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**BALANCING ACADEMIC SPONSORSHIP AND
FOREIGN CULTURAL POLICY: AN INTERPRETATION
OF FIVE DECADES OF HUMBOLDT FOUNDATION
SPONSORSHIP DATA¹**

Fifty Years of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation²

When the present Humboldt Foundation was founded on 10 December 1953, it was the third time a sponsoring institution had been created in the tradition of the distinguished naturalist, universal genius and South America researcher. He thought it was so important to promote young academic talent that he financed promising young researchers from his own personal fortune. The first Alexander von Humboldt Foundation was established in 1860, a year after the death of its eponym, with the objective of sponsoring young German academics to travel abroad. After losing its capital in the great inflation and ceasing to function in 1923, it was re-established in 1925 with the aim of supporting the studies of foreign academics and doctoral students in Germany. This work continued during the National

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² This text relates to research work carried out by the author over a number of years in the Department of Geography at the University of Heidelberg. This work is currently being continued in the form of a supplementary project on international academic mobility, sponsored by the German Research Foundation (DFG). Anonymously-given data from the Humboldt Foundation on their sponsorship programmes form an important basis for this work. I am very grateful to the Humboldt Foundation for providing these data. My special thanks are due to Dr. Ulrike Albrecht and Dr. Barbara Sheldon for their suggestions on structuring and selecting the findings considered relevant for the “Anniversary Edition” and to Dr. Christian Jansen for checking the manuscript. Many thanks also to Dr. Lynda Lich-Knight for translating the text into English and to Janet Bojan for helping with the final editing of the English text. I am also very grateful to Professor Dr. Peter Meusbürger for his support and for providing an inspiring working environment in Heidelberg.

A more detailed version of the text, which had to be cut in the final editing by the Humboldt Foundation, will appear elsewhere. The same is true of the findings of the DFG project for which roughly 20 percent of all Humboldt Fellows and Humboldt hosts of the last five decades are being surveyed by post and a considerable number of them interviewed personally in order to gain scientific insights into the context, course, and outcome of Humboldt stays.

Socialist period, too. When the German Empire collapsed in 1945, the foundation stopped functioning³.

Nowadays, the current Humboldt Foundation, which after 50 years can look back on a global network of more than 20 000 academics sponsored, supports research work by foreign academics in Germany and young German academics abroad. Although it has always been neutral politically, the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation's sponsorship figures mirror the history and international politics of the times. The people who, through their programmes, are able to spend a certain period abroad gaining new impetus for their research as well as for their private lives, were and are determined by the opportunities and restrictions of a specific time and a specific place.

The historical and political events of the last 50 years form the background for the mobility of Fellows across national borders. With all due care with regard to creating causal connexions, an attempt will be made in this article to use the sponsorship figures to position and understand the Humboldt Fellows' stays in Germany in their historic-geographical and political contexts. The justification for this undertaking is partly inherent in the Humboldt Foundation's mission. It is not only an academic sponsorship organization but also plays the role of a mediator in foreign cultural policy. This field of tension defines the special role of the Humboldt Foundation during the last 50 years and characterizes its work to this day.

In the Beginning was the Humboldt Research Fellowship⁴

The work of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation started with the call for applications for Fellowships in December 1953. Back then, this programme formed the essence of the Foundation's work, which has largely remained unchanged until the present day. Until the beginning of the Seventies, it was indeed the Foundation's major business. The basic principles of the programme were and are very simple: Humboldt Research Fellowships allow highly-qualified foreign scholars holding doctorates and

³ A comprehensive history of the Humboldt Foundation post 1953 will be published in 2004. About the same time a monograph on the work of the Foundation during the Third Reich will also be finished.

