



ACCADEMIA NAZIONALE DEI LINCEI

COMMISSIONE PER LA STORIA DELL'ACCADEMIA DEI LINCEI

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

THE HISTORY OF EUROPEAN ACADEMIES IN THE 20TH CENTURY: STATE OF THE ART AND
INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

MAY 27TH, 2021

FASCICOLO ABSTRACT

Scientific and Organizing committee: Alberto QUADRIO CURZIO (Presidente Emerito Lincei), Giovanni PAOLONI (Sapienza Università di Roma, Commissione per la storia dell'Accademia dei Lincei), Claude DEBRU (Académie des Sciences), Wolfgang U. ECKART (Accademia Leopoldina), Johannes FEICHTINGER (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften), Martin FRANC (Czech Academy of Sciences), Rainer GODEL (Accademia Leopoldina, Zentrum für Wissenschaftsforschung, coordinator of the European History of Academies Initiative), Karl GRANDIN (Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences), Keith MOORE (Royal Society).

PROGRAMME

It is well known that international political relations as well as international scientific relations, also at the level of the academies, have always been closely intertwined. Between 2014 and 2018, the German National Academy Leopoldina, the Royal Society, and the Académie des Sciences conducted a joint research project on European Academies before, in, and after World War I. The project was organised as a series of workshops to be run in the respective countries, and, as a follow-up, a series of academic publications. The researchers involved were fully aware that we urgently need a larger comparative perspective on the history of European academies.

On this basis, the Leopoldina invited members, fellows or affiliates to seven European national academies in June 2018 to talk about such a research initiative. The participants agreed to be part of the initiative under the main title: "Academies and politics. Cold War and beyond". All participants agreed to conduct workshops on a specific subject fitting the main topic. The first workshop in the research initiative will take place in Rome. The meeting is aimed at sharing historical outlines of participant institutions in the 20th century, and at the assessment of related state-of-the-art historical research, also seeking to widen the perspective to other European institutions and projects, including the ongoing InSciDE Project, recently granted in the framework of Horizon 2020 Research Program.

Thursday, 27 May

9.30 Welcome address

Giorgio PARISI (Presidente dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei)

Alberto QUADRIO CURZIO (Presidente Emerito dell'Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei; Presidente della Commissione per la storia dell'Accademia dei Lincei)

Wolfgang U. ECKART (Accademia Leopoldina)

1st Session - Chair: Karl GRANDIN

10.00 Rainer GODEL (Accademia Leopoldina, Zentrum für Wissenschaftsforschung): *Introduction: The European History of Academies Research Initiative*

10.30 Martin FRANC (Czech Academy of Science, Masarykův Ústav a Archiv av ČR) - Adam HUDEK (Slovak Academy of Science, Historický Ústav): *The State of Research in the History of Academies of Sciences in Czechoslovakia*

11.00 Johannes FEICHTINGER (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften): *The Austrian Academy of Science 1914–2000. Institutional turning points and historical reappraisal*

11.30 Break

2nd Session - Chair: Giovanni PAOLONI

11.45 Pascal GRISET (Sorbonne-Université, Sirice-InSciDE Project): *Between communication and expertise: the French Academy of Sciences facing contemporary challenges*

12.15 Maria Paula DIOGO e Pascal GRISET: An informal presentation and open discussion of *The InSciDE Program: Historians in Search of an Identity for Science Diplomats*

13.00 Break

3rd Session - Chair: Wolfgang U. ECKART

14.00 Maria Paula DIOGO (Universidade Nova, Lisboa; InSciDE Project): *The Abbé Correia da Serra: using the Lisbon Academy of Sciences as a tool for science-diplomacy*

14.30 Jens THIEL (Bergische Universität Wuppertal): *A scientific academy at institutional margin? The Leopoldina in the 20th Century*

15.00 Giovanni PAOLONI (Sapienza Università di Roma; Commissione per la storia dell'Accademia dei Lincei): *Defining the past to discover the future. The Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei in the 20th Century: historical research, sources and institutional challenges*

15.30 Sven WIDMALM (University of Uppsala): *Eyes on the Prize: The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences after 1900*

16.00 Final discussion and conclusions

ROMA - PALAZZO CORSINI - VIA DELLA LUNGARA, 10

Segreteria del convegno: mariavittoria.liberati@lincei.it – www.lincei.it

I lavori si svolgeranno in videoconferenza ZOOM e potranno essere seguiti dal pubblico in streaming. Il link sarà disponibile sul sito dei Lincei la mattina del convegno. Quanti, durante i lavori, intendano intervenire alla discussione potranno inviare le domande con una email alla Segreteria del convegno, che le trasmetterà ai relatori.

