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Pachankis, Yang

19 December 2022

Online at <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/115812/>  
MPRA Paper No. 115812, posted 29 Dec 2022 14:39 UTC

# **The Translation of Uniformity or a Sociology of Knowledge — Issues of Publishing Ethics in the 21st Century**

December 19, 2022

Yang I. Pachankis, Unaffiliated

28-4 Bldg. 2 Dexinyuan,

1001 Biqing N Rd, Chongqing, 402762

Email: [yang.pachankis@gmail.com](mailto:yang.pachankis@gmail.com)

ORCID: [0000-0002-5252-8670](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5252-8670)

## **STATEMENTS AND DECLARATIONS**

### **Competing Interests**

Yang I. Pachankis is victimized by human trafficking for his homosexual marriage. He has been ordained by the Universal Life Church with customary international law for marriage, and has applied for naturalization overseas with the US government.

### **Funding**

The research received no funding.

### **Author Contributions**

**Yang I. Pachankis:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Validation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Resources, Data Curation, Writing - Original Draft, Visualization, and Project administration.

### **Data Availability Statement**

The datasets generated during and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request for verification, authenticity, and integrity.

### **Ethics Approval**

No ethical committee has formed for the research. The research adhered to the Therapist's Oath and Declaration of Tokyo for public mental & psychological health in the research process. No personally and institutionally identifiable information will be provided with the dataset, except in case of a fair and formal trial.

# **The Translation of Uniformity or a Sociology of Knowledge**

## **— Issues of Publishing Ethics in the 21st Century**

### **Abstract**

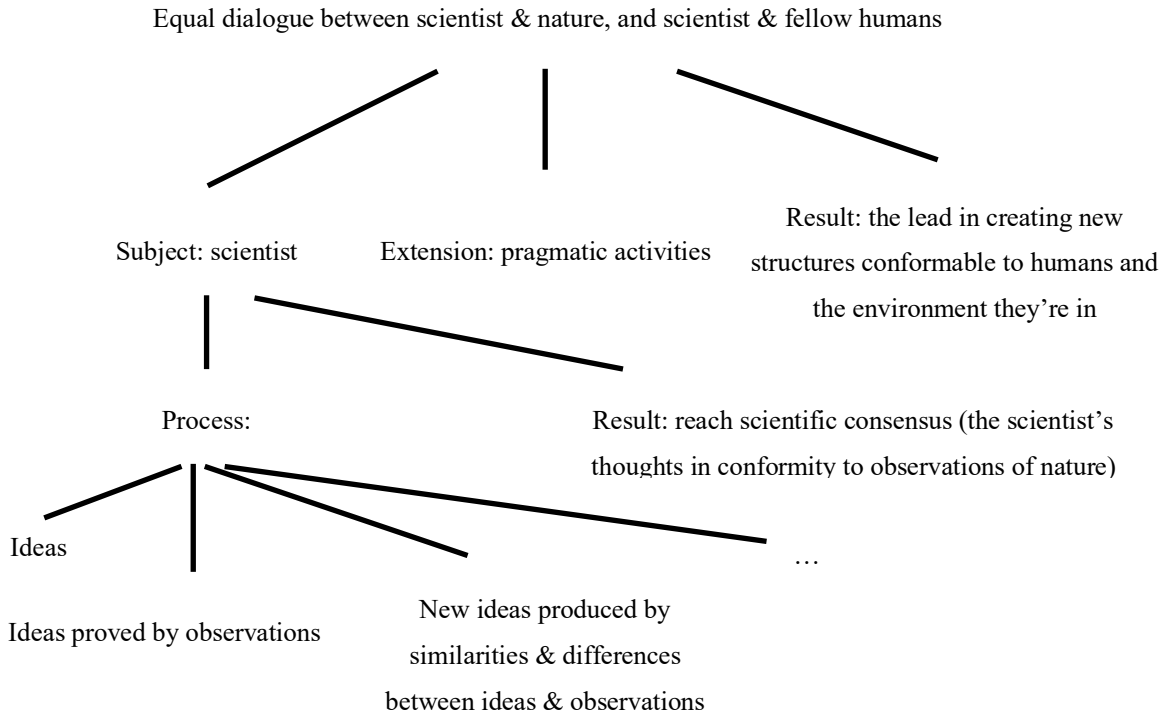
The research adheres to a sociology of knowledge doctrine in academic publishing, and study the irregularities in scientific publishing. It takes the perspective in modern science, with an analytic perspective to the Chinese cultural anthropology. The research empirically studied the grey-area publication surrogacy industry originated from PRC, with its relations to the national governmental funding structures in economics & finance. The research started upon the notice of degree vacancy trading and dissertation sales in PRC, where impositions on specific journal targeting for faculties and ideological correctness for students apply institutionally, and armed forces departments are instituted in almost all major universities. The method takes a step aback on the foundation of modern science and the scientific method that may address the complexities of the issues in a relatively simplistic manner. The results suggest that science doesn't depend on language, even though language is a constituent in sociology. The sociology of knowledge is purposed to communicate scientific knowledge, regardless of the philosophical debates. Power political meta-languages may be signs for caution, and the realpolitik disruptions to the sociology of knowledge are present. The economics of knowledge ought not to be manipulated by power political & realpolitik top-down designs and scientometrics in the informatics age need humanitarian cautions.

