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The World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES)

Mark BRAY, Maria MANZON & Vandra MASEMANN

The WCCES was founded in 1970 in Ottawa, Canada. It evolved from an International Committee of Comparative Education Societies which had been convened in 1968 by Joseph Katz, of Canada's University of British Columbia (Epstein 1981, p.261), and brought together the four national societies and one regional society for comparative education then existing. Over the decades, additional societies joined, and by 2007 the WCCES had 36 member societies.

In the preface to the Proceedings of the First World Congress of Comparative Education Societies, at which the WCCES was formed, Katz (1970, p.5) wrote that:

The Congress itself is evidence that people will work together to achieve not only common but uncommon goals as well.

In addition to considering the administrative and juridical aspects of creating a Council and a continuing Congress, the 1970 event focused on two major themes: the place of comparative and international education in the education of teachers, and the role and rationale for educational aid to developing countries. Katz (1970, p.4) wrote that these themes were:

of special significance in today's world, a world that is divided between the haves and the have-nots; between the developed and the developing; between the nationally and internationally inclined; between the industrial and the agricultural; and between those who suffer an annual average income of \$50.00 and those who also enjoy \$4500.00. For comparative educators interested in examining the similarities and differences in the educative process of various groups the examination of the educational relationships obtaining between the overdeveloped and the underdeveloped areas of the world constitute a very special challenge.

Not all members of the comparative education societies that constituted the World Council even at that time were equally concerned with such issues. Thus, both then and since, many scholars and practitioners in the field have focused exclusively on industrialised countries and on theoretical, methodological and other issues. However, from the start the World Council did have this particular emphasis, which also underpins the work of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Financial and administrative support for the 1970 Congress was contributed by UNESCO, and one of the seven Congress resolutions was that the newly-formed World Council should seek consultative status with UNESCO.

These origins shaped the documents which in due course became the WCCES administrative instruments. The Statutes evolved over time, but the version approved in 1996 remained current at the time of writing this book. They stated (WCCES 1996, Section 2) that the broad goals of the Council were:

- to advance education for international understanding in the interests of peace, intercultural co-operation, mutual respect among peoples and observance of human rights; and
- to improve education systems so that the right of all to education may be more fully realised.

The Statutes then specified two professional aims, namely:

- to promote the study of comparative and international education throughout the world and enhance the academic status of this field;
- to bring comparative education to bear on the major educational problems of the day by fostering cooperative action by specialists from different parts of the world.

Then the Statutes indicated that to achieve these aims, the WCCES would:

- encourage the teaching of, and research in, comparative education;
- promote interdisciplinary collaboration in the development of comparative approaches to the study of educational problems;
- facilitate cooperation between comparative educationists of different countries and regions, and foster the establishment of professional associations and groups of comparative educationists;
- support international programs in education and the agencies responsible for them, by focusing the attention of comparative research workers on the major problems encountered in these programmes;
- organise research projects for which there is a particular need; and
- improve the exchange of information about research and methodological developments in comparative education.

Over the decades, the WCCES has achieved these aims in multiple ways. During the early years the Council had a regular Bulletin and Newsletter, which in due course were replaced by a website. The WCCES has encouraged research through grants and organisation of professional meetings, and it has sponsored publication of various books. Most prominent among its activities has been the organisation of World Congresses, which in each case have been hosted by a WCCES constituent society. Table 0.1 lists the Congresses and their themes between 1970 and 2007. Various chapters in this book contain comments on the challenges of identifying appropriate hosts and locations for the Congresses. The authors also remark on the impact of the Congresses in the regions in which they have been held, and on the importance of the Congresses being held in different parts of the world.

Table 0.1: World Congresses of Comparative Education Societies

<i>No.</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Theme</i>
1.	1970	Ottawa, Canada	Education and the Formation of the Teaching Profession; Educational Aid to Developing Countries
2.	1974	Geneva, Switzerland	Efficiencies and Inefficiencies in Secondary Schools
3.	1977	London, United Kingdom	Unity and Diversity in Education
4.	1980	Tokyo, Japan	Tradition and Innovation in Education
5.	1984	Paris, France	Dependence and Interdependence in Education: The Role of Comparative Education
6.	1987	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	Education, Crisis and Change
7.	1989	Montreal, Canada	Development, Communication and Language
8.	1992	Prague, Czechoslovakia	Education and Democracy
9.	1996	Sydney, Australia	Tradition, Modernity and Postmodernity
10.	1998	Cape Town, South Africa	Education, Equity and Transformation
11.	2001	Chungbuk, Republic of Korea	New Challenges, New Paradigms: Moving Education into the 21 st Century
12.	2004	Havana, Cuba	Education and Social Justice
13.	2007	Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina	Living Together: Education and Intercultural Dialogue

At each World Congress, a General Assembly has brought together individual members of WCCES constituent societies. On each occasion WCCES officers have reported on the work of the WCCES during the years since the previous Assembly, and decisions have been taken if necessary on constitutional and other matters.

