

DRAFT MINUTES EC AA

Friday 19th December at 12 : 30-15 : 30 at the EUI Florence

Presence : Leila Talani (LT), Valerie Hayaert (VH), Pompeo della Posta (PP), Sigfrido Ramirez (SR)

Unjustified Absence : Teresa Moraes (TM)

This was the first meeting of the newly-elected EC of the AA. Before starting, SR recalled that TM wrote us that she could only arrive at 15:00. He suggested that we could wait for her arrival for any question requiring a vote. VH phoned her in the presence of the rest of the members of the EC committee in order to confirm whether she would be coming, and in the case of an absence she would delegate the vote to her. TM happened not to have quitted Lisbon that Friday and not have excused herself about this unexpected absence. PP recalls that we had set up this late date- and not the original in november- to fit her convenience. All members expressed their amazement not just by the absence, but mainly for not having said anything to the other four members of the EC. VH asked TM whether she was ready to delegate her vote to VH. She confirmed this delegation. SR told that he personally opposed to any delegation of vote in any EC meetings but he was ready to accept an exception in this case. The EC agreed that in the future there will not be acceptable any delegation of vote.

AGENDA

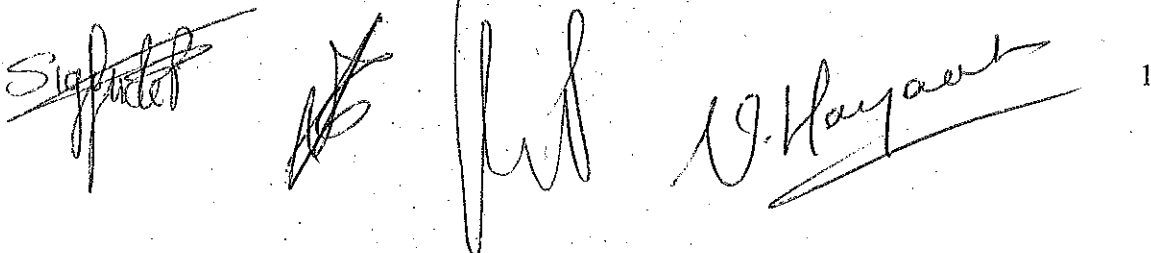
LT chaired the session. SR suggested the following agenda for the meeting

1. The distribution of work among members of the EC.
2. Creating a working group on communication (blog, who's who, linkedin, website).
3. The e-journal Europe at large launched by the AA.
4. The 2nd edition of the booklet about the AA history.
5. The request to set up a Boris Rotenberg Price
6. Local chapters.
7. Conferences sponsored by the AA.
8. The rules for the minutes of General Assemblies, including the GA of 2008.
9. The financial situation.
10. The next meeting date of the EC.

SR states that there is not hierarchy between these points but he suggested that we started by substance before going to the distribuion of works among members. He believes that we had to talk about each point as we were all responsible to develop each of them. Throughout a discussion we would be capable to figure out which of us is the most adequate to be President, Vice-president, Secretary and Treasurer as the distribution of these tasks is a statutory prerogative of the EC of the AA. LT suggested, instead, that we proceed first to the distribution of tasks within the newly elected EC and then going to other points. This proposal and the agenda were accepted by the other members of the AA.

1--The distribution of work among members of the EC

LT asked whether there are proposals for the distribution of work, and more precisely for the position of President. VH put forward her candidacy as President of the AA on the basis of

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having been the candidate who obtained more votes, following a customary principle recalled by the former AA President, Francisco Torres, in the GA. SR asked her whether as expressed in one of her previous emails her proposal was that we applied this principle also for the other positions to be filled out, more precisely that SR would be vice-president, LT Secretary and PP Treasurer. She said that the first thing to be done now was to appoint a President and then proceed to the other appointments.

SR stated that he had another proposal for the distribution of work among EC members. He also opposed to any customary principle that went against the AA Statutes which are very clear about the preminent role of the EC to distribute the work among its members. These are appointed by the EC and not by the GA or coopted by the former President. The EC is a team and it should work as such. He suggested the following work distribution: LT as President, PP as vice-president, SR as Secretary and VH as Treasurer.

LT stated that she did not wish to take the responsibility of being President and if there was no other candidate we should appoint a Vice-president. PP declared also his unavailability to be President or Vice-President. SR states that in such conditions, he is candidate for President of the AA because all position should be filled on the basis of a discussion of the EC and he wished that the EC had a real choice between two candidates.

