

Report of the Committee on Publications to The Executive
Committee of ASOR
Submitted by Kevin McGeough, Chair
November 2024

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Report of the Chair (Kevin McGeough)

ASOR's publication program is running smoothly, and I have no significant concerns in relation to any of the journals or monograph series. Our relationship with University of Chicago Press for the publication of our journals is excellent. The editors have only praise for UCP and from my perspective as COP Chair, the journals have never run more efficiently. The relationship with ISD in producing our two main monograph series is good, but we do face bottlenecks at times given that the press does not always have the labour capacity to devote to the production of the books.

There have been some changes in editorial teams. Last year, Paul Delnero, Petra Goedegebuure, and Seth Richardson took over *JCS*, but Piotr Michalowski completed work on one more issue (the 2024 issue). Now the new team is working on the next issue, which will be their first.

This is also the last year of Stephanie Budin's second three-year term as *NEA* editor. She is leaving the journal in good shape and much of the work for the first two issues of 2025 has already been completed. This is good news for the incoming editor who will be able to concentrate on "on-boarding" rather than racing to meet a deadline. COP has conducted a search for Stephanie's replacement and a recommendation will be made to the Board at the Annual Meeting.

In terms of the book series, in spring 2024 COP asked the Board to renew William Caraher's term as *Annual* editor for an additional year (which will mean his seventh year as editor begins in 2025). We did so because of the number of volumes that were in advanced stages of publication. It would have been unfair to search for a new editor under those circumstances given the expected workload and needed familiarity with these projects. It may be that we need to request one additional year, given some of the publishing delays. I will leave that for the incoming co-chairs of COP and the monograph editors to decide in 2025.

There is clearly demand on behalf of authors to publish in our monograph series, but these series need some attention as the cost to publish in them is becoming more unfeasible. While we have made increasing use of the Opportunity Fund to support the costs of publications, authors are finding it increasingly difficult to come up with subvention funds. This brings with it issues of parity as researchers working in smaller research institutions are disadvantaged in their ability to publish with ASOR. There are decreasing funding opportunities within smaller institutions and for scholars working outside of university settings, a situation that seems unlikely to change in the next few years. ASOR should be helping authors with limited funding publish their work, and that this element of ASOR's mission is worth the financial investment. Financially related, we need to increase the digital reach of our books; digital editions should be the norm not the exception.

The other digital issue I feel I should report on that may be of interest to COP and to the Board is the question of AI and publications. Some of you may be aware that Taylor & Francis recently sold "data access rights" to their catalogue of books and "advanced learning content" (but not explicitly journals) to Microsoft for use in its Artificial Intelligence Programming. I have had conversations with editors of journals managed by Taylor & Francis about this issue. I have learned that they had no ability to veto access, and they were informed that most of the desire for access to their content was for artificial intelligence language building skills. I have communicated my concerns to the University of Chicago Press. They have assured me that they have no desire to enter into a similar arrangement and that ASOR has nothing to worry about for our publications run through them. Still, we should be anticipating other issues related to AI and data access moving forward.

I am pleased to report that Eric Kansa and Sarah Kansa will be taking over from me as COP Co-Chairs. They have long supported ASOR's publication program, both having served on COP and on various COP working groups. Given how important digital publication will be for ASOR's publication future, their expertise in this area will be of tremendous benefit.

As this will be my last report as COP Chair, I want to end on a personal note. Jeff Blakely and Chuck Jones, previous COP chairs, and Joseph Greene, former editor, recruited me first as an editor, and then as COP chair, ensuring that I had all the tools I would need for success in these roles. Over these years members of COP worked together to build a committee that is an effective and collegial group. I had the opportunity to work with many editors whose dedication to their publications have and continue to make ASOR's publication program successful. In my capacity as editor of the monographs and as COP Chair, I have had the pleasure to work with Timothy Harrison, Susan Ackerman, and Sharon Herbert in their roles as presidents, and I benefited from their sound counsel. I also greatly appreciate the hard work of the staff of the ASOR office who play an important role in our publications, especially Marta Ostovich. And finally I want to thank Andy Vaughn, who I have worked with closely for many years now, and whose commitment to ASOR is unwavering. It has been my pleasure to serve ASOR in this capacity. I especially value my role in shepherding the great research of ASOR members into publications. I hope to continue to support ASOR publications in other capacities moving forward.

Near Eastern Archaeology Annual Report — 2024
Submitted by Stephanie L. Budin, Editor

Near Eastern Archaeology published (will have published) four issues in 2024. Two of these were Special Topics issues—one being the overflow of the ST issue on Levantine Stamp Seals from the December 2023 issue, and the September issue dealing with contributions to ANE archaeology by Spanish scholars, guest edited by Josué J. Justel. The December issue is in the works as I type.

2025 is already mostly cared for. We currently have five manuscripts in the queue for March, with another four in peer review. We should have six to eight articles for March. The June and September issues are Special Topics issues dedicated to 50 Years of Excavations at Megiddo, guest edited by Israel Finkelstein. The June manuscripts have already been submitted.

Having noticed that potential authors were finding the *Guidelines for Authors* to be too tedious to get through, I have added the *Guidelines—Quick Form* to both sites pertaining to *NEA*. So far, this seems to have helped.

The NEL Abstracts project seems to be running smoothly. I thank Andy Vaughn for this especially.

We are losing two members of the Editorial Board—Shawna Dolansky and Thais da Rocha Silva—who are completing their second round of duty to *NEA*. We have also lost the Assistant Editor Julia Hsieh who resigned in August.

And, of course, I am leaving myself after six years. I shall be around to train my successor for a while. I am leaving the new choices for filling out the Editorial Board to my successor.

