Stances, Paradigms, Personae

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Abstract
This paper argues that paradigmatic thinking in organization studies has failed to treat personhood as a central problematic within the research enterprise and that this oversight underlies a number of seemingly intractable field-level problems. We emphasise the centrality of personhood to the development and exercise of knowledge via three distinct but complementary projects: Ian Hunter's investigation into 'the moment of theory', Pierre Hadot's exposition of 'philosophy as a way of life', and Bas Van Fraassen's reconceptualization of philosophical positions as 'stances'. The notion of 'stance' provides a means for assimilating and differentiating otherwise distinct paradigms and thereby circumvents debates about paradigm incommensurability or the theory-practice dualism. Rather, the shift from 'paradigms' to 'stances' enables us to re-classify the field of organizational analysis according to new values-based criteria such that practical relevance and ethical seriousness can be restored.

Keywords: paradigms; personhood; knowledge; philosophy; organization;

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Burrell and Morgan's (1979) *Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis* sought to address the concentration of theory and research within the confines of a single orthodoxy, which, in taking for granted a narrow set of meta-theoretical assumptions, was militating against alternative modes of investigating organizational life. In the introduction to their book, they raise concern about "the way in which studies of organisational activities had generated mountains of theory and research which seemed to have no obvious links outside narrow discipline areas", and likewise express doubt about "the utility and validity of much contemporary theory and research in our subject" (ibid: ix). Their paradigm framework authorised a proliferation of research programmes that have, in the intervening years, successfully challenged this functionalist hegemony. And yet, we feel that scholarly production has, of late, moved from a healthy pluralism towards an unbridled permissiveness that is having a detrimental effect on sociological, and indeed *organizational* explanation, leading us to share their initial concerns, albeit for different reasons. Hassard and Cox (2013) have attributed this intellectual disordering to the decline in paradigm modelling ushered in by a 'post-paradigmatic' organization studies during the 1990s. They have therefore sought to develop Burrell and Morgan's (1979) original framework in order to schematise more contemporary developments in organization theory, especially post-structuralism. While we agree with their inclination to 'go against the intellectual grain' in calling for a restoration of order within the field, we disagree that the current problems confronting organizational analysis will be resolved by a simple extension or reassertion of paradigmatic classifications.

We are particularly concerned that much research nominally devoted to organizational analysis now has little regard for the field's core object, 'formal organization' (see e.g. du Gay & Vikkelsø, 2017; Lopdrup-Hjorth, 2015), and is likewise failing to address important economic, social and political challenges that are organizational in nature. We suggest that limiting the criteria by which we assess competing research paradigms to ontology, epistemology, methodology and assumptions concerning human nature is affiliated with the widespread disinterest in concrete and practical organizational concerns and the relative under-privileging of our ability to effectively intervene in organizational life. Rather, the tendency has been to maintain ultimate recourse to the development of theoretical edifices that are scantly appreciated outside of specific paradigmatic communities, let alone recognised as useful for addressing matters of public concern. It is our view that deficiencies of this sort represent an ethical lapse, and are particularly salient in an academic field whose founding and continued existence rests on its status as a practical science of organizing.

We argue that central to these field-level problems is an issue largely overlooked in the paradigm debate and in organization studies more broadly, namely the nature and role of intellectual conditioning in the cultivation of *personae*, which are oriented towards the achievement of particular purposes. The importance of personhood is alluded to in reading Kuhn's discussion of theory-choice (see especially *postscript*, Kuhn, 1970a; Kuhn, 1970b) and in