LT asked the two candidates for President to proceed to present their programmes. SR and VH developed the programmes of their respective candidacies (see the programmes). After a series of question and answers the executive committee decided to appoint VH as President on the basis of her past experience and contribution in the EC, and praising SR new initiatives. SR agreed that this was an important point and he did not ask for a formal vote.

LT suggested that we appointed a vice-president. She suggested that PP became vice-president on the basis that it would not be suitable to have another historian like SR as vice-president. PP declined the offer and considered that SR could perfectly be vice-president as in the out-going EC there has been two economists as president and vice-president. SR is perfectly happy to be secretary even when he considers that this is not a valid argument. LT would be happy to become vice-president asking SR that given his inter-disciplinary background he might take in exclusivity the task of re-launching the e-journal Europe at large. SR is ready to accept LT as vice-president and himself as secretary but only if she committed herself to the relaunching of the e-journal, which was the major point of her electoral manifesto. He is ready to collaborate with her for the e-journal but there are other most urgent commitments that he would like to carry out if appointed secretary of the AA. LT accepted to become vice-president and to take the e-journal as her major task within the EC. Following this discussion LT and SR were respectively appointed Vice-president and Secretary.

SR suggested that we appointed PP as treasurer as he had been in the past EC and he is the member coming more often to the EUI. Despite that the AA has not still a bank account and the funding is managed according to the EUI rules by the EUI administration, it is still necessary to have one person of the EC in charge of authorising the payments to be made by the EUI administration, whose role is merely technical. PP accepted to become treasurer.

All the EC members expressed their satisfaction for a distribution of work carried out in a consensual way without coming into formal votes and preserving its autonomy on the basis of the Statutes. PP underlined that the different responsibilities had been distributed not following the ranking of votes obtained by each member of the EC but by a collective consensus.

2- Creation of a working group on Communication

SR introduced the topic on the basis of the request made in November by an alumnus to create an official LinkedIn of the Alumni Association. In his view the AA has a clear need of improving the communication in order to raise the active participation of alumni. He was surprised that upon the more than 3,000 alumni and 300 members of the AA the turnout in the elections did not reach even 40 votes (35 votes for VH), in spite of having used for the first time electronic voting. These numbers had to be considered whenever there is any claim for democratic legitimacy of the current EC, which had surely casted more votes than any other previous EC. He considered that our objective should be twofold: in the one hand increasing the number of alumni adhering to the AA; in the other hand, reaching a higher percentage of turnover in the next elections. To this purpose it is urgent to create better instruments for communication between the alumni, namely:

- A) A LinkedIn officially sponsored and managed by the EC of the AA. He suggested that we associated the interested alumni to a newly-created working group on Communication.
- B) A Facebook network managed by the EC of the AA. He had talked about this with Alumnus Serge Noiret, who was ready to give a hand in the working group.
- C) A classical who's who in paper to be distributed among the members of the AA.

After a brief debate it was agreed that SR will take the responsibility of coordinating the new Communication WG which will include taking care of drafting the text for the EUI Review and maintain the necessary contacts with the EUI administration in charge of the web site of the AA for all issues related to communication. He will report during the next meeting about the progress made so far.

3- The e-journal Europe at Large

The current manager editor LT explained that so far the journal had not yet published its first issue and that there is an urgent need to go forward with this interdisciplinary journal of European political economy. PP is ready to help her with the publication of the first two issues which could be thematic and derived some material from the conferences to be organised by the AA. SR agrees that a thematic approach to the issues could be a winning strategy and he is ready to collaborate with a proposal for a monographic number in our next meeting. However he would like to underline that we may rethink the scope, format, intended participants and readers of this journal which in his view cannot be just another scholarly journal on European integration, but also play the role of intellectual and scholar communication tool between all alumni, particularly recent Ph.D and professionals. LT objected that this cannot be just a tool for alumni but a first-class scholarly journal whose ambition is to find a prestigious publishing house ready to publish it on paper after some issues published in the web. SR insisted that there must not be incompatibility between both objectives but that some reflection had to be carried out by the new editorial board and managing editors. It is agreed that the editorial board will be the new EC and the new managing editors LT and PP.

