



PROGRESS REPORT

UNITED NATIONS INTELLECTUAL HISTORY PROJECT / UNIHP

no. 2 October 2000

VOLUME ONE OF PROJECT SERIES COMPLETED

The Project directors are happy to announce the forthcoming publication of the first volume of the series. The manuscript of [Ahead of the Curve? UN Ideas and Global Challenges](#) by Louis Emmerij, Richard Jolly and Thomas G. Weiss has been completed, and Indiana University Press has begun the copyediting process. The book is scheduled for publication early next year. We have included in this newsletter and on our website the final chapter of the book in which we discuss tentative conclusions.

The Rockefeller Brothers Fund made its Pocantico retreat facilities available to the Project in late July and early August where the directors and staff finalized the text of *Ahead of the Curve? UN Ideas and Global Challenges*.

This book is somewhat different from the commissioned books and the other two overarching volumes that will follow in this series. It sets out the global challenges during the United Nations' life and asks whether the UN responded with a creative framing of the issues and workable policy ideas. In future publications, the ideas themselves will be the prism through which history unfolds more slowly and with far more documentation than we can permit ourselves in this first volume.

This first attempt to map the UN's intellectual history results from significant but inevitably, as yet, insufficient archival research, brainstorming, reflection, and interviews. We expect that this brief effort to sketch essential elements of the Project's analytical framework will generate a lively discussion that will strengthen and sharpen our focus on the role of the UN as intellectual actor. But we underline that this book is our first rather than our final word, which will only be completed after the last book has been written. And even then, we will no doubt wonder if we could have done better.

Many observers are more than willing to regurgitate the philosopher George Santayana's incantation in *Life of Reason* that "they who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." However, those who support research normally are cool toward history, even historical inquiry like ours that has policy implications for human survival with dignity in the new millennium. We thus are extremely appreciative for the financial generosity of governments and private foundations that have made this book possible. We are grateful for their confidence. We trust that they will be satisfied with this first product. As always, we welcome comments and suggestions from our readers.

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Project staff at Pocantico, sporting *Ahead of the Curve?* t-shirts. Left to right: Frédéric Lapeyre, Thomas G. Weiss, Teresa Booker, Richard Jolly, Louis Emmerij



Hard at work on *Ahead of the Curve?*: Frédéric Lapeyre and Thomas G. Weiss

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RECENTLY COMMISSIONED BOOKS

Our last newsletter contained information on three commissioned books. All but one of the remaining volumes have now been commissioned or are in the process of being commissioned. A complete list of books and the CVs of authors may be found on our web page at www.unhistory.org. We expect to have the remaining volumes commissioned by the end of the year.

The following books have been commissioned and are underway:

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES will be undertaken by RICHARD JOLLY, LOUIS EMMERIJ, AND FRÉDÉRIC LAPEYRE. Project directors Jolly and Emmerij will be joined by Lapeyre, presently post-doc fellow at UNIHIP and associate professor at Geneva's Institut Universitaire d'Etudes du Développement.

THE UNITED NATIONS AND GLOBAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT is being written by NICO SCHRIJVER, Professor of Public International Law at the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague. A lawyer and scholar, Schrijver has published numerous books and articles on the UN and international law, most recently *Sovereignty over Natural Resources*.

A CRITICAL HISTORY OF HUMAN RIGHTS AT THE UNITED NATIONS is being co-authored by SARAH ZAIDI and ROGER NORMAND, respectively Research Director and Policy Director at the Center for Economic and Social Rights in New York. As a public health practitioner, Zaidi has published widely on issues of international public health, and has consulted on numerous occasions with UN agencies on the impact of sanctions on humanitarian activities. Normand, who is a lawyer by training, spearheaded the Harvard study team to assess the impact of war on the civilian population in Iraq, and has published extensively on human rights, including a "critical history" of the laws of war published by the Harvard Law Review.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE has been undertaken by OLAV STOKKE, presently Senior Researcher at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs in Oslo, formerly editor of *FORUM for Development Studies*, and adviser on foreign aid to the Norwegian ministries of Development Cooperation and Foreign Affairs. Stokke is the author or editor of 25 books and dozens of articles on international development assistance.

