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Book review essay: The territorial nature of organization studies

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Academic tribes and territories: intellectual enquiry and the cultures of disciplines, edited by Tony Becher, Buckingham, Open University Press/SRHE, 1989

Academic tribes and territories: intellectual enquiry and the cultures of disciplines, edited by Tony Becher and Paul Trowler. Buckingham, Open University Press/SRHE, 2001

Tribes and territories in the 21st century: rethinking the significance of disciplines in higher education, edited by Paul Trowler, Murray Saunders and Veronica Bamber, London, Routledge, 2012

Introduction

Tony Becher (born 19 December 1930; died 9 March 2009) has been described as the founding father of British higher education research (Reisz 2009). As a Professor of Education at the University of Sussex, he gave impetus to understanding the territorial nature and characteristics of those who cultivate the realms of knowledge through his landmark text, *Academic Tribes and Territories: Intellectual Enquiry and the Cultures of Disciplines* published in 1989. A second edition was co-authored with Paul Trowler in 2001 and in 2012 the tribes and territories metaphors were critically revisited in a reader edited by Paul Trowler, Murray Saunders and Veronica Bamber. The tribes and territories thesis which has made a significant contribution to education studies in mapping ontological, epistemological and methodological shifts within education studies over 23 years offers a framework for understanding on-going debates about the territorial nature of organization studies over a similar timeframe.

The nature of organization studies territories has repeatedly been contested, as this review will highlight. These debates have included proponents for and against the convergence of the field, based upon beliefs that organization studies does or does not need to emulate the discipline status of a more unified science such as physics. The field's 'paradigm wars' of the 1980s and 1990s can also be regarded as academic 'turf wars' and more recently ontological, epistemological and methodological shifts have

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resulted in a greater emphasis upon the centrality of discourse and practice within organization studies. Becher's *Academic Tribes and Territories: Intellectual Enquiry and the Cultures of Disciplines*, which is frequently cited within education studies, is rarely cited within organization studies (see Morris 2003 for a notable exception). Following the mission of *Culture and Organization*, this book review essay attempts to offer innovative insights, provoke discussion and bridge a gap between education studies and organization studies.

In each of the three sections of the main body of this review, a featured book is critically reviewed in terms of its content, as well as discussing the book's significance to organization studies 'territories'. The 23-year chronology of the three books offers a timeline relative to the evolution of organization studies that presents an opportunity to revisit important academic milestones in the debate. Each of the three chronological discussions of the territorial development of organization studies features an account of the field's territorial nature. The first section features Burrell and Morgan's (1979) account of paradigms and organizational analysis. The second section features Deetz's (1996) rethinking of Burrell and Morgan's paradigm grid and their legacy. And in the third section, Shepherd and Challenger's (2013) recent rhetorical analysis of the paradigm wars offers a summary of the terrain and the status of on-going debates.

In the context of this Special Issue on *The Territorial Organization* a contribution to organization studies is made in three substantial ways by this review: through (1) engaging ethnographically with the cultures of organizational studies, (2) understanding how competing beliefs in convergence and divergence inform our understanding of the territorial nature of organization studies and (3) understanding how territorial developments within education studies might inform further understanding about this territorial nature.

The distinctive cultures and ideas of academic communities

Academic Tribes and Territories: Intellectual Enquiry and the Cultures of Disciplines (Becher 1989) was greeted by academics as a landmark book boldly and ambitiously mapping the territory of academic knowledge. Bayer (1991, 224) in his favourable review of the book captured the critical debate that Becher was provoking, noting 'both the frailty of the management assumption by many academic administrators of relative homogeneity among the professoriate and the tenuousness of the generalizability of results of much of higher education research are clearly illustrated by Becher's landmark work'. Whilst Becher worked within the field of education, his research interests were with the wider academic community. Becher examined relationships between distinctive *cultures*, for which he used the metaphor of the tribe, and distinctive *ideas*, for which he used the metaphor of territory. He examined how academics perceived themselves and colleagues, their ways of organizing their professional lives and inter-connections between academic cultures and the nature of disciplines.

