Open policies, open practices – open attitudes?

Openness is the current buzzword in discussions regarding academic publishing, and 2020 is the year when many related efforts of this new supposedly open approach will begin in earnest. The European Union has launched an open access strategy known as ‘Plan S’, which states that “from 1 January 2020, all scholarly publications resulting from public research funding must be published in Open Access journals or on Open Access platforms” (Science Europe 2018). This is in line with European Commission funding instruments, which similarly state that “all projects receiving Horizon 2020 funding are required to make sure that any peer-reviewed journal article they publish is openly accessible, free of charge” (see European Commission 2019).

In Finland, where Fennia is based, similar aims and requests have been presented by the state, in the form of the Finnish Open Science and Research Initiative, and through the national research council Academy of Finland that has set out to develop Plan S together with other European research councils. Universities and libraries are responding to these strategic alignments with their own open science strategies and plans of action. Like other actions, they struggle to balance scholarly interests to publish in high-quality journals and the so-called hybrid publishing practices that most (if not all) of the publishers of the leading journals employ. In short, they contain long embargos and high open access payments per paper, on top of high journal subscription fees. As we write negotiations between FinELib – the national consortium that makes the deals with commercial publishers in Finland – have hit the wall with Taylor & Francis, and the same process is underway with Wiley that similarly seeks increasing profit from open science.

While these public activities are moving in the right direction and – in pushing back against market-domination in academic publishing – are welcomed initiatives (for initial outcomes, see the latest editorial of Geoforum by The Editors undefined 2019), they have thus far offered little support to publications that already follow open policies and practices. Neither the EU nor the Finnish state have announced specific actions in support of scholar-led free-of-charge open publications even if opportunities towards such have been pursued. In Finland, 12 journals piloted non-commercial open publishing in the Kotilava project that aimed at creating a new funding model in broad national collaboration, Fennia being one of them. The project ended last year and, from our perspective, led to nothing but us becoming more aware of the troubling issues and inequalities related to open publishing.

Research funders have introduced means to cover the costs of open publishing; however, in a rather market-oriented manner. The open science research funding encouraged in the budgeting of H2020 and Academy of Finland research projects, for instance, is based on author fees. The money never reaches journals like ours, as we do not want to compensate subscription fees with author fees. Firstly, to promote equality between scholars, secondly, to maintain our accessibility to authors who perhaps publish in Fennia as an ethical choice in the current academic publishing climate due to our fully open access format, and thirdly, to remain distinct from many other supposedly radical publications for whom open access is merely another clandestine source of revenue. Money hence flows mostly to the surplus of the ‘Big Five’ that collect voluntary author fees on top of subscription fees, the latter forming another mechanism through which taxpayers end up supporting the commercial publishing business in the name of open science (also Kallio 2017). Obviously, as a fully open access journal, Fennia receives no payments from libraries as our openly accessible content does not require subscription, and attempts to create non-market-based payment systems have proved in vain (also Kallio & Hyvärinen 2017).

To avoid growing tired of the whole question of open science, which in itself is of utmost importance, in Fennia we have turned our attention to what we can do in the current situation, with the resources we have. As our most important resource, we have identified the international academic community that encompasses extensive competences and enormous power to enforce openness, not only in the form of policies and practices but also as open attitudes.

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For a couple of years, we have been inviting scholars to take part in publication processes that are open in every sense that we can imagine. The authors and the reviewers who have participated in them have contributed to developing new ways of doing things with an open attitude, without compromising rigorous peer reviewing or editorial practices. The latest results of our open peer review process can be found in this issue, and the specific aspects of each process are highlighted as the papers are introduced below. This said we have also tried to stay attuned to the fact that open practices, too, may generate and reproduce unequal power relations, which means that we need to create several opportunities to openness. Our other attempt to grow more open, concerns societal engagement. By the end of the year, we hope to have succeeded in making our publications better accessible beyond the academy, by directing editorial efforts more to the popularization of our content through the online research forum Versus.

