

To inform or govern? 150 years of the *International Review of the Red Cross*, 1869–2019

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Abstract

The International Review of the Red Cross (formerly the Bulletin Internationale des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés) is celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2019, making it the oldest of the general publications produced by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Originally created as a communication tool for the entire International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the Review rapidly changed its course to become first the primary mouthpiece of the ICRC for many years, and finally an academic journal. This article will retrace the history of this evolution, during which, under cover of humanitarianism, political factors played a significant role.

Keywords: International Review of the Red Cross, *Bulletin Internationale des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, information, publications.

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“To read it is to become aware. To circulate it is a good deed.”¹ These were the words chosen by International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) president Marcel A. Naville in October 1969, as he paid homage to the oldest of the ICRC’s publications. The first issue of the *Bulletin Internationale des Sociétés de Secours*

* The views expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

*aux Militaires Blessés Publié par le Comité International*² had been published 100 years previously, on 22 or 23 October 1869.³ Born simultaneously with what we now call international humanitarian law (IHL), the *Bulletin* – and from 1919 onwards, the *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge* (*International Review of the Red Cross* since 1961) – is the oldest journal specializing in the field. At its inception, however, this periodical was not meant to follow and study the development of a new branch of law that aimed to “humanize” warfare. Like several other journals of the time, the *Bulletin* was intended to “be like the ‘official gazette’ of the Movement as a whole”.⁴ It may therefore seem surprising that this publication has made the transition from a Red Cross newsletter to an academic journal functioning as a think tank on humanitarian matters – and on IHL in particular. This transformation, which took place progressively over several decades, was possible only because the ICRC played a distinctive role, far beyond what was normally expected of a “mere” editor. For the first time, this article will attempt to explore this via the hidden underpinnings of the *Review*.⁵

A difficult birth

“Is it desirable to found an international journal of the Relief Societies?” This question appeared on the agenda of the very first International Conference of the Red Cross (International Conference), held in Paris in August 1867⁶ at the margins of the International Exposition. It is true that the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (the Movement) had expanded considerably since its birth in 1863–64. Some twenty States – including the great European powers – had already signed up to the 1864 Geneva Convention and founded national societies for the relief of wounded soldiers, the forerunners of today’s National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies).⁷ But this was not enough. The more the charitable movement expanded, the more it needed to become known. There was

- 1 Marcel A. Naville, “The Centenary of our Publication”, *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, Vol. 9, No. 103, 1969, p. 520 (*Review*’s translation). This article shall refer to the French-only *Revue* and its 1948–61 English supplement by the French title, reserving *International Review of the Red Cross* for the English edition that first appeared in 1961.
- 2 Here, “Comité” refers to the Comité International de Secours aux Militaires Blessés (International Committee for the Relief of Wounded Soldiers), the name by which the ICRC was known until December 1875.
- 3 The exact date of the first issue is unknown. In a letter, publisher Georg in Geneva mentions having received copies of the *Bulletin* on 22 October: see ICRC Archives (ICRCA), A AF 16, 2/202. The ICRC gives the date of 23 October: see “Compte des débiteurs pour annonces”, ICRCA, A AF 47, *Registre des abonnés au Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*.
- 4 “Aux abonnés du Bulletin”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 5, No. 20, 1874, p. 193.
- 5 This article cannot possibly deal with all the problems that one might associate with the history of the *Review*. For instance, it shall not address issues such as how the readership received or receives the publication, or the journal’s ability to influence the debate on IHL.
- 6 ICRC, *Conférences internationales à Paris: Sociétés de secours aux militaires des armées de terre et de mer*, Paris, Commission Générale des Délégués, 1867, p. XII.
- 7 *Mémorial des vingt-cinq premières années de la Croix-Rouge 1863–1888 publié par le Comité international à Genève*, Imprimerie B. Soullier, Geneva, 1888, pp. 284, 290–291.

therefore a constant need for what was then called “agitation” among the general population.⁸ At a time when the written word reigned supreme (and, indeed, alone), setting up a publication seemed the most logical way to achieve this.

Reading the minutes of the International Conference, it becomes apparent that the question was somewhat ambiguous. In fact, the initial idea was not to publish one single journal for all the relief societies, but rather for each of them to produce its own publication in an *ad hoc* manner. Some (France, Belgium, Prussia) had already done so,⁹ “but this is no longer sufficient for the European, international or national movement”.¹⁰ Happily for the very existence of the future *Review*, this interpretation of the question was abandoned in favour of discussion on an international journal “in several languages, [which] would inform the friends of the movement, in every country, of the progress that it achieved”.¹¹ All that remained was to decide who would be in charge of the new publication. But this simple point, which at first appeared to be purely practical in nature, would reveal itself to be problematic. In addition to the purely practical aspects was a geopolitical issue. Logically, a global journal should be published by a supra-national organization. The only such organization in existence at that time was the International Committee for the Relief of Wounded Soldiers, which had founded the Movement but had its seat in Geneva and was composed entirely of Genevan citizens. That point was a source of controversy during the debates of the Third Commission of the International Conference. The first shot was fired by one of the members of the central committee of the French relief society, Count Félix of Bréda, who claimed that the “international” Committee in Geneva, as it existed since 1863, was international in name only, due to the mono-nationality of its members. Furthermore, its status was not carved in stone as, for the time being, the Committee was merely a provisional body and existed only in the absence of a better option. The International Committee of Geneva, aware of its ephemeral character, had suggested that the International Conference reflect upon its “complete reorganization”¹² – all while advocating permanent status for the existing Genevan organization,¹³ supplemented by foreign members. The Count of Bréda held a very different opinion on this point,

8 At the time, the word “agitation” was more commonly used in its sense of “arousing public concern about an issue and pressing for action on it” than it is today.

9 ICRC, above note 6, p. XIV.

10 *Ibid.*, Work of the Third Section, Eighth Session, undated, report by Huber-Saladin, p. 42.

11 *Ibid.*, Seventh Session, 22 June 1867, p. 26.

12 *Ibid.*, Second Part, First Session, 26 August 1867, p. 21.

13 Moynier wished to add “a certain number of foreign members” to the Geneva Committee. However, he stated that “this international element should be attached to the Geneva Committee that founded the work, as otherwise its members would be excluded from active participation in that which has been their constant concern for over four years”. “Proposition relative à la création d’un conseil supérieur de l’œuvre internationale des secours aux militaires blessés, adressée par le Comité genevois fondateur de l’œuvre aux membres de la Conférence de Paris”, August 1867, ICRC, A AF 21/14, p. 7. The Geneva Committee would form an “executive committee that would recruit its own members and would distribute among its members the functions of president, vice-president and secretary, ... in view of the difficulty of having these persons chosen by electors scattered across the entire world.” *Ibid.*, pp. 9, 7.

maintaining that no international committee of the Movement could be located in a provincial town belonging to a State that played only a marginal role on the political chessboard. The conclusion was self-evident: Paris, international city *par excellence*, rich in resources of every kind and city of international diplomacy, must be the seat of a brand-new, authentically international committee. And Paris therefore was the city in which the international Red Cross journal should be published.¹⁴ This proposal was met with scepticism from the other members of the Commission,¹⁵ including members of the French central committee. Huber-Saladin, for instance, maintained that on the contrary, “Geneva, by all reports, ... appears to be the more preferable city”¹⁶ and that “an international journal published in Geneva [would be] one of the consequences generally recognized as inevitable of the necessary reorganization [of the International Committee]”.¹⁷ So alongside a welcome crop of new national publications, he wished to see the “creation of an international journal, the organ of the International Committee of Geneva”, simultaneously settling the question of the Committee’s location.¹⁸ Count Bréda did attempt to turn the opinion of the Commission in his favour by presenting a new report – this time more aggressive towards Geneva and Switzerland¹⁹ – but his attempt failed and the Commission decided in favour of Geneva.²⁰ To spare the feelings of certain French representatives, the International Conference decided in a vote held on 30 August 1867²¹ to both retain an International Committee in Geneva and set up an International Sub-Committee in Paris, which was intended to become “a kind of museum, a permanent exhibition of everything related to the relief societies; a type of repository”.²² The question of the journal remained unresolved, as there were those who continued to believe that “founding an international journal was hardly possible except in Paris”.²³

The following day, when he spoke on this question on behalf of the ICRC, its president Gustave Moynier was only partly reassured, because while an International Committee – of which the details remained to be clarified – was now certain to remain in Geneva, and a “Geneva Committee”²⁴ would continue

14 Véronique Harouel, *Genève-Paris, 1863–1918: Le droit humanitaire en construction*, Henry Dunant Society, ICRC and French Red Cross, Geneva, 2003, pp. 250–251.

15 “The members of the section accept the practical side of this report, but are not entirely in agreement with the ideas expressed therein concerning the choice of a city other than Geneva as headquarters of an international committee.” ICRC, above note 6, Work of the Third Section, Seventh Session, 22 June 1867, pp. 37–38.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 38.

17 *Ibid.*, Eighth Session, undated, p. 48.

