

**INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY STUDIES  
SOCIÉTÉ INTERNATIONALE DES ÉTUDES DU DIX-HUITIÈME SIÈCLE**

**Meeting of the Executive Committee, Dublin  
Thursday 28 August 2008**

Present: Keith Baker (President), Lise Andries, Dimitri Apostolopoulos, Pascal Bastien, Marc-André Bernier, Lorenzo Bianchi, Jean-Claude Bonnet, Maria Grazia Bottaro Palumbo, Andrew Carpenter, Maria Helena Carvalho dos Santos, Simon Davies, David Dunér, Bernadette Fort, Harald Heppner, Etienne Hofmann, Mihaela Irimia, Anna Grzeskowiak Krwawicz, Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink, Anne-Marie Mai, Makoto Masuda, Jean Mondot, Fritz Nagel, Alberto Postigliola, Peter Reill, Lyn Roberts, Catriona Seth, Ingi Sigurdsson, Daniele Tosato Rigo, Motoichi Terada, Wiep Van Bunge, Eva Velasco Moreno, Byron Wells, Raia Zaimova

Apologies: Wolfgang Adam, John Dunkley, Claude Lauriol, Mark Ledbury, Frank O’Gorman, Florence Lotterie, Pasi Ihalainen

**MINUTES**

**1. Welcome from the President**

The President welcomed members and delegates, and thanked Andrew Carpenter for all his work in organizing the Dublin 2008 Executive Committee meeting.

**2. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the July 14th 2007 meeting were approved with the addition of the following:

- Item 4, paragraph 6, co-option of members: this should be reworded to read ‘The Committee proposed that Marc-André Bernier be invited to serve as a co-opted member...’
- Item 6, paragraph 6, amend wording to read ‘Simon Davies, former ISECS Secretary General...’

**Preliminary remarks from the President**

The President commented on Montpellier 2007 by stating that the Congress as a whole had been very successful, but that the AGM had been unproductive. This highlights both the strengths and weaknesses of ISECS, and the issues it needs to address as an international society. The 4-yearly Congress is the most visible activity of the Society, but this is only 1 week out of 4 years and members are not always attuned to the activities of the Executive Committee and of ISECS in general that take place between congresses. The activities of the International Society and its procedures therefore need to be more transparent to members, and by the next Congress (Graz 2011) there needs to be much clearer communication between the EC and the national societies and their members. Further points to bear in mind are that overall membership of ISECS has diminished over past years so ISECS needs to present a more active face to encourage membership; not many members voted in the last EC elections, so the EC needs to work harder to achieve fuller participation. This meeting and discussions should focus on these issues, with the goal of:

- improving the visibility of ISECS / EC activities

- improving the visibility of the EC decision-making

### 3. **General Secretary's report**

Lise Andries, the General Secretary, presented her report. Two key activities since Montpellier 2007 are:

- the current EC Dublin 2008 meeting and ensuing conference on 'Ancients and Moderns in the eighteenth century'
- the forthcoming Junior Scholars Seminar 2008, to be held in Pardubice, Czech Republic, September 8th-13th. This will be on the theme of 'Friendship, conviviality, hospitality'. From the latest correspondence with the organiser, Milena Lenderova, 16 junior scholars will be attending;- 5 from the USA, 2 from Canada, 3 from France/Ile de la Réunion, 2 from Poland, 1 from Norway and 3 from the Czech Republic (see Item10)

The General Secretary's main role is the circulation of information to EC members, and she therefore asked to be notified promptly of any changes to correspondence and e-mail addresses.

The General Secretary also stated that as a member of the Committee on Communications she had participated in a meeting with the Technical Secretariat in July 2008 (see Item 11). The main points discussed were improving the website phase I content and completing phase I items, potential website phase II interactive items and the feasibility of an updated printed directory.

The President thanked the General Secretary for all her work and energy in liaising with the national societies and the Technical Secretariat.

### 4. **Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer, Maria Grazia Bottaro Palumbo, highlighted the key points from the Treasurer's Report for 2007:

- Income received for 2007 totaled £15,174.15. This included outstanding payments from 2005 and 2006, 2007 membership dues that had not yet been paid, and interest received.
- The main expenditure was the Technical Secretariat service agreement and the Junior Scholars Seminar subsidy.
- The balance on income and expenditure at the end of the year was positive, totaling £6,148.73. This was higher than anticipated as the allocation of £1,576.33 (€2,000 euros) for website phase II developments was not spent from the 2007-08 budget.
- The provisional budget for the year commencing August 1st 2008 includes a 2009 Junior Scholars Seminar subsidy of £2,800, a potential first marketing mailing for the Graz 2011 Congress contribution of £2,000, and additional website/communications contribution (for phase II) of £3,000.

