



Minutes of the ASOR Board Meeting  
Aug 19, 2020 3:00 PM-5:00 PM EDT ZOOM

Present: Sharon Herbert (President), Richard Coffman (Board Chair), Andrew Vaughn (Executive Director, non-voting), Charles Jones (Vice President), Susan Ackerman (Past President), Heather McKee (Treasurer), Ann-Marie Knoblauch (Secretary), Lisa Ackerman, Emily Miller Bonney, Theodore Burgh, Erin Darby, Lynn Swartz Dodd, Peggy Duly, Jane DeRose Evans, Paul V. M. Flesher, Debra Foran, Joseph Greene, Michael Hasel, P. Randolph Helm, Øystein LaBianca, Susan Laden, W. Mark Lanier, Carol Meyers, Eric M. Meyers, Robert Mullins, Timothy Potts, B. W. Ruffner (Honorary Trustee, non-voting), Ann V. Sahlman, Joe D. Seger, Carolyn Midkiff Strange, Eric Welch, F. Bryan Wilkins, Meagan Shirley (Guest, ASOR Staff, non-voting).

Absent: Sheila T. Bishop, J. P. Dessel

### **Call to Order**

- The meeting was called to order at 3:04 PM (Richard Coffman)

### **1. Approval of agenda**

- **BE IT RESOLVED:** The agenda is approved by unanimous consent.

### **2. ASOR's name**

#### **A. Introductory remarks and recommendations of the Executive Committee (Sharon Herbert).**

- Sharon thanked everyone for coming, noting the purpose of this meeting is to discuss ASOR's name. While the original timeline had been to receive a final report from the Ad Hoc Committee on ASOR's Name in April 2021, recent events have convinced many that ASOR needs to speed up the timeline.
- Sharon noted that the Executive Committee had met in early August and approved two recommendations, copied here:
  - *The Executive Committee recommends to the Board that the American Schools of Oriental Research remove the word "Oriental" from its name.*

- *The Executive Committee recommends to the Board of Trustees that the organization keep the acronym ASOR.*
- The primary purpose of this meeting is for the full board to discuss and vote on these recommendations.

## **B. Interim Report from Ad Hoc Name Committee (Randy Helm)**

- Randy began by providing a timeline of the committee's work, including a survey distributed to the membership that went out in March, followed by many committee meetings and emails, and an interim report presented at May's ASOR Board meeting. There were over 400 responses to the survey, with little consensus on what ASOR's name should be, though most agreeing it should reflect ASOR's geographical and chronological scope.
- Some of the options for new names in the membership poll included "Near East" and "Middle East," terms potentially problematic for their western orientation.
- Keeping "ASOR" was the most popular response in the poll, by a slim margin.
- After receiving guidance from the EC and many more meetings and emails, the committee came to several conclusions, among them:
  - Keeping ASOR without officially eliminating the word "Oriental" would not work, as the Oriental Institute learned when they tried to switch to simply the "OI".
  - It was necessary for ASOR's new name not to include "Oriental" "Near East" or Middle East"
  - The original charge to the ad hoc committee was to submit recommendations to the Board and the Board would decide the name, but the committee felt the Board should choose a couple of options and have membership vote.
- Randy read part of the latest report from the ad hoc committee (Attachment A). [NB: this document was not circulated in advance to Board members due to clerical error].
- Of note the committee recommends two options, one new name, one that retains the ASOR acronym:
  - American Society of Overseas Research, with the tagline: From Africa to the Indus Valley
  - Society for Archaeological Research and Cultural Heritage Education (SARCHE), with the tagline: From Africa to the Indus Valley
- The ad hoc committee proposes that these two options be sent to membership for a vote.
- Sharon thanked Randy and the committee for the report and discussion followed:
- Randy noted that older membership (55 years + and/or more than 10 years as a member of ASOR) prefer to keep the ASOR acronym
- Sten noted that when discussions took place to change ACOR's name, they discovered that there would be additional complications if they changed the acronym as well (publications, computer framework, etc.) and suggested we try to keep the acronym.
- Other members of the ad hoc committee (Emily Bonney, Lisa Ackerman, Eric Welch) agreed Randy's report was a good summary of the committee's work, adding that much careful consideration had been given to words and the implications of a name change.

**C. Consideration of and action on the Executive Committee's recommendation that "Oriental" be removed from ASOR's name (Sharon Herbert).**

- Sharon noted the strong and unequivocal recommendation from the EC about removing "Oriental" from the ASOR's name.
- Lengthy discussion followed about the results of the membership survey, in which a majority indicated they were happy with ASOR, with some highlights below.
- Andy clarified that the results indicated that members were happy with the acronym, not the words they stood for.
- Discussion continued, parsing the phrasing of the survey and the results (found in the report presented at the May Board meeting) (Attachment B)
- Others wondered whether the survey was meaningful since certain options included the use of "Middle Eastern" and "Near Eastern," now off the table for a potential name for the organization.
- Øystein noted that there is a tendency in some disciplines (such as anthropology) to "erase the past" as thinking evolves, and this should be considered carefully.
- Peggy weighed in, agreeing with the Ad Hoc Committee that the membership be given at least two options to vote on.
- Discussion then turned to the tagline, whether Africa was too broad, perhaps North Africa was more accurate. Susan Ackerman noted that ASOR affiliated projects are currently being run in Ethiopia and Sudan, so North Africa is not inclusive of all ASOR projects.
- Andy brought the group back to the recommendation from the EC: should Oriental be removed. Once that decision is made, then we can discuss a new name:
  - *The Executive Committee recommends to the Board that the American Schools of Oriental Research remove the word "Oriental" from its name.*
- Andy noted that to change the name we will also have to change the articles of incorporation, that the change is a fairly complex legal action, and we should assume it will require a vote by the membership, as per an opinion from ASOR's legal counsel, Arnold and Porter, LLC.
- Discussion followed as to how to emend the EC recommendation to take into account legal issues, including adding language such as "contingent on the ratification by the membership." A mechanism is in place so that such a vote could happen electronically.
- Discussion further followed about involving the membership in this decision before the vote, whether the majority of the membership is in favor of a change based on the outcome of the March poll, as some of the survey questions could be interpreted in more than one way (for example, does voting for keeping ASOR = keeping Oriental?)
- Sharon reminded the committee that there was no majority on any of the survey questions except that the name should reference the chronological and geographical range of ASOR's membership research activity.
- There was debate as to whether the membership should be included in this decision with a separate poll or survey, but others felt strongly that action must be taken immediately, as to defer the decision sends the wrong

message of where ASOR is as an organization.

- The Board members then got to the work of crafting a resolution.
  - Eric Meyers moved, P. Randolph Helm seconded.
  - **BE IT RESOLVED:** The Board of Trustees endorses the Executive Committee recommendation that the American Schools of Oriental Research remove the word “Oriental” from its name. The ASOR Board of Trustees will proceed with all possible speed to seek a vote of the membership on a revised name. Until the membership decides, the organization will use its acronym "ASOR" to identify itself.
  - Unanimously approved (30-0, with no one abstaining).

**D. Consideration of and action on the Executive Committee’s recommendation that A-S-O-R be retained as the acronym of the organization (Sharon Herbert).**

- This discussion centered around the second EC recommendation (*The Executive Committee recommends to the Ad Hoc Committee on ASOR’s Name that the organization keep the acronym ASOR*).
- Randy acknowledged that the ad hoc committee wanted more leeway for another name and acronym, and that a ballot (not a survey) go out to membership to vote on a new name that includes more than one option.
- Discussion ensued about member commitment to the ASOR acronym.
- Although any new name with the acronym ASOR would likely be vague (such as American Society of Overseas Research) and not meet membership desire for a name that reflects the geographical and chronological scope of ASOR’s work, many noted the name ASOR as a “brand” with a long history and tradition that deserves to be maintained.
- Erin noted that a descriptive tagline is helpful in defining what ASOR does, but does not solve the problem of a vague name entirely since that tagline does not appear on CVs or faculty activity reports, a concern of early career scholars. Sharon noted that some explanation is required with the names of most learned societies, and any new name would not necessarily eliminate that problem for members.
- Susan Ackerman made the case that a new ASOR name should retain “schools” for the “S” because it is an important part of ASOR’s history and the overseas schools are still an important part of what ASOR does.
- Andy noted he had been in touch with University of Chicago press about the logistics of a name change. He was told that it is a complicated process, but it can be done. Keeping the ASOR acronym with Schools might make it easier. Only replacing “Oriental” with another word might be advantageous if the Library of Congress did not require a new ISSN for BASOR. UCP stressed that they can handle whatever ASOR desires with enough notice.
- Lisa Ackerman (a member of the ad hoc committee) made the point that the Board’s responsibility is to look forward for the organization, that membership input through additional surveys would not result in consensus, and there will be some members unhappy with the result whatever it is.
- Emily (a member of the ad hoc committee) noted that the committee had worked very hard to come up with a name that met all of the criteria for geography and chronology, and they just could not do it.

- Much time was spent discussing the recommendation of the EC, some of it procedural with regards to making friendly amendments that could provide flexibility for the ad hoc committee moving forward.
- Randy suggested that the ad hoc committee could quickly produce a final report, with the recommendation of a membership vote with at least two options.
- Andy suggested the EC recommendation be tabled until the ad hoc committee produced its final report. This would allow the committee to produce a final report without the restrictions posed by the recommendation.
- Susan Ackerman noted that the interim report that was not available to the Board until the time of the meeting offered significant new information that required careful review before a decision should be made, and so tabling the discussion was a good option.
  - Susan Ackerman moved, Jane DeRose Evan seconded:
  - The Board of Trustees tables the Executive Committee recommendation *to the Ad Hoc Committee on ASOR's Name that the organization keep the acronym ASOR* until the Ad Hoc Committee has presented its report to the ASOR Board.
  - Unanimously approved.

#### **E. Discussion of further charge to the Ad Hoc Name Committee (Sharon Herbert).**

- *This discussion was covered in the motion above to table to a specific time.*

### **3. Discussion of actions to take on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion (Sharon Herbert).**

#### **A. Formation of a DEI taskforce**

- Sharon addressed the letter sent to the Board and signed by 31 current and past members on July 22 (Attachment C). This letter, as well as other national and international events, have prompted discussions within ASOR's leadership on topics of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) within ASOR.
- Immediate steps have been removing the word "Oriental" from ASOR and the formation of an ASOR DEI task force.

#### **B. Discussion of actions to take on the open letter to the Board**

- Chuck noted that because the letter was addressed to the Board, the Board must respond, including inviting the signatories of the letter to participate in the task force.
- Discussion turned to how best to address issues of DEI in ASOR, many expressing that DEI initiatives need to be integrated across ASOR, not (just) as a stand-alone committee. For example, the Early Career Scholars Committee is starting a DEI subcommittee.
- Chuck noted that the CCC has been meeting regularly all summer to discuss the Strategic Plan, and the consensus of committee chairs that DEI should not be differentiated but embedded into all committees. Each committee is looking at the work they do, and how DEI can be brought into it.
- Erin noted that ASOR's DEI initiatives must involve a communication strategy or it will not work.

- Chuck added that the CCC has been instrumental in communication, and info spreads from committee chairs to committee members to other members. It has been an effective communication tool.
- It was noted that the letter requests some very pointed recommendations, and these must be addressed with careful attention so that the authors of the letter know their concerns are being taken seriously, even if the Board is unable (or chooses not) to adopt certain recommendations.

