

**Thirty-Fifth Annual Byzantine Studies Conference
Sarasota, Florida**

**Governing Board Meeting of the Byzantine Studies Association of North America, Inc.
Session I
Thursday, November 5, 2009**

Minutes of the Meeting

Sarah Bassett, President of BSANA, called the meeting to order at 9:10 pm.

Present: Sarah Bassett (President), Elena Boeck, Sharon Gerstel, Anna Gonosová (Treasurer), Linda Jones Hall, Eunice Dauterman Maguire, Henry Maguire, Ralph Mathisen, Margaret Mullett, Adam Schor (Vice President, arriving ca. 11:30pm), Nancy Ševčenko, Ida Sinkevic, Alicia Walker, and Ann Marie Yasin (Secretary).

Regrets: Stratis Papaioannou and Linda Safran.

1. Agenda: The agenda was approved as submitted.
2. Approval of Minutes from the previous meetings of the Governing Board (17 and 18.X.08): R. Mathisen moved and S. Gerstel seconded that the minutes be approved; the motion was unanimously accepted.
3. President's Report
 - a. Activities
 - i. S. Bassett reported that in 2008-09 she wrote the following advocacy letters on behalf of the BSANA: 1. in support of continued publication of *Deltion* (no response received); 2. in support of Italian university scholars (no response received); in support of Florida State University Slavic language department under threat of closure (positive outcome: Slavic languages is not closing at FSU); 3. to the University of Pennsylvania Museum over the firing of faculty members (currently have the understanding that some laid off individuals are being rehired).
 - ii. The first BSANA-sponsored Kalamazoo session took place in May, 2009. It was chaired by Andrea Olsen, and entitled "Women in the Medieval Mediterranean." Papers were delivered by Sarah Brooks ("Byzantine women living under crusader rule: the evidence for Hospitaller Rhodes"), Barbara McNulty ("The Venetian period on Cyprus: constructing the ideal woman"), and Lourdes Maria Alvarez ("A natural disposition to elegance: remembering the female poets of al-Andalus"). Annemarie Weyl Carr was the session discussant.

The next BSANA-sponsored session at the Kalamazoo conference, to take place in May 13-16, 2010, is being organized by Kristine Hess and Cristina Stancioiu and entitled "Places of Medieval Monasticism."

- iii. Report on the BSANA membership survey (conducted by the committee consisting of R. Mathisen, L. Safran and A. Schor (chair): postponed until A. Schor present.

b. Nominating committee and nominations

- i. Program Committee chair and new members for the 2010 BSC: S. Bassett announced that Alice Christ has volunteered and that S. Bassett has accepted her nomination to chair the 2010 Program Committee. Continuing members of the Program Committee are: Linda Jones Hall, Sarah Brooks, Georgia Frank, and Kostis Kourelis.
 - ii. Governing Board officers 2009-2010: Adam Schor has agreed to continue as Vice President. All other officer positions are open and elections will be held during Session II of the Governing Board Meeting. A. Gonosová suggested that the incoming Treasurer should have access to a Bank of America branch office since much of the banking business needs to be conducted in person.
 - iii. Nomination of new members for the Governing Board, to serve 2009-2013: S. Bassett reported that the Nominating Committee (S. Bassett, Chair; A. Gonosová, H. Maguire, and R. Mathisen) had proposed the following names to be considered by the membership for election to the Governing Board: Elizabeth Fisher, Mark Johnson, Kathleen Maxwell, Robert Ousterhout, Claudia Rapp, and Sarolta Tackacs.
 - iv. Appointment of the Nominating Committee for 2009-2010: as per the BSANA By-laws, the Nominating Committee appointed for 2009-2010 was composed of those Governing Board members who are rotating off the Board in 2010: Stratis Papaioannou, Linda Safran, Adam Schor, and Alicia Walker.
- c. Future BSC venues: S. Bassett reported that the following venues and local organizers have been confirmed: in 2010 the BSC will be held at the University of Pennsylvania, organized by Robert Ousterhout; the 2011 BSC will be held at DePaul University in Chicago, organized by Elena Boeck; and the 2013 BSC will take place in Houston, co-organized by Glenn Peers and Michael Maas and timed to coordinate with an exhibition at the Menil Collection. There is still no confirmed location for the 2012 BSC, though Robert Nelson suggests that Yale might be a possibility. Looking ahead to 2014 there is a possibility that Diliانا Angelova and Maria Mavroudi might organize the conference to take place at Berkeley.

