

# Book Publishing Patterns in Social Sciences and Humanities in Lithuania: Analysing Trends in DB “Lituanistika”

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**Abstract.** The aim of this article is to reconstruct and analyse scholarly book (or monograph) publication patterns in Lithuanian Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) registered in national database “Lituanistika”. Database “Lituanistika” provides a good starting point and repository of empirical data as it indexes and abstracts different types of scholarly publications in SSH, monographs included. The empirical part of the research consists of finding registered monographs, attributing them to the individual SSH disciplines, comparing the number of monographs and scholarly articles in various SSH, and retracing the timeline of registered monographs across different disciplines etc. The analytical approach of our research is based on an idea of (social) constructivism. We aim at reconstructing the motives behind the publishing of scholarly books or abstaining from such practice. In this article we argue that the motives to publish (or not to publish) a scholarly book are a product of a broader Lithuanian social, institutional and disciplinary context, which influences and regulates the actions of individual SSH researchers.

**Keywords:** scholarly books, publishing, Social Sciences and Humanities, national database “Lituanistika”, administrative control, academic resistance.

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## Monografijų leidybos tendencijos Lietuvos socialiniuose ir humanitariniuose moksluose: duomenų bazės „Lituanistika“ analizė

**Santrauka.** Straipsnyje siekiama rekonstruoti mokslinių monografijų leidybos modelį Lietuvos socialiniuose ir humanitariniuose moksluose. Sociologinei analizei pasirinkta nacionalinė duomenų bazė „Lituanistika“, kurioje indeksuojamos įvairios mokslo publikacijos ir pateikiamos jų santraukos. Jos duomenys leidžia identifikuoti ilgalaikes publikavimo praktikas skirtingose disciplinose. Straipsnyje vadovaujamas socialinio konstruktyvizmo perspektyva, padedančia atsekti motyvus, verčiančius mokslininkus rašyti knygas arba vengti tai daryti. Savo analize ir svarstymais norime parodyti, kad individualus apsisprendimas publikuoti monografiją pirmiausia yra nulemtas platesnio socialinio konteksto, kuriame svarbus vaidmuo tenka institucinio ir disciplinarinio režimų sąveikai, įgalinančiai tiek subordinacinį, tiek rezistencinį mokslininkų santykį su mokslo administracine aplinka.

**Pagrindiniai žodžiai:** monografijos, mokslo leidyba, socialiniai ir humanitariniai mokslai, „Lituanistika“, administracinė kontrolė, akademinis pasipriešinimas.

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*Writing long books is a laborious and impoverishing act of foolishness: expanding in five hundred pages an idea that could be perfectly explained in a few minutes.*

*A better procedure is to pretend that those books already exist and to offer a summary, a commentary.*

Jorge Luis Borges

## Introduction

Epigraph by Jorge Luis Borges to this article reveals his personal attitude towards longer pieces of writing, such as novels, which he succeeded to avoid. Going with summaries and commentaries to fictional books saves efforts of the author and reduces long stories to their core idea and essence. Thus, following Borges, every writer could be assigned to one of two categories – long distance runner or literary sprinter. Both of them agree on importance of the book but while the former foolishly writes it, the latter pretends it is already written. Applying this analogy to scholarly publishing, it is possible to classify researchers into the two categories extracted from Borges' quote e.g. book writers and scholarly article writers. If all the scholars were Borgesian, the scholarly books would be long dead by now. But this is not the case. Despite the attitudes against book publishing worldwide (e.g. Gimenez-Toledo et al. 2016; 2017), books seem to be more persistent as they are not fully replaced by articles-summaries. Being SSH scholars we find ourselves in rather curious situation: on the one hand, we see the “foolishness” of book writing as evaluation systems and databases are not book-friendly, on the other hand, we somehow respect the format of the book and from time to time labour hard to produce one. Being trapped by administrative evaluation systems but still attracted by certain motives to publish books we seek to explain our academic behaviour and reconstruct the reasons of scholarly book publishing. Looking at Lithuanian academic publishing context, we try to answer the following questions: Why “foolishly” write an academic book? Is it that foolish at all? What is the motivation behind book writing? Why not just save effort by ab-

staining from monograph publishing and choose an article instead? How can an increasing / decreasing number of monographs could be explained?

In order to explain these publication patterns, it is imperative to single out at least two significant aspects – the disciplinary and the geographical. These aspects might be crucial for our purpose. If the publication patterns do not differ across disciplines or countries, then our paper is futile, as one case study should cover all possible deviations. If contrary, then we have some new knowledge to provide. For instance, Gunnar Sivertsen claims disciplinary differences and denies geographical ones:

Publication patterns differ between the disciplines of the SSH while they are similar across countries within the disciplines. Even in disciplines with a nationally oriented publication pattern, the pattern itself is international. As an example, the publication pattern in sociology (degree of international publishing; percentage book publishing versus journal publishing; coverage of publications in the WoS) was much the same in the two countries and it also differed from that of economics in a similar way. In the present study, we assume that the disciplines of the SSH basically have specific publication patterns that are similar across countries. (Sivertsen 2016; 359)

On March 8, 2018 Sivertsen publicly admitted that he had been wrong to ignore the national specifics<sup>1</sup>. This is not documented in any scholarly publication yet, thus Sivertsen is still the author of the above-mentioned quote. We argue against this kind of national similarity statement by seeking to present case study, which is not only discipline-specific, but also country-specific. Similar findings were presented by Polish colleagues (Kulczycki et al. 2018) where cases from eight European countries (Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Flanders (Belgium), Norway, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia) were analyzed.

