[Revised Preprint: July 17, 2014 for the *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*]

Can We Rank Scholarly Book Publishers? A Bibliometric Experiment with the Field of History

Alesia Zuccala, Raf Guns, Roberto Cornacchia, and Rens Bod

a.a.zuccala@uva.nl; rens.bod@uva.nl
Institute for Logic, Language and Computation, University of Amsterdam,
P.O. Box 94242, Amsterdam, 1090 GE (The Netherlands)

raf.guns@ua.ac.be University of Antwerp, IBW, City Campus, Venusstraat 35, B-2000 Antwerpen (Belgium)

roberto@spinque.com
Spinque, Hooghiemstraplein 143, 3514AZ Utrecht (The Netherlands)

Abstract

This is a publisher ranking study based on a citation data grant from Elsevier, specifically, book titles cited in Scopus History journals (2007-2011), and matching metadata from WorldCat® (i.e., OCLC numbers, ISBN codes, publisher records, and library holding counts). Using both resources, we have created a unique relational database designed to compare citation counts to books with international library holdings or 'libcitations' for scholarly book publishers. First, we construct a ranking of the top 500 publishers and explore descriptive statistics at the level of publisher type (university; commercial; other) and country of origin. We then identify the top 50 university presses and commercial houses based on total citations and mean citations per book (CPB). In a third analysis we present a map of directed citation links between journals and book publishers. American and British presses/publishing houses tend to dominate the work of library collection managers and citing scholars; however, a number of specialist publishers from Europe are included. Distinct clusters from the directed citation map indicate a certain degree of regionalism and subject specialization, where some journals produced in languages other than English tend to cite books published by the same parent press. Bibliometric rankings convey only a small part of how the actual structure of the publishing field has evolved; hence, challenges lay ahead for developers of new citation indices for books and bibliometricians interested in measuring book and publisher impacts.

Introduction

Bibliometricians do not know very much about academic book publishers. Unlike journals, which have been studied intensively (Haustein, 2012), book publishers are much like fortresses: shadowy strongholds in the scholarly communication system. Scholars, particularly humanists, rely on them to print 'the book' that will lead to tenure and career promotion (Cronin & La Barre, 2004; Dalton, 2006; Williams et al., 2009). Universities are keen to promote their presses as great additions to their scholarly reputation, and evaluators are growing curious about whether or not a publisher's authority is equal to a proven measure of quality.

Publisher 'quality' has previously been assessed using survey studies (Garand & Gilles, 2011, Goodson et al., 1999; Lewis, 2000; Metz & Stemmer, 1996), and it has also been related to library catalogue holdings (Donovan & Butler, 2007; SENSE-Research School for Socio-Economic and Natural Sciences of the Environment, 2009) number of reviews per publisher and publisher reputation (Jordy et al., 1999). The concept of 'prestige', which is slightly different from 'quality', is typically associated with academic research advice and the selection of a university press by a scholar who has written a new book (Pasco, 2002; Pratt, 1993; Rowson, 1995). Consideration is usually given to the age of the press and its original mission, as well as the rank of its housing university (Gump, 2006). More often than not, ranking procedures for publishers are constructed on the basis of sales and/or yearly revenues (e.g., Publishers Weekly, 2013, July 19).

The focus of this research is to determine how publisher prestige may be indicated quantitatively using bibliographic citations to books from Scopus journal articles, within the broader subject category of *History*. Knowledge in this regard can play a role in how books are selected for new and improved citation indices. Our study is comprised of three parts. The first part is a statistical exploration of highly cited publishers according to type and country of origin. In the second part we construct a ranked list of 50 book publishers – university presses and commercial publishing houses – based on citation counts in journal articles versus mean citation counts per book. This is followed by a comparative analysis of mean citations to mean library holding counts, or 'libcitations' per book (White et al., 2009). Our statistics are derived from a newly constructed Scopus-WorldCat® relational database. While citations normally indicate the scholarly use of a particular book, a 'libcitation' is considered to be a measure of a book's perceived cultural benefit (Torres-Salinas, & Moed, 2009; White et al., 2009). Directed journal-to-publisher networks are presented in the final part of the study and recommended for recognizing regional as well as specialty publishing patterns.

Background literature

A brief history of journal rankings

Bibliometric research has traditionally focused on journals and the ranking of journals based on their relative importance to a research field. Nisonger (1999) indicates that the first approach to ranking was undertaken by Gross and Gross (1927) for the field of chemistry, and at the time of Nisonger's own research (on Library and Information Science journals), thousands of journal rankings had already occurred. Why do we rank? Initially it was to delineate a journal's role in a formal communication network and assist librarians with collection management decisions (Archambault & Larivière, 2009). Over time it has become an instrument for helping scholars with "manuscript submission decisions and with planning their publication agenda; for assessment of faculty performance regarding tenure, promotion, and annual raise decisions" (Nisonger 1999, p. 1004; Nisonger 1998). Eugene Garfield is oft credited for translating these motivations into a full-fledged industry, with the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI) journal citation index (now Thomson Reuters' Web of Knowledge), and seminal work on ranking journals by frequency and impact of citations (Garfield, 1964; 1972).

In recent years, the bibliometrics community has been eager to improve our perception of journals with refinements to their impact measures (Glänzel & Moed, 2002). Statistical

measures generally lead to a ranking, but there can be calculation inaccuracies, which have been known to mislead (Moed & van Leeuwen, 1995; Moed & van Leeuwen, 1996). Moreover, a journal's rank can change depending on the type of measure that is used. The first Journal Impact Factor (JIF), which is widely known, was introduced by Eugene Garfield (1964; 2006); while the Source Normalized Impact Factor (SNIP), developed at Leiden University (Moed, 2010) and the SJR, from Spain (González-Pereira et al., 2010) are both newer additions to the general indicator toolkit. All three indicators focus mainly on scientific journals that accumulate high citation counts. Certain journals published in the humanities are agreeable to impact factors (see Elsevier, 2010), but many do not accumulate citation frequencies as we see in science and particular fields in the social sciences. Normalization techniques are imperative, since a journal's performance is not appropriately measured without considering the research field to which it belongs and time-to-citation for every paper cited in that field (Leydesdorff et al, 2013; Moed & Van Leeuwen, 1996; Van Leeuwen, 2012).