Meeting adjourned at 5:37 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Ann-Marie Knoblauch

## Attachment A

From: **Randy Helm** <[peytonrhelm@gmail.com](mailto:peytonrhelm@gmail.com)>

Date: Thu, Aug 6, 2020 at 12:29 PM

Subject: From the Ad Hoc Committee on ASOR's Name To: Sharon Herbert  
<[president@asor.org](mailto:president@asor.org)>

Cc: Emily Bonney <[ebonney@fullerton.edu](mailto:ebonney@fullerton.edu)>, Emily Hammer  
<[ehammer@sas.upenn.edu](mailto:ehammer@sas.upenn.edu)>, Eric Cline <[ehcline@email.gwu.edu](mailto:ehcline@email.gwu.edu)>, Eric Welch  
<[Eric.Welch@uky.edu](mailto:Eric.Welch@uky.edu)>, Kiersten Neumann <[neumann@uchicago.edu](mailto:neumann@uchicago.edu)>, Lisa  
Ackerman <[lackerman@columbuscitizens.org](mailto:lackerman@columbuscitizens.org)>, Randy Helm  
<[peytonrhelm@gmail.com](mailto:peytonrhelm@gmail.com)>

Dear Sharon,

As you know, I shared both your emails of Monday 8/3/20 with the members of the Ad Hoc Committee on ASOR's Name. On 8/4/20 the Committee (missing Lisa Ackerman, who was unavailable) discussed the EC recommendations to the Board and our next steps as a committee. This letter conveys our thoughts.

We are grateful for the leadership's efforts to address the important issues raised by earlier discussions of the organization's name and by the recent Open Letter. We agree that ASOR must proceed clearly, decisively, and expeditiously in its response. As you know from my email of 7/22/20, the ad hoc committee felt it appropriate to pause our work until getting guidance from the Board on these matters. We thank you for the heads up about the EC's recommendations to the Board and believe that we should share some important thoughts and reactions with you in this brief but important period before the Board of Trustees special meeting.

1. The committee has been working toward a long-term solution to the issue of ASOR's name, and we believe we can achieve that goal. Nobody wants to see the organization compelled to commission another ad hoc committee on ASOR's name in the near future. Thus, while circumstances clearly create a sense of urgency, we recommend completing that work rather than just reverting to ASOR as a brand not an acronym. The situation the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute faces is instructive. Simply adopting the acronym "OI" has not solved anything as one still must use the word "Oriental" to introduce the institute. We believe, therefore, that ASOR must have either a new name that can preserve that acronym OR a new name with a new acronym. The ad hoc committee members are unanimous in their opinion that "Oriental," "Near East," and "Middle East" are (or soon will be) problematic and should not be used.

2. Analysis of the demographics of responses to our original survey, which was designed and administered prior to the recent great renewal of public interest and concern about ethnic and racial justice, suggested that older members of ASOR may be more inclined to retain the current acronym, while younger members are more open to a new name. We would like the Board of Trustees, in considering the EC's recommendations, to be aware of its own demographic composition and to consider the apparently different perspectives of different age groups in the membership.

3. The members of the ad hoc committee are concerned that this may not be a time for the Board of Trustees at the top of the ASOR hierarchy to choose a name without further consultation with the entire membership. In particular we believe we should not place too much emphasis on the last ASOR name survey as it was circulated prior to the recent major shift in climate concerning ethnic and racial

justice. We want it to be clear to the membership that the Board of Trustees is listening. We would suggest that the ad hoc committee narrow the name possibilities to two or three choices (at most) and submit those to the Board of Trustees and then to a vote by the full membership. We would include an update from the Ad Hoc Committee on ASOR's Name. The report would reassure the membership that their response to our surveys have not fallen on deaf ears. Examples of names we could propose (with a tagline) are the following: (a) American Society of Overseas Research (ASOR): From Africa to the Indus Valley (tagline); OR (b) The Society for Archaeological Research and Cultural Heritage Education (SARCHE): From Africa to the Indus Valley (tagline).

Please feel free to share these thoughts with the Board leadership and with the full Board prior to the special meeting, in the hope that it can facilitate a productive discussion of these important issues. Of course I'm happy to consult by phone about any of these suggestions if you would find that helpful.

Sincerely,  
Randy (on behalf of the ad hoc committee)



## Attachment B

### **Ad Hoc Committee on ASOR's Name Interim Report to the ASOR Board of Trustees May 14, 2020**

Rev. 5/4/20

#### **Background**

The Ad Hoc Committee on ASOR's Name was appointed by outgoing President Susan Ackerman and incoming President Sharon Herbert at the beginning of January, 2020. Its members include Trustees Randy Helm (chair), Emily Bonney, Lisa Ackerman, and Eric Welch, and members Eric Cline, Emily Hammer, and Kiersten Neumann. The charge to the committee is included as **Attachment 1**.

#### **Process**

Shortly after its membership was confirmed, Chair Helm distributed to the committee study documents relevant to past discussions of ASOR's name. A list of these documents is included as **Attachment 2**.

The Committee met four times by Zoom between January 21 and April 22, 2020. Summaries of those meetings are included as **Attachment 3**. After reviewing the materials and discussing the issues, we agreed on a work plan that would (a) assess the possible impact of a name change on the ability to access ASOR publications in the future; and (b) develop a survey that would provide a sense of ASOR members' views on this question. The subcommittee on publications quickly determined that any impact of a name change on access to publications would be negligible. The survey subcommittee developed an instrument for the committee's review (see **Attachment 4**).

With the assistance of ASOR staff, the survey was made available online to all ASOR members from March 18 – March 28. We received a very healthy response rate of approximately 30 percent. Comparing the demographics of survey respondents to the actual demographics of ASOR's membership, we noted an overrepresentation of members who have belonged to ASOR for ten or more years (42.6% of respondents v. 29.7% of members). While we agreed that this was worth noting, we also agreed that the robust response made the survey results a reliable guide to members' views on the issue of the organization's name.

#### **Survey Results (Attachment 5)**

##### Demographics

Survey Respondents skew younger: 56.3% are younger than 55; 43.7% are older than 54. However, we don't have age data for all ASOR members, so we don't know if this is representative.

#### Areas of Consensus

- 70.3% agree or strongly agree that it is important that the society's name reflects the geographical scope of ASOR's work. Only 15% disagree or strongly disagree.
- 55.9% of respondents agree or strongly agree that it is important that the name reflects the chronological scope of ASOR's work. Only 25.6% disagree or strongly disagree that this is important.

N.B. The current name does not communicate either the geographical or chronological scope of ASOR's work.

#### Areas of Disagreement

1. Keep the name "American Schools of Oriental Research"?
  - 45.3% agree or strongly agree
  - 40.9% disagree or strongly disagree
  - 13.8% undecided
2. Eliminate the name, but keep the acronym ASOR?
  - Approximately half of respondents (50.1%) disagree or strongly disagree
  - A minority (32.2%) agree or strongly agree.
  - Undecided = 17.7% (somewhat more than are undecided about keeping the historical name).
3. Create a new name retrofitted to the ASOR acronym?
  - 41.6% disagree or strongly disagree;
  - 34.2% agree or strongly agree;

*Observation: Enthusiasm for a retrofitted name is a popular option for members under 35 years old, but drops off sharply among respondents older than 35 and members for more than ten years.*

4. Create an entirely new name that is descriptive in nature (e.g. "Society for Ancient Studies")?
  - 41.9% have a poor or very poor impression;
  - 35.6% have a good or very good impression.
  - 22.5% are neutral.

*Observation: No age group had a majority approving this option; support dropped off sharply among members of more than 10 years*

5. Create an entirely new name based on an ancient word or concept (e.g. "Amphora")?

- 48% have a poor or very poor impression;
- 25.6% have a good or very good impression;
- 26.4% are neutral.

*Observation: No age group had a majority approving this option; support dropped off sharply among members of more than 10 years.*

6. Create a new name that is a new acronym (e.g. “Archaeological Research and Cultural Heritage Education” – ARCHE)?
  - 42.2% have a poor or very poor impression;
  - 33% have a good or very good impression;
  - 24.8% are neutral.

### **Viable Options**

The Committee discussed these results in some detail, noting that older respondents favor retaining the full name and younger respondents favor a change. We acknowledged that the younger respondents represent the future of the organization, while the older respondents represent a group with deep loyalty to and knowledge of the organization.

We also discussed the difficulties that the current name and acronym create for younger scholars in terms of the publication and service records in their tenure and promotion dossiers. Neither the full name nor the acronym explains the organization's purpose or work. Dossier readers are unlikely to understand the organization's relevance or importance.

While the option of a new descriptive name that yields an acronym failed to find majority support among any age group, almost half of the younger members liked it, with stronger disapproval showing up as the age of members increased. We considered the possibility that this option could address the consensus on geographical and chronological descriptors in the name, and make it easier to explain to dossier-readers, younger scholars, and others.

We agreed that the two possibilities worth continued consideration would seem to be: (a) keep the acronym ASOR with a descriptive tagline; or (b) come up with a new name that is descriptive of our work and creates a new acronym.

We also noted that keeping the acronym ASOR as the only name of the organization might, even with a descriptive tagline, result in increasing confusion about the name's meaning and the organization's purpose over the passage of time. Some committee members felt that this would result in another committee needing to consider the name issue a few years down the road.

### **Next Steps**

The Committee agreed that this is a suitable moment to pause and seek the Board's reaction to the survey results and the two viable options identified above. With the Board's guidance, we will move toward a formal report to the membership and a recommendation to the Board as early as the November 2020 meeting.

### **Attachment 1: Charge to the Committee**

We write, as the outgoing and incoming ASOR Presidents, to ask you to serve on an ad hoc committee charged with evaluating the name of our organization. ASOR Trustee Randy Helm has agreed to chair this committee and has agreed that he would very much like you to serve on this group. We hope you will accept. You are being invited because you have been active in ASOR and, we believe, because you have an open mind on this question. If you feel that you do not meet this last criterion, please let us know. We anticipate that there will be a wide diversity of strongly held opinions on this issue, and it will be important for the Committee to have credibility as a thoughtful and objective group who will be open to the ideas and arguments of others.

#### **Background**

ASOR members have been discussing the possibility of changing the organization's name since at least 1982. Most recently, a workshop was offered at the 2018 ASOR Annual Meeting in Denver on "What's in a Name? Re-assessing the Oriental in the American Schools of Oriental Research." The workshop was very well attended, and the presentations and discussion were both thoughtful and provocative. As a result, the organizers created a summary of the workshop's conversations and forwarded them to various governing bodies within ASOR, including the ASOR Board of Trustees. That summary was delivered in Fall 2019.

After considering this summary, the ASOR Board voted, at its November 2019 meeting, to continue the discussion by forming an ad hoc committee to study ASOR's name.

#### **Charge**

The committee's charge is to consider whether ASOR's name is still appropriate for the organization and, if not, to recommend to the Board of Trustees a new name, or a modified name, or some selection of new or modified names that ASOR might adopt instead. Any decision to change or modify ASOR's name would ultimately be made by the Board.

While this charge is succinctly stated, we do not mean to suggest it is easily undertaken. *At a minimum*, we envision that the committee will need (1) to review previous discussions about ASOR's name; (2) review discussions other "O" organizations have had about their names and the decisions they have made, for example, the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago and the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London; (3) review the experiences of other learned societies that have changed their names or have decided not to, including these learned societies' discussions regarding the names of their publications; and (4) actively solicit and carefully consider input from the ASOR membership about ASOR's current name and any possible name change.

We anticipate that the committee's work should take between twelve to fifteen months, depending on how the committee chooses to go about its work, and especially its work of collecting feedback from the ASOR membership. The committee should thus plan on submitting its final report to the ASOR Board, with recommendations, no later than the April 2021 Board meeting. We look forward to supporting the committee in every way that we can, and we have already provided Randy with multiple documents to help in the committee's deliberations and its decision-making process.