## “Lituanistika” Database

The best possible way to uncover the patterns of scholarly books status in Lithuania is data, which could be extracted from the database (DB) “Lituanistika” (*Lithuanian Studies*)<sup>2</sup>. The

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<sup>1</sup> It happened during COST Action “European Network for Research Evaluation of Social Sciences and Humanities” (CA-15137) meeting at Lisbon University.

<sup>2</sup> There is an alternative data bank of scholarly publications for *Lituanistika*. Lithuanian Academic Electronic Library (eLABa) is a national repository of research and study e-documents created in Lithuania since 2006. It is extensively used by academic administrators to track publication histories of scholars and submit institutional reports about publication outputs for the Ministry of Education and Science. The main differences between *Lituanistika* and eLABa is quality assessment of publications registered in the repository. *Lituanistika* uses expert reviews of each publication to be included into the database, while eLABa just registers any publication without any quality check. In this study we decided to work with data from *Lituanistika*, because time coverage of publications is bigger than in eLABa. Of course, there are limitations of *Lituanistika* also. Volumes of data for each year are changing due accumulative and retrospective strategy of data collection and registering more texts from previous years or decades. Also coverage of *Lituanistika* is limited to studies of Lithuanian society, culture, language, history, politics, while more abstract publications without references to Lithuanian context are mainly left beyond the

DB limits its contents by covering only the disciplines from Social Sciences and Humanities (for detailed classification see below). Other fields are not included as irrelevant to the DB's policy. Although named International science database "Lithuanian Studies", the DB is aimed precisely at the defence of the humanitarian scholarship against the processes in Lithuanian research policy which in humanities are commonly perceived as scientification<sup>3</sup>.

In the description of the motives behind the creation of this database, two important interconnected points are made. Firstly, the DB aims at collecting the publications "on the Lithuanian law, society, nation and language in the past and present"<sup>4</sup>, which "is dispersed in various information resources" (ibid.), to prepare their summaries in English and to promote this research internationally. This should lead to the recognition of Lithuanian scholars internationally, as well as open hitherto unknown, nonetheless, valuable Lithuanian scholarship to international community of scholars.

Secondly, the DB also has a domestic aim to replace the dominant quantitative assessment of the scholarship with qualitative, which is considered more adequate for the publications in humanities and social sciences. It also aims to bring the evaluation back to Lithuania, i.e. to support the scholars in SSH who do not publish their findings in prestigious international publishing houses and / or internationally acknowledged (mainly English) scholarly journals, but their research is nevertheless considered important. In other words, the description of the DB has some elite overtones – the condition sine qua non for publication to be included is its quality (since the DB claims to be selective), thus, it also involves the recognition of the scholar in Lithuania and attribution to her some "scientific excellence" (ibid.).

According to the production genre, 87 per cent of scholarly articles and 91 per cent of monographs comply with the scholarly quality requirements – there is no significant difference between the two genres. Therefore, there is no reasonable ground to assume the article assessment in the DB to be more rigorous and strict if compared with that of monographs. Probably this could be explained by the double blind-peer-review performed by the DB experts. Simultaneously, this does not comply with the monograph-as-a-possibility-to-cheat image (see below). Moreover, the data on quality requirements across disciplines is lacking.

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scope of the database. With more administrative pressure to Lithuanian scholars to publish in international journals number of text registered in *Lituanistika* is slowly but steadily dropping down. The coverage of scholarly articles, books and book chapters published in 2010 was 4598, in 2015 – 4322 items, in 2019 – 2969 items; and in 2020 – 1818 items. These changes indicate a shift in topics and concerns of national SSH as well.

<sup>3</sup> Surely, the linguistic point is crucial. In Lithuanian for both science and scholarship the word *mokslas* (literally, *science*), thus in the official policy documents there are plenty of sounding oddly to an English speaker such as *humanitariniai mokslai* (lit. *humanitarian sciences*) or *komunikacijos ir informacijos mokslai* (lit. *communication and information sciences*), and raising rather specific problems – such as if natural sciences, social sciences and the humanities are all sciences (Lith. *mokslai*) should the same evaluation criteria be applied to all of them.

<sup>4</sup> DB "Lituanistika". Subject: <http://www.lituanistikadb.lt/en/about-the-database/subject/318> (accessed on 1 May, 2021).

## Lithuanian Classification of SSH

In Lithuania, the scholarly book publishing is rather fragmented and discipline-related. There are various different, or even incommensurable, epistemological, institutional and administrative premises influencing publishing patterns. Thus, it is hard to draw a single map of book publishing in Lithuania. In order to reconstruct the patterns, some basic facts on the Lithuanian SSH classification of sciences are needed.

According to the classification of the Fields of Science bill, passed by Lithuanian Seimas (Parliament) in 2012, the general field of science is divided into six categories: Humanities (H), Social Sciences (S), Physical Sciences (P)<sup>5</sup>, Biomedical Sciences (B), Agricultural Sciences (A) and Technological Sciences (T). As we concentrate our research on Humanities and Social Sciences, other sciences will be left out.

The humanities are divided into the following fields:

- Philosophy (01H);
- Theology (02H);
- Art History and Criticism (03H);
- Philology (including modern languages) (04H);
- History & Archaeology (05H);
- Ethnology (07H).

Social Sciences are classified in the following way:

- Law (01S);
- Political Sciences (02S);
- Management (03S);
- Economics (04S);
- Sociology (05S);
- Psychology (06S);
- Educational sciences (07S);
- Communication and Information Sciences (08S).

The classification is an arbitrary one. It is an object to change and transformation. For instance, until 2012 administrative decisions, there were only five fields of sciences with Agricultural Sciences missing. Similarly, before 2012 Communication and information Sciences were classified as part of Humanities (06H); after the new classification was introduced, this field migrated to the Social Sciences.