**Keywords:** ideology, knowledge economy, knowledge industry, science financing, science management, scientometrics

**JEL Codes:** A11, A12, A13, C44, D46, D63, D73, D74, D80, D83, E26, E58, E70, K38, L41

### **INTRODUCTION**

The preservation and advancement of knowledge may never serve the interests of absolute powers, whereas absolute powers have almost always sought to impose some sort of publication to a wider society. One of the symbolic phenomena in the Chinese cultural history is the barbaric "Burning of Books and Burying of Scholars" around 212 BCE, and the rebuilding of psychoanalysis in post-Nazi Germany started with the removal of political ideology in



**Fig. 1** Principles in scientific communication summarized from (Bohm, 2004).

school texts (Friedrich, 1995). Unfortunately, the substantially similar and same conducts are still not irrelevant in the 21st century, such as in the PRC with the deep culture.

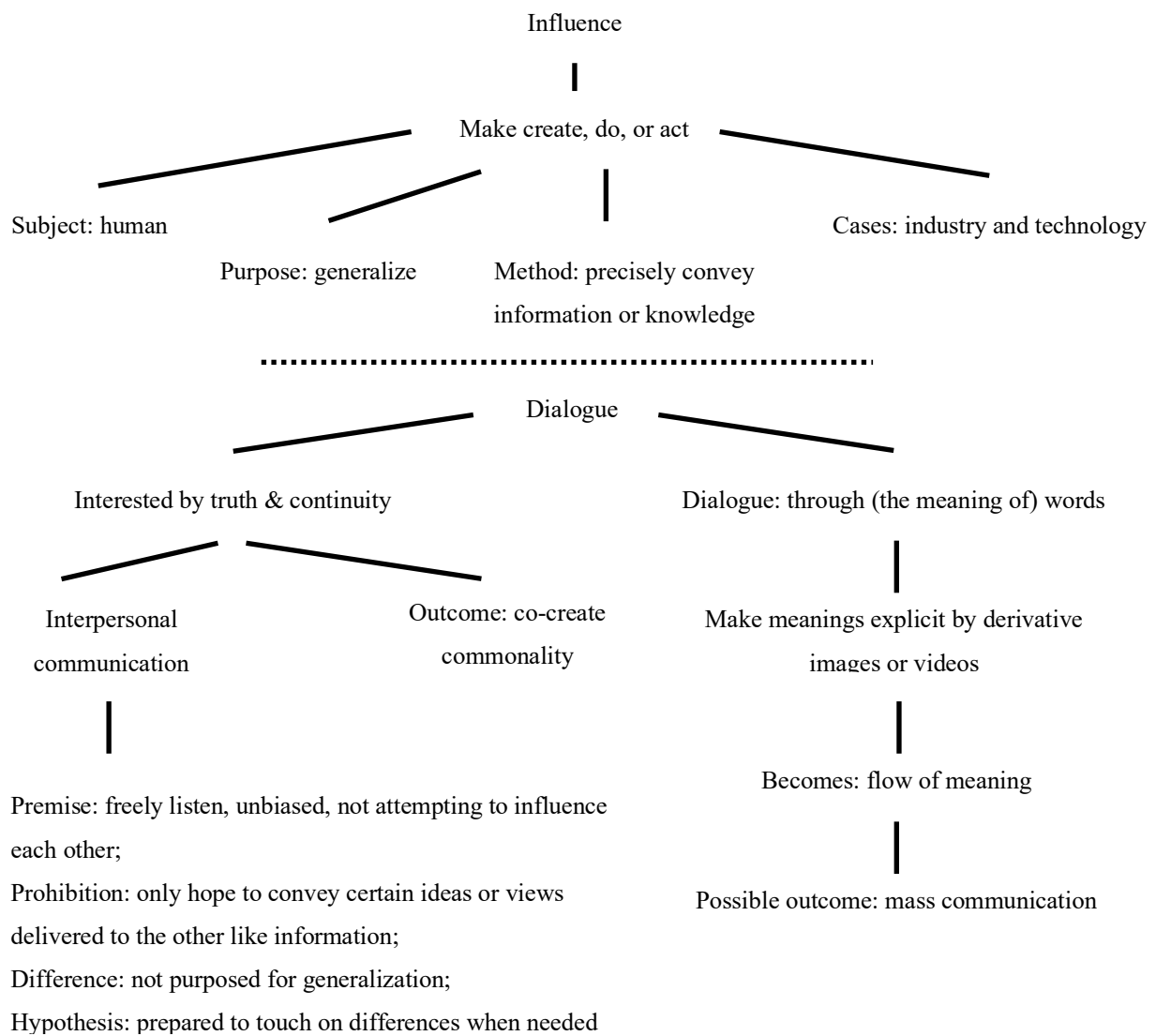
It is structurally analyzed that PRC's centralized banking system has been behind the operations of leveraging the scientific community to its territorial power and technology access (Pachankis, 2022a & 2022b), with corroboration in the currency realm (Pachankis, 2022c). It may sound irrelevant that the history of negative numbers is closely associated with deprivation by force hidden in the declaration of power (Rogers, 2009), its subtle connotative influences in the scientific methods may have more accumulative impacts than are conscious & aware of, such as the cultural debates of medium and printing, and the capitalism of knowledge in their material products.

The method does not mean to explore into the consciousness sciences' perspectives in scientific approaches, but references the classic foundations of modern science (Grant, 1996) and the principles of scientific communication summarized in **fig. 1** (Bohm, 2004). With a human-centric perspective on the subjects of scientific activities, the modern & contemporary changes of medium only change the efficacy of scientific communication product distribution and the material forms, but not the persons doing science. Therefore, the information on scientific journal retractions is analyzed in an economic and science management perspective. In human history, it is not an unusual phenomenon

where general beliefs contradict with scientific truth, and the journals' responsible behaviors in retracting questionable articles may not be a universal practice, therefore, the analysis only serves for the patterns recognized with relation to the qualitative perspective.

