

HGGS

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BETREUUNG –
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UND WO SIE
ZU FINDEN SIND

IMPRESSUM

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Liebe Leserin, lieber Leser,

wir freuen uns, mit dieser Broschüre den Ergebnissen unserer Veranstaltungen und Aktivitäten zum Thema „Betreuung in der Promotion“ Sichtbarkeit zu verleihen. Bereits im November 2019 hatte die Graduiertenakademie einen Termin ihrer Veranstaltungsreihe „Primers for Predocs – Strategien für eine erfolgreiche Promotion“ dem Thema „Betreuung“ gewidmet, um sich einem häufig mit viel negativer Presse belasteten Thema mit neuem Schwung und positivem Ausblick anzunehmen.

Was macht eine gelungene Betreuung von Promovierenden aus? Was sind „Best Practice“-Verfahren und Erfolgsfaktoren im universitären Alltag? Welchen essentiellen Beitrag sollten Doktoranden/innen und Betreuer/innen leisten? Diese und weitere Fragen zum Thema „Doktoranden/innen-Betreuung“ haben wir damals in unserer Panel-Diskussion aufgegriffen und uns seither kontinuierlich mit diesen Aspekten beschäftigt. Unser Ziel war es, positive Beispiele gelungener Betreuungsbeziehungen in der Promotion – und darüber hinaus – aufzuzeigen und den unterschiedlichen Fächerkulturen und ihren Besonderheiten im Kontext einer Volluniversität Rechnung zu tragen. Entsprechend waren die vier Fields of Focus der Universität prominent vertreten, namentlich durch Prof. Dr. Andrea Albrecht (Neuphilologische Fakultät, Germanistisches Seminar), Prof. Dr. Peter Bastian (Fakultät für Mathematik und Informatik, Institut für Wissenschaftliches Rechnen – IWR), Prof. Dr. Aurel Croissant (Fakultät für Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften, Institut für Politische Wissenschaft und Prof. Dr. Ursula Kummer (Fakultät für Biologie, Center for Organismal Studies – COS).

Mit dem Schreibwettbewerb im Frühjahr 2020 zum Thema „Super-Vision: Successful PhD Partnerships and Where to Find Them“, an dem alle o.g. Professorinnen und Professoren als Juroren/innen beteiligt waren, haben wir unsere Initiative weitergeführt. Dank der originellen und kreativen Beiträge aller Teilnehmer/innen sind wir unserem Ziel damit einen Schritt näher gekommen – positiven Erfahrungen und Visionen Raum zu geben und dem oftmals frustrierenden Diskurs zum Thema Betreuung zugewandte und zukunftsweisende Beispiele bzw. Ideen entgegenzusetzen.

Wir teilen unsere Freude mit Hannah Mieger (Neuphilologische Fakultät) für ihr preiswürdiges Gedicht „Promovere“ – ein äußerst verdienter erster Platz.

Weiterhin freuen wir uns mit allen Zweitplatzierten (in alphabetischer Reihenfolge), für deren inspirierende Beiträge wir fünf weitere gleichwertige Preise vergeben durften:

- „*Searching for a good mentor: It takes a village*“ von *Yasamin Dabiri*, Fakultät für Biowissenschaften
- „*It's a mad, mad world – the secret life of a doctoral candidate*“ von *Ulrike Freitag*, Neuphilologische Fakultät
- „*I want to be your supervisor!*“ von *Rovimar Serrano Gómez*, Philosophische Fakultät
- „*Bei der Promotion sind Vertrauen und Freiraum essentiell*“ von *Sara Konrad*, Fakultät für Physik und Astronomie
- „*Reflections on the relationship between provision and supervision in academia*“ von *Hüsnü Yılmaz*, Fakultät für Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften

An dieser Stelle möchten wir zudem schon heute unseren Podcast mit und zu den Beiträgen von Frau Mieger und unseren fünf zweitplatzierten Teilnehmer/innen ankündigen. Weitere Informationen werden wir online bereitstellen.

Mit herzlichen Grüßen aus der Graduiertenakademie und der Heidelberger Graduiertenschule für Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften

Ihre Dr. Helke Hillebrand (Graduiertenakademie), Dr. Astrid Wind (Heidelberger Graduiertenschule für Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften), Dr. Claudia Falk (Graduiertenakademie), Dr. David Jara (Graduiertenakademie)

PROMOVERE***Hannah Mieger***

Promovere – heißt es auf Latein
 Und das soll nun mein Alltag sein.
 Doch wie es mir gelingen kann,
 Dass so in all den Jahren dann
 Ein Buch entsteht aus meiner Arbeit
 Darüber besteht wenig Klarheit.
 Man denkt, man hätt' den Bogen raus,
 Hat studiert Tag ein, Tag aus,
 Doch liegt ein Neuanfang vor mir
 Kahl, nackt und weiß liegt das Papier.
 Wie fülle ich die Seiten nun?
 Wo fang ich an? Was soll ich tun?
 Man fühlt sich hilflos, scheint allein,
 Doch muss das Rad nicht neu erfunden sein.
 Bin nicht die Erste, nicht die Letzte,
 Die sich dies Werk zum Ziele setzte.
 So gab es vor mir eine Frau,
 Auf deren Hilfe ich nun bau'.
 In einem Turm aus Elfenbein
 Da wollen wir zusammen sein
 Und dort der Mediävistik frönen
 Zwischen Büchern, alten, schönen.
 Hier verliert sich Hierarchie
 Bei zwei Frauen, die noch nie
 Erfahren diese Situation.
 Hier trifft Ehrgeiz auf Passion.
 Wir sind zwar voller Gegensätze:
 Die eine laut, die and're leise,
 Die Unerfahrene, die Weise.

