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EDITORIAL

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Maria José Tonelli
Editora-chefe



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RESEARCH DURING THE TIME OF THE PANDEMIC

While producing this issue of *RAE*, we were surprised by the intense transformation caused by the spread of COVID-19 worldwide. It is impossible not to remember the film *Melancholia* by Lars Von Trier. At this moment (I am writing in the first week of April in the city of São Paulo), it is not possible to predict the direction the pandemic will take in Brazil. As with academic journals, our articles and forums, organized in six annual editions, are planned well in advance. Our issues for the year 2020 are all underway, as well as some editions of 2021. In this sense, the number of submissions may decrease next year due to the pandemic. However, we expect that scientific production in business administration will grow creatively in the coming decades. Although we do not have a crystal ball to predict the changes that may occur in practice and research, the ongoing debate suggests several profound changes in several areas. These areas, which make business administration complex in global times, include the following: organizational behavior, wherein leaders and engagement are essential in times of crises; work organization; social media marketing and retail, as the online world has boosted consumption through deliveries; humanitarian logistics, which had already developed after Hurricane Katrina; behavioral finance; companies and human rights; business social impact; sustainability in a broad sense along with the UN Sustainable Development Goals; health management; and public-private partnership. It looks like the 21st century has really begun now. Will globalization be rethought? Will our travel around the planet decrease? Will education in business schools be rethought? Although this is a distressing situation, we have many questions and no answers about how the situation will evolve. However, scientific research is being strengthened, which encourages all of us—professors and researchers. The post-pandemic world will be rebuilt, and several initiatives are being taken in this direction: Scientific journals in several fields have already published calls for papers that address this new scenario. National and international research centers are partnering to develop joint projects. Funding agencies are providing financial resources for projects. Thus, although people are going through a harrowing period, creative possibilities have opened up for research on new forms of management.

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Focusing on the field of Organizational Studies, the forum presented in this issue comes in handy. How can we integrate our studies with those of colleagues in Latin America? Can and should we rethink the principles that have guided the research so far? The president of Fapesp, Carlos Henrique de Brito Cruz (*), states that the internationalization of research is fundamental for the development of science. This issue, dedicated to Latin America, questions the principles that guided the growth of Organizational Studies in this region. It includes the following works: "Organizational Studies in Latin America: Towards a research agenda," by Diego Szlechter, Leonardo Solarte Pazos, Juliana Cristina Teixeira, Jorge Feregrino, Pablo Isla Madariaga, and Rafael Alcadipani; "To think from Latin America in dialogue with the organization of decolonial social struggles: Exploring possibilities," by Maria Ceci Misoczky and Guilherme Dornelas Camara; "Organizational Studies in Latin America: back to the rough ground!" by Diego René Gonzales-Miranda; "Experiencing Agreste: Trials for research about people and business in a peripheral context," by Marcio Sá; "No politics, no society: Questioning the justification of entrepreneurship in Chilean public policies," by Oriana Bernasconi and Juan Felipe Espinosa-Cristia; "*Tupi, or not Tupi that is the question*": Amerindian perspectivism and Organizational Studies," by Sergio Eduardo de Pinho Velho Wanderley and Ana Paula Medeiros Bauer; and "Organizing the Organizational Studies in Chile: History of the creation of the Minga Group," by Gregorio Perez-Arrau, Alvaro Espejo, Marcela Mandiola, Nicolás Ríos González, and Juan Pablo Toro.

This issue is concluded by the essay, "Where did we come from, where are we going? A collective self-criticism and desirable horizons for Organizational Studies in Brazil," by Marcio Sá, Rafael Alcadipani, Ariston Azevedo, Ariádne Scalfoni Rigo, and Luiz Alex Silva Saraiva. These authors also address the theme of this forum.

Happy reading and take care!

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(*) Professor Carlos Henrique de Brito Cruz, President of Fapesp, leaves office in April 2020. Interview granted to the *Folha de S.Paulo* newspaper on April 7, 2020. Site accessed on April 7, 2020:

https://www1.folha.uol.com.br/equilibrioesaude/2020/04/vamos-sofrer-menos-se-nos-basearmos-na-ciencia-mas-ela-nao-faz-magica-diz-brito-cruz.shtml

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ORGANIZATIONAL STUDIES IN LATIN AMERICA: TOWARD AN INVESTIGATION AGENDA

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This paper theoretically reflects on the direction of Organizational Studies (OS) in Latin America and presents an investigation agenda to meet the needs and particularities of our region. In this regard, the need to avoid importation of conceptual models and solve the historical tension in the Administration field has emerged in the Western world. The paradigmatic break that arose in OS during the 1960s had its regional correlate in the last years. This led to a real investigation program that shows promising signs of vitality in Latin-American OS and a strong process of institutionalization of their own paradigm.

INTRODUCTION

As a consequence of the discovery of the Americas, stories, practices, and existing knowledge on the continent were, to a large extent, ignored and even attacked by European conquerors. Thus, it could be argued that the Americas are the manifestation of a European colonial power that, since the great discoveries, expanded their territories and their "modernization" across the world. With the "discovery," the American continent began administration from the perspective of the European metropolis and for their own benefit. The process of colonization disrupted the local knowledge and transformed the surroundings of these societies. Their "native" organizations of the time were subject to and controlled by European metropolises (Mignolo, 2008). From this moment on, a vision of inferiority and underdevelopment of local societies has emerged (Aparicio, Silverman & Aparicio 1997). Discursive forms of control have been systematically produced as an effective means of subjugating native peoples. These practices denied them the right to enjoy the same living conditions that those social groups in power enjoyed. All this occurred in a discursive context of civilizing significance.

In this context, the idea of Latin America emerges as a discursive construction, apparently inferior to Europe and its colonies. Thus, the difficulty associated with production of knowledge originating in central countries is inherent. Even though there are proposals for adaptation of knowledge generated in Europe, the United States, and Latin-American countries (for example, Ramos, 1958), it is difficult to defend decolonization epistemology (Mignolo, 2011).

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Thus, to think about the evolution of Organizational Studies (hereinafter OS) in Latin America requires understanding of the emergence and development of capitalism in Latin America against Europe and the United States, places where the management of the so-called OS was originally conceptualized.

This is necessary because in contrast to cattle-raising from Europe and North America, Latin American industrial capitalism does not arise as an endogenous response to liberal political and economic breaks. It is imported and implanted in a context that is not precisely liberal, at a time when agricultural and cattle-raising political and economic models prevailed, with a deep-rooted oligarchic system and conducted by traditional landowner elites.

Under this incipient Latin-American capitalism, the organizations that arise are a special hybrid, rife with paradoxes and contradictions, many of which are radically opposed to the rational conceptions of liberalism regarding politics, economy, science, and society. Hybridization forms the foundation of these organizations, which in practice mixes religion (Catholic), state, and market. Nevertheless, the concepts of individual and liberal freedom operate simultaneously with the intense collectivist tradition of dependence on conservative elites.

These organizations, therefore, did not work as mechanisms for economic structuring under market laws, of mass production for the consumer population, but were developed as an extension of the elites' power under the state's tutelage, developing client-based relations to maintain monopolies and market privileges. Likewise, the management applies traditional a hierarchy and direction mechanisms, extracted from the landowner practice between village chiefs and peasants, mixed with managerial elements.

Under these criteria, rather than organizations focused on efficiency and productivity, organizations show profiles of strong bureaucratic and client-based system. They are closer to state models than to modern industrial organizations that began consolidation after the war in North America or in Europe after the Second Industrial Revolution.

This initial context serves to centralize the idea that the analysis approach of organizations in Latin America, at least in the beginning, shows an object of study that is not seen in Europe or North America. Although the development of "Organizational Studies" in the region is effectively without intellectual significance (Ibarra-Colado, 2008), the occupations explored are focused on the reproduction of Western managerial models. The intention is to ensure their implementation in Latin American organizations. In contrast, there is a focus on more critical developments that reflect recurring approaches from political and sociological theory, with emphasis on social and economic systems, without insisting on systematic observation methods.

Our intention is to construct an agenda for OS investigation, considering the signs of structural change observed in our region, where the Ibarra-Colado thesis was alive before popular demonstrations occurred in Ecuador, Bolivia, Chile, and Colombia, in a context of crisis in state organizations, with a focus on the role that market organizations play.

PRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE ON ORGANIZATIONS IN LATIN AMERICA: GENESIS AND EXPLANATORY FACTORS FOR ITS COURSE

We can analyze the knowledge production around the organizational phenomenon according to different structural causes that affected the investigation agenda of different countries in the region. One of the factors that help explain this phenomenon is the center–periphery dynamics (Engwall, 1996; Gantman, 1994, 2002; Ibarra-Colado, 2007). The geopolitical position of Latin America against economically developed countries of the Western world implied that the genesis of organizational knowledge centered almost exclusively on the orthodox aspects of Administration. This is because the primary concern of firms established in the region's countries, through the lens of proto-industrialization processes, was the solution to issues regarding the adaptation of organizational management to local market regulations (Szlechter, 2013).

Thus, Latin-American "underdevelopment" can be explained by the public that utilized the administrative knowledge produced in university institutions: managers of large firms and the so-called management industry (Luci, 2016), including consultant companies. This resulted in development with limited autonomy and an inclination to satisfy companies' demands. A curious fact that illustrates this trend is the creation of Business Administration undergraduate courses in Argentinian universities in 1958, when the country was preparing to receive direct foreign investments in key sectors of the economy under the condition of incorporating local suppliers in the production process (Szlechter, 2013).

In short, the difficulties faced by OS in the region are due to the center–periphery dynamics that led to a lack of autonomy in local production, at least during the first half of the 20th century, which led to an almost undifferentiated use

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of classical and orthodox Administration, a tributary of Western management. Despite the existence of organizational forms in the region since early civilizations and the analyses on industrial organizations in Latin America since the 1920s (Hoyo, 1922; Palacios, 1922), we must question how consistently OS were developed in the region.

For Ibarra-Colado (2006b), OS lacked relevance in Latin America and their absence in the academy limited our understanding of organizations' problems and functionality in the region.

We can add the limitations to the organizations' own hegemonic sense that does not consider the organizational dimensions of social life (Carrieri, 2014), which are diverse and specific to Latin-America. Ibarra-Colado (2006b) indicated a trend in Latin American social thought that supported analysis from the general issues of Economy and Politics, to that focused on dependence and subordination of the region to central countries. Therefore, organizational knowledge developed in a subordinate context around the central countries (Ibarra-Colado, 2006a). It is evident that contexts very different from those of classical liberalism generated the processes of industrialization and organizational formalization in many Latin-American countries. These theorize and explain the birth of market and corporate organizations, including civil society organizations.

However, we cannot approach the production of academic knowledge in terms of structural determinants alone. There is also a sort of "agency capacity" of investigation centers in the region that assist in offering a more comprehensive perspective of this process. This is how, along with the contributions of structural analyses, constructivist visions can contribute to critical analysis on how OS developed in Latin America.

The reproduction of hegemonic design and organizational management forms had its main exponents in university think tanks and gurus of the management industry. This biased their view of market rationality to offer solutions to problems emerging in organizational life, both in private and public ambits, NGOs, and social and solidary economy. Ibarra-Colado (2006a) proposed an alternative view of the center–periphery dynamics to explain the conceptual direction of the "organization" concept in the region. Upon a process called "falsification" by the author, we can explain how organizational knowledge, from the centers of world economic power, was automatically sidelined in order to offer "prêt-à-porter" technical solutions to problems of the organizational world, disregarding social and political concerns.

The notion of "falsification" implies that the economic power asymmetry among developed and underdeveloped nations becomes invisible, since the recipe to deal with organizational weaknesses are approached exclusively from the perspective of ideal structural designs and efficient processes that improve productivity. Inside this phenomenon, production of academic literature and divulgation was used to explain frames that reproduced "hegemonic forms of knowledge, legitimate because of their so-called 'scientific validation'." (Ibarra-Colado, 2006a, p. 470). The main consequence of the lack of autonomous native perspective was the "weakening of the Latin American critical thought" (Ibarra-Colado, 2006a, p. 472).

We must also consider that this lack of autonomous native perspective involves the structure of those that have historically produced knowledge in the field of management in Latin America. In a macro analysis on the center–periphery relation, we consider geopolitically those that produce from a Latin American context. However, it is important to note that internally, those that theorize on management and OS in Latin America are groups integral to their country, since in socially unequal contexts they have always produced knowledge. While accessing Latin-American universities, they are groups with Eurocentric profiles, mostly male, not black, not indigenous, putting aside a peculiar dynamic of their own original contexts. Therefore, included in the Latin American context, hegemonies characteristic of the same logic that constituted Latin America as periphery reproduce. So, it is a world periphery that is also regional.

One example of this process is the importation of recipes on business management from countries central to world economic power which historically, did not consider the organizations of a Latin American social context. Likewise, they did not consider organizational and social minorities or management of diversity. The critical knowledge produced on OS on the theme, reflected in Latin American company practices, is based on the functionalist idea that diversity management is only considered a competitive advantage (Alves & Galeão-Silva, 2004) and not a bond between the company and its social context. This process contradicts the genesis of structural inequalities instituted in Latin American countries from the colonialist power dynamics. Thus, management practices destined to fight inequalities like gender, race, class, ethnic origin, and sexuality produce limited results.

ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT, AND THEIR TENSE RELATION WITH OSS

The persistence of views that emphasized technical aspects rather than wider social processes in the internal dynamics

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of different organizational configurations becomes clearer if the apparent scientific method is analyzed with an ideological concept (Gantman, 1994). In this regard, the "serpent's egg" of the dawn of theoretical developments of OS lies in certain management sciences and administration. Some authors have even indicated that there is scarce differentiation between the two subjects (Wood & Kelly, 1978). The literature has approached management problems with regard to ideology, as it helps build the social reality of market rationality. It is contradictory that this "spurious" origin of OS later constituted the reason for abandonment of classic postulates of Administration.

