

Dear Members of the Board,

I am just writing to give you some background about our selection for the BASOR editor(s) and explain our process for selecting these editors. We conducted an open search and had a number of excellent candidates. The search committee conducted numerous interviews and our final group of editors was interviewed more than once. It was the unanimous choice by the search committee without any hesitation. The publications committee also voted in unanimous agreement with this selection after an open discussion.

There are a number of attributes of this particular group of editors that we feel make them particularly well-suited for this position. First and foremost is their editorial experience. The sheer volume of edited works that has been published by this group of scholars is highly unusual. The capacity at which they produce materials is demonstrated. On top of that, this demonstrates their capacity to identify (and cajole) a wide variety of peer reviewers, and that is the most difficult aspect of the BASOR editorial work.

Another attribute which was impressive to the search committee was their diversity. On top of the clear and more typical ASOR network to which they are connected (Susan's work for the Albright exemplifies this), this team will increase BASOR's and ASOR's reach in Europe, which has been noted in a number of documents as desired by the organization. This is the most significant area in which we have identified that BASOR's influence can be grown.

Diversity is also apparent in the editors themselves. We have one senior scholar, two middle stage, and one junior stage scholar. Likewise, we will have three female and one male editors on the team. One is American, three hold EU passports. This increased diversity reflects a positive development for ASOR and shows how ASOR will remain relevant as an organization that makes space for scholars of any background.

In terms of academic background, the team is also quite diverse and the team controls the languages and material culture of diverse periods and regions. All bring different skills to the table. For example, Kilani can work in about twenty languages and controls computational skills in GIS, 3-d modeling software, and various kinds of linguistic programs. All have interests in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Levant and all have made contributions to the study of these regions. Not every member of the team controls the material from Cyprus and this has been identified as an area to recruit for its editorial board (although two of the members control the main languages of Cyprus and have worked on materials from the region so this deficit is not as significant as it may seem from quick perusal of their biographies).

One concern that has been brought to my attention is that the team has been perceived as overly specialized in the Late Bronze Age. The committees that I have worked with rejected this criticism on a number of grounds, however, after significant consideration. First and foremost, we decided that this criticism was unfounded in that this problem would be expected if we only had one editor (and that was possible given how the position was advertised). James Weinstein was a Bronze Age specialist and this was not deemed a concern with his editorship. Second, we

did not have any candidates or teams of candidates that did not have a period of specialization. In the case of “team” applications like this one, all of the constituent applicants worked in the same period. We also felt that given the “inter-regionalism” of the Late Bronze Age, specialists in that period tend to gravitate towards broader geographic interests (as an LB specialist myself, that is what excited me about the period initially). Most importantly, however, we do not believe that it is accurate to describe this group as only interested in the LB (although they undoubtedly began working together because of this shared interest). I can give examples of this diversity for each candidate. Susan Cohen has published on the Iron Age as well and in the summer of 2019 excavated the Roman camp at Megiddo. Pruzsinszky’s current project is a study of music that spans the Bronze and Iron Ages and has edited works that include materials through late Roman times. Mynarova is just as heavily invested in the study of the third millennium and has a number of projects related to this era; her edited volumes span the Bronze and Iron Ages. Kilani’s languages of specialization include Coptic and Arabic and has excavated at Neolithic, Roman, and Medieval sites. In our interviews with them, they were very dedicated to expanding the scope of BASOR in the fashion that Eric and Chris have and to making sure that the journal remains relevant to ASOR’s changing membership while also respecting what makes BASOR distinct from NEA and JCS. No editor can reasonably be expected to have mastery over all of the periods and regions of interest to ASOR’s members; this is resolved through the cultivation of a careful editorial board. Chris and Eric will work closely with the new editors to help build a board that can fully support their efforts.

In sum, the selection of this team was unanimous from the search committee and Publications and they have the complete support of Eric and Chris for the transition. I should also add that we do not have a “back-up” candidate (or team). If the Board does not approve this selection, we will have to advertise for the position again and there is a chance that we may not be able to fill the position before Eric and Chris’s already extended term is finished.

Sincerely,

Kevin McGeough
Chair, Publications Committee