## METHOD

Even though conquer and defeat signified the Roman Empire, the reservation of cultural diversity through translation is not a defeatist practice, neither did the *histriones* of Roman theater deploy dualist values to culture,



**Fig. 2** Two types / modes of communication by Bohm (2004)

except for the churches' theologies parallel to the independent liberal arts in medieval university. In Grant's (1996) research, the *scholastic method* was developed from question-driven research, that "publication should be understood as a process whereby scribes at the university bookstore made master copies of the teachers' lectures" and "it was the presiding master ... who synthesized the various arguments into a definitive answer to the problem". Therefore, the element of power has not been obsoleted from the initial development in modern science. The power originated from the scholastic method has been one of the key subjects in the work of Bohm (2004), differentiated by the modes / types in influence and dialogue in communication summarized in **fig. 2**.

### **Replication**

Carey (2015) stated the main concern in journal retractions has been on the reproducibility of research. The criteria of reproduction do not encourage novelty nor originality of individual scientists, and the only communication type such criteria falls into is influence, with the purpose of generalizing research and utilitarian purposes in industry & technology. Hence the premise of the publishing ethics is set to economy other than scientific conducts, with a lingering problem-driven question if reliability in industry is directly relevant to data input or other accumulated biases. From a purely physical science perspective, entropy exists in every system, and industries & technologies are not immune from it. Capital management uses depreciated values for numerical accounting on the physical phenomenon in asset management, and this does not necessarily translate into scientific feedbacks in human resources management, if not designed with a combination between the social and natural sciences. Of course, this is only a normative example, but depending on the organizational methods & scales, expanded to nation-state systems in macroeconomy and multilateralism political economy, the decision tree can be further complicated.

Without accounting for the diversity of scientific communities and changes in macroeconomic scales & political structures that impact on the interpretation of numerical values, Brainard & You (2018) studied retraction by journal operations and indicated that the increasing retractions in rates ballooned after 1997 in the United States. The categorization in the study was more policy-driven, acting on the scientific community with existing definitions. A more robust study in the morality and ethics in scientists was done by Steen, Casadevall, & Fang (2013); with the psychological factors put aside for inevitable bias factors in intervention-based explanatory paradigm, the probabilities in retraction rated to a "negative increase" in scientific knowledge production, which means either the retractions

needed to further trace back to the foundations of modern science, or something else must be the problem than the problem in knowledge production.

Since the most critical humanitarian values in science reveal in the biological and medical sciences (Fang, Steen, & Casadevall, 2012), and the COVID-19 pandemic has also disrupted the institutional and organizational continuities in the social science perspectives, Retraction Watch (2021) summarized 10 points of trends in the situation: 1) conceptual meta-ethical controversies; 2) the use of scientific image; 3) causal inference between death and COVID-19 vaccination; 4) behavioral research; 5) lack of toxicity studies in traditional medicines; 6) sex, gender and sexuality topics; 7) death risks in COVID-19 treatment plans; 8) the accuracy of PCR testing with the paper defended by the editors; 9) data representation in clinical trial with the paper uncorrected; 10) irregular analogies in written textures. The trend suggests that in light of the global crisis, the journals have been adopting a discrete approach to the biomedical literatures and the attitude inclinations of individual scientists. The institutional roles of journals are thus evidenced in the specific purpose of the research.

### **Publication as an Art**

In Bohm's (2004) categorization, art communication is the dialogue between the artist and inanimate material(s). The inevitable use of language in scientific communication, or with a combination of other technological methods, introduces art as the basic component of scientific communication. Therefore, the intricate boundaries between science and art in the real world can be more difficult to distinguish. There is a unique concept of literary inquisition in the Chinese cultural history, whereby the wordings of ancient Chinese literati can lead to the death sentence of the person, and to 9 generations of the person's immediate family and collateral relatives. Linguistic arts in this regard in the traditional Chinese culture are the inherent constituents of power, where the defeatism goes after even the indomitable (Senn, 1937). The continuity resided with the "Great Cultural Revolution" in PRC and the modern & contemporary censorship therein. No direct or secondary evidence has been collected for the ancient cross-cultural histories on the Chinese culture's influence to the ancient Western culture, but Menzies' (2003) research documented the Chinese paper money culture's influence and the maritime history at the late medieval time.