18 *Ibid.*, p. 51.

19 “Original du rapport fait par le Comte de Bréda à la Conférence de Paris (1867) sur le choix de la ville qui devra être le siège du Comité international”, ICRC, A AF 6, 1/110.

20 “The geographical location of this city, the political neutrality of Switzerland to which it belongs, historical tradition and conscience of a duty towards the founders of the movement, would appear to have been the deciding factors.” ICRC, above note 6, Second Part, Sixth Session, 30 August 1867, p. 184.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 190.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 188.

23 *Ibid.*

24 This committee was intended to act as an “executive committee and to run the day-to-day affairs” of the ICRC. *Ibid.*, Seventh Session, 31 August 1867, p. 257.

to exist and to direct the Movement,²⁵ as he had hoped, it did not necessarily follow that the Committee would be running the future international publication. He therefore expressed himself in terms that he hoped would promote unity: “Publishing a journal on our own would be a weighty matter for us. Clearly, all the committees would need to work together. It would not be our journal – it would be the journal of all.”²⁶ And all would have to put their hands in their pockets, because as a good Genevan banker, Moynier immediately raised this “very prosaic” issue: “To establish an international journal, it must be collectively supported by all. ... We [the International Committee] could perhaps support the journal for one year or two, but not more... our resources would of course be limited.”²⁷ Clearly, the ICRC wished to control the journal, but at the same time it did not wish to bear the cost on its own.

The Conference did not take a final decision on this point, nor on the reorganization of the International Committee, leaving Geneva to sound out the National Societies on the subject. Moynier quickly did so, sending a circular to interested parties on 21 September 1867.²⁸ The question of the international journal “published in Geneva, in French”, appeared, particularly in terms of its budget. The circular closed with a questionnaire that, among other things, asked the National Societies if the International Committee should publish a journal and, if so, to what extent they were prepared to finance it.

The response was mixed. While the majority of the central committees accepted the idea of a journal, their financial contributions would be limited, and fell far short of the 4,000 Swiss francs that Moynier had budgeted to produce a monthly journal with a circulation of 500 copies.²⁹ Furthermore, the place of publication was still controversial, with the French central committee – supported by that of Belgium – accepting such a publication “on the condition that it be published in Paris”.³⁰ The idea was to link the presence of a journal to that of the Red Cross museum planned for the French capital. In the report on his survey that he sent to the National Societies in June 1868, the ICRC president noted that “it’s therefore between Paris and Geneva that the choice must be made”.³¹ In an effort to tip the balance, Moynier mentioned that the Third Commission of the Paris Conference had offered the management of the journal to the International Committee, and hence to Geneva. He also suggested – inaccurately – that the Conference itself had been in favour of this.³² His remaining arguments are a

25 “Comité international (avec les membres étrangers déjà désignés par plusieurs Comités centraux à la suite de la circulaire du 21 septembre 1867”, ICRC, A AF 21/11.

26 ICRC, above note 6, Second Part, Seventh Session, 31 August 1867, p. 243.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 244.

28 “Le Comité international de secours aux militaires blessés à MM. les Présidents et les Membres des Comités centraux dans les divers pays, 9^e circulaire, Genève 21 septembre 1867”, ICRC, A AF 48/2.

29 Moynier carried out complex calculations to determine the share that each National Society should pay. ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 30 November 1867.

30 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 1 February 1868.

31 “Mémoire adressé par le Comité international de secours pour les militaires blessés à MM. les Présidents et les membres des Comités centraux dans les divers pays”, Imprimerie Soullier, Landskron & Wirth, Geneva, 20 June 1868, p. 12.

32 *Ibid.*

subtle mix of hypocritical false modesty (“If we are considered more qualified than others to do this work, we shall endeavour, out of devotion to the movement, to prove ourselves worthy of the confidence shown in us, but we wish to state that we would not solicit [the production of the journal] in any manner whatsoever”)³³ and a vigorous rejection of the arguments in favour of producing the journal in Paris, especially given that “those in favour of Geneva ... meet with hardly any objection”.³⁴ To conclude, however, Moynier left it to the forthcoming International Conference in Berlin to decide the matter.

The Conference agreed with the Geneva Committee on every point. Not only was the idea of an international museum in Paris abandoned – cutting the legs out from under any argument in favour of publishing an international journal in that city – but the “International Committee of Geneva”, in its original and hence exclusively Genevan form, was tasked with editing a “literary publication that will link the central Committees of the various countries and bring to their attention official or other information of which they should be aware”. Indeed, the ICRC had achieved total victory, as this publication was to be produced “without its members incurring any costs”.³⁵

The *Bulletin International*

Riding on its success in Berlin, the ICRC immediately got to work. The minutes show that the question of the journal was raised at every meeting of the Committee from May 1869 onwards. The title of *Bulletin International* was first mentioned at the meeting of 29 May 1869. This title was certainly suggested by Moynier himself, following discussions with the president of the French central committee, Count Sérurier.³⁶ However, it does appear that the ICRC would have liked to have changed the title before the first issue was published. This point is mentioned by two indirect sources: a letter from a regular contact of the ICRC – Théodore Vernes d’Arlandes, a Genevan citizen living in Paris – and an entry in the minutes of the Committee. On 9 October 1869, Vernes wrote:

The more I reflect on the title of your Bulletin, the more I am persuaded that it will not be favorably received. In France, as you know, red is very much the colour of revolution. ... I do not see why you need such a title. I should have understood it more readily if this were a daily newspaper for popular consumption, to be sold on the street.³⁷

33 *Ibid.*, p. 13.

34 *Ibid.*

35 *Compte rendu des travaux de la Conférence internationale tenue à Berlin du 22 au 27 avril 1869 par les délégués des gouvernements signataires de la Convention de Genève et des Sociétés et Associations de secours aux militaires blessés et malades*, Imprimerie J. F. Starcke, Berlin, 1869, p. 225.

36 Letter from Sérurier to Moynier, 14 June 1869, ICRC, A AF 6, 1/181.

37 Letter from Vernes d’Arlandes to Moynier, 9 October 1869, ICRC, A AF 16, 2/200.

The title in question was *Bulletin International de la Croix-Rouge*, but this was abandoned in favour of *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours pour les Militaires Blessés* (*International Bulletin of Societies for the Relief of Wounded Soldiers*).³⁸

On 15 June 1869, the ICRC officially announced the launch of the periodical to the central committees.³⁹ The *Bulletin* was to be published every three months, starting in October 1869. For the first, trial year, the annual subscription was set at 6 francs.⁴⁰ Surprisingly, the ICRC decided to cover the entire cost of the publication, merely encouraging the National Societies to take out subscriptions. It stated:

If the income from subscriptions should prove insufficient to cover the costs, then it will be time for the International Committee to inform the central committees and to request them, on the basis of the resolutions of the Berlin Conference, to furnish such pecuniary assistance as it might require.⁴¹

The ICRC had done its sums. Assuming 500 subscribers, “which are more or less already assured”, it even hoped to make “a profit of 800 francs per year, to cover any unexpected costs”.⁴² These figures proved too optimistic, however – on the eve of publication of the first issue, only half the subscriptions necessary to cover the costs had been received.⁴³ To publicize the new publication, the ICRC decided to print 1,000 copies of the first issue. These were distributed to various contacts and each copy was accompanied by a circular tasking the central committees, in particular, with spreading “propaganda in favour of the *Bulletin*, so as to generate subscribers”.⁴⁴ Perhaps following this appeal, the number of subscribers rose steadily, to 376 in November 1869, 450 in December and 491 in March 1870. To augment the number of subscribers, the first editor of the *Bulletin* mentioned by name, Auguste Bost, was even promised a bonus of 3 francs for each new subscription he acquired.⁴⁵ The first two years of the *Bulletin* yielded a profit of 1,700 francs,⁴⁶ but this positive trend was not to last. In 1874, not only was the number of copies reduced, but there was also a drop in the number of subscribers: 427 in February 1874 and only 397 in January 1878.⁴⁷ The budget remained balanced, however, as the cost of producing the *Bulletin*

38 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 18 October 1869. It took the subtitle *Bulletin de la Croix-Rouge* in January 1876 (Vol. 7, No. 25).

39 “A Messieurs les Présidents et les Membres des Comités centraux dans les divers pays”, 15 June 1869, ICRC, A AF 21/6.

40 *Ibid.*, p. 3.

41 *Ibid.*, p. 4.

42 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 5 June 1869.

43 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 5 October 1869.

44 “A Messieurs les Présidents et les Membres des Comités centraux dans les divers pays”, Circular No. 19, 19 October 1869, p. 3, ICRC, A AF 48/2.

45 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 30 August 1871.

46 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 23 August 1871.

