

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

**Meeting of the Executive Committee, Montpellier
Saturday 14 July 2007**

Present: Keith Baker (President), Lise Andries, Dimitri Apostolopoulos, Irina Badescu, Marc-André Bernier, Lorenzo Bianchi, Jean-Claude Bonnet, Maria Grazia Bottaro Palumbo, Andrew Carpenter, Simon Davies, John Dunkley, Janet Godden, Harald Heppner, Etienne Hofmann, Pasi Ihalainen, Claude Lauriol, Mark Ledbury, Milena Lenderová, Cristina del Melo, Jean Mondot, Fritz Nagel, Birgitta Berglund Nilsen, Alberto Postigliola, Lyn Roberts, Ingi Sigurdsson, Motoichi Terada, Eva Velasco, Rai Zaimova

Apologies: Wolfgang Adam, Bernadette Fort, Florence Lotterie, Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink, Frank O’Gorman, Anne-Marie Mai, Anna Krwawicz

MINUTES

Lise Andries (Secretary General) undertook to compile an email circulation list similar to that used by the previous committee, and stressed the importance of providing up-to-date email contact details of committee members.

Dimitri Apostolopoulos and Alberto Postigliola reported that they had been appointed delegates of the Greek and Italian Societies respectively for the period 2007-2011.

1. Welcome from the President

The President welcomed members and delegates to the first meeting of the new Executive Committee.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the July 8th meeting of the outgoing committee were approved with the addition of point 11, welcoming the Slovenian Society to the International Society.

3. Future meetings

The 2008 Executive Committee Meeting will take place in Dublin, organized by Andrew Carpenter. The preferred dates are August 27th-30th 2008, with September 3rd-6th as an alternative. It will be hosted by the Royal Irish Academy with financial contributions from Trinity College Dublin and University College Dublin. The proposed programme is as follows: Day 1 colloquium, Day 2, Executive Committee meeting, Day 3 excursion to Queen’s University Belfast (organized by Simon Davies, subject to available conference facilities)

The cost of accommodation and travel will be born by individual members, with the possibility of financial aid for delegates from countries with weaker currencies.

The proposed colloquium theme is ‘Ancients and moderns in the eighteenth century’. Andrew Carpenter will circulate an initial plan and call for papers to the Executive Committee within the next 4 weeks.

The 2009 Executive Meeting will take place in Graz, hosted by the Austrian Society. The

Austrian Society will circulate a proposal, including suggested dates, prior to the 2008 Dublin meeting.

4. Co-option of members

The constitution allows the Executive Committee to co-opt up to two members for one 4 year term each so as to:

- acknowledge an individual's contribution to the Society
- achieve a geographical balance in the make-up of the Executive Committee

The President proposed that Pasi Ihalainen be invited to serve as a co-opted member. The Executive Committee supported this proposal and Pasi Ihalainen accepted the invitation.

The President proposed that Deidre Dawson also be invited to serve as a co-opted member but reported that she had expressed some hesitations due to other commitments.

5. 2011 Congress in Graz

The Austrian Society will host the 2011 Congress in the university town of Graz in mid-late July. The Executive Committee meeting will take place on the Sunday, with the conference starting on the Monday. The provisional dates are w/c July 17th or w/c July 24th, depending on the availability of conference facilities. A preference for the w/c July 24th was expressed. The proposed conference theme is 'The Enlightenment and responsibility for the future'. Discussion ensued on the importance of a broad and inclusive theme, and the point was made that it is not mandatory for all papers to conform to the conference theme. It was agreed that a broad title is preferable and delegates were asked to contact Harald Heppner with suggested titles. Harald Heppner will propose an exact title and brief overview of the 2011 Congress theme at the next Executive Committee meeting.

A suggestion was made to limit the number of times participants may present at the 2011 Congress, as has been customary in the past. Some participants presented several papers at the 2007 Congress.

The organizing committee of the 2007 Montpellier Congress offered to share their experiences with the Austrian Society, which was warmly accepted.

6. The ISECS budget

The President presented the budget for 2007-2008, initially discussed at the meeting of outgoing committee on July 8th. As several of the ensuing agenda items would affect the budget, Keith Baker stated that decisions under this item would be provisional, with the final decision on budget figures left to the end of the meeting.

The Executive Committee confirmed the strategy agreed by the previous committee that the Society's reserve must be x3 the annual expenditure.

The brought-forward balance from 2006-2007 would be checked. It was noted that some additional costs had been incurred during the Montpellier Congress and these would need to be added.

The President reported that the Voltaire Foundation had asked for an additional £1000

per annum to fund the services of the Technical Secretariat on account of inflation and costs running higher than agreed. An increase had been proposed by the outgoing committee of £500 per annum for the next 2 years (2007-2008; 2008-2009) and £1000 per annum for the ensuing 2 years (2009-2010; 2010-2011).

