



THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR THE HISTORY AND THEORY OF HISTORIOGRAPHY

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PRESIDENT'S WELCOME ADDRESS



Antoon De Baets

THE HISTORIAN'S FORUM INTERNUM

The French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre was a merciless critic of General Charles de Gaulle's politics during the Algerian war of independence. In 1960, he signed the "[Manifesto](#) of 121," a declaration on the right of insubordination in the Algerian war. There were calls to arrest him for subversive activities, but de Gaulle refused categorically, [saying](#): "On n'emprisonne pas Voltaire!" (You do not imprison Voltaire). He understood that Sartre, as the conscience of his time, was untouchable. Many other political leaders were aware of the influence of intellectuals, perhaps even more in dictatorships than democracies. In the Soviet Union, the poet Boris Pasternak was distrusted but also admired by the authorities. A poet of sorts [himself](#), Joseph Stalin revered Pasternak's power of expression. Rumour had it that, on being presented with documents for the poet's

arrest, Stalin objected while [observing](#): "Do not touch this cloud-dweller..." This leniency did not prevent Stalin from approving the execution of countless other intellectuals, including a record number of historians, the [highest](#) of any regime in world history.

We are familiar with the power of freedom of expression exercised by intellectuals precisely because it has been violated so often. Historians have always been among the prime victims. Mikhail [Gefter](#)'s case in the Soviet Union is telling. In Leonid Brezhnev's time, the History Institute of the Academy of Sciences had a "methodological sector," an interdisciplinary theory of history group under Gefter's direction. In 1966, the sector discussed whether Russia before 1917 could be called capitalist and hence whether the October Revolution was a socialist one, thus throwing doubt on the paramount historical dogma of Marxism-Leninism: historical materialism. Gefter's keynote could only be published in the underground press. The sector was harassed and eventually suspended in 1969; Gefter was dismissed and reprimanded for "mistakes of a methodological and ideological character." He never admitted any such mistakes. After renewed attacks in 1973, he retired early only to be rehabilitated in the late 1980s. The power of intellectuals to speak out has been feared and attacked by political leaders, as the reports of Scholars at [Risk](#) and the Network of [Concerned](#) Historians amply attest.

While freedom of expression is widely reported upon because it is breached so frequently, freedom of thought is usually glossed over, although both are twin articles in the Universal [Declaration](#) of Human Rights. This is not because freedom of thought is considered less important than freedom of expression, quite the opposite: it is held in the highest esteem. Remember the words of novelist

Vladimir [Nabokov](#): “I think like a genius, I write like a distinguished author, and I speak like a child.” Or, similarly, those of biologist Edward O. [Wilson](#): “The ideal scientist thinks like a poet and works like a bookkeeper, and I suppose that if gifted with a full quiver, he also writes like a journalist.” Die [Gedanken](#) sind frei: thoughts are free.

Why then is it underestimated? Freedom of thought refers to the private forum internum, freedom of expression to the public forum externum. The distinction goes back to the [sixteenth](#) century. The [forum internum](#) is the realm of conscience and critical thinking. Within this realm of the mind, individuals are free to develop, hold and change thoughts and opinions – including memories – without coercion or interference. The forum externum is the external manifestation of these thoughts and opinions and such manifestations are subject to some narrow [restrictions](#). In human rights [doctrine](#), freedom of thought enjoys an almost mythical status: it is not only universal (applicable to everyone), but also, unlike most other rights, absolute (it can never be restricted) and [non-derogable](#) (it must be fully respected during public emergencies). Its unconditional protection is beyond discussion. Sadly, for this very reason, it has been the least explored of human rights.

This self-complacent attitude has changed recently, however. In 2021, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Ahmed [Shaheed](#), decided to devote a [report](#) for the United Nations General Assembly to freedom of thought, after consultations with civil society (this author was one of his [respondents](#)). For Shaheed, René Descartes's [dictum](#) “Je pense, donc je suis” (I think, therefore I am) spoke to the essence of freedom of thought for the dignity, agency, and existence of the human being. Drawing on international jurisprudence, scholarship, and the perspectives of diverse stakeholders, he examined four proposed attributes of the right: freedom not to disclose one's thoughts; freedom from punishment for one's thoughts; freedom from impermissible alteration of

one's thoughts; and an enabling environment for freedom of thought. He then scrutinized potential violations of the right across seven diverse fields: torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; surveillance; coercive proselytism, anti-conversion and anti-blasphemy efforts; existing and emerging technologies; mental health; conversion practices; and intellectual freedom and education. The latter included practices that undermine critical thinking; political indoctrination, deradicalization, and re-education programs; self-censorship; and biased content curation by digital companies. In this context, Shaheed warned, history was one of the most vulnerable subjects at school.

