Editorial

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

This issue of the Newsletter gives the results of our elections. Our Program Committee of the Tel Aviv symposium accepted nearly 100 paper proposals; the preliminary program will be available at the end of this month.

It will be a pleasure to meet many of you in summer.

Best wishes

Stefan Poser

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Dear ICOHTEC members,

Few weeks ago we completed the process of belated elections to fill the vacant posts in the Executive Committee and Editorial Board of ICOHTEC. I have a pleasure to announce the results of our elections:

1. Voting for 3 members of Executive Committee for 2014-2018
Francesco Gerali – 56 votes
Irina Gouzevitch – 53 votes
Elitsa Stoilova – 41 votes
Shaul Katzir – 38 votes

Francesco Gerali, Irina Gouzevitch and Elitsa Stoilova are the new members of the Executive Committee.

2. Voting for 2 members of Editorial Board of ICON
Hans-Joachim Braun – 67 votes
Tiago Saraiva – 40 votes
Irina Gouzevitch – 24 votes

Hans-Joachim Braun and Tiago Saraiva are the new members of the Editorial Board.

Sincerely congratulations to the newly elected members of both bodies!

We have reached 55% of participation rate (70 out of 128 entitled to vote) which is a pretty good result! Thank you all for your time and efforts to take part in this democratic process.

With best wishes

Slawomir Lotysz
Secretary General

II. Conference Reports

Oil, Gas and Pipelines: New Perspectives on the Role of Soviet Energy during the Cold War, University of Zürich, January 2015

Felix Frey, Institut für Geschichte, ETH Zürich

Historians and specialists from eleven countries gathered in Zürich for a two-day conference in order to discuss the role of Soviet energy during the Cold War. The convenor, JERONIM PEROVIĆ (Zürich)
pointed out in his introductory remarks that one key aim was to bring together two historiographical disciplines which still stood largely apart: Cold War Studies and Energy History. The task was to get a better understanding of the multiple ways in which energy, politics and power were connected over time and across borders, taking various national, institutional as well as corporate views into account. Perović reminded the audience to be careful not to interpret everything in a global context. The Soviet Union functioned according to its own logic, a logic which can only be understood in the country’s specific cultural context and the particular political mechanisms at work within the Soviet Communist system. Yet if there was an area where the Soviet Union was always, in one way or another, connected to the outside world even during the heights of the Cold War, then this was, according to Perović, the area of energy, especially oil and gas. The guiding theme of the conference was thus to open up new perspectives on the Cold War by looking at energy and energy relations.

The first panel outlined turning points in Soviet energy policy decisions during and after World War II. FELIX REHSCHUH (Zürich) analyzed the reasons for the Soviet leadership’s changes in its attitude towards fossil fuels during the 1940s and 1950s. In the interwar period, the Soviet planners had paid little attention to oil exploitation, but the Red Army’s fuel needs during World War II challenged these energy choices fundamentally. However, it was only towards the end of the 1940s, as tensions between the blocs heightened, that planners finally decided to favor the oil fields in the Volga-Urals-Region (‘the second Baku’), located deep in the Soviet heartland, over Caucasian oil wells. NATALIIA EGOROVA (Moscow) demonstrated in her paper how energy considerations influenced Soviet foreign policy after World War II in the case of Iran. As Egorova argued, the intention of the Moscow leadership to control oil production in Soviet-occupied northern Iran contributed to tensions with the West, leading to the Iranian crisis of 1946. However, Moscow did not pursue the annexation of northern Iran to an enlarged Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic. VIACHESLAV NEKRASOV (Surgut) looked into the interdependence of politics and energy during the Khrushchev period. He offered insights into the mechanisms of energy investment choices within the Soviet planning agency (Gosplan), using a ‘funnel of causality’ to explain its decision-making. Nekrasov identified a shift towards decentralization, professionalization, and an increasingly global orientation of decision-making as characteristics of the Khrushchev era. The commentator of the panel, TANJA PENTER (Heidelberg), underlined that the success story of Soviet oil production was accompanied by high human and environmental costs.

