Editor's Note

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Editor’s Note

This is a happy time to be writing the Editor’s Note for our journal.

The reason: the Comparative Civilizations Review is getting ready to have all of its previous issues placed online. You are now reading Number 65, so expect to see all issues (except for very recent ones) published since the beginning, 1979, up shortly. The articles are now being scanned, digitized, and made fully searchable, and they should soon be ready for uploading to the Internet. This is a mammoth job, and it is being undertaken by our friends at the library of Brigham Young University, in Provo, Utah.

Credit for this wonderful development belongs almost entirely to Connie Lamb. It was Connie who suggested that putting the journal online could be done through a library rather than a commercial venture. Connie is an Associate Editor of the CCR and a social sciences librarian at the Harold B. Lee Library of Brigham Young University.

Connie and her library offered the journal two options: We could have gone with Internet Archive, which would have meant that we would be more or less instantaneously up on the web. But we decided instead to go with the Open Journal System (OJS), even though it takes a bit longer.

The reason?

- The journal will be searchable across the complete run of the publication, since 1979.
- We will have the option to use online editorial workflow — i.e., we can issue calls for papers, send for reviewer comments, and receive reviewer comments in editing new editions of journal.
- This method of uploading gives readers the option to read abstracts, view Table of Contents and link from the Table of Contents to the articles. Thus, it presents a “clickable” structured publication.

The library has written to us that it “wishes to extend its involvement in the promotion of sustainable scholarly communication models and its support for open access publishing initiatives by making available a hosted, web-based editorial workflow and publishing software service for journals which, at the time of the Memorandum of Understanding signing, are … edited by a member of BYU’s faculty or staff.” Dr. Julene Butler, University Librarian, signed the Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of the library on June 20, and I signed it on June 27.
Some key points of the agreement are as follows:

- The entire content of the journal will be made available free of charge to the community of those interested in comparative civilizations, anywhere in the world.
- Access will be 24/7 at all times, it is anticipated.
- We will consider for how long to embargo a newly-published issue from being uploaded to the Internet. Subscribers, members of ISCSC, and readers of the journal are requested to submit suggestions for how long the embargo should stretch. The typical period is three to five years.
- The library will be providing basic training to the journal’s editorial staff in the use of the software involved.
- Copyright to the articles will continue to rest with the journal and with the ISCSC.

We have been looking for a long time for such an arrangement, and I am delighted that this has become possible. For-profit publishers have approached the journal, often noting our distinguished panel of authors, but have wanted to charge users for the services which the library at Brigham Young will offer for free. The ISCSC is paying for staff time in order to make the journal articles fully searchable.

This means that authors who wish to publish in the field, but who need electronic presence to satisfy university or other requirements, will now be able to see their work in print on the Internet, as will everyone else. It will strengthen the journal’s reach and bring us electronically, for free, to the global community of scholars interested in comparative civilizational matters.

In addition, we will continue to produce the journal as we currently do and distribute “hard copy” as soon as we are off the press, of course, so subscribers and readers will continue to be able to see the newest editions in paper as soon as they are produced – with no embargo period. Moreover, we are available now electronically, and will continue to be so, via the H.W. Wilson website, ProQuest, and Ebsco Host for current issues.

The people we will be working with at the Lee Library, BYU, in addition to Connie, include Elizabeth Smart, the Scholarly Communications Librarian and Rebekah Dunn, the Scholarly Communications Services Manager.

The library at Brigham Young is using original copies I submitted to them. They will provide us with article-level metadata. This will enable the complete searching online of our journals. In other words, a researcher anywhere in the world can enter certain terms and phrases into the Internet on his or her computer and, presto! our relevant articles will appear on the screen. How wonderful this is. It will cost the researcher nothing and the journal, in the bargain, becomes the worldwide publication
of record in our subject area. We are now about to become a research tool in the hands of all individuals who desire to undertake study of this wonderful field. Thank you, Brigham Young University.

What is our anticipated timeline at the moment? According to Connie Lamb, a student under her direction has finished entering the CCR metadata into the computer for the issues on hand. The digitizing probably will be fully completed this semester. The scanning and linking should take a couple of months so the project should be completed by December.

What lightning speed! The others of us on the Editorial Board are deeply indebted to the wonderful work of Connie Lamb in making this entire project possible. As you can see, the only reason the library agreed to undertake this massive effort was because Connie Lamb serves as an editor of the publication.

Overall, I forwarded 7,340 pages to the library at Brigham Young for scanning, digitization, and eventual uploading. On my shelves at home I was missing a copy of issues Number 2, 23 and 30. Other editors were asked to help out. Also at least two books are part of the BYU digitization effort: Sociology and Psychoanalysis in Comparative Civilizational Perspective (a memorial issue in honor of Benjamin Nelson, edited by Vytautas Kavolits, Edmund Leites, Marie Coleman Nelson and E.V. Walter) and As Others See Us: Mutual Perceptions East and West (edited by Bernard Lewis, Edward Leites, and Margaret Case). Another memorial volume in honor of Dr. Nelson was entitled Civilizations East and West and Michael Palencia-Roth edited a special Latin American edition.

This is a felicitous development for our journal, a great step forward. The task now is for the editors to cooperate with the library staff to see the project through to completion. Should any readers of the journal have ideas that would augment or improve the projected online services yet further, please don’t hesitate to write to us.

On another note, I’m happy to report to all who didn’t attend that the New Orleans meeting was an enormous success, thanks to the fine work of Reed and Christine Smith, who oversaw arrangements; Bill McGaughey and Michael Andregg, who organized the program; and many others who helped to make the conference at Tulane University such an enormous success. Plan now to attend next summer’s conference, this time in Washington, D.C. For the event, Vlad Alalykin-Izvekov is the host and Ricardo Duschene is the program chair. The meeting will be held at DeVry University in Crystal City, Virginia.

Joseph Drew