He pragmatically focused upon the disciplines of biology, chemistry, economics, geography, history, law, mathematics, mechanical engineering, modern languages, pharmacy, physics and sociology. His research featured largely elite UK institutions such as London School of Economics and Cambridge, although Berkeley and Stanford in the USA (where Becher undertook a Visiting Fellowship) were also included within his sample. His data sources were relevant research literature in the 12 disciplines, as well as interviews with practising academics. In total, he conducted 221 interviews across all the selected disciplines. In his semi-structured interviews, the main themes

covered were the structure of the academic subject, epistemological issues, career patterns, reputation and rewards, aspects of professional practice and costs and benefits of disciplinary membership.

In Chapter 1, Becher (1989) acknowledged that a wide variety of taxonomies of knowledge fields had already been generated in different ways and using different approaches. He cited Pantin's (1968) classification focused upon knowledge structures related to individual specialisms within disciplines, which he contrasted with Kuhn (1962), who was concerned primarily with academic communities at the disciplinary level, rather than their specialisms/fields. Kuhn's (1962) interest in convergence was subsequently to be echoed within Becher's classification. However, it is the phenomenological analysis of Biglan (1973) and Kolb (1981) which appear to have had the greatest influence upon Becher. He particularly preferred Biglan's familiar contrasting of hard and soft, pure and applied to the more esoteric and less accessible terminology used by Kolb. Whilst Chapter 2 explicitly focused upon academic disciplines, Becher was equally aware of the centrality of specialisms and sub-specialisms within academic communities, or what we tend to refer to today as fields and sub-fields. In Chapter 3, Becher expanded further upon such differentiations under the heading of overlaps, boundaries and specialisms. He cited Law (1973) in differentiating between theory-based, technique-based, methods-based and subject matter specialities. Economics was cited as an illustrative example as 'within economics, monetarism is a theory-based specialism, econometrics is defined in terms of a technique and labour economics is a subject field' (Becher 1989, 49). In Chapter 4, his focus was upon aspects of community life which included a focus upon the influence of fashionability (which has been equally a preoccupation of organization studies theorists, see e.g. Abrahamson and Fairchild 1999).

In Chapter 5, his review of the literature and empirical data enabled a differentiation between rural and urban specialisms, and similarly in Chapter 8 he developed his differentiation between convergent and divergent specialisms. These classifications, which are an important part of Becher's taxonomy, are more clearly articulated in the second edition (see the 'Landscapes, tribal territories and academic cultures' section below for further discussion). In seeking to map the territories of academic ideas and cultures, Becher is to be commended for his ambition; it is a quest that most academics have engaged or will engage with, predating Becher and preceding Becher. He displayed reflexivity and humility in his honest admission of limitations, for example, acknowledging that readers of drafts of Chapter 6 expressed concerns that he had nothing to say about the careers of women academics. Similarly the book concludes with a research methods section entitled 'Unfinished Business', again candidly acknowledging that this was a work-in-progress. Nevertheless, Messer-Davidow (1992), in her critical review of the book remained unconvinced, even with the inclusion of Becher's caveats. She regarded Becher's internalist viewpoint and realist assumptions as limitations of his study of disciplinarity. Equally, she was not convinced by his dichotomizing of disciplines and essentializing of their knowledges as categorized by his hard/soft, pure/applied and convergent/divergent dualisms. Yet whilst sceptical of Becher's thesis, she offered an alternative non-realist way forward, proposing that

a social constructionist, by contrast, would ask how a particular discipline came to construct a knowledge termed 'hard' or 'soft' and also how it participated with other disciplines in constructing that distinction itself; a feminist would discover in these distinctions the gendering of knowledges and their production. (Messer-Davidow 1992, 680)

In subsequent sections of this review essay, we witness such emergent shifts influencing the dual territories of education studies and organization studies.