Rarely have we seen a journal's impact measure described in terms of prestige as opposed to rank; however, John Ball (2006) recently gave this latter concept considerable attention in a *Nature* article. The article itself was based on a study carried out by Johan Bollen and his colleagues (2006) at the Research Library of Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico. While the Journal Impact Factor (JIF) may be seen as a measure of crude popularity, the Los Alamos team suggest that Google PageRank (PR) is a complementary measure of prestige. The product of the two measures generates what is known as the Y-factor. This Y-factor can then be used to point out why "certain journals can have high IFs but low PRs (perhaps indicating a popular but less prestigious journal), and vice versa (for a high-quality but niche publication)" (Ball, 2006, p. 170). For instance, "among physics journals, the IF places *Reviews of Modern Physics* at the top of the list, but the Y-factor shifts the emphasis to rapid-publication journals. *Physical Review Letters* is the most influential, with a Y-factor of 5.91 X 10⁻²" (Ball, 2006, p. 170).

Haustein's (2012) *Multidimensional Journal Evaluation* further emphasizes the value of employing and integrating complementary measures. To date, this book is one of the most comprehensive analyses pertaining to journals; referring to earlier research by Todorov & Glanzel (1988), Rousseau (2002) Van Leeuwen & Moed (2002), and Moed (2005) and detailing extensively why a single metric is not adequate enough. It is not within the scope of this paper to replicate Haustein's (2012) work, but there is much to learn from her exploration. In sum, multiple factors can contribute to a journal's rank, namely its publication output, content, perception by readers and usage, citations received, and the management of the journal itself (i.e., the editorial board and publisher affiliation). This type of information is equally relevant when developing impact measures for ranking book publishers.

From journals to books

Both a scientific journal and a scholarly book are often the product of the same 'parent' press; thus (in some ways) book publishing is familiar, but in other ways not. General impact measures for book publishers have simply not been developed, due the fact that citation indices have always omitted full metadata for books. Eugene Garfield (1996), creator of the early ISI journal citation index notes that for the social sciences and humanities "the failure to include monographs as sources may be a drawback in drawing conclusions about the impact of certain work". It is as if book publishers have simply been forgotten, even though they

"stand at a crucial crossroads in the production and distribution of knowledge in any society. They are in a position to decide what is 'in' and what is 'out' of the marketplace of ideas" (Coser, 1975, p. 14).

Thomson Reuters is currently rectifying the problem with its new Book Citation Index (BKCI) as well as Elsevier, with the addition of over 75,000 book titles to Scopus (Adams & Testa, 2011; Elsevier, 2013; Thomson Reuters, 2013). Torres-Salinas et al. (2012) recently assessed the content of the Thomson Reuters' BKCI to determine optimal indicators for a preliminary 'Book Publisher's Citation Report'. So far, the research team has identified a total of nineteen indicators with six focused specifically on ranking scholarly publishers: three are related to productivity (i.e., total number of items indexed; number of books indexed; number of chapters indexed) and another three help to determine the publisher's impact (i.e., total citations for all items; average citation per item; percentage of non-cited items).

Exploratory work with the BKCI is underway, yet what we often hear about publishers, especially university presses, is not that they require evaluation, but that they are barely surviving due to financial cutbacks (Greco, 2009; Thatcher, 1999; Dalton, 2006). According to Greco (2009), 'the vast majority of all university presses require subsidies from their home universities" and "very few end up in the 'black'" (p. xi). This stands in sharp contrast to the journal industry, where presses with active journal publications "are highly regarded and essentially 'profitable' (i.e., they generate a surplus)" (p. vii).

In spite of this publishing crisis, humanities scholars from a variety of research disciplines still feel pressure to publish a book. Cronin and La Barre (2004) investigated what seems to be an unwritten rule and found that within research-intensive faculties for English and foreign language studies "the book is still the principal coin of the realm" even though "equivalency can be established in a variety of ways" (p. 89). The expectation is that candidates for tenure should write at least one book; however, little evidence from the surveyed faculties (n=101) pointed to clear guidelines for new faculty, nor was it clear that publishing a book is considered the best course of action. Cronin and La Barre (2004) suggest that "change of some kind seems possible" given that new modes of electronic publishing are emerging (pp. 86-87).

For many scholars who do feel pressure to publish a book, selecting the best publisher is critical, if not as important as writing the book itself. Goodson et al. (1999) found that:

in tenure and promotion cases, in hiring decisions, in departmental gossip, and at APSA [American Political Science Association] meetings and other professional gatherings, with whom one publishes does matter. One colleague wrote us, "I vividly remember a conversation with a fellow author . . . [who] refused to submit a manuscript to certain publishers because they were not prestigious enough. In my experience (about thirty years), there is a decided 'unwritten' hierarchy of publishers, not only in political science, indeed, not only in academia." Another noted, "My general sense is that the pecking order of publishers is quite clear within my subfield (at least between the best and the rest).' If there is a clear hierarchy among publishers, then which presses are viewed by members of the discipline as publishing the highest quality books? (p. 257).

