

Guidelines for Publishing in *The Journal of Asian Studies*

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To successfully publish in a peer-reviewed academic journal involves careful preparation and attention to detail from conceptualization to composition to submission. Many key points are similar if not identical across a spectrum of journals in the humanities and social sciences. You may find the linked insights of editors and managing editors of journals published by [Duke University Press](#) helpful.

The following guidelines are intended to provide clarity on several points for scholars interested in publishing essays in *The Journal of Asian Studies*.

Determining if *The Journal of Asian Studies* Will Consider Publishing Your Essay

The JAS receives over 350 manuscript submissions per year. The editor decides on whether or not to send a manuscript for external peer review based on the extent to which it fits with the mission of the journal and meets the expectations of the journal's readership. The editor makes this decision in consultation with a team of associate editors with requisite disciplinary and regional expertise

“*JAS* publishes the very best empirical and multidisciplinary work on Asia, spanning the arts, history, literature, the social sciences, and cultural studies. Experts around the world turn to this quarterly journal for the latest in-depth scholarship on Asia's past and present, for its extensive book reviews, and for its state-of-the-field essays on established and emerging topics. With coverage reaching from South and Southeast Asia to China, Inner Asia, and Northeast Asia, *JAS* welcomes broad comparative and transnational studies as well as essays emanating from fine-grained historical, cultural, political, and literary research. The journal also publishes clusters of papers that present new and vibrant discussions on specific themes and issues.”

It is important to note that this mission statement encompasses all scholarship in Asian Studies as the field – which is at once a method, a topic, and a theory – continues to change, becoming more dynamically interdisciplinary, global, and engaged with innovative theoretical perspectives in various disciplines.

Reviewers are selected on the basis of their specific expertise within a field and area of research interest, including transregional Asian Studies. Your manuscript will be read and reviewed by at least two scholars with in-depth understanding of the topic, problem, or question.

Determining Fit and Appropriate Focus

An effective method for determining if your manuscript fits within the mission and meets the expectations of *The Journal of Asian Studies* is to compare your essay with relevant articles that have been recently published. It is wise to look carefully at a selection of articles since the multi-disciplinary reach of the journal and the inter-disciplinary nature of some scholarship can provide a very useful guide concerning the depth of certain kinds of analysis, expectations concerning the use of primary and secondary sources, and how scholars in a range of disciplines define data and make use of data sets.

Follow the Manuscript Preparation and Submission Guidelines Carefully

Instructions for authors are available on the [JAS website](#). It is very important to follow these instructions carefully as it concerns all details of manuscript preparation.

Submission of an article implies that the work described has not been published previously, and that it is not currently being considered by another journal.

Manuscripts should be submitted electronically through the [Editorial Manager online submission system](#).

Compose Your Essay Carefully and Deliberately

There is no single formula for writing an essay for a multi-disciplinary area studies journal. This linked article in the [Chronicle for Higher Education](#) can be helpful for scholars in the social sciences. More broadly, the [Taylor and Francis](#) website provides useful guidelines.

Draw on Innovative Research that has Broad Significance

The Journal of Asian Studies publishes scholarly work that is innovative, creative, and that provides a new perspective on Asian Studies. Articles are often rich in detail and pertain to specific topics in particular historical, geographic, and geopolitical contexts. Breadth of significance does not mean that an article must be explicitly comparative or expand to encompass a particular scale of time or space. Innovative research is understood to provide a new perspective on a topic, question, or problem in the field. Innovative research can be either specific to an established discipline or explicitly interdisciplinary. Breadth of significance is defined in terms of projected readership and scholarly impact. Keywords that accurately reflect the significance of an article provide a perspective on breadth, both within a discipline and with regard to interdisciplinary relevance.

Demonstrate How Your Analysis Contributes to a Body of Scholarship

Any subject can be studied narrowly or broadly. Scholarship involves finding the fine balance of perspective such that the details of analysis and understanding reveal new insights that extend to a broader frame of reference. As such, your work should fit into a body of published scholarship concerning both the details in question as well as the broad implications of the questions, problems, or issues that interest you and the community of scholars with whom you are in conversation. To publish your work, it is important to show how your argument builds on and furthers significant scholarly debates in your field(s).