⁴ The following is essentially based on assessments of the Humboldt Foundation's data base, the Annual Reports for the years 1953/54 to 2001, and AvH reports written on the occasion of anniversaries. An overview of the relevant literature is, for example, provided by Jöns (2002b). The historical details largely draw on the "Deutschland-Chronik" by Lehmann (1995) and the post-war history by Kielmansegg (2000). A summary of academic developments in Germany after the Second World War is given by Weingart (1998).

aged up to 40⁵ to carry out a research project of their own choosing at a research institution in the Federal Republic. During the first 50 years there were more than 50 000 applicants. Of these, roughly 20 000 from more than 130 countries received Humboldt sponsorship in Germany. In terms of numbers, it is therefore the most important sponsorship programme for long-term research visits by foreign academics to German institutions of higher education and non-university research institutes.

The Humboldt Research Fellowship Programme, which has been complemented in subsequent years by other programmes, runs through this article like a leitmotif because it is particularly well-suited to acting as a seismograph of contemporary history. This is because Humboldt Fellowships are not granted according to any quotas with regard to nationality or discipline, for example, and neither religious, ideological, or political opinions nor ethnic identity or gender have any influence on selection. Humboldt Fellows have to apply independently, i.e. decide in advance whether at any given time and in any given country of origin it is of interest to them to spend time researching in Germany. Hence, the application figures and approval rates for Humboldt Fellowships provide insights into international academic interest in Germany. The Humboldt Foundation's regional sponsorship figures allow inferences to be drawn on significant international political events, changing political and economic conditions in the countries of origin (e.g., travel permission), and the concomitant changes in bilateral relations to the Federal Republic. In the following, these relationships will be traced along the most important developmental lines and interpreted in relation to the further development and diversification of Humboldt programmes decade by decade.

The Fifties: Integration into the Western Community of States

Points of Departure

In the Fifties, West German academic life was characterized by the endeavour to regain the trust of academics in other countries for German institutions and people, to recall exiled academics, to re-build the infrastructure of research, and to link up with international academic relations. Between 1933 and 1945 several thousand academics had been forced to leave Germany in an unprecedented exodus; others were killed in concentration camps. By 1945, the war and National Socialism had contributed their part to the desolate state of teaching and research.

⁵ Originally the age-limit was 30. Since 1973 it has been raised to 40. A doctorate became a pre-condition for successful application at the beginning of the Seventies.

Against this backdrop, the rebirth of the Humboldt Foundation in 1953 belongs in a phase of reawakening institutional, international academic relations. This phase had begun before the Federal Republic of Germany was founded and was characterized by the re- or initial foundation of intermediary and academic organizations, such as the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD, 1950) and the Goethe Institute (1952).

By financing visits to Germany by young foreign academics, the Humboldt Foundation devoted itself to a special form of foreign cultural policy from the word go. Foreign guests were supposed to have the opportunity to gain their own picture of Germany. This was particularly important in the post-war period so that trust in the country and in German research and teaching could be rebuilt via direct personal contacts. Sponsoring foreign guest researchers also offered ways of bringing various academic disciplines up-to-date in an international context and encouraging academic research at home.

The First Fellows

The first selection committee meeting for Humboldt Fellowships took place in June 1954. A preliminary office with two members of staff had already been set up in October 1953, sharing office-space with the DAAD. The Board and a central selection committee had been established in December 1953. In order to disseminate information about the programme, all German foreign missions received written notification from December 1953 onwards. During the initial years, foreigners already studying in Germany, such as DAAD Fellows, were also able to apply for Humboldt Fellowships.

In the first year there were 253 applications from 35 countries. The pre-determined financial framework made it possible for about a third of these to be chosen. This was already in line with the average success rates in the first five decades of sponsorship. At the beginning of October 1954 the first post-war Humboldt Fellows arrived in the Federal Republic. They came from 25 countries on five continents and were spread throughout Germany at 10 institutions of higher education and 8 other research institutions. It is important to note that, during the Fifties, in contrast to later years, applicants with bachelors or masters degrees were also sponsored. Indeed, at the beginning, the majority of the Fellows coming to Germany were doctoral students whereas, by the start of the Sixties, the proportion of doctoral students, post-docs, and professors was roughly equal. By the beginning of the Seventies, there were only very few Fellows who did not have doctorates. They usually came from countries where it was either not possible to take a doctorate at all or only attainable after a long academic career.

