

*On the Historical Oblivion of  
August Hermann Niemeyer,  
A Classic Author on Education*

KLAUS ZIERER  
*University of Munich*

ABSTRACT: A.H. Niemeyer, one of the most popular and important educationalists of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, seems to have fallen into oblivion and largely escaped the notice of historians of education. For this reason, on the occasion of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Niemeyer's birth, the contribution on hand pursues the aim to recall and appreciate his life and work. It endeavours, furthermore, to examine a question that is meaningful to education as a science, namely how it is possible that a classic author on education is almost completely unknown today.

RESUMÉ: A.H. Niemeyer, un des pédagogues les plus notoires et les plus importants du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, semble être tombé dans l'oubli et avoir échappé grandement à l'attention des historiens spécialistes de la pédagogie. Ainsi, à l'occasion du deux cent cinquantième anniversaire de sa naissance, le présent article a pour but de retracer sa vie et de faire apprécier son travail. De surcroît, on y examine avec attention une question chargée de sens pour la pédagogie en tant que science, à savoir: "Comment est-il possible qu'un auteur classique en matière d'enseignement soit aujourd'hui tombé presque totalement dans l'oubli i?"

From the perspective of the history of science the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century are more usually connected with names like Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, John Locke, and Immanuel Kant, and less with August Hermann Niemeyer. The same applies to his German hometown Halle on the Saale. This town is world-famous today due to the Francke Foundations and first calls to mind historical personalities such as August Hermann Francke, Carl Hildebrand Baron von Canstein, and Christian Wolff. All of these are sonorous names beside which August Hermann Niemeyer seems insignificant. But this was not always so. For a long time, A.H. Niemeyer was ranked alongside these outstanding personalities and, in the case of education science, was even

described as a classic author, as the reference to him in the *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* (*General German Biography*) points out and the statement by Johann Friedrich Herbart makes clear:

On this question I recommend, secondly, and in place of all other reading, the study of a very famous and widely read work, perhaps already known to you; I mean Niemeyer's *Grundsätze der Erziehung* (*Principles of Education*) ... far from attributing any authority to my statements which might seemingly be compared to his, I ask you rather to listen critically and full of mistrust whenever I differ from Niemeyer ... and many things I will therefore touch upon only briefly, because they seem to have been treated so comprehensively and excellently in that work that any further discussion is rendered superfluous. (Cited in Jacobi, 2001, p. 356)<sup>1</sup>

Today Niemeyer seems to have fallen into oblivion and largely escaped the notice of historians of education.<sup>2</sup> For this reason, on the occasion of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Niemeyer's birth, the Francke Foundations devoted their annual exhibition in 2004 on the topic "Light and Shade"<sup>3</sup> to the recollection and appreciation of his life and work (Klosterberg, 2004).<sup>4</sup> The present contribution also pursues this aim and endeavours, furthermore, to examine a question that is meaningful to education as a science, namely, how it is possible that one of the most important educationalists of the past is almost completely unknown today?

For this purpose, several periods of his life and work are introduced and explained in a first step in order to counteract the oblivion alluded to above. This simultaneously creates the basis for discussing, as a second step, the question of the disappearance of a classic author.<sup>5</sup>

### *Profile of a Life*

A.H. Niemeyer was born in 1754 as the fifth child of Auguste Sophie Niemeyer and Johann Conrad Philipp Niemeyer and is therefore a great-grandchild of A.H. Francke, who established the Francke Foundations in Halle.<sup>6</sup> In 1765 he joined the Pedagogium Regium of the Francke Foundations as an external pupil. After successfully graduating from school, he registered in 1771 at the Friedrichs-University of Halle to study theology. Among his teachers of theology were J.S. Semler, J.A. Nösselt, J.J. Griesbach, and G.A. Freylinghausen, as well as G.F. Meier in philosophy. By this time he had published his first writings, among them the first part of what is probably his best-known theological work, *Charakteristik der Bibel* (*Characteristics of the Bible*) in 1775. This

publication made him famous far beyond the boundaries of the city of Halle. After he had worked for a year as a teacher at the institutions of the Francke Foundations, he was awarded his doctorate in philosophy for the dissertation *De Similitudine Homerica* in 1777, thus obtaining the "venia legendi," the entitlement to hold philosophy lectures at the Friedrichs-University. As early as 1779, Niemeyer was appointed associate professor for theology and inspector of the theological seminar. In 1784 he finally became a full professor of theology and inspector at the Pedagogium Regium. The following year he shared with Georg Christian Knapp the position of the deputy head of the Francke Foundations.

Both then conducted the affairs of the foundations as headmasters from 1799 until the death of Georg Christian Knapp in 1825. In 1793/1794 Niemeyer was Vice-Chancellor of the Friedrichs-University and was awarded an honorary doctoral degree in theology during that time. Some years later, in 1804, he was appointed to the Berlin Oberschulkollegium (a body responsible for secondary education in Prussia) with a seat and a right to vote in the Prussian Ministry for Intellectual, Medical, and Educational Affairs; and in 1808 he was appointed Chancellor and Perpetual Head of the University of Halle by King Jérôme. He held both offices until 1816 and again, with the reopening of the university, which had been closed down by Napoleon, until 1819. In the last years of his life he received high honours – for example in 1826 the award of the Red Eagle Medal 2<sup>nd</sup> class by Friedrich Wilhelm III, and in 1827 the award of the Citizen Crown of the City of Halle, as well as an honorary professorship of the University of Moscow on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his doctoral degree. Niemeyer died at the age of 74 on July 7th, 1828 after a short illness, the father of 15 children,<sup>7</sup> after an active committed life as professor at the University of Halle and head of the Francke Foundations.

This sober account of important biographical data shows that the life of A.H. Niemeyer was closely connected with the Francke Foundations and that he had a career characterized by the quick and constant acquisition of functions and honours. It conceals, however, the darker side of his life.