## “Lituanistika”: Monographs and Scholarly Articles

DB “Lituanistika” cannot provide one rather important piece of information – the size of any given disciplinary community. Therefore, we are not able to measure the productivity of the academic communities across disciplines. We can only tentatively guess the approximate

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<sup>5</sup> In Lithuanian academic discourse by Physical Sciences Natural Sciences are meant.

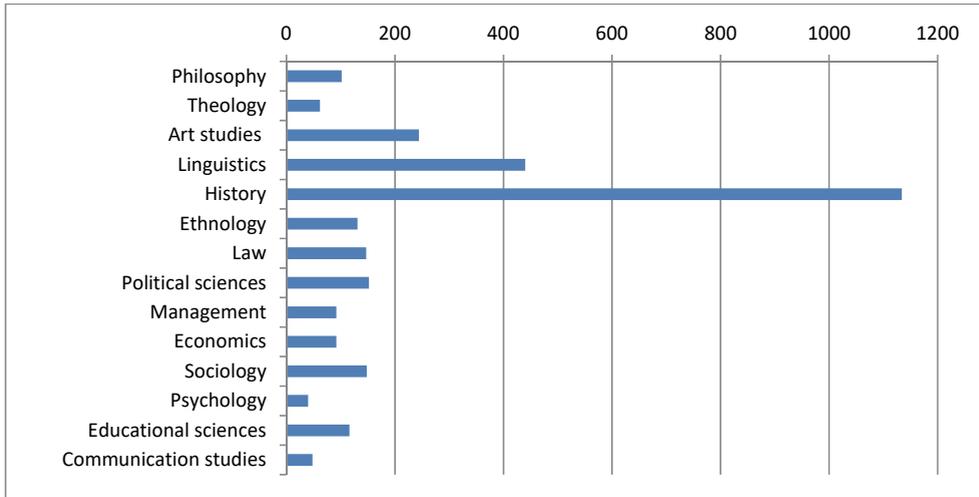


Figure 1. **Number of monographs in humanities and social sciences in Lithuania, 2001–2017, by disciplines.**

Data: ‘Lituanistika’ database (extracted on May 9, 2018)<sup>6</sup> <http://www.lituanistikadb.lt/en/>

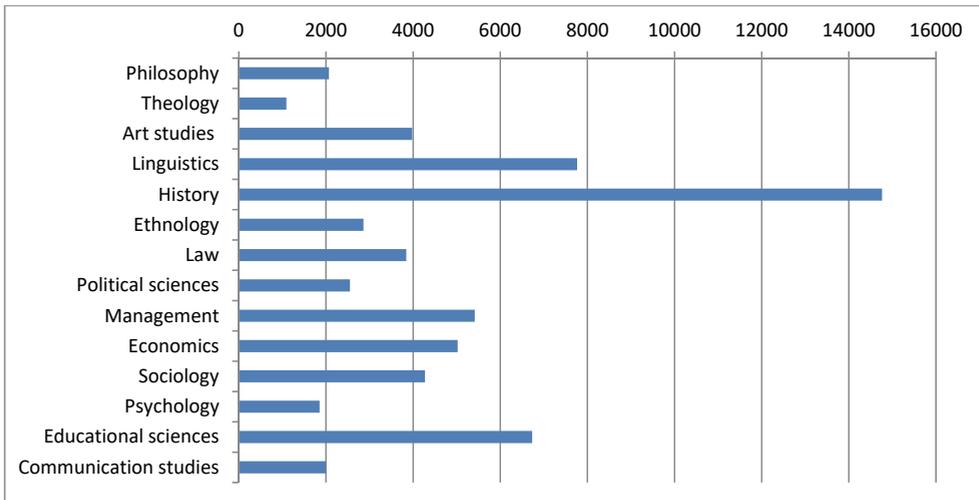


Figure 2. **Number of scholarly articles in humanities and social sciences in Lithuania, 2001–2017, by disciplines.**

Data: ‘Lituanistika’ database (extracted on May 9, 2018) <http://www.lituanistikadb.lt/en/>

<sup>6</sup> We analyse data extracted from 2018 because the structure of the database had been changed in that year. The developers stepped aside from formal classification of SSH and introduced allocation of a text to several disciplines. These changes make classification of a text a little bit complicated and disciplines overlaps. Therefore, we decided to stay with originally extracted data.

size of the scholars in any given SSH discipline by the quantity of publications as figures 1 and 2 show. Judging by the number of both monographs and scholarly articles, the dominance of historians is rather obvious. Across the Lithuanian SSH historians are the most productive community. Their productivity is nearly twice as big as in the second-productive field, which is Philology. It might be the case that the community of Lithuanian historians is the biggest one. The productivity in other disciplines is not that obvious.

Nevertheless, the size of the community is not as relevant as publication patterns, particularly the number of different types of publications, and especially the ratio between monographs and scholarly articles. The ratio not only reveals disciplinary publishing differences but also discrepancies between Humanities and Social Sciences.