Byron Wells commented that to improve transparency with national societies and individual members, the financial statement should be made available on the ISECS website. The President stated that discussion of this proposal would be deferred until Andrew Carpenter presented the Committee on Communications report (Item 11).

Questions were posed on the 2008 Budget, namely:

- the sum allocated for travel expenses (max £1,000): what this covers needs to be

specified. In the past this has included (with advance agreement) financial assistance to EC delegates from less affluent countries to attend the EC meeting, and the cost of travel only of the Technical Secretariat delegate to the EC meeting.

- website phase I and website phase II allocations: there was some discussion on whether the sums of €2,000 for website phase I and €2,000 for website phase II had been formally agreed, and if so, during which previous EC meetings.

[The Technical Secretariat has reviewed previous EC meeting minutes, and the sum of €2,000 was decided at the Halle 2005 meeting and budgeted in the 2005-2006 budget; the sum of €2,000 for website phase II was also discussed at the Halle 2005 meeting and was budgeted in the 2006-2007 budget.]

The budget was received without objection.

## **5. Technical Secretariat's Report**

The Technical Secretariat representative, Lyn Roberts, presented the report. The key work undertaken in the previous year included:

### **i) collection of 2007 membership payments**

An initial request for subscription payment and two reminders to all national societies, and individual reminders for late payments; account keeping and administration of the accounts.

### **ii) ISECS-direct updating and collection of updated data from national societies**

The ISECS-direct 2008 update procedure commenced in early March, with notification of the update sent to all societies. Following national society feedback, the procedure for updating had been simplified, and the instructions made much clearer since the 2007 update. The Technical Secretariat stressed that much time was still spent in dealing with those national societies who did not reply to emails to acknowledge receipt of the CDs of data, or communicate any problems that they were encountering. The Technical Secretariat suggested a form of incentive payment or penalty payment to those societies who had sent in / not sent in the updated membership on time. In view of the time spent on contacting societies as above, the Technical Secretariat also suggested an update of ISECS-direct every 2 years, instead of every four (previously), and the annual update proposed in the current agreement.

### **iii) ISECS website updating and maintenance, additional content updating**

Updating national society contact details; translating and adding new pages in French (for ISECS-direct), adding links to research centres.

Certain delegates commented encountered difficulties with the updating procedure for ISECS-direct. This included a delegate who said the CD would not open, and a delegate reporting that previously deleted members were still appearing on the 2008 CD. None of these issues had been communicated directly to the Technical Secretariat during the process, however. Lyn Roberts asked members to contact the Technical Secretariat outlining these problems so that they could be investigated.

(see also Item 11 (ii) for further discussion on ISECS-direct).

The President noted that there is a perception amongst some EC members that the charges of the Technical Secretariat are high, whereas the Technical Secretariat's report

states that more hours are spent on ISECS work than are covered by the Service Agreement of £5,287.50, and that a subsidy of £6,500 has been sought from the Voltaire Foundation's Besterman Fund to cover this. The President thought it important that members understand how the Service Agreement is spent and that a fuller breakdown of costs was needed.

The President confirmed that the Service Agreement between ISECS and the Voltaire Foundation renewed at Montpellier was for four years. He agreed that it should be placed on the website.

## **6. ISECS Graz 2011 Congress**

Harald Heppner presented the Austrian Society's plans for the 13th Congress of the Enlightenment / 13th Congrès des Lumières to be held at Graz in 2011. The Congress will start on Monday, July 25th 2011 and end on Friday, July 29th 2011. The outgoing EC meeting will take place on Sunday, July 24th, with the incoming EC meeting taking place on Saturday, July 30th.

The organisations involved in the Congress are:

- ISECS
- University of Graz
- University of Music and Dramatic Art, Graz

The University of Graz will not charge for meeting rooms and technical support.

### **(i) Conference theme**

The suggested conference theme is 'Conceptions and expectations for the future' / 'Conceptions et attentes de l'avenir'.

