

Poletayev Institute for Theoretical and Historical Studies in the Humanities  
National Research University “Higher School of Economics”

October 12–13, 2017

## **“Academic Revolutions?”**

### **Understanding conceptual renewal and institutional innovation in the Modern World**

**Venue: 20, Myasnitskaya st., Moscow**

This meeting continues a series of international workshops and conferences organized by the Center for the history of ideas and sociology of knowledge (IGITI, NRU HSE) in recent years (*Intellectual history vis-à-vis sociology of knowledge: between models and cases*, 2014; *Social and human sciences on both sides of the ‘iron curtain’*, 2013, among others). Similarly to previous meetings, this one brings together leading scholars from around the world dealing with the history of social sciences and humanities.

The progress of scholarly knowledge has long been studied not only as a succession of concepts, institutions and ideas but also as a process of rapid, sometimes painful change accompanied by ruptures, rollbacks and revolutions. Though the debate around the ideas of Thomas Kuhn and Michel Foucault’s *The Order of Things* has long become history, historians keep taking undiminishing interest in the origins of these works, their relationship with the post-WWII intellectual climate and their universal impact on various disciplinary fields as well as on the self-awareness of sciences and humanities in general. In addition to knowledge itself, the conference will discuss forms of academic life and social organization regarded from the angle of the agonistic dynamics beyond normal reproduction patterns. What we are interested in is ‘**unsustainable development**’ of institutions, networks and practices.

The goal of our conference is to discuss issues in such fields as the history of natural and social sciences and humanities as well as contemporary sociology of knowledge and sociology of ideas in their application to changes in scientific outlook and academic practices since the early modern period, including the Big Science and the trends of the twenty-first century.

The centennial of the 1917 Russian Revolution is a good occasion to discuss the social and cultural dimensions of changes in natural and human sciences and to study the links between political contexts and epistemological frameworks of knowledge production.

Among other things, we would like to discuss the following issues:

- How revolutionary were / can be / should be the ideas of academic revolution?
- Do social and political changes function as decisive tests that lead to scholarly controversies being ‘closed’?
- Can revolutions be fruitfully studied as *experimental* phases and modes of academic development?
- What conceptual language can we use to discuss the negative aspects (‘failures’, ‘mirages’, ‘dead-ends’ etc.) of revolutionary development, on the one hand, and the positive / objective role of ‘counter-revolutionary’ actors, groups and factors?

# **PROGRAM**

**October 12**

**(20, Myasnitskaya st., room 101)**

**10.30 – Registration of participants**

**10.50 – Welcoming words by Irina Savelieva, director of the Poletayev Institute for Theoretical and Historical Studies in the Humanities**

**11.00 – 12.20 Session 1** (Chair – *Elena Aronova*)

*Joseph Agassi* (Tel-Aviv University, Israel) The Place of Dichotomies in Western Philosophy

**12.20 – 12.45 Coffee break (room 121)**

**12.45 – 14.15 Session 2** (Chair – *Jan Surman*)

*Maxim Demin* (Higher School of Economics, Saint-Petersburg, Russia) Introductory Textbooks in Philosophy of Science: the Transformation of Curriculum From 1937 to 2017

*Roger Smith* (Lancaster University, UK; Institute of the History of Science and Technology, Moscow, Russia) The Dubious Notion of 'a Revolution' in the Human Sciences

**14.15 – 15.00 Lunch**

**15.00 – 16.30 Session 3** (Chair – *Alexey Pleshkov*)

*Tetiana Zemliakova* (European University Institute, Florence, Italy) German-American Academic Migration in the Disciplinary Formation of Modern American Social Sciences, 1864–1910

*Jan Surman* (IGITI Higher School of Economics, Moscow; IFK Vienna, Kunstuniversität Linz) Ukrainian Science 1914-1939: Age of Revolutions?

**16.30 – 16.45 Coffee break (room 121)**

**16.45 – 18.00 Round table “Factors and Determinants of Radical Changes within the History of Knowledge”** (Chair – *Irina Savelieva*)

**18.30 – Welcome dinner (11, Myasnitskaya st., café “Brusnika”)**

**October 13**

**(20, Myasnitskaya st., room 101)**

**11.30 – 13.00 Session 1** (Chair – *Alexander Dmitriev*)

*Elena Aronova* (University of California at Santa Barbara, USA) “Can a Computer Write the History of Science?” Information Revolution and the History of Science in the 1960s

*Christopher Donohue* (National Human Genome Research Institute, Washington, USA) Genomics as a Social and Scientific Revolution

**13.00 – 14.00 Lunch**

**14.00 – 15.30 Session 2** (Chair – *Jan Surman*)

*Christian Fleck* (IGITI Higher School of Economics, Moscow; University of Graz) Social and Cognitive Academic Revolutions around 68

*Alexander Bikbov* (Maurice Halbwachs Research Center, Paris, France; Moscow State University, Russia) The Long Effects of the Student Revolution of 1968 for Social Sciences

**15.30 – 15.45 Coffee break (room 121)**

**15.45 – 17.15 Session 3** (Chair – *Irina Sirotkina*)

*Eglė Rindzevičiūtė* (Kingston University, London, UK) System-cybernetic Revolution in Policy Sciences, East and West

*Olessia Kirchik* (IGITI Higher School of Economics, Moscow) The Post-War Cybernetics as a Failed (or Delayed?) Revolution

**17.15 – 17.30 Coffee break (room 121)**

**17.30 – 18.00 Concluding discussion and closing of the conference**