The ideological analysis of Administration has a long tradition (Bendix, 1966). Gantman (1994) states that implications of this bias are not limited to solving problems or prescription of action models. Add to that the discourse analyses of management, which enlightened the intention of creating a social reality whose material sustenance are in a "particular historical structure of social privilege" (p. 8). Thus, managerial ideologies achieved a legitimating effect while offering action courses to different organizational environments.

According to Ibarra-Colado (2006b), the limited differentiation between OS and Administration is due to an inability to provide clarity on the term "organization," a matter that still persists. The lack of historicization of this concept, along with the absence of situated analyses, helped build the capitalist mercantile rationality on the program planning of exclusive intelligibility when defining reference parameters of the organization. The abstract use of the term "organization" had an effect in its characterization as grey science or minor knowledge (Rose, 1993), since the fundamental function was to solve practical problems (offering "one best way"), rather than seeking some "truth." According to Ibarra-Colado (2006b, pp. 128–129), the ambiguity of the "organization" concept had two main effects. On one hand, it made possible the replacement of terms with strong negative connotations like corporation, monopoly, or bureaucracy. In this regard, the bad press of Latin American state machinery, characterized by deficiently meeting social demands and the democratic processes permanently ruined by military dictatorships, distinguished bureaucracy in terms of inefficacy, inefficiency and corruption. On the other hand, corporate action in the region, characterized by profusion of monopolies that hindered more harmonious capitalist development, generated distrust of the terms monopoly and corporation. That had a positive effect in the later development of OS in Latin America when, while producing a kind of paradigmatic break in Administration, there was an attempt to shed the label of servant, leading to a more autonomous deployment and with increased neutrality in the academic production, as will be seen later.

It is necessary to insist that the abstract and general use of the term organization helps explain the positivist origin of knowledge production on the organizational phenomenon (Ibarra-Colado, 2006b, pp. 128–129). That caused analyses of such different configurations as NGOs, hospitals, schools, sports associations, churches, or political parties fall under the same paradigm, making comparable realities of very different natures. The same goes for nontraditional organizations derived from survival strategies of socially disadvantaged groups in unequal contexts, like informal businesses (Barros & Carrieri, 2015), often located in public places. Thus, the approach of experts focused on proposing appropriate structural designs according to the ideal types originated in the rationality of private companies.

The positivist bias of the study of organizations had a considerable impact on the emergence of OSs. Many of its precursors left the Administration rows, which not only undermined its autonomy but also saw their theories represent "the institutionalization of successful solutions achieved while facing different problems in different ambits, like work, management, markets, technology, environment, politics, just to mention the most relevant" (Ibarra-Colado, 2006b, p. 135). The relevance given to the production of "recipes" limited autonomous discourse on the development of theories to denature management assumptions. The confusion involving Administration and OS led to indications of an apparent "intellectual schizophrenia" (Reed, 1985: 21, quoted by Ibarra-Colado, 2006b). On the basis of Reed (1985), Ibarra-Colado (2006b) suggests that OS are stuck in a permanent tension between the "normative order that prescribes organizational knowledge and the realities that deny them all the time" (p. 135). The schizophrenic character is based on, on one hand, the OS' intention of expressing conflict in the organizational social reality, and, on the other, intention to normatively prescribe the rules that channel such conflicts. In a sense, the accusation of Administration being more technical than science ended up replicating against the OSs.

In the Western world, the functionalist origin of OS has suffered a rupture since the 1960s. It is at this moment that this subject burst into the Latin American context (Ibarra-Colado, 2006b, p. 143). Transformations in the social reality that occurred in the USA, Europe, and Latin America highlighted a reconsideration of the object of study of OSs. The structuralist perspective of the organizational phenomenon had influenced the subject in the 1920s and 1960s. This implied that the chief concerns were the analysis

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of organizational structures in performative terms: that is, only according to the set purposes. This perspective enters a crisis after the boom of constructivism, hermeneutics, and radical humanism. Thus, the study of organizations shifted its view to social studies, meeting the social consequences of organizational life (Ibarra-Colado, 2006b). The organization conception of rule under the power of its leaders toward the consideration of social and economic conditions that pervade the organizational life. This implied a turning point for OSs, which became concerned with offering explanations to social phenomena inside organizations (Ibarra-Colado, 1990, p. 12). Let us analyze deeper this paradigmatic break.

THE PARADIGMATIC BREAKING OF OS AGAINST ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

The 1960s was a pivotal decade when the paths of Administration and OS started to diverge. The tense relation between the two resolved from the moment OS converted to the theoretical consciousness of Administration (Ibarra-Colado, 1990: 70). In a process of distancing from positivist postulates, OS discarded the insistence in each progress in the production of scientific knowledge that characterized the mainstream lines of Administration. The succession of discoveries of new "one best way" to manage organizations led to the blind belief in the development of increasingly more effective techniques to improve organizational performance.

During the 1960s, OS were able to undermine rationality as the ultimate assumption that formed the basis of Administration studies (Nogueira, 1993). Appealing to post-structuralist analyses, OS took their position from postures as performance was not part of their analysis. Authors like Fournier and Grey (2000) address anti-performative theses, indicating that classic administrative thought was based on the search for appropriate means to obtain efficiency and productivity. Instead, the OS are a subject with an inherent reflexive character, while questioning the epistemological and ontological assumptions of traditional Administration (Gantman, 2017, p. 6).

Currently, OS face the challenge of interpreting management as social practice, meeting the consequences of organizational design. If classic Administration coincided with bureaucratic and mercantile rationality, OS should incorporate different action grammars, like community and solidarity (Ibarra-Colado, 2006b). In other words, it is about seeking to study the organizational phenomenon and its social effects as well as social impacts on organizational life. We must study which were the main lines of questioning that emerged from the paradigmatic break of OS regarding Administration. Some of the lines traced in the region contemplate approximations inside the previously suggested point of view:

1. A perspective of normative cut focused on state models analyzed inside the classic Weberian bureaucratic line, which mixes elements of law and public administration.

2. A work line well explored about organizational themes linked to development, particularly in the ambit of international NGOs and state institutions. These works originate from the technical literature of international development organizations (NGOs) and multilateral organisms during the 1970s, as part of intervention processes and assistance to the region countries. These organizations were significant in many places given the volume of their resources and influence through their organizational management and the projects they carried out. Inside this theme, with distinct ideological orientations, we can place the organizational literature developed later by entities like CEPAL, oriented to the strengthening of local organizations and governments, with an economic focus. Likewise we can connect the literature of the New Public Management introduced by multilateral organisms and the academy as of the 1990s, focused on demonstrating the inefficiency of public organizations and the well-being model, and the need to re-orient them toward the models of efficiency and results promoted by neoliberal theories with state cuts. That included approaches that legitimated the new born concept of the third sector that claimed efficiency and promotion of society participation through the so-called civil society organizations and their representation in local NGOs, now reconverted into mechanisms for public policies execution, under an eminently neo-institutional focus.

3. A multidisciplinary perspective to address Administration studies in Latin America, grounded on the need to understand the region and develop its own organizations and administrative models, without becoming dependent on Western models. These works, which questioned the idea of Administration as science, and joined efforts from Latin American scholars with the so-called Montreal school, defended the need to place the individual at the

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center of organizational concerns. This required the study of human beings in their biological, psychic, and social dimensions and fight the behaviorist approach prevailing in organizations and the classic management (Echeverry, Chanlat, & Dávila, 1992).

4. A sociological perspective based on Ramos (1958, 1983) about instrumental rationality in classical management, which seeks to stay away from the functionalist conception of organization and overcome the sociological reduction appealing to a critical consciousness in Latin America.

5. An anthropological perspective of industry and productive organizations, very incipient and diffuse, represented by Guigo's impactful works (1994) on Argentine companies during the 1980s published in France. Today local works stem from Latin American authors in a very eclectic perspective marked by Western classical studies on organizational culture.

6. A perspective, developed during the 1980s and 1990s, based on the study of social movements in Brazil, opposed to the prevailing lines in Brazilian OSs, supported a critical tradition of OS that preceded even the central countries (Misoczky, Flores y Goulart, 2015). The lessons left by this study on organizational forms focused on environmental protection and helped the deployment of proposals of organization from social fights that required a new conceptual set to understand OS from an alternative view.

7. Studies on business history in Latin America that comprise a varied line of work where biographies, history of business development in general, and of companies in particular in the countries are mixed, with strong influence from the historiographic method in some cases and sociological analysis in others. Within these works it is worth mentioning the efforts to characterize companies' impact on the countries' regional culture (for example, the textile sector on certain peoples in Colombia) (Arango, 1991) (Dávila, 2003).

CONCLUSION

Without disregarding the influence of societal structures and processes that affect the transformation of organizational realities, we must investigate the mutual interdependence of internal and external organizational borders. According to Rodríguez (2007), we must incorporate in debates the social studies on organizational management. For him, the need to territorialize OS started to bear fruit with some works that aim to view our reality with "Latin American eyes," such as that by Szlechter (2018), who attempts to deconstruct the "official and hegemonic" history of debates on the organizational phenomenon in Argentina, responding to developments of organizational forms without omitting the incorporation of conceptual schemes from Europe and the United States in the frame of geopolitical and economic power relations. Similarly, several attempts to consider the knowledge on organization have appeared in American countries with critical and autonomous orientation (Misoczky, 2017; Paula, Maranhão, Barreto, & Klechen, 2010), while also being de-colonial (Faria, 2013). Despite these efforts, most of the regional literature contains this generic type of analysis on the organizational knowledge in Latin America, which ignores the specific characteristics of each country in the region (González-Miranda, Ocampo-Salazar, & Gentilin, 2018). For example, the knowledge on organizations and management in Argentina differs from Brazil (Gantman & Rodrigues, 2008), where there is certainly a large community organized in the field of OS (Crubelate, 2005; Rodrigues & Carrieri, 2001).

Any study that intends to show a de-colonial and liberating perspective of organizational social reality must certainly include analysis with a reflexive view to better understand the mindset of those that, at the time, held power in organizations. Thus, the perspective of those made invisible must consider, even where it diverts from performative analyses, where organizational efficacy is the "sacred" variable. Likewise, analyses on invisibilities must be comprehensive, and not just from the homogenizing point of view of colonialism in Latin America (Berth, 2018), to understand the reproduction of race, gender, and ethnic categories (Cardoso, 2014; González & Hasenbalg, 1982). These reflect the discourse reproduction in the occupation processes of organizational spaces, in reference to a hegemonic and white male management (Carrieri, Diniz, Souza, & Menezes, 2013). Therefore, it is necessary to expand reflection on places of speech and discourse analyses (Ribeiro, 2018) produced from the colonialism of knowledge and power.

On the other hand, it is necessary to put aside analyses on problems that seem to originate from a "cabbage" and have been shown in an ahistorical and abstract manner. If at some time there was a special interest in studying the organizational culture of large companies from developed countries, it was not due to researchers from large North American schools, but due

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to large restructuring (mergers, acquisitions, re-engineering) in the 1970s and 1980s, which implied that employees had to adapt to company cultures that acquired stock packages from other companies. In turn, we must understand the impact of job markets' regulations to explain the changes in work organization. We cannot discuss lean production and work in red with new organizational configurations without explaining the work deregulation processes that our countries suffered from the break with neoliberal economic models. At last, a perspective that intends to be reflectively critical, de-colonial, and liberating cannot be restricted to merely a denouncer attitude of the capitalist reality that negatively affects our organizations. If capitalism, in all its historical development phases, needed to appeal to the common good to gain legitimacy (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2002), the development of studies is imperative to call for the search of organizational forms and configurations. These objectives are not centered in the instrumental reason and in individualistic forms of socialization but in liberating projects that support the construction of social bonds and actions that arise from collective projects.

To conclude, it is important to note that local or autonomous agendas of OS in Latin America have always been influenced by external factors and that is why it is necessary to review their organizational impact on the region. Within these external factors we can identify two that are relevant: 1) The end of globalization and the consequent emergence of a liberal agenda with the construction of economic blocks before the emergence of commercial barriers, as in the case of Brexit. 2) The emergence of left and right populism, with their differences and nuances on the world stage, put in check the neoliberalism as we know it and whose transition and defense began in Latin America by the extreme right-wing, specifically in Chile, Bolivia and Ecuador. Therefore, we consider it necessary to propose an agenda for OS appropriate to the region, extending an invitation to integrate a real program of research among researchers on OS in the region. In this regard, Dussel and Ibarra-Colado's (2006) lines of analysis on globalization and the impact on organizations should be rewritten.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

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TO THINK FROM LATIN AMERICA IN DIALOGUE WITH THE ORGANIZATION OF DECOLONIAL SOCIAL STRUGGLES: EXPLORING POSSIBILITIES

Pensar desde a América Latina em diálogo com a organização das lutas sociais descoloniais: Explorando possibilidades

Pensar desde América Latina en diálogo con la organización de las luchas sociales descoloniales: Explorando posibilidades

ABSTRACT

The proposition of thinking about the Organizational Studies from Latin America (LA) is based on the acknowledgement that epistemology is political and that there exists an epistemology of domination inseparable from its material foundation. First, this essay discusses the meaning of LA, arguing that it is both a geopolitical space and a category of analysis. Then, it analyzes Organizational Studies in LA from a Brazilian perspective. Finally, it emphasizes the importance of knowledge based on a critical ethics that contributes towards making organizational processes that confront the multiple concrete expressions of coloniality visible, which is also relevant to struggling communities and collectives.

KEYWORDS | Latin America, social struggles, coloniality, critical ethics, Organizational Studies.

