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**Travelling Scholars, Travelling Theories: German Academics and the University of Vilnius, 1803-1832**

In 1983 Edward W. Said wrote: "Like people and schools of criticism, ideas and theories travel – from person to person, from situation to situation, from one period to another". In fact, most elements of modern culture are the result of exchanges; this is particularly visible in the realm of science. The various forms of contact between German Universities and German culture (especially literature and philosophy) and the University of Vilnius (Uniwersytet Wileński) between 1803 and 1832 are a conspicuous illustration of this truth. In order to show the significance of intercultural transfer for knowledge and scholarship in Central Europe in the first half of the 19th century, I would like to analyze chosen aspects and mechanisms of knowledge transfer (its agents, media and conditions) in the specific scholars' milieu in Wilno.

The University of Vilnius became 1803 the educational center for western gubernias of the Russian Empire (encompassing Lithuania, Belorussia and a large part of Ukraine). Thanks to its curator, Prince Adam J. Czartoryski, a close friend of Tsar Alexander, the University obtained in the next twenty years the financial and political support it needed for successful development. The University's educational and science policy was rooted in the Enlightenment project of emancipation and knowledge exchange drawing from the notion of the Gelehrtenrepublik.

The foundation was so laid for individual friendships and disputes, for example between Jan Śniadecki and Johann G Feder on the one hand, and on the other, Christian Lichtenberg; between Gottfried E. Groddeck and Christian G. Heyne; between Józef Gołuchowski and Friedrich Schelling, and even between Jan Potocki and Julius Klaproth, the "grandfathers" of the oriental studies in Wilno, – as well as for international and interdisciplinary networks (let me name only the interest of some Philomats in physics, geology and literature at the same time).

What is important, the networks I have mentioned were either formal (i.e. practice of regular letter exchange, scholarships for students who were then obliged to learn from particular professors, German scholars holding honored memberships of the University of Vilnius) or informal (music evening at the Franks; the Philomats reading German writers and education theorist, Malewski sending from Berlin and Dresden books on law, literature and pharmacy). Due to internationalization of higher education ("wandering elites") and numerous cooperations with German (and others) scientists, the University of Vilnius actually breaks out of the simplicity of the center-periphery binary opposition.