

›Bildungswissen‹ and its Transformation in a Historical Perspective

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1. Introduction

By knowledge, the research in cultural history focuses on an aspect which is crucial for the constitution of society. Societies shape knowledge cultures which find expression by epistemic practices, media, and materialities and which can furthermore be reconstructed. In a much quoted, concise definition, Karin Knorr Cetina calls knowledge cultures »those practices, mechanisms, and principles [...] of one field of knowledge« which »decide about how we know what we know«.¹ The focus of education-scientific or education-historical research is, more specifically, on that section of a knowledge culture which determines which knowledge is supposed to be obligatorily and bindingly transferred from the older to the younger generation. In modern historical constellations this section of cultural practice—we may call it ›educational knowledge‹ (›Bildungswissen‹)—is programmatically formulated, fixed by curricula, and communicated as well as appropriated by way of specific practices.² The following contribution starts out from the historical finding that by the end of the 18th and in the early 19th centuries the educational system was subject to processes of fundamental change which shaped the organisation of school as well as the profession in a way which is typical for modern society. Although reforms were also initiated at the level of lower schooling and the neo-humanist concept of general education (›Allgemeinbildung‹) showed some egalitarian features, it was the grammar school, which decided about access to university and was the decisive arena of the transformation and expansion of the educational system. Higher educational

1 Knorr Cetina, Karin (2002): *Wissenskulturen. Ein Vergleich naturwissenschaftlicher Wissensformen*, Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, p. 11.

2 The German term ›Bildung‹ has a broad meaning in the German-speaking tradition, only approximated by the English term ›education‹. It refers not merely to training or instruction but to a transformative process of personality shaped through self-activity. For this reason, in the following the term ›educational knowledge‹ (›Bildungswissen‹) is used.

careers, among which then there also counted university studies, frequently led towards the civil service, however also among the clergy, in literature, and in publicism the scholars met as a group most of all after 1800, which in a way epitomised the increased significance of ›Bildung‹.³ They were the first to make visible this new function of education, of no longer being a ›derived feature of status or some private particularity but a relevant criterion for a social position connected to claims to power‹. For them the slogan was true: ›Man creates his social status by way of his Bildung‹.⁴ Fritz Ringer in his monograph on the scholars points out to a passage in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, where the personality ideal clearly reveals itself. Confronted with the wordly nobleman, the bourgeois protagonist does feel inferiority and the pressure to prove his worth, but most of all he is characterised by his ›deep longing for fully developing his personality‹.⁵ In Goethe's novel, the path of self-development by way of education takes the young man to the theatre and not to university. However, after a period of crisis during the transformation phase at around 1800 also and precisely the university developed a new knowledge culture which was to most closely combine with the idea of Bildung. In the following contribution this shall be outlined and, more specifically, the question shall be asked in which ways knowledge occurred as ›educational knowledge‹ (›Bildungswissen‹) in this context. Apart from the reform papers on the occasion of newly founding the University of Berlin, also descriptions of new seminar practices at around 1800 as well as the methodological literature of the time, which was supposed to pave the way of future students to university studies by viewing at the ideal and the reality of university and to make them familiar with academic teaching formats and manners, shall be taken into consideration.

2. The crisis and restructuring of German universities by the end of the 18th century

For Friedrich Paulsen, this early authority of the German research of the history of educational science, still at the beginning of the 20th century it was a fact that the changes which had happened at German universities since the age of Enlightenment meant the transition to their modern constellation. By moving away from ancient

3 Ringer, Fritz K. (1983): *Die Gelehrten. Der Niedergang der deutschen Mandarine 1890–1933*, Stuttgart: Ernst Klett, pp. 24–25.

4 Jeismann, Karl-Ernst (1987): ›Einleitung. Zur Bedeutung der ›Bildung‹ im 19. Jahrhundert‹, in: id./Peter Lundgreen (eds.): *Handbuch der deutschen Bildungsgeschichte*. Vol. III: 1800–1870. Von der Neuordnung Deutschlands bis zur Gründung des Deutschen Reiches. München: C. H. Beck, pp. 1–21, here p. 2.

