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Academic practice par excellence: Martin Hinrich Lichtenstein's role in Adelbert von Chamisso's career as naturalist

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Abstract: Adelbert von Chamisso's (1781–1838) career as a naturalist is increasingly well-documented. Comparatively little, however, is known of his mentor and director of the Berlin Zoological Museum, Martin Hinrich Lichtenstein (1780–1857). This article highlights Lichtenstein's influential role in Chamisso's early career by reconstructing key moments of the student-mentor relationship from twelve yet unpublished letters (letters are presented in full in a separate contribution). It investigates the resources, rhetorical strategies, and allies necessary for establishing oneself as a scholar in the early nineteenth-century academic culture of Berlin.

1 Introduction

...but this poet by the grace of God was in his actual profession a naturalist, specifically a botanist, who, after circumnavigating the globe, served for almost two decades as custodian of the Botanical Institute and Gardens and as head of the Royal Herbarium in Berlin and had made a name for himself in the field.¹

¹ “...aber dieser Poet von Gottes Gnaden war seinem eigentlichen Beruf nach Naturforscher, im engeren Botaniker, der nach jener Weltreise noch fast zwei Jahrzehnte lang Kustos am botanischen Institut und Garten und Vorsteher der königlichen Herbarien zu Berlin gewesen ist und auch als Fachmann einen Namen hat.” Wilhelm Bölsche: Die Eroberung der Erde in Darstellungen großer Naturforscher. Berlin: Deutsche Bibliothek 1917, pp. 339f. All translations of German-language

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In his 1917 popular science survey of German explorers, Wilhelm Bölsche had to remind his readers that the beloved French-born poet Adelbert von Chamisso (1781–1838) was, in fact, also an accomplished naturalist, who participated in the Russian Rurik-expedition around the world from 1815 to 1818 and later enjoyed a successful career in Berlin as a botanist. One hundred years later, such a reminder is gradually becoming expendable. Aside from several important works from the mid- to late-twentieth century,² it is chiefly thanks to research of the last decade that we know in increasing detail of Chamisso's significance for the pre-Darwin world of natural sciences. Recent historical and literary studies have contextualized Chamisso within cultures of scientific voyage and travel writing.³ The digital indexing of Chamisso's literary estate from 2011 to 2014 has spurred new examinations of yet unpublished manuscript materials and investigations into Chamisso's writing, observation and collecting practices.⁴ Several Chamisso scholars have rediscovered original specimens collected during the voyage on the Rurik

sources are Anne MacKinney's, unless otherwise indicated. For reference purposes, the original German citation is provided in the footnotes.

2 Cf. Günther Schmid: Chamisso als Naturforscher. Eine Bibliographie. Leipzig: K.F. Koehler 1942; Ruth Schneebeili-Graf (ed.): Adelbert von Chamisso "...und lassen gelten, was ich beobachtet habe." Naturwissenschaftliche Schriften mit Zeichnungen des Autors. Berlin: Dietrich Reiner Verlag 1983.

3 Cf. Harry Liebersohn: *The Travelers' World. Europe to the Pacific*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2006; Matthias Glaubrecht: *Mit den Augen des Poeten. Der Naturforscher Adelbert von Chamisso auf Weltreise. Ein essayistisches Nachwort, editorische Anmerkungen und Verzeichnis der Illustrationen*. In: Adelbert von Chamisso: *Reise um die Welt, mit 150 Lithographien von Ludwig Choris*. Berlin: Die Andere Bibliothek 2012, pp. 445–487; Matthias Glaubrecht: *Naturkunde mit den Augen des Dichters. Mit Siebenmeilenstiefeln zum Artkonzept bei Adelbert von Chamisso*. In: Marie-Theres Federhofer/Jutta Weber (eds.): *Korrespondenzen und Transformationen. Neue Perspektiven auf Adelbert von Chamisso*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2013, pp. 51–84; Johannes Görbert: *Die Vertextung der Welt: Forschungsreisen als Literatur bei Georg Foster, Alexander von Humboldt und Adelbert von Chamisso*. Berlin: De Gruyter 2014; Marie-Theres Federhofer: *Lokales Wissen in den Reisebeschreibungen von Otto von Kotzebue und Adelbert von Chamisso*. In: Erich Kasten (ed.): *Reisen an den Rand des russischen Reiches: die wissenschaftliche Erschließung der nordpazifischen Küstengebiete im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert*. Fürstenberg/H.: Verlag der Kulturstiftung Sibirien 2013, pp. 111–146.

4 Cf. Michael Bienert: *Botanisieren auf Papier. Ein Blick in Chamissos Notizbücher*. In: Marie-Theres Federhofer/Jutta Weber (eds.): *Korrespondenzen und Transformationen. Neue Perspektiven auf Adelbert von Chamisso*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2013, pp. 107–121; Michael Schmidt: *Chamisso als Illustrator*. In: Marie-Theres Federhofer/Jutta Weber (eds.): *Korrespondenzen und Transformationen. Neue Perspektiven auf Adelbert von Chamisso*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2013, pp. 85–106; Paul Hiepkö: *Botanische Orte: Sammeln und Auswerten*. In: Roland Berbig et al. (eds.): *Phantastik und Skepsis. Adelbert von Chamissos Lebens- und Schreibwelten*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2016, pp. 199–210.

and have demonstrated its potential for bio-historical analyses as well as for literary-historical inquiries.⁵

While Chamisso's naturalist activities are the subject of more and more studies, little attention has yet been paid to one of Chamisso's greatest mentors, the professor and director of the Berlin Zoological Museum Martin Hinrich Lichtenstein (1780–1857). As this article will demonstrate, Lichtenstein was instrumental in creating opportunities for Chamisso to deepen his interest in the natural sciences, to take part in a scientific voyage and to become a member of Berlin's scholarly community. Key manuscript sources stemming from Lichtenstein's and Chamisso's interactions in the latter's early academic career moreover document an important learning process in the (self-)fashioning of the natural researcher and scholarly traveler. Lichtenstein's influence on Chamisso has been, at best, briefly acknowledged in research on the poet-naturalist and Chamisso's association with Lichtenstein cursorily referenced in historical surveys of the Zoological Museum's development.⁶ By foregrounding the relationship between mentor and student, the article aims to contextualize Chamisso's naturalist career within the greater academic culture of early nineteenth-century Berlin.

The first section of the article briefly sketches Lichtenstein's academic background and early career as director of the Berlin Zoological Museum. It will then investigate Lichtenstein's influential role in Chamisso's professional development, moving chronologically from Chamisso's first semester at the University of Berlin, where he met Lichtenstein in 1812, through to his acceptance to the Russian Rurik-expedition in 1815 and finally to his return in 1818 and his appointment to the Berlin Royal Herbarium in 1819.

5 Cf. Matthias Glaubrecht/Wolfgang Dohle: Discovering the alternation of generations in salps (Tunicata, Thaliacea): Adelbert von Chamisso's dissertation "De Salpa" 1819 – its material, origin and reception in the early nineteenth century. In: *Zoosystematics and Evolution* 88/2 (2012), pp. 317–363; Matthias Glaubrecht et al.: The potential of biohistory: Re-discovering Adelbert von Chamisso's skull of an Aleut collected during the "Rurik" Expedition 1815–1818 in Alaska. In: *Zoosystematics and Evolution* 89/2 (2013), pp. 317–336; Yvonne Maaß: Leuchtkäfer & Orgelkoralle. Chamissos 'Reise um die Welt mit der Romanzoffischen Entdeckungs-Expedition' (1815–1818) im Wechselspiel von Naturkunde und Literatur. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann 2016.

6 Cf. Paul Hiepko: Adelbert von Chamisso. In: Horst Bredekamp/Jochen Brüning/Cornelia Weber (eds.): *Theater der Natur und Kunst*. Berlin: Henschel Verlag 2000, pp. 213–218; Erwin Stresemann: Die Entwicklung der Vogelsammlung des Berliner Museums unter Illiger und Lichtenstein. In: *Journal für Ornithologie* 70 (1922), pp. 498–503.

2 Martin Hinrich Lichtenstein (1780–1857) – from physician to traveling naturalist to zoologist

Martin Hinrich Lichtenstein was born on 10 January 1780 and raised within a Hamburg academic family. His father, Anton August Heinrich Lichtenstein, was a respected scholar of philology, from 1782 the rector of Hamburg's Academic School of the Johanneum and director of the city's library from 1796 to 1798. Anton August was also active in the field natural history, publishing a systematic zoological catalog and joining the ranks of the Berlin Society of Friends of Natural Science in 1793.⁷ Martin Hinrich Lichtenstein himself studied medicine at the universities in Jena and Helmstedt, where he was promoted to Dr. med. in 1802; zoology was not yet a fully autonomous discipline at the outset of the nineteenth century, but rather an auxiliary course taught in medical or philosophical faculties.⁸ Still, his early exposure through his father to natural history and specifically to zoology likely shaped his subsequent pursuit of a profession in those fields.