Doch was ich wirklich an ihr schätze,
 Das ist der Raum, den sie mir gibt,
 Für all die Themen, die ich lieb',
 Für all die Fragen, die ich habe,
 Für ihre ganz besond're Gabe,
 Mit ruhiger Art mich zu bestärken,
 Kritik konstruktiv anzumerken,
 Mich autonom und doch betreut
 Wirken zu lassen, was mich freut.
 Noch ist der Weg der Diss sehr lang,
 Doch was ich heut' schon sagen kann,
 Sie dient als Vorbild sehr für mich,
 Da ihr – selbst heut' noch ungewöhnlich –
 Der große Drahtseilakt gelingt
 Mit Juniorprofessur und Kind.
 Doch unser Projekt ist kein Duett,
 Denn erst zu dritt sind wir komplett.
 Hilfe kommt nicht nur von oben,
 Denn unseren HiWi will ich loben.
 Für Korrekturen aller Art
 Steht er uns beiden stets parat
 Und wird so nicht nur zum Kollegen,
 er wird zum Freund auf allen Wegen.
 So zeigt sich schon nach kurzer Zeit:
 Promovieren heißt nicht gleich Einsamkeit.
 Neben der Doktormutter gibt es daher
 Doktorgeschwister, mehr und mehr.
 In unserer Familie MTK
 Kommen sich Wissenschaftler nah;

Aus allen Sparten und Bereichen
Ist das, worin wir uns dann gleichen,
Die Arbeit mit Materialität,
Ob Texte, Bilder, Artefakte,
Ob historisch früh, ob spät,
Hier knüpfen wir Kontakte.
So gibt es in der Numismatik
Eine Doktorschwester und die mag ich
Genau wie die in der Frühneuzeit.
Beide offen und gescheit.
Beide stehen mir zur Seite,
Helfen mir, wenn ich mal leide
Unter Zeitdruck oder Panik.
Sie kennen auch die Problematik:
Denn ohne feste Arbeitszeit
Ist man für Überstunden stets bereit.
Doch bietet man uns eine Chance,
Dass wir sie finden, die Balance,
Zwischen Promotion und Arbeitsgruppen,
Dass wir uns schließlich dann entpuppen
Als junge Forscher mit Niveau –
Wer wird hier nicht erwartungsfroh?
So blicken wir voll Tatendrang
Auf uns'ren Bildschirm stundenlang
Hoffend, dass man was entdeckt,
Das nicht bereits in Büchern steckt,
Das neu ist und das weiterbringt,
Damit die Promotion gelingt.
Zwar ist die Promotion für mich,
Jedoch gelingt sie eigentlich
niemals alleine hier im Stillen.

Selbst mit dem allergrößten Willen
Sind uns Menschen dann ein Segen,
Wenn sie uns unterstützen, prägen.
So kann es die Familie sein,
Die uns ganz fest im trauten Heim
Nimmt in den Arm und motiviert,
Wenn uns einmal der Mut verliert.
Ich hab' daheim und im Büro
Menschen mit Herz und mit Verstand,
Die mich betreuen sowieso,
Und fördernd nehmen an die Hand,
Damit mir Flügel wachsen werden.
Denn Promovieren ohne Beschwerden
Ist eine Utopie.
Doch stimmt die Harmonie,
Bleibt gute Betreuung keine Fantasie
Und am Ende bleibt die Nostalgie
Auf eine Zeit im engen Kreise,
Aus der wir hervorgehen – weise?
Promovere – heißt es auf Latein –
Soll nicht nur diese Arbeit sein.
Sich weiterbilden, weiter streben,
Das motiviert mein Tun, mein Leben.
Ich will nicht bleiben oder sein,
Ich will werden und gedeihen,
Weiterwachsen, auch mal scheitern,
Wissen mehren und erweitern.
Promovere heißt auf Latein
Vorrücken – das soll mein Motto sein.
Doch dass das nicht alleine geht,
zeigt das, was hier geschrieben steht.

SEARCHING FOR A GOOD MENTOR: IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Yasamin Dabiri

Being in the final stages of my PhD experience, I started to recall my early steps in search of a PhD position abroad at a world-class university: a pharmacy graduate sitting in front of a laptop, scrolling up and down websites and writing Emails. Perhaps it was the realization of how coveted PhD positions with top-tier scientists at elite universities were that taught me to value the “opportunity” itself and that made everything else a small detail in my eyes. It was at that moment that I promised myself, if I were given this opportunity, I will do everything in my power to make it a success. This is the inspiration behind the primary message I would like to pass on to candidates who are just embarking on their PhD journey: “Take matters into your own hands!”

According to a survey of PhD candidates conducted by the journal *Nature* in 2019, most graduate students have reported that they are not getting what they expect when it comes to supervision. This is unsurprising since doctoral supervisors are usually extremely busy senior scientists with numerous administrative and academic responsibilities. Additionally, in many cases, years away from the bench have made them less familiar with the very specific technical challenges that we students face in the lab on a day-to-day basis, which brings me to one of the most valuable lessons I've learned during the past four years: ‘It takes a village’ to train and supervise doctoral students.

I want my parents to have all the answers!

During my early days in the group, my PhD advisor conceived a project, supposedly my PhD project, and guided me through writing applications for doctoral fellowships. I believe that his initial ideas put the first brick in the wall, which evolved and drastically transformed throughout my PhD years. This process, however, wasn't easy. In the first group seminars, I vividly remember myself being fascinated and quite often intimidated by the complex scientific terms and methods of molecular biology, the results of my lab-mates, and the knowledge of my advisor. Looking back, this is exactly what I would be most thankful for learning or, better, “adopting” from my supervisor, his style of “scientific thinking”, since I think that no one can explicitly teach this. It was more about me studying the important papers of the group and observing his approach with regards to scientific challenges,

whether in general or in response to specific projects of my colleagues. Coming from an educational system where we were used to relying on strict and close supervision and to acquiring knowledge mostly through classical means, I had my own struggles at the start of my PhD. I often found myself lost among so many questions related to the project, which I had to carefully choose from, and which only then I could try to answer. What made this transition a little smoother, in my opinion, was the open and friendly intellectual atmosphere my supervisor has fostered in the group. This is the primary thing I appreciate in my relationship with my supervisor and his lab. In such environments, learning opportunities can come through unconventional ways and at times when you least expect them, for example over a lunch conversation or during a coffee break. I was sharing an office with two other PhD students and one junior group leader, all of whom were working on related yet different topics. We used to have close conversations about each other's new results and ideas. This was often an indirect source of inspiration to drive our own research. Things, however, were not as glamorous as they sound when it came to experiments! As someone with little experience in molecular biology techniques, I had to start from scratch in so many aspects. But it was then that "peer-mentoring" came in...!

I never thought of my older siblings!