**Table 1. Number of monographs, scholarly articles and their ratio across SSH disciplines in Lithuania, 2001–2017.**

Discipline	Number of monographs	Number of scholarly articles	Ratio between monographs and articles
<b>Humanities</b>			
History	1083	13763	1 : 12,70
Philosophy	101	1604	1 : 15,88
Art History etc.	226	3860	1 : 17,07
Philology	408	7651	1 : 18,75
Theology	52	1036	1 : 19,92
Ethnology	130	2822	1 : 21,70
Total	2000	30736	1 : 15,37
<b>Social Sciences</b>			
Political Science	150	2197	1 : 14,64
Law	142	3350	1 : 23,59
Sociology	145	4040	1 : 27,86
Communication etc.	45	1614	1 : 35,86
Psychology	40	1670	1 : 41,75
Economics	91	4222	1 : 46,39
Management	88	4626	1 : 52,56
Educational Sciences	112	6285	1 : 56,11
Total	813	28004	1 : 34,44
<b>Humanities and Social Sciences</b>			
TOTAL	2813	58740	1 : 20,88

Data: 'Lituanistika' database (extracted on May 9, 2018) <http://www.lituanistikadb.lt/en/>

Table 1 shows the numbers of monographs and articles as well as their ratio across the disciplines in SSH. As could be seen, historians produce more than half of the monographs

included in DB. Moreover, in the field of History, the ratio between monographs and scholarly articles is the highest, which shows the greatest academic weight attributed to monographs. Therefore, being a professional historian in Lithuania increases the probability of writing a monograph which is also much higher than for scholars in Educational Sciences or Management; especially when the average ratio between monographs and scholarly articles in Social Sciences is more than twice bigger than in Humanities.

This could be explained by the differences between Humanities, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences. Applying the general classification of sciences provided by Jerome Kagan (2009) demonstrates that the scientific field falls into three categories or “cultures” laying according to their special rules. In this sense, Humanities are more monograph-friendly than Social Sciences, while Natural Sciences are nearly monograph-less. Lithuanian SSH publishing habits rather closely resemble the scheme where the closer one gets to the Natural Sciences, the less one is tempted by the monograph writing and publishing.

Additional insight into these publishing patterns might be the notion of epistemological style. As an explanatory tool, the latter notion could provide some useful interpretations. The most influential notion of epistemological styles is elaborated by a sociologist Michele Lamont (2009). She defines epistemological style as “preference for particular ways of understanding how to build knowledge, as well as beliefs in the very possibility of proving those theories” (Lamont 2009; 54). In other words, epistemological style is “spontaneous philosophy”, which is applied during the evaluation procedures by the experts in the field.

Lamont mainly focuses her discussion on the disciplines in SSH. She outlines four epistemological styles inside SSH: constructivist (reflexivity and socially engaged research), comprehensive (*Verstehen*, contextual specificity and attention to details), positivist (generalizability and hypothesis testing) and utilitarian (production of instrumental and applicable knowledge). For instance, the closer you move to the pure comprehensive epistemological style, the greater the chances to discover the increasing status of the books. And, on the contrary, the closer one appears to the utilitarian epistemological style, the less important and the less needed books appear to be. According to Gedutis and Kraniauskas (2013), comprehensive style is predominant in Lithuanian Humanities, whereas Social Sciences stretch in between positivist and utilitarian epistemological styles, which partly resembles Michèle Lamont’s (2009) distribution. The only deviation is Political Science, which is in accordance with History and Philosophy, its ratio between monographs and articles being 1 to 14,64. How come? Common sense hypothesis suggests to trace back the origins of current Political Science in Lithuania. The publishing pattern might be related to the fact that after the Independence Political Sciences needed to be re-established and reintroduced in order to be relevant in post-Soviet Lithuania. When the patterns of publishing were established (early 90s), the leading scholars in Political Science came from the fields of Philosophy, History and Law.

## The Book Publishing Timeline and Administrative Control

We have checked the number of books indexed in DB from 2001 to 2015. Later coverage is not completed yet. Coverage prior to 2001 is also varied across disciplines, e.g. earliest entries in History or Philology start at 1979, in Art History – 1994, while earliest monographs from all other disciplines start at 2000.

Retracing back the monograph publishing intensity, we see that in case of Humanities there are two peak years – 2005 and 2010 (fig. 3). The most radical change in monograph numbers happened in 2005. If 2004 is marked by 103 monographs, 2005 reaches up to 164, which symbolizes a 37,2% increase. In Social Sciences, the curve is more even. Nevertheless, in Social Sciences, year 2005 is also out of the ordinary, because it shows the increase of the monographs number by 40,3%. The increase is even greater than in Humanities as it marks variation from 46 in 2004 to 77 in 2005 and 48 in 2006. This requires additional explanation including certain administrative and political decisions.

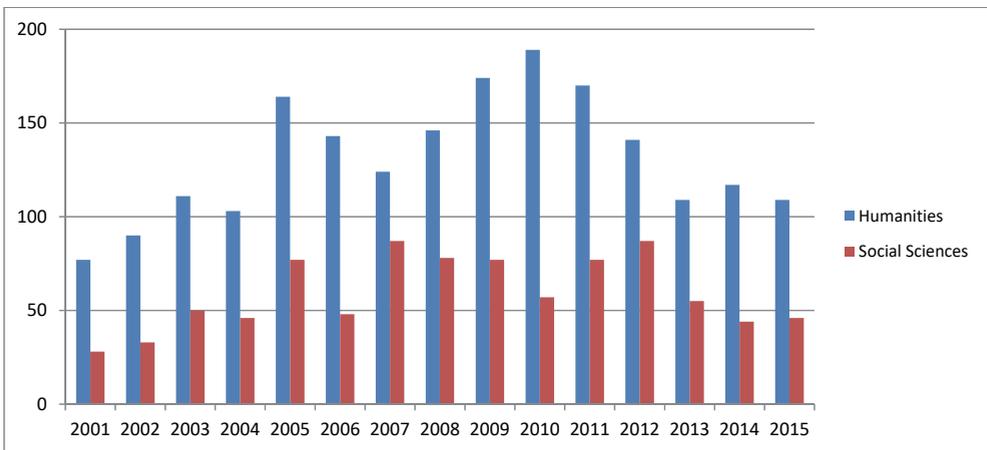


Figure 3. Number of monographs in humanities and social sciences in Lithuania, 2001–2015.