Between Assemblies, the WCCES has been managed by an Executive Committee comprising the Officers (President, two Vice Presidents, Secretary General, and Treasurer), which has met at least once a year. During the early years, the WCCES Presidency was linked to plans for forthcoming Congresses. Since approval of the 1996 Statutes, Presidents have been elected from among nominees identified by search committees. Since that time, the WCCES has also had two Vice Presidents, one being a nominee of the society which hosted the last Congress and the other being a nominee of the society due to host the next Congress. The Executive Committee has brought together the presidents or other representatives of all the member societies. By custom, the chairpersons of the standing committees have also been invited to Executive Committee meetings. In 2007, the standing committees were responsible for admissions and new societies; congresses; finance and fund-raising; publications; research; and special projects.

The WCCES Member Societies: What They Are and What They Do

The five societies that came together to form the Council in 1970 were the:

- Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) of the USA,
- Comparative Education Society in Europe (CESE),
- Japan Comparative Education Society (JCES),
- Comparative and International Education Society of Canada (CIESC), and
- Korean Comparative Education Society (KCES).

This list contains four national societies (for the USA, Japan, Canada and Korea), and one regional society (for Europe). Over the decades additional societies joined, and Table 0.2 lists the 36 societies which were members in February 2007.

Table 0.2: Member Societies of the WCCES

Asociación de Pedagogos de Cuba (Sección de Educación Comparada) (APC-SEC)
Association française pour le développement de l'éducation comparée et des échanges (AFDECE)
Association francophone d'éducation comparée (AFEC)
Australian and New Zealand Comparative and International Education Society (ANZCIES)
British Association for International and Comparative Education (BAICE)
Bulgarian Comparative Education Society (BCES)
Chinese Comparative Education Society (CCES)
Chinese Comparative Education Society-Taipei (CCES-T)
Comparative Education Section of the Czech Pedagogical Society (CES-CPS)
Comparative Education Society of Asia (CESA)
Comparative Education Society in Europe (CESE)
Comparative Education Society of Hong Kong (CESHK)
Comparative Education Society of India (CESI)
Comparative Education Society of the Philippines (CESP)
Comparative and International Education Society (CIES)
Comparative and International Education Society of Canada (CIESC)
Council on Comparative Education of Kazakhstan (CCEK)
Egyptian Comparative Education and Educational Administration Society (ECEEAS)
Greek Comparative Education Society (GCES)
Hungarian Pedagogic Society (Comparative Education Section) (HPS-CES)
Israel Comparative Education Society (ICES)
Japan Comparative Education Society (JCES)
Korean Comparative Education Society (KCES)
Mediterranean Society of Comparative Education (MESCE)
Nederlandstalig Genootschap voor Vergelijkende Studie van Opvoeding en Onderwijs (NGVO)
Nordic Comparative and International Education Society (NOCIES)

Polish Comparative Education Society (PCES)
Russian Council of Comparative Education (RCCE)
Sektion International und Interkulturell Vergleichende Erziehungswissenschaft in der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Erziehungswissenschaft (SIIVEDGE)
Sezione Italiana della CESE (SICESE)
Sociedad Argentina de Estudios Comparados en Educación (SAECE)
Sociedad Española de Educación Comparada (SEEC)
Sociedad Mexicana de Educación Comparada (SOMECE)
Sociedade Brasileira de Educação Comparada (SBEC)
Southern African Comparative & History of Education Society (SACHES)
Turkish Comparative Education Society (TCES)

The broad objectives of each of these societies resemble those for the WCCES. The societies exist to promote research in the field of comparative education, and to encourage dialogue among scholars in different parts of the world. As explained in various chapters in this book, some societies have additional objectives, such as contribution to policy making and to advocacy. Some societies are small, with fewer than a few dozen members; but others have memberships that reach into the thousands. While most WCCES members are independent societies, some are specialised sections within broader professional societies. Several societies run journals, and most organise periodic conferences. All have Comparative Education in their names, but five include the related field of International Education. One links educational administration with comparative education, another links history of education with comparative education, and a third includes intercultural education with comparative and international education.

