Editorial

Applying "Knowledge Circulation" in Historical Research

The history of knowledge pays increasing attention to questions of "how, when, and, if necessary, why a certain knowledge emerges – and disappears again", and further to what effects it has, in which contexts it functions, and who its stakeholders are.[1] Over the past decade, it has developed into a dynamic field, producing fruitful concepts that now need to be empirically reassessed. One of the key concepts within the field is the much discussed "knowledge circulation". It implies that knowledge is not simply spread linearly from A to B, remaining unchanged. Rather, it suggests a multidirectional process in which knowledge is produced, mobilised, and always transformed. Understanding knowledge as the product of a circulation process allows for an analytical shift towards the process of knowledge production itself. This process, which takes place in concrete spaces and contexts, involves a variety of actors, practices, techniques, and means, which have proved to be valuable objects of examination in advancing our understanding of knowledge in motion. The analytical focus on the sites, actors, and conditions of knowledge production necessarily requires close attention to the inherent power relations shaping the circulation process.[2] "Knowledge circulation" as a concept, therefore, offers promising avenues for addressing the research question mentioned above and for defining the history of knowledge.

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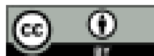

Lisa Hoppel, Institut für Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte, Universität Wien, Universitätsring 1, 1010 Wien, lisa.hoppel@univie.ac.at

Florence Klauda, Institut für Historische Sozialforschung, Arbeiterkammer Wien, Prinz-Eugen-Straße 20–22, 1040 Wien, Florence.Klauda@akwien.at

Nora Lehner, Institut für Wirtschafts- und Sozialgeschichte, Universität Wien, Universitätsring 1, 1010 Wien, nora.lehner@univie.ac.at

1 Philipp Sarasin, Was ist Wissensgeschichte, in: Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur 36/1 (2011), 159–172, 165, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1515/iasl.2011.010.

2 Johan Östling/David Larsson Heidenblad/Erling Sandmo/Anna Nilsson Hammar/Kari Nordberg, The History of Knowledge and the Circulation of Knowledge. An Introduction, in: eid. (eds.), Circulation of Knowledge: Explorations in the History of Knowledge, Lund 2018, 9–33, 21f.

This special issue of the *Austrian Journal for Historical Studies* (OeZG) brings together contributions from the *15th Annual Graduate Conference in European History* (GRACEH), which took place at the University of Vienna in 2021. The articles present different ways of applying "knowledge circulation" in historical scholarship, covering various epochs, spaces, and contexts. This allows for a focus on conceptual commonalities in applying "knowledge circulation" to analyse the process of knowledge production, transmission, and transformation while incorporating a variety of definitions and methodological approaches. The authors address the constitutive questions of how and by what means knowledge is moved and transformed; which actors are involved in these processes and who remains excluded from them; how media and media practices contribute to the mediation, stabilisation, and recognition of specific knowledge; and what role asymmetrical power relations and hierarchies play in negotiation processes over legitimacy and truth claims. In doing so, this volume further illustrates the possibilities of uncovering hegemonic practices of representation and recognition, as well as strategies of empowerment and agency, by conceiving knowledge production as an interactive process and communicative practice.

Historiography

In recent years, the history of knowledge has sparked much debate. Understood as a research field in its own right, attributed with novelty and innovation, its advocates describe it as "a form of social and cultural history that takes 'knowledge' as a phenomenon that touches upon almost every sphere of human life"[3]. In this respect, knowledge should function as a "lens" to revisit historical findings.[4]

New research institutions, networks, and publications continue to open up promising lines of inquiry. The establishment of research centres such as the *Max Planck Institute for the History of Science* in Berlin in 2000, the *History of Knowledge Center* (*Zentrum Geschichte des Wissens*) in Zurich in 2005, and the *Lund Centre for the History of Knowledge* (LUCK) in 2020 has led to the rapid and innovative development of the field and increasingly enabled exchange across disciplines.

However, the history of knowledge builds on a long tradition of scholarship from various disciplines. Even before it emerged as a historical field in the 21st century,

3 Simone Lässig, The History of Knowledge and the Expansion of the Historical Research Agenda, in: Bulletin of the German Historical Institute 59 (2016), 29–58, 44.