Whilst the next section of this review features the second edition of Becher's landmark text, at this point debates about the territorial nature of the field of organization studies at this time need to be surveyed as they form the context of interpretation for his studies. In Becher's mapping of academic ideas and cultures, we are offered an explanation of the origins of contemporary organization studies controversies. The unified science aspirations for the natural sciences encouraged by responses to Kuhn's (1962) writings were mirrored in expectations about how the study of organization and management would develop. Whitley (1984, 2000) in his studies of the development of management knowledge highlighted a privileging of science, tracing the origins of the goal of an integrated, coherent and relevant 'science of management' back to the halcyon days of the 1950s. White and Jacques (1995) similarly highlighted the explicit goal that modernist scientific inquiry would create homogeneous, interlocking subsystems of knowledge describing all of reality within a single system of knowing. Hassard, Kelemen, and Wolfram Cox (2008) cite Cole's (1983) 'hierarchy of sciences' when critically challenging common academic assumptions that the natural sciences offer a model of scientific progress that social science should seek to emulate. However, Whitley found that management studies did *not* integrate around common theoretical goals and research skills, but instead developed into multiple sub-fields with differing goals, problems and research approaches, a development similar to the field of organization studies with its many constituent and respected sub-fields. The convergence envisaged within management and organization science was never realized and instead we witnessed divergence as many fields and sub-fields developed and continue to develop (see McKinley, Mone, and Moon 1999 who reached similar conclusions in their account of the development of schools of thought in organization theory).

Whilst acceptance of divergence rather than convergence became the norm for organization studies, debates in the late 1970s were still framed in terms of paradigms, influenced by Kuhn's (1962) argument that paradigms provided scientists not only with a map, but also provided directions essential for map-making. Whilst the extremely well-cited *Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis* (Burrell and Morgan 1979) has received both bouquets and brickbats (see Deetz 1996; Shepherd and Challenger 2013 for an overview) since its publication over 30 years ago, the book made a significant contribution to understanding the territorial nature of organization studies without adopting the territorial label.

Burrell and Morgan (1979) differentiated between the sociology of regulation and the sociology of radical change on one continuum, and between research interests focused on either the individual's subjective experiences or the hard objective realities of scientific research on a second transecting continuum. They (1979) explained competing philosophical assumptions in terms of four polarized dimensions of debate; ontological, epistemological, human nature and methodological. Philosophical assumptions were acknowledged as underpinning their four identified paradigms of functionalism, interpretivism, radical humanism and radical structuralism. Burrell and Morgan's (1979) framework has never been updated, which may explain Grey's (2000) criticism that such perspectives as poststructuralism, postmodernism and feminism are continually neglected by reproductions of this analysis (indeed, in 1979 there was no work on postmodernism or poststructuralism in organization studies, and little feminism – indeed Burrell himself went on to pioneer interventions in these areas).

Landscapes, tribal territories and academic cultures

The second edition of *Academic Tribes and Territories: Intellectual Enquiry and the Cultures of Disciplines* published in 2001 was co-authored with Paul Trowler who extended the original research. Becher and Trowler (2001, 23) reaffirmed their central concern as being with ‘... the relationship between the distinctive cultures within academic communities – academic tribes – and academic ideas – the territories across which they range’. Becher and Trowler (2001, 58) argued that the language and literature of disciplinary groups played an important role in establishing cultural identity as ‘it seems natural enough to think of knowledge and its properties and relationships in terms of landscapes, and to saturate epistemological discussion with spatial metaphors: fields and frontiers, pioneering, exploration, false trails, charts and landmarks’.

They (2001, 36) identified four major knowledge and disciplinary groupings: *Hard Pure* – pure sciences (e.g. physics), *Soft Pure* – humanities (e.g. history), *Hard Applied* – technologies (e.g. mechanical engineering) and *Soft Applied* – applied social science (e.g. education). These groupings allowed them to make distinctions between knowledge domains, characteristics in the objects of enquiry, the nature of knowledge growth, the relationship between the researcher and knowledge, the enquiry procedures, the extent of truth claims and criteria for making them and the results of research. However, the authors candidly conceded such depictions were closer to a painting in rough outline rather than a fully formed faithful likeness. Becher and Trowler cited economics as an illustration of a discipline which crossed the hard, soft, pure and applied boundaries. In their interviews with practicing academics they identified variations in people-to-problem ratios (the number of different problems people were working upon). For example, amongst physicists they found a large number of people working on a small number of problems.