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RESUMO

A proposição sobre pensar os Estudos Organizacionais desde a América Latina (AL) tem como premissa reconhecer que a epistemologia é política e que há uma epistemologia da dominação inseparável de seu fundamento material. O texto faz uma discussão sobre o significado da AL, defendendo que ela é simultaneamente um espaço geopolítico e uma categoria de análise. Em seguida, realiza uma aproximação aos Estudos Organizacionais na AL desde o contexto brasileiro. Por fim, destaca a importância de um conhecimento fundado em uma ética crítica que contribua para tornar visíveis processos organizacionais que confrontam as múltiplas expressões concretas da colonialidade e que, ao mesmo tempo, seja relevante para as comunidades e coletivos em luta.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE | *América Latina, lutas sociais, colonialidade, ética crítica, Estudos Organizacionais.*

RESUMEN

La proposición de pensar los Estudios Organizacionales desde América Latina (AL) tiene como premisa reconocer que la epistemología es política y que hay una epistemología de la dominación inseparable de su fundamento material. El texto plantea una discusión sobre el significado de AL, defendiendo que esta es simultaneamente un espacio geopolítico y una categoría de análisis. Después, realiza una aproximación a los Estudios Organizacionales en AL desde el contexto brasileño. Fianalmente, destaca la importancia de un conocimiento fundado en una ética crítica con aportes para hacer visibles procesos organizacionales que confrontan las múltiples expresiones concretas de la colonialidad y que, al mismo tiempo, sea relevante para las comunidades y colectivos en lucha.

PALABRAS CLAVE | *América Latina, luchas sociales, colonialidad, ética crítica, Estudios Organizacionales.*

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INTRODUCTION

The proposition of thinking about Organizational Studies from Latin America (LA) is inspired by the work of Bautista (2014). His basic premise refers to knowing ourselves considering the relationship between the facts of domination and the production of knowledge, between a form of social relation and its pertinent cognitive form, and to recognize that epi stemology is political and that there is an epistemology of domination inseparable from its material fundament.

However, it is not enough to affirm LA as the locus of enunciation using the terms defined by Mignolo (2008) to refer mainly to geocultural and ideological spaces wherein discourses are enunciated. Medieta (2008) expanded this notion to indicate that the production of knowledge is always connected to a spatial imaginary that expresses its locus of enunciation and, simultaneously, projects a certain image of the planet, global space, and polis. Besides, he considered it necessary to make the relationship between reason and social structures explicit, clarifying the normative criterion and what social collectives or institutions the knowledge is produced for. In other words, making the political consequences of an epistemological project clear.

To bring these propositions to the purpose of this essay obliges us to make clear that we adopt an ethical-material principal as the normative fundament of our work as teachers and researchers as well as in our actions as political beings. In the words of Dussel (2001), "those who acts ethically must produce, reproduce and develop human life in community (p. 74)", with humanity and all life on the planet as ultimate reference and therefore, with a universal claim of practical truth. This principle is developed starting from the thematic verification and elaboration of the negativity that is the fact of the "not-able-to-live of the oppressed, the exploited, the victims", and from an interpellation for us to effectively and practically put ourselves close to them "not only in a position of observational participation [...], but as co-militants who enter in the practical horizon of the victims (material-negativity) whom we decide to serve by means of a scientific-critical research program (explanatory of the 'causes' of this negativity)" (Dussel, 2001, p. 28). We will return to this author and his propositions later in the essay. For now, the intention is to explain the political-ethical attitude that orients our work.

To close these introductory clarifications, it is necessary to make explicit our locus of enunciation in terms of the area of Organizational Studies (OS). Regarding this, we aim to be coherent with the ethical-material principle we adopt and with the commitments it demands. In this sense, we address as our object of studies the organizational processes of social struggles in defense of life and ways of living in relation to nature. We defend the legitimacy of this choice and highlight the specific contributions we can make from a perspective focused on organizational phenomena. However, we do so in markedly interdisciplinary dialogues and recognize that is not easy to make it in an area increasingly dominated by management.

Thus, our reference to the production of knowledge in OS from LA implies our interest in exploring possibilities to make it in accordance with Rauber (2004, p. 12). According to her, the organization of organic-political processes does not overlap the subjects of the transformative action. This, besides being part of the production of plural collectives wherein the practices that confront domination and overcome alienation are formed and established. We are interested in what is happening in the reality in which we are immerse. We are convinced of the impossibility of properly understanding the plethora of organizational processes of these collectives unless we articulate the knowledge that is theoretically elaborated and the one that emerges from below and remains, most of the time, restrained to the processes and spaces of struggle (Misoczky, Dornelas Camara & Böhm, 2017).

Therefore, it calls for paying attention not only to the claims around which the struggle or the movement is organized, but also its prefigurative practices. This notion emerged in the European and North American movements for social justice of the 1960s and 1970s to describe the coherence between organization and political purposes (Gorz, 1968; Boggs, 1977). In our context, this logic was appropriated by Tragtenberg (1986) to address the organization of workers' struggles and horizontal relations that negate verticalism (be it by the state, party or the union) in the socialization of the struggle and shared existence. For him, these processes oppose capitalist sociability, which is performed from top to bottom by centralized boards that alienate workers. The meaning of prefigurative refers to the possibility of, meanwhile organizing the struggle, experiencing sociabilities that are alternative to those defined and indispensable to the reproduction of the oppressed and excludent.

Now we can introduce the parts that follow. We provide a discussion on the meaning of LA, defending it is simultaneously a geopolitical space and a category of analysis. This constitutes the majority of this essay and is justified because, as we will see in the section regarding an approximation to the OS in LA, from the Brazilian context it remains a predominant tendency to speak of LA without making explicit to what we are referring to. We conclude by addressing the possibilities of studying the organization of social struggles that factually confront the colonialities of power and knowledge.

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LATIN AMERICA: GEOPOLITICAL SPACE AND CATEGORY OF ANALYSIS

According to Brandalise (2013), the enunciate LA emerged in the 19th century. It was part of the reflection of intellectuals from the region in the face of the fear of United States' imperialist expansion in the subcontinent while being reticent about the European influence. Some authors attribute the creation of the expression "Latin America" to Napoleon III in his intention to expand the French domains in the subcontinent. For Ardao (1980) and Mix Rojas (1991) however, this term stemmed from a Latin American conscience arising from the Saxon/Latin antithesis, from the perspective of a cultural and political self-identification, at the same time that was anti-imperialist and anti-colonialist (Brandalise, 2013).

The poem *Las dos Américas,* by José María Torres Caicedo (1857) indicates the intellectual atmosphere of that time. In another record, the essay *Nuestra América* by José Martí, written in 1891, affirms LA in opposition to imperialist threats. It defends the need to assume indigenous cultures as part of our roots and to organize the material and cultural life taking into consideration our own specific conditions (Rodríguez, 2016). His ideas developed based on the principle "for our life, our laws (Martí, 2010, p. 170)." The enunciate LA emerged and developed in a context of political and economic relations of domination that were not only local, but global, leading to the constitution of theoretical and practical fronts, both anti-colonial and anti-imperialist. Such processes of mutual recognition facing the empire already produced a sense of LA that expresses more than a geographical position or one or another linguistic appropriation.

This historical record shows that we cannot understand LA except in its relationship with the macro-categories of North and South (Roig, 2008) and in how they condense political, cultural, and economic elements. Thus, we cannot avoid the reference to geopolitical praxis. Regarding this, we follow the definition of León (2017), for whom in a more general and abstract sense, "geopolitics is the human capacity to intervene in the spatial and territorial orders that govern life in society (p. 14)." Still in a broad sense, "the geopolitical, in LA, is the current historically spatial praxis in its unitary form and in each of the processes it contains (p. 15)." This praxis can be methodologically separated into three dimensions that are constantly and contradictorily articulated: (i) power, (ii) knowledge, (iii) struggles and resistance.

To further this reasoning, it is necessary to introduce a definition of category. When we use this term, we refer to an ordering of the theoretical thought that arises from reality but is not to be confused with it when reconstructing it in an abstract order. It arises from reality and not from ideas. Thus, the determination of the real are moments of existence that, abstracted in the analytical process, are expressed in definitions of abstract determinations as concepts and in instruments of interpretative mediations as categories (Dussel, 2012).

In our understanding, it is essential to articulate the geopolitical with the categorial. That is, with the treatment of LA as an interpretive mediation abstracted from reality to, returning to it, explain it. Therefore, it is necessary to understand the geopolitical and the categorical in their mutual determinations. We begin with the theme of geopolitics of power in conjunction with the geopolitics of knowledge, resuming the seminal work of Aníbal Quijano: a text originally published in 1972 in the context of celebrating 500 years of the invasion of America. In his words: "The current globalization is, in the first place, the culmination of a process that began with the constitution of America and Eurocentred colonial/modern capitalism as a new patern of global power (Quijano, 2005, p. 117)." In an earlier text, Quijano (1991) had introduced the concept of coloniality to refer to the structures of control and hegemony that emerged from colonialism but are still present today. In other words, coloniality expresses the transhistorical expansion of colonial domination and its contemporary effects.

For Quijano (2005), "America was constituted as the first space/time of a new model of power of global vocation, and both in this way and by it became the first identity of modernity (p. 117)" based on two fundamental axes. One was the idea of race: "a supposedly different biological structure that placed some in a natural situation of inferiority to the others (p. 117)." Based on it, the *conquistadores* classified the population of America and later, of the world. Another was the "articulation of all historically known previous structures of control of labour - slavery, serfdom, small independent commodity production and reciprocity - together around and upon the basis of capital and the world market (p. 118)." The author uses the term America but is evidently referring to the process of Iberian invasion and colonization of Latin America and part of the Caribbean. Within this America, a whole universe of new materials and intersubjective relations was initiated. Therefore, the concept of modernity accounts for the changes in the material dimensions of social relations and for the changes that occur in all dimensions of social existence. We emphasize that in these propositions there is a connection between modernity and capitalism because capitalist determinations "required, in the same historical movement, that these social, material and intersubjective processes could not have a place except within social relations of exploitation and domination (Quijano , 2005, p. 125)."

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In summary, coloniality is a neologism that gives meaning to a constitutive aspect of modernity and of its economic expression (capitalism) which cannot be thought outside the Eurocentric pattern of knowledge and its claim to universality. This contribution points in two simultaneous directions: one is analytical - the concept of coloniality opens space for "the reconstruction and restitution of silenced stories, repressed subjectivities, subalternized knowledge and languages"; another is programmatic – it indicates the need to decolonialize power and knowledge (Mignolo, 2007, p. 451).

Enrique Dussel (2018) shares with Quijano the interpretation that modernity is born with the constitution of the tropical Atlantic as the global geopolitical axis, when simultaneous aspects of the same phenomenon originate: (a) politically - coloniality begins as a global process with the invasion of LA in 1492; (b) geopolitically - the displacement of the centrality of the Mediterranean world to the Atlantic with the rise of Spanish and Portuguese power and the displacement of the Ottoman empire; (c) economically - capitalism based on mercantilism and on the original accumulation with the exploitation of mines in LA, of tropical products, and slavery; (d) culturally - Eurocentrism turns European everyday life and all modern social sciences into a fetish; (e) anthropologically and ontologically - the instauration of the narcissistic and competitive ego of human relations of domination creates an ethics, a policy, an aesthetic, an oedipal psychoanalysis and, therefore, shapes, within its own modality, gender (as patriarchy), race (as white superiority), and other human relations of submission and exploitation; (f) cosmologically - the scientific, technological, and everyday interpretation of nature as an infinitely exploitable object as opposed to the respectful attitude of some original cultures.

According to Dussel (2018), while constructing this he asked himself about the meaning of LA. In his search for answers, he reconstructed the presence of Byzantine and Muslim traits in Iberian history. He recognized that the historical-cultural horizon of LA is related to histories, peoples, and myths excluded or made subaltern in the narratives of European modernity. That is why he proposed the interpretation of this process from the notion of 'exteriority'. However, this proved insufficient in explaining processes that not only erase cultures and histories, but also negatively impact the production and reproduction of life. The encounter with the initial propositions, in Prebisch (1950), of what would become a broad theoretical set on dependence allowed him to recognize, in addition to the cultural dimension, the fact of domination and exploitation in its economic dimension. Thus, he arrived at the fundaments of his Philosophy of Liberation, which include cultural conditioning, but and mainly adopt "the perspective of the interests of determined classes, groups, genders, races, etc." (Dussel, 2018, p. 35). In this construction, exteriority acquires an expanded meaning to emphasize not only localized identities silenced or suppressed, but the concrete experience of existing as a material and living exteriority of the system. This includes the Other of capital, the living work that is exploited when sold and that, before being sold, is nothing for capital (Dussel, 2008). It is therefore a philosophy elaborated from an interpellation that comes, "sincerely and simply, from the face of the poor dominated indigenous, from the oppressed mestizo, from the Latin American people (Dussel, 1973, p. 162)." It is built in intercultural and political dialogues with peoples who also suffered the economic, political, military, and cultural power of the central hegemonic countries.

Dussel (2013) denies the possibility that the future alternative may be a non-capitalist modernity, since modernity and capitalism are two aspects of the same: "modernity is the whole, and foundation of the particular aspect in the economic field consists of the capitalist system (p. 360)." Hence the proposition of a transmodern world that includes a pluriverse episteme. Transmodernity is a project with a claim to universality that opposes capitalism, patriarchy, imperialism, and coloniality. It will not emerge from the same Eurocentric modernity despite being inspired by some aspects of the critical current of European modernity (Dussel, 2016).

However, this pluriverse dialogical episteme is not based on the procedural morality of discourse ethics wherein the empirical materiality of history is secondary or irrelevant. It presupposes, in addition to formal morality, an ethical-material morality that determines the criterion of universal and concrete truth: the production and reproduction of human life in community (Dussel, 2004). It is therefore a dialogue "between critical creators of their own cultures" from the exteriority that is not pure negativity, it is also a distinct positivity (Dussel, 2018, p. 59). Some Latin American indigenous cultures, for example, affirm relations of respect and belonging to nature; as well as social blocks of the oppressed, from the exteriority of capital, develop collective potencies in processes that involve critical consciousness, organization and struggle.

