

Geographies of Knowledge Production in Different Academic Fields – Heike Jöns
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Recent work in science studies and geography has shown that scientific knowledge bears the mark of the location where it was produced and thus displays a particular geography. It has also been argued that the global mobilisation of scientific resources in specific centres of scientific calculation has been an important process in the growth of academic knowledge. Bringing these two observations together raises at least two questions: Where did academics of particular centres of scientific calculation travel in order to conduct or mobilise new resources for their work? And how did the resulting geographies of knowledge production vary between different academic fields and at different stages of academic work? In this paper, I begin with exploring these questions by looking at travel cultures of Cambridge academics in the period 1885 to 1954. Using unpublished archival data on all recorded applications for leave of absence by Cambridge University Teaching Officers, I argue that the global flows of Cambridge academics were shaped in at least three ways: first, they were inextricably linked to changing power-geometries of world politics; second, they were influenced by the uneven distribution of what Pierre Bourdieu categorized as four forms of capital, and, third, they were influenced by shifting degrees of (im)materiality in different types and at different stages of academic work. In order to understand the geographies of knowledge production, it thus seems to be important to consider academic travel as much as the social and material aspects of different scientific practices.