

Action Group on the History of Antarctic Research

The 50th anniversary of the International Geophysical Year is in 2007-2008. On this occasion an Action Group on the "History of Antarctic Research within SCAR" was established under the Delegate Committee on Standing Committees and Outreach of SCAR during the SCAR XXXIII Delegates Meeting at Bremerhaven in October 2004. It is the first international and interdisciplinary group devoted to the history of polar research.

Aim of the History Action Group

The aim of this working group is to obtain insight into the evolution of Antarctic research and the emergence and development of institutions to co-ordinate what was first called the Special Committee, and then Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR). We plan to study to what degree research in the Antarctic has been driven by scientific criteria, and to what extent compromises were made in the light of political barriers, levels of technological development, logistical limitations and physical hazards.

In historical perspective, a review will be made of essential background factors, both scientific and non-scientific, at work when nations were moved to participate in the International Geophysical Year (IGY, 1957-1958) at the time of the Cold War. Pertinent in this respect are the different roles played by non-governmental scientific organisations as distinct from intergovernmental organisations or modes of international organisation. Additional socio-cultural and political background factors will be considered with regard to major nations that chose not to contribute to the IGY.

1st Workshop Munich, 2 –3 June, 2005

The Commission for Glaciology with its first scientific leader Dr. Oskar Reinwarth was involved in the preparatory phase of the construction of the Georg-von-Neumayer- Station, and participated in many research projects funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft. On the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the establishment of this West German Antarctic station, a workshop on the history of Antarctic research will be held under aegis of the SCAR Action Group on the History of Antarctic and the Commission for Glaciology at the

**Bavarian Academy of Sciences
Marstallplatz 8
D-80539 München
Germany.**

We plan to discuss several aspects of the phase prior to the International Geophysical Year and the initial attempts to institutionalise polar research. Traditionally, field science practised in remote geographical regions was either a by-product of exploration or an activity exploited by economical interests or territorial claimants. An important aspect of the early international polar year initiatives in the past has been the requirement that expeditions and projects be driven by scientific research instead of exploration. This principle was reiterated in Belgium by a number of internationally minded scientists (Henryk Arctowski, Otto Nordenskjöld, Jean Charcot, William Speirs Bruce, and others). This was when efforts were afoot to establish an international polar commission, a hybrid combination of inter-governmental and non-governmental scientific and other organizations. Although such a commission was actually founded, it had a very marginal influence on events and was soon eclipsed by the First World War.

With this workshop we want to attract historians, historians of science and polar researchers. It will be the first international group to deal with the history of Antarctic Research and its institutionalisation.

At the workshop oral and poster presentations are invited for the following themes:

Engagement: What motivated an individual person or a given country to engage in Antarctic research? Did the motivation differ during different historical time periods? Is it possible to identify different types of role-figures?

Realisation : How were Antarctic research agendas set up and implemented? What kind of arguments were used to promote Antarctic research? What sort of funding was available, and did different modes of funding affect the character of an expedition and the way it was conducted?

Co-operation: When did co-operation for research pertaining to Antarctica occur, and what was the general orientation and scope? What were some of the obstacles associated with multi-lateral or international co-operation?

Leading figures: In the context of different national settings and perspectives, who were the persons that came to be recognised as leading figures in Antarctic research, and for what reasons? To what extent did some scientists emerge as diplomats within science, or beyond it in the international political arena? How were they regarded by their scientific colleagues, by politicians, media, etc?

The **format of abstracts** should be as follows.

Length: One page A4 (21 cm x 29,7 cm) with 2,5 cm margins

Font: Times

Font size: Title (12pt bold), author (11pt), affiliation (11pt)
text (11pt).

No figures please. Conference language is **English**.

Abstracts of oral presentations or posters must be submitted electronically as word or rtf files by **15 April 2005**
to **C.Luedecke@lrz.uni-muenchen.de**

There will be no conference fee.

You will find hotels, private accomodations, youth hostels and camping under
http://www.muenchen.de/Tourismus/Hotels_Unterkunft/2015/index/html

At the end of April the final programme will be sent to the participants by email.

Organisers:

PD Dr. Cornelia Luedecke
SCAR Action Group
History of Antarctic Research
Valleystrasse 40
D-81371 Munich
Germany
Tel.: +49 (89) 725 6 725
Fax.: +49 (89) 725 6 725
Email: C.Luedecke@lrz.uni-muenchen.de

Dr. Ludwig N. Braun
Kommission für Glaziologie
Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften
Marshallplatz 8
D-80539 München
Germany
Tel.: + 49 (89) 23031 1196
Fax.: + 49 (89) 23031 1100
Email: Ludwig.Braun@Lrz.badw-muenchen.de

Prof. Dr. Aant Elzinga
Department of History of Ideas and Theory of Science
Goteborg University
Box 200
SE-405 30 Goteborg
Sweden
Tel.: +46 (31) 773 1931
Fax.: +46 (31) 773 4548
Email: vetae@hum.gu.se

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