8.1. Gender and other diversities. The empirical, scholarly, written and tacit knowledge and its transfers in plantology, ecology and agricul-
ture (Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century)

Panel organiser: Rippmann Tauber, Dorothee, University of Zurich, Switzerland

Up to now the importance of women in the history of agricultural science has been mostly neglected. A further academic lacuna is the study of ‘male’ and ‘female’ in the concepts of natural philosophy and agricultural science. In the panel, the characteristics of female knowledge and the conditions of knowledge acquisition and transfer are looked at under the aspects of gender and gender difference. The focus is on three time-periods. In the beginning, the Encyclopaedia of Bartholomäus of England (13th century), the manuscripts of which were distributed widely in Europe, shall serve as an example to introduce a theory of the interaction of male and female principles in the macro- and microcosms with which the author explained the life cycle of plants. This explanatory model survived in parts up until the establishment of the modern natural sciences and further into alternative ‘unscholarly’ circles. Secondly, using the example of German high-ranking noblewomen it can be shown that the sixteenth-century princely court was a ‘site of knowledge’ in which agricultural and economic practice went hand in hand with the development of theoretical knowledge. These noblewomen could actively further agricultural progress in the manorial seigneurie. We can study the knowledge of a Dresden noblewoman, her interest in agricultural progress and her experiences in practical agriculture through different sources, in contexts of variably transmitted communication. Thirdly the panel discusses the ‘passion and profession’ of the female pioneers of organic farming in Europe. The importance and the role of women in the history of organic farming is a field into which more academic research is desirable. This lacuna is due to the fact that the historiography of science too has focused on the success stories of ‘great men’, further to the institutionalisation and academisation of organic farming and thus also a changed estimation of knowledge and the definition of academic research in general. There were an astonishing number of women taking part in the development of organic farming in the formative years of its development. While did these first-generation female agricultural pioneers have in the ‘scientific community’? What do their research biographies and achievements look like? Awareness of natural cycles, the interactions and mutual dependency of earth, plants, animals and humans and the emphasis on the fundamental importance of soil fertility have been basic principles of organic farming since its beginnings.

Chair: van der Burg, Margreet, Wageningen University, Netherlands

8.1.1. ‘...quod terra est mater et sol est pater plantarum’. Bartholomäus Anglicus’ Book of Plants

Rippmann Tauber, Dorothee, University of Zurich, Switzerland

Of the Encyclopaedias of the 13th century, Bartholomäus Anglicus’ De proprietatibus rerum, widely distributed in the Middle Ages and Enlightenment, is in this aspect of discussion in this paper. The 17th book De plantis et herbis contains the Being, Growth and Decay of plants as part of living nature and image of creation. The text, usually analysed for assistance to prayer and moral and theo-
tical teachings, shall now be looked at regarding ecology and agrarian history. The hypothesis: The author is reflecting the environ
ment with its ecosystem as well as the results of human ecology and the man’s colonisational intervention with nature, through the

8.1.2. Diversity of media – diversity of gender and social strata

Schlade, Ursula, Associated with the Institute for Saxonian History and Cultural Anthropology (ISGV), Dresden, Germany

European agrarian knowledge seems to be ‘scientific’ from around 1800, when it was transformed into an academic discipline. This is significant from the perspective of both gender and social history, since the production of agrarian knowledge thus appears as a

8.1.3. Deviant Concepts of Knowledge: Women Pioneers in Organic Farming and Gardening

Spieker, Ira, Institute for Saxon History and Cultural Anthropology, Dresden, Germany

Schmidt, Mathilde, Institut für Interdisziplinäre Gebärdensforschung der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Innsbruck, Austria

There were an astonishing number of women taking part in the development of organic farming and during its initial phase in the early 20th century. The reasons for the intensive participation lay presumably in the manorial seigneurie and in the garden. Furthermore, during this stage it was possible to gather experience, implicit knowledge and scientific data in the field of organic agriculture ‘at home’, in the garden, the kitchen or on windowsills. The fact that there was little professionalism with respect to teaching, research and consulting activities in the field made it also possible for women without academic background and credentials to contribute to the advancement of knowledge. This paper is based on our research on women pioneers in organic farming which started in 2002 with a research project entitled ‘Passion and Profession. Women Pioneers in Organic Agriculture’. The key objective is to trace down, evaluate and establish the achievements of women during the various phases which organic agriculture crystalized and record their contributions to the development of the theories and methods employed. The paper focuses on the various research approaches and contexts to clarify how gender parameters influenced knowledge concepts which can be characterized by the historical and experimental development of collected knowledge under local conditions, tacit knowledge and empa-
thy; great need for the dissemination of knowledge; disregard of research.

8.1.4. „For the Edification of the Common People”: The Parish Library in Eighteenth-Century England

Allen, David, University of St. Andrews, UK

The paper takes as its subject the rural parish library in eighteenth-century England. It will consider the impact of mechanisms for providing access to books and facilitating reading within rural communities, demonstrating the importance of lending libraries for the dissemination of knowledge in such a way that enjoyed relatively high levels of literacy, and the reasons for the cultural and intellectual history of early modern Britain, and the ways in which book culture and the circulation of printed texts, in developing shared beliefs, assumptions and understanding (religious, cultural, political, scientific) across the widely-scattered and still largely rural population of eighteenth-century England, assisted in the formation of coherent public identities in this period.

Participants

Schmitt, Mathilde, Dorothee Rippmann Tauber, Dorothee, University of St. Andrews, UK

van der Burg, Margreet, Dr. Margreet van der Burg is rural gender historian at Wageningen University, NL. She published several books and many articles on rural women within agricultural and rural modernization programming with respect to labor, education, extension, self-organisations, representation, and agricultural research. From NL, she first broadened her view to Europe and the world, and then the last decade also to global and transnational change. She served as chair and board member in organisations on women’s history, rural women’s studies and agricultural or rural history, and was on the editorial board of Agricultural History.

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