He lost his mother when he was nine years old; and at the age of 13 years, also lost his father. From then on, Sophie Antoinette Lysthenius, a relative, brought him up. Further, two of his children died at birth, one at the age of one year, and during his life Niemeyer buried another four of his children. Although it sounds like a glorious period, the time at the

Francke Foundations and at the University of Halle was anything but easy for Niemeyer: The revenue of the Francke Foundations, for example, sank by one third from 1780 to 1795, so that its existence was at stake. Thanks to a combination of numerous connections, clever maneuvering, conviction, and competence, Niemeyer succeeded in renewing the Francke Foundations both from inside and out, so that he can be described without exaggeration as their second founder (Menne, 1995). Approximately the same applied to the University of Halle, which was subject to a far-reaching re-organization in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and suffered particularly from the Napoleonic Wars. A.H. Niemeyer was directly affected by the wars, as he was deported to France in 1807 and separated from his family and home country for almost six months. The result of this "journey" is recorded in an interesting and informative contemporary document, which attempts to capture the atmosphere within the population of Halle after the Prussian defeat and the victory of France, as well as recording his personal experiences, visits to places of interest, and encounters with important people. Almost 20 years later it was published in two volumes, in 1824 and 1826, under the title *Observations on a Deportation Journey to France in the Year 1807* and it remains an essential source for modern historical research. His other accounts of journeys through Germany and Europe are worth mentioning at this point. These journeys led him, for example, to Berlin, Hamburg, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Prague, Vienna, and Venice. The accounts were published between 1820 and 1823 as *Observations on a Journey to England* and *Observations on a Journey through a Part of Westphalia and Holland* (*Beobachtungen auf Reisen in und außer Deutschland*).<sup>8</sup>

Niemeyer's motive for his journeys was often the encounter with famous dignitaries of the church and politics, writers and scholars. He had friendly contact to J.W. von Goethe and F.G. Klopstock, visited F.H. Jacobi, J.F. Herbart, Chr. G. Salzmann, and J. Chr. GutsMuth; he met G.E. Lessing, J.G. Herder, and Chr. M. Wieland, to name a few. Different literary works, for example a volume of poems called *August Hermann Niemeyer's Poems* (1778), as well as the religious dramas *Abraham on Memoria* (1776), and *Lazarus* (1778), which was set to music by J.H. Rolle and later by F. Schubert, resulted from these acquaintanceships.

Although these contacts and this work made Niemeyer famous far beyond the boundaries of Halle, he has attained his greatest fame through his educational texts, in particular his major work *Principles of*

*Education and Teaching for Parents, Private Tutors, and Educators* (*Grundsätze der Erziehung und des Unterrichts für Eltern, Hauslehrer und Erzieher* – 1832),<sup>9</sup> published for the first time in 1796. This work was published eight times during his lifetime and was translated into numerous languages, for example into Dutch and Danish in 1800, Polish in 1808, and French in 1835.<sup>10</sup>

To the present, this book has been reprinted several times, for example in 1878/1889 by W. Rein and most recently in 1970 by H.-H. Groothoff and U. Herrmann.<sup>11</sup> Without doubt, the *Principles of Education and Teaching* is one of the most important educational documents of its time. In what follows the principles will be explained in more detail.

### *On Niemeier's "Principles of Education and Teaching"*

A.H. Niemeier's educational texts are, based on the practical educational responsibility he had taken on as a teacher at the different schools of the Francke Foundations and primarily as head of the *Pedagogii Regii* in 1784, and on a combination of the ideas of the Enlightenment and Pietism. The *Principles of Education and Teaching for Parents, Private Tutors, and Educators* represents the sum of his educational experience and it is outstanding in two different ways: first, it is the most influential work of A.H. Niemeier; and second, precisely because of its construction and its motifs, it can be regarded as one of the first systematic textbooks on education in Germany (Cf. Hermann, 2004a, 2004b). Niemeier speaks of principles since the statements he makes are generally valid in his eyes for education and teaching:

Although one human being is definitely not completely similar to another one, there is nevertheless something common in the nature of man, which can everywhere be taken for granted, so that from the same effects the same results can usually be expected. This is not only the case with the adult man in the state of full maturity and completed education; it already applies to the earliest years. All aptitudes take shape from earliest childhood; all strengths develop following the eternal law of nature. If education consists of a deliberate influence on human beings to advance this process, if they are not to be left to the workings of coincidence and thoughtless routine, if instead a certain plan, a strict principle, for a common aim, is pursued, the determination of which is a question of ethics, in order to bring about changes – then he who explores human nature most thoroughly and, as far as possible, examines the very beginnings of all its changes, will be most certain to find

the general rules which can promote this formation and development. So, there cannot be any doubt that general rules of education can and really do exist. (Niemeyer, 1832, p. 6)

These first principles of education which he formulated and that he calls the highest principles of all education can be summarized in these general statements:

- 1) Awaken and shape all talents and abilities that have been given to the pupil as a human being and an individual.
- 2) Bring unity and harmony to their education by means of clear ideas of the natural determination and the relationship of these talents.
- 3) By every means that is compatible with the rights of the pupil as a rational creature, turn the strength which has been awoken towards everything that appears to reason to be worthy of man.
- 4) Let the harmony of freedom with reason be your highest aim, because the moral, and consequently, the highest value of man is based on it. (Cf. Niemeyer, 1832, p. 5)

The intention of his work from the first edition on was to write an essay in which the "occupations, duties and relationships of the private tutor and educator, [are represented] more completely than till now" (Niemeyer, 1970, p. 22). The size of the *Principles of Education and Teaching* therefore always grew over the course of time both in quantity and quality, as the editions were always revised and expanded, thus giving the work an encyclopaedic character. The fields of educational philosophy, education as a science, special and general teaching theory, organization of the school system and publicly recognized schools, family education, and history of the education are treated in the 8<sup>th</sup> edition (Landsheere, 1999). According to Gilbert de Landsheere (1999) and Ulrich Herrmann (2004b), the structure of education as a modern science is already included.

### *Niemeyer's Eclecticism: A Moderate Approach*

With regard to method, Niemeyer proceeds eclectically. "Check it all! Keep the best!" This motto and the principle of not belonging to any party was therefore his only declared confession, which he emphasizes again and again and attempts to justify. He writes for example in the 1<sup>st</sup> edition:

I do hope that one will notice that I have tried to keep free from any attachment to a particular system, be it religious, philosophical, educational or political. Perhaps this is not the way to make one's fortune in our days, when one must think absolutely aristocratically

or democratically, critically or uncritically before one-sided tribunals, and choose between the old or new education to find favourable acceptance. I know meanwhile that there is also a considerable number of quiet researchers and promoters of the truth, who are fair towards the virtuous and who regard the party spirit, which should reign least in an enlightened republic, as the most essential obstacle against the general progress of enlightenment. I would like to have myself made worthy of the satisfaction of these more moderate people. (Niemeyer, 1970, p. 10)<sup>12</sup>

One example shall serve for the clarification of the eclectic method of A.H. Niemeyer: In the context of his considerations on moral education, he notes that:

Education [must] find the task of establishing a morally good character through its influence more easy or more difficult, depending whether it perceives more good or more evil, or at least both to approximately the same degree, in the child's nature." (Niemeyer, 1832, p. 56)

Consequently, the question arises whether the child is good or bad by nature. Here Niemeyer differentiates primarily two positions and presents them at first without comment. This procedure could be described as hermeneutic:

According to the verdict of many recent educationalists and moralists [he quotes Rousseau, Basedow, Campe, Salzmann, and others] the first is the case. To them the world of children is a state of innocence in which no trace of malicious tendencies and desires could yet be found. The verdicts of others [Fichte is mentioned] stand in the most glaring contradiction to this view; they assert a complete inability for all true good without the help of higher support and declare in this sense that all the thoughts and desires of man are bad from youth on. (Niemeyer, 1832, p. 56)