The second panel focused on Western perspectives on Soviet oil exports. As NIKLAS JENSEN-ERIKSEN (Helsinki) argued, the increase of Soviet oil extraction and exports between 1955 and 1965, as well as the UK embargo of 1959, fueled institutional debates about Soviet imports within Britain. Jensen-Eriksen underlined that these debates were not so much driven by strategic, rather than domestic economic considerations. Although the British Ministry of Energy was keen to protect the country’s oil producing companies, the Board of Trade was interested in importing cheap ‘red oil’ in order to support the British manufacturing industry. ROBERTO CANTONI (Manchester) looked into NATO’s internal debate on the real and perceived Soviet ‘oil offensive’ in the early 1960s. Soviet efforts to increase oil exports to the West using its Druzhba pipeline project was seen as a means to expand political power and influence, particularly by the US. Conversely, European governments saw a chance to stimulate their economies by purchasing low-priced Soviet fossil fuels in exchange for technology. Accordingly, the US-enforced embargo against the shipment of steel pipes to the Soviet
Union in 1962 was soon to be undermined by several Western countries. JUSSI HANHIMÄKI (Geneva) then raised the question whether a bipolar Cold War logic blurred the view of NATO strategists, with regard to a hypothetical Soviet threat.

Even though the history of East-West energy cooperation is intriguing, the international history of Soviet oil and gas exports needs to be enriched by an intra-bloc perspective, a point made by the presenters in the third panel. As MARGARITA BALMACEDA (New Jersey/Cambridge, MA) observed, Soviet energy exports to member states of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) created a legacy of dependency that continues to have an impact on contemporary international relations and politics. Furthermore, major problems of post-Soviet countries such as non-transparent book-keeping practices, far-reaching responsibilities of energy companies and the reliance on cheap energy have their roots in the common Soviet past. FALK FLADE (Frankfurt/Oder) explained how economic and non-political factors were predominant in intra-bloc discussions on the construction of the transnational Druzhba pipeline, which connected the Volga-Urals region with CMEA member states. A growing reliance on oil in the communist satellite states was expected from the late 1950s, caused by higher demand in the agricultural and heavy industry sector. A pipeline seemed to be the only way of sustaining a sufficient supply of energy from the USSR to its allies. The Soviet Union thus subsidized the struggling Eastern European economies by delivering oil at a much cheaper price than the world market price. The ensuing fighting about the pricing mechanisms within CMEA in the 1960s and 1970s was the subject of the paper presented by SUVI KANSIKAS (Helsinki). She showed how Eastern European states used their veto right in the CMEA to thwart Soviet attempts to change the energy pricing system. It was only in 1975 that the USSR and its CMEA partner states came to an agreement, which took increased world market prices for oil into account. Kansikas demonstrated that seeing the CMEA as a mere tool of Soviet influence over its Eastern European allies is in fact quite reductionist and in need of revision.

While the first day of the conference was characterized by the question of managing energy abundance, LORENZ LÜTHI (Montreal) launched the second day of the conference by looking into the energy crisis within CMEA, caused to some extent by Soviet supply problems. As Lüthi demonstrated, the USSR faced severe oil extraction shortages in the 1970s. The decrease of energy supplies to Eastern Europe coincided with a broader disintegration of CMEA and a growing orientation of its member states towards the West and the International Monetary Fund. The crisis in Soviet oil output was countered by Brezhnev's Western Siberian gas campaign and the construction of the ‘Soiuz’ gas pipeline in the late 1970s. DUNJA KREMPIN (Zürich) showed how internal Soviet discussions about the development of the gas-rich Western Siberia led to comprehensive negotiations with Western European, Japanese, and even US companies and governments. But not all within the Soviet Union favored cooperation with the West: while some feared that the exploitation of the vast gas resources would be ecologically disastrous and economically unsustainable, others dreaded the perspective of their country becoming increasingly dependent on the capitalist West. Thus, in order to support the project, Brezhnev himself toured the region and the Soviet media launched an intensive propaganda campaign in favor of Siberian energy. GALINA KOLEVA (Tiumen’) gave an overview on the rapid development of the Tiumen’ oblast’ from a vast and ‘empty’ space to an industrialized area. The Western Siberian campaign not only boosted the exploitation of gas resources, but created jobs for
thousands of workers in the process. As Koleva pointed out, the Western Siberian campaign transformed a former periphery to a new industrial center and leader in oil and gas production.

