

EDITORIAL

Modern Italy is now an Open Access journal

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The research articles featured in this edition, as well as the Contexts and Debates pieces, are now freely available for anyone to access and view on the Cambridge University Press website. This shift in *Modern Italy*'s publication policy is not a temporary measure: it is a permanent change. Beginning with this issue, *Modern Italy* is now an Open Access journal.

When our publishers Cambridge University Press (CUP) proposed this change to us – that is, to the editors of *Modern Italy* and to the executive committee of the Association for the Study of Modern Italy – our first reaction was to welcome it unreservedly. We have always been in favour of a broader and unrestricted dissemination of academic findings, particularly because we are mindful of the importance of making the research carried out within the universities accessible to a wider audience, including those not having an institutional access to it. Furthermore, we are aware of how beneficial Open Access is to the authors, as it enhances their articles' visibility and increases their global impact.

But we must confess that we also had some reservations. How would our fellow academics react to the news? Some might have thought that the peer-review process would be less rigorous for articles that could be accessed freely and that such articles would somehow have less academic value. This is perhaps proof of how we have become accustomed to assigning a price to everything, including culture, and of how the economic value has become, against our own wishes, the principal parameter to judge the value of our work.

There is not much we can do to dispel potential biases against the Open Access approach we have adopted, beyond reassuring both authors and readers that the peer-review process will be as rigorous as it has always been, and that the academic importance of the material published in *Modern Italy* will not be diminished because it is now free to access.

It is crucial to note that research articles, review articles, and Contexts and Debates contributions will now be published under the Gold Open Access agreement of Cambridge University Press. Open Access does not just mean free access: the licensing rules are also more permissive, allowing for the reuse and adaptation of research content. However, any other article published in the journal, and especially book reviews, will remain behind a paywall and only available to personal or institutional subscribers.

Transformative Agreements (TAs) represent the predominant approach that enables *Modern Italy* to transition to Gold Open Access publication. These are agreements made

by our publisher, CUP, through which an institution secures the right for its affiliated staff not only to read our journals but also to publish Open Access material without paying an Article Processing Charge (APC). Currently, 2,700 institutions have such an agreement with CUP: a diverse group, covering institutions large and small, research-intensive and teaching-intensive, across over 50 countries. A full and up-to-date list of Cambridge's TAs is available [here](https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/open-access-policies/read-and-publish-agreements) (<https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/open-access-policies/read-and-publish-agreements>), and you can check your eligibility [here](https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/open-access-policies/waivers-discounts) (<https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/open-access-policies/waivers-discounts>).

But what about independent researchers? Would they be prevented from publishing in *Modern Italy* because of their lack of affiliation? Not at all: authors in this position will be asked to submit a waiver request form, declaring that they do not have funding. CUP will invariably grant a waiver, so that the article can be published as Open Access at no charge. This process will begin after the article has been accepted and therefore will not interfere with the submission and peer review process.

It is an honour for us, the editors of *Modern Italy*, to shepherd the journal through this important transformation, which marks a significant milestone in the history of a publication that is now in its 29th year of existence. We express our gratitude to Cambridge University Press for choosing *Modern Italy* to pioneer this groundbreaking approach to academic publishing and for their prompt and efficient implementation of this new model. We thank the Association for the Study of Modern Italy for its unwavering support during the transition. We thank our team – our associate editors Rossella Merlino, Vinzia Fiorino and Nick Carter, and our book review editors – for contributing crucially to the making of the journal. Finally, we thank the past general and associate editors of *Modern Italy*, and all our authors, friends and readers for having made of *Modern Italy* an indispensable reference point for Italian Studies in the United Kingdom and beyond.