2.1 Lichtenstein's naturalist activities at the Cape of Good Hope

Following his studies, Lichtenstein received the opportunity to accompany Jan Willem Janssen, Dutch governor of the Cape Colony, and tutor the governor's thirteen-year-old son. Fueled by the desire to “get to know a land that had

7 Cf. Erwin Stresemann: Hinrich Lichtenstein. Lebensbild des ersten Zoologen der Berliner Universität. In: Willi Göber/Friedrich Herneck (eds.): *Forschen und Wirken*. Festschrift zur 150-Jahr-Feier der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. 1810–1960. Vol. 1. Berlin: Deutscher Verlag der Wissenschaften 1960, pp. 73–96, here p. 73; Ilse Jahn: Zur Vertretung der Zoologie und zur Entwicklung ihrer Grundlagen an der Berliner Universität von ihrer Gründung bis 1920. In: *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. Mathematisch-Naturwissenschaftliche Reihe* 34/3 (1985), pp. 260–280, here p. 261; Anton August Lichtenstein: *Catalogus rerum naturalium rarissimarum Hamburgi auctionis lege distrahendarum: Verzeichniss von höchstseltenen, aus allen Welttheilen mit vieler Mühe und Kosten zusammen gebrachten, auch aus unterschiedlichen Cabinettern, Sammlungen und Auctionen ausgehobenen Naturalien welche von einem Liebhaber, als Mitglied der Batavischen und verschiedener anderer Naturforschenden Gesellschaften gesammelt worden*. Hamburg: Gottlieb Friedrich Schniebes [1793–1796].

8 Cf. Stresemann: Hinrich Lichtenstein (footnote 7), p. 73; Lynn K. Nyhart: *Biology Takes Form. Animal Morphology and the German Universities, 1800–1900*. Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press 1995, pp. 90f.

sparked [his] curiosity since youth” and in particular to acquaint himself with South Africa’s natural history, Lichtenstein enthusiastically accepted the offer.⁹ In preparation for the naturalist activities he was planning for his time abroad, Lichtenstein traveled to Braunschweig, where he met with the renowned entomologist Johann Christian Ludwig Hellwig, his assistant Johann Karl Wilhelm Illiger and the botanist and entomologist Johann Centurius von Hoffmannsegg. Hoffmannsegg, who would go on to champion the establishment of the Berlin Zoological Museum in 1810, and Illiger, who would serve as the museum’s first director in 1811, were especially crucial figures for the future of Lichtenstein’s academic career. In the few days he spent in Braunschweig, Lichtenstein gathered as much information and advice as possible from these three scholars before continuing his journey northwards to the Netherlands, where he boarded a ship bound for the Cape in December 1802. During his three years in South Africa, Lichtenstein took part in various expeditions along the coast and into the inner regions of the colony, where he made geographic, ethnographic, linguistic and medicinal observations as well as amassed a collection of plants and animals.¹⁰

Lichtenstein left the Cape in 1806 and spent the following years between Braunschweig, Göttingen and Jena organizing his collection and preparing the manuscript of his travel account. During this period, he also rejoined Hellwig and Illiger to assist with the systematization of Hoffmannsegg’s entomological collection.¹¹ Hoffmannsegg meanwhile was in Berlin urging Wilhelm von Humboldt and Carl Ludwig Willdenow – founders of the city’s first university – to concurrently establish a Zoological Museum that would unite the diverse natural historical cabinets in Berlin and serve as essential study material for students and scholars.¹² Hoffmannsegg recommended his friend Illiger to the double position of

9 “...der Wunsch ein Land zu kennen, das seit dem reifern Jünglingsalter meine Wissbegierde beschäftigt hatte”. Martin Hinrich Lichtenstein: *Reisen im südlichen Africa in den Jahren 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806*. Vol. 1. Berlin: C. Salfeld 1811, p. 5.

10 Cf. Stresemann: Hinrich Lichtenstein (footnote 7), p. 74.

11 Cf. Wilhelm Heß: Lichtenstein, Martin. In: *Historische Kommission bei der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* (ed.): *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*. München/Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot 1875–1912. Vol. 18: Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot 1883, pp. 556–557, online edition *Deutsche Biographie*: <http://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd100190014.html?anchor=adb> (accessed 7 April 2016); Heidi Muggelberg gives an overview of the work involved in systematizing and cataloging the Hoffmannsegg collection, cf. Heidi Muggelberg: *Leben und Wirken Johann Karl Wilhelm Illigers (1775–1813) als Entomologe, Wirbeltierforscher und Gründer des Zoologischen Museums der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin*. Teil 1. In: *Mitteilungen aus dem Museum für Naturkunde in Berlin. Zoologisches Museum und Institut für Spezielle Zoologie* 51/2 (1975), pp. 257–303, here pp. 271, 275–279.

12 Cf. Jahn: *Zur Vertretung der Zoologie* (footnote 7), pp. 260–263.

Professor of Zoology and Director of the Zoological Museum. When Illiger, who suffered from lung disease, refused to take on the stress of both positions, Hoffmannsegg turned to Lichtenstein. Lichtenstein gladly took up the professorship and a position as co-director of the museum in 1811.¹³ As a sign of gratitude for his appointment and commitment to the institution he now served, Lichtenstein donated the natural objects he had collected during his travels in South Africa to the newly founded Zoological Museum.¹⁴ Indeed, it became a common practice around 1810 for incoming scholars beginning their tenure at the university to renounce ownership of their private collections, whether through sale or donation. This ostensibly ensured that the scholarly overseers of the university's collections served the interests of science and the state, and did not take personal advantage of their high position.¹⁵ When making a gift to the Zoological Museum of his Rurik collection in 1818, as will be explained below in more detail, Chamisso too would rely on this powerful symbolism of gratitude, loyalty and selflessness conveyed by a donation of natural objects to the state's institutions. Though it is not made explicit in the sources, it is probable that Lichtenstein's example encouraged Chamisso's strategic move.

2.2 Lichtenstein builds a museum

When Illiger died in 1813, Lichtenstein took on the sole direction of the museum while still holding the professorship for zoology. At this point Lichtenstein became truly active in rapidly expanding the museum's collection. To this end, he relied heavily on his students and other young men in his professional circle who expressed a desire to travel beyond Prussia's borders. While Lichtenstein could not yet convince the Prussian state to fund entire expeditions for the young museum (this would first be possible with Wilhelm Hemprich and Christian Gottfried Ehrenberg's expedition in Egypt between 1820 and 1825), he used his

¹³ Cf. Jahn: Zur Vertretung der Zoologie (footnote 7), p. 262; Stresemann: Hinrich Lichtenstein (footnote 7), p. 75.

¹⁴ Cf. Martin Hinrich Lichtenstein to Section for Culture and Public Education (*Sektion für den Kultus und öffentlichen Unterricht*), Berlin, May 1811, Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz (hereafter GStA PK), I. HA Rep. 76 Kultusministerium Va Sekt. 2 Tit. X Nr. 15 Bd. 1, fol. 133 and Martin Hinrich Lichtenstein to Karl Illiger, 20 July 1811, Museum für Naturkunde Berlin, Historische Bild- und Schriftgutsammlung (hereafter MfN HBSB), Zool. Mus., S I, Illiger I: Innere Einrichtung des zoolog. Museums 1810–13, fol. 109.

¹⁵ Cf. Anke te Heesen: From Natural Historical Investment to State Service: Collectors and Collections of the Berlin Society of Friends of Nature Research, c. 1800. In: *History of Science* 42/1 (2004), pp. 113–131, here p. 124.

network of scholarly, state and noble contacts to help his protégés find employment overseas or positions on expeditions funded by wealthy aristocrats. For instance, in the case of his student Karl Heinrich Bergius, Lichtenstein secured him a job in 1814 as an apothecary assistant in the Cape Colony and furnished him with a detailed set of instructions on which specimens to collect, how to conserve them, and how to pack and send them to Berlin.¹⁶ In 1821, Lichtenstein recommended Ferdinand Deppe, an assistant gardener at the Royal Gardens and younger brother to Lichtenstein's secretary Wilhelm Deppe, for the position of naturalist to accompany Count Albert von Sack on his voyage to Mexico.¹⁷ Similar to Bergius, Deppe entered into an arrangement with Lichtenstein and agreed to send to Berlin (for reimbursement) shipments of mammal, bird, fish, mollusk, mineral and plant specimens.¹⁸ When Deppe and Sack parted ways in 1826, Lichtenstein recommended to the Count his student Gustav Haeberlin as Deppe's replacement.¹⁹ As elaborated below, Lichtenstein also devoted himself to securing the wanderlust-stricken Chamisso an employment that would allow him to travel overseas and collect specimens for the museum. With the support of his prolific traveling naturalists, Lichtenstein saw to it that hundreds of thousands of specimens from overseas were channeled into the Berlin Zoological Museum, as well as into the Botanical Gardens, the Mineralogical Cabinet and the Anatomical/Zootomical Museum. While a portion of these immense shipments of natural specimens were traded or sold to other museums and private collectors, the Berlin collections still grew at an unprecedented rate as a result of the travelers' energies and Lichtenstein's coordination efforts. According to one calculation from Lichtenstein's successor Wilhelm Peters, the Zoological Museum alone saw an expan-

16 Cf. Hinrich Lichtenstein: *Instructionen für die auswärtigen Reisenden und Sammler* (1815). In: Ulrich Moritz/Agnieszka Pufelska/Hanns Zischler (eds.): *Vorstoß ins Innere – Streifzüge durch das Berliner Museum für Naturkunde*. Berlin: Alepheus Verlag 2010, pp. 27–45; Martin Hinrich Lichtenstein to Section for Culture and Public Education (*Sektion für den Kultus und öffentlichen Unterricht*), Berlin, 21 October 1814, GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Kultusministerium Va Sekt. 2 Tit. X Nr. 15 Bd. 2, fols. 69–72, here fol. 69.