Data: 'Lituanistika' database (extracted on May 9, 2018) <http://www.lituanistikadb.lt/en/>

The year 2005 marks one more peculiarity. During this year it was not just the number of monographs that increased – scholarly articles, especially in Humanities, also scaled the new heights as well (fig. 4). These peaks cannot be explained without reference to the political and administrative decisions and/or their withdrawal.

With the help of political decision in 2001, the demise of monographs started. In 2001 Lithuanian Ministry of Education and Science issued Resolution No. 899 (2001): “For the position of professor, associate professor, chief researcher and senior researcher could apply only those who have published their scholarly articles in peer-reviewed journals included in the ISI Web of Science database. All research and higher education institutions should adapt to the new system, revise the descriptors of qualification requirements and introduce new

procedures”. Prior to this Resolution neither international databases in general, nor ISI WoS in particular were promoted to the role of major criterion of SSH evaluation. The Resolution aimed at the increase of research quality and at the introduction of an instrument enabling to discriminate between high quality and low quality research.

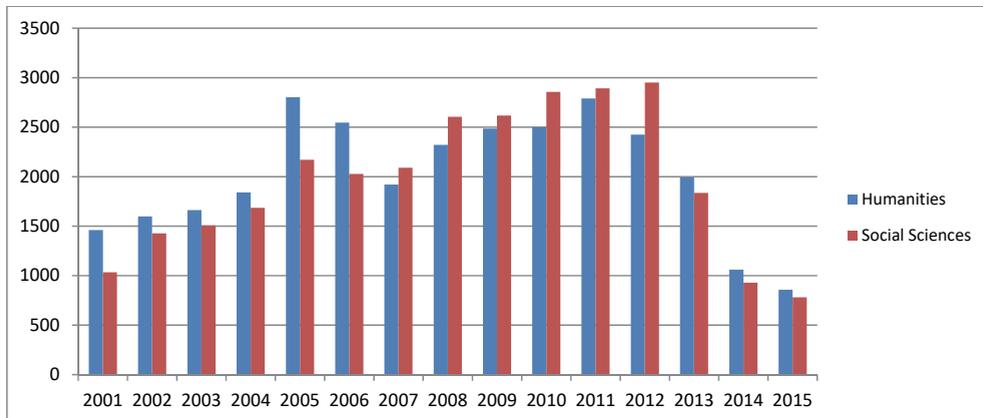


Figure 4. Number of scholarly articles in humanities and social sciences in Lithuania, 2001–2015.

Data: ‘Lituanistika’ database (extracted on May 9, 2018) <http://www.lituanistikadb.lt/en/>

Lithuanian SSH researchers reacted in employing two different strategies: 1) adaptation to the new requirements, which meant changing of publishing patterns: publishing international articles in English instead of Lithuanian, and publishing articles instead of monographs; 2) Resistance to the new rules and regulations: looking for all possible ways to subvert and cancel the Resolution.

The resistance appealed to the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, which officially defends Lithuanian language, and European Union’s values that also supports national languages. SSH representatives, defending the right to publish scholarly findings in Lithuanian (and in monographs) appealed to the following articles of the Constitution:

Article 14: Lithuanian shall be the State language.

Article 40: Schools of higher educations shall be granted autonomy.

After the verdict of the Constitutional Court (2003), the application of the Governmental Resolution No. 899 was antedate. The same year the Research Council of Lithuania proclaimed the Resolution No. V-39, which stated the following:

- Lithuanian science (especially Lithuanian studies in a broad sense) should, first of all, serve Lithuania and its culture;
- Exclusion of Lithuanian language from the field of science contradicts the Constitution of the Republic of Lithuania, the strategic and political aims of Lithuania, and the European Union priorities emphasizing multicultural EU constitution and protection of national traditions and languages;

- Research Council of Lithuania recommends the following provisions to the state authorities and institutions responsible for legislation concerning the use of Lithuanian language in:
  1. The language of scientific publication should be decided by the audience it is intended for – Lithuanian or foreign.
  2. The quality of academic publication is not dependent on language /.../
  5. Diversify the criteria of different sciences. In the field of SSH priority given to the following:
    - 5.1. publications in Lithuanian, which are significant to the development of Lithuanian society and culture as well as national identity in the context of integration to EU and globalization;
    - 5.2. multilingual publications, which present articles both in Lithuanian and other languages.

By the end of 2003 and the beginning of 2004, there remained no political and administrative obstacles to return to the routine and ordinary publishing patterns, monographs included. Therefore, 2005 marks the radical leap in publication numbers. Needless to say, the dominant language of both monographs and scholarly articles was Lithuanian...

### **Some Considerations on SSH Scholarly Books in Lithuania**

Do patterns of publishing embody particular types of scholarly / scientific spirit? This may sound as an over-exaggeration, yet in contemporary Lithuanian Humanities there is a widespread feeling that the transformations of the publishing culture is the place where the decline of the spirit of the humanities is most visible. And this has nothing to do with the notorious publish or perish, but more to do with the belief that books are the primary result of the humanist scholarship.

Surely, there is a wide range of ways to publish in the Humanities. Our interviewee – a prominent scholar in Humanities as well as an important figure of science policy in Lithuania – listed at least five relevant ways: scholarly monographs, publication of the sources, scholarly articles, the publications disseminating the scholarly finding to the general public (books, articles in magazines, TV shows, websites, etc.), and the reviews of other publications and the events of academic life (scholarly as well as popular) (Informant 2). However, out of this variety, the monographs and the scholarly articles seem to be the leading antagonists in the debate.

