Battling for 'Openness'. Applying Situational Analysis to Negotiations Between Dutch Universities and Elsevier

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Abstract
More than a decade after the Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI) declaration, Open Access has become a widespread phenomenon and a dominant topic in the academic publishing world. Several large-scale developments can be currently observed including (trans-)national efforts towards 'full Open Access' in a given year or 'offsetting' models when renewing library subscriptions. In this context, the Netherlands are believed to play a pioneering role as novel agreements with major academic publishers have been recently reached and Open Access was set prominently among the priorities of the Dutch Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first semester of 2016. However, the negotiations between Dutch universities and Elsevier could be rather described as an ongoing battle that only recently has taken 'a constructive turn'. As a rich case for investigation, the controversy will be examined using Adele E. Clarke's (2005) method of situational analysis and subsequently visualized with three kinds of maps.

Research questions

How is Open Access academic publishing re-ordering the scientific system?
- What expectations towards the scientific system are expressed through the shift to Open Access academic publishing?
- How is Open Access imagined by different actors?
- How does Open Access affect actual publication practices?

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Methods & materials

A case study on VSNU-Elsevier negotiations using **situational analysis** by Adele E. Clarke (2005) and compiling three types of maps:
- *Situational maps* – aim to depict all major discourses as well as human and nonhuman actors articulated and implicated in discourses;
- *Social worlds / arenas maps* – aim to elucidate which social worlds or subworlds come together in a particular arena and why, drafted as meso-level cartographies of collective commitments, shared ideologies and going concerns;
- *Positional maps* – aim to represent the heterogeneity of positions in discourses itself by locating positions along contested issues or axes and pointing out potential blind spots or "sites of discursive silence".

Materials include official statements, press releases and newsletters by involved organisations, presentations and talks at academic conferences, written communication in discussion forums, media coverage, blog posts. In the further course of research interviews with key actors in negotiations as well as Dutch researchers are planned.

Theoretical framework

- *Knowledge regime* (Felt *et al.*) building on "technopolitical regimes" (Hecht)
- *Scripts* of certain orders in technologies (Akrich)
- *Master narratives* (Felt *et al.*) and *public narratives* (Somers; Viehöver)
- *Discourse coalitions* (Hajer)
- *Buzzwords* (Bensaude Vincent)

The 'Dutch approach'
According to the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU), four factors were crucial for its success in negotiations on Open Access with publishers:
- Unique bargaining model,
- Clear political support,
- A powerful delegation,
- Fidelity to principles.

Image credit: Hisakuni Fujimoto (2006). *windmill*. Flickr. Licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

Draft maps

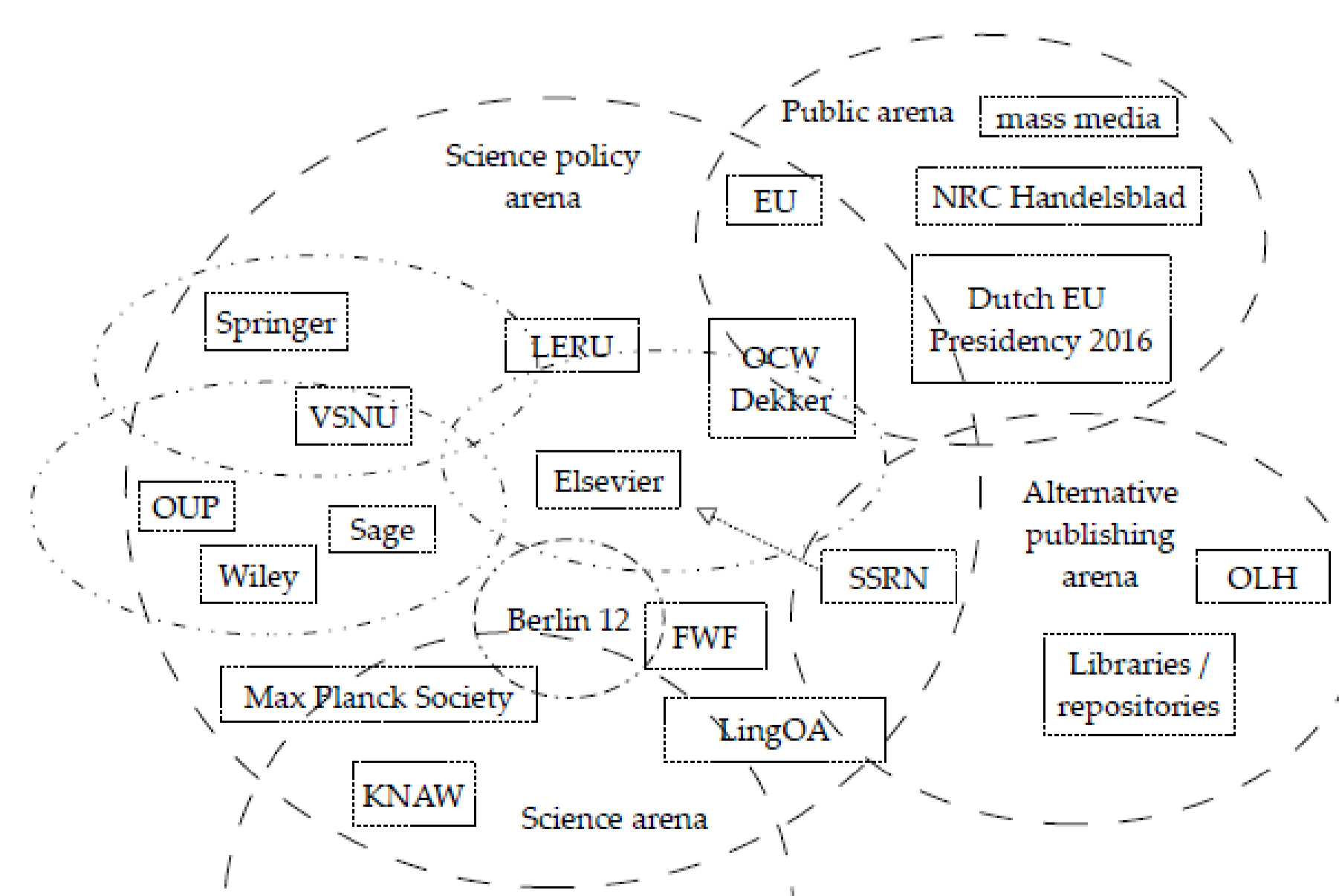Figure 1. Abstract situational map: Messy/working version