Burrell and Morgan's (1979) recognition that the difficulty called forth in moving between paradigms is akin to a religious conversion.[1] Yet, a canvas of the main citations populating the 'paradigm wars' in organization studies reveals that although personhood is a latent concern, it has not been isolated as a central problematic. For example, Hassard (1988) draws on the later Wittgenstein to argue that one can be *trained into* a new language game, thereby opening the possibility for paradigm mediation. Meanwhile, Jackson and Carter (1991), in their defence of paradigm incommensurability, assert identity-otherness as the relationship that orients one paradigm vis-à-vis the others, and in so doing also imply that identity is both what arises and what is at stake in inter-paradigmatic debate. Nonetheless, a proper treatment of personhood "involves a shift away from general social and cultural theoretical accounts concerning the formation of 'subjectivity' and 'identity' towards an understanding of the specific forms of 'personhood' that individuals acquire as a result of their immersion in, or subjection to, particular normative and technical regimes of conduct (du Gay, 2007: 11). Such an analysis is as relevant for studying organizational actors as it is for studying organizational researchers, in particular with respect to the latter's inculcation within particular paradigmatic, or otherwise defined, academic communities.

We seek to redress this oversight by emphasizing the centrality of personhood to the development and exercise of knowledge, via three distinct but complementary projects: Ian Hunter's investigation into 'the moment of theory', Pierre Hadot's exposition of 'philosophy as a way of life', and Bas van Fraassen's reconceptualization of philosophical positions as 'stances'. This trio of otherwise diverse scholars converge in their recognition that the formation of intellectual personae is fundamentally implicated in the production of knowledge. Each approach this insight in a unique way, but all call forth the need to consider not only the purposes toward which different personae have been cultivated and may be appropriately exercised, but also the values, attitudes, and commitments – 'stance' – that animate their respective approaches to inquiry. This imbues the research enterprise with an ethical gravity that is missing in contemporary discussions of paradigm and multi-paradigm research. The shift to 'stances' likewise provides a basis upon which to identify and prioritise alternative criteria for the evaluation of research that will re-classify the field in new ways, such that the stubborn disciplinary and institutional difficulties that have been plaguing organizational research may finally be addressed head on.

Ian Hunter: 'The moment of theory'

Intellectual historian Ian Hunter's (2014) analysis of the 1960s 'theory boom' in the humanities and social sciences, or what he terms 'the moment of theory', draws our attention to the fundamental role of intellectual conditioning that underlies and is essential to the performance

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[1] Burrell and Morgan (1979: 35-36) do not adhere to Kuhn's (1970b) original paradigm concept, but neither account treats personhood adequately.

of any paradigm or theoretical programme. As part of his investigation into the history of theory, Hunter (2006: 79-80) argues that although the inclination is to locate the propensity for 'theory' by excavating history until one arrives at unifying conditions of possibility, most likely assumed to be associated with the object of study itself, on the contrary, such an investigation must begin with an acknowledgment of the "irresolvable conflict" between "rival accounts of such conditions". As he argues, one can see the emergence of theory in the humanities and the social sciences of the 1960s take form in "an array of associated but rivalrous vernaculars" addressing divergent objects but nonetheless sharing in a "certain kind of philosophical interrogation" of positive knowledge. His concern is not to validate or undermine the truth or falsity of any theory in particular, but rather to demonstrate that the proliferation of 'theory' and 'theorising' as a primary mode of academic activity has less to do with specific claims to truth than with a kind of metaphysical disposition that can be subject to empirical intellectual enquiry.

Hunter's analysis therefore suggests that we conceive of the moment of theory not as a necessary or inevitable result of the investigation of particular objects, but rather as a learned form of intellectual conditioning, that once historicised, demonstrates itself as one amongst many in the history of philosophy. The moment of theory signals the reappearance of a certain kind of European university metaphysics[2] (*Schulmetaphysik*, or scholasticism) within the Anglo-American academy, which, "far from representing a novel and progressive transformation of moribund disciplines", is rather indicative of "a mode of transforming the disciplines through the self-transformation of their practitioners" (Hunter, 2007: 6). Therefore, Hunter's (ibid: p. 16) immediate concern is "not with political and institutional history but with the history of the will to theorise in a certain way – to cultivate a certain intellectual persona – which in turn has institutional and political conditions and consequences".

