

## **Pay Big to Publish Fast: Academic Journal Rackets**

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### **Abstract**

*In the context of open-access (OA) academic publishing, the mounting pressure cross global academe to publish or perish has spawned an exponentially growing number of dodgy academic e-journals charging high fees to authors, often US\$300-650, and even triple that amount, promising super-fast processing and publication open-access (OA) online. Jeffrey Beall (Scholarly Open Access, <http://scholarlyoa.com>) has characterized this phenomenon as 'predatory OA publishing,' since it is oriented largely to extorting a high fee from authors. This exponential growth in start-up cyber-journals galore of questionable quality and dubious upstart origin is driven largely by the globalization of Euro-Atlantic research cultures into the Global South and lower-income economies everywhere, part of the now rapid internationalization of scientific research (Jha 2011) and 'researching under the audit' (Illner 2011: 70), and is potentially a form of 'academic racketeering.' It tends to attract and exploit lesser-privileged academics, often on 'knowledge production peripheries.' They are a segment of a hugely expanding global constellation of researchers, in some ways a 'research proletariat' (Harvie 2000), many of whom can least afford the 'cyber-services' of these start-up, fee-gouging OA journals. Yet researchers anywhere, including doctoral students and others in an 'academic precariat,' may be lured to publish there, given a turnaround time of three weeks from submission to acceptance and publication often offered and implemented (Stratford 2012). A certain kind of 'market cynicism' (Power 2010) may take hold, where young academics are forced to think of themselves largely in economic terms and the 'price' of quick dubious publication.*

*In essential ways, the phenomenon of predatory academic journals is also part of the largely ex-colonial and subalternized 'academic periphery striking back' against that Eurodominance of research cultures, involving basic contestations about asymmetrical power and representation and the geopolitics of hegemonic*

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*and subaltern knowledge production and dissemination on a global scale, the 'coloniality of power/knowledge' (Quijano 2000; Grosvoguel 2008; Jaramillo 2012) within the changing face of biopolitical production and the emergence of a new 'common' (Hardt 2010; Hardt & Negri 2009) inside globalized immaterial capitalist production. Racist subtexts about 'academic scams based in Africa and South Asia' need to be confronted and avoided.*

*In resisting trends toward corporate, high-cost Western-dominated academic publication, cost-free OA knowledge publication paradigms need to be expanded in the (re)appropriation of a 'knowledge commons' under late capitalism. These include arXiv.org, journals like JCEPS, the Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Qualitative Social Research ([bit.ly/xjc0mD](http://bit.ly/xjc0mD)), and more than 7,000 others associated with the Directory of Open Access Journals ([www.doaj.org](http://www.doaj.org)) -- in the spirit of the Imaginary Journal of Poetic Economics ([bit.ly/zPYYFJ](http://bit.ly/zPYYFJ)) and the work of the Public Knowledge Project (<http://pkp.sfu.ca>), Open Journal Systems ([tinyurl.com/2ydklr](http://tinyurl.com/2ydklr)), SciELO (<http://socialsciences.scielo.org/>) in Latin America -- and other initiatives for 'Green OA' in open-access repositories elsewhere. These OA needs to be reconceived in the struggle for a 'communism of the common' (Hardt 2010: 140). That re appropriation and its self-organization should become a main goal in confronting and dismantling the regime of monopolistic knowledge control today by giant 'knowledge enclosure' corporations like Thomson-Reuters, Springer and Wiley.*

*A key aim of the present paper is to spotlight these 'predatory' journals and urge further empirical research. Despite the huge amount of largely bourgeois analysis of OA, there is very scant critical inquiry into such academic journals and their burgeoning conglomerates.*

**Keywords:** academic publishing; journal rackets; open access; biopolitical production; knowledge globalization; knowledge commons; coloniality of power.

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Alles Ständische und Stehende verdampft / All that is solid melts into air  
(Communist Manifesto 1848 [1882])

today the immaterial triumphs over the material, the reproducible over the  
unreproducible, and the shared over the exclusive  
(Hardt 2010: 135)

## 1. Introduction

The phenomenon of the open-access (OA) ‘start-up’ academic journal as a kind of profitable ‘business’ with exploitative ‘processing fees’ is barely researched, aside from librarian Jeffrey Beall’s watchdogging (Scholarly Open Access, <http://scholarlyoa.com>), what he calls ‘predatory publishers’ (see also Harzing 2012), in effect extortionate junk journals. The present article introduces readers to its darker underside, rapidly expanding inside *biopolitical* production (production of ideas, information, images, knowledges, codes, affects, social relations, forms of life and *dispositifs*) in the sense of Hardt (2010; Hardt & Negri 2009) and raises a number of questions. The article is exploratory, admonitory: it seeks to call attention to this potential perversion of knowledge production, its ‘academic ecology’ within the coloniality of knowledge/power, and stimulate further badly needed empirical investigation on a number of these journals. The commercialized journal conglomerates springing up on the Internet in academic English are part of the capitalist political economy of knowledge distribution and its very uneven playing fields, which remains for many scholars across the planet a grim game of survival. One paradox of cyberspace subsumed in ‘capitalist biopower’ (Negri 2010: 163) is the seeming promise of equity and the reality of a reproduction of core and periphery in the realm of ‘immaterial and reproducible property (Hardt 2010: 135). OA, legitimate (<http://goo.gl/jPyIv>) and ‘fee-gouging,’ also involves basic contestations about asymmetrical power and representation and the geopolitics of hegemonic and subaltern knowledge production and its epistemologies, validation and dissemination on a global scale (Haider 2007). Many who publish in these questionable new ‘pay big, publish fast’ e-journals are younger scholars based in the Global South and particularly in the Muslim world. For example, the *International Journal of Linguistics*, vol. 4(3) September 2012, published by Macrothink Institute in Las Vegas/Nevada, had 24 out of 25 papers authored in the Islamic world (see Sec. 6.2). As Dei (2011: xii) reminds us: ‘It is important to recognize how power and relations

of colonialism and re-colonial relations have scripted and continue to script us differently,' as the production of hegemonic 'science' is itself made planetary.

A good example of a dodgy OA journal in our field is *International Education Studies*, launched in 2008 under CCSE in Canada, charging its authors US\$300 to publish. The journal has proved enormously popular, with 118 articles in vol. 5, 2012 (five issues until mid-August). Significantly, *IES* authors are mainly from Iran, China, Turkey, Malaysia, Jordan and other research ecologies in the Global South. A number of articles published in Vol. 5(5) averaged 9-12 days from submission to acceptance, and one article from Turkey took a mere 11 days from submission to publication [!]. The volume of articles from 1 February to 13 August 2012 generated a potential US\$35,400 in processing fees (<http://goo.gl/Tdxha>) for CCSE, and *IES* is growing rapidly. Its senior editor Chris Lee is associated with CCSE but with no academic affiliation listed. Mr. Lee also edits other journals at CCSE. *Educational Research and Reviews*, a journal under academicjournals.org charging US\$550 to publish, had authors principally from Turkey, along with Kenya, Nigeria, Botswana, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Ghana, India, China, Taiwan, Pakistan, Iran, and Bangladesh from Jan. to July 2012 (<http://goo.gl/ZlpbS>). There are a whole slew of such journals emerging in the education sciences.

### 1.1 Paper overview

Section 2 explores the publication tsunami in academe and the concomitant metastasis of predatory publishing it has triggered. Section 3 provides a framing overview of the much broader emerging constellation of largely 'legitimate' OA journals and what the paper does not seek to discuss in depth. Sec. 4 looks briefly at the 'elite established racket': the huge corporate empire of academic journals dominated by Elsevier, Wiley and other publishers, to which the emergence of start-up, author-pays 'fee-gouging' journals is clearly responding. Sec. 5 briefly explores the question of 'subalternity' in cognitive capitalism, coloniality of power/knowledge production & distribution and related questions. Sections 6-7 comprise the paper's core: Sec. 6 sketches an introductory overview of start-up journal initiatives which may be rackets, while Sec. 7 looks in greater detail at a number of these. Sec. 8 lists some key questions for future research. Sec. 9 briefly explores the question of the dominance of English in

global academic discourse, its ‘BANA tilt’ (Hill 2012a) and neo-colonial ballast. Sec. 10 brings concluding thoughts about transforming the coloniality of power/knowledge, fair costs for OA and who should bear them, and the outlook for alternative more democratic and socialist constellations in a ‘knowledge commons’ in life under late capitalism and beyond, part of a radical ‘socialization of power’ (Quijano 2000; Grosfoguel 2008), with a final sub-section: ‘OA, biopolitical production and a communism of the common.’

## **2. Publication tsunami and ‘researching under the audit’**

The current conjuncture of the relations and forces of ‘academic biopolitical production’ – the dynamic ensemble of cybertech fused with the new managerial university and its dictates for performance – have led to a publication tsunami that is now an exponential wave. Publishing research in academic journals has become a ‘key performance indicator,’ a KPI at universities in all higher-income and many other economies over the past decade. There has been a staggering surge in OA journals and articles since 1993 (see figure at <http://goo.gl/LZy59>), a veritable ‘paradigm shift in scientific publishing’ (Solomon & Björk 2011). In 2000, ca. 19,500 articles were published OA, skyrocketing by a factor of 10 to 191,850 articles in 2009; OA journals in 2000 numbered some 740, and were estimated at 4,769 for 2009, growth by a factor of 6.44 over nine years. The Open Access Directory is an excellent compendium of lists and information about OA ( <http://goo.gl/NmI0t> ).

The tightening grip of knowledge commodification and the ‘publish or perish’ syndrome is extreme in the core higher-income economies, like the UK, but has become a metastasizing phenomenon in virtually all. This is central to the pathologies of globalization in the changing geopolitics of knowledge production, ‘researching under the audit’ (Illner 2011), integral to the ethos of ‘public managerialism’ and ‘causalisation’ (Hill 2012a) under Capital’s unfettered grip, the new ‘academic entrepreneurialism’ (Dahlstedt & Tesfahuney 2010; Chattopadhyay 2012), part of the ‘contemporary biopolitical turn of the capitalist economy’ (Hardt 2010: 142). Boyd (2011: 259) stresses that in this borrowing of market paradigms to reshape tertiary education, ‘teachers are entrepreneurs in and of themselves, continually trying to play the market and build a personal and educational portfolio that will attract investors willing to hire them for a job.’ This is transforming universities along the lines of

business management models in a headlong march toward ‘academic capitalism’ (Dörre & Neis 2010: 11-38, 144-165) on a planetary scale. In his research in the UK, Illner found that

all interviewees described the strong shift in research that occurred with the introduction of the Teaching Quality Assessment (TQA) and the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), recently re-named Research Excellence Framework (REF) that established standardised benchmarks of achievement for teaching and research [...] the audits not only affect the content but also the temporal structure of research. Because the RAE is carried out every four years, long-term research becomes hampered and the time for a proper in-depth engagement with a topic becomes scarce [...] the audits entice academics to become entrepreneurs, thereby framing education and knowledge in terms of investment and profit and subsuming them under the excessive logic of capital (2011: 70, 72, 79).

Enda Brophy (Roggero 2011: viii) notes: ‘The university seeks its niche, markets itself, and relentlessly commodifies the results of the intellectual production occurring within it.’ This is generating ‘estranged academic labor’ in a fundamental Marxist sense. Harried university teachers under extreme pressure to publish to survive are resorting to new publication channels in soaring numbers. Looking at cognitive capitalism and the rat race, De Angelis and Harvie (2009: 6) stress that ‘academic work possesses all the basic characteristics of immaterial labour,’ in which ‘the form of social cooperation is crucial in defining the ‘output,’’ likewise in looking at biopolitical production of knowledge and its distribution. Meanwhile, in the U.S., under extreme austerity constrictions, 67 percent of university teaching staff are part-time employees on short-term contracts, a ‘precariat’ often competing viciously amongst one another (Kendzior 2012). In all higher-income and many other economies, publishing research and conceptual papers in academic journals has become a ‘key performance indicator’ (KPI), part of the ‘politics of knowledge production.’

