

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY STUDIES

SOCIÉTÉ INTERNATIONALE D'ÉTUDE DU DIX-HUITIÈME SIÈCLE

**General Assembly, Montpellier
Thursday 12 July 2007**

MINUTES

1. The President, Jean Mondot, opened the meeting at 11 a.m. He welcomed members to the meeting and outlined the agenda. He thanked Claude Lauriol and his colleagues for an excellently organised Congress.
2. **Minutes of the General Assembly in Los Angeles (7 August 2003)**
Approved.
3. **Secretary General's report**
Deidre Dawson described the principal activities of the Executive Committee over the previous four years, which were as follows.
 - _ The Junior Scholars' seminars had been encouraged and financially supported, four seminars having taken place.
 - _ ISECS publication activity had increased, with both the Champion printed publications of the transactions of some of the Junior Scholars' seminars and the new on-line review inaugurated in 2006.
 - The design and content of the website had been improved (although much remained to be done).
 - The ISECS Directory was now entirely electronic, and members were asked to report any problems experienced so that these could be put right.Several members regretted the fact that the Directory was now entirely electronic: it was argued that not everyone had a computer, and that the printed Directory was valuable as a visible presence of the International Society; it was also often more convenient to use. Others supported the decision taken in Dublin to invest in other activities, notably the Junior Scholars' seminars, and argued that the printed Directory was expensive and dated rapidly. On a majority vote, with 6 members abstaining and 9 voting against, it was agreed to ask the incoming Executive Committee to explore once more the technical and financial possibilities of producing a short run print edition of the Directory for those who wanted it (as in 2003) either in conventional print form or as pdfs.
4. **Treasurer's report**
Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink reported a positive balance at the end of the four-year period, with the reserves now standing at £49,000. The annual subscription per individual member stood at £1.30. The Society's income was made up of subscriptions paid by

constituent societies, interest and bursary contributions. Expenditure was on the administrative, financial and electronic services of the Technical Secretariat, support for the Junior Scholars' seminars; support for the travel and accommodation costs of members of the Executive Committee from countries with weak currencies and other authorised travel costs. He emphasised the fact that, with the exception of the colleagues already mentioned, no expenses are paid for members and delegates attending meetings of the Executive Committee.

Certain constituent societies who had failed to pay any subscriptions for 3 years, despite frequent reminders, had been temporarily suspended from the International Society.

The accounts were approved with one vote against and no abstentions.

5. **Report of the Technical Secretariat**

The Technical Secretariat submits a written report on activities undertaken under the terms of the agreement with ISECS to each meeting of the Executive Committee. These duties are subsumed under the separate reports of the Secretary and the Treasurer to this meeting, also under the items on the website and the elections..

6. **Revision of the statutes and by-laws proposed by the Executive Committee**

It was suggested that this item should not be considered since the full revisions had not been circulated to all members three months in advance of the meeting as required by the Statutes. In response it was argued that the revisions had been circulated to all societies and their delegates within the prescribed period, and that in view of the high cost of circulating all members societies had a role to play in keeping their members informed. The proposals were the work of a small sub committee chaired by Alberto Postigliola as past president, and they had been discussed at the Executive Committee meetings of 2005 and 2006, whose minutes were available on the ISECS website. On a majority vote, with 3 abstentions and 7 members voting against, it was agreed that the proposed revisions should be considered at the current meeting.

The proposals were agreed, with the exception of those relating to a printed version of the Directory which will be held in abeyance pending further discussion of that matter.

7. **Formation of new constituent society**

The incoming Secretary General, Lise Andries, reported the formation in May 2007 of the new Slovene Society with 53 members. Harald Heppner, who had been instrumental in the formation of the society, spoke in its favour. The new Slovene Society was accepted unanimously.

8. **Results of the elections to the Executive Committee for 2007-11**

Jean Mondot announced the election results and congratulated those who had been elected to the Executive Committee.