For the appearance of publication in the medieval ages, the function of publication is documented to be an extension from the class setting (Grant, 1996), implying the prior involvement of dialogues and scientific communication in mentorship. The Aristotelian notion of publication is thus seen to be the fundamental origin on the

sociology of knowledge — democratically and not on an enforced basis. Modern and contemporary technologies further expanded the medium capabilities of interpersonal communication or asymmetric interpersonal communication on a mass scale; synchronously, asynchronously, unidirectional, bidirectional, and etc. Therefore, the arts in a broad sense have influences to the inner scientific / academic community, and the convenience of institutions in the roles of the secondary extensions in the sociology of knowledge.

Three sentences are offered here on the examples how linguistic arts in publication can lead to severe consequences:

1. The United States President Joe Biden passed the Respect for Marriage Act.
2. Joe Biden, the President of the United States, passed the Respect for Marriage Act.
3. Joe Biden passed the Respect for Marriage Act (acting) as the President of the United States.

### **Scientific Epistemology in the Question of Science**

So far, the research has adhered to the natural philosophy flow of language with the analysis, but excluding the heterogenous human beings from the premises of science may be a denial on the natural philosophy itself, which has been acknowledged to be the foundation of modern science (Grant, 1996). The dichotomy arises on the fundamental morality and preservations of scientific epistemology, and seeing it as a bargaining between power and science may better help with the resilience on the intricate subject. With the modern and contemporary divisions between scientific publishing and the primary sociology of knowledge, internet access has also changed the modes of the primary sociology of knowledge. Albeit such changes of arts may have more direct influence to the physical and astronomical sciences than the others, such distinctions do not prevent the power grips in monopolizing direct access to the wider internet, favoring regional intranet.

Basken (2012) attributed the problem arisen on technology and management metrics' impacts on the scientific community's psychology possibly driving the behaviors. Van Noorden (2011) further made it explicit on the seemingly irreconcilable conflicts between the journals' profit model and qualitative branding based on the scientists' researches. The intersection between academic management and business management in the real-world economy thence becomes the apparent issue, with the subscription-based journals favoring influence in scientific communication. Since the multi-stakeholder approach does not account for the imbalance of power in the real world setting even without the premises of power intrusion, the outcomes further institutional marginalization and resources



polarization over the trusts in the naturalist epistemology in its natural accumulation in evidence (Schneider, Woods, Proescholdt, *et al.*, 2022).

### **Previous Empirical Research and Unexpected Evidence**

The empirical research originated from my graduate research in a university in PRC around the year 2017. I reported on my findings on the *coup d'état* gathered from accumulated direct causal social interactions with relation to the PRC media outlets. I reported to the dissertation committee on democratization before they temporarily removed my mentor from the university. One of the schoolmates who is experienced in the Chinese political environment suggested me to buy a dissertation in the market, and I partially did that. In the research, I found suppliers located in Heilongjiang, Beijing, and Wuhan city via a major Chinese online shopping platform. With interactions to the Heilongjiang supplier, I requested a dissertation on democratization, and listed key framework and points on the constitutional structural issues of PRC contrary to the international standards in judiciary independence and the spirit of laws. The supplier returned the upfront money of around 1,000 RMB. With the supplier based in Wuhan, she requested landline calls to my mobile phone several times. This time I requested a business proposal and the service cost around 3,000 RMB. The completed business proposal was full of ideological jargons in the Maoist thought and data on the U.S.'s communication industry with monetary values in USD and trade secrets on individual media. The industrial data were not sourced in citation neither can they be located with Google searches. Since there was no direct causal evidence nor correlative evidence even after the change of constitution of PRC, the issue was put aside.