Our thoughts are our most precious asset. We, cloud-dwellers, should ask the state and society to leave us alone while we work. We are willing to share our views in the public arena, but not until we are ready for it. In my [inaugural](#) address before our [Board](#), I expressed the hope that all those interested in the history and theory of history would feel welcome in the International [Commission](#) for the History and Theory of Historiography: the hedgehogs and foxes (Isaiah [Berlin](#)'s distinction) as well as the birds and frogs (Freeman [Dyson](#)'s distinction). I wish that all perceive our Commission as a natural home for their activities. And I see the president of the Commission as a porter inviting people in to speak and listen. And above all to think. Aware of the fragility of thought, our Commission should contribute to a world where the integrity of the forum internum is respected and protected.

ICHS 23RD CONGRESS REPORT

The 23rd Congress of the International Committee of Historical Sciences (ICHS) took place in Poznan, Poland from August 21-27 2022 at the Adam Mickiewicz University. This intellectual feast attracted over 900 participants (both physical and virtual). According to official Congress sources, 535 papers were presented in 93 panels. Highlights of the Congress included: three Keynote Addresses delivered by Olufunke Adeboye, Dipesh Chakrabarty and Ewa Domanska at the Opening Ceremony; and the International Prize for History awarded to Sanjay Subrahmanyam. The next Congress in 2026 is scheduled to hold in Jerusalem, Israel.



Dipesh Chakrabarty, Olufunke Adeboye, and Ewa Domanska at the Opening Ceremony
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ICHTH member Norbert Fabian wrote a review of the Congress: “Quo vadis history?”, available on H-Soz-Kult at <http://www.hsozkult.de/conferencereport/id/fdkn-133354>

HONORARY MEMBERS

The ICHTH over the years has accorded special recognition to a few of its members for their scholarly

distinction and past contributions to the Commission and the general field of historiography. This issue of the newsletter shall begin to serialize their key achievements. The complete list of Honorary Members is available on the ICHTH website at

<https://www.ichth.net/content/honorary.html>



NATALIE ZEMON DAVIS

is among the world's most highly respected historians and is Henry Charles Lea Professor Emerita at Princeton University having previously taught at the University of Toronto, the University of California (Berkeley) and Brown University. A pioneering scholar of women's history (*Women on the Margins* 1995) and of history from below (*Society and Culture in Sixteenth-Century France* 1975), her work has ranged from uncovering the lives of sixteenth-century French women and men (*The Return of Martin Guerre* 1983) to exploring the role of the gift in early modern society. Noted for her ability to combine history with anthropology and literary theory, Prof. Davis has also been highly influential historiographically, investigating such issues as the reliability of past testimony (*Fiction in the Archives* 1987), and cross-cultural communica-

tion (*Trickster Travels* 2006), and the boundaries between history and imagination. In addition to honorary degrees from many universities, she is a recipient of the Holberg International Memorial Prize (2010) and the American National Humanities Medal (2012). A long-time resident of Canada, Prof. Davis has been a Companion of the Order of Canada, her adopted country's highest honour, since 2012. [by Daniel Woolf]



ROMILA THAPAR

has transformed our understanding of Indian history and historians, and generated novel insights into the purpose and politics of histories. Her tenacious and even courageous use of scientific methodologies for the study of ancient history has shaped over 20 monographs and edited works, including *The Past as Present: Forging Contemporary Identities Through History*

(2014), *Somanantha: The Many Voices of History* (2005), *Śakuntala: Texts, Readings, Histories* (2002), *Interpreting Early India* (1992, 1999), and *A History of India*, Vol.1 (1966). Her preeminent contributions have been previously recognised through honorary doctorates from the University of Chicago, the Institut National des Langues Civilisations Orientales, the University of Oxford, the University of Edinburgh, the University of Calcutta, and the University of Hyderabad. She is an Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Social Sciences, and in 2008 was the co-winner with Peter Brown of the US\$1m Kluge Prize for the Study of Humanity. [by Marnie Hughes-Warrington]



PETER BURKE

has been in an influential voice in historiography for six decades. Both a polyglot and a leading scholar of early modern cultural history, he has been an important mediator between continental (and, latterly, Latin American) and Anglo-American traditions of historical writing, and between history as a discipline and the social sciences.