Everywhere in academe, there is mounting pressure to publish *fast*, preferably in shorter papers (Ledgerwood & Sherman 2012), leading to a stress on quantity over quality, a growing trend dubbed ‘fast-food scholarship’ (Worsham 2011). Familiar from the Global North, such practices of ‘bite-size science’ (Bertamini & Munafo 2012; ScienceDaily 2011) are a spreading academic contagion, metastasizing across

the world's poorer and poorest economies as well. Faculty members work under a 'system of measure' of their productivity that is

an assemblage of techniques for quantifying, standardizing, counting, ranking, benchmarking, and assigning value to academic production and labor. Peer review is an important element of the system of measure as is the construction of university rankings, the calculation of economic impacts, the introduction of workload formulas, the conduct of research audits, the use of performance indicators, and the deployment of metrics. These technologies not only quantify and hierarchize the field of higher education to ever higher degrees but they also seek to homogenize and individualize the production of living knowledge (Edufactory collective 2011: 3).

This pressure to publish permeating into university structures across the Global South is leading to a huge proliferation of publications, coming ever more from staff at thousands of universities in lower-income and so-called 'emerging' capitalist economies seeking to join the bourgeois 'knowledge production market.' Over a decade ago, Harvie (2000: 126) warned about the new growing 'power which "research assessment" promises/threatens to measure and define. In turn measurement and definition offers capital greater opportunities to limit and control intellectual creativity within universities through enclosure of "intellectual commons." He noted how the RAE/REF can be a source of extreme alienation of the researcher from the product of one's labor, and advised: 'RAE-valorisation should be opposed in its totality' (120).

Increasingly, research produced on what is regarded as 'periphery' to the higher-income capitalist 'core' hegemonic knowledge production sites is appearing, often in upstart journals online. Moreover, 'the scientific world does not escape capitalism's laws and its reactionary ideology. The milieu of scientific research is impregnated with a spirit of ferocious and permanent rivalry. The race to publish, the quest for individual prestige, social and financial recognition' (ICC 2011) characterize scientific endeavor as a material social practice in a system grounded on an ideology of markets, Capital, commodifying of knowledge 'products' and the surplus value of knowledge creation. More than at any earlier point in bourgeois society, 'alles Ständische und Stehende verdampft,' planet-wide, under the bourgeois 'apparatuses of capitalist command' (Hardt & Negri 2009: xiii) within knowledge generation. We live in a maelstrom of algorithms, bending our research and minds. *Ulrichsweb*

*Global Serials Directory* now lists more than 141,000 academic and scholarly journals, their number growing by the day, somewhat less than 50 percent of which are peer-reviewed; many are now online in some form (Altbach and Rapple 2012: 6). Publication and access in this tidal wave of journals and articles is hardly an even playing field.



Source: <http://goo.gl/LgrY9> (www.etsy.com)

## 2.1 Predatory Publishers

A number of those new publication channels appear to be ‘fee-gouging’ rackets. The mounting publication pressure has spawned an exponentially growing number of academic e-journals charging high fees to authors, often US\$300-650, and even three times that amount with some journal conglomerates, such as OMICS (<http://goo.gl/BRu0v>), promising super-fast processing (often less than 40 days from submission to publication) in an OA format cost-free to readers. Jeffrey Beall has characterized this as ‘predatory open-access publishing,’ since it is oriented largely to extracting a high fee from authors, and has compiled a list of such publishers: <http://scholarlyoa.com/publishers/>. He admonishes: ‘The open-access movement started with good will and good intentions. Unfortunately, it has now been co-opted by a bunch of corrupt schemers who threaten to destroy the foundation of scholarly communication’ (<http://goo.gl/mOJ28>). For example, in January 2012, the *African Journal of Biotechnology* published 307 articles, amounting to US\$199,550 in potential handling fees (\$650 per article) in a single month; in May 2012, the same journal published 203 articles, equal to revenue of US\$131,950. Many of these articles had a multiple authorship of 6-9 authors, and several even up to 12, probably



splitting the publication cost. The *AJB*'s research input is almost exclusively from the Global South. Whether all were actual 'authors' is an open question, naturally difficult to research. Yet significantly, the *AJB* is one of two journals under the umbrella of academicjournals.org granted ISI status by Thomson-Reuters, although this journal enterprise is considered by Beall a major predatory publisher based in Lagos (see 7.1 below). ISI OA journals (2010) are listed here: <http://goo.gl/SFwDC> . In rare research, Harzing (2012) explores some of the apparent abuses of academicjournals.org.

The proliferation of such journals, now in the many hundreds, raises questions about where knowledge production is rushing in its headlong 'globalization,' and the entire social and political ecology of knowledge production and its distribution: how much is genuine research, how much is a new 'free-market' fee-gouging business with 'predatory' publishers? Harzing (2012) explores how it is corrupting research, focusing on a 'super author' with a high number of citations of questionable provenience. How is this impacting on scientists in low-income economies? Who are the new journal creators? Who is profiting, who publishing in this seeming tsunami of academic output? How much is shaped by a kind of 'market cynicism' (Power 2010) among aspiring academics, paying up-front to breathe and survive? How is peer review being handled or corrupted under remarkably fast publication by some new 'junk' journals? How shoddy even fraudulent is some of this research (Lim 2011; Xin Hao 2011; Special Correspondent 2010)? Or in fact how good, but published at high cost in dubious outlets?

Looking at what they term 'anarchy, commercialism and 'publish or perish'' within the current academic metabolism, Altbach and Rapple (2012: 6) stress: 'Not surprisingly, a large number of "bottom feeders" are now starting "journals" with the sole goal of earning a quick profit and enriching their owners. [...] Peer reviewing is touted, but one suspects that anyone who pays the fee can get published. [...] A 21<sup>st</sup> century paradox is that while it is ever more difficult to get published in a top-tier journal, it is now easier than ever to get published.'

Easier? Yes, authors just pay up-front. Jeffrey Beall notes:

Predatory open-access publishers unprofessionally exploit the author-pays model of open-access publishing (Gold OA) for their own profit. [...] Operating essentially as vanity presses, these publishers typically have a low article acceptance threshold, with a false-front or non-existent peer review process. Unlike professional publishing operations, whether subscription-based or ethically-sound open access, these predatory publishers add little value to scholarship, pay little attention to digital preservation, and operate using fly-by-night, unsustainable business models ([tinyurl.com/bu7d8ra](http://tinyurl.com/bu7d8ra)).

This article explores this burgeoning phenomenon of academic journal ‘sharks’ in the darker periphery waters of OA, with a number of concrete examples in some detail (Sec. 7). The term ‘vanity press’ Beall uses is arguably somewhat a misnomer, since ‘vanity’ plays little role here: in this constellation of ever more constricting relations of academic production, authors are under extreme *existential* pressure to produce. It is more a mode of ‘survival’ press. If your job, promotion or career are at stake, under an unfettered and unregulated capitalism that permeates world academe, you may be grateful for this corruptive option, whatever its cost, especially if its extortionary cost can be shared in a multiple-author article. That is the paradox around which this phenomenon of exploitation is tightly wrapped. Like most rackets under capitalism, they serve real human needs under existing relations of production, however destructive of real science these publication scam operations may be. Beall has a useful set of ‘Criteria for Determining Predatory OA Publishers’ ([tinyurl.com/cas4vso](http://tinyurl.com/cas4vso)), see 6.1 below.

### 3. ‘Legitimate’ OA

The present paper does not touch except tangentially on the much broader constellation of largely legitimate OA publishing and its range of not-for-profit models. Willinsky (2006) earlier identified ten main modes of OA, including author-pays. In that complex, ‘Gratis’ OA is free online access and ‘Libre’ OA is free online access plus various re-use rights. Authors can provide OA in two ways: ‘Green OA,’ involving publication in a subscription journal and then making the final draft free for all online by self-archiving in their OA institutional repositories immediately upon acceptance for publication (Harland, 2007; 2008; Suber 2012a). Or ‘Gold OA,’ by paying up-front to publish in an OA journal that provides cost-free online access to all readers. Likewise, the paper does not seek to examine in depth what the actual costs of OA publishing are in empirical terms, and who ideally should cover those costs. It

is clear that a preponderant majority of OA journals in many fields, including JCEPS, charge authors no fee for publication, but I will not explore the how and why of this mode of OA here. Given the income inequity among researchers across the globe, almost any fee is for some a burden. Biomed Central, one of the major OA commercial publishers, charges a standard US\$1,920 to authors, with various other journal fees at BMC ranging from \$1,675 to \$2,535 (<http://goo.gl/PhOND>). Peter Suber (2006) noted that a great majority of OA journals charge no author fees, and raised questions about their financing: ‘I wish I could tell you how many different ways the no-fee journals have found to pay their bills, and which methods work best in which disciplines and countries,’ and goes on to sketch an array of options for covering expenses. We need transparency data about what the actual costs of operating a cost-free OA journal are (Edgar & Willinsky in press; and Sec. 10 infra). Beyond author-pays and publisher-pays models, virtually no one discusses the option of a ‘commonwealth-pays’ model, which seems the natural option in a ‘knowledge commons’ of the future.

### **3.1 Useful sources for the broader terrain of OA**

As mentioned, the Open Access Directory provides many up-to-date links to a broad compendium of materials. Suber’s *SPARC Open Access Newsletter* (2003-present) is a huge repository of useful comment on ‘legitimate’ OA ([tinyurl.com/3atwtb](http://tinyurl.com/3atwtb)). Willinsky (2006) provides a now classic discussion of the growth of OA and its various modes and subspecies, but does not address the more recent burgeoning of commercial ‘scam’ publishing enterprises. Alperin, Fischman & Willinsky (2008) provide an overview of OA in Latin America, and the broader context. Suber (2012a) has an excellent ‘Open Access Overview’ and his book (2012b) is the now the best current brief introduction to OA, but he likewise does not address the growing shiver of ‘sharks’ in the muddying commercial waters of OA. The detailed Wikipedia article ‘Open Access’ (2012) is a thorough introduction to the current state of discussion and debate on OA, and is recommended to all readers. Solomon & Björk (2011) examine article-processing charges (APCs) based on a survey with some 420 authors responding. Much more such empirical research along these lines on author preference criteria for publishing OA and their willingness to incur high APCs is needed. The authors did not look at the question of ‘predatory’ OA journals, and note

that a significant percentage of their respondents (62%) were from higher-income countries. Haider (2007) raises important questions about the contradictions within the discourse of OA, strung between neo-liberal ‘development talk’ and ‘resistance’ from the academic peripheries. She notes how much support has come for OA from Soros’ Open Society Institute, ‘one of the main funding bodies behind OA,’ and other major Western nodes for promoting capitalist ‘development’ globally.

#### **4. The other ‘racket’: elite academic journal corporate conglomerates**

The paper likewise does not look in depth at the complex of established journals accessible now online at a high cost to libraries and individual subscribers. They of course form the broader ‘legitimate’ context of academic publication, and in the eyes of increasing numbers of researchers, are also ‘rackets,’ however prestigious, seeking to exclude reproducible property from the common.