So what lies at the heart of openness, as an attitude, in academic publishing? To us two aspects seem central. First, open attitudes should be encouraged within the academic community. Regarding peer reviewing this involves, in the first place, contributing to publication processes of other scholars in exchange for their equivalent efforts, that is, openness towards peer reviewing in journals that you value. During the review, openness means approaching each other with dignity as scholars, treating the work of others in a respectful and equitable manner, and appreciating the work of everyone involved by presenting critique and responding to it in a thoughtful manner. Our experience from the past two years as editors indicates that open review processes invite people to appreciate these kinds of principles. As Simone Tulumello (2019) brings up in this issue, dialogical engagement cannot be taken for granted in peer reviewing. High-quality dialogical engagement can of course be requested in double-blind processes as well, yet the difference is that in open reviewing the responsibility for openness is shared among authors, reviewers and editors, whereas in blinded processes editors end up doing (or leaving undone) more of this work.

Another important aspect regarding open attitudes in scholarly publishing concerns the reach beyond the academy. Bringing research into dialogue with people and societies, and communicating the published results to different audiences is something journals can encourage as part of their publication processes. In Fennia, we ask the reviewers from open processes to write their comments into an easily accessible format that can be published in our Reflections section along with the article. This, we think, enhances the visibility and approachability of the published research. From our authors we request popularised versions of their articles, to be published at the Versus platform where we invite professionals and scholars to comment on them. The first outcomes from these processes are debates around Ari Lehtinen's (2018) article Degrowth in city planning and the article by Matthew Sawatzky and Moritz Albrecht Translating EU energy policy for insular energy systems: Re-union Island's quest for energy autonomy. All authors in the present issue have been invited to contribute to the Versus Research Debate, and we hope to produce vivid and influential discussions based on their work.

This is how Fennia seeks to promote openness in academic publishing, on its 130th anniversary. We invite geographers and scholars from related fields to join in and develop these attitudes, practices and policies further with us, in the roles of authors, reviewers, commentators and visiting editors. This is what we can do, as an academic community.

The first issue of Fennia in 2019 includes five original articles in the Research Papers section, two of which are accompanied by commentaries. In the Reviews and Essays section, we have two review articles and one essay, the last of which with three commentaries. The Reflections section contains altogether eleven pieces, nine commentaries based on the articles and essay mentioned, one lectio praecursoria, and one standalone intervention.

The first research article in this issue is crafted from the Annual Fennia Lecture given by Rhys Jones at the Finnish Geography Days 2018 in Helsinki. The article is concerned with the idea of governing the future and it investigates this through a meticulous case study of Wales' Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015), calling for geographers to take the lead in exploring attempts to achieve spatial justice in the present and the future. It is accompanied by four commentaries, two of which are based upon the open dialogical review process that we have been piloting in the journal in order to create more inclusive and open exchanges to produce rich and original geographical articles. We will
introduce each of the four commentaries and remark upon this open review process, following a critical introduction to the article that emerged out of a visible initiative for the journal, the Annual Fennia Lecture (see van Houtum 2017; Gill 2018) – the next of which will be at the Nordic Geographers Meeting in Trondheim in June 2019.

**Governing the future and the search for spatial justice: Wales’ Well-being of Future Generations Act** (Jones 2019), suggests that there needs to be a more explicit examination of the significant geographies that characterize the governance of the future. Arranged across five sections, this article is an extensive call to geographers to re-consider and remember the imagined future in the writing of present contested spaces of the governmental and the political, yet importantly it is *vividly geographical*, deeply detailed and grounded in a particular case study. The article provides an examination of the various ways in which the governance of the future has been approached to date and background detail on the case study – an act that has the notion of justice, understood in relation to the concept of well-being, at its heart, for Jones. It does not end there though, as the article begins to map out the way in which geographers could begin to contribute to this governance of the future, for the Well-Being Act – as it is shortened to throughout the article – has sought to govern the future across and between three distinct, yet interconnected scales. These are sketched out by Jones, plainly giving over a sense of just how geographers might clearly have something to contribute here to governmental imaginings of possible futures, before he reflects more broadly on the significance of geography and scale for the governance of more hopeful futures.

