

## Editor's Note

In this, the last issue of Volume 40 of the *Journal of Asian Studies*, I wish to take stock of the experiences gained in this past year and to announce plans for the coming year.

### Journal Style

For years, the professional journals and the societies that govern them as well as the editorial world in general have discussed various means for incorporating footnotes into the text in a manner that will maintain high scholarly standards; be effective with respect to conveying information; cost less to typeset; and be efficient for the processing and proofing of manuscripts. The rising costs of printing and publication have made this task more urgent.

It is in this light that the recent recommendations of the Modern Language Association were reviewed by the *JAS*. These detailed recommendations discuss largely the range of citation problems common to publishing books and periodicals. I have had extended discussions and correspondence with many persons engaged in Asian studies whose research interests vary in topic and discipline; most of them favored adopting the MLA recommendations. Hence the *JAS*, beginning with the first issue of Volume 41, will adopt the MLA format for documentation, namely, incorporating within the text of an article the reference by name, date, and page, with the full biographical citation provided in the list of references at the end of the manuscript. The *JAS* has used this format on some occasions already, as in the article by Frederic Wakeman, Jr. ("Rebellion and Revolution," *JAS* 36, 2:201–237) and, in this issue, the article by James Brow, "Class Formation and Ideological Practice."

Reservations about this method of citation have centered on two issues. Some scholars who work with exceptionally complex materials and sources have queried the feasibility of using the new form to cite their manuscripts. The experience of other humanities and social science journals indicates that this problem can be solved. Others have cogently argued that in some citations text-extension footnotes are essential for accurate rendering of their work. However, such footnotes are allowed under these new rules, although it is always preferable to incorporate them into the text whenever possible.

The new format is expected to be permanent, but 1981–82 (vol. 41) should be viewed as a trial period. We are sensitive to the scholarly needs and preferences of contributors to the *JAS*. If the format should cause problems, we will work with the authors to insure that their scholarly requirements are met. Organizations that have adopted the MLA citation format, such as the American Oriental Society, seem to have been able to resolve problems, and we believe that we can do the same.

### Romanization

After considerable discussion and a number of letters from various AAS members, I have decided to extend the period of time during which the *JAS* will publish articles

using either the Pinyin or Wade Giles romanization system. For some purposes, Wade Giles appears to be preferable; this is particularly true for discussions of historical periods and for discussions of some Chinese populations outside of the People's Republic of China. It seems equally true to us that, for other topics, especially for the post-1949 period and for documents originating in the PRC, Pinyin is preferable. Although it may be more consistent to select one or the other system, the problems inherent in selecting an appropriate system and the diversity of our readership and authors have persuaded me that, for the present, the *JAS* should continue to accept both romanization systems.

### Book Reviews

The book review policies and procedures of the *JAS* are among the least understood and the most controversial aspect of the *Journal's* work. Before announcing some changes, I will recapitulate the general procedures followed by the Editorial Board.

Books are received and assigned by area review editors according to the geographical regions of the books to be reviewed: Asia General, China, Inner Asia, Japan, Korea, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. (The *JAS* listing of regions is alphabetical.) If there is doubt about the classification, the issue is resolved by correspondence among the area editors.

When area book review editors receive a book for review, they decide whether the book should be reviewed, by whom, at what length, and by what date. (They also solicit longer comparative book-review articles.) The area editors then solicit a reviewer—sometimes a lengthy process. When a reviewer has accepted, the book is sent. Occasionally a reviewer, on reading the book, will feel that it should not be reviewed. In most circumstances, the area editor will accept that decision. Given the limited pages of the *JAS*, the volume of books received, and the tendency of reviewers to exceed their assigned space limits, the area editors have some discretion in juggling books and length requirements.

The reviewer sends the manuscript to the area editor, who edits it (with correspondence, if necessary) and then sends it to the *JAS* office. Here book reviews are subjected to further editing. If the changes are substantial or appear to be controversial, further correspondence ensues with the original reviewer. At this point, ideally, the book review is incorporated into the schedule for publication in the next *JAS* issue, and that is what usually happens.

### *Holdovers*

However, the correspondence between reviewers and *JAS* may delay publication, or space may not be immediately available in our 240 pages per issue, with the result that reviews may have to be held over. In that case, preference is given to reviews of areas that are *least* discussed in that issue and to reviews of older books.

Every effort is made to see that held-over reviews are published in the next issue.

### *Short reviews*

The Editorial Board of the *JAS* at its annual meeting in Toronto in March 1981 discussed the problems of reviews. The number of books to be reviewed constantly

increases, but commitments to articles make it difficult to assign additional pages to book reviews. Hence, the Editorial Board has decided to experiment with "short reviews." These will normally be less than 200 words and may be unsigned. We plan to incorporate them into the appropriate area section of the *JAS*, and books so reviewed will normally be volumes that are reissues, reprints, revised editions, or highly specialized books that are usually reviewed elsewhere.

After a trial period, the Editorial Board will evaluate our experience with short reviews. We will be interested in the views of the membership.

### *Volunteers*

We have received so many volunteer offers for book reviews that we will hardly be able to take advantage of all of them. The area book review editors and the article editors have all received the names of these volunteers.

### Obituaries

The publication of obituaries was discussed at the editorial meetings in Toronto as well as at the Board of Directors meetings of the AAS. The Board of Directors and the Editorial Board agreed that the *JAS* is the appropriate place for publication. Accordingly, the *JAS* will continue to publish the obituary notices that we receive. A brief notice of death will be made in the AAS newsletter, and a more extended announcement will be printed in the *JAS* if received in our office. Occasionally, there will be extended reviews of the scholarly contribution of a particular person; these articles will be refereed in the normal manner of the *Journal*.

### Communications to the Editor

The *JAS* welcomes communications. We shall, whenever possible, publish them, provided that they address matters of concern to the readership rather than a personal difference between two writers. In general we will endeavor to publish letters and responses in the same issue, if at all possible, and as promptly as can be arranged after their receipt.

Experience with the *JAS* indicates that it is perhaps wise to restate some policies. We do not publish materials already published elsewhere, and we do not publish translations. We expect that a manuscript submitted to us is not simultaneously submitted to other journals.

Finally, we encourage our readers to submit articles to the *JAS* that attempt new methodologies and procedures or report new research results.