Panel 5 dealt with East-West energy relations. RÜDIGER GRAF (Potsdam) contrasted current discursive framings of the role of energy in today’s ‘New Cold War’ with the discussion during the Cold War. Graf concluded that contemporary newspaper headlines are at odds with Cold War realities. Energy was rarely an aggressive tool of Cold War politics, but rather a ‘softener’ of international relations. The interpretation of the Cold War and the ‘New Cold War’ as driven by conflicting interests over resources can be attributed to a lack of alternative explanatory models after the collapse of the Eastern bloc. Similar to Graf, PER HÖGSELIUS (Stockholm) differentiated between ‘imagined’ and ‘real’ energy weapons, the latter of which he defined as an intended disruption of supply. A hypothetical energy weapon is formed by discourse and fears, rather than by an actual threat, and often turned out to be more powerful than an actual disruption of supply. DAVID PAINTER (Washington, D.C.) explained how such imaginary threats are being described by some US historians of the so-called ‘Reagan Victory School’. They perpetuated the idea that the Soviet Union was economically crushed by the steep decline of oil prices in the 1980s, which was intentionally induced by the US and its Saudi Arabian allies. This concept of a geostrategic conspiracy is, as Painter argued, much more myth than economic reality. In fact, it was the high oil prices of the 1970s and the resulting increase in exploration and production which led to the drop of the oil price in the 1980s.

By looking into cooperation between West European companies and the Soviet Union, the last panel of the conference added an important aspect to the discussion. ELISABETTA BINI (Trieste) portrayed Italy’s national energy company ‘Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi’ (ENI) as being skillfully managed between the political front lines of the Cold War. While Italy was importing Soviet oil and gas in increasing volumes throughout the 1960s and 1970s, ENI managed at the same time to conclude advantageous contracts with Middle Eastern countries as well as with NATO member states such as the Netherlands. As Bini argued, ENI’s management played on the American fear of an Italy dependent on Soviet energy, the Soviet wish to barter oil for Italian pipelines, as well as the perception of ENI as a non-colonial, neutral energy company in the Middle East. ALAIN BELTRAN (Paris) and JEAN-PIERRE WILLIOT (Tours) demonstrated how the case of France differed from Italy due to the low importance of gas in the French energy mix. Still, the state-owned company GDF (Gaz de France) imported Soviet gas in increasing volumes from the early 1970s onwards. For GDF and the Pompidou administration, Soviet energy was welcomed as a means of lowering the dependence on Middle Eastern gas, even though such a move was opposed by the US. The final speaker, OSCAR SANCHEZ-SIBONY (Macau) shed light on Soviet motives for cooperating with Western European and Japanese companies. He explained the nature of Soviet foreign trade as a development from barter towards a compensation trade based more and more on cash during the 1970s. Japan and Western Europe were supplying capital for diameter pipes, paper mills and the like to the Soviets in exchange for long term compensation in material goods. This appropriation of Western capital to build their industry not only led to high ambitions among Soviet planners, but also accelerated the integration of the Soviet economy into the global financial system. GIACOMO LUCIANI (Geneva) in his commentary emphasized that actors like ENI or GDF had hardly any political agenda, but based their alliances on economic profitability.
Based on the conference presentations it becomes clear that the Cold War and energy are indeed interconnected stories. This was evident not only from presentations dealing with energy relations across national borders, but even from those analyzing domestic issues of Soviet energy. The various energy campaigns from Stalin to Brezhnev can be better understood taking into account the broader international context. Another deduction is that the Soviet Union was a rather reluctant energy power. Considering only official statistics, the story of Soviet energy is a story of success. In real politics, however, the issue of energy was a burden, rather than an asset. The wide-spread perception in the West about the Soviet Union using energy as a weapon is at least partly misleading and in need of revision. Also, the view that Soviet energy policy was generally driven by an expansionist geopolitical agenda ignores the fact that the Soviet Union repeatedly faced domestic energy crises and aimed at cooperation with Western companies and states as a way to overcome them. In the words of Rüdiger Graf, in East-West relations, energy was not so much a cause of tension and confrontation, but rather a political ‘softener’. In sum, the conference represented an important and pioneering endeavor to approach Cold War energy questions and the role of Soviet oil and gas in a comprehensive manner. A publication of the results of this conference would certainly be desirable.