47 “Le Bulletin international”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 9, No. 33, January 1878, p. 4.

corresponded exactly to income from subscriptions.⁴⁸ The ICRC's accounts reveal that from this point onwards, the periodical's revenue came not only from subscriptions but also, and indeed primarily, from the sale of older issues and complete collections. We may therefore suppose that in a good year, new issues of the *Bulletin* yielded no more than a small profit,⁴⁹ and that in the bad years, such as 1879, its publication cost considerably more than it brought in.⁵⁰

From 1903 onwards, the (separate) account of the *Bulletin* steadily decreased. To make matters worse, in 1908 it lost the exemption from postal charges that it had enjoyed when it was launched.⁵¹ It does not appear that there were ever enough subscribers to cover the publication cost on their own.⁵² Furthermore, the ICRC had long been aware of the fact that "the *Bulletin* is not sufficiently widely distributed", and it took a number of measures to remedy this situation over the years. General reminders of the *Bulletin*'s existence – such as that of September 1871⁵³ – were followed by targeted approaches to Red Cross branches,⁵⁴ authors, publishers and booksellers offering new publications about the Movement. The latter were offered the opportunity to advertise publications in the *Bulletin* free of charge.⁵⁵ ICRC members were themselves sometimes asked to help acquire new readers,⁵⁶ but with mixed results.⁵⁷ This difficult situation prompted the vice-presidents of the Ninth International Conference – spontaneously or otherwise⁵⁸ – to ask that all National Societies "serve to assist in the publication and dissemination of the International Committee's *Bulletin* ... by taking out a larger number of subscriptions, in proportion to their means".⁵⁹ The Conference adopted this proposal unanimously, without discussion.⁶⁰ Following this move, the ICRC noted with satisfaction that "several committees have increased the number of their subscriptions", the American central committee alone having taken out 200.⁶¹ On the eve of the First World War, the

48 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 11 February 1874. It is also worth noting that the ICRC supplied the *Bulletin* free of charge in exchange for foreign journals or publications.

49 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 17 January 1882.

50 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 7 February 1879.

51 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 1 June 1908.

52 In 1876, for instance, there were only 276. ICRC, A AF 21/5.

53 "Bulletin international des Sociétés de secours aux militaires blessés", 20 September 1871, ICRC, A AF 21/5.

54 "Monsieur le Président et messieurs les membres du Comité de secours aux militaires blessés", 30 April 1875, ICRC, A AF 21/5.

55 "Bulletin international de la Croix-Rouge", 8 December 1877, ICRC, A AF 21/5.

56 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 19 May 1905.

57 The October 1905 issue of the *Bulletin* was sent out free of charge to a list of some 150 persons, but this marketing operation yielded only five new subscribers. ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 20 November 1905.

58 The proposal came from the Italian vice-president, Count della Somaglia. However, the chairman of the session during which he made his recommendation was none other than the president of the ICRC, Gustave Ador. One might therefore be inclined to doubt the spontaneous nature of the Italian request.

59 *Neuvième conférence internationale de la Croix-Rouge tenue à Washington du 7 au 17 mai 1912: Compte rendu*, American Red Cross, Washington, DC, 1912, p. 242.

60 This became the ninth resolution of the conference. *Ibid.*, p. 319.

61 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 5 July 1912. The Italian Red Cross increased its subscription six-fold: ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 2 July 1913.

Bulletin – which had officially borne the title of *Bulletin International des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge* since January 1886⁶² – counted 635 paying subscribers.⁶³

The contents of the Bulletin

In theory, the contents of the *Bulletin* should not have presented any problems. The ICRC had drawn up a reasonably complete summary in its September 1867 circular. The articles published were to cover

announcements that the International Committee or National Committees wished to bring to the attention of all members of the movement, information on the work carried out by the various Committees, be they in time of peace or time of war, bibliographical information concerning reports, notes, theses, letters, etc. on questions concerning the course and progress of the movement and communications of any sort bearing on the object of our work.⁶⁴

In summary, the *Bulletin* was to be “a collection that centralized all important information – historical, administrative, technical, bibliographical, etc., and that was sufficiently complete to keep its readers informed of all matters that could be of interest to the members of our associations”.⁶⁵ This programme had been approved by the Second International Conference, in Berlin, which had also specified that space could be reserved for “announcements or reviews of special publications, devices or inventions related to the relief of sick or wounded soldiers”.⁶⁶ In other words, to offset some of its costs, the *Bulletin* could sell advertising space.⁶⁷

The ICRC was therefore to occupy only a minimal space in the future publication. It would be the task of the national committees to supply the journal with information and articles. The Geneva Committee would merely “encourage their production, gather them together, coordinate them and publish them”.⁶⁸ At most, the ICRC could “if needed” supplement information received with “its own information”.⁶⁹ This was indeed the policy followed in the first three issues of the *Bulletin*. However, the fourth issue brought the first departure from this policy, which, according to the ICRC, offered a solid guarantee of impartiality. In that issue, under the seemingly innocent title of “Du double caractère, national et

62 “How the ‘Bulletin International’ Started”, *International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 9, No. 103, 1969, p. 534.

63 Author’s calculations, made on the basis of the subscription book for 1912–18, ICRC, A AF 47. In total, 750 individuals and organizations were receiving the periodical before the First World War. ICRC, A AF, Commission de Direction de l’Agence, meeting of 26 November 1918. After the First World War, this figure fell to 550.

64 “Le Comité international”, above note 28, p. 2.

65 “Mémoire adressé par le Comité international”, above note 31, pp. 11–12.

66 *Compte rendu des travaux*, above note 35, pp. 225–226.

67 The ICRC stated that an advertising form would be included with each issue. “A Messieurs les Présidents”, above note 39, p. 3.

68 “Mémoire adressé par le Comité international”, above note 31, p. 14.

69 “A Messieurs les Présidents”, above note 39, p. 2.

international, des sociétés de secours” (“On the Double Character, National and International, of Relief Societies”), the Geneva-based institution responded once and for all to criticism – from France in particular – regarding its international nature. “The existence of what is called an *international* committee in Geneva may indeed lead to differences of opinion on this point [the national character of all the relief societies]”, it wrote; “However, the term is appropriate, as its concerns are global.”⁷⁰ Thus did Moynier – for it was he that authored this article – attempt to neatly close the debate on the internationalization of the ICRC.

Far from being a simple informational periodical, the *Bulletin* also became a forum for debate where Geneva presented its ideas – or rather, those of its president. From 1872 onwards, it served as a platform for Gustave Moynier, ensuring “wide publicity”⁷¹ for his writings.⁷² Some of these, such as that concerning the creation of an international judicial body to prevent and punish breaches of the Geneva Convention,⁷³ had no more than an indirect connection with the work of the Red Cross – a point that earned the ICRC a sharp reproach from the French Red Cross.⁷⁴ There continued to be no love lost between Paris and Geneva, the former accusing the latter of denigrating it via articles published in the *Bulletin*. The ICRC replied that the French central committee “had no right to complain if we publish articles that are contrary to its view”.⁷⁵ When the Eastern Crisis erupted (1875–78), the *Bulletin* began to publish a new category of content: denunciations (and counter-denunciations) of breaches of the Geneva Convention and of failure to respect the protective emblem. The *Bulletin* published the various accusations, sometimes in gruesome detail, with “the greatest impartiality”.⁷⁶ Despite all claims of impartiality, however, the ICRC often expressed its own opinion in the comments that it printed alongside these pieces. And from an anthropological perspective, the ICRC’s opinion was not especially favourable to “the Other”. During the Eastern Crisis, for instance, the Turks were accused of the worst cruelty towards unarmed enemies and persons wearing the red cross emblem. In the view of the ICRC, the “source of evil” was to be found in “the religious antagonism between Muslims and Christians, or rather the inveterate hatred of Muslims for Christians.”⁷⁷

70 “Du double caractère, national et international, des sociétés de secours”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1870, p. 161.

71 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 12 January 1872.

72 The *Bulletin* of July 1873 (Vol. 4, No. 16), for example, was dedicated entirely to a historical article by Moynier on the tenth anniversary of the Red Cross. See also Vol. 32, No. 126 of April 1901, in which Moynier set out the rules for recognition of new National Societies.

73 *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 3, No. 11, 1872.

74 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 1 October 1877. The Russian Red Cross maintained that this was a “matter of international politics, to which the solution was entirely in the hands of the governments”. Letter from the St Petersburg Committee to General Dufour, 29 April 1872, ICRC, A AF 15, 2/83.

75 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 31 July 1872.

76 “La Convention de Genève pendant la Guerre d’Orient”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 8, No. 32, 1877, p. 156.

77 “Les destinées de la Convention de Genève pendant la guerre de Serbie”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 7, No. 28, 1876, p. 174.

