

The Power of Norms

22-24 September 2016, Prague, Czech Republic

The **7th International Conference of the European Society for the History of Science** will be held in Prague, Czech Republic, 22-24 September 2016. The Conference is organized by the Society for the History of Sciences and Technology of the Czech Republic. The theme of the Conference is **“Science and power, Science as power”**.

One session, for example, will explore “The power of norms: standardisation and normalization through International Scientific Organisms”. Most international scientific unions, such as IUPAC, IUPAP, IUPAB, IAU, IUGG, URSI, ... etc., were creations of the 20th century, and aspired to be pure scientific bodies, above national government or cultural influences, and making decisions or issuing recommendations on strictly rational grounds. One of their aims, especially in the case of IUPAC and IUPAP, was to draw up norms and standards to facilitate the development and the propagation of science. In the frame of ICSU for instance, IUPAC and IUPAP founded joint special commissions to deal with specific matters: symbols, units, nomenclature, constants, atomic weights, physicochemical standards, analytical methods, etc. Furthermore, IUPAP or IUPAC also developed joint commissions with the other international organizations mentioned above for special common subjects.

Standards allow for a better diffusion and exchange of knowledge by creating and maintaining a common

language. But standards, terminology, and norms also are a mean of power. It comes thus as no surprise that before these standards were enacted and accepted locally, whenever they were, heated or extended debates took place inside commissions before reaching consensus. Afterwards, the task still remained for the international bodies to diffuse the new standard as a scientific recommendation to be followed by its users, especially in teaching and publishing. Few historical studies have been devoted to this contingent part of scientific activity up to now, as it appears at first to be a purely administrative or technical part of scientific management, whereas this process of normalization eventually impacts and structures the science itself.

The proposed session will focus on this under-investigated facet of scientific work, to which nonetheless several scientists, often of great fame—F. and I. Joliot-Curie, E. Bauer, G.T. Seaborg, G. De Hevesy, or J. Timmermans, among others—have devoted a notable part of their time and activity.

For more information about this specific session, contact Danielle Fauque: danielle.fauque@u-psud.fr or Brigitte Van Tiggelen: vantiggelen@memosciences.be

For full program see www.7eshs2016.cz

Selenium Research (Se2017)

13-17 August 2017, Stockholm, Sweden

Today we know that selenium has a wide range of important functions in nature. To celebrate **200 Years of Selenium Research**, an international selenium conference will be held at Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm on 13-17 August 2017. The conference will cover all fields of current selenium research, with a special focus on biology, medicine, biomedicine, and the environment. The conference will officially be composed of two serial symposia, for the first time held in parallel at the same site and having overlapping plenary sessions, poster sessions and social events. The two symposia are **The 11th International Symposium on Selenium in Biology and Medicine**, which is the continuation of a meeting held in Berlin in 2013 (<http://selenium2013.com>), and **The 5th International Conference on Selenium in the Environment and Human Health**, as con-

tinued from a meeting held in Brazil in 2015 (see ‘Conferences’ on www.seleniumresearch.org).

Registration for Se2017 will open in 2016. This website will be further updated closer to the launch of Se2017. Save the dates to come to Stockholm in August 2017!

Feel free to contact the organizers if you have questions or ideas for the upcoming conference; the chair of the local organizing committee, is professor Elias Arnér, Karolinska Institutet, Sweden (Elias.Arner@ki.se)

<http://se2017.se/>