Thus, transmodernity as a possibility and a project emerges from both ancestral positive experiences and those generated within the colonial cultures, and from dominated and excluded groups. It emerges from the moments and processes in which collectives organized around themes of gender, race, ways of life in their relation to nature discover themselves as valuable; from memories, histories, victories, and heroes of the past; from defeats and new beginnings; from sharing advances on the various fronts of struggle to build a new pluriverse humanity,

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"rich in analogical similarities and differences, which avoids the univocal uniformity of the universalization of only one culture and the irreconcilable confrontation of all against all" (Dussel, 2013, p. 165). A humanity that avoids, also and as a logical consequence of the normativity of an ethical-material principle, relativism and dialogue as a value in itself.

In summary, both Quijano and Dussel show the interdependence between the dimensions of power and knowledge. In this same sense, for Bautista (2014), thinking from LA does not mean denying the previous, it means building a categorical framework that allows "to understand the specificity of the Latin American problems of underdevelopment, dependence, oppression, colonialism, misery, ignorance, denial, suffering and exclusion." It is about "taking the political-economic terrain as an interpellation of the reason that thinks the real and itself, but from itself" (Bautista, 2014, p. 25). It is about thinking "our own condition as peoples historically situated at a series of particular crossroads (Roig, 2008, p. 51)."

These records lead us to ask ourselves about the relationship between nations (Brazil, in our case) and LA, between the national and the Latin American. Following Roig (2008), we understand that the national does not limit us to our village or parish since when it is concretely assumed, it is the indispensable basis for the universal. The nation is, of course, synonymous with people, social classes, ethnicities, gender, youth, etc. It is from this concreteness that the struggles and social movements are organized in defence of life and ways of life in relation to nature. Therefore, dialectically and contradictorily, to define LA as a space of life and a locus of enunciation implies the elimination of some differences and the affirmation of others. The consciousness of difference is what allows us to give meaning to the different ways of being that coexist in transmodernity. However, this consciousness should not include a localist emphasis outside of history and political economy. According to Roig (1999), we can ask ourselves about the ways of objectification by which the people of the countries that make up LA organize and carry out their social life, as well as their material and symbolic culture. However, we must recognize a reality crossed by contradictions and within the framework of a Latin American history that is both shared and conflictive.

In this way, we reject a dichotomous or hierarchical relationship between the national and the Latin American. In contrast, we articulate the theme of the social thinking of national origin in the Latin American context. First, however, a clarification on the meaning of social thinking is needed. For Heredia (2010), social thinking "is linked to the more general conceptions of social matter, from the ways of apprehending the knowledge and the norms, as well as previous concepts and boundaries that are placed on these intellectual processes, on the ideological belongings of the involved (p. 7)." Marini (1994), in turn, defines social thinking as the reflection of a society on itself, a theorization aimed at ensuring a certain order of things from a class point of view. As the economic system becomes more complex and the opposition of interests more present, the social thinking becomes contradictory, leading to the emergence of divergent currents.

Accepting these definitions of social thinking, we present, as an illustration, the contributions of two Brazilian authors who dedicated themselves to thinking about Brazil and simultaneously, LA: Manoel Bomfim and Darcy Ribeiro.

Bomfim (1993), writing in the early 20th century, analyzed and confronted the Eurocentric model of classification applied to Latin American societies as a condition to understand the critique that the Brazilian historiography was making of national characteristics based on the acceptance and propagation of European ideas about the region. In other words, he sought, in the European propositions about LA, the means for understanding the production of Brazilian authors about Brazil. Thus, when confronting the legitimizing discourse of European colonialist interests in Latin America, he identified biological and racist contents and identified the way in which local elites, colonial metropolises, and imperialist powers parasitized the Brazilian working classes when appropriating the wealth produced by them.

Ribeiro (2001), a better-known author, linked the possibility of an autonomous, sovereign, and independent Brazil to a project articulated with the rest of LA. In his academic and political activism, he affirmed that we Latin Americans are "peoples still struggling to make ourselves (p. 241)." Defending the existence of LA as a geopolitical reality and as an interpretive category, he recognized the differences between the Luso-American and the Hispanic-American contents. These were founded "on a small linguistic variation that is not an obstacle to communication, even though we tend to exaggerate it (Ribeiro, 1986, p. 12)." For this author, the expression AL "reaches highly significant connotations in the opposition between Anglo-Americans and Latin-Americans, who, in addition to their diverse cultural contents, contrast even more strongly in terms of socioeconomic antagonisms" (Ribeiro, 1986, p. 21).

We hope to have made it clear that the postulation of thinking from LA does not include nativist, originalist or culturalist conceptions. Rather, it postulates an ethical critique based on the original proximity to the subject who reveals the person in her reality as such and not as a mere thing for the capital. To be critical, then, is to recover the Other as distinct from the system that

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reifies them. Respecting their otherness is the essence and origin of the critique, the protest and the rebellion against the current systems which are the result of institutionalization processes of domination (Dussel, 2016). It is not enough, therefore, to narrate or describe processes, histories or facts occult by official histories. It is necessary to produce knowledge so that these histories appear with their real meaning - of epistemic exclusion and domination, economic exploitation and social exclusion, massacre of peoples and destruction of nature and ways of life associated with it.

In this section, we addressed, in a relational way, the geopolitical and categorical character of LA, presenting some fundamental elements for its understanding and highlighting the dimensions of the coloniality of power and knowledge. After a digression, which is in the next section, focusing on OS in LA, we will resume the dimension of social struggles in their relationship with the coloniality of power and knowledge.

TO THINK ORGANIZATIONAL STUDIES FROM LATIN AMERICA: AN APPROACH FROM THE BRAZILIAN CONTEXT

In 2008, the Organization Theory Division of EnANPAD, then coordinated by Roberto Costa Fachin, organized an International Panel with the participation of Eduardo Ibarra-Colado as panelist and Maria Ceci Misoczky as debater. The title of Ibarra-Colado's presentation was a question about whether it would be possible to understand and transform OS from LA and not die in the attempt. More than 10 years hence, this question is still valid.

In his presentation, Ibarra-Colado (2008) starts by noting our inability to establish "a systematic dialogue between our own Latin American communities," highlighting "the paradox of a region that considers itself as a common area for its historical and cultural ties, but which is extremely fragmented and disconnected (p. 1)." Adding:

> Our common references have not been our Latin American lands, nor have been the historical ties or shared cultural heritage, or the common problems associated with our origin as a colonized space marked by exclusion. No, our references have been Anglo-Saxon theories, their journals, their conferences and the admiration we feel for their personages and *ouvre*; but it has also been the denied or unacknowledged intention, maybe unconscious, to look or get to be like them, to become modern experts in "modern organizations," to talk to them about their problems as if they were ours, to discuss with them on their terms as if they were ours, to employ their theories and methods as if they were ours, to assume, following them, their own research agendas as if they were ours (Ibarra-Colado, 2008, p. 2).

As an indication of ways to overcome this situation, Ibarra-Colado (2008) proposed that we follow a triple determination: (i) that we worry "less with theory and more with reality, since reality is the source for theory production;" (ii) that we are updated "not only with the latest academic literature, but also with the problems of our communities and nations," listening not only to "those who know because they study, but to those who know because they live it;" and (iii) "to get our hands dirty with fieldwork" to feed our essays and interpretations (pp. 9-10).

In the debate, Misoczky (2008) followed the same direction, adding the institutional dimension by highlighting that, in the Brazilian field of OS, the predominant logic is the reproduction and translation of ideas out of place that is legitimized through "an institutionalized circuit that disseminates a model of dependent and subordinate relationship between our academic community and the communities of central countries (p. 2)."

Retrieving notes on comments made by the audience after the two presentations, we found that the first question was exactly whether it would be possible to speak of LA as a category of its own if it was not a creation imposed from another reality. This comment gave evidence that, at least until that moment, LA either as a category or as a geopolitical reality tended to be overlooked in its relevance. We emphasize that it is not a case of defending a single definition of LA or even opposing it to another, but of recognizing that the very existence of LA was neglected in the Brazilian context of OS.

This debate followed two years later at the Latin American-European Meeting on Organization Studies (Laemos) held in Buenos Aires in a panel organized by Miguel Imas. Possibly inspired by the debate at the EnANPAD panel, Misoczky (2010a) returned to the theme of LA as a category forged in a Latin Americanism that fought the pan-Americanist project of the then North American president James Monroe, who in 1823, famously stated, "America for the Americans." A Latin Americanism that also fought the subsequent occupation by North American troops of Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Panama. Misoczky (2010a) then made a distinction between pan-Americanism and Latin Americanism, affirming the anti-imperialist character

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of the latter and ending her introduction with the statement that, "although we speak different languages, we understand each other amongst other reasons because we share the same dependent insertion in the context of international relations, as well as the same intense contradiction between abundance and material misery" (p. 4). A statement made from the audience which we again found in our records questioned whether Brazil could be considered part of LA because of the distance generated by the language.

These episodes illustrate that the theme of LA has been part of the reflections of some researchers, finding a place in academic events for over 10 years. It is also worth mentioning the year 2006 as the one in which the production of knowledge from our context of practice (Dussel & Ibarra-Colado, 2006; Misoczky, 2006) was formally added to our agenda, albeit from a culturalist approach, according to the critical interpretation of Misoczky and Dornelas Camara (2015). It is also worth mentioning a set of works that aimed at thinking LA from the perspective of management and business. Among these, we highlight the publications by Guedes and Faria (2010), Alcadipani and Reis Rosa (2011), and Alcadipani and Faria (2014).

For the sake of recognition beyond any chronological order, it is necessary to value the contribution of the *Núcleo de Estudos de Administração Brasileira* (Abras) since 1988, coordinated by Paulo Emílio Matos Martins. Its objective is to study the "organizational space-dynamics" as a "historical, political, economic and cultural phenomenon, that is: as the locus of (re) production of the symbolic about work, its place of occurrence and its management, having as theoretical reference social thinking and interpreters of Brazil (Núcleo Abras, 2019)." This research program of more than 30 years highlights the concrete possibility of applying interpretive categories developed from our reality to the OS. Additionally, the study of Brazilian authors who do not dissociate Brazil from LA led to the initiative to organize, in partnership with other research groups from Brazil and other countries in the region (mainly from Ecuador), the *Encuentro Administración y Pensamiento Latino-Americano* held annually since 2012.

Still regarding academic events, in 2015 at the III Brazilian Congress of Organization Studies, the conference "Challenges of integrating Latin American Organization Studies" conducted by Rodrigo Muñoz Grisales and Jorge Alberto Rosas Castro took place. We registered, in the institutional dimension, the agreement in force since 2015 involving the Brazilian Society of Organization Studies (SBEO), the *Red de Postgrados de Investigación Latinos en Administración y Estudios Organizacionales* (Red Pilares), and the *Red Mexicana de Estudios Organizacionales* (Remineo).

These kind of meetings and institutional links culminated into the *Red de Estudios Organizacionales de Latinoamérica* (REOL), formalized in July 2019. Its founding letter states that in LA, OS developed in a heterogeneous and diverse way. It also indicated the necessity to critically appropriate it for the reality of our region based on our specific needs and going "beyond the simple reproduction of the *status quo* originated in other latitudes (REOL, 2019, p. 1)". This network of networks and societies (initially including *Red Argentina de Estudios Organizacionales*, *Red de Estudios Organizacionales de Colombia*, *Red Chilena de Estudios Organizacionales - Minga*, Remineo and SBEO) elaborates, in the process of its constitution, a diagnosis and proposes challenges:

> We also recognize that the pluridisciplinarity and paradigmatic plurality that characterize the field have historically been conditioned by the colonialism of knowledge [...]. Until very recently, we focused on the global North and knew little about the academic production of neighbouring countries. Often, we would meet in academic spaces offered and organized outside our region and communicate with each other through their intermediaries. Today, shoulder to shoulder, we know that the differences in our national trajectories do not constitute barriers between us, they are specific characteristics that can become contributions and possibilities to advance and reflect and that, instead of separating us, they will do nothing more than unite us (REOL, 2019, p. 2).

In this diagnosis, we find echoes of Ibarra-Colado's words in 2008. The novelty to face the challenge that remains basically the same, even in other terms, is the process of organization based on the recognition of differences and the constitution of spaces for articulation and sharing. This is in line with the propositions of Bautista (2014) mentioned above: not to deny the previous, nor to reject theorizations or authors from the North, but to develop theories and categorical frameworks to understand our specificities.

Of course, OS is an area of plural knowledge. Within its scope we find projects with different political connotations in their respective objects of study, adopting different epistemologies and theoretical foundations. These projects include varied analytical approaches and propositions to the practice of Administration in organizations and, in times of extensive globalization, they tend to emphasize management in "its intimidating position that

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presupposes epistemic superiority" at the service of projects that "involve transfers, extractions, and the development of capital, people, resources and information across borders (Davis, 2018, pp. 10-11)." We also find an internal critique of management that has become institutionalized as Critical Management Studies. However, it compromises its critical dimension due to the logical impossibility of negating its own object.

This is not the space for the already well-established discussion, from different perspectives, on the meaning of management as an instrument of practical-operational intervention imbued with an ideological dimension (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2002; Gaulejac, 2007; Klikauer, 2013; Parker, 2002; Vizeu, 2010; among others). It is only worth mentioning that a critique of management has not yet been adequately developed from a perspective of the decolonialization of power and knowledge. Doing so would imply the negation of management because it would have to be recognized that it is inherent to neoliberal modernity, being a construction that reflects the improvement of the process of real abstraction carried out at the service of the market, with its own implicit ethics based on a conception of modern and Eurocentric science and rationality; also at the service of preserving and expanding relations of power that are consolidated in the division of labour on the world stage.

As has already been widely recorded, the Brazilian critical tradition in OS (Misoczky, Flores, & Goulart, 2015; Paula, 2015; Paula, Maranhão, & Barreto, 2010) authorizes and even provokes us to go beyond a self-limited critique (Klikauer, 2015) and to value OS as a space in which, despite its growing colonization by management, there is the possibility of creating paths based on an ethical critique and also based on our own reality, taking into account the struggles against business and management technologies that negatively impact the production and reproduction of life and ways of life in relation to nature.