We hope that you will be able to serve on the important committee. Many thanks for considering this invitation, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Susan Ackerman  
ASOR President

Sharon Herbert  
ASOR Vice President and President-Elect  
Chair, Chairs Coordinating Council

**Attachment 2: Study Documents reviewed by Committee Members**

C&G Partners, *Discovery Findings and Recommendations for ASOR Branding and Website Redesign*, March 22, 2016

Orientalism Session – Raw Data 2018

Melissa Bailey Kutner, “Getting Oriented” 2018

Ian W. N. Jones, “‘Isn’t that a Little Racist, Dr. Jones,’ or What I learned Trying to Explain ASOR to High School Students” 2018

Danielle Steen Fatkin, “Orientalism in America: East Asia, West Asia, and the American Racial Imagination” 2018

Danielle Steen Fatkin, “Report to the CCC regarding the workshop ‘What’s in a Name? Re-assessing the Oriental in the American Schools of Oriental Research’ at the November 2018 Annual Meeting”

Michael M. Homan, “Why the Term ‘Oriental’ in ASOR is Neither Accurate Nor Appropriate.” 2018.

Straw Poll on ASOR Name Change, ASOR BoT 1982

Informal “Straw Ballot”, ASOR BoT 1982

### Attachment 3: Ad Hoc Committee Meeting Summaries

#### January 21, 2020:

We convened our Zoom meeting promptly at 4 PM EST, courtesy of Penn and Emily Hammer. Lisa Ackerman participated by phone, the rest of us were live and in living color.

After brief self-introductions, I reviewed the charge to our committee, noting that the word "Oriental" in ASOR's name has been flagged as problematic since at least 1982, though there has never been a formal move to change it. We discussed the range of objections to "Oriental" which, at the least, is misleading (common usage considers "Orient" to refer to East Asia), and at worst is racist and ethnocentric. I noted that other geographic terms might be equally problematic, given the somewhat undefined boundaries of ASOR-supported activities.

We agreed that the words "American" and "Schools" are also problematic, in that many of ASOR's members are not Americans and the schools are now independent entities.

Kiersten shared with us the rationale used by OI (aka "The Oriental Institute) for abandoning its name but keeping its acronym. She has since shared the OI's answers to FAQs about its "name change."

We discussed the potential problems of a name change in terms of publications and library citations, citing instances when organizations had changed names with and without negative consequences. We agreed that more research is needed on whether (and, if so, how) this issue should be addressed.

We discussed various possible outcomes of our work: keeping the ASOR name; keeping ASOR as an acronym only; finding new words that would fit the acronym ASOR; keeping ASOR as an acronym with a tagline; changing the name ASOR entirely to something like "Amphora".

We agreed that we need to be open to input from ASOR members and, to that end, a survey followed by a forum at the Boston meetings in November 2020 would be appropriate. We agreed that the survey would ideally be administered in March or April, that it would be simple and short, and that it would present a range of options with rationales.

We established two subcommittees:

1. The library/citation committee will look into the actual challenges of a name change for publications. Eric Cline, Emily Bonney, and Kiersten N. will tackle this.
2. The survey committee will work on the survey. Eric Welch, Emily Hammer, and Eric Cline will work on this. I will provide some introductory text for the survey to queue up the questions.

We agreed to have another Zoom video conference in 2 weeks: Tuesday, February 4, at 4:30 EST.

#### February 4, 2020:

1. We started by discussing the opening paragraph that I circulated for the survey and agreed that Kiersten's edits are terrific and that this will be the final version:

**Background:** *The American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR) was founded in 1900. In the ensuing 120 years the term "Orient," which at the time of our founding was a geographical term used in reference to Asia, has become problematic. For some, and certainly when utilized with pejorative overtones, "Oriental"*



*is racist and ethnocentric; for others, it is misleading as a geographical term since in common usage it now often refers to East Asia. The descriptor "American" may also not be necessary, as ASOR is an ever-growing international organization with members from many countries. Finally, the "Schools" referred to in the original name are now independent entities. On the other hand, the name of the organization and the ASOR acronym have long histories and wide name recognition; for some, there are concerns that a change could have negative impacts on the organization's brand recognition and could also create complications for the citation of ASOR's various publications (such as BASOR) going forward.*

*In beginning its work, the ad hoc committee considered these various aspects of our charge, and conceived of a range of possible resolutions, including:*

*retaining the name and acronym without change*

*retaining the acronym, perhaps with an explanatory tag line, but no longer using the formal name*

*"American Schools of Oriental Research"*

*developing a new name that is retrofitted to the ASOR acronym (e.g. "Archaeological Scholarship On Research")*

*changing the name entirely*

*We now seek input from ASOR's members to help us evaluate these, and possibly other suggested options.*

*We hope to host a forum at the November 2020 meetings in Boston where we can share the results of this survey with attendees.*

2. Emily B. and Eric C. reported on the possible complications ensuing from a name change in terms of publications and library catalogues. They assured us that any such problems would be negligible; we further discussed the possibility of changing the name of BASOR, since the term "Bulletin" is not particularly accurate or helpful. Other publications' names do not seem to be problematic (i.e. *Near Eastern Archaeology*, *Journal of Cuneiform Studies*, *Ancient Near East Today*).

3. We then had an extended conversation about the scope of ASOR's work - both geographically and chronologically. While there are useful statements on the website, they are not easily summarized in one or two words. The group felt that a geographical indicator doesn't need to be part of the organization's name but can be included in another space where the purpose of the organization is described at greater length than lends itself to an acronym. The chronological range (from the earliest times to Late Antique - according to BASOR) is equally broad and hard to sum up in a single word or short phrase.

4. We reviewed the sample survey questions Eric W. sent us before the meeting. We agreed that shorter is better and that these questions addressed most of the important issues. I pointed out that question #2 should be rephrased to eliminate reference to the 2016 rebranding initiative, since respondents may have conflicting ideas of what that initiative entailed. Kiersten suggested an additional question seeking to identify what members consider ASOR's most important defining characteristics (methodologies? geographic range? chronological range?).

We discussed how the survey results might feed into the Boston Forum next November. We agreed that we wanted to avoid survey fatigue or frustration with the topic coming up yet again, but were not in consensus about how specific the options presented at the Forum should be. We can discuss further once the survey results are in.

5. We agreed on the following timeline for next steps:

By Thursday 2/6 Eric will distribute revised questions. We will read, reflect, and circulate any suggested changes amongst ourselves. We will have another Zoom conference on February 18, 2020 at 4:30 PM EST. Emily H. will set it up.

**February 18, 2020:**

We discussed the survey instrument, though we had not all had an opportunity to review Eric W.'s most recent draft. Various minor edits were suggested, along with the re-sequencing of questions 5 and 6, and the addition of two demographic questions at the end of the survey for cross-tab purposes. There will now be three such questions:

1. How long have you been an ASOR member?
2. What is your age ?(Eric W. will provide age ranges)
3. On what continent are you based?

We agreed on a timeline for the survey implementation and analysis:

1. **By Friday February 21.:** Eric will incorporate suggested edits and distribute as a word document to committee members.
2. **By Tuesday, February 25:** Committee members will either sign off on Eric's draft or suggest further edits (please circulate your responses to all committee members).
3. **By Tuesday, February 25:** Randy will confer with Andy V. about the mechanics of distributing and publicizing the survey.
4. **By Wednesday, March 18th:** We will distribute the survey to the Membership with a ten-day deadline for response.
5. **By Wednesday, March 25th:** (or three days before response deadline): we will send a reminder to members to complete the survey.
6. **By Monday March 30:** deadline for completing the survey
7. **By Wednesday, April 15:** Eric will tabulate the results and share with committee members
8. **On Wednesday, April 22 at 4:30 PM EST:** the committee will have its next Zoom videoconference to discuss the survey results. (Emily H. please do your Zoom magic for us once again). If it turns out that this date does not work for us after all, I will do another doodle poll.
9. **On Saturday, April 25:** Randy and Emily B. will give the ASOR Board a preliminary report on our project, including survey results.

#### **April 22, 2020:**

1. We discussed whether the survey respondents were representative of ASOR member demographics. Although members of more than 10 years standing are somewhat overrepresented, we didn't feel that this was a major problem and agreed that the survey, especially given the high response rate of about 30%, provides reliable information about the members' views on the questions we asked.
2. We noted that the survey revealed two areas of strong consensus among respondents: that the name of the organization should reflect (a) the geographical and (b) the chronological scope of ASOR's work.
3. We noted that the respondents strongly disagreed about retaining the full name , with older respondents favoring the full name and younger respondents favoring a change. We discussed that the younger respondents represent the future of the organization, while the older respondents represent a group with deep loyalty to and knowledge of the organization.
4. We discussed the difficulties that the current name and acronym create for younger scholars in terms of the publication and service records in their tenure and promotion dossiers. Neither the

full name or the acronym explain the organization's purpose or work. Dossier readers are unlikely to understand the organization's relevance or importance.

5. We noted that younger members were generally positive about a new name retrofitted to the ASOR acronym, though enthusiasm for this approach dropped off sharply among members 53 and older. We also agreed that many have tried and failed to come up with such a name (the Latin phrase we floated as a trial balloon doesn't seem to really explain ASOR's mission or role - and it doesn't address the dossier reader concerns).

6. There seems to be little enthusiasm for a new name based on an ancient word or concept (e.g. "Amphora").

7. While the option of a new description name that yields an acronym failed to find majority support among and age group, almost half of the younger members liked it, with stronger disapproval showing up as the age of members increased. We discussed the possibility that this option might address the consensus on geo and chrono descriptors in the name, and make it easier to explain to dossier-readers, younger scholars, and others.

8. We agreed that the two possibilities worth continued consideration would seem to be: (a) keep the acronym ASOR with a descriptive tagline; or (b) come up with a new name that is descriptive of our work and creates a new acronym.

9. We agreed that our report to the May Board meeting should follow the approach of sharing the survey data, along with a summary analysis and a summary of our thinking to date, with a request that the board advise us as to its thinking on these questions before we proceed.

10. We agreed that we might dispense with a forum at the November meeting. Instead, we could distribute a report on the survey and our current thinking to the membership over the summer, along with an invitation to submit further responses. Those could be factored into our final discussions and the development of our final report and recommendation to the Board.

#### Attachment 4: Survey Instrument

**Background:** The American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR) was founded in 1900. In the ensuing 120 years the term “Orient,” which at the time of our founding was a geographical term used in reference to Asia, has become problematic. For some, and certainly when utilized with pejorative overtones, “Oriental” is racist and ethnocentric; for others, it is misleading as a geographical term since in common usage it now often refers to East Asia. The descriptor “American” may also not be necessary, as ASOR is an ever-growing international organization with members from many countries. Finally, the “Schools” referred to in the original name are now independent entities. On the other hand, the name of the organization and the ASOR acronym have long histories and wide name recognition; for some, there are concerns that a change could have negative impacts on the organization’s brand recognition and could also create complications for the citation of ASOR’s various publications (such as BASOR) going forward.

In beginning its work, the ad hoc committee considered both these aspects of our charge and conceived of a range of possible resolutions, including:

- retaining the name and acronym without change
- retaining the acronym, perhaps with an explanatory tag line, but no longer using the formal name “American Schools of Oriental Research”
- developing a new name that is retrofitted to the ASOR acronym
- changing the name entirely.

We now seek input from ASOR’s members to help us evaluate these and possibly other suggested options. The results of this survey will be shared at the members meeting at the 2020 ASOR Annual Meeting in Boston.

