

JOURNAL OF NEAR EASTERN STUDIES

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The *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* remains one of the most widely read and distributed academic journals in the fields of ancient and medieval Near Eastern studies. With more than 750 paid institutional subscriptions and free or steeply discounted access available to more than 11,000 institutions in 125 countries, *JNES* continues to command a lively and diverse audience. The fifty most-accessed articles in calendar year 2023 gave us 46,752 readers worldwide through the University of Chicago Press and JSTOR portals alone.

From a publishing perspective, 2023–24 was another strong year for the journal. Our October and April issues (*JNES* 82/2 and 83/1, respectively) ran to more than 400 pages of articles, book reviews, review essays, and forum pieces. Our authors tackled everything from viticulture to phonology, from amulets to paleo-Arabic, from sectarian scholarship to seditious Seljuks. Contributions focused on the issue of reported speech and rhyme in the Qur'an; a forgotten fortress on the Euphrates and the rediscovered inscription of a Companion of Muhammad; historical problems in inscriptions of Samsuiluna of Babylon and Xerxes of Persia; Egyptian strategies for representing time and emotion; and forms of gambling with knucklebones. Our forum piece focused on evidence for the early orthographic and linguistic history of the ancient concept of what a “word” was; a review essay gave an overview of the study of economic history in Mesopotamia. Twenty-two book reviews rounded out these issues, assessing new scholarly work on everything from Hittite geography to medieval *nawāṣib* heresy to Early Dynastic ceramics. Page after page, the rich world of the ancient and medieval Near East rolled out in unexpected and wonderful ways.

The pace and volume of the journal's business is best told through the numbers. Seventy-one article manuscripts were received during the year July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. Thirty-five manuscripts underwent a full review process: twenty-seven with one round of review, seven through two rounds, and one through three—altogether, forty-four rounds of review. These articles came from authors in Austria, Belgium, Egypt, Germany (4), Hungary, Iran (2), Ireland (2), Israel (5), the Netherlands (2), Poland, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Taiwan, Turkey, and the United States (10).

Eighty reviewers engaged in these rounds of review (many of them twice), with an average of 2.25 reviewers per manuscript. Authors received feedback from as many as four colleagues through a double-blind peer-review process. The profile of reviewers completing written reviews was every bit as international as the authors: reviewers were based in Bulgaria, Canada (4), France (2), Germany (8), Hungary, Ireland, Israel (5), Italy (4), Jordan, Mauritius, the Netherlands (3), Russia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom (12) in addition to thirty-five reviews completed by scholars based in the United States. We are immensely grateful, as always, for the (nearly) thankless work our reviewers do to maintain the high quality of our published articles.

The status of the seventy-one articles at year's end reflected our continuing effort to publish only the best scholarship available:

Decisions	9	Accept (12.6%)
	2	Revise minor
	2	Revise major
	12	Reject with review
	32	Reject without review

Other	1	Withdrawn
	2	New submissions
	11	Currently under review

Our process also continued to be as prompt as it was thorough: the average time-to-decision from the date of submission for this past year was sixty-two days—nine weeks from submission to decision. Articles are published within one year of their acceptance, making *JNES* one of the most efficient journals in the field. As selective as we are in what we publish, we consider our service to all authors to be the same: to procure the most helpful advice for revision toward the best possible work.

As always, we thank finally the departmental colleagues who helped with the all-important work of reviewing initial submissions: Helga Anetshofer, Simeon Chavel, Fred Donner, Ahmed El Shamsy, Adam Flowers, Petra Goedegebuure, Rebecca Hasselbach-Andee, Hakan Karateke, Jana Matuszak, Augusta McMahon, Brian Muhs, Cecilia Palombo, Martha Roth, Foy Scalf, Mehrnoush Soroush, Jeffrey Stackert, Sofía Torallas Tovar, and Theo van den Hout. James Osborne continued as editor, Seth Richardson as managing editor, Fred Donner as book review editor (modern), Mehrnoush Soroush as book review editor (ancient), and the indefatigable Jane Gordon as editorial assistant.