5 Ringer: *Die Gelehrten*, p. 27.

scholasticism with its dogmas and petrified forms, by shifting the weight of the faculties, as a consequence of which theology lost its uncontested position towards the faculties of law and philosophy, by the German language being introduced as a »living and invigorating language« of instruction, and by the systematically structured lecture pushing through, not least also by the development of university seminars, he identified the constituting factors for the principle of free research and teaching which first and foremost characterised the university of his time.⁶ Today one is more careful when it comes to the nature of the 18th century as a turning point, and in view of university history one describes longer preliminary stages and lines of continuity. That many new developments connected to the idea of Enlightenment became apparent even since the Thirty Years War is emphasized e.g. in *Handbuch der deutschen Bildungsgeschichte* (*Handbook on the German History of Education*).⁷ As a matter of fact, as early as at the threshold to the Modern Age there started the trend towards the differentiation and dynamization of knowledge production and circulation which lasts still today. For example, even the Lutheran Reformation had marked the end of the previous static knowledge culture which had exclusively counted on passing on the tradition, and earlier as assumed by Paulsen we observe the beginnings of the restructuring of the university's teaching and research infrastructures as well as a differentiation of new knowledge fields at university (e.g. in the natural sciences or the technological fields of knowledge). Nevertheless, it cannot be overlooked that despite such already perceivable shifts many academic contemporaries considered the university to be stuck in traditional structures and strictly keeping up its function of communicating fixed and safe knowledge stocks. Under the influence of the Enlightened spirit of the times, one hoped for change to be initiated rather by other institutions. More than a few critics of the university favoured the training of experts at special schools which promised to spread useful insights from many fields of knowledge more effectively. New research practices were rather expected from the academies, whereas the university was downgraded as a dinosaur burdened with tradition. However, insofar as the Enlightenment generally strengthened educational institutions, also the universities benefitted, and notwithstanding widely spread criticism finally even they had come under the influence of Enlightened reform intentions. In the 18th century two prominent new foundations, Göttingen and Halle, were considered strongholds of the philosophy of Enlightenment, and at Königsberg—otherwise a rather modest university—the famous philosopher

6 Paulsen, Friedrich (1902): *Die deutschen Universitäten und das Universitätsstudium*, Berlin: Verlag von A. Asher & Co., pp. 52–60.

7 Hammerstein, Notker (2005): »Universitäten«, in: Notker Hammerstein/Ulrich Herrmann (eds.): *Handbuch der deutschen Bildungsgeschichte*. Vol. II: 18. Jahrhundert. Vom späten 17. Jahrhundert bis zur Neuordnung Deutschlands um 1800, München: C.H. Beck, pp. 369–400.

Immanuel Kant was teaching. This way the universities survived the crisis which recently, during the occupation of wide parts of Germany by Napoleon's troops, had caused a real extinction of universities. At the same time the neo-humanist reform activities became stronger. Most of all the planning and refoundation of the University of Berlin, realised in 1800, allows for studying an ambited reflection on the future of the university. The scientific ideal, formulated in the founding papers, carried with it new ideas of what should characterise scientific knowledge, however also of how it was to be created, appropriated and communicated.

3. Concepts of a new knowledge culture in the context of the Prussian university reform

Ideas of knowledge and science moving away from the model of knowledge being fixed and legitimated and stored by canonical texts had spread at European universities since the early Modern Age. Since the 18th century the search for knowledge and insight started to become the criterion, an aspiration which reinterpreted the proverbial ›academic freedom‹ and demanded a critical control of establishing knowledge.⁸ In the natural scientific disciplines these standards—early on initiated by Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679)—were established by practices of observation and the collection of data, in the humanities it was flexible methods of text criticism and new practices of interpreting and reading which indicated a shift. The relation of teaching and learning at university changed from an authoritarian way of communicating to cooperative ways for which there developed new institutional frames. The academic concept of knowledge was particularly accentuated under neo-humanist auspices. In their memoranda the reformers from the planning environment of refounding the University of Berlin criticised established university teaching formats, and for formulating a modern ideal of science they referred to new, participative and activating knowledge practices.

