

ХРОНИКА НАУЧНОЙ ЖИЗНИ

Breaking the Wall: A National and Transnational Perspective on East-European Science (1945–1990). October 11–12, 2017 — Bucharest, Romania

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The international conference, “Breaking the Wall: A national and transnational perspective on East-European Science (1945–1990),” was held October 11–12, 2017 at the Hotel Ambassador and the offices of the Institute for the Investigation of Communist Crimes and the Memory of the Romanian Exile (IICCMER), who organized the conference. The first day began opening remarks by Ilinca Iordache, Program Coordinator of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Romania Office, as well as Dinu Zamfirescu, President of the Scientific Council of the IICCMER.

This introduction was followed by the first address courtesy of Mihai Maci, lecturer in the Department of International Relations and European Studies at the University of Oradea, Romania. Her talk, *Embracing Enlightenment: Translators and their translations of international scientific works*, characterized obligatory references to Friedrich Engels and the tenets of Marxism-Leninism as an update of the “civilizing ideology of the Enlightenment” in the new context of socialist Romania. She argued that these references were not simply exercises necessary to avoid censorship, but rather the use of historic materialism as a contribution to the “progress of humanity,” thus re-grounding it across “wall” in common cultural roots.

The next speaker on the panel, Jan Surman of the Higher School of Economics Moscow and the Internationales Forschungszentrum Kulturwissenschaften in Vienna, whose talk was titled Translation Policy of the Kiev publishing house “Naukova Dumka” between Soviet Union, Socialist Camp and the Scientific Community. Surman analyzed the construction of knowledge in the Soviet sphere by analyzing the publications of the Ukrainian publishing house, Naukova Dumka. By considering what was translated and published, as well as how Naukova Dumka’s policies changed over time, Surman considered official scholarly output as a political tool whose flexibility and utility reflected evolving practices of Soviet doctrine.

The final speaker on the first panel was Mirosław Sikora, Researcher at the Katowice branch of the Institute of National Remembrance — Poland’s counterpart to the Romanian

IICCMER. Sikora described the case of Stefan Węgrzyn (1925–2011), a highly influential cyberneticist at the Technical University in Gliwice. Among the most salient aspects of Węgrzyn's biography that despite his refusal to fully collaborate with Poland's Urząd Bezpieczeństwa (security service), he suffered no repercussions. Sikora's talk not only illustrated the value of newly available security files for historians of the socialist period, but the ambiguity of the roles played by scientists and other actors negotiating the demands of loyalty, integrity, and the desire for contact with western colleagues during the socialist period.

The second panel on the first day began with William deJong-Lambert, Bronx Community College of the City University of New York, who in his paper, "*The Difference Between No. 1 1928 and No. 1 1930 is Great Indeed*": *Theodosius Dobzhansky's Self-Imposed Exile from Soviet Russia*, described the correspondence between Theodosius Dobzhansky (1900–1975) with his Russian mentor, Yuri Filipchenko (1882–1930). Dobzhansky came to the United States in 1927 on what was supposed to be a one year stay funded by the Rockefeller Foundation, which Dobzhansky began very soon plotting a way to prolong. Dobzhansky would ultimately never return to the Soviet Union. The Dobzhansky-Filipchenko correspondence charts a struggle faced by many east and central European scientists during the heyday of the Cold War, torn between their loyalty to their homeland and former colleagues, versus the desire to remain in a land that offered more freedom and resources for research.

The next paper, *Aspects of the reception in France of Oparin's ideas on the origin of life in the middle of the 20th century* by Stéphane Tirard, professor at the Centre François Viète d'épistémologie et d'histoire des sciences et des techniques, Université de Nantes, France, analyzed the debate among French scientists over the primordial soup theory on the origins of life by Russian biologist Alexander Oparin (1894–1980). These discussions took place in context with the rejection of genetics initiated by one of Oparin's Soviet colleagues, Trofim Lysenko. By describing this dialogue Tirard showed how the lines of theoretical loyalty during the Cold War never followed the trajectories assumed by state actors aligned on either side of the "wall".

Finally, Cristiana Oghinâ-Pavie, associate professor at the Centre de Recherches Historiques de l'Ouest CNRS FRE2004, Université d'Angers, France, presented on Lysenkoism in Romanian political archives. This talk was part of her larger project of reconstructing the history of Lysenkoism in socialist Romania, which once again blurred the lines of politics by revealing Romanian's lingering fascination with French science and culture. Making use of the resources available at the archives of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Romania — not to mention her own family history — Oghinâ-Pavie continues to demonstrate why Romania is such a unique and vital case study in terms of the broader history of Lysenkoism.

The third and final panel of the day began with Jean-Claude Dupont, professor at the Centre d'histoire des sciences, des sociétés et de conflits (CHSSC-EA 4289), Université de Picardie Jules Verne, France, presenting on *The Medical and Political History of Pavlovism in France: Fernand Lamaze and the Case of Painless Childbirth*. Fernand Lamaze (1891–1951) — of the renowned "Lamaze method" child bearing technique, was inspired by Pavlovism imported from the Soviet Union. Once again we see ideas transgressing the Cold War boundaries to create unique ideas uninhibited capitalist-socialist rivalries.

Corina Doboş, researcher at the New Europe College in Bucharest, followed up on this theme by presenting *The Pavlovian turn: psychiatry textbooks and career strategies in post-war Romania*. Doboş described the reinterpretation of Pavlovian theory — in terms of semantics and etiology — to conform it to the new conditions of Romanian socialism. This paper also demonstrated the means by which Romanian scholars were able to continue to practice favored doctrines by tweaking them according to official demands.

