

INQUA CONGRESSES: A 75th Anniversary Review

INQUA came into being in 1928 at the International Geological Congress held in Copenhagen, Denmark. At that meeting, Professor M. Limanowski (University of Wilnus, Poland) proposed the creation of *l'Association pour l'Étude du Quaternaire européen*. His proposal was strongly endorsed by the USSR delegation. An organizing committee chaired by Professor V. Madsen of Denmark was appointed to discuss and draft organizational statutes. The first assembly of the Association was convened in Copenhagen in June 1928, and Professor D. I. Musketov (USSR) was elected the first President. The new Association included the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Great Britain, the Low Countries, Poland, Sweden, and Russia (USSR). An excursion was organized to examine the Quaternary deposits of northern Denmark.

The second congress ("reunion") convened in 1932 in Leningrad and Moscow, USSR in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the Geologic Service of the USSR (Russia). The President was Professor I. M. Gubkin (USSR). Discussions were held regarding whether the association should remain European or become a worldwide organization. Eleven local excursions were organized, as well as a "grand" excursion lasting 16 days that covered much of the country between Leningrad and the Black and Caspian seas.

The third congress was held in 1936 in Vienna, Austria in conjunction with the 16th International Geological Congress. Professor G. Götzinger (Austria) presided during the meetings. The name of the Association was formally changed to *Internationale Quartärvereinigung (International Association for Quaternary Research)*. The acronym "INQUA" was proposed by Professor H. Gams, Secretary General of the congress, and this designation has been retained ever since. A "grand" excursion was organized in the eastern Alps that lasted 14 days. At this congress, 23 countries were represented, and the participants numbered 187. Professor Albrecht Penck served as Honorary President.

No congresses were held during the next 17 years, an interval that encompassed WWII, during which time INQUA remained inactive. Congresses that would have met in 1940, 1944, and 1948 were not organized, and it was 1953 before Quaternary scientists again assembled for an INQUA congress.



The first postwar congress (IV) met in Rome and Pisa, Italy, in 1953, with Professor Baron Gian Alberto Blanc (Italy) serving as President. This meeting was the first to adopt an emblem, or logo: a penguin and a palm tree on an ocean beach, meant to evoke the complex climatic variations of the Pleistocene.



The V congress, held in 1957 in Madrid and Barcelona, Spain adopted as its logo a prehistoric cave painting of a bison from the Altamira district. The President of the congress was Professor José M. Albereda (Spain).



In 1961, the VI congress was held in Warsaw, Poland, with Professor Wladyslaw Szafer (Poland) as President. At this congress the first INQUA Executive Committee was elected and served during the inter-congress period. The first President of the Executive Committee was Professor André Cailleux (France).



The VII Congress convened in Denver and Boulder, Colorado (USA) in the summer of 1965 with Professor Richard Foster Flint (USA) as President. Gerald M. Richmond (USA) was elected President of the next inter-congress Executive Committee. The General Assembly approved the adoption of a new constitution, in which INQUA's name was changed to the International Union for Quaternary Research.



The VIII Congress met in Paris in 1969, with Professor Jean Dresch (France) as President. A reception for congress delegates was held in the Hotel de Ville, and scientific sessions were held at the Sorbonne. Professor G. Frank Mitchell (Ireland) headed the new Executive Committee elected during the congress.



The IX Congress, convened in 1973 in Christchurch, New Zealand, was the first to be held in the Southern Hemisphere. Professor Maxwell Gage (New Zealand), the congress President, played an active part in organizing the numerous field excursions held throughout the country. The President of the newly elected Executive Committee was Vladimir Sibrava of Czechoslovakia.



Professor Frank Shotton (UK) presided over the X INQUA Congress, which was held at his university (Birmingham) in the summer of 1977. Jane Soons (New Zealand) was elected President of the Executive Committee for the next inter-congress period.



The USSR hosted the XI INQUA Congress in Moscow in 1982, marking the 50th Anniversary of the second (Moscow-Leningrad) congress in 1932. Academician B. S. Sokolov (USSR) served as Congress President. The President of the new Executive Committee was Professor Hugues Faure (France).



In 1987, INQUA XII convened in Ottawa, Canada, with Professor Nat Rutter (Canada) as President. Rutter was elected President of the Executive Committee. This was the last inter-congress Executive Committee to have a single person serve both as Secretary and Treasurer.



The first INQUA Congress (XIII) to be held in mainland Asia was convened in Beijing, China in 1991. Professor Liu Tungsheng (China) was President. Field excursions were held all over the country, many allowing foreign scientists access to key Chinese Quaternary sites for the first time. Professor Liu was elected President of the new Executive Committee.



The XIV Congress was held in 1995 at the Freie Universität Berlin in Berlin, Germany. The President was Professor Burkhard Frenzel (Germany). The conference dinner was served on a cruise ship that sailed to Potsdam and back. Professor Stephen C. Porter (USA) was elected President of the inter-congress Executive Committee.



The first African congress (XV) convened in 1999 in Durban, South Africa, with Professor Timothy C. Partridge (South Africa) as President. Meetings were held in a new convention center a short walk from the Indian Ocean. Professor Nicholas J. Shackleton (UK) was elected President of the Executive Committee.



Reno, Nevada is the venue of the XVI Congress (2003), the second to be convened in the United States. It meets on the 75th Anniversary of INQUA, with sessions and meetings held in the Hilton Hotel. Professor Herbert E. Wright, Jr. (USA) is congress President. The International Council will discuss a new structure for INQUA, which involves fewer commissions, but a wider array of Quaternary disciplines.

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