

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION
FOR THE HISTORY AND THEORY OF HISTORIOGRAPHY

NEWSLETTER

No. 1

March 1996

ICHTH Executive: Georg G Iggers (President), Edoardo Tortarolo (Secretary General);
Fernando Sánchez Marcos (Treasurer) Editor of Newsletter Irmeline Veit-Brause

Introductory Remarks by the President

This is the first newsletter circulated by the Commission. The Commission has now been in existence for over fifteen years, but since its founding at the International Congress of Historical Sciences in Bucharest in 1980 there has been little attempt beyond a number of conferences to maintain communication with persons interested in the history and theory of historiography. We would like to change this. This newsletter is intended as a vehicle for this new active role of the Commission. We want to inform you of the work of the Commission but also to serve as a clearing house for other groups and individuals interested in historiographical issues. Financial constraints will keep the size of the newsletter to about six pages for the time being, but we shall welcome input from our readers.

Although *Storia della Storiografia* has been independent of the Commission since the Madrid congress in 1990 and will continue to be so, we shall work closely with it and it will serve as an additional medium for communication.

One of our foremost tasks is to establish contact with national and regional historians. We are exploring the possibility of affiliating with the American Historical Association, which would give us the opportunity to organize a section at the annual meetings of the Association. Since we are an international rather than a national organization,

it has still to be clarified whether affiliation is possible. We have also established contacts with historians' groups in Japan, Korea, and Hungary and of course, with historians in most of the world. Additional contacts in Latin America, the Arab countries, Africa, and the Indian Sub-Continent would be desirable. Prof Mamadou Diawara of Mali has agreed to join our executive committee. The Commission itself plans two colloquia. The first, an assessment of the historiography of the 1990s, is being planned tentatively for 1998 in Turin, the second, on the historiography of the twentieth century in retrospect, for the International Congress in Oslo in the year 2000. The topics are still tentative. We hope soon to invite papers. We are also in close contact with Prof Jörn Rüsen, of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research at the University of Bielefeld in Germany, and with Thomas H C Lee, City University of New York, who heads a major project which involves East Asian as well as North American and German scholars. We are in communication with Prof Detlef Junker and Dr Eckhardt Fuchs, who are planning a colloquium on historical theory at the German Historical Institute in Washington in 1997, and with Prof. Ferenc Glatz and Dr Attila Pók, who are planning a colloquium at the Academy of Sciences in Budapest.

Georg G Iggers

MINUTES OF ICHTH MEETINGS

Meeting of the Bureau, Montréal, 1 September 1995

Present W J Mommsen (chair), G G Iggers, R Torstendahl, F Sanchez-Marcos, G Ricuperati, H Schleier, R Vann, I Veit-Brause, A Pok (as proxy for F Glatz)

Absent and apologies P. Burke, H von der Dunk, F Hartog, F Glatz, A Sakharov
Observers J Rusen, E Tortarolo

(1) President's Report:

Professor Mommsen reported on the activities of the Commission since the Madrid Congress in 1990. He referred to the annual meetings of the Bureau in Budapest and the success of the two conferences held in Budapest 1993 on 'The Soviet System and Historiography' and in Uppsala, September 1994, on 'The Past of History: The Cognitive and Social Formation of the Discipline'. The President thanked the organisers for their successful efforts

Bureau and *Storia*. The separation of editorial responsibility for the journal *Storia* from the Bureau of the Commission, agreed at the last General Meeting of the Commission, had proved immensely beneficial for both parties concerned. The President congratulated the editors of the journal, E Tortarolo and G G. Iggers, for considerably raising the quality and profile of *Storia* in the last five years.

The President argued for the separation between the journal and the Bureau to continue, including the present arrangement of separate membership fees and subscription fees

Membership of the Commission. The President argued for a new membership drive and the publication of a Newsletter

The president urged the Bureau to think about how to attract colleagues with an international reputation for their work in the area of history of historiography as members

of the Commission. His decision not to stand for re-election as president was meant to open the way for a generational change and renewal. He indicated that his preferred option for a new team of executive officers included Jorn Rusen and Frank Ankersmit as president and secretary-general, respectively. The President's report was accepted.

(2) Secretary General's Report:

A written Report, prepared by Ferenc Glatz, was circulated. Attila Pók briefly summarized its main points.

The meeting noted the Secretary General's report.

