Call for papers – Special Issue for


Deadline: February 28, 2016

Guest Editors:
Patrizia Zanoni, Hasselt University, Belgium Patrizia.Zanoni@uhasselt.be
Alessia Contu, University of Massachusetts Boston, USA Alessia.Contu@umb.edu
Raza Mir, William Paterson University, USA MirR@wpunj.edu
Stephen Healy, University of Western Sydney, Australia Stephen.Healy@gmail.com

Overview

Organisation and Management theorists have long offered incisive critiques of manifestations of power as they take form in capitalist economies. Drawing upon diverse epistemological traditions such as feminist, Marxist, post-colonialist and psychoanalytic approaches many have analyzed how capitalist organizing shapes contemporary subjectivities and reproduces processes of exploitation in continuously changing, and often highly effective modes. This work is often fairly peripheral to the broader social and political debate, yet critiques of neo-liberal capitalism, while never completely absent, have increased globally after the latest financial crisis. Critical engagements have grown (also in the West) becoming more urgent and widespread in the media and the broader cultural and political domains reaching and involving millions. In 2011 the Occupy Movement with the slogan ‘we are the 99%’ shifted the attention of the mass and social media to the inequalities and injustice generated by capitalism. In 2013 Pope Frances attacked directly trickle-down economics and its unsubstantiated promise that growth will inevitably bring greater justice and inclusiveness. For good measure he gave the world a new commandment: say ‘thou shalt not’ to an economy of exclusion and inequality. In 2014 Piketty’s best-selling book ‘Capital in the Twenty First Century’ showed, with elegant statistical precision, that indeed the current socio-economic organization favors rising inequality. Some contingent examples have emerged in the recent past, though time will be needed to evaluate their ultimate effectiveness. For example, in January 2015 Syriza, a coalition of the radical left, won the elections in Greece with an anti-austerity programme, and in the December 2015 Spanish political elections chances are that Podemos, another left party, might become a governing party, too. These are examples of critique today performing alternatives to neo-liberal capitalism.

In political studies and heterodox economics many diverse theorists are elaborating, and calling for, the actualization of radical democratic alternatives that practice a generative, ethical, post capitalocentric economy (e.g. Castoriadis, 2005; Latouche, 2009; Kelly, 2002,2013; GibsonGraham, 1996a; 2003; 2006; Wolff, 2012). The work of post-Marxist feminist theorists GibsonGraham (1996a; 2008) has been particularly incisive in theorizing the re-politicization and resocialization of the economy to question capitalism totalitarian reach and saturation. They invite the study and appreciation of how to engage and perform new economic worlds by starting with an ontology of economic difference. Diverse economies, they argue, are not only possible but also richly present and growing in significance globally. Diverse economies exhibit values, mode of exchanges, work, ownerships and practices that do not follow the logic of capitalist accumulation and profit maximization concentrated in private ends solely for private purposes. Studying, proposing and theorizing such alternatives is not an easy feat, particularly if one is to avoid romanticization and stereotyping and aims to maintain a vigilant eye by ascertaining in what ways post-capitalist alternatives do increase liberty, equality and individual and collective welfare.

We call on theorists and researchers to join this urgent conversation on the disharmony, incoherence and contradictions of capitalism. The study and practice of alternatives is performative in that it fosters our understanding of the (im)potentialities of non-capitalistic alternatives within and beyond capitalism (Gibson-Graham, 1996b; Sharpe, 2014). Organisation theorists are in a privileged position to offer detailed and careful studies of such alternatives for a number of reasons. Firstly, historically there has been an interest in alternatives (e.g. Burawoy 2000; Fournier, 2008) and this work, if still on the fringes, is lately becoming more evident (Atzeni, 2012; Parker et al 2014; Cheney at al 2014). Secondly, organizations theorists have been trained to appreciate the subtleties and contradictions of different practices and decision making and communication structures, technical and cultural forms of control, and the complex power dynamics and forms of legitimation and authority in getting things done through organized work. And, thirdly, because an organizational angle on alternative economies is potentially central to their transformative success, since organizing fundamentally structures the production, circulation and distribution of economic and social value.
Invitation to Authors

