



**MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ESHS ON 3RD NOVEMBER
2012 (ATHENS)
NHRF - NATIONAL HELLENIC RESEARCH FOUNDATION –ZERVAS LECTURE ROOM**

Date: 3rd November

Present: Prof. Soňa Štrbářnová (President), Prof. Fabio Bevilacqua (President elect), Prof. Helge Kragh (Vice President), Prof. Maria Rosa Massa Esteve (Secretary), Prof. Erwin Neuenschwander (Treasurer), Prof. Ida Stamhuis (Centaurus Editor), Dr. Raffaele Pisano (Public Relations), Prof. Suzanne Débarbat (Scientific Board), Prof. Ladislav Kvasz (Scientific Board), Prof. Maria Teresa Borgato (Scientific Board), Dr. Milada Sekyrková (Scientific Board), Prof. Antoni Roca-Rosell (Scientific Board).

Apologies: Prof. Michal Kokowski (Scientific Board), Prof. Éva Vámos (Scientific Board), Prof. Olivier Bruneau (Webmaster), Prof. Robert Fox (Scientific Board).

Agenda General Assembly

- 1) Welcome and President's report (Soňa Štrbářnová)
- 2) Election of three auditors
- 3) Election of two scrutineers
- 4) The Treasurer's report (Erwin Neuenschwander)
- 5) The Secretary's report (Maria-Rosa Massa-Esteve)
- 6) The PR Officer's report (Raffaele Pisano)
- 7) The Web-master's report (Olivier Bruneau)
- 8) The Centaurus Editor's report (Ida Stamhuis)
- 9) Report on the Neuenschwander Prize (Fabio Bevilacqua)
- 10) Elections of the new council
- 11) Announcement of the next ESHS conference in Lisbon (Ana Simões)
- 12) Discussion, members' proposals
- 13) Closure by the new President (Fabio Bevilacqua)

1) Welcome and the President's (Soňa Štrbářnová) Report

At 18:30 the president welcomed all the members of the ESHS. She opened the session, ran through the agenda of the meeting and gave an account of all events during the last two years in our Society. She spoke about the in-between conference in Prague (September 2011) and the nomination and election process of the first Neuenschwander Prize. Prof. Claude Debru became the first Laureate. Prof. Štrbářnová thanked all the members of the ESHS by names who had contributed to the successful development of the



Society. She presented the new president Fabio Bevilacqua and especially thanked the main organizers of the 5thESHS in Athens: Efthymios Nicolaidis and Kostas Skordoulis.

2) Election of three auditors

The three elected auditors are: Karine Chemla, Annette Vogt and Ida Stamhuis.

3) Election of two scrutineers

The two elected scrutineer are: Peter Heering and Efthymios Nicolaidis.

4) The Treasurer's (Erwin Neuenschwander) Report

Prof. Neuenschwander commented on the report given below. After the revision of the accounts by the three auditors, the accounts of the treasurer were approved.

ESHS Report of the Treasurer November 2010—October 2012

Checking Account with Sparkasse Hochrhein (D)

Total amount in the account at 1 st Oct. 2010	Euro 2'726.35
Membership fees collected in Barcelona	Euro 2'360.00
Membership fees collected 2010/11	Euro 985.00
Membership fees collected 2012	Euro 1'185.00
Surplus interest payment minus bank charges	Euro 42.93
<i>Total earnings</i>	<i>Euro 7'299.28</i>

Expenses for Lunch at Council Meeting in Barcelona	Euro 200.00
41 ESHS Member subscription to Centaurus 2010 (online)	Euro 410.00
33 ESHS Member subscription to Centaurus 2010 (online and print)	Euro 990.00
ESHS Website Gandi SAS	Euro 43.06
Chiptan, Sparkassen-card	Euro 18.90
Support Conference in Prague	Euro 250.00
46 ESHS Member subscription to Centaurus 2011 (online)	Euro 460.00
23 ESHS Member subscription to Centaurus 2011 (online and print)	Euro 690.00
Student Grants for 5 th ESHS International Conference in Athens	Euro 1'000.00
<i>Total expenses</i>	<i>Euro 4'061.96</i>

