Another Workflow Is Possible: Building Trust and Relinquishing Control for Multilingual Digital Publishing Futures

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Abstract: How can we build new multilingual futures for academic journals in the age of electronic publishing? The answer may lie in the multilingual pasts of scholarly publishing. This essay explores historical trajectories of journal editing to examine how the figure of the "editor" today has evolved in relation to the changing landscape of research since the inception of scholarly periodicals. It begins by exploring early multilingual practices of journals in the 17th and 18th centuries. The essay continues by exploring how multilingualism remained a mainstay of journals even with the boom in journals of the 19th century that emerged from research gaining a foothold in higher education institutions. It then considers how journals of the 20th and 21st century lost their way and foreclosed linguistic diversity in the increasing drive towards disciplinarity and the neoliberalization of higher education. The essay argues that another editorial workflow is possible, one that productively negotiates the tension between editor as gatekeeper of publishing and editor as steward of knowledge production. As such, it makes the case for a new approach to the work of journal editing better positioned to facilitate linguistic diversity and equity in scholarly communications.

Keywords: multilingualism, linguistic diversity, scholarly periodicals, academic journals, scholarly journals

"Can my special issue be bilingual?" asked a guest editor for *Reviews in Digital Humanities*, an open access journal I run with Jennifer Guiliano, early in our first year of operations. Our immediate and enthusiastic answer was "Yes!" We did not stop to worry about the fact that neither of us had editorial-level command of one of the languages in question. We did not hesitate over the additional amount of work—double, we would later learn—that producing a bilingual issue would require. We did not even think through the logistics of a new editorial workflow for multilingualism in the journal. We just knew that the answer was yes, and we could work out the details. This easy decision was guided

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by the values we have established for the journal: our commitment to creating a welcoming space for minoritized communities within digital humanities to have their digital projects reviewed and amplified. Being willing to engage with languages beyond English, to embrace the changes required of us in our editorial and production workflows, and to adjust our labor and financial budgets was simply part of realizing these goals.

Time and money are often cited as barriers to multilingual academic journal publishing, and neither is infinite.[1] But this is a problem that single-language publications face today as well: more submissions than could be feasibly accommodated, coupled with the so-called reviewer crisis that makes finding peer reviewers more challenging and time intensive than ever before, across disciplines and around the world.[2] Unique obstacles to multilingualism, however, include linguistic limitations of editors, sedimented workflows, and, fundamentally, the way the role of the "editor" is currently understood. These are areas ripe for change to overcome barriers to multilingual journal editing, and inspiration may lie in the history of academic journals.

What would it take for more editors to get to yes and embrace linguistic diversity in scholarly journals? This article explores historical trajectories of journal editing and reflections of journal editors to examine how the figure of the editor today poses constraints to multilingual publishing. Drawing on my own editorial work, I argue that another editorial workflow is possible, one that productively negotiates the tension between editor as gatekeeper of publishing and editor as steward of knowledge production. In doing so, I make the case for a new approach to the work of journal editing better positioned to facilitate linguistic diversity and equity in scholarly communications.

The Early Roots of Multilingual Journals in the 17th and 18th Centuries

While the histories of scholarly editing and book history have received significant treatment in scholarly communications research, the history of scholarly journals and the role that multilingualism played in them receive less attention. In the history of

1. Mary Jane Curry and Theresa M. Lillis, "Strategies and Tactics in Academic Knowledge Production by Multilingual Scholars," *Education Policy Analysis Archives* 22, no. 32 (May 2014): 8, https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.v22n32.2014; Maciej Maryl et al., "The Case for an Inclusive Scholarly Communication Infrastructure for Social Sciences and Humanities," *F1000 Research* (October 22, 2020), https://doi.org/10.12688/f1000research.26545.1; and Helsinki Initiative on Multilingualism in Scholarly Communication, https://www.helsinki-initiative.org.
2. Scott Henderson et al., "Finding Reviewers: A Crisis for Journals and Their Authors," *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry* 54, no. 10 (2020): 957, https://doi.org/10.1177/0004867420958077; Carolina Tropini et al., "Time to Rethink Academic Publishing: The Peer Reviewer Crisis," *mBio* 14, no. 6 (November/December 2023): 1–2, https://doi.org/10.1128/mbio.01091-23; and Hugo Horta and João M. Santos, "Determinants of Peer Review Engagement and Quality in Scientific Journals: Insights for Academic Research and the Sustainability of the Peer-Review System," *Studies in Higher Education*, published ahead of print, October 20, 2023, https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2023.2270488.

academic journals, 1665 was a banner year.[3] The earliest known scholarly periodical, *Le Journal des sçavans*, began publication in France early that year under the editorship of Jean Denis de Sallo, a Parisian lawyer and writer. Interdisciplinary in nature, *Le Journal des sçavans* included notes on inventions in the sciences, news from the arts, court decisions, and scholarly book reviews. De Sallo's approach to editing was strident, to say the least. Early content in the journal reflected a tendency towards searing critique and served as a vehicle for de Sallo's political leanings. Because de Sallo supported the Gallican movement, which advocated for a new French church separate from the Roman Catholic Church, the journal was suspended during its first year of publication under pressure from the pope.[4] The next year, it was revived under new editorial leadership and resumed publication until a brief hiatus from 1792 to 1816 for being on the wrong side of the French Revolution. Since 1816, the journal has continued to be published, now under the name of *Le Journal des savants*.