Ultimately, these conceptions are comprehensible for Niemeyer, but not acceptable, as both of them lack an empirical basis. What is decisive for Niemeyer's eclecticism is, therefore, experience. The rationality of opinions alone is not sufficient. They must first pass the test of experience, as he argues in the following quotation:

Education will not miss its purpose, as long as it does not neglect the undeniable phenomena of the world of children and youth, even assuming that the profoundest reasons for these phenomena remain in many respects dark and doubtful. The most important and non-contradictory ones are the following: (1) In all children one perceives dispositions towards good tendencies, fundamental

attitudes and actions ... (2) Furthermore, all children are not only subject to seduction, but have, more or less, a tendency towards some things that are called wicked or evil at a mature age, even though one is not immediately inclined to blame them for this. (Niemeyer, 1832, p. 57)

Traces of dialectics and phenomenology can be recognized in these explanations as well as the already mentioned hermeneutic elements and first approaches towards empirical research, which principally refers to observation (Cf. Schmid, 2004, p. 188). Asked whether the child is good or bad, Niemeyer gives the following answer against the background of his considerations as quoted above:

It is in no way possible to say of children that they are positively good or positively bad; but you can say that the tendency to good and to bad lies in them, although in varying mixtures and relationships. (Niemeyer, 1832, p. 57)

The problem of whether a child is good or bad by nature is clearly answered by Niemeyer in a hermeneutic, dialectical, and phenomenological critique of the various opinions prevalent at his time which is not merely the result of a weighing up of opposing positions. "Eclecticism creates something new by classifying and systematizing the existing positions and surpasses itself in the process of systematization" (Horn & Wigger, 1994, p. 29).

For Niemeyer it was a matter of course that "education and didactics per se [are] deductive sciences" (Schmid, 2004, p. 189). Ethics, philosophy, anthropology, and psychology therefore are for him important related sciences that on the one hand set the aims of education and instruction and, on the other hand, name the corresponding means for their attainment (p. 189).

The knowledge of the history of education and instruction was for him an important basis for the practice of educational activities. A.H. Niemeyer denounces the lack of historical consciousness among many contemporaries, whose standpoints consequently remain vague, making them susceptible to zealot. From these considerations arose his attempt to give a survey of the general history of education and teaching with the aim "of providing the prospective educationalist and schoolteacher with an overview and perhaps also of prompting him to undertake research and to implement it in practice" (Niemeyer, 1832, p. 436).

His attempt is one of the first in this direction and shows its effects up to the present. His division of the 18<sup>th</sup> century into the Francke School, the School of Humanism, the School of the Philanthropists, and

the School of the Eclectics can still be found today in many historical studies upon education (cf. Schmid, 2004, p. 187f). And also the method of this survey – the combination of presentation oriented towards persons and text excerpts – is still part of the research into the history of education. Michael Winkler even claims that “Niemeyer virtually [invents] the classic pedagogic author in his attempt to characterize education in the 18<sup>th</sup> century with special regard to Protestant Germany” (1994, p. 149).

### *Between Pietism and Enlightenment: Aims of Education and Teaching*

As pointed out above, A.H. Niemeyer’s dependence on and connections with other fields is especially evident in his interpretation of education: He defines education as a deliberate and purposeful physical and intellectual influence on all the abilities and strengths of a person, predominantly in childhood and youth, in order to make him aware of these abilities and to cultivate them accordingly (Niemeyer, 1832, p. 2). The aim of education is consequently the “perfectibility” of the individual person, which shows in the ability to reason and to freely determine the will (autonomy) and culminates in the refining of the moral nature of man (morality) (p. 4f). Education cannot, however, achieve this aim by itself:

But this would happen too slowly, one-sidedly and imperfectly, the stock of materials on which mental strength should be developed and which man should process in order to achieve the various aims of his destiny would be too poor, and too much time would be lost in futile endeavours, if education were not assisted by actual teaching, and the educator by the teacher. Only in this way can the accidental and uncertain learning of countless facts and skills be ordered and reinforced, the inevitable gaps left by one’s own conceptions and occasional information deriving from communication with others be supplemented and the mind that might so easily be led into error be guided by a firm hand. (p. 108)

Education must be completed by instruction which differs “less in its purpose than in the manner by which it achieves its aim” (p. 108).<sup>13</sup> Whereas education confines itself to and concentrates on awakening, exercising, and confirming the existing abilities and strengths, teaching tries to add concepts, knowledge, and experience from outside.

To explain these considerations more closely Niemeyer, like most educators of his era, makes use of the image of the gardener:

The gardener does not really have to put a young tree into a greenhouse, to cultivate the soil for its roots artificially, to apportion air and sunshine for it, to block its natural growth with posts and pales or to arrange and straighten its branches symmetrically, but he will nonetheless be called wise if he sometimes breaks up the soil when it is hard and rough, if he waters it, when rain is lacking; if he protects the tree from the storms, roots out the weed that takes away its nourishment, kills the insect that gnaws at its tender bark and cuts off the sprigs that would deprive the stem of the very best juices. The education of man should be exactly like this. (Niemeyer, 1832, p. 482)

Accordingly, he summarizes: "Education can only enliven, support, and direct the force of nature" (p. 483).

A.H. Niemeyer does not understand education only as negative education in the sense of J.-J. Rousseau, but also as positive education in which the educator intervenes in an attempt to support and promote the right course of nature. The opinion that human nature is both good and bad is clearly visible since it can develop in both directions.

But how does the educator know which direction is the right one? Only his reason combined with his experience will be able to help him: it is the link between man and his creator that allows him to recognize the good, real, original nature. The educational motto is not, therefore "Do nothing," but "Do what is sensible" (Niemeyer, 1832, pp. 5, 480). Here the proximity to ideas of the Enlightenment is unmistakable.

Apart from this tendency toward good and evil, human nature is also characterized by a strength manifesting itself and working in a variety of ways, on which:

The well-known classification of the strength into physical or mental aspects [is based], which is not necessary, but neither uncomfortable nor fruitless. The mental strengths are further subdivided into the cognitive capacity, the ability to feel and the ability to express desire. (Niemeyer, 1832, p. 6)

With this anthropological conception, culminating in the formula "head, heart, hand" by J.H. Pestalozzi, Niemeyer can be interpreted as a child of his time. In this context, the emphasis on a general and all-embracing education has to be accentuated:

Even if the greater or lesser teach ability of the one or other of these strengths – separated more in the idea than in reality – namely memory, imagination, intellectual power, poetic talent etc. – are hints for the educator as to the fields in which the individual might accomplish the most and to the spheres of intellectual

activity in which he would be most skilled, the educator will nonetheless beware of helping these abilities to become so predominant that any other talent might become ineffective. (p. 1832, p. 486)

Body, soul, and spirit depend consequently on each other and a defect in the education of one leads to a defect in the development of the other. A harmonious education, supporting both the physical and the intellectual abilities, is therefore indispensable.

