

Animisov, J. A.

[In his very interesting...]

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Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.



J. A. Anisimov

In his very interesting and pithy lecture, Professor Taton brings forward a series of theses which are of great interest for the historians of science and technology. The organization of inquiries into the history of science and technology is without any doubt of exceptionally great importance for the preparation of high-quality works in that domain.

The complicacy of studying the history of science and technology is determined by the border-line character of that discipline, and consequently by the necessity of analysing the whole complex of scientific-technological questions as well as a number of others, chiefly of historical and economic character.

Meanwhile, the uninterrupted and ever-increasing development of science and technology commits to a systematical scientific making over and revaluing of their history, the reflection of modern scientific trends being discovered in the past. It is besides characteristic that, frequently, the ideas developed in modern science and technology were formerly expressed by the representatives of science who — as the academician V. I. Vernadsky remarked it — were in conflict with the scientific world outlook of their time. Their thoughts had not been understood in their time and sometimes even remained unmarked. This commits to study not only the already known scientific materials, but also to approach most attentively the so called second-rate works.

It is quite clear that the increasing complexity of the process of scientific researches on the history of science and technology involves an ever-growing necessity of drawing into that work a largest possible number of highly qualified specialists, i.e. creative workers in the field of modern science and technology — and of organizing the collective investigations apart from the individual ones.

In his lecture submitted for familiarization to the participants of the Symposium, Professor Ronchi — when classifying the research workers in the domain of the history of science and technology — points at a numerous group of scientists, actively working in special domains and giving some attention to research on the history of science and technology. Moreover, he rightly points to the fact that despite the value of the works prepared by them in the domain of the history of science and technology, there are considerable shortcomings in most of them. They are bound up with a limited time being at the disposal of that group of scientists for such investigations, and with an inadequate mastery of methods of studying the history of science and technology.

While regarding that remark as correct, we however believe it possible and necessary to find a most fruitful form for attracting that category of research workers to the preparation of work in the way of the history of science and technology. We consider it advisable to strive for uniting into creative collectives the historians of science and technology, and specialists participating in the elaboration of problems of contemporary science and technology, by making use of the latter chiefly in order to appraise the materials at different stages of research work.

At present, at the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences there is being carried on — under the direction of the Sector of the history of technology and natural science — a series of investigations which are in accordance with the suggested principle. Those are works of different trends; they are connected with the study of the history of mathematics, the history of technological development of the coal industry and the history of development of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences. For the purpose of carrying out the aforesaid investigations there have been created collectives, each numbering scores of scientists, both historians of science and technology, and specialists of different kinds.

A properly organized study on the history of science and technology does contribute to the scientific-technological progress: it constitutes an integral element of the scientific research work. The development of science and technology, while being determined by a series of factors, obeys at the same time to its internal laws. One of such laws is the continuity of development which commits to make a close study of the experience of the past. Many ideas which could not be utilized under the previous level of the development of scientific knowledge may be very valuable at the following stages. Numerous examples thereof are well known to every research worker. It is to be understood here — as Professor Zvorykine had stressed — that the influence of socio-economic conditions must be taken into account as well.

Understanding the historical process of development of one or another branch of science and technology permits to select more correctly from among the numerous modern tendencies of scientific-technological development the most perspective ones for the future.

Finally, the study of the history of science and technology may — to a certain degree — help to work out scientific-technological prognoses, which was already reported at this Symposium by my colleague Dobrov.

If the modern stage of development of the history of science and technology necessitates the inculcation of new organizational forms of scientific research, namely the creation of collective works, attention shall be paid to the perfection of methods of conducting the scientific

research work, of utilizing the modern achievements of science and technology. It is necessary for example to consider the possibility of employing the computer technique for historico-technological researches. In any case, for the analysis and appraisal of numerous and ever-increasing patent materials, the elaboration of an adequate program for the electronic computers is a very fascinating problem that seems to have prospects of success.

At present, preparatory works are being performed with us, at the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, in order to conduct experiences in this direction, and we hope that our colleagues dealing with that problem, in particular Professor Dobrov who was speaking here, will be able, at the following meetings, to share with us the first results of such investigations.

In conclusion, we cannot help expressing our approval to Professor Taton's initiative towards the organization of bibliographical work on an international scale and the perfection of methods of scientific information exchange. This will allow not only to make the investigations in the domain of the history of science and technology more objective and to raise their quality, but it also will contribute to a better mutual understanding between the research workers of different countries, the importance of which can scarcely be exaggerated.

R. Taton

Je remercie les différentes personnes qui ont apporté d'intéressantes contributions sur différents aspects de mon exposé. Pour conclure, je voudrais revenir rapidement sur quelques points qui ont été ainsi abordés.

La position toute spéciale de notre discipline fait qu'elle subit les influences parfois contradictoires des grands secteurs de recherches voisins. Si nous pouvons profiter très utilement d'une bonne part des suggestions qui nous sont ainsi faites, il ne faut pas mésestimer pour autant l'importance essentielle d'une prise de conscience originale des buts et des méthodes de nos recherches.

Au sujet de la formation technique de nos chercheurs, je suis tout à fait d'accord sur la nécessité de développer l'enseignement des sciences auxiliaires, en particulier la technique de documentation et spécialement le dépouillement d'archives. J'ai été particulièrement intéressé par les précisions données sur les résultats obtenus à ce sujet dans certains pays et sur les possibilités futures d'emploi de machines électroniques dans le domaine de la bibliographie.