While searching for the term "peer-mentorship", I realized that several studies as well as many career advisors have suggested that "peer-mentoring support" can positively transform post-graduate learning. I would like to go even further and say that PhD supervision must not be a one-person job. To illustrate this, I can share what I have personally experienced. Upon joining the lab, it was soon clear to me that I was unfamiliar with most of the research themes of the group and methods used in the lab. I therefore tried to fill some of these gaps by learning from senior colleagues, because I had to. Now I think that almost everyone in the group has taught me at least one technique and has helped me with understanding a certain topic or troubleshooting a particular experiment. From my experience, having a real connection with lab-mates not only serves as a ground for a less complicated learning process, but it can also be an immediate source of motivation. In the field of natural sciences, it is not very unlikely that the primary project you were given takes months or even more than a year until you have some sort of preliminary data. That too happened to me. Although highly committed to the PhD program, I remember that those days were filled with lots of self-doubt: what am I doing here? what question am I trying to

answer? are these results going to be of any value to anyone? I therefore turned to my fellow students and senior colleagues for support. I tried to get involved in their projects, and this not only introduced me to new scientific themes but gave me a sense of being part of a team, which was far more motivating and rewarding than working on your own. Nonetheless, we have to bear in mind that such group-mentoring necessitates a team spirit, which, to my experience, requires building-relationship opportunities. Therefore, PhD advisors would have a key role in enabling such culture in the group, which will ultimately have a great impact on the quality of supervision their PhD students receive.

Do not forget to visit distant relatives!

The American sociologist Jack Mezirow mentions that one of the most important areas of adult learning is freedom from habitual ways of thinking and acting. Although I got to know this by the very end of my PhD, I recognized that I was subconsciously exploiting it during my studies. The attempt of exploring new learning tools is not so uncommon among post-graduate students. However, this needn't be done only when we have given up on our primary sources, in this case PhD advisors and mentors. In other words, we should be encouraged right from the start to benefit from a variety of learning modules. The truth is that most of the practical and theoretical issues we encounter in the lab have been resolved before! I personally came to know this while trying to troubleshoot certain experiments. It was so heart-warming to realize that the smallest details of the technical problem I was trying to solve have been previously described or even answered by other scientists in professional networks, such as ResearchGate. We live in the age of unlimited sources of information. This too extends to the field of research we are working in. Indeed, it requires good skills to filter massive information for the specific knowledge that we need. However, once learned, it will provide a precious opportunity to diversify our learning sources, which can be used as a launching pad for becoming an independent researcher.

In the end, I would like to return to the beginning and emphasize, one more time, on the importance of various avenues through which we can arrive at a good PhD experience. PhD supervision does not need to be a hierarchical matter. For a better doctoral training, I had to learn to break my learning routines and combine all the different sources. My deepest appreciation goes to each and every one of them!

IT'S A MAD, MAD WORLD – THE SECRET LIFE OF A DOCTORAL CANDIDATE

Ulrike Freitag

My first attempt, although it started in the best possible manner, came to a crashing end only 4 months after I had the glorious idea of prolonging my leisurely-lived student life by writing a PhD.

So, first step: find a topic and a supervisor.

Professor at Mannheim University (looking at me in a very euphoric manner): „That’s a great topic and exactly in my field of research! Researching Russian symbolism in anglophone literature should make for a great thesis! I like your style of writing and belief that you’re a competent student. Let’s get to the paperwork immediately for you to get started.“

Me (also very euphoric): „I’m so glad to hear that! I think this will be a great opportunity for me and the topic is even affiliated with my master thesis; nothing can go wrong.“

A couple of weeks later, apparently everything had gone wrong. Having sent her a finished exposé via e-mail roughly 6 weeks after our initial conversation, I got an e-mail 2 months (!) later:

Professor: „Sorry, but I have to tell you that I don’t think you’re a competent student any more and also, your style of writing is not to my liking any more either. Bye!“

Me: „... (no words) ... can we maybe discuss this in person?“

Apparently not. I never heard from her again. She did come up with a couple more sentences by mail but this is basically the short version of what she wanted to inform me about. Needless to say, my confidence in my academic capabilities came crashing down to zero. No explanation, just two very different and confusing... let’s call them conversations.

Change of scene: a couple of months later, after having let off some steam in the pubs and

bars of Heidelberg, one drunken night I decided to try again and made the following promise to myself: that woman would not define the way I think of myself as an academic. I will write the most amazing PhD-thesis this university has ever seen and send it to her afterwards, just to make a point! (Disclaimer: I have somewhat lowered my expectations at this point to a more realistic end-product and also do not any longer intend to send my finished thesis to her.)

So, first step (again): find a topic and a supervisor.

Okay then... This time, I went looking for a supervisor in my old department and eventually found someone whom, to all intents and purposes, I'm going to call here Ms. Perfect Supervisor (really not meant sarcastically at all). Having already taken classes with her during my master's, I trusted her enough to have an open conversation about the possibility of doing a PhD under her supervision.

Professor: „I'll be glad to supervise you as I already know your work from the seminar you took and a topic in American feminism is right up my alley. Be aware, however, that this will not be easy. There will be obstacles all along the way, you'll have self-doubt and phases during which you will question everything. When (she determinedly said, not if) that happens, contact me immediately and we'll have a proper chat about it over a nice cup of tea.“

Me: „Alrighty... Thank you for your trust in me and your support, I will get in touch if (I naively said, not when) I encounter problems at any point.“

I left her office slightly light-headed but happy nonetheless, thanks to the joy I felt by having my confidence boosted again, and went home immediately to get started on my exposé. The first attempt was, in no way whatsoever, any good. I knew that Ms. Perfect Supervisor knew that and so she told me in a resolute but friendly manner. Since I only wrote it to know whether the topic was heading in the right direction, which it was (as she assured me), I went home again, wrote a second go, a proper one and got accepted by the faculty a couple of months later without any difficulty.

I am now approaching the halfway point of writing my dissertation and, boy oh boy, there were problems already, and moments of despair, and moments when I thought to myself just what the f*** am I doing here exactly? What manic inspiration of mine made me think that I can actually write a dissertation? There were times when I was not able to write anything at all for weeks on end and I kept it hidden from my supervisor, ignoring all the help and advice she had offered me upfront, because I was still too afraid to face her in my current state.

Now, I believe that there are two kinds of supervisors when it comes to writing a PhD-thesis. The first type is the one that throws you off a cliff and leaves you all alone to fall until, at some point, you hit the bottom with a thesis in your hands and come crawling up the hill again to finally hand it in. I have heard friends complaining about the lack of interest and support by their supervisors before I even got started on my own project. And, of course, I have my own spectacular experience of ‚how-not-to-do-it‘ playing still very vividly in my mind.