THE DECOLONIAL DIMENSION IN SOCIAL STRUGGLES AND POSSIBILITIES OPENED FOR ORGANIZATIONAL STUDIES FROM LATIN AMERICA

Returning to the indications of Bautista (2014), to think from LA also implies "taking on the political-economic terrain as an interpellation of the reason that thinks the real (p. 25)" adopting categorical frameworks that allow us to understand our specificities without isolationisms. Returning to what we presented previously, we take a decolonial perspective that, based on the tradition of Latin American social thinking, affirms that modernity begins with the invasion of America and, therefore, is inseparable from capitalism. In this sense, talking about decoloniality implies including, in addition to the epistemic dimension, the dimension of the concrete life of communities, peoples, and social collectives that have it under threat or as a practical impossibility. This choice is based on a material ethical-normative principle that forces us to abandon any position of neutrality in our area of study. It urges us to assume a critique that is made in active solidarity with those who organize and struggle against concrete expressions of the coloniality of power mediated by the coloniality of knowledge.

In addressing these organization phenomena, we adopt a definition of organization that states it as "a means to carry out liberating action through territorialized processes and practices guided by strategic-critical reason (Misoczky, 2010b, p. 50)." The term strategic-critical reason refers to one of the principles of the ethics of liberation developed by Dussel (2000) and refers to feasibility:

> Who aims to implement or to transform a norm, act, institution, system of ethicity, etc., cannot disregard the conditions of possibility for its objective, material and formal, empirical, technical, economic, political feasibility, in such a way that the act becomes possible taking into consideration the laws of nature and the human ethical requirements (p. 568).

Of course, this principle is subordinate to the human needs or the reproduction and development of life in community and to the participation of those affected by the decision making.

We understand that, as indicated by Hinkelammert (1977), the development of concepts and categories not only allows to know the new, but makes it possible to conceive other realities as possible and affirm the existence of transformative political and organizational processes. Thus, a definition of organization like the one mentioned above allows to make these processes visible respecting their own logic.

If decoloniality refers to the dissolution of structures of domination and exploitation shaped by the coloniality of power, its expression in social struggles implies the negation of oppression and the affirmation of possibilities economies for life; the production of pre-figurative indications of political and organizational processes of a pluriverse and transmodern world. Again, to think about these processes from LA does not imply a position of isolationism or the ontological privilege of our existence. It means that this is our reality and that our academic

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practice gains relevance when we contribute to illuminate the understanding of what happens in our reality, remembering the indication of Ibarra-Colado (2008) about the importance of being updated with the problems of our communities and nations, and listening to those who know because they live them.

Therefore, we refer to the multiple processes organized from the will to live that confront the destitution of the Other and the destruction of nature. For example, (a) anti-extractive struggles in defence of common goods that confront transnational corporations allied with national governments and oppose management technologies that aim to destroy community ties (such as corporate social responsibility practices) by affirming their ways of life and, in many situations, ancestral values; (b) popular feminisms that, since their heterogeneity and the confrontation with modern western hegemonic feminism, "find common points in voices that speak of lives marginalized by racism, capitalism and heterosexism (Barroso, 2014, [s / p])" and (c) the daily struggle of peoples and families for the reproduction of their lives in poor communities and even on the streets, who develop life forms and organized strategies for their survival.

Finally, we refer to dialogues with the knowledge produced from below in specific contexts in which the system and its instruments, the coloniality of power and knowledge are confronted by the social bloc of the oppressed. Based on an ethical critique of the system and its practical-operational instruments, to think in solidarity with the people-exteriority of capital in their imperative need to organize to produce and reproduce their lives in community. To think from LA, in addition to taking our real problems as a reference for the production of knowledge, it is necessary to understand the limits of the dialogues with Eurocentric epistemologies adopting a scepticism founded on the experiences and concrete lives of our peoples and communities, with their cultural, political, and economic characteristics.

We argue that this doing, which is both academic and political, explores and expands the possibilities of producing knowledge in OS going beyond the epistemological critique of the coloniality of knowledge. A knowledge that contributes to making visible organizational processes that confront, in everyday life, the multiple concrete expressions of coloniality and that, at the same time, is relevant for the communities and collectives in struggle.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

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ORGANIZATIONAL STUDIES IN LATIN AMERICA: BACK TO THE ROUGH *GROUND*!

Estudos organizacionais na América Latina: De volta ao terreno áspero!

Los estudios organizacionales en Latinoamérica: ¡Vuelta al terreno áspero!

ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to do a self-critical retrospection exercise about what Organizational Studies (OS) are within the Latin American context. Their development and incidence in the region have increased and consolidated --although not in all countries at the same level and extent --as a critical field of knowledge to study organizations. However, there are some unresolved matters that need to be addressed and discussed; that is why Wittgenstein's (1986) expression is retaken to formulate some fundamental questions regarding the OS identity and projection in the region, in search of a "friction" that gives continuity to that path of growth. In addition, some constitutive aspects of OS are discussed. Reflections will allow organization experts and researchers not only to delve into this field of knowledge, but also to build a stance of their own on OS in the region.

KEYWORDS | Critical approach, field of knowledge, Latin America, Organizational studies, organizations.

RESUMO

O objetivo deste artigo é realizar um exercício de retrospecção autocrítica sobre o que são os Estudos Organizacionais (EO) no contexto latino-americano. Seu desenvolvimento e incidência na região vem crescendo e se consolidou -embora não em todos os países no mesmo nível e profundidade- como um campo de conhecimento crítico para o estudo das organizações. No entanto, existem alguns assuntos não resolvidos que precisam ser discutidos e apresentar debate. Assim, a expressão de Wittgenstein (1986) é retomada para formular algumas questões fundamentais em relação à sua identidade e projeção em busca de uma "fricção" que permita continuar nesse caminho de crescimento. Além do acima exposto, alguns aspectos constitutivos dos EOs são discutidos. As reflexões não apenas aprofundarão esse campo de conhecimento, mas ajudarão os pesquisadores e estudiosos das organizações a construir sua própria posição sobre os EO na região.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE | *Aproximação crítica, campo do conhecimento, América Latina, Estudos Organizacionais, organizações.*

RESUMEN

Este artículo tiene como objetivo realizar un ejercicio de retrospección autocrítica sobre los Estudios Organizacionales (EO) enmarcados en el contexto latinoamericano. Su desarrollo e incidencia en la región ha crecido y se ha consolidado -aunque no en todos los países al mismo nivel y profundidad - como un campo de conocimiento crítico para el estudio de las organizaciones. No obstante, hay algunos asuntos aún sin resolver sobre los cuales es necesario debatir. Es así como se retoma la expresión de Wittgenstein para formular algunas preguntas fundamentales, en relación con su identidad y proyección, en busca de una "fricción" que permita seguir por ese camino de crecimiento. Aunado a lo anterior, se discuten algunos aspectos constitutivos de los Estudios Organizacionales. Las reflexiones permitirán, no solo ahondar en este campo de conocimiento sino, también, contribuir con los investigadores y estudiosos de las organizaciones en la región a construir una posición propia sobre el asunto.

PALABRAS CLAVE | *Aproximación crítica, Campo de conocimiento, Latinoamérica, Estudios organizacionales, organizaciones.*

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INTRODUCTION

The development of Organizational Studies (OS) in Latin America has had an important deployment in recent years. Research projects, doctoral theses, empirical works, events, and other academic and research activities express not only the proliferation of this field of knowledge, but also the interest of many scholars who approach this domain to learn and apply their theoretical and methodological proposals in the search for alternative approaches to analyze the social phenomena that occur in organizations (Albuquerque, 2017; Camara, 2017; Ibarra-Colado, 1991, 2006a; and Pérez & Guzman, 2015, among others).

For Ibarra-Colado (2003), OSs emerge as a field of study that aims at overcoming or toning down the positivist and reductionist imperatives imposed by both organization theory (OT) and administrative theory (AT). It is a space of particular knowledge that contrasts with theories that enjoy greater institutional recognition. Proof of this is that said field of knowledge does not intend to become a great theory, but seeks to delve into the knowledge of a specific organizational reality, based on its analysis from the perspective of social sciences (SSs) and with a critical-comprehensive stance (Gonzales-Miranda, 2014; Padilla, Hernández, & Ríos, 2015). Thus, OSs advocate, from a postmodern perspective, the emancipation of human beings (Alvesson & Deetz, 2017; Pfeffer, 2000), with the purpose of distancing themselves from the social rationality of modernity, albeit without proposing something concrete (Alvesson & Deetz, 2017; Barba, 2012; Hatch, 1997; Montaño, 1994; Reed, 1993).

Notwithstanding the benefits and the important results in terms of publications, it is crucial to perform a retrospective exercise, that is, to retrace the steps that look for clarification regarding the foundations, but, especially to consider some questions that have been taken for granted but have not yet been resolved. As Ibarra-Colado (2006a) states, "Unfortunately, there are not enough studies in Latin America that enable the interpretation of the social consequences of organizational performance and management" (p. 91). In this sense, the purpose of this paper is to bring to the table some topics that have not been sufficiently addressed regarding the development of OSs in the region. Given that OSs in Latin America are still in development, literature by classical and Latin American authors is used to illustrate, strengthen, and foster reflection. This will favor the emergence of new challenges and questions, the discovery of possible research routes, and the introduction of new conversations on what OSs are in this part of the world.

Back to the rough ground!

To start the journey, it is worth referring to Robert Chia's words at the 31st colloquium of the *European Group of Organizational Studies (EGOS) 2015*, who, quoting Wittgenstein, said:

> The conflict becomes intolerable; the requirement is now in danger of becoming vacuous. We have got onto slippery ice where there is no friction and so in a certain sense the conditions are ideal, but also, just because of that, we are unable to walk. We want to walk: so we need friction. Back to the rough ground! (Wittgenstein, 1986, p. 121).

Thus, Chia (2015), in that colloquium, invited a return to the comprehension of the everyday aspects of reality. These, surrounded by the complexity of life, provide light for a deep understanding, and avoid pre-established interpretations that pigeonhole reality and, in turn, favor the proliferation of theories that, besides not helping to explain, become the object of study itself. Therefore, the search for (or the achievement of) a theory should become the goal of all research study—not the understanding of reality and the hidden avatars of its daily functioning. For this reason, the author invites scholars to go back to the rough ground, as a way of looking at the road already travelled and of returning to the fundamentals.

What, then, are the meanings and implications of going back to the rough ground? It certainly means looking for friction, which can also be defined as resistance to motion, but here it is metaphorically understood in the opposite way, that is, as a force between two surfaces that prevents them from sliding or slipping on each other. It is the same force that allows acceleration, since it becomes a foothold that prevents slipping and makes it possible to move forward. Going back to this expression is essentially an invitation to consider two aspects.

On the one hand, it encourages all those scholars studying organizations not to get carried away by the inertia and comfort of a path already built, where it is easier to slip, but it is more difficult to advance. Taking for granted a series of assumptions about OSs, without delving into a discussion that sheds light on the Latin American scenario in particular, means running the risk of distorting the reason for being of OSs in terms of their critical spirit. It also means choosing the easy way and assuming that OSs "operate" properly and differ from other organizational analyses, thereby avoiding further development, as if it has been completed and resolved.

On the other hand, the absence of friction hinders dialogue and confrontation. This requires a thorough knowledge of the

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parties to support their own arguments, as well as good listening skills to be able to engage in a dialogue with the interlocutor. As a result of this confrontation, new knowledge emerges, offering new perspectives in the study of organizations and vitalizing the proposal of OSs. In this sense, the petition to go back to the rough ground becomes not only pertinent, but also necessary, given that in Latin America the field is still in a process of maturation, where differences, questions, doubts, and even ignorance are still part of its constitution and identity. As suggested by Gonzales-Miranda and Ramírez (2017), "In Latin America, OSs connote a different type of development and evolution. Their reality and presence in the region is heterogeneous, fragmented, and diverse" (p. 26).

These authors published the Spanish-language translation of *The SAGE Handbook of Organization Studie*s (Clegg, Hardy, Lawrence, & Nord, 2006), where they included reflections for Latin America based on each of the original chapters. A similar exercise was made by Miguel Caldas, Roberto Fachin, and Tânia Fisher with their 1999 publication of the Portuguese-language translation of the first edition of *Handbook of Organization Studies* (Clegg, Hardy, & Nord, 1996) in three volumes: *Modelos de análise e novas questões em Estudos Organizacionais*; *Reflexões e novas direções*; and *Ação e análise organizacionais*. The work conducted by these researchers demonstrates the rise and development of OSs in Brazil. In consequence, the 2006 text becomes a historical benchmark, since it enables the dissemination "of the theoretical and methodological proposals of OSs in the different regions of Latin America" (Gonzales-Miranda & Ramírez, 2017, p. 23). In their analysis, after the publication exercise in which nineteen Latin American authors took part, the researchers state that *heterogeneity* suggests that organizational knowledge "does not lead to a common place, but rather shows countless approaches that imply diverse conceptions of its meaning, scope, and possibilities for the analysis of organizations, as well as of its connection with the management" (p. 26). *Fragmentation* explains that the development of OSs in Latin America is divided into regions; therefore, it is worth highlighting the cases of Mexico and Brazil that differ from the continent, where OSs are still incipient. Finally, *diversity* means "the large number of topics, interests, and lines of research that are being proposed in the field of Latin American OSs" (p. 28), showing the breadth and scope of OSs for the analysis of societies through organizations.