Goodsen et al. (1999) employed a list-based survey and asked scholars in the field of political science to rate the quality of known publishers. The top five presses that received the highest mean quality ranking were *Cambridge University Press*, *Princeton University Press*, *Oxford University Press*, *University of Chicago Press* and *Yale University Press*. When respondents were asked to evaluate only those presses/publishing houses with which they were familiar, *Cambridge* once again topped the list, followed by *Oxford University Press* and then *Harvard University Press*. Although the results were not surprising [note: Oxford and Harvard are generally thought to be 'gold standards' in publishing (Dalton, 2006)], it is useful to mention that there are certain drawbacks to using survey questionnaires. Not only are they time-consuming to carry out, it can be difficult to obtain readership participation or to construct a sample that fully represents all of a discipline's subfields. The concept of 'prestige' is also focused entirely on what scholars believe to be true with no objective measure of what is occurring in the literature.

Garand & Gilles (2011) later expanded upon the survey approach using an open-ended questionnaire (again with political scientists). In this study, a comparison was made between scholars' own choice of publisher (i.e., indicate the first, second, and third book publisher to which you would submit a manuscript) versus their readership preferences (i.e., identify book publishers whose books you read regularly or consider to be the best research in your area of expertise). Again, the results put *Cambridge University Press* and *Princeton University Press* at the top in terms of publishing choice and nothing changed with respect to readership: "*Cambridge University Press* and *Princeton University Press* [led] the way once more, with preference counts for Princeton University Press constituting slightly more than 80% of the preference counts for *Cambridge University Press*" (p. 377).

Improvements can always be made to surveys; however, it is perhaps time now to augment this type of research with bibliometric methods of evaluation. In fact, rankings based on surveys have been shown to relate positively to bibliometric measures, at least in research with journals (Rousseau, 2008). Both approaches have their merit: the first gives us a glimpse of 'perceived' publisher reputation in light of faculty expectations; while the second quantitative approach, which allows for wider observation, is now becoming more feasible with recent developments to Scopus and Thomson Reuter's new BKCI. Years of developing impact measures and ranking journals have prepared us for the task of ranking book publishers: we are (hopefully) less inclined to employ misleading statistics and consider optimal ways of interlacing indicators.

The publishing industry

All insights gathered, regardless of analytic method, are significantly related to how the book publishing industry itself has evolved. Certain facets of this industry have been persistent, and Thomson (2005) refers to these as "the structure of the field" (p. 86). This basic structure is comprised of four criteria: 1) ownership status, 2) economic capital, 3) symbolic capital, and 4) geographical reach.

In terms of *ownership status*, there are clear differences between the university press and the commercial publishing firm. The university press is usually constituted as a department within a host university, and often it is registered as a charity or not-for-profit. Many university presses are also overseen by a committee: *Cambridge University Press* and *Oxford University Press* each have a respective Board of Syndics and Board of Delegates (Thomson,

2005). Unlike the university press, the commercial publisher may be a private, largely family-owned business, or it could be a subsidiary of a larger corporation (e.g., as *Longman* is to *Pearson*). The commercial publisher is subject to financial objectives and commercial constraints. Moreover, it is not required to publish scholarly material, and does not have any special tax status.

For both the university press and commercial publisher a high degree of economic capital makes a difference in operations and production. At the commercial end, industry reports identify publishers that bring in millions of dollars of revenue annually. In Publisher's Weekly (2013, July 19) Pearson from the UK is said to have retained its "crown" ranking as the world's largest publisher in 2012, with a total revenue of \$9.16 billion. Thomson's (2005) study of the university press also emphasizes differences in *economic capital*. Some presses receive financial assistance from their host institutions, "ranging from annual operating grants to cover deficits to rent-free accommodation, free employee benefits and interest-free overdraft facilities" (p. 88). Those that do not receive direct financial assistance from their host institutions expect to break even, and some that are receiving small amounts of support are experiencing growing pressure to reduce their dependence. Oxford University Press (OUP) and Cambridge University Press (CUP) are, as Thomson (2005) states, "in a league of their own". At the time that his monograph was published "OUP's turnover year ended 31 March 2001 was £366 million (\$585 million), generating a net surplus of £44 million (\$70 million)" (p. 87). Compare this to a turnover for the year ended March 31, 2013, which amounts to approximately £723 million, with a net surplus of £105 million (Oxford University Press, 2013).

Symbolic capital is a criterion that is not easy to quantify in the same way as economic capital. Thomson (2005) describes this in terms of "a resource that flows back and forth between the academic field and the field of academic publishing" (p. 90). Amongst university presses, this particular form of capital is oft aligned with institutional or host university prestige (Gump, 2006). It does however fluctuate, given that "a publisher can augment its symbolic capital by publishing authors who have gained a high reputation in the academic field and, at the same time an author can increase his or her standing in the academic field by publishing with a press that has accumulated large quantities of symbolic capital" (p. 90). The surveys carried out by Goodsen et al. (1999) as well as Garand and Gilles (2011) come close to addressing the issue of symbolic capital, because the responses obtained from their surveyed scholars were based on publisher perceptions. We attempt to corroborate these perceptions through the use of citations – another form of symbolic capital, which is indeed measurable.

Geographical reach is the last criterion, and it is based on the number of offices that a publisher establishes worldwide. For instance, the publishing house of Palgrave MacMillan not only embraces a variety of subjects, for books and journals, its current geographic reach is up to 19 countries worldwide, including North America, Europe, Asia as well as Australia and New Zealand (see http://www.palgrave.com/). While the geographical reach of a university press or commercial publisher is normally linked to economic capital, it may also be historical in nature. Again, Thomson (2005) refers to Oxford University Press and Cambridge University Press because both "expanded their activities outside the UK in the late nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries" when they could "take advantage of trading networks created by the British Empire" (p. 89). This is not to say that geographical reach is completely distinct from economic capital; in fact all three elements often intertwine. Editors who are at a disadvantage in one way or another, may "adopt different strategies to

acquire content" such as forming "strong relationships with local authors... and offer[ing] the kind of personal attention that an editor at a more prestigious but distant press may find difficult to match" (Thomson, 2005, p. 91).