The final paper on Pavlovism was presented by Sarah Marks, lecturer at Birkbeck University of London. In *After Pavlov: Behavioural Conditioning Research in Poland and Czechoslovakia during the Cold War*, Marks made a comparative study of the treatment of Pavlov's theories in Poland and Czechoslovakia to outline the contributions and uses of the doctrine, as well as the assumptions present in the west of how the idea of conditioning was presumed to a technique for brainwashing.

The second day of the conference began with a panel on the treatment of disability and the fate of sociology as a discipline under socialist regimes. The first paper — *Attitudes towards disability and diseases in communist Romania. Case study: unrecoverable children and the premises for Humanitarian intervention after 1990*, by Luciana Jinga, Marie Curie Fellow at the Centre de Recherches Historiques de l'Ouest CNRS FRE 2004, Université d'Angers, France, and researcher at the IICCMER in Romania — focused on the Romanian communist regime's policies with regard to people with disabilities. According to the author these approaches were fundamental to the explaining how disability is treated in Romania today.

The second paper, *Rights and Rehabilitation. Polish scientific approaches to disability across the Iron Curtain*, was presented by Anaïs Van Ertvelde, PhD candidate at Leiden University in the Netherlands. Van Ertvelde described the development of the Polish rehabilitation model from its founding after World War II, up through the 1960s and beyond, when Poland began to have a more sizable influence upon global strategies of rehabilitation. She concluded with the 1980s — the period when disabled people began to challenge the ways in which they were being treated by the institutions established by those who were not themselves disabled.

The third paper on the panel focused on the wider issue of sociology. In *Building Socialism while Challenging it. Sociology during Communism between Expertise, Societal Projects and the Socialist State Needs*, Ștefan Bosomitu, researcher at the IICCMER, Romania, focused on the place of sociology — a notoriously “bourgeois” discipline — within the broader framework of sciences, social and otherwise, in communist Romania. Bosomitu described how the production of sociological knowledge, critical at a time when Romania society was becoming increasingly urbanized, was determined by the influence of political authority.

The final panel began with a paper by Dalia Bathory, researcher at IICCMER, Romania, presenting *Knowledge Production and Redistribution. The Case of the Institute of History in Cluj between 1957 and 1968*. Bathory chronicled the serial restructuring of scientific institutions in Romania during the postwar period by focusing on what happened at the Institute of History in Cluj between 1957 and 1968. By analyzing the Institute's yearbooks, or annual reports, she interpreted how its work fit in context with the larger framework of print production during this period.

The final paper of the conference, *The Status of Philosophy in Romanian Communism*, was presented by Daniela Maci, lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Social Care at the University of Dradea, Romania. Maci focused on the status of philosophy both in terms of the new, official vocabulary necessitated by the communist regime, as well as the status of philosophy as a discipline within the Romanian educational system. She divided her analysis between two periods — the 1950s, when dialectical materialism was first being disseminated in Romanian society — and the 1970s, when it was argued Marxism could not be reduced to this principle. In doing so she wrestled with the larger question of how this production was impacted by censorship and thus how philosophy developed.

The final remarks were delivered by deJong-Lambert who referred to the prevalence of workshops, conferences, and every other type of meeting organized since the end of the Cold War that highlight the idea that — despite physical walls and less tangible boundaries — members of opposed sides were still able to travel and communicate. The question is whether this history, as it has been written now that the socialist empire has ended, would have made any sense to those

who lived in it. Wouldn't they be baffled by how it defies their experience? The fact that all they could see were banned books, censorship and the bureaucratic acrobatics required to travel not only to the other side, but even within to one another? Would this history have seemed real, or is it something we simply write for ourselves, seeking comfort that totalitarianism was never actual?

Международная конференция: «Ломая Стену: национальный и межнациональный взгляд на восточноевропейскую науку (1945–1990)» (11–12 октября 2017 г., Бухарест, Румыния)

ВИЛЬЯМ ДЕ ЙОНГ-ЛАМБЕРТ

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Международная конференция «Ломая Стену: национальный и межнациональный взгляд на восточноевропейскую науку (1945–1990)» состоялась 11–12 октября 2017 года в гостинице «Амбасадор», и в отделениях организовавшего конференцию Института по расследованию коммунистических преступлений в Румынии и памяти румынской эмиграции (ICCMER).

**“On the Border of the Russian Empire: German University of Tartu and its First Rector Georg Friedrich Parrot”:
The 28th Baltic Conference on the History of Science**

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The 28th Baltic Conference on the History of Science on the topic “On the border of the Russian Empire: German University of Tartu and its first rector Georg Friedrich Parrot” was held at the University of Tartu from the 18th till the 20th of May 2017.

The conference was in celebration of the 250th birthday of the University of Tartu (then Kaiserliche Universität zu Dorpat) first rector Georg Friedrich Parrot. In 1802 Parrot was invited to the newly reopened university as the physics professor and as the first rector he was fundamental in ascertaining that Tartu would incorporate a modern version of academic study and that the natural sciences and science based studies would be the foundation for the university. Science based studies was the reason behind Parrot's physics cabinet, which for a while was held as the best equipped cabinet in the Russian empire. The university's autonomy, good equipment and professor privileges provided an excellent foundation for the brightest minds to congregate towards Tartu which in return led to the decade's worth of scientific excellence for