

Title:

How Universities Became Two-Cultured Spaces.

Abstract:

Few beliefs about the nature of knowledge appear to be less problematic and more deeply ingrained than the assumption that a wide gulf divides the natural sciences and the humanities. The happy phrase “the two cultures,” invented by the British physical chemist and novelist C.P. Snow in the Cold War, has over the past decades assumed an a-historical ring. But like many other dichotomies that characterize modernity, this binary opposition is younger than we tend to think. Its emergence constituted one of the most fundamental transformations in the history of knowledge. The talk will trace some aspects of this dichotomy by focusing on the institutional setup and spatial organization of European and American universities in the nineteenth century.

Short bio:

Fabian Kraemer is Assistant Professor for the history of science at LMU Munich and a member of Junge Akademie, where he initiated the working group “The Two Cultures of Science”. He is interested primarily in the history of the sciences and the humanities from the Renaissance through the nineteenth century and has two main research foci:

- (1) the scholarly practices of reading and note taking that were shared across the early modern Republic of Letters and their relation to “scientific” observation;
- (2) the pre-history of the “two cultures” (C.P. Snow) of the sciences and the humanities/literature.