

Editorial: Open Access and Copyright

MSR has been published online as an Open Access journal since 2009 (Vol. XIII, No. 1), which means that all new and back issues are freely available online as PDF files. We believe that free and open access to scholarship benefits everyone. As the Open Access movement has evolved, however, it has become clear that we must clarify our policies—for our readers and our authors—in order to comply with accepted best practices that make Open Access effective.

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The wording of our copyright statements will now make explicit what we have always understood: that each author owns the copyright to his or her work and is granting *MSR* the right to publish it. Our commitment to provide our authors with a high quality platform for their work, and to provide our readers with the best scholarship in the world, is unchanged.



With all of this in mind, and to avoid any misunderstandings, we have created a Memorandum of Understanding to which all authors must agree before we can publish their work. It is available on our website (<http://mamluk.uchicago.edu>). We have also updated our Editorial Statement and Style Guide, which is also available on our site.

Finally, we consider this change in copyright policy to apply retroactively to all content published since the journal's first issue (in 1997), as all back issues have been freely available online for years (thus Open Access in practice, if not explicitly in policy). Though older issues still state that the copyright belongs to the Middle East Documentation Center (MEDOC) at The University of Chicago, we want to make it clear that each article is the property of its author(s). We do plan to ammend older issues' copyright statements with the new licensing information.

Please contact me if you have questions about these changes to our policies.

I am confident that our mission to promote scholarship on the Mamluks will be enhanced. I hope that ever greater access to such scholarship will serve to attract scholars, including those of our current peers who might discover in the Mamluks a new area of interest, and, even more importantly, the future scholars who will one day find and edit the manuscripts, analyze the sources, write the articles, and publish this and other journals.

Marlis J. Saleh

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