But then there is the other type, the kind of supervisor that somehow knows when things drift off-course and write you an e-mail at what is seemingly most inconvenient moment: lying in bed on a Wednesday, in the early afternoon, watching Netflix with a glass of wine in your hand and a half-eaten bag of chips next to the pillow.

Professor: „Hey there, just checking in, haven't heard much from you lately. How is the writing going? Could you send me a sample of what you have written by the end of the week for me to take a look at? Best wishes...“

Me: „... (suffering a minor heart attack) ... oh sh**...“

This situation, to my slight disgrace, took place more or less as I've just described it. I did send her some ten pages, on which I had only spent four days, and of course they were trash. So there I was, hopelessly lost and invited by my supervisor to stop by her office to discuss my so-called writing sample... she was not amused at all. But, instead of biting my head off, which I would have understood perfectly well, she sat me down and asked what's going on. I finally told her about how lost I feel with all the research I have been doing, and

how overwhelming all of this is, and that I simply do not know where to start and how to sort things out. What followed was an hour-long, ridiculously productive conversation during which we made a structured plan for the upcoming weeks and also agreed on regular intervals for me to check in with her.

She had told me from the beginning that I can contact her whenever I have a problem, or get stuck, or get sick and cannot write, and I had promised myself to do that the minute something came up. Obviously, I did not. And I have a slight inkling that many students think like me and are simply afraid to admit that they need help in writing the best thesis the world has ever seen (and we all, I believe, do lower our standards rather quickly). I am happy to report that, now, when halfway through my thesis, I have found my rhythm of writing and I know what I have to do to hand in my thesis at the end of next year, right on time. This conversation is only one of the many conversations I have had with my supervisor and she has been nothing but helpful (and thankfully patient) throughout the entire experience. Thus, the latest conversation we had in April via Zoom went like this:

Professor (smiling): „So, I looked through your latest writing sample that you sent and I think it's good! You're definitely on the right path, there are some points which you should look at again in more detail, but otherwise, keep on doing what you're doing.“

Me (smiling): „Thanks a lot, I'm really happy to hear that. Your guidance has really helped me figure things out.“

Afterwards, we discussed our lives in this era of momentary lockdown and virus paranoia for twenty more minutes and said goodbye. As of today, I am happy to say that I have not been lying in bed watching Netflix while drinking wine in the early afternoon again. (Another disclaimer: I have simplified the conversations depicted here for reasons of space, obviously...please, do not hold it against me. Thanks.)

I WANT TO BE YOUR SUPERVISOR!

Rovimar Serrano Gómez

And there I was, again with a registration form, with that racing heart. A feeling equal to a child's excitement as the first day of school approaches. With newly purchased notebooks and pencils, awakening the indelible memory of the smell of the blank page. With the anguish of getting everything ready, so as not to be late for school. With that desire to see a room full of new faces. And with the firm idea of being more organized, and not leaving everything for the „last minute“.

Well, this time it was different, already with more years in tow and without being able to run or shout with joy for this new challenge. Those actions of adults, which are limited to expressing themselves through the sincerity of words, from the impetus of the heart, from the existence of few limits. In short, I assumed my new doctoral passage with a few academic and work commitments to my credit. A recent position as a university lecturer, a specialization about to end and with that desire to eat the world. Who wouldn't wish it?

When you have the gallantry that youth gives.

I started my doctoral classes with the idea of going unnoticed. Neither arriving too early nor too late. Looking for a seat ... not so close to the professor, not so far.

But it turns out that at that level, there are very few students, and there was no way to be just a spectator. So, my first days were spent between fright and flight, trying to avoid the professors' questions ... impossible. But I managed to adapt and find the rhythm of the system.

The semesters passed and it was time to find a supervisor for the thesis. Why is that figure needed? I had some people in mind, but I was afraid to face that moment. That kind of ritual similar to „asking for the bride's hand.“ At the time, I remembered my master's supervisor, who said that the relationship of a tutor and his or her student was like a marriage: that if you became divorced along the way, it was the most terrible thing that could happen. Well, the investigation would be different and you would even have to start pursuing other paths.

My master's supervisor was a very busy man. I remember that we had appointments every 15 days and sometimes he could not take full advantage of the consultancies, due to his multiple occupations. I disliked that a little bit, because I would ask for permission at work to attend those consultancies. But I was faithful and stayed with him until the end. I fulfilled all that he was demanding of me: Chapter 1 ... Chapter 2 ... Chapter 3 ... Conclusions and

Bibliography. I disciplined myself and finished my work.

In the end, when he saw everything finished, he checked my work exhaustively; he made suggestions; I accepted, corrected, and delivered. When I had to present, I did it impeccably and got a “First”, with the recommendation to publish. I was very happy and my supervisor was proud of me. I remember that he gave me a nice pen at the end of the defense of my MA thesis.

So, with those tips from my master's supervisor, I came to fear that „academic divorce“ and that's why I had to choose that guide well. It would have to be someone special, who inspires confidence in me, who is responsible, cordial and serious with his investigations. I thought of a colleague who was about to become a full professor, and whom I admired very much. In my department meetings she expressed herself in such a way that no one dared to contradict her; she had an ancestry full of illustrious people and a long list of achievements in the struggle for justice in the field of education in my country. For me she was the right person.

So, I built up my courage and asked her to be my tutor. But she said she couldn't. I felt that the world was falling apart. She told me that she still did not have full status as a professor and did not know when her status would end. Although I told her that we could wait, because I was barely developing the initial ideas of my research ... she didn't want to ... so I didn't insist and left my search for another time. Sometimes you don't have to search too much!

At that time a specialization in Telematics was nearing completion. All the training had been remote via Moodle and email. I was assigned a supervisor, just like my master's degree, and he communicated with me via email.

I didn't know that professor, because he had never taught me. From time to time I would send him my work-in progress and he would make suggestions to me. I tried to keep up with this type of advice, but it was difficult for me due to the time between one and another response from the emails. I managed to finish, although it took a lot of effort. I don't even remember how many emails we shared. That was not meaningful for me.

The defense of the work was by videoconference; I managed to do well. But I think that the lack of having a longer exchange of communications, that went beyond the fact of fulfilling the requirement of the undergraduate work, did not help to establish a stronger and more committed relationship with that university.