Unlike *Le Journal des sçavans*, other early scholarly journals were linked to scholarly societies: voluntary organizations of scholars—including, but not limited to or even dominated by, those employed in academic positions—formed to share knowledge on topics of mutual interest. Inspired by *Le Journal des sçavans*, the Royal Society of London immediately launched their own journal in 1665, with the goal of disseminating innovations in the sciences. Henry Oldenburg, a secretary of the Royal Society, held the first editorial position at the new journal, *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*. Much of his time, however, was consumed by managing journal finances. As a result, he began sending articles submitted to the journal to fellows of the Royal Society for their expert review—the earliest known instance of peer review, albeit an informal system driven by Oldenburg's personal networks.[5]

Between 1665 and 1790, nearly 500 serial scientific and technical journals are known to have been published in Europe by scholarly societies.[6] Aileen Fyfe et al. note that participation in these societies—and publication in their journals—was the voluntary work of typically middle- and upper-class men.[7] The early history of humanities journals during

3. I use the terms "scholarly journal," "academic journal," and "scholarly periodical" interchangeably.
4. David Banks, "Starting Science in the Vernacular: Notes on Some Early Issues of the *Philosophical Transactions* and the *Journal des Sçavans*, 1665–1700," *ASp: la revue du GERAS* 55 (2009): 7, https://doi.org/10.4000/asp.213.
5. David Solomon, "Talking Past Each Other: Making Sense of the Debate over Electronic Publication," *First Monday* 7, no. 8 (2022), https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v7i8.978; Lindsay Reid Parker, "Henry Oldenburg and the *Philosophical Transactions*: Origins and the Development of Editorial Praxis" (MA thesis, University of Alberta, 2006), 97–98; and Suprakash C. Roy, "Peer Review Process: Its History and Evolution," *Science and Culture* 87, nos. 1–2 (2021): 38–39, https://doi.org/10.36094/sc.v87.2021.Peer_Review_Process.Roy.36.
6. David A. Kronick, *A History of Scientific and Technical Periodicals: The Origins and Development of the Scientific and Technological Press, 1665–1790* (New York: Scarecrow Press, 1962), 76–86.
7. Aileen Fyfe et al., "Untangling Academic Publishing: A History of the Relationship between Commercial Interests, Academic Prestige and the Circulation of Research," discussion paper, University of St Andrews, 2017, 5–6, https://eprints.bbk.ac.uk/id/eprint/19148.

this time period is more difficult to grasp, given that lines between readers, scholars, and critics blurred in periodicals at the time.[8] Neither scientific nor humanistic content of the 17th and 18th centuries resembles the genre of "journal article" that proliferates today in its various disciplinary incarnations, as conventions of scholarly communications are shaped by changes in discursive and linguistic communities over time.

Wildly influential, the model developed at the Royal Society was replicated by scholarly societies across Europe. The French, for example, began publishing *L'Histoire de l'Académie royale des sciences* in 1666. The line between editor and author blurred in the early years of the journal, with the substantial work of assembling and writing each annual issue falling upon editor Bernard Le Bovier de Fontenelle.[9] The German scientific journal *Miscellanea Curiosa Medico-Physica* appeared in 1670, published by the Collegium Naturae Curiosorum. While little has been documented about the history of this journal, early society presidents initially served as editors, largely providing instructions to authors on preparing manuscripts for submission. Beginning in 1683, a "Director Ephemeridium" (editorial director) was appointed. According to Frances Mason Barnett, the labor fell to a small group of society members who edited—and censored—submissions by "passing judgment on the quality and credibility of observations."[10] The academy of Copenhagen put out *Acta Medica et Philosophica Hafniensia* in 1673, first edited by Thomas Bartholin, but little is known of his editorial praxis.[11]

Multilingualism was part of the very foundations of journal editing. This initially took the form of including translations of work previously published in other venues. After all, the purpose of these scholarly journals, which were linked to the Republic of Letters of the 17th and 18th centuries, was to share research, but they were primarily

8. Sean Latham and Robert Scholes, "The Rise of Periodical Studies," *PMLA: Proceedings of the Modern Language Association* 121, no. 2 (March 2006): 517–18.
9. Pierre Gauja, "L'Académie Royale des Sciences (1666–1793)," *Revue d'histoire des sciences* 2, no. 4 (September–December 1949): 297–300; Kronick, *History*, 76–86; Julien Pierre, "Tricentaire des *Miscellanea de l'Académie des curieux de la nature*," *Revue d'histoire de la pharmacie* 214 (1972): 224; Marie-Jeanne Tits-Dieuaide, "Les savants, la société et l'État: à propos du 'renouvellement' de l'Académie royale des sciences (1699)," *Journal des savants* 1 (1998): 90; Maria Susana Seguin, "Fontenelle et l'histoire de l'Académie royale des sciences," *Dix-huitième siècle* 1, no. 44 (2012): 365–79, https://doi.org/10.3917/dhs.044.0365; and Susana Seguin, "Philosophical Clandestine Literature and Academic Circles in France," in *Clandestine Philosophy: New Studies on Subversive Manuscripts in Early Modern Europe, 1620–1823*, ed. Gianni Paganini, Margaret C. Jacob, and John Christian Laursen (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2020), 250–51.
10. Andreas Elias Büchner, *Academiae Sacri Romani Imperii Leopoldino-Carolinae naturae curiosorum historia* (Ghent: Litteris et impensis Ioannis Iustini Gebaueri, 1755), 236; Frances Mason Barnett, "Medical Authority and Princely Patronage: The *Academia Naturae Curiosorum*, 1652–1693" (PhD diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1995), 6; Uwe Müller, Danny Weber, and Wieland Berg, "Forschungsstand: Geschichte der Akademie 1652–1818," *Acta Historica Leopoldina* 60 (2013): 12–14; and Maria Conforti, "Illustrating Pathologies in the First Years of the *Miscellanea Curiosa*, 1670–1687," *Nuncius* 30, no. 3 (2015): 577–78, https://doi.org/10.1163/18253911-03003006.
11. Alessandro Porro et al., "Reports on Greenlandic and Faroese Medicine from an Eighteenth-Century Medical Book," *International Journal of Circumpolar Health* 80, no. 1 (2021): 2, https://doi.org/10.1080/22423982.2021.1914968; and Karel Černý and Ludmila Hlaváčková, "Ke zrodu časopisu Rozhledy v chirurgii," *Rozheldy v chirurgii* 100, no. 4 (2021), https://doi.org/10.33699/PIS.2021.100.4.%25p.

published in vernacular languages that delimited readership. Translating original publications into other languages was crucial to scholarly communications across linguistic boundaries. In fact, in the first issue of *Philosophical Transactions*—the second oldest academic journal—Oldenburg included an English translation of a book review that had originally appeared in French in the first issue of *Le Journal des sçavans* just months earlier. Other translations from Latin, Italian, Arabic, Chinese, Dutch, Spanish, Persian, and Russian variously appeared in *Philosophical Transactions*, demonstrating an editorial inclination towards facilitating exchange of ideas regardless of linguistic barriers.