Total amount in the account at 29th Oct. 2012 Euro 3'237.32

Savings Account Sparkasse Hochrhein (D)

New savings account at 2 nd Oct. 2009	Euro 5'000.00
<u>Savings account at 17th Oct. 2012 with interest payments</u>	<u>Euro 5'221.18</u>

Savings Account Credit Suisse Zurich (CH)

Total amount in the account at 12 th Nov. 2010	Euro 704.77
Membership fees collected	Euro 270.00
Surplus interest payment minus bank charges	Euro 0.69
<u>Total amount in the account at 25th Oct. 2012</u>	<u>Euro 975.46</u>

Sterling Account (GB) (established by Robert Fox)

Total amount in the account at 3 rd Aug. 2008	English Pounds 547.56
Total amount in the account at 14 th Nov. 2010 (according to Robert Fox no substantial change)	c. English Pounds 550.00
<u>Total amount in the account at 15th Oct. 2012 according to R.Fox</u>	<u>Engl. Pounds 864.20</u>

Zurich, October 29th 2012

E. Neuenschwander

5) The Secretary's (Maria-Rosa Massa-Esteve) Report

In September 2011 a meeting of the Council was held in Prague (during the in-between conference), where the Athens conference was prepared. I wrote the minutes of this meeting.

I have collaborated in the election of the first Prize Neuenschwander by collecting the votes and sending them to the scrutineers.

In May 2012 I represented the ESHS in Barcelona at the **"ISE conference: Strengthening the European Research Area - What does science need to flourish? 3rd and 4th May 2012, Barcelona"** and sent the conclusions to the President.

I would like to address the issue of membership, a really challenging question for our Society. During the last two years, I sent the updated members list of our Society to Centaurus every month.

In Barcelona 2010, when I became Secretary, the ESHS had 41 members (on-line subscription) and 33 members (print and online subscription). Altogether, the ESHS had 74 members in 2010.

Last year in 2011 the ESHS had 46 members (on-line subscription) and 23 members (print and on-line subscription); that is, the ESHS had 69 members in 2011.

I wish to point out that the ESHS currently has 42 members (on-line subscription) and 18 members (print and on-line subscription), which makes 60 members in 2012.

After the Athens conference there are 30 members for 2013 (on-line subscription) and 8 members (print and on-line subscription), 17 of whom have been recruited as new members during this conference.

We have to take into account that the decrease in the number of members is greater than that reflected in these numbers. Every year some members do not renew their subscription, while new members join. The list of those in each category is not as simple as it might seem. For example, the number of 23 members (print and on-line subscription) in 2011 was reduced to 18 in 2012, combining all situations; that is, people who change from print and on-line to on-line subscription, and people who do not renew, and subscriptions from new members.

Last January I sent a reminder to those members who did not pay their fees for 2012. Some of them declined to renew their membership.

The distribution of members by country reveals that half the total number of members is concentrated in just three countries.

I think it is urgent to make decisions to prevent this decrease in the number of ESHS members, especially after attending this fruitful conference with seminal sessions organized by our Society.

6 and 7) The PR Officer's (Raffaele Pisano) Report and the Web-master's (Olivier Bruneau) Report

Dr. Pisano explained the changes made in the web and in the inscriptions; he also highlighted the work done by Prof. Bruneau, who was not present at the conference. He talked about the new logo and the Centaurus pages on ESHS.