In another text, in which the development of OSs in Latin America is also analyzed, Gonzales-Miranda, Ocampo-Salazar, and Gentilin (2018), based on a literature review, found that in the region there is a preponderance of functionalist/positivist studies, basically related to AT. Meanwhile, OSs are becoming increasingly important, as they tend to address organizational problems from a critical perspective. However, the authors emphasize that "the purpose is not to favor an epistemological stance characterized by an irreconcilable polarity of perspectives, the functionalist/positivist one on the one hand and the comprehensive one on the other; nor is it to stigmatize one of them in terms of value" (p. 104). On the contrary, the results of the study show that no single theoretical perspective is better than the other; they complement each other and coexist in the Latin American organizational arena.

It is undeniable that the steps taken in the region have made it possible to write a history that has mended fences and overcome prejudices against positions and approaches contrary to OSs. At the same time, regional and global recognition has been achieved, though the lack of confrontation and reflexivity usually ends up leading to a comfort zone. This study is an invitation to leave that comfort zone.

OSs IN LATIN AMERICA UNDER DEBATE

It is mandatory to reflect on OSs in the region, given that "one of the main characteristics of Latin American countries is the reduced number of theoretical and field studies" (Barba, 2012, p. 15). This is perhaps an academic obligation for all researchers who belong to this field of study. It is, at the same time, a suggestive exercise to understand the *collective comprehension* of academics about OSs in Latin America.

It also warns about the need to demarcate the aspects that shape their identity, understanding that delimitation is not being closed to new "conversations," but is rather the defense of the autonomy—the identity—that rejects the belief that "everything fits" in OSs. This is not possible. There are some characteristics that, without conceiving them as immovable in time, clarify some identity features that demarcate the field. That is the purpose of this paper, which does not focus on answering the questions and reflections raised, but on going back to "rough ground" to obtain the "friction" necessary to build conceptions and proposals appropriate to OSs in the region.

The foregoing is relevant because it helps answer questions such as: How can one know whether a research project falls within the perspective of OSs? Are critical management studies (CMSs) part of OSs? Such studies constitute a pluralistic, diverse, and interdisciplinary field that covers a wide range of perspectives (Sanabria, Saavedra, & Smida, 2015). For some authors, CMSs are part of OSs; for others, they are two different and essentially unrelated fields of knowledge, because the former aims to analyze management from a postmodern position (Fernández, 2007), while the latter addresses organizations from a critical theory

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viewpoint. Furthermore, many authors of OSs are also recognized as authorities of CMSs. This discussion is not concluded; it is only an example of the relevance of delimiting the field of OSs so as not to fall into ambiguities that turn it into a space where any study on organizations—or on the social aspects or dynamics developed within organizations—is claimed to be part of this field from an alternative–critical stance.

Continuing with this self-reflective exercise and considering what Nord et al. (2017) stated about wanting "to stimulate conversations within and between the different approaches to OSs. In fact, we conceptualized these studies as a series of multiple, overlapping conversations that reflect, reproduce, and refute earlier conversations," (p. 1) it is pertinent, due to the context and development of OSs in Latin America, to question certain aspects that surround the nature of OSs as noted below.

Are OSs a field of knowledge or a discipline?

Fields are considered "relatively autonomous social microcosms, i.e., spaces of objective relations that are the site of a logic and a necessity that are specific" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 135). The agents in each field occupy different positions according to the (material or symbolic) resources they possess ("capitals," in Bourdieu's terms), in the process of disputes that arise in the singularity of the social microcosm. These differentiated positions of the agents make them participate differently in disputes within the field. This is how, in this conception, there is no linear or consensual progression. The history of each field—of each disciplinary field individually, and of the scientific field in general—is filled with tensions, particularly with the one it reaches at a certain moment, derived from the way in which such disputes are resolved.

In the context of science, each field follows certain ontological, epistemological, methodological, and theoretical assumptions, especially regarding disciplinary differences. In these differences, scholars incorporate dispositions and stances that work as references for interpretation, apprehension, and action in the face of the dynamics of the field and its disputes. The field of OSs, paraphrasing Bourdieu, implies the existence of networks of relatively autonomous relations, "within which all moves are not allowed, in which there are immanent regularities, implicit principles, and explicit rules of inclusion and exclusion, and admission rights that are being continually raised" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 236). Therefore, what moves are permitted within OSs? What are the rules of exclusion and inclusion? What are the admission rights to enter OSs?

> Secondly, a discipline refers to an area of singular knowledge, which has precise limits based on an object of study, methods, theories, languages, and forms of objectification, from which specialized knowledge is produced. Correlated to this, and in Morin's (1998) terms, "it is an organizational category within scientific knowledge; it establishes the division and specialization of work, and responds to the diversity of domains that encompass sciences" (p. 9). In line with such an approach, discipline "represents specialization in isolation" (Max-Neef, 2004, p. 3), which results in the configuration of hyperspecialized and autonomous knowledge, hence:The disciplinary frontier, its language, and its own concepts are going to isolate the discipline regarding others and the problems that the discipline confronts. The hyperdisciplinary spirit will become a spirit of ownership that prohibits any foreign incursion in its area of knowledge. (Morin, 1998, p. 10).

The term "field" is often used instead of "discipline" to refer to OSs as a strategy—not to categorize them in a positivist and closed approach, but to achieve the beginning of other approaches, to understand rather than to resolve. However, the performative aspect of OSs has also been promoted, linked to the disciplinary aspect as having the potential to change and transform society, regarding the notion one needs to change reality after understanding it—that is, that there is a clear option for praxis, without diminishing the importance of theory. Some researchers have even called themselves *organizationalists*, promoting what is known as "organizational perspective" (Contreras & De la Rosa, 2013), denoting a clear tendency to mark disciplinary aspects of OSs. Therefore, are OSs becoming a discipline in Latin America?

What is critical in OSs?

The critical perspective proposed by OSs implies the ascension of visions that contrast and challenge existing social development conditions because they are considered insufficient and negative. This does not imply a fictitious vision, but requires a thorough and rigorous knowledge of the conditions of possibility that should lead to the transformation of existing structural relationships (Freire, 1984; Misoczky, 2017). In this context, it is possible to understand critique as the ability to look within a field or discipline and account for its own postulates. In other words, it is a self-

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reflective process. In line with Misoczky (2017), critique necessarily implies that it must be ontological and must seek to transform society and free individuals from oppressive regimes. Therefore, it is not enough to have a critical methodology, as proposed by Alvesson and Willmott (1992), or to adopt a position contrary to the status quo; it is a matter of looking for a transformation, a praxis that transcends and transforms the hegemonic practices that occur in the approach to organizations (Alvesson & Willmott, 1992). Historically, two lines of thought are identified within OSs: one in *critical theory,* presented by the Frankfurt School, and the other one in *postmodernism* (Saavedra, Marín-Idárraga, & Gonzales-Miranda, 2017). Where are OSs classified? In both?

In postmodernism?

As stated by Alvesson and Deetz (2017), there are multiple approaches to postmodernism, which makes it difficult to define it. From OS in particular, emphasis is placed on the concepts of fragmentation, textuality, and resistance in OS, mainly from authors such as Derrida, Foucault, Baudillar, Deleuze, Guattari, Laclau, and Mouffe (Alvesson & Deetz, 2017). These authors stated that, among the most relevant issues, they were inclined to study:

> In the constructed nature of people and reality, language is emphasized as a system of distinctions that are central to the construction process, and it argues against grand narratives and largescale theoretical systems such as Marxism or functionalism. The power/knowledge connection is also emphasized, as are claims of expertise in systems of domination, affirming the fluid and hyperreal nature of the contemporary world and the role of mass media and information technologies, and stressing narrative/fiction/rhetoric as central to the research process. (Alvesson & Deetz, 2017, p. 513).

The focus is placed on the critical point of postmodernism, as it is part of a broader critique that challenges the status quo and supports silenced and marginalized voices (Alvesson & Deetz, 2017).

Where are OSs classified in critical theory?

In relation to OSs, Alvesson and Deetz understand that the use of critical theory is derived from the developed works that take as a reference the authors of the Frankfurt School (radical humanism), such as Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse, and Habermas. Hence, it is expected, from critical theory in OSs, "to create societies and workplaces that are free from domination, where all members have an equal opportunity to contribute to the production of systems that meet human needs and lead to the progressive development of all" (Alvesson & Deetz, 2017, p. 517). Similarly, relevant themes include ideology; communicative action; a critical look at the capitalist system and contemporary organizational society; domination through instrumental rationality; the status of women, workers, and people of color; the goals, values, and forms of consciousness; and communicative distortions within companies, among other aspects, (Alvesson & Deetz, 2017)

It is not enough that researchers assert, perhaps with a certain arrogance, that they have a *critical position* and therefore are within the field of OSs. How to know whether there is a true critique, or what type of critique forms a constitutive aspect of OSs? Not everything with a critical "tone" can be considered as a part of OSs. Then, what criteria would have to be considered for this? What stance (postmodernism or critical theory) should be adopted?

What is the relationship between OSs and the social and human sciences?

Pierre Bourdieu (2003) states that "social science is a social construction of a social construction" (p. 153). SSs take social reality as a study reference—that is, the reality that, practically and symbolically, agents build on the relational reality of the social dimension. It is the individual, surrounded by a set of relationships, who creates and gives meaning to reality. SSs, in turn, seek to determine the way individual and collective action is structured, the way life is given meaning, and to understand how, in that network of relations, reality is constructed, reproduced, and transformed.

As a social construction, SSs have unfolded in multiple options to analyze humans in society, which is why diverse disciplinary divisions, defined by apparently differentiated and distant objects of study, methods, languages, epistemes, and ontological references, have appeared in that field's history. As a result, the divisions that had been imposed on the world from the disciplinary perspective have been reconsidered (Mardones, 2012; Wallerstein, 1996).

In 1945, as Wallerstein states, there was clarity about the dividing lines between, on the one hand, natural sciences and humanities—alluding to philosophy, literature, and arts—and, on the other hand, SSs—consisting of history, to study

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the modern world; economics, responsible for market matters; sociology, oriented toward civil society; and political science, focusing on state matters. In addition, anthropology was confined to the study of the non-modern world (Wallerstein, 1996). After World War II, these limits were questioned, and integrating stances suggesting an ontology of the social world as a complex entirety emerged to gain ground (Osorio, 2002; Zemelman, 1992), evidencing the need for integrations and interrelationships. Therefore, according to Wallerstein (2006), the need for a separation from the traditional divisions of SSs (and SSs from the natural sciences) means recognizing

> that the major issues facing a complex society cannot be solved by decomposing them into small parts that seem easy to manage analytically, but can only be truly solved by attempting to treat these problems, both humans and nature, in all their complexity and interrelations (p. 87).

It is continually said that OSs require SSs to understand the social dynamics that take place in organizations; this, in turn, implies recognizing the influence of OSs on SSs (Durango, 2005). Accordingly, this paper introduces two aspects to analyze. (1) Is it possible to take up the theoretical frameworks of SSs such as philosophy, sociology, and anthropology *partially*, without sufficient in-depth knowledge or even basic training in the discipline? (2) The analysis of organizational phenomena does not become comprehensive and critical simply by involving SSs—that is, the approach does not turn critical simply by mandating the application of SSs. In what sense and how are OSs included in SSs? This question calls to reflect on the multidisciplinarity, interdisciplinarity, or transdisciplinarity of OSs.

Are OSs multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, or transdisciplinary?

"Multidisciplinarity" means addressing a problem from different approaches. This does not involve dialogue, but requires multiple perspectives to provide diverse answers to the question. As Hernández points out (2017):

> Multidisciplinary work resembles a panel of experts, where each presents their point of view of a complex issue, based on their own discipline and the knowledge built within their discipline that is relevant to the problem. (p. 24).

Subsequently, Hernández states that "this way of addressing the problems does not necessarily synthesize the types of knowledge involved, nor conceive a shared task around a problem in which each contributes collectively to the solution" (Hernández, 2017, p. 24). This leads to a cooperation, integration, and exchange exercise (Morin, 1998, p. 15), in the search for connections that are inconceivable from a discipline's singularity.

"Interdisciplinarity" means

> Agreement and cooperation between two or more disciplines, each one contributing (in terms of theory or empirical research) their own conceptual structure, their way of defining problems, and their research methods. (Bottomore, 1983, as cited in López, 2012, p. 368).

At the core of this "way of getting to know reality," there are some ontological and epistemological assumptions that seek to understand the world in a relational and complex manner. Consequently, a disciplinary search is insufficient due to its specialization, because it does not favor connections in a diverse but interconnected reality. This results in "a new type of knowledge that exceeds the disciplinary and paradigmatic position, and creates, in turn, a common space that enriches the proper epistemological, ontological, and methodological elements of this discipline" (Delgado, 2009, p. 18).

According to Delgado (2009), "transdisciplinarity" is "at an epistemological level surpassing interdisciplinarity because it represents the highest level of knowledge integration" (p. 24). This perspective aims to transcend disciplinary borders, overcoming their limits and suggesting alternatives to build knowledge, that is, "opening all disciplines to those that traverse them and lie beyond them," as suggested by Basarab Nicolescu's "Charter of Transdisciplinarity," adopted at the First World Congress of Transdisciplinarity, held in 1994.

The foreign definitions and approaches of some notable texts on OSs often declare that OSs are an interdisciplinary field (Ibarra-Colado, 2008). Is this true? Does that conform to the Latin American reality? Why can they not be "pluridisciplinary"? The studies conducted from an interdisciplinary view are very few. The first reason, already mentioned, is that not all researchers are trained in a diversity of disciplines; the second reason is that not all problems can be addressed from all disciplines.

What theoretical frameworks constitute OSs?

What are the theoretical frameworks that form or are part of the *theoretical corpus* of OSs? What are the criteria to accept one

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or the other? Does it depend on the research proposal or the critical perspective used? Can the same theoretical framework be found in two different epistemic perspectives? "If everything fits in something, this 'something' does not exist," according to a saying in philosophy. If everything fits in OSs, the very OSs become distorted.