But multilingualism came to include publishing in multiple languages as well. In addition to English-language publication, *Philosophical Transactions* also published articles in Latin, the lingua franca in the sciences of the time.[12] This decision reflected the role of Latin in mediating linguistic divides in Europe at the time as well as a desire for scholarly communication across language barriers. But Oldenburg's multilingual ambitions were broader: entire texts appeared in languages other than English and Latin, notably French, Italian, and German.[13] Committed to cross-linguistic scholarly communications more broadly, Oldenburg intended to translate *Philosophical Transactions* into Latin himself. By 1671, however, John Sterpin in Germany and Christoph Sand in the Netherlands had beaten Oldenburg to the punch with their own translations. Later, *Philosophical Transactions* was translated into French in the 18th century by L'Acadèmie royale des sciences.[14]

The 19th-Century Multilingual Journal Boom

The first professional academic organizations—a departure from the voluntary scholarly societies of the past—began forming in the 19th century in fields, ushering in a proliferation of new journals. Multilingualism remained part of this expansion. Germany, in particular, experienced a boom in the development of professional academic organizations that would later spread around the world, due in large part to the model of higher education envisioned by Wilhelm von Humboldt—a blend of research and

12. Felicity Henderson, "Faithful Interpreters? Translation Theory and Practice at the Early Royal Society," *Notes and Records of the Royal Society* 67, no. 2 (2013): 107, https://doi.org/10.1098/rsnr.2013.0017; and David Banks, "The First Translation of an Academic Article (*Philosophical Transactions*, 6 March, 1665)," *Revista de Lingüistica y Lenguas Aplicadas* 13 (2018): 33, https://doi.org/10.4995/rlyla.2018.7933.
13. Katrin Menzel, "Translated Texts in the *Philosophical Transactions* and *Proceedings* of the Royal Society from the 17th to the 20th Century," in *Online-Festschrift for Elke Teich on the Occasion of Her 60th Birthday* (Saarbrücken, Germany: Universität des Saarlandes, 2023), https://www.uni-saarland.de/fileadmin/upload/lehrstuhl/teich/degaetano/Festschrift_Menzel_Teich.pdf.
14. Pablo Toribio, "The Latin Translation of *Philosophical Transactions* (1671–1681)," in *Translation in Knowledge, Knowledge in Translation*, ed. Rocío G. Sumillera, Jan Surman, and Katharina Kühn (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2020), 123–25; and Menzel, "Translated Texts."

teaching ultimately unfettered by the state—that influenced the establishment of German research universities.[15] In Germany, notably the University of Berlin, which was founded in 1810, research gained a firm footing within universities. Later, in 1876, Johns Hopkins established his eponymous US university in Baltimore, Maryland, emulating the German model envisioned by Humboldt. Johns Hopkins University significantly influenced higher education institutions in the United States as many universities adopted its educational frameworks.[16] The same model was exported across the globe as the United States invested in universities in newly independent countries in Africa beginning in the mid-20th century, to consolidate its influence in the former colonies. Within the Humboldtian model of higher education, scholarly journals only continued to become more central to scholarly life in universities as currency for their prestige economies.

With research quickly becoming the province of universities, disciplinarity became king. New journals first began differentiating between the sciences, social sciences, and humanities before becoming increasingly more disciplinary by the end of the century. Historians, philologists, biologists, and psychologists coalesced for advocacy and for control over curricula. At the same time, publication was beginning to be viewed as an egalitarian and meritocratic measure of scholarly standing that could replace social status as a metric of renown.[17] Newly emerging professional organizations had answers to these problems and more.

The formation of these professional organizations typically followed two patterns: organizational models were adopted in a new national context or implemented in new disciplines. For example, in the United Kingdom, the Institution of Civil Engineers was founded in 1818. The model was replicated in Ireland in 1835, Switzerland in 1837, and the Netherlands in 1847. In the case of cross-disciplinary formation, the American Association for the Advancement of Science was founded in 1848, while the American Social Science Organization followed suit in 1865. The Modern Language Association was founded in 1883, while the American Historical Association was established in

15. Charles E. McClelland, *The German Experience of Professionalization: Modern Learned Professions and Their Organizations from the Early Nineteenth Century to the Hitler Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 33–40; Johan Östling, *Humboldt and the Modern German University: An Intellectual History* (Lund, Sweden: Lund University Press, 2018); and Thorsten Nybom, "The Humboldt Legacy: Reflections on the Past, Present, and Future of the European University," *Higher Education Policy* 16 (2003): 141–59, https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.hep.8300013.
16. Steven Muller, "Wilhelm von Humboldt and the University in the United States," *Johns Hopkins APL Technical Digest* 6, no. 3 (1985): 254; Maryann P. Feldman and Pierre Desrochers, "Truth for Its Own Sake: Academic Culture and Technology Transfer at Johns Hopkins University," *Minerva* 42 (2004): 111–12, https://doi.org/10.1023/B:MINE.0000030019.99709.a0; John R. Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), 90; and Maryann Feldman, Pierre Desrochers, and Janet Bercovitz, "Knowledge for the World: A Brief History of Commercialization at Johns Hopkins University," in *Building Technology Transfer within Research Universities: An Entrepreneurial Approach*, ed. Thomas J. Allen and Rory P. O'Shea (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 156–57.
17. Fyfe et al., "Untangling Academic Publishing," 5–6.