With my other researches published in international journals and the acknowledgment of my PhD by the international academic community, I started receiving invitations from Open Access journals. The change of financial incentives in Open Access publishing may increase institutional costs of research funding and universities, but the equity provided in the distribution of knowledge and the financial incentive changes in journal operations may, theoretically, in time optimize the sociology of knowledge over industry and technology in scientific publishing by the change of competitive models. Among them, one specific journal in education and biotechnology contacted me in Chinese language. For my prior researches, I enquired on the submission. For precautions, I raised several key points in education and bioethics as a prerequisite for an intended article: 1) directly face the massacres in modern and contemporary Chinese history in education and in the public for public mental & psychological health; 2) put emphasis on geochemistry, urban water systems and environmental humidity into biotechnological research, especially

concerning proliferation and environmental pollution; 3) if the above two points cannot be met, I don't hold an optimistic view on the healthy and ethical applications of biotechnologies. The person replied that he /she acknowledged my point of view, but it is almost unlikely that it can be published. I further enquired on an alternative strategy in emphasizing in natural epistemology, and the concept of sovereignty originated from *The Leviathan* is dependent on natural epistemology. And the person tacitly replied that they are a surrogate company for journal publication and have cooperation with guest editors. They can also match journals with from 28,000 to 55,000 RMB according to regular / special issues and impact factors for SCI journals. If I was still interested, I could send the full paper to the guest editor's pre-review. Apart from the communication dated in Dec 2022, a prior paper in around 2021 also encountered the same censorship directly with a Chinese operated journal located in the USA where the banking information was in Wuhan and Shanghai. The paper passed peer-review, but the lead editor requested constant revisions. The associate editor added my WhatsApp and told me that according to her understanding on the lead editor, it was only a tacit avoidance on the paper being published. I furthered enquired if it was associated with the PRC's merging of the National Radio and Television Administration and National Press and Publication Administration, and she answered that she only got into the industry recently and did not know the details.

## RESULTS

The accumulated empirical evidence indicates to a systematic operation in the publication industry, and the surge of retraction coincided with the Reform and Opening of PRC. The dialectic dialogues indicate that most of the persons behind the operations have the consciousness of the right thing to do, maybe except for the trade secret operation. This could have been due to the COVID-19 disasters that have partially awakened the persons' conscience even though various other factors could have led their decisions in remaining behind the operations. The meta-like input from the dictatorial structure has an impact on the journal publication industry, and the operations are not confined to the PRC territory. The realpolitik, power political, and political economic assertions for power grip on the influence-based communication are present, with implications for geopolitics & geoeconomics. These factors can further dissect the industries & technological communities away from the basis of scientific communication and the sociology of knowledge. Such as, a different perspective to some of the retracted papers' empirical evidence may lead to further clues in other directions of scientific activities, instead of traces being completely wiped away from the public access. If there is a syllogism between evidence and evidence, the disappearance of evidence is not a usual practice.

With the territorial controls and double-traffic blocks of information by the internet operations of several regimes, with PRC included, the continuity in the dialogue-based scientific communications have been largely undermined if not rendered completely obsolete. The PRC also translates materials from the scientific world, but in practice the linguistics have often been changed and inserted with ideological wordings, including one book in art history I translated from British English to Simplified Chinese. One institution, Central Compilation and Translation Bureau, has been the structural operator. Either from the censorship on any materials of the modern and contemporary genocides conducted by the PRC on the civilians in its territory, or the blocks of information from the global academic community in direct internet sources, the translation practices of the PRC are wildly different from the medieval ages. The insertion of ideological texts in translated publications violate the modern science's fundamental principle of publication, and is not contributed by cross-cultural differences. With the workings of translated academic texts and the more culturally-rooted Nazi-equivalent ideological operations, the internationalization of indigenous Chinese knowledge can have severe social impacts to the democratic polities from the bottom up. The inventions of new concepts in science can be the risk zones if without a valid cause.