Janet Godden explained that the most important cost was that of staff time at the Voltaire Foundation. Much more time was taken than originally anticipated on dealing with matters such as:

- communicating with individual societies, several of whom did not reply after 3 emails. With 30 societies this can mean 90 emails on routine business matters such as subscription payments.
- updates to the electronic directory (ISECS-Direct) in autumn 2006. Many societies did not complete the necessary data-cleaning work as requested.
- the agreement also covered updating the website and obtaining 'permission to email' forms which are legally essential for electronic voting.

She added that the work of the Secretariat had cost the Voltaire Foundation more than the budgeted amount in the year 2006/07.

A former committee secretary noted that non-communication from some societies has been an ongoing problem for several years, and that it is sometimes those societies who do not promptly reply to requests that are often the most willing to complain.

Janet Godden concluded that what was needed, as said in the past, was for each society to nominate one contact person for the Technical Secretariat, who can communicate in English and has regular access to email.

There was a proposal to present the budget as a deficit or neutral budget as this may galvanize individual societies into raising money in their respective countries. The Treasurer's view differed in that the Society's budget should be transparent and that a neutral or deficit budget would present a poor image of the Society to its members. It was then suggested that the presented reserve could be divided into designated sums for specified future expenditure.

7. **The ISECS website**

Emphasizing the crucial importance of the website for the Society's communications and conduct of its business, the President proposed that expenditure for the development of the website (website phase II) proceed as planned, and not be suspended as suggested by the outgoing committee. He then proposed the setting-up of a website sub-committee to define priorities for website development and to facilitate a clearer flow of information and decisions. The broad remit of the website sub-committee is to:

- define priorities for website development
- communicate these priorities to the Technical Secretariat and review estimates of the costs of implementation to be provided by the Technical Secretariat
- take action as appropriate after consultation with the officers of the Society.

Keith Baker proposed Andrew Carpenter as the chair with Mark Ledbury and Lise Andries as serving members, with the committee given the ability to co-opt up to two further members from ISECS for technical support. The website sub-committee will report twice-yearly to the Executive Committee. Andrew Carpenter invited members to contact him by email with suggestions for the website.

Establishment of the sub-committee with the nominated serving members was unanimously agreed. It was agreed that it would be called the Committee on Communications.

The President's initial suggestion for investigation by the website sub-committee is for a system whereby individual societies can post information directly on to the ISECS website. This would save time, as the information would not go through the Technical Secretariat, and it would also ensure that national societies would take greater responsibility for posting and disseminating their notices. A point was raised that some societies are more active than others, and would have more information to post, so space may need to be allocated.

Noting that the Executive Committee had been charged by the General Assembly to consider means and costs of making a printed directory available to members, Keith Baker proposed that this issue be referred to the new Committee on Communications, which would report on the matter for discussion at the next meeting of the Executive Committee. Several possibilities need to be considered and investigated by the website sub-committee, ranging from:

- PDF versions to be made available to national societies by the Technical Secretariat for them to print and disseminate to individual members
- PDF versions to be made directly available in print form to individual members
- producing a printed volume for sale to individual members

Janet Godden stated that producing the last printed directory in 2003 cost c. £16,000 plus postage; 3,000 copies were printed for ISECS members and a further 1,000 copies were printed for ad-hoc orders, although few were received.

Keith Baker closed the discussion on the printed directory by stating that it is clearly a considerable cost.

In view of the urgency of these matters, the President called for a vote on three points:

- the formation of the Committee on Communications as stated
- Andrew Carpenter to be asked to provide a progress report to the Bureau in 6 months
- adding £3,000 from surplus for 2006-2007 to website phase II development money in order to improve communications and negotiate costs for this with the Voltaire Foundation

These proposals were agreed unanimously.

8. ISECS elections

The election results had been reported to the outgoing committee and the General Assembly and would shortly be posted on the website.

The President stated that there was a much lower turn-out of voters than expected. To address this issue Keith Baker wants more members to register to vote electronically. This entails each member's completing a legally required form giving permission for use of their email address and it is the responsibility of each national society on how to implement this. Keith Baker suggested that it might be possible to make this permission part of an annual subscription form for members of each society. Views were expressed that some members found the voting instructions unclear, and that there could be technical differences that depended on the type of computer used.

It was pointed out that although the number of junior scholars attending the Congress has increased, there is still a low turnout of junior scholars present at the AGM. It is important for more junior scholars and younger members of ISECS to become involved

in running the Society, and it was suggested that:

- the Executive Committee have a position for 1 postgraduate or postdoctoral student
- national Societies have a position for 1 postgraduate or postdoctoral student on their own committees

Issues surrounding the ability of junior scholars to serve for 4 years and raise the necessary funds were discussed. It was agreed to put this as an agenda item for the next meeting.