4-The 2nd edition of the booklet about the AA history

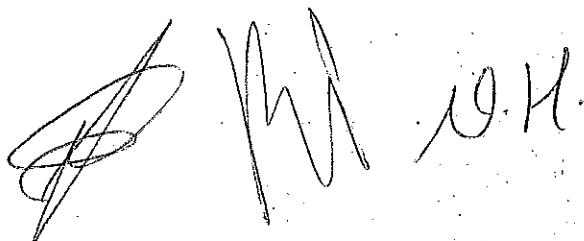
VH introduced this point given that she had followed this issue at the former EC. She stated that there has been some alumnus who had requested that some modifications to the first edition. As this booklet had been conceived from the very beginning as a volume to be continuously updated, there is nothing problematic about this request even when she will need to analyse the actual method (contract with collaborators) and timetable for its actualisation. She volunteered to take in charge this important issue and to suggest in the next meeting a suitable timetable to have the second edition published within the current mandate of the EC.

5- The request for a Boris Rotenberg Price by the EUI AA

VH clarified the information about this request raised before the last GA by some Alumnus, who urged the EUI AA to institute a price in commercial law to honour the memory of alumnus Boris Rotenberg open to contribution from alumni to feed it. There were here two questions intertwined : the first is of principle on whether the AA should sponsored prices outside of the now well-established Price of the AA for the best phd dissertation. The second is about this particular case. The EC concluded that the AA is not in financial position to sponsor more prices of the AA. However, the EC is ready to analyse alumni proposals provided that the proponents would manage to raise enough funding to cover the important administrative and other expenses incurred by the procedure of creating a proper price. Therefore for setting any future AA price, the AA would retain a percentage of the amount of the price to cover the expenses of properly organising such a price. There is also a question about whether the AA could receive donations for this purpose from Alumni given that it does not have anymore its own account. VH will take care of this issue and inform the alumni willing to set up this price about the new policy line decided by the EC as the current proposal of a Boris Rotenberg price asked the AA to entirely fund this price by itself regardless of the level of the contribution of alumni willing to fund this particular price.

6-Local chapters.

SR introduced the topic which was quite prominent in his own manifesto. In his view the formalisation of local chapters is fundamental to create an effective and participative AA. This means to take stock that informal networks of AA had not served in the long-run to maintain a regular activity of local chapters. They have been one-shot experiences which had created as much hope as frustration, depending on the particular cases. He can only talk for the experience he saw in Brussels where he has been living for the last years. At the time he made a suggestion but he gave up as he did not see that the circumstances were met for a successful launching of a formal association. Additionally, he observed that in the general assemblies only came few alumni, most of them present by chance or by geographical proximity to the EUI. The obvious solution for him is to create formal local chapters with their own executive committees and represented in the central EC by their presidents; giving in this way a territorial and participative dimension which the AA is lacking. This may imply, or not, a modification of the statutes of the alumni association and the adaptation to local association rules the current Statutes of the AA which is an Italian association. For example in Belgium the regular form is the creation of an ASBL (Association sans but lucratif) of the AA. In his view Brussels is the obvious place for experimenting about the formalisation of chapters. He ask authorisation to create a working group to set up the Brussels chapter in one year time. He will also contact and cooperate with the person in charge of the Brussels office of the EUI to make things easier for this experience which may be extended to other chapters.



The EC accepted SR proposal but made clear that it is important that the chapters are realities on the ground and do not divert financial resources from the AA. PP reminded that there are already local chapters such as in Frankfurt, Berlin and other major cities. SR replied that the reason of the failure of setting up local chapters derived from its informal nature and that it lacked of a stable structure and own resources. In his view they would not divert resources because the basic principle of local chapters is to bring together alumni who are members first of the AA, that is that pay their annual fee, and putting on the top of it a special fee for the functioning of the activities of the local chapter. Local chapters will work if they set up their agenda in a regular manner and in each city they will work differently. He insisted that it is of foremost importance for this chapter to work that they are also the place of contact between the most senior and most junior members of alumni association. From his viewpoint we may focus our effort on major cities with a substantial number of alumni like Brussels, Paris, London, Milan, Madrid, Barcelona, Lisbon, etc.

7-Conferences sponsored by the AA

LT introduced this point departing from the successful experience of the conferences organised in the past which concluded most of them with publications. The conferences are the moment of intellectual meeting between alumni around a topic and at the same time are useful to strengthening other AA objectives. About past conferences she informed the EC about an invitation made by the new President of the ECPR, a EUI Alumnus, to present the book she co-edited about Maastricht in the next ECPR annual meeting in Lisbon. She will inform the AA when she will know more about the concrete format of the invitation.