4 Johann Östling/David Larsson Heidenblad/Anna Nilsson Hammar, Developing the History of Knowledge, in: eid. (eds.), Forms of Knowledge. Developing the History of Knowledge, Lund 2020, 9–26, 14; Simone Lässig, History of Knowledge, (2016), 44.

many historical sub-disciplines and their leading figures have studied and analysed knowledge, knowledge systems, and the role of knowledge in society.[5] In this regard, the novelty of the field has been repeatedly questioned by prominent historians in related fields, who have pointed out pioneering works from their own disciplines and research practices. In particular, the relationship between the history of science and the history of knowledge has been heatedly debated by representatives of both research strands.[6] Representatives of the latter, such as Sven Dupré and Geert Somsen, devoted the first issue of the *Journal of the History of Knowledge* to this very question, concluding that the history of knowledge is more than "a mere expansion of the history of science".[7]

What the history of knowledge actually entails remains a much-contested topic. Of particular note in this regard is Philip Sarasin's "Was ist Wissensgeschichte" (2011), which has been described as one of the field's programmatic "manifestos".[8] Understanding knowledge as an inherently historical phenomenon,[9] and as more than just a product of scientific activities,[10] offers new analytical avenues. It allows us to examine the inner structures and workings of truth claims, the transformative processes of exchanging and moving knowledge, or the practices and instruments of knowledge production. With the aim of studying the societal production and circulation of knowledge,[11] these dimensions constitute the three "pillars" of the history of knowledge, as recently summarised by Sarasin himself: "(a) orders of knowledge, (b) circulation and non-originality and (c) materiality and mediality".[12] New research in the field builds on these foundational considerations, increasingly focusing on practical, social, and tacit knowledge[13] and everyday

5 For a comprehensive overview of both the historical disciplines that are considered the forerunners of the history of knowledge and the diverse historians and sociologists who pioneered the field see Östling/Larsson Heidenblad/Sandmo/Nilsson Hammar/Nordberg, History of Knowledge, 2018, 10f., as well as Sven Dupré/Geert Somsen, Forum. What is the History of Knowledge?, in: Journal for the History of Knowledge 1/1 (2020), 1–2, 1.

6 See for instance the critical stand by historian of science Lorraine Daston: Lorraine Daston, The History of Science and the History of Knowledge, in: Know 1/1 (2017), 131–154.

7 Dupré/Somsen, Forum, (2020), 1.

8 Östling/Larsson Heidenblad/Sandmo/Nilsson Hammar/Nordberg, History of Knowledge, 2018, 12.

9 Sarasin, Wissensgeschichte, (2011), 165. For another pioneering contribution to the field pushing the conceptualisation "knowledge circulation" see James A. Secord, Knowledge in Transit, in: Isis 95/4 (2004), 654–672, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1086/430657.

10 Simone Lässig, History of Knowledge, (2016), 44.

11 Sarasin, Wissensgeschichte, (2011), 164.

12 Philipp Sarasin, More Than Just Another Specialty. On the Prospects for the History of Knowledge, in: Journal for the History of Knowledge 1/1 (2020), 1–5, 3, DOI: https://doi.org/10.5334/jhk.25.

13 Simone Lässig, History of Knowledge, (2016), 37.

practices[14] when asking "how knowledge has been used, routinized, lived, and experienced".[15]

As a result, the history of knowledge has often been criticised for being too broad, too vague, or too poorly conceptualised.[16] However, if we understand it not as a field which needs to be defined, but rather as an innovative approach, various *histories* of knowledge open up. These allow for multiple and diverse research inquiries.[17] Well aware of the potential problems that loose definitions and methodological plurality might entail, representatives of the field nevertheless stress the value of the inherent openness in bringing together many different research strands.[18]

Following recent assessments of the history of knowledge, the "circulation of knowledge" constitutes one of the main – if not the most fruitful – pillars of the field, always depending on and related to each of the other pillars.[19] Thus, as a concept, "knowledge circulation" is also concerned with heterogeneous actors, spatialities, practices, systems, as well as orders of knowledge. However, it is precisely this factor that provides the opportunity to reconceptualise established spatial, chronological, social, and cultural categories.[20]