9. **Seminars for junior scholars**

2008 junior scholars seminar

The Committee received a proposal from Milena Lenderová of the Czech Society to host the 2008 junior scholars seminar at the château of Pardubice (c. 80km from Prague). The theme of the seminar would be 'L'hospitalité au 18^e siècle'. The suggested dates were from September 8th to 12th 2008.

The budgeted cost of board and lodging for 15 participants for 6 days is €2000, with €1000 of this cost already promised by the university. Milena Lenderová said that the Czech Society does not have the means to provide any financial support, but there could be other possible contributors.

There was a proposal that ISECS provide the balance of £1000 as the Czech Society is not cash-rich. A discussion ensued on whether the amount budgeted for travel costs (£2,800) would be sufficient.

Organizing future young scholars seminars

The President suggested that proposals for seminars should be submitted 2 years in advance. This would allow for a fuller discussion on the budget and for the organizers to obtain any necessary supplementary funds. Keith Baker proposed a junior scholars seminar sub-committee led by Jean Mondot, with Marc-André Bernier as serving member with the option to invite other members to join the committee. The sub-committee would:

- request seminar proposals
- prepare advice notes, including a budget template
- prepare interim reports for the Executive Committee

A unanimous vote was passed in support of setting up a junior scholar seminar sub-committee with the above remit.

A unanimous vote was passed in support of the Czech proposal to host the 2008 seminar. Budgetary issues were again discussed, and it was agreed to return to this at the end of the meeting (ISECS budget resumed).

It was noted that other young scholars seminar proposals had been received from Vienna and Portugal during the AGM, and Mark Ledbury proposed the Clark Institute, Williamstown for a future seminar. Mark Ledbury also commented that seminars held in more cash-rich countries/institutions such as the Clark could generate a financial surplus, thereby spreading the overall cost to ISECS across a number of years.

10. **ISECS publications**

Keith Baker proposed a publications sub-committee headed by Jean-Claude Bonnet. The

sub-committee's remit would be to:

- understand the aims of the Society's publications and how they should be organized, namely the electronic journal and the volumes published by Champion.

Jean-Claude Bonnet stressed that this would be an oversight sub-committee and would not take the role of the editorial committees for the publications. He also pointed out that Champion volumes were not always produced to the highest quality, and that conference speakers whose papers would appear in a volume should be notified beforehand, as this would change the nature of their paper. The Bulgarian delegate reminded members that it is cheaper to print in Eastern Europe.

A unanimous vote was passed in support of setting up the publications sub-committee, with Jean-Claude Bonnet and Keith Baker to discuss other invited members.

11. **Investment funds**

Keith Baker reviewed the issue of investment funds that had also been discussed during the outgoing committee on July 8th. The Executive Committee wanted to explore the possibility of achieving a higher return for the ISECS invested funds, currently held by Oxford University. This is a complicated area involving the legal status of ISECS. Keith Baker proposed a finance sub-committee chaired by Maria Grazia Bottaro Palumbo with Keith Baker as a member to investigate and report at the next meeting on:

- whether the funds can be invested elsewhere
- the costs, risks and implications of such a move

A unanimous vote was passed in support of setting up the finance sub-committee.

12. **Other business**

The President noted that an outstanding item is the rewording of the ISECS bylaws concerning the directory, which cannot be finalized until the future of the directory has been agreed. This will be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

John Dunkley presented a joint research programme by the British, French and Irish Societies entitled 'Cultural transfers and circulation of knowledge in the Age of the Enlightenment'. As part of the programme a series of three symposia has been organized for 2008, 2009 and 2010. John Dunkley requested €1500 from ISECS in financial support for the symposia. A discussion ensued and members were reminded that supporting such research seminars was listed as a purpose of the society in the new statutes in the constitution.

It was pointed out that other seminars involving other societies are going forward without additional funding.

It was then suggested that any future proposal affecting the budget should not come under 'Other business', and should be circulated well before the meeting of the Executive Committee.

There was also concern over where this funding would be taken from, and Keith Baker said that it would have to be taken from the 2006-2007 surplus. On a vote whether to provide financial support for this series of symposia, a majority of voters abstained and the proposal was not passed. The President expressed regret to the British, French and Irish Societies that no financial support could be made, and stressed the Executive Committee's sympathy for the aims of the symposia.

13. ISECS budget (resumed)

With consideration of all agenda items affecting the budget concluded, discussion on the 2007-2008 budget was resumed and Keith Baker proposed the following amendments to the circulated budget:

- the Service Agreement increased by £500 plus VAT, to be taken from the 2006-2007 surplus
- the rest of the surplus held in reserve for distribution as appropriate to support (i) development of the website under the direction of the Committee on Communications and (ii) additional support for the 2008 junior scholars seminar in the Czech Republic (to a maximum of £1000 in accordance with the original proposal).

The proposed amendments were accepted and the budget was unanimously approved.

The meeting ended at 1.05pm.

Keith Baker, President
Lise Andries, Secretary General

DRAFT