Con preghiera di segnalare l'eventuale partecipazione

* * *

The Conference will be held via ZOOM Platform and in live streaming. The link to access the live streaming will be made available on the Lincei website on the morning of the conference. During the conference, those who wish to participate in the discussion with questions to the speakers, may do so by sending them to the Conference Secretariat via email.

You are kindly asked to confirm participation

Introduction: The European History of Academies Research Initiative

Rainer GODEL (Academia Leopoldina, Zentrum für Wissenschaftsforschung)

The history of the joint European History of Academies Research Initiative traces back to a workshop series organised by the Académie des sciences, the Royal Society, and the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina. This precursory project focused on the history of the three academies that had instigated this series with a focus on the period before, during and after World War I. The series of workshops took place in Halle (Saale), in Metz, and in London between 2015 and 2018. It was clear from the beginning that a history of academies cannot and should not be limited to only a few protagonists, given that an international network of cooperation in science had shaped the respective research developments as well as the political positions and stances the academies took up then. The three academies decided to publish the results of the workshops and additional research – such as a volume editing and commenting official addresses by representatives of European academies between 1914 and 1920 – in Leopoldina’s book series “Acta Historica Leopoldina” (volume 78 which includes the results from the London workshop is currently in print). However, it always was clear to the initiators of this first project

- that the research topic focusing on the question how academies relate to politics is a largely unexplored area of research
- that a comparative approach in the field of the history of academies is urgently needed to cope with the European and/ or international character of academic networks since the late 19th century
- that the methods used in a possible continuation of this idea shall not be limited to an institutional history
- last, but not least, that it is necessary to include further academies into a steering committee to establish a wider basis and a multiplicity of research perspectives.

On this basis, the Leopoldina invited members, fellows or affiliates to seven European national academies in June 2018 to talk about such a research initiative. The participants – representing the respective National academies from Austria, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, and the United Kingdom – agreed to be part of the initiative under the main title: “Academies and politics. Cold War and beyond”. All participants agreed to conduct workshops on a specific subject fitting the main topic. I am very grateful that the first workshop in the research initiative will take place in Rome on May 27, 2021.

The Austrian Academy of Science 1914–2000. Institutional turning points and historical reappraisal

Johannes FEICHTINGER (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften):

2022 the Austrian Academie celebrates its 175th anniversary. Founded in 1847, the imperial Academy of Sciences in Vienna quickly became the Habsburg state's most important scientific innovation agency. It initiated Institute-based research in Austria, sent large scale expeditions around the world, co-initated the International Association of Academies for cross-national research projects, operated research institutes itself and made sensational discoveries. Today, the Austrian Academy of Sciences (AAS) is both a Society of renowned scholars and scientists and the major non-university institution for basic research in selected areas of the natural sciences as well as the humanities.

The aim of this presentation is to give an overview of the history of the Academy between the First World War and Austria's accession to the European Union in 1995, with a brief outlook to the further development. In a second step, I would like to briefly discuss the historical reappraisal of the history of the AAS in the 20th century.

The overview of the Academy's history is structured according to the political ruptures of the 20th century that were decisive for Austria and can be circumscribed by the following dates: 1914, 1918, 1934 (abolition of the democratic constitution), 1938, 1945, 1955 (Austrian State Treaty), and 1995 (Austria's accession to the EU).

It will be shown

- (1) how the transnational imperial academy of Habsburg Austria developed into the national academy of the Republic of Austria which only regained its international importance during the Cold War in neutral Austria;
- (2) how the above-mentioned political ruptures affected the history of the academy and to what extent they caused institutional turning points for the academy; and
- (3) what the state of historiography on the AAS about the 20th century is today.