Discussion centered on three points:

i. Relationship between Commission and *Storia*. It was felt that the separation had worked well, and should remain. As for benefits for members of the Commission, it was accepted that as long as Jaca Books (the publishers of *Storia*) won't agree to discount the journal for members of the Commission, the issue could not be discussed further.

ii. Activities and membership. It was noted that the Bureau had not been inactive, as evidenced by the two successful conferences in Budapest, 1993, and Uppsala, 1994.

It was suggested that future conferences have to be directed at the general membership.

It was agreed that -

- information about the activities of the Commission had to be more widely circulated,

- the General Meeting at the next International Congress should be scheduled for the start of the Commission's program.

iii. The Secretary General's proposal to publish a composite volume of the papers of the Budapest and the Montreal conference papers was not considered a viable proposition.

(3) Election of the new members of the Bureau by the General Assembly: In preparation of the elections, the meeting

appointed a nomination committee consisting of Rolf Torstendahl and Richard Vann

(4) Candidature for the office of president: Georg Iggers announced his candidature for the office of President and Edoardo Tortarolo's candidature for the office of Secretary General. He explained that he had been approached by Sanchez-Marcos to take on this task. Commenting on the joint ticket with Tortarolo, Iggers referred to their successful cooperation in editing *Storia della Storiografia* and the availability of infrastructure support in Turin. He also expressed his satisfaction that Rösen was prepared to serve as a member of the Bureau. In outlining his future plans for strengthening the Commission's membership, Iggers referred to his plan of seeking, for the Commission, formal association with the American Historical Association. He also referred to talks he had with Christophe Charle, and members of the Korean association for the history of ideas. He assured the meeting that he had a very active program in mind, including the reactivation of national correspondents and the publication of a newsletter edited by I. Veit-Brause.

(5) Change of the Commission's name: Suggestions for changing the Commission's name to read 'International Commission for the History of Historiography and Theory of History' were ventilated. It was agreed to support a motion foreshadowed for the General Meeting of the Commission.

(Minutes prepared by Irmeline Veit-Brause)

ICHTH General Meeting
Montréal, 2 September 1995

Present

W. J. Mommsen (chair), members of the Bureau (as for 1 September meeting, with the exception of R. Torstendahl and R.

Vann) and approx 25 members of the Commission and observers

(1) President's Report

Professor Mommsen reviewed the activities of the Commission since the last general meeting in Madrid 1990. He recalled the state of crisis in which the Commission found itself in 1990, due to editorial problems with the journal, *Storia della Storiografia*, founded at the same time and in conjunction with the Commission in Bucharest in 1980. The decision taken at the last General Meeting to separate the responsibility for the journal from the Bureau and to charge Edoardo Tortarolo and Georg Iggers, in cooperation with an editorial board, with editorial responsibility had worked well.

The President referred to the difficulties experienced by most International Commissions in their daily work. The lack of finance for supporting travel costs for meetings of the Bureau or conferences was a persisting problem, as foundations were reluctant to grant support to international bodies. In the period between 1990 and 1995, these financial problems were somewhat alleviated by the Secretary General's ability to make accommodation available at the Europa-Institute for the meetings of the Bureau in Budapest. He also underlined Professor Torstendahl's success in obtaining a conference grant from the Royal Academy for History, Letters and Antiquities in support of the conference in Uppsala, September 1994.

The President reported briefly on the four formal meetings of the Bureau (December 1990, July 1991, 1992, 1993) all held in Budapest, and the informal meeting in Uppsala in September 1994. He mentioned that problems in coordinating the responsibilities and work of the president and the secretary general had hampered the activities of the Bureau. He stated with regret that plans for a regular Newsletter had

not been realised, and explained that it was lack of finance which prevented the organization of conferences with an open call for papers and more general participation. But he also suggested that the incoming executive of the Commission should pursue such plans more energetically

The President expressed his regrets about past difficulties

Referring to the past trend of declining membership, Professor Mommsen supported the suggestion for negotiations with Jaca Books with a view of given members of the Commission the benefit of a discount on subscriptions of *Storia*

The President concluded his report by expressing his sincere wishes for the success of the in-coming Bureau with a policy of generational change and re-vitalization of the Commission's activities.

