



## Kollegiala mikrokulturer inom högre utbildning

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Two things are more important than anything for  
academic identities (Henkel, 2005):

### *Academic freedom* *The discipline*

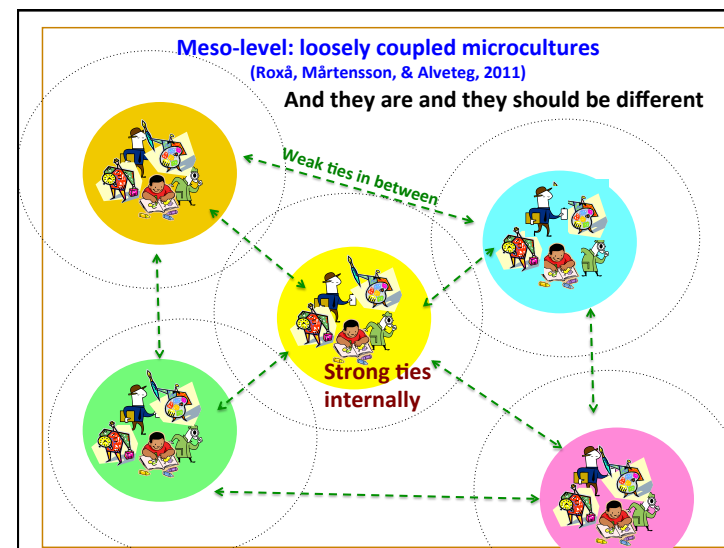
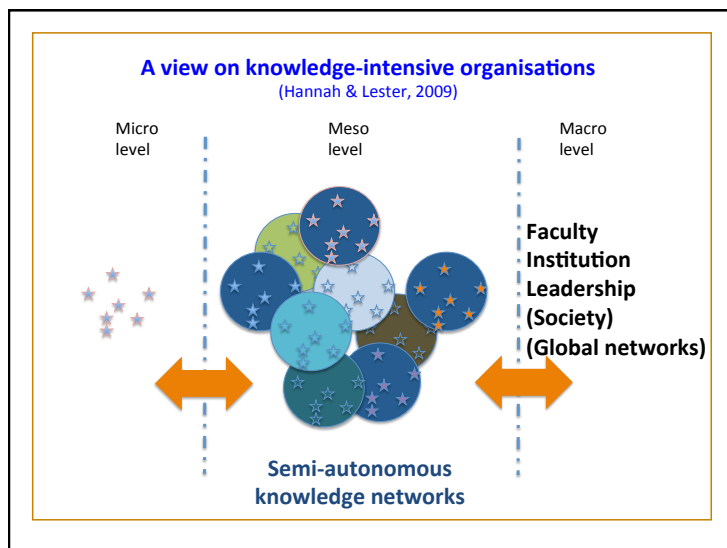
#### *Academic freedom*

rest in a continuum between loyalty and autonomy

Being loyal towards  
colleagues & institution

Being  
autonomous

(Åkerlind & Kayrooz, 2003; Mårtensson, Roxå, & Olsson, 2011)



## If that is true, how can we compare microcultures?



### Fallacies:

*Bureaucracy:* establish the same norms as the best practice

*Market:* adapt through competition (It limits the variation)

**Functioning microcultures** are different because they adapt to different environments and tasks

That is: their normative structures *should* vary considerably

### Conclusion:

With the support of Ostrom's research, microcultures can be compared through the study of the function of norms (**design principles**)

Allowing for variation and sophistication in relation to local needs.

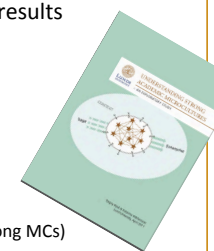
## A study of academic microcultures (MCs) (5 strong and 4 developing)

### Selection based on

- Interviews (23) with leaders (deans, HoDs) and student-union representatives. (Could not point out strong MCs.)
- Course/program-evaluations, Quality audit results
- Local knowledge
- Three faculty contexts; same university

### Method:

- ✧ Ethnographically inspired
- ✧ Interviews with local leaders and academic staff (35)
- ✧ Focus-group interviews with (25) students (in the 5 strong MCs)



(Roxå & Mårtensson, 2011/2013)

## Four types of microcultures

### Trust

### Shared responsibility

*Experience of a shared responsibility*  
Do things together  
Negotiate what to do  
Are impacted by what the others do

*No experience of a shared responsibility*  
Do things in parallel  
No negotiation  
No interference from the others

*High level of trust*  
High significance  
Strong ties  
Sense of belonging

### The Commons

Share a concern for a practice. Things are being negotiated in relation to the shared concern. An undertow of consensus. 'We're in this together.'

### The Club

Members are together without sharing a concern. Descriptions from practice are not challenged. Friendship and consensus is highest priority. 'We'll always support each other.'

*Low level of trust*  
Low significance  
Weak ties  
Sense of coexistence

### The Market

Share a concern for a practice. Ideas compete. Things are negotiated with an undertow of conflict. Relationships are formalised through contracts. 'I look after myself.'

### The Square

Members share a space with strangers with no collective concern. Things are negotiated only when necessary. Members enter into relationships and leave them continuously. 'Who are these people?'

(Roxå & Mårtensson, accepted)

## Microcultures can be described and related to each other through Ostrom's (1990) design principles – following Roxå & Mårtensson (2014)

1. Clearly defined boundaries and memberships.
2. Rules [norms] in use are well matched to local needs
3. Members can usually participate in modifying the rules.
4. Members right to devise their own rules is respected by external authorities.
5. An established system for self-monitoring members' behaviour exists.
6. A graduated system of sanctions is available.
7. Access to low-cost conflict-resolution mechanisms
8. Commons are organised in a nested structure with multiple layers of activities