The reform concepts had the insight in common that in particular the lecture in its traditional form did no longer meet the requirements. The format of the lecture should either be transformed into other forms, or it should change markedly. For Johann Gottlieb Fichte the availability of books made the lecture lose its original purpose, that is the communication of knowledge. In his *Plan einer zu Berlin zu errichtenden höhern Lehranstalt* (*Plan for an institution of higher education to be established in Berlin*), written in 1807, he criticises professors who in their lectures just duplicate what is written in the books. Repetition, he says, is no activity in its own right but is the opposite of what universities are about and of what students are supposed to

8 See Rüegg, Walter (ed.): *Geschichte der Universität in Europa*. Vol. III: Vom 19. Jahrhundert zum Zweiten Weltkrieg 1800–1945, München: C. H. Beck, 2004, pp. 18–35.

learn there: »the art of making use of knowledge«. The university must become »a school of the art of making scientific use of reason«.⁹ While being aware of this kind of activity and while keeping its rules the elaborate use of knowledge, he says, can become habitual, in a way, and become »a unique element of our personalities, and our lives, which are to be developed freely and at will«.¹⁰

Also Wilhelm von Humboldt opposed the scholastic way of teaching which at his time was still common at universities, and sneeringly he joined the critics of the lecture format.¹¹ His essay *Über die innere und äußere Organisation der höheren wissenschaftlichen Anstalten in Berlin* (*On the inner and outer organisation of the higher scientific institutions in Berlin*) of 1810, published as late as in 1896 and 1900, contains condensed ideas of general educational teaching at university and thus counts among the most famous founding documents of the modern research university.¹² Humboldt's formula of »solitude and freedom« as the ideal of university activity was an open confrontation with a kind of science fixing and passing on knowledge by closed systems. It was supposed to be replaced by a kind of university which treats science »always as a still not really solved problem« and was supposed to make both teachers and students »cooperate in always reviving yet casual and purposeless ways«.¹³ By way of its inner organisation the university was supposed to stimulate and maintain permanent research and to make it an ›educational‹ institution (›Bildungsinstitution‹) in a double sense. On the one hand, it is an institution organising knowledge in different ways, that is more dynamically than it is the case with scholasticism or at school, where only fixed knowledge is taught and passed on. On the other hand, the demand to understand science as an uncommitted and unconstrained process of searching for and newly creating knowledge which never comes to an end is immediately connected to a way of developing personality which is typical for Humboldt's idea of education. The nature of a university obliged to science »is thus connecting [...] objective science with subjective education«.¹⁴

9 Fichte, Johann Gottlieb (1817): *Deducirter Plan einer zu Berlin zu errichtenden höhern Lehranstalt*. Geschrieben im Jahre 1807. Stuttgart [Stuttgart]/Tübingen: Cotta'sche Buchhandlung, p. 10. Online: <https://mdz-nbn-resolving.org/details:bsb10732168> (last access: 14.11.2025).

10 Ibid., p. 9.

11 See Menze, Clemens (1975): *Die Bildungsreform Wilhelm von Humboldts*. Hannover, Dortmund, Darmstadt, Berlin: Hermann Schroedel Verlag KG, pp. 280–282.

12 Humboldt, Wilhelm von (1810/1969): »Über die innere und äußere Organisation der höheren wissenschaftlichen Anstalten in Berlin«, in Andreas Flitner/Klaus Giel (eds.): *Werke in fünf Bänden*. Vol. IV: *Schriften zur Politik und zum Bildungswesen*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, pp. 255–266.