From All Over the World

In the post-war period, Humboldt Fellowships were mainly attractive to young academics from developing and threshold countries as well as to those from industrialized countries with a comparable academic level. During the first decade (1954-1963) most applications came from India (12%) and Japan (11%). With more than double the success rate of India in the selection, Japan had the largest percentage of Fellows. It was followed by several states located around the Mediterranean, namely Greece, Turkey, Egypt, Yugoslavia, Spain, and Italy. The relatively high occurrence of applicants and Fellows from South America is explained by traditional academic relations going back to Alexander von Humboldt and the special cultural bonds with Germany due to the high percentage of people of German descent.

The Federal Republic's integration in the West went hand in hand with Western orientation in Humboldt Fellows' academic relations. During the first three decades, the number of Fellows from the USA grew continually while Fellows from the Soviet Union only came to the Federal Republic post 1970 and from China only after 1979. However, due to the influence of the Second World War and differing academic resources, especially in the sciences, the percentage of Fellows from the USA remained relatively small during the first decade, Western integration notwithstanding. The same holds true for Great Britain and France.

The first applications from Hungary and Poland were received for the academic year 1957/58. This was the period of Eastern Bloc crisis, triggered off by destalinization, which led to revolts against the Soviet Union in both countries in 1956 and for a short time opened the borders to the West. When the revolts were suppressed, the Cold War tightened its grip and the Iron Curtain was closed to potential applicants and Fellows until the beginning of the Sixties, a development which was reflected in the decreasing number of applicants.

Disciplines and Institutions

In the Fifties, most of the Fellows came to Germany from fields of work in which research required comparatively few human and material resources. It was extremely difficult, for example, to find sufficient working places for physicists because the research infrastructure was still being built. Chemists were the ones most easily able to benefit from the great scientific tradition of research in Germany that went on to produce six Nobel Prize Winners in chemistry in the period 1950-73 alone. In medicine, which was well-represented, Humboldt Fellows particularly welcomed practical work at German clinics and the opportunity to pursue practically-orientated special training. At the time when the Basic Law of the Federal Republic had

established itself successfully, jurisprudence also played a significant role in the Fellowship Programme. Most researchers in jurisprudence came from countries which had adopted parts of the German system of law (e.g., Japan, Korea, Greece, Italy, Spain, Turkey).

From the beginning of the programme, most Humboldt Fellows stayed at institutions of higher education. However, from the first decade onwards this percentage sank from 90% to 78% because ever more visits were made to Max Planck Institutes and major non-university research institutions due to their role as international research centres. Furthermore, there are considerable differences between the universities in regard to the number of Humboldt Fellows per professor (Jöns, 2002a). The reasons for this are: the differing disciplinary profiles and subject-related collaborative cultures; the (subject-related) image of institutions; the research infrastructure available; the academic activity of the hosts; and long-term personal networks abroad. During the first five decades of sponsorship (1954-2003), the universities most frequently visited were Munich, Bonn, and Heidelberg; during the period 1994-2002 it was Munich, Berlin (FU), Heidelberg, and Bonn. By region, the most favourable ratio of Fellows to professors during the Nineties was to be found in Baden-Württemberg, followed by Bavaria, Berlin, and North Rhine-Westphalia.

Development and Expansion

As awareness of Humboldt Fellowships grew and the Federal Republic became continually more stable from a socio-economic point of view, the number of applications had almost tripled by the end of the Fifties. Part of this success was due to the academics themselves, who returned to their own countries after spending time researching in Germany and acted as multipliers there, as well as to the continually-growing personal networks of German academics abroad.

For the Humboldt Foundation, the Fifties were a time of development and expansion. In these years, the basis for the individual care for Humboldtians was created: the tradition of an annual meeting, including a reception hosted by the Federal President, started in May 1955. Two- to three-week study visits around Germany were introduced in Summer 1957 and the Foundation has been running induction meetings for new Fellows since October 1957. In 1958, the first edition of the magazine *Mitteilungen* was published for former Fellows. In June 2001, the title of this magazine was changed to *Humboldt Kosmos*.