Muslims were not the only group to find themselves the targets of harsh comments in the *Bulletin*. “Negroes” were judged to be “too savage” to be associated with the humanitarian ideas that underpinned the movement.⁷⁸ The Boers were accused of being “semi-barbarians” until the *Bulletin* revised its opinion during the First Boer War.⁷⁹ The Japanese were described as a “pagan nation”⁸⁰ and the Chinese as insufficiently civilized to sign the Geneva Convention.⁸¹ These stereotypes remind us that the *Bulletin* was a contemporary of European colonialism, and its Genevan editors shared the racist ideology of that movement, sometimes to the point of making totally inappropriate statements. During the “reconquest” of Sudan, for example, the *Bulletin* maintained that “finishing off the wounded was almost necessary during the war against the Dervishes”.⁸² The Congo of King Leopold was another such case. The Congo “Free” State had ratified the Geneva Convention and had even set up a National Red Cross Society. Despite this status – unique in Africa at that time – the Congo Free State remained a colony, and it was run with such brutality as to provoke a massive international campaign at the end of the nineteenth century. Even so, as late as 1903, after reminding the reader of “the excessive and inveterate savagery of the Negroes”, the *Bulletin* opined that “the example and the education that the Belgians are giving to their African wards will no doubt have a long-term effect on their ideas and will gradually turn them into civilized people”.⁸³ The author of these words was none other than Gustave Moynier, unconditional admirer of Belgian colonialism and even the consul of the Congo Free State in Switzerland.

The *Bulletin*’s statements did not stop at promoting a Eurocentric, Judaeo-Christian view of the world, or the benefits of the white man’s “civilization”. On occasion, the *Bulletin* strayed into clearly political territory, which clashed with the “proper neutrality and absolute impartiality”⁸⁴ of which it claimed to be the messenger. This was particularly apparent during the First World War. While the ICRC showed no real preference for one side or the other during the first few months of the war, that all changed in spring 1915, when the German Occupying Power dissolved the central committee of the Belgian Red Cross. In a state of

78 “La Croix Rouge chez les Nègres”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 11, No. 41, 1880, p. 5.

79 “Les insurrections dans l’Afrique australe”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 12, No. 46, 1881, p. 53.

80 “Le Japon et la convention de Genève”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 8, No. 29, 1877, p. 3.

81 “La Chine et la croix rouge”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 13, No. 49, 1882, p. 37.

82 “Les blessés de la bataille d’Omdurman”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 30, No. 117, 1899, p. 40.

83 “L’avenir de la Croix-Rouge au Congo”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 34, No. 136, 1903, p. 220.

84 “La guerre européenne”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 46, No. 182, 1915, p. 122.

shock, the ICRC protested strongly against this act.⁸⁵ From that point onwards, the *Bulletin* became steadily more favourable to the Entente, for which several members of the ICRC – including its president, Gustave Ador – had never hidden their personal preference. As a result, the *Bulletin* was full of more-or-less veiled criticisms of Germany. That nation was “accused” of publishing dishonest propaganda via “a virulent press campaign, with denigrating headlines” on the situation of prisoners,⁸⁶ and of taking little notice of the reports of the ICRC’s delegates who were visiting “with impartiality and conscientiousness” the camps where prisoners were held and treated “with humanity”. “One would begin to despair of the influence and value of the Red Cross if the reports of official delegates [of the ICRC] were to be considered worthless.”⁸⁷ When the German Reich denounced the “atrocities” committed by Allied soldiers of colour and demanded that they be withdrawn from the European theatre “in the interests of humanity and civilization”, the ICRC delivered a stinging reply:

One cannot but sincerely deplore atrocities of this nature. But neither can one avoid regret... that the German government has not, ‘in the interests of humanity and civilization’ imposed very different conduct on its own troops in Belgium, on the Austro-German armies in Serbia and on its Turkish allies in Armenia.⁸⁸

The other Central Powers also fell victim to the *Bulletin*’s Germanophobia. When, for instance, Bulgaria or Turkey complained about the bombing of medical facilities by Allied aircraft, the ICRC regularly advanced the argument that these were accidents.⁸⁹ When it came to the “victims” of the Central Powers, the ICRC described the ordeal suffered by the population in the occupied territories of Belgium and the North of France, praised the “heroism” of Serbia⁹⁰ and denounced the massacre of Armenians by the Turks on the basis of information it had received from an Armenian committee.⁹¹ The “bloody”⁹² dissolution of the

85 “Protestation contre la dissolution du Comité central de la Croix-Rouge de Belgique”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 46, No. 183, 1915, p. 275 ff.

86 “La guerre européenne”, above note 84, p. 336.

87 “L’Agence internationale des Prisonniers de guerre (Cinquième article)”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 46, No. 184, 1915, pp. 488–489.

88 “La violation du droit des gens de la part de l’Angleterre et de la France par l’emploi de troupes de couleur sur le théâtre de la guerre en Europe”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 47, No. 185, 1916, p. 88.

89 “La guerre européenne”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 46, No. 184, 1915, p. 453; “La guerre européenne”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 47, No. 186, 1916, p. 181.

90 “La guerre européenne”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 47, No. 185, 1916, p. 16.

91 “La guerre européenne”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 46, No. 184, 1915, p. 438. Sadly, history was to reveal that this denunciation was correct. However, it was issued in haste and contravened the ICRC’s self-imposed rule of making public “only information that it knows to be absolutely certain”: “La guerre européenne”, above note 84, p. 122. The ICRC’s haste was due in part to its pro-Armenian tendency.

92 ICRC, A PV, AIPG, meeting of 26 February 1918.

central committee of the Russian Red Cross in February 1918 had a lasting effect on the ICRC. The “unspeakable”⁹³ behaviour of the Russian revolutionaries helped solidify a strong anti-communist sentiment among the members of the Committee.

Even if the ICRC did use – and in some cases abuse – the *Bulletin* to propagate its own opinions, the publication also made it possible, more naturally, to highlight the Geneva organization’s work during the Great War. In what was a fundamental change, the *Bulletin* of the war years focused on the ICRC rather than on the National Societies. The ICRC had already used the *Bulletin* to talk about itself in the past, especially during such major armed conflicts as the Franco-Prussian war and the Eastern Crisis, but never to the same extent as between 1914 and 1918.⁹⁴ It is true that the scale of the First World War was unprecedented, as was the expansion of the organization – from about ten persons to over a thousand in just a few months. Notwithstanding, the ICRC was in the process of taking control of a publication that was supposed to represent the entirety of the Movement. This process continued with the creation of the *Revue*.

The *Revue*

There is only rough information regarding the transformation of the *Bulletin International des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge* into the *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge*. There are no real archival files for the period 1919–39, so what information we have comes from the minutes of ICRC bodies.

It would seem that the idea of transforming the *Bulletin* into a monthly journal emerged just after the Armistice. The idea was put forward by Étienne Clouzot, one of the secretaries of the International Prisoners-of-War Agency.⁹⁵ It is not currently possible to establish how the project originated, or whether it emanated solely from Clouzot. One could imagine that Clouzot, who was originally a French citizen, took his inspiration from publications in his own country such as the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, the *Nouvelle Revue* and the *Nouvelle Revue Française*. It would appear that the aim was to ensure the longevity of the *Bulletin*, but in a different form. Three arguments were put forward in support of the change. The first was related to content, and the recurrent need to make up for a lack of articles from external authors.⁹⁶ The editor, Paul Des Gouttes, explained that he “was the first to recognize the need to enlarge the publication. [He himself] had already attempted to expand it and ... had experienced considerable difficulty in obtaining articles.”⁹⁷ The second point was the need to adapt the journal to a changing world. Des Gouttes was aware of “the influence

93 “Dissolution violente du Comité central de la Société russe de la Croix-Rouge”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 49, No. 194, 1918, p. 298.

94 According to our calculations, over 300 of the *Bulletin*’s 570 pages were devoted to the ICRC in 1915.

95 ICRC, A PV, Commission de Direction de l’Agence, meeting of 23 November 1918.

96 Right from the early days of the *Bulletin*, Gustave Moynier complained that he received too few articles from the National Societies. ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 27 February 1879.

97 ICRC, A PV, Commission de Direction de l’Agence, meeting of 26 November 1918.

that the course of events and political events will have on the *Bulletin*, requiring a broadening of its scope and creating a need for a living publication, open and not overly attached to the past”.⁹⁸ The new journal should prioritize “the works of peace” towards which the ICRC seemed to be turning.⁹⁹ Furthermore, there was the financial aspect – subscriptions had remained low (550 in 1918), while printing costs had doubled during the First World War, and it therefore made sense to try to broaden the journal’s readership. There was also agreement on the need to maintain the international element in the future publication’s title and to retain an “old style” *Bulletin*, either published separately or merged with the *Revue*. The new publication was intended not to kill off the *Bulletin* but, on the contrary, to make it “more than ever” alive¹⁰⁰ by increasing its importance and the frequency of publication.¹⁰¹ By the beginning of December 1918, it was done:

The title will be *Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, with the subtitle *Bulletin international des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge*. The format will be slightly larger than that of the *Bulletin*, published monthly, its appearance will recall that of the *Bulletin*, the price will be 20 francs per year, 2 francs per issue. The *Revue* will be managed by an *Executive Committee* [and] an *Editorial Board* ... [,] will consider the content of each issue and will decide on or have the ultimate say as to which of the articles proposed should be included. ... It is understood that naturally, it will accept only those articles that could be of interest to the Red Cross Societies, as the *Bulletin* has done hitherto.¹⁰²