The scholars traditionally prefer books to articles, suggesting, as another interviewee did, that “in the article you cannot gather the momentum. You have no space there, but humanities need space, they need a book, they need the flow of the text. Only through text, through its length, though the plunging into the text you can influence and persuade your reader” (Informant 1). Our experience suggests that this passage captures the widespread attitude of Lithuanian humanists well.

However, on the other hand, as a science manager, our informant acknowledged quite the opposite: “I distrust books and monographs as there is some space for cheating, unreliability, and opaqueness of reviewing processes” (Informant 1). These suspicions are particularly visible in case of the books, written from scratch, i.e. those which do not consist of the texts which were published previously. Whereas in the case of articles the process of double-blind peer-review is considered much trustworthy, therefore, the Research Council of Lithuania (the state research foundation) has “chosen articles as a currency which is traded off against the grants received from the Foundation” (Informant 1). Moreover, still being peer-reviewed monographs openly state the reviewers in their colophon page. Having in mind the possibility to choose the reviewers on their own, the authors of the monographs tend to choose their acquaintances and colleagues. During this process the only limitation for possible (wannabe) reviewers is different academic affiliation. That is where the cheating from the above-mentioned quotation might possibly creep in.

Many scholars in humanities, however, share the opinion that this push to publish articles and then transform their collections into monographs has not that much to do with the quality of research and its results, but it comes from the domination of natural sciences in contemporary academia. In case of the “true”, traditional, humanitarian monographs it is rather impossible to measure their citation indexes, therefore there is no way to quantify their scholarly value and consequently, no way to evaluate the scholarly output of the institution (Informant 2).

And here is the “scientification” of humanities as well as losing their spirit is considered most visible.

### **Interacting with the System and Fragmentation of the Academic Self**

Communication of research is strongly influenced by the structural environment of science organization. Writing a book or an article is not an independent decision of a scholar. Usually, it is a social action fuelled by a rational choice and, taking into consideration its structural environment, calculations of gains and losses. Administrative systems, which structure career opportunities of a scholar or his/her access to funding, play the vital role in such considerations, especially in the context of neo-liberal academia focusing on performance based funding of scholarship. Despite the general attitude and statements of the Ministry of Science and Education in Lithuania, that individual scholars or academic institutions should not worry about the performance evaluation systems or criteria (*Mind your own scholarly business and just do a good research, don't bother about performance indicators and administration of science!*), many researchers and institutions are very sensitive about choosing appropriate forms of publishing. By ‘appropriate’ we mean ‘appropriate to administrative requirements’, usually prioritizing a tradition of metrics (citation indexes, impact factor) of a scholarly article as a universal and cost-effective model for evaluation of any research. To write a book or to write an article in SSH sometimes becomes a dilemma where a scholar has to take a position – should he/she be loyal to the established tradition of communication patterns of his/her scholarly community and cherish original epistemological style of writing or should he/she follow quantitative

criteria and consciously submit him/her-self to the administrative control? In terms of Jürgen Habermas (1987; 16–17), it might be considered as an issue of colonization of the life-world of scholarship by the administrative system.

In following chapters, we would like to explain different levels or situations of administrative evaluation of scholarship in SSH in Lithuania, where scholarly books figure as an indicator of the research performance. Two situations concern assessment of individual performance or academic biography of a scholar, while the third one focuses on evaluation of academic institutions. As a rule, in all cases SSH are defined as a special type of scholarship, requiring a different approach in assessment than natural sciences, but inner heterogeneity of SSH or differences of epistemological styles are not taken into consideration.

### **Accumulating Symbolical Capital for a Professor Position**

In Lithuania, each university or research institute has to set and define academic requirements of scholarly positions autonomously. Being a professor in one institution does not automatically translate into holding the same position in another. Despite of imaginary freedom of interpretation as to what constitutes professorship and existing heterogeneity of academic requirements, since 2009 all academic institutions have to follow a resolution of the Research Council of Lithuania 'Description of Minimal Requirements for Qualification of Researchers at the National Institutions of Science and Studies'<sup>7</sup>. The resolution, as its title indicates, defines what criteria a person should meet to take a position of a senior researcher, research fellow or junior researcher. Originally it defines the criteria for hierarchically different research positions, while universities usually use definitions of this occupational structure not only to define structure of research organization but also to transpose them, of course, slightly modified, to the teaching environment. Since 2016 many universities in Lithuania changed their academic requirements and in practice they are much higher than the minimum set by the Research Council of Lithuania.

The Description of Minimal Requirements clearly states that a person willing to take a research position in SSH has to publish his/her research in books (monographs), peer-reviewed scholarly articles, or conference proceedings. If one intends to be a senior researcher (a highest position), one should meet one of two basic requirements: 1) to have 15 articles in peer-reviewed journals, or 2) to have 1 published monograph and 10 articles in peer-reviewed journals. Such definition introduces quantitative reasoning about books and is based on a simple formula – 1 book equals 5 articles. It fragments a book into smaller pieces, but number of pieces is the same, despite the volume of a book. A book of 120 written pages and a book of 600 written pages are treated as the same composition of 5 pieces.

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<sup>7</sup> The original version of the Description of Minimal Requirements was published in October 22, 2009. It defined conditions for all branches of sciences and scholarship. The Description was lightly modified in May 11, 2011, and changes mainly concerned natural sciences. This version of the Description is available at: <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/TAR.A51D-87D465CB>. A new version was issued in 2018, but came into action just in 2019.