13 Ibid., p. 256.

14 Ibid., p. 255.

For this, the lecture was not sufficient. Rather—as again Fichte describes—university teaching must take on the »shape of a dialogue«. It is, he said, »mutual information of and by everybody and the melting together of the individuals to one learning organic whole as it can precisely develop only out of these learning individuals.«¹⁵ In terms of method, Fichte's ideas result in demands for variety: apart from delivering subject matter by way of lectures and books, he suggests exams where not only knowledge is requested but its skilful use is demonstrated. He suggests both *konservatoria* (conversations), »in the course of which the disciple asks questions and the teacher asks back about the question, which way there develops an expressive dialogue of the Socratic kind«,¹⁶ and written elaborations on certain tasks. In Fichte, at last the continuous exercise of making use of reason does not only concern the students. He also demands the establishment of a »Professor Seminarium (seminar of the Professors)«. ¹⁷ Friedrich Schleiermacher, on the other hand, does not go as far as to replace the lecture by conversations, as Fichte does. Also, he has an interest in the scientific attitude which must be exercised, however it must be based on an example, that is the skilful lecture by a professor, he says. To give reasons he explains: »Our education is much more individual than the old one, thus the conversation is at once by far more personal, so that no individual could be named as a conversation partner speaking in the name of all others and the conversation would become a form which is only confusing and annoying«. ¹⁸ Thus, particularly the kind of education which aims at individual characteristics and is thus individualising as well as the specialisation of knowledge Schleiermacher perceived indeed required centring and focussing. Accordingly, the communication of knowledge, he said, requires a representative, »the desk lecture at university« shall, by way of a kind of Socratic teaching conversation, »only create awareness of ideas«. ¹⁹ However, also Schleiermacher emphasizes that everything inflexible and schematic shall disappear from the lecture and that the professor must both incorporate and create a scientific attitude. The teacher must make everything he says develop in front of his listeners, he cannot just tell what he knows but must »reproduce« his own insight, »the act itself, so that they [the students; J.S.] constantly not only collect information but im-

15 Fichte: Deducirter Plan, p. 28.

16 Ibid., p. 15.

17 Ibid., p. 13.

18 Schleiermacher, Friedrich Daniel Ernst (1808/1998): »Gelegentliche Gedanken über Universitäten in deutschem Sinn. Nebst einem Anhang über eine neu zu errichtende«, in: Dirk Schmid (ed.): Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Erste Abteilung. Schriften und Entwürfe, Vol. 6: Universitätsschriften. Herakleitos. Kurze Darstellung des theologischen Studiums, Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, pp. 15–100, here p. 48.

19 Ibid., p. 48

mediately watch the activity of reason while creating insight and recreate it while watching». ²⁰

The structural considerations of the Prussian educational reformers have been extensively reconstructed and critically discussed by historical research. In this context, the tensed relationship between the drafts and the subsequent organisation of the German university in the 19th and 20th centuries has been pointed out to, and it has been demonstrated that e.g. referring to Humboldt was often rather a quotation than the normative guideline for the actual development. »The ideal Humboldtian university was never congruent with the actual German university of the 19th century«, as Rüdiger von Bruch takes stock. ²¹ The plausibility of the historical findings on the »Humboldt myth« (Ash) must instead be confronted with the fact that around 1800 the changed relation to knowledge did not only consist of ideal drafts but also of new ways of dealing actively and dynamically with academic practices, which shall be viewed at in more detail in the following.

4. Infrastructures of knowledge: the seminar and the practices of studying

The knowledge order pushing through at around 1800 was not limited to a new conception of the university and a new concept of knowledge and science but can be read from formats of university teaching and studying themselves. Thorsten Pohl even supports the thesis that the modern understanding of university teaching as developed in the memoranda lagged behind the contemporary practice which, by the seminar as a format, had already partly been implemented, ²² as will have to be demonstrated. However, historical praxeology offers even earlier indications for tracking constituting factors of more dynamic ways of making use of knowledge, for even the spread of the book as a teaching aid from the distance had, in the Early Modern Age, contributed to accelerating the communication among students and their teachers and to replacing the old culture of being present at university which was tied to reading manuscripts aloud. ²³ The increased production of paper coming

²⁰ Ibid., p. 49.

²¹ Bruch, Rüdiger vom (1999): »Langsamer Abschied von Humboldt? Etappen deutscher Universitätsgeschichte 1810–1945«, in: Mitchell G. Ash (ed.): *Mythos Humboldt. Vergangenheit und Zukunft der deutschen Universitäten*, Wien/Köln/Weimar, pp. 29–57, here p. 38.

²² Pohl, Thorsten (2013): »Die Seminararbeit. Eine Skizze ihrer institutionellen Rahmenbedingungen im 19. und beginnenden 20. Jahrhundert«, in: *Zeitschrift für Germanistik*, 2, pp. 293–310, here pp. 300–301.