17 While Count von Sack took on Deppe in 1821 upon Lichtenstein's recommendation, the expedition, fully funded by von Sack, first got under way in 1824. See Erwin Stresemann: *Ferdinand Deppe's Travels in Mexico, 1824–1829*. In: *The Condor* 56/2 (1954), pp. 86–92, here p. 86.

18 For a detailed breakdown of the specimens sent to Berlin and the conditions of Deppe's voyage, see also Ulf Bankmann: *A Prussian in Mexican California: Ferdinand Deppe, Horticulturist, Collector for European Museums, Trader and Artist*. In: *Southern California Quarterly* 84/1 (2002), pp. 1–32, here p. 8.

19 Cf. Stresemann: *Vogelsammlung des Berliner Museums* (footnote 6), p. 501 and Bankmann: *A Prussian in Mexican California* (footnote 18), p. 8.

sion of 2,247 mammal specimens, 13,270 bird specimens, 4,506 amphibian specimens and 3,370 fish specimen between the years 1813 and 1854 – Lichtenstein’s most active period.²⁰ Within a span of less than half a decade, the Berlin Zoological Museum could already compete with the longer established zoological collections in Paris, London and Vienna.²¹

2.3 Lichtenstein’s position in Berlin’s academic circles, upper political echelons and historical memory

Not only did Lichtenstein significantly impact the development of the Zoological Museum, he was a prominent figure in the greater academic landscape of Berlin in the early nineteenth century. He was a member of numerous learned societies, including the Berlin Society of Friends of Natural Science since 1810, the Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences since 1813 and the German Academy of Naturalists Leopoldina since 1818. Furthermore, he served multiple times as university rector, acted as interim director of the Botanical Gardens (1812–1815) and established in 1841 the Berlin Zoological Garden, serving as its director until his death. Next to his expansive international network of contacts and correspondents, Lichtenstein also maintained close personal ties to such influential statesmen as the minister of culture Karl vom Stein zum Altenstein and the courtier and scholar Alexander von Humboldt.²²

While Lichtenstein was evidently a highly active and well-respected member of the Prussian state and society, he had an ambiguous reputation among his academic peers. That he was hard-working, debonair with employees, coworkers, and supervisors alike, and socially adept at dispelling conflict and brokering compromises were praises commonly sung by Lichtenstein’s contemporaries.²³ Still, in the eyes of numerous colleagues, the physician-cum-zoologist lacked innovation in his discipline and the specialized knowledge in classification required to properly maintain a zoological collection – “the good Lichtenstein is

20 Cf. Table “Entwicklung der Wirbeltier-Sammlung (nach Peters)”. In: Stresemann: Hinrich Lichtenstein (footnote 7), p. 78.

21 Cf. Stresemann: Hinrich Lichtenstein (footnote 7), p. 83.

22 Cf. Stresemann: Hinrich Lichtenstein (footnote 7), pp. 86f.; for a select part of the correspondence between Lichtenstein and Humboldt see [Anonymous:] Ungedruckte Korrespondenz Alexander von Humboldts. In: Westermanns Monatshefte 14 (1863), pp. 82–92, 544–548; 15 (1863), pp. 192–199.

23 Cf. Stresemann: Hinrich Lichtenstein (footnote 7), pp. 75f., 85–88.

no *dux gregis*”, or bellwether, as zoologist Heinrich Boie summed up in 1820.²⁴ Particularly towards the end of his career, Lichtenstein’s students, too, complained of his tedious lectures and ridiculed his stubborn adherence to a practice of zoology that, in the older tradition of natural history, insisted on the primacy of systematics and largely ignored new developments in comparative anatomy and morphology.²⁵ This ambivalence regarding Lichtenstein’s contributions to Berlin’s scholarly landscape seemed to have contributed to his almost complete obscurity today. With remarkable self-awareness Lichtenstein himself predicted in a letter to his friend Alexander von Humboldt in 1842:

What I failed to accomplish in scholarly research and innovation – perhaps due to a lack of tenacity as well as to insufficiently developed intellectual capacity – I have tried to make up for with zeal, orderliness and exactingness in my administrative duties. These qualities, combined with the so-called practical talent that people tend to praise me for, have likely led to the dissipation of energy, which prevents all concentrated, thorough industriousness. [...] He who lives in the present and lets himself be directed by the moment, must give up on the future and content himself with being remembered, rather than for a whole century, perhaps for only a decade after his death.²⁶

In 1960 Berlin ornithologist and historian of science Erwin Stresemann attempted to call attention to Lichtenstein’s many important contributions to Berlin’s Zoological Museum and to the overall academic landscape with his *Lebensbild des ersten Zoologen der Berliner Universität*.²⁷ Yet his observation that posterity “has

24 “*Der gute Lichtenstein ist kein dux gregis*”. Letter from Heinrich Boie to Johann Friedrich Naumann, Heidelberg, 24 June 1820. In: Erwin Stresemann/Peter Thomsen (eds.): Briefe, gewechselt in den Jahren 1818 bis 1820 zwischen Heinrich Boie und Johann Friedrich Naumann. In: *Journal für Ornithologie* 94/1–2 (1953), pp. 7–30 [letter: pp. 21–24], here p. 23.

25 Cf. Stresemann: Hinrich Lichtenstein (footnote 7), p. 89; for an analysis on developments in the discipline of zoology in Germany in the mid-nineteenth century, see Nyhart: *Biology Takes Form* (footnote 8), especially pp. 90–102.

26 “*Denn ich habe, was mir auf dem Wege gelehrter Forschung und Erfindung vielleicht eben so sehr aus Mangel an Stetigkeit, wie an hinreichend entwickeltem geistigen Vermögen, zu leisten versagt war, durch Eifer, Ordnung und Pünctlichkeit in der Verwaltung zu ersetzen gesucht, Eigenschaften, die, verbunden mit dem sogenannten practischen Talent, was man an mir zu rühmen pflegt, wohl jederzeit zu der Kraftzersplitterung führte, die aller concentrirten streng gründlichen Arbeitsamkeit hinderlich wird. [...] Wer der Gegenwart lebt und vom Augenblick sich leiten läßt, muß die Zukunft aufgeben und sich bescheiden, statt ein Jahrhundert lang, vielleicht nur noch ein Jahrzehnt nach seinem Tode genannt zu werden.*” Letter from Martin Hinrich Lichtenstein to Alexander von Humboldt, Berlin, 10 June 1842. In: Stresemann: Hinrich Lichtenstein (footnote 7), pp. 95f., here p. 95.

27 In other articles, too, Stresemann has stressed the influential role of Lichtenstein. See, for example, Stresemann: Ferdinand Deppe (footnote 17); Stresemann: *Vogelsammlung des Berliner*

all but forgotten” this “man of hands-on action”, applies – with rare exceptions²⁸ – as much today as it did over half a century ago.²⁹ By highlighting Lichtenstein’s role in the career of one of his students, Adelbert von Chamisso, on the basis of manuscript sources, this paper seeks to reinvigorate awareness for Lichtenstein’s involvement in Berlin’s academic culture in the early nineteenth century.

3 Chamisso’s Lichtenstein: “my teacher, friend and everything to me”³⁰

3.1 Chamisso’s turn to the natural sciences

The first decade of the nineteenth century was a turbulent one for Chamisso, who traveled between France, Germany and Switzerland, searching for a home to little avail. In 1806 after eight years of service, Chamisso left the Prussian military in the wake of its capitulation to Napoleon’s troops at the fortress of Hamelin and returned to his family’s estate in France. Discovering there that his parents had died and left him only meager funds, Chamisso spent the following years drifting between Hamburg, Berlin, and Coppet in Switzerland.³¹ He resided for two years at Château Coppet in Madame de Staël’s literary salon before his restlessness took hold again: Convinced he was unsuited for the world of poetry, Chamisso decided to return to Berlin in the fall of 1812 and pursue the one occupation he believed

Museums (footnote 6) and Erwin Stresemann (ed.): Hemprich und Ehrenberg. Reisen zweier naturforschender Freunde im Orient geschildert in ihren Briefen aus den Jahren 1819–1826. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag 1954. Stresemann’s colleague at the Berlin Museum für Naturkunde, Ilse Jahn, also attributed to Lichtenstein a crucial role in the expansion of the Zoological Museum in the early nineteenth century in Ilse Jahn: Zur Vertretung der Zoologie (footnote 7).

28 Though his portrait of Lichtenstein is not particularly forgiving, Carsten Kretschmann presents many archival sources documenting Lichtenstein’s initiatives in administering the Zoological Museum. Cf. Carsten Kretschmann: Räume öffnen sich: naturhistorische Museen im Deutschland des 19. Jahrhunderts. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag 2006.

29 “Die Nachwelt [...] ihn hat sie schon fast vergessen.”, “Mann des praktischen Wissens”. Stresemann: Hinrich Lichtenstein (footnote 7), p. 94.

30 “Mein Lehrer, Freund und Alles”. Letter from Adelbert von Chamisso to Louis de La Foye, Berlin, [early 1819]. In: A.v.C.: Leben und Briefe von Adelbert von Chamisso. Ed. by Julius Eduard Hitzig. Vol. 2. Leipzig: Weidmann’sche Buchhandlung 1839, pp. 114–116, here p. 115.

