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INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

«One Hundred Years of *L'Enseignement Mathématique*:
Moments of Mathematics Education in the 20th Century»

*organized jointly by the University of Geneva
and the International Commission on Mathematical Instruction*

Geneva, 20–22 October 2000

BACKGROUND

The well-known international journal *L'Enseignement Mathématique* was established in Geneva in 1899. The first prefaces show that its founders, Henri FEHR (Geneva) and Charles-Ange LAISANT (Paris), wanted to associate the world of teaching to the “*great movement of scientific solidarity*” which was emerging at the end of the 19th century, notably through the organization of international meetings such as the first International Congress of Mathematicians held in Zurich in 1897.

The journal immediately obtained important successes, as is testified by the gold medal at the World Fair of Brussels in 1905. An original characteristic of the beginnings is a series of articles on the teaching of mathematics in different countries.

The idea of internationalism in mathematics education led a few years later to the creation of the International Commission on Mathematical Instruction during the 1908 International Congress of Mathematicians in Rome, with Felix Klein as President and Henri Fehr as Secretary General. Fehr was the Editor-in-Chief of the journal until his death in 1954, publishing the 40 volumes of the first series. The second series started in 1955 under the impulsion of ICMI, which had just been reconstituted as an official commission of the International Mathematical Union, IMU.

During these one hundred years, mathematics education has undergone profound changes marked by decisive developments in the evolution of mathematics and in the organization and structure of the school systems throughout the world.

L'Enseignement Mathématique has been the official organ of ICMI ever since the inception of the Commission in 1908. This is why, on the occasion of the centennial of the journal, ICMI and the editors of the journal wanted to reaffirm their ties by organizing jointly a symposium on the history of mathematics education under the theme

**«One Hundred Years of *L'Enseignement Mathématique* :
Moments of Mathematics Education in the 20th Century»**

PRESENTATION OF THE SYMPOSIUM

Organized by ICMI and the University of Geneva as a contribution to the celebration of *World Mathematical Year 2000*, this symposium will take place in Geneva, the home of the journal since its birth, from Friday October 20 to Sunday October 22, 2000.

The programme of the symposium is based on a series of invited talks. The Programme Committee has identified three main themes to be discussed – geometry, analysis, and applications of mathematics – and three different periods at which these themes will be considered: 1900, 1950 (*i.e.* the period leading to the “new maths”), and 2000. Ample time will be devoted during the symposium to collective discussions on the themes presented in the talks. In this connection some participants have been invited to play the role of “reactors”. They will have the responsibility, in each session, of launching the discussion partly by giving a synthesis of the presentations but more importantly by outlining the major trends and issues about the theme, both in the light of the past century and as seen from today’s perspective. Reactors will thus be invited to add structure to the discussion, in particular by considering changes and transformations in the aims of reforms and in the curricula concepts. Such a perspective might for instance allow one to consider the emergence and/or failure of new trends or the birth of new sub-disciplines.

The symposium thus aims at looking at the evolution of mathematics education over the last century and identifying some guidelines and trends for the future, taking into account, among other sources, the documents, debates and related papers having appeared in *L'Enseignement Mathématique*. The emphasis of the symposium is on secondary education (students in the age range of about 12 to 18 or 19 years) and also includes the education of teachers.

In addition to proposing a reflection on the history of mathematics education and the evolution of mathematics and its teaching and learning in the 20th century, the symposium gives the opportunity of a gathering of some of the main actors, during the last decades, in mathematics education as considered from an international perspective. The symposium should thus be seen as an international meeting of all those interested in mathematics education and its evolution.

PROGRAMME

Speakers will be allocated 30 minutes and reactors 20 minutes, so that ample time will be available for collective discussion. The meeting starts at 9:30 on Friday October 20 and ends at 12:30 on Sunday October 22.

FRIDAY OCTOBER 20

L'Enseignement Mathématique : birth and stakes

Speakers: Gert SCHUBRING (Germany) and Fulvia FURINGHETTI (Italy)

Reactor: Jean-Pierre KAHANE (France)

Geometry

Period 1900: Rudolph BKOUCHE (France)

Period 1950: Geoffrey HOWSON (UK)

Period 2000: Colette LABORDE (France)

Reactor: Nicolas ROUCHE (Belgium)

SATURDAY OCTOBER 21

Analysis

Period 1900: Bruno BELHOSTE (France)

Period 1950: Man-Keung SIU (Hong Kong)

Period 2000: Lynn STEEN (USA)

Reactor: Michèle ARTIGUE (France)

Applications of mathematics : mathematics as a service subject

Period 1900: Philippe NABONNAND (France)

Period 1950: Hélène GISPERT (France)

Period 2000: Mogens NISS (Denmark)

Reactor: Gerhard WANNER (Switzerland)

SUNDAY OCTOBER 22

Mathematics education from the perspective of international infrastructures

Speaker: Claude GAULIN (Canada)

International journals in mathematics education

Speaker: Gila HANNA (Canada)

Stakes in mathematics education for the societies of today and tomorrow

Speakers: Ubiratan D'AMBROSIO (Brazil) and Jeremy KILPATRICK (USA)

Reactor: Hyman BASS (USA)

Updated information about the programme can be obtained on the websites :

<http://www.unige.ch/math/EnsMath/> or <http://www.mathunion.org/ICMI/>

ORGANIZATION

The members of the Programme Committee are Daniel CORAY (Switzerland), Fulvia FURINGHETTI (Italy), Hélène GISPERT (France), Bernard R. HODGSON (Canada) and Gert SCHUBRING (Germany).

The philosophy of discussions and personal exchanges underlying this symposium imposes a limitation on the number of participants. People interested in the symposium are thus requested to contact the Local Organizing Committee at the address below as soon as possible, **preferably prior to August 31**. Participants are expected to stay for the three days of the meeting. There will be no registration fee, but very little financial support is available. Hence foreign participants are expected to cover their travel and local expenses by themselves or through their home institution.

The main language of the Symposium is English. However, taking into account both the tradition dating back to the beginnings of *L'Enseignement Mathématique* and the fact that the meeting takes place in Geneva, some participants may choose to use French, keeping in mind that this might restrict communication with part of the audience.

The Symposium Proceedings will be published under the responsibility of the Editorial Board of the *Monographies de l'Enseignement Mathématique*, in collaboration with the Programme Committee.

Information about local facilities (hotels, etc.) can be obtained from the Local Organizing Committee :

Local Organizing Committee
Symposium EM-ICMI
Case postale 240
CH-1211 Genève 24
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e-mail : EM-ICMI <EnsMath@math.unige.ch>