Their use of spatial metaphors also led them to contrast urban and rural ways of life. In urban specialisms academics worked closely upon a narrow range of related problems, whereas within rural specialisms academics were far more dispersed working upon a broad range of problems. They cited physics as a highly convergent discipline with respondents commenting upon an overriding sense of collective kinship, mutual interests, shared intellectual style, consensus around profound simplicities and a quasi-religious belief in the unity of nature. In contrast, sociology, mechanical engineering, modern languages, geography and pharmacy were cited as being divergent disciplines in terms of how research was conducted. The four dimensions which comprise the cognitive and social realms are depicted in Figure 1.

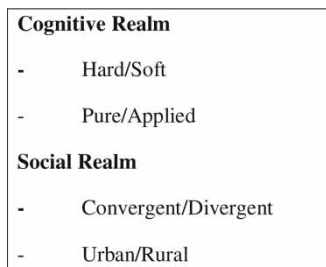


Figure 1. Knowledge forms and communities dimensions (Becher and Trowler, 2001).

Trowler's contribution to the second edition was evident in a number of ways. In the second edition, a critical narrative becomes more evident with for example, Becher and Trowler (2001) noting the painful impact of managerialism upon academic communities, although, this may equally be explained in terms of deteriorating employment relations within higher education. Morris (2003, 567) in his review highlighted the pessimistic tone of this book and the other books that he reviewed about changing communities in academia at this time. But, he also reminds us that this was a time of '... increased staff numbers, heightened student participation and improved educational opportunities, as well as, an expansion in research capability and activity'.

In their discussion of academic careers, sections on women's academic careers and race and ethnicity are now included. Also, greater attention to micro-social processes and localized meaning systems, as well as engagement with discourse is evident (see Trowler 2001). Trowler, who had previously worked at a former polytechnic, presented a case study of NewU, which may have been seeking to balance the elite university emphasis of the first edition. However, for Morris (2003) this was little more than tokenism, the book remaining a study almost exclusively of elite institutions, with the authors themselves drawn from such institutions.

Clegg's (2012) recent conceptualization of higher education research as a field offers comparisons of Becher and Trowler's (2001) analysis with the conceptualizations of fields by Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992), Bernstein (2000) and Wenger (2000). Clegg (2012) highlights Becher and Trowler's (2001, xiv) unfortunate reference to 'lower status institutions and disciplines' in echoing Morris' concerns about the elite emphasis of their study, as well as Coles' (1983) 'hierarchy of the sciences'. She remains sceptical that the book advances enquiry into the intellectual status of a field, instead regarding its strength as offering rich and descriptive practitioner insights. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) in their analysis shift the emphasis away from relations between agents towards objective positions and structuring within a field and Bernstein (2000) is regarded by Clegg as more effectively acknowledging the complexity of fields in his contrasting of regions with disciplinary singulars. Wenger's (2000) paper in *Organization* is also favourably cited, depicting communities of practice as 'social containers' with members joined together through 'joint enterprise', 'mutuality' and a 'shared repertoire of communal resources'. This more flexible typology appears more applicable to the organization studies focus of this review.

We can now turn to discuss the territorial nature of organization studies at the time of the publication of Becher and Trowler (2001). Deetz's (1996) rethinking of Burrell and Morgan (1979) offered an important milestone in terms of developments in debates about the territorial nature of organization studies. Deetz acknowledged that the four paradigm grid that Burrell and Morgan promoted had been embraced by alternative scholars as an asylum from the more mainstream functionalist accounts of organization with the grid acknowledging the existence of different unitary communities within organization studies. However, Deetz argued persuasively that we needed to move away from the reification that the grid encouraged, as well as getting beyond the resulting debates about paradigm in/commensurability. Deetz with his interest as a communication scholar in how the linguistic turn in modern philosophy informed organization studies proposed the following dimensions. Research orientation differences could be contrasted in terms of 'local/emergent' and 'elite/a priori' and in terms of their promotion of 'dissensus' and 'consensus'. Deetz favoured moving away conceptually and empirically from paradigms towards discourses; highlighting the discourses of normative studies, interpretive studies, critical studies and dialogic studies.