The Sixties: Making Contact with Eastern Europe Despite the Cold War

Relations Between East and West

The beginning of the Sixties saw the Cold War come to a head with the Cuba Crisis and the building of the Berlin Wall that cemented the division of Germany. The climax of the crisis about stationing Soviet missiles on Cuba took the world to the verge of the third World War. Its avoidance, however, brought about the first improvement in relations between East and West. In the Humboldt Fellowship Programme there was a significant drop in applications around 1962 which can be seen in relation to these global tensions. There was uncertainty in many countries which led to changes in travel conditions.

In the period following the settlement of the Cuban conflict, a larger number of applications and Fellows from the Socialist states of Eastern Europe can be observed. This development reached a peak in 1968 during the reforms of the Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia. During that year, this relatively small country submitted by far the most applications for the Humboldt Fellowship Programme (19 %). After the violent quashing of the reform movement by the invasion of troops from five Warsaw Pact states, the number of applicants and Fellows from Czechoslovakia initially remained quite high. In the wake of stricter political demarcation vis-à-vis the West in the Seventies, however, exit permits and hence academic exchange relations with the Federal Republic were severely restricted.

The first phase of détente in the East-West conflict saw a relatively large number of applicants and Fellows from South Eastern Europe (e.g., Yugoslavia 1962-68, Bulgaria 1967-76, Rumania 1968-74). By contrast, academic contacts with Hungary and Poland remained at a low level during the second half of the 1960s. The fact that these two countries were involved in the invasion of Czechoslovakia and their concomitant reservations about the West seem to have temporarily slowed down the revival of academic relations to Western Germany. All in all, academic contacts to the socialist states in Eastern Central and South Eastern Europe via Humboldt Fellows were relatively intensive even before diplomatic relations were established.

During the Sixties, academic relations within Western Europe gradually became closer, too. For instance, the number of Humboldt Fellows from Great Britain rose considerably. Following the conclusion of the Franco-German Friendship Treaty (1963), noticeably more Fellows also came from the comparatively large country of France, but until the middle of the Eighties their numbers lagged well behind those for Fellows from Great Britain.

Revising the Foundation's Objectives

In the second half of the Sixties, the figures for applications for Humboldt Fellowships grew significantly once again as interest in spending time on research in Germany developed considerably among leading academic nations outside Europe. On the basis of this quantitative and qualitative growth in interest, the foundation's objectives of the Humboldt Foundation were revised in 1965. Changes to the statutes and articles had become necessary because of the ever higher qualifications of the potential Fellows. This marked the end of a phase in which the Programme gained a clear profile. From this point on, the Foundation's objective was to give academically highly-qualified young researchers of foreign nationality the opportunity to carry out research projects in the Federal Republic by granting them a Research Fellowship. Previously, further academic training in the form of a study visit had been the main objective. Taking special national practices with regard to academic careers into account, a doctorate or equivalent qualification was made a prerequisite for receiving a Humboldt Fellowship in the 1970s.

New Means of Sponsorship

In the 1950s and 1960s, the Federal Republic's international academic relations benefited from the economic miracle. Investment in research and development contributed to making Germany a more attractive place for visiting researchers and there was a growth in the amount of state funding allocated to the intermediary organizations working in the field of foreign cultural policy. Thus, the Humboldt Foundation's budget increased sevenfold between 1960 and 1969. While the number of Fellowships initially remained the same, the additional funds were used to make the Fellowships more attractive internationally. For instance, the Fellowship grant was placed on a sliding scale according to the level of qualification; travel expenses for all Fellows were covered; and family subsidies were paid⁶. Since 1968, it has been possible for Humboldt Fellows to spend up to four months of the sponsorship period at foreign research institutions within Europe or up to six months at German institutions abroad. Furthermore, the Foundation created new opportunities for post-sponsorship support, including contributions for books and equipment at the home institutes, and introduced various follow-up programmes. Up until 2001, every third Humboldt Fellow spent at least

⁶ Family subsidies were certainly part of the reason why, during the second decade of sponsorship, every second Fellow was able to be accompanied to Germany by a partner or family with children. Since the third decade this proportion has levelled out at 60%.

one further period of time as a guest researcher in Germany within the framework of these follow-up programmes. Intensive follow-up support for those sponsored is the hallmark of the Humboldt Foundation and forms the basis for the world-wide network it has built up.