Rationale of administrative requirements obviously promotes publishing of scholarly articles and quick communication of small fragments of a research; while a genre of developing more extended arguments becomes a marginal and outdated preoccupation within global economy of knowledge. This trend becomes more evident with a new discussion regarding the necessity to change the minimal requirements in Lithuania. If in the Description of Minimal Requirements of 2009 monographs were the first entry on the list of the variety of scholarly publications and articles in peer-reviewed journals were the second entry, in a project of new minimal requirements launched in 2017, the first entry on the similar list for SSH is articles published in journals indexed in Clarivate Analytics and SCOPUS. Books are mentioned only as the third entry. A message of symbolical rearrangement of the entries order is clear – lengthy books do not have the same prestigious status as short articles. According to the project on new requirements for a position of a senior researcher or a professor, a scholar is not required to publish a book anymore. New scholar elite should focus on publishing short pieces or fragments of their research. Articles or chapters in edited books will be the main symbolic currency to gain access to the power position in *homo academicus* field.

### **Transforming Money into Symbolical Capital: Individual Practices**

Another situation, where a scholar encounters evaluation of accumulated academic capital, is competition for research grants and funding. In Lithuania the competitive research funding is mainly organized and supervised by the Research Council of Lithuania. The Council runs several national programs which also set rather strict requirements for the leading researchers. This field, which became more open for any scholar in Lithuania only in 2009, is structured by the idea of internationalization. The official position of the Council is promotion and priority of research projects with an international output. Form of research publication – books or articles – is not considered as crucial, but scholarly texts in journals indexed by Clarivate Analytics and SCOPUS are the main keywords to be found in the whole corpus of administrative language.

If the requirements for an academic position might facilitate a fierce and open discussion among book-writers and article-writers as two interest groups struggling for a position of power<sup>8</sup>, a competitive funding model structures practices of research publication in more hidden and ambiguous way. On the one hand, national programs provide an opportunity for scholars to get financial support to publish their books, when they don't have such opportunities at their own institutions or universities. It was very important for scholar communities, especially

<sup>8</sup> Preparation of a new project of minimal requirements for scholarship positions started in 2013. The project ran several hearings in the Research Council, but has not been finished. Since 2016 different versions of the requirements were submitted for public discussions for three rounds and received fierce criticism from academic community of SSH. The main criticism was about publishing practices and making an extensive list of published outputs produced by different disciplines. The Research Council approved the final version in autumn of 2018, but new updates came again in January 2021.

during the period of poor governmental funding of universities and research institutes in 2010–2017. The national research programs for SSH in 2009–2017 unintentionally produced a huge volume of voluminous scholar books mainly written in Lithuanian language, which were interpreted as more tangible and conspicuous manifestations of the success of national programs supervised by the Research Council of Lithuania. For example, in 2009–2015 the most popular program among SSH was National Program for Promotion of Lithuanian Studies (orig. *Nacionalinė lituanistikos plėtros programa*). During this period the program funded more than 500 projects with an output of nearly 450 books.

On the other hand, books written in the national language contradict the general attitude of the Research Council to stimulate international communication of research. Therefore, since 2016, new research funding programs in SSH attempted to limit publishing practices by installing quantitative requirements for the leading researchers. They are required to have a solid record of international articles. Books or book chapters are not counted as an evidence of academic excellence and cannot be symbolically transformed into smaller countable fragments like in the Description of Minimal Requirements. If a scholar has a solid record of article-publishing practices, there is a bigger probability of continuation and mastering of such practices in the future, which fully corresponds the expectations of the Research Council toward internationalization of research communication. By such criteria a lot of aging senior researchers in SSH, who were mainly in their 50-60s and used to think about scholarship as a book writing practice, were kept away from the competition for huge grants and had limited opportunities even to pass administrative criteria. Introduced requirements obviously favoured just several disciplines of social sciences practicing mainly collective writing/reporting of small empirical research (like in psychology, management and administration studies, and economics) and discriminated humanities practicing solitary authorship and development of comprehensive arguments. The biased requirements for leading researchers to enter competition for grants were sued by law scholars of Vilnius University in 2017 and the Administrative Court demanded to defer such discriminatory practices from national research funding programs.

In competitive funding system in Lithuania scholarly books written in SSH circulate as a second-hand currency. The system is supportive of cheap production of such currency but hardly accepts it back for recycling or evidence as excellence. A scholar can transform money (a grant) into marks of academic capital (a book), but not otherwise. Books do not guarantee easy access to funds.

### **Transforming Symbolical Capital into Money: Institutional Practices**

The performance based funding system distributes governmental budget for research among all universities and research centres in Lithuania. In 2009–2018 it operated using the data on academic output of a whole institution covering 3 years period<sup>9</sup>. It mainly counts publica-

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<sup>9</sup> A new system of research evaluation of science institutions has been introduced in 2018, where evaluation units are smaller than institution itself.

tions, external research grants, participation in international research programs, and research contracts with business companies (R&D). The methods of evaluation are set by a decree of the Minister of Science and Education ‘The Methods for Evaluation of Science Production of Science and Educational Institutions’<sup>10</sup>. There are two levels of assessment, where the first level is a formal assessment, operating just with quantitative data. The second level is evaluation of the best production, which is carried by experts. We are interested in the second level of assessment, because it explicitly states value of each type of production.

Universities have to submit the scholarly publications to the Research Council of Lithuania where they are consequently transformed into countable and commensurable units with a particular weight. The list of entries and weights was introduced in 2010, where scholarly books had distinguished position and could accumulate more points for an institution than any other publication. First, a scholarly book should have more than 8 quires, where one quire consists of 40 000 characters including spaces. Second, contribution of one author in a co-authored book should be no less than 4 quires. Third, one quire of a book brings 4 points for an institution. It means that the traditional book of 8 quires brings a minimum of 32 points. The lengthier the book, the more profitable it is for an institution.