The report was published first in H-Soz-Kult, http://www.hsozkult.de/conferencereport/id/tagungsberichte-5906

III. Conference Announcements

8 – 10 May 2015


Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung, Potsdam, Germany

Organizer:

Gesellschaft für Technikgeschichte GTG; Gesprächskreis Technikgeschichte GKTG; Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung Potsdam; Fachgebiet Technikgeschichte, Technische Universität Berlin, Prof. Dr. Marcus Popplow.

Please find the program on: http://zzf-pdm.de/Portals/_Rainbow/images/home/ProgrammGTG2015_05_8_10.pdf
This workshop focuses on the concept of technology as seen by various historical actors in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We seek to shed light on the dissemination and transfers that allowed technology - as a science of action - to become a major theoretical concept in nineteenth-century Europe just as its definition was becoming increasingly restricted to the application of science to industry – a widely shared meaning today.

In nineteenth-century Europe, different views of "technologie" attracted much debate. From the well-known writings of Johann Beckmann, Jean-Sébastien Lenormand, and George Wilson emerged the understanding of technology as the science of operation. These theoretical considerations went hand in hand with the intensification of labour which affected all modes of production - from craftsmanship and rural industries to factories. Interestingly, these theoretical discussions on the meanings of technology involved a wide range of actors deeply implicated in the world of techniques. Whether artisans or engineers, scientists or cameralist academics, they theorized productive acts and articulated their understanding of labor into operative concepts. A quick glance at those articulations reveals a plethora of hope for the ways in which new science, capable of analyzing human action, could help improve it.

In the nineteenth-century United States, there was a striking absence of significant theoretical framing of technology despite its pervasive presence, most notably in the naming of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1860. As Eric Schatzberg reminds us, the term came to the United States as a mere passing shadow of its cameralist self. It emerges in the name of an institution but its founders seem blissfully unaware of the concepts European genealogy and tradition. At the same time and despite ignorance of its existence, the European conceptual baggage of the term traveled across the Atlantic, becoming in the early twentieth century roughly synonymous with the older conception of technology as industrial arts.

This workshop presents a rare opportunity to confront American and French historiographies on the subject of theoretical conceptions of technology. In the nineteenth century, on both sides of the Atlantic, intellectual traditions promoted studies of technological science as irreducible to applied science. In France, the anthropology of techniques and the philosophy of science and technology, from Georges Canguilhem to Gilbert Simondon, enhanced the resurgence of this meaning of technology. In the United States, a rich literature, particularly published in Technology & Culture and also favored by the rise of cybernetics after World War II, has assessed the existence of a technological science and has promoted the concept of operation as a tool for deconstructing the barriers of disciplinary knowledge.
Nevertheless, these approaches in France and in the United States do not seem to have spoken to each other. This shared understanding in a context of mutual ignorance is the focus of our workshop that we would like to organize in collaboration with the Society for the History of Technology, the publisher of Technology & Culture.

With support from:
- EHESS : Centre Alexandre Koyré
- GIS Unité de la Technologie et des Sciences Humaines(UTSH)
- Université Technologique deCompiègne(UTC), programmeHumanTechnology
- Laboratoire LARCA (CNRS/Université Paris 7)
- Laboratoire SPHERE (CNRS/Université Paris 7)
- Laboratoire ICT (Université Paris 7)
- ICOHTEC

In partnership with:
- Institut des Humanités et des Sciences de Paris (IHSP)
- Society for the History of Technology (SHOT)

Please visit http://40ans.ehess.fr/2015/02/09/la-technologie-comme-science-sociale-2/

10 – 11 June 2015
Workshop "Fokus Handwerk": Aktuelle Perspektiven einer interdisziplinären Handwerksforschung. Themen, Fragestellungen, Quellen und Methoden / Workshop „Focus Hand Crafts“. Perspectives of an interdisciplinary approach to research on hand crafts: Subjects, questions, sources and methodology.
LWL-Freilichtmuseum Hagen, Germany