And now in my doctorate, when it was already time to give the name of the supervisor to the program coordinator ... he appeared. What mysterious things does life have in store?

I confess that I admired him. His classes were brilliant for me. He had that imposing personality, that confidence in speaking that inspired respect. And at the end of a class he came up to me and said: - I want to be your supervisor! –

I remember I almost fainted; I couldn't believe it, I thought it was a dream... I even trembled with emotion. That event was so wonderful for me, it was as if I was walking in a large green field full of flowers and the singing of birds everywhere.

I said yes ... And a wonderful path began for me ... for both of us.

He, a very sensitive man, paid attention to all the details of human behavior, and transmitted that to me. When we were having a coffee, he said to me: - You see that lady who is sitting there. What do you think she thinks? - That was irrelevant to me, because I was used to being practical, going straight to the heart of things and taking advantage of time. Well, he ... calmly described that context, managed to decipher that lady's behavior and, without saying any more, aroused in me a search for those small details that allowed me to make analogies with what I wanted to investigate. I confess that I am no longer the same!

I emailed him my thoughts, he responded quickly, and then called me on the phone for details and to make an appointment in his office. Added to that was the time for an afternoon coffee. With him I learned to enjoy coffee. We had long conversations in which he oriented me and gave me encouragement. He filled me with confidence, he believed in me. He showered me with good books, had this great desire to help, total dedication. His books travelled back and forth from my house to work. I walked with that spark, my „Aufklärung“. I plunged into a great lake of co-constructing knowledge.

I had a humanistic approach that allowed for flexibility and understanding of my creative process when approaching research. He was very patient, he listened very carefully, as if he were my therapist, he generated in me an extraordinary confidence; we were colleagues. He re-directed my path. I had found my oracle!

And that's how I took courage and knew no fear of producing that text – my supervisor had helped me find a way to formally start my academic writing. With his diplomatic and elegant style, he showed me possible paths ... and there I was selecting the path ... and there he was, accompanying me. Ensuring every step. Waiting with utmost concern for my doubts and successes. He taught me to look at otherness with fresh eyes; we built a space for mutual learning. We grew together!

Today, after that great experience, I am surrounded by wonderful people. The green field became a meadow. My discussions transcended other steps and here I am, watering seeds.

**BEI DER PROMOTION SIND VERTRAUEN UND FREIRAUM ESSENTIELL
WIE SOLLEN WIR AUCH SONST ZU NEUGIERIGEN, SELBSTSTÄNDIG DENKENDEN,
KREATIVEN WISSENSCHAFTLERINNEN WERDEN?**

Sara Konrad

22 Tage nach Beginn meiner Promotion war ich nervlich komplett am Ende. Heute, über vier Jahre später, geht es mir so gut wie noch nie. Trotz Covid19 und trotz der Tatsache, dass ich in drei Monaten meine Dissertation abgeben werde.

Drei Jahre hatte ich mich nicht mehr mit Physik beschäftigt. Jetzt wollte ich die Probleme kosmischer Strukturentstehung unter Einbeziehung Einsteins Relativitätstheorie und Methoden der Quantenfeldtheorie lösen. Klingt kompliziert? Das ist es!

Warum sich mein Prof. auf ein solches Mammutprojekt mit jemandem einlässt, der drei Jahre lang keine richtige Physik gesehen hat? 2011 schrieb ich meine Bachelorarbeit bei ihm, die ziemlich gut lief.

Ich bekam ein Problem und einen approximativen Lösungsweg, den ich ausrechnen sollte. Ein paar Wochen später meldete ich mich bei meinem Prof. Ich hatte die approximative Lösung verworfen und dafür eine einfachere, exakte gefunden. Meine Bachelorarbeit wurde ein voller Erfolg, wir schrieben eine wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichung mit mir als Erstautor, weitere Co-Autorenschaften folgten.

Er setzte wohl viel Hoffnung in mich. Später lernte ich, dass es nicht nur Hoffnung, sondern vor allem auch Vertrauen in meine Fähigkeiten gewesen sein musste.

Die Anfangsphase meiner Promotion verlief, milde gesagt, bescheiden. Ich steckte noch bis zum Hals in einem nervenaufreibenden und zeitfressenden vorherigen Forschungsprojekt, dessen Abschluss nicht abzusehen war. Ich war frustriert, weil ich beim Wiederlernen physikalischer Grundlagen kaum vorwärts kam. Die Literatur über die Theorie, mit der ich arbeiten sollte, verstand ich monatelang überhaupt nicht. Und 22 Tage nach Beginn meiner Promotion zerbrach ohne Vorwarnung meine Beziehung. Ich war am Tiefpunkt angelangt.

Für Wochen und Monate kam ich nicht voran. Ich hatte keine Ahnung, wie ich mich dem schweren Promotionsthema annähern sollte.

Mir war klar, dass es so nicht weitergehen konnte. Ich rang mich zu einem offenen

Gespräch mit meinem Prof. durch. Er hörte mir geduldig und verständnisvoll zu. Dann fragte er mich, was wir ändern könnten, damit ich den Anschluss bekomme. Ich schlug wöchentliche Treffen mit kurzen Fortschrittsupdates vor. Eigentlich hasse ich es bei der Arbeit kontrolliert zu werden und regelmäßig Rechenschaft ablegen zu müssen, aber von Schuldgefühlen geplagt, war es das einzige, was ich anbieten konnte. Seine Antwort verblüffte mich. Er lehnte meinen Vorschlag ab, da er befürchtete, dass das zu viel Druck für mich sei. Ich war erleichtert und unendlich dankbar für sein Verständnis. Er schlug mir stattdessen eine leichte Einstiegsaufgabe vor, damit ich ein schnelles Erfolgserlebnis habe. Dieses Angebot nahm ich gerne an.

Auch in der folgenden Zeit fragte er nie nach, wie es bei mir läuft. Es ist generell nicht seine Art zu drängen. Wenn man ihn sprechen möchte, steht seine Tür offen. E-Mails beantwortet er spätestens am nächsten Tag. Immer. Wenn man nicht weiter kommt, lobt er einen für das, was man ausprobiert hat, weil man gezeigt hat, was nicht funktioniert. Dann hat er Ideen, was man als nächstes ausprobieren kann. Wenn man meint etwas Banales gefunden zu haben, zeigt er auf, dass das ganz und gar nicht banal, sondern physikalisch interessant ist. Seine Art den Fortschritt sichtbar zu machen und wert zu schätzen, ist unglaublich motivierend.