Given the opportunity to revise the paper in light of the open comments by the two referees, Lieven Ameel and Juho Luukkonen, Jones writes of the review process that he found the comments to be immensely useful and they helped to strengthen and sharpen the arguments made in the paper. The comments provided were in the spirit of collegial yet rigorous critique of known fellow academics and this is surely what peer-review should be for, to improve already excellent academic endeavor, and chimes with comments made by the editors of *ACME* (in this journal) to consider peer-review as a form of mutual aid (Springer et al. 2017). Indeed, in light of the comments made by the reviewers, the need to see the future as an object of governance (from a Foucauldian perspective) was made more explicit, and amongst other things enabled the author to state clearly that the idea of multiple and contested futures is implicit in the use of the term, *geography of the future*. The significance of the consultation exercise that preceded the Well-being Act and the opaque nature of this process, the implicit privileging of the urban within imaginations of the future, and the need to define what is meant by *geography* and the role that *geographers* can play in promoting spatial justice and defining *justice* itself were also discussed.

The commentaries on the governance of the future in the Reflections section of this issue of *Fennia* are by Sami Moisio, Pia Bäcklund, Juho Luukkonen and Lieven Ameel. Moisio (2019) forcefully suggests that the constant production of governmental imaginaries dealing with the future should be understood as future work that is an essential dimension of a broader phenomenon of *territory work* whereby processes of re-territorialization and de-territorialization come together. The second commentary like the original article draws upon a case study. Of clear concern here, for Bäcklund (2019), are attempts to define justice and how different practices attempt to define what *justice* is, and indeed the need to determine whose realities play a part when defining more just future imaginaries, chiming with the comments made by the reviewers. The two last commentaries come from the reviewers of the original article. This allows Luukkonen (2019) to take up the discussion by stating a Foucauldian perspective on governance as a problematizing activity, and to bring to the fore a critical debate regarding the future and governing the future, that is, the future is not something that waits out there to be seized by rulers but a social and political construction dictated by the conditions of the present. The fourth commentary asks what can fictional texts contribute to our thinking of the future? Drawing upon examples from historical utopian literature that envisioned possible arrangements of future governance, Ameel (2019) illustrates the fleetingness of particular future visions – the very ambiguity and indeterminacy of literary fiction make it a useful *geographical* resource for imagining the future, taking into account the complexity of the world.

The second original article, titled *Land for agriculture? Conflicts and synergies between land use in two parts of Scandinavia*, by Elin Slåtmo (2019), discusses conflicts and synergies related to land use in two
empirical contexts, Hållnäs in Sweden and Sandnes in Norway. Taking agriculture as her starting point, Slätmo first analyses in each case the degree to which different uses of land seem commensurable with agriculture, and then compares the cases in the same regard. Her final results suggest that agricultural lands can be seen as positively linked with a range of values, related to soil protection, biodiversity, cultural heritage and outdoor recreation for instance. Hence, instead of creating oppositions, according to Slätmo local and regional planners should focus on identifying synergies between different uses of land.

In the third research paper, Maija Halonen (2019) sets out to challenge the idea of peripheries as merely static locations and, instead, highlights their dynamicity and adaptation. Her article *The long-term adaptation of a resource periphery as narrated by local policy-makers in Lieksa* focuses on a rural location in Finland, a hinterland forming around the town of Lieksa and located by the Russian border, representing a resource periphery in the industrialised North. The results of the analysis emphasise institutional changes as a key element in the economic evolution of places. Presenting critique towards quantitative approaches typically used in the socio-economic analysis of rural development, Halonen stresses that a ‘human perspective’ can offer different insights that may fit better the perspectives of local actors and dwellers, and be more productive in the actual development processes.

