

## **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS**

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### **General Submission Criteria**

- All submissions to the *Journal of Medieval Religious Cultures* that are determined by the editors to be appropriate for review are anonymously peer-reviewed. Please remove all references to or clues about your identity as author(s) from the main text and footnotes.
- Charts and illustrations should be submitted in digital form as separate files / documents from the article text. Authors are responsible for obtaining permissions.
- Figures must be submitted in high-resolution .jpg or .tiff files (300 dpi) at least 2.25 inches in width.
- Authors provide **alt text** to describe image content (for figures, charts, and tables) to ensure accessibility for individuals using screen readers. Please see the **PSU Press Alt text Guide on page 9** for more on writing alt text.
- Submissions must be accompanied by a short abstract up to 200 words and up to 5 keywords.
- By submitting work to the *Journal of Medieval Religious Cultures*, authors are tacitly asserting that their work is original, that it has not previously been published elsewhere, and that it is not currently under review with another press or publication.

- Authors are responsible for securing permissions and paying the required fees for the use of any material previously published elsewhere. Copies of permission letters must be sent to the Penn State University Press.
- Authors guarantee that the contribution does not infringe any copyright, violate any other property rights, or contain any scandalous, libelous, or unlawful matter. Authors are responsible for obtaining permission for any third party images under copyright included in submissions. It is the author's responsibility to secure reproduction rights for any images, photos, figures, music, or content credited to a third party outside of the fair use provisions described in U.S. copyright law. Authors must also include appropriate acknowledgement in their published article.
- Submit all articles via Editorial Manager: <http://www.editorialmanager.com/jmrc/>.
- Authors have reviewed the submission checklist on page 10 of this guide to ensure all submission directions have been followed.

### **Manuscript Format**

- All submissions must be made as Microsoft Word files.
- All submissions should be double-spaced in twelve-point Times New Roman font with standard margins, with double line spacing throughout.
- *JMRC* uses an anonymous review process; please remove all references to or clues about your identity as author from the main text and footnotes.
- Submissions of 7,000 to 10,000 words will be considered. Please query editors prior to submission if your essay falls outside of this range. We are also interested in short editions of previously unedited texts; please query editors directly for details.

## Style

### Notes and Citations

The punctuation, mechanics, and citation method of your essay should conform in all aspects to the 18<sup>th</sup> edition of the Chicago Manual of Style's "notes and bibliography" system.

All references/citations in the text must be noted in the endnotes. However, if a specific text is referred to five or more times, in-text citations may be used for that source.

- All footnotes should be converted to endnotes, double-spaced, and rendered in 12-point Times New Roman.
- When giving a reference to a journal article, the first citation should appear in the following format: Author name(s), "Title of Article," *Journal* volume, no. (Year): page range, specific page number(s), URL/doi.
  - Travis Stevens, "Christian Lovesickness: Richard of St. Victor's *The Four Degrees of Violent Love*," *Journal of Medieval Religious Cultures* 47, no. 1 (2021): 21–46, at 30, <https://doi.org/10.5325/jmedirelicult.47.1.0021>.
  - Note that the entire page run of the article is given first and the specific page number for reference appears after "at." Include the issue number.
- First citations for books should follow this format: Author name(s), *Title* (Publisher, Year), page(s).
  - Naomi Janowitz, *Icons of Power: Ritual Practices in Late Antiquity* (Penn State University Press, 2002), 58.
  - If a book appears as a part of a series, include the series title after the book title.
- First citations to chapters/essays in book collections should follow this format: Author name(s), "Chapter Title," in *Title of Book*, ed. Editor name(s) (Publisher, Year), page(s).

- John F. Benton, “Consciousness of Self and Perceptions of Identity,” in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Robert L. Benson and Giles Constable with Carol D. Lanham (Harvard University Press, 1982), 271.
- First citations of web pages should follow this format: “Title of Web page,” Publisher, publication/revision/accessed date, URL.
  - “About Penn State,” Penn State University, accessed October 24, 2024, <https://www.psu.edu/about>.
- All subsequent footnote references should follow Chicago’s short title format: Author, shortened title, page number.
  - Savage and Watson, *Anchoritic Spirituality*, 2.
  - Benton, “Consciousness of Self,” 293.
- Manuscript references: When referring to manuscripts, the first citation must include the full manuscript information: City, Library, manuscript number, and folio number.