Through a series of articles, Hunter's (2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2014) intellectual history explicates the manner in which both structuralism and post-structuralism offer their practitioners a "means for escaping from the surface of things" (Hunter, 2007: 13), the former through recovering 'deep-structures' and the latter through attuning oneself to the appearance of the 'other' via abstention from the empirical world. In particular, whereas neo-Kantian structuralism relies upon "a style of metaphysical argument in which the supposed indeterminacy of empirical experience is used to motivate the necessary presence of a priori structures in the subject of this experience" (Hunter, 2006: 89), Husserlian transcendental phenomenology urges practitioners to suspend their commitment to existing practical or experiential categories, and by extension to formal and positive knowledges, in order to become open to breakthrough phenomena of various kinds (Hunter, 2007). This act of

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[2] Here 'metaphysics' is used historically, not philosophically. The concern is not with doctrines of being as such, but with the teaching of doctrines of being and the formation of personae who accede to such doctrines (see Hunter, 2007: 16). Taken philosophically, the moment of theory signals a *particular form* of abstract metaphysics that comes to displace a philological or erudite conception of knowledge.

voluntaristic self-problematisation, termed the transcendental reduction or *epoché*, epitomizes the persona of the post-structural theorist.

The transcendental reduction can be recognized primarily as an exercise in philosophical self-questioning and self-transformation (Hunter, 2006, 2007) aimed at the modification of the subject, in this case inducing epistemological anxiety and a scepticism towards positive knowledge (Hunter, 2008). Such an act is eminently historical, the Husserlian rendition being merely one in a series of exercises on the self – referred to collectively as "spiritual exercises" by Hadot (1995), or as acts of "transformation of the self by the self" by Foucault (2006: 16) – which can be identified in the history of philosophising. Seen in this way, the *epoché* is not only "something performed rather than investigated" (Hunter, 2006: 85) but can be viewed as a pedagogic practice through which students undergo a certain kind of intellectual formation. In this regard, "[t]he only thing that sets the transcendental reduction and the 'phenomenological attitude' apart in this field [of the humanities] is the particular means it chooses to lead its inductees across the threshold of self-questioning and self-transformation and the particular intellectual persona that it seeks to cultivate on the basis of this regimen" (ibid: 86).

The intellectual comportment indicated by the moment of theory maintains a certain recognizable posture of critique with respect to empiricist and positive sciences constituted as 'natural' or 'factual'. For any critical scholar within Organization Studies this learned scepticism should be thoroughly recognizable. This makes sense once we can see that Husserlian phenomenology, Heideggerian hermeneutics, structuralism and post-structuralism broadly, including semiotics and deconstruction, as well as the work of Habermas and the Frankfurt School are all similarly and fundamentally enabled by this intellectual deportment (see Hunter, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2014). This is notable since together these theoretical 'schools' form much of the critical inspiration from which contemporary organization studies and its cognates (e.g. Critical Management Studies, and Practice Studies) draw (Fournier & Grey, 2000), but is also pertinent for the present discussion because these theoretical affiliations are ascribed to *different* paradigms (see Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Hassard & Cox, 2013).

Hunter's analysis sits alongside a number of recent studies in the history and philosophy of science that deploy empirical historiography and contextual intellectual history in order to treat the disciplines as objects of empirical investigation. Understood as an "array of historically formed intellectual comportments grounded in regional 'subcultures' or ways of intellectual life" (Hunter, 2014: 32) that train and equip scientific conduct, this work collectively demonstrates how different orientations within science – *paradigms* in the parlance of Burrell and Morgan (1979) – have recourse to different historically formed ways of conducting oneself. Hunter (2014: 12) thereby demonstrates that social-scientific knowledge "depends in varying ways on ethos", since the production and exercise of distinct theoretical programmes relies on

the cultivation of particular intellectual personae within specific regimes of training and conduct. This view incites us to consider not only what constellation of beliefs and practices – ontological, epistemological, methodological, and those concerning human nature, though there could be others – are associated with different paradigms, but crucially what array of personae are called forth through the exercise of historic and contemporary 'organization' theories, and what purposes or ends they are fashioned to serve.