Trotz der neuen Aufgabe ging es bei mir jedoch nicht wirklich voran. In dieser Zeit begann er damit mich hin und wieder fast beiläufig an den Erfolg bei meiner Bachelorarbeit zu erinnern – wie ich nach ein paar Wochen wie aus dem Nichts mit einer eigenen einfacheren Lösung zu ihm kam.

Nach und nach erkannte ich, dass es mir nicht nur erlaubt war, sondern dass es vielleicht sogar von mir erwartet wurde, die eigentliche Aufgabe zu verlassen und nach anderen Möglichkeiten zu suchen.

Unsere Gespräche verliefen meist so, dass ich mit ihm einen nächsten Schritt besprach und anschließend genau das Gegenteil tat. Nicht etwa, weil ich das aktiv so entschied, sondern weil mir das andere dann doch natürlicher erschien. Meinen Prof. schien das niemals zu stören.

Mit der Zeit stellten sich kleine Erfolge ein, ich wurde selbstbewusster und auch psychisch erholte ich mich langsam. Den eigentlichen Wendepunkt erlebte ich dann über zweieinhalb Jahre nach Beginn meiner Promotion während des Gruppenseminars.

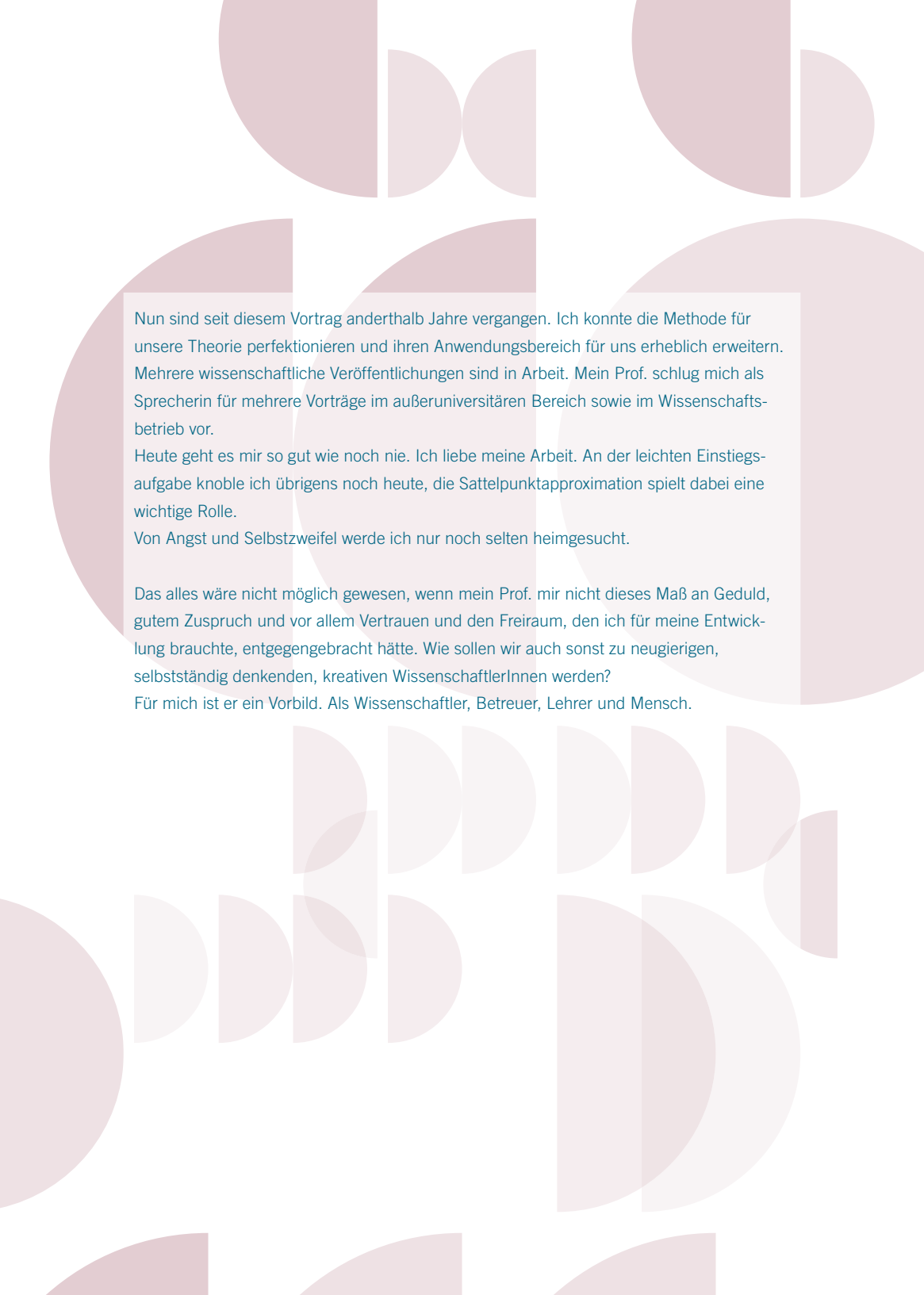
Unser Gruppenseminar ist mit verschiedenen Beiträgen gefüllt. Zum einen stellen einzelne Gruppenmitglieder ihre eigene Arbeit vor, zum anderen wird über aktuelle Forschungsergebnisse in der Kosmologie gesprochen. Schließlich gibt es noch Lehrvorträge, bei denen Lehrbuchthemen oder -methoden im Vorlesungsstil vorgetragen werden. Diese Themen haben nicht notwendigerweise direkt etwas mit unserer Arbeit zu tun, benötigen einiges an Vorbereitung und sind meist höchst spannend.

Ich hatte mich für ein mathematisches Thema gemeldet. Genau genommen kam ich zu spät zur Themenverteilung und dieses Thema war das einzige das noch übrig war. Es ging um die „Sattelpunktnäherung“. Ehrlich gesagt hatte ich zu diesem Zeitpunkt keine Ahnung, was das sein sollte. Mein Prof. klärte mich auf. Die Sattelpunktnäherung ist eine Methode, um das Verhalten bestimmter Integrale zu approximieren. Hässliche Integrale gibt es in unserer Theorie zur Genüge und Probleme diese auszurechnen, haben wir auch. Allerdings hatte sich mein Prof. in der Vergangenheit bereits mit numerischen Mathematikern zu dieser Problematik besprochen und keine hilfreiche Idee bekommen. Ich rechnete also mit einem interessanten Thema, das uns aber nicht allzu viel nützen würde. Wochenlang beschäftigte ich mich kaum mit etwas anderem als diesen für mich neuen und faszinierenden mathematischen Methoden, die dieser Näherung zugrunde liegen. Dass ich bei meiner eigentlichen Arbeit zunächst nicht weiter voran kam, war zum Glück kein Problem.

