

TAPA

Instructions to Referees

Thank you very much for agreeing to referee a submission to *TAPA*. We appreciate your willingness to give your time to this process, and hope it will prove stimulating. We are certain that the author will benefit tremendously from your feedback.

TAPA strives in its review process for efficiency, inclusivity, and generosity. We particularly ask reviewers to keep in mind this last quality in composing their reports: *please write with the same generosity that you would in addressing a student or mentee*. This does not by any means entail withholding criticism; on the contrary, constructive criticism is *the* most important thing the process can offer, and we encourage you to be thorough and unsparing in your critique, even of the strongest submissions. But we ask that this critique be presented in such a way that the author will feel encouraged to work further (not necessarily for resubmission to *TAPA* or even on the particular piece in question) rather than demoralized, even when the verdict is disappointing. The Editors will revise any reports that we feel are excessively harsh.

TAPA practices a strict policy of blind refereeing, and you should write your report in such a way as not to betray either your own identity or any surmises you may have about the author. If you think you know who the author is or have seen a named earlier draft of the submission, please inform the editor and recuse yourself.

As you review the submission, please keep *TAPA*'s submission guidelines in mind:

Submissions to *TAPA* are evaluated primarily on criteria of originality and significance. Originality is understood as an article's distinctive contribution to scholarship, which entails both thorough consideration of existing research, and a clearly defined and novel perspective, which is argued persuasively enough to influence future discussions of the topic. Significance is understood in relation to the interests and research of Society members; articles should be written in ways that can address the membership broadly (including those whose specialties lie elsewhere), and, however technical their focus, make claims that resonate beyond the particular objects under discussion. While specialized research is the necessary condition for making an original argument, this research must be framed by an understanding of the stakes of the argument for it to have the broad significance that *TAPA* seeks. There is no fixed minimum or maximum length to articles, but submissions are expected to justify their length by the substance of their contribution.

TAPA's expectations for originality are consistent with those for publication in the field as a whole, but we ask that reviewers pay particular attention to the expectations for significance, understood as the ability to address to a readership of SCS members from all areas of the discipline. The expectation of significance relates both to the substance of the conclusions, which should be important enough that they resonate beyond the scope of the objects under discussion, and to the article's exposition, which should be such that *any classicist can follow the argument, engage with the evidence presented, and grasp wider consequences*. If you feel an article is worth publishing, but can do a better job of speaking to such a reader, please point it out and suggest where improvement is needed; if you feel that an article, though sound and original in its contribution, is not able to interest such a reader, please explain this too.

Ideally, a peer review will begin with a succinct statement of the article's argument, and an evaluation of its originality and significance. It will lay out the most general suggestions for revision, and then go on to point out specific matters as running comments. It is not, however, the

responsibility of the reviewer to correct minor errors, typos, or infelicities (though this will surely be appreciated); your energy can concentrate on matters of substance.

The Scholastica system will prompt reviewers for three answers:

- An overall rating of the piece from one to five stars. While the system demands an answer to this prompt, we use it only for statistical purposes and your rating will not be transmitted to the author or affect our decision.
- A recommendation for publication (described more below). Your recommendation is transmitted only to the editors and is not shared directly with the author.
 - **Accept:** Choose this category if you believe that the submission makes an original and significant contribution to the field AND can be published either in the present form or with minor revisions of a kind that do not affect its substance. Please specify any revisions that you think are necessary.
 - **Revise and resubmit:** Choose this category if you believe that the submission cannot be published without major revisions but is nevertheless so significant that *TAPA* should actively pursue the possibility of future publication.
 - **Reject:** Choose this category if you believe that the submission should not be published at all. A recommendation of “Reject” need not imply that the submission is generally unpublishable or irredeemably bad, only that it is unsuitable for *TAPA* in its current form, or that it would need near-total overhaul in order to reach publication standard.
- Comments for the editors: these are confidential and not transmitted to the author.
- Comments to the author: this is the review proper, and where you should make your suggestions for improvement to the submission.

Most reviewers compose their reviews using a word processor. In order to ensure the anonymity of the review process, though, we ask that review text be cut and pasted into the Scholastica prompt under “Comments to the author.”

Please do not hesitate to be in touch with the editors if you encounter any questions or difficulties. Thank you again, on behalf of the journal and the submitting authors, for your time.