8) The Centaurus Editor's (Ida Stamhuis) Report

Prof Stamhuis explained that since the previous report for the General Assembly in Barcelona in November 2010, *Centaurus* continued to develop in an upward direction, after becoming the official journal of the European Society of the History of Science

Two thematic issues appeared:

- Volume 53 Issue 2 (May 2011)

Instruments of Science – Instruments of Geology (Klemun, Carneiro)

-Volume 54 Issue 1 (February 2012)

Cosmos and Cogwheels – The Work of Ole Rømer (1644-1710)

Furthermore, two thematic issues will appear in 2013:

- Volume 55, Issue 2 (May 2013)

Finding Science in Surprising Places: Gender and the Geography of Scientific Knowledge

(Discusses the significant contributions to science made in unexpected places, often by women;

Rentetzi, Von Oertzen, Watkins)

- Volume 55, Issue 3 (August 2013)

New perspectives on Cold War science (Heymann, Nielsen et al).

One Spotlight appeared in: Volume 52, Issue 4 (November 2012)

- *Post-WW2 Transatlantic Science Policies* (Abir-Am, Krige et al).

A further spotlight will appear in the next issue: *Using the Past to Enhance the Future* (about the use of archives, especially in the case of women scientists) (Rossiter et al.).

For the first time, a so-called article-with-response has appeared: Volume 54, Issue 2 (May 2012).

Galileo's Refutation of the Speed-Distance Law of Fall (by Norton, Roberts; Palmerino, Laird).

Also for the first time and in the next issue: Volume 54 Issue 4 (November 2012).

Essay review: *The STEP (Science and Technology in the European Periphery) initiative: Attempting to Historicize the Notion of European Science* (Gavroglu).

Moreover, a number of original articles on various aspects of the history of science and its cultural aspects have been published. Please do not hesitate to submit your quality papers and please prompt your colleagues and students to do the same. For further information, please visit the Centaurus website or contact me directly.

The book review editor Raf de Bont wants around 20 book reviews per year to be published. In addition to their potential significance, the selection of the book reviews is aimed at reflecting the European character of Centaurus. Please persuade your publisher to send in review copies!

The following unhappy development has taken place. Mrs. Claire Neesham, the English corrector and assistant editor, has ended her job at Aarhus University in August, 2012. Because of the cuts at Aarhus University, it is no longer possible to employ someone for the work at *Centaurus* or to pay Mrs. Neesham on a freelance basis. A person like Ms. Neesham is absolutely essential to keep moving in an upward direction that *Centaurus* has taken in the last couple of years. I discussed how to solve this problem with the publisher WB, and I gained the impression that the publisher is willing to pay for her services.

The pressure on the annual budget as regards the number of pages ($4 \times 88 = 352$) is increasing and the publisher is very strict. This is a positive development, because it means that Centaurus enjoys increasing popularity and visibility. As regards individual papers, the consequence may be that I will have to make the criteria for acceptance stricter, and reject papers which may be suitable for acceptance. Furthermore, the current situation prevents me from accepting that thematic issues that are longer than those originally agreed on. Together with the editors of the 2013 issue, I am looking for ways to make it possible for thematic issues over 100 pages to be published. In general, this will mean that the issue editors will have to find the funds to pay for the extra pages.

After the report, discussions were held on the English language in some articles submitted to Centaurus by authors who are not native English speakers.

9) Report on the Neuenschwander Prize (Fabio Bevilacqua)

Prof. Bevilacqua reported on the Gustav Neuenschwander Prize Ceremony and congratulated the first winner of the Neuenschwander Prize, Prof. Claude Debru. He read the laudatio that he had given at the ceremony, remarking on the good trajectory and the high research of Prof. Debru.

Prof. Bevilacqua explained that the procedure for choosing the winner is very complicated, and believed that it would be better to simplify this procedure for the choice of the next prize-winner.

10) Elections

The President presented the list of candidates proposed by the Council for the elections to the General Assembly. He asked the Assembly if anyone had proposed other candidates, but nobody answered.

