

4.11 *The Impact of an International Scientific Cooperation at the Beginning of the 18th Century*

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In countries like Austria, France, Germany, South Africa, the United States of America and possibly elsewhere in the world, scientists have done and are doing research on an international scientific project that was conducted at the beginning of the 18th century. In terms of its scientific goals, the project itself was not successful. Yet, the circumstances under which it evolved, the time and the places at which it took place, the kind of people that were involved, and, after all, the astronomical knowledge that formed the basis for the project, all of this results in a very fine piece of history of science which is worth to be looked at more closely.

The described scientific project, initiated and financed by Baron Bernhard Friedrich von Krosigk (1656–1714), has been discussed amongst astronomers, ethnographers, historians, and philosophers ever since it started and it thus resulted in quite a large amount of scientific insights, despite its failing to obtain the astronomical results that were planned to be accomplished initially.

The presentation will give a short overview over the project, how it probably started, its aims, the way it proceeded and who was involved, e.g. the Franconian astronomer Peter Kolb (1675–1726). Furthermore, some effects on astronomy, ethnography and philosophy will be discussed. Finally, an overview of the actual state of current research, based on this ‘failed’ project, is given.