With the cyber & electronic warfare current, the bias factor or at least diversity inclusion in scientometrics may be a question. The sociology of knowledge is technologically gapped with the new developments in communication media and segregations. With the media transmission of light speed and silencing on authentic voices in publication, the reliability criteria seeking for authority may further worsen the power political intrusions on an institutional scale and impact on mental & psychological health in professional settings. The effects of the phenomena may influence the institutional decision-making processes and priorities with the normative democratic decision procedures. Albeit the immediate impacts may be more concentrated in the economic realm with the tier systems, the long-term humanitarian impacts may include: 1) fairness in financial economy; 2) workers' rights; 3) resources availability and diversification for policy formation; 4) human security and environmental relevance; 5) capital ineffectiveness in scientific funding; 6) increased burdens in mass psychological care; 7) increased coordination costs in globalization.

Apart from publishing ethics, more subtle yet less studied phenomenon is the trading of Masters and PhD degrees and admission insurance. The market exists in PRC with all major universities and elite universities in UK, South Korea, and etc.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The phenomenon appeared in the publishing industry has only reflected some questions on behavioral changes of concern. The specific issue of concern that led to the power political suppression on my graduate thesis research was my report on the PRC's macro-money indicators disproportional to industrial structures with relatively and stably low household spendings, with the World Bank data published up to 2017. The systematic behaviors with differentiating practices in the publication industry indicate to a political and / or political economic gap that may be less taken into consideration in the scientific communication pipelines. It is not impossible for normative behaviors to be affected by irregular behaviors, and the culturally diverse globalization further complicates the phenomenon between cultural diversity and politically indoctrinated ideologies. The behavioral changes are most prominent in the digital technological companies such as the emergence of excessive censorships on social media originated from democratic countries. The costs exercised to within the scientific community have been the erosion of trust in scientific publishing, and the phenomena arisen affects the industrial sectors with real economic damages, apart from other non-material, tangible or intangible, damages.

A currently specific issue is the PRC government's systematic fabrication of governmental data and defamation of the science professionals in disguise of its criminal conducts behind official capacities. In the appeals of removing lockdowns where human trafficking methods have been applied, Dr. Zhang, Wenhong's research on Omicron conducted in Shanghai with its implications to herd immunity has been defamed for data fabrication, where the PRC National Health Commission announced zero SARS-CoV-2 death on 24 Dec. 2022. Messages have come out on Twitter that on 19 Dec. 2022, the funeral home in Beijing were commanded being banned from leaking anything seen at work in any forms, discussing, answering, or revealing any situations concerned with data and operations, and accepting interviews from the media or any organizations. The systematic top-down obstructions to scientific activities could have been the causal factors contributing to the changing publishing ethics behaviors, including the involvement of meta-science and scientometrics, whereby scientometrics have also been used by the governmental behaviors in propaganda distribution and technology access. The diversion of the public's fears and hatred from the PRC government has also driven the public in calling Dr. Zhang, Wenhong a "killer doctor". Similar phenomenon happened to the "Defeat the Mandate" doctors in USA, and in a Twitter meeting held on 28 Dec. 2022, it was revealed that financially sponsored attacks on their credibility and public appearance were organized, nominally by a company with deep ties with the PRC government.

From the research it can be seen that unitary command disguised in the name of policy covering large geographical areas can lead to severe consequences on real people's matters of life and death. In the context of PRC, the purposes and intentions in hiding criminal evidences in the organizational decision tree are clear and such deliberate criminal conducts behind official capacities have been obstructing timely scientific approaches, or even threatening the scientific methods by the destruction of scientific evidence chains and fabrication of quantitative data. With this regard, access to valid and published scientific evidences, albeit takes extra efforts, may provide better coherence in the scientific enterprise and reliability in doxastic logic with some tolerance to precision biases. The systematic spread of unitary command is analogical to a situation where one specific researcher's papers and books are guarded by the military, altered to be indisputable, and forced to be accepted by all persons and to be followed in guiding their actions and social interactions in everyday life.

Whereby for truly scientific establishment, one may not get the results in any other way, whereas otherwise, one gets the same result with severe anti-humanitarian consequences.

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