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UTILIZING HPRINTS.ORG AS A SUBJECT BASED RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE

By Søren Bertil Fabricius Dorch, Ingegerd Rabow, Marjatta Sikström, Simone Schipp von Branitz Nielsen, Jonas Gilbert, Mia Nyman & Thea Marie Drachen.

Introduction

Research by Nordic scholars within the arts and humanities is among the best in the world and it may thus seem counter intuitive, that these areas are facing severe problems related to quantifying the quality of their research (especially in relation to local research assessment exercises, cf. Faurbæk 2007). However, we believe that these problems are largely a result of the visibility deficit of research, e.g. as a consequence of the poor representation of these subjects in international literature databases and Open Access archives. Citation and literature databases like the established ISI Thomson's A&HCI cover only an insignificant fraction of the published Nordic research. This is in part because Nordic language publications (e.g. Nordic journals) are not yet sufficiently indexed by international databases and because of the lack of electronic access to research publications: The traditional reading pattern is still largely dependent on the availability of print and the publication pattern primarily involves books and book chapters – rather than shorter articles and papers – and e-books are still rarely available in Nordic languages and from Nordic publishers. Also, these are in general still not meeting fundamental usability requirements, such as portable hardware and interface software. Furthermore, unpublished or locally published research (e.g. working papers, conference reports, invited reviews etc.) are generally not accessible at all or are at best only made available through private contacts.
In summary, in terms of electronic and online research, the Nordic arts and humanities and related subjects still are rather invisible, inaccessible in an international context and as such remain in the shadows of both other scientific fields.

The concept of an international subject based archive has long been available within the natural science area, for almost two decades the well established arXiv.org, now hosted by Cornell University Library, has been an integral part of the publication pattern for some of the exact natural sciences (physics, mathematics, computer science etc.). The archive contains research publications in several publication stages: from unpublished, over submitted to accepted and peer reviewed or even rejected journal papers, conference proceedings etc.

Studies show, that research that is visible and accessible through arXiv.org is read and cited much more than research that is only accessible at a publisher or journal website: E.g. the so called citation advantage resulting from Open Access to arXiv.org papers turns out to be roughly a factor of two, and the immediate visibility of newly submitted research results in a Early Access advantage over non-submitted research. Furthermore it has been demonstrated, that authors who submit their research as full text to arXiv.org submit only research material, that they think will hold up to the scrutiny of fellow researchers. Additionally it is worth mentioning, that publishers and journal editors belonging to the publication-sphere of the sciences that regularly use arXiv.org actually condone or even encourages individual authors to submit their research papers to the archive, although sometimes after an embargo period. This holds true even for research for which the copyright has in principle been exclusively transferred to the publisher: No known author has ever been submitted to legal measures by a publisher for making her research available in arXiv.org.

Brief background of hprints.org

Much scientific research is by nature international: Kierkegaard and his works are studied with just as much interest in China, as he is in his own native Nordic country – and sometimes even in the native Scandinavian tongue – and the same is true for many other fields of research. Therefore the hprints project did not exclusively take the local, regional or even the national view point on the accessibility and visibility of research. Instead, the aim of the hprints project is to expose Nordic research to an audience wider that it traditionally has been. The focus of hprints is in the Nordic research community within the arts and humanities and social sciences.

A subject based repository is not intended to compete with or replace the current institutional and national initiatives. The repository is meant to be a supplementary technology that should be seen as a complementary tool and resource to researchers within the arts and humanities and social sciences. A subject based repository will in general not be able to provide full publication coverage of any institution, the entire publication record of any individual scientist, nor is that the idea. Authors should be able to submit what they find to be the most relevant of their research to the archive, and other researchers should be able to

readily find and download full text versions of the research that is of the most value to them. Hence the archive cannot be used to perform quantitative citation analyses of individuals or institutions, nor research management and assessment etc: That is left to institutional and national repositories. This said, a subject based archive should be set up in such a way that its content may be easily harvested and/or linked to, from both institutional and national repositories and literature databases as well as research websites. Similarly it should be technically possible to submit or harvest copyright cleared full text resources from national repositories into the archive if desired.

The policy documents of hprints state that all relevant research materials, published or not may be submitted to the repository: And especially important in the case of an HAL archive is that strictly educational material without any particular interest to science will not be accepted.

As to who that can submit material to the repository, the policy states that users must register to be allowed to submit material to the repository, while everyone can receive customized free email alerts and RSS feeds independent of registration status.

