

## Fellows



**Alexander Honold**  
IFK\_Senior Fellow

Duration of fellowship  
01. October 2017 bis 31. January 2018

## Alexander Honold

### PROJECT TITLE

Diderot German. The Cultural Politics of Intermittent Translation

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

For the reception of Diderot, the German-speaking world has become a constitutive, discourse-founding organ of dissemination and mediation. Diderot's *Lehrstücke*, his teaching or learning plays (*Le Père de famille*, *Le Fils naturel*), were made internationally available around 1760 through Lessing's translations. The picaresque novel *Jacques le Fataliste et son Maître* was publicized in excerpts by Schiller in 1785. Goethe's translation of the dialogue novel *Le Neveu de Rameau* (1804) even constituted the foundation for a re-transfer into French, and the title character was taken up by Hegel as the model case of an epigonically mis-educated consciousness. These processes of cultural transfer enhance Diderot's disruptive qualities. When it comes to the plays, there are narrative frames that break with illusions; when it comes to the novels, translators process the digressions of their source materials by means of abbreviations and transitions. Starting from these frictions, the present analysis aims at extracting the poetological "DNA" of Diderot's writing experiments, of an aesthetic of sensualistic constructivism that seeks to reveal, by crossing genres and forms of discourse, their respective effects on that which can be said, felt, seen and thought.

## CV

Since 2004, Alexander Honold has held the chair of Modern German Literature at the University of Basel. He studied German, Comparative Literature, Philosophy and Latin American Studies in Munich and Berlin. In 1994, he received his Ph.D. from The Free University of Berlin, with a dissertation about Robert Musil and the First World War. In 2002, he completed his habilitation thesis about astronomy in the writings of Friedrich Hölderlin at the Humboldt University of Berlin. Since then, Honold has taught at the FU of Berlin, the HU of Berlin, and at the University of Konstanz; he has also spent research stays in New York, Stanford, at the KWI Essen and the FRIAS in Freiburg. His research focuses on intercultural and travel writings, narratology, culture and theory of modernity, literature and music, history of landscape aesthetics, and astro-calendric forms of knowledge.

## Publications

gem. mit Edith Anna Kunz und Hans-Jürgen Schrader (Hg.), *Goethe als Literatur-Figur*, Göttingen 2016; (Mhg.), *Einsatz der Dichtung. Literatur im Zeichen des Ersten Weltkriegs*, Berlin 2015; *Die Zeit schreiben. Jahreszeiten, Uhren und Kalender als Taktgeber der Literatur*, Basel 2013.