The following books are at the planning stage. Author biographical notes will be available on the Project web site in due course:

TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS will be written by JOHN DUNNING AND TAGI SAGAFI-NEJAD.

THE GENDER REVOLUTION: WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT will be written by DEVAKI JAIN.

A CRITICAL HISTORY OF HUMAN SECURITY will be written by S. NEIL MACFARLANE and YUEN FOONG-KHONG.

PERSPECTIVES ON DEVELOPMENT : VIEWS FROM THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS will be edited by YVES BERTHELOT with chapters by ADEBAYO ADEDEJI, LEELANANDA DE SILVA, GERT ROSENTHAL, and BLANDINE DESTREMEAU.

The remaining two overarching books, UN IDEAS: VIEWS FROM THE TRENCHES AND TURRETS and THE UN AND IDEAS OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT will be written by three of the Project's directors, RICHARD JOLLY, LOUIS EMMERIJ, and THOMAS G. WEISS, during the course of the Project.

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS

Since the last report, the Project has conducted nine additional oral history interviews, with more scheduled later in the year:

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In March 2000, the Project interviewed DON MILLS, long-time advocate of the NIEO, in Kingston, and JACQUES POLAK, former director of research and executive director at the IMF, in Washington.

MICHAEL ZAMMIT-CUTAJAR, Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and formerly with UNCTAD, was interviewed at the Project's offices in New York in April 2000.

In May 2000, BERNARD CHIDZERO, until recently Senior Minister of Finance, Economic Planning, and Development in Zimbabwe, formerly with UNCTAD and first African Resident Representative of UNDP, was interviewed in Harare. IGNACY SACHS, director of the International Center of Research for Environment and Development at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, was interviewed in Paris.

In June 2000, the Project interviewed VICTOR URQUIDI, former president of the Colegio de Mexico and specialist on sustainable development, in Oslo, and STÉPHANE HESSEL, Ambassadeur de France with a distinguished career within the UN and follower of UN debates, in Paris.

In July 2000, MIHALY SIMAI, professor and director of research of the Institute of World Economy of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and formerly with the ECE, was interviewed in Budapest. ROBERT COX, well-known critical theorist of multilateralism and 25-year member of the ILO secretariat, was interviewed in August 2000 in Toronto.

Interviews currently being scheduled for the remainder of 2000 and early 2001 include ALISTAIR MACINTYRE in New York or Kingston, GERT ROSENTHAL and MARGARET ANSTEE in New York, KURT WALDHEIM in Vienna, GERRY HELLEINER in Toronto, VLADIMIR PETROVSKY and DHARAM GHAI in Geneva, and JANEZ STANOVNIC in Lubjana.

In June, the Project organized a useful in-house critical review session of oral history interviews and research completed to date to ensure the continual improvement of the Project's oral history component. The Oral History Office of Columbia University evaluated our progress to date. Project directors and researchers were pleased to confirm that our procedures are producing interesting interviews, and that the resulting oral history data bank will likely be considered a valuable resource by researchers.

REPORT ON THE SECOND MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL: NEW YORK, 27-28 MARCH 2000

The second meeting of the International Advisory Council was held in New York on 27-28 March 2000.

The meeting combined IAC business with substantive presentations on the following books: *Ahead of the Curve? UN Ideas and Global Challenges*; *Trade, Finance, and Development*; *Quantifying the World: Diffusing and Differentiating the Realities and Mirages*; *Transnational Corporations*; and *A Critical History of Human Rights at the United Nations*. Invited authors and expert guests joined the meeting for presentations and discussions from lunch on the first day through the morning of the second day, with the first and last

sessions of the 2-day meeting reserved for the IAC meeting.

In addition to outlines from authors, Thomas G. Weiss presented a co-authored paper with Tatiana Carayannis entitled *The UN, Its Economic and Social Ideas, and their Agents: Toward an Analytical Framework for the UNIHP*, a version of which is forthcoming in the first issue of the *Journal of Global Social Policy*. The paper was a preliminary effort to produce a procedural roadmap that authors could follow so as to ensure some methodological consistency across the project's work. For purposes of this meeting, it sought to begin a dialogue among IAC members and participating authors about methodology, the conceptualization and role of ideas, and the potential theoretical contributions of the project. Weiss spelled out some of the conceptual difficulties in dealing with ideas, listed the research questions the project seeks to answer, and outlined some hypotheses about the impact of ideas.