²³ See Ricken, Norbert/Reh, Sabine/Scholz, Joachim (2023): »Transformationen des Bildungswissens. Eine wissenstheoretische und -geschichtliche Perspektive auf digitale Wissenskulturen«, in: Sandra Aßmann/Norbert Ricken (eds.): *Bildung und Digitalität. Analysen – Dis-*

along with the book is yet another example. Also, this made the autonomous-productive appropriation of knowledge easier: »The unprecedented availability of paper allowed students to produce a large number of documents and contents of them were a mirror of their study experience with notes of various kinds. Single words, phrases, quotations of various lengths, lecture notes, transcripts of works or parts of works on study subjects, or simply things of interest to the author«. ²⁴ And not least the expansion of the production of written material came along with changed reading practices. The Göttingen philologist Johann Matthias Gesner (1691–1761) successfully propagated a new way of cursory reading in the course of which reading was oriented at grasping the text as a whole, and the reader's attention was supposed to be directed on the overall context instead of individual phenomena. Gesner's disciple again, the classical scholar Friedrich August Wolf (1759–1824), took up these ideas in the preface to his first work, *Prolegomena ad Homerum* (1795), and introduced new ways of practicing university studies for his philological seminar founded at Halle in 1787. ²⁵ Wolf had his students interpret the classical works in a way as to practice a tactful, appropriate application of philological knowledge by way of intensive conversation among each other and with their teacher. Doing so, the reference to interpretation rules was rather loose, the way of dealing with each other was rather collegial. ²⁶ According to Lutz Danneberg in view of the history of his discipline, German studies, »abilities, skills and methods of one's own way of working were developed and scientific norms, but most of all philological tactfulness, were in a way habitually internalized.« ²⁷ Seminars such as Wolf's or his disciple August Boeckh's (1785–1867)

kurse – Perspektiven, Wiesbaden: Springer VS, pp. 313–347, p. 328. Online: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-30766-0_12.

- 24 Lepri, Valentina (2023): »Note-Taking with Method. Remarks on the Theories of Knowledge in Early Modern *De ratione studii* Manuals«, in: id. (ed.): knowledge shaping. Student note-taking practices in early modernity, Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, pp. 9–28, here p. 9–11. Online: <https://doi.org/10.1515/978311072722-002>.
- 25 At that time he as well as the Berlin educationalist Friedrich Gedike had been tasked by the Prussian Minister of the Interior, von Zedlitz, with the founding of two institutions of teacher training. In this context Wolf is considered to have been the one who, by way of his programme aiming at the studying of ancient languages, established philology as the »professional science« of grammar school teachers.
- 26 Apart from interpretation and the writing of essays, Spoerhase and Dehrmann also count Wolf's personal conversations and walks with his students among these new practices. Wolf did not like to be paid for them: »The relations between professor and students at the seminar were collegial, not mercantile« (Spoerhase, Carlos/Dehrmann Mark-Georg (2011): »Die Idee der Universität. Friedrich August Wolf und die Praxis des Seminars«, in: *Zeitschrift für Ideengeschichte* 5:1, pp. 105–117, here p. 109).
- 27 Danneberg, Lutz (2013): »Altphilologie, Theologie und die Genealogie der Literaturwissenschaft«, in: Thomas Anz (ed.): *Handbuch Literaturwissenschaft*. Vol. 3: Institutionen und Praxisfelder, Weimar: Verlag J. B. Metzler, pp. 3–25, here p. 20.

contributed to creating at universities an understanding of knowledge as a complex of intertwined proceedings and skills which build on each other and to providing it with an institutional frame. The seminar was thus considered the ›nursery‹ of scientific research.²⁸

It is no coincidence that the epistemic practice Wolf developed—a kind of understanding which is oriented at grasping the overall context and the flexible application of interpretation rules—developed in the context of teacher training. It was at the seminar where future teachers practiced how to have a tactful teaching conversation about matters.²⁹ However, even Boeckh's seminar dissolved from the primacy of teacher training. It completely lacked educational instruction, its goal was exclusively the focus on the practicing of philological science. Sources from the seminar work show that apart from discussing and interpreting—e.g. during simulated teaching situations for future teachers—writing by students was highly appreciated. Via being asked to write down essays on tasks set by the teachers or by the student's themselves there established a student writing culture which was different from the records of lectures in notebooks by an even higher degree of autonomy, served for proving and examining one's own skills and, by its function of »confirming knowledge and representing it to the outside«,³⁰ gradually transferred the ancient format of the disputation into the written form. There is also evidence that the drafts by students served as preliminary works for dissertation theses and this way were in line with the universities' new target definition of extending the existing knowledge stock. The dissertation thesis as a format which, since the second half of the 18th century, combines examination and exercise, developed its current form and function at seminars.³¹