Please find the program on: http://www.lwl.org/LWL/Kultur/LWL-Freilichtmuseum_Hagen/Das_Museum/Forschung_Projekte/

Please contact Dr. Lisa Maubach, LWL-Freilichtmuseum Hagen, Kompetenzzentrum Handwerk und Technik, lisa.maubach@lwl.org

24 – 27 June 2015
Inequalities: Winners and Losers in Business. 19th Annual Congress of the European Business History Association, EBHA
Miami, USA
Please find the congress website: www.thebhc.org/annmeet/general15.html
30 March – 2 April 2016
Life stories and oral histories. Oral history and life stories network of the European and Social Science History Conference, ESSHC
Valencia, Spain
CFP – Deadline 1 May 2015

Broadly, we want to encourage papers that explore the relationship between oral histories and the construction and analysis of life stories, both in terms of processes and outcomes. This, for example, might include the conceptual use and reuse of both oral histories and life stories in research, and/or considerations of the methods involved in both. We would encourage proposals that attempt to cross the oral history/life history divide (bringing the two research communities together).

We invite contributions that address the following key issues in method:

- Different approaches to questions and question design
- Interview relations (intersubjectivity as a dynamic interaction and building trust), this could include ‘remembering for the future’ and how awareness of potential reuse may shape interview encounters
- Life stories and the position and subjectivity of the researcher
- Analytical approaches to “truth”, remembering and the parameters of gaps and silences in narratives (told and untold topics)
- Visuality: the interrelation between verbal and non-verbal in the interview or life story
- The limits or parameters of interpretation and reuse
- Ethics of consent

We are also specifically interested in papers on the following topics:
- Environment, including climate change
- Post-repression narratives including narratives of migration
- Negotiating the private and the public in memory, including globalisation and the continuation of traditions
- Subaltern voices: life narratives ‘from below’
- Turning life stories and oral histories into public history

Finally, we welcome papers exploring the ‘future of the past’; that might include the contribution of innovative contributions in archiving, curation, sharing authority and teaching to the future of oral history and life stories research.

Please note that our Network is often oversubscribed. If this is the case for the Valencia 2016 conference, the Network chairs will select in the first instance those abstracts that meet the themes highlighted in the call for papers. We will also only consider proposals that draw substantially on oral history and/or life story methods (and are research based). We will also prioritise papers that are of high quality, and/or innovative in argument or method. Please note that proposals must be uploaded with required online registration NO LATER than May 1, 2015. Please also read the ESHHC guidelines at https://esshc.socialhistory.org/guidelines on proposing and presenting papers.
While we welcome proposals for panels these must be international in membership (and from different institutions), and each of their constituent papers must be of a high quality. The over-riding criterion for selection is strength of papers; if a proposed panel is not strong enough en bloc, the organisers will (as in 2014) consider the merits of papers individually. Our Network does not favour discussants; so that if a panel proposal includes a discussant it should indicate why they wish to follow this format (and that if they do, the panel must comprise a maximum of four speakers plus a discussant). Sessions can have a maximum of five papers.

Please visit https://esshc.socialhistory.org/networks/oral-history-and-life-stories

Please contact the 2016 Network Chairs:
Anne Heimo anheimo@utu.fi
Graham Smith graham.smith@rhul.ac.uk
Andrea Strutz andrea.strutz@uni-graz.at

29 March – 3 April 2016
Environmental History and Its Publics. 2016 conference of the American Society for Environmental History, ASEH
Seattle
CFP – Deadline 1 July 2015

The ASEH invites proposals for its 2016 annual conference that will convene March 2016 in Seattle, Washington. Located on the shores of the Salish Sea and surrounded by lakes and rivers, Seattle’s location serves as an evocative site to consider fluid and interdisciplinary themes in environmental history, with their commensurate ebb and flow of natures, peoples, ideas, goods, and microbes. The region is likewise home to powerful global corporations, including Boeing, Starbucks, Amazon, and Microsoft, ones that not only influence our interaction with the natural world but also provide an opportunity for historians to promote policy and decision-making beyond traditional academic venues. With a multitude of threats facing today’s environment and the diverse people who depend on it, historians need to find the venues and craft the vocabularies necessary for reaching new audiences and contributing to knowledge making with direct applicability.