A full discussion ensued on the theme; broad comments were that the theme was inclusive but perhaps too broad. Harald Heppner further suggested including a sub-theme or focus on 'Central and Eastern Europe in the era of Enlightenment' / 'L'Europe centrale et orientale au temps des Lumières', as Graz lies at the centre of this large geographical area. Furthermore, there would be greater possibilities for financial assistance from Austrian institutions if such a focus were included. Further discussion ensued on the main theme and proposed sub-theme, how and whether they would work together, or whether the sub-theme should constitute a plenary session instead. The President said that, in his view, the sub-theme would be a very good means of encouraging central and eastern European colleagues to attend and present at ISECS. However, he felt that as part of the main theme, 'Central and Eastern Europe in the era of Enlightenment' / 'L'Europe centrale et orientale au temps des Lumières' would be too restrictive. It was suggested that the sub-theme should not be too tightly linked to the main theme.

The President suggested and it was agreed that Harald Heppner would hold a meeting during the lunchtime on Friday August 28th, open to all EC delegates, to discuss the Graz 2011 conference theme and title.

It was further agreed that German would be the third official language of the Congress, that all Congress notices would therefore be trilingual (English, French, German), and that all Congress notices should be proofread by native speakers. The organising committee, headed by Harald Heppner, would be responsible for providing the

originating copy in all three languages.

Harald Heppner stated that he will have more information on organisational issues over the coming months, and will communicate this to the President, General Secretary, Technical Secretariat and Committee on Communications. A further presentation will take place at the next EC meeting.

#### **(ii) Financial aspects**

Harald Heppner stated that it is too early to provide details, but that the costs would be lower than for the Montpellier congress. Harald Heppner is also in contact with local businesses and institutions about potential sponsorship.

A projected budget and provisional cost of inscription / accommodation costs will form part of the presentation at the next EC meeting (Graz 2009).

#### **(iii) Bursaries for Graz 2011**

Keith Baker presented the current system for bursaries: these are intended to support those scholars wishing to attend the congress who would not normally have the funds to do so. Such scholars usually come from countries of weaker currencies. It was pointed out that for the Montpellier congress, most bursaries were given to scholars who did not come from countries of weaker currencies. It was further proposed that bursary applications should be considered on their own merit, not simply on the applicant's country of origin. Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink added that it could be possible to distinguish between two types of bursaries:

1. for young scholars from any country who may not have the financial means to attend the Congress
2. for scholars of any age who come from countries of weaker currencies, e.g. Africa, Eastern Europe, Latin America

The President proposed a sub-committee consisting of Lise Andries, Jean-Claude Bonnet and Byron Wells to discuss and propose the criteria and procedures for inviting and evaluating bursary applications. The sub-committee will report at the next EC meeting in 2009.

### **7. Meeting of the EC in Graz, 2009**

The next EC meeting will take place in Graz, Austria. The EC meeting will take place on Thursday, August 27<sup>th</sup> 2009, followed by a conference on Friday, August 28<sup>th</sup> 2009 and a cultural visit on Saturday, August 29<sup>th</sup> 2009. The topic/theme of the conference will be 'Scholars' careers in the era of Enlightenment: an international comparison'. Harald Heppner believes that accommodation will cost c.45-80 Euros per night, and he will try to obtain financial assistance for other meeting expenses. At the same time Harald Heppner will investigate costs for accommodation for the 2011 Congress.

### **8. Future EC meetings**

Anne-Marie Mai proposed that the Danish Society (or the joint Nordic societies) would host the 2010 EC meeting at the end of August, which could be combined with the annual meeting of the Danish Society itself. The President was very supportive of combining the EC meeting with a national society meeting as it aids the visibility of ISECS. He further proposed that future EC meetings should be organised in this way. Anne-Marie Mai suggested the theme of 'Satire / humour in the eighteenth-century', and added that there was a possibility of financial support from the University of Southern

Denmark. Anne-Marie Mai is invited to present a fuller proposal at the next EC meeting.

## **9. ISECS Congress 2015 - Preliminary Proposal**

Wiep van Bunge presented the Dutch-Belgian Society's proposal to host the ISECS Congress in 2015. The Dutch-Belgian Society has never hosted the Congress, is a growing society, and could obtain financial support from a local company. A discussion ensued on i) the organisation of congresses, and ii) the procedure for approving congress proposals.