It will be shown, which efforts the AAS has made to come to terms with its Nazi past and which major desiderata remain (also with regard to the history of its last 75 years). They shall be briefly mentioned. In an outlook it will be briefly noted what the added value of a European perspective on the reappraisal of national academy histories can be, especially for the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

A scientific academy at institutional margin? The Leopoldina in the 20th Century

Jens THIEL (Bergische Universität Wuppertal)

Abstract (English)

This lecture examines the history of the German Academy of Sciences Leopoldina – today's National Academy of Sciences - in the 20th century. In order to better understand its special role in the “century of extremes” or “age of ideologies”, it is necessary to remember its origins and development as an early modern scholarly society with a natural scientific and medical profile. Its self-image, which was strongly influenced by this, and its reflection in external perceptions, as well as the associated lines of continuity and the organisational structures derived from them, determined the history of the Leopoldina well into the 20th century. Unlike the other large science academies in Germany and Austria, the Leopoldina could not easily create link with newly founded national and international cooperation networks that sprang up around 1900. This was due to the Leopoldina's constitutional framework that made it difficult to engage with national and international partners. The Leopoldina remained institutionally marginalised in the German academy structure. Despite tentative attempts at reform, nothing changed in its position as an outsider. Particularly with a view to the period of National Socialism and the Cold War, the lecture explores the question of how the academy, which has been based in Halle an der Saale since 1878, adapted to the respective political conditions and what significance its special role played in science policy decisions, especially in the two German dictatorships. Special attention will be paid to the fact that the Leopoldina, not least because of its special history, always saw itself as an “all-German” academy in East Germany after 1945 and was thus able to maintain its independence.

A scientific academy at institutional margin? The Leopoldina in the 20th Century

Jens THIEL (Bergische Universität Wuppertal)

Abstract (deutsch)

Der Vortrag beschäftigt sich mit der Geschichte der Deutschen Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina – der heutigen Nationalen Akademie der Wissenschaften – im 20. Jahrhundert. Um ihre besondere Rolle im „Jahrhundert der Extreme“ bzw. „Zeitalter der Ideologien“ besser verstehen zu können, ist es notwendig, sich ihrer Entstehung und Entwicklung als einer frühneuzeitlich geprägten Gelehrtenengesellschaft mit naturwissenschaftlich-medizinischem Profil zu erinnern. Ihr davon stark geprägtes Selbstbild und dessen Spiegelung in der Wahrnehmung von außen sowie die damit verbundenen Kontinuitätslinien und daraus abgeleiteten Organisationsstrukturen bestimmten die Geschichte der Leopoldina bis weit ins 20. Jahrhundert hinein. Anders als die anderen großen Wissenschaftsakademien in Deutschland und Österreich fand die Leopoldina auf Grund dieser Verfasstheit um 1900 keinen Anschluss an deren neu gegründeten nationalen und internationalen Kooperationsverbände. Die Leopoldina blieb im deutschen Akademiengefüge weiterhin in einer institutionellen Randlage, im Abseits. An ihrer Außenseiterposition änderte sich trotz zaghafter Reformversuche nichts. Vor allem mit Blick auf die Zeit des Nationalsozialismus und des Kalten Krieges geht der Vortrag der Frage nach, wie sich die seit 1878 in Halle an der Saale ansässige Akademie den jeweiligen politischen Rahmenbedingungen anpasste und welche Bedeutung ihre Sonderrolle in den wissenschaftspolitischen Entscheidungen, insbesondere in den beiden deutschen Diktaturen, spielte. Besonderes Augenmerk wird dabei dem Umstand gewidmet, dass sich die Leopoldina, nicht zuletzt auf Grund ihrer besonderen Geschichte, nach 1945 im Osten Deutschlands immer als eine „gesamtdeutsche“ Akademie verstand und sich somit in ihrer Eigenständigkeit behaupten konnte.

Defining the past to discover the future. The Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei in the 20th Century: historical research, sources and institutional challenges

Giovanni PAOLONI (Sapienza Università di Roma; Commissione per la storia dell'Accademia dei Lincei)

Defining the past to discover the future. The Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei in the 20th Century: historical research, sources and institutional challenges

If one wants to understand the activity of the Accademia dei Lincei in the 20th century, and its place in Italian national identity, one needs to know the origin of its name. The founder, prince Federico Cesi, chose this to emphasize the importance of observation in the vision of science affirmed by the 'scientific revolution' at the beginning of the 17th century. The word 'linceo' comes from 'lynx': an animal with sharp sight, capable of subtle hunting strategies. The history of the Lincei dates back to the early 17th century, and it was the academy where Galileo Galilei belonged. Galileo is the iconic character of scientific revolution in Italy. The Accademia dei Lincei was therefore the ideal candidate institution to gather the Italian cultural élite under a banner of indisputable symbolic value.