Pierre Hadot: Philosophy as a 'way of life'

While foregrounding comportment serves an analytical purpose in Hunter's investigation of the history of theory, Pierre Hadot (1995) provides an account of how the modern conception of philosophy, focused on metaphysical discourse in the pursuit of reason as an 'end it itself', came to displace the earlier conception of philosophy as 'a way of life', wherein the cultivation of intellectual personae through the practice of 'spiritual exercises' was the explicit and primary function of philosophy. Hadot's exegesis informs us that the development of an abstract theoretical enterprise considered detached from the formation and exercise of the comportment of its practitioners is both historically specific, and necessarily limited in its capacity to inform conduct outside of the modern university. This is fundamentally troublesome for a field struggling to uphold its practical remit. We find the earlier conception elaborated by Hadot (1995; see also 2002, 2009) more suitable for properly recognising the role of personhood in the development and exercise of organizational knowledge, irrespective of paradigmatic affiliation.

In the Greco-Roman world, philosophy was a way of life, which entailed not only a specific type of moral conduct, but a "mode of existing-in-the-world, which had to be practiced at each instant… the goal of which was to transform the whole of the individual's life" (Hadot, 1995: 265). Hadot continues:

> In order better to understand in what way ancient philosophy could be a way of life, it is perhaps necessary to have recourse to the distinction proposed by the Stoics, between discourse about philosophy and philosophy itself. For the Stoics, the parts of philosophy – physics, ethics, and logic – were not, in fact, parts of philosophy itself, but rather parts of philosophical discourse. By this they meant that when it comes to teaching philosophy, it is necessary to set forth a theory of logic, a theory of physics, and a theory of ethics. The exigencies of discourse, both logical and pedagogical, require that these distinctions be made. But philosophy itself – that is, the philosophical way of life – is no longer a theory divided into parts, but a unitary act, which consists in living logic, physics, and ethics. In this case, we no longer study logical theory – that is, the theory of speaking and thinking well – we simply think and speak well. We no longer engage in theory about the physical world, but we contemplate the cosmos. We no longer theorize about moral action, but we act in a correct and just way. Discourse about philosophy is not the same thing as philosophy (ibid: 266-267).

Here, philosophical discourse exists for and acts in the service of a philosophical life. The task of theory is to furnish a way of being-in-the-world. If we maintain organization as a practical science, this means that theory production is only significant insofar as it is able to produce a

formative effect in those who practice organization. Since principles underdetermine conduct, this entails much more than the application of well-studied theorems to a set of identifiable problems. Philosophising as lived action is "a continuous act, permanent and identical with the life itself" (ibid: 268) which has to be renewed through the practice of 'spiritual exercises'. These "philosophical thought-exercises" or "inner activities of the thought and the will" (ibid: 128), nurture a certain inner attitude or comportment which coheres with the philosophical school to which one subscribes.

The specific practices that compose the exercises of any given school or at any given time vary widely, both in tone and content. However, underlying this diversity is a unity in the "means employed and in the ends pursued" (ibid: 101-102). *All* philosophical schools in antiquity made use of exercises that were "practical, required training, education and effort", and which were oriented towards self-formation, requiring "a shift in one's entire comportment, attitude, stance" (du Gay, 2015: 6), or persona. In other words, philosophy as a way of life was a cultural-pedagogical programme directed towards a wide array of practical ends. Seen in this light, "[p]hilosophy then appears in its original aspect: not as a theoretical construct but as a method for training people to live and to look at the world in a new way" (Hadot, 1995: 107).[3] This is in stark contrast to the modern understanding of philosophy as, above all, philosophical discourse, produced and largely contained within the walls of modern universities.[4] The substantial casualty of this transformation is the erosion of any sense in which the purpose of theory is to support the formation of a comportment (of its producers/practitioners) that must be continually exercised and performed as a 'way of life' in and through a duty to the collective community. Rather, theory production becomes stripped of its ethical and practical import, and the researcher is likewise 'let off the hook' from interrogating their own commitments and conduct as they relate to scholarly activity and engagement with matters of public concern.