A prolific author, he has written, edited or coedited many books, book chapters, and articles that have had continuing impact on the study and teaching of the history and theory of historical writing and scholarship. These include *The Renaissance Sense of the Past* (1969), *The French Historical Revolution: The Annales School 1929-89* (1990), *Varieties of Cultural history* (1997), and *What is the History of Knowledge?* (2015). [by Daniel Woolf]

PREVIOUS LAUREATES OF BOOK PRIZES.

2022 ICHTH–INTH Book Prize

- Hans Ruin, *Being with the Dead: Burial, Ancestral Policies and the Roots of Historical Consciousness* (Stanford University Press, 2018).
- Zoltán Boldizsár Simon, *History in Times of Unprecedented Change: A Theory for the 21st Century* (Bloomsbury, 2019).

2018 ICHTH Doctoral Dissertation Prize

- Ritwik Bhattacharyya, *Homo Ahistoricus: Disavowal of History in Colonial South Asian Writing* [award].
- Alexander Maar, *Cause, Chance, Determinism and Counterfactuals in History* [honourful mention].

2016 ICHTH Book Prize

- Jouni Matti Kuukkanen, *Postnarrativist Philosophy of Historiography* (Palgrave 2015).

2013 ICHTH Doctoral Dissertation Prize

- Berber Bevernage, *History, Memory, and State-Sponsored Violence: Time and Justice* (Routledge, 2013).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Professor Sanjay Seth, University of London

- Sanjay Seth, *Beyond Reason: Postcolonial Theory and the Social Sciences* (NY: Oxford University Press, Dec 2020- paperback appearing in February 2023).

Professor Herman Paul, Leiden University

- Herman Paul, *Historians' Virtues: From Antiquity to the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge University Press, 2022):
<https://www.cambridge.org/core/elements/historians-virtues/CB8AB4ECC555E6C0E6E8C21297D76D96>
- Herman Paul (Ed.), *Writing the History of the Humanities: Questions, Themes, and Approaches* (London: Bloomsbury, 2023):
<https://www.bloomsbury.com/us/writing-the-history-of-the-humanities-9781350199101/>

Professor Diana Mishkova, Centre for Advanced Study, Sofia

- Diana Mishkova, *Beyond Balkanism. The Scholarly Politics of Region Making* (Routledge, 2019)
- Diana Mishkova, *Rival Byzantiums. Empire and Identity in Southeastern Europe* (Cambridge University Press, 2022)

Associate Professor Tyson Retz, University of Stavanger

- Tyson Retz, *Progress and the Scale of History*, Cambridge Element in the series *Historical Theory and Practice*, (Ed.) Daniel Woolf.

张作成 (Zhang Zuocheng), Ph.D. History department at Northeast Normal University

- Zhang Zuocheng. *West vis-à-vis East. Tradition, Question and Practice in Chinese Historiography. Dejiny–Teorie–Kritika [History-Theory-Criticism]*, 2/2021, pp.333-346. 2. 张作成：《当代西方史学理论中历史表现论题的阐释》·《史学史研究》2022年第1期·第70-78页。

Professor Jaume Aurell, University of Navarra (Spain)

- Jaume Aurell, *Genealogies of the West: Civilization, Religion, Consciousness* (London: Anthem Press, 2023).
<https://anthempres.com/genealogies-of-the-west-ph>

Associate Professor Vilmos Erős, University of Debrecen, Institute for History.