Journals like *Nature* are charging US\$ 32 to read a single article online, with a subscription cost of €2,844 to libraries in Europe (<http://goo.gl/gHqbZ>), including lower-income economies like Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, Russia and the Ukraine. Wiley’s ‘pay-to-view’ for a single article (or even a short book review) is US\$42. Routledge continues to market itself with new initiatives like the Routledge Education Highly Cited Research Collection (<http://bit.ly/Hff8RB>), with articles at US\$36. Altbach and Rapple (2012: 6-7) note: ‘The highest journal costs are invariably in the sciences (the average price of chemistry journals in 2011 was \$4,044, that of physics ones \$3,499). The cost of some journals are indeed astronomical, for example \$24,048 for *Brain Research*, \$20,269 for *Tetrahedron*, and \$17,258 for *Chemical Physics Letters*—all three journals published by Elsevier.’ Meanwhile, mega-publisher Wiley’s *Journal of Comparative Neurology* will cost a library \$30,860 annually. They add that journals in language and literature hiked up subscription rates by 29 percent between 2009 and 2011, while other areas in the humanities increased between 17 and 22 percent in the same period. Another problem they point to is the bundling of subscription packages of 100s of journals to libraries, where in a bundling model the librarian cannot select or reject specific journals. The ‘Cost of Knowledge’ petition ([bit.ly/zPymWj](http://bit.ly/zPymWj)) signed by over 12,580 researchers (as of 13 August 2012) has pointed up the problem of the ‘corporatization of globalized knowledge access and distribution,’ and the continuing Eurodominance in much ‘high-impact’ high-cost

knowledge publication (Flood 2012). This had led to a burgeoning ‘serials crisis’ as libraries find subscriptions too costly to maintain, and the commercial phenomenon of the journal ‘big deal,’ involving purchase of a package of journals of the publisher’s choice, often only with pincode access through the library (Haider 2007). As Hardt (2010: 136) notes: ‘Here is an emerging contradiction internal to capital: the more the common is corralled as property, the more its productivity is reduced; and yet expansion of the common undermines the relations of property in a fundamental and general way.’

The Thomson-Reuters Web of Science, part of the (ISI) Web of Knowledge, now ‘covers over 12,000 of the highest impact journals worldwide’ ([tinyurl.com/4uahx3o](http://tinyurl.com/4uahx3o)), and has become itself a huge indexing business in a kind of neo-liberal control of ‘prestige’ knowledge distribution, access and ‘evaluation.’ Access to the Web of Science is by subscription only for a high fee, charged mainly to libraries, many of which in lower-income economies have no funds for such subscriptions, either print or online. It is estimated that revenue to academic publishers from academic journals outside China, based largely in the Global North, is US\$8 billion annually as of 2010, with some \$5.6 billion from academic library subscriptions, likewise largely in the Global North (Morrison 2011). Increasingly, publishers are turning to OA as a source of new profit, devising various new initiatives, such as Versita OA (<http://goo.gl/DEOZs>). The parent company of Versita is de Gruyter. How much the author pays in their ‘author-pays’ model for a journal article is unclear from their website.

Naughton (2012) stresses:

This gives enormous power to outfits like Elsevier that publish key journals. And guess what? They wield that power. [...] the average cost of an annual subscription to a chemistry journal is still \$3,792 and many journals cost far more. [...] Most major British universities are giving between £4m and £6m a year to outfits like Elsevier, and the bill has been rising faster than the rate of inflation over the years. [...] The peer reviewing that ensures quality in these publications is likewise provided gratis by you and me, because the researchers who do it are paid from public money. (One estimate puts the value of UK unpaid peer reviewing at a staggering £165m.) The most astonishing thing about this is not so much that it goes on, but that people have put up with it for so long.... [The Elsevier boycott] is the beginning of something new. The worm has finally begun to turn....

So perhaps we are dealing with two kinds of ‘rackets’: established elite, based on extortionate subscriptions for individuals and institutions, which the Elsevier boycott ([bit.ly/zPymWj](http://bit.ly/zPymWj)) highlights -- and ‘start-up’ upstart OA predators, both a phenomenon of capitalist relations and forces of *biopolitical* knowledge production at the present explosive conjuncture. Hardt (2010: 137): ‘These corporations [...] steal the common and transform it into property.’

### **5. Luring the less privileged in academe?**

This exponential growth in cyber-journals galore of questionable quality and dubious origin is driven largely by the globalization of Euro-Atlantic research cultures into the Global South and lower-income economies everywhere, part of the now rapid internationalization of scientific research (Jha 2011). It tends to attract (and exploit) non-privileged academics, often on ‘knowledge production peripheries,’ part of a hugely expanding global constellation of researchers, many of whom can least afford its ‘services.’ But researchers anywhere, including graduate students and others in an ‘academic precariat,’ may be lured to publish there, given a turnaround time of three weeks from submission to publication often offered (Stratford 2012). Stratford looks in depth at the case of one doctoral candidate in Louisiana lured by the predatory conglomerate OMICS (<http://www.omicsonline.org/>) to publish fast and then set a surprise bill of \$1,800, and the ensuing story. The Stratford article points up the kind of detailed concrete inquiry needed on specific personal narratives of negative encounter with these predatory publishers and the fabric of interactions with their staff and editors. There is a great dearth of data on this, and Solomon & Björk (2012) provide one model for empirical surveys of authors (see survey form: <http://goo.gl/ghQ3A> ).

These developments in knowledge dissemination are best viewed as a material social practice molded by a political economy of ‘location,’ access to resources and academic ‘subalternity,’ and the divide in much research between an Anglo-American core and the periphery (Hsiung 2012). These possible ‘rackets have sprung up largely at the ‘bottom’ of the world academic community, which bears some analogy to a kind of pyramid of privilege and access to resources. While this development is alarming, it should also be seen as a kind of ‘subalternized space’ within cognitive

capitalism, knowledge production as a material social practice. These journals appeal especially to the many young academics in developing lower-income economies who are cut off from libraries and higher salaries -- but under pressure to publish relatively fast with minimal peer review, because they cannot compete with more privileged metropolitan scholars. They, as an academic 'underclass,' clearly opt for these new 'pay-big-to-publish' outlets far more than scientists in the richer countries. In a sense, those who can least afford to 'pay' for publication are being driven by circumstance and their disadvantaged position at universities with poor libraries and research facilities to 'purchase' space for publication in shady new journal operations. As mentioned, Haider (2007) points up this involvement of OA in 'conflicting discursive spaces,' between hegemonic epistemologies and 'resistance' from the developing world. It is notable that a substantial proportion of articles in an array of journals under the canopy of academicjournals.org stem from Muslim countries, in particular Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and the Gulf.

### **5.1 Indigenizing and decolonizing academic publication**

Latin America has taken an innovative course in developing OA journals, led by Brazil, with ventures such as the Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO) and RedALyC (Alperin, Fischman & Willinsky 2008). Alperin et al. stress that this is a localizing and indigenizing process for Latin American knowledge dissemination, although they say nothing about its abuses and possible academic rackets emerging in Latin American OA publishing, a separate question.

Numerous universities across the globe now have their own research journals, increasingly OA online. The site African Journals Online is a premier example in Africa, based in South Africa, and now coordinates over 433 journals from the continent. AJOL is a non-profit organization, and charges from no payment (low-income countries) to US\$27 per article download, depending on the country a reader is based in: <http://www.ajol.info/> Most of these journals are cost-free to authors. It describes itself as 'the world's largest and pre-eminent collection of peer-reviewed, African published scholarly journals. Historically, scholarly information has flowed from North to South and from West to East. It has also been difficult for African researchers to access the work of other African academics. In partnership with

hundreds of journals from all over the continent, AJOL works to change this.’ AJOL is also linked with DOAJ. The Directory of Open Access Journals ([www.doaj.org](http://www.doaj.org)) now has more than 7,000 journals under its canopy, including JCEPS, and is growing by ca. 100 journals a month, almost all cost-free to authors and readers. The U.S. leads by far with ca. 1,230 journals in DOAJ, followed by Brazil, the UK, India, Spain and Egypt [!]. Such OA alternatives will be touched on in Sec. 10 infra. Meanwhile, many other new and inventive e-journals are OA, cost-free to users and article authors. The *Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek* EZB (Electronic Journals Library) developed at the University of Regensburg now lists 8,300 journals online, many of which can be accessed free of charge ([tinyurl.com/y63my3](http://tinyurl.com/y63my3)).

In China, today there are some 2.5 million peer-reviewed articles appearing in Mandarin annually, and this figure is rising rapidly (Morrison 2010a). How much of this research is also translated into English or other Western languages and published somewhere is unclear. Significantly, Jha (2011) notes:

China could overtake the United States as the world's dominant publisher of scientific research by 2013, according to an analysis of global trends in science by the Royal Society. [...] The Royal Society said that China was now second only to the US in terms of its share of the world's scientific research papers written in English. [...] Turkey's R&D spend increased almost six-fold between 1995 and 2007, said the Royal Society, and the number of scientists in the country has jumped by 43%. Four times as many papers with Turkish authors were published in 2008 as in 1996. In Iran, the number of research papers rose from 736 in 1996 to 13,238 in 2008. [...] 'Iran has the fastest-growing number of publications in the world, they're really serious about building up science.' Turkey's R&D spend increased almost six-fold between 1995 and 2007, said the Royal Society, and the number of scientists in the country has jumped by 43%. Four times as many papers with Turkish authors were published in 2008 as in 1996.

## 5.2 Two caveats

The strong presence of authors based in China, Iran, Turkey and sub-Saharan Africa in some of these more questionable ‘fee-gouging, predatory’ journals is very evident from even a cursory inspection. Yet two caveats are in order. First, whether a journal or constellation of journals under a publisher deemed ‘predatory’ (Beall lists 133 such publishers ([tinyurl.com/6ny3nl3](http://tinyurl.com/6ny3nl3)) is an accurate classification is of course open to further investigation and revision. Many publishers will challenge that charge. The



phenomenon remains scarcely researched beyond Beall's work, on which this paper in part builds. Second, we need to confront and avoid racist innuendos about 'rackets' based 'mainly' in the Global South, particularly West Africa and South Asia, or appealing largely to scholars working there, often under extreme economic hardship. These scams are mushrooming with nodes in cyberspace literally across the globe, including North America. They attract authors from a wide range of countries and circumstances.

## 6. A Look at Some Representative OA Predators

### 6.1 Criteria for Determining OA Predators

Beall has listed a set of 'Criteria for Determining Predatory OA Publishers' ([tinyurl.com/cas4vso](http://tinyurl.com/cas4vso)). Among them:

- A. Publish papers already published in other venues
- B. Publish papers that contain plagiarism
- C. Copy 'authors guidelines' verbatim (or with minor editing) from other publishers
- D. List false or insufficient contact information, including contact information that does not clearly state the headquarters location or misrepresents the headquarters location (e.g. through the use of addresses that are actually mail drops)
- E. Publish journals that are excessively broad (e.g., *Journal of Education*) in order to attract more articles and gain more revenue from author fees
- F. Publish journals that combine two or more fields not normally treated together (e.g. *International Journal of Business, Humanities and Technology*)
- G. Enlist members of editorial boards that are not experts in the field; have an insufficient number of board members; have made-up editorial boards (made up names); include scholars on an editorial board without their knowledge or permission; have board members who are prominent researchers but exempt them from any contributions to the journal except the use of their names and photographs; provide insufficient contact/affiliation information about board members (e.g., M. Khan, Pakistan) [...]
- K. Use language claiming to be a 'leading publisher' even though the publisher is a startup or no one has ever heard of it before. [...]
- M. Use spam email to solicit manuscripts or editorial board memberships

N. Demonstrate a lack of transparency in its operations [...]

Q. Set up shop in a first-world country chiefly for the purpose of functioning as a vanity press for scholars in a developing country

R. Begin operations with a large fleet of journals, often using a template to quickly create each journal's home page.

Beall has a list of publishers mentioned above (<http://scholarlyoa.com/publishers/>), and a separate list of other questionable journals (<http://scholarlyoa.com/individual-journals/>). All these journals need further sustained empirical research as to practices, profits, quality of submissions, who owns them.

