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The life's work of a German botanist in Japan
How is the work of Philipp Franz von Siebold (1796-1866) still influencing our everyday life?

During our own research with salt tolerant plants at the coastline of the German North Sea we detected a well established population of the toxic fungus Claviceps purpurea (ergot fungus) on the common cord-grass Spartina anglica. Both species are new invasive organisms that influence coastal ecosystem drastically. That was very impressive and I became more aware of invasive species in general. Actually, one of the major invasive species in Europe was sent from Japan by Philipp Franz von Siebold, Japanese knotweed (Fallopia japonica), during the 1820s together with several hundred more plant species. Most Japanese plant species were grown in botanical gardens for their beauty, like Hortensia (Hydrangea otaksa). Some of them were used economically, like the tea plant Camelia sinensis. Some individuals of this plant species were sent to Java by Mr. von Siebold and formed the basis for the tea economy in Indonesia. Today there are strict rules for importing plants to other countries to protect both the country of origin against bio-piracy and the country of introduction against invasion. Obviously, Mr. von Siebold's activities still influence our everyday life but we also learned from these early global bio-trading activities.

Jutta Papenbrock: Date of Birth, February 24, 1968. Appointed for life to a Professor (W2) in 2010 for sulfur metabolism and abiotic stress, Institute for Botany at the Leibniz University Hannover. Award with a Heisenberg professorship funded by the German research foundation (DFG) for 5 years.
Academic positions: Heisenberg-fellow at the Leibniz University Hannover from 2009 to 10; “Außerplanmäßige Professorin“ at the Leibniz University Hannover in 2006; Higher scientific assistant (C2) at the Institute for Botany, Leibniz University Hannover from 2002- until 2009 and Scientific assistant (C1) at the Institute for Botany, Leibniz University Hannover from 1997 until 2002. PhD in 1997 at the University of Hannover and researching at the Institute for Plant Genetics and Crop Plant Research in Gatersleben from 1993 until 1997.

Major Research Interests: Sulfur metabolism in higher plants; Protein families and enzymology; Phylogeny, physiology of sea grasses; Secondary metabolites after biotic and abiotic stress application and new stress-tolerant crop plants

Other Professional Activities: More than 70 publications, current h-index = 25; Reviewer activities for more than 40 journals and funding agencies (DFG, DAAD, USDA, BBRSC, ISF, NSF, Alexander von Humboldt-Foundation and others).