



Beijing, 15 and 18 September 2007

At the invitation of the Association of Chinese Historians and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the Bureau held a meeting in Beijing on Saturday, 15 September in Conference Room II of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences at 5 Jianguomennei Dajie. The meeting resumed on 18 September at the same location.

Present: José Luis Peset, President; Koichi Kabayama, Vice-President; Jean-Claude Robert, Secretary General; Pierre Ducrey, Treasurer; Mikhail Bibikov, Michael Heyd, Marjatta Hietala, and Hilda Sabato, Assessor Members.

Invited Guests: Laurent Tissot, ICHS Treasurer-elect, Hans Blom, President of the Organizing Committee of the XXIst Congress (Amsterdam 2010), Pim den Boer, Organizing Committee of the XXIst Congress.

Excused: William Jordan, Vice-President, Shahid Amin, Roger Chartier, Assessor Members, Jürgen Kocka, Counsellor.

Agenda for Saturday, 15 September:

1. President's opening statement and remarks
2. ICHS affairs and Secretary General's report on activities since October 2006
3. Treasurer's report
4. Report of the two sub-committees (Sydney GA)
5. Nominating Committee
6. Law and freedom of research
7. Amsterdam Congress
 - a) Report on the organization of the Amsterdam Congress
 - b) Congress themes
 - c) Recruitment of organizers and discussants
 - d) Opening and closing sessions
8. Upcoming Bureau meetings
9. Miscellaneous

Agenda for 18 September:

1. General Assembly discussion and follow-up

1. President's opening statement and remarks

The President welcomed Bureau members to Beijing and underscored the importance of the West's relations with China as he recounted the events of Marco Polo's voyages. In view of Professor Sorin Antohi's resignation as an Assessor Member, the President submitted the candidacy of Professor Roger Chartier of *l'École des Hautes Études en*



Sciences Sociales in Paris. He also spoke about the imminent departure of Professor Pierre Ducrey, ICHS Treasurer, who, in Sydney in 2005, had agreed to extend his term until the end of 2007. The President warmly thanked Pierre Ducrey for his excellent work with the ICHS's finances and introduced the prospective Treasurer, Professor Laurent Tissot of the University of Neuchâtel. The Bureau was then asked to vote on these two candidates. The voting was unanimous in the affirmative.

2. ICHS affairs and Secretary General's report

Since the last Bureau meeting, the Secretary General's time has been monopolized by two main dossiers: the selection of themes for the Amsterdam Congress and the organization of the General Assembly in Beijing. Preparations for the General Assembly, a joint effort by the Chinese Historians Association, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and the ICHS Secretariat in Montréal, were lengthy and complex, often requiring a great deal of effort and attention to detail. In December 2006, the Secretary General and the ICHS President travelled to Beijing to finalize various details. In keeping with the ICHS's tradition of providing scientific content at each event, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and the Chinese Historians Association presented a symposium on the state of contemporary Chinese historiography. The Secretary General thanked the Chinese Historians Association and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences for their outstanding work, excellent organization and unflinching cooperation.

Bulletin d'information

The most recent edition (Volume 32-2006) was not published until March 2007, given the late scheduling of the Bureau's meeting in Santiago de Compostela. In view of the expense of sending out the previous edition, the most recent issue of the *Bulletin* does not contain a historical section. To reduce postage costs in the future, historical documents will be available only on the ICHS's Web site.

Members

After receiving a membership application from the Association of Kazakhstan historians, the Secretary General exchanged information with the applicant and examined its constitution. He recommended that Bureau members move to admit the Association of Kazakhstan historians as a National Committee during the General Assembly.

In addition, the International Commission on the History of the Russian Revolution has responded to the *Bureau restreint's* proposal to strike it off the list of Internal Commissions. Acknowledging the Commission's departure from its constitution, the President of the Commission has asked for the Secretary General's assistance in reinstating the organization. In view of this new development, the *Bureau restreint's* motion was withdrawn. The Secretary General will provide the help requested, and the Bureau will defer any further decision on the subject until a future General Assembly.

ICHS relations with UNESCO

The Joint ICHS-UNESCO Committee has taken up much of the Secretary General's time since 2003. Bureau members have received the final report prepared for UNESCO in December 2005. Now that UNESCO has withdrawn funding as of 2006, the Joint Committee has ended its useful life for the time being and is unlikely to be re-created as it once was. It still might be possible for the ICHS to receive funding for specific events



from UNESCO's funding program for cases such as multilateral or bilateral meetings, also known as participation programs (PP), as long as they involve several member countries. Thus, the Sydney experience has shown that a well-organized plenary session can be very successful and that a funding scenario might be achieved for Amsterdam.

As for regional meetings, they are no doubt positive and desirable, but it is impossible for the Secretary General to continue organizing them because his time is monopolized by other tasks. The Secretary General proposed that Bureau members assume the responsibility of organizing one or two regional meetings during the quinquennium as a more equitable way of distributing tasks and responsibilities. He would also like to maintain the tradition of including scientific content in all the meetings of the Bureau and the General Assembly.