The candidates proposed by the Council for the elections are:

Officers:

President - Fabio Bevilacqua - Italy (automatic)

Vice-President – Soňa Štrbářová – Czech Republic (automatic)

President-Elect – Karine Chemla - France

Secretary - Maria-Rosa Massa-Esteve – Spain (to be re-elected)

Treasurer - Erwin Neuenschwander – Switzerland (to be re-elected)

Centaurus Editor - Ida Stamhuis – The Netherlands (not electable)

Public Relations - Leonardo Gariboldi – Italy (to be elected)

Newsletter Editor: Frank James – UK (to be elected)

Webmaster –Kostas Skordoulis– Italy (to be elected)

Scientific Board:

Maria Teresa Borgato (Italy) (to be re-elected)

Olga Elina (Russia) (to be elected)

Pere Grapi (Spain) (to be elected)

Efthymios Nicolaidis (Greece) (to be elected)

Felicitas Seebacher (Austria) (to be elected)

Milada Sekyrková (Czech Republic) (to be re-elected)

Ana Simões (Portugal) (to be elected)

Annette Vogt (Germany) (to be elected)

Members of Scientific Board who cannot be re-elected are: Suzanne Débarbat, Robert Fox, Ladislav Kvasz, Michal Kokowski, Antoni Roca-Rosell, Éva Vámos.

All candidates introduced themselves and briefly explained their respective research fields and the affiliation. All candidates proposed by the council were unanimously elected by the Assembly.

11) Announcement of the next ESHS conference in Lisbon (Ana Simões)

Prof. Simões presented some features of the next conference, the 6th ESHS, in Lisbon (Portugal) to be held from 4 to 6 September 2014. The conference will take place in the Centro Interuniversitario de Historia das Ciencias y da Tecnologia inside Lisbon. The theme of the next conference in Lisbon will be: “Communicating Science and Technology”.

12) Discussion, members’ proposals

Prof. Chemla thanked all new members of the Society and expressed her satisfaction for having such a good group.

Prof. Borgato reported on the new situation for the historians of mathematics in Italy. In fact, the rules for recruitment of new professors have changed and new bibliometric criteria were introduced in the evaluation for the candidacy of new professors.

Prof. Borgato read the document “Pro veritate Gli Studi Italiani di Storia delle Matematiche Minacciati” for submitting to the Assembly in support of the Italian history of mathematics:

PRO VERITATE

GLI STUDI ITALIANI DI STORIA DELLE MATEMATICHE MINACCIATI

In Italia sono in corso grandi cambiamenti, che modificano l’impianto stesso del sistema universitario, portati avanti da gruppi ristretti di operatori che sono stati scelti e lavorano in modo poco trasparente e fuori dal controllo della comunità scientifica. Il DM 7 giugno 2012 rischia di espellere dalle Università italiane le ricerche in storia delle matematiche, facenti parte del settore disciplinare Mat/04, inserito in SC A01, per il quale prevede un sistema di valutazione basato sull’uso di sistemi bibliometrici.

SC A01 è un settore nel quale sono confluiti ricercatori che hanno metodologie diverse di lavoro e differenti abitudini di pubblicazione: i logici matematici, che hanno una produzione affine agli algebristi, i didattici della matematica che hanno una produzione mista e gli storici delle matematiche.

L’Agenzia nazionale di valutazione del sistema universitario e della ricerca, ANVUR, si è avvalsa per la valutazione di banche dati, e in via principale di Scopus e ISI, che non prendono in considerazione il cuore della produzione in storia delle matematiche rappresentata da libri, contributi in volume, edizioni critiche, curatele, oltre che dagli articoli su riviste.

Se si afferma questo criterio di valutazione si tornerà indietro di trent’anni. In Italia si rinuncerà a documentare in modo professionale, attraverso edizioni, bibliografie, analisi dell’ingente materiale presente nelle nostre biblioteche e dei nostri archivi, l’attività scientifica del passato nel campo delle scienze matematiche. L’Italia è stata per cinque secoli (XII-XVII), dalle traduzioni dall’arabo di Gherardo da Cremona Platone da Tivoli e da Leonardo Pisano, alle opere di Galileo, Cavalieri e Torricelli, la sede principale della cultura matematica del mondo, in primo luogo nelle sue università. La lingua italiana è stata la prima lingua vivente delle matematiche con i maestri d’abaco. Tutto questo materiale tornerà nell’oscurità come lo è stato per decenni.