Digital transformations

In addition to the publishing field's structure, innovations are occurring in printing and publishing. As far back as the 1980s industry professionals have had a "widespread feeling...that digitization is bound to have a profound impact" (Thomson, 2005, p. 309). Journal publishers have been relatively quick to embrace the digital revolution, and now with the open access movement, increasing numbers of articles are freely available for download via the Internet. Research concerning article impacts has therefore given due attention to this transformation (e.g., Moed, 2005; 2007). What this means, or could mean, is that book publishers are at risk of being "left behind like a beached whale" if they do not actively experiment with new technologies (Thomson, 2004, p. 332).

The prospect of producing, marketing and selling academic books in digital form has always been attractive to publishers: "scholarly books in online environments [can] become a new source of revenue" (Thomson, 2005, p 331). The second benefit to the publisher is that the "electronic dissemination of scholarly works extricate[s] [them] from the seemingly inexorable economic logic of the field", and third, the electronic medium "has potential to liberate scholarly work from the constraints imposed by [print]" (pp. 331-332). Esposito (2012) aptly suggests that publishers focus on the short-form digital book, which lies somewhere in the middle between an article and a monograph:

The short form (which is really a middle form, since articles are shorter yet) has been mostly dormant for decades because the circumstances of profitable publishing in the print era could not make an economic case for the short form. Book-length work could be sold in bookstores, where it commanded a price (in today's currency) between \$12 and \$25. Articles could find a place in journals or in collections of essays (sold as a book). But what to do about the 40,000-word essay? How to price it? So much of the cost of getting a book into a bookstore is in handling and transportation, so a 40,000-word piece would have to bear a price close to that of a full book. Which doesn't make much sense if you are a customer. Thus, the short form languished — until now, when digital technology opens up new possibilities.

Several universities across the United States and elsewhere are pursuing digital strategies for promoting and selling their latest books (see survey of the Association of American University Presses, 2014). Princeton shorts is a program at *Princeton University Press* which starts with a full-length book and takes chapters or sections out to make a separate 'shorter' work, in digital form (http://press.princeton.edu/PrincetonShorts/). This is one option for developing the short-form electronic book, including creating one initially from scratch. In Great Britain, *Cambridge University Press* has also embraced the digital movement with University Publishing Online (see http://universitypublishingonline.org/), and *Mondadori*, a leading publishing house in Italy, which covers 26% of the fiction and non-fiction book trade released approximately 3000 e-books in 2011 (Publishers Weekly, 2012).

While the publishing industry is taking a marked turn, little is known about how this is affecting the research culture of the humanities scholar. Adriaan van der Weel (2011), author of *Changing our Textual Minds*, indicates that the "Order of the Book is gradually disintegrating" (p. 5). The print paradigm was built upon a familiar one-way linear hierarchical order, but this new order is what he refers to now as a "digital docuverse". Digitalization "enables new ways of accessing the text, both as a whole and as fragments", and in terms of distribution and consumption, this "creates an entirely new relationship between author and reader" (p. 5).

In sum, we have many factors to consider when evaluating publishers. Based on the literature it is clear how difficult it can be to address all in one study. Our objective is not to produce a definitive approach to ranking publishers, but to formulate a distinct viewpoint using a unique 'citation-libcitation' database. The analysis is field-specific (i.e., the broader subject area of *History*), thus conveys only a small part of what makes academic publishing an intriguing enterprise. At the time that this research was conducted, we did not have access to Thomson Reuter's Book Citation Index (BKCI); hence our data-intensive approach began with an extraction of book titles cited in journal articles indexed in Elsevier Scopus.

Research Methods and Results

Data preparation

The Scopus journal citation index includes books in tagged reference lists; however, each book lacks a distinct source identification code. The researcher is forced to grapple with what is known as the reference 'string' [e.g., Runge L, 2005, Companion 18 Century, p292]. Sometimes the referenced title appears in short form, and sometimes it is recorded in full¹, but always the publisher name is omitted. Moreover, both the author and book title itself can be recorded inconsistently from article to article depending on the scholar who made the original citation.

In June 2012 our project team constructed a Microsoft SQL server database, with citation records from a set of Elsevier Scopus journals (*History & Literary Theory/Criticism*) for the periods 1996-2001 and 2007-2011. The Scopus datasets were granted to us via the 2012 Elsevier Bibliometrics Research Program and were comprised of a total of 1023 journals from both fields. The unique aspect of this database is that the citation records for book titles were matched and linked to publisher metadata extracted from the WorldCat® Library Catalog.²

We performed thousands of queries in WorldCat® using an API developer key. Many of the Scopus references/citations (i.e., from research articles only) may have been to documents other than a book or article (e.g., unpublished archive materials) but those preliminarily identified as a book were labelled as such because they did not have a unique Scopus source ID, a source title with a different article title, and did not contain a volume number. The specific data extracted from WorldCat® included the OCLC number, the ISBN of the book, the publisher name and publishing location. With each book title classified by a new OCLC number, we also retrieved corresponding library holding counts (i.e., 'libcitations') for the

¹ This is more often the case in Scopus than in Thomson Reuter's Web of Science.

² WorldCat® is a union catalog that itemizes the collections of 72,000 libraries in 170 countries and territories. All libraries participate in the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) global cooperative (see http://rlin21.rlg.org/worldcat/statistics/default.htm).

Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and international or non-ARL libraries. Table 1 highlights the results of our matching procedure.

Table 1. Cited documents from research articles in Scopus *History* and *Literature* journals matched to titles catalogued in WorldCat®.