## 6.2 Eleven representative probably 'predatory' journal cyber-conglomerates

I look at seven of these journal conglomerates in greater detail (Sec.7) below:

- The largest journals conglomerate in Africa, ACADEMIC JOURNALS, now with 108 journals, based in Nigeria, asks US\$550-650 for publication. It offers rapid processing of six weeks from submission to publication. Some of its journals have seen exponential growth, such as the *African Journal of Business Management*, from 997 pp. (Dec. 2009) to 13,579 pp. (Dec. 2011) over the span of 24 months, as I will discuss below ([www.academicjournals.org](http://www.academicjournals.org)).
- INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNALS, based in Nigeria and founded in 2009, currently runs 14 journals. It charges authors US\$400 per article ([interesjournals.org](http://interesjournals.org)). A representative new journal under IRJ is the *Journal of Research in Peace, Gender and Development Studies* ([tinyurl.com/6guk3vd](http://tinyurl.com/6guk3vd)).
- PRIME JOURNALS, likewise based in Nigeria, also founded in 2009, charges US\$400-500 per article to publish, and now has three journals ([tinyurl.com/5wcghdo](http://tinyurl.com/5wcghdo)).
- ONLINE RESEARCH JOURNALS, based in Nigeria, offers among its 11 new online journals: The *International Journal of Education Research*. It also requires a processing fee of US\$400 ([tinyurl.com/6mamq7b](http://tinyurl.com/6mamq7b)). ORJ promises a review process of four weeks.
- BASIC RESEARCH JOURNALS, launched in 2012 in Delta State/Nigeria, has five journals (<http://www.basicresearchjournals.org>), including the *Basic*

*Research Journal of Education Research and Review*, now with its second small issue (<http://goo.gl/Cjxgi>). It charges US\$400 per article for publication, though an author can request that part of the fee be waived. No editors have been listed for the journal, rapid processing of submissions within several weeks is promised. The first two articles in this education journal, from Iran and India, averaged 19 days from submission to publication.

- SCIENCE JOURNAL PUBLICATION, launched in 2011 and based in Delta State in Nigeria, charges US\$500 per article. It promises a peer-review decision within two weeks of submission. SJP has 16 journals, mainly in the natural sciences, as well as business and economics ([www.sjpub.org](http://www.sjpub.org)).
- WUDPECKER RESEARCH JOURNALS, launched with nine journals to appear monthly in 2012, promises peer-review in 3-4 weeks, with fees from \$450 to \$550. Several journals have yet to appear (August 2012). Where WRJ is based is unclear, but Nairobi and Lagos are listed, and India is suspected ([bit.ly/yabgAW](http://bit.ly/yabgAW)). The journal *Educational Research & Essays* recently featured articles authored from Cameroon, Iran, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Zimbabwe and the U.S.
- CCSE The Canadian Center of Science and Education runs 31 journals, is based in Toronto ([www.ccsenet.org/journal](http://www.ccsenet.org/journal)). It charges a fee of US\$300 for publication in almost all of its 31 journals.
- MACROTHINK INSTITUTE, based in Las Vegas/Nevada, charges US\$100 for publication, and has 16 journals. Its *International Journal of Linguistics*, vol. 4(3) September 2012 had an average of 14 days for processing of 25 papers from submission to acceptance (<http://goo.gl/zbVao>), with three papers from Iran accepted within 8-9 days of submission and one from Saudi Arabia in seven days. Authors were largely from Iran and Saudi Arabia, along with Malaysia, Pakistan, Yemen and Tunisia, and one paper from Israel. Of the 25 papers, 24 were from the Islamic world. Its chief editor, Jean Lee, chief editor, edits a number of journals at Macrothink. Its *Journal of Public Administration and Governance* Vol. 1 (2) 2011 averaged 21 days for article acceptance after submission.
- NOVA SCIENCE PUBLISHERS, based in Hauppauge/New York, is a widely known though controversial and ‘unconventional’ academic publisher that was founded in the 1980s and now has 110 journals under its canopy. It has an

open-access option for its digitized journals, but charges authors US\$450 per paper for this arrangement; otherwise the journals cost several hundred dollars for library subscription, or a substantial charge for access to an individual article or softcover issue [URL: [www.novapublishers.com](http://www.novapublishers.com)].

- INFO INVEST LTD ([www.sciencebg.net](http://www.sciencebg.net)), a ‘knowledge’ firm based in Burgas/Bulgaria, operates five journals online, and charges €150 for publication, unless a paper has been presented at one of its five annual conferences (conference fee €210-240). They claim to be the ‘largest publisher of scientific papers in Bulgaria.’
- PLoS. An OA venture of elite status in the sciences based in the U.S. that many would consider fully legitimate and a pacesetter is PLoS Public Library of Science, an ensemble of seven interactive online open-access science journals of high quality established a decade ago [[www.plos.org](http://www.plos.org)]. It is discussed briefly below, and in the conclusion. PLoS charges authors between US\$1,350 and \$2,900 per article, with possible waivers and discounts, among the highest OA publication fees anywhere. Why? Who can afford such publication expenses for their research, except highly funded researchers?

### 6.3 Big business?

Some such large-scale e-journal operations are publishing every month, and in the case of some journals, like *SRE*, issued under the umbrella [www.academicjournals.org](http://www.academicjournals.org) out of Lagos/Nigeria, four to five issues per month in 2012 ([tinyurl.com/4yqare5](http://tinyurl.com/4yqare5)), some 400-500 pages per month, largely authored from scientists based in Turkey, China, Iran, and Malaysia. At US\$550 per article cost to authors, this can amount to revenue of \$6,600 and more in a single week (30 July 2012). In January 2012, the *African Journal of Biotechnology*, also under this journal canopy and indexed by ISI, published 307 articles, amounting to US\$199,550 in handling fees in a single month; in May 2012, the same journal published 203 articles, equal to US\$131,950. Many of these articles had a multiple authorship of 6-9 authors, and several even up to 12, probably splitting high publication costs. A large number of the articles in *AJB* are authored by scientists based in China, Turkey, Pakistan and Iran ([tinyurl.com/3sfuqbu](http://tinyurl.com/3sfuqbu)) and elsewhere (often in the Muslim world), reflecting what the Royal Society has noted regarding the great upsurge in pressure to publish in

Turkey and Iran (Jha 2011). How much of this gargantuan intake is actual profit is difficult to determine, but some realistic production costs are discussed in the conclusion below (see also Edgar & Willinsky in press).

## **7. Seven (e)journal conglomerates closer up**

### **7.1 ACADEMIC JOURNALS.ORG**

The commercial firm academicjournals.org, based in Lagos/Nigeria, continues to expand its stable of journals, now numbering 108, many with editors largely unknown in their field. It has 28 journals in the medical sciences, 24 in biological sciences, nine in social sciences, 15 in arts and education, nine in physical sciences, 11 in agricultural sciences, one in law and three that are more general in scope. Most journals under the academicjournals.org canopy charge US\$550 for publication of an article, but may grant a waiver of some of the cost. The *African Journal of Business Management* is one of its most successful journals, and was granted prestige status by Thomson-Reuters by inclusion in the Social Sciences Citation Index and thus under the umbrella of ISI Web of Science journals. Its expansion, charging authors US\$550 per article, has been exponential, probably due to its inclusion for a time under ISI. In 2011, it reached a startling 13,579 pages, and has grown by some 28% in 2012. In 2010, its total volume was 4,229 pages, while in 2009 it had 997 pp., in 2008 242 pp., and in its founding year 2007, 243 pp. Thomson-Reuters was asked in 2010 to review the *AJBM* under ISI journals, and finally removed the journal from its list in Feb. 2012, some 18 months after serious questions regarding the journal's practices were submitted to the knowledge firm. What does this say about the nature of prestige indexing and inclusion in the academically upscale Web of Science? Harzing (2012) raises important questions about 'high-impact' self-citation and other aspects of publishing in such 'predatory' journal rackets.

The journal *Scientific Research and Essays* has likewise enjoyed exponential growth: from 1,593 pp. in 2009, to 4109 pp. in 2010, to 6,855 pp. in 2011, publishing an issue weekly. In 2012, volume declined to September by some 20%. The exponential growth of the journal is probably tied to some sort of indexing cache. *SRE* publishes research articles from a remarkable range of disparate disciplines. It describes itself as a 'very rapid response journal.' Its editor-in-chief, a biochemist at Delta State

University in Abraka/Nigeria, does not list his academic affiliation, while other editors are all at universities in the Global South, aside from one new editor in Croatia. The journal states: ‘SRE editorial board makes an objective and quick decision on each manuscript and informs the corresponding author within three weeks of submission. If accepted, the article is published online within days’ ([tinyurl.com/43r73wb](http://tinyurl.com/43r73wb)).

The probably highest volume journal of this conglomerate, the *African Journal of Biotechnology*, charges US\$650 per article, and has been publishing since late 2002. It has increased exponentially from 718 pp. in 2003 and 2004 to 1,627 in 2005, 2,603 pp. in 2006, 5,001 in 2008, 7,436 pp. in 2009, and 9,327 pp. in 2010, to 19,946 pages in 2011. Bringing out a large issue every 3-4 days [!], it reached 13,927 pages by mid-September 2012, compared with 10,810 pages at mid-September 2011, growth of some 30% in a single year. Its nine issues in August 2012 contained a total 1,005 pages. Vol. 10 (59) 3 October 2011 contains 40 articles, across numerous science disciplines. Authors in this issue are primarily from China, Iran, India and Pakistan, with two articles from Serbia and Croatia. Vol. 10(60), published two days later, has 34 articles, authored primarily from China and Iran; once again, there is one article from Serbia. Only three of the 34 articles are single-authored; two of the articles from China have ten authors each. This factor is important because scholars from low-income economies cannot afford \$650 for publication of a single article, but may be tempted to put their name on an ISI article by sharing some of the cost. In a sense, of course, this can be a gesture of ‘resistance’ to the system of the ‘audit,’ and the difficulty of publishing in journals controlled by a phalanx of editors based in the Global North.

In January 2012, the *AJB* published 307 articles, amounting to US\$199,550 in potential handling fees in a single month; in May 2012, 203 articles were published, generating US\$131,950 in possible revenue. Its editor is the same biochemist at Delta State University in Nigeria as chief editor at *SRE*, while associate editors are from Egypt, South Africa, Kenya, Turkey and Japan. The *AJB* is an ISI journal under the Web of Science, which probably accounts for its expansion. How can *AJB* be reviewing such a huge volume of articles? How many, if any, is it rejecting? The *African Journal of Agricultural Research*, another of this conglomerate’s flagship

journals (<http://goo.gl/Vooiy>), is also indexed in ISI. In its first year 2006 it had 198 pp., yet *AJAR* increased to 6,803 pp. in 2011, and is growing at a rate of just under 20% in 2012. The *AJAR* had 3,598 pp. in 2010, 1,573 in 2009, 856 pp. in 2008, thus nearly doubling its size each year. Its chief editor Prof. N.A. Amusa is based at Olabisi Onabanjo University in Ogun State, Nigeria, although his academic affiliation is not listed on the journal. It charges a processing fee of \$600 per article. Vol. 7 (25-29) in July 2012 published 73 articles, generating \$48,300 in potential fees. Authors are scientists largely from across the Global South.