Whereas these considerations are valid for everybody, special determining factors apply to every individual person "to which every single pupil will devote himself or will be forced to do so by the circumstances" (Niemeyer, 1932, p. 483). Niemeyer refers here to the system of estates, which is in his eyes necessary for the continued existence of a state and which was broken down only slowly in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>14</sup> He therefore also subdivides the school system into elementary schools that are meant for all children and further into country schools and town or citizen schools, differentiated according to sex, ability, and vocation. For the sons of the prosperous Niemeyer mentions, among others, commercial schools, art schools, and military schools, as well as the scholars' or grammar schools, which are meant as a preparation for university. For girls he has girls' schools in mind, if required, "without having to be afraid of an over-education, if one knows how to be moderate" (Niemeyer, 1832, p. 246).<sup>15</sup>

Altogether it can be said that to educate man to consciousness and to the moral use of his reason is the task of education since this produces in the ideal case the educated man:

The sensible man, however, will without fail be the best citizen and possess the greatest social usefulness. Reason, which has taken command of him, will first and foremost restrain all primitive drives, but also the drive towards liberty and independence. Then it will teach him to see that man does not merely have natural rights, but also social duties which are determined by the specific situations and circumstances, including the forms of government. It will show him how he can fulfil these duties most beneficially for the community. It will make obedience to the law easier for him without demanding slavishness. He will thus keep his inner liberty in every situation, a sensible liberty which will benefit him personally. He will nonetheless avoid the desire to alter the existing conditions or to exchange the actual world for an idealistic one. (Niemeyer, 1832, p. 11)

*A.H. Niemeyer: A Classic Author on Education  
in the 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century*

If we leave aside the objections which can be made to an idea of education based on privileges and on an intolerable conception of the role of women, as already indicated, Niemeyer can be said to present an absolutely modern theory of education, in which a general, all-embracing and versatile development of the individual is striven for. This and his strivings for systematization in education as a newly developing discipline, as well as his sensible, quiet, and eclectic approach, guaranteed the status of Niemeyer's major work as a classic in education. His *Principles of Education and Teaching* was frequently reprinted, among others in 1878 in the series *Educational Classics – A Selection of the Best Educational Documents of all Times and Nations* (*Pädagogische Klassiker – Auswahl der besten pädagogischen Schriften aller Zeiten und Völker*) by Gustav Adolf Lindner, as a second edition in 1882/1883 in *H. Beyer's Library of Educational Classics* (*H. Beyers Bibliothek pädagogischer Klassiker*) by Wilhelm Rein, in 1888 in the collection *Classics of Education* (*Die Klassiker der Pädagogik*) by Johannes Meyer, in 1904 in *Schroedels Educational Classics* (*Schroedels pädagogische Klassiker*) by Edmund Oppermann, and in 1905 as Vol. 8 of the *Documents of Excellent Educationalists for Seminarists and Teachers* (*Schriften hervorragender Pädagogen für Seminaristen und Lehrer*) by Joseph Nießen.<sup>16</sup>

For a long time, Niemeyer was considered a luminary figure of education. Today, however, he leads a shadowy existence, to take up once more the image "Light and Shade" of the annual exhibition of the Francke Foundations in 2004. A simple, swift look at current studies in the history of education proves this: with few exceptions, Niemeyer is not mentioned – and when he is, he almost never receives the attribute of a classic author.<sup>17</sup>

From the educational point of view therefore several questions arise for which a first answer is sought here. When is somebody regarded as a classic author? How does one consequently become a classic author? And the crucial question in the case of August Hermann Niemeyer is: How is it possible that someone who was a classic author is no longer one today? What are the reasons for this?

*About the Disappearance of a  
Classic Author on Education*

The question of the classic author can be dealt with from different perspectives. An approach from evolutionary theory seems helpful in the context on hand since it asks less about the nature of a classic author or work, as Hans-Georg Gadamer does, for example, in his hermeneutic analysis, but rather it emphasizes the social conditions that are necessary for the genesis and status of a classic author or work (Cf. Gadamer, 1990; Zierer, 2005).

Only few attempts to approach the issue from the standpoint of evolutionary theory can be found, so that Alfred Tremml takes up a special position. According to his own statements he discusses for the first time the question of the classic author from an evolutionary theoretical point of view, namely by referring to the basic works of Niklas Luhmann, Ludwig Fleck, Thomas S. Kuhn, and others. For this reason the references in the following treatment are primarily to his work. As he sees his considerations as “aphorisms,” (Cf. Tremml, 1997, p. 9) it is our task to select and systemize them, without, however, claiming completeness and general validity for the results. In this case, too, the person of August Hermann Niemeyer will be the focus of interest.<sup>18</sup>

The core statement of the evolutionary theory analysis of the classic author by Alfred Tremml is:

Contrary to a wide-spread prejudice classic authors have no privileged entry to cognition. An author then and only then becomes a ‘classic,’ if his texts produce continuous communicative response (in the scientific community). (1997, blurb)<sup>19</sup>

According to this idea, classic authors are persons who can refer to a continuous communicative response, that is, a constant intellectual discussion of their work in a certain public. This is an indispensable prerequisite for a classic from an evolution theoretical view: An author who is not discussed cannot be a classic (Cf. Tremml, 1997, p. 30). Persons whose works are regarded and dealt with as classics are constructs of a social discourse.

If you transfer this criterion to August Hermann Niemeyer, it can be said that today he is no longer a classic author. He cannot claim any communicative response for himself at present and is extremely seldom the topic of scientific essays. This, however, was not always the case. If you look at the dissertations published up to the 1920s broad and varied discussions of Niemeyer can be found. He was therefore justly granted the status of a classic writer on education. The crucial question against

this background is: Why did Niemeyer lose his classic status as a writer on education? Why does the discussion of his work break off at the beginning of the 20th century? To answer this question, variables must be searched for that are necessary for a continuous communicative response.

### *Accessibility of the Work of Niemeyer*

From a formal point of view, it is first necessary that the author has created and therefore handed down something to the scientific community. Alfred Treml writes:

First of all it is certainly agreed that as a condition for the possibility of classic status authors must have created something, a work, an 'opus,' which serves as variation stock for the following selection processes. (Treml, 1997, p. 28)

The access to this work has to be seen in close relation to this condition: Only if the access is free for a broad mass of readers and it is possible to access the author's work easily and quickly, is it possible for a long continuous communicative response to arise. But in this context too this cannot be unrestrictedly asserted for August Hermann Niemeyer.