1884, and the American Economic Association formed in 1885. Towards the end of the century, professional organizations had emerged in more than 50 countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.[18] These organizations created opportunities for advocacy, community, conversation, and the articulation of often-contested and hotly debated disciplinary standards. One of the mechanisms through which they realized these goals was the creation of academic journals. As a result, the 19th century saw an explosion of new scholarly journals. Scientific periodicals worldwide, which are well documented, grew from approximately 100 to 10,000.[19]

Although the missions of professional organizations and their journals began aligning with those we see in these and similar organizations today, the role of editor varied widely. In medical journals of the 19th century in Europe and the United States, editors often wrote the bulk of the content that appeared in issues.[20] Solo editors or editorial teams that did not rely on the assistance of peer review were not uncommon, as in the case of Edinburgh's journals of the century, notably the *Edinburgh Philosophical Journal*, *Edinburgh Journal of Science*, and *Edinburgh Journal of Natural and Geographical Science*.[21] In many cases, editors relied on their own networks for submissions and book reviews.[22] Publications from the Royal Society continued to rely on their distributed model first implemented by Oldenburg in *Philosophical Transactions*, though reviews had by that point begun passing through a Committee of Papers that determined whether an article would be published.[23] Meanwhile, organizations such as the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences began establishing editorial boards for their publications and relied on collaborations with librarians, moving away from editorial control resting in the hands of a single individual.[24]

Unlike trends in scholarly communications today, multilingualism was a regular fixture of 19th-century academic journals. In some, this took the form of publishing translations. Scottish journals routinely included translations of articles previously

18. Michael Heffernan, "Learned Societies," in *The SAGE Handbook of Geographical Knowledge*, ed. John A. Agnew and David N. Livingstone (London: SAGE, 2011), 114.
19. William H. Brock, "Science," in *Victorian Periodicals and Victorian Society*, ed. J. Don Vann and Rosemary T. Van Arsdel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 86.
20. John C. Burnham, "The Evolution of Editorial Peer Review," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 263, no. 10 (1990): 1324.
21. Bill Jenkins, "Commercial Scientific Journals and Their Editors in Edinburgh, 1819–1832," *Centaurus* 62, no. 1 (2020): 71–73, https://doi.org/10.1111/1600-0498.12276.
22. Richard M. Mikulski, "'The Success of the Journal': Personal Networks in Early 19th-Century Publishing," *College & Research Libraries News* 83, no. 7 (July 2022), https://doi.org/10.5860/crln.83.7.310.
23. Aileen Fyfe et al., "Managing the Growth of Peer Review at the Royal Society Journals, 1865–1965," *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 45, no. 3 (2020): 405–29, https://doi.org/10.1177/0162243919862868; Aileen Fyfe, "Editors, Referees, and Committees: Distributing Editorial Work at the Royal Society Journals in the Late 19th and 20th Centuries," *Centaurus* 62, no. 1 (2020): 126, https://doi.org/10.1111/1600-0498.12266.
24. Jenny Beckman, "Editors, Librarians, and Publication Exchange: The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences in the Long 19th Century," *Centaurus* 62, no. 1 (2020): 103, https://doi.org/10.1111/1600-0498.12267.

published in French.[25] Multilingual approaches to editing also facilitated intellectual exchange in countries that were more peripheral to dominant European academic communities of the time, though this was often monodirectional. Portuguese journals such as *O Investigador Portuguez em Inglaterra* published translations of mathematical texts from Latin and also published articles in Latin and French. Similarly, Hungarian periodicals of the 19th century began publishing translations of scholarship from English, French, and German and only later published original scholarship by Hungarian scholars. Chinese journals of the 19th century also relied on publishing translations of scholarship from Europe, some translated by European missionaries and scholars, others by Chinese scholars.[26] But publishing articles in multiple languages within a single issue continued as well. For example, journals of the Royal Swedish Society, while mostly published in Swedish, also included papers in German, French, and English.[27] The outlier, unsurprisingly, is the United States, where English-only publications reigned.

These developments in multilingual publishing are inextricable from the colonial power dynamics of the 19th century. English was slowly establishing itself as a dominant language through the British Empire's global exploits.[28] We might view the attention to multilingualism as a reaction to encroaching English-language hegemony. In one regard, it offered a way of maintaining access to knowledge for communities that were not predominantly English speakers. But publishing in languages other than English was also a way of asserting cultural power and, indeed, national scholarly identities.

The predominant labor model behind translation was largely voluntary, as in the case of the British journal *Scientific Memoirs*, for which editor Richard Taylor used a practice akin to crowdsourcing: soliciting and managing a robust roster of volunteers aimed at making scholarship from other European countries available to English readers.[29] Of course, much of editorial and authorial labor was voluntary, as remains typical today. The 19th century would turn out to be the last great age of multilingualism in

25. Jenkins, "Commercial," 71–73.

26. Luis Manuel Ribeiro Saraiva, "Mathematics in the *Memoirs* of the Lisbon Academy of Sciences in the 19th Century," *Historia Mathematica* 35, no. 4 (2008): 313, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.hm.2008.04.002; György Radó, "Hungarian Tradition," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, 2nd ed., ed. Mona Baker and Gabriela Saldanha (Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2009), 438; David Wright, "The Translation of Modern Western Science in Nineteenth-Century China, 1840–1895," *Isis* 89, no. 4 (1998): 661–67, https://doi.org/10.1086/384159; and Eva Hung, "The Role of the Foreign Translator in the Chinese Translation Tradition, 2nd to 19th Century," *Target* 11, no. 2 (1999): 225–26, https://doi.org/10.1075/target.11.2.03hun.

27. Beckman, "Editors," 105; and Alex Csiszar, *The Scientific Journal: Authorship and the Politics of Knowledge in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), 309–39.

28. Sekhar G. Raja, "Colonialism and Imperialism and Its Impact on English Language," *Asian Journal of Multidimensional Research* 1, no. 4 (2012): 111–20; and Alastair Pennycook, *English and the Discourses of Colonialism* (London: Routledge, 1998).

