Open science
Open access
Open works

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Some data on the Italian journals in humanities and social sciences

Searching for the right audience
Open science (in HSS) from the publisher’s point of view

Conclusions with many questions and few answers
Associazione Italiana Editori (Italian Publishers Association)

The Italian trade association of publishers of books, journals and text-based digital products and services

In 2019 it celebrates 150 years

Organised in publishers’ groups. One is for academic and professional publishers

Besides typical lobbying, we carry out many services

An AIE peculiarity: an R&D team within the association
Some data about Italian HSS journals
Italian Journals in humanities and social sciences

Survey conducted by Università di Verona, AIE and CINECA

### Journals by type of publishers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Publisher</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commercial publishers</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Press</td>
<td>890</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>808</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Departments</td>
<td>808</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Publishers by type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Publisher</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scientific Societies</td>
<td>841</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>841</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>1854</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Survey conducted by Università di Verona, AIE and CINECA
An interesting feature: inter-disciplinarity

Criterion: analysis of the disciplines of the authors by the 14 disciplinary areas of the Italian official classification

1,873 journals (57%) have authors from more than one area
923 (28%) have authors from more than two areas
34 have authors from all the six HSS areas in the Italian classification
Golden OA journals

Journals by type of publishers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Publisher</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journals</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishers</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>2,9</td>
<td>5,6</td>
<td>1,5</td>
<td>1,7</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Publishers by type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>N</th>
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<td>135</td>
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<td>79</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishers</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>1,5</td>
<td>1,7</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>1,7</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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</table>
Focus on the audience
Open science as a matter of audience

Reading open access statements from a publishing viewpoint

The viewpoint of publishers that publish HSS content, prevalently in Italian

From a claustrophobic model (scholars are the authors and the readers) to an open model (scholars dialoguing with non scholars)

(7) Enabling societal actors to interact in the research cycle improves the quality, relevance, acceptability and sustainability of innovation outcomes by integrating society’s expectations, needs, interests and values. (…)

(8) Businesses will also benefit from wider access to scientific research results. Small and medium-sized enterprises in particular will improve their capacity to innovate.


Social sciences should be open to the society.
Otherwise they are not social
And probably not science anymore
A personal experience as an economist working in a trade association

An excellent paper:

The paper is organized as follows. The next section presents the data and describes how we compute individual measures of lifetime earnings. This section also contains an explicit test of the hypothesis that age-earnings profiles are parallel by educational attainment. Section 3 introduces the empirical model. In section 4 we discuss the effects of compulsory school reforms on educational attainment in the European countries for which we have data. Section 5 present our estimates of the returns to education using lifetime earnings. Section 6 considers how differences in early life conditions affect these returns and Section 7 presents a discussion of reasons why the number of books in the household at age ten matters. The last section concludes.

Core finding in the last 2 chapters
Methodological part very hard to read
Professionals in the book sector quote only the abstract...
Il Caffè, journal published in Milan from 1764 to 1766

Cesare Beccaria, *Dei delitti e delle pene*, Livorno, 1764
The first essay against death penalty and torture. Banned by the Vatican in 1766

1765: First French edition
1766. Voltaire publishes the
*Commentaire sur le livre des délits e des peines*,

Well known to
John Adams and
Thomas Jefferson
Lesson learned

Social sciences are for improving the society

Sometimes they succeed (in Europe, Beccaria did)
Sometimes not (in the US, Beccaria did not)

Should the impact in the society be measured rather than that in the scholarly community?

Sometimes they are unorthodox
And somewhere publications are banned

Cesare Beccaria
Some (genuine, non-rhetorical) questions: 1. open access to publish

Still today, the majority of the world population live in countries with strong censorship regimes. Hence:

Should we care, first of all, that access-to-publish is open?

May OA models, when implying forms of «authors pay», close the doors to scholars in countries where governmental control of funds can be use for censorship purpose?

Ragıp Zarakolu, Turkish Publishers, Prix Voltaire IPA 2008, who publishes history and social science books.
Some (genuine, non-rhetorical) questions: 2. the audience issue

*If we agree that an open science model implies addressing broader audience, then:*

How to identify such audience?

Is it sufficient saying “citizens”? Shouldn’t we address specific communities?
   - SMEs and start-ups, as suggested by the EU Commission?
   - Practitioners in different areas?
   - Communities selected on the basis of different criteria?

“Scholarly publication” vs. “popular-science” - Is there anything in the middle?

Which tools / eco-system do we need to boost bidirectional communication between scholars and their audience?
Some (genuine, non-rhetorical) questions: 3. the selection process

Peer review is a necessary element for every scholarly publishing model

However:

Is it also sufficient in an open science perspective?
Isn’t the capacity of reaching the audience equally important?

Does this impact the quality assessment in academic and research systems?
And the role of “quality certification” of publications?
Italian cultural publishing is an original creation of Giulio Einaudi. His greatness is in the clear and fierce determination in pursuing a huge and perhaps foolish project. Making publishing, and a specific publishing house, the center, the strategic pivot of what Gramsci would have defined as a hegemonic project. (…) No one before Einaudi dared to conceive such a megalomaniac project, to make a publishing house the fore bridge, the General Staff, the guide of the national culture. Nothing like the University Press! The publishing house is not the servant of the university, the university is to tail after the publishing house.
Is openness (just) a matter of access for free?
Isn’t the language of the publication more relevant?

Isn’t there a peculiar publishing job, to identify the audience and guide authors to better speak with that audience?

Can a pay-to-access model be more effective to opening science than a free-to-access?
  The existence of a price creates an incentive to publisher the better meet the audience needs
  Turnover can never be, per se, a proxy of the openness in the meaning we are discussing
I have no answers to all the questions

I have just a suggestion:
go back to 1962 are read *The Open Work* by Umberto Eco, a very brilliant essay that can be useful to look for answers to the most difficult questions about openness
We have to invent new wisdom for a new age. And in the meantime we must, if we are to do any good, appear unorthodox, troublesome, dangerous, disobedient to them that begat us.

J.M. Keynes, *Am I a Liberal?*,
The Nation & Athenaeum, 1925, Part I (August 8, pp. 563-4) and Part II (August 15, pp. 587-8)