



Sketch of a tadpole model (detail of fig. 8).

chapter 2 A young doctor of great dexterity

It was above all in and around the German universities that during the nineteenth century academic science as we know it was made. So historians have for a long time worked to explain the creation of laboratory disciplines; how appointment as a professor came to depend less on teaching and local connections and more on research presented at meetings of learned societies and published in journals; and why palatial institutes were built to house laboratories in which, not just researchers, but every doctor and science teacher would train.³³ These studies have concentrated on professors and higher civil servants, but slowly the changing opportunities and activities are coming into view of the other people who made this transformation possible. Modellers belonged to the important group, including other artists, collectors, dealers, technicians, instrument-makers and taxidermists, who stocked institute collections with instructive objects.³⁴ They started out with various amounts of formal education, and supplied a market ranging from universities, clinics and major public collections through schools and bourgeois homes to popular wax museums; some moved between science and, for example, portraiture, caricature or making imitation pastries for café window displays.³⁵ By drawing together scattered evidence about Ziegler's early career, this chapter places him at the academic end of the spectrum: he shared the most common port of entry to high-class anatomical modelling, a medical degree, and it was with models made for institute-building professors that he gained a reputation as a maker of embryos in wax.

Adolf (or Adolph) Ziegler was born in 1820, the second of two sons of the regimental quartermaster Gustav Ziegler and his wife Ernestine (née Winter), at Mannheim in the Grand Duchy of Baden, a state assembled during the Napoleonic Wars out of various territories in the German south west. Fearing for his health and family were he called to accompany another campaign, Gustav petitioned for a transfer back to the civil administration, and in 1824 took charge of the tax office in the small university town of Freiburg im Breisgau on the edge of the Black Forest.³⁶ Said "since his youth" to have been "skilful in drawing and modelling", Adolf would describe himself as an artistic "autodidact". How he learned to model we do not know, nor how much it mattered to him then, but Freiburg's classical grammar school, which he attended from 1830 to 1837, offered drawing classes, and books introduced the popular pastime of modelling in wax and clay.³⁷