29. Karin Littau, "Translation's Histories and Digital Futures," *International Journal of Communication* 10 (2016): 918; and Maeve Olohan, "Volunteer Translation and Altruism in the Context of a Nineteenth-Century Scientific Journal," *The Translator* 18, no. 2 (2012): 200–202, https://doi.org/10.1080/13556509.2012.10799508.

academic journals, which featured an openness to publishing in multiple languages and deep interest in cultural transmission through translation that offered some resistance to linguistic hegemony.

The Decline of Multilingual Journals in the 20th and 21st Centuries

All of this radically shifted in the 20th century. While much of the first half of the century was occupied by wars and pandemics, higher education would find itself transformed in the post–World War II era. Editorial practices in journals and the role of multilingualism changed too. With exponential growth in the number of journals, multilingual journals were outnumbered by those in English and did not grow apace. In the United States, the expansion of higher education after World War II led to larger communities of academics, further growth of professional organizations, and hyperdisciplinarity. Expansion was not just limited to the United States but was, in fact, a worldwide expansion. Factors include the role of universities in postwar rebuilding in Europe, the founding of new higher education institutions in newly independent countries that had formerly been colonies, and the pressures of scientization associated with the Cold War.[30]

Such substantial growth had a tremendous impact on the landscape of scholarly journals. Often-cited statistics for journal growth estimated by A. J. Meadows are staggering. Meadows claims that 10,000 journals worldwide in 1951 had become 71,000 by 1987.[31] With journal articles being the coin of the realm for academic careers, new journals proliferated. As hyperdisciplinarity increased, more and more specialized journals began appearing. Fyfe et al. note that the scholarly communications landscape became increasingly commercialized in the postwar era, which from the mid-1940s to mid-1970s appeared to be a mutually beneficial relationship between academic institutions and commercial publishers. By the 21st century, however, this dynamic had become an imbalanced one that heavily favors commercial publishers' interests and bottom lines.[32] The later years of the 20th century also correspond with the increased neoliberalization of higher education, through frameworks such as the Research Excellence Framework (REF) in the United Kingdom, ever-rising requirements of publications for tenure and/

30. Evan Schofer and John W. Meyer, "The Worldwide Expansion of Higher Education in the Twentieth Century," *American Sociological Review* 70, no. 6 (December 2005): 900–905; David John Frank and John W. Meyer, "Worldwide Expansion and Change in the University," in *Towards a Multiversity? Universities between Global Trends and National Traditions*, ed. Georg Krücken, Anna Kosmützky, and Marc Torka (Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2006), 40; and Ciro Avitabile, "The Rapid Expansion of Higher Education in the New Century," in *At a Crossroads: Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean*, by María Marta Ferreyra et al. (Washington, DC: World Bank Publishers, 2017), 48–50.
31. A. J. Meadows, *Communicating Research* (San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 1998), 15.
32. Fyfe et al., "Untangling Academic Publishing," 4.

or promotion around the world, and the demand for measurable metrics for research output and impact. Journal articles have a central role in these demands.

What roles did editors assume during this time? On one hand, some editors responded to the changes in higher education that led to increased demand for metrics and hyperdisciplinarity to meet the needs of a shifting profession that was also growing more diverse. For example, Brett Fairbairn, who served as editor of the *Canadian Journal of History/Annales canadiennes d'histoire* in the early 1990s, described the role of journals and editors as "legitimizing and compartmentalizing knowledge" and "legitimizing and compartmentalizing academics." Exactly what—or who—gets legitimized and deemed to fit within the parameters of a journal is, as Fairbairn acknowledges, arbitrary. In the context of the subjective nature of vetted and suitable scholarship, Fairbairn writes, "As long as we know who is 'in' and who is 'out' in our profession . . . the gatekeeper function has been performed, no matter whether the standards are entirely consistent or fair." In Fairbairn's perspective, these concerns can be mitigated by "a commitment to integrity and fairness on the part of all who participate in journals." He goes on to say that fairness depends on journals being "diverse, pluralistic, and changing . . . A diverse and evolving constellation of journals."[33] On the other hand, some editors positioned themselves as unrepentant gatekeepers. For example, in 2003, Philippe Contamine, then editor of *Les Journal des savants*, described his mission: "We try to be the guardians of civilization."[34]

In this environment, English firmly entrenched itself as a lingua franca for journals, aided by the drive of commercial publishers to expand their market share in an increasingly international audience.[35] According to Race MoChridhe, we can understand this as a "hidden paywall of English."[36] Philippe Mongeon and Adèle Paul-Hus found that commercial databases such as Web of Science and Scopus, owned by commercial publishers Thomson Reuters and Elsevier, respectively, are dominated by English-language journals. Other scholars, such as John Mingers, Evangelia Lipitakis, Marcel Clermont, and Harald Dyckhoff, have demonstrated that Google Scholar primarily indexes journals published in English.[37] These decisions by database designers magnify biases towards

33. Brett Fairbairn, "The Present and Future of Historical Journals," *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 27, no. 2 (January 1996): 59–74, https://doi.org/10.3138/JSP-027-02-059.
34. Quoted in Burton Bollag, "A Tale of Two Journals," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 7, 2003, https://www.chronicle.com/article/a-tale-of-two-journals/.
35. John M. Swales, "Language, Science and Scholarship," *Asian Journal of English Language Teaching* 8 (1998): 3–4; Rogerio Meneghini and Abel L. Packer, "Is There Science beyond English? Initiatives to Increase the Quality and Visibility of Non-English Publications Might Help to Break Down Language Barriers in Scientific Communication," *EMBO Reports* 8, no. 2 (February 2007), https://doi.org/10.1038/sj.embor.7400906; and Fyfe et al., "Untangling Academic Publishing," 8.
36. Race MoChridhe, "Linguistic Equity as Open Access: Internationalizing the Language of Scholarly Communication," *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 45, no. 4 (July 2019): 423, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2019.02.006.
37. Philippe Mongeon and Adèle Paul-Hus, "The Journal Coverage of Web of Science and Scopus: A Comparative Analysis," *Scientometrics* 106 (2016): 222–24, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-015-1765-5; John Mingers and Evangelia A. E. C. G. Lipitakis, "Counting the Citations: A Comparison of Web of Science and Google Scholar in the Field of Business and

