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Navigation Nobel: Soviet pioneer

Physiologist Ivan Beritashvili was notably absent from the acknowledged forerunners in the scientific background document for this year's Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine (see *Nature* **514,** 153; 2014). In the 1930s, he studied spatial navigation in dogs at the University of Tbilisi in Georgia.

John O'Keefe, one of the Nobel winners, had many of Beritashvili's works translated into English. References to Beritashvili have appeared in several books and reviews (see, for instance, P. F. Smith and Y. Zheng *Front. Integr. Neurosci.* http://doi.org/wrj (2013); I. Bures and O. Buresova in *Machinery of the Mind* (eds E. R. John *et al.*) Springer, 1990), and evidence of his pioneering research was presented by neurophysiologist Merab Tsagareli at a September 2014 conference on early Soviet and Russian contributions to the 'science of anticipation' (see go.nature.com/oc4cl8).

In my view, Beritashvili, as the first to study spatial navigation in higher vertebrates, deserves a mention in the Nobel background document. His contributions warrant reappraisal, as do those of many other scientists who worked in the former Soviet Union and who were often vilified and isolated from the international scientific community.

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