Although a foray into ancient philosophy may seem far removed from contemporary organization studies, we believe that the present *absence* of a concern with the cultivation of intellectual personae in organizational scholarship is centrally implicated in the paradigm debate, as well as a number of other struggles affecting organizational research and teaching. Hunter and Hadot each urge us to recognise personhood as central to social-scientific paradigms, and insist that the exercise of different paradigmatic positions is *not* akin to picking a recipe off a shelf or putting on a new pair of perspectival glasses. Rather, comporting oneself in line with a certain philosophical or theoretical school – practicing it as a 'vocation' (Weber, 1948) – requires commitment, exercise and discipline, and also calls for ethical and intellectual

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[3] One may question the relevance of a notion of philosophy formed in relation to an archaic cosmology. Hadot (2009: 68-69) implores us to "distinguish from the ideology that justified the attitude in the past, the concrete attitude that can be actualized". This requires disentangling the historical ideology from the 'stance'.

[4] Hadot and Hunter have each studied the genealogy of this shift, with the former focusing on developments from antiquity through to medieval scholasticism, and the latter contrasting renaissance humanism with Kantian and Post-Kantian metaphysical philosophy.

seriousness.[5] Moreover, it demands an interest in our ability to speak publicly to economic, social, and political problems that are organizational in nature, rather than remain contented with the development of theory as an end-in-itself. We note that disregard for person formation is equally problematic for Business School teaching. An understanding of the personae brought into being through particular technical and intellectual forms of training, and the ends they are designed to pursue, is directly related to our (in)capacity to inculcate prudence, responsibility, and sound ethical judgement in our students as we prepare them to enter organizational life. One need not recount the plethora of corporate scandals – big and small – to indicate the importance and magnitude of this oversight.

Bas van Fraassen: Philosophical positions as 'stances'

Understanding the formation of personae is crucial for grasping the importance of 'stance', that is, a way of conceiving diverse intellectual positions not on the basis of their 'factual' doctrines or theses, but rather as sharing in a set of commitments, attitudes, or approaches that furnish ways of engaging in inquiry. The move to 'stances' is significant, but not particularly contentious once one accepts that science (in the Weberian sense of the 'disciplined pursuit of knowledge') is a value- and attitude-driven enterprise. One is in "false consciousness" when seeing it otherwise, potentially denigrating science "into an arid play of mere forms" (van Fraassen, 2002: 17) devoid of intelligibility in-the-world. On the contrary, a stance orients our understanding of context-dependent claims and the domains of discourse within which they occur (see ibid: 24).

This section introduces 'stance' as a purposeful designation.[6] We follow philosopher of science Bas van Fraassen, who in *The Empirical Stance* (2002), explores the viability of a renewed empiricism that stands opposed to the metaphysical philosophy to which both Hunter and Hadot refer. Central to van Fraassen's work is his reconceptualization of philosophical positions not as dogmas, doctrines, ideologies or theses derived from specific beliefs, but rather as 'stances'. By 'stance' he means an "attitude, commitment, approach, a cluster of such – possibly including some propositional attitudes such as beliefs as well… but [which] cannot be simply equated with having beliefs or making assertions about what there is" (ibid: 47-48). Although doctrinal beliefs change over time, stances enable us to identify otherwise diverse traditions or developments within a tradition, as sharing in a particular constellation of attitudes, commitments, and modes of engagement, albeit to different degrees. Following