the English language in journal readership and citation because English-language journals dominate the very databases that provide researchers with access to scholarship. As a result, publishing one's scholarship in English-language journals creates reputational capital in the form of readership and citation metrics. Françoise Salager-Meyer explains that vernacular journals have small reading audiences that are rarely transnational and are generally limited to the authors who write for them. She found that scholars of the Global South tend not to publish in these journals because "they prefer to send their best works to mainstream journals written in English."[38] Publishing in such journals, rather than local ones, also generates cultural capital, particularly in the Global South, where higher education institutions valorize scholarship published in English, in publication venues of the Global North.[39] At the same time, the English language also dominates the internet. Even though only 4.7% of the world's population primarily speaks English, over 55% of websites are in English as of 2023.[40] The cumulative effects of these forces have marginalized non-English publications.

Within the broader, systemic dynamics that solidify English-language hegemony in the landscape of journal publishing, how do editors conceptualize their role in the 21st century? The genre of editorial reflections—editorial notes written by departing editors of journals—offers much insight on how 21st-century journal editors conceive of their roles. Scopus indexed more than 1,000 such pieces between 2000 and 2023, while Web of Science indexed over 3,000 during the same period. Using jsLDA for topic modeling, the Natural Language Toolkit (NLTK) Python collocations module for bigrams and trigrams, and the scikit-learn Python library for term frequency–inverse document frequency (TF-IDF), I examined these full-text editorial notes to identify common features within the genre and better understand how editors construct their identities and roles as editors.

Editorial reflections, often solipsistic in nature, contain predictable features: insights on growth of readership, submissions, and authorship; acknowledgment of the ways

Management," *Scientometrics* 85, no. 2 (2010): 613–25; and Marcel Clermont and Harald Dyckhoff, "Coverage of Business Administration Literature in Google Scholar: Analysis and Comparison with Econbiz, Scopus, and Web of Science," SSRN Scholarly Paper No. 2016850, March 2012, https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2016850.

38. Françoise Salager-Meyer, "Scientific Publishing in Developing Countries: Challenges for the Future," *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* 7, no. 2 (April 2008): 123, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2008.03.009.

39. Karen Bennett, "Towards an Epistemological Monoculture: Mechanisms of Epistemicide in European Research Production," in *English as a Scientific and Research Language*, ed. Ramón Plo Alastrué and Carmen Pérez-Llantada (Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2015), 10–11; Mary Jane Curry and Theresa Lillis, eds., *Global Academic Publishing: Policies, Perspectives and Pedagogies* (Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2018), 2–4; Márton Demeter, "The World-Systemic Dynamics of Knowledge Production: The Distribution of Transnational Academic Capital in the Social Sciences," *Journal of World-Systems Research* 25, no. 1 (2019): 121–25, https://doi.org/10.5195/JWSR.2019.88; and MoChridhe, "Linguistic Equity," 423–24.

40. Russell Brandom, "What Languages Dominate the Internet?," *Rest of the World*, June 7, 2023, https://restofworld.org/2023/internet-most-used-languages/?utm_source=chartr&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_campaign=chartr_20230616.

the journal has changed under the editor(s)' leadership; and advice for future authors. Inherent in the language editors use to define their roles is a mindset that implies gatekeeping. Among the themes that recur in relation to how editors define their roles are safeguarding the scope of the journal, maintaining quality of the journal, and upholding the integrity of the journal and its peer review processes. Certainly, scope, quality, and integrity are central to the work of journal editors. After all, scholarly communities must be able to trust that they are accessing scholarship that is relevant to them, externally vetted, and reflective of scholarly ethics. But despite the assertions in editorial reflections that these are the domain of the editor, they are more realistically made possible by the ecosystem of participants that has evolved through the history of scholarly journals since the 17th century: not only the editor but also managing editors, editorial boards, peer reviewers, copy editors, publishers, and more.

What journal editing has lost since its illustrious past, however, is a place for multilingualism. The rare occurrences in which editors address multilingualism are in journals that are designed to be bilingual (e.g., in countries such as Canada that have multiple national languages) or journals that are explicitly producing knowledge on translation or, more frequently, teaching English to learners of other languages. In the realm of online journals, grasping for editorial control results from multiple factors. Online journals themselves have had their legitimacy questioned—as if "online" is somehow synonymous with a lack of peer review or quality control. This reflects the intersections of capitalism and knowledge production, where prestige and legitimacy accrue behind paywalls, a reflection of the market forces that suggest merit stems from commodification of knowledge and that openly available scholarship must be suspect. The rise of predatory journals exacerbates this tension between open access and commodification. It produces an entrenched mentality: quality must be overly controlled and gatekeeping must be maintained to surmount the concern over a lack of legitimacy. Into this breach steps the editor: the person—indeed, it is often a lone person—who understands themself responsible for the journal contents. In this world of scholarly periodicals, multilingualism suffers.

A New Path Forward to Recovering Multilingual Futures

How can we learn from the past and engage the affordances of electronic publishing to reclaim a place for multilingualism within academic journals? It begins by recognizing that the role of editor, particularly as it has evolved over four centuries in the Global North, has become synonymous with control over content and a responsibility to guarantee that scholarship meets an acceptable, if amorphous, standard for publication. We must reorient our notion of the editor and the work of editing away from the individual or small team that functions as gatekeepers and towards greater trust in the ecosystem that makes scholarly journals possible—trust that Oldenburg recognized was possible as early as 1665. Based on recent editing experiences, I offer the following advice for making this reorientation possible so we can move towards multilingual futures.

Editor, Edit Thyself!