At this time Hassard and Kelemen (2002) were also questioning the utility of mapping organization studies territories in terms of paradigms as the field moved forward and reflexive understandings of ‘knowledge’ became more sophisticated. Their response to the ‘paradigms debate’ in organizational analysis was classified through their taxonomy of five main camps of knowledge production and consumption: non-consumers, integrationists, protectionists, pluralists and postmodernists, noting that ‘... Postmodernists typically rebuke the notion of paradigm as being fundamentally rooted in a production perspective on knowledge’ (Hassard, Kelemen, and Wolfram Cox 2008, 27).

Tribes and territories in the twenty-first century

The recent publication of *Tribes and Territories in the 21st century: Rethinking the Significance of Disciplines in Higher Education* (Trowler, Saunders, and Bamber 2012) offers a timely opportunity to rethink and reappraise the spatial metaphors of Becher (1989) and Becher and Trowler (2001). Paul Trowler, now along with Murray Saunders and Veronica Bamber as co-editors brought together 19 scholars from across the world unified by their theoretical stance of *social practice theory*. Twenty-three years have passed since the publication of the first book and with the death of Tony Becher the sad passage of time is also reflected in the introductory chapter. Performativity in students and among academics is now regarded as the main driver of education, solving problems (usually identified by business) through short-term networks of specialists, rather than the more critical drivers of the 60s and 70s (Trowler 2012).

This edited reader is divided up into four parts signposting the interests of the contributors and key themes of the book. The first part entitled ‘Theorising (Inter-) Disciplinary and Social Practices’ contains two chapters by Paul Trowler. In this first part studying disciplines is now problematized with the essentialism of Becher’s original 1989 study acknowledged. Klein’s (2000) belief in interdisciplinarity is favoured in which interdisciplinarity is understood either as a methodological approach, a process, a way of thinking, a philosophy or an ideology. The contributors favour a social-constructionist position in acknowledging that academics share and develop narratives and that multiple and contrasting narratives can exist within a discipline, compatible with how Messer-Davidow (1992) believed the analysis of academic practice needed to develop.

The first two chapters in part one explain that the universities that had originally engaged Becher (1989) were now very different institutions. Incorporation into universities of practice-based fields, the casualization of the workforce, staff working on portfolios of short-term projects, more detailed person specifications for academic posts and an increase in the diverse range of support staff (Whitchurch 2010) were all acknowledged. Also taken into account was Scott’s (2006) summary of changes in academic practice which included: massification of research, scholarship and teaching; separation of teaching and research and universities becoming increasingly complex with bifurcating missions. The second chapter is devoted to outlining social practice theory, the theoretical stance unifying all the contributors. Key characteristics envisaged within the social practice approach to understanding universities and change are summarized in Figure 2.

The second part entitled ‘Disciplinary Differences and Research Practices’ comprises four chapters. Trowler (2012) identifies the following themes emerging from these diverse chapters. The first question addressed is how salient are *disciplines* as

1. People as carriers of practices with analysis focusing upon practices not individuals.
2. People in universities, departments and work groups engage in clusters of practices at different levels and in different locales.
3. Human agents use artefacts and tools which influence social reality in different ways.
4. Discursive practices and the social construction of reality work together.
5. People and things operate to shape and reshape context and each other.
6. History and narratives about history significantly influence social life in the present.
7. Special features in different institutions mean that change initiatives will be received, understood and implemented in ways which are, partly at least unique.
8. Knowledge and interpretations of imperatives and their implications help reconstruct new configurations of 'repertoires' or practices.
9. Practices are conditioned by the operation of power, located in structures and positions.

Figure 2. A social practice approach to understanding universities and change (based upon Trowler, Saunders and Bamber 2012, 32–34).

an organizing device in research practices today? Different contributors adopt different positions with even interdisciplinarity potentially regarded as serving capitalist interests when compared with the territorial boundaries offered by traditional notions of disciplines. The second theme relates to differences in *educational ideology*. The third theme is the influence of *regulatory frameworks* such as the UK Research Excellence Framework closely related to the fourth theme – the impact of the *financial context*. The final theme relates to *identity*, as if disciplines are becoming less significant what are the implications for professional identities inextricably associated with disciplines? Spurling's (2012, 84) chapter develops this fifth theme, offering a rich insight into academic identity from one of her interview subjects.