Since 1962, important initiatives for creating and developing the Humboldt network abroad have also been taken by former guest researchers. By 2001, they had set up more than 100 Humboldt Clubs and Associations in 68 countries with the aim of maintaining professional and personal contact with one another, supporting the Foundation in preparing their foreign colloquia, and helping to look after German academics abroad.

The Seventies: Expansion of Higher Education and Boom in Applications

Increasing Capacity

The protest slogan, “Under the gowns – the odour of a thousand years”, coined by Hamburg students in 1967, stood at the beginning of a comprehensive reform of higher education that characterized the 1970s. The reform got underway with the foundation of the German Educational Council in 1965 and, just like in other industrialized countries, led to an unprecedented expansion of the tertiary educational system. In order to meet the growing numbers of qualified school-leavers and undergraduates, many of whom were able to apply for support from the new Federal Law on Financial Assistance for Students (BaföG, 1971), numerous new universities were founded and new appointments at existing universities were made.

This enormous increase in capacity meant new potential for international academic relations which was reflected in a further growth in the numbers of annual applications for the Fellowship Programme. At the same time, the standard figure for Fellowships granted annually gradually increased from 300 (as of 1962) to more than 440 (as of 1973) and then to the reference point of 500 (as of 1980) Fellowships per year. Despite occasional upward deviations (e.g., after German Unity, 1991-92), this is still the case at the beginning of the 21st century.

Shift in Subject Emphasis

Increased interest in research visits to Germany was most evident in the sciences and engineering. Between the first and third decades of sponsorship the total number of Fellowships increased almost threefold. But in the sciences it was almost fourfold and in engineering just about fivefold. The major reasons for this were growing economic importance and the targeted development of scientific and engineering research at institutions of

higher education in Germany, at Max Planck Institutes, and at state-subsidized major research institutions. In the third decade of sponsorship, the bio-sciences, chemistry, and physics produced the most Fellows. The first of these unseated medicine, which had been the most frequently-represented discipline during the first two decades.

In the humanities, history came to the fore with more than four times the number of Fellows in the third decade compared to the first. Growing interest in analysing recent German history and the increasing opening up of archives had led to a research boom in history at home and abroad. But taking all the humanities together, the sponsorship figures had hardly doubled so that their proportion of Fellows as a whole was declining. The potential for increased applications in this complex of subjects is particularly small because knowledge of German plays a central role in most research projects in the humanities and the number of foreign academics with a knowledge of German is restricted and, for historical reasons, even declining.

New “Ostpolitik”

In foreign policy, the beginning of the Seventies was characterized by new policies on Germany and “Ostpolitik” which reached a temporary climax when treaties were concluded with the Soviet Union, Poland, and the GDR and laid the foundations for more far-reaching détente with the Central Eastern European states. The resulting establishment of diplomatic relations with Poland was accompanied by a veritable boom in applications after 1972 which reached a peak in 1985. Until the Iron Curtain fell, Germany had been a central point of reference in international academic cooperation for Polish academics outside the Eastern Bloc, for political, cultural, and economic reasons.

During the third decade of sponsorship (1974-83) most applications came from India (18%), followed by the USA (10%), Japan (10%), Poland (9%), China (4%), and Egypt (4%). The Federal Republic had established diplomatic relations with China in 1972. However, academic mobility in the framework of the Fellowship Programme only got underway in 1979 during the period of economic liberalization and opening up to foreign trade after the death of Mao Zedong. The figures for applicants and Fellows from Egypt were particularly high in the late Sixties and early Seventies even though diplomatic relations to Bonn had been broken off between 1965 and 1972 after Germany had established diplomatic relations with Israel (1965). Only occasional Fellows came from Israel post-1958. In the Seventies, however, Israel became the most frequently-represented Near-Eastern country in the Fellowship Programme, followed by Iran.

