Minutes of the Business Meeting of the Society of the Africanist Archaeologists Bergen, Norway – 29th June 2004

The presence of a quorum as specified in the By-laws was established by the President, Susan McIntosh, who then called the meeting into session. She reported on the following items:

State of membership

This year, SAfA has 123 registered members, compared with 75 last year. Fifty-one members registered at the conference in Bergen, making 26 the number needed for a quorum at the Business Meeting.

Executive Board Actions

Recommendation on membership and meeting participation/Life membership

- a. Following a proposal made at the previous SAfA Business meeting in Tucson, the Executive Board voted to make membership in SAfA a requirement for material participation in a Biennial meeting (i.e., presenting a paper, chairing a session, etc.) The new membership rates are free for Africans and very low for student and regular members choosing online subscription to Nyame Akuma, so this should not be a financial burden for people. This brings SAfA in line with standard practice in other learned societies.
- b. The Executive Board voted to offer a SAfA life membership for 300 US dollars. This option will be available in 2005.

Recommendation on publishing minutes

Minutes of the Business Meeting will be posted on the SAfA website; members can send comments and amendments and approve them at the next meeting.

Recommended By-laws change

The Executive Board initiated a proposal to change the By-laws to add an Organizing Secretary and to designate the existing Secretary position in the By-laws as Recording Secretary. Prior to the Bergen meeting, the Executive Board sent the proposed By-laws change to all current SAfA members for an email vote. Because the By-laws requirement of 60 days advance notice regarding any By-laws change would not be met, members were also asked to vote on waiving the 60-day requirement in this case. As per the By-laws, both proposals required responses from at least 50% of the current membership of 78 as of early June, and affirmative votes from at least 2/3 of those responding. Thirty-nine members voted, 38 in favour and 1 against the two proposals. Both carried. The By-laws are therefore amended as follows:

Article VII-Officers

Section 1 - Elected Officers. The elected officers of the Society shall be President, a secretary, and a Treasurer.

Amend to read: The elected officers of the Society shall be President, an Organizing Secretary, a Recording Secretary, and a Treasurer.

Section 7 - Secretary. The secretary shall oversee the proper recording of the proceedings of meetings of the Society and the Executive Board, shall ensure that accurate records are kept of the corporation and all members, that appropriate archival procedures are used, and such duties as from time to time may be assigned to the office by the President or the Executive Board.

Amend to read: Section 7 - Recording Secretary. The Recording Secretary shall oversee the proper recording of the proceedings of meetings of the Society and the Executive Board, shall ensure that accurate records are kept of the corporation and all members, that appropriate archival procedures are used, and such duties as from time to time may be assigned to the office by the President or the Executive Board.

Add:

Section 8 - Organizing Secretary. The Organizing Secretary shall be responsible for overseeing the organization of the next biennial meeting of the Society. These responsibilities include arranging institutional and necessary financial support for the meetings, publicity, registration procedures, program organization, and preparation of a full financial statement of meeting revenues and expenditures to be presented to the Treasurer and Recording Secretary within six months of the end of the meetings. The Organizing Secretary shall form a committee of individuals who will assist in these tasks.

Amend the current Section 8 - Treasurer to Section 9 - Treasurer.

Establishment of new committees

The Executive Board voted to establish the following new committees:

a) Web page committee

Charge: Contribute to the development of the Society's Web page by actively generating appropriate content, scouting out suitable material and bringing it to the attention of the Webmaster, developing new ideas for promoting the Web page as a vehicle for disseminating information, sharing ideas, and networking SAfA members.

Composition: Six members representing a variety of geographical areas, time periods, and usage constituencies (students, faculty, heritage administrators) + 1 liaison from the Executive Board and the Webmaster, Susan McIntosh

Term: Two years.

Current Committee members: North Africa - Robert Vernet; West Africa - Kodzo Gavua; Central Africa - Bernard Clist; East Africa - Kennedy Mutundu; Horn of Africa - Kathy Weedman; Southern Africa - Sven Ouzman

b) Ethics Committee

Charge: Develop a draft of ethics statements for distribution, discussion at Bergen, revise and refine statement in light of discussion for vote at next biennial meeting.

Composition: Three members + Executive Board voting members.

Current Committee members: Scott MacEachern (Chair), Elena Garcea, Ibrahima Thiaw.

c) Society for American Archaeology/African Studies Association Symposium Committees Charge: Promote interest in organizing SAfA sponsored sessions at the annual SAA and ASA meetings; solicit proposals at least three months in advance of the proposal submission deadlines (end of August for SAA; March For ASA); consider potential publishability of the best symposium proposals; select two proposals maximum per meeting for identification as SAfA-sponsored. Composition: Three members who have attended SAA meetings at least once and three members who have attended the ASA meetings at least once + 1 Executive Board liaison.