Initially, however, there can be no question of a new knowledge culture pushing through at German universities: in the first half of the 19th century seminars were to be found at less than a few university locations.³² The lecture remained the pre-

28 Pohl, Thorsten (2009): Die studentische Hausarbeit. Rekonstruktion ihrer ideen- und institutionsgeschichtlichen Entstehung. Heidelberg: Synchron, Wiss.-Verl. der Autoren, p. 35.

29 Reh, Sabine/Scholz, Joachim (2021) »Seminars. A Hybrid Form of Education (18th-19th Centuries)«, in: Monica Ferrari/Matteo Morandi/Rita Casale/Jeanette Windheuser (eds.): La formazione degli insegnanti della secondaria in Italia e in Germania. Una questione culturale, Milano: FrancoAngeli, pp. 189–202.

30 Seifert, Sabine (2021): Die Ursprünge der Berliner Forschungsuniversität. August Boeckhs philologisches Seminar in Konzeption und Praxis (1812–1826), Berlin: Berliner Wissenschaftsverlag, p. 328.

31 See Behrs, Jan/Klausnitzer, Ralf/Gittel, Benjamin (2013): Wissenstransfer. Konditionen, Praktiken, Verlaufsformen der Weitergabe von Erkenntnis, Frankfurt a.M./Bern/Wien: Peter Lang, pp. 230–231.

32 Seminars started booming only as late as in the 1870s. On their spread see Pohl: Die studentische Hausarbeit, pp. 35–37 and Pohl: Die Seminararbeit, pp. 305–306.

dominant way of instructing, and if additionally we consider the characteristics of the student culture, as Marian Füssel has recently done based on everyday sources, it becomes obvious that at many places university studies were a dull business between »everyday life of studying and excess«.³³

5. Hodegetic works

The mediation of the ideal and the actual situation was the purpose of the hodegetic works which were published in large numbers in the 18th and 19th centuries. This genre which, due to the increasing spread of literary productions, grew out of the necessity of bibliographic instruction, was essentially stimulated by the encyclopaedic conviction of the inner coherence of the sciences. The authors of this contemporary literature for those starting university studies—in most cases experienced, older university teachers—attempted to spread an Enlightened academic ethos.³⁴ Thus they warn against immorality of which, not without reason, studying at university had a reputation, just like confronting the novice with images of exemplary practice. Thus, university knowledge cultures and their change find expression by hodegetics, although in different ways—rather in view of practice than of theory—which in the following shall be demonstrated by the example of three titles.

The first one is the work *Über das akademische Studium und akademische Leben. Ein Lehrbuch für Jünglinge, so auf Universitäten gehen wollen und bereits daselbst sind* (On Academic Studies and Academic Life. A Textbook for Younglings as Wanting to Attend Universi-

33 See Füssel, Marian (2016): »Studentenkultur in der Frühen Neuzeit. Praktiken – Lebensstile – Konflikte«, in: Andreas Speer/Andreas Berger (eds.): Wissenschaft mit Zukunft. Die »alte« Kölner Universität im Kontext der europäischen Universitätsgeschichte, Köln/Weimar/Wien: Böhlau, pp. 173–204. Lectures and exercises frequently happened at the private homes of the professors, other activities such as the sorting of records or reading happened mostly at home. Flats shared by students were crowded, the student culture at home, in the street, and at the pub was connected to consuming alcohol, honour disputes resulting in duels, however also to prostitution as well as to minor and major offences. Yet still, Füssel identifies indications of a gradual change of the student culture, which found expression by changed habits of reading, writing, and listening, however also by other new practices such as changing the place of studying (see Füssel: Studentenkultur, p. 174). Hardtwig, Wolfgang (1985): »Krise der Universität, studentische Reformbewegung (1750–1819) und die Sozialisation der jugendlichen deutschen Bildungsschicht. Aufriß eines Forschungsproblems«, in: Geschichte und Gesellschaft 2, pp. 155–176.