For this reason, the theme of Seattle’s conference will be “Environmental History and Its Publics.” Environmental history has grown over the past decade, especially on the international level, and is now poised to engage multiple publics who can benefit from the field’s interdisciplinary approach. To reach these new audiences, environmental historians must begin to retool their message and methodologies to push society beyond its fixation on the present with a deeper understanding of the past so that better decisions can be made to shape the future of human and nonhuman life on Earth.
Guidelines:

The Program Committee welcomes teaching sessions, non-traditional formats, and sessions that encourage active audience participation. It encourages panels that include historians at different career stages and different types of institutions (academic and public) and that are gender and racially diverse. We strongly prefer to receive complete session proposals, although we will endeavor to construct sessions from proposals for individual presentations. Sessions will be scheduled for 1.5 hours. It is ASEH policy to allow at least 30 minutes for discussion in every session. No single presentation should exceed 15 minutes, and each roundtable presentation should be less than ten minutes since roundtables are designed to maximize discussion. Commentators are allowed but not required. Please note that individuals can propose to present or comment on only one panel, roundtable, or poster session in addition to chairing a second session.

The online submission system will be available in April 2015, after our annual conference in DC.

Note: Please note that even if you submitted a proposal for our 2015 conference you must register again for new proposals for 2016.

If you have any questions, please contact: Brett L. Walker, Montana State University, Bozeman, Program Committee Chair brett.laurence.walker@gmail.com or Lisa Mighetto, ASEH Director, director@aseh.net.

IV. Summer Schools

The deadline for the ESEH 2015 Summer School Cities and Mountains. Environmental and Health Risks : A Socio-Historical Perspective (Lyon, Yenne, and Grenoble) has been postponed to 26 April 2015.


V. Join ICOHTEC

An ICOHTEC membership makes you a member of the scholarly network of the UNESO-based International Committee for the History of Technology, ICOHTEC.

The membership includes:

- Reduced fees for ICOHTEC’s conferences
- ICOHTEC’s reviewed journal ICON (published annually, ca. 200 pages)
- Electronic access to back issues of ICON (published since 1995)
- ICOHTEC’s electronic Newsletter (published monthly – available via mailing list and on the homepage)
Please share this form with a colleague who is not yet a member or ask your library to subscribe.

Form for annual membership renewals / registration of new members

Annual membership includes subscription to ICOHTEC’s refereed annual journal ICON, access to all back issues of ICON in electronic form via the ICOHTEC website, a monthly Newsletter, and special registration rates at the annual ICOHTEC symposium.

I wish to renew my membership / to become a new member in ICOHTEC. (Tick below the appropriate description/rate):

- □ An individual. Rate: (40 $ or 30 € or equivalent) per year
- □ A student. Rate: (40 $ or 30 € or equivalent for two years)
- □ An institution. Rate: (100 $ or 75 € or equivalent) per year
- □ A library. Rate: (Europe: 36 €, Oversees 39 € or 52 $) per year

Tick the years of membership to be paid: □ 2014 □ 2015 □ 2016 □ 2017

I submit the total amount: ____________________________ €/$

Your first name and surname: ________________________________________________________________

Email: __________________________________________________________________________________

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- □ Through international money transfer: Make international money transfer to:

  “ICOHTEC“ at Commerzbank Bochum (Husemannplatz 3-4, D-44787 Bochum, Germany):
  IBAN: DE44 4304 0036 0390 2590 00; BIC: COBADEFFXXX

- □ Through a cheque. Send the check with the appropriate sum made out to “ICOHTEC” and send to:

  Dr. Lars Bluma Otmarstrasse 5, D-45131 Essen, Germany.

After filling the form, please scan and send by email to Dr. Yoel Bergman, ICOHTEC Treasurer at yoelb@protalix.com or, send a hardcopy by regular mail to Yoel Bergman, 20 Haatzmaut St., Herzliya 46789, Israel. Your filled form will facilitate sending ICONs and allocating access privileges.