

The Editor's Annual Report

Another year has come to an end, a year that has been smoother and better organized, if not very much less hectic, than the last with its double load of issues. We are still working at speeding up our process and cutting down on the delay between receiving an article and publishing it in order to prevent a backlog. The whole procedure can only be as fast as its slowest link, and as the mails allow.

I have some suggestions for improvement. First, I would like to step up the rubric of Notes and Communications. A page or two of every issue will be set aside for the rebuttals to reviews, comments, and different views expressed by the readers. Obviously we must limit the length of these comments and I suggest that contributions be limited to a paragraph or two to forestall the necessity of selecting only relevant parts of the communication, which may cause further heartburn.

Second, we are instituting the two-part format for a manuscript that is longer than a journal article but shorter than a monograph. Authors now have the option of submitting an article longer than the prescribed 12,000 words on condition that the work warrants the extra length and can be divided into two sections for publication separately.

We must simplify the use of diacritics; unless they are absolutely imperative to the argument of the article (as in subjects of literary and linguistic niceties) they will be deleted, except for ains and hamzas. (Ains and/or hamzas that are typed as apostrophes will be set as apostrophes.) Moreover, authors who do use diacritics and transliteration have the total responsibility for consistency and accuracy in manuscript, as corrections are not permitted in proof. In other words, the editor will not change or query any diacritics or transliteration. The rising cost of editing, typesetting, and correcting diacritics makes this necessary.

We direct your attention to the section headed Notes for Contributors which starts on the back cover; it contains new information. We urge you to follow instructions. Articles that do not conform will be returned for retyping as will illegible manuscripts or those with a multitude of handwritten corrections.

Cambridge University Press has drawn our attention to matters of libel, not as a consequence of any suits pending against *IJMES* but as general advice to all of us, and I pass it on to our readers. Libel has been defined as the publishing of any statement tending to discredit a person in the eyes of reasonable members of society generally, and may be an actionable wrong. The Press further elaborates

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that the same may apply to personal attacks on the qualifications or motives of others.

The Press has also informed us that they are changing the typeface to less rounded characters and to modern lining numerals. They have kindly undertaken to send us information to be forwarded to our reviewers as guidelines for reviewing books, something which many have requested and which is customary among some journals.

The special issues commemorating the Islamic Centennial met with such success that we decided to duplicate it with future issues on a specific theme. I hope to devote issues to certain specified topics of general interest, for example, one on economic history, or on the history of women, or on literature. Readers who would like to participate should write to the editor with ideas and suggestions for topics.

Finally, I would like to thank our production editor Teresa Joseph for her indefatigable efforts, the board of reviewers for their prompt and careful review of articles, and, not least, our book review editor Dr. Michael Cook for a job well done. Dr. Cook is stepping down and the book review editorship will be shared among a number of editors of different disciplines. We hope this will render the task easier.

Readers who have comments about the Journal are invited to address the editor who will be pleased to receive them. Feedback from readers is vital to a dynamic journal. We can only publish articles we receive, so keep the articles coming. And thank you for your continued interest and support.

A. MARSOT
Editor