On (not) defining "knowledge circulation"

Given that the analytical concept of "knowledge circulation" is considered to hold great potential for the history of knowledge, it has garnered a great deal of scholarly attention in the last two decades.[21] However, a precise and all-encompassing definition of both "knowledge" and "circulation" has never been the goal of this flourishing research field. Instead, there is a general agreement on the analytical benefits of dialogue between their multiple and conflicting interpretations. This has provoked critique, both within and beyond the field, of the ubiquitous use of the term "cir-

14 See for example Anna Nilsson Hammer, Theoria, Praxis, Poiesis. Theoretical Considerations on the Circulation of Knowledge in Everyday Life in: Östling/Larsson Heidenblad/Sandmo/Nilsson Hammar/Nordberg (eds.), Circulation of Knowledge, 2018, 107–124.

15 Johan Östling/David Larsson Heidenblad, Fulfilling the Promise of the History of Knowledge. Key Approaches for the 2020s, in: Journal for the History of Knowledge 1/1 (2020), 1–6, 3, DOI: https://doi.org/10.5334/jhk.24.

16 Daston, The History of Science, (2017).

17 Peter Burke, What Is the History of Knowledge?, Cambridge 2016.

18 Östling/Larsson Heidenblad, Promise, (2020), 1.

19 Sarasin, Specialty, (2020), 2.

20 Kapil Raj, Relocating Modern Science. Circulation and the Construction of Knowledge in South Asia and Europe, 1650–1900, Basingstoke/New York 2007.

21 Johan Östling, Circulation, Arenas, and the Quest for Public Knowledge. Historiographical Currents and Analytical Frameworks, in: History and Theory 59/4 (2020), 111–126, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1111/hith.12184; Östling/Larsson Heidenblad, Promise, (2020), 2.

culation". Stefanie Gänger reminds us of the pitfalls of simply replacing problematic terms such as "spread", "diffusion", and "dissemination" with new ones, without reflecting on their meaning or changing the analytical approach.[22] Additionally, "circulation" runs the risk of implying a natural movement which takes on a life of its own, thereby neglecting the experiences and motivations of the actors who make knowledge move. By emphasising movement over agency, questions such as "how this movement was achieved, who caused or wanted it"[23] are left aside. Gänger therefore calls for research focusing not only on the fact of movement alone but also on the "causes, contents, and conditions of movement".[24] With this in mind, fundamental theoretical discussions on "knowledge circulation" have constituted a well-equipped canon for conceptualising knowledge in motion, which allows for further in-depth explorations in several directions and research fields.

In 2004, James Secord famously pleaded for a shift towards understanding knowledge production as a form of communicative action, and for eradicating the distinction between making and communicating knowledge.[25] When knowledge is produced while moving between people, groups, and institutions, it is constantly evolving, changing, and realising itself anew.[26] This (often asymmetrical) process of negotiation implies "a double movement of going forth and coming back, which can be repeated indefinitely. In circulating, things, men, and notions often transform themselves".[27] Circulation is therefore seen as a constitutive feature of knowledge production processes.[28]

A dynamic and circular understanding of exchange processes allows to respond to the postcolonial call that challenges a one-dimensional perspective of simply diffusing self-contained, static, and unchangeable knowledge from one place to another (e.g. from "North" to "South").[29] With the "translational turn" in cultural sciences, scholars such as philosopher Bruno Latour, literary scholar Doris Bachmann-Medick, and historian Kapil Raj have prominently argued that knowledge is

22 Stefanie Gänger, Circulation. Reflections on Circularity, Entity, and Liquidity in the Language of Global History, in: Journal of Global History 12/3 (2017), 303–318, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/S174002281700016X.

23 Ibid., 312; see also Stuart A. Rockefeller for the discussion of the term "flow" in global history: Stuart A. Rockefeller, Flow, in: Current Anthropology 52/4 (2011), 557–578, 558–559.