His major work *Principles of Education and Teaching* went through numerous editions and reprints, but only until the beginning of the 20th century. Later, the interest in his educational thinking and activities was lost, apart from a further reprint initiated by Hans-Hermann Groothoff and Ulrich Herrmann (1970) and a collection of source materials with a selected text by Enno Fooker (1965). Although these texts are available in most libraries, in my opinion the work on them is, as a rule, not without difficulties, since the books can only be used in reading rooms and are often subject to copying bans due to their age. None of Niemeyer's texts are available from publishing houses trade any more. Compared to authors who are treated as classics today such as Johann Friedrich Herbart and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Niemeyer is undoubtedly at a clear disadvantage.

From a formal point of view, therefore, the access to the writings is a prerequisite for the genesis of a classic from the standpoint of evolutionary theory, and although the situation is not bad in the case of August Hermann Niemeyer, there are nonetheless obstacles and restrictions to be overcome. This, however, does not answer the important question of why the communicative response broke off at the beginning of the 1920s; it rather accentuates it. To give an answer, another look at the contents and the method (with the help of which an

attempt has been made above to characterize the work of the educationalist), can be helpful, against the background of the connective capacity of the thoughts of Niemeyer.

### *On Niemeyer's Ability to Connect*

The basis for a continuous communicative response is, first of all, the connective capacity of a work, provided it is accessible to the public. If this is lacking, a name quickly disappears from scientific discourse. This is shown primarily in the apparently boundless number of quotations from classics, as Adolf Muschg puts it in a rhetorical question: "Is there a stronger proof of the continued existence of the classic authors than their indestructible quotability?" (Cited in Treml, 1997, p. 44).

Alfred Treml correspondingly also describes the classic authors as "the uncrowned kings of the footnotes" (Treml, 1997, p. 44).

These statements are supported by an essay by Michael Winkler, in which he examined about 40 accounts of the history of education with regard to the frequency in which the names of individual educationalists are mentioned. On the basis of 474 different notations he initially states that at first sight there "are no educational classics," (1994, p. 152) but in the end, he concludes:

Indeed, the top ten of education calculated in this way is actually reassuring. As can be expected Rousseau takes up the top position; he may be regarded as the classic author per se. He is followed at a short distance by Pestalozzi and Comenius; then, at a rather greater distance Herbart and Locke reach the goal together. (p. 153) [Niemeyer by the way is not mentioned]

The decisive point is that this connectivity has to be interpreted in a double sense. Alfred Treml notes:

Classics reduce and open up complexity at the same time. They reduce complexity, because you can start out (or end) with them and thus exclude more than you include; they open up complexity because – taking them as a starting point - you can follow your own line of thought as you like. (Treml, 1997, p. 87) <sup>20</sup>

This can take place either in a positive manner, in the form of affirmation and consent, or in a negative manner, that is in the form of criticism and objection. Alfred Treml attaches more significance to the latter variant – with reference to Immanuel Kant, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and others (Cf. "the individual studies in Treml, 1999"). He gives the following reasons:

In an atmosphere of sheer consent, not only every conversation, but also every classic will die of suffocation. Boundless consent can be fatal and totally effusive reviews are a threat to survival in the scientific community. (Treml, 1997, p. 54)

And he continues:

Pure affirmation is not the substance classics are made of. There is therefore an enormous need for aversion, irony, criticism, negative attitudes, apologetics, eccentricity, heresy, nihilism, polemics, problematization, destruction, contradiction, negation. (p. 55)

Accordingly, he writes with regard to critics:

From the author's point of view, a negative review of a new oeuvre might be a disaster, from the view of evolutionary theory it should in the end be a stroke of luck. Paradoxically, criticism stimulates the evolution of the human spirit more than positive acclaim. Negative criticism strengthens the response, because it builds up an additional difference and is therefore more capable of leading to further communication than repetitive paraphrase. Criticism leads to variation in a reproduction and thus enables evolution. A merely positive confirmation merely repeats and leaves the reader only the possibility to say no or yes. However, a criticism of a work gives the reader an opportunity to say yes to the work and no to the criticism or yes to the work and yes to the criticism or no to the work and yes to the criticism or no to the work and no to the criticism. By means of criticism one makes the entire communication code fertile: true and false, beautiful and ugly, good and evil. (p. 39f)

In the context of the presentation of August Hermann Niemeyer's life and work, an attempt was made to indicate that there are possibilities for connection: eclecticism as a method, morality as an aim of education and as the centre of educational theory and practice, the necessity of a historical philosophy in education, as well as the task of the organization of educational knowledge, to repeat some examples. None of them, however, are taken up, either in regard to content or method. The reasons are various and complex, and can be discovered only with difficulty. Let us look, first of all, at the content: In general, every science is dependent on selection in order to win a historical basis out of the abundance of personalities and knowledge. Alfred Treml points out that this depends on various coincidences:

To achieve the status of a classic author, a writer evidently needs not only the talent to compose comprehensive and profound texts, but especially the stroke of luck that he has written the right text at the right time and at the right place – and not the wrong text at the right time and the right place or the right one at the right place

but the wrong time or at the wrong place at the right time. (Trembl, 1997, p. 101)

Transferred to the situation of August Hermann Niemeyer and his disappearance as a classic author by the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this can be interpreted as follows: The 18<sup>th</sup> century can be described as the educational century, because it produced so many important works about education and teaching. Niemeyer here holds an outstanding position, due to his textbook, already frequently mentioned, and his eclectic method. With the emergence of reforming education, however, serious consequences occur within historical studies. On the one hand, the number of essential educationalists rises by leaps and bounds in this second heyday of educational thinking and practice, so that a new selection, particularly of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, takes place. On the other hand, many reforming educationalists take up ideas from the 18<sup>th</sup> century and reproduce them, so that some educationalists suddenly lose importance – not because their ideas are outdated, but because they are presented by others in a new guise. Niemeyer seems to be affected by this development. In my opinion, coincidence and luck play an important role in this process.<sup>21</sup>

A second reason for the failure to make connections in terms of content can be seen in the fact that historical studies, mainly around the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, regard Niemeyer only within the framework of comparative research or praiseful acknowledgment, but do not use him for constructive critical purposes.

With regards to method: It was already explained above that Niemeyer called himself an eclectic and that the motto “Check it all! Keep the best!” was his methodical guideline. Within the educational discussion at that time he made himself known through this approach and did the concept of eclecticism a great service. Today, this term has almost disappeared from the repertoire of methods and even carries negative connotations, as Wolfgang Nieke comments:

In today's usage, the term has a ring of reproach. Mostly “Eclecticism” is the denomination for a mere adoption of other doctrines, lacking the power to combine the elements adopted and to reshape them into a higher or new point of view. (Nieke, 1972, p. 433)

The reason for this is, in my opinion, the controversial status of the term, especially in the field of philosophy, which affects other branches of knowledge. Whereas the term achieved a breakthrough and reached a peak mainly in historiography and the natural sciences in the 17<sup>th</sup>

century, the 18<sup>th</sup> century brought about its descent, which was initiated by philosophy. Immanuel Kant, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, among others, turned against eclecticism, taking it as a kind of spreading out, watering down, and dissolution. Eclecticism was for them, as Michael Albrecht (1994) summarizes, “a dependent intermixing, that is syncretism in a pejorative sense.”<sup>22</sup>

Therefore eclecticism became sooner or later a method which seemed timeworn, even disreputable and out of fashion.<sup>23</sup>

From the point of view of evolutionary theory it is therefore understandable that an alienation from any form of eclecticism took place and that it was slowly but steadily excluded from scientific usage. This evaluation of eclecticism is still predominant today. Although almost everybody admits that he works eclectically, only few would describe themselves as eclecticists in the first place: This method is too unproductive, too inaccurate, too non-transparent, and too uncreative to be able to meet the requirements of scientific research. The above-mentioned explanations, however, indicate that these conclusions are too narrow and overhasty in regard to education in general and particularly to the case of August Hermann Niemeyer.