As ever, I am truly grateful to and for Billie Jean Collins for her copy editing, Susanne Wilhelm for layout, and Rob Blixt and Jared Koller for all the tech. support. The members of the *NEA* Editorial Board are the best in the world and deserve all due recognition.

Report 2024, *Bulletin of ASOR*

BASOR co-editors: S. Cohen, M. Kilani, J. Mynářová, R. Pruzsinszky

We would like to extend our thanks to *BASOR*'s copy editor, Ali Witsell, and the production team at University of Chicago Press for all their work in helping to produce the journal.

Below are the relevant statistics regarding publication and the other activities that we have accomplished in 2024.

- Statistics (1 November 2023 – 31 October 2024):
 - number of papers submitted: 41
 - number of papers accepted: 11
 - number of papers rejected: 17
 - number of papers out for revision: 7
 - total number of papers out for revision (all years): 27
 - book reviews published: 13

- Publication of two volumes:
 - v391 in spring 2024, and v 392 in fall 2024.

- Review Process:
 - We are continuing to increase the pool of peer reviewers solicited by *BASOR*.

- Editors' Last Term:
 - ASOR renewed our contract as *BASOR* co-editors for a second term, from January 2024 – December 2026. This will be our final term as co-editors.

- Social Media:
 - *BASOR* now has 1755 followers on Facebook (as of October 25, 2024).
 - up from 1333 followers in 2023 and 925 in 2022

- Other Items:
 - Our goal is still to reach an article acceptance rate of 15-20%.
 - We have achieved our previous goals of maintaining no more than a one year backlog of articles in the publication queue.
 - At present, our current challenges now are related to the lack of submissions. While we believe that some of this stems from the current situation(s) in the Middle East, we would also like to kindly request our board, COP, and other *ASOR* members to assist us in soliciting submissions.

Annual report: *Maarav*

Simeon Chavel, Editor

This is *Maarav*'s second year as an ASOR journal. There has been excitement about *Maarav*'s rebranding. There were thirteen submissions since last year's issue, *Maarav 27* (2023). Seven were accepted, six rejected. Six of those accepted will be published this year in *Maarav 28*, while the remaining one, at the "prepare final files" stage, gives *Maarav* its first backlog and will be published in *Maarav 29* (2025). In its two years as an ASOR journal, *Maarav* has received twenty-two submissions and accepted eleven.

The 2024 issue is typeset and about to be sent to the respective presses, for printing and for publishing online. It has six articles totaling 220 pages (*Maarav 27* [2023] has four articles in 190 pages). These cover a good range of topics, languages, and periods — inscriptions on altars, jars, busts, and tablets, and the formulations and textual history of magic spells and prophecies, in five different languages, from the Late Bronze Age, through the Iron and Hellenistic Ages, to the modern period. The issue will be published as a double-issue.

The University of Chicago Press has budgeted for 500 pages (250 per issue), and *Maarav* is building to that level.

Journal of Cuneiform Studies — Annual Report 2024
Submitted by Petra Goedegebuure, co-editor

Piotr Michalowski retired as editor of *JCS* after decades of stellar service. The last volume he shepherded to publication was *JCS* 76 (2024).

In February 2024 Paul Delnero (Johns Hopkins University), Petra Goedegebuure (University of Chicago), and Seth Richardson (University of Chicago) officially took over as co-editors for a three-year term.

This transition was accompanied by several important changes. The two major changes involved (1) the submission process and the management of the workflow, and (2) the review process. *JCS* now uses Editorial Manager to manage the workflow. We also established a double-blind peer review process with at least two reviewers per manuscript. All websites now reflect these changes.

The editors meet on a weekly basis. Goedegebuure participated in selecting the candidate for the Mesopotamian Fellowship. Next year one of the other editors will participate (we will rotate).

JCS continues to work with Billie Jean Collins from Lockwood Press for the publication of the journal. We are in conversation with her about minor modifications to the journal style, deadlines, and working with Editorial Manager.

We inherited ten manuscripts from Piotr. Nine of the ten authors re-submitted their manuscript to Editorial Manager, after which the editorial process could start. Including these nine manuscripts, *JCS* currently (November 2024) has received 38 submissions. 28 of those manuscripts have already had decisions made on them; with 8 papers accepted, our acceptance rate currently stands at 29%. Below follows a break-down of the status of the submissions, with editorial outcomes when applicable.

Accept: 8
Eight manuscripts have been accepted for publication in *JCS* 77 (2025).

Together with the article that has been accepted with revision (see next), currently nine manuscripts are scheduled to appear in *JCS* 77 (2025). We expect that several of the manuscripts that are new, under review, or under revision (total: 13) will also appear in *JCS* 77. We are monitoring the probable page count on a regular basis so as not to over-accept.

Under revision: 4
One article is under major revision, two are under minor revision, and one is accepted with revision.

Under review: 7
There are currently seven manuscripts under review.

New submissions: 3

There are currently three new submissions. Editors and reviewers will be assigned in our next meeting.

Desk-rejected: 8

The content of three manuscripts did not fall within the scope of *JCS* and were referred to more appropriate journals. One manuscript was erroneously submitted twice.

Four manuscripts belonged to the same author who tried to convince us through bullying and threats to make us accept their writings. Needless to say, this did not go anywhere.

Withdrawn: 3

Three manuscripts were withdrawn, in two cases after the manuscripts received the verdict of *Major Revision*.

Rejected after review: 5

Five manuscripts were rejected after receiving negative reviews.

Annual of ASOR – Annual Report – November 2024

Submitted by William Caraher, editor

Published Manuscripts:

Title: *The Amman Theatre Statue in Its Iron Age Contexts*

Author: Joel S. Burnett with contributions by Romel Gharib and Don F. Parker

Color: No

In page proofs.