	Total docs cited	Sourced in Scopus only	Not in Scopus, but matched in WorldCat®	Sourced in Scopus & matched in WorldCat®	Not in Scopus or WorldCat®	Cited docs w. missing values (?)
HISTORY						
1996-2001	882,155	6,945	303,048	368	564,773	7,021
2007-2011	2,858,005	117,789	806,985	2,251	1,915,002	15,978
LITERATURE						
1996-2000	198,606	815	75,840	139	120,445	1,367
2007-2011	1,395,917	36,737	504,721	1,546	845,561	7,352

To develop a ranking of book publishers we chose to focus on non-sourced Scopus references that were matched in WorldCat®. Sizeable counts to cited books were obtained for the 2007 to 2011 period for *History* (n=806,985); thus our work began with this particular dataset. The field itself is broadly defined on the basis of 604 different journals. This included the history and philosophy of science, the history of technology and culture, economic history, renaissance studies, medieval studies; the history of religion and biblical studies; British history, American history, Irish history, German history, Canadian history, Roman studies, African studies, etc. The coverage of subtopics was wide-ranging.

From the initial 806,985 matches we selected only book titles that had both an OCLC number and an ISBN number. It was understood also that in order to produce reliable statistics the retrieved publisher records for all books needed to be cleaned and standardized. Since we were working with combined records from two separate sources, we were highly dependant on consistencies in record keeping. Titles recorded in Scopus may have been matched to an incorrect title in WorldCat®, if one or both had been recorded incorrectly, or if they referred to different books that happened to have the same title.

Data cleaning started at the level of the cited book, ensuring that all reference strings and corresponding citation counts were to individual books, followed by a process of standardizing or uniting all publisher names. The procedure included both an automated process, as well as a manual one. For every publisher name it was necessary to clarify, for example, that "Oxford Univ. Press" and "OUP", as well as "Oxford U. Press" were equal to the standardized form of "Oxford University Press". Some press names required knowledge of the differences between particular American universities (e.g., PENN State University Press; University of Pennsylvania Press). Names that were difficult to standardise were those written in a non-English language or a non-Latin script (e.g., ROSSPEN-Rossiiskaia Politicheskaia Entsiklopediia).

Many publishers were not recorded in their singular form, for instance: "Oxford University Press for the British Academy" or "Polity Press in association with Blackwell". To simplify the outcome of this research, we decided to omit any record where a press/publisher had acted "in association with", "in conjunction with" another, or published a book "for" another type of organisation. We also chose not to standardize a publisher name if it had been altered recently due to a merger (e.g., J. Wiley & Sons merged with Blackwell publishing to become Wiley-Blackwell). Instead, we kept the name as it had originally been recorded in one or more of the catalogues affiliated with WorldCat® (e.g., Blackwell publishing). And finally, we maintained separate records of all imprints, since many of these appeared in addition to their 'parent' publishing name (e.g. Scribner is an imprint of Simon & Schuster).

General statistics

Following the data cleaning and standardization, we produced a list of 500 most highly cited publisher names from a larger set of approximately 12,000 (note: many publishing entities were cited just once). The top 500 consisted of publishers that had accumulated up to 19 citations or more in Scopus history journals during the 2007 to 2011 period. These 500 names were then categorized and grouped according to three distinct types: 1) university presses, 2) commercial publishing houses, and 3) museums, libraries, special research institutes, foundations, non-profit and international organizations (labelled "other").

We further categorized the publishers on the basis of their founding country. For most university presses, the label was obvious (e.g., *University of Toronto Press* is from *Toronto*, *Canada*), but research via the Internet (usually Wikipedia) was useful for verifying the geographical origin of some commercial publishers. For instance, *Nauka* is the name of a Russian publisher of academic books, established in 1923 in the city of Leningrad, under the original name of *USSR Academy of Sciences Publisher* (until 1963).

Figure 1 illustrates the number of citations and libcitations received by 500 publishers from 27 countries, including a small group that fit within an 'international' category (e.g., *World Health Organization; OECD-Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development*). Note that the WorldCat® libcitations, or library holding counts, are much higher in number than the journal citations, and the two variables, both skewed in distribution, were highly correlated with a Spearman's rho of .686.³ Great Britain and the United States are dominant to the publishing scene, but book publishers from other countries, notably Germany, France and Italy are also strong recipients of journal citations.

In Figure 2 we show the distributions of citations and libcitations received by the three categories of publishers. For university presses there is an even distribution of libcitations, but in terms of citations, more tend to fit within the upper quartile of the distribution (i.e., above the median mark) with *Cambridge University Press* and *Oxford University Press* marked as clear outliers. The libcitation and citation distributions for the commercial publishing houses follow a similar pattern. Within the commercial set there are also a number of publishing houses in competitive positions (i.e., upper 25% quartile): *Routledge* and *Palgrave Macmillan* are also clearly marked as outliers. Citation rates to alternative publishing units, like museums, institutes, and non-profit and international organizations are

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³ Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

not nearly as high, relative to the other publisher categories, yet still they produce a major portion of cited books (i.e., enough to include in the top highly cited 500).

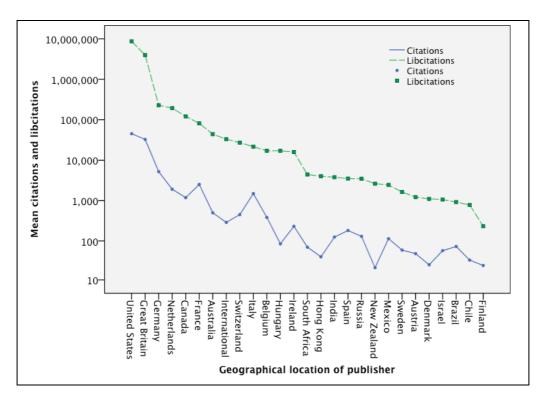


Figure 1. Mean Scopus journal citations and WorldCat® libcitations for publishers in 27 countries.

