

Finocchiaro, Maurice A.

Introduction : Meta-History of Science at the Berkeley Congress

Organon 22 23, 7-8

1986 1987

Artykuł umieszczony jest w kolekcji cyfrowej Bazhum, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych tworzonej przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego.

Artykuł został zdigitalizowany i opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie ze środków specjalnych MNiSW dzięki Wydziałowi Historycznemu Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.



Maurice A. Finocchiaro (USA)

INTRODUCTION: META-HISTORY OF SCIENCE
AT THE BERKELEY CONGRESS

In the summer of 1982 I proposed to Professor John Heilbron, co-chairman of the XVIIth International Congress of History of Science, to be held in 1985, a symposium dealing with the historiography of science and/or the philosophy of history of science. His response was favorable, and so, when in the fall of 1983 more definite plans for the Congress were being formulated, a committee of three was formed to work out the details of such a symposium. The three so-called conveners were Professor Eugeniusz Olszewski (Poland), Yehuda Elkana (Israel), and myself. The result was Symposium No. 14 "History of Science: Methodology and Philosophies", held on August 1, 1985, at the University of California, Berkeley, as part of the XVIIth International Congress, which lasted from July 31 to August 8, 1985.

The symposium was divided into two parts. The morning session concentrated on "Authors" and was chaired by Professor Mirko Grmek of France. Its speakers and topics were as follows: Salvo D'Agostino (Italy), "Federigo Enriques (1871—1946): Historian and Philosopher of Science"; Robert S. Cohen (USA), "Edgar Zilsel, Joseph Needham, and Boris Hessen"; Janos Farkas (Hungary), "Inconsistent Interpretations of Marxian Methodology in the History of the Social Sciences"; Gad Freudenthal (France), "Hélène Metzger's Hermeneutics of the History of Science"; Imre Hronszky (Hungary), "Veblen, Scheler, Borkenau"; and Yehuda Elkana (Israel), "Comment".

The afternoon session concentrated on "Problems" and was chaired by Professor Ian Hacking of Canada. The speakers and topics were the following: Joseph Agassi (Canada and Israel), "Twenty Years After"; Amos Funkenstein (USA and Israel), "Scientists as Historians"; Eugeniusz Olszewski and Henryk Hollender (Poland), "Regularities in the Evolution of Particular Sciences"; S. R. Mikulinsky (USSR), "On the Historiography of the History of Science: V. I. Vernadsky and T. I. Rainov as Investigators of Scientific Development"; Marcello Pera (Italy), "A Divorce of Love Between the History and Philosophy

of Science"; and Maurice A. Finocchiaro (USA), "Comments on the Methodology and Philosophy of History of Science".

Neither Professor Olszewski nor Professor Hollender were able to be actually present at the Congress, but their paper had been sent to me in advance, and so it was read at the symposium by Professor Robert S. Cohen.

This volume of *Organon* contains papers by most of the symposium speakers (some of them introduced changes in the titles of their papers). All have undergone some revision, minor in some cases, major in others. A few are longer papers based on the presentations at the symposium, where time limitations necessitated summarizations and omissions.

Besides these symposium papers, another one, also presented at Berkeley, has been included. It is Professor Thomas S. Kuhn's Keynote Address "The Histories of Science: Diverse Worlds for Diverse Audiences", delivered at the Congress opening ceremonies, on July 31, 1985. The connection between this paper and the others will be obvious to readers, and it may be elaborated as follows.

Let us reflect on the theme underlying the title of Symposium No. 14, "History of Science: Methodology and Philosophies". One way of expressing this rationale is to say that the methodology of history of science may be conceived as the study of the proper methods and procedures for writing about and doing research in history of science; and the philosophy of history of science may be taken to include the just mentioned methodology, as well as the examination of such topics as the nature of the developmental patterns, if any, in the evolution of the various scientific disciplines. Hence the title suggests two types of what we may call meta-historical studies.

It turned out, however, that Symposium No. 14 came to contain a third meta-historical theme, namely that of the history of science. This is clear partly from the papers in the morning session, since the various examinations of the "authors" in question constitute to some extent contributions to the history of the discipline. The "history of history" theme also emerges very explicitly in Professor Mikulinsky's paper, which in a sense may be taken as a plea for the importance of studying the history of the discipline. The same theme is also explicitly addressed in the first section of my own paper, as a way of introducing the other two types of meta-historical studies (the methodological and the philosophical).

In short we may say that, in fact, Symposium No. 14 dealt with questions in the history, the methodology, and the philosophy of history of science.

It follows that the paper of Professor Kuhn is intimately related to that theme. He is reflecting on the current international state of the discipline, and on its recent history, by means of a comparison and contrast of relevant features of the international congresses held in Amsterdam (1950), Ithaca (1962), and Berkeley (1985).