34 Olbertz, Jan-Hendrik (1994): »Hodegetik. Hallesche Wurzeln einer universitätspädagogischen Denktradition im Licht der akademischen Freiheit«, in: Günter Jerouschek/Arno Sammes (eds.): Aufklärung und Erneuerung. Beiträge zur Geschichte der Universität Halle im ersten Jahrhundert ihres Bestehens (1694–1806). Zur Dreihundertjahrfeier, Hanau: Dausien, pp. 234–244, here p. 235.

ties and Are already there) by Christoph König (1754–1812). For a university professor of the 18th century like the jurispudent König the ideal of university studies consisted of emulating the ancient scholars and following their traditions. By extensive allegories he enters into a discussion of all the traps of university existence. If we read this hodegetics as a list of virtues, then the student seems to be obliged most of all to assess, prior to attending university, his own suitability for studies and to find out if he could count himself among those who could be recommended at all to be granted access to university. Only if, as favourable preconditions, quick-wittedness, a good memory, and also a degree of financial backing come together, König recommends university studies. This requires scrupulous self-awareness, which is why hodegetics communicate primarily knowledge of the various minds and the capabilities attributed to each of them. Introspection and self-selection *before* entering the world of the sciences are demanded and later become a »sensus commune«, ³⁵ a sense of the whole which indeed often cannot be investigated by way of special examinations and in situations of proving one's worth. Also, the second work from the end of the 18th century to be mentioned here grants much space to assessing one's own capability for studies before starting them. Moreover, the literary historian and philologist Erduin Julius Koch (1764–1834) in his *Hodegetik für das Universitätsstudium in allen Facultäten* (*Hodegetics for University Studies at all Faculties*) (1792) bases the self-awareness he demands on a taxonomy of fixed types. Both in the former and the latter the primary task is gaining knowledge of oneself. What is interesting with both hodegetics is that first of all they address a bourgeois clientele aspiring business careers and attending university for this purpose. Koch does without a section »supposed to deal with the education (Bildung) of man«, although nominally he emphasizes its significance. But given the addressees he decides: »Such general reasoning about what is supposed to happen is listened to and forgotten, because it does not enter the heart which is receptive only for the particular«. ³⁶

A third, quite well-known hodegetic work to be introduced here, by philosopher Johann Gottfried Kiesewetter (1766–1819), was published in 1811. Compared to the works from 20 resp. 30 years before, now a qualitative difference becomes obvious. At first Kiesewetter explains what university studies mean (»making efforts concerning a matter, dealing diligently with it«³⁷) and that it is the purpose of scholarly schools to communicate scientific knowledge. He does not bother much with the

35 König, Johann Christoph (1781): Ueber das akademische Studium und akademische Leben. Ein Lehrbuch für Jünglinge, so auf Universitäten gehen wollen und bereits daselbst sin, Nürnberg: Ernst Christoph Grattenauer, p. XIV.

36 Koch, Erduin Julius (1792): *Hodegetik für das Universitäts-Studium in allen Facultäten*, Berlin: Franckesche Buchhandlung, p. XI.

37 Kiesewetter, Johann Gottfried Karl Christian (1811): *Lehrbuch der Hodegetik oder kurze Anweisung zum Studiren*, Berlin: G. C. Nauck, p. 1.

question of who should study. Indeed, certain basic requirements are necessary, »a sane, experienced mind, a productive imagination which is not lazy, and a good, reliable memory«,³⁸ however soon it becomes clear that in the course of studying these qualities may even be further extended and increased. Who studies, cultivates the use of reason and acquires a »higher degree of civilisation«. ³⁹ What makes Kiesewetter's hodegetics special is the wealth of systematically organised, practically implementable rules for correct studying which hardly leave anything out. His suggestions for the »perfection of reasoning power«, ⁴⁰ for example, include very concrete knowledge practices of studying: How must the lecture be attended? How must attending be prepared, what must be considered while listening, for the follow-up, for taking notes? What belongs to purposeful reading, and which rules should be kept while reading? Again and again Kiesewetter comes back to »increasing and perfecting insight by way of thinking for oneself«⁴¹ being of utmost significance. He lectures about ideas being organised by intuition and thoughts, to the last detail he explains procedures to understand meaning, or he recommends contemplation exercises to control autonomous thinking. The purpose is the capability of learning how to study, of self-research and »training the mind«, to once be able to »oneself extend the field of this science«. ⁴² Also when it comes to the value of writing, Kiesewetter speaks out in favour of a culture of »educational knowledge« (»Bildungswissen«) we have already encountered by the ways of learning at the seminar: »Among the eminent matters of a student's private diligence there counts practicing the written essay. [...] Here we just consider the usefulness of these exercises in view of the perfection of insight and of training the power of cognition. They make us consider the subject we are going to write about from different sides and with much attention and thus train the capability of observation and reflection, they make us used to thought moving on quietly and make the structuring of thoughts easy, they train phrasing and help to a better oral presentation, they make us feel the existing faultiness of insight and drive us to remedy it, it is them by way of which we brand matters deeper on the memory etc.«. ⁴³