Evaluate the following statements:

1. I am satisfied with the historical name “American Schools of Oriental Research.”  

<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
--------------------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------	-----------------------
2. I am satisfied with eliminating all references to the historical name “American Schools of Oriental Research” and retaining “ASOR” as the society’s name.  

<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
--------------------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------	-----------------------
3. I am satisfied with creating a new name retrofitted to the ASOR acronym (e.g. “Antiqui Scientiam Orbis Reperiens” = “Discovering knowledge of the Ancient World”).  

<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
--------------------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------	-----------------------
4. I am satisfied with changing the name of ASOR entirely (e.g. “Society for Ancient Studies”).  

<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
--------------------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------	-----------------------

In the following section, please rate your impression of the following approaches to renaming ASOR. All examples are presented as representative concepts. Your response is not a vote in favor of a particular name.

5. A name that reflects the geographical scope of ASOR is important to me.  

<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
--------------------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------	-----------------------
6. A name that reflects the chronological scope of ASOR is important to me.  

<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Undecided</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
--------------------------	-----------------	------------------	--------------	-----------------------

7. Please rate your impression of a new name that is descriptive in nature (e.g. Society for Ancient Studies).

**Very Poor                      Poor                      Neutral                      Good   Very Good**

8. Please rate your impression of a new name that is based on an “ancient” word or concept (e.g. Amphora).

**Very Poor                      Poor                      Neutral                      Good   Very Good**

9. Please rate your impression of a new name that is an acronym (e.g. ARCHE = “Archaeological Research, Cultural Heritage, Education”).

**Very Poor                      Poor                      Neutral                      Good   Very Good**

#### **Demographics**

10. How long have you been a member of ASOR?

1-5 years  
6-10 years  
11-15 years  
16-20 years  
More than 20 years

11. On which continent do you live?

Africa  
Asia  
Australia  
Europe  
North America  
South America

12. What is your age?

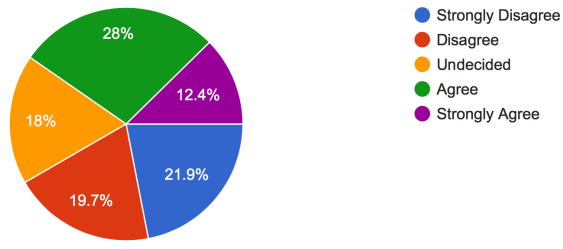
18-24  
25-34  
35-44  
45-54  
55-64  
65-74  
75+

13. Please confirm that you are a current ASOR member by providing the e-mail address associated with your ASOR membership (the same e-mail address where you received the notice about this survey). If you are not an ASOR member but wish to comment on this issue, please feel free to write to the Committee and ASOR's leadership at: [info@asor.org](mailto:info@asor.org).



3. I am satisfied with creating a new name retrofitted to the ASOR acronym (e.g. "Antiqui Scientiam Orbis Reperiens" = "Discovering knowledge of the Ancient World").&nbsp;

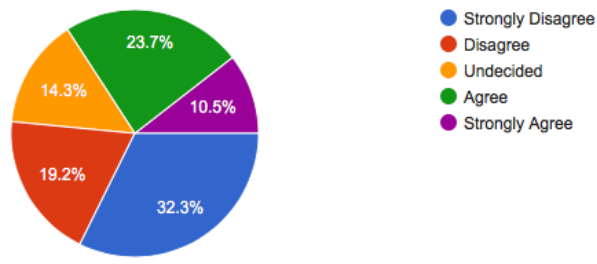
761 responses



Strongly disagree:	167	21.9%
Disagree:	150	19.7%
Undecided:	137	18%
Agree:	213	28%
Strongly agree:	94	12.4%

4. I am satisfied with changing the name of ASOR entirely (e.g. "Society for Ancient Studies").

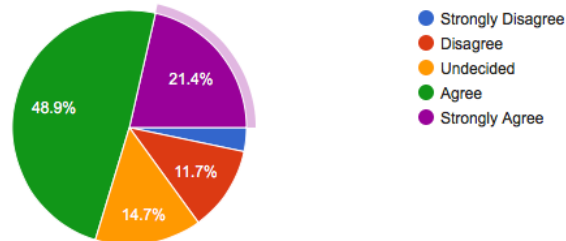
761 responses



Strongly disagree:	246	32.3%
Disagree:	146	19.2%
Undecided:	109	14.3%
Agree:	180	23.7%
Strongly agree:	80	10.5%

5. A name that reflects the geographical scope of ASOR is important to me.

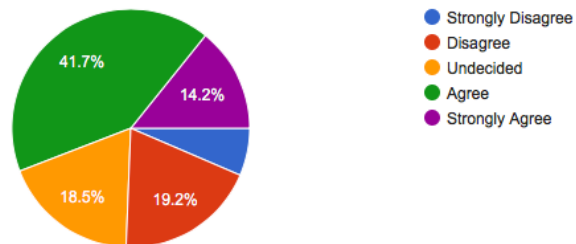
761 responses



Strongly disagree:	25	3.3%
Disagree:	89	11.7%
Undecided:	112	14.7%
Agree:	372	48.9%
Strongly agree:	163	21.4%

6. A name that reflects the chronological scope of ASOR is important to me.

761 responses

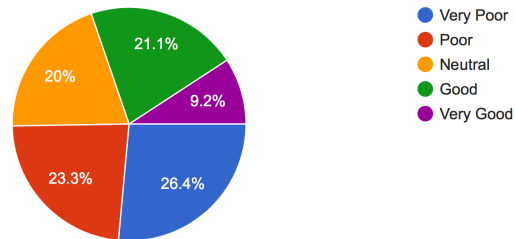


Strongly disagree:	49	6.4%
Disagree:	146	19.2%
Undecided:	141	18.5%
Agree:	317	41.7%
Strongly agree:	108	14.2%



7. Please rate your impression of a new name that is retrofitted to the ASOR acronym (e.g. "Antiqui Scientiam Orbis Reperiens" = "Discovering knowledge of the Ancient World").

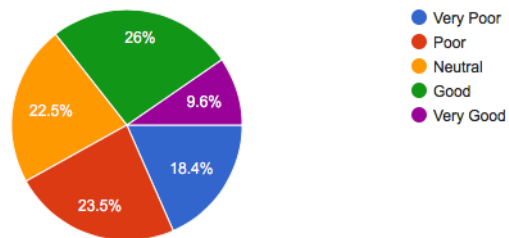
760 responses



Very poor:	201	26.4%
Poor:	177	23.3%
Neutral:	152	20%
Good:	160	21.1%
Very good:	70	9.2%

8. Please rate your impression of a new name that is descriptive in nature (e.g. Society for Ancient Studies).

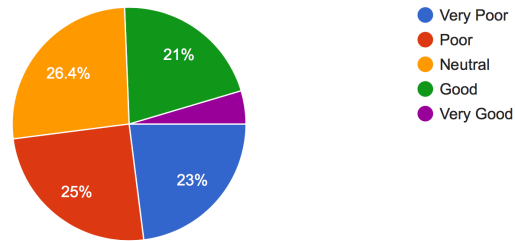
761 responses



Very poor:	140	18.4%
Poor:	179	23.5%
Neutral:	171	22.5%
Good:	198	26%
Very good:	73	9.6%

9. Please rate your impression of a new name that is based on an "ancient" word or concept (e.g. Amphora).

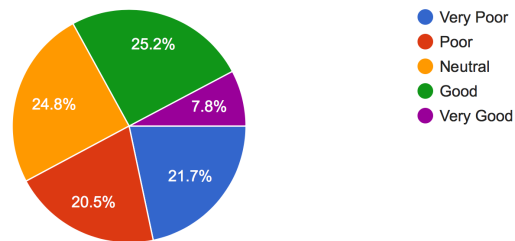
761 responses



Very poor:	175	23%
Poor:	190	25%
Neutral:	201	26.4%
Good:	160	21%
Very good:	35	4.6%

10. Please rate your impression of a new name that is an acronym (e.g. ARCHE = "Archaeological Research, Cultural Heritage, Education").

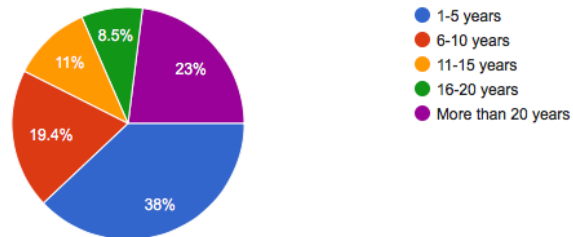
761 responses



Very poor:	165	21.7%
Poor:	156	20.5%
Neutral:	189	24.8%
Good:	192	25.2%
Very good:	59	7.8%

### 11. How long have you been a member of ASOR?

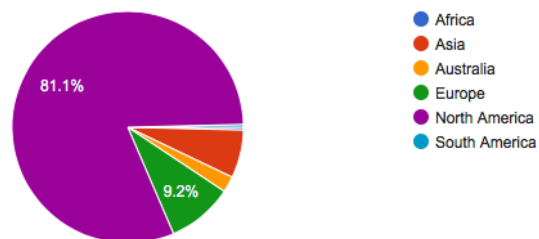
761 responses



1-5 years:	289	38%
6-10 years:	148	19.4%
11-15 years:	84	11%
16-20 years:	65	8.5%
>20 years:	175	23%

### 12. On which continent do you live?

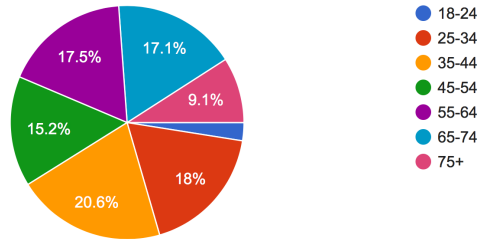
761 responses



Africa:	3	0.4%
Asia:	51	6.7%
Australia:	17	2.2%
Europe:	70	9.2%
N. America:	617	81.1%
S. America:	3	0.4%

## 13. What is your age?

761 responses



18-24:	19	2.5%
25-34:	137	18%
35-44:	157	20.6%
45-54:	116	15.2%
55-64:	133	17.5%
65-74:	130	17.1%
75+:	69	9.1%

## 2. Results by Years of Membership

### 1-5 Years: 289 Responses

#### 1. I am satisfied with the historical name “American Schools of Oriental Research.”

Strongly disagree:	49	17%
Disagree:	90	31.1%
Undecided:	40	13.8%
Agree:	64	22.1%
Strongly agree:	46	15.9%

#### 2. I am satisfied with eliminating all references to the historical name “American Schools of Oriental Research” and retaining “ASOR” as the society’s name.

Strongly disagree:	52	18%
Disagree:	91	31.5%
Undecided:	51	17.6%
Agree:	79	27.3%
Strongly agree:	16	5.5%

#### 3. I am satisfied with creating a new name retrofitted to the ASOR acronym (e.g. “Antiqui Scientiam Orbis Reperiens” = “Discovering knowledge of the Ancient World”).

