

ALEXANDER - VON HUMBOLDT



Information



Languages

Alexander von Humboldt on his travels

Globalization

Alexander von Humboldt was a widely traveled man. In addition to visits to Europe and Africa, he also traveled to America. Even back then, traveling was an important feature of globalization (globalization = connecting the whole world). In the 19th century, many Germans emigrated to America and traders sailed their ships across the world. But Alexander broke the record for travel in his time.



Fig.: Globalization in the 19th century

(Source: Lordrice, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Launch-of-the-SS-GB.jpg>)

In July 1792, Alexander traveled in less than two weeks from Ludwigstadt, in the very north of Upper Franconia, via Bad Steben to Bayreuth and then to Arzberg in the very east of Bavaria. Back then there were no motorways and hardly any paved roads. Alexander rode in a carriage along the bumpy paths through the mountains and valleys of Franconia. He also sailed from the island of Tenerife to Venezuela in 22 days. It took Alexander only 33 days to return from Philadelphia in the USA to Bordeaux in France. So he was always on the move quickly. At first glance, the times mentioned sound endless, but the type of mobility used to be different. People were much more dependent on nature. However, Alexander made perfect use of all natural elements and, above all, took advantage of the winds and ocean currents on his travels.

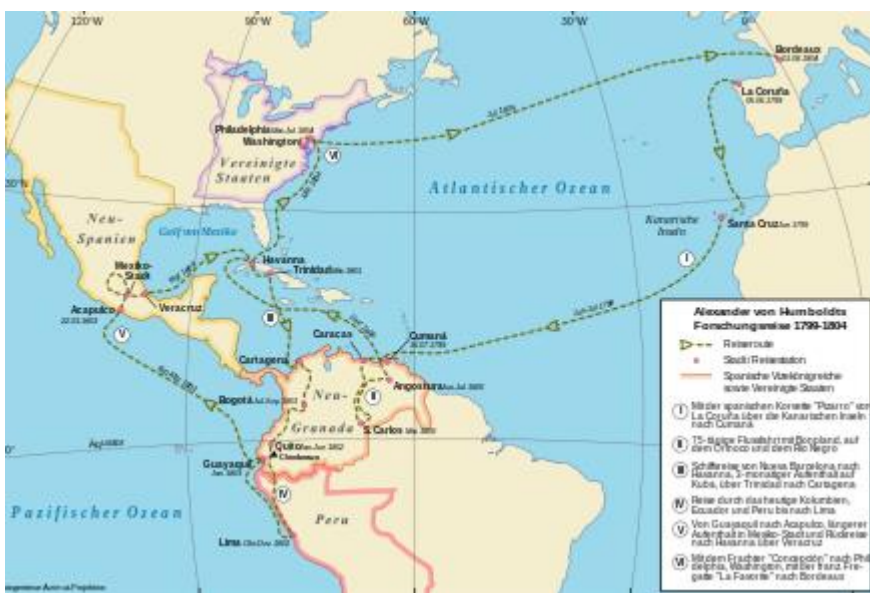


Fig.: Alexander's journey from Germany via South America, the USA to France

(Source: Alexrk, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_Alexander_von_Humboldt_expedition-de.svg)

The altitude levels

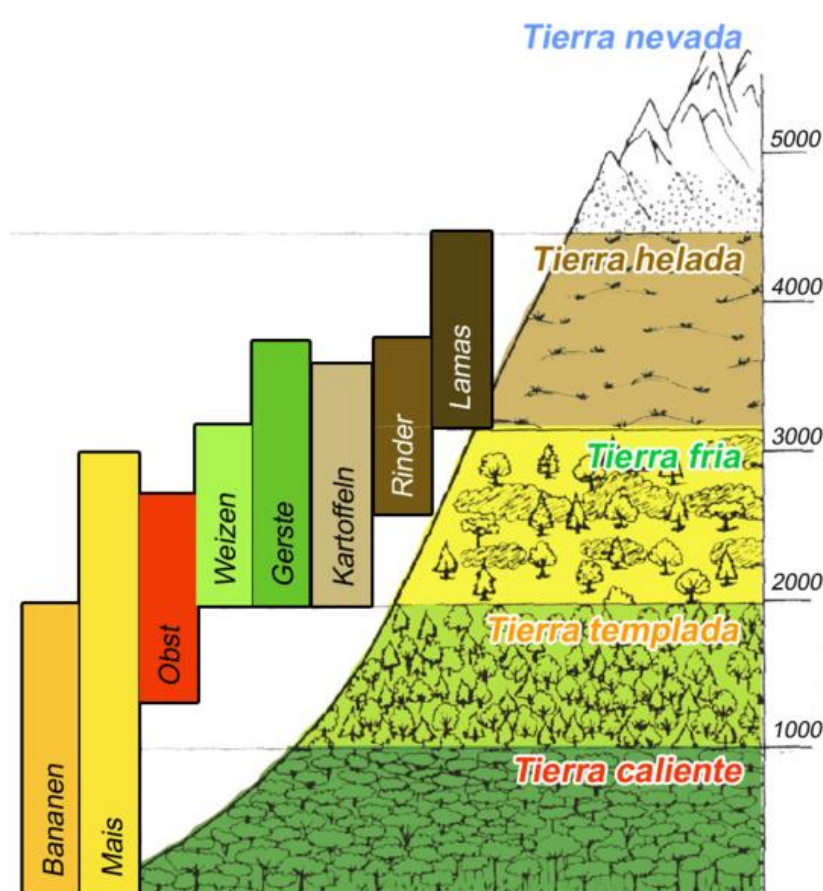


Fig.: The elevations of the Andes

(Source: Anita Graser, https://de.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:H%C3%96henstufe_der_anden.png)

On his travels he also stopped in the Andes (South America) and researched the plant culture of this high mountain region. This field of research is also called plant geography.

Plant geography combines the areas of biology and geography. Biology shows that plants are adapted to certain factors in their environment, i.e. circumstances such as rain/dryness/heat/cold. In order to observe plants in different conditions, Humboldt climbed the Andes on his travels. These have a maximum height of 6961m. Humboldt almost hiked through on his ascent all altitude levels. Meanwhile he watched himself The vegetation, i.e. the growth and type of plants, changes with altitude.



Fig.: Location of the Andes in South America

(Source: Captain Blood, https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:South_America_topo.png)

Alexander never wanted to concentrate on just one subject. He included physics, biology and geography in his research. This type of research is now called interdisciplinary research.