Term: Two years.

Current Committee members: SAA - Stan Ambrose, John Arthur, David Killick; ASA - Adria LaViolette, Akin Ogundiran, Paul Lane.

d) Regional Conference Committee

Charge: Gather and disseminate information (through the SAfA Website) on upcoming conferences in each region; identify at least one SAfA member who will be attending. Request that the SAfA attendee serve as the Society's representative, providing a brief report on the conference, and procuring the program and abstracts for posting on our Website. The purpose is better communication, and support for our fellow archaeological societies in Africa.

Composition: Various members representing different regions in Africa, as identified by the chair + 1 Executive Board liaison.

Chair: Merrick Posnansky

The assembly suggested to investigate if European archaeological associations accept interest groups of Africanist archaeologists.

Action of plagiarism accusation

Pam Willoughby, *Nyame Akuma* editor, reported on a case of plagiarism in *Nyame Akuma* brought to her attention by Stan Ambrose. Two members of the Executive Board independently compared the *Nyame Akuma* article with an original report authored by Stan Ambrose and Mwanzia David Kyule and agreed that it was an unambiguous case of plagiarism. The article's author has recently passed away. Pam will write a statement on this matter in her editorial for the next issue of *Nyame Akuma* and post it on the Website. There is a second case that will be further investigated when the M.A. thesis that is alleged to be the basis of the article is obtained from Kenya. She explained that *Nyame Akuma* is not a refereed journal and has to trust the honesty of authors.

A suggestion was made from the floor that the editor might be assisted by two other members in reading over articles submitted for publication, to facilitate flagging questionable material.

Venue for SAfA 2006

Diane Lyons extended an invitation from the University of Calgary to host the next SAfA Biennial Meeting, which the Exectuive Board has accepted. The assembly unanimously welcomed her invitation with a round of applause.

Note of thanks

The President thanked Randi Haaland, Nils Anfinset, Jostein xxx, Erlend Eidsvik, and the entire Organizing committee for all their work in organizing the 2004 SAfA Meeting and the University of Bergen for their generous financial support. The assembly responded with a standing ovation.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer, Joanna Casey, reported on the financial situation of the Society, which is doing well with some funds left in the budget that will be used for Africans to attend the Calgary meeting. All issues of *Nyame Akuma* are now on-line. Most money comes from institutional subscriptions which are used to send copies to subsidise African institutions. On-line subscriptions are especially beneficial for people who would not otherwise join SAfA.

With regard to Kluwer and the distribution of AAR, she checked with each person to sort out their subscription to AAR. The President thanked Joanna for the enormous amount of time she has dedicated to taking care of the Society's finances, memberships, and subscriptions over the past four years.

The President announced that Joanna will be stepping down as Treasurer, and it has been necessary to identify in advance of the meeting a candidate for Treasurer who will be able to bring institutional support for posting Nyame Akuma. Also, the next Treasurer must be willing to

undertake the paperwork to convert SAfA into a non-profit organization. The Executive Board has nominated Jeff Fleisher to be our Treasurer and will ask the voting members to elect him by acclaim.

Nyame Akuma Editor's Report

Pamela Willoughby reported on the journal. The June 2004 issue will come out soon with the abstracts of the papers presented at the conference in Bergen. She reminded what the role of NA is: short report articles, with few pages, a couple of figures, and minimal bibliography. Electronic manuscripts are accepted.

Ethics Committee - Chair's Report

The President explained why the Executive Board had created a committee to draft a code of ethics. Virtually all other archaeology societies have developed such statements of the principles it expects members to observe. Ethics Committee Chair Scott MacEachern reported on the history of the activities of the Ethics Committee, which included: looking at the ethics statements on the Web sites of other archaeology associations, including the Society for American Archaeology, the Canadian Archaeological Association, and the European Archaeological association; drafting a comparison chart with the main elements of these three ethics statements to be distributed to the meeting participants; preparing a preliminary, draft statement of ethical principles for discussion by SAfA members. In order to promote feedback in advance of the Business meeting, copies of the chart and draft were made available and an Ethics Forum was announced at the conference. No members attended the Forum other than the ethics committee.

The President then called for discussion. David Phillipson raised an objection to the concept of an ethics statement, suggesting that it might more appropriately be called a "statement of professional behavior", but argued that such a statement was neither necessary nor desirable. There was considerable discussion on the issue of national autonomy within each African country regarding archaeological ethics, the wisdom of proposing such a statement when so few Africans were present, and whether such a statement has any meaning if enforcement provisions are absent. Several African members, including Clement Apak, Ibrahima Thiaw, and Salah Mohammed Ahmed spoke in favor of a statement of ethics. The President then asked the assembly to indicate whether or not it was in favor of moving forward with the current draft as a provisional, non-binding document, re-titled as "Statement of professional behaviour". The Ethics Committee received the mandate to continue its work and to involve members to provide input on future developments of the document.