Title: *Excavations at Kourion's Amathous Gate Cemetery (2 Volumes)*

Author/Editor: Michael Given

Color: Yes.

In page proofs

Manuscripts Under Contract and In Production:

Title: *Archaeological Ethics in Practice.*

Editors: Sarah Lepinski and Sarah Kielt Costello

Color: No

Title: *Excavations at Tel Jezreel 1995–1996: The Stratigraphy and Neolithic–Iron Age Pottery From Area A Vol. II.*

Editor: Charlotte Whiting

Color: No

Manuscripts Expected:

Unsilencing the Archives

Author/Editor: Aaron Brody, Felicity Cobbing, Melissa Cradic, Helen Dixon, Samuel Pfister, and Jeff Zorn

Taanach Volume.

Author/Editor: Nancy Lapp

Color: Undecided

Proposal Under Review:

Judith McKenzie's *The Re-Use of Sacred Spaces in the Levant from Late Antiquity to the Medieval Period*

Author/Editor: Andy Reyes and Ross Burns (Judith McKenzie †)

Color: Undecided

ASOR Archaeological Report Series Annual Report

November 2024

Jennie Ebeling, Series Editor

Recent publications

ASOR-ARS 31

Oleson, John P. *Humayma Excavation Project, 3: The Roman Fort*. POD copy available at ISD desk at ASOR annual meeting.

Manuscripts ready (or nearly ready) for production

Evans, Jane DeRose and Jennifer Tobin. *The U-Shaped Building at Caesarea Maritima: A Garden Attached to the Praetorium*. Contract signed and \$10,000 subvention for printing and color illustrations paid to ASOR. Manuscript is with Susanne at ISD.

Parker, S. Thomas and Megan A. Perry, eds. *The Roman Aqaba Project Final Report Volume 2 – Excavation of Ancient Aila*. Contract signed and \$5,000 subvention for printing and black and white illustrations granted to Megan Perry by ASOR publications. Manuscript has been shared with Susanne.

Gaber, Pamela, ed. *Idalion III. The Terrace of the East Acropolis, Mouti tou Arvili, and Special Studies*. Contract signed and \$10,000 subvention for printing and color illustrations paid to ASOR. This manuscript needs more work but I haven't sent it to Susanne yet.

Manuscripts currently under peer review

Tappy, Ron. *The Zeitah Excavations Volume I Project Overview: Design, Strategy, and Tabulated Results*. Contract signed in November 2021. Awaiting report from Reviewer 2.

Tappy, Ron. *The Zeitah Excavations Volume II Stratigraphy and Architecture: Historical Development from the Iron Age IIA through the Late Ottoman Period*. Contract signed in November 2021. Awaiting report from Review 2.

Manuscripts received but not yet sent out for peer review

Gaber, Pamela and Evi Margaritis, eds. *Environment, Landscape, and Society: Diachronic Perspectives on Settlement Patterns in Cyprus*. CAARI Monograph.

Proposal accepted March 3, 2017 (with Andrew McCarthy listed as one of the editors).

Manuscript received October 25, 2024. Pam says the subvention (not sure of amount) is with Bill Andreas. Working with Bill Caraher on manuscript.

Tappy, Ron. *The Zeitah Excavations Volume IV: Objects, Small Finds, and Specialized Studies and Post-Iron Age Pottery*. Contract signed in November 2021. Manuscript received August 27, 2024. Waiting to receive manuscript for vol III so these two vols can be reviewed by the same two reviewers.

Proposal currently under peer review

London, Gloria with a forward by H.W. and S. Swiny. *Echoes from the Past: Traditional Cypriote Pottery. An Exhibition at the Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute October 1995*. CAARI Monograph.

Proposals accepted after peer review; awaiting manuscripts

Listed in chronological order from most recent.

Caraher, William, Nancy Serwint, R. Scott Moore, and Tina Najberg, eds. *Polis I: History of Princeton Excavations and the Late Roman material from the E.F1 Area*. Proposal accepted July 23, 2024.

Caraher, William, Nancy Serwint, R. Scott Moore, and Tina Najberg, eds. *Polis II: City of Work: Hellenistic and Roman Workshops in the area of E.F2*. Proposal accepted July 23, 2024.

Stone, Peter. J. *University of Michigan and University of Minnesota Excavations at Tel Kedesh IV. Pottery and Lamps from the Persian-Hellenistic Administrative Building (PHAB)*. Proposal accepted May 29, 2024.

Berlin, Andrea M. and Sharon C. Herbert. *University of Michigan and University of Minnesota Excavations at Tel Kedesh II. The Persian-Hellenistic Administrative Building (PHAB): Stratigraphy and Architecture, Context and History*. Proposal accepted April 15, 2024.

Berlin, Andrea M. *University of Michigan and University of Minnesota Excavations at Tel Kedesh III. Objects and Finds from the Persian-Hellenistic Administrative Building (PHAB)*. Proposal accepted April 15, 2024.

Tappy, Ron. *The Zeitah Excavations Volume III. Iron Age IIA-B-C: A Comprehensive Comparative Ceramic Analysis*. Proposal accepted May 12, 2021. Contract signed in November 2021.

Gleason, Kathryn, Barbara Burrell, and Jimmy Schryver. *The Promontory Palace at Caesarea Maritima, Israel: Final Reports*. Proposal accepted January 3, 2020.

Casana, Jesse. *Archaeological Investigations at Tell Qarqur, Syria: Settlement, Subsistence, and Social Change in the Northern Levant*. Proposal accepted January 4, 2019.

Parker, S. Thomas and Megan A. Perry, eds. *The Final Report of the Petra North Ridge Project*. Perry now responsible for publication. Proposal accepted November 27, 2017.
Caraher, William et al. *Koutsopetria 2, Cyprus*.