Halonen's article went through a mixed review process where two of the reviewers worked openly and one chose the double-blind option. The process was very efficient as all reviewers provided carefully written reports and the author created a detailed revision plan upon the editor's request. When the plan was accepted by everyone involved in the open process, the author made the revisions following her plan. The reviewers were so content with the revision that they did not feel the need to write commentaries as their perspectives were already included in the final article. This first mixed review process in *Fennia* showed us that it does not complicate the process if reviewers choose to participate in different roles.

Our fourth research article is by Virpi Kaisto and Olga Brednikova (2019), titled *Lakes, presidents and shopping on mental maps: children's perceptions of the Finnish–Russian border and the borderland*. It focuses explicitly on the Finnish-Russian border, analysing children’s spatial conceptions and identifications through mental maps, with the aim of shedding light on the complexity of bordering processes in borderlands. On the one hand, the results indicate that the significance of the national framework in the processes of spatial socialisation is not diminishing. On the other hand, the local borderland context where the participants lived appears in a very important role in how people form local and national perceptions. Thus, Kaisto and Brednikova argue that local border-related phenomena and border-crossing experiences are increasingly relevant for national and local identification processes.

The last original article in this issue links thematically with the previous, focusing on the processes of political socialisation and identity formation in Palestine. Janette Habashi’s (2019) paper *Palestinian children: a transformation of national identity in the Abbas era* is based on longstanding research in the West Bank where she has worked with children and youth. Approaching national identities from the perspectives of young Palestinians, the article analyses the journals that the participants wrote on the researcher’s request. They initially focused on what is happening in their current communities yet as it had appeared that they wanted to write specifically about being Palestinian, national identities became an important theme of the study. By introducing seven dimensions of ‘the self’ and five dimensions of ‘the other’, Habashi makes visible the dynamic processes of political socialisation in the context of the Palestinian Occupied Territories.

Habashi’s article is accompanied by two commentaries by Sunčana Laketa and David J. Marshall based on an open review process, and they are included in the Reflections section of this issue of *Fennia*. Laketa (2019) takes up Habashi’s long-standing commitment to Palestinian children’s narratives of their own geopolitical worlds by considering the geopolitical lives of children in her home country, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Drawing our attention here to a school in Jajce, Laketa describes the so-called ‘two schools under one roof’ model and the children and youth-led resistance to it. While reading about how Palestinian children articulate similar hopes for national unity and reconciliation within a context of political and territorial divisions, two issues stood out for Marshall (2019), issues that speak specifically to the Palestinian case presented, but which are also relevant to the study of
children's political geography more broadly. Marshall is prompted by Habashi's article to consider some conceptual and methodological concerns related to the issue of spatial scale that continues to vex children's geographies, as well as the issue of temporal scale, typically measured in generations in studies of children and youth.

Habashi's article went through an open review process that involved several phases. The reviewers first presented comments to the author and the author responded with clarifications, in agreement as well as in disagreement with the comments. The reviewers then responded to her in a dialogical spirit, accepting most of the responses yet emphasising some aspects from their own perspectives. At this stage, the editor requested revisions and continued to work with the author. The author, however, decided to share the revised version of the manuscript with the reviewers, too, to offer them the opportunity to assess her work once more. This last round of engagement led to the final acceptance of the paper, after which the reviewers agreed on writing their comments into Reflection pieces. This process, we hope, demonstrates to those sceptical of the critical aspects of open reviewing that the processes can be very thorough and allow the participants to present various kinds of justified views.

In the Reviews and Essays section, this issue of Fennia has two review articles. The first one concerns higher education student mobility with specific focus on life satisfaction after a study period abroad. In their article Life satisfaction among inbound university students in northern Sweden, Per Anders Nilsson and Britt-Marie Stålnacke (2019) introduce a study on the self-reported life satisfaction of students who came to study at the geography department of Umeå University in northern Sweden, for an exchange period. Using the Life Satisfaction Questionnaire (LiSat-11) they found that, especially regarding somatic health and activities of daily living, exchange students seem to have significantly higher life satisfaction after staying in the host country for six months, which may be related to their changing life styles and forming peer relations.