By marked contrast, a host of journals in the humanities, tourism, and education are struggling to attract authors, all charging a \$550 processing fee. The *Journal of Fine and Studio Art* has had but three articles since its launch in 2010, a total of 16 pp. The *International Journal of English and Literature* had 205 pp. for 2011, largely by authors in Iran, Iraq, India, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Kenya and China. In 2011, the *Journal of Languages and Culture* had papers from Iran, Kenya, Nigeria, Malaysia, Ethiopia, China and the U.S., with 213 pp. The *Journal of Hospitality Management and Tourism* had only 65 pp. in 2011, with articles from Taiwan, Iran and southern Africa. In the educational sciences, the journal *Educational Research and Reviews*, reaching 1,057 pp. in 2011, had articles from scholars especially in Turkey, as well as Pakistan, Nigeria and Iran. It began publication every week in Sept. 2011, but has since shifted to twice a month. *ERR* has a broad international advisory board, but attracts articles mainly from the Global South (<http://goo.gl/bN4z2>). The *International Journal of Educational Administration and Policy Studies* had 221 pp. in 2011, and is expanding in 2012. In 2012, it has had articles in the main from Nigeria and Kenya, along with Zimbabwe, Malaysia, Turkey, Taiwan, UAE, India, Brazil and Australia. Its editors are based in Greece, Malaysia and Turkey (<http://goo.gl/TpBez>). The *International Journal of Library and Information Science* had 241 pp. in 2011, with articles mainly by researchers in India and Nigeria, its editors based in Botswana, India, Nigeria and Ethiopia.

## 7.2 INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNALS

(<http://interesjournals.org/index.htm>)

IRJ describes itself as follows: ‘The establishment of [...] International Research Journals is an answer to the wishes and desires of many researchers and teachers in developing nations especially in Africa and Asia who lack free access to quality materials online. This Journal opts to bring panacea to this problem, and to encourage research development’ ([tinyurl.com/3zzmms8](http://tinyurl.com/3zzmms8)). Based in Sapele in Nigeria’s Delta State, its vision is to ‘provide the largest pool of OPEN ACCESS Journals with a bias for African and Asian subjects, publishing over 200 journals by 2020.’ IRS runs 33 journals, published monthly, and states that articles generally appear within a month after acceptance. Acceptance can take several months, or only 2-3 weeks. The handling fee of US\$400 per article can be waived in part. It is superb to have such a platform largely for African and Asian scholars, but why at this high fee? How often is there a fee waiver, partial or full? Moreover, there is no university in Sapele; Delta State Univ. is in Abraka, at a short distance to the east. The editor-in-chief of *Scientific Research and Essays*, mentioned above, is anchored at Delta State University. One may wonder whether there is some connection between IRJ and the journal *SRE*.

The *Journal of Research in Peace, Gender and Development*, established in February 2011, has had articles from Zambia, Nigeria, Iran, Ethiopia, Lebanon, India, Kenya, Ireland, Cameroon, Australia, Tanzania, Mozambique, Ghana, Congo, Bangladesh, and the U.S.

The journal *Educational Research* (<http://interesjournals.org/ER/archive.htm>) is edited by scholars from Nigeria, South Africa, UK and Turkey. Vol. 3 (2012) has articles by authors from Brazil, Ghana, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Kenya, Iran, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Brunei, Mexico, Argentina, Philippines, Belgium, Indonesia, Malaysia, Namibia, Taiwan, China, India, Egypt and Oman. So it is clear that some 95% of papers accepted in these journals are from the Global South. *ER* reached 1830 pages and 139 articles for 2011. What proportion of the total fees of US\$55,600 for this 12-month period was waived is of course not public knowledge. Who owns IRJ? How much of total authors’ fees are indeed profit, and for whom? If



it is publishing every month, how many articles is the journal rejecting? How many academics from outside Africa and Asia are submitting articles, since few appear here? Is this the kind of journal conglomerate model scholars in the developing world need? Or is it a paradigm of their exploitation?

### **7.3 PRIME JOURNALS** (<http://www.primejournal.org> )

Likewise based in Nigeria and launched in 2009, it has expanded to nine journals. *Prime Research on Education* reached 146 pp. in 2011. It has articles by authors primarily based in Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Iran, South and East Africa in recent monthly issues. The *PRE* editorial board, from Malaysia, Spain and Iran, has changed completely over the past year. The article handling fee is US\$400. Yet article quality can be high, as reflected in this detailed empirical study on forestation governance and deforestation in Tanzania ([tinyurl.com/76uneua](http://tinyurl.com/76uneua)). The *Prime Journal of Business Administration and Management* has articles authored largely from Kenya, Iran, India, Nigeria, Zimbabwe. Its editors are principally based in India, Abu Dhabi, Malaysia and China; handling fee is US\$500 per article. The *Prime Journal of Microbiology Research* has an editorial board based mainly in India, Mauritius, China and Iran, and has research authored largely from India, Nigeria and Iran, again at \$400 per article. The *Prime Journal of Physical Science* has had 2 issues in 2012, with 24 pp. total; its editorial board has scholars from Ghana, Malaysia, India and Iran, and the handling fee is \$300 per article. The *Prime Journal of Social Science* had articles from Uganda, Zimbabwe, Turkey, Kenya and Ghana since its launch in 2012, with an editorial team from Romania, India, Malaysia and Kenya; handling fee is likewise \$300. The *Prime Journal on Medicine* has had articles mainly from Nigeria and India since its inception in 2011.

### **7.4 CCSE** (<http://ccsenet.org/web/about-us.html>)

CCSE, a 'knowledge industry' firm based in Toronto and established in 2006, is rapidly expanding. It describes itself as 'an independent organization delivering supports and services to education and research in Canada and the world,' and charges US\$300 per article for publication in most of its 31 journals. *IES* was mentioned in the introduction. The time period between submission and acceptance of articles in *English Language Teaching* (Vol. 4[3] 2011), averaged between 2-4 weeks, with

some exceptions, raising questions about the nature of its peer-review process ([tinyurl.com/3gfxdmz](http://tinyurl.com/3gfxdmz)). *ELT* published some 120 articles a year on English language teaching in 2010 and 2011, largely authored from the Global South, among the highest volume journals in the field. At \$300 per article, it took in \$36,000 in 2010 and 2011. In 2012, its volume has soared significantly with 199 articles in 11 issues to mid-September. Iranian and Chinese authors are heavily represented. Striking is that of 184 articles in Vol. 5/1-10 (2012), only a small handful have authors who are probably ‘native speakers’ of English, with none in issue 5/11. Its sister journal, the *International Journal of English Linguistics*, launched in 2011, has authors again largely from Iran and China, and is proving very popular, with 119 articles in its first year of publication (six issues), generating a potential US\$35,700 in processing fees (<http://goo.gl/Tdxha>). The first four issues of *English Language and Literature Studies* (2011) have articles mainly from Iran, Malaysia, China, Taiwan and Oman ([tinyurl.com/3zu92be](http://tinyurl.com/3zu92be)), submission to acceptance averaging 20 days. Although an English Studies journal, there appear to be no ‘native speaker’ authors in its initial issues; however, that cannot be fully determined. Clearly the journal appeals to scholars in the ‘developing’ world. The *International Journal of Psychological Studies* (Vol. 3[1] 2011) has articles largely by authors in Malaysia, as well as Hong Kong, Iran, Italy, India and Pakistan ([tinyurl.com/6gdjdv1](http://tinyurl.com/6gdjdv1)). The *Journal of Geography and Geology* (Vol. 3[1] 2011) has papers by scientists in Nigeria (predominant), South Africa, Sudan, Iran, India, Pakistan, Cameroon, Ethiopia, China, Uganda, Spain and Iraq. The *Journal of Politics and Law* (Vol. 4[2] 2011) has authors from Nigeria, Jordan, Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, Nigeria, Tunisia, and several papers from the US, UK and Italy. The *International Journal of Chemistry* (Vol. 3[3] 2011) has authors from Malaysia, Egypt, Iraq, India, China, Turkey and Nigeria. Conspicuous thus is largely the absence of authors from the Global North. Average time from submission to acceptance for articles in all these journals is around three weeks, or less. Though based in Canada, CCSE has virtually no input from Canadian authors.

Who owns CCSE and who are on its board of directors? This is not specified in any way, not a single name. Its affiliate ScholarTime is a new hosting service for academic journals that offers its basic package at US\$600 a year, encouraging in effect academic journal ‘entrepreneurs’ ([www.scholartime.com](http://www.scholartime.com)).

## 7.5 NOVA SCIENCE PUBLISHERS

NOVA is perhaps the most controversial long-established academic publisher in the world. It publishes a broad spectrum of books, and now has 110 journals under its umbrella. Long run by Frank H. Columbus, who passed away in late 2010, it is now operated by his widow. NOVA has a huge catalogue of books in many fields, with 398 under the rubric of 'education' alone ([tinyurl.com/6j1q7fp](http://tinyurl.com/6j1q7fp)); newer books are in the range of \$126 to around \$200. Its series *Progress in Education* ranges between \$67 and \$193.50 for recent volumes 2012. NOVA operates 110 journals, many recently launched, and is expanding in this area, proactively seeking new proposals for journals ([tinyurl.com/3tcaxzf](http://tinyurl.com/3tcaxzf)). The *Journal of Education Research*, now in Vol. 6, still lists Frank Columbus as editor (<http://goo.gl/h7NKU>). Individual articles can be purchased for \$43. The *International Journal of University Teaching and Faculty Development* is edited from Spain and published quarterly; a single issue costs US\$100. Articles in most NOVA journals can be made available open-access online, but the charge to the author is \$450, and thus is quite infrequent, but some authors choose that costly option, as in the journal *Issues in Intercultural Communication* 3(1) ([tinyurl.com/44462zh](http://tinyurl.com/44462zh)). The editors seek to persuade authors to opt for open access by paying this fee. Open Access Express (immediately after page proofs) costs \$750. English editing/styling services are available for \$350. Authors can purchase a full post-production PDF of the article for personal use only, not printable, for \$250; the same PDF for unlimited use and printing is \$450. They offer a 'dedicated website' for the article for \$350. These charges to authors are quite high, compared with any cost-free online journals. Bade (2007) raises a number of questions about practices at NOVA over the years, as does this blog: ([tinyurl.com/6crw1xl](http://tinyurl.com/6crw1xl)).

## 7.6 INFO INVEST Ltd (Burgas, Bulgaria ([www.sciencebg.net](http://www.sciencebg.net)))

Turning to Eastern Europe, scholars at Russian Federation universities (or Russians in the U.S.) appear prominently on the editorial boards of several of the five online journals which Info Invest operates from Burgas/Bulgaria ([www.ejournalnet.com](http://www.ejournalnet.com)), charging €150 for publication ([www.science-journals.eu](http://www.science-journals.eu)), unless the paper was presented at one of the six annual conferences it sponsors at the Imperial Hotel in Sunny Beach resort on the Black Sea. Journals include *Language, Individual & Society* (<http://goo.gl/J3IEG>) and *Educational Alternatives* (<http://goo.gl/XvOKi>).

These journals state: they notify on acceptance within 20 days of submission (see <http://goo.gl/eOIKw>). The journal *Economy and Business* has only one Bulgarian on its editorial board of 20, ditto for the journal *Ecology & Safety*. Vol. 3 (2009) of *Language, Individual & Society (LIS)* had seven articles authored by Bulgarians, but Vols. 4 and 5 (2010/2011) had no papers from Bulgarian academics aside from a scholar based directly in Burgas, Vol. (2012) had four Bulgarian-authored papers of the 28 published, two again by the same scholar based in Burgas. The journal has no Bulgarian editors. *Educational Alternatives* (vol. 10, 2012) has no Bulgarian editors, and only three papers by Bulgarian scholars out of some 120; most are by Russian scholars. The cost of publication (or conference participation at €210; €240 after deadline) is likely a factor in the EU's lowest-income country, where most academics and school teachers earn a gross monthly pay equivalent to €350, with net take-home far less. By contrast, the *Bulgarian Journal of Science and Education Policy*, now in vol. 6, publishes OA, with no charge to authors (<http://goo.gl/e4yfd>), and is under DOAJ. Bulgarian scholars should look carefully at the conference and journal initiatives of this academic entrepreneurial initiative in Burgas, claiming to be the 'largest publisher of scientific papers in Bulgaria' ([tinyurl.com/5urwjdh](http://tinyurl.com/5urwjdh)).