However, this does not alter the fact that the eclectic method has fallen into disuse and that no connective potential in regard to Niemeyer exists in this context. Only a new consciousness of eclecticism combined with a new definition could change this situation.

Accordingly, it can be said with regards to the possibility to connect with Niemeyer that the potential in regard to both content and method is not realized for different reasons. Therefore, a continuous communicative response does not exist, nor is it in sight. And this is the reason why Niemeyer – as seen from the standpoint of evolutionary theory – is not a classic author today.<sup>24</sup>

### *Résumé and View: Plea for a Recollection and Reappraisal of A.H. Niemeyer*

As has been shown, A.H. Niemeyer has been dismissed from the circle of the classics of education today from the point of view of evolutionary theory, because of the lack of communicative response to his work. The necessary access to his work does not exist, nor can the connective potential in terms of content and method be realized for a variety of reasons. This can – among other things – be summarized in the following terms: On the one hand, the scientific compulsion to selection

claims its victims, a process in which coincidence plays its part. Moreover, historical tradition has concentrated in the case of Niemeyer more on praiseful acknowledgment than on a critical constructive discussion. On the other hand, the idea of his method has fallen into disrepute, which has led to dissociation in different fields, including education. Against this background, Niemeyer cannot be seen as a classic writer on education. But, in my opinion, a difficulty arises with these conclusions: Somebody can be a classic author, without being traded as such, which means that he cannot be one from the perspective of evolutionary theory. It is also possible that somebody is regarded as a classic author without being one. Alfred Tremml correspondingly notes:

Evolution is a kind of sieve; in the long run only the coarse material remains, in this case the classics. Classics are classics because they stay on top in the sieve of elimination and oblivion; they do not remain in the sieve because they are classics, but they are classics [better: they are traded as such], because they remain in the sieve. (Tremml, 1997, p. 86f)

In this context the historical unawareness within education already mentioned by Niemeyer can have a negative influence, which is ascertainable for both the past and the present. Dietrich Benner and Jürgen Oelkers write for example:

The historical lack of awareness of modern science has considerable, not always pleasant consequences. Succeeding generations of scientists can become members of the scientific communities without going through history and without dealing with the basic principles of the field. For the single career this might be very pleasant; if it becomes the rule for research careers, the richness of insights, problem definitions and reflections will get lost which is a distinctive feature of the history of problems and theories. It then remains left to coincidence rather than to effective reflection, how far tradition still has an influence on what is regarded as meaningful in contemporary academic life. (Benner & Oelkers, 2004, p. 7)

If the interest in the history of education decreases for various reasons, it is the logical consequence that work on tradition diminishes and historical research is neglected, which eventually will lead to stagnation in historical educational discourse and even to a loss of stability. What conclusions can be drawn from this for education in general and for the case of August Hermann Niemeyer in particular?

One problem of the historical debate in education is, in my opinion, that history is primarily treated in a monumental and antiquarian way,

to take up a distinction made by Friedrich Nietzsche (19984). Thus its use for life and for the present and the future often cannot be seen. Being a branch of practical discipline, as education is at its core, historical education research is in danger of maneuvering itself into the sidelines in this way. Against this background, supplementation by a critical approach, as F. Nietzsche calls it, and an additional methodical orientation towards Hans-Georg Gadamer, for whom understanding always contains "an application of the text to be understood to the present situation of the interpreter" (Gadamer, 1990, p. 313) seems indispensable. Michael Winkler correspondingly notes:

Texts are frequently rather unproductively recopied, especially in the tradition of the humanities. One takes them for granted, often as a contemporary document and as an expression of the specific character of the author, which is considered as irrecoverable; it is almost a sacrilege to understand a text better or differently than its originator. (Winkler, 2001, p. 83)

In this sense, it is in my opinion profitable to deal, once more, with August Hermann Niemeyer. His work is a treasure trove of valid principles and full of impulses for the future, in regard to both content and method. Accordingly, the motto "Check it all! Keep the best!" can still be pioneering for education today. In this sense, the words of Martin Walser shall present the conclusion of my considerations as a kind of quintessence: "Those who animate us are the ones we need; these are the classic authors" (1985, p. 10).

### NOTES

1. Quoted from Jacobi, 2001, p 356. Cf. Lindner, 1878; Rein, 1878 / 1879; Meyer, 1888; Oppermann, 1904 and Nießen, 1905, as well as ADB, 1886.
2. Cf. for example the works of Tenorth (Ed.), 2003, März, 1998; Reble, 1989 and Scheuerl, 1979; but also Killy, 1998, Zierer, 2005 and Herrmann, 2004b, who also mentions this fact in a critical way.
3. Cf. on this point Klosterberg (Ed.), 2004.
4. Cf. on this point the exhibition volume by Klosterberg (Ed.), 2004.
5. Two comments in advance: Firstly it is not intended to instigate a quarrel about classic authors that in my opinion would bring nothing for education and could not be fair, either. The question raised seems however necessary, if you presume that classic authors make an important contribution to the foundation of traditions and the self-conception of a science, which applies particularly to education as a relatively new science. Secondly, the following explanations do not claim to be generally valid, as they are restricted to a concrete case, namely that of August Hermann Niemeyer. The intention is, nevertheless, to make a plausible and logical

attempt in the direction indicated in order to initiate further research. Cf. on this point for example Winkler, 1994; Tremml, 1997, and Oelkers, 1998.

The method applied is predominantly hermeneutic. This result, on one hand, from the question touched upon above which involves the attempt to sketch and understand historical developments, and, on the other hand, from the research literature used, which has to be interpreted from an educational point of view. Essential features of educational hermeneutics as it can be developed from the philosophical hermeneutics of Hans-Georg Gadamer therefore point the way. Cf. Gadamer, 1990 and Danner, 1998.

6. Auguste Sophie Niemeyer was the daughter of the headmaster of the Francke Foundations, Johann Anastasius Freylinghausen and thus the grand-daughter of the founder of the Francke Foundations, August Hermann Francke. Conrad Philipp Niemeyer was deacon at St. Mary's Church in Halle.