4. Secretary's report

- a. Listserv update: A. M. Yasin reported that a new BSANA listserv was set up in Nov. 2008 as a Yahoo Group. The BSANA Yahoo Listserv replaces the BSANA listserv that had been hosted by Washington University in St. Louis; with this change the listserv is no longer

tied to the academic affiliation of the BSANA Secretary and need not be moved each time a new Secretary is elected by the Board. The listserv operates free of charge for members and for the organization. As of Nov. 1, 2009, the number of members on the BSANA Yahoo Listserv was 445.

- b. A. M. Yasin reported the following membership statistics: as of Nov. 1, 2009 the number of BSANA members in good standing (with 2009 dues paid) was 254; of these, 148 are regular members, 60 are students, 28 are retired, and 18 are independent scholars. The total number of members in 2008 was 308.
- c. A. M. Yasin suggested altering the dues payment structure to change an extra \$1 for those members who request that hard-copies of BSANA announcements be sent to them by mail rather than electronically. Currently, paper copies of the annual dues renewal notice, the BSC call for papers and the annual conference registration information are sent to the approximately 60 members who request this option. H. Maguire and S. Gerstel suggested that instead of \$1 the fee should be raised to \$5. A. Gonosová suggested that raising the fee could be seen as punitive and result in a reduction in charitable gifts from members to the organization. Lively discussion ensued. It was decided that no additional charge would be instituted, that the Secretary should receive a budget of \$100.00 (with the option to request additional funds if necessary) for assistance in stuffing envelopes, and that the following line should be added to the dues renewal form: "contributions toward postage would be appreciated."
- d. A. M. Yasin suggested that as a future initiative, the Board should investigate the possibility of an on-line membership renewal system in which members could submit their membership information and dues payment electronically. In the ensuing discussion it was agreed that submitting membership forms electronically as a .pdf document would lower costs and increase efficiency of maintaining membership records and that accepting credit card payments would likely increase the number of foreign members, but concerns were raised about the potential costs of accepting credit card payments. It was agreed that this is an issue for the 2009-10 officers to investigate and raise for further discussion.

5. Continuing Business

- a. Tousimis Graduate Prize
 - i. Winners of the 2008 Tousimis Graduate Prize will be announced at the Annual Business Lunch on 7.XI.09.
 - ii. Dr. Tousimis has paid for the prizes through 2008.
 - iii. S. Bassett reports that Dr. Tousimis has suggested the following revision to the prize structure: replacing the current 1st, 2nd, 3rd place prizes, which Dr. Tousimis regards as hierarchical, with a prize in each of the three chronological areas, namely, early, middle, late Byzantine. S. Bassett called for opinions on this issue, and lively discussion ensued. The following concerns were raised: it is bad policy for a prize donor to stipulate the conditions of the awards at this level of

specificity; chronological categorization is problematic because the distribution of papers would be very uneven and many papers span multiple periods. The Board agreed that S. Bassett should respond to Dr. Tousimis with the suggestion that the structure be revised to the awarding of three equal prizes to papers in any area.