Strongly disagree:	44	15.2%
Disagree:	53	18.3%
Undecided:	51	17.6%
Agree:	97	33.6%
Strongly agree:	44	15.2%

#### 4. I am satisfied with changing the name of ASOR entirely (e.g. “Society for Ancient Studies”).

Strongly disagree:	74	25.6%
Disagree:	56	19.4%
Undecided:	42	14.5%
Agree:	80	27.7%
Strongly agree:	37	12.8%

#### 5. A name that reflects the geographical scope of ASOR is important to me.

Strongly disagree:	6	2.1%
Disagree:	39	13.5%
Undecided:	41	14.2%
Agree:	145	50.1%
Strongly agree:	58	20.1%

**6. A name that reflects the chronological scope of ASOR is important to me.**

Strongly disagree:	12	4.2%
Disagree:	44	15.2%
Undecided:	47	16.3%
Agree:	142	49.1%
Strongly agree:	44	15.2%

**7. Please rate your impression of a new name that is retrofitted to the ASOR acronym (e.g. "Antiqui Scientiam Orbis Reperiens" = "Discovering knowledge of the Ancient World").**

Very Poor:	56	19.3%
Poor:	71	24.6%
Neutral:	65	22.5%
Good:	68	23.5%
Very Good:	29	10%

**8. Please rate your impression of a new name that is descriptive in nature (e.g. Society for Ancient Studies).**

Very Poor:	31	10.7%
Poor:	65	22.5%
Neutral:	68	23.5%
Good:	87	30.1%
Very Good:	38	13.1%

**9. Please rate your impression of a new name that is based on an "ancient" word or concept (e.g. Amphora).**

Very Poor:	49	17%
Poor:	68	23.5%
Neutral:	88	30.4%
Good:	64	22.1%
Very Good:	20	6.9%

**10. Please rate your impression of a new name that is an acronym (e.g. ARCHE = "Archaeological Research, Cultural Heritage, Education").**

Very Poor:	44	15.2%
Poor:	52	18%
Neutral:	82	28.4%
Good:	81	28%
Very Good:	30	10.4%

## 6-10 years: 148 Responses

### 1. I am satisfied with the historical name “American Schools of Oriental Research.”

Strongly disagree:	31	20.9%
Disagree:	39	26.4%
Undecided:	23	15.5%
Agree:	25	16.9%
Strongly agree:	30	20.3%

### 2. I am satisfied with eliminating all references to the historical name “American Schools of Oriental Research” and retaining “ASOR” as the society’s name.

Strongly disagree:	28	18.9%
Disagree:	39	26.4%
Undecided:	29	19.6%
Agree:	40	27%
Strongly agree:	12	8.1%

### 3. I am satisfied with creating a new name retrofitted to the ASOR acronym (e.g. “Antiqui Scientiam Orbis Reperiens” = “Discovering knowledge of the Ancient World”).

Strongly disagree:	33	22.3%
Disagree:	29	19.6%
Undecided:	23	15.5%
Agree:	45	30.4%
Strongly agree:	18	12.2%

### 4. I am satisfied with changing the name of ASOR entirely (e.g. “Society for Ancient Studies”).

Strongly disagree:	46	31.1%
Disagree:	20	13.5%
Undecided:	23	15.5%
Agree:	44	29.7%
Strongly agree:	15	10.1%

### 5. A name that reflects the geographical scope of ASOR is important to me.

Strongly disagree:	8	5.4%
Disagree:	13	8.8%
Undecided:	22	14.9%
Agree:	73	49.3%
Strongly agree:	32	21.6%

**6. A name that reflects the chronological scope of ASOR is important to me.**

Strongly disagree:	12	8.1%
Disagree:	27	18.2%
Undecided:	27	18.2%
Agree:	67	45.3%
Strongly agree:	15	10.1%

**7. Please rate your impression of a new name that is retrofitted to the ASOR acronym (e.g. "Antiqui Scientiam Orbis Reperiens" = "Discovering knowledge of the Ancient World").**

Very Poor:	33	22.3%
Poor:	36	24.3%
Neutral:	30	20.3%
Good:	35	23.6%
Very Good:	14	9.5%

**8. Please rate your impression of a new name that is descriptive in nature (e.g. Society for Ancient Studies).**

Very Poor:	23	15.5%
Poor:	27	18.2%
Neutral:	37	25%
Good:	46	31.1%
Very Good:	15	10.1%

**9. Please rate your impression of a new name that is based on an "ancient" word or concept (e.g. Amphora).**

Very Poor:	32	21.6%
Poor:	44	29.7%
Neutral:	30	20.3%
Good:	34	23%
Very Good:	8	5.4%

**10. Please rate your impression of a new name that is an acronym (e.g. ARCHE = "Archaeological Research, Cultural Heritage, Education").**

Very Poor:	30	20.3%
Poor:	27	18.2%
Neutral:	33	22.3%
Good:	41	27.7%
Very Good:	17	11.5%



## 11-15 years: 84 Responses

### 1. I am satisfied with the historical name “American Schools of Oriental Research.”

Strongly disagree:	24	28.6%
Disagree:	18	21.4%
Undecided:	9	10.7%
Agree:	19	22.6%
Strongly agree:	14	16.7%

### 2. I am satisfied with eliminating all references to the historical name “American Schools of Oriental Research” and retaining “ASOR” as the society’s name.

Strongly disagree:	17	20.2%
Disagree:	22	26.2%
Undecided:	12	14.3%
Agree:	25	29.8%
Strongly agree:	8	9.5%

### 3. I am satisfied with creating a new name retrofitted to the ASOR acronym (e.g. “Antiqui Scientiam Orbis Reperiens” = “Discovering knowledge of the Ancient World”).

Strongly disagree:	12	14.3%
Disagree:	18	21.4%
Undecided:	20	23.8%
Agree:	27	32.1%
Strongly agree:	7	8.3%

### 4. I am satisfied with changing the name of ASOR entirely (e.g. “Society for Ancient Studies”).

Strongly disagree:	19	22.6%
Disagree:	14	16.7%
Undecided:	12	14.3%
Agree:	23	27.4%
Strongly agree:	16	19%

### 5. A name that reflects the geographical scope of ASOR is important to me.

Strongly disagree:	1	1.2%
Disagree:	17	20.2%
Undecided:	9	10.7%
Agree:	45	53.6%
Strongly agree:	12	14.2%

**6. A name that reflects the chronological scope of ASOR is important to me.**

Strongly disagree:	5	6%
Disagree:	29	34.5%
Undecided:	18	21.4%
Agree:	26	31%
Strongly agree:	6	7.1%

**7. Please rate your impression of a new name that is retrofitted to the ASOR acronym (e.g. "Antiqui Scientiam Orbis Reperiens" = "Discovering knowledge of the Ancient World").**

Very Poor:	17	20.2%
Poor:	21	25%
Neutral:	17	20.2%
Good:	21	25%
Very Good:	8	9.5%

**8. Please rate your impression of a new name that is descriptive in nature (e.g. Society for Ancient Studies).**

Very Poor:	13	15.5%
Poor:	20	23.8%
Neutral:	20	23.8%
Good:	21	25%
Very Good:	10	11.9%

**9. Please rate your impression of a new name that is based on an "ancient" word or concept (e.g. Amphora).**

Very Poor:	14	16.7%
Poor:	20	23.8%
Neutral:	28	33.3%
Good:	18	21.4%
Very Good:	4	4.8%

**10. Please rate your impression of a new name that is an acronym (e.g. ARCHE = "Archaeological Research, Cultural Heritage, Education").**

Very Poor:	12	14.3%
Poor:	21	25%
Neutral:	18	21.4%
Good:	29	34.5%
Very Good:	4	4.8%

## 16-20 years: 65 Responses

### 1. I am satisfied with the historical name “American Schools of Oriental Research.”

Strongly disagree:	10	15.4%
Disagree:	13	20%
Undecided:	11	16.9%
Agree:	13	20%
Strongly agree:	18	27.7%

### 2. I am satisfied with eliminating all references to the historical name “American Schools of Oriental Research” and retaining “ASOR” as the society’s name.

Strongly disagree:	15	23.1%
Disagree:	18	27.7%
Undecided:	15	23.1%
Agree:	9	13.8%
Strongly agree:	8	12.3%

### 3. I am satisfied with creating a new name retrofitted to the ASOR acronym (e.g. “Antiqui Scientiam Orbis Reperiens” = “Discovering knowledge of the Ancient World”).

Strongly disagree:	18	27.7%
Disagree:	13	20%
Undecided:	9	13.8%
Agree:	16	24.6%
Strongly agree:	9	13.8%

### 4. I am satisfied with changing the name of ASOR entirely (e.g. “Society for Ancient Studies”).

Strongly disagree:	25	38.5%
Disagree:	15	23.1%
Undecided:	9	13.8%
Agree:	12	18.5%
Strongly agree:	4	6.2%

### 5. A name that reflects the geographical scope of ASOR is important to me.

Strongly disagree:	1	1.5%
Disagree:	5	7.7%
Undecided:	10	15.4%
Agree:	30	46.2%
Strongly agree:	19	29.2%

**6. A name that reflects the chronological scope of ASOR is important to me.**

Strongly disagree:	6	9.2%
Disagree:	13	20%
Undecided:	14	21.5%
Agree:	20	30.8%
Strongly agree:	12	18.5%

**7. Please rate your impression of a new name that is retrofitted to the ASOR acronym (e.g. "Antiqui Scientiam Orbis Reperiens" = "Discovering knowledge of the Ancient World").**

Very Poor:	23	35.3%
Poor:	11	16.9%
Neutral:	12	18.5%
Good:	12	18.5%
Very Good:	7	10.8%

**8. Please rate your impression of a new name that is descriptive in nature (e.g. Society for Ancient Studies).**

Very Poor:	17	26.2%
Poor:	14	21.5%
Neutral:	17	26.2%
Good:	15	23.1%
Very Good:	2	3.1%

**9. Please rate your impression of a new name that is based on an "ancient" word or concept (e.g. Amphora).**

Very Poor:	15	23.1%
Poor:	19	29.2%
Neutral:	17	26.2%
Good:	12	18.5%
Very Good:	2	3.1%

**10. Please rate your impression of a new name that is an acronym (e.g. ARCHE = "Archaeological Research, Cultural Heritage, Education").**

Very Poor:	13	20%
Poor:	20	30.8%
Neutral:	20	30.8%
Good:	10	15.4%
Very Good:	2	3.1%

## 20+ years: 175 Responses

### 1. I am satisfied with the historical name “American Schools of Oriental Research.”

Strongly disagree:	19	10.9%
Disagree:	18	10.3%
Undecided:	22	12.6%
Agree:	55	31.4%
Strongly agree:	61	34.9%

### 2. I am satisfied with eliminating all references to the historical name “American Schools of Oriental Research” and retaining “ASOR” as the society’s name.

Strongly disagree:	50	28.6%
Disagree:	49	28%
Undecided:	28	16%
Agree:	37	21.1%
Strongly agree:	11	6.3%

### 3. I am satisfied with creating a new name retrofitted to the ASOR acronym (e.g. “Antiqui Scientiam Orbis Reperiens” = “Discovering knowledge of the Ancient World”).

