

Minutes of the NSM board meeting, Lund, February 12, 2011

Present: Marianne Bøe, Jørgen Jensehaugen, Dietrich Jung, Hannu Juusola, Ehab Galal, Pernilla Myrne, Leif Stenberg

1. Introduction and approval of agenda.
The board agreed upon an agenda.
Secretary: Pernilla Myrne
2. Brief reports from individual countries.
Denmark: In Odense, a position as professor in Middle East Studies, focusing on the modern ME, is announced. The centre for ME studies has organized an exchange program with Jordan for MA studies, financed by a grant from the Danish FM.
Sweden: Lund is building up the new centre for ME research with several positions as researchers, involving areas previously neglected in ME studies, such as natural sciences. In Sweden, students from abroad have to pay a large fee from 2011, which reduces the number of students considerably.
Norway: In Bergen, the centre for ME studies has lost almost all its funding. There is no bachelor degree in ME studies any longer, but there are still 15 PhD students.
Finland: In Helsinki, the dep. Of world cultures will work towards area studies and put more emphasis on the modern ME.
3. NSM administration
The Centre for Middle Eastern studies in Lund is willing to take on the administration of NSM, as the centre in Bergen has lost its funding. The Board agreed and delegated the responsibility for the details to Leif Stenberg and Marianne Bøe. Administration of the membership fees and the website are urgent issues, as is the nomination of an auditor.
4. Nordforsk funding for research network in the Nordic countries
The deadline for this year's proposal is in the beginning of April. The former Board applied last year, but the project plan was rejected and needs reworking. The Board discussed whether completing a new proposal to April is feasibly, considering that none of the new board members has had time to think about the project. The Board decided that the Board members will contemplate the last year's project plan and answer before February 21 whether they think it is feasible or not.
5. Substitute for Board members
The question of substitutes for absent Board members was raised at the General Assembly. The Board found no objection to substitutes, appointed by the absent member, but concluded that it is preferably with one permanent substitute from each country and that the election committee should nominate substitutes from each country for the next Board.
6. Future activities
The Board discussed the possibility to organize PhD schools and agreed that they are an important task for the NSM. Those Board members who have contacts with Nordic institutes in the ME will inquire the possibilities to organize and finance PhD course in cooperation with them.

NSM should have representatives at the BRISMES annual conference in June. Leif Stenberg will participate. Dietrich Jung will organize a panel at the German Middle East Studies Association (DAVO) conference in Berlin 6-8 October 2012, introducing research and teaching ME in the Nordic countries. There should be one representative from each Nordic country. Leif Stenberg and Hannu Juusola volunteered to represent Sweden and Finland.

7. The next NSM conference

The themes and keynote speaker for the next NSM conference will be discussed at the next Board meeting. The conference will be held in Lund.

8. Babylon

The board discussed the cooperation with Babylon, the Nordic journal for Middle Eastern studies.

- Webpage should link to Babylon homepage
- Babylon Call for Papers will be sent out with information mail
- Subscription to Babylon should be made option when becoming a member of the society. This will be part of the web-page set up, but subscription "logistics" will be handled by Babylon.
- Members of Society are encouraged to think of possible young researchers that could be "satellite" editors for Babylon.

9. The next meeting will be in Copenhagen, August 27.