Hear me out: an editor does not need to know a language to publish an article in it in the journal they run. One of the most common obstacles to implementing multilingualism in digital publishing is that there are far more languages in the world than an individual editor or editorial team could hope to read. Inherent in attitudes towards editing is the implication that if editors cannot read the content of an abstract or an article, they cannot possibly undertake the requisite editorial work. For *Reviews in Digital Humanities* (hereafter *Reviews*), *Digital Humanities Quarterly* (*DHQ*), and *International Journal of Humanities and Arts Computing* (*IJHAC*), I edited issues that welcomed submissions of articles in languages that I have not formally studied and do not possess a level of fluency that would have allowed me to make meaningful contributions to the article. Yet I successfully participated in the editorial labor, and we published high-quality multilingual scholarship.

To navigate these challenges as an editor, I relied on several strategies. Gist translation with Google Translate gave me a general sense of the contents of the submissions, which was sufficient to determine whether or not they fell within the scope of the journal. This meant that I was not positioned to evaluate "quality" of the articles but could get a general sense of whether they might be topically appropriate for the journal. I then relied on the expertise of collaborators who possessed the fluency to determine whether the submissions were in sufficient shape for peer review. These included guest editors (*Reviews*), co-editors (*DHQ* and *IJHAC*), and the journal editor (*IJHAC*). This experience demonstrates the importance of not only editorial teams but also prioritizing multilingual representation on them. In these cases, our teams had the sufficient linguistic knowledge to make decisions about desk rejections or proceeding to peer review.

But the real purpose of having multilingual teams is not to ensure that they can actually read all the articles but to bring the habits of mind and predispositions of a multilingual perspective. After all, if we simply rely on the linguistic capacities of editors or editorial teams, we are at risk of creating a new form of colonial multilingualism that simply adds a few new languages (e.g., Spanish, French, German) to the mix and replicates exclusion of the other(ed) languages of the world. One key element is an openness to finding solutions to linguistic challenges. In the case of *Reviews*, I knew that Guiliano and I shared this value because we had previously run successful peer review mechanisms of the Association for Computers and the Humanities conferences together and welcomed submissions in any language. Our strategy was to find the peer reviewers and trust them. After all, the people running conferences or staffing a program committee cannot possibly adjudicate submissions on all the methods or topics that might be submitted. Instead, we rely on the assessments of our peers. The same can be said of language. Like Oldenburg, we recognized that we could not possibly have sufficient grasp on anything that might come our way and that we could choose to trust our colleagues. To do so, the desk reject needs to be limited to scope, rather than "quality," which is itself a concept wielded against marginalized linguistic communities. This is a shift in mindset from being a *gatekeeper* of knowledge to being a *steward* of knowledge—from controlling access to facilitating access, from being a warden to being a caretaker of a journal.

Embrace the Ecosystem

When we were developing the initial concept for *Reviews*, Guiliano and I recognized that we wanted the journal to have multilingual capacities beyond the eight languages between us. Recognizing, like journals of the past, that we could leverage the knowledge of a robust advisory board, we prioritized multilingualism in the selection of board members. In doing so, we more than doubled the linguistic capacity of the journal. Simply having collective linguistic knowledge, however, does not necessarily result in more authors interested in publishing in languages other than English, particularly when publishing in English brings with it reputational and cultural capital. This was the case for *Reviews*. However, we wanted the reviews of digital scholarship that we publish in the journal to be available for broader readership, not just English-language readers, particularly since we have readership in 150 countries and our analytics demonstrate that bilingual publications are our most widely read.

Our solution to this problem was to change the structure of our team. In 2023, with financial support from the Mellon Foundation, we began piloting the addition of topic editors: small editorial teams focused on particular topics that would encourage multilingual publications (e.g., Asian and Asian diaspora, African and African diaspora, and Latinx). In our selection of the teams, which involved an open application process and interviews, we prioritized topic editors who would add to the linguistic capacity of the journal and were invested in multilingualism. We also contracted a translation service to assist with translation. Our first bilingual topic issue was published in January 2024.

To address the additional labor that this model brings, we made several changes to our team. We moved from a model where a single, compensated editorial assistant handled correspondence and assisted with production to bringing on two compensated managing editors and promoting our editorial assistant to associate editor for production, funded through negotiations when I changed jobs. With the labor that Guiliano and I relocated to the managing editors, we were able to take on management, communication, and mentorship of the topic editors. With linguistic changes afoot, we have navigated challenges like whether our managing editors can communicate by email with authors. We have been able to rely on the knowledge of our topic editors to address this. The new ecosystem we envisioned and implemented has been essential towards moving our goals for multilingual presentation forward.

Ready Your Spreadsheet

By changing our team structure, Guiliano and I have also been able to dedicate time to long-term planning for the journal's financial future. We have partnered with the Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF) and have spent the last year building a financial model that lets us fully understand the impact of decisions that we make on the cost of running the journal. Maintaining the values of *Reviews*—including our commitment to multilingualism—has emerged as a guiding theme in our work with NFF. As a result, we can now run hypothetical decisions through our financial model to evaluate costs as we make decisions about the journal's core functions. This positions us to use cost-benefit analysis in our decision-making to assess the impact of a given decision on our value proposition, financial position, and reputational capital.

What has become clear is that the cost of producing an article or an issue doubles when we add a second language and then increases by one-third with each additional language. This is not simply the cost of paying for translation but for the additional complexity it adds to our workflow. Prior to contracting a vendor for translation, more languages increased time to publication as well because we were relying on voluntary labor. Because time, like labor, is not infinite, this meant that when we chose to commit to facilitating multilingual publications, we needed to scale back operations in another area of the journal. In our case, we deprioritized special issues. In the first two years of publication, we pursued special issues as a mechanism for building communities around topics within digital humanities and as a form of outreach. While we still are open to special issues, we have to be thoughtful about the cost-benefit analysis given the costs we have taken on with multilingualism.