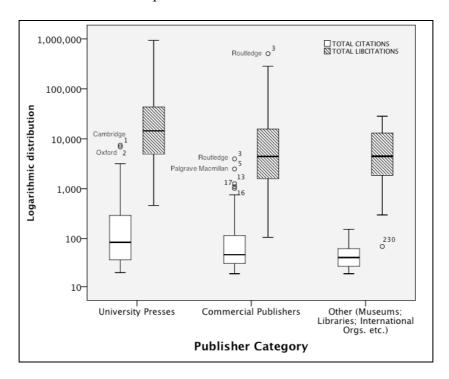


Figure 2. Distribution of citations and liberitations by publishing category (Books cited in Scopus *History* Journals 2007-2011).

Top 50 ranking

A reasonable number of international presses and commercial houses were featured in our list of 500, but amongst the top ranked 50 publishers, almost all originate from the United States or Great Britain. The exceptions include two German publishers and one from Switzerland. As noted in the introduction, ranking procedures can be complicated and may lead to misleading statistics. It would be useful to employ a normalization approach to ranking based on information beyond citation counts and library holdings. Some variables; however, are difficult to control and not easily gathered from one source. For example: What are the annual sales figures for each publisher? How many books have been sold and distributed specifically for the subject of history? How many scholarly reviews have been written for the publishers' book titles, particularly those cited during 2007 to 2011?

Table 2 demonstrates how citations can at least be viewed from two different perspectives. A comparison is made for 50 of the top cited publishers on the basis of total citation counts and mean citation per book in journal articles (2007 to 2011). As expected, both *Oxford University Press* and *Cambridge University Press* are ranked at the top in terms of citation counts. *Routledge* appears to be the most prestigious commercial publisher, ranking third in the list based on total citation counts, and almost half from the list (n=22) are commercial publishers. When we re-examine this ranking by the mean citation per book, *Cambridge* and *Oxford* move to 16th and 17th place and the new highest ranked publishers then become *Belknap*, *Princeton University Press*, *Harvard University Press*, and *University of North Carolina Press*.

Cambridge University Press, Oxford University press and Routledge produce thousands of books per year for a variety of subjects and fields. Since the Scopus journal list covers a wide variety of subjects (related to History), there are ample opportunities for each of the top cited book publishers to receive citations. This does not guarantee; however, that every book that is printed will have a high individual citation impact. The Belknap imprint of Harvard University Press may produce fewer books per year by comparison, but it has developed a specialist reputation in American history since 1954 when the first Harvard Guide to American History was printed. Publishing under the Belknap name thus appears to be a 'prestigious' choice for some historians. Many other American university presses are at the top of our mean CPB list, but we have yet to observe the extent to which the journals indexed by Scopus focus extensively on American history, compared to other topics of study.

Figure 3 below compares the mean library holding counts (WorldCat®) and mean citation counts per book (Scopus) for the top 50 publishers. Here we see a positive but weak relationship: books distributed by each publisher and catalogued frequently in international libraries tend to receive higher citation rates in the journal literature. In other words, their perceived benefit to the academic community corresponds to some extent with their scholarly use.

Table 2. Top 50 publishers based on total citations and citations per book (CPB) in Scopus *History* Journals (2007-2011). (Commercial publishing houses printed in italics)

PUBLISHER NAME		Total Citation Counts	Mean CPB	ı	PUBLISHER NAME	Total Citation Counts	Mean CPB 6.750
Ca	Cambridge University Press		3.118	1	Belknap Press (of Harvard)		
O	xford University Press	6899	2.972	2	Princeton University Press	3176	4.586
Ro	outledge	3960	2.152	3	Harvard University Press	2151	4.334
Pr	inceton University Press	3176	4.586	4	University of North Carolina Press	1482	4.320
Pa	algrave Macmillan	2490	2.097	5	University of Chicago Press	2470	4.039
Ur	niversity of California Press	2483	3.974	6	University of California Press	2483	3.974
Ur	niversity of Chicago Press	2470	4.039	7	Duke University Press	1620	3.803
На	arvard University Press	2151	4.334	8	Verso Books	535	3.699
Ya	le University Press	1862	3.316	9	Johns Hopkins University Press	1114	3.397
D Du	uke University Press	1620	3.803	10		1361	3.359
_	niversity of North Carolina Press	1482	4.320	11		413	3.357
_	ornell University Press	1361	3.359	12	Yale University Press	1862	3.316
_	rill Academic Publishers	1263	1.908	13	,	850	3.293
_	anford University Press	1142	3.190	14		1142	3.190
_	hns Hopkins University Press	1114	3.397	15		616	3.166
_	shqate Publishing	1098	1.789	16		7459	3.118
_	ackwell Publishing (now Wiley-Blackwell)	1014	2.428	17	,	6899	2.972
_	IT Press	893	2.585		Alfred A. Knopf	633	2.913
_	ENN, University of Pennsylvania Press	850	3.293	19		697	2.797
_	olumbia University Press	844	2.518	20	. ,	429	2.719
_	arendon Press (of Oxford)	756	2.566	_	MIT Press	893	2.585
_	elknap Press (of Harvard)	701	6.750	22		756	2.566
	! W. Norton & Company	697	2.797	23	, , , ,	682	2.520
_	anchester University Press	682	2.520	24	·	844	2.518
_	fred A. Knopf	633	2.913	25	•	468	2.438
	diana University Press	625	2.418	26	-	1014	2.428
_	age Publications	624	1.982	27		625	2.418
	enguin Press	616	3.166	28	•	499	2.412
_	niversity of Minnesota Press	588	2.390	29	, ,	588	2.390
_	erso Books	535	3.699	30	•	403	2.339
	niversity of Michigan Press	499	2.412	31	3 () 3 ()	368	2.339
_				_	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		
	niversity of Toronto Press	487 468	2.160 2.438	32 33	•	487 3960	2.160 2.152
_	erg Publishers	408	2.438	34	-	2490	2.152
	plity Press				3	404	2.097
_	asic Books	413 412	3.357	35	•		
_	erlag C. H. Beck		1.981	36	, , , ,	310	2.095
_	ew York University Press	404	2.095	37	·	373	2.077
_	king Press (of the Penguin Group)	403	2.339	38	•	326	2.073
_	B. Tauris	394	1.985	39	•	333	2.059
_	owman & Littlefield Publishers	388	1.527	40		320	2.048
_	eter Lang	374	1.280	41	,	308	2.006
_	andenhoeck & Ruprecht	373	2.077	_	University of Nebraska Press	325	1.994
_	niversity of Illinois Press	368	2.218	43		394	1.985
_	niversity of Texas Press	333	2.059	44		624	1.982
_	oydell & Brewer	326	2.073	45	-	412	1.981
_	niversity of Nebraska Press	325	1.994	46		1263	1.908
_	cGill-Queen's University Press	320	2.048	47	1.2	312	1.825
_	ontinuum Books (of Bloomsbury)	312	1.825	48		1098	1.789
St:	ate University of New York (SUNY) Press	310	2.095	49	Rowman & Littlefield Publishers	388	1.527