A clear indication that Germany had been comprehensively reintegrated in the international academic community of the Seventies was the interest shown by the USA, globally the dominant academic centre of the post-war period. In both absolute and relative terms, the numbers of applications and Fellowships from the USA reached its zenith in the third decade of sponsorship. The favourable job situation in the expanding US system of higher education was one of the factors encouraging post-docs and young professors to spend a specific period of time abroad because there would be enough jobs to choose from on their return. For the same reason, the application and Fellowship figures for Great Britain reached their relative and absolute maximum to date in the third decade of sponsorship.

Integrating Foreign Excellence and German Promise

The huge state investment in higher education and the establishment of Humboldt Research Awards in 1972 made it possible to bring more international academic excellence to Germany. Humboldt Research Awards are granted to internationally-renowned researchers for their past achievements, i.e. to academics at an advanced stage of their careers. Each Award leads to an invitation to spend up to one year researching in Germany. It can only be granted on the recommendation of professors from Germany. Historically, the Programme has special meaning for German-American relations because it was established as part of a thank-you for Marshall Plan Aid on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of its announcement. For ten years it only applied to distinguished US-American scientists and engineers, thus being an important symbol of loyalty to the USA during the period of the New "Ostpolitik". Furthermore, Humboldt Awards made it possible for US scholars who had been forced to leave Central Europe during the Third Reich or whose parents had been emigrants to spend a longer period of time in Germany. In many cases, this led to a positive change in their attitude towards Germany and contributed to coming to terms with their own experiences or those of their parents⁷.

On the initiative of former Humboldt guest researchers, the Humboldt Foundation started the Feodor Lynen Programme in 1979, in order to meet the need of German post-docs to do research abroad. The programme allows highly-qualified German post-docs up to the age of 38 to spend one to four years on research at the home institutions of Humboldt Fellows or Award

⁷ A detailed analysis of the context, course, and outcome of the research stays by US-American Humboldt Award Winners in Germany (1972-96) can be found in Jöns (2002b).

Winners. By 2002, ca. 2 500 post-docs had taken advantage of this opportunity in more than 60 different countries of the world.

The Eighties and Early Nineties: Before and After the Fall of the Iron Curtain

In 1980-81 application figures for Humboldt Fellowships reached an initial peak which was only surpassed in 1988. This indicates that, in the world political situation at the time, the application potential had been exhausted. However, during this period the focal points for sponsorship shifted from Asia to Eastern Europe. Between 1980 and 1989 the number of applications from India decreased for the first time and dropped by almost half. There were also a third fewer applications from Japan since Japanese researchers, like those from India, orientated themselves more towards the USA. By contrast, applications from Poland had doubled in the period 1980-89. And a lot of Fellows also came from Hungary which had already embarked on a comprehensive process of reform in the 1980s. A boom in applications came about in France, too, which therefore became the EU country with the highest number of applicants and Fellows.

In foreign policy, the Eighties were characterized by East-West German special relations. These meant closer dialogue, agreements on bilateral economic and cultural relations, and new and easier travel regulations. When at the end of the Eighties Mikhail Gorbachov, who had become President of the Soviet Union in 1988, introduced a new era of reforms in the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact with his demands for Glasnost (transparency) and Perestroika (reshaping), the way was opened for largely peaceful political change in the Eastern Bloc states and the unification of Germany, which came about on 3rd October 1990.

The global political and internal German upheaval which followed, sealed the end of the Cold War. It led to enormous changes in the network of international academic relations, meant a shift in priorities in German scientific policy towards the rebuilding of the East, and also presented foreign cultural policy with new challenges. In the Humboldt Research Fellowship Programme, the end of the Cold War heralded a flood of applications from the Soviet Union's successor states and the transformation states of Central and South Eastern Europe. This meant that the number of applications in 1990-92 reached its maximum to date even though the boom in applications in the diverse countries of origin varied with regard to period of time, extent, and duration (e.g., Hungary, 1987-92; Poland, 1988-89).