### 7.7 PLoS (<http://www.plos.org>)

This knowledge firm, established in 2000 by scientists at Stanford and Berkeley, and now publishing seven different open-access online high quality journals in the natural sciences, describes itself in glowing terms:

The Public Library of Science (PLoS) is an innovative non-profit open-access publisher and advocacy organization. It is headquartered in San Francisco, US, and has offices in Cambridge, UK. Its mission is to establish more open, efficient, and effective ways to communicate new ideas and discoveries. Everything we publish is in 'open access' — freely available online throughout the world, for anyone to read, download, copy, distribute, and use. PLoS has a global team of more than 80 people working in our editorial, production, information technology, administration, marketing, communications, and advocacy teams. Our work environment is team-oriented and rich in innovative ideas. PLoS's distinguished Board of Directors includes eminent scientists, business leaders, and entrepreneurs.

In just eight years, PLoS has established seven highly successful journals that publish original content, an influential blog network, and a number of other initiatives to improve the organization and assessment of content for the benefit of different communities (<http://www.plos.org/about/jobs/>).

PLoS has received generous support from the MacArthur Foundation, the Sloan Foundation, the Bill Gates Foundation and a number of other foundational supporters. It prides itself as an example of ‘excellence, financial fairness, internationalism, integrity, breadth, science as a public resource’ ([tinyurl.com/3v8a5zc](http://tinyurl.com/3v8a5zc)). Nonetheless, this journal initiative charges notably high fees to authors:

- *PLoS Biology* US\$2900
- *PLoS Medicine* \$2900
- *PLoS Computational Biology* \$2250
- *PLoS Genetics* \$2250
- *PLoS Pathogens* \$2250
- *PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases* \$2250
- *PLoS ONE* \$1350

PLoS offers generous waivers for those scholars who lack sufficient funds (whatever that may actually mean in practice), and has other publication support options available. Yet it would seem to appeal especially to Global North scientists with large research grants, who can readily afford to publish by diverting some grant money to PLoS. The journal *PLoS ONE* has many editors across the world on its board, and is regarded as very ‘high-impact.’

Morrison (2010b) notes: ‘At the PLoS average article processing fee of \$1,649 U.S. per article, or BMC average article processing charge of \$1,560 U.S., libraries worldwide could fund full open access to the world's estimated 1.5 million scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles produced every year at less than 30% of current annual global academic library journal expenditures.’ She sees PLoS as a model for an alternative transition to open access by academic libraries across the planet (Morrison

2011), and notes that four of its seven journals are among the high-impact now in their fields.

The far larger BioMed Central (BMC), an open-access science journal venture ([tinyurl.com/3zl8f3b](http://tinyurl.com/3zl8f3b)), with a portfolio of over 220 e-journals, also charges a high fee between ca. US\$1,300 and \$2,500 per article to authors, and will not be dealt with further here. It is a venture much respected in many fields, mainly the natural sciences, with journals such as *BM Medicine*, *BMC Biology*, *Transplantation Research*, *Longevity & Healthspan*, edited by prominent experts in their fields. Yet *Poiesis & Praxis: International Journal of Technology Assessment and Ethics of Science*, published by Springer, a major corporate player in academic publishing, is also part of this open-access BMC venture ([tinyurl.com/6bgagvl](http://tinyurl.com/6bgagvl)).

We may wonder: is PLoS a model for open-access digital publication and sharing of knowledge on a more democratic and equitable basis? Ditto for BioMed Central? Do the high fees actually ensure that scholars with a low income and minimal financial support from their own institution or grant scheme can also have equal access – i.e. do high fees for those from richer economies undergird a kind of distributive equity? These are questions which separate investigation should look into. It would be interesting to discover how many articles PLoS rejects are subsequently published in some author-pays journal conglomerate of questionable status. What is the role of corporate foundation funding in the operations of PLoS? Is it an example of a kind of nexus between digital high-quality knowledge distribution and some alternative sources of North American and Euro-Atlantic capital for elite research projects?

## **7.8 Further predatory journal ventures Beall has spotlighted**

Among those Beall scrutinizes but I do not look at more closely, most maintaining a U.S. office. Empirical research on each of these operations is needed:

- **David Publishing**, based somewhere in the U.S., with a fleet of some 30 journals, in humanities, social sciences, business and engineering (<http://www.davidpublishing.org/>) is a veritable paradigm of such predatory journal conglomerates. Although its information to authors says nothing about

fees, David charges authors \$1,090 for publication. This can come as a complete surprise to an author, as Jeff Beall describes ([tinyurl.com/9ymlqqw](http://tinyurl.com/9ymlqqw)).

- **Scientific Research Publishing (SCIRP)** is one of the largest Open Access journal publishers. It is currently publishing more than 200 journals covering a wide range of academic disciplines. A conglomerate based in Irvine/CA, SCIRP charges \$400-500 per article for the first ten printed pages, \$50 for each additional page. In the field of educational sciences, the journal *Creative Education* (<http://www.Scirp.org/journal/ce>) exemplifies its policies. Turnaround from submission to acceptance averages 5-6 weeks and the journal publishes 6x a year. A 15-page article in CE would be charged \$750.
- **OMICS**, launched in 2009, based in Los Angeles and Hyderabad, with more than 12,000 Facebook fans and ca. 20,000 editorial board members, has some 200 journals under its expanding canopy ([tinyurl.com/9bz4l73](http://tinyurl.com/9bz4l73)). It also sponsors many conferences worldwide. OMICS charges a ‘processing fee’ from \$900-1800 depending on income level of the author’s country of residence (<http://goo.gl/BRu0v>). Its time from submission to publication for some journals, like *Mass Communication & Journalism*, may be 2-3 days, see issue 2/6 (2012) ([tinyurl.com/8gpq3p2](http://tinyurl.com/8gpq3p2)). Of its now 200 journals, some 40 percent still have no content. Stratford (2012) cautions: ‘[...] numerous authors, faculty members, and open-access advocates have raised concerns about the practices of OMICS and the quality of its journals. In some cases, faculty members say they were named to editorial boards without their consent and cannot get OMICS to remove their names. Some authors allege that despite the company's claims, their articles were not peer reviewed [...].’
- **Global Journals Inc. (US)** claims to be based in Cambridge/MA, with some 50 journals and expanding. Its processing fee is US\$300 and up, depending on length. Jeff Beall suspects this mega-journal conglomerate may actually run out of India ([tinyurl.com/9h4h6nt](http://tinyurl.com/9h4h6nt)).
- **IBIMA Publishing** has some 59 journals in fields of business, life sciences, material sciences. <http://www.ibimapublishing.com/>. It is based ostensibly in Pennsylvania and is a ‘one-man’ operation. Jeffrey Beall has looked into it in some detail ([tinyurl.com/923gwlm](http://tinyurl.com/923gwlm)). Charges range from USD295 to \$395 per article. As a gimmick, in mid-2012 it was offering ‘free of charge’ publication for a ‘limited time’ in 12 of its journals, eight of which have yet to appear.

- **OpenAccessPub** (<http://openaccesspub.org>). Beall notes: ‘a brand-new outfit based out of an apartment in Rancho Cordova, California [...]. The site lists nine journals, but none has any content. Surprisingly, the editorial boards contain impressive lists of scholars. They include prominent academics from Harvard, Syracuse University, and Baylor College of Medicine. Something is wrong, for I am sure all the researchers listed as editorial board members did not agree to serve’ (<http://goo.gl/mOJ28>). It charges US\$540 per article to authors.
- **Dovepress** (<http://www.dovepress.com>) in Auckland/New Zealand publishes a fleet of 120 journals, largely in medical research and the natural sciences. Its high processing fee ranges €1,250 to €1,372 per article for authors in most countries.

### 7.9 A miscellany of other journals awaiting analysis

New journal ventures are appearing across the globe, hard to keep up with as they proliferate. All require scrutiny. I urge extended empirical research. Most reflect an urge to decolonize research production and dissemination, and charge a high fee in the process; some do not. For example, the new *Education Research Journal*, founded in June 2011 ([tinyurl.com/c72zpzp](http://tinyurl.com/c72zpzp)). *ERJ* charges US\$450 per article for processing, and is largely edited out of the Arab world. The *American International Journal of Contemporary Research* promises review within two weeks and demands US\$200 for publication ([tinyurl.com/7tjhwze](http://tinyurl.com/7tjhwze)). In 2012, it was publishing about 25 articles a month, from many disciplines. *Science Education Review*, published out of Australia, charges authors AUD110 per page, capped at 3000AUD ([tinyurl.com/6qe5ogd](http://tinyurl.com/6qe5ogd)), making it one of the most costly of all online journals. Moreover, it also charges a subscription fee for users of AUD60 per annum. Progress Publishing in Azerbaijan has seven journals, claiming it charges no processing fee (<http://www.ijar.lit.az/>). But the *International Journal of Academic Research*, the *Journal of Education and Sociology*, the *Journal of Language and Literature* and the *International Journal of Academic Research* (which publishes articles in all disciplines) have another costly requirement: all authors must purchase a print copy of the journal at US\$200-240 per issue (<http://goo.gl/e7F3N>). Any article over 3,500 words will be additionally charged \$50 per 1,000 words for ‘postage,’ so an article of 6,500 words would cost



the author \$350. The *International Review of Social Sciences and Humanities*, founded in 2011, charges US\$20 per page, with a minimum of \$200 per article (<http://www.irssh.com>). The *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, launched 2010, and the *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, launched 2011, are both connected with the MCSER center in Rome, and charge €150 to authors per article ([tinyurl.com/d36etkj](http://tinyurl.com/d36etkj)). The review process is promised to take no more than 2-3 weeks. *JESR* (May 2012) contains 39 articles, many authored from Iran. By contrast, the *International Journal of Instruction*, published from Turkey since 2008, with some 25 articles per year, appears to require no fee from authors (<http://www.e-iji.net>).

#### **8. A host of questions arise for future research, among them:**

- Why do researchers choose to pay high fees to publish in questionable new online journals? Is the rapid turnaround time of fast processing a paramount factor?
- How do authors cover the costs of high processing fees? How many receive waivers, or assistance from their universities?
- What percentage of papers in dubious journals are of excellent quality, probably published there mainly for lightning-fast processing, whatever the charge?
- What the various criteria scholars use when deciding where to submit their manuscripts, including ‘net value of submission’ factors (Solomon & Björk 2011: 9-10)?
- How many articles appearing in these journals were rejected elsewhere?
- What is the rejection rate for articles submitted to these journals, if at all?
- How can such journals operate an honest and proper peer-review process if they have a financial interest in publishing papers fast, and in high volume, often with lightning-fast processing and publication?
- Who pockets the probable profit for publication, since production costs are demonstrably cheaper?
- How can some of these journals, like the *African Journal of Business Management*, operate with four to five issues per month, ranging from some

850 to 1,150 pages each issue? As of mid-August, the journal had published under 9,369 pages [!] in 2012, expanding at some 200 pp. per week.