The President's Report was accepted

(2) Secretary General's Report

Copies of the written Report prepared by Professor Glatz were circulated Dr Pók conveyed the Secretary General's apologies for his absence and briefly commented on the record of the Bureau's work:

i A summary of the Commission's objectives,

ii Four meetings of the Bureau in Budapest,

iii Two successful conferences in 1993 and 1994, in Budapest and Uppsala respectively

He also stated that the facilities of the Europa-Institute in Budapest were still available for the Commission's use; and that 400 letters had been sent out with the agenda for the General Meeting at Montréal

Discussion on the Secretary General's Report: The suggestion that the Commission had enjoyed stable membership was queried by Mommsen. He also reiterated his point that the Commission should continue with the policy of not accepting responsibility for the editorial work for the journal *Storia*.

It was agreed that members of the

Commission would be more regularly and more fully informed about the activities of the Bureau including plans for future conferences

The Secretary General's Report was noted

(3) Treasurer's Report

Professor Sánchez Marcos presented a written statement on the financial situation of the Commission

Le trésorier a exprimé son vif remerciement à tous les membres de la Commission qui, ayant payé les cotisations, ont fait possible sa continuité institutionnelle

Voilà les informations et chiffres qu'il a donné sur le bilan comptable 01.01 1991 - 21.08 1995 le total net d'entrées par versement des cotisations a été de 278.293 pts, le total de sorties: 252.273 pts (215 907 pour les cotisations institutionnelles au CISH et le reste pour des frais d'administration et poste), et le solde, positif, 26.020 pts. (Si est finalement accordé l'aide ou subvention à la Commission très probable selon le Trésorier du CISH, M. Dubois, équivalent à la cotisation au CISH de 1994.) Le Trésorier a manifesté aussi sa gratitude à M. Schulze et M. Mommsen par la cotisation spéciale (330 DM) du Verband der Historiker Deutschlands à notre Commission. Finalement Sánchez Marcos a exprimé son espoir de lier le paiement de la cotisation à la subscription, avec un rabais, à *Storia della Storiografia*, on pourra attendre une amélioration de la situation économique par l'augmentation du numéro de membres qui payeront la cotisation de la Commission

A fin de compléter le rapport sur la situation économique de la commission, le Trésorier informa que dans le Congrès de Montréal a été approuvé par le Comité International des Sciences Historiques la proposition de M. Dubois (l'ancien Trésorier du CISH) d'aider notre Commission avec une subvention équivalente à notre cotisation institutionnelle au CISH de 1994 (650 FS). Ainsi, la Commission n'aura, en ce moment, aucune

dette arrière (la cotisation 1995 au CISH a pu être payée). D'autre part, aux 37 personnes qui avaient payée des cotisations jusqu'au 21.08 1995, 12 de plus (qui ont versé les cotisations pendant ou après le congrès de Montréal) y ont été ajoutées
The Treasurer's Report was approved. It was agreed that the statement of account be in future given in US dollars

(4) Report on *Storia della Storiografia*:

On the invitation of the chair, Professor Tortarolo reported briefly on the current state of *Storia della Storiografia* and new initiatives emanating from a group of Italian scholars interested in the history of historiography

It was noted that -

- *Storia* had about 250 subscribers, and that about 100 copies were sold through the bookshops in Italy,

- *Storia's* table of content for each issue was now available on Internet,

- a new review of publications in history of historiography had been launched on Internet,

- a reduction of 25% on the subscription for members of the Commission was a distinct possibility to result from negotiations with Jacca Books

Further suggestions from the meeting for editorial policy changes, e.g. a fusion with *Rivista della Storia della Storiografia Moderna* and an extension of the range of languages in which articles may appear in *Storia* were noted

(5) Election of the members of the new Bureau and the executive officers of the Commission:

Professor Veit-Brause presented the slate of names proposed by the nomination committee. After Professor Mommsen's withdrawal from the chair, I. Veit-Brause chaired the election procedures

Nominations for the Bureau:

Frank Ankersmit (Groningen),

François Hartog (Paris);
Georg G. Iggers (Buffalo),
Wolfgang Mommsen (Dusseldorf),
Attila Pók (Budapest),
Jorn Rusen (Bielefeld),
Fernando Sánchez Marcos (Madrid);
Masayuki Sato (Kofu),
Hans Schleier (Leipzig),
Rolf Torstendahl (Uppsala),
Richard Vann (Weslyan University),
Irmeline Veit-Brause (Deakin University)

Additional nominations (moved by Siegel and Olábarri) Jerzy Topolski (Poznan)

The motion for the election of the new members of the Bureau was carried

A motion for the election of up to four additional members on the Bureau (Olábarri/Iggers) to secure a more balanced regional representation and to be conducted by postal vote was put and carried.

