

## Georg G. Iggers

### History of the Commission for the History and Theory of Historiography

The Commission for the History of Historiography was founded at the 15th International Congress of Historical Sciences in Bucharest in 1980. The initiative came from Prof. Charles O. Carbonell of the University of Montpellier, a pioneer of historiographical studies in France. Prof. Carbonell wished to create within the framework of the International Committee of the Historical Sciences a meeting place for historians from all over the world interested in historiographical themes. He recruited Lucian Boia from Bucharest and Georg Iggers from Buffalo to help with the preparation of the Commission. All three were committed to founding an organization which would transcend cold war divisions. The original steering committee consisted of Charles Carbonell (France), Bianca Valota Cavalotti (Italy), Lucian Boia (Romania), Andrzej Grabski (Poland), Hans Schleier (GDR), Karl-Georg Faber (FRGermany), and Georg Iggers (USA). Other persons closely related to the Commission included Jerzy Topolski (Poland), Wolfgang J. Mommsen (FRGermany), Zhang Zhilian (PRChina), Richard Vann (USA). A proposal by Soviet historians at the founding meeting that the major countries should be members of the steering committee (bureau) was turned down with the response that the bureau did not represent states but individual scholars active in the field of historiography. Plans were laid for the founding of a historiographical journal which were actualized with the launching of *Storia della Storiografia* in 1982 which carries articles in four languages, English, French, German, and Italian. The main editorial responsibility was assumed by Bianca Valota Cavalotti with Milan becoming the seat of the journal. Although friendly cooperation existed between the journal and the renowned *History and Theory*, which emphasized theory and philosophy of history, *Storia della Storiografia* tended to concentrate on the history of historiography and eschew questions of theory. This led ultimately to divisions in the commission. While Faber, Mommsen (who succeeded Faber as secretary general upon Faber's death in 1982), Iggers, Topolski and others believed firmly that history and theory could not be separated, Carbonell favored a relatively quantitative, empirical approach to historical production. In 1990 Carbonell was succeeded by Mommsen as president and in 1995 the commission changed its name to the Commission for the History and Theory of Historiography. In 1990 the link between *Storia* and the Commission were severed, to give the journal greater editorial autonomy, Edoardo Tortarolo (Turin) became chief editor with Georg Iggers and Guido Abbattista (Turin) assisting him. More issues centered around a theme or a problem. In 1995 Georg Iggers assumed the presidency for one term until 2000.