38 Ibid., p. 14.

39 Ibid., p. 40

40 Ibid., pp. 15–16.

41 Ibid., pp. 224–257.

42 Ibid., p. 240. In the quoted passages Kiesewetter praises the studying of mathematics.

43 Ibid., pp. 251–252.

6. Conclusion

The reformation of the university at the threshold between the 18th and the 19th century, which then found expression by establishing the exemplary model of the University of Berlin, is still discussed in the historiography on universities, however these days it is no longer considered a turning point and connected to clear attributions. Before and parallel to the history told by the emphatic founding papers and parallel to the structural parameters which then, in the course of the 19th century, made the German universities expand unprecedentedly, cultural history and the history of practices also create insights concerning the long run-up to and the complex structure of the preconditions for the new university knowledge order. For example, the culture of studying, which has been discussed in somewhat more detail in this contribution, may partly be traced back as far as to the socially privileged status of the university and to the liberties granted to its students since the Middle Ages.⁴⁴ Despite such long-term observations, the decades around the year 1800 may still be considered a transformation period of particular significance, in the course of which the university knowledge structure is reshaped and starts a constellation which is typical for the Modernity and its understanding of education. The here considered sources provide evidence that in those days, almost at the same time and to the same degree, a new concept of knowledge started having effect, based on new ideas and practices. If the literature on the history of knowledge emphasizes that since the 18th century a new concept of knowledge produced the effect of combining growing and differentiating knowledge stocks by way of epistemic procedures, thus making knowledge transferable and applicable,⁴⁵ at first the aspect of the personal appropriation of this knowledge in the sense of an individual education experience must be noticed. Knowing is more than just appropriating information for the purpose of its application. The ways in which students at university are supposed to be made familiar with scientific knowledge on the one hand makes obvious the intention to refer knowledge and insight to the shaping of one's own personality, to incorporate it and make it reflective in the form of »awareness of the ways of learning.«⁴⁶ The here outlined historical change, however, concerns even knowledge itself and,

44 Not only in the 18th century the relative freedom of the university and its members was the cause of observation by the non-university outside world and resulted in conflicts. Given the frequently perceived exaggerations and excesses which characterised most of all the students' everyday lives, the university had a reputation of living »a culture of deviance in the context of which studies became secondary« (Füssel: *Studentenkultur*, p. 202).

45 Behrs et al.: *Wissenstransfer*, p. 217.

46 Fichte: *Deducirter Plan*, p. 10. And he goes on: »One knows thoroughly and unforgettably only that of which one knows how one got it. Then, [at university; J.S.] not just that is learned and practiced what is given first of all, the capability is developed to learn everything else easily and safely in all eternity and as one likes it; and there develop artists of learning« (ibid.).

from this perspective, means more and different things than just its individual tailoring and the contribution of knowledge to personal development. If from this perspective we look at the seminar practice, most of all the *changed relation to knowledge* moves to the fore which is supposed to be established and cultivated at university. By the hodegetics which, in a way in virtualised forms, transport the understanding of university studies, by the formats of university events such as the discussion during the seminar, the reorganised lecture as Schleiermacher had it on his mind, or in the course of Fichte's walks with students, the exchange, change, correction, and the recreation of knowledge is of significance. After all, these ways of dealing dynamically and reflectively with knowledge devote knowledge to appropriation and consequent dedication, they provide the university with a particular nature for which the term ›educational knowledge‹ is adequate.

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