The second review article, by Helena Köhler and Kristina Trygg (2019), presents insights from using time-diary as a method in a mixed-method study, focusing on energy and water consumption in Finnish households. The paper brings forth that placing people's activities at the centre of the study, instead of merely measuring consumption quantitatively, allows the analysis of people's contextual experiences, behaviour and performances. Together the mixed-methods data can be helpful in creating research with practical value, for developing means towards sustainable consumption.

The essay included in this issue focuses on methodological differences that, according to the author Simone Tulumello (2019), may build obstacles to some scholars in academic publishing. Tackling mainly issues of peer reviewing, his provocative text Generalization, epistemology and concrete: what can social sciences learn from the common sense of engineers brings up discrepancies between quantitative and qualitative research traditions and highlights how they may encounter in ways non-productive, especially in referee journal publication processes that do not identify these differences adequately. The essay is accompanied by three commentaries from the open review process that, in this case, led to a completely new publication format. While Tulumello's essay itself did not change much during the process, the final version is accompanied by a vivid discussion between the author and the reviewers, presented in the form of endnotes and Reflections commentaries.

The commentaries to Tulumello come from two scholars whose work is qualitative, Guntram Herb and Jouni Häkli, and one scholar following a quantitative tradition, Ossi Kotavaara. In his commentary, Herb (2019) takes up the distinction between methodologies and epistemologies by discussing the plurality of quantitative and qualitative geographical research. In a similar spirit, Häkli (2019) draws attention to the ‘grey area’ where questions of generalisability, for instance, do not appear as straightforward as in the methodological caricatures portrayed by Tulumello. Kotavaara's (2019) commentary suggests that collisions between qualitative and quantitative frameworks often do not take into account a present state-of-the-art or mainstream quantitative human geography and carefully goes on to suggest, that the positivistic paradigm could be applied mainly to clarify the historical paradigm and not to define the context of post-millennial quantitative human geography. In all, the review discussion adds significantly to Tulumello's essay that engages in direct dialogue with the commentaries through the endnotes. Written in an easily accessible manner, the discussion suits well also the purposes of methodology teaching and research training.
In addition to the mentioned commentaries to research articles, the Reflections section includes a lectio praecursoria by Saija Niemi (2019), titled *Lectio praecursoria: Theory of control tuning – the processing of control in migration-related place coping*. The doctoral lecture comes from the Finnish academic tradition where the candidate gives a presentation based on her thesis at the opening of the public PhD defense. Upon the acceptance of the thesis, it is customary to publish the lecture in a scholarly journal and thus give the study more public visibility. Niemi’s lecture introduces the theoretical approach of ‘control tuning’, developed in her doctoral research, focusing on different migration actors’ practices of control that help them to manage and govern feelings, information, actions and people as well as ownership of situations and objects.

To end this editorial, we draw your attention to the final piece included in this issue of *Fennia* and the eleventh piece in the Reflections section. A standalone interjection on resilience (Andresen 2019), which we include due to its critical analysis of a neoliberal agenda consuming academia that we have been pointing out, working against, alongside and within, as editors of this journal for the past five issues of *Fennia*. The Reflection eloquently skewers the increasingly worrying task facing early-career academics, those who are faced with this neoliberal model of academia (and academic publishing) from the very beginning. For creativity, joy, and inspiration are becoming stifled through an ever more instrumental production of knowledge, which is surreptitiously turning the endeavour of writing a thesis into a simultaneously overwhelming and yet predefined exercise. This process of neoliberalization is framing and enclosing grant proposals, research articles, academic journals, and geography, and to repeat: it must be resisted with a truly open academic publishing model and an open scholarly attitude as we have suggested here in *Fennia*.

KIRSI PAULIINA KALLIO
FENNIA EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

JAMES RIDING
FENNIA REFLECTIONS SECTION EDITOR

REFERENCES


