



Aarhus, August 2012

Minutes of the Business Meeting, 11th of August, 10.00-12.00

Participants: The organizing committee Pernille Hermann, Jens Peter Schjødt and Ulla Loumand and ca. 80 conference participants.

Chair: Jens Peter Schjødt

Referent: Lisbeth Heidemann Torfing

Agenda

- 1: Delegates of International Board
- 2: Minutes from the Business meeting in Uppsala
- 3: The 16th International Saga Conference 2015
- 4: Forthcoming conferences
- 5: Forms of publication
- 6: Thanks

1: Delegates of International Board

The delegates for the next period had been chosen by the delegations prior to the meeting. Members of International Advisory Board 2012-2015 were announced as follows:

Argentina: Santiago Barrerio
Australia: Kári Gíslason
Austria: Maria Winkler
Belgium: Sofie Vanherpen
Canada: Bernardine McCreesh
Czech Republic: Marie Novotná
Denmark: Matthew Driscoll
Estonia: Daniel Sävborg
Finland: Sirpa Aalto
France: Grégory Cattaneo
Germany: Hubert Seelow
Hungary: Vilmos Voigt
Iceland: Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir
Italy: Maria Cristina Lombardi
Japan: Tsukuso Itó
Mexico: Fernando Guerrero
Netherlands: Kees Samplonius
Norway: Odd Einar Haugen
Poland: Jakub Morawiec
Russia: Tatiana Jackson
Spain: Teodoro Manrique-Anton
Sweden: Agneta Ney
Switzerland: Kate Heslop
United Kingdom: Alison Finlay
United States: Merrill Kaplan



2: Minutes from the Business meeting in Uppsala

The minutes had been distributed prior to the meeting and were approved.

3: The 16th International Saga Conference 2015

Jürg Glauser presented a proposal from Zürich and Basel in Switzerland. A pamphlet had been distributed during the conference. It was underlined that Switzerland has not hosted the conference before, but there is a great interest in the study of Old Norse. It was pointed out that the location of the two universities very close to each other gives an opportunity to experience two cities in one week. The proposed theme was 'Sagas and Space', which would be attractive to scholars of many different fields, and which links well with the theme of the Aarhus conference, which has to do with time. Proposed sessions and three excursions were presented. Poster sessions will be continued and a new format of project presentations was proposed. The costs in Switzerland are high, but experience suggests that funding can be raised to keep the costs for participants at the same level as at the present conference. Proposed time is 9th – 15th August 2015.

It was asked whether there would be a student discount and/or any grants for them. Jürg Glauser responded positively, but emphasized that the exact amount will be dependent on the success of fund raising. It was asked whether subsidy would be dependent on presentation. Jürg Glauser answered that some kind of presentation would be necessary. It was asked on what basis the funds for subsidies would be distributed. Jürg Glauser responded that funds could be spent in various ways. It was suggested that if there was a possibility for cheap student housing, this would cut costs greatly. Another possibility is cutting student fees. Jürg Glauser responded that student dormitories are not common in Switzerland, but that other solutions will be found, and student fees are budgeted to be lower.

There were no other proposals/invitations, and no one objected to the proposal from Switzerland. Jürg Glauser was thanked and it was concluded that the 16th International Saga Conference will take place in Zürich and Basel

4: Forthcoming conferences

This point on the agenda had two different strands, the format of the conferences and the 2018-conference respectively.

The form of future conferences was taken up for discussion first. A majority wished to keep the Saga Conference at the same length as previously; and a majority believed that the excursions in the middle of the week unite the scholarly with the social objectives in a fruitful way. It was proposed that paper acceptance should be more selective, since only few papers have been rejected at each of the three last conferences.

The following remarks were made: The saga conference is too long, to which it was pointed out that participants who do not wish to stay for a week can go home at any time. It was discussed whether shorter conferences could lead to more frequent conferences (a saga conference every 2nd year). The number of parallel sessions was debated and the opinion was raised that there are too many parallel sessions at the existing conference. A proposal to solve the problem of too many parallel sessions was to publish papers online after the conference, so that people can gain information about the papers they do not attend; another suggestion was to upload videos of the papers



including discussion on the internet. It was suggested that concentrated project presentations could reduce length. Posters and project presentations are a way to keep the length of presentations while still allowing a growing number of participants. It was suggested that the excursions could be placed at a different time, such as the end, to make it easier to drop parts of the conference. Another way to make it easier would be to make a timetable earlier, so speakers would know a long time in advance. It was pointed out that the selection process is very dependent on the objectives of the Saga Conference. It was pointed out that a timetable probably cannot be made earlier than it was at this conference.

Next the 2018 conference was up for discussion. Svanhildur Óskarsdóttir made an announcement of a pre-proposal from Iceland for the 17th International Saga Conference.

5: Forms of publication

Matthew Driscoll presented the idea of an online archive of documents from previous Saga Conferences. He will now set this up electronically with relevant documents from all previous conferences, where people will also be able to publish powerpoints and papers. The archive will not consist of links, but everything will be placed on the webpage server of the permanent archive. It is not a good option to use this as webpage for individual conferences, since many universities wish to have their own conference pages. It is, however, possible to use it if the need arises. Such an archive will make it an opportunity to have Pre-prints which only consists of abstracts in the future, while more lengthy post-conference publications can be uploaded on the permanent archive. There was general approval of this proposal. It was asked whether peer-reviewing was an option, but Matthew Driscoll responded that this task would be too much to ask of the organizers. It was asked whether the online publication option was available for this conference, and this was confirmed by Matthew Driscoll.

It was proposed that in the future abstracts should be longer to allow a better selection of papers at the conference for participants. It was suggested that there should be better guidelines for the content of abstracts, such as bibliography. Keywords were proposed. It was proposed that e-mails addresses should also be part of the abstracts. It was suggested that the old preprint format was better, because for some it has a clear status as publication and earlier volumes are very used. It was responded that it is simply too much work for future conference organizers and that revised papers published online would be just as useful. It was suggested that future organizers should decide on the basis of their resources. It was pointed out that online publication gives greater accessibility. It was pointed out that it matters whether the online publication would be an official publication and that this may change greatly in coming years. It was suggested that the point of preprints had always been informal information for use at the conference. Information about the permanent and institutional status of the webpage was requested. This is not yet clear.

6: Thanks

The organizers thanked everyone for participation in the conference and the meeting. Then the conference was officially handed over to Jürg Glauser from Pernille Hermann and Jens Peter Schjødt. Jürg Glauser thanked Pernille Hermann and Jens Peter Schjødt for a successful conference with a well-chosen subject and a good organization.