The book I just published was written in a hurry because we were told to write stuff. I wanted to get promoted and I knew to do that I needed to write a book. So I did, and I got promoted, but now I feel that I've sold my soul away ... it became more and more instrumental as it went on.

In Manathunga and Brew's chapter (2012) the colonialist critique of the earlier books surfaces with notions about knowledge also undergoing radical change. They draw upon Southall (1996) and Smith (1999) in offering a post-colonial perspective which critiques the term 'tribe' as a pejorative classification entangled with colonialism and imperialism. In seeking to understand the spaces that define disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity they favour the metaphor of oceans, depicting knowledge domains in terms of fluidity, rather than being trapped in a version of the past reproduced by the metaphors of tribes and territories. They believe that envisaging disciplines as fluid offers a more sustainable ecology for academia.

The third part entitled 'Disciplinary Differences and Learning and Teaching Practices' comprises six chapters. Becher (1989) in his study of disciplines was, as previously noted, preoccupied with research communities within elite as opposed to

'lower status institutions'; in Becher and Trowler (2001) there was a move towards teaching and learning; and in this book learning and teaching feature prominently in discussions of interdisciplinarity. Bamber provides an introductory chapter for this part illustrating disciplinary norms being reworked and a concluding chapter looking at the four contributions from the perspective of social practice theory. The four chapters focus upon disciplinary differences in learning and teaching practices in very different contexts: Finnish nursing science, first year undergraduate sociology, disciplines and identities in higher education dance, drama and music, and mechanical engineering programmes.

The fourth part entitled 'Catalysts for Changing Disciplinary Practices' comprises eight chapters including Saunders' (2012) lead chapter and the editors' overall concluding chapter. The emphasis here shifts from the cultures that inhabit the disciplines towards emerging forces shaping academic practices. Two alternative metaphors are invoked for these forces: catalysts and drivers with the catalyst the richer and more favoured metaphor for forces shaping academic practices.

Practices have moved from being very loosely coupled to relatively tightly coupled to outside determinants in which external changes and imperatives increasingly exert influence on how academics behave and what they think is important. (Saunders 2012, 174)

Land (2012) highlights that academic groupings now require mutual deconstruction of each other's terminologies, although mutual discourses or frameworks remain in short supply. He concludes his chapter acknowledging that the current academic incentives that predispose academics to remain within their disciplinary territories may need to be rethought (see, e.g. our boundary defining 'units of analysis' within the Research Excellence Framework). Throughout the book illustrations of the lived experiences of academics are shared leading to the conclusion that 'being an effective academic in the twenty-first century means possessing repertoires of practice that balance the demands of multiple competing imperatives. These repertoires involve being environmentally savvy' (Trowler, Saunders, and Bamber 2012, 257). Academic knowledge producers of the earlier books now have to embrace the challenges of knowledge consumption.

Shepherd and Challenger (2013) in their recent review of management research revisited the accounts of paradigms that have featured in this review. They acknowledge Weick's (1999) call for the dissolution of the paradigm wars and Deetz (1996) and Hassard and Kelemen's (2002) encouragement to move away from paradigms towards discourses. However, their review confirms the continuing popularity of paradigm(s) in business and management research, the rejection of notions of paradigm incommensurability and the acknowledgement of the importance of rhetoric in the construction of knowledge claims and the justification of research practices.