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[5] As opposed to careerism and the glorification of novelty for its own sake.
[6] 'Stance' is different but not inconsistent with elements of Kuhn's (1970b) 'disciplinary matrix' (see also Masterman (1970) on the 'sociological' meaning of Kuhn's paradigm concept). Burrell and Morgan (1979: 36) footnote 'forms of life' as related but not synonymous to 'paradigms'. We use 'stance' to indicate the comported nature of value-based differences in scientific inquiry, as distinct from a scientific community cohered around factually-derived beliefs or 'exemplars'. We hope that 'stance' will invite the excavation of previously unarticulated attitudes that may assimilate and differentiate the work of various historic and contemporary organizational thinkers subscribed to different paradigms.

Hunter, we might say that although the work comprising the 'moment of theory' shares neither an object nor a vernacular, it can be said to consist in a common stance. Likewise, van Fraassen's example – empiricism – occupies several positions in the history of philosophy which nonetheless cohere around a set of commitments, including but not exclusively, a strong dissatisfaction with explanation by postulate, and an insistence on a model of inquiry that respects contrary factual claims as rivals worthy of consideration (ibid: 37). Seen in this way, empiricism may be characterised as a posture against "a certain systematizing and theorizing tendency in philosophy: a recurrent rebellion against the metaphysicians" (ibid: 36). Conceived as a stance, the empiricist's attitude towards scientific inquiry rather than their beliefs in and about science become the crucial characteristic. As such, a stance can withstand even dramatic changes in propositional belief instigated by empirical investigation.

Seen as an attitude or outlook, consisting in a set of commitments, virtues and habits, which we learn and continuously exercise, a stance furnishes a comportment, or a 'way of life' that provides guidelines for action. It is the actions, practices, and exercises enacted in-the-world that condition and in turn are dictated by different personae. As Hunter (2006) reminds us, we should not expect different stances to neatly correspond to the pursuit of specific objects. Once elements of personal decision, values, and volition are given a legitimate place in the epistemic enterprise, we can recognise a degree of discretion over the stance one adopts, even when addressed towards the same nominal object. This is because "holding a stance is a function of one's values as opposed to one's factual beliefs, and though values may be well- or ill-advised, they are not true or false… one commits to a stance, or adopts it – they are possible means to realms of possible facts" (Chakravartty, 2007: 187). As such, "a stance is not something truth-apt, since it's not a claim about the world, but a certain attitude of investigation" (Rowbottom & Bueno, 2011: 8). Weber (1948) alludes to something similar when he insists that the vocation of science is animated by competing attitudes that cannot be reconciled or valued by the scientific enterprise itself. Mills (1959: 79) elevates the ability to identify, acknowledge, and reflect upon such attitudes and value judgements to an essential criterion for good social science.

Acknowledging that stances are not rationally compelled, van Fraassen (2007) advocates 'stance voluntarism', which views epistemology in a pragmatist vein. Voluntarist epistemologies reject the abstract theory format as a view of what knowledge and opinion are like, and instead give a central role to volition. The most faithful exemplars of a voluntarist epistemology are to be found in classic American Pragmatism, whereby "desires for truth and avoidance of error are contextually qualified by our interests and values" (van Fraassen, 2002: 90). In pursuing empirical inquiry, individually and collectively, the ambition is "to discourse illuminatingly [about this volitional, intentional activity] without writing a theory about it, at least in the narrow sense of 'theory'… [we want to] investigate the tactics and strategies appropriate to certain criteria of evaluation, explicated or made precise in certain ways" (ibid: 82). This is

because the evaluation of any epistemic pursuit depends on "its defining aim, its telos. Only if we can answer what we are after in this enterprise of knowledge can we even begin to determine how much of it hinges on our doing something well or badly and how much on contingent fortune" (ibid: 82-83). We therefore hope to make clear that although a stance cannot be true or false, it can most certainly be more or less appropriate for addressing a set of concerns. It is on this basis that different stances can be compared and assessed, for instance, in terms of the sort of understanding they offer, by their consequences, or the sorts of problems they generate or are able to solve.