## **Language and Translations**

All submissions must be in English. Please give translations for all quotations in languages other than English (including Old English and difficult Middle English passages). See below for specific translation guidelines.

- When including a quotation in a language other than Modern English in the main text, give translations in square brackets in the main text, immediately following.
- Single word glosses or translations in the text should be in parentheses; however, single word glosses or translations appearing inside a quotation should be placed in square brackets.

- Example of in-text translation: “Whan that April with his shoures soote” (line 1) [When April with its sweet showers].
- Block quotations: translation follows original language in main text, in square brackets with one blank line intervening.

### **Spelling and Abbreviations**

- *JMRC* utilizes standard American English spellings--e.g., “utilize,” not “utilise”; “center,” not “centre.”
- In general, avoid abbreviations in the main text whenever possible.

### **Ellipses**

There is much confusion over ellipses. Please follow these guidelines:

- When omitting part of a sentence, use 3 periods with a space before, in between, and after.
- If the end of sentence is omitted, use four periods, the first immediately following the text, with spaces in between and after.
- Use four periods if an entire sentence is omitted.
- Do not use ellipses at the beginning or end of a quotation.

### **Special Issues**

The *Journal of Medieval Religious Cultures* welcomes proposals for special issues. Prospective editors for special issues should contact the editors with a detailed description of their proposed issue, which would include a discussion of the issue’s focus, its timeliness, and any other information that may be relevant to their consideration of the proposal.

Once a proposal for a special issue has been accepted, the issue's editors should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Each article to be included in a special issue must be submitted through the Editorial Manager system (link above) as a "Special Issue Submission."
- All articles included in special issues are subject to the regular peer review process of the journal, overseen by the general editors. The general editors will solicit suggestions for reviewers from the guest editors and will communicate with the reviewers through the online editorial system; the guest editors will communicate the results of those reviews to article authors, and work with authors to respond appropriately.
- Guest editors have the discretion to organize the issue as desired in terms of number, order, and theme of contributions, as long as the full issue is about 40,000 words. In other words, it is up to the guest editors whether to adhere to the *JMRC*'s de facto standard of four articles of approximately 7,000-10,000 words each, or to adopt a different format, such as gathering together a larger number of shorter articles.
- Guest editors work with the authors/contributors through the proofing and copyediting process.
- Guest editors are welcome to write a short introductory essay and/or a response to the issue if they wish.

**Please contact the editors with any questions at [jmrc@press.psu.edu](mailto:jmrc@press.psu.edu).**

### **Guidelines for writing an Abstract**

An abstract allows readers to quickly and accurately identify the basic content of your article. It is an invaluable research guide because it is most often what potential readers use to decide whether your article is relevant for them.

#### **Abstracts at a Glance:**

- Condensed version of the article
- Highlights the major points covered
- Concisely describes the content and scope of the work
- Helps readers decide whether to read the entire article
- Provides readers with a preview of research
- Contains relevant keywords for searching and indexing

Many online databases, such as the Scholarly Publishing Collective, use both abstracts and full-text options to index articles. Therefore, abstracts should contain keywords and phrases that allow for easy and precise searching. Incorporating keywords into the abstract that a potential researcher would search for emphasizes the central topics of the work and gives prospective readers enough information to make an informed judgment about the applicability of the work.

### **Writing Tips**

An abstract is a self-contained piece of writing that can be understood independently from the article. It must be kept brief (approximately 150–200 words) and may include these elements:

- Statement of the problem and objectives (gap in literature on this topic)

- Thesis statement or question
- Summary of employed methods, viewpoint, or research approach
- Conclusion(s) and/or implications of research

*Keep in Mind...* Depending on your rhetorical strategy, an abstract need not include your entire conclusion, as you may want to reserve this for readers of your article. The abstract should, however, clearly and concisely indicate to the reader what questions will be answered in the article. You want to cultivate anticipation so the reader knows exactly what to expect when reading the article—if not the precise details of your conclusion(s).

**Do**

- Include your thesis, usually in the first 1–2 sentences
- Provide background information placing your work in the larger body of literature
- Use the same chronological structure as the full article
- Use lucid and concise prose
- Explain the purpose of the work and methods used
- Use keywords and phrases that quickly identify the content and focus of the work
- Mimic the type and style of language found in the original article, including technical language

**Do not**

- Refer extensively to other works
- Add information not contained in the original work
- Define terms
- Repeat or rephrase your title



- Use the first-person pronouns (In this article, I will) in writing the abstract. Instead, use third person: “This article discusses”

## **Examples**

The abstract should begin with a clear sense of the research question and thesis.