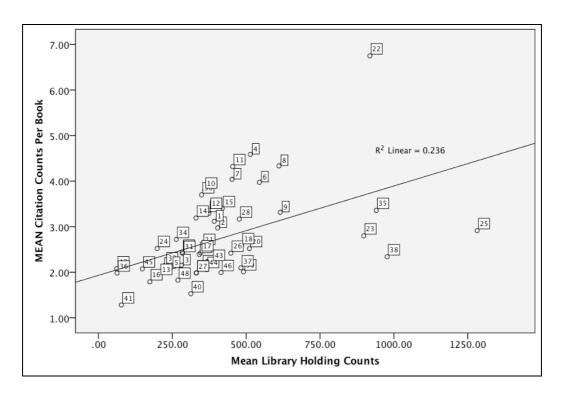


Figure 3. A comparison of the top 50 ranked publishers based on mean library holding counts ('libcitations') and mean citation counts per book.

Directed journal-to-publisher network

With our network approach to observing publishers, we employed two mapping tools: 1) VOSViewer (van Eck & Waltman, 2010) and 2) Pajek (de Noy et al, 2005). Both tools enabled us to explore the relationship between the Scopus journal set and the various presses/publishing houses cited by research articles. The network arcs are directed and include a selection of the top 501 strongest citation links, where the bottom threshold for link strength was set at n=10. A total of 354 international journals were included and 147 of the most frequently cited international book publishers. *Cambridge University Press* and *Oxford University Press* are recipients of the most in-links from this 354 journal set, but a significant number of smaller, non-British/non-American houses are featured. We spent time experimenting with the VOSViewer clustering algorithm in order to obtain interpretable results. The best option was a cluster resolution of 2.00 with a minimum size of 15. Although VOSViewer allows the user to zoom in to a specific cluster, it could not be extracted from the full map. Pajek was therefore useful for extracting and examining each cluster separately.

The VOSViewer map, shown in Figure 4, may be interpreted on the basis of sub-themes and/or geographical interests. At the bottom, we see an emphasis on journals and book publishers dedicated to period studies (e.g., the Renaissance period; Sixteenth century; Eighteenth century and Medieval times). There are two distinct clusters to the right that emphasize the history of religion and biblical studies (e.g., Early Christian studies, the study of Judaism; New Testament Studies) as well as Italian and Roman studies. The top portion of the map highlights Economic history, and the History and Philosophy of Science, and towards

the left we have journals and publishers that focus on Politics, Diplomatic history, Social history and the civil war in the United States. *Cambridge University Press* belongs to the cluster/subfield of Economic history, while *Oxford University Press* is aligned with general British and Irish history, from earlier times as well as the present.

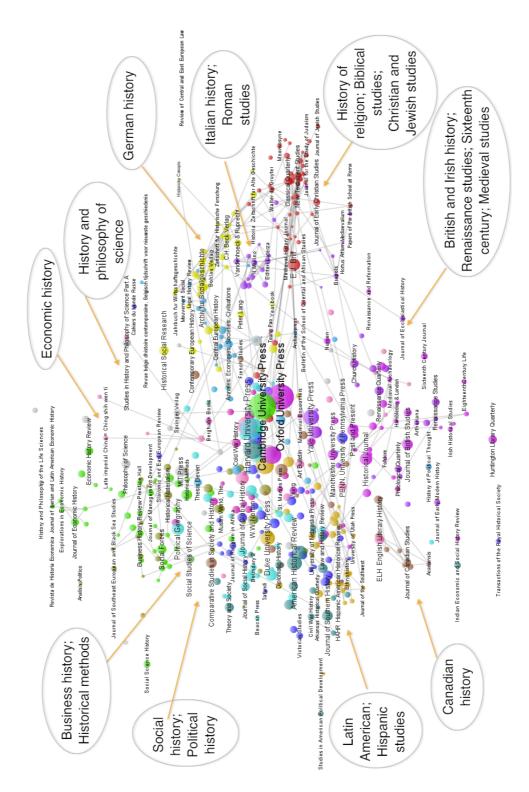


Figure 4. 354 Scopus *History* journals with directed citation links to 147 book publishers (n=16 clusters).