31 Cf. Adelbert von Chamisso: Leben und Werk. Ed. by Werner Feudel. Leipzig: Reclam 1988, pp. 46f.

himself truly capable of – the natural sciences.³² With renewed purpose, Chamisso ambitiously “moved about within the encyclopedia of the natural sciences”, attending courses at the new university in osteology, comparative anatomy, minerology, chemistry and zoology.³³ His goal, as he disclosed to his friend Louis de La Foye in November 1812, was to “cover more or less all the natural sciences and in several years stand before myself as a made man and proper fellow, one that could present himself as [...] fit for a scholarly voyage”.³⁴

When Chamisso met the zoology professor Lichtenstein in the winter semester of 1812/13, he came decisively closer to achieving his objective. He quickly built a strong relationship with his mentor. For instance, when Chamisso had to interrupt his studies for several months in 1813 due to the beginning of the Wars of Liberation, Lichtenstein helped him secure refuge in the secluded Brandenburg town of Cunersdorf with the family von Itzenplitz, good friends of the professor.³⁵ Returning to university in the winter of 1813/14, Chamisso began volunteering at Lichtenstein’s museum, where he organized the crustacean and fish collections.³⁶ Chamisso had apparently made such a good impression on Lichtenstein, both personally and professionally, that he could claim to de La Foye in 1814:

32 Cf. Letter from Adelbert von Chamisso to Rosa Maria, Berlin, 17 November 1812. In: A.v.C.: *Leben und Briefe von Adelbert von Chamisso*. Ed. by Julius Eduard Hitzig. Vol. 1. Leipzig: Weidmann’sche Buchhandlung 1839, pp. 336–338, here p. 337.

33 “*ich bewege mich in der Encyclopadie der Natur Wissenschaft herum*”. Letter from Adelbert von Chamisso to Louis de La Foye [fragment] [Berlin, May/June 1814]. Ed. by Anna Busch, Sabine Seifert. In: Anne Baillot (ed.): *Briefe und Texte aus dem intellektuellen Berlin um 1800*. Berlin: Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, p. 4. In: *Briefe und Texte aus dem intellektuellen Berlin um 1800*: <http://tei.ibi.hu-berlin.de/berliner-intellektuelle/manuscript?Brief053ChamissoandeLaFoye> (accessed 7 April 2016).

34 “*ich will alle Naturwissenschaften mehr oder weniger umfassen, und in einigen Jahren als ein gemachter Mann und rechter Kerl vor mir stehen, der zu einer gelehrten Reise [...] als tauglich sich darstellen könne*”. Letter from Adelbert von Chamisso to Louis de La Foye, Berlin, Autumn 1812. In: A.v.C.: *Leben und Briefe*. Vol. 1 (footnote 32), pp. 334–336, here p. 335.

35 Theodor Fontane references Lichtenstein’s recommendation of Chamisso in Theodor Fontane: *Wanderungen durch die Mark Brandenburg*. Berlin: Hertz 1862–1882. Vol. 2: *Das Oderland*. Berlin: Hertz 1863, p. 469. In: *Deutsches Textarchiv*: http://www.deutschestextarchiv.de/fontane_brandenburg02_1863/481 (accessed 30 March 2016). Hitzig also references Lichtenstein’s influence in securing Chamisso refuge, cf. Chamisso: *Leben und Briefe*. Vol. 1 (footnote 32), p. 340; more recently, Monika Sproll has studied Chamisso’s summer in Cunersdorf and its significance for his intellectual development as a naturalist and botanist, see Monika Sproll: *Adelbert von Chamisso in Cunersdorf*. Frankfurt/O.: Verlag für Berlin-Brandenburg 2014 (Frankfurter Buntbücher Bd. 55).

36 Cf. Letter from Adelbert von Chamisso to Louis de La Foye, Berlin, early 1814. In: A.v.C.: *Leben und Briefe*. Vol. 1 (footnote 32), pp. 346–348, here p. 346 and letter from Adelbert von Chamisso to Louis de La Foye, Berlin, 1814. In: A.v.C.: *Leben und Briefe*. Vol. 1 (footnote 32), pp. 349f., here p. 349.

Lichtenstein loves me and finds me useful, and to put it briefly I am not without reasonable hope that within a few years, when a scholarly voyage is to be undertaken – if – as is the plan, young people should travel for the museums and the botanical garden, I will be sought out.³⁷

Lichtenstein kept his word. In 1815, Lichtenstein was called upon by Prince Maximilian zu Wied-Neuwied to assist with preparations for a scholarly expedition to Brazil by supplying critical assessments of older natural historical works on the region and information on known Brazilian animal species.³⁸ When it came time to choose an assistant naturalist to accompany the prince, Lichtenstein promptly endorsed his eager student Chamisso. Ultimately, however, Chamisso was rejected as a suitable candidate. A comparison of the correspondence surrounding this application – namely Lichtenstein’s letter of recommendation sent to Neuwied,³⁹ Chamisso’s own letter of motivation,⁴⁰ and finally a report on Chamisso from Neuwied’s associate, Lorenz Leopold von Reichenbach⁴¹ – highlight certain criteria particularly valued in traveling naturalists in the early nineteenth century.

3.2 Chamisso’s application to Maximilian zu Wied-Neuwied’s Brazil Expedition: learning the arts of recommendation and self-fashioning

In his letter of recommendation to Neuwied from 2 March 1815, Lichtenstein stressed above all Chamisso’s “detailed and extensive” knowledge in the natural

37 “Lichtenstein liebt mich und findet mich brauchbar, und kurz ich bin nicht ohne gegründete Hoffnung, binnen ein Paar Jahre, wenn eine gelehrte Reise unternommen wird – wenn – wie es Plan ist, junge Leute für die Mus[ee]n und den Botanischen Garten reisen sollen dazu ausgesucht werden”. Adelbert von Chamisso to Louis de La Foye, [Berlin, May/June 1814] (footnote 33), p. 4.

38 Cf. Birgit Kirschstein-Gamber/Susanne Koppel/Renate Löschner (eds.): *Brasilien-Bibliothek der Robert-Bosch-GmbH*. Vol. 1: Katalog. Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt 1986, p. 89, 157.

39 Letter of recommendation from Martin Hinrich Lichtenstein to Prinz Maximilian, Wied-Neuwied, Berlin, 2 March 1815. In: Erwin Stresemann: *Eine Charakteristik Adelbert von Chamissos aus dem Jahre 1815*. In: *Forschungen und Fortschritte*. Nachrichtenblatt der deutschen Wissenschaft und Technik 33/5 (1959), pp. 129f.

40 Cf. Letter from Adelbert von Chamisso to Prinz Maximilian, Wied-Neuwied [concept], [Berlin], no date. In: A.v.C.: *Leben und Briefe*. Vol. 1 (footnote 32), p. 354; see also reprints of this letter in Stresemann: *Eine Charakteristik Adelbert von Chamissos* (footnote 39), p. 129 and Dorothea von Chamisso/Friedrich Karl Timler: *Chamissos Berliner Zeit: Vom Pagen zum Direktor des Botanischen Gartens*. Berlin: Presse- und Informationsamt 1982, pp. 43–44.

41 Cf. Letter from Lorenz Leopold von Reichenbach to Prinz Maximilian, Wied-Neuwied, Berlin, 8 March 1815. In: Stresemann: *Eine Charakteristik Adelbert von Chamissos* (footnote 39), p. 130.

sciences, in particular his strengths in botany and minerology.⁴² Chamisso's familiarity with the existing collections of the Zoological Museum would moreover be an advantage to Neuwied, Lichtenstein argued, implying that Chamisso would be able to identify for the prince valuable specimens not yet in the museum's possession. Chamisso's letter of motivation to the prince followed a similar pattern. Here, he cited Lichtenstein's positive judgment of his skills as a naturalist and, like Lichtenstein, underscored the depth as well as breadth of his knowledge:

I have devoted myself to botany and, as is my nature, have turned to my nearest surroundings; I have trained myself using our North German as well as Swiss flora, which I know quite precisely. But I have not neglected other branches of natural science; I have, for example, recognizing the great esteem in which comparative anatomy is held, wielded the scalpel myself. I have also familiarized myself with the mineral kingdom.⁴³

Next to his academic skills, Chamisso's national-cultural identity had an apparent bearing upon his application. Though Lichtenstein claimed he need not report on Chamisso's person, – Neuwied's deputy Reichenbach was, after all, planning to meet Chamisso in several days to assess the latter's suitability as an assistant – he could not help but characterize his student's disposition in national terms:

in his entire being, there lacks the sprightliness of the true Frenchman and in essence, he is indeed more ponderous than most Germans, a characteristic which is however pleasantly mitigated by a very poetic temper that flows from him in leisurely hours. He needs time to sort something out, but once he is done, then it is certainly sorted out.⁴⁴

Chamisso evidently also felt compelled to insist on his inherently German character despite his country of origin, claiming that he is “a Frenchman by birth, a German by language, spirit and education”.⁴⁵ Indeed, Chamisso's complex ‘na-

42 “gründlich und ausgedehnt”. Letter of recommendation from Lichtenstein (footnote 39), p. 129.

43 “Ich habe mich der Botanik ergeben und bin darin, meiner Weise nach, von dem zunächstliegenden ausgegangen; ich habe mich an unserer Norddeutschen und an der Schweizer-Flora gebildet, die ich ziemlich genau kennen gelernt. Ich bin aber auch andern Zweigen der Naturwissenschaft nicht fremd geblieben; ich habe z.B. die Würdigung der vergleichenden Anatomie erkennend das Skalpell selbst geführt, auch das Mineralreich kennengelernt.” Chamisso to Wied-Neuwied (footnote 40), p. 354.

