

In the past few decades, the scholarly discussion on useful knowledge has gained momentum. This theme straddles the disciplinary boundaries between the history of science and technology, and economic history, offering the opportunity to investigate the trading zones where political and economic issues, and knowledge about the natural world and its manipulability meet and mingle.

We favour an integrated approach that explores fields as diverse as medicine, engineering or commerce. Expertise, Institutions and Tools will be the three main threads examined in the workshop.

The workshop roundtable will be an occasion to gather new insights on the notion of useful knowledge from the strongly diachronic perspective adopted and the wide array of settings explored.

Organizers

Thomas Morel

Giuditta Parolini

Cesare Pastorino

www.wissensgeschichte-berlin.de



The Making of Useful Knowledge

October 30-31, 2014

Venue

Max Planck Institute
for the History of Science,
Boltzmannstraße 22, 14195 Berlin

Berlin Center for the
History of Knowledge

Thursday, October 30

9:00-9:15 Welcome Coffee

9:15-9:30 Introduction

SESSION 1: EXPERTISE

Chair: **Friedrich Steinle**, *TU Berlin*

9:30-10:15 **Simona Valeriani**,
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
Objects and Spaces for the Production
of Useful Knowledge in Early Modern
Europe

10:15-11:00 **Ursula Klein**,
*Max Planck Institute for the History of
Science, Berlin*
The 'Useful Sciences' in Prussia around
1800

11:00-11:15 Coffee Break

11:15-12:00 **Cesare Pastorino**,
*TU Berlin/Berlin Center for the History
of Knowledge*
Reporting Useful Experiments: Cost
Accounting and Early Modern Technical
Experimentation

12:00-12:30 General Discussion

12:30-13:30 Lunch

Thursday, October 30

SESSION 2: INSTITUTIONS

Chair: **Dagmar Schäfer**,
*Max Planck Institute for the History of
Science Berlin*

13:30-14:15 **Jonathan Harwood**,
University of Manchester
Useful Knowledge but for Whom?
The Development of Appropriate
Agricultural Technology in Southern
Germany, 1890-1920

14:15-15:00 **Thomas Morel**,
*TU Berlin/Berlin Center for the History
of Knowledge*
Usefulness and Practicability of
Mathematics: The German Mining
Academies in the 18th Century

15:00-15:30 Coffee Break

15:30-16:15 **Karel Davids**,
VU University, Amsterdam
Making 'Useful' Knowledge in the 18th
Century: A Maritime Perspective

16:15-17:15 Roundtable chaired by
Dagmar Schäfer,
*Max Planck Institute for the History of
Science Berlin*

Friday, October 31

SESSION 3: TOOLS

Chair: **Marcus Popplow**, *TU Berlin*

9:30-10:15 **Gerhard Rammer**, *TU Berlin*
Practical Mathematics and the
Waterwheels in the 18th Century

10:15-11:00 **Stephen Johnston**,
*Museum for the History of Science,
University Oxford*
Utility, Commerce, Pleasure: London
Scientific Instrument Workshops as
Sites of Public Knowledge, 1550-1750

11:00-11:30 Coffee Break

11:30-12:15 **Angela Creager**,
Princeton University
Making Mutations Useful: The
Development of In Vitro Tests for
Carcinogens in the 1970s

12:15-13:00 **Giuditta Parolini**,
*TU Berlin/Berlin Center for the History
of Knowledge*
Farming, Meteorology, and Field
Experiments: Using Statistics to
Improve Agricultural Practices

13:00-14:00 Lunch

14:00-15:00 General Discussion

15:00-16:00 Conclusions, Results and
Prospects