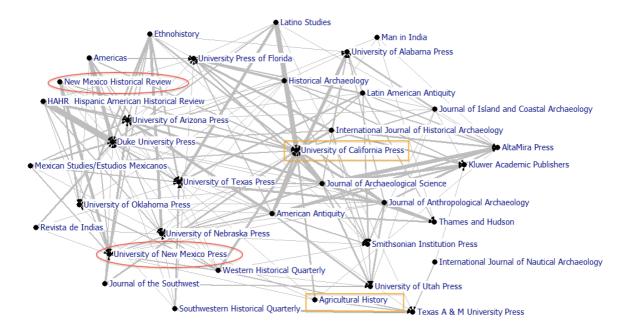


Figure 5. Specialty journals and university presses for Latin American history and Archaeological studies (n=35 node partition from Figure 3).



Figure 6. Specialty journals and publishers for the History of Religion and Biblical Studies (n=50 node partition from Figure 3).

Individual analyses of the clusters point to underlying journal-to-publisher relationships. Certain presses/publishers that produce journals as well as books are directly linked. Note from Figure 5 that scholars who have written research papers for the *New Mexico Historical Review* have cited books published by the journal's parent press, the *University of New Mexico Press*. Books published by the *University of California Press* have often been cited in research papers from the journal of *Agricultural History* (i.e., also from the same 'parent' publisher). Figure 6 illustrates the importance of *Brill Academic Publishing* for topics relevant to the history of religion. Books published by both *Brill* and *Walter de Gruyter* have also been cited frequently in research articles from their own journals.

While it is possible to rank presses/publishers on one indicator alone, our network approach to mapping directed citations suggests that it may be prudent to think in terms of specialization. Historians do not necessarily have to publish with a high-ranking press like *Cambridge* or *Oxford* to gain recognition by citation. The choice of publisher also depends on the type of academic audience one would like to reach. For example, a scholar of Latin American history/Hispanic studies might publish with the *University of California Press* or *Duke University Press*, and the historian who wants to make an impact with new research concerning the history of Christianity may choose to publish a book with *Brill*.

Concluding discussion

Can we rank scholarly publishers? Without access to a complete index of cited books, it is possible, but the procedure is difficult. However, the amalgamation of two bibliographic resources, Scopus and WorldCat®, following a detailed matching, cleaning and standardizing procedure for publisher names and book titles, has afforded us insights that we might otherwise not have gained had we been granted the 'perfect' index. This work has generated some results that were expected, along with information that only tedious data handling can elucidate. As expected, our findings reflect the degree to which Cambridge University Press and Oxford University Press are powerful institutions with a wide geographic reach, and high degrees of economic and symbolic capital. It is also clear that the English language dominates international publishing, even though many presses and commercial houses from Europe are keeping up a reasonable pace (Are they also publishing more books in English?). Further work is needed to determine how citations to books from other books might alter or complement what we have seen in the journal literature. The role of libcitations as unique indicators also deserves more attention, in addition to the World Wide Web as a protractor of prestige (e.g., Google PageRank). Until we have a complete picture, investors in new and improved citation indices for books benefit from as much research as possible into the publishing field's structure.

Commercial organizations like Thomson Reuters and Elsevier are now faced with the proverbial question: "To include or not to include?" Book metadata is currently being added to the Book Citation Index and Scopus (respectively), but little is known about the selection criteria for titles and publishers. Certain choices could be detrimental not only for the publishing industry, but for historians as well, particularly those with national or regional interests. Our journal-to-publisher network confirms that it is still a standard practice for some scholars to publish research articles and books in French, German, and Italian. A selection of non-English books, as well as those originally printed in non-Latin scripts may or may not be added to the new indices in a 'fair' approach to comprehensiveness. Will this continue in a climate of financial cutbacks, internationalism and digital transformations? In

terms of writing and publishing, historians are divided. Some are willing to forego local/regional interests, write as much as possible in English (if not in an English-speaking country), and embrace the notion of high-ranking international journals. Others are less willing to publish one or more journal articles versus a full-length monograph, because short publishing strategies compromise the in-depth treatment of their subject. But now, the electronic short-form book could actually change the scholar's outlook. The process of ranking book publishers can alter promotion and tenure expectations, but new departmental expectations for producing research might also change how we value different forms of text when establishing publisher rankings.

This study was not designed to provide historians with a definitive list of publishers that they should now choose from to increase their scholarly impact. It was an experiment, and our experimental approach has led us to the following conclusions. Citation indices that include books will not be useful if developers do not recognize the difference between how publishing entities work alone or in conjunction with other units and organizations. The cleaning and standardizing process for this study brought awareness to the fact that many university presses act in association with other entities like museums, libraries and special research institutes. Moreover, several institutes, organizations, museums and libraries seem to have established themselves as publishing units in their own right. When publisher names are added to the new indices, especially commercial publishers, they must be recorded consistently, and remain distinct where distinctions are informative: imprints do not necessarily play the same role as their 'parent' publishing houses. A book publisher that establishes a reputation as a topic specialist is not in the same league as an international, comprehensive publisher. Clearly, the regional specialist will not benefit from being evaluated or ranked alongside larger competitors with more economic capital. Comprehensive presses/publishing houses will naturally acquire more citations simply for having distributed more books. However, the book publisher that specializes in a regional topic need not aim to be comprehensive; there are enough presses and commercial houses that share similar strengths and have survived wellenough for a comparative evaluation, despite the publishing crisis.

Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful to both the Elsevier Bibliometrics Research Programme (http://ebrp.elsevier.com/) and OCLC WorldCat® for granting us datasets that were used to create the unique database used in this study. We would also like to thank the Center for Digital Humanities in Amsterdam for financing our project, as well as Maurits van Bellen and Robert Iepsma for assisting us with our data cleaning and standardization.

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