The ICRC stated that it was prepared to cover the cost of the publication – estimated at several tens of thousands of francs – from the “revenue and if necessary the capital of the Nobel Prize” for peace, which it had been awarded in 1917. In order to cover the “considerable” printing costs involved, the ICRC also decided to “advertise in the most important of the appropriate newspapers, in an attractive but not flamboyant or overly American way, the publication of the *Revue* and encouraging subscriptions”.¹⁰³ The *Revue* was also itself authorized to feature advertisements.¹⁰⁴

The birth of the *Revue* was announced by circular on 4 December 1918.¹⁰⁵ The circular put forward an argument based on the “expansion of the field of action of both the National Red Cross Societies and of [the ICRC] itself”. The new periodical would

98 ICRC, AIPG, session of 27 November 1918.

99 *Ibid.*

100 ICRC, A PV, Commission de Direction de l’Agence, meeting of 26 November 1918.

101 ICRC, AIPG, session of 27 November 1918.

102 ICRC, AIPG, session of 4 December 1918.

103 ICRC, AIPG, session of 29 January 1919.

104 The first adverts appeared in May 1919, and the *Review* continued to carry advertising until 1977.

105 “Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge et Bulletin international des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge (175ème circulaire)”, *Revue International de la Croix-Rouge*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1919, pp. 75–77.

continue to focus above all on the direct victims of war, but could, in the part entitled *Revue internationale*, present more freely the experiences experienced in certain countries that could be instructive for others, while at the same time allowing space for original articles concerning the areas both broad and varied that already concerned the National Societies before the war or which will concern them at the start of the new era of peace.¹⁰⁶

As for the *Bulletin* (which now indicated that it was published by the ICRC, “the founder of the movement”), it would continue to play the role of “faithful narrator of the activities of the various Red Cross Societies”.¹⁰⁷ The monthly publication launched in January 1919 was therefore a two-headed animal.

The *Revue* turned out to be a financial black hole from the first year of its existence, recovering only 30% of the 54,322 francs that it cost to produce.¹⁰⁸ Clearly, the ICRC’s advertising had not had the desired results, as the *Revue* had only 965 subscriptions, 515 of which belonged to National Societies¹⁰⁹ – and even these figures appear doubtful.¹¹⁰ Subscriptions increased only slightly in 1920, to 1,005,¹¹¹ before falling again to 776 in 1921¹¹² and 610 in 1925.¹¹³ Advertising revenue followed a similar pattern. As a result, the publication remained firmly in the red, with deficits of 22,000 francs in 1920 and 25,000 francs in 1921. It was therefore suggested that costs be reduced by printing the *Revue* somewhere other than Geneva (perhaps even outside Switzerland) and on presses other than those of the *Journal de Genève*.¹¹⁴ This idea produced outcry from the members of the ICRC, led by Horace Micheli (who was also the political editor of the *Journal de Genève*), and was eventually abandoned.¹¹⁵ Less drastic cost-cutting measures were nonetheless taken, reducing the deficit to 7,000 francs in 1922. Thereafter, expenditure always exceeded receipts by some 6,000 francs, and the *Revue* was only able to balance the books thanks to an annual contribution from the ICRC to make up the difference. The situation was even worse coming out of the Second World War: at the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, the *Revue* cost 60,000 francs to produce each year, but its revenue was only just over 13,000 francs, the majority of which came from advertising. Subscription

106 *Ibid.*, p. 76.

107 *Ibid.*

108 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 26 January 1920. A week earlier, figures had been announced indicating that revenue was covering less than 10% of costs: ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 19 January 1920. It is difficult to understand how such different figures could be presented at two meetings only a week apart.

109 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 26 January 1920.

110 Given that an annual subscription cost 20 francs (according to the 175th Circular), the subscription revenue for the *Revue* in 1920 (15,027 francs) indicates that there were, at best, only 751 paying subscribers. See also above note 108.

111 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 7 March 1921.

112 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 25 November 1921.

113 “*Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge. Budget pour 1925*”, ICRC, B CR 190/132.

114 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 23 February 1920. The *Journal de Genève* had been publishing the *Bulletin* since 1912: ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 12 January 1872.

115 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 23 December 1921. The discussion came up again in 1925. While the Committee decided to continue to print the *Revue* in Geneva, it was transferred to the presses of another newspaper, the *Tribune de Genève*. ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 12 November 1925.

revenue was only about 4,500 francs,¹¹⁶ indicating that the number of subscribers had fallen to just 225.¹¹⁷

It was also during the Second World War that the question of the language used in the *Revue* arose once again.¹¹⁸ Since its launch in 1869, the periodical had appeared in French only. However, it did not have “sufficient penetration in America”,¹¹⁹ and it was therefore proposed that the *Revue* be translated and printed in London and New York, to ensure its wide distribution in the English-speaking countries. The proposal was not implemented for financial reasons; it would have been too expensive to publish an edition in the United States with a sufficient number of subscribers.¹²⁰ In addition, the time needed for translation would have rendered the *Revue* less up-to-date, depriving it of “much value in the eyes of the public”.¹²¹ Finally – and this seems to have been the deciding factor – the *Revue* would not have been able to compete in the United States with the publications of the American Red Cross, which were often free. The ICRC did not totally abandon the idea, however, and from 1948 onwards the *Revue* translated its main articles into English, publishing them in a supplement of some twenty pages, in accordance with its undertaking to “keep up with the times”.¹²² A Spanish supplement followed in 1949 and a German supplement in 1950, but this solution was hardly satisfactory. Delegates and several National Societies called for a *Revue* in English or, at least, “a less skeletal supplement”.¹²³ Their wish was fulfilled when, in April 1961, an English version of the *Revue* was published which was “in principle ... identical with the French edition”.¹²⁴ In 1976, a full Spanish edition of the *Revue* was published, responding to wishes already expressed immediately following the Second World War. Special Arabic issues were occasionally published on an *ad hoc* basis.¹²⁵ In 1956, approximately 3,500 copies of the *Revue* were printed, including all the language supplements. Twenty years later, circulation had increased to over 6,000 in total (all languages included).¹²⁶

With three complete different-language versions plus an abridged German version (2,500 pages per year in total), it quickly became impossible for the ICRC to

116 Note regarding the publication of an English edition of the *Revue*, annexed to ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 8 September 1960.

117 An annual subscription continued to cost 20 francs a year. The ICRC arrived at a figure of 254 subscribers: “Note à Monsieur J. Pictet. Diffusion de la *Revue*”, 30 August 1956, ICRC, B AG, 064-03.

118 The idea of publishing the periodical in several languages in order to “develop” it had been suggested as far back as 1919. ICRC, A PV, AIPG, meeting of 1 September 1919.

119 ICRC, A PV, Commission de l’Information, meeting of 24 June 1943.

120 ICRC, A PV, Commission de l’Information, meeting of 21 November 1944.

121 ICRC, A PV, Bureau, meeting of 29 September 1943.

122 *Report of the International Committee of the Red Cross on Its Activities during the Second World War (September 1, 1939–June 30, 1947)*, Vol. 1, Geneva, May 1948, p. 128, available at <https://library.icrc.org/library/search/notice?noticeNr=6962> (all internet references were accessed in May 2019).

123 “Note relative à la publication d’une édition anglaise de la *Revue*”, annexed to ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 8 September 1960.

124 *International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1961, p. 3.

125 In 1954 and 1955, for instance. An Arabic edition did not appear regularly until the May–June 1988 issue.

126 Including 3,000 in French and 2,000 in English. “Publications périodiques du CICR”, 20 October 1975, ICRC, B AG 064-11.

cover the costs involved. In December 1977, the ICRC therefore took a step which was “painful: that of reducing publication of the *International Review of the Red Cross* from twelve to six issues per year”.¹²⁷ Meanwhile, another decision had been taken very quietly: the *Bulletin* was to disappear. This happened gradually. The process started in July 1955, with a semantic change: the *Bulletin* – which had already lost a great deal of content – became “News of National Societies”. Its cover page disappeared and it was now included in the table of contents of the *Revue*.¹²⁸ However, the “News” did mention that it was the direct successor to the *Bulletin*. This link ended in 1965, when the “News” was replaced by a section titled “In the World of the Red Cross”. That title was used until 1998, though not without a mention – but only in 1988 – that the (small) part of the *Review* devoted to the National Societies also included the Red Crescent Societies.¹²⁹ In 1999, this section became “Red Cross and Red Crescent”; this natural link with the Movement disappeared altogether in September 2002, almost 133 years after the founding of the *Bulletin*. The transformation that occurred in the autumn of 2002 also affected the ICRC, as this was the point at which the *Review* became an academic journal. The space available to present the activities of the Geneva institution became more rare.

