



BASEES Symposium, Cambridge, April 5-6, 2024

***East-West Cooperation in Science and Technology:
Actors, Actions, and Intelligence Gathering***

Organizers: Matěj Bílý – Doubravka Olšáková, Institute of Contemporary History, Czech Academy of Sciences

The symposium is organised with the support of the Strategy AV21: Research programme Identities in the World of Wars and Crises.

The conference will explore the central role of technology and science in overcoming ideological boundaries during the Cold War. Despite political tensions, scientists and experts from both sides of the Iron Curtain found common ground, facilitated by the neutral working environment created by scientific and technological endeavour. The Atoms for Peace conference in Geneva in 1955 was an important milestone in improving East-West cooperation. However, the technological rivalry between the blocs fuelled competitiveness, driving politicians' strategic interest in science and technology. National prestige became intertwined with scientific progress, especially during the Cold War. The shock of Sputnik spurred scientific and technological progress in the 1960s and 1970s, increasing the mobility of scientists and integrating intelligence gathering into their routine practices. Certain areas, such as nuclear proliferation, disarmament and environmental security, attracted considerable interest in intelligence gathering.

With a focus on exploring the complex dynamics of international relations during and beyond the Cold War era, the conference seeks to analyse the multiple intersections of science, diplomacy and technological progress.



PROGRAMME

Friday, April 5

Venue: Selwyn Old Library Room 4

Nuclear Diplomacy, Communication and Technological Sovereignty

Chair: *Doubravka Olšáková*, **Discussant:** *Sam Robinson*

- 12.45-13.00: **Barbara Hof (CH):** American Spy Anxiety And East-West Cooperation On Particle Accelerators, 1959-1975
- 13.00-13.15: **Katja Castryck-Naumann (DE):** Experts And International Administrations In Politics Of Nuclear Disarmament
- 13.15-13.30: **Katharina Lenski (AT):** Scientific Exchange Between East And West. A Space Constructed By Communication
- 13.30-13.45: **Frank Dittmann (DE):** The Ultracentrifuge For Uranium Enrichment - An East-West Technology Transfer In The Cold War
- 13.45-14.00: **Matěj Bílý (CZ):** Warsaw Pact's Attempt To Protect Its "Scientific-Technological" Potential In The Late 1980s

Technology and Science Diplomacy

Chair: *Matěj Bílý*, **Discussant:** *Sam Robinson*

- 13.45-14.00: **Jiří Janáč (CZ):** Agents In Their Own Service? Czechoslovak Techno-Experts Working For The UNO/UNECE In The Czechoslovak Intelligence Collection Management
- 14.00-14.15: **Doubravka Olšáková (CZ):** Future Shock: Computers, Linguistics And New Technologies In Eastern Europe
- 14.15-14.30: **Brittany Shields (US):** Scientific Diplomacy & Knowledge Exchange: Mathematicians and Computer Scientists Navigating the Cold War US-USSR Interacademy Program



East-East and East-South Relations

Chair: Barbara Hof, Discussant: Sam Robinson

- 16.45-17.00: **Barbora Buzássyová (SK)**: Activities Of Czechoslovak Experts In Africa Through The Lens Of Secret Service Documents (1960s, 1970s)
- 17.00-17.15: **Barbora Menclová (CZ)**: Czechoslovak Geologists In The Global South In The Service Of The State And Intelligence
- 17.15-17.30: **Jan Adamec (CZ)**: Scientists? Diplomats? Businessmen? Spies? Czechoslovak-Chinese Joint Commission For Scientific And Technological Cooperation As A Czechoslovak Vehicle For Gathering Scientific, Economic And Political Intelligence On The PRC
- 17.30-18.00: **Lyubomir Pozharliev (DE)**: Yogurt And Technology – Bulgarian-Japanese “Intelligent” Cooperation in the 1980s

Saturday, April 6

Venue: Selwyn Old Library Room 2&3

The Role of Science Diplomacy In a Modern World

Chair: Lyubomir Pozharliev, Discussant: Barbara Hof

- 9.00-9.15: **Szabolcs László (HU)**: Knowledge Acquisition and Travel Reports about the “West” in Cold War Hungary
- 9.15-9.30: **Fabian Link (DE)**: Left-Wing Scientific Diplomacy And History Of Science: The Cases Of Joseph Needham And John Desmond Bernal
- 9.30-9.45: **J.M. Webb, T.H. Spurling and G.W. Simpson (AU)**: Science Diplomacy In Newly Independent Australia Post 1901

Final Remarks