

## WCAA Delegates' Meeting February 7, 2024

Attendance: Ricardo Fagoaga, Gang Chen, Gordon Mathews, P-J Ezech, A. Jamie Saris, Andrew 'Mugsy' Spiegel, Anna Bohlin, Diana Mata-Codesal, Ed Liebow, Emily Metzner, Francine Saillant, Mimina Pateraki, Monica Heller, Oto Poloucek, Silvia Hirsch, Virginia Dominguez, Gabby Dlamini, Helen Macdonald, Eva Kuminkova, Melissa Schmidt, Francesca Declich, Carmen Rial, Junji Koizumi, Andrea Lobo, Dorothy Zinn, Melissa Schmidt, Isaac Nyamongo, Chandana Mathur and Michel Bouchard

### Publishing and Citation Practices

Discussion of publications and how they are weighed and ranked.

Ricardo Fagoaga: the problem is not the indexing, but the ranking of journals which is a political tool. Open-ranking has boomed, but not citations.

Gang Chen (James): China has its own citation index called CSSCI, Chinese Social Sciences Citation Index,, but some large universities try to follow American standards and they have their own systems where the American-based indexes such as SSCI or SCI are valued much more. They will require that papers are published in American ranked journals.

Anna Bohlin: In Sweden when assessing recruitment and applications for funding, it is more of a qualitative assessment but there is a tendency to rank English-language publishers much higher. There is a Swedish anthropological journal and it has a global scope but it tries to provide its own perspective. However, younger scholars prefer to publish elsewhere and more senior scholars reproduce this process. Suggestion: it would be good if WCAA had a list of legitimate open-access journals and publishers.

Mugsy Spiegel: A small sum is given to universities based on what is published based on a list of journals that is used and quite often South African journals are not included. South Africa pays the university for publications and sometimes the university gives something to the author. It is a fixed rate per article just as long as it is on the list.

Gabby Dlamini: Global North journals have a higher standing and greater impact. The government sends out a list of accredited journals and they will include both local and international journals. The main thing is that the journals follow the traditional patterns of expectations of theory, the people who should be cited. The journals in turn of content tend to reinforce existing colonial practices.

Sylvia Hirsch: Silvia Hirsch: In the case of Argentina, most journals are published by public universities, they are open access but many of these do not have DOI. The Journal *Etnografías Contemporáneas*, was submitted to SCOPUS which rejected it because the journal was not cited enough internationally and it didn't have articles in English. The pressure for the Anglo-American system is strong. Also the style of Anglo-American journals is not how many scholars write in other languages.

Ed Liebow: The United States is the hegemon. As for Scopus, I'm interested in hearing what could be done. Virginia Dominguez also noted that such practices were shameful. Ed Liebow noted the AAA repository is indexed and openly accessible.

Helen Macdonald: in South Africa, where it matters in promotion. Though in the rankings in the government list are equal, it is when individuals are going up for tenure and promotion that their committees may value the international journals and rankings over the government lists.

Andre Lobo (via chat): Here in Brazil we have a relatively well-organised system for qualifying citations with a ranking of Brazilian journals. Scielo is our main reference system as an indexer. We operate entirely on an open access system. Our ranking at local level works well, we also have a good number of publications in Spanish. We are a sizeable community of anthropologists, so we consume our publications well and the transit between Portuguese and Spanish is made with some ease. But the pressure to publish in English is the rule! Journals are qualified by their level of internationalisation, which means publishing in English, for the most part. This means that dialogues with the English-speaking world to show internationalisation is highly valued. The issue of funding for journals is a major bottleneck, And this certainly applies to the need for translations, which cost a lot of money, for publication in English.

Virginia Dominguez: Two points, one of the concerns who is sending manuscripts where. It is doubtful that Americans send manuscripts outside of the USA except for perhaps Great Britain or Australia. There is an informal ranking in the United States that comes into play when someone comes to be hired or promoted. Most of those prestigious journals are AAA journals. JAI (formerly Man) out of England counts highly as west. However, most scholars in the USA will never consider posting outside of the USA.