- Vilmos Eros, *Populus, plebs, rusticus*. (Szabó István "harmadik utas" társadalomtörténete.) [Populus, plebsrusticus. The Social History of the Hungarian Historian, István Szabó.] Budapest, Ráció Kiadó, 2022. 572 p.
- ---- *Approaches to Historiography*.II. (Edited by Vilmos Erős - László Dávid Törő) Egyetemi Kiadó Debrecen University Press, Debrecen, 2022. 250 pp.
- ----"From "Geistesgeschichte" to Public - History": (The years of emigration of the Hungarian Historian, Béla Iványi-Grünwald Jr.) In: *Dynamics of emigration. Epistemic repercussions*. (Émigré Scholars and the Production of Historical Knowledge in the Age of Extremes.) Edited by Stefan Berger and Philipp Müller. Berghahn, London-New York, 2022. 156-172.
- ---- "Prussian Way" versus "Third Road". Peasant-History in Hungary in the 1950s and 1960s. The Case of István zabó. In: *Moving the Social*. Bochum, Institut für Soziale Bewegungen, 68. (2022) 2. 67-81.
- ---- "A szellemi történet Debrecenben: Ifjabb Révész Imre. [Geistesgeschichte" in Debrecen: Imre Révész, Jr.] In: *Aetas*, 2022/3. 79-96.
- ---- "On the Concept of Historiography. Paradigms in European Historical Writing. In: *Approaches to Historiography* II. Ed. by Vilmos Erős, László Dávid Törő. Debrecen University Press/Egyetemi Kiadó, Debrecen, 2022. 12-32.
- ---- "The Persecutions of a "Bourgeois Historian": Peasant-History in Hungary in the 1950s and 1960s. The Case of István Szabó" In: *Approaches to Historiography* II. Ed. by Vilmos Erős, László Dávid Törő. Debrecen University Press/- Egyetemi Kiadó Debrecen, Debrecen, 2022. 173-191.
- ---- "Hungarian historiography in foreign

langauges” (A Bibliography.) (With Törő László Dávid) In: *Approaches to Historiography*. II. (Edited by Vilmos Erős -László Dávid Törő) Debrecen University Press/Egyetemi Kiadó, Debrecen. 2022. 192-221.

- ---- “A szellemtörténet jegyében: Ifjabb Révész Imre levelei Mályusz Elemérnek (1930-1939)” [In the Spirit of Geistesgeschichte: The Letters of Imre Révész Jr. to Elemér Mályusz.] In: *Egyháztörténeti Szemle*, 2022/3. 125-168.
- ---- “A magyar nemzeti kérdés a középkorban.” (Domanovszky Sándor előadása a Zürichi Nemzetközi Történészkonferencián 1938-ban.) [The Hungarian Nationality Question in The Middle Ages.] The Paper of Sándor Domanovszky at the International Historical Congress in Zürich in 1938.] In: *Valóság*, 65. évf. 2022. November. 9-24.

Dr Dobre Claudia-Florentina, Nicolae Iorga” Institute of History, Romanian Academy, Bucharest

- Claudia-Florentina Dobre, Ni víctimas ni heroínas. Las antiguas detenidas políticas y las memorias del comunismo en Rumanía, Bogotá-Colombia, Editorial Aula de Humanidades, 2022. ISBN: 978-958-5111-XX-X (Versión impresa) ISBN: 978-958-5111-XX-X (Versión digital) 162. Traducción del francés al español de Miguel Ángel Gómez Mendoza.

Norbert Fabian, Lecturer Ruhr-University Bochum / Institute for Social Movements

- Norbert Fabian, Wirtschaft - Reformation - Revolution. Studien zur historischen Gesellschaftswissenschaft und zur Geschichtstheorie, Münster 2020, 2 vols.
- ---- “Zum Lernen aus der Geschichte. Geschichtsforschung, Geschichtstheorie und Geschichtsdidaktik”, in: *geschichte für heute*, 2023/1, S. 37-52
- ---- “Quo vadis history? Zum Welthistorikerkongress in Poznan 2022”, in: *HsozKult*, 2023/1 (Kongressbericht)

Professor Ewa Domanska, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland.

- Jerzy Topolski, *Theory and Methodology of*

Historical Knowledge. An Anthology, eds. Ewa Domańska and Anna Topolska. Poznań: Faculty of History Press, Adam Mickiewicz University, 2022, pp. 432, ISBN 978-83-66355-78-1

PERSONAL NEWS/HONOURS

Professor Marnie Hughes-Warrington, University of South Australia

- Became an Officer in the Order of Australia for distinguished service to higher education governance, leadership and mentoring.

Professor Diana Mishkova, Centre for Advanced Study, Sofia

- 2023 (Feb.): Konstantin Jireček Medal granted by the German Southeast European Association (Südosteuropa-Gesellschaft) for “outstanding contributions and achievements in international research on Southeast Europe”.
- 2022: Danubius Award granted by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research for “achievements in science and research in and for the Danube region”.
- 2019: Doctor Honoris Causa of Södertörn University, Stockholm, Sweden
- 2018: Foreign Corresponding Member of the Austrian Academy of Sciences

Associate Professor Vilmos Erős, University of Debrecen, Institute for History

- Award of "Doctor Scientiae" title from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

Associate Professor Tyson Retz, University of Stavanger

- Joined the Editorial Board of the History Education Research Journal, published open-access by UCL Press.