This presentation outlines the institutional history of the academy, since World War I to the second half of the 29th century. When the war began, in August 1914, Italy declared its neutrality. This reflected somehow the desire of Italian cultural élites for cultural internationalism of the Belle Époque not to be crushed. In May 1915, it declared war on Austria-Hungary, and in the summer 1916 it declared war on Germany. When Italy went into the war, the national academies of the Entente sent messages resounding with military rhetoric, to which the Lincei responded halfheartedly. After 1916, when war on Germany was declared, the majority of the academics slowly drifted to cooperation in the nation's war effort.

When fascist dictatorship was gradually established, the Accademia dei Lincei had to deal with it. In 1920, the mathematician Vito Volterra was elected vice president, to become president in 1923. He was a declared anti-fascist, and in 1925, he was one of the signatories of the 'anti-fascist manifesto' made public by another 'linceo', the philosopher Benedetto Croce. However, a number of members preferred not to take explicit political standing, whereas others sympathized with fascism. In 1926 the Fascist government created the Accademia d'Italia, an institution whose members were appointed by the government. In 1933, the fascist government passed a reform of the statutes, which included a compulsory oath of allegiance to fascism. This led to the expulsion of ten members, who refused the oath. In 1938, following anti-Jewish laws, also Jewish members were expelled. In 1939, the Accademia dei Lincei was suppressed, and its members merged as second rank members of the Accademia d'Italia.

In post-war years, the history of the Lincei is shaped at the same time by enhanced collegiality, and by the influence of prominent intellectuals in charge of the presidency and vice-presidency. Through publications and awards, the organization of conferences and seminars, and institutional initiatives such as the Interdisciplinary Center established in 1971, the Lincei contribute to the social, economic and scientific development of the country. Historiography has deeply studied institutional issues such as the relationship to Fascism, the consequences of the anti-Jewish Laws, and the purge of fascist members in 1944-1946. Less-traveled studies are the institutional history after in the second half of the 20th century, and the contribution of the Lincei to the development of different branches of culture. A rich library and archival heritage encourages such lines of research, which would benefit not only historians, but the Academy itself, which needs - like every institution - to deal with its own past in order to orient its lines of development in a constantly evolving context.

Eyes on the Prize: The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences after 1900

Sven WIDMALM (University of Uppsala)

Abstract

By 1900 the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (RSAS), funded by government appropriations and a monopoly on almanac sales, had long since become a semi-public umbrella organization for several specialized research institutes and a few large public institutions (the National Natural History Museum and the Government Meteorological Institute). It regularly awarded about a dozen prizes and medals, and it issued or subsidized publications, including the venerable “Transactions” (*Handlingar*, 1739–1974). More than a century later it is fair to say that the academy (in Sweden as elsewhere) is known primarily because of its role from 1901 onwards in the award of Nobel Prizes in physics and chemistry.

The 20th-century history of the RSAS is one of non-growth and defoliation in the face of a very great expansion of research and related activities at a growing number of universities, as well as in industry and government agencies. In that context the Nobel Prize took on extra significance. As the RSAS – unlike sister academies in e.g. Russia, the UK, and the US – lost much of its influence over national science, including research policy, it simultaneously established a position (along with the Karolinska Institute, awarding medicine prizes, and with a significant membership also in RSAS) as arbiter of what would count, world-wide, as the most important developments in three major scientific disciplines. This pretention was accentuated in 1969 when the RASA agreed to award the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences, in effect a sixth Nobel Prize.

My presentation will delineate these parallel developments from the perspective of Swedish research policy in the 20th century, which especially after WWII downplayed the importance of scientific institutes in favour of university research guided by government prioritizing about perceived political, economic, and social needs. As a semi-independent institution, the RSAS did not fit very well in that political landscape, where the role it could have played as government advisor was usurped by a government-appointed standing committee (*Forskningsberedningen*). This development had more or less been cemented by the 1970s, when the RSAS lost its financial independence (the almanack monopoly) and felt forced to cancel publication of its journals.