- iv. Annual gathering at BSC for prize recipients past and present: Dr. Tousimis would like to fund a get-together for prize-winners. In principle, the Board had no problem with this, but it was agreed that there are other pressing financial needs in the organization. It was suggested that Dr. Tousimis be asked if he would be receptive to directing funds toward other needs, such as graduate travel costs. Concern was also raised about the BSANA giving out prize-winners' contact information without their consent. It was agreed that recognition of Dr. Tousimis' generosity is important, and the two following suggestions were agreed upon: upon notification of their awards, prize winners should be given Dr. Tousimis' address and encouraged to write a letter of thanks; S. Bassett could offer that a page dedicated to the announcement of the awards be included in BSC registration packets.
- a. Endowment: S. Bassett raised for discussion the possibility of approaching Dr. Tousimis about endowing the prize in order to ensure the regular and ongoing payment and administration of funds. In the past there has been significant difficulty securing the funds in a timely manner, and the BSANA has had to front the money for the awards until receiving the funds from Dr. Tousimis. After lively discussion it was agreed that 1. The BSANA legal advisor, Segundo Fernandez, be consulted as to whether/how an endowment could be configured given that the BSANA has a rotating Board and no administrative staff; 2. The BSANA will not advertise the award with Dr. Tousimis' name attached if the funds are not made available to the organization in advance; 3. The deadline for receiving payment should be one month before the Call for Papers goes out so that that document can provide an accurate announcement of the prize.
- c. Graduate Student Liaison. At the 2008 Board Meeting it was agreed that a graduate student liaison would be desirable, but no action was taken on how to develop the project. S. Bassett suggests that this issue be either actively taken up or dropped. It was agreed that the idea is valuable but impractical to execute.
- d. DO-BSANA Liaison Committee: S. Bassett asks whether the Board would like to continue the dormancy of this committee. It was agreed that, yes, the Committee should remain dormant, and that our connection to DO remain informal, with the Dumbarton Oaks Director of Byzantine Studies invited to contribute a report to the Annual Business Meeting, and the BSANA continuing to use the Dumbarton Oaks address for certain administrative functions that require a permanent address, such as the BSANA bank account and tax records.
- e. Website Oversight: L. Safran has been doing the continued work of forwarding announcements to Amanda Wagner to be posted on the website. S. Bassett has recently

gone through the website content and instructed Amanda Wagner as to which old content should be removed. S. Bassett posed the question of whether there needs to be someone to look after the website more systematically. A. M. Yasin said that as Secretary she has had regular contact with A. Wagner regarding updating the membership list posted on the website, as well as other BSANA documents and announcements, and suggested that website oversight could fall under the Secretary's responsibilities without adding a significant burden. S. Bassett also raised the question of the website's financial administration and registration. The website is currently hosted by godaddy.com which bills for the service on a semi-annual cycle. L. Safran has recently arranged for the payment covering the next two years. It was agreed that future bills should go to the Treasurer, ideally to be paid via bill pay feature of the Bank of America account.

- f. Kalamazoo Conference Session Sponsorship: S. Bassett raised the issue of whether and/or in what capacity the BSANA should continue to sponsor a session at the annual Medieval Congress in Kalamazoo. At issue is the low response from BSANA members to submit sponsored sessions as well as the cost to the organization.
 - i. Time-frame. S. Bassett suggested that the BSANA continue sponsorship of a Kalamazoo, but that a time-limit be put into effect: that sponsorship continue for the next 5 years and that the issue be reevaluated at that point. The Board agreed to this proposal and that it be announced at the 2009 Business Lunch.
 - ii. Funding and Definition of Sponsorship. In the initial Kalamazoo agreement then-President L. Safran agreed to cover expenses of organizers for the first session. In the absence of a formal policy that procedure has been continued for the second sponsored session. S. Bassett suggests that the Board establish a policy regarding funding levels of BSANA-sponsored Kalamazoo sessions. Lively discussion ensued. There was general consensus that the sessions are a valuable means of getting the BSANA name out, that it is desirable that the organization support the presentation of scholarship on the Byzantine period in academic venues that are not limited to Byzantium, and that it is desirable that sessions stress connections between Byzantium and other fields. A. Walker suggested that the session chairs receive a fixed budget of \$500 to disperse as they see fit (e.g. for session chair travel costs, graduate student participant travel costs, etc). The Board agreed to this budget allocation for the specified time period.
- g. BSC issues
 - i. BSC Conference Program and Call for Papers Issues: S. Bassett asked L. Jones Hall if the Program Committee was happy with the sequence of dates for the Calls for Papers and paper submissions; L. Jones Hall confirmed that to be the case.
 - ii. The Board agreed that regular BSC papers should continue to be 20-minutes in length with a short question period following after each paper.

