

## Editor's Note

With my third issue as editor it is perhaps time to review some of the policies associated with the journal and the Society.

The goal of the journal has always been to provide a forum in which the local community of prehistorians may publish. However, more specifically, the journal has always provided specific services to that community:

1. The journal has actively encouraged avocational prehistorians to publish in it. We have always tried to make the journal a somewhat less daunting address than most international journals appear to be. On the other hand, by publishing in English, we make it accessible to the international audience.
2. In the same tenor, the journal has actively encouraged students to publish in it, offering more elaborate services (e.g., more intense English editing than might be available in an international journal), and a local audience for comment. We try to be more 'friendly' without sacrificing quality.
3. The journal has maintained a policy of publishing reports, even long reports (and perhaps reports which are too long!). Our rationale has been that in 20 years the theoretical debates current now will be passé, but the data will remain necessary for a much longer period. We provide a service to the discipline by publishing basic descriptive data, a service which many journals now eschew in favor of the flavor of the day in terms of theory. We do not reject theory, but as a local journal, who will publish our descriptive data if not us?

A word is necessary about the finances and operation of the journal, for those who might not be aware of how it all works. Only three people/companies receive any payment in connection with the journal. The largest expense is the actual printing. After that, graphic layout costs, and after that, a student works as an administrative assistant. All copy-editing is done voluntarily by the editor, and all other administrative work associated with the society (excepting book-keeping services) is voluntary. Income derives from three sources, an annual contribution from the CARE Foundation, sales (included in society membership and overseas subscriptions), and overhead taken from the society research deposits. We are very much a non-profit organization.

The actual process of publication is as follows:

1. Once a manuscript is received, the editor ensures that it meets the minimum professional standards to be sent out for review (that is, basic format, appropriateness of the subject matter, etc.). Guidelines are published in each issue of the journal.
2. It is sent out for review to a minimum of two external professional reviewers. A set of basic review questions accompanies the manuscript. Reviewers do not get paid, and since all reviews are anonymous, they cannot even be properly acknowledged. The service they provide is invaluable and I am grateful. I have sent reviews out both to senior scholars and to doctoral candidates. Lest there be no mistake, we are a peer-reviewed journal and reviewing for us should appear in any CV. This is especially important for students and junior scholars.
3. This peer review process may take some time. Since all work is voluntary, the journal can hardly demand that the reviewers 'hop to it'. Our reviewers are aware of the time constraints. Publication is in order of receipt of the manuscript. No one gets bumped from an issue to make room for someone else (although papers have been delayed to a next issue when they are received too late for inclusion in the current one). There are no privileged authors.
4. Most papers are accepted pending revision; only a few do not require revision, and only rarely is a paper rejected. However, sometimes the revisions demanded can be extensive. The reviews are sent back to the author who is asked to address the comments either in the manuscript, or to justify not doing so. The final decision on the publication is the job of the editor.
5. Once the manuscript is edited and accepted, the editor copy-edits for language and style and the manuscript is again returned to the author for approval.
6. Once the final copy-edited version of the manuscript is approved, it is sent for layout and page-setting. The author receives a pdf proof sheet of the page set paper for final corrections and approval. This is NOT the time for any significant changes, but only for corrections to the layout process and typographic errors.
7. Authors receive pdf "reprints" once the journal has been published.

Currently, the *Journal of the Israel Prehistoric Society* is a print journal, with no on-line edition. The challenge of the coming years will be to explore our options for going on-line, providing access for a much larger audience.

Finally, I wish to thank Francois Valla for his generous support in publishing the previous issue of the journal.

Respectfully,  
Steve Rosen  
Editor *JIPS, Mitekufat Haeven*