Professor Davide Cadeddu, University of Milan

- Promoted to Full Professor at the University of Milan.
- Nominated Life Member of the college Clare Hall, Cambridge.

UPCOMING EVENTS

COMMISSION UPDATES

- The ICHTH website has a page with links: <https://www.ichth.net/content/links.html>

The page includes links to international networks, collective works, journals, blogs, and book series in our field. For practical reasons, the page excludes works of individual authors or initiatives of merely national scope, but please send any other suggestions to info@ichth.net.

Submitted by ICHTH President, Professor Antoon Baets, University of Groningen

História da Historiografia - International Journal of Theory and History of Historiography invites researchers to submit proposals for a special issue to be published in 2024. Proposals should have two to four proponents (guest editors) and they should be submitted through our online form. The deadline for submission is March 1st, 2023. We are happy to answer any questions you may have via our e-mail: historiadahistoriografia@hotmail.com.

Online form link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeBkraXJSoFammmxmh_ASk_UC_WAtguIOPEpZT-rjHI4Oukxg/viewform Submitted by Professor Joao Ohara

CONFERENCE/ WORKSHOPS/ TRAININGS

- III. International Conference in Debrecen (Hungary), November, 2023.

Submitted by Associate Professor Vilmos Erős, University of Debrecen

- Forthcoming Paper Presentation: "Steps to Peace" - Social Democrats and Christians in the Peace Movement of the Early 1980s. Arguments against the International Arms Race and Discussions on Gradualism/ Panel: Historical Peace Research as Social Science History: Theories and Categories, Peace Movements and International Diplomacy (Organizer) - European Social Science History Conference, Gothenburg / Sweden, 12.04.2023.

Lecture: Vergleichende Revolutions- und demokratietheoretische Überlegungen zu 1848/89 / Wissenschaftliches Symposium 'Die Modernität von 1848/49', Frankfurt am Main, 16.05.2023.

Submitted by Norbert Fabian, Lecturer Ruhr-University Bochum / Institute for Social Movements

- The Betty Behrens Seminar on Classics of Historiography

Location: Clare Hall, University of Cambridge

Time: 2-4 pm

Speakers: Timothy Rood (University of Oxford)

David Wootton (University of York)

George Garnett (University of Oxford)

Richard J. Evans (University of Cambridge)

Convenor: Davide Cadeddu (University of Milan)

Program: 16 February – Timothy Rood, "*Anabasis*" (IV c. BC) by *Xenophon*

23 February – David Wootton, "*Le Siècle de Louis XIV*" (1751) by *Voltaire*

2 March – George Garnett, "*Historia novorum in Anglia*" (c. 1115) by *Eadmer*

9 March - Richard J. Evans, "*The Age of Revolution*", "*The Age of Capital*", "*The Age of Empire*" (XX c.) by *Eric Hobsbawm*.

Website:

<https://www.clarehall.cam.ac.uk/events/bettybehrensseminar23/>

For further information: davide.cadeddu@unimi.it

Submitted by Professor Davide Cadeddu, (University of Milan)

NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

- Tyson Retz is receiving applications for enrolment in the PhD course "Hermeneutics: An Introduction" (5ECTS), to be held in Stavanger, Norway, and online in early May. Be in contact with Tyson for further details tyson.retz@uis.no

Submitted by Associate Professor Tyson Retz, University of Stavanger

International Commission for the History and Theory of Historiography BOARD

Executive Team

- President: Antoon De Baets – University of Groningen, The Netherlands.
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- Secretary-General and Program Chair: Marnie Hughes-Warrington – University of Australia, South Australia,
- Secretary-General and Program Chair: Daniel Woolf – Queen's University, Canada.

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- Efi Gazi - University of the Peloponnese, Greece
- Allan Megill - University of Virginia, United States
- Sanjay Seth - University of London, United Kingdom
- Verónica Tozzi - Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Xupeng Zhang - Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, Beijing, China
- Ewa Domanska - Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland

Follow ICHTH activities on the new website: <https://www.ichth.net>

ICHTH Members are requested to pay their annual fees. More information about annual fees is available at <https://www.ichth.net/content/membership.html> or write to info@ichth.net

The next ICHTH Newsletter is scheduled for October 2023. Please send relevant news to the Newsletter editor anytime at <https://forms.gle/cV7N8rqb5YJWUQcM8>

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