

CALL FOR PAPERS

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Management Research

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THEORIZING MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION STUDIES FROM THE MARGINS

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Special issue guest editors:

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Over the last two decades, the field of management and organization studies (MOS) has successfully trespassed over several boundaries, enlarged its scope considerably, and invaded a number of territories all over the world. Many topics from most corners of the world have been “captured” by the field of MOS.

Organizations and management are a necessity of modernity. However, they are not a formal vessel receiving whatever content and molding it to a necessary form. There is a dialectical relationship between dominant orthodoxies, substantive experiences, and cultural, political, and economic specificities. The contemporaneous portfolio of possibilities in terms of organizations illustrates these dialectics, formally registered as public organizations, network organizations, virtual organizations, flexible organizations, hierarchical organizations, humane organizations, international organizations, learning organizations, public organizations, postmodern organizations, fordist organizations, modern organizations, and so forth. Correspondingly, the formal portfolio of possibilities in terms of management is registered in discourses of international management, global management, transnational management, network management, public management, critical management, people management, project management, and so forth.

As the central systems never stop growing and novelties never stop emerging, it is no longer clear where the margins are located. Formal registrations tend to flow from the center to the periphery in models of institutional isomorphism. The flows from the margins to the center are considerably less. Little room is left for the otherness of practices of organiza-

tion and management that might inform modernization, based on indigenous or otherwise unincorporated knowledge. Those located in the margins were often forcefully included in spite of their traditional wishes, beliefs, or convictions, but they also resist experimenting locally with alternate forms of organization.

The extraordinary power and reach achieved by the organization and management of production, dissemination, and consumption of academic knowledge in MOS over the last years suggest that such systematic process of identifying and building different types of organizations where they did not exist and of conceiving and proposing different possibilities of management for these organizations is far from over.

Within an era of globalization, a key problem is that the corresponding academic knowledge in MOS remains flowing massively from the center—especially (in) the United States and Europe—toward the margins on a global scale. As a result of the successful organization of an extraordinary number of academic conferences, forums, and publications, we have witnessed in the last years the constitution, legitimation, and diffusion of a large number of paradigms, epistemological orientations, and ontological debates. The extent to which such a successful project of modernization is beneficial to those who are located in the margins is not yet clear, although there are some recent important events that suggest that modern models of modernization may not be beneficial either to those located in their center on Wall Street or those on their margins, with Iceland being the most spectacular example.

The spread of the neo-liberal project and the corresponding universalization/colonization of practices has advanced at

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the expense of those from the margins (whatever meaning one might use to describe margins). For those who are at the margins, straying outside the boundaries policed from the central institutions of the World Bank, IMF, WTO, and so on, is difficult. Globally incorporated, they will be “captured,” with exclusion becoming its own form of punishment, as in the case of states such as Cuba or of communities such as the Zapatistas. It seems to be necessary to review or transform such an extraordinary process of modernization by jumping into it from the margins no matter how contradictory this might be.

In this call for papers, we wish to interrupt, interrogate, review, analyze, and transform this extraordinary and problematic process by inviting marginal reconsideration, theorization, and transcendence of Management and Organization Studies. We would like to receive contributions that challenge both the systematic conversion of “nonorganization” and “nonmanagement” into “organization” and “management” as much as of “nonmodern” into “modern” (or “postmodern”). Also, we welcome proposals that recognize emerging/marginalized experiences of management and organization and their associated noninstitutionalized knowledge.

We understand that such a challenging perspective should be accompanied by critical questions such as (but not limited to)

- How do management and organization theorists think about the “margins” and about what is viewed as “marginal”?
- How do the dialectics of center and periphery influence the theories of management and organization?
- Why has the marginal “base of the pyramid” remained outside the focus of MOS for such a long period of time?
- Why there is little space for alterity in MOS?
- How do marginal ideas operate to encourage new practices in marginal realities?
- How do marginal ideas and practices travel to the center?
- How marginal is Iberoamerica and other postcolonial spaces as a theory-producing and theory-distributing region?
- Why has the “natural” environment remained marginalized in MOS?
- To what extent do postcolonial theoretical perspectives clash or embrace perspectives from other regions?
- To what extent is it possible that common perspectives might develop across the countries/regions that make up spaces such as “Iberoamerica”?
- To what extent is there political and economic support for theoretical perspectives from Iberoamerica from international institutions and national governments in the region?

Submission Instructions

Papers (maximum 8,000 words, A4 paper, single spaced, 12 point font) should be submitted to

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Organizers

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Eduardo Ibarra-Colado: Head of the Department of Institutional Studies at the Autonomous Metropolitan University, Campus Cuajimalpa. He has a Ph.D. in sociology from Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. He is National Researcher of the Mexican National System of Researchers, and regular member of the Mexican Academy of Sciences. He has published a large number of contributions in the fields of Organization Studies and Higher Education Studies in Mexico and Internationally. Recent publications include “Mexico’s *Management & Organization Studies* Challenges in the 21st Century” (*Management Research*, 2006), “Organization Studies and Epistemic Coloniality in Latin America: Thinking Otherness from the Margins” (*Organization*, 2006), “The Ethics of Managerial Subjectivity” (coauthored, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 2006), and *The Ethics of Globalization* (Routledge, 2006).

Miguel Pina e Cunha: Professor of organization theory and behavior at the Faculdade de Economia, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, in Lisboa, Portugal. He has a Ph.D. from Tilburg University. His research has mainly been focused on the margins of organizational theorizing: improvisation, bricolage, serendipity, positive organizing, peripheral vision, kafkaesque bureaucracies, and other equally marginal topics.

Stewart Clegg: Research professor at the University of Technology, Sydney, Australia. He has a Ph.D. in management from Bradford University. His research has been multifaceted but at its core retains a deep fascination with the ways of power as they find expression in the practices of management and organizations.