### **i) Organisation of congresses**

It is not essential but beneficial to involve a university as co-host of a congress, especially from an academic perspective; financial responsibility ultimately rests with the organiser(s); keeping down the cost of accommodation is important (Montpellier accommodation cost c.150 euros for the week), and it is beneficial for all meetings to take place on one main site.

### **ii) Procedures for proposing and hosting a congress**

The procedure for proposing and gaining approval for hosting a congress is as follows: the proposing society needs to present a full proposal to the EC one year before a congress year, so that the EC can approve the proposal and recommend the proposal at the ISECS AGM. So for the Dutch-Belgian Society, the full proposal would need to be presented in 2010 prior to being presented at the AGM of the Graz 2011 Congress. The President added that the Dutch-Belgian Society's proposal is very attractive, and he would welcome a more detailed proposal presentation at the 2009 EC meeting. In the interim, other delegates are welcome to submit alternative proposals for 2015.

## **10. Junior Scholars Seminars**

Lise Andries had received a report from Milena Lenderova, the organiser of the 2008 Junior Scholars Seminar. The allotted £2,800 had been received and the additional £1,000 approved at the Montpellier 2007 EC meeting would be needed. This would not cover the total costs estimated at £4,800. Lise Andries stated that Milena Lenderova was not asking for more financial aid from ISECS, and it was suggested that Milena Lenderova explain to seminar candidates that only a part of their travel costs would be paid by ISECS. A discussion ensued on the costs for candidates attending the Junior Scholar Seminars. Marc André Bernier had compiled a guide on organising Junior Scholars Seminars in 2007 which had been sent to Lise Andries and Jean Mondot, and was also sent by Lise Andries to Milena Lenderova. It was suggested that it should be placed on the ISECS website. The President concluded that ISECS had committed £3,800 to this year's seminar; Milena Lenderova was not asking for any further financial assistance, so no further action from ISECS is needed.

### **i) Future Junior Scholars Seminars**

Jean Mondot, as chair of the Junior Scholars Seminars sub-committee, presented an oral report. He stressed two important issues, a) the scheduling and organisation of future seminars, and b) publishing the seminars.

#### **a) Scheduling and organisation of future seminars**

- 2010 will be hosted by the Centre for Eighteenth-Century Studies (CECS), Queen's University, Belfast, organised by Simon Davies. CECS would fund the accommodation and meals, and the £2,800 subvention would be used for travel

costs. The proposed theme is 'Cultural Intermediaries'.

- 2011 will be in Graz, as part of the Congress.
- 2009: a slot still remains for 2009 for which an informal proposal had been received from the Portuguese Society, and discussion ensued. The President noted that firm proposals circulated prior to EC meetings are needed, but that in this exceptional situation the EC would accept electronic submission of a full formal proposal from the Portuguese Society within the next few weeks.

#### **b) Publishing Junior Scholars Seminars**

Jean Mondot stated that Champion publishes the proceedings of the seminars. Two seminar proceedings are already published, two are in production and a further two are at an earlier stage. In total, Champion will have published ten publications associated with ISECS. Future publications could necessitate a subvention to Champion. The President stated that this would be deferred to the discussion on the budget.

### **11. Committee on Communications report**

Andrew Carpenter, chair of the Committee on Communications, circulated a report and presented two main issues, i) the website, and the website as a means of improving communication between ISECS and national societies/their members and ii) ISECS-direct online and the printed directory.

#### **i) The ISECS website**

The website is a powerful vehicle for communicating with members, and needs more content for the existing sections. The Committee proposed the appointment of a designated Content Editor, who would find, collect, edit and collate information on ISECS activities, on conferences, on research initiatives and on other matters of interest to eighteenth-century scholars. The Content Editor would be a young bilingual researcher, and would need financial reward. It was further proposed that each national society appoint a designated content provider who would liaise with the Content Editor. An initial project would be for each national society to write a 150-word profile of the society, which would be posted on the website.

The website needs further sections, and the following are proposed:

- Best New Books columns (one English, one French)
- Top Tips for Research column
- Online Research Tips column
- ISECS members overview on their research projects
- Junior Scholars column, with a blog or social networking aspect

Content for Best New Books, Top Tips for Research, Online Research Tips and ISECS member overviews of their research projects would form part of website phase I.

The interactive blog or social networking proposed for the Junior Scholars column would need development and would form part of website phase II.