44 “seinem ganzen Wesen fehlt die Beweglichkeit des eigentlichen Franzosen und im Ganzen ist er sogar schwerfälliger als die meisten Deutschen, was aber wieder durch eine sehr poetische Laune, die sich in Nebenstunden von ihm ergießt, angenehm gemildert wird. Er braucht Zeit, eine Sache aufs Reine zu bringen, hat ers aber fertig, so ist sie auch gewiß auf dem Reinen.” Letter of recommendation from Lichtenstein (footnote 39), p. 130.

45 “Ich bin der Geburt nach ein Franzose, der Sprache, dem Sinn, der Bildung nach ein Deutscher”. Chamisso to Wied-Neuwied (footnote 40), p. 354.

ture' oscillating between French and German did not go unremarked by Reichenbach, who met the candidate personally on 5 March 1815. In his report to Neuwied several days later, Reichenbach described with evident reservation his first impressions of Chamisso:

By nature he is lanky, haggard and wears his long black hair parted in the middle, in the style of students who want to indicate their Germanness. [...] Cleanliness is apparently not his strong suit (so a true Frenchman after all). His entire being has something noticeably odd about it, to which his lanky figure and parted hair greatly contributes.⁴⁶

The conspicuous place of Chamisso's national and cultural identity in the preparations for the Neuwied expedition surely must be read against the greater backdrop of the final months of the Napoleonic Wars, during which hostile attitudes towards the French were still strong in Prussia. At the same time, the role of politics and budding national cultures should not be overstated. While his French origin was for Lichtenstein and Chamisso a fact to be downplayed, or for Reichenbach grounds for gibe, Chamisso's application ultimately foundered on a much more pragmatic consideration: money.

To be sure, Lichtenstein asserted that Chamisso, hardened by military service, had only the "most humble needs".⁴⁷ Chamisso himself similarly insisted that he would make "an undemanding, eager and robust assistant".⁴⁸ These claims were still apparently not enough to quell Reichenbach's doubts that Chamisso would be more financial burden than scientific aide. In fact, as Reichenbach reported to Neuwied, it became clear in his personal meeting that the student had few resources, with which to equip himself for his journey, and that Chamisso moreover predicted his yearly expenses during the expedition to amount to 400 Reichstaler Prussian Courant. Evidently suspicious that Chamisso's estimated financial need was based on higher standards of comfort than was to be expected on a scientific journey, Reichenbach inquired by the family von Itzenplitz – "one of the richest Prussian landowners", he added – whether their

⁴⁶ "Von Natur ist er lang, hager und trägt das schwarze lang gewachsene Haar gescheitelt, auf Art der Studenten, wodurch selbige Teutschheit andeuten wollen. [...] Reinlichkeit soll nicht seine Haupttugend sein (also ächt französisch). Sein ganzes Wesen hat etwas auffallend sonderbares, wozu seine lange hagere Figur und der gescheitelte Haarwuchs viel beiträgt." Reichenbach to Wied-Neuwied (footnote 41), p. 130.

⁴⁷ "Seine Bedürfnisse sind höchst gering, denn er ist im Kriegsdienst und auf fortgesetzten Fußreisen abgehärtet". Letter of recommendation from Lichtenstein (footnote 39), p. 130.

⁴⁸ "Einen anspruchlosen, eifrigen, rüstigen Gehülphen würden Sie an mir haben". Chamisso to Wied-Neuwied (footnote 40), p. 354.

former boarder Chamisso had lived beyond his means.⁴⁹ Despite their answer to the contrary, Reichenbach nevertheless concluded his report thus:

all the same, I do not believe it will be his fate to accompany you to such a strange part of the world since a large part, indeed the largest part of his travel expenses will fall on you. Also I do not believe that he would be able to cope with you in bearing the discomforts that are characteristic for such a voyage – and what a burden that would become for you.⁵⁰

The constellation of letters surrounding Chamisso's suitability for a scientific voyage reveals that scholarly ability was only one criterion among several that were sought out in young men aspiring to embark on a research expedition. At a time when state-funded scientific expeditions were still a distant prospect in Prussia and when the costs of overseas travel could be an obstacle to even the wealthiest of aristocratic explorers, the question of money was a crucial one. Delicately but clearly addressing financial needs or self-sufficiency could make or break a hopeful naturalist's application for participation on a scientific voyage. While Lichtenstein's recommendation coupled with Chamisso's self-fashioning in his letter of motivation ultimately failed to convince Neuwied to take on the young naturalist, Lichtenstein's supportive endorsement of Chamisso in the subsequent application to the Russian Rurik-expedition was successful. The differences between Lichtenstein's two recommendation letters suggest that he consciously adapted his presentation of his student's ability and character to reflect the financial concerns of expedition planners.

3.3 Chamisso's application to the Rurik-expedition: perfecting the arts of recommendation and self-fashioning

Already during Chamisso's lifetime, the pivotal moment of applying as naturalist to the Russian Rurik-expedition was dramatically told and retold in biographical and autobiographical portraits.⁵¹ As the story goes, Chamisso, while visiting his

⁴⁹ *“einem der reichsten Preuss. Güterbesitzer”*. Reichenbach to Wied-Neuwied (footnote 41), p. 130.

⁵⁰ *“so glaube ich dennoch nicht daß sein Fatum über ihn verhängt haben wird, Ihr Begleiter nach jenem so merkwürdigen Welttheil zu sein, da schon ein großer, ja wohl der größte Theil seiner Reisekosten auf Sie fallen würde. Auch glaube ich nicht, daß er es mit Ihnen in Ertragung von Beschwerden, die das Attribut einer solchen Reise sind, würde aufnehmen können, und welche Last müßte daraus für Sie entstehen.”* Reichenbach to Wied-Neuwied (footnote 41), p. 130.

⁵¹ Cf. Chamisso: *Leben und Briefe*. Vol. 1 (footnote 32), p. 356; Adelbert von Chamisso: *Werke*. Leipzig: Weidmann'sche Buchhandlung 1836–1839. Vol. 1: *Reise um die Welt in den Jahren 1815–1818, erster Theil: Tagebuch*. Leipzig: Weidmann'sche Buchhandlung 1836, p. 9; Friedrich Palm:

good friend Julius Eduard Hitzig, had coincidentally come across a newspaper article reporting the upcoming departure of a Russian expedition on search for the Northwest Passage. Allegedly stamping his foot, Chamisso cried out to Hitzig emphatically: “How I wish to be with these Russians at the North Pole!”⁵² Hitzig personally knew August von Kotzebue – father to the expedition’s captain, Otto von Kotzebue – and hence urged Chamisso to apply for a position on board: Hitzig would make the introductions and Chamisso would only need to gather certificates and letters of recommendations to support his application. On 14 June 1815, the coordinator of the Russian expedition Admiral Adam Johann von Krusenstern sent Chamisso a positive reply; the naturalist previously chosen for the expedition, Carl Friedrich (von) Ledebour, had withdrawn on short notice from the expedition, leaving an open position on board. A closer study of several documents concerning Chamisso’s application reveals that, besides Hitzig, it was Lichtenstein who played a decisive role in Chamisso’s second, successful attempt to take part on a scientific expedition.

Writing to August von Kotzebue on 22 May 1815, Lichtenstein once again praised Chamisso’s extensive knowledge in the natural sciences.⁵³ This time, however, he shifted the emphasis of his overall recommendation. Whereas in his first letter to Neuwied Lichtenstein had written one sentence on Chamisso’s minimal needs and resilience as a traveler, he now devoted almost a third of his letter to this subject when writing to Kotzebue. He stressed that Chamisso, “through early training in military campaigns and travel” as well as through his “difficult fate”, had both a “hardened” body and “steeled” spirit.⁵⁴ The thirty-four-year-old Chamisso combined the “staid and sedate nature” of a mature man with the “undemanding nature of a youth just entering the world”.⁵⁵ With these characterizations, Lichtenstein no doubt hoped to dispel any doubts that Chamisso would be capable of withstanding the difficulties and the frugal daily routine of scientific travel. In contrast to Lichtenstein’s first letter that avoided

Chamisso’s Werke in neuer Auflage. Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz (hereafter SBB PK), Nachlass Adelbert von Chamisso, K. 16, Nr. 22, fols. 3v–4v, here fol. 4.

52 “*Ich wollte, ich wäre mit diesen Russen am Nordpol!*” Chamisso: *Leben und Briefe*. Vol. 1 (footnote 32), p. 356.

53 Cf. Letter of recommendation from Martin Hinrich Lichtenstein to August von Kotzebue [copied by Adelbert von Chamisso], Berlin, 22 May 1815. In: Anne MacKinney: Chamisso and Lichtenstein: documents. In: *Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur* (IASL) 42/2 (2017), pp. 348–366, here p. 349.

54 “*durch frühe Uebung in Feldzügen und auf Reisen*”, “*hartes Schicksal*”, “*abgehärtet*”, “*gestählt*”. Letter of recommendation from Lichtenstein (footnote 53), p. 349.

55 “*gesetztes und beruhigtes Wesen mit der Anspruchlosigkeit eines eben in die Welt tretenden Jünglings*”. Letter of recommendation from Lichtenstein (footnote 53), p. 349.

discussion of finances, this recommendation now explicitly stated that Chamisso could only afford to equip himself with the most basic materials and instruments; in the same breath, though, Lichtenstein reassured Kotzebue that Chamisso “sought neither salary nor profit”.⁵⁶ His only aim in fulfilling his long-standing wish to participate in an overseas voyage was to “benefit science”.⁵⁷ Lichtenstein’s reassurances surely were a reaction to the misgivings that Reichembach and Neuwied held regarding Chamisso’s financial needs and expectations.