During the meeting, Graduate Center President Frances Degen Horowitz welcomed the members and guests to the new secretariat headquarters of the project, offered expressions of support and encouragement, and invited members to use The Graduate Center as their "home away from home."

A discussion was held with regard to the state of UN archives. It was reported that in contrast to those of the IMF and World Bank in Washington DC, the UN archives in New York had been underfunded and understaffed, and the contents not very useful as they contained mainly official correspondence and final drafts of documents. It was agreed that although the issue of UN archives fell outside the scope of the Project, agency heads should be encouraged, whenever possible, to look at ways to better organize and maintain their archives.

Participants attended a reception at the United Nations Delegates' Lounge hosted by the project in honor of its International Advisory Council. They were joined by 100 guests drawn from the UN, UN missions, foundations, and other supporters of the project. The Secretary-General of the UN, Kofi Annan also attended the reception and personally welcomed the members of the IAC.

OTHER PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Project staff continues to collaborate with related efforts and other researchers worldwide. The following are some of those collaborative activities.

In April 2000, UNIHP participated in the Reflection Group Conference in Geneva, organized by Ambassador Anthony Hill. The conference convened a small group of individuals with a long association with the UN family to reflect on their many years of public service. UNIHP supported this effort through several means. Project

director Louis Emmerij was a conference participant and Project researcher Tatiana Carayannis attended as rapporteur for the conference, producing a report of the conference available from the Project or from Ambassador Hill. In addition, UNIHP recorded the proceedings using Digital Audio Tape recording (DAT) equipment, thus ensuring an audio record of participants' reflections of archival quality.

Project director Thomas G. Weiss presented the Project's on-going work and its potential contribution to theory at the ACUNS annual meeting in June 2000. He was joined on the panel by Desmond McNeill and Morten Bøås of the CANDID project based at the University of Oslo, whose work on how particular development ideas have penetrated and been interpreted by intergovernmental organizations complements UNIHP's.

In September 2000, Sophie Theven, a UNIHP researcher, attended a CANDID workshop on *The Role of Ideas in the Multilateral System* in Oslo.

Other recent Project activities include a short essay on the Project by Louis Emmerij which will appear in the ILO Friends Newsletter at the end of the year. In addition, the Project has recently been in touch with the Association of Former UNESCO Staff Members which has taken the lead to document the history of UNESCO.

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UNIHP OPENS GENEVA LIAISON OFFICE

In September the Project opened a Liaison Office in Geneva, located within the UN Library at the Palais des Nations. Yves Berthelot joins Emmerij, Jolly, and Weiss as a co-director and will be based at the Project's Geneva Liaison Office. Berthelot is currently Senior Research Fellow at The CUNY Graduate Center. He was Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Europe until mid 2000 and has dedicated his career to international economic issues and development. He has served also as Deputy Secretary-General of UNCTAD, Director of the Centre d'Etudes Prospectives et d'Information Internationales in Paris, and Head of Research of the OECD Development Centre.

The Geneva Liaison Office, in addition to spearheading the work on the volume on the Regional Commissions, will also serve as a base of operations for authors needing to consult the UN archives in Geneva. Graduate students will be working with the Geneva office to research those archives.

NOVEMBER 2000 MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL AND COMMISSIONED AUTHORS IN GENEVA

The next meeting of the IAC will take place 16-18 November 2000 in Geneva. The meeting will begin with a reception at the Palais des Nations to introduce the Project to the UN community in Geneva, and like the March meeting in New York, will combine IAC business with substantive discussions of the next round of commissioned volumes. Authors for *International Development Strategies, The United Nations and Global Resource Management, International Development Assistance, and Views from the Regional Commissions* are scheduled to make presentations to the IAC and selected guests. In addition, there will be a presentation and substantive discussion of the Project's oral history interviews and research to date.

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