Nominations for the executive officers of the Commission:

Georg Iggers (president)

Edoardo Tortarolo (secretary general)

Fernando Sánchez Marcos (treasurer)

The motion for election of the executive officers was carried (with 1 abstention)

It was agreed to defer the election of vice-presidents.

The meeting continued under the chairmanship of the new president, Georg G. Iggers

Georg Iggers outlined his plans for the future including

- circulation of a Newsletter of the Commission once or possibly twice a year, - a meeting of the Bureau of the Commission in Gottingen on June 2, 1996,

- possibilities of affiliation of the Commission with the American Historical Association with a view of running a panel

on historiography at the annual meetings of the AHA (the meeting in January 1997 is a possible target).

Iggers also foreshadowed a conference in Budapest in 1997 and a conference in Turin in 1998 meant as a preparatory meeting for the Oslo conference in 2000

Ignacio Olábarri moved a motion to change the name of the Commission to "International Commission for the History and Theory of History". After extensive discussion, a change of name to "International Commission for the History and Theory of Historiography" was approved, on the proviso that the change of name would cause no complications with the Comité International. The president was urged to pursue the matter with Prof Bédarida. The meeting agreed that if the name change were acceptable to the Comité it should be implemented by the Bureau.

Professor Mommsen, as immediate past president, expressed his thanks to Professor Glatz and Dr. Pók for their services for the commission.

The new president moved a motion of thanks for Professor Mommsen

(Minutes prepared by Irmline Veit-Brause and Edoardo Tortarolo)

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CONFERENCE REPORTS

The Past of History: The Cognitive and Social Formation of the Discipline,
Uppsala, 9-11 September 1994

Irmline Veit-Brause (Deakin University)

started out with an outline of the whole problem area. She argued for a new configurational perspective which takes due cognizance of history's shifting place in a developing scientific field and signalled the importance of the normative basis of the discipline. She also stressed the importance of the fact that history of historiography has not reached the status of a sub-discipline in its own right as have many other branches of the 'science of science'. Ann Rigney (Utrecht) and Frank Ankersmit (Groningen) took up some profound and much-debated themes in the theory of history after the 'linguistic turn' and its impact on the discipline. The blurring of the borderline between history and fiction and the meaning of 'fictional' devices when they are used in historical representations are important for any historian. Rigney argued for a schema to distinguish between historiography and fiction. Ankersmit explored the meaning and possibility of 'historical experience.' If we have no experiences of the past, what does then become of the empirical content of the historical discipline? The papers by Thomas Haskell (Rice University) and Peter Novick (Chicago) were concerned with the impact of postmodernist theories on historiographical practice and disciplinary identity. Haskell's examination of anti-foundationalist positions extended to the more general issue of how to justify in this light the core value of 'academic freedom'.

François Hartog (Paris) took up the question of the order of time, how things are ordered in time and who is imposing the order on history. Here, those who write history and are the guardians of the discipline have a crucial role. The role of the historian was still more central in the paper by Rolf Torstendahl (Uppsala) which focused on the function of norms in historical practice as one aspect and the analysis of such norms in the history of the discipline as another and stressed the difference in minimal and maximal norms in the operation of the

discipline at any given time Ragnar Bjork (~~Uppsala~~) and Andrej Sakharov (Moscow) ~~both focused~~ their attention on the relations between history and politics While Bjork adopted a highly theoretical point of view, analysing different possibilities and positions of historians with respect to politics, Sakharov presented the concrete example of politicisation of contemporary Russian history versus 'legitimate' differences in a general sense The borderline between politics and history was thus very differently approached in these two contributions

Lutz Raphael (Darmstadt) and Attila Pók (Budapest) examined the institutional preconditions for historical work with respect to the Annales School, and the establishment of specialised research institutes in interwar Central Europe, respectively. While their framework of analysis appeared similar, they focused on different aspects. Raphael explored in detail the effects on history writing of particular institutional arrangements, while Pók concentrated on the difference between scholarly functions and non-scholarly (i.e. political) functions

The papers will be published

Rolf Torstendahl

Irmline Veit-Brause

**Politics, Society and Scientific Institution:
Historical Congresses in Comparative
Perspective**, Nischwitz/Leipzig October
27/28, 1995