Demonstrate Command of the Relevant Literature

New modes of accessing libraries, archives, and collections make it increasingly easy to draw on a vast resource of published material, and to adopt methods of integrated citation that are seductively easy to weave into a manuscript. Online access to published and unpublished material affords tremendous opportunities for new kinds of scholarship, but also presents profound challenges in demonstrating that you have scholarly command of the literature in question. A key to successful publishing is to be judicious and thoughtful in citing literature that is relevant to your argument and that you have read carefully.

Avoid Theoretical Jargon that is Exclusive

It is often useful to imagine that you are writing for a community of scholars and that you are in conversation with them as you compose your essay. However, it is critically important to not let this “imagined conversation” lapse into a mode of exclusive communication based on the development of a language that only you and a relatively small group of scholars understand. As you write, periodically step back and ask yourself if what you have written can be understood by one of your peers – a generous and sympathetic colleague, but one who “speaks a different language” – in a discipline that is not your own. While engaging in this useful, and self-consciously humbling exercise, think about how you could best persuade them of the significance of your insights.

Support Claims for the Significance of Your Scholarly Intervention with Evidence and Convincing Analysis

It is relatively easy to make broad claims of significance, but it is always better to avoid statements that announce the importance of what you want to say by referring primarily to what others have said. The significance of your insight is derived from the

evidence you bring to bear to answer the questions you and others are asking, and how convincing your analysis of the evidence is. Use the article to show rather than tell why the evidence matters. A convincing analysis is built upon evidence that is persuasive either in terms of qualitative or quantitative criteria, and often some combination of both.

What to Do If You are Asked to Revise and Resubmit

To be asked to revise and resubmit an essay is the most likely positive outcome following submission. To revise and resubmit gives you an opportunity to engage in one of the most productive aspects of the peer-review process. It can be unnerving and is often challenging but is always – and I mean always – rewarding. The process of peer review is often spoken of in terms of “gate keeping,” as though editors seek to limit access to an elite and exclusive club. My experience, and certainly my approach, is to conceptualize the process in terms of opening access rather than defining the terms of exclusion. An invitation to revise and resubmit means that the editor, associate editors, and peer reviewers want to help you succeed at publishing your manuscript in the *JAS*. This often involves revising the scope, structure, and/or central concept of the manuscript. Because of the thought required to accomplish such deep revisions, it is appropriate to spend 4-6 months revising a manuscript for resubmission. That said, the process of peer review is selective and involves critical evaluation that can lead to rejection. Rejection is difficult to accept, but it should lead – as a sage professor at UC Berkeley once told me – to a careful reappraisal, determined revision, and thoughtful but timely resubmission of your valuable work to another journal.

Anticipating the Peer Review Time Frame

- ***Manuscripts reviewed by the editor:***
2 - 5 days from receipt to decision.
- ***Manuscripts that meet expectations are sent to Associate Editors (AEs):***
15 - 20 days from receipt to recommendation.
Note: AEs often recommend revisions before recommending that a manuscript be sent out for peer review. This is a form of a “revise and resubmit” request. Like revise and resubmit decisions after peer review, AE recommendations are designed to help you succeed at the next stage of review.
- ***Manuscripts sent for external peer review on AE recommendation:***
28 days from the acceptance of the invitation to review to response and recommendation.
Note: It often takes time to secure a commitment from qualified prospective reviewers. This can delay the peer review process.

- External peer reviewers can recommend “accept with minor revisions,” “accept with major revisions,” “revise and resubmit,” or “reject.” The editor determines the appropriate next step for the manuscript based on external reviewers’ recommendations.
- ***Manuscripts accepted until posting on First View:***
3 - 4 months including copyediting and page proof correction.
- ***Manuscripts accepted to date of publication:***
4 - 5 months from First View.