The archive as it is today is set up, maintained and promoted by a number of Nordic consortium members. The original founding consortium members were Copenhagen University Library (part of the Danish Royal Library), The Faculty of Humanities, at Copenhagen University, Lund University Library, Museum Tusculanum Press and University of Oslo Library. The current project managers are Ingegerd Rabow (Lund) and Marjatta Sikström (Stockholm), following previous project manages Søren Bertil Fabricius Dorch (The Royal Library), Jesper Mørch (The Royal Library) and Simone Schipp von Branitz Nielsen (University of Copenhagen).

Submission of electronic text material to the archive is decentralized to local individual researchers, or at research group level. hprints is open to the public as well as a tool for scientific communication between academic scholars, who can upload full-text research material such as articles, papers, conference papers, book chapters etc. The content of the deposited material should be comparable to that of a scientific paper that a scholar would consider suitable for publication in for example a peer reviewed scientific journal. Validation of submitted material takes place at authors' member institutions, centrally by country, or by The Royal Library, Denmark. The contents of hprints can be retrieved by defined topics through search at the hprints.org website, by searching via Google or e.g. WorldCat.

In May 2007 the Nordic funding agency for libraries (Nordbib) funded the hprints project as part of its funding program Work Package 2: Focus area on Content and Accessibility. And in October 2007, the Nordbib "hprints project" chose the technical system to be used for the Nordic arts and humanities e-print archive to be the HAL-system from the French national research council (CNRS). HAL is an already functioning archive.

Therefore, the hprints e-print archive is set up as a Nordic HAL portal with its own layout and adapted to the requirements of hprints. Since the archive is a part of HAL, papers are shared with the French national Open Access archive. After a period of adapting and testing various software systems, the consortium established a three-year agreement with CNRS based on part of the funding granted by Nordbib, signed by The Royal Library Director Erland Kolding Nielsen, February 2008. March 2008 hprints opened for public access (e.g. Dorch 2008).

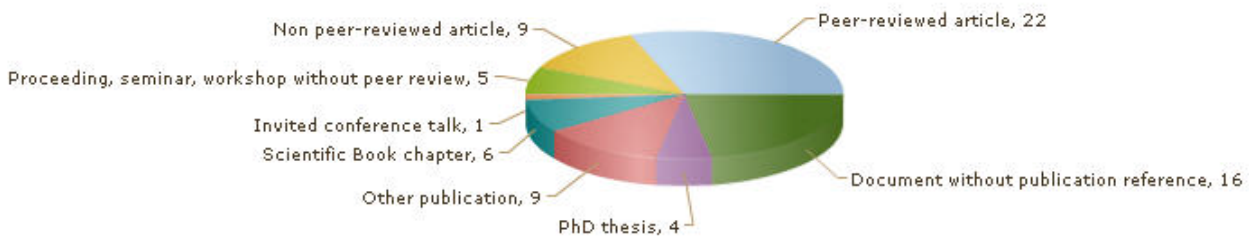

Figure 1: Distribution of document types.

Figure 2: Front page of www.hprints.org. Users can download Open Access material without registering.

Registered users can upload material and subscribe to email new lists. All uploads are validated.

The statistics module in hprints.org documents show that submitted works have increased their visibility through high numbers of "reads" and "downloads": E.g. the abstract of one article on "Pietism and the politics of catechisms" was viewed several thousand times and the Open Access full text of the articles was downloaded hundreds of times. The Top 10 articles in terms of views have all been accessed many hundreds of times, while Top 10 downloaded articles had their PDF files accessed between 40 and 120 times (cf. Fig. 3).

The future impact and success of the archive ultimately lies in the hands of the grass root users, i.e. the researchers. However, to ensure sustainability, the future management of hprints.org will take place through CULIS Knowledge Center for Scholarly Communication at the Royal Library of Copenhagen. The CULIS Knowledge Center has agreed to run and manage hprints.org at least until 2011, and will in cooperation with the consortium initiate further collaborative projects on hprints.org.