The contents of the Revue

In its editorial programme, the *Revue* extolled its “expansion” into new subjects and new authors. Reading the table of contents for its first year,¹³⁰ it is indeed apparent that the journal had opened up to include social topics, especially those related to children. That was no coincidence, as the ICRC was now devoting considerable attention to children as a category of war victims. The articles came from a range of sources, while maintaining a link with the world of the Red Cross or, more generally, with that of charitable works. Not until after the Second World War did the *Revue* begin to regularly feature articles from academic authors. The ICRC did, however, retain a degree of control over the contents of the journal. Of forty texts published in 1919, sixteen were by ICRC members or staff – 40% of the articles. The high proportion of internal ICRC authors – which at times reached or surpassed 50% – remained a constant, but for two exceptions, until the beginning of the 1930s.¹³¹ The ICRC also remained very well represented in the *Bulletin* section devoted to the National Societies and the new League of Red Cross Societies, created at the same time as the *Revue*. When the Second World War broke out, this dominance increased. Like the *Bulletin* in the First World

127 Alexandre Hay, “The Future of the International Review of the Red Cross”, *International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 18, No. 202, 1978, p. 3.

128 *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, Vol. 37, No. 439, 1955.

129 From January 1988 onwards, this section was entitled “In the Red Cross and Red Crescent world” (author’s emphasis).

130 “Table de la Revue internationale de la Croix-Rouge”, *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, Vol. 1, No. 12, 1919.

131 Author’s calculations, for the first twelve volumes of the *Revue*. The following decade was more mixed.

War, the *Revue* became the mouthpiece of the ICRC and was devoted almost exclusively to the ICRC's efforts on behalf of the victims of the war, for example including long extracts from reports on visits to prisoners of war and civilian internees around the world. The pages of the *Bulletin* followed the same tendency, highlighting the actions and statements of the ICRC. The same applied to the original articles, over 70% of which were written by ICRC members or staff.

As had been the case for the *Bulletin*, certain articles in the *Revue* gave rise to controversy. For instance, an article by Serge Bagotzky, who represented the (Soviet) Russian National Society in Switzerland¹³² (which was recognized as a National Society by the ICRC in 1921), led to fierce protests from the former (meaning "Tsarist") Russian Red Cross, with which the ICRC maintained close links, and which considered itself the only legitimate Russian National Society.¹³³ Conversely, Bagotzky complained about the fact that since 1933, the *Revue* had regularly published an annual report on the work of the former Russian Red Cross organization, at that organization's request.¹³⁴ The ICRC considered that it was entitled to publish "anything of a nature that could interest our readers on any Red Cross activity" in the *Revue*, but that at the same time it "was entirely free to cease any publication to which it had voluntarily consented".¹³⁵ Ultimately, however, it did not have to take a decision on this dispute, which fizzled out on its own at the beginning of the Second World War.

A new controversy involving communist National Societies erupted immediately after the end of the war, when the ICRC was accused of not having done enough to defend the interests of the victims of Nazism and Fascism, especially the civilian population – including Jews and partisans. The Eastern Bloc accused the ICRC of having "lost its neutrality because of its exclusively Swiss character ... [and of having] fallen into the Swiss government's service".¹³⁶ It is therefore not surprising that in response to the first of these criticisms the ICRC published *in extenso* a long study it had just completed, highlighting its work in concentration camps in Germany, in the March and April 1946 issues of the *Revue*.¹³⁷ It also published a report on its efforts to help partisans who had fallen into enemy hands.¹³⁸ To justify its existence, the ICRC published a long article recalling its origins and at the same time explaining at length the valuable work it

132 Serge Bagotzky, "L'organisation et l'activité de la Société russe de la Croix-Rouge", *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, Vol. 5, No. 49, 1923.

133 ICRC, A PV, Commission de la Croix-Rouge, meeting of 2 May 1923.

134 ICRC, B CR 109, Annex 240, "Conflit Bagotzky/ancienne organisation de la Croix-Rouge russe", 14 April 1937.

135 *Ibid.*

136 Catherine Rey-Schyr, *From Yalta to Dien Bien Phu: History of the International Committee of the Red Cross, 1945 to 1955*, ICRC, Geneva, January 2017, p. 61, available at <https://library.icrc.org/library/docs/DOC/icrc-002-0907.pdf>.

137 "Documents sur l'activité du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge en faveur des civils détenus dans les camps de concentration en Allemagne", *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, Vol. 28, Nos 327–328, 1946.

138 "Rapport sur l'activité du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge en faveur des 'partisans' tombés en mains de l'ennemi", *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, Vol. 28, No. 334, 1946.

had undertaken during the war.¹³⁹ It hammered home that “the Committee is subordinate to no other institution, be it a Red Cross Society or a government, even the Swiss government. Its members, who receive no payment, are themselves wholly independent.”¹⁴⁰ Not long before, ICRC president Max Huber had emphasized the “complete political and administrative independence [of the ICRC] from the Swiss Confederation” in the pages of the *Revue*.¹⁴¹ In this context, when the question was raised of translating the *Revue*, a Russian version was suggested, alongside English and Spanish. Officially, the intention was to enhance the dissemination and influence of the periodical among readers from different countries, while avoiding the impression of “alignment with any of the blocs of States that currently exist”.¹⁴² Unofficially, one can well imagine that the aim was to convey the ICRC’s ideas directly to those who were criticizing it. The idea was not implemented, for reasons unknown.¹⁴³ The *Revue* later acted as a channel for replying to other accusations, such as those made during the Korean War.¹⁴⁴

The early days of the *Revue* coincided with those of the League of Red Cross Societies, which was founded in May 1919. Relations between the ICRC and the League quickly soured.¹⁴⁵ The ICRC was far from happy at the idea of a new organization stepping on its toes by taking over the programme of peacetime humanitarian activities that it had proposed to the National Societies.¹⁴⁶ The League, for its part, saw the ICRC as having become obsolete in view of the challenges that followed the First World War. This animosity became apparent as soon as the creation of the League was announced. The ICRC saw the League as an “association ... of a transitory nature” and demanded the right to remain “the central body for all the National Societies, as it has always been, by virtue of the successive decisions taken by the Conferences [of the Red Cross]. The organization that is being created should in no way supplant it, but should

139 Frédéric Sjordet, “*Inter Arma Caritas*”: *The Work of the International Committee of the Red Cross during the Second World War*, 2nd ed., ICRC, Geneva, 1973, available at https://library.icrc.org/library/docs/DIGITAL/DOC_00036.pdf. Sjordet was an ICRC employee. The original French version of this work appeared in the *Revue* under the title “‘Inter Arma Caritas’: L’œuvre du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale”, *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, Vol. 29, Nos 339, 340, 342 and 344, 1947.

140 F. Sjordet, above note 139, p. 88.

141 Max Huber, “Principes d’action et fondements de l’œuvre du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge, 1939–1946”, *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, Vol. 29, No. 337, 1947, especially p. 67.

142 ICRC A, A PV, Commission de l’Information, meeting of 13 May 1947.

143 A Russian edition of the *Revue* only appeared in November–December 1994.

144 At the Eighth International Conference in July–August 1952, communist representatives accused the ICRC of taking sides in the Korean conflict: see C. Rey-Schyr, above note 136, p. 105. The ICRC replied via an article in the *Bulletin* of September 1952 (“Le Comité international de la Croix-Rouge et le conflit de Corée”, *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, Vol. 34, No. 405, 1952). An English summary appeared in the English-language supplement to the *Revue* in November 1952.

145 Irène Herrmann, “Décrypter la concurrence humanitaire. Le conflit entre Croix-Rouge(s) après 1918”, *Relations Internationales*, No. 151, Autumn 2012.

146 “La mission du Comité international de la Croix-Rouge pendant et après la guerre” (Circular 174), 27 November 1918, in *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1919.

rather extend and expand its action.”¹⁴⁷ So while it allowed its sister organization to communicate through the *Revue*, the ICRC never missed an opportunity to comment on its rival’s articles.¹⁴⁸ Elsewhere it explained that the League was neither democratic nor universal.¹⁴⁹ However, contrary to the ICRC’s predictions, the League turned out to be a temporary phenomenon that became permanent. The ICRC had to live with the situation, while maintaining its dominant position – and that meant communicating. In March 1920, it was suggested that the *Revue* be made the joint publication of the ICRC and the League. While the two organizations were to share the management of the new periodical, the *Bulletin* would remain “the publication of the International Committee”, retaining the “universality and freedom it has always enjoyed”.¹⁵⁰ Negotiations followed, both internally and with the League. It is clear that the ICRC hoped such a merger would “bail out” the *Revue* by providing it with a wider distribution, while at the same time reducing the ICRC’s financial commitment. The ICRC also hoped that in exchange for this partnership regarding the *Revue*, the League’s journal – “21,000 copies of which [were] distributed free of charge”¹⁵¹ – would report on the ICRC’s peacetime work. However, the prospect of such an agreement raised a number of concerns, including the fear that the ICRC might ultimately end up being absorbed by the League, which, by virtue of the considerable funds at its disposal, could be “inclined to give the orders”. It was therefore emphasized that the *Revue* and the *Bulletin* would remain “the publication of the International Committee and the journal of the Red Cross Societies”.¹⁵² On the other side, it seems that the League was also somewhat hesitant, with the result that the idea of an agreement was eventually abandoned.¹⁵³ In 1928, the idea of merging the ICRC and League publications was raised once again, but the fear that the *Revue* might lose “its character” put a temporary end to the discussion.¹⁵⁴ The question of combining the *Revue* with the publications of the League or of other organizations resurfaced in the 1930s, without leading to any action.¹⁵⁵

To inform or govern?