Krusenstern’s enthusiastic invitation to Chamisso to take part in the expedition confirms that Lichtenstein had struck the right tone. In this invitation, Krusenstern was highly impressed by Lichtenstein’s recommendation as well as by three additional testimonials – albeit much shorter and referencing exclusively Chamisso’s coursework – from Chamisso’s professors.⁵⁸ These documents were “of such a form, that they filled us with the greatest confidence”, exclaimed Krusenstern.⁵⁹ Yet it was ultimately Lichtenstein’s letter underscoring Chamisso’s sole desire to serve the sciences and his modest needs which convinced Krusenstern to take on the student:

From Prof. Lichtenstein’s letter, I see with great pleasure that your motives for the voyage are no less noble [than those of his predecessor Ledebour; A.M.] and I confess to you honestly, that *the* passage in Prof. Lichtenstein’s letter, which makes reference to this, alone gave me the courage to write to you.⁶⁰

Krusenstern moreover emphasized to Chamisso that all other participants of the expedition, including the captain, had likewise renounced any great financial

56 “sucht keinen Lohn noch Geldgewinn”. Letter of recommendation from Lichtenstein (footnote 53), p. 349.

57 “der Wissenschaft Nutzen bringend”. Letter of recommendation from Lichtenstein (footnote 53), p. 349.

58 Cf. Letters of recommendation from Karl Asmund Rudolphi, Christian Samuel Weiss and Paul Erman [transcribed by Adelbert von Chamisso; notarized by Karl Wilhelm Ludwig Schede], Berlin, 22 May 1815, SBB PK, Nachlass Adelbert von Chamisso, K. 1, Nr. 6, fols. 3–4.

59 “sind von der Art, dass sie uns das grösste Zutrauen einflössen”. Letter from Adam Johann Ritter von Krusenstern to Adelbert von Chamisso, Reval, 14 June^{greg.}/2 June^{jul.} 1815. In: Anne MacKinney: Chamisso and Lichtenstein: documents. In: Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur (IASL) 42/2 (2017), pp. 348–366, here p. 350.

60 “Aus dem Briefe des Prof. Lichtenstein sehe ich mit innigem Vergnügen, dass Ihre Motive zur Reise nicht weniger noble sind, und ich gestehe Ihnen aufrichtig, dass die Stelle in Prof. Lichtensteins Briefe, welche darauf Bezug hat, mir allein den Muth gibt, an Sie zu schreiben.” Krusenstern to Chamisso (footnote 59), p. 351 (emphasis in original).

benefits: “they set in their sights only the glory of taking part in an endeavor, which is unique in its kind and is thoroughly promising”.⁶¹

The ‘modest’ 2,500 Rubles, or roughly 625 Reichstaler, that the naturalist was to receive yearly was likely more financial support than Chamisso could have hoped for.⁶² The fame, too, associated with joining the still thin ranks of European scholars who traveled around the world would indeed be useful for Chamisso’s later career. Yet a draft of Chamisso’s letter to the financier of the expedition, Count Nikolaj Petrovič Rumjancev, suggests that Chamisso was learning the importance of emphasizing his selflessness in the pursuit of science. Though only partially dated, the draft was likely written while the expedition was still in Plymouth, England in early September 1815, just before it embarked for the first station of its voyage in Brazil. In this letter, Chamisso reassures Rumjancev that “what compels us to sacrifice what we love, is neither the hope of profit, nor the more noble desire for renown or glory”.⁶³ Rather, Chamisso only hoped to “live with nature, to search through new lands and under new skies [...] in order to wrest from it its hidden treasures and to embrace it in all its metamorphoses”.⁶⁴ With respect to the new discoveries that were sure to be made on the expedition, Chamisso humbly presented himself to the Count as a mere “instrument in the vast realm of science”.⁶⁵ After the first failed attempt with the Neuwied application, both Lichtenstein and Chamisso successfully cultivated an abnegating, self-effacing rhetoric that was so crucial to being accepted as a member of a scientific voyage.

61 “nur das Glorreiche, Theil an einer Unternehmung zu nehmen, welche in ihrer Art einzig ist und durchaus viel verspricht, schwebt ihnen vor Augen”. Krusenstern to Chamisso (footnote 59), p. 350.

62 For the calculation of currency equivalencies, see Krusenstern to Chamisso (footnote 59), p. 353, note g.

63 “ce qui nous fait sacrifier à ce que nous aimons ce n^{est} pas même le désir ni l^{espoir} de gain ni même l^{envie} plus noble de la reputation ou de la gloire”. Letter from Adelbert von Chamisso to Nikolaj Petrovič Rumjancev [concept], no place, 7 September^{greg.}/26 August^{jul.} [1815]. In: Anne MacKinney: Chamisso and Lichtenstein: documents. In: Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur (IASL) 42/2 (2017), pp. 348–366, here p. 354 (emphasis in original).

64 “vivre avec la nature, la chercher dans de nouvelles terres et sous de nouveaux cieus, révéler pour lui aracher ses trésors cachés, et l^{embrasser} sous toutes ses metamorphoses”. Chamisso to Rumjancev (footnote 63), p. 354.

65 “des decouvertes nouvelles dont je pourrai devenir l^{instrument} dans le vaste champ des sciences”. Chamisso to Rumjancev (footnote 63), p. 354.

3.4 Do ut des: Chamisso's collected objects and Lichtenstein's museum

Lichtenstein's commitment to helping his student fulfill the longstanding wish to undertake a scientific voyage was itself not without self-serving motivations. Lichtenstein desired new, rare specimens for his museum and Chamisso was now in an ideal position to help him. Indeed, before he embarked on his voyage, Chamisso and Lichtenstein struck a deal that the Berlin museum would receive any extra specimens, or 'duplicates' (*Dubletten*), that Chamisso was allowed to keep at the end of the expedition. No other persons or institutions, Chamisso promised, would be allocated the no doubt valuable specimens originating from parts of the world few Europeans had yet explored. As in similar contracts arranged between the museum and university students or independent collectors, Lichtenstein even secured ministerial approval to reimburse Chamisso – should he return safely from his voyage – a fixed amount for each specimen in order to partially cover packing and transportation costs.⁶⁶ Lichtenstein moreover utilized the occasion of his student's imminent departure on a foreign expedition to stress to the Prussian Section of Culture and Public Education (*Sektion für den Kultus und öffentlichen Unterricht*) the urgent need to provide state funding for scientific expeditions; otherwise Prussia's "most skilled, young people" would be forced to continue to seek out better opportunities abroad.⁶⁷ Not only was Chamisso in the position to support the growth of Lichtenstein's museum, his example was also useful in promoting Lichtenstein's greater scientific-political agenda.

Lichtenstein ultimately got more than he bargained for. As the Rurik-expedition embarked on the final phase of its journey from Portsmouth, England to Kronstadt, Russia, Chamisso wrote a letter – addressed to Hitzig but no doubt relayed to Lichtenstein – announcing his return to Europe and the bountiful collection of objects destined for the Berlin Museum. Instead of giving Lichten-

⁶⁶ Cf. Letter from Martin Hinrich Lichtenstein to Section for Culture and Public Education (*Sektion für den Kultus und öffentlichen Unterricht*), Berlin, 28 June 1815. In: Stresemann: Eine Charakteristik Adelbert von Chamissos (footnote 39), p. 130. The original letter is located in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin under the signature SBB PK, Sgl. Darmstaedter Afrika 1804: Lichtenstein, Martin Karl Heinrich, fols. 37–38. A copy of the letter is located in the Geheimes Staatsarchiv under the signature GStA PK, I. HA Rep. 76 Kultusministerium Va Sekt. 2 Tit. X Nr. 15 Bd. 2, fols. 139–140; Letter from Martin Hinrich Lichtenstein to Ministry of Culture (*Ministerium für die geistlichen, Unterrichts- und Medizinal-Angelegenheiten*), Berlin, 10 March 1819. In: Anne MacKinney: Chamisso and Lichtenstein: documents. In: Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur (IASL) 42/2 (2017), pp. 348–366, here pp. 359–362.

