

# **Workshop: Small Forms for School Education – Education through Small Forms**

July 4–6, 2018  
at the Humboldt-University of Berlin

## **Deadline for abstract submission: February 25, 2018**

The selection of authors, texts and images suited for didactic purposes and their edition and modification into learning materials for school lessons may seem at first glance to be ordinary practices of marginal importance. But the aesthetic, economic and epistemological dimensions of the forms employed and generated in these practices have gained new significance through the research of the graduate school »Literary and Epistemic History of Small Forms«. Indeed, **small forms of writing—sketches, abstracts, notes, protocols, excerpts, essays, anecdotes, proverbs and paratexts**—cannot be overestimated in their importance both for school teaching and for scientific research. In the broad field of research on small forms, their usage in teaching and learning in schools has yet to be explicitly and thoroughly examined. The selection of texts, the planning of lessons and the composition of learning materials are subject to certain economic constraints, yet they are also to meet certain standards in form and substance while being designed with clear ideas about their reception in learning processes. Hence, the small forms of source material undergo a long transformation process from the discovery, analysis and reception of a text as an object of research to its edition and modification for school lessons.

Accordingly, we want to raise the question whether school education has a fundamental, maybe even inevitable affinity towards small forms, and whether it also generates its own specific small forms. These questions gain further importance in light of the changing cultural practices of reading and writing brought about by digitization and the consequent implications for school education.

The spatial and temporal conditions of modern lessons ultimately lead to the necessity of selecting contents and forms based on certain criteria for learning materials. At the same time the quality of teaching and learning has to be preserved. This tension can be observed equally in language and in natural science lesson plans. Particularly interesting is the intentional placement of breaking points in lesson materials as well as the preparation of larger material-based tasks: Here selected, abbreviated and/or edited texts and images are collected and composed in a new arrangement and embedded in a paratextual environment. Similar procedures take place in the composition of school books. However, there is a strong

tension between the aesthetic and epistemological demands of planning lessons on the one hand and the economic and aesthetic necessities of designing and publishing schoolbooks on the other.

Finally, the production of small forms by the pupils themselves—e.g. the lists, excerpts, notes and protocols they are expected to create—is an essential part of school education. In the creation of these small forms, the complex interplay between the pupil's two roles as recipient and as producer becomes apparent.

Small forms as »little tools of knowledge«, therefore, are essential components for learning and teaching. Ultimately, when examining the interrelationship between small forms and school education it is necessary to place their different applications and functions for teaching and learning within a historical context in order to illuminate and relate continuities as well as discontinuities.

The following **topics** are intended as possible, though by no means exclusive, approaches to the concept of the workshop:

- **Small forms and their usage in school education – now and then**
- **Small forms and their usage in school education – possibilities and limitations**
  - Small forms in science education: excerpts, lists, protocols, graphics, diagrams etc.
  - Small forms in language teaching: anecdotes, excerpts, essays, exempla, protocols, proverbs etc.
- **Text edition: from source text to learning material**
- **Schoolbook concepts and small forms**
- **Economy of the lesson vs. economy of the book: Which form fits?**
- **Digitization and school education**
- **Small forms specific to school education**

The workshop is addressed to scholars from the various fields of philology and from the natural sciences, as well as professionals from the publishing field.

**Abstracts** for **talks** (max. 30 minutes + 15 minutes Q&A) or **working group sessions** (interactive talks, max. 45 minutes) can be submitted **in English or German (max. 1 page)**. Abstracts should be e-mailed to this address: [julia.heideklang@staff.hu-berlin.de](mailto:julia.heideklang@staff.hu-berlin.de).

Depending on funding opportunities, accommodations and travel expenses may be compensated.