Strongly disagree:	60	34.3%
Disagree:	37	21.1%
Undecided:	34	19.4%
Agree:	28	16%
Strongly agree:	16	9.1%

### 4. I am satisfied with changing the name of ASOR entirely (e.g. “Society for Ancient Studies”).

Strongly disagree:	82	46.9%
Disagree:	41	23.4%
Undecided:	23	13.1%
Agree:	21	12%
Strongly agree:	8	4.6%

### 5. A name that reflects the geographical scope of ASOR is important to me.

Strongly disagree:	9	5.1%
Disagree:	15	8.6%
Undecided:	30	17.1%
Agree:	79	45.1%
Strongly agree:	42	24%

**6. A name that reflects the chronological scope of ASOR is important to me.**

Strongly disagree:	14	8%
Disagree:	33	18.9%
Undecided:	35	20%
Agree:	62	35.4%
Strongly agree:	31	17.7%

**7. Please rate your impression of a new name that is retrofitted to the ASOR acronym (e.g. "Antiqui Scientiam Orbis Reperiens" = "Discovering knowledge of the Ancient World").**

Very Poor:	72	41.1%
Poor:	38	21.7%
Neutral:	29	16.6%
Good:	24	13.7%
Very Good:	12	6.9%

**8. Please rate your impression of a new name that is descriptive in nature (e.g. Society for Ancient Studies).**

Very Poor:	56	32%
Poor:	53	30.3%
Neutral:	29	16.6%
Good:	29	16.6%
Very Good:	8	4.6%

**9. Please rate your impression of a new name that is based on an "ancient" word or concept (e.g. Amphora).**

Very Poor:	65	37.1%
Poor:	39	22.3%
Neutral:	38	21.7%
Good:	32	18.3%
Very Good:	1	0.6%

**10. Please rate your impression of a new name that is an acronym (e.g. ARCHE = "Archaeological Research, Cultural Heritage, Education").**

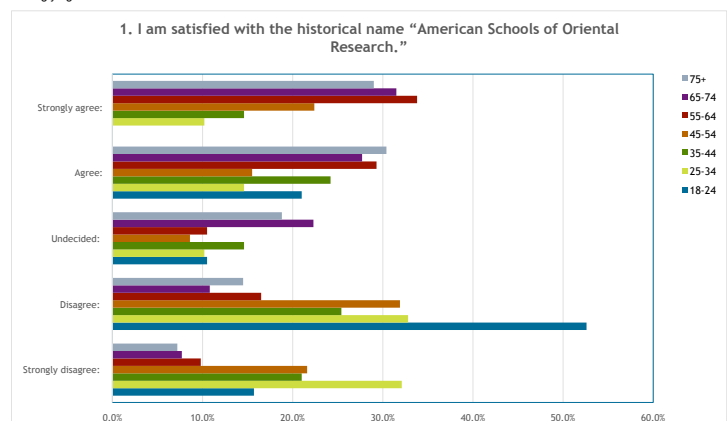
Very Poor:	66	37.7%
Poor:	36	20.6%
Neutral:	36	20.6%
Good:	31	17.7%
Very Good:	6	3.4%

### 3. Results by Age Range (bar charts)

SURVEY ON ASOR'S NAME BY AGE RANGE

**1. I am satisfied with the historical name "American Schools of Oriental Research."**

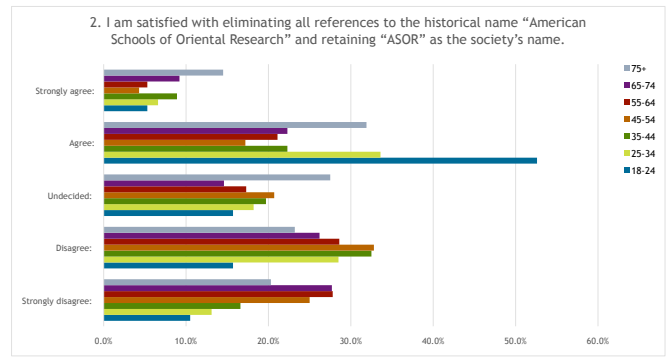
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	64-75	75+
Strongly disagree:	15.7%	32.1%	21.0%	21.6%	9.8%	7.7%	7.2%
Disagree:	52.6%	32.8%	25.4%	31.9%	16.5%	10.8%	14.5%
Undecided:	10.5%	10.2%	14.6%	8.6%	10.5%	22.3%	18.8%
Agree:	21.0%	14.6%	24.2%	15.5%	29.3%	27.7%	30.4%
Strongly agree:	0.0%	10.2%	14.6%	22.4%	33.8%	31.5%	29.0%



SURVEY ON ASOR'S NAME BY AGE RANGE

**2. I am satisfied with eliminating all references to the historical name "American Schools of Oriental Research" and retaining "ASOR" as the society's name.**

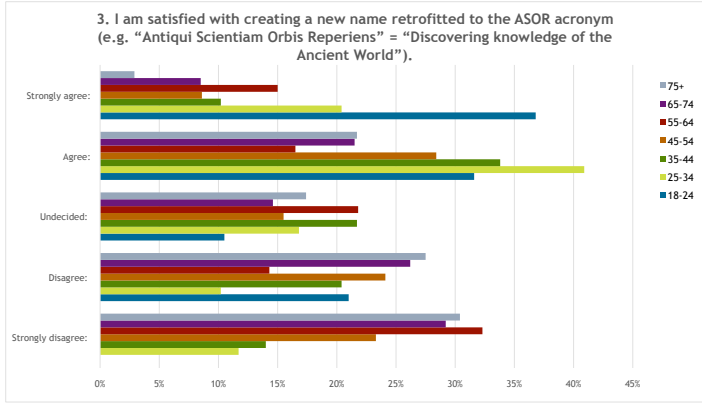
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	64-75	75+
Strongly disagree:	10.5%	13.1%	16.6%	25.0%	27.8%	27.7%	20.3%
Disagree:	15.7%	28.5%	32.5%	32.8%	28.6%	26.2%	23.2%
Undecided:	15.7%	18.2%	19.7%	20.7%	17.3%	14.6%	27.5%
Agree:	52.6%	33.6%	22.3%	17.2%	21.1%	22.3%	31.9%
Strongly agree:	5.3%	6.6%	8.9%	4.3%	5.3%	9.2%	14.5%



SURVEY ON ASOR'S NAME BY AGE RANGE

**3. I am satisfied with creating a new name retrofitted to the ASOR acronym (e.g. "Antiqui Scientiam Orbis Reperiens" = "Discover**

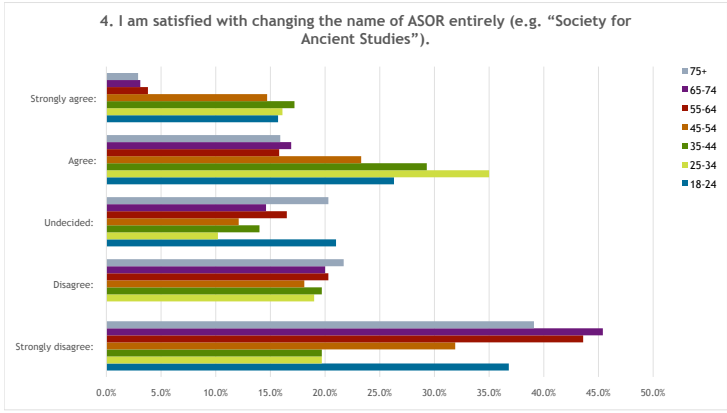
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	64-75	75+
Strongly disagree:	0%	11.70%	14%	23.30%	32.30%	29.20%	30.40%
Disagree:	21%	10.20%	20.40%	24.10%	14.30%	26.20%	27.50%
Undecided:	10.50%	16.80%	21.70%	15.50%	21.80%	14.60%	17.40%
Agree:	31.60%	40.90%	33.80%	28.40%	16.50%	21.50%	21.70%
Strongly agree:	36.80%	20.40%	10.20%	8.60%	15%	8.50%	2.90%



SURVEY ON ASOR'S NAME BY AGE RANGE

**4. I am satisfied with changing the name of ASOR entirely (e.g. "Society for Ancient Studies").**

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	64-75	75+
Strongly disagree:	36.8%	19.7%	19.7%	31.9%	43.6%	45.4%	39.1%
Disagree:	0.0%	19.0%	19.7%	18.1%	20.3%	20.0%	21.7%
Undecided:	21.0%	10.2%	14.0%	12.1%	16.5%	14.6%	20.3%
Agree:	26.3%	35.0%	29.3%	23.3%	15.8%	16.9%	15.9%
Strongly agree:	15.7%	16.1%	17.2%	14.7%	3.8%	3.1%	2.9%

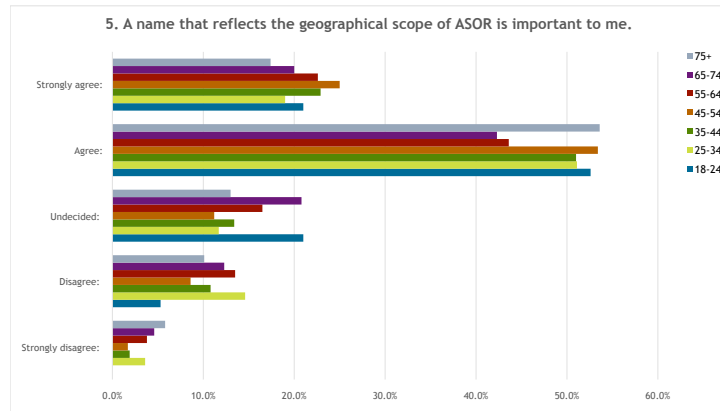




SURVEY ON ASOR'S NAME BY AGE RANGE

5. A name that reflects the geographical scope of ASOR is important to me.

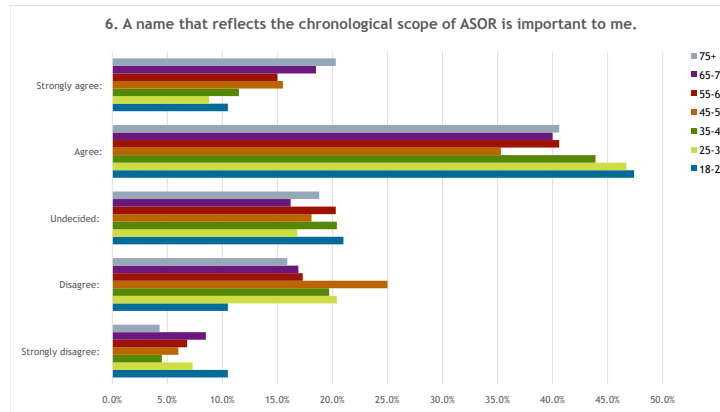
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	64-75	75+
Strongly disagree:	0.0%	3.6%	1.9%	1.7%	3.8%	4.6%	5.8%
Disagree:	5.3%	14.6%	10.8%	8.6%	13.5%	12.3%	10.1%
Undecided:	21.0%	11.7%	13.4%	11.2%	16.5%	20.8%	13.0%
Agree:	52.6%	51.1%	51.0%	53.4%	43.6%	42.3%	53.6%
Strongly agree:	21.0%	19.0%	22.9%	25.0%	22.6%	20.0%	17.4%



SURVEY ON ASOR'S NAME BY AGE RANGE

6. A name that reflects the chronological scope of ASOR is important to me.

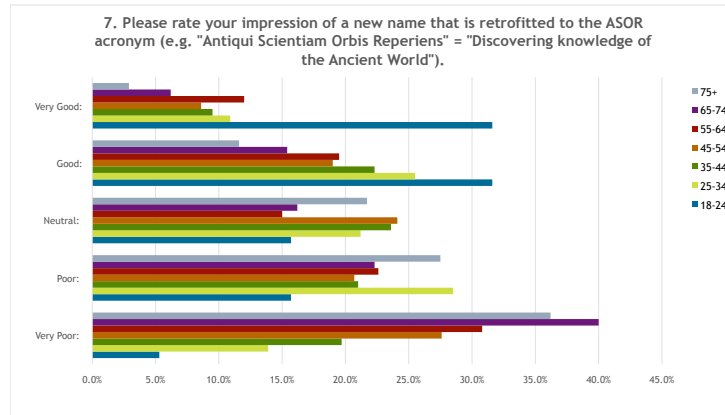
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	64-75	75+
Strongly disagree:	10.5%	7.3%	4.5%	6.0%	6.8%	8.5%	4.3%
Disagree:	10.5%	20.4%	19.7%	25.0%	17.3%	16.9%	15.9%
Undecided:	21.0%	16.8%	20.4%	18.1%	20.3%	16.2%	18.8%
Agree:	47.4%	46.7%	43.9%	35.3%	40.6%	40.0%	40.6%
Strongly agree:	10.5%	8.8%	11.5%	15.5%	15.0%	18.5%	20.3%