Un criterio sbagliato non è preferibile all’assenza di criteri numerici. Anche su prestigiose riviste ci sono articoli di dignitosa routine e articoli che hanno meritato una medaglia. Il numero delle

citazioni è del tutto insufficiente come criterio di valutazione: una formula particolarmente utile in informatica è molto più citata dei lavori sulla soluzione delle equazioni polinomiali di quinto e sesto grado.

I criteri valutativi sono di grande importanza per orientare le scelte dei ricercatori: basti ricordare come sia stato attraverso l'uso di criteri valutativi errati che l'algebra in Italia ha dovuto aspettare gli anni '60 del Novecento per entrare nella formazione del matematico italiano.

Gli storici di Mat04 sono la prova che in Italia non si può più essere a cavallo dei due settori, che la cultura letteraria e scientifica devono essere rese impenetrabili l'una all'altra e che l'interdisciplinarietà deve essere resa impossibile. Inoltre gli storici di Mat04 sono l'esempio da manuale di un'ingiustizia commessa in nome di un "obbiettivo superiore", quello di emarginare i docenti non meritevoli secondo i criteri Anvur. Ma il perseguimento di "scopi supremi" a costo di lasciare vittime sul terreno è il contrassegno tipico delle visioni totalitarie.

Sottoscrivendo questo scritto intendiamo manifestare il nostro apprezzamento la nostra stima e solidarietà per i professori italiani di storia delle matematiche che abbiamo avuto modo di apprezzare nel corso degli anni attraverso i loro scritti e le loro conferenze e che vediamo ingiustamente discriminati da criteri iniqui. Noi auspichiamo che il Governo italiano possa porre fine a questa grave discriminazione, nell'interesse generale degli studi e in quello specifico del patrimonio culturale italiano. Se valutazioni si vogliono fare, oltre a quelle alle quali i nostri colleghi sono stati sottoposti per decenni o a quelle che in grande abbondanza si possono ricavare, consultando ad esempio i cataloghi delle principali biblioteche del mondo, non si scelgano impossibili scorciatoie, ma si ricorra al giudizio tra pari della comunità scientifica internazionale.

ITALIAN STUDIES IN HISTORY OF MATHEMATICS UNDER THREAT

Italian studies on the History of Mathematics are part of a long tradition which dates back to the beginnings of the discipline in the sixteenth century and continued throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century. At present Italian historians of mathematics rank high among the International community.

This tradition is being put at risk as a result of the indiscriminate use of questionable evaluation criteria (h-index, quotation index and so on), adopted by the Italian Ministry on the advice of a small group of people whose selection and method of work is anything but transparent and, moreover, outside the control of the scientific community. These criteria, erroneously presented as "objective", work in such a way that historians of mathematics are evaluated in competition with mathematical logicians and scholars of mathematics teaching, three categories that are clearly different. Moreover, they only consider the works published in (some) journals and thus exclude the most important part of the production in history of mathematics, which includes critical editions, books, and contributions to volumes.

The classifications that result from this method of evaluation consistently place mathematical logicians at the top, followed by scholars of didactics and, in a lower position, historians of mathematics, which means that the latter do not have access to an assessment of their own works by competent reviewers, thus excluding them a priori from making a career within the university.

We are all perfectly aware of the need for a rigorous selection of university staff. However, granted that the proposed criteria, a subject of wide discussion nowadays, are suitable for their

purpose, we cannot but observe that the pursuit of “supreme goals” whatever the cost is the earmark of a totalitarian vision.

By endorsing this document, we intend to show our esteem for and solidarity with the Italian professors of the history of mathematics whose works and conferences we have had the opportunity to appreciate over the years and whom we have seen discriminated by unjust criteria. We sincerely hope that, in the general interest of study and research and, more specifically, of the cultural heritage of Italy, the Italian government will put an end to this serious discrimination. If evaluation is necessary, above and beyond that which our colleagues have undergone for decades, we demand that fallacious shortcuts should not be chosen, but rather that peer assessment of the International scientific community should be applied.