24 Gänger, Circulation, (2017), 313.

25 Secord, Transit, (2004), 661.

26 Sarasin, Wissensgeschichte, (2011), 166.

27 Claude Markovits/Jacques Pouchepadass/Sanjay Subrahmanyam, Introduction: Circulation and Society under Colonial Rule, in: eid. (ed.), Society and Circulation. Mobile People and Itinerant Cultures in South Asia, 1750–1950, London 2006, 3.

28 Secord, Transit, (2004), 661.

29 Katharina Kreuder-Sonnen, Wenn man Mikroben auf die Reise schickt. Zirkulierendes bakteriologisches Wissen und die polnische Medizin 1885–1939, Tübingen 2018, 14.

always transformed when transported.[30] In line with this broader paradigm shift, James Secord and Philipp Sarasin have urged historians to move away from the assumption of originality or novelty, which would imply that knowledge emerges locally and is then transferred to wider contexts.[31] However, this does not imply ignoring local practices and conditions, but rather paying "more attention to practices of circulation on a wide variety of scales".[32] Moreover, focusing on transformations according to time and circumstances through cross-border and cross-periodical research holds the potential for identifying regularities, patterns, and shifts in the circulation process.

By regarding knowledge production as a communicative process between different actors, localities, and contexts, the question of power imbalances becomes inevitable. Kapil Raj and Lissa Roberts have applied "circulation" as a useful tool to expose different forms of power relations on a global scale, demonstrating epistemic inequalities between (colonial) centres and peripheries.[33] However, prevailing power asymmetries do not presuppose a unidirectional diffusion of knowledge from the metropole to the colony. To the contrary, taking the role of peripheral actors in knowledge production into account challenges Eurocentric narratives and reveals mutual exchange and transformative effects in both directions. The potential of "knowledge circulation" to identify and analyse transformations in the process of knowledge production uncovers contested agency in the struggles for access and control of a broad variety of actors. As a result, boundaries, hurdles, and limits along the paths of knowledge-making become visible. The fact that knowledge moves does not make it equally accessible to all or evenly distributed.[34] Following this line of thought, Östling and Heidenblad argue that the social dimension of "knowledge circulation" has been understudied and therefore propose the "societal circulation of knowledge" as an additional analytical avenue. By conceiving knowledge as a "broad

30 Bruno Latour, The Pasteurization of France, Cambridge 1988, 181; Doris Bachmann-Medick, The Trans/National Study of Culture. A Translational Perspective, in: ead. (ed.), The Trans/National Study of Culture. A Translational Perspective, Berlin/Boston 2014, 1–22, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110333800.1; Raj, Relocating Modern Science, 2007.

31 Sarasin, Wissensgeschichte, (2011); Secord, Transit, (2004).

32 Secord, Transit, (2004), 667.

33 Kapil Ray, Beyond Postcolonialism … and Postpositivism. Circulation and the Global History of Science, in: Isis 104/2 (2013), 337–347, 343, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1086/670951; Lissa Roberts, Situating Science in Global History. Local Exchanges and Networks of Circulation, in: Itinerario 33/1 (2009), 9–30, 18, DOI: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0165115300002680.

34 Sarasin, Wissensgeschichte, (2011), 164; Östling/Larsson Heidenblad/Sandmo/Nilsson Hammar/Nordberg, History of Knowledge, 2018, 18.

political, social, and cultural phenomenon", such research could focus on "public knowledge" or knowledge with a broad societal reach and relevance.[35]

Ongoing explorations in vibrant research networks such as LUCK lead Östling et al. to believe that the 2020s will bring a decade of inspiring contributions.[36] These research activities demonstrate how the analytical potential of the concept can contribute to and initiate further developments across various fields and disciplines such as the (global) history of science, social and cultural history, or postcolonial studies. In order to fulfil the multiple potentials of "knowledge circulation" for these wide-ranging research inquiries, we need to shift our analytical attention to its methodological application. How can we put the above mentioned conceptual considerations into practice?

