

## THE VIIth INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON THE HISTORY OF OCEANOGRAPHY

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The Seventh International Congress on the History of Oceanography took place in Kaliningrad (former Königsberg)/Russia between September 8–12, 2003. It was hosted by the Museum of the World Ocean. The main supporting organizations were the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation (Moscow), the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (Baltimore), the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, UNESCO (Paris), the Ministry for Industry, Science, and Technology of the Russian Federation (Moscow), the Russian Academy of Sciences (Moscow), the Administration of the Kaliningrad Region, the U.S. Office of Naval Research, International Field Office (London), the P.P. Shirshov Institute of Oceanology, RAS (Moscow), the All-Russia Research Institute for Geology and Mineral Resources of the World Ocean, RAS and RF MNR (St. Petersburg), JSC Marine Arctic Geological Expedition (Murmansk) and the Atlantic Scientific Research Institute of Marine Fisheries and Oceanography (Kaliningrad).

In Kaliningrad, situated at the Baltic Sea, more than 120 participants from 23 countries and representing 110 organizations joint the ICHO VII.

The Congress was preceded by a visit to the pavilion “Sperm-whale”, exhibition hall, R/V “VITYAZ”, R/V “KOSMONAVT VIKTOR PATSAEV” and Diesel-electric submarine B-413 (Project 641) owned by the Museum of the World Ocean.

The dry-cargo ship “Mars” was built in Schichau shipyard Bremerhaven / Germany. After various ownerships (Germany, UK, US) and users, and final transfer to the possession of the USSR (1946), between 1947–1949 she was re-equipped as R/V “Vityaz” (third) belonging to the USSR Academy of Sciences (port of registration Vladivostok). Between 1949–1979 “Vityaz” made 65 scientific cruises, sailed about 800,000 nautical miles, and called at 100 ports, becoming the flagship of the Soviet oceanographic research fleet (four times in the Guinness Book of Records). In 1979 “Vityaz” completed her last research expedition in the port of Kaliningrad. On April 12, 1990 as per the regulation of the RSFSR Government, the Museum of the World Ocean was organized in Kaliningrad and she became its major exhibit. On July 12, 1994 “Vityaz” was moored for good at the museum quay, and on November 23, 1994 the first visitors stepped on to the ship decks.

During the opening ceremony welcome speeches were expressed by the Admiral of the Russian Navy V.G. Yegorov, Dr. S. Morcos, Representative of the IOC-UNESCO, Prof. S.S. Lappo, Corresponding Member RAS, Director of P.P. Shirshov Institute of Oceanology, Moscow, Prof. E. Mills, Chairman, Commission of Oceanography of the International Union of History and Philosophy of Science, and Dr. A.S. Studenetskyi, Deputy Head of the Division of Earth Sciences and World Ocean, Ministry of Industry, Science and Technology, Russia.

In his speech, Prof. Mills solicited proposals to host ICHO VIII in a location adjacent to the World ocean in 2008.

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Through 120 oral presentations and 45 posters the participants emphasized the role that the history of oceanography plays in enriching modern oceanography with the knowledge of its deep historical and cultural past.

The ICHO VII Proceedings contain 200 abstracts or full papers grouped in the following sections:

- Foundation of oceanography,
- International collaboration in the research of the World Ocean,
- Marine organizations, research fleet,
- Prominent persons and Founders of the oceanographic science,
- Exploration and research of the polar regions of the ocean,
- Contribution of the Navy to the ocean studies, the “Cold War” and oceanography,
- Specialized research of the ocean: national contributions,
- Oceanographic education, scientific magazines, general ideas,
- History of oceanography in the Museum collections and expositions,
- Studies of the Baltic Sea.

The following special symposia have enriched the ICHO VII programme:

- the commencement of the systematic research of the ocean: the 150th anniversary of the Meteorological Conference in Brussels,
- the 200th anniversary of the First Russian Round-the-World expedition,
- Maritime Königsberg.

Two round-tables deserved considerable consideration too:

- the future of oceanography,
- legends of oceanography.

The location of ICHO VII in Kaliningrad provided an excellent and unique opportunity to illustrate the central role Russia has had in the development of modern oceanography; many contributions presented the history of the Russian achievements in the exploration and investigation of the World Ocean, the role of the Russian explorers in the investigations of the Arctic Ocean and its seas, the importance of the Russian research vessels, including submarines in international oceanographic ventures, etc.

The participants, through their historical reflections, have illustrated the central importance of the World Ocean for mankind; they noted the continued need for increased international collaboration to investigate the World Ocean in the twenty-first century to ensure careful stewardship of all mankind over the world’s most valuable resources.

The reports about the international collaboration in the investigation of the Mediterranean, Black and Caspian Seas and the South Ocean aroused a lot of interest.

Also worth mentioning is the mid-congress excursion to the Baltic Sea coast, namely to Yantarny – the Earth’s largest amber-field, Svetlagorsk – national health resort, and the Curonian peninsula a unique natural park (protected by UNESCO).

The undersigned represented Romania in the second section with the contribution “International collaboration in the research of the Black Sea”, and offered to the Museum of the World Ocean the volumes 32–33 / 2000 of *Cercetări marine - Recherches marines* (Historie des recherches marines roumaines en mer Noire) and *Cinci luni în Oceanul Indian* by E.A. Pora, for R/V “Vityaz” library/exhibition.