Regional Conference Committee - Chair's Remarks

The Chair, Merrick Posnansky, suggested that we need more human than Web interaction. He would like to see more African countries, particularly French-speaking ones, represented at the SAfA meetings, and expressed concern that few Northern archaeologists attend African regional archaeology conferences such as meetings of the West African Archaeological Aassociation. The Regional Conference Committee will work to address these concerns. He encouraged African colleagues to suggest names of people who can meet at least at regional meetings. He will post proposals on the web in the near future.

Webmaster's Report

Susan McIntosh presented the format of the new SAfA web page. All of Nyame Akuma has been scanned and is archived online now. She encouraged people to use the Web site, contribute news item to it, and use the Discussion Forum to extend our possibilities for exchange. With the new Web Committee in place, the page will continue to grow in scope and usefulness, she hopes. On behalf of the assembly, Randy Haaland congratulated Susan on the enormous amount of work she is doing, and thanked Rice University for their support.

Journals offered with membership

Following the extensive discussions at the Tucson meeting on some members' dissatisfaction with AAR, the Executive Board was able to determine that the Society has no contractual agreements of any kind with Kluwer recognizing AAR as its "official" journal. Neither does it have any influence over the press that publishes AAR (Kluwer owns the rights to the journal title), or the choice of editor. Therefore, the Board focused on the possibility of offering more than one discount subscription option as a perquisite of SAfA membership. Kluwer saw no impediment to this. The Executive Board proposed that SAfA offer to its members the choice of subscribing at low or discounted prices to any or all of the three pan-African journals currently being published: *African Archaeological Review, Afrique: Archéologie & Arts, Journal of African Archaeology*. AAR will continue to be offered at the current steep discount; the *Journal of African Archaeology* offers SAfA members who subscribe through SAfA a 10% discount. The proposal was approved. Journal editors will no longer sit as *ex officio* members on the SAfA Executive Board.

E-publication of meeting proceedings

Susan McIntosh asked whether the assembly would support the publication online of papers presented at the meetings – an e-proceedings. There was concern that this would detract from submissions to Nyame Akuma. Instead, a proposal to post expanded conference abstracts, with photos, on the SAfA Website was approved.

Announcements

Sarah Mantshadi Dingalo announced that the Pan-African Congress will be held on 3rd-10th July 2005 in Botswana. The second announcement will be sent out in September 2004, and the third and final one in January 2005. The web page is on the University of Botswana website.

Benjamin Smith announced that the next SAAA will be held in Pretoria in 2006.

Paul Lane announced that the next Livingstone Heritage conference on Managing cultural heritage in Eastern and Southern Africa on 30 September – 2nd October in Oxford.

Detlef Gronenborn announced the round table that he is organizing within the next UISPP congress held in Portugal in 2006 on complex hunter-gatherers around the world.

Diane Lyons announced the Chacmool Conference that will be held in Calgary in November 2004. This year's theme, gender and archaeology, marks the 15th anniversary of Chacmool's first gender conference.

Members should ask their libraries to subscribe to the new journals, *Afrique: Archéologie & Arts*, and *Journal of African Archaeology*.

Elections

The Executive Board acted as a nominating committee to create a slate of candidates, following previous practice. Susan McIntosh pointed out that the By-laws state only that all officers shall be elected by the membership. They do not provide guidance on the nomination procedure. The Board considered whether to have an early nomination procedure with more than one candidate for each position, but feared that unpleasant lobbying might ensue. They considered having only nominations from the floor, but that doesn't allow candidates time to evaluate whether they should accept the nomination. The Board therefore consulted with colleagues and meeting attendees regarding potential nominees to generate a list for each position. Potential nominees were contacted to see if they were willing to run. In most cases, one clear, consensus candidate emerged for each position. This slate of candidates was presented to the assembly, and additional nominations were accepted from the floor, with each nominee given the opportunity to accept or decline the nomination. There were two candidates for President: Peter Mitchell and Christopher Henshilwood.

The following members were elected for the various statutory positions:

President: Peter Mitchell Treasurer: Jeff Fleisher

Recording secretary: Elena Garcea

Organizing secretary: Diane Lyons
Members-at-large: North America: John Arthur; Europe: Detlef Gronenborn; Africa: Ben Smith
Student members-at-large (non-voting): Menno Welling, Isaya Onjala