The Catalan Society of Mathematics: from 1986 until 1998

The Catalan Society of Mathematics (SCM) was founded in 1986, as a result of the split of the larger Society of Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics (SCCFQM). However, the Mathematical Division of this society was quite independent long before. In order to understand the history of the Society between 1986 and 1998, some words on the period immediately before 1986 is firstly presented.

On the 26th October 1978, a Committee of the Division was elected. Manuel Castellet was the president and Joan Girbau and Manuel Udina, who was later replaced by Eduard Recasens, were members. The aim of the Committee was to renew the Division and to increase the number of members: this rose from 28 in 1978 to 257 in 1982. In the same period, the Journal of the Division, which comprised both non-specialist papers and information on mathematical-related activities all around the world (conferences, workshops, etc.), was published for the first time. Although it lacked a satisfactory presentation, like that of current journals, it was aimed at a general readership, and was regularly published and so favoured the promotion of the Mathematical Division. In that period, 13 issues came out, a book on the development of Mathematics in the 19th century was published, 25 conferences and the VII Hispanic-Lusitanian Journeys of Mathematics were held and reciprocity agreements with Mathematical Societies from other countries were established by the Division, which also took charge of the annual Mathematical Olympiad in Catalonia.

On the 12th November 1982, a new Committee was elected, presided by Julià Cufi and formed by Carles Perelló, Josep Lluís Solé, who was later replaced by Jordi Deulofeu, Enric Nart and Jaume Aguadé. The presentation and the content of the Journal improved notably. The number of activities (conferences and short courses) remained the same, while the number of members continued increasing (although more slowly), reaching 303 in June 1983. The most relevant activity organised during this period was the *Non-standard Analysis* course by professor G.Reeb from Strasbourg, in November 1983.

In June 1986, a new Committee was elected, with Joan Girbau as president and Carles Perelló and Victoria Corberó as members. The split of the four Divisions of the SCCQFM had already started but did not culminate until the 7th October 1986, when the statutes of the new societies were provisionally accepted by the Secció de Ciències de l'Institut. This was the formal beginning of the Catalan Society of Mathematics (October 1986). As the old name of the Journal had to be replaced by The Journal of the SCM, the opportunity was taken to modify and improve the format and the typography at the same time. Between 1986 and 1990, 5 issues were published.

Carles Perelló was the main artificer of the new Journal. However, the expense of publishing, together with the troubles of the IEC treasury, prevented the Journal from being published regularly. Thus, the Committee had to look for a cheaper procedure. For the first two issues, the articles delivered at the printing house had been typed as usual. Thereafter, the original papers were TEX-typed by specialised staff. This allowed the delivery of a totally finished, high-quality journal which only had to be copied. The technical problems involved in the TEX processor were satisfactorily solved by Jordi Saludes, who, like most of the staff of the Journal, worked voluntarily. We would like to point out that the Society has always been based on the voluntary contribution of many dedicated people.

In April 1990, an extra issue containing the name and address of each member, 391 in total, was published. The conferences and the Mathematical Olympiad aside, several short courses were organised for teachers of secondary education called Mathematics within reach, which became very popular. Among these short courses, we could name the following: Chaos, an ordered dynamics; Hypotheses tests and Design of experiments; Basic astronomy; Lineal and non-lineal optimisation and Geometry from an axiomatic point of view. Most of the texts were published in the Journal. A series of conferences called Algorithmic Theory of information, by Professor G,J.Chaiting from the IBM Research Division, focused on a very specific area of growing interest.

On the 27th November 1990, the new Committee was elected, with Joan Girbau, Antoni Gomà and Josep Pla, presided by Josep Vaquer. Between 1990 and 1994, 5 issues of the Journal came out. In 1994, a book of more than 600 pages collecting the complete works of Pere Menal (who died in 1991) was published. We would like to point out that during the same period, the SCM joined the recently created European Society of Mathematics and presented its candidature for the organisation of the European Congress of Mathematics in 1996, which was finally granted to Budapest. However, that candidature enabled Barcelona to be chosen to host the following Congress, in 2000.

Among all the activities of the Society, we should emphasise the following round tables: Mathematicians and mathematics in the labour world (March 1992) and Forum of problems, meant for the teachers of secondary education but

also open to students (May-March 1993 and November 1993-April 1994) and several courses: The Universe of Tarski, Axiomatic Geometry and Temporary series. In 1994, several meetings for the preparation of the Mathematical Olympiad were held with the help of some teachers (Lluis Babiloni, Josep Grané, Griselda Pascual, Pelegrí Viader and Sebastià Xambó. In December, there were 433 members.

In February 1995, a new Committee was elected, with Sebastia Xambó as president and Claudi Aguadé, Jaume Aguadé, Antoni Gomà, Josep Grané, Xavier Martínez Albéniz, Joaquim Ortega, Josep Pla, Anna Pol and Pelegrí Viader as members. This Committee totally supported the candidature of Barcelona presented by their predecessors and canvassed support from among the members of the Executive Committee of the European Mathematical Society (EMS) .After overcoming much resistence, Barcelona defeated Brighton, Copenhagen and Turin on the 215t July 1996 in Budapest, with the following results: Barcelona, 36 votes; Copenhagen, 7 votes and Brighton, 13 votes (Turin had retired).

In order to distinguish between the usual activities and the organisation of the European Congress (hereafter referred to as ECM-2000), the Committee of the Society elected the Executive Committee of ECM-2000, which is responsible for the above mentioned organisation, and defined its statutes. This Executive Committee was formed as follows: Sebastià Xambó (UPC), president; Marta Sanz (UB), secretary of organisation; Julià Cufí (UAB), in charge of economy; Carles Casacuberta (UAB), information and communication; Marta Valencia (UPC), infrastructure and Rosa Miró (UB), activities and programming. On the 29th April 1997, a broader Organising Committee of the ECM-2000 was elected so that the whole local mathematical community could be involved.

Between 1995 and 1998, the following items were published: 4 volumes of the Journal; 9 issues (0– 8) of a new magazine called SCM/News; a Catalan version of the Disquisitiones Mathematicae of Gauss by Griselda Pascual; a biography of the mathematician Ferran Sunyer i Balaguer by Antoni Malet, with the co-operation of the Catalan Society of History of the Science and the Technique, and finally, the training sessions for the Mathematical Olympiad by Joseph Grain.

Among the rest of activities, we would like to emphasise the Mathematical Olympiad and the training sessions led by Josep Grané. Since the Olympiad is traditionally meant for an elite, the Society decided to organise an annual problems contest called Kangaroo in 1996, which became very popular, in order to make mathematics available to many more students. Short courses and conferences are still being organised. Among the former, there are several outstanding titles: Scientific typography, by José Luis Ruiz, Jordi Saludes and Gabriel Valiente; Internet, by Jordi Saludes; Geometric Cabri, by Xavier Valls and Lluís Babiloni and Statistical bases and use of the programme Minitab, by Antoni Gomà.

Finally, we would note that there were 575 members in 1995 and that this number increased to 869 in 1998.

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