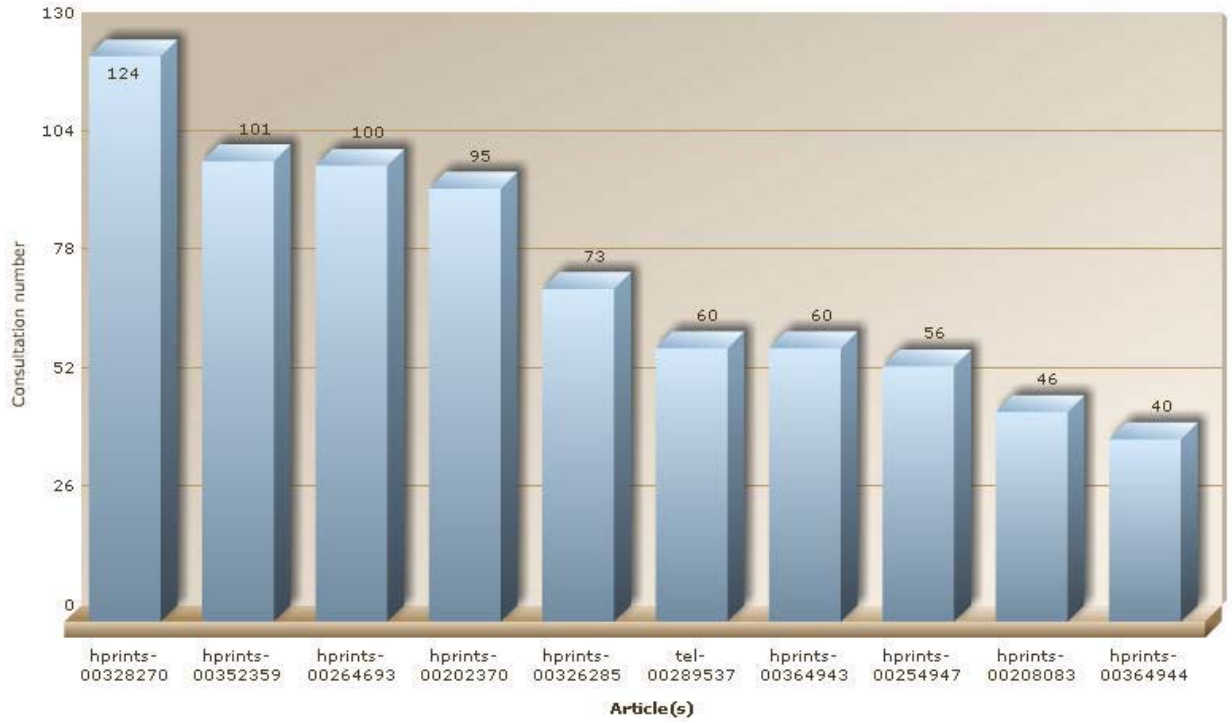

Figure 3: Top 10 articles in terms of full text file download (April 2010).

The current hprints project

In December 2009 a second application was sent to Nordbib, this time the consortium consisted of the original consortium members, minus Oslo, but supplemented by Gothenburg University Library, Stockholm University Library and partners of NIAS, The Nordic Institute for Asian Studies. This time the goal was to promote the principles of Open Access among scholars in the Nordic social sciences and arts and humanities, while utilizing hprints.org as a basic research infrastructure.

The feeling of the consortium was that the time was ripe to focus on another key issue that may prevent efficient deployment of the principles of Open Access, namely copyright and authors' rights. In the spirit of making publicly funded research freely and openly available to all who want to access it, Dutch SURF and the international Knowledge Exchange's publishing agreement document, Licence to Publish, was created to support the principles of Open Access. For researchers to benefit from the initiative and in order to put it into use, the Licence to Publish document should be translated into the Nordic languages, be made widely available and promoted in a relevant and timely fashion to the individual researcher.

By providing a legal translation of Licence to Publish into Danish, Swedish, Norwegian, Icelandic and Finnish, the project supports the principles of Open Access while providing the necessary legal means for authors to self-archive their publications resulting from publication production within the focus cases. This exceeds the current world average of approximately 11 percent (cf. Björk, Roos & Lauri, in Proceedings of ELPUB, 2008).

Simply posting the agreement or a Licence to Publish on the Internet will not in itself guarantee increased Open Access and awareness about authors' rights. A well-directed outreach campaign is necessary to engage the research community at the grass root level to increase the awareness of the principles of Open Access.

Results so far

During April 2009 an initial discussion of the Licence to Publish took place: It quickly became clear that some concerns existed as to the appropriateness of the Licence to Publish document as the primary tool for promoting self-archiving in the present project. Especially the participants from Sweden were concerned about whether authors' rights were best supported by the current version of the Licence to Publish.

One of us, Ingegerd Rabow translated Licence to Publish into Swedish together with Helena Stjernberg (Lund), and it was then subsequently reviewed by a legal advisor at Lund University. Besides an authors' rights issue (namely a time-unlimited grant to the publishers), it turned out that the document was unlawful in terms of Swedish law and therefore could not be used directly as a legal contract. Knowledge

Exchange was then contacted – the main promoter of Licence to Publish – in order to inquire further about the developments of the document. Two Knowledge Exchange partners were contacted: The German Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) and the Dutch SURF Foundation. DFG informed us that a translation of the Licence to Publish into a legal German document had not been completed e.g. due to a failure to comply with German legal language tradition – i.e. not directly due to the content of the Licence to Publish, but for legal structural reasons. Should one provide a German version of the Licence to Publish, the document would have to be redesigned. SURF informed us that there were indeed plans to make a new version of the original Licence to Publish, but that the time line for this was doubtful.