Um das Thema verständlicher zu gestalten, bereitete ich für den Vortrag viele Beispiele vor. Nun packte mich ein gewisser Ehrgeiz, der genährt war von den Worten meines Betreuers, mit denen er mich an meine Bachelorarbeit erinnert hatte. Ich wollte eine Beispielrechnung zeigen, bei der ich eines der Integrale in unserer Theorie so hinbog, dass man die Sattelpunktnäherung anwenden konnte. Physikalisch ergab das für mich wenig Sinn und das Ergebnis, das ich bekam, wirkte auf mich noch weniger sinnvoll – wenn nicht sogar albern. Aber ich wollte unbedingt ein praxisnahes Beispiel zeigen. Vielleicht würde jemand etwas damit anfangen können oder mein Prof. erkennen, dass diese Näherung für uns nicht taugte.

Bei meinem Vortrag dann großes Staunen. Es stellte sich heraus, dass mein Ergebnis, als beiläufige Beispielrechnung vorgestellt, keineswegs albern ist. Es entspricht qualitativ sogar ziemlich genau dem, was in Simulationen beobachtet wird, doch gelang es bisher niemandem, das analytisch auszurechnen.

Was ich gefunden habe, ist möglicherweise ein wichtiger Baustein, um die Strukturbildung im Universum grundlegend zu verstehen.



Nun sind seit diesem Vortrag anderthalb Jahre vergangen. Ich konnte die Methode für unsere Theorie perfektionieren und ihren Anwendungsbereich für uns erheblich erweitern. Mehrere wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen sind in Arbeit. Mein Prof. schlug mich als Sprecherin für mehrere Vorträge im außeruniversitären Bereich sowie im Wissenschaftsbetrieb vor.

Heute geht es mir so gut wie noch nie. Ich liebe meine Arbeit. An der leichten Einstiegsaufgabe knoble ich übrigens noch heute, die Sattelpunktnäherung spielt dabei eine wichtige Rolle.

Von Angst und Selbstzweifel werde ich nur noch selten heimgesucht.

Das alles wäre nicht möglich gewesen, wenn mein Prof. mir nicht dieses Maß an Geduld, gutem Zuspruch und vor allem Vertrauen und den Freiraum, den ich für meine Entwicklung brauchte, entgegengebracht hätte. Wie sollen wir auch sonst zu neugierigen, selbstständig denkenden, kreativen WissenschaftlerInnen werden?

Für mich ist er ein Vorbild. Als Wissenschaftler, Betreuer, Lehrer und Mensch.

REFLECTIONS ON THE LINK BETWEEN SUPERVISION AND PROVISION IN ACADEMIA

Hüsnü Yılmaz

One of the core objectives in academia is to establish a dynamic communication between student and supervisor. A mutually beneficial relationship between all parties, especially during graduate studies, has the potential to produce sustainable knowledge. This writing contest is principally organized in pursuit of a similar end, namely to benefit from the experiences of graduate students in terms of creating mutually productive ties between young researchers and their professors. In this regard, this contest aims to combine the reflections of graduate students on how a good supervision may promote academic development and success. It also provides an intellectual platform by which students at different stages of their doctoral research may come up with ideas about the impact of this particular relationship on their professional careers either after or outside academia. What makes the supervision of my supervisor special to me is not only related to his academic contributions to my research. This exercise makes me think of the encouraging and enlightening role my supervisor has also played in the process of writing up a story from scratch. It contains my individual reflections to acknowledge his role in making our story as a family real, which is for me equally important to his crucially important academic guidance so far. Put differently, this short article is an expression of my gratitude to my supervisor. Besides his priceless assistance in my academic orientation, I continue with the central focus of this text, which is the significance of my supervisor in our challenging journey in the past few years.

Academically speaking, I should admit that I have benefited from the scholarly expertise of my supervisor at crucial junctures of my doctoral research since the Winter Semester of 2017-2018. Among other things, his critical role in redesigning my research and providing several references, which opened up different possibilities for me, were decisive in the development of my research. I needed his constructive interventions when I was a mentally tired and confused beginner at earlier stages of my work. What was of equal importance was his advice on choosing a new methodological approach, which helped me benefit from the expertise of young scholars in the department. The letter he wrote in support of me was also important in receiving a travel grant from the Graduate Academy for the astonishing ECPR (the European Consortium for Political Research) 2019 Summer School. Similarly, his positive feedback and support for my application to the HGGS (Heidelberg Gradui-