Approaching "knowledge circulation"

The pioneers in this field have previously asked how to make "knowledge circulation" analytically accessible. In 2011, Andreas Kilcher and Philipp Sarasin presented four preliminary directives for approaching "knowledge circulation" in order to define and delimit the concept: They propose (1) to focus on the materiality and mediality of knowledge production; (2) to move away from the misconception that knowledge originates in a specific place, and rather considering it as (co-)produced in cultural interaction and exchange; (3) to acknowledge that knowledge is not equally available to everyone and everywhere, and to take into account the obstacles, detours, and constraints of movement (4) and finally, to start from the premise that knowledge is always situated and bound by orders of knowledge.[37] They argue: "The history of the circulation of knowledge is therefore always at the same time the history of those semiotic, discursive and medial systems that make knowledge possible in the first place".[38] Similarly, Johan Östling and David Larsson Heidenblad have pointed out that although there is no agreed definition of the concept of circulation, three recurring or dominant interpretations seem to guide current research: a geographical, a social, and a material approach to circulation.[39]

What do these approaches entail? The premise that knowledge is the product of a circulation process implies that this process takes place in a specific space, and

35 Östling/Larsson Heidenblad, Promise, (2020), 3.

36 Ibid., 1.

37 Philipp Sarasin/Andreas Kilcher, Editorial, in: Nach Feierabend. Zürcher Jahrbuch für Wissensgeschichte 7, Zürich 2011, 7–10, 10.

38 Ibid.

39 Östling/Heidenblad, Promise, (2020), 2.

is constituted by concrete actors, their practices, means, and techniques. Attention to these dimensions of "knowledge circulation" allows researchers to approach the processes of knowledge production while acknowledging the main conceptual considerations discussed above, such as non-originality and multi-directionality, power relations, agency, and obstacles, as well as contextual situatedness and conditions.

Viewing knowledge-making as a communicative process puts social relations at the centre of the analysis of knowledge production. This is what Östling and Heidenblad emphasise with their "social approach" to circulation while Kilcher and Sarasin do so in addressing power relations and constraints in knowledge movement. A closer look at interactions brings to the fore numerous and diverse actors: we can examine different perspectives, experiences, and interests by capturing the encounters and exchanges between historical actors from different regional, political, cultural, and economic contexts, including state and non-state actors. This raises the question of who holds agency and who and what is considered an actor in the first place. As Bruno Latour has prominently argued, non-human actors such as objects or immobile actors can play a key role in making knowledge move.[40] Kapil Raj's concept of "go-betweens" highlights another essential, yet frequently overlooked group in assembling, negotiating, and translating knowledge. So-called "go-betweens" act as intermediaries or "brokers" in cross-cultural interaction.[41]

Drawing on the experiences of the various actors involved in the production of knowledge opens up the possibility of contrasting conflicting perspectives and can lead to new findings for historians when researching knowledge movements. Furthermore, insights into everyday practices and lived realities offer new perspectives on previously invisible aspects of the processes in question.[42] In order to increase the visibility of those aspects historians turn, for example, to other types of sources, such as various forms of ego-documents of and interviews with hitherto neglected actors. In the traditional source material, researchers carve out representations and perspectives of these very actors, which have often been adapted, overshadowed, or absorbed by more dominant actors in historical narratives. In this regard, Sarasin points out that people are always surrounded by and engaged with different forms of knowledge. Therefore, he sees the history of knowledge as "a 'proxy' for learning why people behaved, spoke, and acted one way or another in the past".[43] Since "knowledge circulation" emphasises the process of knowledge production, the con-

40 Bruno Latour, On Actor-Network Theory. A Few Clarifications, in: Soziale Welt 47/4 (1996), 369–381, 369.

41 Kapil Raj, Go-Betweens, Travelers, and Cultural Translator, in: Bernard Lightman (ed.), A Companion to the History of Science, Hoboken 2016, 39–57.

