



HISTORICAL **SW&S** PORTRAITS

GLOBAL LEADERS FOR SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION:  
THE IASSW PRESIDENTS 1928-2008

## Preface

This historical overview traces the history of IASSW through portraits of the sequence of its presidents.

The history of this organisation is not only connected with major phases of the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century but also partly with my own history as a member and teacher of a historically rooted profession and discipline.

I was inspired to commission this series of portraits by my numerous encounters with international colleagues and their rich and diverse contributions to the continuous development of our discipline.

I became aware of the fact that during my teaching career in social work and community education studies I encountered personally no less than eight of the presidents of IASSW as well as the honorary president portrayed in this book. I take from this that personal and institutional histories are intricately connected in our field and that these biographies characterise also the general development of the social professions. Each of these figures left their own hallmark on the association and contributed in their unique way and from the perspective of their own experience, research and cultural background to the development of the profession as an international movement.

The character of international social work moves between universal standards and cultural particulars and each of the portraits reveals a concern with both sets of criteria: while at the start<sup>1</sup> it was important to aim at universal standards, our current phase of development requires attention to cultural and epistemological differences.

Historical milestones reflected in this history were in particular the world economic crisis of the 1920s, the advent of fascism in the 1930s, the aftermath of the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, the Cold War confrontation, the crisis of the welfare state, the collapse of the Soviet system and the establishment of globalisation.

Social work responded to these challenges generally with commitment and imagination, identifying the pertinent professional and educational issues arising at its biennial international congresses which were / are held in:

*1928 Paris, 1932 Frankfurt, 1936 London, 1948 Atlantic City, 1950 Paris, 1952 Madras, 1954 Toronto, 1956 Munich, 1958 Tokyo, 1960 Rome, 1962 Brazil, 1964 Athens, 1966 Washington, 1968 Helsinki, 1970 Manila, 1972 The Hague, 1974 Nairobi, 1976 Puerto Rico, 1978 Jerusalem,*

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<sup>1</sup> For more details see: Kniephoff – Knebel, Annette and Seibel, Friedrich W. 2008: Establishing international co-operation in social work education: the first decade of the “International Committee of Schools for Social Work” (ICSSW). In: International Social Work, 6.

*1980 Hong Kong, 1982 Brighton, 1984 Montreal, 1986 Tokyo, 1988 Vienna, 1990 Lima, 1992 Washington, 1996 Amsterdam, 1996 Hong Kong, 1998 Jerusalem, 2000 Montreal, 2002 Montpellier, 2004 Adelaide, 2006 Santiago de Chile, 2008 Durban*

During the congress held in The Hague/NL in 1972 on “New themes in social work education” three new and different approaches to social work: Agology (from the Netherlands) - Animation (from France) and Conscientization (from Chile) were presented. They marked the advent of an area of indigenisation.

For me - as a novice in the international arena - this looked very promising and I decided to take part more regularly get involved actively.

It took the organisation more than 20 years until - during the congress held in Amsterdam/NL in 1994 – IASSW changed its constitution and structure accordingly by devolving powers to its regions.

IASSW is now a global network:

This was documented by Ralph Garber, as chair of the Committee, which conducted the World Census of Social Work Education in 2000.

Lena Dominelli launched initiatives with regard to intercultural communication within this international organisation in order to draw attention to issues of cultural identity and discrimination which also affect its members. During the congress held in Montpellier/ F in 2002 the board of IASSW focused attention on the importance of translation into several languages and took decisive steps to overcome earlier mono-lingualism and its effects - largely unintended - of exclusion.

I hope therefore that at the threshold of a new phase of international developments these historical reflections will provide a fruitful base with which to confront core issues of the discipline and the profession.

## Acknowledgements

The work of many people who have a share in the realisation of this book is gratefully acknowledged.

First and foremost my appreciation goes to the members of the Board of IASSW who invited me to edit this book for this special occasion, the 80th anniversary of IASSW, and to the authors of the portraits and the introductory paper.

My special thanks go to Carola Kuhlmann, who at the IASSW Congress in Jerusalem in 1998 presented a poster with a short portrait of Alice Salomon, the first president of the IASSW. This poster gave the inspiration for the series of "Historical portraits of important European leaders in social work" which I started to edit in 2001 in the "European Journal for Social Work (EJSW)". Carola accepted the invitation to write the first and more detailed portrait of Alice Salomon in this series.

I am grateful to the publishers of EJSW, Taylor & Francis Ltd., and to the author for granting permission to reprint the paper in this book.

From 2003 onwards a number of "Historical SW&S Portraits of Important International Leaders in Social Work" have been edited by me in the open access journal "Social Work & Society" (SW&S), among them a number of portraits which are included in this collection.

I am thankful to the founding editors of EJSW, Hans-Uwe Otto und Walter Lorenz, as well as the editors of SW&S for encouraging me to collect and publish these portraits.

Furthermore I want to thank the editors of SW&S for permission to use these portraits in this printed volume and for their readiness to publish the collection as a supplement of the online journal on this very occasion.

My sincere thanks go to Stefanie Albus who was again responsible for the technical implementation of the online version in "Social Work & Society" as well as for the production of the layout of the printed version.

Last but not least I am indebted to Mustafa Ademi who provided technical assistance in designing and realising the cover of this book.

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May 2008

**Social Work  
& Society**

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