

Minutes of the NACS board meeting, Stockholm June 21st 2006,

Place: Department of Chinese, Stockholm University

Time: 2-4 pm

Present board members: Finland: Lauri Paltemaa and Juha Vuori

Norway: Goerild Heggelund and Unn Målfrid H. Rolandsen

Denmark: Nis Höyrup Christensen

Sweden: Lena Rydholm, Johan Lagerkvist, Marina Thorborg, Helena Löthman

1. Chair Lena Rydholm welcomes all present board members to the meeting and starts the round of presentations, where everyone attending the meeting give a short presentation of themselves.

Lena Rydholm was elected as chair and Helena Löthman was elected as secretary for the meeting.

2. The agenda was accepted. No further additions to the agenda were suggested.

3. Approval of the minutes of the last board meeting, in Kauniainen, Finland, June 9th 2005

(Appendix 1, also available at the NACS website). The minutes were approved.

4. The new NACS website: [www.nacsorg.com](http://www.nacsorg.com)

The website was transferred from Helsinki University in December 2005 to a net domain of our own. Our new webmaster, Peter Freund, helped us with that. The cost for the domain is 600 SEK for a two year period. Peter Freund will receive a salary of 4000 SEK/year in webmaster salary, the same amount our former webmaster was paid.

Some of the board members have visited the website. Lena gave further information on the mailing list. It has been rather quiet lately and members of NACS are to be encouraged to send information on conferences, workshops and other China related issues that might be of interest to our members to our webmaster (the address is on the website) so that the mailing list will be more vivid. Helena Löthman gave information on contacts with the NIAS mailing list and a proposal by Martin Bech at NIAS that we should share information via the lists and/or advertise each others activities on the websites. Board members discussed the use of this and suggested that information should not be advertised on the website, but via the mailing list only. Helena Löthman will keep in contact with Martin Bech at NIAS and further the information to our webmaster.

5. Proposal for "Workshop on Chinese media" in cooperation with the project Media and Globalization in Contemporary China and the Confucius Institute. The original plan presented at the last board meeting to organize a workshop

with this theme has been postponed awaiting response from possible sponsors. We have sent an application to the Nordic Confucius Institute. The organizers of the workshop are positive that it will take place, probably in 2008.

A brief presentation of the Nordic Confucius Institute and its work was presented by Lena Rydholm to the board members, since this was not familiar to most of the members.

6. Report on the NACS conference in Helsinki 2005 (appendix 2, also on the website under "Previous conferences", under "Conference 2005") and financial report to the Conference in Helsinki 2005 (appendix 3)

The Conference in Helsinki and its organizers were complemented for their good work and to a successful conference. The board members had no further comments on the two reports. Lena Rydholm informed the board that the organizers of the NACS conference in Finland 2005 used the membership fees paid at the conference, a sum of 11 040 SEK, for the conference budget and was not kept for NACS work during the following period 2005-2007. Due to this the economy of NACS is quite stressed at the moment, which for instance has resulted in that no accommodation is granted the board members for this board meeting, and the travel reimbursement is only 200 euro/person of the board members attending today's meeting instead of 300 euro as it was for the board meeting in 2004. Member Morten Laugesen, Denmark, even had to cancel his participation since he could not find a ticket close to that sum.

Helena Löthman added that another extra cost for NACS last year was that the board members' travel reimbursements were not paid for by the conference in Helsinki. Instead the travel reimbursements of the board members were paid for by the NACS accounts. Only participants presenting a paper at the conference were given reimbursements from the conference budget. As board members are more or less forced to participate in our meetings we cannot assume that they pay their own travel expenses to board meetings, so for the conference that are being planned for and organized in Stockholm in 2007, money for this is being applied for in applications for funding the conference.

When discussing travel reimbursements the following two topics was raised for discussion:

1) Travel reimbursements should not be fixed, but paid in full or in different scales depending on where you fly from. Cheap tickets are normally easy to find when flying from Copenhagen, Oslo or Stockholm, but not as easily available for those flying from smaller cities. This will also be of even more concern when Iceland becomes a member, since tickets from there are even more costly;

2) In order to strengthen the economy of NACS and be able to pay the increasing travel fees for board members attending the board meetings, we

will suggest a raise of the participant fee at the General Assembly next year. The fee is now 240 SEK for a period of two years. If we can raise that to 35 euro it will more easily cover the expenses at board meetings as well as give us the possibility to support activities such as workshops like the one on field work held in Copenhagen in 2004, which NACS supported with 5000 DKK.

#### 7. Financial status of NACS

Treasurer Helena Löthman gives a report of the finances during the period 2005-05-26 till 2006-06-20 (appendix 4). NACS have spent 9 532,78 SEK during the period. At the moment we have a total of 34 865,35 SEK in our two accounts plus the "handkassa". Today's board meeting is estimated to cost SEK 10 200.