SURVEY ON ASOR'S NAME BY AGE RANGE

7. Please rate your impression of a new name that is retrofitted to the ASOR acronym (e.g. "Antiqui Scientiam Orbis Reperiens" =

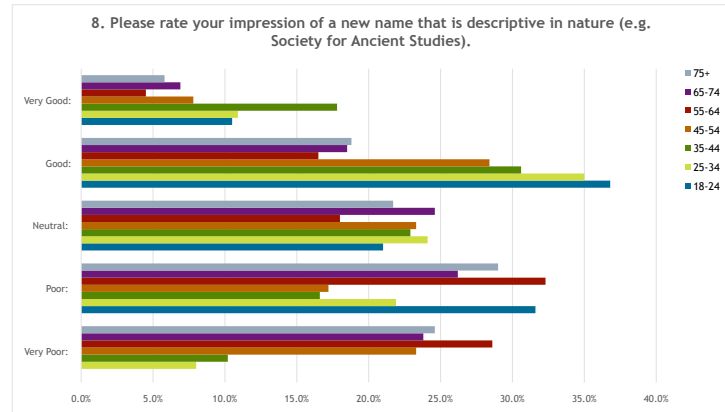
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	64-75	75+
Very Poor:	5.3%	13.9%	19.7%	27.6%	30.8%	40.0%	36.2%
Poor:	15.7%	28.5%	21.0%	20.7%	22.6%	22.3%	27.5%
Neutral:	15.7%	21.2%	23.6%	24.1%	15.0%	16.2%	21.7%
Good:	31.6%	25.5%	22.3%	19.0%	19.5%	15.4%	11.6%
Very Good:	31.6%	10.9%	9.5%	8.6%	12.0%	6.2%	2.9%



SURVEY ON ASOR'S NAME BY AGE RANGE

8. Please rate your impression of a new name that is descriptive in nature (e.g. Society for Ancient Studies).

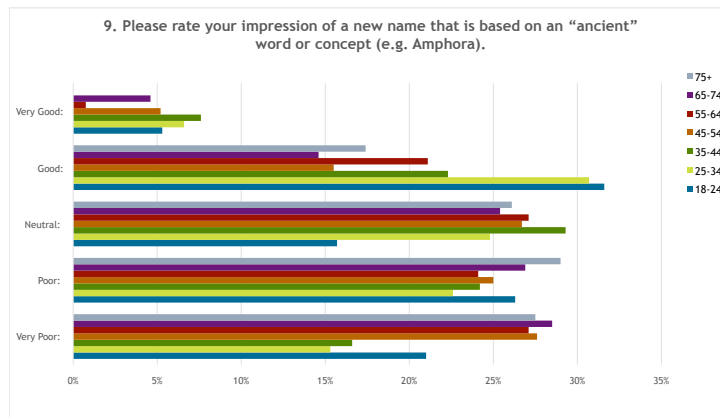
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	64-75	75+
Very Poor:	0.0%	8.0%	10.2%	23.3%	28.6%	23.8%	24.6%
Poor:	31.6%	21.9%	16.6%	17.2%	32.3%	26.2%	29.0%
Neutral:	21.0%	24.1%	22.9%	23.3%	18.0%	24.6%	21.7%
Good:	36.8%	35.0%	30.6%	28.4%	16.5%	18.5%	18.8%
Very Good:	10.5%	10.9%	17.8%	7.8%	4.5%	6.9%	5.8%



SURVEY ON ASOR'S NAME BY AGE RANGE

9. Please rate your impression of a new name that is based on an "ancient" word or concept (e.g. Amphora).

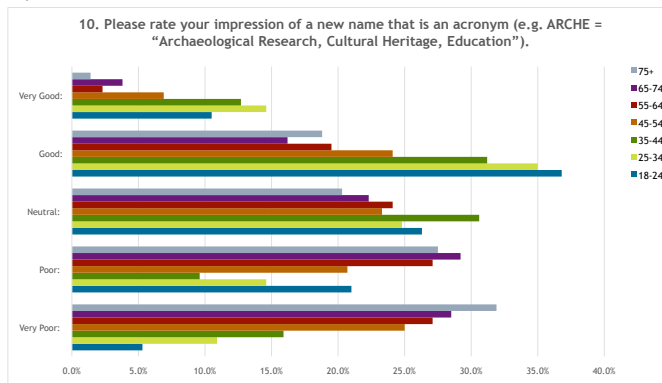
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	64-75	75+
Very Poor:	21%	15.30%	16.60%	27.60%	27.10%	28.50%	27.50%
Poor:	26.30%	22.60%	24.20%	25%	24.10%	26.90%	29%
Neutral:	15.70%	24.80%	29.30%	26.70%	27.10%	25.40%	26.10%
Good:	31.60%	30.70%	22.30%	15.50%	21.10%	14.60%	17.40%
Very Good:	5.30%	6.60%	7.60%	5.20%	1%	4.60%	0



SURVEY ON ASOR'S NAME BY AGE RANGE

10. Please rate your impression of a new name that is an acronym (e.g. ARCHE = "Archaeological Research, Cultural Heritage, Ed

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	64-75	75+
Very Poor:	5.3%	10.9%	15.9%	25.0%	27.1%	28.5%	31.9%
Poor:	21.0%	14.6%	9.6%	20.7%	27.1%	29.2%	27.5%
Neutral:	26.3%	24.8%	30.6%	23.3%	24.1%	22.3%	20.3%
Good:	36.8%	35.0%	31.2%	24.1%	19.5%	16.2%	18.8%
Very Good:	10.5%	14.6%	12.7%	6.9%	2.3%	3.8%	1.4%



## 4. Comments received via email.

From	Comment
Rick St. Hilaire	One suggestion. If you changed the name to either the American Society of Ancient Research or to the American Schools of Ancient Research, you get ASOAR, which is the same pronunciation as ASOR.
Michele Daviau	I took the ASOR name survey but found it quite strange. There was no opportunity for other ideas from the members. The American Schools (to refer to our institutional members and the society's history) could still be retained as part of the name. To link with our expanded interest areas, the name could be American Schools of Ancient Research and still retain ASOR as the acronym but this was not even an option on the questionnaire.
Gary Arbino	I just took the ASOR Name Survey and had a quick comment about question #2: in that question the word "all" is used - "...remove ALL references to American..." the issue for me (as an historian) is that the wording implies removal of this term retroactively from past materials (as much as possible) as well as future materials. That may not be what was intended, but since my institution changed its name a few years back there has been an effort to remove the previous name from not only all materials but from public relations memory - ie: things that happened at "Golden Gate Seminary" prior to 2016 are now written as happening at "Gateway Seminary". Historically this is a loss, and in some respects, a half-truth.
Bruce Williams	My response to Question 2 was "neutral" but I would have responded more in favor of such a change if the word (and implication) "all" was not used (even IBM is still International Business Machines, but no one knows it, AARP on the other hand utilizes, for PR only, the 'RP' to mean "Real Possibilities", and nowhere on their main web page is the actual name written out (gotta go to Wikipedia to get that!))
Eliot Braun	I tried to take the survey but found the requirement for age offensive.
Barry Gittlen	Silly idea to change the name.
Mitchell Rothman	Please forward to the NAME committee my appreciation for the work they are doing and the well thought through survey they sent out through you.
	I filled out your survey, but you left no space for alternate ideas. I think ASOR as an acronym is so long associated with us that it needs to stay. If you must have a gloss, American Society Of Near East Research? Not complete fit, but closer and more accurate than some Latin name that no one will understand, and why Latin? Hebrew at least or Arabic.

Paul Flesher	<p>I find that I gave lukewarm answers on the survey. In part, this is because it is missing what I think should be an important of the name: archaeology. "Society for Ancient Studies" is missing that. How about SARME - Society for Archaeological research in the Middle East. Or if that name is also too imperial how about SARL - Society for Archaeological research in the Levant, SARGA - Society for Archaeological research in Greater Arabia, or CARL - Council for Archaeological Research in the Levant. That's my 2 cents. I do support the move away from a name with "oriental" in it. I am not against the Latin idea. But it would be nice to have archaeology in the name.</p>
Shirlee Hoffman	<p>I just completed, with lingering uncertainty about my answers, your Survey on ASOR's name. I had hoped that there would be a place for me to write in my thoughts on the survey. Open-ended responses are hard to score but perhaps useful. (Retired marketing consultant commenting here.) But there's always email!</p> <p>ASOR has a lot of equity in that acronym (like IBM). What I would like to see is having the organization keep ASOR but then creating a new tagline that reflects what the organization is about--you actually suggested one toward the end of the survey but I didn't copy it down. The Oriental Institute (where I'm a volunteer docent) changed its logo to just OI and then kept Oriental Institute as the "tagline." ASOR doesn't have to do that with "American Schools...." Even if you decide to keep the current acronym, I'm hoping any tagline will be in English, not Latin or Greek for that matter.</p> <p>I recognize the enormous challenge of coming up with an identity that represents ASOR's membership and makes sense. I was going to send you a few ragged name possibilities but then just surrendered. Your Team, composed of people with a lot more organizational history and creativity than I, will certainly emerge victorious!</p>
Elizabeth Bloch-Smith	<p>I took the survey but there's no option to leave a comment. My question is how important is it to the membership to include archaeology/archaeological in the name?</p>
Herb Huffmon	<p>While Albright was a student at Hopkins, under Paul Haupt, the department was known as "The Oriental Seminary."--reflecting the idea of a Seminar. That name remained until the late 1960's to "Department of Near Eastern Studies," (I still have some stationary referring to "The Oriental Seminary.")</p> <p>So ASOR might become ASNER/S--American School(s) for Near Eastern Research/Study, but neither looks as good as ASOR.</p>

Christina Luke	<p>In filling this out, I found myself confused. ASOR is ASOR — past and present, and I'd argue into the near future. Why? I had strongly believed change in the name was necessary b/c "things" had indeed changed — until I registered for the Boston 2020 meeting and my Turkish colleagues and students registered. ACOR provides assistance (or it seems) to Jordanian (perhaps others, but in general ACOR is Jordan specific) to students. But, my students had to pay the full student rate. They have nice packages from Koç University for living in Istanbul, Turkey — very nice indeed. But, translated into USD for a conference, the rates were extraordinary. This would be equivalent to charging US graduate students min \$1,000 USD to register. This of course doesn't happen precisely because students are on a budget and ASOR generously recognizes this. But for those outside of USD standards of living, the rate is shocking. Of course ASOR can do nothing about airline tickets and hotels, nor the humiliating process of getting a visa into the US from Turkey and other countries, but they can and should do more about the registration fee. I was stunned that there wasn't a category for students from specific countries — or even an option to apply for a reduction or waiver with a letter of support from the institution or faculty member. It is for this reason that I voted to keep ASOR as ASOR in every sense. I was sad to do so. <b>(Marta responded to CL about AM registration rates)</b></p>
Mark Chancey	<p>Thanks for the excellent survey on changing our name. I agree strongly we need to change and am thankful for the society's work on the matter. I had several thoughts to convey, for what they're worth. Given our international membership, I think we should drop "American."</p> <p>I think our name should be geographically specific so that we don't adopt an all-encompassing name while not actually having an all-encompassing scope. For example, if our name includes "Ancient" with no geographical referent, then we're implying that we cover the entire ancient world. If, however, we don't actually study the entire ancient world (which we don't and won't), then we're inadvertently conveying that those parts of the world don't matter. My colleague who studies ancient India comments often on how India is often excluded from studies of the "ancient world." I'm sure other colleagues focusing on other geographical areas can sympathize.</p> <p>For that reason, I recommend something like Society for the Study of the Ancient Mediterranean and Mesoptamia (SSAMM) or Society for the Study of Ancient Near East (SSANE) or some other name that includes geographical referents. Of course, then the issue is what is included in "ancient." Anyway, these are my thoughts. Thank you again for your leadership on this.</p>