Monica Heller (via chat): I want to suggest two things: 1) that WCAA could make some points about how anthropology as a discipline works differently from other disciplines even within the social sciences; this matters when say psychologists or business school people are judging others; 2) that we think about where the money comes from — open access e.g. does need to be funded. Canada puts a bunch of money into supporting Canadian publications as a way to counter US and European hegemony, but that may not last. CASCA's open access journal Anthropologica requires support from CASCA. And so on...

Jamie Saris based in Ireland. Another issue is the question of anthropology. In Ireland, an anthropologist publishing in a place with a minority language, will be pushed towards folklore and history. The anthropological journal did not do well during Covid and it is now being resurrected.

Mimina Pateraki: Speaking from the Greek association, I would like to underline that publishing and citation index is a big issue in Greece too. The norm for publication is English-language journals. Writing in English in Greek journals or in Balkan journals or southern European journals have less valuation than the well-known and high rated journals. There is not adequate funding for research as well for supporting open-access journals. Furthermore, when there is funding for writing in Greek, publishing in Greek has less value. The association is working hard to maintain our first open-access journal facing the possibility that maybe there is no adequate interest to publish. Scopus and the Web of Science was recently imposed by government agencies. The reality of anthropologists is very different from medical scholars for whom the indexing works better. The question: who is interested in the research? How should we communicate our research? How is this related to academic evaluation? English is both a global hegemon as well as an international language.

Emily Metzner (via chat): I would add from the USA perspective, and this may be stating the obvious - it is certainly the case outside of the USA as well - that the job market in US anthropology is dismal. Anthro departments and majors are being shut down around the

country. Junior scholars who are trying to launch careers or (best case scenario) secure tenure are disincentivized from publishing in journals outside of the AAA matrix of journals. I understand this to be a major hindrance to chipping away at the hegemony of US journals. So in a way perhaps the diminishing growth and opportunity in US anthropology is reinforcing its hegemony.

Monica Heller (via chat): To Emily's point: or it could actually be reducing the US market, making it smaller, more provincial...

Oto Poloucek: There is an effort to standardize the system for all disciplines. The money is distributed from the state down to the universities, then to the faculties and departments. There is effort to only gain points for Scopus, Web of Science and to exclude local journals and books. Some colleagues will publish in high quality prestigious German journals and publications, but they do not get any points for this as they are not on Scopus or Web of Science. Other countries will not conform to this, but the Czech Republic does. They play the game, but their neighbours do not.

There is a tendency for the natural sciences to dictate the terms and not the humanities and social sciences.

Carmen Rial: In Brazil there is a hierarchy of journals but it is done locally. They take into account Web of Science and Scopus, but they also have Sucupira that has a hierarchy of global journals, but not only American journals. Every two years these are reviewed. There are Brazilian journals that are international and there are American journals that are local. Journals are ranked: A1, A2, B1, B2 etc... And this is what matters for promotion. It is important to have local journals that speak to local publics, but they are not ranked the same. Also, open-access is sometimes misunderstood as there are open-access journals that have bad peer-review. Another good practice would be decolonizing the editorial system, but this is difficult. Space must be given to people who were excluded.

P-J Ezeh: speaking from the first Nigerian University that is the first to grant university degrees, they have accepted the international rankings. Senior Lecturer: 1 publication in one of the ranked journals, associate professor 2, and full professor 4. The challenge is getting the universities to develop their own rankings that are not based on the international ones. The outcome: there should be high quality and some must be published internationally as well as locally. Issue of language: this is not a problem and that is a pity as English was inherited and virtually all journals in Nigeria are in English. Ideally some should be published in Indigenous languages.

A takeaway: how can we qualify our differences as anthropology? How can quality be measured or rated?

Chandana Mathur: anthropology is different in Ireland. There is only one department in the Republic of Ireland, and one in Northern Ireland. Anthropology is judged by hegemonic standards and whether publications appear in highly regarded international journals, i.e. American journals and this might be an issue in smaller countries.

Dorothy Zinn, representing the Italian association: the national ministry establishes two lists: one of recognized journals and a separate list that recognizes A-list journals. That is the Italian distinction. Being published on the A-list is essential for being hired, promotions and evaluations done every 5-years in departments. Also, there is the issue of the fate of monographs. There is

also the issue of ethnographic films, even graphic novels, and how do they fit into it. There is an acceptance of journals in other languages, but they tend to be European journals.