#### 8. Plans for the next NACS conference, Stockholm June 11th-13th 2007 (appendix 5)

The board members are asked to be members of the organizing committee, and they all agreed. Their main work will be to look for key-note speakers from each country and act as discussants and chairs of panels during the conference. Marina Thorborg is also willing to help out with the preparations for the conference, since she will be in Stockholm during the coming semester.

Lena Rydholm gives information of the theme of the conference, "Chinese Culture and Globalization: History and Challenges for the 21st Century". The theme was chosen due to the lack of conferences concentrating on cultural aspects. Sweden also has a background of studies and scholars in Chinese culture and it's proven fairly easy for us to get funding. The theme is broad in order to cover all aspects of Chinese studies, since politics, economy, environment studies, etc, all have a kind of culture. A preliminary program has been made and some key-note speakers have been asked of whom some already have accepted. This information is necessary when applying for money from sponsors. We can still change the program as well as key-note speakers if any of them should be unable to attend the conference.

Travel reimbursements for those presenting a paper will be paid with 150 euro/person. In order to give participants enough time to find a cheap ticket, the call for papers, deadline for abstracts and notification of acceptance will have to be well in advance of the conference. The organizers will set a schedule that is reasonable.

The conference will take place at the Institute of Oriental Languages. We can use the rooms and facilities free of charge.

Accommodation will be arranged at a close-by, inexpensive hotel.

We plan a conference publication and have talked to the editor of the Journal of Oriental Studies, Fredrik Fällman. He is positive about the idea of a theme issue on the NACS conference. This would cost NACS approximately 17 000 SEK, money that we apply for extra.

The board members found the plans for the conference and program thorough and interesting, but had some comments. The focus on humanities are fine, interesting and facilitates funding, but in order to keep the conference broad and attract more students, more sessions on social sciences has to be added in the program. The themes “security and foreign policy”, “China’s international organisations and foreign relations”, “China’s sustainable development and resources”, “China’s economics and politics”, etc were suggested.

The board decided to keep the door for further suggestions of topics open for yet some time, and the board members are encouraged to suggest more topics in due time before the call for papers. In the call for papers we will list the topics, and then divide them into panels when we have seen the abstracts. This might look more welcoming for the students and researchers in social sciences.

Johan Lagerkvist raised the question if all key-note speakers that have accepted speak and understandable English. The situation has so far never occurred, and we assume that they do speak good English

Another important comment on the conference that was given is that we should try to keep the participants together, so that the important networking will take place.

#### 9. Iceland’s interest in membership of NACS (appendix 6 and 7)

The issue was discussed at last year’s board meeting, and since then Lena and Geir Sigurdsson have had some contact via e-mail. Lena Rydholm lets us take part of the e-mail correspondence they have had. Some problems with the participation of Iceland occur, mainly due to the statutes of NACS that require two board members from each country, both with deputies. Since scholars in China studies so far are few on Iceland, this is difficult to organize. It would also be a difficulty to organize a NACS conference on Iceland already in 2009. There is also a financial issue, since it is more expensive to organize a conference on Iceland. Geir Sigurdsson foresees the difficulties and wants to postpone Iceland’s becoming a member of NACS to some time in the future.

Marina Thorborg informs the board of the “Nordic model”, which means that Iceland in many Nordic organisations and co-operations can have half the number of board members, etc, since the population is smaller than the other Nordic countries’, and suggests that NACS should use the same model in order to facilitate the participation of Iceland. The board approves.

Helena Löthman suggests that in order to pave the way further for Iceland’s membership, we should raise the issue at the General Assembly in 2007 even if Geir Sigurdsson for practical reasons finds it too early.

Lena Rydholm suggests that we make an amendment to change the statutes of 6th of June 1999 under point 5, “Styrelse”, in which we suggest that we

apply the “Nordic model” so that Iceland will be required to have only one member and one deputy on the board, even though the other member countries have two members and deputies each on the board. The board approved.

Nis Höytrup Christensen, Denmark (the chair-country of NACS 2007-2009) has already with deputy Mads Holst Jensen discussed the possibility of hosting the conference in 2009 together with Iceland, so that the burden of organizing a conference would not fall entirely on Geir Sigurdsson’s shoulders. If the funding is abundant the conference can be held on Iceland, if not it will take place in Copenhagen. The board encourages this initiative and asks Nis Höytrup Christensen to discuss this further with Geir Sigurdsson. Marina Thorborg suggests that we suggests to the General Assembly in 2007 that the General Assembly delegate to the board to decide if Iceland should become a member or not. This will make it possible for Iceland to apply to become a member of NACS in the time in between the biennial General Assembly. In that way it will still be possible to become a member of NACS before the General Assembly in 2009 if Iceland should wish to co-organize the conference in 2009 with Denmark. The board approved.

11. The next board meeting will be held in Stockholm after the General Assembly at the conference in 2007.

Chair Lena Rydholm thanks the board members for coming to Stockholm and participating in the board meeting. The meeting ends.