7. A.H. Niemeyer married Agnes Wilhelmine Christiane von Köpken in 1786. A detailed account of the family is to be found in Klosterberg (Ed.), 2004.

8. The travel diaries *Observations on a Journey to England and Observation on a Journey through a Part of Westphalia and Holland*, complete his *Observations on a Deportation Journey in and out of Germany (Beobachtungen auf Reisen in und außer Deutschland)*.

9. From the third edition on, the book is published under the slightly modified title: *Principles of Education and Teaching for Parents, Private Teachers and Schoolteachers (Grundsätze der Erziehung und des Unterrichts für Eltern, Hauslehrer und Schulmänner)*.

10. The individual editions were published as follows: 1796 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1799 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 1801 4<sup>th</sup> edition, 1805 / 1806 5<sup>th</sup> edition, 1810 6<sup>th</sup> edition, 1818 7<sup>th</sup> edition and 1824 / 1825 8<sup>th</sup> edition. In addition to this, several pirated editions were issued.

11. Cf. example Lindner, 1878, Rein, 1878 / 1879 and 1882 / 1883; Meyer, 1888; Oppermann, 1904; Nießen, 1905 and Groothoff & Herrmann, 2004.

12. Niemeyer, 1970, p. 10f. Cf. Niemeyer, 1832, p. Vf., where he accordingly speaks about neutrality. This must not be mistaken for irresolution or lack of opinion, but is the result of a reflective process. Cf. Herrmann, 2004 b.

13. Already in Niemeyer you find the formula of "educative teaching" – well-known in Germany and as a rule attributed to J.F. Herbart. Cf. Niemeyer, 1970, p. 208 and Niemeyer, 1832, p. 110.

14. Niemeyer was most likely not aware of the fact that he paints a picture which did not and could not correspond to reality, as history shows. Cf. on this point Zierer, 2005 and Sheenan, 1994.

15. Niemeyer, 1832, p. 246. At first glance this might today seem disconcerting and will not meet with appreciation. On closer consideration, it becomes clear, however, that Niemeyer's work falls into an era in which the roles of the sexes were newly defined and that is not so old fashioned,

even from a present day standpoint (Cf. Jacobi, 2004, p. 426). Whereas for example Jean-Jacques Rousseau is of the opinion, that "women [have] too little sagacity to succeed in exact sciences" (cited from Jacobi, 2004, p. 432), Niemeyer is of the opinion, that "this sex, too, is [no less] equipped with mental gifts and strengths, the perfectibility of which equally clearly proves that the woman as well as the man belongs to the higher species of creatures who are entitled to all claims based on reason and freedom" (Niemeyer, 1832, p. 404). These statements must not of course conceal the fact that Niemeyer assigns to women a clear vocation as wives and mothers. In this context, he has to be interpreted as a child of his time, who reveals traces of the Enlightenment, although in a moderate form. Cf. Zierer, 2005. 16. On this point cf. the detailed bibliography of the works and literature on Niemeyer in Groothoff & Herrmann, 1970.

17. Cf. for example the works of Tenorth (Ed.), 2003; März, 1998; Reble, 1989; Scheuerl, 1979, and also Killy, 1998; Zierer, 2005; Herrmann, 2004b, who also mention this fact in a critical manner. The topicality of the question about classics in education can be recognized among others by the intensive treatment of it. For example, the two volumes by Hans Scheuerl, *Classics of Education*, were newly edited by Heinz-Elmar Tenorth in 2003. In the current publishing programmes of Beltz, Schneider, and the Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft (Scientific Book Association), there are special *Classic Series*, that are either in the initial stages or already finished. In none of them has Niemeyer been taken into consideration (so far). Cf. Schäfer (Ed.), 2002f. (among others Rousseau, Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Montessori, Bollnow); Löwisch (Ed.), 2002, (Humboldt, Pestalozzi, Kerschensteiner, Petersen), as well as Lost & Ritz (Eds.), 2003 (Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Stuve, Herbart, Fröbel, Diesterweg), furthermore Glaser & Priem, 2003.

18. The blurb reads: "In this essay, classics (especially those of philosophy and education) are for the first time seen through the 'glasses' of evolutionary theory and outlines of the general theory of the classics are drawn" (Tremml, 1997 blurb)

19. Tremml, 1997, blurb. A possible confrontation of this opinion with an ontological standpoint was already hinted at. I emphasize once more that in my opinion both sides have their right to exist and that they even interlock. Problematic in my eyes is the frequent and inadequate mingling of both argumentative levels.

20. Tremml, 1997, p. 87. Cf. also the explanations further above regarding the importance and the ranking of the classics for education as a science.

21. This is a possible interpretation of the interrelations. It is, however, not possible to outline and uncover them completely. The reality and their historical course seems too complex. In this respect, only assumptions can be made, which will have to meet the requirements of plausibility and stringency.

22. Albrecht, 1994. Therefore it is at first sight surprising that Niemeier could nevertheless be so successful in education with this method. The reason for this is, in my opinion, the genesis of education as a science in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, whose birth is often connected with the occupation of the first chair of philosophy and education in Halle in 1784 by Christian Trapp, who, however, failed in the end. Niemeier's eclectic endeavours fitted in with this phase of orientation and definition, and by collecting the most essential experiences in combination with various theoretical approaches he managed to put education on a scientific basis and, at the same time, to provide directives for action in daily education. It is obvious that his character and his position within the University of Halle and the Francke Foundations were not insignificant in this context.

23. Cf. also Herrmann, 1986, p. 78f, who particularly in the dispute with Wilhelm Dilthey comes to the conclusion that the latter – starting from his hermeneutics – “shattered the idea of a scientific eclecticism by demonstrating the inexhaustible multi-perspectivity of human self comprehension and the manifestations of the human mind.”

24. Georg Kerschensteiner is an educationalist of whom for instance Michael Winkler expects this. Cf. Winkler, 1994, p. 153.

#### REFERENCES

- Albrecht, M. (1994). *Eklektik*. (Stuttgart, frommann-holzboog).
- Ballauff, T. & Schaller, K. (1970). *Pädagogik – Eine Geschichte der Bildung und Erziehung*. Band II. Freiburg: Alber.
- Benner, D. & Oelkers, J. (2004). Vorwort. In D. Benner & J. Oelkers (Eds.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Pädagogik* (pp. 7-10). Weinheim: Beltz.
- Danner, H. (1998). *Methoden geisteswissenschaftlicher pädagogik*. Basel: Reinhardt.
- Fooker, E. (Ed.). (1965). *August Hermann Niemeier: Über den Begriff der Erziehung*. Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer.
- Gadamer, H.-G. (1960). *Wahrheit und Methode – Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik*. Tübingen: Mohr.
- Glaser, E. & Priem, K. (2003). Klassiker-Renaissance? Neue Studienbücher der Erziehungswissenschaft. *Erziehungswissenschaftliche Revue*, 2003/2004.
- Groothoff, H.-H. & Herrmann, U. (1970). August Hermann Niemeier – Leben und Werk. In H.-H. Groothoff & U. Herrmann (Eds.), *A.H. Niemeier: Grundsätze der Erziehung und des Unterrichts* (pp. 276-399). Paderborn: Schöningh.
- Herrmann, U. (1986). “Eklektik” und “Systematik” in der erziehungswissenschaftlichen. Diskussion in Deutschland im ausgehenden 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert. *Aufklärung*, 1, 67- 79.