Francine Saillant: In Canada there are two main journals, *Anthropologica* the journal of CASCA as well as *Anthropologie et Sociétés* that focus on anthropology in French. Publishing in French is a battle even if *Anthropologica* affirms that it wants to publish in both official languages, but very few articles are published in French. The issue is that of the quality, who is rating the articles. In French-language universities though there is no need to publish in English, but Laval University is seeking to introduce a policy pushing scholars to publish in university to thus be seen as a good university. Université de Montréal, it is similar. *AnthroPen* a francophone dictionary of anthropology as a way to resist English-language hegemony. The government of Quebec is giving important funds very recently to help publication in French because of the diminishing quantity of manuscripts published in French here in Canada and Quebec.

Another topic: university rankings, which have a great impact.

Carmen Rial (via chat): In Brazil, we have a audiovisual ranking similar to the journals. IT IS NOT difficult to classify - not more than journals. We have to give attention to other supports of anthropology, as Dorothy said, and I would add podcasts.

Oto Polouček (via chat): In the Czech Republic, we also have a separate evaluating process of so-called non-bibliometrics results (Books, films or for example exhibitions). It is called "Methodics 17+", but it does not so much involve funding of institutions, indexed results have much more impact.

Junji Koizumi: There are very good Japanese journals and there are many anthropologists in Japan and some have only published in Japanese. It is a strong feature that Japanese anthropology is published in Japanese. In Japan rankings do not matter and it varies from institution to institution. There is no systemic way to evaluate individual scholars, what matters are the national evaluations of universities.

Dorothy Zinn (via chat): As regards US anthropologists not publishing outside the North Atlantic/OZ, it would be good to push them to publish in journals where they are conducting fieldwork - to ensure a level of dialogue with local scholars. I understand the pressure of the job market, but this aspect should be favourably evaluated by committees.

Diana Mata-Codesal: representing the Catalan association (ICA), in Catalonia, Spain. The debate now underway is what to do with the journal. The problem are the logistics. The journal is run by volunteers and many are precarious scholars. To get a job one must be published in international journals. More importance must be given to open-access but publishing in English in international journals is preferred. The association has no idea how to proceed with the journal that has been publishing for 20 years.

Francesca Declich: One of the issues is multidisciplinary and the journals that are multi- and interdisciplinary. It is difficult to include such journals in ranking systems. Journals such as *American Anthropologist* have a 95% rejection rate while others much easier to publish in may be ranked the same. In Italy there has not been an anglophonic hegemony until now, although now internationalization is requested. The question is audience: who can read articles written in Italian? Also, there is a question of freedom of speech if one is pushed to publish in certain kinds of journals rather than others. Some things cannot be said in certain journals. Issues of

peer-evaluation are sometimes problematic (overwork of peer reviewing, requests of quoting certain authors, even published after the journal was submitted, etc...).

Gordon Mathews: Key points will be sent to everyone in the meeting. To start a discussion and make comments.

Afterwards: Vesna Vucinic, by e-mail: In this whole discussion, basically, one can differentiate between the normative and the practical level of the formal national rules of ranking journals, and thus evaluating individual scientific production. When focusing on the normative level, theoretically, one can imagine three cases: (1) where foreign journals are ranked higher than the national (which seems to be the most represented case) , (2) where they are ranked equally by creation of two parallel lists (quite a rare case), and (3) where national journals are ranked higher than the foreign (we heard of no such case). It would be great to find out if case no. (3) does exist somewhere because this would mean that that country's scientific establishment broke the Western/anglo-american hegemony. There is also a difference on a practical level in how much importance is given to quantitative evaluation coming from publishing in foreign journals, and how much to the assessment of the real quality of these articles. In some cases, only quantitative is being applied, while in others both are considered. The problem is that the ranking/evaluation rules at national levels are created by bureaucrats and scientists who turned bureaucrats and forgot what true science is. Proper evaluation seems to be applied mostly (but not always) at the level of University, when new faculty members are being considered. In addition, when talking about a surge to publish in top Anglo-American journals on one hand, and very low overall acceptance, a good thing to remember (for both the policy makers and anthropologists outside the Anglo-American academic sphere) is that those journals were originally created (and still are used) for the American job market, and not for the international one.