Use Light Touches, Not Heavy Hands

With concerns over "quality" control, editors can reproduce hegemonic approaches to language, especially in English. This can lead to editors recommending extensive copyediting for writers whose English does not imitate the style, structure, and diction of the "academic" English of the Global North. This approach reinforces linguistic barriers as lack of alignment with editorial expectations of what constitutes English language can become confused with the question of whether the scholarship itself is sound. I have previously written about how the notion of accented written language—the idea that accents are not just aural phenomena but are written ones as well—can help digital humanists understand the diversity of digital humanities scholarship. Likewise, in electronic publishing, the original concept of a written accent, developed by scholars of Global Englishes and teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL), encourages editors to be open to linguistic variety even when publishing in English.[41]

The "light touch" approach to editing is thus essential. While editing an issue for *Digital Studies/Le champ númerique* (*DS/LCHN*)—a multilingual one, naturally—I was impressed by the editors' attitudes towards editing. They advocate against trying to "standardize" or overly intervene in prose, beyond typos, grammar, and syntax that truly interferes with understanding. As special issue editors, we were asked to adopt this approach. In doing so, *DS/LCHN* makes an important contribution to normalizing linguistic diversity and therefore promoting linguistic equity. At *Reviews*, Guiliano and I similarly advocate for and mentor our editors to take a light touch editorial approach. We find that many who begin working with us in editorial capacities have internalized the idea that there is a "correct" way to write. Often, their early editorial interventions come in the form of heavily marked up documents peppered with questions. Our approach to this has been to provide mentoring, explain why we favor a light editorial touch, and ask them to consider how more editorial restraint helps promote linguistic equity. Clearly communicated on our website are the absolute "must-haves" for publications that appear in the journal. We encourage our managing editors, special issue editors, and topic editors to use these as the metric for assessing the suitability of a submission and, more importantly, for giving meaningful and actionable feedback to authors. We also discourage these editors from providing mechanical feedback, choosing to leave that to our production process, which employs light-touch copyediting.

41. Roopika Risam, "Other Worlds, Other DHs: Notes towards a DH Accent," *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities* 32, no. 2 (June 2017): 377–79, https://doi.org/10.1093/llc/fqv063; Ilona Leki, *Understanding ESL Writers: A Guide for Teachers* (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1992), 138–42; and Barbara Kroll, ed., *Exploring the Dynamics of Second Language Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 23.

Choose (Your Platform) Wisely

In today's environment for electronic publishing, the possibilities for platforms can be overwhelming. But digital platforms are primed for multilingual publication because they are not limited by word counts or page lengths that pose greater restrictions for print journals. However, it is critical to use platforms that facilitate, rather than hinder, multilingualism. For *Reviews*, knowing that multilingualism was a journal priority meant that it was a priority when choosing a platform too. After evaluating multiple options, including Open Journal Systems (OJS), Manifold, PubPub, and simply building our own WordPress or Jekyll site, we opted to work with PubPub. The modular nature of PubPub, developed by Knowledge Futures, has been essential to realizing our goals. We have been able to develop templates for multilingual publications to publish multiple language versions on the same page, under the same Digital Object Identifier (DOI). PubPub provides support for a wide range of scripts. It also accommodates right-to-left (RTL) languages with built-in features, while RTL can be wonky-to-infeasible without intentional support within a platform. Our enthusiasm for PubPub does not mean that we have access to or that the platform implements all the features necessary to maximize multilingual publication. For example, all our metadata is currently in English. But because we have partnered with PubPub and serve as a use case for them, we have been working together to examine feasibility and secure funding for further developments of the platform, including search functionalities and multilingual metadata. As part of our Mellon funding, we also brought on a metadata and discovery specialist to work on these issues in collaboration with PubPub. With *Reviews*, we were starting a new journal, so we were at an advantage because we could plan for multilingualism. Editors of journals that are firmly entrenched in existing systems will have to consider how to put pressure on their publishers and platforms or pursue migration alternatives.

While these efforts rely primarily on the labor of our team of five, our recommendations can be scaled for smaller teams. The external funding that we have garnered is explicitly not being used for operating costs but for investment in future developments, both for the long-term functioning of the journal itself (e.g., the topic editors, business modeling, and metadata and discovery efforts) and for the benefit of other collaborators (e.g., our partnerships with other journals or projects and work with PubPub). Guiliano and I are constantly attentive to our long-term minimum viable product—if our team scaled back to just the two of us, or to just two editors who might take our place, what kind of capacity would we have? Even before we had funding, we successfully ran the journal with monthly publications and produced two multilingual issues a year. Based on our assessments, we could reasonably scale back to quarterly multilingual publication. This is possible because our ethos is based on the concept of minimal computing, as Alex Gil and I define it in our special issue of *DHQ*: making decisions based on what's necessary and sufficient for running a project. Gil and I offer four questions that guide these considerations: (1) What do we need? (2) What do we have? (3) What must we prioritize? and (4) What are we willing to give up?[42] Our decision to prioritize multilingualism, as I have described, means that we have had to relocate labor in order to make it possible. This might mean minimizing our efforts in other realms, such as pace of publication. Consequently, above all, I am advocating for an approach to workflows that recognizes multilingualism as a critical value for scholarly publication and then adjusts other dimensions of labor, as necessary, to accommodate it.

The deeply entrenched nature of monolingualism in scholarly journals today is not a problem that can be easily solved. Scholarly communications are deprived of linguistic equity by a complex system of factors, from capital and the economics of publishing, to the prestige economies of scholarly venues of the Global North, to the cultural and reputational capital that accrues when publishing in English. However, unless we defamiliarize English by creating spaces for scholars to share their research in a variety of languages—for a variety of readers—we are reproducing the colonial nature of language in scholarly communications. By reframing how we understand the work of the editor in the 21st century, we have an opportunity to preserve the role of editor as a steward of knowledge, without imbuing the editor(s) with control over publication that replicates colonial hierarchies of knowledge production. The collective work and concerted effort of those of us engaged in scholarly communications to create new opportunities for multilingualism—both the advice I offer here and the practices that others are inventing—hold the possibilities of moving scholarly journals forward and realizing their multilingual features.

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42. Roopika Risam and Alex Gil, "Introduction: The Questions of Minimal Computing," *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 16, no. 2 (2022), http://www.digitalhumanities.org/dhq/vol/16/2/000646/000646.html.

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