⁶⁷ "geschicktesten jungen Leute". Lichtenstein to Section for Culture and Public Education (*Sektion für den Kultus und öffentlichen Unterricht*) (footnote 66), p. 130.

stein his duplicates for recompense, Chamisso ultimately decided to donate his entire zoological and mineralogical collections to the Berlin Museum. For this, Chamisso expected Lichtenstein's assistance in completing his journey from Kronstadt back to Berlin. In the same letter, he listed his anticipated itinerary and various needs:

I would like to depart from Kronstadt to Stettin in the first days of September, the most convenient time, and take with me that, which I will retain from my collections – this should and will be a great portion – around 20 crates, large and small. An application and strong recommendation to the Prussian Consul in Kronstadt could be very helpful to me, a recommendation to the envoy in Petersburg perhaps desirable. In Kronstadt I will need to disembark and re-embark, [and I will need; A.M.] a depot for my crates, etc. – my collection's ultimate destination – excluding my plants – is the Berlin Museum [...]. I don't know the Prussian customs facilities. Should my well-caulked and well-packed crates be opened – I could stand to lose everything. Could this not be avoided?⁶⁸

Clearly overjoyed both at his student's safe return as well as at the prospect of such a generous donation of material to his museum, Lichtenstein spared no effort in granting Chamisso's wishes.⁶⁹ He relied especially on his ministerial connections to organize contact persons in Kronstadt, who would then secure safe and swift passage to Berlin for both donation and donor.⁷⁰ On 3 July 1818, Lichtenstein wrote:

68 *“Ich will in den ersten Tagen des Septbr., die günstigste Zeit, mich in Cronstadt für Stettin wieder einschiffen und mit mir nehmen, was ich von meinen Sammlungen behalten werde – und das muß und wird ein großer Theil sein – gegen 20 Kisten große und kleine. Eine Anmeldung und kräftige Empfehlung an den Preußischen Consul in Cronstadt könnte mir sehr nützlich werden, an die Gesandtschaft in Petersburg vielleicht nur angenehm. In Cronstadt muß ich mich aus- und einschiffen, eine Niederlage für meine Kisten haben u.s.w. – meiner Sammlungen endliches Ziel – meine Pflanzen ausgenommen – ist das Berliner Museum – sollte sich das Department für solche nicht interessieren. Ich kenne die preußischen Douanen-Einrichtungen nicht, sollten bei Ankunft in einem preußischen Hafen meine wohl verpichten und verwahrten Kisten eröffnet werden müssen – würde ich alles verlieren können. Könnte dem nicht vorgebeugt werden?”* Letter from Adelbert von Chamisso to Julius Eduard Hitzig, England, 16 June 1818. In: A.v.C.: Leben und Briefe. Vol. 2 (footnote 30), pp. 53–55, here p. 53.

69 Cf. Letter from Martin Hinrich Lichtenstein to Adelbert von Chamisso, Berlin, 3 July 1818. In: Anne MacKinney: Chamisso and Lichtenstein: documents. In: Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur (IASL) 42/2 (2017), pp. 348–366, here pp. 354–356.

70 Cf. Letter from Johann Ludwig von Jordan to Martin Hinrich Lichtenstein, Berlin, 7 July 1818; letter from Johann Ludwig von Jordan to Prussian consul to Kronstadt G[eorg] W[ilhelm] Hasselmann [copy], Berlin, 7 July 1818; letter from Johann Ludwig von Jordan to Royal Envoy Friedrich von Schoeler [copy], Berlin, 7 July 1818. In: Anne MacKinney: Chamisso and Lichtenstein: documents. In: Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur (IASL) 42/2 (2017), pp. 348–366, here pp. 357–358.

Welcome home to Europe dear Chamisso! Three times welcome, since you return with rich blessings and should like to give us your collections. Our Ministry for Foreign Affairs has undertaken to ensure that you will be warmly received by the Prussian Consul in Kronstadt and that he will officially be at your service. If need be, he should also provide you money. Regarding the arrival of your things in Prussian territory, I give you my word that your crates will not be opened before they reach the museum and under no other circumstances than *in your presence*. This is how it is with all shipments directed to us and never has something addressed to us been inspected at the border or in the warehouse.⁷¹

Per Lichtenstein's recommendation, the natural objects were sent separately and in advance of Chamisso's own arrival to protect them from potential damage through exposure in the coming autumn and winter months. Chamisso himself finally departed from Kronstadt on 27 September 1818, arriving almost three weeks later around 17 October in Swinemünde (today Świnoujście, Poland); he returned to Berlin likely several weeks thereafter.⁷²

3.5 From student to scholar

In the fall of 1818, Chamisso began working on his contribution to Otto von Kotzebue's official voyage report and on his dissertation on the salps he discovered together with the ship's doctor Johann Friedrich von Eschscholtz during the

71 "Willkommen in Europa mein bester Chamisso! Dreimal willkommen, da Sie mit reichem Segen zurückkehren und Ihre Sammlungen uns zuwenden wollen. Unser Ministerium der auswärtigen Angelegenheiten hat Sorge getragen, daß Sie bei dem Pr[eußischen] Consul in Cronstadt gute Aufnahme finden und ihn zu Ihrem Dienst officiell auffordern können. Nöthigenfalls soll er Ihnen auch Geld zahlen. Was den Eingang Ihrer Sachen ins Preussische betrifft, so gebe ich Ihnen mein Wort, daß Ihre Kisten nicht eher als im Museum und nicht anders, als in Ihrer Gegenwart geöffnet werden sollen. Denn so geschieht es bei allen Sendungen an uns und nie wird etwas an der Grenze oder im Packhof visitirt, was an uns adressirt ist." Letter from Lichtenstein to Chamisso (footnote 69), p. 355 (emphasis in original).

72 In Chamisso's published letters to Hitzig, he writes Hitzig on 17 October 1818 from Swinemünde (Świnoujście) and estimates 8 days travel before his arrival in Berlin. In a letter transcribed and published by Anna Busch and Johannes Görbert, Chamisso writes Hitzig on 20 October 1818 from the anchored ship and is unsure whether he will be able to deboard in Stettin (Szczecin) and begin his journey to Berlin in a day or in four to six weeks. Cf. Letter from Adelbert von Chamisso to Julius Eduard Hitzig, Swinemünde (Świnoujście), 17 October 1818. In: A.v.C.: Leben und Briefe. Vol. 2 (footnote 30), pp. 63f., here p. 64 and letter from Adelbert von Chamisso to Julius Eduard Hitzig, [Swinemünde (Świnoujście)], 20 October 1818. In: Anna Busch/Johannes Görbert: "Schlemiel kommt wieder". Unveröffentlichte Briefe von Adelbert von Chamisso vom Ende seiner Weltreise. In: Zeitschrift für Germanistik, N.F. 23/1 (2013), pp. 134–142, here p. 140.

expedition.⁷³ Lichtenstein, meanwhile, was occupied with assessing and integrating Chamisso's collection pieces into the museum as well as laying groundwork with the Ministry of Culture for his student's future career. On 10 March 1819, Lichtenstein wrote to the Minister Altenstein to "report on the success, which his [Chamisso's; A.M.] efforts have had for the museum".⁷⁴ After describing the quality and summarizing the quantity of Chamisso's objects, Lichtenstein estimated the entire worth of the collection to amount to 1000 Reichstaler. He stressed, though, that aside from a small reimbursement of transportation costs⁷⁵

Chamisso desires no payment, but rather would like that this bounty from his journey be incorporated into the Royal Collections without further ado, since he wishes to affiliate himself in the future with the local natural scientific institutions and reserves only the right to freely use his donated rarities for his scholarly work.⁷⁶

Renouncing direct payment for his objects was, to be sure, a strategically smart albeit risky move for Chamisso. As Lichtenstein's intimations make clear, Chamisso was hoping that by donating his objects to the museum, he would receive in return something far more valuable than a lump sum of money: Once his collection was a part of Berlin's scientific institutions he hoped the path would be paved

73 Cf. Adelbert von Chamisso: *Bemerkungen und Ansichten auf einer Entdeckungsreise: unternommen in den Jahren 1815–1818 auf Kosten Sr. Erlaucht des Herrn Reichs-Kanzlers Grafen Romanzoff auf dem Schiffe Rurick unter dem Befehle des Lieutenants der Russisch-Kaiserlichen Marine Otto von Kotzebue*. Weimar: Hoffmann 1821; Adelbert von Chamisso: *de animalibus quibusdam e classe vermium Linnaeana in circumnavigatione terrae auspicante comite N. Romanzoff duce Ottone de Kotzebue annis 1815, 1816, 1817, peracta observatis*. Fasciculus primus. De Salpa. Berlin: Ferdinand Dümmler Verlag 1819. For a detailed reconstruction of Chamisso's research on the salps, the composition of his dissertation and the reception of his work, see Glaubrecht/Dohle: *Discovering the alternation of generations in salps* (footnote 5), pp. 339–360.

74 "zu erstatten über den Erfolg, welchen seine Bemühungen für unser Museum gehabt haben". Lichtenstein to Ministry of Culture (*Ministerium für die geistlichen, Unterrichts- und Medizinal-Angelegenheiten*) (footnote 66), p. 359.

75 This reimbursement was ultimately granted. Cf. Letter from Karl vom Stein zum Altenstein to Adelbert von Chamisso, Berlin, 6 May 1819. In: Anne MacKinney: *Chamisso and Lichtenstein: documents*. In: *Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur (IASL)* 42/2 (2017), pp. 348–366, here p. 364.

76 "Chamisso begehrt aber dafür keine Bezahlung, sondern will diese Ausbeute seiner Reise ohne weiter viel Aufhebens davon zu machen, den Königl[ichen] Sammlungen einverleiben, da er sich für seine künftige Lebenszeit den hiesigen Naturwissenschaftlichen Anstalten anzuschließen wünscht und sich nur die freie Benutzung der überwiesenen Seltenheiten zu seinen gelehrten Arbeiten vorbehalten." Lichtenstein to Ministry of Culture (*Ministerium für die geistlichen, Unterrichts- und Medizinal-Angelegenheiten*) (footnote 66), p. 360.

for himself to become part of Berlin's scientific institutions. It was, in a sense, a reversal of the practice of scholars donating their collections to the state institution subsequent to their appointment.⁷⁷ Yet there was no guarantee that Chamisso's plan would work.