Researchers have classified different topics onto OSs, resulting in the identification of trends that are related, though not exclusively, to the OS corpus. The new institutionalism, organizational knowledge and learning, culture, organizational sociology, postmodernism, critical theory, etc., can be found among them (Gonzales-Miranda, Ocampo-Salazar, & Gentilin, 2018). However, beyond elucidating the classifying criteria, one concern emerges—creating, in turn, another tension. The field should be flexible enough to include other emerging theoretical frameworks that are being developed in Latin America and are claimed to be part of OSs.

Colonialism, gender, entrepreneurship, and innovation, among others, are examples of the subjects that researchers choose for analyzing the social dynamics in organizations. An additional concern is that many times, within these topics or in the very SSs, analyses take place without linking them properly to organizations. If the object of study is organizations, a variety of topics and disciplines are expected to delve into the organizational aspects, based on their own academic interests and theoretical frameworks. Does it need to be stated that such research projects are within OSs?

Do OSs have their own methodological perspective?

Considering the comprehensive nature of OSs, there is a virtual consensus for using the qualitative approach in studies. This is understandable, since the aim is to elucidate the meanings that actors assign to their actions. Nevertheless, one is also allowed to question the possibility of addressing organizational phenomena from a comprehensive vision by using a quantitative approach, or else by conducting mixed methods research. Furthermore, authors such as Medina (2010) invite the acceptance of methodological anarchism in the hope that innovative methodologies can be tested to study organizations. Another issue is quasi-exclusivity, or the tendency to choose an approach or strategy based the case study.

The extensive literature in this regard shows multiple conceptions of how to understand the case study: as a strategy (Archenti, Marradi, & Piovani, 2018; Galeano, 2012) or, as Simons (2011) points out, as an approach (differentiating it from method and strategy). Broadly speaking, and according to Stake (1999), "The case study is the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances" (p. 11). In other words, "the case study is the study of the singular, the particular, the unique" (Simons, 2011, p. 19). The case may be "an individual or collective unit—a person, an institution, a business, a program, a policy, a community, a system, a country" (Archenti et al., 2018, p. 292), as well as the research intentions "that impact the chosen methods to collect data" (Simons, 2011, p. 20).

On one hand, several authors resort to not reducing the case study to its methodological aspect (Galeano, 2012; Simons, 2011; Stake, 1999); on the other hand, it is understood that the methodological aspect comes from the very construction of the case, from the object of research. The case study "is not about a methodological option, but about choosing an object of study; what defines it is the interest in the object and not the method" (Archenti et al., 2018, p. 292).

On the other hand, when discussing its quantitative or qualitative nature, regarding the research techniques used in the case study, the use of qualitative techniques stands out; however, the quantitative nature is not discredited, but, depending on the study, is considered to be significant or not. As Simons (2011) states, "A case study is not synonymous with qualitative methods" (p. 40). Finally, when talking about the case study, it does not refer to a unique case, as the researcher can take multiple cases (Stake, 1999; Yin, 1994) to analyze them in a research project.

With this outlook, where in OSs is there exclusivity for this method–strategy? Can researchers be critical using a quantitative approach, and why is this type of study not fostered? What is a case study? Is it a method, as Stake (1999) states, or a strategy, as Yin (1994) does? Many times, things are taken for granted without the proper support or justification, and reviving the particular, with no universal assertions, is taken as conducting a case study.

Do OSs distance themselves from management?

The last element to be considered in this reflection exercise on OSs in Latin America is the relationship between this field of knowledge and management as a discipline (Rosa & Contreras, 2007; Echeverry, Chanlat, & Dávila, 1996; Kliksberg, 2005; Ocampo-Salazar, Gentilin, & Gonzales-Miranda, 2016). It is clear that OSs focus on the object of study of management, that is, on organizations (or their performance) and on the social dynamics that occur within them. Due to its nature, management does not

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have the required basis to be considered a science capable of giving universal signs of action and replication to its acts. Along with this, the approach of OSs implies "the creative destruction of existing formulas, recipes, and practices intended to reinvent the organization" (Clark, Clegg, & Ibarra-Colado, 2000, p. 123).

However, no organization is unsusceptible to management. In this sense, the relationship between management and organization is evident, and its analysis is imperative and irreplaceable (Gil, 2005). Far from treating them as watertight compartments and stigmatizing their positions, principles, foundations, and scopes, it is worth approaching them as complementary, since understanding the social phenomena better ends up positively impacting management. Works such as those by Ramírez, Vargas, and Rosa (2011) aim to build and define such bridges. However, the Latin American reality, overall, still has different opinions concerning this type of approaches, and some integrate excessively said realities to such a degree of showing no differences in an act that, instead of integrating them, distorts both realities (Fernández, Paramo, & Ramírez, 2008; Medina, 2010).

HOW TO BUILD A LANGUAGE PROPER OF OSS BASED ON A LOCAL CONTEXT AND REALITY?

Regarding ways of thinking and approaching reality, dialogue is enriched and learning spaces are favored by heterogeneity, diversity, and difference. Consequently, criteria that tend toward a mechanical and Cartesian universalization of reality are not intended to be unified. However, ambiguity introduces error, confusion, and certain relativism, where "everything fits." Thus, it becomes a complicated situation, a challenge. The discussion so far prompts the delimitation of the field, when it seems that what characterizes it is precisely that non-delimitation. Hence, is it possible to reconsider a definition that demarcates and restricts OSs and prevents them from holding other approaches? A paradox then emerges, encouraging thinking.

As a result, there is a clamor and a claim—so to speak—for the identity of OSs, for "that which makes that something is one thing and not the other," or, in more organizational terms, for that which is central, distinctive, and durable (Albert & Wheten, 1985; Gonzales-Miranda & Uribe, 2018). Nevertheless, in view of such intention that can place the discourse in essentialist terms (Ashforth, Rogers, & Corley, 2011), an *apparent contradiction* is structured. In Dubar's (2002) words, identity is the result of a double linguistic operation: *differentiation* and *generalization*. The former defines difference since it influences singularity in relation to other fields. The latter intends to define the common nexus of a series of different elements; thus, identity is common belonging. *These two operations are at the origin of the paradox of identity: what is unique is what is shared*.

What generalizes OSs?

There are many other fields of knowledge and theoretical approaches that share their own aspects with OSs. The critical spirit and the recurrence to SSs and humanities to study and analyze social aspects in organizations are among them. However, these two aspects are not essential, nor do they become a unique, deciding criterion. There are diverse modalities in the study of organizations that not only share these two characteristics, but also differentiate themselves regarding their space–time conditions, issues addressed, paradigmatic position, and methodological orientation. Table 1 summarizes the diverse modalities based on the proposal by Rendón and Montaño (2004).

The aim of this general presentation on the main trends in the study of organizations is to highlight their dissimilar theoretical approaches, which have prevailed for more than a century. It is clear that the development of each of them turns into something necessary to achieve a deeper understanding. However, the intention is to contribute to a vision that offers a wide outlook on the study of organizations, and to show the common points within the diversity of approaches. Moreover, this study's purpose, above all, is to question the air of exclusivity conferred to OSs with no support other than ignorance and, perhaps, vanity, masked with the arrogance of believing that it is the only organizational approach alternative available for the academic world, when, within the *organizational zoo* (Perrow, 1984), there are actually many parallel frameworks and currents that coexist in the universe of possibilities to study organizations.

What differentiates OSs?

As it was announced at the beginning of this discussion, the objective is not to formulate the definition of OSs, although the considerations posed, in the end, aim at and contribute to such purpose. Nevertheless, besides the analysis presented—as a first exercise to delimit the field—and unquestionably fostered by previous questions and thoughts, a set of important considerations are detailed to highlight the particularities of OSs.

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Exhibit 1. **Modalities of study of organizations**

Lines of thought	Origin	Orientation	Foundation	Object of study
Management	American (born with the great railway company). Chandler	Functional.	Prescriptive models based on experience.	Company.
Organization theory	American (unclear origin) scientific management, systems theory or human relations. Simon, Cyert and March.	Functional, with a broader social content.	It is constituted as a field of knowledge in itself.	Productive organizations (mainly). Close relationship with management.
Institutional analysis	French.	Critical. It questions the excesses to achieve excellence.	Psychosocial analysis. Unconscious elements that underlie every organization and prevent a more harmonious and balanced development.	Organization from the unconscious. Little known line of thought.
Sociology of work	French (Mexico and Brazil joined). Touraine and Naville. Freedman.	Critical (the institutional approach prevails).	It emphasizes aspects such as technology, working culture, gender, etc.	Themes that evolve as society transforms.
Sociology of organizations	Weber's inheritance (American sociological tradition with Merton and Gouldner, and French with Crozier).	Socio-constructivist.	It highlights the issue of power to "correct" the type of bureaucratic ideal.	Power in organizations. Public organizations.
Organizational analysis	It has no precise boundaries.	Socio-constructivist.	Eclectic stance. Particular modality of the sociology of organizations.	Collective action, organization as a process.
Sociology of the company	It emerged from sociology to study companies. Sainsaulieu and Segrestin.	Social (emerging field).	Social actors have an important place in the analysis.	Company.
Organizational studies	European (English sociologists).	Critical. Little relation with administrative theory. It takes elements from sociology of work and sociology of organizations.	It takes up organization theory from a critical point of view and incorporates the issue of culture and power to counteract American hegemony.	Organization. Little relation with management.

Source: the authors, based on Rendón and Montaño (2004).

A community around the study of organizations

The concept of community has been used in numerous forms by SSs. Its passage from anthropology to different disciplines has been swift and easy to accept, thanks to the simplicity of its meaning, whose first sense refers to every human grouping. However, the term is used to delimit human groups having a strong link, such as a religious one, or identity traits that keep it united, as in academia.

In this regard, Kuhn (1971), in his renowned work about academic—also called scientific—communities, states that these communities share a disciplinary matrix that should be understood as a set of elements—components around which its unity is built. Above all, it is important that such communities produce and validate academic or scientific knowledge through consensus. A discussion is introduced here: whether said knowledge, accumulated by practical experience, science, and technology, is not integrated but, on the contrary, consists of a juxtaposition of more-or-less consistent knowledge systems, as parts that show no coherence or even compatibility among them, since they are poles apart with specialized visions that mark and deepen differences (Schutz, 2003). As Bauman (2004) suggests, identities are volcanic crusts that harden, melt again, and frequently change.

Indeed, it would seem that OSs in Latin America are developing in such a way that incompatibility is their biggest feature and, therefore, they could hardly be considered a community as such. Despite epistemological differences or theoretical approaches, the object of study, and the critical view—that is, criteria that are often used interchangeably to find some sort of theoretical classification—there is a group of researchers that distances itself from the merely functional and instrumental to critically think and dig deeply in organizations.

In addition, the community is also made up of affections that lead researchers to favor a friendship relationship among colleagues, which allows them to build alliances and, as a result, to collaborate at the institutional and personal levels, to configure a particular thinking that respects differences and diverse views, but that groups itself around OSs. Therefore, the construction of dialogue spaces is significant, which favor academic meetings such as colloquia and conferences, as well as joint activities that promote research in this field of knowledge.

An object in constant organizing process

The concept of "organization" can be narrowed down by a functional–operational vision if it is considered as a set of individuals with common interests, who get together under certain structures and whose purpose is the efficiency and productivity of actions. From a more flexible and dynamic point of view, it is also conceived as a social and concrete entity with a certain lasting nature, with its own recognizable characteristics, and as a space within which social dynamics are developed and built.

> In this way, the meaning of the organizational is not noticeable; the phenomena present there turn into the unintelligible, which struggles to stand out, but hides latently in the dynamics of the human creation. Thus, the academic effort will focus on making it intelligible and, therefore, on making *the organizational* understandable (Gonzales-Miranda, 2014, p. 55).

The particularity of what is latent and the task of making it intelligible involve and require a certain theoretical framework. On that account, the interpretation and understanding of social dynamism will arise from the theoretical lens used, and, depending on the relevant and proper use of such a framework, the conceptualization of organization will vary.

Thus, the organizational component is merely the particular shape of social dynamics that occur in a specific way, which will be unique depending on each organization. In that sense, there will be no organizational identical to another, since the social fabric will be different, even though there are certain structural similarities shared by those belonging to the same economic sector. In addition, the organization component also refers to each entity's own organizing processes. The play on words between the noun and the verb explains a continuous dynamic of change and adaptation of the organization to the environment. This mobilizes its internal structure in such a way that it can adjust to the environment where it is located. Understanding the organizing process implies social developments on the construction of meaning, delimited by space–time dimensions that make them incomparable and, in turn, subject to constant change. This entails the need to clearly contextualize the organization and its course, while at the same time implying a detachment from any pretension of universalization.

This discussion also focuses on the object of study of OSs. It is valid to state that the object of study can be true or only a representation of that reality. Therefore, it could be said that it is a theoretically reconstructed object that has a place in a specific organization, and is a reflection of the possibility of search and analysis; or it is an empirical organizational process, thanks to methodological tools, seeking the possibility and relevance of its study in a coherent and consistent way. Furthermore, the object of

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study may also refer to dissecting the organizational component to emphasize some of the dynamics and processes, such as culture, decision-making, power relations, among others.

Regarding the above, and according to Rendón and Montaño (2004), this object can assume two ontological positions: its real existence outside the individual (independent of thought) or its construction as a methodological tool. In this way, the object of study is a device of the researcher that does not correspond faithfully to reality. It is a theoretical construct thanks to the presence of an organization which extends from the inside out (from the small organization to the interorganizational network) or vice versa (particular processes or structures—organizing), and which is limited by space–time dimensions. The latter influences its definition, since the object to be studied does not depend exclusively on the will of the researcher despite its construction. This is because delimitation implies considering the historical stage in which the specific problem is framed, the particular development of methodological tools, the theoretical approach, and the diverse modalities of representative social relations of the moment.

