

Editorial Note

The present selection of texts is based on the ten-volume edition of Alexander von Humboldt's *Sämtliche Schriften: Aufsätze, Artikel, Essays* [*Complete Writings: Papers, Articles, Essays*], edited by Oliver Lubrich and Thomas Nehrlich in Berne and published by dtv in Munich in 2019.¹ Two hundred fifty of Humboldt's texts were translated into English during his lifetime. These historical translations are assembled here for the first time. If various versions of the same text exist, the selection was made on the basis of the following criteria: date (first print or earliest possible print), integrity (as complete a version as possible), relevance (prominence of the publication medium). The order of the texts follows the chronology of the respective original publications as established in the German edition of 2019. A new translation of Humboldt's first article of 1789 complements the historical English versions.

The orthography and the punctuation of the edited texts correspond to the historical originals. Only obvious errors that distort the meaning of the text have been emended. All emendations are documented in the emendation list, separated by volume. Textual and typographic characteristics are preserved as far as possible. Footnotes are numbered for each article. The layout of the headings has been standardized. The page numbers and page breaks of the original are marked. The historical vocabulary (*negro*, *mulatto*) and the historical units of measurement (*toise*, *lieue*) have not been altered.

¹Alexander von Humboldt, *Sämtliche Schriften: Aufsätze, Artikel, Essays (Berner Ausgabe)*, eds. Oliver Lubrich and Thomas Nehrlich, 10 vols. (Munich: dtv, 2019). www.humboldt.unibe.ch/text.