Book Sales Report through 9/30/24

Q1

- US: 25 books sold, \$985.97: \$645.33 (ASOR), \$340.64 (ISD)
- UK: 17 books sold, £402.40: 268.27 (ASOR)

Q2

- US: 112 books sold, \$6,668.33: \$5,213.71 (ASOR), \$1,454.61 (ISD)
- UK: 6 books sold, £152.26: 101.50 (ASOR)

Q3

- US: 240 books sold, \$14,734.07: \$11,450.96 (ASOR), \$3,283.11 (ISD)
- UK: 17 books sold, £409.51: 273.00 (ASOR)

Total Sales for 2024 through September:

US \$22,388.87: **\$17,310.00 (ASOR), 377 books**

UK: £964.16: **642.77 (ASOR), 40 books**

Recent publications, subventions, and costs:

December 2023, AASOR 75: *Amman Theater Statue*, Joel Burnett

\$5,000 subvention

\$236.70 extra copies purchased by author

\$1,800 pre-press work

\$9,518 Sheridan invoice

-\$6,081.30

June 2024 AASOR 76: *City and Cemetery Vol. 1*, Michael Given

June 2024 AASOR 77: *City and Cemetery Vol. 2*, Michael Given

\$10,000 subvention for 2 volumes

\$2,565 pre-press work

\$11,411 Sheridan invoice V1

\$15,506 Sheridan invoice V2

-\$19,482 (author still owes for extra copies)

Forthcoming:

2024 ARS 31: *Humayma*, John Peter Oleson

\$5,000 subvention

\$2,790.00 pre-press work

\$2,210.00

2024 AASOR 78: *Ethics in Archaeological Practice*, Sarah Costello & Sara Lepinski

2023 data

Q1

- US: 21 books \$570.79: \$372.87 (ASOR)
- UK: 13 books £251.17: 167.45 (ASOR)

Q2

- US: 56 books, \$3,081.18: \$2,251.03 (ASOR)
- UK: 9 books, £164.65: 109.77 (ASOR)

Q3

- US: 42 books, \$1,796.83: \$570.33 (ASOR)
- UK: 11 books, £236.87: 157.91 (ASOR)

Q4

- US: 28 books, \$1,379.14: \$900.99 (ASOR)
- UK: 25 books, £638.64: 425.76 (ASOR)

Totals:

US: \$6,827.94: **\$4095.22 (ASOR), 147 books**

UK: £1 291.33: **£ 860.89 (ASOR), 58 books**

Published in 2023:

January 2023, ARS29: *Taanach II*, Mark Meehl

September 2023, ARS30: *Tel Kedesh I*, Sharon Herbert

\$5,000 subvention

\$1,145 pre-press work

\$11,370 Sheridan invoice

-\$7,515

The Ancient Near East Today 2024 Report **Submitted by Jessica Nitschke (Editor), 11 Nov 2024**

ANE Today produced 27 articles in 2024, distributed through 26 newsletters (some are yet to appear). The decision was taken at the end of 2023 (in consultation with Andy Vaughn, Sharon Herbert, and Marta Ostovich) to move to a reduced schedule of every other week in order to free up the editor and staff for the ongoing review of copyright compliance of past articles as well as creation of the new website.

New Website

The major achievement of 2024 is the design and creation of a standalone website for ANE Today (<https://anetoday.org/>), which was launched in mid-September. This was carried out primarily by myself, Marta Ostovich, and Jared Koller.

To date, approximately 150 articles (out of a total of ~580) have been transferred over to the new site (representing 2021 to present). The website makes it easier to search and browse articles and will hopefully lead to greater prominence of the publication in the public sphere. We have added a commenting function, in order to promote engagement with the community. Currently, the editor moderates these comments (which for the moment are not many and mostly spam).

As part of the process of creating the website, Marta Ostovich and I undertook the **creation of the [Terms of Use](#)** specific to *ANE Today*, including a publication agreement. In doing so, we made a couple of decisions about rights and access that had been left ambiguous or were under debate:

1. **Ownership of the *intellectual property* of content:** Although ASOR's other publications retain the copyright to their articles, it was decided that this doesn't make sense for ANE Today and could lead to problems, since much of what is published in ANE Today is summaries/abbreviated versions of scholarship published elsewhere. Therefore, the policy we decided on was that authors will retain copyright to their text; ASOR retains copyright to the site itself; images/illustrations remain the copyright of the stated rights holder.
2. **Access to the site's content.** At the last annual meeting, there had been discussion of restricting access to portions of articles and/or the site to only those who have signed up for the newsletter/Friends of ASOR, in order to encourage membership in FoA (especially among students). We have decided against this for a few reasons:
 - Such restriction of access is counter to the ideal of Open Access and ASOR's mission of public outreach, personal information is a "cost" of sorts.
 - There are some people, e.g. some in the Middle East who would be uncomfortable with having their data added to an American organization's mailing list.
 - Blocking access will hinder the growth of the site. Making it completely open without restriction is more effective for increasing traffic and viewership.
 - Asking instructors to force students to sign up for a newsletter they don't want is strategically ineffective if the goal is to use the FoA mailing list to somehow generate revenue. it would be best to figure out other ways to convert website viewership to subscriptions.

Therefore, it is our view that the site should remain completely accessible to everyone.

I have also created a **style guide and work flow** for both rebuilding old articles/creating new articles on the new site (i.e. formatting, handling images, SEO, tags, categories etc), in order to ensure consistency,

quality, and continuity in the event of editor/staff turnover. This has been really important for images, as previously there was no set procedure for checking/resizing/optimizing images.