In 1869, during the 2nd International Conference, French central committee delegate Jean Huber-Saladin recalled the genesis of the *Bulletin*:

147 “Le Comité international et la ‘League of Red Cross Societies’” (Circular 182), 20 May 1919, in *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, Vol. 1, No. 6, 1919.

148 See *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, Vol. 1, No. 6, 1919. At the beginning of an article by a member of the League’s Governing Board, the ICRC asks what use this new organization is (p. 621).

149 Paul des Gouttes, “De la Fédération des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge”, *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, Vol. 1, No. 8, 1919, p. 930.

150 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 15 March 1920.

151 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 14 April 1920.

152 *Ibid.*

153 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 14 June 1920.

154 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 20 September 1928.

155 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meetings of 19 September 1931 and 3 November 1938.

Charged with the report on ... the creation of new periodicals at the Paris Conferences, I made the entirely natural proposal to set up an international journal in Geneva. The Genevan Committee, taking into consideration what was a simple suggestion on my part, developed my idea as necessary, and made of it the object [of one of the proposals submitted to the Conference].¹⁵⁶

From the beginning, therefore, the ICRC had been most interested in the publication of a periodical that would become a kind of “official gazette of the Red Cross”.¹⁵⁷ Moreover, it had done all it could to ensure that the ICRC would be managing and publishing it, despite the significant financial sacrifice incurred and the additional workload for its president, Gustave Moynier, who became the lynchpin of the whole operation. Geneva’s enthusiasm provoked considerable friction with the French Red Cross, which was also keen to take on such a publication. Far from being a mere contest between rivals, taking possession of the *Bulletin* became a core issue for the ICRC. For Paris, being allowed to manage the global journal of the Movement was a question of prestige; for Geneva, it was a matter of survival. Under criticism for its mono-national makeup, uncertain as to its permanence and, above all, resistant to any change in its structure, the ICRC needed a strong argument to counter the threats it was facing. Publishing the *Bulletin* provided an unhopèd-for opportunity to ensure the long-term survival of this small Genevan entity while allowing it to maintain a certain degree of autonomy and, above all, to avoid changing that which constituted its *raison d’être* – acting as a link between the National Societies. This being so, it is easy to understand why the ICRC was so determined to seize Huber-Saladin’s “simple suggestion” and render it sufficiently viable to be accepted by the Berlin International Conference.

Seen against this background, the financial question was not insignificant. By refusing all funding from the National Societies to offset publication costs – despite such funding having been agreed in principle – the ICRC hoped to maintain absolute control over the *Bulletin*. All of this came as no surprise to the French central committee. Aware of the power that the future periodical would confer on whoever controlled it, the French committee attempted to limit that power once it realized that it had lost the battle for control. Its president, Count Sérurier, insisted at the 1869 International Conference that “communications of any sort, even scientific discussions, [could] only be published in the international journal of Geneva insofar as they had been submitted by the various [Red Cross] Committees”.¹⁵⁸ The aim was to stifle the voice of the ICRC and to limit its spread via the pages of the *Bulletin*.

The ICRC itself was fully aware of the advantages that such a periodical could bring. It therefore struck a reassuring tone, stating that it “would not be conferring upon the International Committee a worrying prerogative by investing it with the right to preside over the editing of the journal, given that the true

156 *Compte rendu des travaux*, above note 35, p. 223.

157 “Le Bulletin international”, above note 47, p. 1.

158 *Compte rendu des travaux*, above note 35, p. 226.

editors should be the national Committees themselves”.¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, the ICRC added, it had never desired, nor sought “in any manner”,¹⁶⁰ the production of the *Bulletin*, which “was in no way born of our initiative” and for which the ICRC had “assumed the burden of responsibility only to comply with a decision taken by the Red Cross Societies of all nations at the International Conference that they held in Berlin in 1869”.¹⁶¹ The ICRC’s role concerning the *Bulletin* would be limited to that of an auxiliary, which would “hold the pen to record the facts trimesterally, in the conviction that by so doing it was fulfilling a useful role, albeit humble”,¹⁶² and the periodical would serve to consolidate “the moral union of all the central Committees”.¹⁶³ That last point was crucial. The ICRC’s interest in the *Bulletin* was tied to the fact that it was the rallying point for all the National Societies. Since 1867 and the initial discussions on its composition and role, the ICRC had known that its salvation would come from the Movement, or more precisely from the disagreements between its components. It had already experienced this in Paris in 1867, when, faced with the destructive desires of the French Red Cross, it had been able to count on the support of the other central committees. It had also benefited from internal dissent at the Third and Fourth International Conferences of 1884 and 1887. On those occasions it had been confronted with a Russian Red Cross plan to internationalize the ICRC’s staff. That proposal had been refused by the vast majority of National Societies, who judged that “in the general interest of the Red Cross, it is useful to maintain the International Committee as it has existed since the beginning of the movement, with its headquarters in Geneva”.¹⁶⁴ Thanks to the *Bulletin*, the ICRC had “an entirely natural opportunity, and one that it would not otherwise have had, of communicating regularly with the central Committees”.

The future of the ICRC was therefore closely linked with control of the *Bulletin*. So it is not surprising that, at the Fourth International Conference in 1887, the ICRC wished the plenary to decide both about retaining the ICRC in its original form and also about the continuation of an international *Bulletin*, “published in Geneva”, under the sole responsibility of the ICRC.¹⁶⁵ Some thirty years later, the same situation arose once again, during the conflict between the ICRC and the League. In view of its hegemonic leanings, several National Societies were reluctant to join the new organization, or at least to comply with all of its wishes. The ICRC took advantage of this tension to position itself as the

159 “Mémoire adressé par le Comité international”, above note 31, p. 14.

160 “Le Bulletin international”, above note 47, p. 5.

161 “Monsieur le Président et messieurs les membres du Comité de secours aux militaires blessés”, 30 April 1875, ICRC, A AF 21/5.

162 “Le passé et l’avenir du Bulletin international”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 11, No. 41, 1880, p. 3.

163 “Le Bulletin international”, above note 47, p. 5.

164 “La conférence de Carlsruhe”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 18, No. 72, 1887, p. 164.

165 *Du rôle du Comité international et des relations des Comités centraux de la Croix-Rouge: Rapport présenté par le comité international à la Conférence internationale des sociétés de la Croix-Rouge à Carlsruhe, en 1887*, Imprimerie B. Soullier, Geneva, 1887, p. 23.

natural forum for coordination within the Movement, thereby garnering support in its battle with the League. When it became necessary to envisage some form of cohabitation between the two organizations, and the question arose of merging their respective journals, ICRC president Gustave Ador was of the opinion that in the future periodical, the *Bulletin* – which would remain in the hands of the ICRC – “should occupy the leading position, above that of the *Revue* [of the League]”.¹⁶⁶ This was a way of demonstrating the ICRC’s dominance within the Movement and its close, traditional links with the National Societies. The same tactic was deployed immediately after the Second World War, when the ICRC was confronted by accusations from communist National Societies. Rather than replying directly, the ICRC called the Movement as its witness, by publishing long extracts from its reports and other writings. This approach was successful, because at both the 17th and 18th International Conferences in 1948 and 1952, when the communist world once again attacked the ICRC on account of its all-Swiss makeup, the ICRC obtained the support of the rest of the Conference participants and was thus saved. Indeed, this contentious question – which had been a thorn in the ICRC’s side for almost 100 years – disappeared of its own accord during the same period.

It is therefore not surprising that from 1955 onwards the bonds that had united the ICRC with the world of the Red Cross thanks to the *Revue/Bulletin* began to weaken. From 1956, the *Revue* was considered the official journal of the ICRC and no longer that of the Movement as a whole.¹⁶⁷ The disappearance of the *Bulletin* was also a sign that the danger had passed, and that the ICRC had less and less need of the support of the National Societies to survive. The ICRC played the game for a few more decades, however. From May 1988, the *Review* even mentioned on its cover that it was “Published bimonthly by the International Committee of the Red Cross to serve the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.”¹⁶⁸ Not until the brink of the new millennium did the mask finally slip and the close bond disappear between the *Review* and the Movement, a bond that had lasted for over a century.

Not only did the *Bulletin* and the *Revue* furnish the ICRC with a solid basis and even a shield against its adversaries within the Movement, but they also had a further major advantage for the organization that managed them; it was on the pages of those publications that the ICRC was able to proclaim and create IHL. Gustave Moynier’s 1872 article in the *Bulletin*, mentioned above, in which he presented his personal opinion in favour of the creation of an international criminal tribunal to punish breaches of the Geneva Convention, provoked negative reactions. But far from backing down, the ICRC – and its president – continued to use the periodical to communicate ideas on humanitarian law. For example,

166 ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 24 March 1920.