42 Nilsson Hammar, Theoria, 2018, 110, 113.

43 Sarasin, Specialty, (2020), 4.

cept allows to identify and examine the key roles and functions of the various actors involved in these processes. As a result, different degrees of agency become visible. However, access to and control over knowledge is always contested, even if the movement of knowledge can transcend physical, social, and ideological boundaries. As James Secord aptly put it: "to make knowledge move is the most difficult form of power to achieve".[44] In approaching knowledge production processes through analytical categories such as race, class, or gender, the concept of "knowledge circulation" can usefully be applied to identify asymmetrical power relations and hierarchies.[45]

Knowledge is not only socially but also always spatially and chronologically situated.[46] By framing a geographical approach to "knowledge circulation", Östling and Heidenblad take spatiality more explicitly into account, which corresponds to Kilcher and Sarasin's emphasis that knowledge is always situated, bound by orders of knowledge, and does not have a singular point of departure. Despite being situated, knowledge is never produced in isolation: "every local situation has within it connections with and possibilities for interaction with other settings".[47] Criticising the obsession with novelty and finding a place of origin for every idea, information, or invention, James Secord accordingly argues for overcoming the artificial division between making and communicating knowledge.[48] In a similar vein, Angelika Epple introduced her concept of "relational locality", highlighting how social relations determine the mutually constitutive relationship between local practices and their wider interconnections.[49] A focus on spatiality thus implies challenging established spatial categories for locating movement such as the dichotomies between centre and periphery, or locality and globality. Analysing and unravelling contact zones, networks, and (transnational) spaces of negotiation can serve as an approach to the multiple, often entangled sites of knowledge production. In this sense, scholars focus on the interactions of actors with physical space. They ask what enabled specific actors to deal with certain spatial conditions or how they appropriated spaces for

44 Secord, Transit, (2004), 670.

45 The newly published third volume of the trilogy on the history of knowledge from the Lund Centre for the History of Knowledge (LUCK) discusses in detail the importance of knowledge actors and their agencies in particular, as well as the ways in which scholars can and should approach them in their research. See Johan Östling/David Larsson Heidenblad/Anna Nilsson Hammar (eds.), Knowledge Actors. Revisiting Agency in the History of Knowledge, Lund 2023. The edited volume was not yet available when this editorial was finalised.

46 Donna Haraway, Situated Knowledges. The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of a Partial Perspective, in: Muriel Lederman (ed.), The Gender and Science Reader, London 2001, 169–212.

47 Secord, Transit, (2004), 670.

48 Ibid., 662.

49 Angelika Epple, Lokalität und die Dimensionen des Globalen. Eine Frage der Relationen, in: Historische Anthropologie 21/1 (2013), 4–25.

their own agendas or advantages. This can take into account the physical, social, cultural, and ideological boundaries that impact the processes of knowledge production. While the limits of movement point to political and social hierarchies, the examination of boundaries and imbalances can also reveal the transgressive potential of circulation, uncovering room for manoeuvre and elements of empowerment.

In addition to the physical spaces of knowledge production, media represent further sites of the circulation process that reveal the practices of knowledge-making. What has previously been framed as the materiality of circulation (Kilcher/Sarasin) or the material approach to circulation (Östling/Heidenblad), entails an analysis of the means and techniques of knowledge production. Different cognitive, technical, and media practices sustain, reinforce, and stabilise knowledge. The material dimension of knowledge production indicates how knowledge is stored, transported, and displayed. Different media act as channels, containers, but also as filters that shape and sometimes constrain knowledge, always changing and further producing it. Pointing to the "practical turn", Sarasin argues that "knowledge in its 'functioning' depends on circulation".[50] This implies that knowledge should not be analysed only as a product. Disclosing the conditions of knowledge movement relies on examining practices of representation and discursive trends in various textual and visual sources. Furthermore, focusing on conflicting discourses and knowledge systems can contribute to identifying discursive changes within the process of knowledge production. Acknowledging the circumstances, practices, and experiences of knowledge-making, enables us, again, to bring agency to the fore.

The social, spatial, and material dimensions of knowledge production are intrinsically intertwined and can rarely be analytically separated when examining specific historical contexts of knowledge-making. In their individual contributions, the authors of this issue draw on the outlined directives for applying the concept of "knowledge circulation" in various case studies that demonstrate this multidimensionality. In doing so, they emphasise the processual character of knowledge production and the potential of "knowledge circulation" to sharpen our view for the various actors and different social, spatial, and material conditions that make knowledge (move).