As for the **performance** of the new site, it has only been up for a couple of months, so it is a little difficult to analyze the metrics so far, but the data we have at this point will provide a useful baseline for evaluating performance and creating a strategy going forward:

Google Analytics: October 1 - October 31

Views: 8,300

Active Users: 5,300

Average engagement time per active user: 1m 23s

Google Search Console: October 1 - October 31

Top 10 queries in search results	Clicks	Impressions	CTR	Position (in search results)
ishtar gate	20	13662	0.15%	12.52
lighthouse of alexandria	13	9244	0.14%	10.54
lighthouse of alexandria article	13	71	18.31%	1.62
josephus on moses	11	39	28.21%	1.54
absalom's monument	9	1641	0.55%	9.24
bible characters who wanted to die	9	112	8.04%	1.76
dreams in ancient egypt	8	38	21.05%	2.16
people who wanted to die in the bible	8	30	26.67%	1.33
assyria	6	16451	0.04%	6.93
the ishtar gate	5	1160	0.43%	8.9

Top 10 pages (based on clicks from google search results)	Clicks	Impressions	CTR	Position (in search results)
https://anetoday.org/levinson-death-hebrew-bible/	241	5748	4.19%	7
https://anetoday.org/stevens-egypt-china/	236	8410	2.81%	8.16
https://anetoday.org/gries-ishtar-gate-babylon/	178	51778	0.34%	10.84
https://anetoday.org/higgins-pharos-lighthouse-alexandria/	115	34347	0.33%	10.19
https://anetoday.org/szpakowska-dreams-egypt/	112	3606	3.11%	6.51
https://anetoday.org/westwood-moses-antiquities/	105	3015	3.48%	13.23
https://anetoday.org/goncalves-cuneiform-mathematics/	95	6469	1.47%	16.64
https://anetoday.org/volokhine-egypt-food-prohibitions/	90	4373	2.06%	14.67
https://anetoday.org/barbu-who-invented-idolatry/	88	4014	2.19%	13.56

Ongoing Review of Images of Past Articles and Reposting on the New Website

As per last year's report, in 2023 a problem emerged whereby ASOR received copyright complaints for a couple of images used in ANET articles. Since the articles have to be rebuilt on the new site anyhow, we took this opportunity to review image use in the archive. With the assistance of Moni Islam (Office Coordinator) and Lucia Kustra (Student Intern), I have been steadily going through all the past archives:

- creating a database of articles and organizing the backup archives (completed)
- reviewing images from past articles for copyright compliance, including rewriting captions where necessary and replacing/deleting non-compliant images (finished for 2020-present; in progress for 2013-2019)
- reposting the articles on the new website, including: resizing images and replacing or deleting poor quality images; improving for SEO (finished 2021-present)

This has been a somewhat slow and arduous process, for the following reasons:

- Many times the original source of the image was not provided, necessitating a reverse image search on google.
- I have had to do a lot of research to determine the licensing/usage rules for images from various online repositories.
- Turns out that not all images put on Wikimedia as "public domain" are, in fact, such.
- While the number of images from past ANET articles that openly violate copyright is relatively small, there is a larger problem that many, many images that would be ok to use were not credited properly in the captions (e.g., images from museum websites, Creative Commons images). This has necessitated that we rewrite the captions.
- A further issue is technical: in the past there was no systematic process in place for preparing image files for upload to the asor website; the result was that sometimes there were images of really poor quality included; in other instances, the file sizes uploaded are far too large, contributing to the sluggishness of page load times and of the overall ASOR website. Therefore, we have to resize and optimize images from all the past articles.

Social Media Accounts

In October 2024, We launched separate social media accounts for ANE Today, which are being managed by Rachel Bernstein, the new communications manager/FOA coordinator:

https://www.instagram.com/ane_today/

https://x.com/ANE_Today

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61567524929136>

At the moment we are sharing current and past articles; news links; and relevant ASOR news. In the future we will also share images of objects/buildings/sites.

Looking ahead to 2025 and beyond

I have many ambitions for the coming year.

Build website traffic/readership

As one of my goals in coming on as editor of *ANE Today* is to increase readership and visibility of the publication as a resource for both students and enthusiasts, my main goal is to increase engaged traffic to the site, through a variety of strategies

- Continuing to add content regularly (i.e. articles from the archive + new articles)
- Fixing performance issues and tweak SEO
- Work with the communications manager to increase *ANE Today's* profile
- Consider other types of content (once reposting the archive is finished; this is likely a project for 2026)

Redesign the Newsletter.

The template is outdated and difficult to use on mobile devices. This has turned out to be a bit more challenging than it seems like it should be, because of difficulties with the newsletter service that ASOR uses and limited staff time. It is a priority for early 2025, and once this is done, in coordination with the communications manager, we will make a plan about adjusting the content

Increase Newsletter subscriptions/FoA membership

Inasmuch as the ANE Today newsletter is tied to Friends of ASOR membership, we will work on ways to encourage visitors to the site to sign up for the newsletter. The current number of subscribers/members is 17310 (up from 16749 last year). At the moment there are sign-up links on the website, but these are not as prominent as they could be.

Image Review / Article Reposting

We need to speed up the process of reviewing images and reposting articles from the archive, as it is taking much longer than anticipated for reasons mentioned above. More manpower would help, but most likely for the earlier years (e.g. 2013-2018). I will simply delete all non-crucial images that are not already copyright compliant with adequate credit in the captions, rather than looking for ways to replace or fix them.

Expand the Editorial Advisory Board

As we have been focused mostly on the technical side of the publication, less attention has been spent on content strategy except to continue more or less what has been done in the past. I would like to expand the board to include coverage of areas of expertise currently lacking (e.g. Late Antiquity, Islamic history and archaeology, Mesopotamia) and begin discussions about future content.