167 “Note à M. Pictet. Diffusion de la *Revue*”, 30 August 1956, ICRC, B AG 064-003. This point was reaffirmed by the Assembly (the governing body of the ICRC) in March 1998: Cornelio Sommaruga, “The *International Review of the Red Cross* at the Service of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement”, *International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 28, No. 264, 1988.

168 *International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 28, No. 265, 1988.

the ICRC spoke out against hasty revision of the Geneva Convention,¹⁶⁹ favouring prudent adjustments,¹⁷⁰ itself proposing a new draft.¹⁷¹ For a long time, the ICRC pushed for ratification of the additional articles of 1868,¹⁷² and was even prepared to “dictate” the procedure to the Swiss Federal Council.¹⁷³ As can be seen, the ICRC used the *Bulletin* to make its voice heard in a field where it had no official role. The ICRC had not been assigned a specific mission regarding IHL by the International Conferences that had decided its functions between 1867 and 1887.¹⁷⁴ It was therefore only as a result of personal initiative that the ICRC assigned itself the task of considering the law on behalf of the Movement. This approach was certainly based on historical precedent – the 1864 Geneva Convention, which had largely been drafted by two members of the ICRC, Gustave Moynier and Henry Dunant. This practice continued, becoming a sort of tradition thanks to the longevity of the ICRC’s first leader. Better still, it was made official by the circulars sent by the ICRC to the central committees on the progress and development of IHL, followed by the ICRC’s legal articles, also published in the *Bulletin* and later in the *Revue*.¹⁷⁵ This made the two publications the official channels through which the ICRC could highlight its commitment to and leading role in elaborating humanitarian law, strengthening the special relationship with States that it already enjoyed in this area.

Conclusion

To see the *Bulletin/Revue/Review* as an instrument of power in the hands of the ICRC is to understand more fully the organization’s dedication to a project that others would long since have abandoned if they had only looked on the surface at its components or financial criteria, such as the profitability of the publication or the number of subscribers. Indeed, generally speaking the *Bulletin* and the *Revue/Review* have been financial liabilities for the ICRC. The organization has never been under any illusions on this point, having recognized in autumn 1919 that the *Revue* would “never break even”.¹⁷⁶ Examining the accounts of the *Bulletin*

169 “La révision de la Convention de Genève”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 7, No. 27, 1876, p. 122.

170 “La révision de la Convention de Genève, d’après M. G. Moynier”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 30, No. 118, 1899.

171 “Projets de révision de la Convention de Genève”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 33, No. 131, 1902.

172 “Ratification des articles additionnels à la Convention de Genève”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 1, No. 1, October 1869.

173 “Une nouvelle démarche relative à la ratification des articles additionnels à la Convention de Genève”, *Bulletin International des Sociétés de Secours aux Militaires Blessés*, Vol. 14, No. 54, April 1883.

174 The final list of functions was adopted at the Fourth International Conference: *Quatrième Conférence internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge tenue à Carlsruhe du 22 au 27 septembre 1887: Compte-rendu*, Starke, Berlin, 1887, p. 102.

175 See, for instance, “Projet de Code des prisonniers de guerre, déportés, évacués et réfugiés”, *Revue International de la Croix-Rouge*, Vol. 5, No. 56, 1923.

176 ICRC, A PV, AIPG, meeting of 1 September 1919.

led to the same conclusion. The ICRC took various measures in response to this recurrent problem: it reduced the number of issues from twelve per year to six in 1978¹⁷⁷ and to four in 1998.¹⁷⁸ It closed the Arabic, Russian and Spanish editions in 1999, leaving only a bilingual French/English edition.¹⁷⁹ But at no time in its history did the ICRC consider abandoning publication of this periodical, which has acted as the voice of the ICRC since it was founded. While finding paying subscribers was essential in order to place the *Bulletin* on a solid footing – which explains the many attempts to acquire new subscribers¹⁸⁰ – this was not a priority for the *Revue/Review*, as long as it was widely disseminated. “The question of subscriptions is less important than that of distribution of the *Review* in places where it will be available to readers”, was the internal view.¹⁸¹ This explains print runs that were sometimes enormous in comparison with the actual number of subscribers. What mattered to the ICRC was reaching as wide an audience as possible – even a non-paying audience – in order to get its messages across or to ensure that it was accepted for what it was. The purpose of publishing the *Revue* in Spanish, for instance, was primarily to counter prejudices in Latin American countries regarding the ICRC stemming from “denominational questions”.¹⁸²

Over the years, there were two target audiences for the journal, reflecting two different priorities. The first priority was to anchor the ICRC firmly in the Movement, whether to ensure the very existence of the organization or to counter any threat of exclusion. In parallel, especially after the Great War, the *Bulletin* and the *Revue/Review* also targeted the political and academic world, with the aim of making the ICRC a preferred intermediary and essential partner in any discussion on IHL. A glance at the distribution lists in the ICRC archives shows that the ICRC’s distribution strategy – supported, incidentally, by the Swiss Confederation¹⁸³ – was geographically broad, yet targeted in terms of the organizations and individuals that the ICRC attempted to influence. This explains why, even before its transformation into an academic journal, the *Revue* (as with the *Bulletin* before it) was never a mainstream publication. It was always “aimed at an elite”,¹⁸⁴ and its contents were seen, even within the ICRC, as too technical and “not very attractive” to a general readership.¹⁸⁵

The *Bulletin* and the *Revue/Review* have undergone many transformations over their 150 years of existence, but none was as far-reaching as that of 2005, which

177 “International Review in 1978”, *International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 17, No. 201, 1977, p. 552.

178 “Announcement”, *International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 38, No. 322, 1998.

179 “To subscribers and readers of the International Review of the Red Cross”, *International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 38, No. 325, 1998.

180 See, for example, “Aux abonnés du Bulletin”, above note 4.

181 ICRC, A PV, Commission de l’Information, meeting of 11 November 1947.

182 ICRC, A PV, Commission de l’Information, meeting of 11 November 1947.

183 Swiss embassies and other diplomatic representations are tasked with verifying and adding to the distribution list for the *Review*. See, for example, the correspondence between the ICRC and the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ICRC, B AG, 064-11.

184 ICRC, A PV, Commission de l’Information, meeting of 11 November 1947. Gustave Moynier had already raised this point: “Aux abonnés du Bulletin”, above note 4.

185 In the words of one of the members of the Committee: ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 3 November 1938.

affected the form, content and editorial line of the *Review*. Firstly, the publication became monolingual and chose English as its official language. Only a selection of articles is translated now, even in the case of the French version. Secondly, each issue of the *Review* now addresses a specific theme. The *Review* became a true academic journal, a trend that was accentuated by the partnership set up with Cambridge University Press in 2006. Finally, an Editorial Board was created, consisting exclusively of persons from outside the ICRC.¹⁸⁶

Does this mean that the ICRC lost control of the *Review* fifteen years ago? Not necessarily. The editorial team still consists of ICRC staff, and it is they who have the last word on the journal's contents. Furthermore, the theme for an issue is often chosen in the light of the current concerns of the ICRC or of its strategic priorities. And while the *Review* has a global role, almost one third of its articles are still authored by ICRC staff.¹⁸⁷ While each author expresses their own views, it is clear that contributions also relay institutional messages. The percentage of content tied to the ICRC is even higher if one takes account of the institutional documents, reports and official positions that the *Review* continues to publish. To put it simply, the *Review* remains a policy platform for the ICRC.

The most significant change since the first issues of the *Bulletin* is, as we have seen, the disappearance of the Movement, both as the main recipient of the publication and as the supplier of raw material for its articles.¹⁸⁸ In that sense, the ICRC has laid down the mandate conferred upon it by the Berlin International Conference of 1869, transforming in accordance with its own wishes a publication intended to remain the "official gazette of the movement". And it is the National Societies that have been most affected by this change. Indeed, the words of Count Sérurier appear prophetic today, stating that he was "surprised and distressed" on reading the minutes that rendered the decisions of the Berlin Conference official, to see that they spoke of creating an international "journal" rather than the "bulletin" that the Conference had decided upon.¹⁸⁹ Despite Gustave Moynier's assurances addressing Sérurier's concerns,¹⁹⁰ the latter had understood full well that a power issue lay behind the choice of title. While a "bulletin" was ultimately no more than a receptacle in which one might deposit various pieces of information, the role of a "journal" was primarily to promote the words and thoughts of whoever managed it. The ICRC had most certainly understood this distinction from the very beginning, and turned it to its own advantage.

186 "Editorial", *International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 86, No. 856, 2004, p. 721.

187 Author's calculations, based on Nos 901–905 of the *Review*. The author counted only signed articles and did not include interviews or editorials.

188 Even though the ICRC complained regularly that the central committees rarely sent in notes for publication. See, for instance, ICRC, A PV, Comité, meeting of 23 August 1871.

189 Letter from Sérurier to Moynier, 14 June 1869, ICRC, A AF 6, 1/181.

190 Letter from Sérurier to Moynier, 16 June 1869, ICRC, A AF 6, 1/182CP.