With this special issue, we aim to contribute to the dynamic scholarship that delves into the conceptual implications of knowledge in motion by providing further investigations into the application of "knowledge circulation" in historical research. Through case studies in different spatial and temporal contexts, our contributors take up the above-mentioned analytical avenues of research and explore how the "circulation of knowledge" can provide new insights into heterogeneous research ques-

50 Sarasin, Specialty, (2020), 2f.

tions, areas, and approaches. This allows us to present a wide range of topics that are not limited to European history. The contributions in our volume deal with different regional contexts on the African, Asian, American, and European continents and range from the 17th to the 20th century. In doing so, they reveal different conceptions of what knowledge meant or what was recognised as such in their respective historical contexts. In light of this multiplicity, we refer to Östling et al., who argue for pragmatic approaches to investigating the key concepts of "knowledge" and "circulation", as the search for universally valid definitions would fall short due to the integrative and inter-chronological nature of the research field.[51] Our authors therefore bring together a variety of definitions and methodological approaches. They individually define what knowledge, forms of knowledge, and practices of knowledge production can entail, depending on their respective research scopes. Thereby, they present manifold analytical ways of applying the main conceptual implications of "knowledge circulation" and may stimulate further discussion on the potential and limitations of the concept. We have organised the contributions according to overarching conceptual inquiries, ranging from practices of representation, to functionings, strategies, and effects of (co-)production processes and finally to the (non-)circulation of contested, unintended, or withheld knowledge. As a result, the contributions reveal the underlying interrelationship between social, spatial, and material aspects of "knowledge circulation", when they highlight actors and agencies, different sites, contexts, and conditions as well as means and techniques constituting the process of knowledge production.

The first four papers explicitly address how discursive practices in the production and transfer of knowledge can be methodologically grasped and illuminated. Most importantly, they analyse media in their function as containers, transporters, and displayers of knowledge, and show how they are entangled in struggles over representation and identity construction. All four authors are confronted with source material that describes and thereby creates "the other" in social, spatial, and temporal terms. However, their examinations ultimately challenge the centre-periphery binary by identifying the agency and unpredictability of practices of representation, adaptation, and appropriation. By contrasting a multitude of perspectives, they help to highlight the significance of various actors involved in knowledge production. The authors trace power relations and hierarchies between Western European knowledge producers, go-betweens, intermediaries, cultural brokers, and underrepresented actors such as translators, pilgrims, as well as local informants and authors, and therefore show how different forms of knowledge are produced, contested, and recognised. Jana Hunter examines temporal representations of 19th-century Prague

51 Östling/Larsson Heidenblad/Nilsson Hammar, Developing the History of Knowledge, 2020, 14–16.

in literary narratives. By analysing not only British travelogues but also the texts of Czech go-betweens, the contribution shows how different actors participated in the production of the cultural, political, and social knowledge of the city, with reciprocal effects. Hunter's relational perspective brings to light different interests and margins of manoeuvre and exemplifies the communicative aspects of knowledge production. Balázs Balatoni too touches upon the issue of representation, examining the publications of the British Balkan Committee and their role in the production and distribution of knowledge about Southeast Europe in 19th-century Britain. The contribution discusses the relationship between informants such as Western diplomats and local translators, and shows how the committee members created hierarchies and assessed the presumed trustworthiness of their informants – thereby controlling and shaping knowledge production and movement. Similarly, Siga Maguiraga looks at asymmetrical power relations in cross-cultural interactions. She highlights the essential role of pilgrims in the co-production of knowledge about West Africa for European audiences. Using the example of the relationship between a French traveller and two West African pilgrims in mid-19th century Cairo, the paper demonstrates the agency of the hitherto underrepresented actors. While Maguiraga carves out strategies of negotiation and resistance of marginalised actors in travel accounts, Tom Schira examines more explicitly the construction of alterity as another significant function of media. By comparing two German adaptations of John Jewitt's influential North American *captivity narrative*, Schira illustrates the construction of the indigenous *other* and the German *self*. The analysis of the reception of the *captivity narrative* includes production strategies and interventions in the original text that reveal the long-term transformation of knowledge about and representation of Native Americans when translated into different discursive contexts.