The Levantine Ceramics Project



www.levantineceramics.org

Levantine Ceramics Project 2024 Annual Report ASOR Committee on Publications

The [LCP](#) has had another busy year. We completed a large round of software development last winter and are finishing another as I write. I begin every annual report this way, because this sentence underscores one of the most fundamental aspects of the [LCP](#), which is that it is a work in progress, open to improvement, correction, and expansion. I am always happy to share details of software upgrades with whomever is interested – so please ask! In this report, I summarize other sorts of take-aways and updates from the past year.

LCP Handbooks get real!

[LCP](#) Handbooks, which last year were a glimmer in the eye, are about to go live. The first installment, *The LCP Handbook to the Late Roman Amphora 1 (LRA 1)*, by Veronica Iacomi and Grady Gillett, is in the copy-editing stage; we expect publication in hard copy and as an open-access e-book by February 2025. That is also when we anticipate the complete manuscript of the second installment, *The LCP Handbook to Eastern Sigillata A (ESA)*, by Nicole Constantine and Brigitte Keslinke, with publication in late spring 2025. We held a planning conclave for the third installment, *The LCP Handbook to Eastern Sigillata B (ESB)*, by Laura Rembart and Alice Waldner, this past June (see below, under Workshops); they are aiming for a full manuscript about a year from now.

A bit of background and catch-up. We conceived, fleshed out, and launched the [LCP](#) Handbook series all within the three days of the 2024 ASOR Annual Meeting in Chicago, thanks to three members of the Editorial Advisory Board: Matt Adams, Bill Caraher, and Paul Flesher, whose initiative, energy, and support helped make it happen. These will be ceramic guides built from data on the [LCP](#), intended to fill a scholarly publishing gap by providing much-needed, user-friendly resources for excavators and students. We hope they will become essential guides on Mediterranean and Near Eastern field projects, where it is common to recover pottery that falls outside the expertise of available staff.

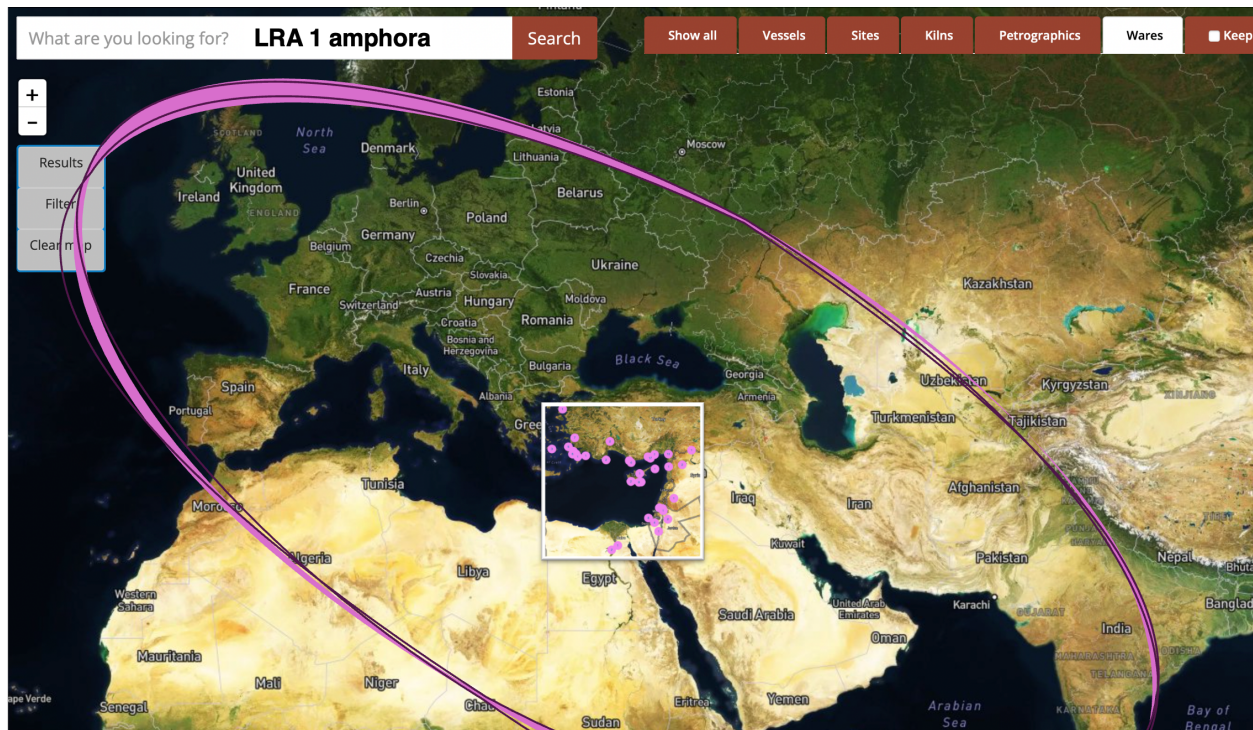
Handbooks can focus on a class of pottery, a specific region and/or era, or a particular ceramic phenomenon (e.g., handmade wares). They will generally be between 30,000 and 50,000 words, peer reviewed, and published as both open access downloads and hard copies. Digital versions will include comprehensive hyperlinks to both the [LCP](#) and other open access, stable digital datasets (e.g., [Pleiades](#), [Trismegistos](#), [Open Context](#), etc).

The series editors are William Caraher, the [LCP](#)'s Associate Editor of Publications, Matt Adams, and me (Andrea). They will be published by Lockwood Press on behalf of The Center for the Mediterranean World and ASOR, under the keen editorial guidance of Billie Jean Collins, press director, and Susanne Wilhelm of ISD Publications, who will help produce final print and digital versions. The Managing Publisher is Matt Adams, in his role as Director of TCMW, who will work with Billie Jean and Susanne on matters of final production and distribution.

