

To whom it may concern,

My name is Dr Alessandra Tosi and I am the co-founder and Managing Director of Open Book Publishers, one of the world's leading and award-winning independent Open Access book publishers. I am writing with some information about our press and the reasons authors choose to publish with us.

We are a not-for-profit social enterprise run by and for scholars, committed to making high-quality research freely available for everyone. Our rigorously peer-reviewed and prize-winning books are available in high-quality Open Access editions from the date of publication, accessed by millions of people around the world—our books are currently being accessed freely worldwide over 20,000 times every month. We do not charge authors to publish with us (in other words, no 'article processing charges' or APCs) and our authors retain their copyright.

Quality

All our books are rigorously peer reviewed: first an author's proposal is assessed internally by our Board of Directors and members of the Editorial Board and Advisory Panels, and then, if judged of sufficient quality, the full manuscript is sent for review by at least two experts in the relevant field. Based on their reports, our Board of Directors makes a final decision.

We do not charge our authors to publish with us: we encourage them to apply for funding to defray the costs of publication if they are able to do so, but the availability of funding has no bearing whatsoever on our decision whether or not to publish the book; rather, this is entirely dependent on the outcome of our peer-review process.

Our books have been submitted for scrutiny as part of the UK REF assessment exercise and they are regularly reviewed in academic publications including *The Times Literary Supplement*, *Times Higher Education*, *Choice Review*, *Essays in Criticism*, *Modern Language Review*, *Romanticism*,

Medieval Aevum, The English Historical Review, International Studies in the Philosophy of Science and the *Journal of European Studies*.

Our titles also receive prizes in recognition of their excellence. For example, two of our books, *The Jewish Unions in America: Pages of History and Memories* (2018) by Bernard Weinstein, translated and annotated by Maurice Wolfthal, and *Piety in Pieces: How Medieval Readers Customized their Manuscripts* (2016) by Kathryn M. Rudy were awarded *Choice Review's* Outstanding Academic Title in 2017 and 2018. *Literature Against Criticism: University English and Contemporary Fiction in Conflict* (2016) was submitted by its author, Martin Paul Eve, as part of the portfolio for which he was awarded the prestigious Philip Leverhulme Prize in 2019, while *A Fleet Street in Every Town: The Provincial Press in England, 1855-1900* (2018) by Andrew Hobbs was awarded the 2019 Robert and Vineta Colby Scholarly Book Prize for the best book on Victorian newspapers and periodicals.

We are eligible to receive the European Commission's publication grants for research funded within the FP7 and Horizon 2020 frameworks, and we are an approved member of OASPA, the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association. We are compliant with the Open Access requirements of the European Research Council, the Wellcome Trust, Open Access Publishing in European Networks (OAPEN), the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) and the Norwegian Register for Scientific Journals, Series and Publishers. All of our titles are listed in the Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB).

We were shortlisted for the 2017 and 2014 World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) Awards, and we are proud to have achieved a 9/10 social-impact score in the SE100 Rankings 2019. We won the 2013 IFLA/Brill Open Access award for initiatives in open access monograph publishing and the Accelerating Science Award Program (ASAP) blue-ribbon panel of industry experts selected us to be one of seven high-impact Open Access organizations.

Readership

Open Access publication greatly increases the number of times a book is read, as well as its longevity. A monograph typically sells 200 copies over its entire lifetime, but our books are currently being viewed over 20,000 times every month by readers all over the world. In total, we have received over 3 million book visits, and this is only from those sources we can measure: actual usage of our books will be far in excess of these figures.

Each book has its own page on our website with its viewing figures segmented by platform, month, and year, together with a map showing its geographical reach. For certain books, this geographical reach is particularly relevant—for example *Oral Literature in Africa* by Ruth Finnegan (2012), which was out of print before the author brought it to us to publish in a new

OA edition, has been accessed hundreds of thousands of times: more in Africa than in any other continent.

Each title is available in high-quality Open Access editions (PDF, HTML and XML), and reasonably priced paperback, hardback and ebook editions (EPUB and MOBI), all created from the same master file and published on the same date with no embargo period. While sales figures for each title drop off in the years after publication (as is typical for all presses), our viewing statistics do not. In fact, the annual readership numbers for many of our titles have increased over time. The printed editions are available via print-on-demand—so there is no such thing as ‘out of print’—and all our books are preserved in the UK legal deposit libraries at the British Library, Portico, OpenEdition, Google Books and the Internet Archive.

Since they are Open Access, our titles are available on multiple platforms to anyone with an internet connection. Each book is marketed to researchers, journals and libraries, and thanks to our Library Membership programme, our books are listed in the catalogues of academic libraries all over the world. We also work in partnership with organisations such as Worldreader to make our books accessible to those who only have basic mobile phones or who rely on ereaders donated to local libraries. We also work with the RNIB (Royal National Institute for the Blind) who create editions that are accessible for people with visual impairments.

Innovation

We believe that digital publishing gives researchers the chance to think deeply about what an academic monograph or edited collection can be. For example, many of our books include embedded audiovisual material to enhance the reader’s understanding of a subject: from recordings of the changing sounds of musical performance throughout history to illustrate an argument about musicology, to video footage of Zambian storytellers performing their tales in a study of oral literature, digital publication offers many advantages to scholars seeking to communicate their research more vividly and comprehensively. With the use of URLs and QR codes in paperback and hardback editions, our titles can embrace the capacities of the digital medium without abandoning the printed book.

Leading the way in Open Access publishing

We are key partners in the Community-led Open Publication Infrastructures for Monographs (COPIM) project, which in 2019 was awarded a £2.2 million grant from the Research England Development (RED) Fund and £800,000 from Arcadia Fund in order to build much-needed community-controlled, open systems and infrastructures to develop and strengthen Open Access book publishing. We are also a founder member of ScholarLed, a consortium of five non-profit, academic-led Open Access book presses who are working collectively to develop powerful,

practical ways for small-scale, academic-led Open Access presses to grow and flourish. In collaboration with presses, universities, libraries and infrastructure providers all over the world, we are creating a diverse and resilient ecosystem for Open Access book publishing.

I hope this letter has given you an insight into the work we do at Open Book Publishers, and illustrated the many reasons an author might choose to publish with us. If you have any questions about anything I have discussed, or if you would like to know more about our work, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alessandra Tosi". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letter 'A' being particularly large and prominent.

Dr Alessandra Tosi

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