#### **ii) ISECS-direct online and the printed directory**

##### **a) Printed directory**

The President explained that, as requested at the Montpellier AGM, the EC needed once again to investigate the feasibility of producing a printed directory. Some members of the

Society present at the AGM preferred a printed directory as it is a symbolic and tangible product; others felt that a printed directory is better for those members who may not have equal access to the internet. In the following discussion, however, it was noted that the vast majority of members do now have ready access to the internet, so this is not a reason in itself to produce a printed directory. Andrew Carpenter stated that the Committee on Communications recommended an online directory only (i.e. ISECS-direct), but would be happy to further explore the possibility of a printed directory.

Andrew Carpenter reported that the Technical Secretariat estimates that the cost of producing an updated printed directory of the 7,500 current members of ISECS would be in the region of £13,000, which covers project management, typesetting, paper, printing, binding and delivery to a UK warehouse. Postage from the UK would be additional to this. It was suggested that an alternative would be to produce PDFs of the directory that could be disseminated to national societies so that they could print locally. Lyn Roberts explained that this option would probably not be much cheaper for the following reasons:

- ISECS-direct is an electronic database of information, and the data is stored differently in a database of this nature than for data that is to appear in print format
- the majority of the costs involve reformatting the data from the ISECS-direct database and in typesetting the data so that it is in a 'directory' format.
- user instructions would be needed, as well as a facility for answering queries from national societies on printing the directory, which would involve time and thus additional costs

A full discussion ensued on whether to pursue investigations of costs for a printed directory, or whether to place available resources into the online directory (ISECS-direct).

A motion was passed not to commit £13,000 to a new printed directory, but if a cheaper solution is found, then an updated printed directory could be proposed by the Committee on Communications at the next EC meeting.

#### **b) ISECS-direct**

The updating process for ISECS-direct in 2008 took 6 months and therefore involved much cost to the Technical Secretariat (see Item 5 (ii)). The President did not accept the Technical Secretariat's proposal to update of ISECS-direct every two years, and stated that the online directory should be updated on an annual basis. This was agreed by a majority vote.

Certain societies were concerned about the amount of work an annual update would entail. Lise Andries stated that the CD is complex and, for larger societies, membership data took many hours to update. Andrew Carpenter stated that the Committee on Communications would prefer a simpler method of membership data cleaning and submission, and added that Technical Secretariat had proposed investigating an alternative submission by Excel. Lyn Roberts confirmed that the feasibility of submitting data by Excel is currently being investigated by the Technical Secretariat.

It was agreed not to pursue the Technical Secretariat's suggestion of an incentive payment or penalty payment to those societies who had sent in / not sent in the updated membership on time.

The President asked the Committee on Communications to explore with the Technical Secretariat the possibility of national societies having direct access to the ISECS-direct database so that they can complete out their updating online. Andrew Carpenter responded that the Committee on Communications will continue to work with the Technical Secretariat on improving ISECS-direct but that the Committee will also investigate other database models and providers. The next meeting of the Committee on Communications and the Technical Secretariat is scheduled for November 6th 2008.

## **12. Summary of financial points arising from the meeting**

The President outlined three key issues that needed discussion:

- a) the proposed Content Editor
- b) posting ISECS financial matters on the website
- c) more detailed accounting from the Technical Secretariat of the services provided

### **a) Content Editor**

The proposal for a website Content Editor was approved. The President proposed a maximum sum of £5,000 for this financial year (2008-2009) for the remuneration of the Content Editor, and this sum was approved.

### **b) Posting ISECS financial matters on the website**

The President invited Byron Wells to reintroduce his proposal that the ISECS budget be put on the website, with explanations on the budgeted items to be provided by the President and the Treasurer. The explanation would include the point that the statutes dictate that ISECS needs to hold reserves that would allow the organisation to run for 3 years. This proposal was approved.

### **c) Accounting of the Technical Secretariat services provided**

The President undertook to write to the Voltaire Foundation (the Technical Secretariat) to request a full account of how the service agreement moneys are allocated. This would be reported at the next EC meeting.

## **13. Other business**

Before the meeting closed, the following items were presented:

- The Secretary General noted that the Slovenian Society joined from the end of 2007, and that their constitution conforms to the ISECS constitution.
- The Secretary General requests that delegates email her suggestions for the next EC meeting agenda.
- The President stated that nominees for the next Executive Committee are needed for the next EC meeting (Graz 2009)

### **Agenda items outstanding:**

- ISECS publications.

The meeting ended at 5.25pm.

Keith Baker, President  
Lise Andries, Secretary General