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# Soviet-French links in biology during the Cold War

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## Résumé

French-Russian scientific relationship dates back to 1717 when Peter the Great visited the Paris Academy of Sciences. After the 1917 October revolution, this relationship, despite a short hiatus, became a French-Soviet one. After World War II, it received a new impetus with Charles de Gaulle State visit in Moscow in June 1966, resulting in a set of scientific agreements between the two States.

This scientific cooperation was full spectrum, including both natural and social sciences, basic as well as applied sciences. Some fields of cooperation were decided at the highest level, like in particle physics of space (Rey, 1991). Others, like life sciences, were set by lower bodies, but still in a top-down fashion.

There is already a body of works about French-Russian cooperation in neurosciences, in medicine and in biology more generally (Barbara, Dupont, Sirotkina, 2011 ; Barbara, Dupont, Kolchinsky, Loskutova, 2012 and 2016). Yet, there is much left to be done. A three year project focused on French-Soviet cooperation in genetics between 1965 and 1991 was not enough to exhaust the topic (Pierrel and Shalimov, to be published).

This symposium aims at addressing the following issues:

In which areas of life sciences has the French-Soviet cooperation developed? Genetics and molecular biology, neurosciences or physiology have been, and still are fruitful fields for research.

What were the promoting factors of cooperation? Were there factors hindering the cooperation? It has been said that both States manage science in a centralized fashion (Graham and Dezhina, 2008). But there were yet significant differences in science management which had to be taken into account in scientific agreement.

How the Cold War affected the cooperation compared to previous French-Soviet cooperation in the 1930s or earlier French-Russian cooperation? The lasting scientific relationship between the two States allows for comparisons.

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**Mots-Clés:** Science diplomacy, Cold War, France, USSR