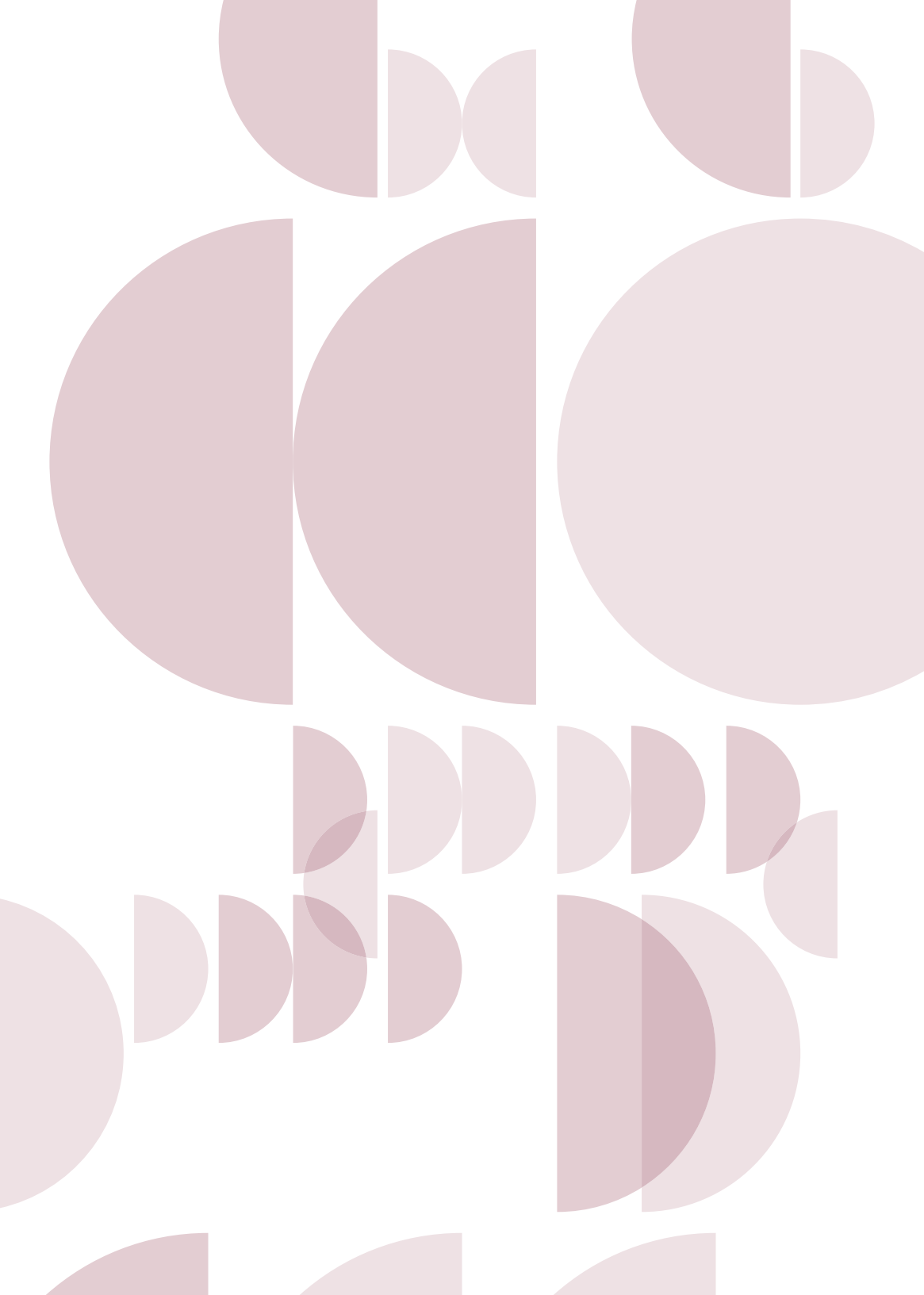
ertenschule für Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften) was one of his key contributions that enabled me to become a member of an interdisciplinary research community. Moreover, both in the initial application process and while submitting the interim reports, his feedback made it possible for me to obtain and extend my doctoral research grant from the esteemed Gerda Henkel Foundation. Taken altogether, all of his efforts played a pivotal role in sustaining my academic focus, which was only a part of the whole story.

Our move from Turkey to Germany in August 2017 was a first step to make a new start as a family – myself, my wife and our 2-year-old daughter. It was a journey into the unknown, symbolically speaking. Thanks to a two-year research grant from the Gerda Henkel Foundation, I was lucky enough to have my family with me on this journey. I consider myself fortunate because I was able to resume not only my academic life but also keep my family united. That I could manage to resettle myself as a graduate student at the University of Heidelberg came after a challenging process that began in August 2016. In the political atmosphere in Turkey following the attempted coup in June 2016, my doctoral position in Istanbul was first suspended and then ended permanently. It became more chaotic for us after my wife and I had our working contracts terminated. Finding it very difficult to continue in the homeland without access to fundamental rights to work and education, it became urgent for us to move to a welcoming place, namely a 'hostland'. After a challenging year, it was an honor to become registered in Heidelberg as a Ph.D. student at the Institute of Political Science. It goes without saying that it was my supervisor himself who was the key actor to make all this happen.

Heidelberg represented a big 'relief' for us despite all the questions and anxieties we had in the beginning. It provided us with a 'normal' after experiencing a year of 'state of emergency', as well as an opportunity for us to rewrite our story. In this story, apart from the chapter of my doctoral research, two ladies in our family have their own parts too. It is a great pleasure to see that in the last three years my wife could achieve considerable progress to continue her profession in a new working environment and culture, and similarly it was an enormous joy for me to witness how well our daughter is adjusting to her new socio-cultural setting. My supervisor has always been an important character in this story, who provided enough room for us to progress. He has done this with the utmost care and sincere attitude. Whenever we were in need of some help, he was there for us. Not just physically definitely, but he has always been with us in the last three years during which we are happy to develop a sense of home here. Everything he has done made things easier for us.

Viewed from this perspective, my supervisor embodies the characteristics of an enlightened personality and presents how academic supervision could be merged with the crucial provision of assistance in the creation of new stories. He shows the potential that 'academic supervision' and 'academic provision' can go hand in hand through which personal narratives could be rewritten. He exemplifies the quality of combining different values in the implementation of a successful academic supervision. It is this noble and intellectual profile of its scholars that makes the University of Heidelberg so valuable and distinguished to attend.

It seems that this text has become more like a collection of personal reflections expressed from a purely subjective perspective. In writing it, I felt free to come up with my own personal story as encouraged in the announcement of the contest. Keeping my firm belief that there will be many promising stories to be recorded in this wonderful university in years to come, I would like to show my appreciation to the Graduate Academy and the HGGs to have the opportunity to pay homage to the warm welcome and sincere contributions of my supervisor.



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ÜBER DIE HGGS

Die HGGS ist interfakultär und interdisziplinär angelegt und stellt das Angebot einer strukturierten Promotionsausbildung für alle DoktorandInnen der Geistes-, Sozial- und Rechtswissenschaften dar. Sowohl Individualpromovierende wie bereits in Forschungsprojekte eingebundene Promovierende können am Programm teilnehmen. Ziel ist es, die Tradition der weitgehenden Freiheit bei der Erarbeitung einer Dissertation mit Ansätzen einer strukturierten Promotionsphase, z.B. der Durchführung von speziellen Blockseminaren, zu verknüpfen. Bei erfolgreicher Aufnahme in die HGGS stehen Mitgliedern Projektzuschreibungen, Workshops und ein interdisziplinäres begleitendes Lehrprogramm offen. Die Arbeitssprachen der HGGS sind Deutsch und Englisch.

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