

## REPORT BY THE FIEC DELEGATE TO CIPSH

When the CIPSH GA took place in Paris the 14th of October 2014, in the opinion of many people the CIPSH situation was simply desperate, and an effective relaunching was really hard to believe. Today we can say we were right to believe in it. The whole new Bureau has been committed in CIPSH relaunching and strategic reinforcement, but we have to say that it was mainly the hard, tenacious and intelligent work by the General Secretary, Luiz Oosterbeek, and much credit for the actual result is due to him.

In the triennial 2014-2017 many things happened, actually many more than several of us, including me, were expecting. First of all, a new website was released ([www.cipsh.net](http://www.cipsh.net)), where a great deal of information is available and where all the Member Organisations have dedicated pages and a link to their own website. A new constitution was approved and the CIPSH, a non-governmental and non-profit-making organization, is now registered as an International Association, as defined by the French Law of 1901. The relationship with UNESCO was re-established and strengthened by signing in 2016 a global framework agreement, so that now an active and fruitful cooperation is well established. Some of the original Member Organisations, which were absent for so long and probably totally disaffected, returned to a full membership; new associations joined us and others are foreseen, thus increasing the presence and potential of the CIPSH at international level.

Several projects and initiatives have been launched or are under preparation. In 2016 CIPSH sponsored the International Year of Global Understanding, launched by the International Geographic Union (a MO of CIPSH): a network of almost 50 Regional Action Centres undertook initiatives all over the world, with the presence of CIPSH at various levels; the CIPSH President Prof. Chao Gejng and the Director of the IYGU Prof. Benno Werlen participated in a public event in Genoa, seat of the Italian RAC of the International Year of Global Understanding. The CIPSH has also launched a program for a network of UNESCO-CIPSH chairs: in this framework I myself with the Bureau worked on a FIEC proposal on the theme "The reception of Classics in contemporary education and thinking", which we will try to support and develop in the following year.

The new CIPSH Statute (Article VII) provides for the institution of an Executive Committee, a wide body (perhaps a bit too wide, in my view...) that meets once a year and is defined as "the main decision-making body in between sessions of the General Assembly". The Executive Committee has been appointed during the GA in Liège and the FIEC is represented in it by me (ex officio as I am member of the CIPSH Bureau) and by our colleague Jesús de la Villa (member of the FIEC Bureau).

Yet the most important and meaningful event was the World Humanities Conference, held in Liège from the 6th to the 12th of August. It was preceded by a GA of CIPSH, during which the Bureau was re-elected, including your President re-appointed as Treasurer. We cannot deny that the organization of the World Conference was difficult, with many problems, and great troubles till the very last days before the event. We well know that and its reasons, to a large extent at least. On the other hand it was not easy, for sure, to find someone willing to take on such a heavy task. Yet these considerations do not change the fact that WHC has been a major event, of great importance, with tremendous potential for the future towards the defense, or rather promotion of Humanities all over the world. The main result, also in terms of visibility, is the final document (*Outcome Document. A New Humanities Agenda for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* - here in attachment), which will be presented at the Unesco General Assembly in November, so that UNESCO will adopt it and spread it to all governments of the member countries. All that and chiefly the WHC are an important result, indeed, but should be also and above all a starting point: in the next few years the CIPSH will continue to carry on projects and initiatives to promote Humanities wherever and in any way possible.

I omit to mention other things, because I do not want to go on too much: a great deal of information appears in the cited website as well as in the *Bulletin of the International Council for Philosophy and the Human Sciences*, prepared by the General Secretary for the GA in Liège (in attachment).

The presence of the FIEC in this general framework is guaranteed as for now until 2020, given that its President is a member of the CIPSH Bureau and that FIEC is entitled to have a representative in the Executive Committee of the CIPSH, as already mentioned. But for sure that is not enough in itself. Thanks to the action by Christiane Reitz and Chris Carey, and above all - let me say - thanks to Chris' patience and tenacity in the last phases and to his presence in Liège, FIEC had a presence also in the WHC, which is by now the most important achievement. It was not easy, especially because of a very precarious and deficient organization, but in the end FIEC had its share, as Chris illustrates in his report (in attachment).

As you know, I have been definitely encouraging and supporting this policy and, if you allow me, I believe it was the right decision. Perhaps we, I mean the FIEC, could have made some additional investment effort, but, given the premise and the situation, we can be satisfied, although it is true that other CIPSH Member Organizations have had a greater presence in the WHC program and therefore greater visibility. Now, however, is time to think about all this and look forward. The relaunching of the CIPSH and its growing international presence are certainly very important for us, and are probably the chief main stream in terms of visibility and influence for the promotion of Humanities in a global perspective. Staying out or standing on the sidelines would be a deadly choice for the sciences of antiquity and for classical studies. The risk would be to become increasingly marginalized and reduced in weight and presence, with the serious danger of becoming irrelevant on the world cultural scene. It would be easy to summon all the recent episodes of reduction of classical studies in universities, to remember that our fields are at present heavily threatened and it would be suicidal if we ourselves help this destruction process. I think that we must not run this risk and that means that in the future the FIEC will have to avoid withdrawing into itself and call itself off (by saying that this and that are not in our interest and not strictly in our vision). The FIEC will have to dare more, invest more and be more present in CIPSH initiatives and projects, so that our cultural sphere continues to be represented with strength and weight. It is a political line I intend to pursue until the end of my term (which is very close...), hoping in the support from the Bureau and trusting that the FIEC future governance will continue on this line as far as possible.

Franco Montanari