PP informed that in relationship to the volume about globalisation that he is co-editing, the AA promised to pay for the elaboration of an index. The cost is of 750 Euros that he needs to reimburse as soon as possible. Therefore, he requested the authorisation of the EC to make this payment as new Treasurer. LT recalled that the payment for the index of his book was half that price and that in case that the AA contributed to publication costs; this must be graphically acknowledged with the presence of the AA logo in the cover of the book. PP replied that he supported this point but that in this case the acknowledgments came within the book and he apologised for not having thought about this important element which provides a greater visibility to the AA.

The EC agreed to LT's point that any request of funding, whatever the amount, will include an acknowledgment in the cover of the book. They also exceptionally authorised the expense of 600 Euros for the publication expenses of the Globalisation book co-edited by PP.

About future conferences, particularly for this year, there are several proposals on the table:

- A) A conference about the Economic international crisis call Europe, in crisis?-LT/PP
- B) A conference about the history of electoral behaviour in Europe-VH
- C) A Conference in honour of Professor Alan Milward-SR

The EC members will submit a more elaborated proposal for the next meeting of the EC.

8-Minutes of General Assemblies, including the GA of 2008.

SR introduced this point on the basis of the email exchange he had with former President of the AA Francisco Torres. He pointed out that it is not a normal and fair working procedure of

any association or organisation that the chair of the meeting drafted the minutes of the GA and then proceeded to their definitive approval and deposit in the records of the EUI. The EC cannot approve the minutes of the GA but it is only the GA (and not some discretionary recipients of emails) in its next meeting (in this case of 2009) where the minutes are formally approved. This is not just a formal objection but a fundamental element of respect for the right of dissenting from these draft minutes by any of the Alumni present in the previous GA, even if their ammendment to the draft minutes are not accepted in the GA. From his viewpoint the current minutes posted in the website can stay there but only if the link makes clear that these are the draft minutes submitted by the chair for the approval of the next GA. This is relevant as far as for this meeting he had already received proposals from modification from alumni. He also believed that the minutes are not clear about who participated in the vote, both by mail and in the GA. A short debate was open about the necessity to improve the procedure for e-voting and of candidacies. For example some people were unable to vote and there was no much flexibility to allow a new candidate to introduce his candidature in the Assembly, when the electoral committee had been very flexible with the arrival after the deadline of the candidature of VH, for example.

The EC agreed to this proposal and gave mandate to the secretary to make this modification and notify to the alumni present in the 2008 GA to submit their ammedments to the draft minutes before the next meeting. They also agreed to include the names of the Alumni who participated in the election both by email and in the GA.

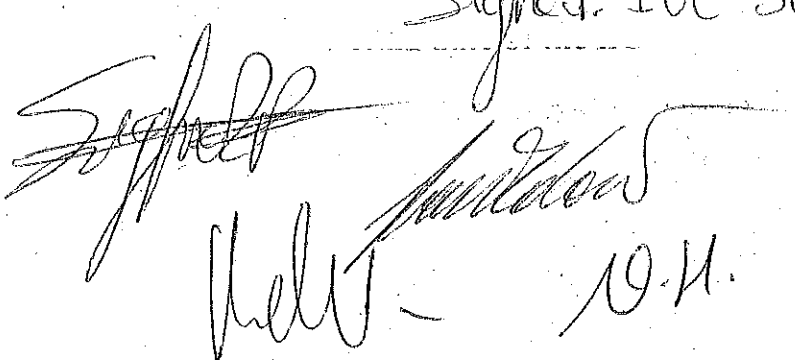
9-The financial situation

In its last meeting the former EC decided to cancel the account of the Alumni Association in the Cassa de Risparmio and leave all the funding into the accounts of the EUI which would be in charge to manage the whole of contributions. The situation appears satisfactory so far but there is the need to organize also fund raising activities to improve even more the situation of our finances if we wish to tend towards more ambitious objectives, particularly for organizing conferences. All members will think carefully about which kind of activities could be used to this purpose.

10-The next meeting date of the EC

It is fixed to the Friday 27th March at 10:00 at the EUI Florence. It is desirable that before the 9th March we could transmit the agenda points in order to leave time to carefully think and prepare the meeting. It is also agreed that the general practice for reimbursing the travel expenses of these meetings will be as follows: a return ticket plus the hotel stay the night before and after(most of us have to travel from abroad) and a per diem of the meeting day. In case of staying more days for preparing conferences or other, the per diem and the night are extended according to the days necessary for the execution of the activity.

Signed. IVE 30/03/2009

The bottom of the page contains several handwritten signatures and initials. On the left, there is a large, stylized signature that appears to be 'S. G. ...'. Below it, there are initials 'H. H.' and 'V. H.'. To the right, there are more initials, possibly 'M. ...' and 'V. H.'.