Organizational activities have today become increasingly complex, fragmented and dispersed throughout both the temporal and spatial spectrum. The actors involved in these activities often move quickly from one geographic spot to another. In this context, research design, particularly when it relates to longitudinal research with reliance on ethnographic approaches, has to be reconsidered (Mahadevan, 2012; Rasche and Chia, 2009; Van Maanen, 2011; Yanow, 2009; Czarniawska, 2007). How can action be effectively observed when it gets dispersed in time and space, and if it arises unexpectedly? How is it possible to reconcile the need to "be there", for a period long enough to assess the practices, norms and values of a community (Watson, 2011), with the practical difficulties encountered when collecting data in these new settings? Moreover, how can multiple levels of mediated artefacts be used to explore over time the multiple ways of organizing in a contemporary economy?

A considerable body of ethnography-based research has until now been associated with extended immersion in a single bound community, face-to-face interactions and interviews (Yanow, 2009; 2012). While such efforts have produced a substantial amount of organizational knowledge Down (2012), we can actually identify a preference for renewing the design of such methodological approaches. As the contemporary environment becomes more fragmented, complex and uncertain, the field of ethnography proves to be less confined to bound, single-site studies, as new settings, methods and techniques are gaining prominence (Van Maanen, 2011, Brannan, Rowe & Worthington, 2012).

Some ethnographers tend to work with settings beyond the scope of standard organizations, for the purpose of investigating new organizational phenomena or showcasing classical phenomena. For example, Benoit-Barné and Cooren (2009) followed a "Médecins Sans Frontières" (Doctors without Borders) team in the Congo in 2005, while Rix-Lièvre and
Lièvre (2010) conducted studies during a series of polar expeditions. Other researchers have focused on complex phenomena and pursued "multi-site" evaluations (Marcus, 1998; Nippert-Eng, 1995; Ramshaw, 2012). Whether the object is a jazz orchestra, artists' "squats", a sports team or the boundaries existing between home and work, researchers are required to develop innovative methods and techniques in order to practice ethnography and, in so doing, some have gone on to propose new forms of organizational ethnography (Van Maanen, 2006).

This special issue will explore a number of these new forms of organizational ethnography. More specifically, we are interested in ethnographic experiences in unusual settings and pluralistic contexts, such as artistic scenes, non-profit organizations, virtual communities, sports teams, and so on. We are also intent on examining new ways of collecting and analyzing ethnographic data. Some ethnographic researchers have suggested updating their research methodology through the use of writings, photographs, films and even the latest social media, like Skype and e-mail exchanges; still others have proposed developing multi-sited ethnography in claiming that ethnography is not restricted to case studies. New forms of organizational ethnography must also reassess the myriad ways of presenting and disseminating research results in academia and/or various forums.

As part of this special issue, we are interested in exploring such new forms of organizational ethnography and invite contributions on the following topics, which by no means are meant to be exhaustive:

- New forms of OE
  - New settings, new actors, new topics ( tools, bodies, texts, etc.)
  - New design, data collection and analysis
  - Implications for the research process
- Contributions
  - How can new forms of ethnography contribute to contemporary organizational studies?
  - What are the interests and limitations of these new forms of ethnography?
- Challenges
  - Redesign of access to this field
  - Roles of emotion and power in OT
  - New ways of presenting and disseminating results
  - Ethical decisions
  - Self-reflexivity of researchers

References