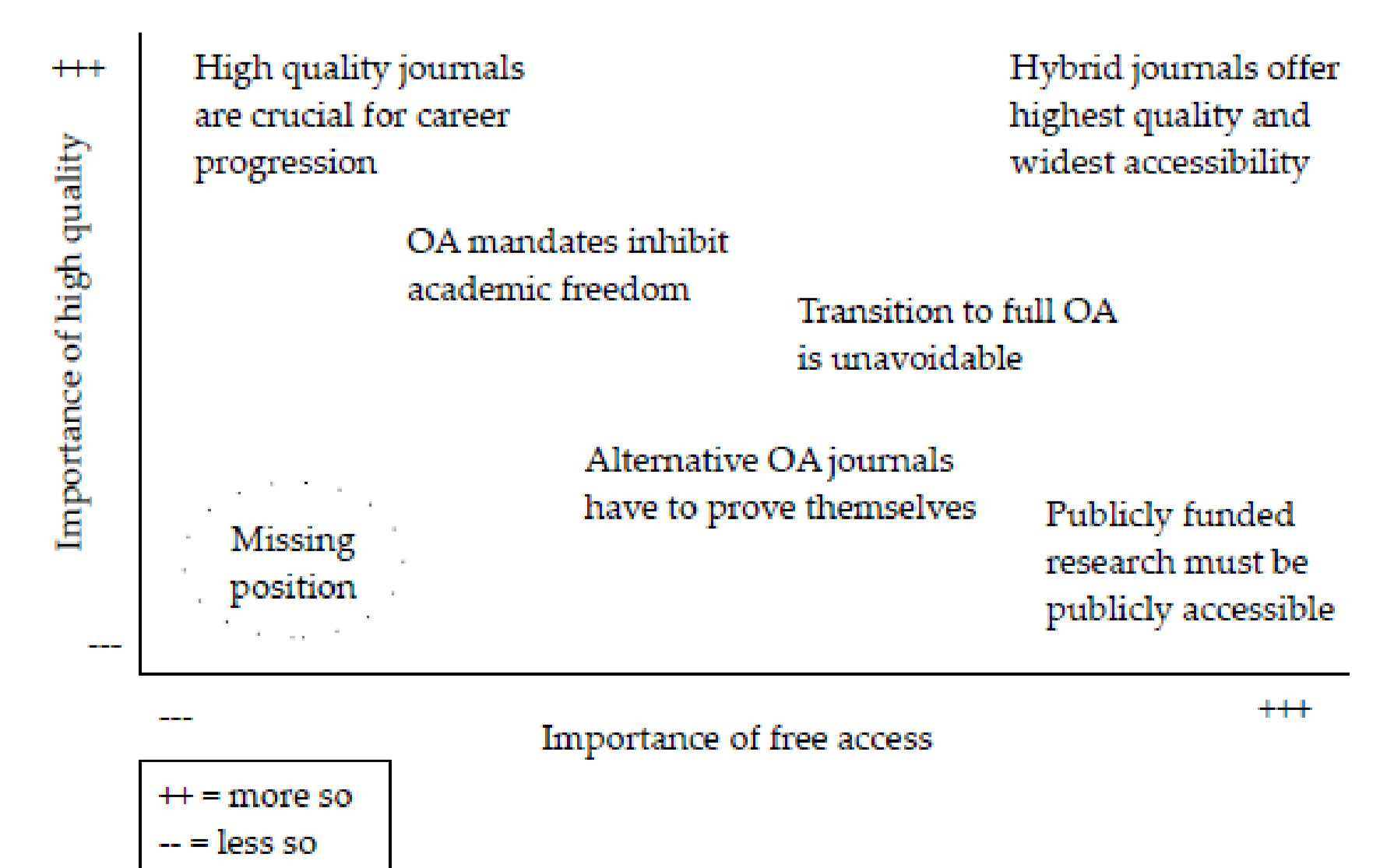Figure 2. Abstract map of social worlds in arenas

Figure 3. Abstract positional map

References
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Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU). (2016). *The Netherlands: paving the way for open access*. E-zine Open Access. Available online at http://vsnu.nl/files/documenten/Domeinen/Onderzoek/Open%20access/Ezine-OpenAccess-ENG-mrch2016.pdf
For further information and reference list please see: Šimukovič, E. (2016). *Of hopes, villains and Trojan horses – Open Access academic publishing and its battlefields* (Doctoral research proposal). University of Vienna, Vienna. Available online at http://hdl.handle.net/10760/29265