Tom Brayshaw	I have taken the survey, but I forgot to suggest American Society for Oriental Research. It removes the now inappropriate word, but maintains the long standing traditional ASOR acronym that so many know. This would follow the example of the American Association of Museums that diversified from its original limited scope and became the American Affiliation of Museums, thus maintaining its well known AAM.
Dave Laske	You have no business asking for one's age anymore than I do asking your IQ.
Maurice Margulies	<p>I completed the survey with regard to the naming of the society - ASOR. I am 89 years old and have a Ph.D. in microbiology and biochemistry from Yale – 1957. My interest in archaeology stems from my visits to Israel and other places in the Mediterranean basin. I have been on two digs in Israel.</p> <p>The society deals mostly with the Near East. So one could go with the name of the Journal – Society for Near Eastern Archaeology. But, if I remember correctly you also publish studies along the North African Coast and upper Nile. So one could expand the scope to Society for Near Eastern and Mediterranean Basin Archaeology. However, I do not have trouble with keeping the name of the society as it is.</p> <p>My best wishes in coming to a decision.</p>
Jim Muhly	<p>ASOR and Orientalism</p> <p>Today is April Fools Day, but my guess is that no one has any interest in practical jokes. I am getting used to being locked in, but I cannot complain. We have a large house, with an enclosed garden where I can walk, and I have a very good library. Quite important now that all the libraries in Athens are closed. I am writing to both of you, as members of the "Change of ASOR's Name Committee. I took the survey that I was sent, but was not impressed with the choices offered. In my opinion the only feasible alternative to the present name was to make the official name of the organization simply ASOR. This I would call the "BP Option". Several years ago British Petroleum decided that its name associated the organization with fossil fuels and the pollution of the environment. They decided that BP would now be the official name of the organization, omitting any connection with oil. Were ASOR to go the same route we would be admitting that "Oriental" had the same undesirable connotations as "petroleum". Is this true?</p> <p>I begin by explaining that I have already been involved in problems connected with the name "Oriental". While I was still teaching at Penn the students in the Oriental Studies Department launched a determined campaign to change the name of the department. For them the word oriental carried with it associations with colonialism and imperialism. They were very much influenced by the book by Edward W. Said, <i>Orientalism</i>, published in 1978. I was in favor of retaining the tradition name, along with Peter Gaeffke, our Prof. of Indology. Peter came from Holland and knew all about the danger of name changes. He had been through the reorganization of</p>

	<p>Central Europe during and after WW II. He wanted no part of it. Obviously we lost. The students put on a determined campaign. We were accused being in the business of selling "Oriental Rugs". The best was the posters they circulated, telling everyone to come to 847 Williams Hall for an "Oriental Massage". So we now have a Department of Near Languages and Civilizations. This program offers several concentrations: Arabic &amp; Islamic Studies;; Arabic and Hebrew Studies; Hebrew and Judaica ;and The Ancient Near East. Turkish Studies; Indology, Chinese and Japanese Studies have gone their separate ways. The result was exactly what I had feared. We now have a number of separate programs, each one too small to amount to much of anything. When I joined the department in 1967 it was one of the greatest departments of Oriental Studies in the world. We covered all languages and cultures east of Greece , exactly as the American Oriental Society still does today. The JAOS is one of the major scholarly journals in the world. I am still a devoted subscriber. We still have the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago and many dedicated programs in oriental studies around the country.</p> <p>I have the greatest respect for Edward Said. His book on <i>Orientalism</i>, as well as his later book on <i>Culture and Imperialism</i> (1993), had a tremendous impact on the field. They aroused great controversy, as did his devoted and outspoken advocacy for the cause of the Palestinians. Said was a wonderful writer and a great scholar, as well as being a superb concert pianist. The book had one serious flaw. Said covered only France and Britain, and he saw Oriental Studies in terms of colonialism and imperialism. He had little to say about all the great German orientalists, of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century who created many of the basic research tools that we still use today. One cannot do any serious work in oriental studies without taking into account the work of the <i>Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft</i>, founded in 1898. The DOG was taken under the protection of Kaiser Wilhelm II in 1901, and with imperial funding it was able to carry out excavations at many of the important ancient sites in the Middle East. True, these excavations were carried out very much within the spirit of European colonialism, with all the major finds crated up and shipped back to Berlin. This is why today, to see the marketplace of Pergamon and the Ishtar Gate of Babylon it is necessary to go to the Pergamon Museum in Berlin. That museum celebrated the centennial of the DOG in 1998. It would not be possible to study ANE Archaeology today without the excavations and the publications of the DOG. I will mention only the work of Walter Andrae, who began excavating at Assur in 1903, and worked to 1913. Andrae was not only a great scholar, he was also a gifted artist. His large-scale paintings of ANE sites still decorate the walls of the Pergamon Museum. For linguistic work I mention only the work of Nöldeke, who establish the text of the Qur'an in his <i>Geschichte des Qoorans</i>, the 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. of which, edited by F. Schwally, was published in Leipzig, in 2 vols. in 1919. I remember an occasion when , as a student at Yale in the early 1960s. I was talking with the great Arabic scholar Franz Rosenthal. A student asked him how best to prepare for a career in Semitic languages. Well, Rosenthal replied, "The first Semitic language is German". I studied with the great Albrecht Goetze, who lectured in a mixture of English and German. Needless to say, Goetze had very few students, but he taught me how</p>
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	<p>to do research.</p> <p>What is needed is a serious discussion of what we mean by "Orientalism". The term has different meanings to different scholars. I cannot attempt such a discussion at this time, but I can recommend two books. For a general account see John M. MacKenzie, <i>Orientalism: History, theory and the arts</i>, Manchester UP, 1995. For German orientalism see Susanne L. Marchand, <i>German Orientalism in the Age of Empire. Religion, race, and scholarship</i>, CUP 2009. Needless to say, I am strongly in favor of retaining the traditional name, The American Schools of Oriental Research.</p>
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## Attachment C

### An Open Letter to the Board of ASOR:

The moniker *The American Schools of Oriental Research* is a shameful name for the most prominent membership organization in Near Eastern Studies. *Oriental* is a term rife with a legacy of negative associations. It carries with it a racist, reductionist portrayal of the multitude of communities present throughout the regions of Asia and North Africa. This critique was expressed over forty years ago in the seminal book, *Orientalism*, by Edward Said, and in his and other scholars' re-writing on the topic since.

This term connects our present work in the region, with a history of archaeology as a tool for colonialist endeavors in the construction of arbitrarily demarcated states, the theft of cultural heritage under the guise of a patronizing concern for preservation, and the continuing depiction of local communities as static and underdeveloped and therefore in need of intervention. We implore the organization to make a commitment to framing research as done at the behest of primarily local stakeholder communities, therefore carrying a duty to involve representatives in every aspect of the research process, from designing research questions to deriving best practices in fieldwork to dissemination of research findings to exhibition of cultural heritage. We envision our organization promoting this new standard in the research of our members by updating grant expectations to include documentation of these efforts as well as explicitly defining timelines for post-field analyses and the ultimate repatriation of objects of cultural value.

We are far from the first group of scholars to see an issue with this name and take action to rectify the problem. As of now, a committee has formed to move forward on devising a new name for the organization, and they have made efforts to survey the membership about potential name replacements. We support these efforts, but would caution against any utilization of 'Near Eastern' or 'Middle Eastern' in the new title, as these terms also position the region in relation to an Euro-centric perspective. This necessary divestment with this racist terminology is only the first phase of a reckoning of our participation in a system of inequality. We must undertake this effort to critique our institution if we wish to be an organization with a membership that reflects the totality of a community with interest in the study of this heritage, not just those of us in Euro-American academic institutions.

We would also like to encourage you, as a leading organization in our field, to commit to thinking about broader initiatives that contribute to promoting anti-racism and diversity and to decolonizing our profession. While promoting diversity in a more general sense is admirable, we feel that specifically supporting current and future Black and Indigenous students and scholars in the field is imperative.

- To promote a diverse member body, the organization should provide additional support and mentoring of Black students, other students of color, and other underrepresented groups. The organization should partner with faculty and students from HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) and MSIs (Minority Serving Institutions), providing them support and a strong platform to ensure that more BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) students enter the field and thrive within it.
- We ask that the organization establish a fellowship for BIPOC students.

- We ask that a policy is put in place for instituting tailored implicit bias training for those in leadership roles engaging in the process of creating and renewing any and all ASOR-affiliated field projects
- We ask that those field projects with affiliations to the organization or pursuing such affiliations be required to pursue formal collaborations with faculty at HBCUs or MSIs in order to provide more opportunities for BIPOC students to be introduced to our field and have their interest cultivated through institutional mentorship.
- We ask that the organization create a DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) Committee to address the lack of diversity in the leadership and membership of the organization. This committee should include BIPOC scholars and range from graduate students to career professionals. The committee should be headed by co-chairs in order to diversify the voices of representation on the CCC (Council of Committee Chairs). Additionally, a new Board member seat should be instituted, and this seat should be filled by a member of the DEI committee.
- We would also like to see the formation of a number of recurring workshops that would focus on ongoing efforts to decolonize our research, since the history of our profession is very much bound to white supremacist ideologies and other problematic colonial practices and systemic racism. Topics relevant to such workshops include (but are not limited to):
  - analyzing troubling histories of scholarship and identifying ways forward
  - designing syllabi that center the work of Black and minority scholars, including integration of the theoretical scholarship of scholars outside of archaeology specifically
  - developing anti-racist practices in scholarship
  - a general re-imagining of what the role of this discipline should be in the present day

These workshops should be developed in coordination with BIPOC scholars or educators, whose work should be appropriately compensated.

We the members of this organization have the power to prioritize new objectives and begin taking steps on the long arduous path to justice and equity in our discipline. This community of scholars can be visionaries in the future of ethical pursuit of our work, rather than merely doing just enough to keep up with peer institution standards.

Sincerely,

Abigail Buffington, William & Mary  
 Ioana A. Dumitru, CSRM Foundation  
 Lesley A. Gregoricka, University of South Alabama  
 Smiti Nathan, Johns Hopkins University  
 Tiffany Earley-Spadoni, University of Central Florida  
 Allison Mickel, Lehigh University  
 Laurel A. Poolman, Johns Hopkins University  
 Jill S. Waller, Johns Hopkins University  
 Morgan E. Moroney, Johns Hopkins University  
 Rosanne Liebermann, Washington University in St. Louis  
 Susan Guise Sheridan, University of Notre Dame  
 Alexander Nagel, State University of New York, FIT  
 Annalee Sekulic, Ohio State University

Rachel Kalisher, Brown University  
Pinar Durgun, The Met  
Avery Taylor, Johns Hopkins University  
Ian W. N. Jones, University of California San Diego  
Craig A. Harvey, University of Michigan  
Alexis T. Boutin, Sonoma State University  
Kara Larson, University of Michigan  
Petra M. Creamer, University of Pennsylvania  
Bianca Hand, Johns Hopkins University  
Jonathan Gardner, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School  
Anna Glenn, LMU Munich  
Danielle Steen Fatkin, Dept of History, Knox College  
Anne Austin, Assistant Professor of Anthropology & Archaeology at the University of Missouri St. Louis  
Joseph Lehner, USyd  
Marc Flores, Johns Hopkins University  
Jaime Ullinger, Quinnipiac University  
Amir Zaribaf  
Sasha Boghosian, McGill University