- iii. L. Jones Hall requested that Board Members send the Program Committee Chair a list of other listservs on which the BSC Call for Papers should be advertised and instructions for posting messages to those listservs.
- h. Amendments to By-Laws
 - i. Participation and payment of membership fees: At Session II of the 2008 Board Meeting it was pointed out that there was an inconsistency of language in Sections III.3 and V.1 of the By-laws regarding requirements for the submission of abstracts and presentation of papers at the BSC. S. Bassett suggested the following revision to section V.1 of the By-laws in order to resolve this inconsistency: "The BSC takes place annually at venues approved by the Governing Board. Both members and non-members of BSANA may submit an abstract to present their work at the BSC. Non-members whose papers are accepted for presentation must pay the annual membership fee to participate (see above III.3)." The Board approved this wording of the By-laws amendment to be put to a vote of the members at the 2009 Business Meeting (see 2009 Business Lunch Minutes, section 5.a.i).
 - ii. Program Committee: S. Bassett proposed the following amendment to revise section IV.6 of the By-laws: "The Governing Board selects the Program Committee for the Byzantine Studies Conference at the Board Meeting of the year prior to the BSC. The Committee consists of a chair and six members. Appointments are for two years and terms are staggered, with three or four members replaced annually. Committee members must include balanced representation of the disciplines that make up the field of Byzantine studies. In addition, it is desirable that the Program Committee include one member from both the current and the upcoming host institution or area. The Program Chair is responsible for the annual Call for Papers for the BSC, and the Committee is responsible for determining the annual Program from the submitted abstracts. A member of the Program Committee serves as the graduate-student prize coordinator." The Board approved the wording of the following By-laws amendment to be put to a vote of the members at the 2009 Business Meeting (see 2009 Business Lunch Minutes, section 5.a.ii)

6. New Business

- a. Local Arrangements Guidelines: In light of budget shortfalls for recent BSCs, which in turn needed to be covered from the BSANA budget, S. Bassett distributed a proposal that an exploratory committee should be established for each prospective BSC venue; this committee would be responsible for submitting a budget to the President and Treasurer at least one year in advance of the conference date [see attached]; at that point, the President should present the proposed budget to the Board and the Board is to decide the viability of the venue. Lively discussion ensued. A. Gonosová noted that the section of the By-laws regarding the responsibilities of the Local Arrangements Chair

(sect. IV.7) is not specific as to "logistical details" and added that the necessity for fundraising should be made clear to prospective Local Arrangements Committee chairs from the beginning. H. Maguire suggested that the Local Arrangements Committee be expanded to include both the previous and the subsequent Local Arrangements Chairs. On the larger question of fundraising, A. Walker asked whether the BSANA might want to raise an appeal in the event that we come within \$5000 of our \$25,000 nest egg, and also suggested that there be a mechanism in place whereby the Board would be authorized to cancel a given BSC should the Local Arrangements Committee fail to provide an acceptable budget in a timely manner. A. Schor asked if a Board Member should be elected as a fundraiser, and S. Bassett suggested that the legal advisor should be consulted as to what our legal responsibilities and limitations on fundraising are. A. Gonosová responded that there are many who feel strongly that fundraising for the BSC should be handled at the local level. It was agreed that these concerns should be shared with the membership at the Business Lunch, and that the Board consider in session II whether or not to write up a proposal to be brought before the membership at the 2010 Business Lunch.

- b. Survey issues: Discussion of issues raised in the Membership Survey, including the launching of a journal, was tabled until the Business Meeting and Board Meeting Session II.
7. Adjournment: R. Mathisen duly moved that the meeting be adjourned, L. Jones Hall seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. The Meeting was adjourned at 12:34am.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Marie Yasin
Secretary, BSANA