With a shared focus on the functioning, experiences, and effects of co-production processes, the next two papers analyse cross-border networks that were decisive for the direction, scope, and content of knowledge development. By examining personal, institutional, and expert networks, the authors question established structures and demonstrate multidirectional exchange processes. The contributions point to the political dimension of knowledge production and reveal the conditions, materiality, and content of knowledge movement while highlighting the diverse motivations and conflicting interests of the actors involved in these networks. Vojtěch Pojar's contribution approaches the circulation of knowledge on eugenics through the lens of personal and expert networks in the late Habsburg monarchy. Depending on practices, types, and functions of eugenic knowledge, he identifies different actors, institutions, and geographies situated along the imperial network nodes. By analysing their interactions, Pojar ascertains that the joint process of creating

eugenic knowledge took on the additional function of serving as a tool for negotiating empire. Immanuel R. Harisch looks at strategies of knowledge co-production in the context of two trade union colleges in the Cold War 1960s that gathered and produced knowledge about the African trade union movement. An essential part of collecting this knowledge for the educational institutions was repeatedly contributed by African course participants based on their experiences and their practical and technical knowledge – even after their graduation. Focusing on intercultural interactions, Harisch therefore challenges the linear model of North-South knowledge transfer and demonstrates a process of co-production and its reciprocal effects.

Finally, the authors of the last three papers shed light on the contexts in which knowledge could be deliberately withheld, and non-circulation could become an affirmation of (subaltern) agency. The contributions illustrate that the tool of "knowledge circulation" retains its analytical value when it is acknowledged that the movement of knowledge can be confined, unintended, or adjusted to different interests. This allows our authors to explore different types of knowledge, such as rumours and manipulated knowledge, and move beyond attributions such as "true" and "false," or "useful" and "useless". Introducing her concept of *intimate epistemic economies,* Anna Grutza explores the role of confidentiality and trust in the context of Cold War intelligence, which is inherently characterised by uncertainty. Two case studies of Polish informants for the US broadcaster Radio Free Europe illustrate ignorance and error as obstacles and challenges to the negotiation and production of knowledge. Grutza presents different types of knowledge, such as rumour and gossip, and asks what information is considered trustworthy and valuable. Florence Klauda approaches contested knowledge production from a different angle, focusing on the unintended circulation of diverging understandings of democracy in postwar Austria. Using the example of party youth magazines, she zooms in on how the Western Allies envisioned a linear transfer of democratic values during their ten-year administration. However, the analytical focus on Austrian party youths then reveals the circular processes of appropriation and adaptation of democratic knowledge for their own political agendas. Finally, Morgan Breene discusses the aspect of non-circulation of knowledge between local boatmen and English East India Company officials in the Madras surf zone. By providing and withholding the exclusive expertise and skills of movement in the surf zone, indigenous knowledge-holders maintained group agency. Breene's analysis of the exclusionary knowledge of the ship-to-shore movement shows how local boatmen secured room for manoeuvre in negotiating working conditions for almost 100 years.

This special issue aims to enrich the growing body of literature on "knowledge circulation" by presenting a range of applications of the main analytical implications of the concept. In individual case studies across different regions, epochs, and con-

texts, the authors illustrate the interrelated social, spatial, and material aspects of making knowledge (move). They re-emphasise the value of investigating underrepresented, overshadowed, or previously overlooked agents and types of knowledge when discussing (hegemonic) practices of representation and recognition in knowledge production processes. Additionally, by acknowledging different sites, means, and techniques of knowledge-making, they are able to trace and examine the transformative effects of communicating, exchanging, and translating knowledge. Consequently, regarding knowledge production as a multidirectional, interactive, and unsteady/uneven process in motion allows our contributors to identify elements of this very process even in contexts that appear to inhibit circulation and to be hostile to knowledge movements. This underlines once again that instances of limited or impeded circulation can yield valuable insights, shedding light on power relations, contested agencies, and strategies of empowerment and resistance. We therefore share the optimistic and exploratory assessment of historians of knowledge in highlighting the potential of "knowledge circulation" for analysing the multiple dynamics and effects of knowledge production.

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Lisa Hoppel, Florence Klauda, and Nora Lehner