We seek papers that develop innovative insights in the way alternative economies produce noncapitalistic modes of value allocation, how they foster non-capitalistic subjectivities, and are themselves variously related to capitalism. We are particularly interested in studies that focus on the practices involved in constituting and reproducing such organisational alternatives for example in engendering and experiencing new forms of ownerships, funding, decision-making, leadership and communication. We are also interested in work that makes us attentive to how organizing practices engender alternative economic subjectivities that are less gripped by the dominant capitalist imaginary structuring identity, desire and enjoyment (Glynos, 2010, 2011), and that go beyond ‘decaf resistance’ (Contu, 2008) and neo-normative control (Fleming and Sturdy, 2009). We welcome research exploring these subjectivities and their relations to other understandings of work, value, the individual and the collective, equality, etc., as well as the collective and individual desires on which they rest. We invite studies that enable us to think the unthinkable, by showing possibilities of real, radical and emancipatory shift in capitalism. Moreover, we are interested in analyses of the multiple tensions inherent to enacting alternative economic practices in a broader context where capitalist accumulation, profit maximization, growing commodification and marketization remain the dominant logics. Such studies might favor a better understanding of how the conditions of possibility can be created for alternative practices to flourish. Submissions should illuminate how the shifts in the meaning of work, value, solidarity, responsibility, equality, etc. enable the creation, appropriation and redistribution of symbolic and/or psychic and/or material resources in non-capitalistic ways, and by doing so redefine power relations between subjects in novel ways. In order not to preclude the possibility of learning from alternative praxis, wherever it happens, we welcome alternative organizing categories, subjectivities and practices, independent on the formal status of the organization where they occur (e.g. co-operatives, associations, informal organizations, family businesses, SMEs, public organizations, multinationals, the household…).

Topics

Our ultimate aim, with this special issue, is to draw attention to the heterogeneity of organizational and economic practices and to re-conceptualize and represent the economy as an intrinsically heterogeneous space (Healy, 2009), the site where post-capitalistic politics and radical democratic change occur. To summarize papers submitted to this special issue might consider, but should not be limited to, the following issues:

- Which organizational practices stretch dominant categories, practices, and subjectivities towards new organizational forms, performing an alternative imaginary?
- How do these practices change the way value is produced, appropriated and distributed?
- Which alternative understandings of work are generated by alternative economic practices? Which alternative representations of humans and non-humans (animals, nature)? With which inclusionary and exclusionary effects?
- What role do accounting languages and devices play in alternative economic practices?
- How do alternative economic practices rearticulate the nexus between production and consumption?
- How do alternative economic practices reconfigure value chains for instance by decommoditizing goods and restoring mutual recognition and responsibility between actors?
- How do societal and economic institutional arrangements enable or hinder the emergence and flourishing of alternative economic practices?
- What is the role of the state and civil society in the displacement of alternative economies in order to enhance capitalistic accumulation (e.g. by dispossession)?
- How can capitalistic practices of value production, distribution and appropriation be transformed into/be co-opted by non-capitalistic ones?
- How should we critically assess alternative economies, if we re-conceptualize potential as an open-ended process of becoming rather than as a process of realizing a pre-given noncapitalistic possibility?
- To what extent are non-capitalist practices of value production, distribution and appropriation emancipatory? How do we avoid dismissing the experiences of alternative economic forms as ‘false consciousness’ or, conversely, how do we avoid mystifying them?
- What does embracing this potentiality-focused perspective entails in terms of our own research praxis?

References


Guest Editor Biographies

Patrizia Zanoni is a Professor at the Faculty of Business and Economics at Hasselt University, Belgium.

Raza Mir is a Professor of Management at William Paterson University, USA.

Stephen Healy is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Culture and Society, University of Western Sydney.

Alessia Contu is the Chair of the Department of Management and Marketing at the University of Massachusetts at Boston, USA.

Submissions

Papers may be submitted electronically from 30 November 2015 till 28 February 2016 to SAGETrack at http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/organization

Papers should be no more than 8000 words, excluding references, and will be blind reviewed following the journal’s standard review process. Manuscripts should be prepared according to the guidelines published in Organization and on the journal’s website: http://www.sagepub.com/journals/Journal200981/manuscriptSubmission.

For further information, please contact one of the guest editors:

Patrizia Zanoni, Hasselt University, Belgium Patrizia.Zanoni@uhasselt.be

Alessia Contu, University of Massachusetts, Boston Alessia.Contu@umb.edu

Raza Mir, William Paterson University, USA MirR@wpunj.edu

Stephen Healy, University of Western Sydney, Australia Stephen.Healy@gmail.com