- Many such papers are multiple-authored. The *International Journal of Linguistics* 4(3) Sept. 2012 at Macrothink Institute (<http://goo.gl/zbVao>) had 72% of its papers multiple-authored, unusual for a linguistics journal. Is this in part to split & share the costs of the processing fee? In some disciplines, multiple-authorship is very common, even a norm; in others, including, education and many social sciences and humanities disciplines, it is not.
- Why are 80-90% of articles in many journals authored by scholars mainly in the ‘developing’ world? *Educational Research and Reviews*, a journal of the academicjournals.org conglomerate, had authors April to July 2012 almost exclusively based in Turkish universities (<http://goo.gl/ZlpbS>).
- How have some of these journals, like the *African Journal of Business Management*, the *African Journal of Biotechnology* and *African Journal of Agricultural Research* (under academicjournals.org), managed to achieve ISI status (even if later removed)?
- What are universities doing about staff members publishing in ‘predatory’ journals? Are some turning a blind eye, others (as in SE Asia) issuing warnings to staff to avoid specific journals?
- Are there practicable cost-free quality sustainable alternatives in moving forward to an ‘equitable planetary knowledge commons’?

## 9. Linguistic Imperialism, ‘lingua frankensteinia’?

Entangled in the coloniality of power knowledge is the element of dominant language: significantly, most academic journals, including those classified here as ‘predatory,’ are in English. Though beyond the scope of the present paper, it is also necessary to interrogate the dominance of English as the main academic global language and itself a measure of the ‘quality’ of international scholarship (Lillis & Curry 2010). Horner (2011: 444) reminds us that ‘knowledge production is best understood as a material social practice shaped by a politics of ‘location’ in terms of not only geography but also language(s), resources, and global power relations.’ The present article does not focus on this dimension of the Anglo academic lingua franca, or ‘lingua frankensteinia’ (Phillipson 2009, chap. 7) and its neo-imperial global sprawl, a form

of rampant ‘linguicism’ ([tinyurl.com/79xnwbu](http://tinyurl.com/79xnwbu)) in knowledge production, also extending to the excessive translation of English-based textbooks in many fields into other languages (Hsiung 2012), and the epistemological and methodological distortions this gives rise to. Phillipson (2003) raises serious questions about the destructive role of English today across Europe.

Hill (2012a) mentions the ‘BANA- Britain, Australasia, North America-dominance / hegemony within English language and publications, books, reviews, journals, rendered “high status” through this Anglophone- and specifically, United States, hegemony,’ and the ‘privileged group in the economy of higher education, those in BANA.’ He underscores the attempt ‘in a small way to overcome this linguistic imperialism to an extent by deliberately publishing articles from outside of BANA in JCEPS [...] and in the composition of the international editorial advisory board.’ But English remains the only language of JCEPS. Marxist *Kritische Psychologie* in Germany, associated with the work of Klaus Holzkamp and many others in critical pedagogy there (<http://goo.gl/wrZNK>) and largely in German, has had barely any reception anywhere in BANA. Nor have these links:

<http://www.grundrisse.net/links.htm> .

Commenting on Lillis & Curry (2010), Danylak (2010) stresses:

The study [...] shows that while scholars experience growing institutional and governmental pressures to publish in English, and to do so as broadly as possible and in journals having high-impact factors, they often lack the resources and support to meet these challenges. [...] The scholars participating in this study do not always have the financial means to attend conferences, collaborate on research, and access other resources. They also often struggle to find the extra time needed to write in English. In addition to these limitations, which hinder scholars' ability to publish in English, the global research community at large suffers by not receiving their research findings, insights, and methodologies.

### **9.1 Editing in English: a spreading potential racket online**

Given the dominance of academic English in nearly all disciplines, editing of articles has become a service offered online by a variety of firms, some reputable, some perhaps not. One based in Nigeria, International Proof Reading ([tinyurl.com/79lwurz](http://tinyurl.com/79lwurz)), charges US\$50 for 1-14 pages, \$80 for 15-19 pages, ranging up to \$130 for 30-39 pages. Perhaps their work is good, but their own website contains a number of errors

in English, hardly encouraging confidence in their expertise. Here too, we have an attempt on the post-colonial (or re-colonial) periphery of English to provide a needed service, but at inflated rates. Another recent proofreading venture (<http://www.manuscript-proofreading.org>) charges the same rates, and lists no editors, no address. Beall writes about this as ‘And now, a proofreading scam’ (<http://goo.gl/OCwM3>), though it is hardly the first. A\*Editing Services is a more reliable enterprise in the UK, but does not list its rates at all on its site (<http://goo.gl/MYdWd>). Who stands behind such service ventures? Who can afford its services? Here too we see the contours of hegemonic and subaltern knowledge production and its epistemologies & validation in Dei’s (2011) sense. The entire area of how scholars for whom English is a second language prepare their work for publication requires a separate set of studies, researching the research process. It is clear that people are open to exploitation in this crucial area of publication preparation, since peer reviewers and editors are often very strict about the ‘standard’ of English they demand in an article, another aspect of linguistic Eurodominance. Some qualified editors take €30 an hour, but who should pay?

## **10. Concluding thoughts**

All the questions touched on need exacting research, in particular about the quality and nature of articles being published in journals suspected of being part of a journal ‘racket,’ actual experience of authors and editors with such journals, of which Stratford (2012) is a brief albeit more journalistic paradigm. Empirical data is needed on the questions raised in Sec. 8. above.

The internationalization of science now in high gear (Jha 2011) under late capitalism is very positive, decolonizing knowledge production in important ways. It is understandable that academics and scientists from all fields throughout the Global South and lower-income economies in the North turn to other ‘easier access’ outlets for publication, even for a high price, under the constraints of academic life worlds smothered under the mountings pressures of ‘audit’ and accountability. But these possible journal rackets are potential exploiters: they should be investigated carefully, evidence gathered and made public, and should if necessary be pressured to shut down. They can undermine the integrity of research and proliferate science fraud (Lim 2011; Special Correspondent 2010; Xin Hao 2011). Research misconduct and faking

of findings are perhaps spreading in a number of fields, in the most hallowed halls of Western academe (Gill 2012).

### 10.1 Transforming the coloniality of power/knowledge?

I can't wait until the syntax of the world comes undone.  
Italo Calvino, *The Castle of Crossed Destinies* (Negri & Hardt, 2009: 1)

More broadly involved here are basic contestations about asymmetrical power and representation and the geopolitics of hegemonic and subaltern knowledge production and its epistemologies, its validation and dissemination on a global scale. Shiva (2000: vii) notes that colonialism from its beginnings has 'been a contest over the mind and the intellect. What will count as knowledge? And who will count as expert or innovator?' Knowledge production and distribution is highly 'entangled' with the 'colonial power matrix' that Grosfoguel (2008), Quijano (2000), Jaramillo and others speak of at the core of the world-system, a coloniality of eurocentered power/knowledge that needs to be decolonized. This coloniality of power is manifested as 'multiple, intersecting, and entangled hierarchies include race/ethnicity, sexuality, spirituality, language, epistemology, an interstate system of political-military organizations controlled by European males, an international division of labor of core and periphery, and a particular global class formation that situated nation-states geopolitically' (Jaramillo 2012: 71-72). Students and scientists/scholars long oppressed by dominant discourses can find it extremely difficult to move beyond these 'naturalized' and interiorized structures, assumptions and values, let alone challenge or oppose them (Dei 2010). The sheer naturalized hegemony of Eurocentric *bürgerliche Wissenschaft* ('bourgeois science') is overwhelming, 'grounded on the necessities of bourgeois society, geared to maintaining the given life relations, promoting their development and mastering their problems,' speciously appearing in the guise of 'independent, free and unbiased knowledge' (Kulturkritik 2012).

Significant and worthy of a special research focus is the fact that many who are publishing under 'predatory' journal umbrellas are situated in the Muslim academic world. Why are so many authors based in Iran, Turkey, Pakistan, Islamic SE Asia, the Gulf and North Africa drawn to these outlets for their research? In the dynamics of re-

colonial relations in research, is there a kind of ‘domestication of academic colonialism’ operative here, reproducing imperial practices of Eurocentric scholarship and science – and ‘the power of the colonial [racial] dominant’ (Dei 2010: xi) -- on a truly cyber-global scale? Do qualitative and other ‘scholars in the periphery do more than simply retrieve, modify, and return research tools from a “toolbox of approaches and practices” presumably created by the core?’ (Hsiung 2012). Or is this in some way a decolonizing of knowledge production, as some may argue, expanding the entire platform of knowledge creation & distribution, challenging still largely Eurocentric in terms of control und international Capital’s dominion and bourgeois ideological formations?

In the field of education, the premier OA ‘multi-lingual’ review journal *Education Review* (<http://www.edrev.info/>) is reflective of a strong Euro-Atlantic dominance: virtually all books in English reviewed are published in North America or the UK, and nearly all reviewers likewise are based in the Americas or (rarely) Western Europe. Its Spanish/Portuguese section is a good antidote to this almost ‘naturalized’ Anglocentricity. Yet seldom are any books in education published elsewhere in English across the globe or in other languages, such as German, French, Arabic or Mandarin, ever reviewed. In September 2012 they carried one excellent exception from China (<http://goo.gl/EO6Q6>). This Atlanto-centric skewing may have practical reasons, but needs to be overcome. *ER* recently published its 3,000<sup>th</sup> review, here a nice video with Gene Glass to mark the occasion (<http://goo.gl/p0Py2>).

Hsiung (2012) surveys in depth attempts to indigenize and decolonize qualitative research outside the Anglo-American dominant core, stressing that researchers from the core establishment are

intellectually and politically obligated to change the unidirectional flow of knowledge and capital from the core to the periphery into an intellectual dialogue that disrupts the hierarchical, core-periphery divide. [...] Moreover, qualitative scholars in the periphery should explore how they could enrich the existing ‘toolbox’ of QR and how their indigenization of QR could expand the horizon of QR methodologically and/or epistemologically.

This topic requires a separate in-depth treatment in the framework of the geopolitics of hegemonic knowledges, the impact of imperial and re-colonial structures on

knowledge production, and the affirming of counter-hegemonic local indigenous ways of knowing, and new understandings of Indigeneity and the coloniality of power/knowledge (Grosfoguel, 2008; Dei, 2010; Wane, Kempf & Simmons, 2011). Looking at Mexico, Pérez-Aguilera & Figueroa-Helland (2011: 291) stress: ‘Bland multiculturalisms must be surpassed by critically-engaged, proactive and fertile interculturalisms that challenge power-relations, redress historical injustices, and promote epistemic-reciprocity.’

## **10.2 Fair costs, future constellations in a ‘knowledge commons’**

I realize that the questions raised here are controversial, and that the operators, editors and reviewers at these journals, and their authors, might reject the charges we raise or aspects we question. Since most of their operations are shrouded in secrecy and non-transparent, empirical investigations are necessary, though fraught with difficulty. Useful would be qualitative studies that interview a cross-section of authors who choose to publish in these journals, exploring their views and motives; and interview data from talks with editors and those actually behind these journals.

A major question is: what is the fair cost for publishing a journal online, and who should cover the cost? It is possible to publish a journal through Wordpress (wordpress.org) online for very little cost, with voluntary effort. A journal can be attached to a university or organizational website, and operated at a cost under €200 a year, plus voluntary work for editing. If the webmaster does not volunteer services, then of course certain personnel expenses are involved. Other options might indicate a cost in the range €2-3 per page, for a variety of arrangements. The online science venture arXiv (arxiv.org) at Cornell Univ. is cost-free to users and submitters, and is in a sense *the* paradigm for other fields of knowledge. Egypt has become a leader in OA journals, ranked no. 6 in the world with 335 journals (DOAJ; Taha 2010). How are they being financed in a country with very low per capita income?