The "L" question

As we know, the "L" in [LCP](#) stands for "Levantine," the long eastern Mediterranean coastline from the Dardanelles to Egypt and its immediately adjacent lands. This stretch of the globe has been a single connected corridor for people and goods throughout human history, one of the essential hinge points of planet Earth. With the [LCP](#), we have built a resource for investigating the Levant's social, cultural, and economic history via pottery, the artifact that best gives us direct access to people in the past, because it helps us see, analyze, and follow their activities, tastes, and movements.

Now, 14 years in, the [LCP](#) is about to bust out beyond the Levant, thanks to that world traveler, the LRA 1 amphora. By mid-December, when we finish adding all the new countries, sites, and examples where LRA 1s have been found, the [LCP](#)'s geographic range will extend from Scotland and Wales to Yemen and India, and will include every country across Europe and North Africa. The screen shot below, with "LRA 1 amphora" queried in the search bar, will become a continuous stretch of bright pink dots.



Building out the [LCP](#)'s capabilities in order to accommodate all the site links in the LRA 1 Handbook means that, going forward, it will be possible for anyone to add pottery from any of these countries to the platform. While it's unlikely that hundreds of new entries from Europe and North Africa will be added in the short term, the [LCP](#)'s new geographic range does create an unmatched resource for all manner of innovative research initiatives. Curious readers: think big! If you have ideas for workshops, programs, or investigations that use pottery as a way to study people and what they are up to, please get in touch.

p.s. as for that "L" ... as the image above shows, while the [LCP](#)'s circle is now much, much wider, the countries of the Levant remain at the center of it all: conduit, bridge, by-way and throughway. So I guess we can remain the [Levantine Ceramics Project](#) for the foreseeable future.

Numbers

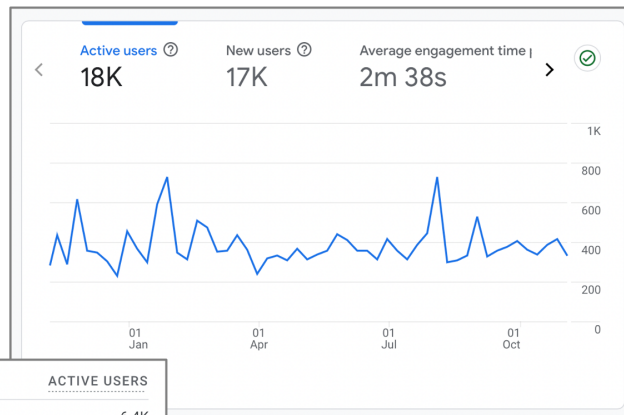
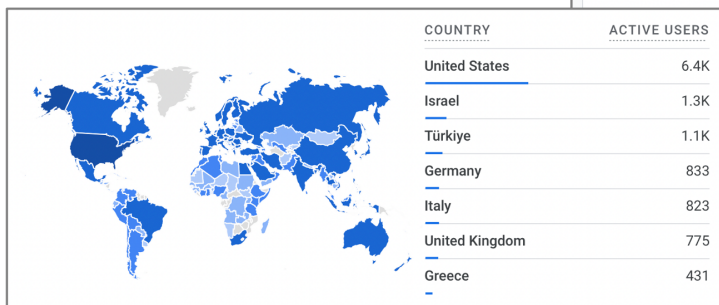
We gained new information in almost every category, with a particularly big increase in vessels. No new petro-fabrics, which is probably fitting since we encounter new pottery far more often than we do new geology.

category	as of Nov. 1, 2018	as of Nov. 1, 2019	as of Nov. 1, 2020	as of Nov. 1, 2021	as of Nov. 1, 2022	as of Nov. 1, 2023	As of Nov. 1, 2024	<i>increase in the past year:</i>
Contributors	280	346	456	533	594	640	688	48
Vessels	9131	10,000	12,093	13,794	16,834	17,734	19,852	2118
Petrographic samples	5268	5303	5458	5716	6002	6081	6194	113
Wares	400	442	483	476	491	500	504	4
Petro-fabrics	76	93	101	104	109	115	115	—
Kiln/Workshops	25	30	40	52	56	72	80	8

Big Numbers (aka Site Analytics)

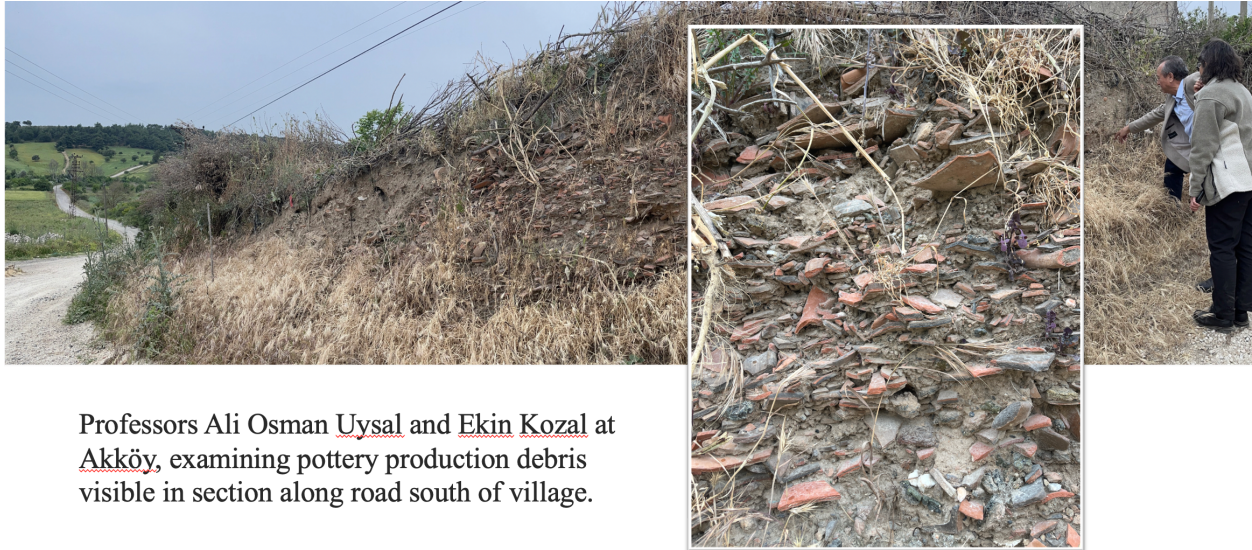
As the charts and maps from Google Analytics show, the [LCP](#) is a resource that helps ASOR reach thousands of people around the world.