In addition to the societies listed in Table 0.2, some bodies were created and joined the WCCES between 1970 and 2007 but subsequently ceased to function. The demise of comparative education societies is important to note alongside the birth of societies. Table 0.3 gives a chronological account of the birth (and demise) of the societies that have been members of the WCCES.

Table 0.3: Chronology of WCCES Member Societies

	1950-60	1960-70	1970-80	1980-90	1990-00	2000-07
Established:						
USA	Europe	Francophone	Italy	Bulgaria	Cuba	
	Czechoslovakia	Australia	Brazil	Greece	Philippines	
	Japan	Dutch-speaking	Russia	Poland	Mediterranean	
	UK	Chinese-Taipei	Hong Kong	Southern Africa	Mexico	
	West Germany	Spain	Egypt ¹	Asia	Argentina ²	
	Canada	China	Colombia	France (AFDECE)	Kazakhstan	
	South Korea	India	Hungary	Portugal	Egypt ²	
		London (LACE)	Nigeria	Nordic	Turkey	
	WCCES (1970)	Argentina ¹	Israel	Ukraine		
			Czech			
Ceased activities:						
	Czechoslovakia		London (LACE)	Colombia	Ukraine	
				Nigeria	Portugal	
				Egypt ¹		
				Argentina ¹		
Cumulative total (net)	7	16	25	30	36	
Other societies that expressed interest in joining WCCES but did not do so						
			Venezuela	Romania	Arab World	
				Albania		
				Panafrica		

Note: The table is based on year of foundation of societies, not of their joining the WCCES. Two national societies appeared to have become defunct, and were de-listed from the WCCES, but were replaced by new societies that were subsequently admitted. These are denoted with a numerical superscript, e.g. Argentina¹. LACE = London Association of Comparative Educationists.

Table 0.4 further classifies the 36 member societies existing at the beginning of 2007 by type and geographic coverage. Twenty eight were national (for example for China and Poland) or sub-national (for example for Hong

Kong). Six were regional (for example for Asia, Europe and the Mediterranean), and two were language-based (for speakers of French and Dutch). Classifying the societies by geography (and placing the language-based societies in the regions from which the societies were administered), the largest groups were in Europe and Asia. One society served Australia and New Zealand, but no society explicitly served other parts of the South Pacific. Africa was also poorly served, and only three societies served South America and the Caribbean.

Table 0.4: WCCES Member Societies by Region and Type

<i>Nature</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Region</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
National & sub-national	28	78%	Europe	16	44%
			Asia	11	31%
Regional	6	17%	North America	3	8%
Language-based	2	5%	South America & Caribbean	3	8%
<i>Total</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>100%</i>	Africa	2	6%
			Australasia	1	3%
			<i>Total</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>100%</i>

Note: This table shows the membership as of January 2007.

Table 0.5 lists the Presidents between 1970 and 2007. Table 0.5 also lists the Secretaries General, who have commonly provided continuity and institutional memory. Particularly to be noted in this respect is Raymond Ryba, who was Secretary General from 1983 to 1996. Following his death in 1999, Ryba's papers were transported to Toronto, Canada, where they were consulted by David Wilson and Vandra Masemann in preparation for this book. The papers were then sent to the WCCES archives at Kent State University, Ohio, USA, where they joined other documentation which was examined during the preparation of the book.

Table 0.5: WCCES Presidents and Secretaries General, 1970-2007

<i>Presidents</i>		<i>Secretaries General</i>	
Joseph Katz	1970-1974	Anne Hamori	1970-1978
Brian Holmes	1974-1977	Leo Fernig	1978-1982
Masunori Hiratsuka	1977-1980	Raymond Ryba	1983-1996
Erwin H. Epstein	1980-1983	Vandra Masemann	1996-2000
Michel Debeauvais	1983-1987	Mark Bray	2000-2005
Vandra Masemann	1987-1991	Christine Fox	2005-
Wolfgang Mitter	1991-1996		
David N. Wilson	1996-2001		
Anne Hickling-Hudson	2001-2004		
Mark Bray	2004-2007		

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