- Herrmann, U. (2004a). August Hermann Niemeyer – Theologe, Pädagoge, hallescher Patriot. In B. Klosterberg (Ed.), *Licht und Schatten – August Hermann Niemeyer: Ein Leben an der Epochenwende um 1800* (pp. 17-25). Halle: Franckesche Stiftungen.
- Herrmann, U. (2004b). Der Begründer der modernen Universitätspädagogik: August Hermann Niemeyer (1754-1828). *Neue Sammlung*, 3, 359-382.
- Horn, K.-P. & Wigger, L. (1994). Vielfalt und Einheit – Über Systematiken und Klassifikationen in der Erziehungswissenschaft. In K.-P. Horn & L. Wigger (Eds.), *Systematiken und Klassifikationen in der Erziehungswissenschaft* (pp. 13-32). Weinheim: Deutscher Studien Verlag.
- Jacobi, J. (2001). August Hermann Niemeyer – Hallesche Pädagogik im Zeitalter der preußischen Reformen. In T. Müller-Bahlke (Ed.), *Gott zur Ehr und zu des Landes Besten – Die Franckeschen Stiftungen und Preußen: Aspekte einer alten Allianz* (pp. 349-357). Halle: Franckesche Stiftungen.
- Jacobi, J. (2004). Geschlecht. In D. Benner & J. Oelkers (Eds.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Pädagogik* (pp. 422-442). Weinheim: Beltz.
- Killy, W. (1998). Niemeyer, August Hermann. In W. Killy & R. Vierhaus (Eds.), *Deutsche Biographische Enzyklopädie* (p. 409, Band 7). München: Saur.
- Klosterberg, B. (Ed.). (2004). *Licht und Schatten – August Hermann Niemeyer: Ein Leben an der Epochenwende um 1800*. Halle: Franckesche Stiftungen.
- Landsheere, G.D. (1999). August Hermann Niemeyer. *Prospects*, 3, 509-524.
- Löwisch, D.J. (Ed.). (2002). *Werkinterpretationen pädagogischer Klassiker*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Lost, C. & Ritzi, C. (Eds.). (2002). *Basiswissen Pädagogik – Historische Pädagogik*. Baltmannsweiler: Schneider Verlag Hohengehren.
- März, F. (1998). *Personengeschichte der Pädagogik*. Bad Heilbrunn: Klinkhardt.
- Menne, K. (1995). *August Hermann Niemeyer – Sein Leben und Wirken*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Nieke, W. (1972). Eklektizismus. In J. Ritter (Ed.), *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie* (pp. 432-433). Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Niemeyer, A.H. (1832). *Grundsätze der Erziehung und des Unterrichts für Eltern, Hauslehrer und Schulmänner*. Reutlingen: Esslin'sche Buchhandlung.
- Niemeyer, A.H. (1970). *Grundsätze der Erziehung und des Unterrichts*. Paderborn: Schöningh.

- Nietzsche, F. (1984). *Vom Nutzen und Nachteil der Historie für das Leben*. Basel: Diogenes.
- Oelkers, J. (1998). Einige Bemerkungen Friedrich Nietzsches über Erziehung und der Status eines "Klassikers der Pädagogik." In C. Niemeyer et al. (Eds.), *Nietzsche in der Pädagogik? Beiträge zur Rezeption und Interpretation* (pp. 211-240). Weinheim: Deutscher Studien Verlag.
- Reble, A. (1989). *Geschichte der Pädagogik*. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta
- Schäfer, A. (Ed.). (2002). *Pädagogische Portraits*. Weinheim / Basel: Beltz.
- Scheuerl, H. (1995). Was ist ein pädagogischer Klassiker? *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik*, 2, 155-160.
- Scheuerl, H. (1979). Einleitung. In H. Scheuerl (Ed.), *Klassiker der Pädagogik*. München: Beck.
- Schmid, P. (2004). Erzieherische Praxis und Bildungstheorie – Der Pädagoge Niemeyer. In B. Klosterberg (Ed.), *Licht und Schatten – August Hermann Niemeyer: Ein Leben an der Epochenwende um 1800* (pp. 184-193. Halle: Franckesche Stiftungen.
- Tenorth, H.-E. (Ed.). (2003). *Klassiker der Pädagogik*. München: Beck.
- Treml, A.K. (1997). *Klassiker – Die Evolution einflussreicher Semantik*, Band 1. Sankt Augustin: Academia.
- Treml, A.K. (1999). *Klassiker – Die Evolution einflussreicher Semantik*, Band 2. Sankt Augustin: Academia.
- Walser, M. (1985). Was ist ein Klassiker? In *Warum Klassiker? Ein Almanach zur Eröffnung der Bibliothek deutscher Klassiker* (pp. 3-10). Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag.
- Winkler, M. (1994). Ein geradezu klassischer Fall – Zur Traditionsstiftung in der Pädagogik durch Klassiker. In K.-P. Horn & L. Wigger (Eds.), *Systematiken und Klassifikationen in der Erziehungswissenschaft* (pp. 141-168). Weinheim: Deutscher Studien Verlag.
- Winkler, M. (2001). Klassiker der Pädagogik – Überlegungen eines möglicherweise naiven Beobachters. In *Zeitschrift pädagogischer Historiographie*, 2, 76-85.
- Zierer, K. (2005). Das Verschwinden eines Klassikers. *Vierteljahrsschrift für wissenschaftliche Pädagogik*, 3, 258-281.

*Klaus Zierer* was born and raised in Germany. His previous degrees are: Diploma for Teaching at Primary Schools (1. Staatsexamen), University of Munich, 2001 and Ph.D. (Dr. phil.), University of Munich, 2003. Since 2004, he has been a Primary School Teacher and then in 2008, a Member of the Institute for School Education at the University of Munich. In the year 2007 he began his Postdoctoral Lecture Qualification (PD) about pedagogical eclecticism at the University of Munich, which he finished in November, 2009. In this context he was Visiting Research Fellow at the Department of Education at the University of Oxford from April to May 2009. His research interests are philosophy of education and the history of educational ideas.

*Author's Address:*

University of Munich  
Leopoldstraße 13  
80802 Munich  
GERMANY  
EMAIL: klaus.zierer@web.de