Scholarly articles and book chapters in peer-reviewed volumes bring 3 points per entity; other publications like overviews, opinions or book reviews in peer-reviewed journals bring 2 points per entity; handbooks, encyclopaedias, or dictionary entries bring 2 points per quire; conference proceedings or essays – 1 point per entity. The higher the score of an institution, the more governmental funding is allocated to it for the next three years.

Such evaluation system has been very favourable for book-writing practices, because more voluminous books in national language could bring more money to an institution than any scholarly article published in an international journal. The difference is more striking if we compare two different systems of evaluation – requirements for a scholar position and criteria for assessment of institutional performance. Assume that two scholars AG and LK both got positions of senior researcher with two different profiles. Professor AG got this position with 15 scholarly articles, while professor LK – with 1 book and 10 scholarly articles. Both are happy and equally enjoy their professorship. But a strict administrator of science KK started to count which one of them is more profitable for an institution to keep. AG’s accumulated academic capital of 15 international articles will bring just 30 points (2 points for each article), while LK with his one book of 12 quires (of course in local language with a run of 150 copies) and 10 articles in national scholar journals will bring 68 points. It means that book-writers in Lithuania bring nearly twice as many governmental money to the academic institution as the article-writing practices<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> The Methods for evaluation of research performance for 2013–2015 period are available at: <https://www.e-tar.lt/portal/lt/legalAct/d2944660ad2711e4b1d79f4bef60993c>

<sup>11</sup> This system was slightly changed in 2018 with more favouring book writing in humanities. Social scientists were expected to publish in journals indexed in Web of Science and SCOPUS, where one article could earn more points and money for a HEI than a voluminous book pub-

In 2015 few new entries were introduced into the Methods. Firstly, books or book chapters published by internationally recognized publishing companies (such as Routledge, Springer, SAGE etc.) would bring 6 points per quire. Secondly, articles published in the journals with citation index also would bring more points than similar articles published in less popular international or local journals.

Finalizing this short overview about the book evaluation practices in Lithuania, we would like to indicate a tension provoked by ideological contradictions of different levels of research evaluation. On the one hand, external administrative systems and current neo-liberal ideology of universities require fragmentation of your research into small countable pieces and publishing it quickly. It is also fragmentation of the academic self and dilution of it in the globally growing network of small informational pieces. More often than not book writing is considered to be a time-consuming and wasting activity in accelerated academia. On the other hand, book-writing is still valued as a cost-effective practice of academic business. But the profit goes to an institution as administrative entity which does not want to finance publishing of scholar books and pushes scholars to search and compete for external funding. A short and instant article is more valuable for administrative control unlike an institutional investment in a long-term project of book-writing.

## **Why Publish a Scholarly Book in Lithuania?**

There is no single and constant in time motivation to publish scholarly books in Lithuania. Motivation varies according to one or more of the following factors:

*Individual.* Book provides more space to develop ideas, especially in certain fields, strongly related to comprehensive epistemological style. Moreover, the peer-review process is easier to accomplish writing a monograph than a scholarly article. Blind peer-review is non-existent in the realm of the monographs. The reviewers of any Lithuanian monograph must be declared on the colophon page of the book. At the same time, the authors are usually free to choose the reviewers on their own. That is where the cheating might come from.

*Institutional.* Academic institutions might introduce their own individual evaluation criteria. If institution X seeks the increase of international visibility, it might stress the importance of international scholarly articles. If it goes for easier-to-attain national points, then monographs might be the preferred currency as during the process of evaluation they could earn more academic points comparing to those of an article, even in most prestigious SCOPUS or Clarivative Analytics journal.

*Disciplinary.* There is a clear divide between Humanities and Social Sciences in book publishing patterns. Having in mind the predominant epistemological styles in every field, it is rather obvious why the popularity of books is greater in Humanities. In Humanities, a comprehensive epistemological style, consisting of the collection of highly detailed data and

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lished in Lithuanian. But to track effects of those changes to book publishing trends is too early exercise.

other information, is much friendlier to the monograph publishing. Comprehensive style presupposes a bigger amount of textual space for the fulfilment of its requirements. On the contrary, utilitarian style, which is more common in Social Sciences (and practically not present in Humanities), is oriented towards real-life problem solving, thus, it is faster and easier to approach the problem in a scholarly article than in a monograph.

*Administrative 1.* The administrative rules and regulations for the evaluation of SSH are object to periodic change, varying from increasing internationalization criteria to their loosening and back. Internationalization means obligatory introduction of ISI Web of Science, Scopus, Clarivate Analytics as the tools to measure performance and impact of SSH. The more internationally oriented the criteria, the harder the times for monograph publishing, i.e. delegating the administrative SSH control to international entities forces to opt for internationally published scholarly production, which guarantees higher amount of points earned. As can be seen (fig. 3), the next year (such as 2005) after the liberalisation of international criteria and after the international criteria are lifted is distinguished by drastic increase in the number of monographs.

*Administrative 2.* The Research Council of Lithuania is the main national foundation to finance research. Currently the competition for the funds is high and harsh, thus, additional (usually unwritten) criteria are introduced. In order to convince the evaluators, the scholars in SSH are expected to publish a monograph and some both scholarly and popular articles. Monograph is a must.

*Audience.* Potential readers also might influence the publishing outcomes. Scholarly articles are hard to find for the wider audience outside academic world. Scholarly books are easier available, then as a result, the tradition of publicly present a monograph is a popular and still influential as means of dissemination. Public presentation of an academic article is a thing not heard about.

All the above provides a plausible explanation of why being a Lithuanian SSH scholar one is supposed to bother “foolishly” writing long monographs instead of their summaries in the form of scholarly articles.

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