

CORRESPONDENCE

XTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PHILOSOPHY

THE Ninth International Congress of Philosophy (Congrès-Descartes), which took place in Paris in August 1937, accepted at its final session the Dutch Government's invitation to meet again in the Netherlands. The Tenth Congress would have met in Groningen, in September 1941, had not the war prevented this. In February 1940 an indefinite delay of the Congress was agreed upon. Only some months later the Netherlands were overpowered. Shortly after Professor Leonard Polak was arrested; he died in the concentration camp of Sachsenhausen, a victim of an inhuman ideology.

The committee which had constituted itself under Polak's chairmanship agreed to resume their task as soon as circumstances would permit and have decided, in agreement with the board of the preceding congress and the "Institut international de philosophie," to summon the Congress to Amsterdam during the summer of 1948 to meet at a date yet to be arranged between August 15th and September 15th.

We now address to the students of philosophy in all countries, which during the last years have served the cause of mankind, a first call. We feel that the Congress will, at this very moment, meet the sympathy and the active support of all those who endorse the idea of humanity and who prefer universal values over particular interests.

The material difficulties, which, at this moment, hamper international relations and traffic, presumably will gradually diminish; in 1948 it will be possible to travel to the Netherlands without too much trouble. The assistance promised in this respect by the section Literature and Philosophy of the UNESCO has been gratefully accepted.

The Congress will reflect as far as possible the philosophical activities during the years since 1937. The board are fully aware of the present situation in philosophy, which is characterized by a predominance of diversity over unity. They accept the diversity without indulging in any illusions of bringing about a unification.

They consider a meeting of representatives of divergent currents of thought as highly profitable, provided it is inspired by a desire for objectivity and mutual respect. On the other hand they are anxious to prevent the Congress from becoming merely a fortuitous encounter of these tendencies where, in spite of all objectivity, the impression of a total lack of unity would prevail. In order to meet this danger the choice of a central theme, imposed by the inner development of philosophy as well as the present state of mankind, seemed justified. This theme is given by the ideas of *man, humanity, and mankind*, which are so closely interconnected, that their philosophical clarification cannot be performed without constant mutual consultation.

This central theme borrows its significance from the facts that it points to the common origin, from which the divergent currents of thought may be considered; it indicates a common problem, to which they all refer. In dealing with this theme, we certainly cannot do without the contributions of sciences such as sociology, psychology, psychiatrics, ethnology, and the history of civilization.

The other domains of philosophy will, of course, be present at the Congress besides its central theme; the theory of knowledge, the theory of values, the problems of metaphysics will not be lacking. Wherever possible they will be brought in connection with the central theme, without prejudice to the autonomous treatment of their special problems. For the plenary meetings papers will be invited on the central theme as well as on the other great problems.

Provisional subscriptions for the Congress and announcements of short papers to be read in the sections will be very welcome to the secretariate. Especially any suggestions regarding the fundamental idea and its practical elaboration will be gratefully accepted.

Further communications will follow, in order to keep future participants informed on the state of our preparations.

Name and address of the secretary: E. W. BETH, Bern. Zweerskade 23 I, Amsterdam-Z.

(On the receipt of the above letter, representatives of the Mind Association, The Aristotelian Society, and The British Institute of Philosophy, met to consider

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how British Philosophy could make a contribution to the Xth International Congress of Philosophy.

Dr. A. C. Ewing, of 69, Hurst Park Avenue, Cambridge, was appointed to represent all three of the above Societies, and he has sent a letter to a selection of British philosophers, informing them of the proposed Congress and inviting them (1) to communicate with him if they intend to be present at the Congress, and (2) to submit their papers to the Secretary of the Organizing Committee, Professor E. W. Beth, Bern, Zweerskade 23 I, Amsterdam-Z.).—Ed.

TO THE EDITOR OF *Philosophy*

DEAR SIR,

Readers of *Philosophy* may be interested to learn that in June of this year the first award was made of the Susan Stebbing Studentship. The successful candidate is Mademoiselle Françoise Chauvet, a French lady who has the Licence ès Lettres of the University of Lyon and hopes to proceed to her Agrégation. She is studying the origins of modern philosophy with special reference to Bacon and Descartes, and will hold the Studentship at Bedford College.

Yours faithfully,

H. B. ACTON.

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