The Second Half of the Nineties: Wooing Guest Academics

The Calm After the Storm

The political change in the Eastern Bloc broadened the potential for international academic cooperation considerably. After initial orientation towards Germany, which historically, geographically, and culturally was the nearest Western country to aim for, the focus of researchers in Central and South Eastern Europe shifted away from Germany. Many young researchers turned towards the countries in the Anglo-American tradition which had attractive research facilities and offered the advantage of using English as the language of science.

In the second half of the Nineties, there were also fewer applications from other countries. This was true, for example, of the USA, Japan, Great Britain, Australia, and South Africa. Therefore, the total number of applications per year dropped back to the levels of the 1980s. A multitude of factors contributed to this downturn. On the one hand, the consequences of the drop in the birth-rate in highly-developed industrialized nations meant there were fewer young academics available. On the other hand, the range of fellowships on offer world-wide was vastly greater. In addition, many graduates preferred financially more attractive jobs in industry to those in academia.

Since cultural bonds to the host country are also an important factor in deciding to spend a longer period of time researching abroad (Jöns 2002b), in many countries (e.g., USA, South America) diminishing biographical connexions to Germany and Central Europe are responsible for a further decrease in the interest in longer-term stays in Germany.

Asia and Africa

A growth in applications from the Asian countries India, China, and Bangladesh could be traced in the Nineties. As a result, China heads the current rankings for the fifth decade (1994-03) both in relation to applications and Fellowships. Concurrently, the African states Nigeria and Algeria showed quite considerable interest for the very first time. Egypt was still the most frequently-represented African country with regard to applications but Nigeria actually received more Fellowships.

Over and above this, since 1998 the Humboldt Foundation has been awarding Georg Forster Research Fellowships to highly-qualified post-docs from developing countries, a programme financed by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. This offers opportunities to spend

time researching in Germany without having to compete with applicants from economically stronger industrialized nations.

International Marketing

In order to consolidate Germany's place in the network of international academic relations and to expand the internationalisation of Germany as a place to do research, since the end of the Nineties the Humboldt Foundation has been intensifying measures geared to making their sponsorship programmes more well-known and more attractive to the researchers whom they are wooing world-wide. Apart from targeted dissemination of information, new sponsorship tools have also been introduced. Hence, in the framework of the Federal Government's Investment in the Future Programme ("ZIP"), the Humboldt Foundation has created the most valuable academic prizes in the world. Entitled the Wolfgang Paul Award and the Sofja Kovalevskaja Award, they were bestowed on 43 young foreign academics for the first time in 2001. Free of administrative constraints, they offer the award winners the opportunity to carry out long-term research work with their own working group and thus constitute an important basis for continuing the internationalisation of research in Germany.

Conclusion: Humboldt Sponsorship fosters Internationalisation

The Humboldt Foundation's sponsorship figures for the last five decades can be related to global political events, internal developments, and the reintegration of Germany into the international academic community. Applications and Fellowships grew, boomed, stabilized again; the regional focus of sponsorship shifted. New Humboldt programmes opened up various segments of academic mobility, the Humboldt Foundation's follow-up work and the voluntary initiative of former guest academics consolidated a widespread network of Humboldtians on all continents. During the period under consideration, the work of the Foundation was characterized in its distinctive continuity by political neutrality, flexibility under changing conditions, demanding selection principles, and individual care.

In a fast-track academic world, long-term Humboldt sponsorship opens up important opportunities for intensive academic exchange across national, disciplinary, cultural, and linguistic borders. In particular, face-to-face contact between Humboldtians and members of their host institution may lead to surprising scientific insights and trusting collaboration which, even in the era of the Internet, would not otherwise come about (Jöns, 2002b). Sponsorship of international academic mobility certainly does not

complement what is assumed to be the inherent internationality of science; on the contrary, it is what creates it in the first place. Academic findings only attain an international, objective, universal character by moving from one place to another, by recruiting supportive resources in other places, and by proving themselves and being accepted in new contexts. Thus, the creation of opportunities for cross-border interaction in the sciences and humanities is undoubtedly one of the most important effects of Humboldt sponsorship. In addition, there are the personal bonds with Germany which, in the long term, go beyond the academic dimension and mould Germany's political, cultural, and economic relations with the world.

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