The International Council for Philosophy and Humanistic Studies (ICPHS)

The ICPHS held its General Assembly in Alexandria in November 2006, but the ICHS Secretary General was unable to attend. The significant financial problems stemming from UNESCO's steady reduction of the budget are being slowly resolved, but the situation remains uncertain, although the publication of *Diogène* magazine is secure for now.

This overview of the Secretariat's activities ended with a reminder of the fundamental problem of lack of resources. With only a modest annual budget (Cdn\$10,000), three-quarters of which is earmarked for the *Bulletin*, the Secretary General's means are very limited. Fortunately, additional resources are provided through the support of his institution. The Secretary General thanked the *Université du Québec à Montréal* (UQAM) and its History Department for their constant support, as well as Renée McNicoll, who performs the secretarial tasks.

3. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Pierre Ducrey presented and discussed the profit and loss accounts, the balance sheets for 2005 and 2006, and the 24 May 2007 audit report submitted by *la Compagnie fiduciaire Temco SA Lausanne (Suisse)*. The highlights of the accounts and the balance sheets are published in the General Assembly's minutes of 17 September 2007. The Treasurer reminded Bureau members that they are also collectively responsible for this information, and that the General Assembly would vote on approving the documents.

4. Reports of the two sub-committees (Sydney General Assembly)

During the Sydney General Assembly the Bureau was asked to study two issues, the expansion of the ICHS and the question of tiered fees, and the procedure to develop the program of the quinquennial Congresses, an issue that has arisen because of criticisms that the current procedure was too opaque. At the same time, the Bureau was asked to give a report to the General Assembly in Beijing in 2007. When the *Bureau restreint* met in Madrid it created two sub-committees composed of Bureau members and representatives of the National Committees and the Affiliated International Organizations to study these dossiers.



The two sub-committees met in Santiago de Compostela in October 2006 and later on prepared reports to be presented to the Bureau and to the General Assembly (included in this issue of the Bulletin). After examining the information, particularly that submitted by the sub-committee on the expansion of the ICHS, the Bureau resolved to introduce a motion at the General Assembly regarding tiered membership dues. A second motion to let the second sub-committee pursue its work and prepare a final report for the first General Assembly of the Amsterdam Congress was carried.

5. Nominating Committee

In accordance with article 5 of the ICHS Constitution, the Bureau will appoint three of the seven members of the Nominating Committee to serve on the Bureau (in 2010), and the Assembly will elect four members. José Luis Peset, Marjatta Hietala and Jean-Claude Robert were designated as the three appointed members. The Bureau will be submitting the candidacy of the four elected members at the first session of the General Assembly (17 September). Their choice has to take into account the delegates who will be present in Beijing and the need to fairly represent the National Committees, the Affiliated International Organizations and the main regions of the world. The Secretary General proposed the following four candidates: Krassimira Daskalova (International Federation for Research in Women's History), Robert McCaa (International Commission for Historical Demography), Yoichi Kibata (Japanese National Committee), and Jean-François Sirinelli (French National Committee). The motion was carried, but the Assembly could still move to change the list before voting during the second session on 18 September.

6. Law and freedom of research

During its session of 19-20 April 2007, the Council of the European Union adopted a framework decision on the fight against racism and xenophobia, a decision which threatens to fetter historical research.

This framework decision is the result of an initiative to impose on all Member States of the European Union legislation to criminalize the denial of genocides, notably the Holocaust. This legislation already exists in Germany, Austria, France, Poland, Romania, Lithuania, Slovenia and the Czech Republic. This initiative provoked a great deal of negative responses but ran its course at the European level, and will be given wider application through this framework decision, which applies not only to racist and xenophobic remarks and the denial of the Holocaust, but also to "publicly condoning, denying or grossly trivialising crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes as defined in the Statute of the International Criminal Court (Articles 6, 7 and 8)". Within two years after the adoption of this framework decision, each Member State will be required to adopt matching legislation which makes provisions for a penalty of between 1 to 3 years' imprisonment.

All this shows the dangers of such legislation. Although it arises from the necessary and just fight against racism and xenophobia, it ends up — through a series of conceptual shifts — touching on issues which are the proper domain of historical research. Indeed, it is necessary for historians and politicians to keep at arms' length, each in his own domain. Politicians can decide which use of history best serves their own ends, by instituting official commemorations, for example; but they must not interfere through the



judicial system in the work of historians. This framework decision marks a very dangerous turning point in the delicate and often difficult relations between politicians and historians. It is therefore necessary that historians in Europe and elsewhere in the world address the motives and the consequences of such a framework decision.

Motion on the "Council framework decision on combating racism and xenophobia"
(Council of European Union, April 2007)

Since the decision of the Council can have an impact on the freedom of research, it is moved that,

1. ICHS is deeply concerned with this complex matter of the possible intrusion of the power of the law into historical research.
2. ICHS urges all its members to examine more closely this question and initiate discussion among their own members.
3. ICHS proposes to set up a special session in Amsterdam in 2010, on the theme "Historical research, ethics and law".