Active users, 11/1/23 – 11/1/24 by country and overall numbers



LCP Workshops are back!

In summer 2024 we held three LCP workshops, two in Turkey and one in Poland. The first Turkey workshop was spearheaded by Professor Ekin Kozal of the University of Çanakkale, an LCP country Editor for Turkey. It took place from May 27th-30th, at the University of Çanakkale and the Troy Museum, and also included a trip to the important medieval and modern pottery production workshop at Akköy (now on the LCP: <https://www.levantineceramics.org/kilns/189-akkoy-workshop>). Over 50 Turkish students from around the country came to learn about pottery and the LCP. For details see: <https://antikmalzeme.comu.edu.tr/arsiv/duyurular/antik-malzemeler-ve-teknolojiler-ii-bilimsel-egiti-r1.html>



Professors Ali Osman Uysal and Ekin Kozal at Akköy, examining pottery production debris visible in section along road south of village.

The second Turkey workshop was organized by Drs. Laura Rembart and Alice Waldner, of the Austrian Archaeological Institute and the Ephesus excavations. The subject was Eastern Sigillata B, the fine tableware manufactured in several locales close to Ephesus in the 1st and 2nd centuries CE. The goal was to bring together scholars working on ESB at various sites, and launch conversations to help inform the planned LCP Handbook.



Participants at the LCP Workshop on Eastern Sigillata B, in the Ephesus Excavation House depot.

We met in Seljuk, at the Ephesus excavation compound, from June 10th-14th. The highlight was the opportunity to spend an entire morning in the beautiful depot workroom, where Laura and Alice had brought out most of the ESB found at Ephesus – as well as examples of ESA, its companion fine ware. In the photo above are the editors of the LCP ESA Handbook, Nicole Constantine (standing, holding a blue folder) and Brigitte Keslinke (seated, in a striped shirt), selecting individual examples of ESA vessels to photograph for inclusion in their upcoming handbook.

The third workshop was conceived by Dr. Micaela Sinibaldi, a long-time [LCP](#) contributor, member of the Editorial Advisory Board, and an LCP country editor for Jordan, in conjunction with the Polish Center for Mediterranean Archaeology in Warsaw. The subject was ceramic wares of Cyprus, Jordan, Egypt, and Sudan. Amongst the series of interesting talks, the highlight was the presentation by Dorota Dzierzbicka, the Editor of *PAM: Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean*. In her talk, “*The Levantine Ceramics Project and Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean: a new digital partnership*,” she announced the launch of a [new partnership](#) between *PAM* and the [LCP](#). Going forward, pottery published in *PAM* will be added to the [LCP](#) in advance of publication, so that the links can appear on the journal’s digital platform. We are very excited about this initiative, and also very grateful to Micaela for her dedicated work which was instrumental in making it happen.

Looking ahead

Finally, on the horizon for June 2025 is a workshop devoted to the pottery of Late Classical and Hellenistic Asia Minor, to be hosted by Ankara University Professor Musa Kadioğlu, the director of the Teos Excavations, and to be held at the site’s beautiful excavation compound. For over 1000 years, across the Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic, and Roman eras, Teos was an impressive port city which boasted two large harbors (see photo below) as well as being a busy production center for pottery, especially fine wares and transport amphoras.



View of the South Harbor of Teos, looking southeast.

The idea for the workshop arose when Musa invited me to visit Teos this past summer, as I was working just down the road, at the site of Notion. The Hellenistic pottery of Teos is being studied by one of Musa's PhD students. Meanwhile I was training a PhD student from the University of Michigan who is starting work on Notion's Hellenistic pottery, as well as an MA student from Ege University in Izmir who is taking on its Late Classical pottery. Musa and I thought it would be great for the three of them to be able to meet, compare material and learn from one another. We have now added a PhD student from Harvard who will go with me to Sardis next summer to work on that site's Hellenistic pottery. In addition to these four students, Musa and I plan to invite other researchers who focus on these periods. We hope this will create an opportunity for these young scholars to advance their own research as well start building professional relationships to carry into the future.

Above I talked about the "L" in [LCP](#). With the return of LCP workshops, we are reconnecting with the "P" in our name. The [LCP](#) is truly a *project*, one in which we use pottery as a tool to study people – since, after all, it is *people* who are our real subject. In that way, the [LCP](#) enterprise is itself a tool, a way to bring people together across time and space, in order to pool our knowledge and speed our way towards future discovery, insight, and understanding.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Andrea M. Berlin". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Respectfully submitted,".

Andrea M. Berlin,
James R. Wiseman Chair in Classical Archaeology, Boston University
Founder and editor, [Levantine Ceramics Project](#)