

ASOR COMMITTEE ON PUBLICATIONS

Annual Meeting

November 19, 1998

Orlando, Florida

Present: Eric Cline, Billie Jean Collins, Rudy Dornemann, Peter Feinman, Larry Herr, Bob Hohlfelder, David Hopkins, Nancy Lapp, Al Leonard, Gloria London, Victor Matthews, David Schloen, Jim Weinstein; Ex-officio: P.E. MacAllister, Joe Seger, R. Thomas Schaub

1. Al Leonard, Chair and Presiding Officer, called the meeting to order, 3:30 P.M.

2. Al Leonard announced that Brian Hesse and Paula Wapnish would be the new editors of NEA and he praised David Hopkins, the outgoing editor, for the job he had done.

3 Bob Hohlfelder called for nominations for the two positions for the class of 2001. In the absence of any suggestions, board members were asked to contact either him or Al Leonard.

4. Bob Hohlfelder called for nominations to replace Jim Weinstein who was congratulated for bringing BASOR up to schedule, as the editor of BASOR. Based on the understanding that a renomination was not in violation of the bylaws, David Hopkins renominated Jim Weinstein for the position and he was unanimously reelected for a term of three years.

5. Billie Jean Collins, Director of Publications, presented the report on the publication and financial status of the various publications of ASOR (see Attachment I). David Hopkins reported that a mailing to AIA members had had a 3% response, but Billie Jean Collins reported that member subscriptions to NEA were down. She also noted the ongoing effort to hire an electronic publications editor.

6. Bayard Presse - The potential partnership between ASOR and this French publishing company was the subjection of (i) a presentation by Billie Jean Collins on the current status, followed by (ii) a presentation by Hubert Chicou, Chief Executive Officer of Bayard Presse, USA, which led to (iii) a committee discussion and resolution on how to proceed.

(i) Billie Jean Collins presentation (see Attachment II) -The following key points were noted about the generally good discussions which have been held so far between ASOR and Bayard Presse:

- ASOR has initiated the possibility of investing up to \$100,000 in the venture although the details and specifics of the financial return on that investment has not been determined and that in principle, the entire investment could be risk although it seemed unlikely;

- ASOR would have free advertising space in the bi-monthly magazine which could be used to promote ASOR activities and publications;

- ASOR members would serve on the editorial board of the publication.

(ii) Hubert Chicou, Bayard Presse - He reviewed the status of the publication in France (28,000 circulation) and stated that the marketing goals for the United States were for 30,000 in the first year at a price a \$25/year for 6 issues with a \$19.95 promotional rate. Layouts for the 1998 test issue were distributed and plans to begin regular publication in March 1999 were announced. Chicou expressed a desire for the endorsement of ASOR and for the active participation of ASOR members on the editorial board and in the writing of articles.

In answer to a question from Bob Hohlfelder, he stated that the new magazine was a non-academic journal seeking a broad popular audience and therefore would not be competition with NEA. David Hopkins added that NEA couldn't match that level of circulation without a professional staff and more money.

In answer to a series of questions from Jim Weinstein about the length of the agreement (3 years), the financial risk to ASOR, and the final approval of the advisory board for the magazine, Chicou replied that Bayard as the publisher would have the final say on the advisory board, that 3 years was a fair amount of time for the partnership although there was a 5-10 year business plan for the magazine, and that the partnership with ASOR and not the \$100,000 investment was the primary goal of Bayard Presse. Billie Jean Collins added that there would be a national search for the managing editor who probably would not be an ASOR member.

In response to a question from Tom Schaub about the revenue of the French publication, Chicou responded that 80% of the revenue was from circulation and that it was sold via subscriptions and at selected newsstands connected with relevant institutions. It was also noted that the magazine would not accept ads from antiquities dealers.

In response to a question from Rudy Dornemann about the contact with the readers, Chicou reported that seminars and meetings with the readers will be conducted [focus groups?] at least 2 or 3 times a year. Peter Feinman noted the adult education possibilities through such meetings and the magazine.

(iii) General Discussion - After a lengthy and spirited discussion about where ASOR is in the negotiation process at present, how we arrived, and where we are going in the future, the Committee on Publications approved the following resolution for submission to the Executive Committee:

The Committee on Publications hereby authorizes the Executive Committee to proceed with negotiations with Bayard Presse for the

production of an English language magazine "The World of the Bible" to published in partnership with ASOR on terms to be determined conditional on the approval of competent legal and financial counsel.

The vote was 12 for, 1 opposed (Gloria London)

7. Publications Opportunity Fund (see Attachment III)

The status of these funds is contingent upon the Bayard Presse negotiations since they could be applied towards the ASOR investment in the publication venture.

8. Luce Center Offices - Joe Seger provided an update on the situation and the connection with Scholars Press. Gloria London and Jim Weinstein raised the question if a similar situation couldn't be repeated with Bayard Presse. legal counsel will be pursued to resolve the issue.

9. Book Program (see Attachment IV) - Billie Jean Collins present the case that ASOR was not receiving its money's worth from Scholars Press and that there were potential cost savings of approximately \$10,000 by doing the work in-house.

Tom Schaub raised the issue of the impact on journal subscriptions of severing the book tie with Scholars Press and sought more cost analysis.

Dave Hopkins noted that bringing the work in-house would increase the work of Billie Jean Collins herself.

Jim Weinstein asked about accounting software, advertising costs, and using Eisenbrauns.

The issue was reverted to Billie Jean Collins investigation and reporting to the Committee.

10. Additional COP Meetings (see Attachment V)

It was agreed by general consent that a committee of Al Leonard, Billie Jean Collins, and Tom Schaub would meet up to four times annually to discuss ongoing issues that can not wait for the annual November conference meeting. The prime and immediate example was the Bayard Presse negotiation where it was decided that COP should approve any agreement prior to the review by the Executive Committee at the January board meeting.

11. Al Leonard adjourned the meeting at 6:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Feinman
Class of 1999