
EDITORIAL

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It was on Tuesday 3 August 2004 that Anthony Harding, Martin Bartleheim and I met for lunch at the Petit Paris restaurant in Edinburgh's Grassmarket to discuss the possibility that I might take over as Editor of the *EJA*. I think Anthony was already convinced I would take on the role; I was less sure and vacillated. My wife sensibly advised against, so naturally I said yes, and one month later at the EAA conference in Lyon I became the Editor and started work on the half-finished *EJA* issue 7(1).

Six years later I am now putting the finishing touches to issue 13(3), my final issue after having passed the editorial baton to Robin Skeates at the 2010 EAA conference in Den Haag. These six years have been an occasionally rocky road for the *EJA*, as reflected in the somewhat erratic timing of the journal's arrival and the appearance of those combined issues in the years 2006–2009, which must have been a bit confusing for EAA members and librarians alike.

Both of my predecessors as Editors – John Chapman in issue 4(1) and Mark Pearce in issue 7(1) – chose in their final editorials to look back over the content they produced in terms of analyses of period and geographic coverage, and author gender and nationality. While these aspects are undeniably interesting, in my case I prefer to leave them for future historians of the EAA to consider. The Editorial Board has of course given much thought to ways of encouraging submissions of articles on broader topics, and from underrepresented regions or constituencies, and has met with some success. As Editor, however, in terms of day-to-day business, my overriding concern has been to publish the best of the articles submitted, without bias towards gender, period or nationality, and my greatest satisfaction has come when steering the work of young scholars through the path from submission, past peer review and revision(s), to successful appearance in print. The biggest frustration has been with those authors and reviewers, often established scholars, who are so cavalier about their references and quotations that much editorial time is spent checking and correcting – in some cases correcting quotes from their own work; trivial matters to the authors, but the bane of editors. And I

should make clear that this element of the task has not been a lone one, for the publisher's copyeditors have undertaken final checks which catch the omissions and slips I have overlooked. I would pay especial tribute to Elaine Corke, who has been the invaluable copyeditor for most of my issues.

The way the *EJA* is 'overseen' or 'enabled' by an Editorial Board has changed over my period as Editor, a process which has sometimes been a little fraught, with some of those all too familiar problems which bedevil committees. But I nevertheless thank all those members of the Editorial Board over the past six years for their input, and for tolerating my own idiosyncracies. Without any doubt I would not have weathered the six years without the unstinting help and support from the EAA Secretariat of Sylvie Květinová (and latterly Magda Turková as well) – they made it possible. I have also enjoyed the constant support of the EAA Presidents, Anthony Harding for most of my editorship and Fritz Lüth as his successor (and the one who persuaded me to continue to the end of my six-year term when I was on the point of resigning in 2009).

More thanks are due to the *EJA*'s faithful servants as translators of the abstracts into French and German – Isabelle Kayser-Gerges and Heiner Schwarzberg respectively. We have never met face to face but, having enjoyed a friendly email relationship for six years, they feel like old friends. And thanks also to all those peer reviewers who have helped me in the editorial process. They remain anonymous to authors and readers, but I know who they are, and I know which ones have responded fulsomely, appositely and on schedule, to the great advantage of the authors and the journal.

I find the reviews section of the *EJA* enormously instructive and entertaining and the EAA has been well served during my six years by its Reviews Editors, initially Peter Biehl with Alexander Gramsch, and latterly Cornelius Holtorf with Troels Myrup Kristensen. At SAGE, our publishers, I have had excellent support from the several production editors who have been responsible for the *EJA*; they have been unfailingly polite and patient and have known just when to send me a necessary conscience-pricking email. Lastly, but actually most importantly, I thank all those authors whose work I have had the opportunity to read, enjoy and publish, and I offer my sincere commiserations to those authors whose submissions for one reason or another never made it into the journal.

So, for six years the *EJA* and the EAA have been a big and rewarding part of my life, and this will now be the lot of the new Editor, Robin Skeates, his Reviews Editors and his new Editorial Board. I wish them all well and good fortune with the exciting new developments in the offing for the *EJA*. Robin I know is already off to a good start with editing the next issue, and I can relax in the knowledge that the *EJA* is in such good hands. *Ave atque vale.*