

MINUTES

From the NSM Boardmeeting, Copenhagen, January 26, 2008-01-28

Present: Kjersti Berg, Jacob Høigilt, Sylvia Akkar and Anitta Kynsilehto, Ulla Holm and Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen, Annika Rabo and Pernilla Myrne.

Present were also the committee on the Ph.D. School: Lena Ambjørn, Hannu and Knut Vikør.

1. Introduction and approval of Agenda

An introductory round of presentation and reports on national developments.
Agenda was approved with an additional no 4.a. on revision of Statutes.

2. Minutes of the General Assembly were studied and the proposals for the Board discussed.

3. Report from the Helsinki Conference.

Sylvia Akkar, of the organizing group, reported from a successful event, with 131 participants (of whom 51 were Finns), a good level a papers and panels, and enthusiastic feed-back. The conference was fully financed by participants and support and will give the Nordic Society a small surplus.

4. The financial situation.

The financial situation is not encouraging, but not as bleak as reported at the Helsinki conference. As of January 10, the funds of the Society add up to around 65.000 dkk, but more membership fees should come in, as they were only called for in late December. This money will mainly be spent on the annual Board meetings, minor expenses for postings etc, and some support (max 20.000) for the conferences.

However, financial cuts at the University of Bergen have hit its Middle East Center, the host of NSM. This means that the office assistance enjoyed by NSM may no longer be forthcoming. For the time being, NSM will stay on with the Middle East Center, and Kjersti Berg take care of the mail etc.

4.a Revision of Statutes.

This item, concerning limiting the number of periods a board member can sit, was referred to the next Board Meeting.

5. Future Activities

The Board decided to adopt some of the proposals from the Helsinki meeting:

- The Nordic bulletin will be resurrected. Jacob will edit it on a quarterly basis.

- The Board will strive to activate greater cooperation between Middle East Studies institutes in Scandinavia. Annika, Jakob and Kjersti will look into types of exchanges and possibilities for funding.
- The Board is interested in closer cooperation with Iceland and the Baltic states. It did not, however, adopt a specific strategy to further this aim.

Furthermore, the next conference, of 2010, was discussed:

This conference will take place in Bergen, probably in May, August or September. Kjersti Berg will set up a preparatory committee which will look into issues of: funding, venue, theme and possible guest speakers. The next Board Meeting will take place in late fall, 2008, to make sure that things are on track, and assist, so that a first call for papers can be announced.

6. The Ph.D. School in Egypt.

The school will be organized with the help of the Danish-Egyptian Dialogue Institute in Cairo, and the Swedish Institute in Alexandria. It will take place in early June 2008.

Funding (dkk 176.000) has been secured from the Danish-Egyptian Dialogue Institute. To this will be added fees from participants which the Board set at Euros 400.

The preparatory group (Hannu, Lena, Knut and Jakob) will send out invitations to all Nordic Ph.D. students, in early February. The course will be rated at 10 ECTS. Knut makes a draft of the invitation.

7. Next Board meeting will be on Friday, November 14, 2008, in Oslo.

8. Other business.

The Board appointed Sylvia Akkar its secretary and representative in Eurames.

The Board appointed Pernilla Myhre its Vice Chairman.