“While some recent scholars claim to have refuted the relevance of stylometric analysis for Plato studies, new technological advances reopen the question. This article uses two recently completed stylometric analyses of the Platonic corpus to show that advanced artificial intelligence techniques such as genetic algorithms can serve as a foundation for chronological assertions.”

It is often useful to identify the theoretical or methodological school used to approach the thesis question and/or to position the article within an ongoing debate. This helps readers situate the article in the larger conversations of your discipline.

“The debate among Watts, Koupria, and Brecker over the reliability of stylometry (PMLA 126.5, Fall 2009) suggests that . . .” or “Using the definition of style proposed by Markos (2014), this article argues that . . .”

Finally, briefly state the conclusion.

“Through analyzing the results of Watts and Koupria’s genetic algorithmic stylometry, this article demonstrates that they provide solutions to roadblocks previously identified in stylometric analyses of the Platonic corpus for the purposes of developing a reliable chronology. These solutions . . .”

## **PSU PRESS ALT TEXT GUIDE**

Penn State University Press is committed to making its publications accessible to the widest audience possible. The inclusion of alternative text (or “alt text”) will allow those using assistive technology to access the images and other graphic elements (such as tables, charts, graphs, and

maps) in the digital formats of articles. Authors are encouraged to submit alt text (and where necessary, extended descriptions) for all images and other graphic elements in their manuscripts.

### **General Guidelines for Composing Alt Text**

Alt text should clearly and concisely describe the content and function of an image. Please limit the description to the most important elements of the image. In most cases a one- or two-sentence description, consisting of no more than 250 characters (not including spaces), should suffice. If more than 250 characters are needed to convey the content and function of an image, please provide an extended description in addition to the alt text.

### **Extended Description**

For more complex images and graphic elements (such as graphs, charts, and maps), please provide an extended description with the necessary information. Any visible English text in an image must be transcribed in the extended description. Please note that images requiring an extended description must also have the shorter alt text.

### **Formatting and Submitting Alt Text**

Alt text should be submitted along with captions. The alt text for a figure should be set on a new line after the caption and should be preceded by <alt text>. An extended description, when necessary, should be treated in a similar manner, preceded by <extended description>. When drafting and formatting alt text, you should:

- capitalize acronyms so assistive technology reads them as separate letters and not words (e.g., US versus us);
- avoid complex symbols, such as brackets, quotation marks, dashes, ellipses, and mathematical symbols, as assistive technology does not treat all of these symbols consistently;
- write in complete sentences but avoid overly complex sentence structures.

For examples as well as additional information and resources, see [here](#).

### **Submission Checklist**

- All authors and coauthors are listed in the submissions interface.
- At least one author has been designated as the corresponding author with contact details:
  - E-mail address
  - Affiliation
  - ORCID number has been provided (if you have one)
- Necessary funding statements have been provided, including funding organization name, the organization's DOI, and grant numbers if you have them.
- All necessary files have been uploaded. Submission must include:
  - Abstracts (150–200 words)
  - Keywords (3–5)
  - Separate image files (tiff, jpg, include relevant captions, **not inserted into Word file**)
  - All tables (including titles, description, footnotes)
  - Ensure all figure and table citations in the text match the files provided.
- Journal policies detailed in submission guidelines have been reviewed.
- Manuscript has been checked for spelling and grammar.
- Manuscript and Notes and or Works Cited sections follow the most recent *Chicago Manual of Style* (18<sup>th</sup> edition) for formatting and language.
- All references mentioned in the Works Cited list are cited in the text.
- If you only have 1 note or 1 work cited, the sections are called Note or Work Cited (not Notes or Works Cited).
- If your article includes notes, you have used shortened citations instead of ibid (See *CMS* 18, 13.37).
- Permission has been obtained for use of copyrighted material from other sources (including the Internet and for image use). Please provide permission documentation to journal editor for images or long text excerpts under copyright.
- All figures have been provided as individual image files (**not inserted into Microsoft Word**) and are 300 dpi at a sizing of at least 2.25 inches wide.
- **Alt text has been provided** to describe all supplied images, tables, and charts. See **PSU Press Alt Text Guide** in submission guidelines and reference more information [here](#).