In agreement with Nordbib, one of us, Simone Schipp von Branitz Nielsen, put forward the possibilities that the project should either, A) provide translations of a soon to be obsolete version of Licence to Publish, B) translations, but with of an augmented Swedish version, or C) awaiting a revised version from Knowledge Exchange and SURF, along with trying to influence changes that we all can agree on. It was decided to go for option C), while at the same time meeting with SURF at the CERN workshop on Innovations in Scholarly Communication (OAI6) in Geneva, June 2009. At that meeting – with Wilma Mossink and Gerard van Westrienen from SURF – it was decided that SURF would inform about the status and plans regarding the Licence to Publish, once a SURF workshop with stakeholders had been held in late June 2009. The result was that the current version of Licence to Publish will not be revised; instead it will be rewritten within a timeframe beyond that of our project. Hence, it was decided to go forward with the translations of Licence to Publish into Nordic languages.

The various discussions among the project partners shed light on the following issues:

- The project requires a tool to secure authors' right when self-archiving: Licence to Publish is such a tool and while the document is perhaps imperfect, the focus of our project should be the existence of a tool, while at the same time the implementation of the outreach strategy should not necessarily be restricted to one particular tool exclusively.
- In many cases authors' rights issues will be directed at international publishers and several of these publishers are based within Dutch or Anglo-Saxon legal traditions. Hence actual legally valid Nordic documents would be irrelevant as such, in these cases. Then, however, the Nordic translations would be used as "reading guides" to the original English or Dutch versions, and the translations should therefore be literate.
- The Licence to Publish is not suitable for publications in Open Access journals (e.g. Golden Open Access publishing): It is designed for traditional publishing – future versions of the Licence to Publish is likely to be fine-tuned to those types of publications. When doing outreach to authors publishing in Open Access journals, care must be taken to ensure their rights in manners that are not supported by the Licence to Publish.

The results so far are also reported in Nielsen *et al.* (2009).

Ongoing work: Focused outreach through case study

One of the project's deliverables is to devise a strategy for substantial outreach with respect to "Licence to publish", authors' rights, self-archiving and the principles of Open Access, by focusing on a number of cases in the Nordic social sciences and humanities.
For this part of the project we use the methodology of a case study. Case studies as a methodology can bring us to an understanding of a complex issue or object, can extend experience or add strength to what is already known through previous research and bring out the details from the viewpoint of the participants by using multiple sources of data.

E.g. the following questions are relevant:

- What are the researchers concerns about Open Access?
- What are the obstacles for the researchers?
- Do the researchers know their rights to self-archive?
- Where and when do the researchers look for information on authors' rights, and Open Access?

Case studies are selective, focusing on one or two issues that are fundamental to understanding the system being examined. The cases can either be unique in some way or cases which are considered typical and one may also select cases to represent a variety of geographic regions, size, or other parameters. Our criteria for selecting the cases are:

- Expected benefits from the focused outreach
- Positive inclination of the group towards the project
- Equal geographical dissemination among the Nordic project participants.

The cases chosen were the following:

- Department of Scandinavian Languages, with the Dutch Division, Stockholm University
- Department of French, Italian and Classical Languages, Stockholm University
- The Department of Philosophy, Linguistics and Theory of Science, Gothenburg University
- Transnational and Migration Studies, The Faculty of Humanities, University of Copenhagen.

The case studies are now ongoing and results are forthcoming during summer 2010.

Discussions and conclusions

The first Nordbib funded hprints project provided a subject based infrastructure for Open Access publishing of research within Nordic social sciences and arts and humanities, namely hprints.org, in collaboration with CNRS.

By completion of the first part of the second hprints project during the summer of 2009, Nordic scholars now have access to a translation of "Licence to Publish" in the Nordic languages.

This project has demonstrated that it is indeed possible for Nordic partners to agree on and setup a case study design for a Nordic study aiming at a relevant Nordic outreach to increase the awareness and understanding of the principles of Open Access by providing a dialogue among stakeholders on authors' rights and Open Access principles.

It has furthermore been demonstrated that the preparatory study for an effective Open Access outreach is a time-consuming process, and one should be wary of not basing an outreach effort on personal assumptions and experiences, since there might very well be subject- and/or research group-specific concerns, obstacles etc. towards Open Access.

The now ongoing case studies have already proven useful in identifying author concerns and preferences, while at the same time showing that addressing Open Access on a granular level is a highly fruitful and necessary task: I.e. a task which brings information specialists closer the minds of the individual researchers, educating both through the process of research support.

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