Their findings with regard to paradigm incommensurability are pertinent to debates featured in this review. They neatly juxtapose Kuhn as offering an isomorphic and convergent view of the progression of science with Burrell and Morgan offering a divergent and synchronic perspective. Their review highlights three rhetorical strategies used in the context of the paradigm wars in arguments and counter arguments regarding incommensurability, integration, pluralism and dissolution. The first rhetorical strategy they identify is the construction of identities for individuals or groups attributing values, interests and assumptions which build or undermine credibility. This appears to have been the rhetorical strategy of the first two academic tribes and territories books. The other two rhetorical strategies identified are transferring agency to concepts

and constructing them as bringing about their own effects; and authors managing accountability for claims by producing them as quotations, positions, ideas or their own personal views. In *Tribes and Territories in the 21st Century: Rethinking the Significance of Disciplines in Higher Education*, the contributors had certainly moved away from the first rhetorical strategy, but given that the book was an edited reader with no single authorial voice it is difficult to identify a single rhetorical strategy dominating. Their position grounded in social practice theory would however suggest that a range of discursive practices was inevitably going to be employed.

Conclusions

Three influential books from education studies have been reviewed with specific reference to how they might inform our understanding of the territorial nature of organizational studies. Deetz's (1996) dissensus pole depicted struggle, conflict and tensions as the natural state of the field suggesting that territorial knowledge boundaries of organization studies will constantly be contested. The 23-year time horizon of the books reviewed here encourages an appreciation of the dynamic nature of these on-going debates. As Burrell (1997) warned, science places the perpetually dynamic into a field of stasis, which is evident within Becher (1989) and Becher and Trowler's (2001) hard/soft, pure/applied, convergent/divergent and urban/rural dimensions. Another advantage of the extended time horizon of this review is in countering a pragmatic concern that when we are immersed in the present it is hard to know what is fleeting, what is idiosyncratic, and what is part of more permanent and systemic change (Eccles and Nohria 1992).

In terms of the tribes and territories thesis, Becher's (1989) work was greeted as a landmark contribution for creatively challenging administrative notions of homogeneity amongst academic communities (Bayer 1991). However, by 2012 the idea of tribes and territories was believed to be trapping us in the past, with disciplines now widely regarded as more fluid (Manathunga and Brew 2012). In a similar way, Burrell and Morgan's (1979) four-paradigm grid was originally welcomed as giving legitimacy to the work of critical scholars who welcomed a means of differentiating themselves from functionalists (Burrell 1996). However, by 2012 the '... a priori existence of groups of researchers carrying around different meta-theoretical assumptions, values, goals, interests and so on in their heads, which produce paradigm specific language' (Shepherd and Challenger's 2013, 227) was seen to be problematic. The books reviewed here in combination make three distinct contributions to understanding the territorial nature of organization studies.

Engaging ethnographically with the cultures of organizational studies

The appeal of the tribes and territories metaphor may have been that academics desired a stable, fixed cultural identity, with a sense of belonging to a particular knowledge community (Manathunga and Brew 2012). Whilst this review has suggested that the boundaries of organization studies territories are constantly changing and contested, the desire to belong to a community of scholars endures – as is evident in the increasing and stabilizing number of scholarly conferences over the review period, including British Academy of Management, European Academy of Management, European Group for Organizational Studies and the Standing Conference on Organizational Symbolism (in Europe and Australia) and the formal rise of Critical Management Studies communities ('Crittlers') on both sides of the Atlantic. Paradigms, disciplines,

perspectives or methodologies are not so much the issue, as is the shared cultural identity that endures and evolves. In this review differences between, for example, Burrell and Morgan's (1979) paradigms and Deetz's (1996) discourses have been highlighted, yet similarities still endure in the different academic cultures towards which we gravitate. However, looser communities of practice (Wenger 2000) may be more applicable to current cultures of organization studies in terms of reflecting beliefs in interdisciplinarity, discourse and practice, which Becher's (1989) fixed and essentialist metaphors of tribes and territories failed to capture.

Competing beliefs in convergence and divergence inform our understanding of the territorial nature of organization studies

The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (Kuhn 1962) gave impetus to notions of paradigm shifts and by association impetus to subsequent hierarchical privileging of the natural sciences over the social sciences (Cole 1983). Against this backdrop, it was inevitable that early proponents of management and organization studies would aspire to developing a unified science. Whilst, Burrell and Morgan (1979) encouraged an appreciation of the social theories underpinning organizational analysis paradigms, belief in the power and legitimacy of a unified science was still apparent in the 1990s. Pfeffer (1993, 1997) fearing that paradigm plurality and critical debate would be the death knell of organizational analysis argued for consensus around a single dominant paradigm.