LES ÉTUDES D'HISTOIRE DES MATHÉMATIQUES MENACÉES EN ITALIE

En Italie, les études sur l'histoire des mathématiques font partie d'une longue tradition qui remonte au XVI^e siècle, début de cette discipline, et s'est prolongée tout au long des XIX^e et XX^e siècles. Aujourd'hui, les historiens des mathématiques italiens tiennent un haut rang dans la communauté internationale.

Cette tradition est en train de courir un grand risque du fait d'un usage aveugle de critères d'évaluation contestables (facteur h, index de citations, etc.), adopté par le Ministère italien, conseillé par un petit groupe de gens dont la sélection et la méthode de travail sont tout sauf transparents et, en outre, hors de tout contrôle de la communauté scientifique.

Ces critères, faussement présentés comme "objectifs", ont pour résultat que les historiens des mathématiques sont évalués en compétition avec les logiciens et les didacticiens, trois catégories clairement différentes. De plus, ils ne considèrent que les travaux publiés dans (quelques) journaux et excluent ainsi la partie la plus importante de la production en histoire des mathématiques, qui comprend les éditions critiques, les livres et les contributions à des ouvrages collectifs.

Les classements qui découlent de cette méthode d'évaluation placent, pour l'essentiel, les logiciens au sommet, suivis par les didacticiens et, en position inférieure, les historiens des mathématiques, ce qui signifie que ces derniers n'ont pas accès à une évaluation de leurs propres travaux par des critiques compétents: il devient ainsi a priori exclu qu'ils puissent faire une carrière dans l'université.

Nous sommes tous parfaitement conscients du besoin d'une sélection rigoureuse des personnels universitaires. Cependant, en admettant même que les critères proposés (ce qui est d'ailleurs l'objet d'une vaste discussion aujourd'hui) soient adaptés à leurs objectifs, nous ne pouvons pas nous empêcher d'observer que la recherche des "buts suprêmes", quel qu'en soit le coût, est la marque distinctive d'une vision totalitaire.

En soutenant ce document, nous voulons exprimer notre estime et notre solidarité avec les professeurs italiens d'histoire des mathématiques dont nous avons eu l'occasion d'apprécier les travaux et conférences depuis des années et que nous voyons victimes d'une discrimination sur des critères injustes. Nous espérons sincèrement que le gouvernement italien mettra un terme à cette grave discrimination, et cela dans l'intérêt même des études et de la recherche, en particulier, quant à l'héritage culturel de l'Italie. L'évaluation est certes nécessaire, d'ailleurs nos collègues s'y sont soumis depuis des décennies, mais nous demandons de renoncer à des faux



raccourcis et, au contraire, d'utiliser plutôt une évaluation par les pairs de la communauté scientifique internationale.

The Assembly of the European Society for the History of Science, convened in Athens on November 3rd, 2012 on the occasion of its 5th International Conference, considers inappropriate the use of the bibliometric criterion introduced in Italy for the evaluation of historians of mathematics, which excludes critical editions, books, contributions in volumes for such evaluations. The Assembly adheres to this document "Pro Veritate" presented by historians of science from twenty different nations (*Fabio Bevilacqua*, President, *Sona Strbanova*, Vice President of the ESHS).

13) Closure by the new President (Fabio Bevilacqua)

The new president, Prof. Bevilacqua, announced in the closure that the next in-between conference, 2013, should take place in Florence in the Florentine Museum of History of Science. The subject of the meeting could be: History of Science and History of European Science, specifically the perspectives on the History of Science today.

Prof. Bevilacqua also reported on the Autumn School in Aarhus and on the Spring School in Maon, organized by the Society Catalan of the History of Science and Technique. They have the patronage of the ESHS.