



al-‘Uṣūr al-Wuṣṭā

Book Review Guidelines

Last revised: January 2018

Thank you for your willingness to contribute a book review to *al-‘Uṣūr al-Wuṣṭā*, the online, open-source, peer-reviewed journal of the Middle East Medievalists (MEM). Since its founding, *al-‘Uṣūr al-Wuṣṭā* has earned a reputation for incisive, informative reviews, particularly of scholarship in languages other than English.

The editors request that reviewers observe the following guidelines.

Content

All reviews should include the following two elements:

- *Brief summary* (often somewhat longer for non-English books). Please synthesize and clearly represent the book’s salient features (e.g., subject, thesis, sources, methodology, argumentation) rather than narrating its contents chapter by chapter.
- *Critical evaluation*. Identify the book’s positive contributions to the field as well as any noteworthy weaknesses that affect the validity of its conclusions or its general usefulness.

If reviewing an edited volume, please indicate the unifying theme and argument, if any, and evaluate its success in addressing the same. It will normally be most practical to summarize and evaluate select articles rather than treating all those included in a particular volume.

Reviewers should seek to be fair and sincere in their assessments, restricting the scope of their critical evaluation to the book under review. The editors recognize that there are many ways to write an effective book review, and welcome all contributions that observe these considerations.

Length

The online, open-access format of *al-‘Uṣūr al-Wuṣṭā* permits us to print extensive, in-depth reviews. In general, reviews tend to run between 1000 and 3000 words, but may be longer. The editors reserve the right to require that the length of reviews be changed by their authors.

Please provide the names of all authors and editors rather than using et al. Reproduce personal names exactly as they appear on the title page. When personal names are given in both Roman and non-Roman scripts, use the given Roman-script spelling rather than transliterating. Titles, however, should be transliterated following IJMES conventions. Place of publication should be given according to English usage (e.g., Damascus rather than Dimashq, Damas, etc.).

When quoting or alluding to specific passages of the book under review, indicate the page number in the body of the text using parentheses, as follows:

The author states, “Most Umayyad caliphs made their capital in Damascus” (p. 44).

When referring to other books and articles, please give full publication information in footnotes, following *The Chicago Manual of Style* (see http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html).

Please transliterate rather than using non-Roman scripts. Transliteration of Middle Eastern languages should follow IJMES conventions (see <https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-file-manager/file/57d83390f6ea5a022234b400/TransChart.pdf>).

Negative Reviews

As a matter of policy, in the case of strongly negative reviews the editors will request a second opinion from a member of the journal’s board or an outside authority. If you believe that your review matches this description, please mention this to the editor. The publication of negative reviews may be delayed as a result of this policy.

Submission Procedure

Please submit your review as a Microsoft Word Document (.doc or .docx), or as a Rich Text File (.rtf). In addition, please include a version in Portable Document Format (.pdf) that has been checked to ensure that all elements (diacritics, font, etc.) display as intended.

The editors of *al-‘Uṣūr al-Wuṣṭā* reserve the right to make editorial changes to all book reviews, to request alterations from reviewers, and to make final decisions concerning publication.