Conclusion

This tripartite argument has asserted the crucial and unavoidable role of personhood within the research enterprise. First, by drawing attention to the cultivation of intellectual personae in and through the exercise of different theoretical programmes, we showed that modes of theorising are not inherent to the object at hand, but rather indicative of historically specific comportments fashioned towards distinct purposes. Second, by differentiating philosophy as an abstract theoretical pursuit from a 'way of life', we highlighted the manner in which adherents of the former are led to abstain from their practical and public responsibilities, thereby limiting our collective capacity to address concrete ethical problems. Third, by introducing the notion of stance as a means for identifying the attitudes, values and commitments that animate different approaches to inquiry, we foregrounded the ethical and volitional dimensions of academic knowledge production, and introduced a new basis upon which to evaluate contributions to research within our field.

Whereas the paradigm concept as imagined by Burrell and Morgan (1979) and re-asserted by Hassard and Cox (2013) maintain ontology, epistemology, methodology and beliefs about human nature as the fixed criteria by which intellectual developments should be classified, the shift to stances incites us to consider other value-based criteria – for instance, disposition towards the object 'organization', primary interest in formal versus social organization, tolerance for metaphysical speculation, extent to which theory is valued as an end-in-itself, the ability for research outcomes to effectively intervene in organizational life – that would provide a very different 'map' of the field. It is our contention that such an exercise would expose the fact that the majority of stances within contemporary organization studies do not value organization as a 'way of life' and likewise are not fit for a 'practically relevant' study of organization. In other words, the incapacity to intervene in organizational matters is inherent to the dominant persona within organization studies – one that is fashioned primarily towards the assembly of theoretical edifices. For example, in their recent book *For Formal Organization*, du Gay and Vikkelsø (2017) have pinpointed a shared disposition or as they term it, a 'metaphysical stance', that privileges the practices of theory construction, theory application and metaphysical speculation, often at the expense of addressing concrete problems. This

stance is evident in 'popular', 'mainstream' and 'critical' strands of organizational research, therefore transcending a typical paradigmatic classification. Recognizing this previously elusive stance upends the way in which we are able to diagnose and bypass the apparent impasse concerning the development of a more relevant organization studies because it gives us a new way of identifying the purposes towards which particular stances and their associated personae are ultimately directed, and those which they are not fit to address. Having identified the source of inertia, we can begin to cultivate an alternative stance for organization studies that is more appropriate for the problems at hand, and which will restore practical relevance and ethical seriousness to the research enterprise.

The contribution of our paper is twofold. Firstly, we have demonstrated that understanding the historical particularity of specific personae, and the capacities that they cultivate, is crucial for understanding the purposes they do or do not uphold, and consequently, for evaluating different approaches to inquiry on the basis of their competence in addressing problems and consequences in-the-world. By constituting the *personae* of managers and organizational researchers and their/our associated modes of conduct as legitimate sites of analysis, such an approach allows us to understand the techniques of inquiry through which organization is presently pursued and the associated 'ways of life' that are called into being. This is as relevant to understanding the researcher who exercises a particular paradigm or commits to a specific a 'stance', as it is to understanding the practitioners for whom organization is a 'vocation', or indeed for imagining new techniques with which to inculcate our students with a more ethical and responsible sense of managerial judgement. Secondly, we have demonstrated that the commensurate shift in register from the analysis of theoretical 'paradigms' to one of 'stances', enables us to avoid debates over incommensurability or the theory-practice dualism, for instance, and rather more distinctively, predisposes us to excavate the intellectual attitudes that suggest a commonality across otherwise disparate, often antagonistic, literatures. Stances not only reassert the importance of personhood in the research enterprise, but also assimilate and differentiate otherwise distinct paradigms by re-classifying the field according to new value-based criteria addressed more directly towards resolving disciplinary and institutional problems that have, until now, proven intractable.

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