A total of 496 votes had been cast, 330 on-line and 166 by post. Thirty-five invalid postal votes had been discounted (no name given on outer envelope; name illegible; or name not on electoral register). Five electronic ballots were discounted because a postal ballot had been received from the same voter, giving a total of 456 valid ballots.

The elected officers, with votes cast, were as follows: President: Keith Michael Baker (397); 1st Vice President: Andrew Carpenter (249); 2nd Vice Presidents: Jean-Claude Bonnet (339) and Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink (270); Secretary General: Lise Andries (368); Assistant Secretary: Wolfgang Adam (365); Treasurer: Maria Grazia Bottaro Palumbo (241); Assistant Treasurer: Etienne Hoffman (211).

The eight elected members were as follows: Lorenzo Bianchi (233), Anna Grzeskowiak-Krwawicz (222), Mark Ledbury (247), Florence Lotterie (243), Anne-Marie Mai (233), Fritz Nagel (255), Frank O'Gorman (217), Motoichi Terada (245).

Jean Mondot reported that electoral turnout had been disappointing, and improving communication with members must be a priority for the incoming committee. Some members had experienced difficulty with the electronic ballot, but many had failed to realise in time that advance registration was necessary. Increasing the numbers of members willing to communicate their email addresses would be another priority.

The meeting was adjourned at 2.30 p.m. and resumed at 4.00 p.m.

The incoming president, Keith Baker, took the chair. He said that he had been present as a graduate student at the founding meeting at Coppet, and evoked the transformation of Enlightenment Studies over the intervening years. Much of this success he felt had been due to the presence of the International Society. He thought it essential that the Society continue to move forward and would welcome positive suggestions from all members.

9. **The ISECS website**

Mark Ledbury reported that much had happened since 2003. The website had been redesigned and the basic infrastructure now exists. The principal problem remaining is filling the website with meaningful content and ensuring that it is kept up to date and that there is enough on it to attract attention.

Since the role of the constituent societies is pivotal in this regard, the President stressed the importance of moving as quickly as possible to a position where designated officers of the societies could be given passwords enabling them to post their own information. It was also felt important to include items of general interest and not to seem to duplicate the websites of the individual societies. Societies need to know who is responsible for the content of the website, and it was suggested that each society be encouraged to appoint its own web-link officer.

10. **Publications**

It was noted that, as already reported by the Secretary, the Society now had a print publication series, published by Honoré Champion ('International Eighteenth-Century'), and the new on-line electronic journal ('International Review of Eighteenth-Century Studies'), of which the intention was that each issue would be created by one of the national societies.

11. **Junior Scholars' seminars**

Catriona Seth reported on the successful seminar held in Montpellier immediately before the Congress. Fifteen participants had been drawn from 10 nationalities, and the theme had been 'Image and the body'. The possibility was put forward of a seminar in the Czech republic in 2008, and suggestions were made of Vienna and Lisbon for future years.

It was noted that the funds allocated by the Executive Committee (£2,800) were insufficient to cover travel and subsistence costs for all participants. Early identification of host societies and seminar organisers would allow more time for the raising of additional funds. It was thought that many universities would be willing to support a seminar, but if approached with only a year's notice they would have difficulty providing additional funding because their available funds would be likely to be already committed. It was therefore agreed that the Executive Committee would send out an appeal for proposals to offer Junior Scholars' Seminars, and would also draw up a list of points for the guidance of those contemplating organising future seminars.

12. **International Congress, 2007**

The Assembly re-stated its appreciation of the work of the organising committee, and its pleasure at meeting in Montpellier.

13. **International Congress, 2011**

Harald Heppner confirmed that the Thirteenth International Congress would be in Graz, in July 2011, the precise dates yet to be specified. The theme of the Congress would be: 'Enlightenment and responsibility for the future.' The exact wording of the title was still to be agreed.

14. **Future meetings of the Executive Committee**

These would be held in Dublin in 2008 and Graz in 2009.

15. **New activities**

Suggestions from Alberto Postigliola would be considered by the Executive Committee.

16. **Other business**

There was none.

The President thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 5.15 p.m.