As a new publishing venture in the field of education studies in Eastern Europe, the quality journal *Problems of Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, published from Lithuania since 2007 and now in vol. 45 (2012) (tinyurl.com/5tc74zc), charges authors €15 per A4 page, which the editors believe is reasonable (<http://goo.gl/9rd6I>). The journal

states it rejects some 50% of submissions, and publishes in soft-cover format, so printing expenses are necessary. Online access is not available. Yet the Polish-Slovak-Czech *New Educational Review* charges authors nothing, and is available both online and in print form ([www.educationalrev.us.edu.pl](http://www.educationalrev.us.edu.pl)). It is under the (ISI) Web of Science of Thomson-Reuters, the only such ISI education journal published in East-Central and Eastern Europe.

JCEPS online has operating expenses of ca. £1,000 annually, but charges authors nothing (Hill 2012b). This amounts to an outlay of £600 per issue. Vol. 10/1 contains 22 articles, suggesting a cost of ca. £27 per article, but this is an especially full issue. Vol. 9 has a total of 30 articles, which would be £40 per article at management costs paid from the editor's pocket. Editor Dave Hill, who has put in some 1,000 hours of work per year since the journal's founding, notes that he would make a clear profit were he to charge authors even €14-15 per page (personal communication, 15 Sept. 2011). How many OA journals require the selfless dedication of 1,000 hours a year unpaid work by a chief editor to keep them afloat? Should that be necessary? Edgar & Willinsky (in press), in a survey of Open Journal Systems periodicals, come to a figure of US\$188 as average total cost per article for publication, a fraction of the charge to authors at PLoS, but perhaps close to what *Problems of Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* is charging for 10 pages. Morrison (2011).comments: 'If the goal is an affordable open access scholarly publishing system, it makes sense to support scholar-publishers of the type included in the OJS survey, and it makes sense to support cost-effective charges like the BMC standard and PLoS ONE.' To my mind, the charges at BMC and PLoS at present are simply much too high, except for academics with relatively large research budgets. Altbach & Rapple (2012: 7) underline the need for universities and scholarly societies, expanding through OA inventiveness, to 'wrest more control of both the production and diffusion of scholarship away from commercial publishers, legitimate and illegitimate,' and stress that 'quality control and prices could be placed on a surer footing.' Solomon & Björk (2012: 15) found that in answer to the question 'If there were a journal in which you had a strong desire to publish, what would be the maximum APC you would be willing to pay?', the responses averaged US\$649 and a standard deviation of US\$749, with authors assuming the question to mean pay 'out of their own pocket.' But many of us would never agree to such a charge. Numerous younger academics working as adjuncts in



the U.S., often with income below the poverty line (Kendzior 2012), would clearly be unable to pay such fees.

Scholars must raise demands for transparency for all publishing outlets for their work. In my view, they should not be required to pay handling fees for publication which enrich those running the publishing ‘firm,’ whose identities are often unknown. Whatever questions are raised here about such journals, I am not looking at the quality of the articles published. A separate study would have to show that a number of these articles would be rejected elsewhere. The journal *Nature* rejects 92% of submissions. Whether peer review is really effective in all fields is another crucial question, currently much debated ([tinyurl.com/2sf7yn](http://tinyurl.com/2sf7yn)). A useful site created by Morrison has various articles on peer review and alternatives ([tinyurl.com/3qstpck](http://tinyurl.com/3qstpck)). ArXiv does not employ standard peer reviews, but experiments with other modes. Pre-submission collegial collaborative research and ongoing team-generated peer review (Morrison 2010a) are one alternative that is in fact happening in some subfields of the hard sciences.

### **10.2.1 ‘Imagine all the people / Sharing all the world ...’**

The need for these ‘predatory’ outlets has to be eliminated through a radical transformation of what KAFCA (2011) calls the ‘self-organization of knowledge production.’ This general thrust is also reflected in *The Imaginary Journal of Poetic Economics*, founded in 2005 by librarian Heather Morrison, a major Canadian activist for OA journals and the transformation of knowledge distribution (<http://poeticeconomics.blogspot.com/>). The journal’s motto frames its vision:

IMAGINE A WORLD WHERE ANYONE CAN  
INSTANTLY ACCESS ALL OF THE WORLD'S  
SCHOLARLY KNOWLEDGE - AS PROFOUND A  
CHANGE AS THE INVENTION OF THE PRINTING  
PRESS. TECHNICALLY, THIS IS WITHIN REACH.  
ALL THAT IS NEEDED IS A LITTLE  
IMAGINATION, TO RECONSIDER THE

## ECONOMICS OF SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATIONS FROM A POETIC VIEWPOINT

‘Transitioning to Open Access’ by Heather Morrison gives useful access to a broad array of articles ([tinyurl.com/3ltrb4g](http://tinyurl.com/3ltrb4g)). She reports that Wiley is now moving toward broader open access (<http://goo.gl/nwNw0>). The Public Knowledge Project (<http://pkp.sfu.ca>) is also in this central vein of OA journals and their creation of a knowledge commons along democratic, non-commercial lines. In a similar critical vein, Monbiot (2011) raises key questions about how large corporate publishers such as Springer, Routledge, Wiley, Macmillan, Elsevier and others, the ‘lairds of learning’ as he terms them, have built up ‘academic journal empires’ charging huge sums for subscriptions to their journals, and in effect creating large moats around knowledge that should be freely available in a kind of ‘knowledge commons.’ Monbiot: ‘What we see here is pure rentier capitalism: monopolising a public resource then charging exorbitant fees to use it. Another term for it is economic parasitism. To obtain the knowledge for which we have already paid, we must surrender our feu to the lairds of learning.’

Brophy (2012) sees movement emerging struggling in academe in many places for ‘the right to the collective production, circulation and use of knowledge, beyond the imposition of intellectual property regimes which stifle learning and advancement,’ part of what he terms the ‘combustible campus.’ This question of who the gatekeepers of knowledge distribution are in a digital age at this juncture is a much broader issue, as highlighted by the 2012 ‘Cost of Knowledge’ petition against Elsevier ([bit.ly/zPymWj](http://bit.ly/zPymWj)). In late February 2012, Elsevier announced it had dropped support for the highly controversial Research Works Act in draft form before the U.S. Congress ([bit.ly/wsTgsV](http://bit.ly/wsTgsV)), in effect scotching the bill. Space precludes discussion here, but I urge readers to look at Monbiot (2011), Robbins (2011) and Flood (2012) for a critical perspective. Monbiot concludes: ‘The knowledge monopoly is as unwarranted and anachronistic as the Corn Laws. Let’s throw off these parasitic overlords and liberate the research which belongs to us.’

In resisting this trend, cost-free OA knowledge publication paradigms such as arXiv.org, journals like JCEPS, the *Journal of Praxis in Multicultural Education*

([bit.ly/yiTWDC](http://bit.ly/yiTWDC) ). and more than 7,000 others associated with the Directory of Open Access Journals ([www.doaj.org](http://www.doaj.org)) – in the spirit of the Public Knowledge Project (<http://pkp.sfu.ca>) and Open Journal Systems ([tinyurl.com/2ydklr](http://tinyurl.com/2ydklr)), and a rich variety of other initiatives for ‘Green OA’ stored in open-access repositories like arXiv.org -- need to be expanded in the (re)appropriation of a ‘knowledge commons,’ letting a hundred flowers blossom. SciELO in Latin America is another experimental model (<http://socialsciences.scielo.org/>).

Models such as arXiv and OJS need to be expanded across the disciplines, especially in the humanities and social sciences, precisely at a conjuncture when the U.S. is losing its long-maintained dominance in R&D worldwide (Marcus 2012). Journals like the *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Qualitative Social Research* ([bit.ly/xjc0Md](http://bit.ly/xjc0Md)), based in Berlin, have been helping to encourage new approaches to qualitative research and its dissemination especially from the research peripheries and the Global South. Knowledge should have no price tag, or as low as possible.

The manifesto ‘The crisis is our university!’ states in Thesis #4: ‘The opposite of selection in education is not inclusion, but the radical critique of knowledge and the re-appropriation of our commonwealth.’ Thesis #5: ‘The opposite of university cuts is not money to the existing academic power, but claiming funds for autonomous education and the self-organization of knowledge production’ (KAFCA 2011). That re-appropriation of a ‘knowledge commons’ and its self-organization should become a main goal in struggling against the regime of knowledge control today by giant ‘knowledge enclosure’ corporations like Thomson-Reuters. Indeed, this is in many ways a struggle of ‘commons’ against multiple onslaughts of ‘enclosure’ and its contemporary barons.

### **10.3 OA, biopolitical production and a communism of the common**

Ultimately, as Peter McLaren (2011) stresses in thinking about ‘decolonial pedagogy’:

We need to account for the complex entanglement of gender, racial, sexual and class hierarchies within global geopolitical, geocultural and geo-economic processes of the modern/colonial world system. [...] What will a social universe outside of capital’s value form, outside of value production altogether, look like? And how do we get there?

Jaramillo (2012) and Dei's (2010) anti-colonial discursive pedagogy for Africa are also in this same spirit. What is developing in Egypt may have some intriguing alternative models, ditto Brazil and elsewhere in Latin America (Taha 2010; Alperin et al. 2008). Grosfoguel (2008) stresses:

Quijano's (2000) proposal for a 'socialization of power' as opposed to a 'statist nationalization of production' is crucial here. [...] Communities, enterprises, schools, hospitals and all of the institutions that currently regulate social life would be self-managed by people under the goal of extending social equality and democracy to all spaces of social existence. This is a process of empowerment and radical democratization from below [...].

The August 2012 call for People's Power Assemblies in the U.S. is also in this spirit, though 'socialism' is not explicitly mentioned (<http://goo.gl/Ojvcg>). Within a worldwide association of producers -- on a planet without bourgeois states, borders, wage slavery, and knowledge production and its dissemination under the dictates of Capital and its circuits -- 'the role and the place of science would be completely different to those that we've know so far' (ICC 2011). As Negri stresses (2010: 161), 'cognitive labour is terribly indigestible to capital.' This is about a struggle to transform the relations *and* means of knowledge production, under the technological impact of changing production forces.

The comprehensive 'socialization of power,' and of knowledge production and distribution in the socialist societies of humanity's necessary future in a world after capitalism -- a radical and full cost-free OA where there are no private corporate stakeholders -- should be the longer-term goal. Hardt (2010: 144) reminds us: 'communism is defined not only by the abolition of property but also by the affirmation of the common -- the affirmation of open and autonomous biopolitical production, the self-governed continuous creation of new humanity.' This can be grounded in part on what a Belgian socialist thinker calls 'socialism 2.0' (Mertens 2011), based partially on open sourcing, commons-based and 'demonitized' peer production (<http://goo.gl/xDuz0>). Some Austrian Marxists think the 'information commons' and other new technologies may serve as a model to point up 'how a completely different mode of production that bypasses wage labor and markets is potentially within reach' (Exner & Lauk 2012). The prospect of demonetization and decommodifying of knowledge in a 'manner of production qualitatively new in material and social terms, beyond commodity, market, labor, capital and state' (Exner

& Meretz 2012) struggling toward a simpler, sustainable-energy post-carbon (Heinberg 2010) socialist world is rarely mentioned in any bourgeois commentary on OA. Negri (2010: 165): ‘The new use value consists in these *dispositifs* of the common that are opening up new paths for the organization of struggle and the forces of destruction of capitalist command and exploitation.’

Moreover, some modes of socialization of knowledge production/distribution were perhaps partially realized, albeit in highly authoritarian forms, by states of ‘real existing socialism’ in the past, and perhaps in Cuba and elsewhere today. The critical history of these experiments in a countervailing epistemology to *bürgerliche Wissenschaft* (Kulturkritik 2012) under *Realsozialismus* across a number of very different countries could be looked at anew.

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