Against this contested background this review has focused upon the potential contribution of the education studies writings of Becher (1989), Becher and Trowler (2001) and Trowler, Saunders, and Bamber (2012) to debates about the territorial nature of organizational studies. In Figure 1, based upon the first two books four dimensions were highlighted; hard/soft, pure/applied, convergent/divergent and urban/rural. An implicit appeal within such an act of classification was to encourage movement towards the status of physics as an exemplary natural science – encouraging 'science envy'. In this way, the first two books did share the aspirations of Pfeffer (1993, 1997) and his commitment to a unified science achieved through the convergence of academic communities and ideas. Academics in Becher and Trowler's terminology were encouraged to move out of the countryside (rural) and into the cities (urban) in pursuit of social and political recognition, relevance and impact. In the third book (Trowler, Saunders, and Bamber 2012), the troubling colonialist language of 'tribes and territories' was finally challenged and critiqued. Whilst the academic desire for a fixed cultural identity and a sense of belonging have been acknowledged, analyses of the discourses and social practices of academics (Figure 2) are now viewed as being far more revealing of the contours and dynamics of a field. In this way, Becher and Trowler's own discourse begins retrospectively to become more suspect. For example, when Becher and Trowler (2001, 185) contrasted convergent and divergent communities they wrote 'divergent communities lack these features, tolerating a greater measure of intellectual deviance and in some cases degenerating into self-destructive disputation'. Tribes and territories with hindsight were not just about mapping a knowledge terrain; essentially conservative, they potentially policed subjects and stifled critical debate. A rereading of the postscript to Kuhn's (2012, 179) classic 1962 work from the perspective of power/knowledge is informative here as he notes 'a paradigm governs, in the first instance, not a subject matter, but rather a group of practitioners'. Becher and Becher and Trowler's writings explain and potentially encourage territorial convergence: in contrast the contributors to Trowler,

Saunders, and Bamber (2012) with their commitments to interdisciplinarity and social practice theory appear far more comfortable with divergence.

Hinings (2010) recent review of editorial statements in *Organization Studies* offers an overview of the state of the field. He identifies three interrelated themes: a desire and respect for diverse theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches; a concern with more than the organization per se and sustaining an interdisciplinary range. This overview would suggest that divergence remains the respected norm, certainly if gauged by papers published in *Organization Studies*.

Territorial developments within education studies inform understanding of the territorial nature of organization studies

It has been enlightening to understand territorial developments within organization studies through inquiries into the territorial nature of education studies. Clegg's (2012) conceptualizing of higher education research as a field demonstrated the appeal of such endeavours, but equally their contested nature. Becher as a Professor of Education examined what was happening beyond his own organization and beyond his own field of study. One of the original questions his 1989 book sought to answer was how do academics perceive themselves and colleagues in their own disciplines, and how do they rate those in other subjects? In this spirit, the 23-year time horizon featured in this review has witnessed developments within education studies sharing and furthering Becher's curiosity. It has been refreshing to cross over a perceived boundary into education studies and witness the development of another field in order to better understand the territorial nature of organization studies. Interdisciplinarity as an enduring and characteristic theme of organization studies (Hinings 2010) offers the passport for such excursions into other fields.

Becher (1989, 36) believed that spatial metaphors inform our understanding of knowledge, its properties and relationships '... fields and frontiers; pioneering, exploration, false trails; charts and landmarks'. This simple belief has also driven this review and its application to the territorial nature of organization studies. However, Becher (1989, 37) knew that 'any systematic questioning of the accepted disciplinary ideology will be seen as heresy and may be punished by expulsion...'. Becher's concerns about the contentious nature of discussions about territory within education were well founded (see earlier criticisms) and this review has highlighted parallel contentious territorial debates within organization studies. Shifts from paradigms to discourses, from essentialism to social constructionism and from focusing upon individual identities to people as carriers of practices may move us away from continued consideration of the territorial nature of organization studies. Or are these shifts just more sophisticated attempts to mark out our territory?

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