Indeed, in April 1819, around one month after Lichtenstein had sent his report to the Minister Altenstein, Chamisso was becoming desperate for any information on his future in Berlin's academia and ventured to write the minister himself.⁷⁸ Though he had published his dissertation *De Salpa*, obtained his doctorate from the University of Berlin in March of that same year and had even recently received word from the Director of the Botanical Gardens, Heinrich Friedrich Link, that a position would likely become available to him, Chamisso's financial resources remained precariously low and his existence troublingly uncertain. The draft of his letter to Altenstein indicates the great care Chamisso took to make clear on the one hand his urgent financial needs yet on the other maintain his image as a selfless servant of science. Indicating his devotion not just to science in general, but specifically to science in Prussia, "my second fatherland", Chamisso declares at the outset of his letter that he turned down the many professional opportunities offered to him in Russia and sought only to become a part of Berlin's scientific institutions.⁷⁹ In a fleeting yet crucial embedded clause, he reminds the minister that his collections were already a part of the institutions he now wished to join. After referencing his financial difficulties – which he discreetly terms "a very peculiar concatenation of private circumstances" that prevent him from patiently awaiting news on his appointment – Chamisso then names the salary he would need to be able to live independently.⁸⁰ In his draft he even crosses out the higher amount of 700, requesting only a minimum of 600 Reichstaler annually. This money, Chamisso insists, would release him from the necessity of finding a

77 See Chapter 2.1. of this article.

78 Letter from Adelbert von Chamisso to Karl vom Stein zum Altenstein [concept], Berlin, [April 1819]. In: Anne MacKinney: Chamisso and Lichtenstein: documents. In: Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur (IASL) 42/2 (2017), pp. 348–366, here pp. 362–364.

79 "*meinem zweiten Vaterlande*". Chamisso to Altenstein (footnote 78), p. 362. As one letter from Chamisso to Hitzig makes clear, these Russian offers were never competitive. Referring to these prospects, Chamisso writes from Kronstadt: "even if they offer me a ream of paper rubles, they shall not keep me here. It is clear to me that I cannot ever wish to start my future here, [...] every day of delay is like blood being drained from my heart" ["*Daß ich mir keine Zukunft zu begründen wünschen kann, ist mir klar, daß jeder Tag müßiger Verzögerung mir wie Blut vom Herzen abgezapft werde ist natürlich*"]. Letter from Adelbert von Chamisso to Julius Eduard Hitzig, [St. Petersburg], August 1818. In: Busch/Görbert: "Schlemiel kommt wieder" (footnote 72), p. 138.

80 "*eine ganz eigene Verkettung meiner Privatverhältnisse*". Chamisso to Altenstein (footnote 78), p. 363.

second employment and would thereby allow him to fully devote himself “with the exertion of all [his] strengths” and with “righteous enthusiasm” to the institution, to which he hoped to be appointed.⁸¹ Chamisso was careful to frame his request as an issue of existential security and not of profit. He finally appeals to the Minister Altenstein, whom he names “magnanimous protector of each and every pure aim for the sciences”, to grant his request and thereby casts his own (ultimately monetary) desires as uncorrupt.⁸²

Though it is unclear from the sources whether Altenstein ever responded specifically to this letter, it is obvious that the minister was enthusiastic about Chamisso’s donation as well as sympathetic to his career ambitions. Writing to Chamisso directly on 6 May 1819, Altenstein expressed his pleasure in reading Lichtenstein’s report of Chamisso’s “considerable number of manifold, highly interesting natural historical curiosities”.⁸³ He moreover applauded Chamisso’s “noble selflessness” in donating these objects to Berlin’s natural history collections.⁸⁴ With this “very important gift for science”, Chamisso had created a “lasting remembrance” for himself.⁸⁵ Altenstein moreover acknowledged Chamisso’s desire to join Berlin’s natural scientific institutions and declared it a wish that “would surely be very welcome to the state”.⁸⁶ Six months later on 11 November 1819 Altenstein wrote again to Chamisso, happily informing him that he was accepted to the post of assistant in the botanical department of the Royal Herbarium.⁸⁷ In this position, Chamisso was to receive the annual 600 Reichstaler he had requested.⁸⁸ Once again, as with the application to the Rurik-expedition four

81 “mit Anstrengung aller meiner Kräfte”, “redliche Eifer”. Chamisso to Altenstein (footnote 78), p. 363.

82 “großmüthigen Protector jeglicher reinen Absicht für die Wissenschaft”. Chamisso to Altenstein (footnote 78), p. 363.

83 “bedeutende Zahl von mannigfachen sehr interessanten naturgeschichtlichen Merkwürdigkeiten”. Letter from Karl vom Stein zum Altenstein to Adelbert von Chamisso, Berlin, 6 May 1819. In: Anne MacKinney: Chamisso and Lichtenstein: documents. In: Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur (IASL) 42/2 (2017), pp. 348–366, here p. 365.

84 “edler Uneigennützigkeit”. Altenstein to Chamisso (footnote 83), p. 365.

85 “dieses, für die Wissenschaft wichtige Geschenk”, “bleibendes Andenken”. Altenstein to Chamisso (footnote 83), p. 365.

86 “dem Staate gewiß sehr willkommenen Wunsch”, “durch Ihren Eifer und durch Ihre Talente der Wissenschaft, welcher Sie Sich vorzüglich gewidmet haben, recht nützlich zu werden”. Altenstein to Chamisso (footnote 83), p. 365.

87 Cf. Letter from Karl vom Stein zum Altenstein to Adelbert von Chamisso, Berlin, 11 November 1819. In: Anne MacKinney: Chamisso and Lichtenstein: documents. In: Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur (IASL) 42/2 (2017), pp. 348–366, here pp. 365–366.

88 For a contextualization of this sum, see Christian Maus’ overview of the typical income of an ordinary professor at the Berlin University, which averaged around 1200 Reichstaler per year in

years prior, presenting oneself – or being presented – as a selfless, devoted servant of science disinterested in glory or profit ultimately paid off.

In the final letter regarding Chamisso's appointment to the Royal Herbarium, Lichtenstein's name is no longer mentioned; only Heinrich Friedrich Link, who accepted Chamisso in the Botanical Gardens to work as his assistant, is referenced. Still, Lichtenstein's repeated involvement and support during this early period of Chamisso's studies was essential for Chamisso's advancement as a scholar. As is perhaps characteristic of such mentor figures, Lichtenstein deeply influenced the path of those under his wing and benefitted in turn from their successes; ultimately, though, he acted behind the stage of academic performance. Particularly today, when academic impact is measured in publication statistics, Lichtenstein's importance for students and practitioners of natural history can be easily overlooked. The documents discussed here, however, should make clear why Chamisso could write in 1819 that Lichtenstein was his "teacher, friend and everything" to him.⁸⁹

4 Conclusion

The three crucial moments of Chamisso's early career – the failed application to the Neuwied voyage, the successful application to the Rurik-expedition and the admission into Berlin's academic circle, marked by his appointment to a position in the Royal Herbarium – not only demonstrate Lichtenstein's significance as a mentor. Beyond this, these moments point to more general features of the culture of natural research in the early nineteenth century: First, the border between securing the finances necessary to live and 'serving' the scientific community was a fine one. Chamisso could not subsist for long as a naturalist without some form of livelihood. Yet in order to acquire such support, he needed to appear – either present himself or be presented by an influential mentor as – altruistic, solely devoted to the sciences and entirely disinterested in financial gain. The rhetorical (self-)fashioning of the naturalist as a servant of science was crucial to Chamisso's survival. Second, the examination of Chamisso's case underscores that (self-)fashioning as a discursive practice did not only play a decisive role in published travel accounts or

the first half of the nineteenth century. Christian Maus: *Der ordentliche Professor und sein Gehalt. Die Rechtsstellung der juristischen Ordinarien an den Universitäten Berlin und Bonn zwischen 1810 und 1945 unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Einkommensverhältnisse*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Unipress 2013 (Bonner Schriften zur Universitäts- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte. Vol. 4), pp. 135–139.

⁸⁹ "Mein Lehrer, Freund und Alles". Letter from Adelbert von Chamisso to Louis de La Foye, Berlin, early 1819. In: A.v.C.: *Leben und Briefe*. Vol. 2 (footnote 30), pp. 114–116, here p. 115.

scholarly treatises, but already before this stage, in the first epistolary attempts to enter the spheres of natural research.⁹⁰ Chamisso's and Lichtenstein's false starts and subsequent modifications of their letters of motivation and recommendation moreover suggests that fashioning the naturalist self first had to be learned – in other words, the rhetorical practices that helped mold the persona of the naturalist were not self-evident, universal or static. These observations based on the case of Chamisso and his mentor Lichtenstein can help more clearly define the processes, media and actors involved in shaping, negotiating and disseminating the cultural figure of the naturalist in the early nineteenth century.

90 In a recent article, Monika Sproll has similarly focused on the letter as the medium, through which Chamisso and his naturalist friends fashioned their identities as researchers. Whereas the focus of this article has been on the strategies of constructing the naturalist persona before the formative experiences of joining a research expedition and later an academic community, Sproll contributes an important analysis of the processes of shaping identity that take place after the return from expeditions and within a scholarly network. Cf. Monika Sproll: *Weltwissen und ästhetische Identität – Merkmale einer Generation Schlemihl in den wissenschaftlichen Briefen Adelbert von Chamissos*. In: Selma Jahnke/Sylvie Le Moël (eds.): *Briefe um 1800 – Zur Medialität von Generation*. Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag 2015 (Berliner Intellektuelle um 1800. Vol. 4), pp. 103–134.