



REPORT OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE EXPANSION OF ICHS presented in Beijing, September 2007

Preamble

Decision of the general assembly of Sydney of 7 July 2005

« Next came the question of broadening the recruitment of ICHS members and re-assessing the structure of membership fees. The delegate from Morocco pointed out that a single-fee system for National Committees placed smaller nations at a serious disadvantage. Several delegates commented on the issue and some were favourable, while others were not. Prof. Even Lange of Norway suggested widening the recruitment of members to include a new category of members. He stated most notably that transformations affecting the discipline of history had brought about changes since the Second World War and that from now on universities and major history research centres could be canvassed to become members of the ICHS and help improve its financial situation. He proposed that the ICHS Bureau examine the question and make a report to the next General Assembly in 2007.

The motion was carried. »

Creation of the Subcommittee "Expansion of ICHS" (extracts of the minutes of the meeting of the *Bureau restreint*, Madrid, 25 February 2006)

« The *Bureau restreint* of ICHS decided to put up a sub-committee to look into this matter. It is composed of one representative from National Committees, one representative from the Affiliated International Organizations and two members from the Bureau and is to be presided over by the treasurer of ICHS, Professor Pierre Ducrey. This sub-committee should prepare a proposal for discussion during the next meeting of the Bureau at Santiago de Compostela, Spain, 6 and 7 October 2006. There will be a joint meeting of the sub-committee and the Bureau to discuss this proposal. The finances of ICHS do not permit having a formal meeting of the sub-committee and the work will have to be done through e-mail. However, the Spanish Committee will host the members of the sub-committee during the meeting of the Bureau at Santiago de Compostela »

Composition of the Subcommittee "Expansion of ICHS"

President : Pierre Ducrey, ICHS Treasurer; two members of the ICHS Bureau: Sorin Antohi and Michael Heyd; one representative of the National Committees: Even Lange (Oslo University); one representative of the International Affiliated Organizations: Claudio Visentin (Université de la Suisse italienne).

Reminder

Constitution of ICHS (extracts)

« **Art. 1. Purpose of the Committee.** — The International Committee of Historical Sciences (ICHS) ... is a non-governmental organization ... created in order to promote the historical sciences through international co-operation. In particular it organizes every five years ... an International Congress of Historical Sciences. »



« **Art. 2. Composition of the Committee.** — The Committee shall be composed of:

- a) National Committees that are representative of the institutions of historical research in each member country;
- b) International Affiliated Organizations which are devoted to research and to scholarly publication in particular areas of historical study.

The Committee may set up Internal Commissions. »

« **Art. 6. Dues and contributions.** — Every National Committee or International Affiliated Organization shall pay annual dues determined by the General Assembly. The amount shall be the same for all National Committees. It shall also be the same for all International Affiliated Organizations but lower than that paid by the National Committees. »

« **Art. 7. Withdrawals and exclusions.** — Every National Committee or International Affiliated Organization that has not paid its dues for three years shall lose its right to vote. After five years, that National Committee or International Affiliated Organization shall be deemed to have withdrawn de facto. »

To sum up, the ICHS is an umbrella organization that groups other organizations (National Committees, International Affiliated Organizations). The members of each of these two categories pay a unique fee. The main goal of ICHS is the organization every five years of an International Congress of Historical Sciences.

Current Situation

In 2006 the ICHS includes 53 National Committees, 29 International Affiliated Organizations and 12 Internal Commissions.

The members of the ICHS receive every year on 1 December an invoice for the following year. The members who have not paid their fee receive a reminder on 1 June of the current year as well as reminders for the previous years in which they have not paid their dues.

The situation concerning dues can be summed up as follows: most National Committees from European countries, North American countries, Asian countries (Japan, Korea and India) regularly pay their dues. Denmark is an exception, as it has not paid its dues since 2000. The National Committees from most big countries or industrialized countries display a willingness to pay their past dues. Thus India just paid five years' worth of past dues.

On the other hand, Latin American countries (Argentina, Chile, Venezuela, Brazil), African countries, including South Africa, and Arab countries, have progressively withdrawn from ICHS or were never members.

The same remarks apply to certain International Affiliated Organizations: irregularity of payments, resignations (such as the International Numismatic Commission).



The ICHS has maintained the membership fees at their current level for the last fifteen years. We shall point out that the amount of the fee is extremely modest, even for the poorer countries.

Analysis of ICHS spending

The main sources of expenditure are: the organization of the Bureau meetings, which cost nearly 20,000 CHF per year, the administrative expenses (coming from the offices of the secretary general and of the treasurer), the *Bulletin* and the subsidy for the quinquennial Congresses of Historical Studies. We note that expenses increase regularly. This process will further intensify since the Bureau that was elected in 2005 is composed of members coming from different parts of the world, which implies an increase in travel expenses.

Income of the ICHS

Currently, most of the income of the ICHS comes from membership fees. The countries hosting meetings of the executive committee are called upon to reduce the cost of the executive committee's meetings. Japan has been approached about covering the cost of the 2009 executive committee meeting in its entirety, including travel costs.

Expansion of the ICHS

To attain the universality that is the goal of the ICHS, a greater number of National Committees should join. The expansion of the ICHS within the framework of its current statutes thus implies the recruitment of new National Committees. This goal can be reached in three steps:

1. Making an inventory of the countries in which historians or their associations belong to a national organization.
2. Approach these organizations.
3. Convince them to join the ICHS and pay their dues.

The first step does not pose any insurmountable difficulties. The second implies that the ICHS manages to convince potential members of their interest or potential benefits in joining ICHS and then convince them to pay their dues.

Three paths leading to the expansion of the ICHS

1. Make ICHS more attractive

A number of measures can be considered to make ICHS more attractive, for example:

- Make a better website;
- Use the website to provide a forum for historians;
- Associate ICHS patronage with certain international events;
- Organize conferences and colloquia or give ICHS patronage to certain conferences;



- Create a system of "ICHS fellowships";
- Give a greater role to the International Affiliated Organizations during conferences by including them in the preparation of the programme as well as in the event itself.

To reach these goals, it would be essential on the one hand to reinforce the General Secretary's Office and on the other hand to find new financial means.

2. Recruiting new members

Aside from soliciting National Committees in the countries where they exist, the ICHS could encourage the creation of National Committees of historians in the countries where they do not exist by addressing the circles of historians of these countries. More intimate links should be created between the ICHS and its members.

The ICHS should create a third category of members, that would encompass various international research centres, active in the discipline of history as well as certain national institutes that practice historical research. Concretely, this suggestion would amount to expanding the notion of "International Affiliated Organizations" to international research organizations where history plays an important role, as well as to national institutes whose sole or at least principal specialty relates to history.

3. Modifying the fee structure

We shall emphasize the principle that up to now, the members of the ICHS were paying a unique membership fee based on the category to which they belonged. The introduction of a different fee structure is possible. We shall point out however that about 10 % of the annual dues are paid in an erroneous manner (error in the amount, error in the method of payment, error in the address of payment, to say nothing of late payments). It is obvious that a change in the mode of payment will be relatively complex to put into effect. We can expect complaints, whatever the new criterion ends up being.

Among all the possible criteria, we could choose per capita GDP. But other criteria are possible, such as, for example, the number of historical societies of a particular country or the number of members affiliated with a national organization.

The future amount of the dues

In each category of membership, we could introduce two or three amounts, for example for the National Committees 1000 CHF, 800 CHF and 600 CHF and for the International Affiliated Organizations, 800 CHF and 500 CHF.

If a differentiated fee structure were to be adopted, it should be written in the statutes that all members are equal irrespective of the amount of their membership dues.