The conference was concerned with the institutionalisation of national and international scientific associations, especially historical associations The program was organised in three sections The first section dealt with *Comparative history of processes of institutionalisation in science and the humanities*. It included papers by Bernhard vom Brocke (Kassel) on the history of International Congresses of the historical and geological sciences, medicine and

technology Vom Brocke explained how the institutionalisation of disciplinary history conferences was facilitated by and became an important platform for scientific communication and argued that political antagonisms after World War II accelerated this development This theme was illustrated, using biographical references, by Martin Guntau (Rostock) and Eberhard Wachter (Freiburg/Dresden) Guntau referred to an 'intradisciplinary urge' motivating national and international committees for the history of geology, going back to G von Cotta's paradigm of geology as an historical natural science He also observed that research into disciplinary history tended to be practised as study of concepts and lacked sociological or interdisciplinary contextualisation Wachter presented vivid biographical illustrations of the functioning of TICCIH (The International Committee on Industrial Heritage) as a sub-group of the scientific community.

A second section, chaired by Ernst Schulin (Freiburg), was organised around the theme of *German Historikertage*. Matthias Middell (Leipzig) established the geographically organised representation of German historiography in the late 19th century He contrasted the organisational attitudes of universities in south-eastern Germany with those of a number of northern and western, Prussian dominated universities Gangolf Hübinger (Frankfurt/Oder) discussed *Communication and Institutional Delimitation* between sociology and history in Germany prior to World War II Germany, he argued, fell behind France and Great Britain in establishing sociology as a distinct discipline due to the epistemological proximity between *Kulturgeschichte* and sociology Elfriede Uner (Munich) proposed her own concept of 'institutionalisation' Modifying Kuhn's notion of paradigm Uner stressed network analysis Cathrin Friedrich (Leipzig) discussed the *Historikertage* during the 1920s Martin Sabrow (Potsdam) recon-

structed the *East German perspective on West German Historiography* observed from a ~~West German vantage~~ point which differed from that of the East-German participants, as the subsequent debate demonstrated

A third section was devoted to international comparisons. Gerald Diesener (Leipzig), chairing the session, started with the observation that, so far, research had mostly focussed on the event-character of historians' meetings and largely ignored extra-scientific influences. Charlotte Beisswingert (Berlin) compared the inter-war situation in Germany and France raising the issue of alternative forms of institutionalisation, historiographic innovation and internationalisation. Edoardo Tortarolo (Turin) described the peculiarity of the Italian case. An initial series of conferences between 1870 and 1905 was discontinued due to internal rivalries between powerful regional and local history societies. Eckardt Fuchs (Berlin) drew attention to the role of international conferences as self-presentation of science. He pointed out that governments and amateur historians played a central role in organising and financing conferences held in their respective countries. Michael Geyer (Chicago/Leipzig) spoke about American Historical Association meetings since the 1900s. He described the institutional crisis of the AHA's annual mass gatherings where sheer size of numbers imposed itself on disciplinary discourse. As a result, smaller and more focussed events have emerged as the main venue of professional communication. Geyer stressed the importance of new media (eg Internet) as new means of research and scholarly communication. Discussions at the closing session centered on the need for further research into the institutionalisation of history as a discipline. A series of follow-up conferences was mapped out. The need for more precise definitions of core categories, such as institutionalisation, professionalisation, codification, was stressed. Also, further empirical research into

the structures of public and private organisations need to be undertaken, including the personnel and financing of institutions. The papers of the Nischwitz meeting will be published.

The conveners invite interested researchers to participate in follow-up conferences. For further information, please contact Zentrum für höhere Studien der Universität Leipzig

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Hans-Martin Moderow
Andreas Westerwinter

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 30 - June 1 Colloquium on "East German Historiography in Retrospect," at the Max-Planck-Institut für Geschichte, Göttingen.

June 2, 1996 Meeting of the ICHH Bureau, at the Max-Planck-Institut für Geschichte in Göttingen.

NEW ON INTERNET

CROMOHS is a new review journal, edited by Guido Abbattista, specialising in the history of historiography. It is accessible on <http://www.unifi.it/riviste/cromohs>

Comments and contributions to the Newsletter are welcome. Please contact Assoc Prof Irmline Veit-Brause
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**ICHTH Membership Application Form
and
Subscription to *Storia della Storiografia***

I would like to become a member of the International Commission for the History and Theory of Historiography, for an annual membership fee of US\$20

I am paying the membership fee/s for the year/s

I also want to subscribe to *Storia della Storiografia* for the discount price of US\$50 for ICHTH members

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