Adopted by the ICHS Bureau on 15 September 2007.

7. Amsterdam Congress

a) Report of the President of the Amsterdam Congress Organizing Committee

Professor Hans Blom presented a detailed account of the organization of the Amsterdam Congress. The Congress will be held from Sunday, 22 August to Saturday, 28 August 2010. The sessions will take place at the University of Amsterdam, which has a good choice of venues convenient to restaurants and hotels in the city. A variety of reasonably priced hotel rooms have been found to suit every budget. The format for the opening and closing sessions has now been decided, and the organization is progressing rapidly. For the convenience of ICHS members, registration will be on the Website of the Congress at: www.ichs2010.org.

The registration fees are 240 Euros for regular registration and 380 Euros for late registration, while the corresponding student rates are 120 Euros and 190 Euros. These fees are comparable to those of other international congresses. As in the past, simultaneous English and French translation of the major thematic sessions will be provided, and other languages may be added if resources permit. Reiterating the importance of attracting young historians to the Congress, Professor Blom pointed out the need to carefully select the participants for the specialized sessions.

The Netherlands Organizing Committee has developed a financing plan for the Congress, which includes a solidarity fund to encourage the attendance of colleagues from emerging countries. The President thanked Professor Blom for his report and its positive outlook for the 2010 Congress. The Bureau viewed the progress of the preparations as very positive. In fact, the Bureau will be traveling to Amsterdam in 2008 to visit the locations and receive an update from the members of the Organizing Committee.



b) Themes of the 2010 Congress

The members of the ICHS have proposed 201 themes, which were analyzed by a Bureau sub-committee composed of José Luis Peset, William Jordan, Hilda Sabato, Jean-Claude Robert, and Pierre Ducrey. The sub-committee began the work by e-mail, and then held a meeting in Paris on 4 March, at which time the list was pared down to 45 themes. Bureau members then received the list and added comments of their own which were incorporated into the final list of proposals that the Secretary General sent to all the Committees and Commissions. The themes were approved by the Bureau, which found them sufficiently varied and inclusive of all chronological periods. The President and the Secretary General explained that these were still proposals, and that the Committee was still flexible particularly with regard to the formulation or distribution of themes. As for the selection of organizers and discussants, care must be taken to ensure that men and women, specialties, periods, and countries are represented fairly.

c) Recruitment of organizers and discussants

The recruitment of organizers and discussants will start after the General Assembly has decided on the themes of the Congress. ICHS members have until 31 January 2008 to send their proposals to the Secretary General. They must provide the candidate's full contact information (affiliation, address, telephone/fax, and e-mail address) and obtain his or her consent before sending the submission.

The organizers are selected for their mastery of the theme and their knowledge of the relevant seminal works and are responsible for setting up the session and making the final selection of participants. To streamline communications involving the Secretary General, the Secretary of the Amsterdam Congress, and the different session participants, ONLY ONE organizer may be selected for each session. The structure of the round tables has changed; from now on each round table will be organized around one document prepared by the organizer, which is submitted in advance to four participants who will discuss it in session. Generally speaking, it is not the organizer's role to disclose the content of the communications for this session but rather to present the theme and its attendant issues. For all sessions except the round tables, it will be necessary to identify a discussant, whose task will be to summarize the documents and, more importantly, to prepare discussion themes for the room.

The same Bureau sub-committee that prepared the selection of themes (Hilda Sabato, José Luis Peset, Pierre Ducrey, William Jordan, and Jean-Claude Robert) will be preparing the final list of organizers and discussants, which will then be submitted to Bureau members for approval. The selection of organizers and discussants for joint sessions will be left to the organizations that submitted proposals and to the Secretary General. In the selection of organizers, discussants and communicators, care must be taken to ensure that men and women, countries, world regions, and ages are represented fairly.

d) Opening and closing sessions

The Bureau briefly discussed the format for the opening and closing sessions. During the opening session, the ICHS President will be given the floor, and the Heineken Prize for History will be awarded. For the closing session, expert historians might be given the



floor to comment on the Congress. Discussions about these two sessions will continue by e-mail, and the Bureau will continue to follow this dossier and make a decision at a future date.

8. Upcoming Bureau meetings

The next Bureau meeting will be held at The Hague, Netherlands, from 13 to 16 November 2008. In 2009, the meeting will be held in Tokyo from 11 to 13 September.

9. Miscellaneous

As there were no further questions, the President thanked the members of the Bureau and closed the meeting.

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Second session of the Bureau meeting, Tuesday, 18 September 2007, 2 p.m.

Agenda:

1. General Assembly discussion and follow-up

Bureau members expressed their satisfaction with the General Assembly, which afforded ICHS members an opportunity to be heard.

The discussion centered primarily on the place of young historians. In view of the near failure of the poster sessions of previous Congresses, Bureau members discussed how best to make room for young historians at the Congresses. The Netherlands Organizing Committee would examine this question and discussions would resume at a later date.

The President thanked the members of the Bureau and closed the meeting.