

MINUTES

From the NSM Boardmeeting, Stockholm, September 19, 2009

Present: Kjersti Berg, Anitta Kynsilehto, Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen, Annika Rabo and Pernilla Myrne.

1. Introduction and approval of Agenda
Referent Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen.
The agenda was approved, with an additional point about funding
2. Minutes of the Nov. 15, 2008 meeting
The Minutes from the meeting were approved
3. Reports from individual countries.
4. Statutes of the NSM, and the Board after 2010
Negotiating the text for an amendment to the rules of the Society, the Board agreed on a formulation to be presented to the General Assembly in 2010. In the paragraph on the Board a time-limit for membership of the Board is introduced, stating that "Board members can sit for a maximum of two consecutive periods". This will have significant implications for the composition of the Board after 2010, as a little more than half the members of the Board will have to resign. JSP was asked to contact the election committee to notify them about this change and remind them of the need for substitutes. He was also charged with finding out whether there might be interest in joining the Society from Iceland.
5. The financial situation. Kjersti Berg reported
 - a. We have a total of 109.183 NOK, split on several currencies.
 - b. Members to 2010: 107 members.
 - c. With board meetings as an annual expense of app. 20.000 nok per year, there is some surplus.
 - d. The handling of the day-to-day administration of the Society in Bergen has been solved, at least temporarily. The new expanded institute, the AHKR, has agreed that its secretary, Bjørg Anja Teigland (bjorg.teigland@ahkr.uib.no) will handle the job. The Board expressed its appreciation that Bergen will continue being the seat of the Society.
 - e. The Board could therefore conclude that the financial situation has stabilized.

6. The Bergen Conference

Kersti Berg informed of the progress. The website is up and running, and three key-note speakers have been drafted: Jørgen S. Nielsen, Judith Tucker and Sabry Hafez. A fourth, Zachary Lockman, will most probably also come. The board members were urged to spread the word and organize panes that could then also be announced. Four more general panels, on migratory situations, religious transformations, language and societies, and adaptations in law and society, have been announced but are still empty.

On the financial side: The budget in its most expanded version (with the conference set in a hotel) is 245.000 NOK. The organizing committee has applied for the full amount with the Norwegian Research Council, and is awaiting their answer. In case that should fail, the Bergen University Fund and another fund attached to it, might step in with a somewhat smaller amount. Something may also be expected from the institute, AHDR. Marianne Bøgh can spend some of her working duties as a Ph.D. preparing the conference.

7. Future Activities

The Board would like to serve members more actively than has been the case.

- Organizing MA courses. This idea will now be tested: Together with the Danish Institute in Damascus and University of Toronto, Copenhagen University is making an MA course in Damascus. JSP will report back on the experience and whether it would be suitable for the NSM
- Ph.D. Courses. The Board agrees that this is a level where the national population of students is too small, and the NSM has an important role to play. The two previous courses have been successes, and another should be organized in the periode after the Bergen conference.
- Teacher training and meeting. This would be a good way to serve the members of the NSM. We will try to apply for funds. See below.
- The electronic service. At the moment, members are sent the Eurames newsletter, but little information from the other Nordic countries. The attempt at adding a Nordic component was abandoned for lack of news. The Board decided to give it another try, with Boardmembers reporting in to the editor every 6 months about new research, books, positions, etc.
- It was also decided that Kjersti will look for a student who can make a members' area on the NSM homepage with an up-to-date list of members and their fields of interest. The Board is willing to support this project financially.

8. Applications for funding.

Nordforsk has a particular grant for setting up researcher networks. NSM should try to apply for this (deadline Dec 31) to establish regular meetings between Nordic scholars. The title of this project would be "Teaching Islam and the Middle East in Nordic Countries", and we would try to include both teacher seminars, a Ph.D. seminar and an active website. Annika Rabo and Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen shall look into that.

9. Next Board meeting will be on September 23 or 24, 2010, just before the General Assembly.

10. Other business. No other business.

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