The reference to the substantial conversations of Nord et al. (2017) with other conversations is better understood here. It occurs as a spiral of knowledge, where the first conversation takes up the previous one to reach, in the next one, a deeper level of discussion and thus better understand the organizational phenomenon. Therefore, it is necessary to take a diachronic, rather than a synchronic, approach that unites a set of disciplines to decipher the multiple links, tensions, subjectivities and intersubjectivities, affections, meanings, power relations, communication, and symbolic meanings, among others. These are part of that complex reality represented by organizations and make all organized phenomena express the underlying social reality (Mandiola, 2016).

The critical approach

The critical component in OSs refers to works that have "a deliberate and explicit intention of questioning elements immersed in the tradition of the field that has studied them and in the relations of domination linked to it" (Sanabria, Saavedra, & Smida, 2014, p. 211). Accordingly:

> The task of critique in OSs is therefore to counter the "positive" version of critique that is made from within management, which does not question its essence and its function with regard to the reproduction of social structures that constantly generate victims; it is an ethical and ontological critique. (Misoczky, 2017, p. 147).

There is an emancipatory purpose that embodies a critique of the status quo that seeks to prevent administrative practices from objectifying the individual's humanity (Carvajal, 2002). Some of the different works include those inspired by the Frankfurt School, and the proposals that Alvesson and Deetz (2017) understand as the critical point of postmodernism, given its challenge to the existing world and its support for silenced or marginalized voices. Similarly, critique implies a praxis that, on the one hand, seeks understanding of the world and of the conditions of possibility that at a given moment have been constructed and allow for or limit the practices of freedom and, on the other hand, aims to search for the construction of alternative scenarios that allow for different social links, which leave aside relations of domination. Critique advocates individuals and groups free from "repressive social and ideological conditions, particularly those that impose socially unnecessary restrictions on the development and integration of human consciousness" (Alvesson & Willmott, 1992, as cited in Saavedra, 2009, p. 56).

As discussed in the previous sections, this is a crucial issue that still needs to be delimited, but its presence, as part of the style of analysis of OSs, is undeniable. Although the very definition of critique has yet to be defined for the region, this is an issue that constitutes and shapes a distinctive and therefore identity-based aspect of OSs. Undoubtedly, depending on the countries of the region and the history and structure of the field in each one of these places, the term will denote and cover different frameworks. However, the critical approach will certainly not be absent from the process of analysis and reflection that underlies all research processes in OSs.

A concern for the education of students

Research and teaching are not separated; understanding the organizational phenomenon does not contradict teaching. In this sense, there is a pedagogical strategy that aims to cultivate another means of approaching organizations in a critical and propositional way. It encourages students to think in a different way about the social organs called organizations, while at the same time proposing different alternatives for being in and understanding the world around them, and thus greater and better possibilities for intervention management of them from an ethical and responsible conception.

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In this way, the proposals of OSs complement the training of students in administrative and management issues. This does not demonize or discredit the functional-operational component of management; rather, recognizing its limitations and scope, it tends to complement it. It is clear and necessary that organizations should be well managed, with a sense of social responsibility and respect for the dignity and development of their members, and that they should also ensure the fair and proportionate achievement of expected returns for shareholders. In this way, without falling into recalcitrant dogmatism and exacerbated complaints, it is important to achieve a fair measure that balances both positions. Although what is "fair" may be difficult to achieve and to define, it is crucial for OSs in Latin America not to deny the administrative reality of management that integrates these tensions. Otherwise, they would aim at generating preconceptions and prejudices which, far from integrating critique into management, would end up ignoring or rejecting it.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The process of building a Latin American identity unquestionably involves knowing the organizational reality of this subcontinent. It is a task that requires the identification of characterizing themes and problems. Hence, they are constituted in categories that not only delimit the reality of Latin America, but consequently make it possible to show the differences with other latitudes where OSs emerged and have certainly consolidated (Europe and North America). In this process, it is important to take up the foreign references and make an appropriation "of our own" that explains the reality of the region, which leads to elaborate theoretical proposals and own alternatives of intervention that respond concretely to the vicissitudes and particularities of the Latin American subcontinent. The questions and reflections presented in this article have sought to contribute to this task.

A text by Argentine writer Ernesto Sábato (2000) provides insight into some of the challenges that the Latin American academic community faces in building its own language in the study of organizations. As part of this final reflection, it is worthwhile to encourage the appropriation of the ideas of such a famous Latin American writer:

> I believe we must resist: this has been my motto. But today, how often have I asked myself how best to embody that word, how to live resistance! Before, when life was less hard, I would have understood by resisting an heroic act, like refusing to continue riding this train that drives us to madness and misfortune. Can one ask people who have vertigo to rebel against it? Can one ask the men and women of my country to refuse to belong to this savage capitalism if they support their children, their parents? If they carry this responsibility, how are they going to abandon this life?
>
> The situation has changed so much that we must carefully assess what we mean by resistance. I cannot give you an answer. If I had it, I would emerge as the Salvation Army, or those delirious believers—perhaps the only ones who truly believe in testimony—to proclaim it on the street corners, with the urgency given by the few meters that separate us from the catastrophe. But no, I sense that it is something less formidable, smaller, like faith in a miracle, which I want to convey to you in this letter. Something that corresponds to the night we live in, just a candle, something with which we can wait (p. 85).

Resistance is part of identity. People resist because they defend what they are; they close ranks around what they consider to be their own, and refuse to change, at least in a fundamental sense. While there are many ways to understand resistance, it is undeniable that it has an unequivocal relationship with identity. Thus, following the author, the construction of a language is an invitation to consider the following.

The constitution and consolidation of a Latin American identity requires knowledge of its territory, and, in that sense, it is necessary to go deeply into the particular and unique way in which these organizations develop and survive day by day. Thus, referring to what Chia said (2015) at the beginning of this discussion, the reality of quotidian matters allows for the identification, understanding, and analysis of what is "Latin American" about these organizations. This favors a deconstruction far from preconceived foreign references, and a constant preconception of what Latin America is for the rest of the world. Considering one's own discourse based on an analysis of the different local realities of Latin America will undoubtedly unite the understanding and knowledge of the global organizational society.

This implies recognizing a constant tension to avoid colonization, which is closely related to not falling into the logic of academic capitalism in its various manifestations, which Sábato calls "savage." Hence, one of the ways to constitute a regional community regarding OSs consists in demarcating the lines of dissemination in journals and academic environments.

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These spaces should provide the means to explain and express a unique development, avoiding the need to sacrifice the critical spirit and the local comprehensive view. It also prevents falling into the vortex of publishing in high-impact journals according to international pressures, which is an aspect that is well received for the criteria of accreditation, if not demanded. In that sense, resistance implies the achievement and strengthening of Latin American spaces of dissemination that operate with publishing logics far from editorial projects that make the ranking criteria prevail over the production and dissemination of knowledge that responds to the real needs of the region.

Another form of resistance is lighting a candle. What does this mean? Candles have been associated with waiting, with the virtuous capacity to wait, which leads to hope. What is expected? It is expected that life in the organizations will respect the dignity, autonomy, development, and legitimate rights of those who are a part of it. It is basically about contributing from academia to build a society where everyone fits. It is also about generating awareness that contributes to a transformation; and, when necessary, the courage to denounce practices that go against this integrity. Language implies a call to action from the local reality to study Latin American organizations—not just a call to contemplation in the form of a theoretical thought (always relevant and urgent, perhaps a starter), but also to the concrete transformation of organizations.

The students in classrooms today will become the leaders with the responsibility to accompany and guide future generations in organizations. It is important to help sow actions and see them materialize, which will lead these men and women to respect human integrity. Although today it is not possible to see the scope of what can be built from the Latin American OSs, hope allows having confidence and thus working tirelessly to achieve it. Work is not done for what is seen today, but for what is wanted and desired in the future.

This document is not intended to be a tool for leveling, but rather a means to return to the rough ground, to return the questions about those aspects of identity still under construction. It also proposes to return to the difficult questions that get people out of permanent comfort and force them to think, to listen to others, to learn—to continue the seemingly endless process of maturation. At the same time, it is an opportunity to continue writing the history of Latin America in a language "of our own;" it is the process of building community from the difference that enriches dialogue. Dissent, openness to other approaches, and critique are therefore always welcome, as they manifest the style of dialogue in the field that seeks to understand organizations.

Finally, it aims to cover the rough, stony, and difficult ground of OSs in Latin America, as the region needs friction to move forward.

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EXPERIENCING AGRESTE: TRIALS FOR RESEARCH ABOUT PEOPLE AND BUSINESS IN A PERIPHERAL CONTEXT

Experiências Agrestinas: Pistas para a pesquisa sobre gente e negócios em contexto periférico

Experiencias del Agreste: Pistas para la investigación sobre gente y negocios en contexto periférico

ABSTRACT

This epistemological essay, which emerges from experiences set in the Agreste of Pernambuco between 2007 and 2016, has the main objective to systematize epistemic clues for research on people and businesses in a peripheral context, in the sense of greater linguistic clarification. After the introduction, some socio-historical features that constitute a place and its people are presented, followed by a brief retrospective look at such experiences. In the main section, clues are exposed that point to: (1) the need for an appropriate understanding of the context as peripheral; (2) advancement in the construction of a scientific mode of production appropriate to that context; (3) the relevance of clarifications about language as an ordinary action of researchers and researched people; and (4) argumentative rhetoric in the sense to achieve legitimacy in accordance with the audience to which it is directed. The text ends with brief concluding remarks.

KEYWORDS | Agreste, Bourdieu, epistemology, linguistic practice, peripheral business.

RESUMO

Este ensaio epistemológico, que se ergue a partir de experiências ambientadas no Agreste pernambucano entre 2007 e 2016, tem como objetivo principal sistematizar pistas epistêmicas para pesquisa sobre gente e negócios em contexto periférico, no sentido de maiores esclarecimentos linguísticos. Após a introdução, alguns traços sócio-históricos que constituem o lugar e sua gente são apresentados e seguidos de um breve olhar retrospectivo para tais experiências. Na seção principal, são expostas as pistas que apontam para: (1) a necessidade de uma compreensão apropriada do contexto como periférico; (2) o avanço na construção de um modo de produção científico apropriado ao referido contexto; (3) a relevância de esclarecimentos sobre a linguagem como ação ordinária própria e dos pesquisados; e (4) a retórica argumentativa como meio para se alcançar a legitimidade em conformidade ao auditório ao qual se dirige. O texto termina com breves considerações finais.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE | *Agreste, Bourdieu, epistemologia, prática linguística, negócios periféricos.*

RESUMEN

Este ensayo epistemológico, que surge a partir de experiencias ambientadas en el Agreste pernambucano entre 2007 y 2016, tiene como objetivo principal sistematizar pistas epistémicas para investigación sobre gente y negocios en contexto periférico, en el sentido de mayores aclaraciones lingüísticas. Después de la introducción, se presentan algunos rasgos sociohistóricos que constituyen el lugar y su gente, seguidos de una breve mirada retrospectiva a tales experiencias. En la sección principal se exponen pistas que apuntan: (1) la necesidad de una adecuada comprensión del contexto como periférico; (2) el avance en la construcción de un modo de producción científico apropiado a dicho contexto; (3) la relevancia de aclaraciones sobre el lenguaje como acción ordinaria propia y de los encuestados; y (4) la retórica argumentativa como medio para alcanzar la legitimidad en conformidad al auditorio al que se dirige. El texto termina con breves consideraciones finales.

PALABRAS CLAVE | *Agreste, Bourdieu, epistemología, práctica lingüística, negocios periféricos.*

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INTRODUCTION

Since the last century, the hegemony of great narratives (Lyotard, 2002) has been questioned in disputes over scientific legitimacy. Views, modest practices, and detailed knowledge production have gradually started occupying more space; over time, they started to be regarded as potentially valid in several sheltered communities under the human and social sciences cloak (Portocarrero, 1994; Vessuri 1991).

Theoretical-epistemic approaches have emerged from that context due to localized research objects with attention to the social and historical specificities, which also condition the phenomenon of interest. However, they are influenced by Western social thinking embodied advances, many stemming from the so-called "linguistic turn", as the constructivist explanation of that field-characters-phenomena-researcher is a unique relation. The scope fits the research experiences shared here with Brazilian Organizational Studies.

The text that follows should not be read as an article or conventional theoretical essay; after all, there are no research problems, hypotheses, results or even a theoretical argument to be exposed and defended. Perhaps the best way to call it is an epistemological test, which purports to be added to these emerging alternative approaches in recent decades. Through the author's eyes, an essay of this nature can address issues such as the following: Which epistemic approaches have structured social researches? In what ways are such approaches put into practice? What types of learning can be incorporated and shared from such experiences? Can they inspire other community members of which they are a part? How can they serve as a guide for epistemic advances in a researcher's life?

The choice of this writing form occurred due to the need to systematize investigative experiences' epistemic developments and build a better guide for future practice. The synthesis of features that characterize a specific context, the recovery of a long-term investigative trajectory in such an environment and, mainly, the systematization of clues from the confrontation of such trajectory with specialized contemporary literature are the elements, materialized in the following sections, that articulate such form and content.

Its constitutive source is accumulated learning; over 10 years (2007-2016) of social research experiences of an active researcher in the scientific fields of Sociology, Management, and Organizational Studies have acclimated in Pernambuco's harsh Agreste region and faced some of the aforementioned epistemological advances, in particular, impacts on linguistic terms such as the *modus operandi* and the scientific *habitus* (Bourdieu, 2014). Its main objective is to systematize epistemic tracks for research about people and business in peripheral context, towards a better clarified linguistic practice. We believe that these slopes may be useful to both the continuity of the problematized investigative trajectory and inspire other contextual initiatives more or less near to the harsh region of Agreste.

After this introduction, we present some social and historical traits that constitute the place and its people, followed by a brief redemption of research trajectory in hinterland soil. In the main section, we expose, one by one, the four elaborated epistemic lanes. Finally, a summary of them is offered along with the final considerations.

SOCIO-HISTORICAL TRACES OF PRESENT-DAY

Located in a strip between the Zona da Mata and the Sertão, in the interior of Northeast Brazil, there is a region that cuts through its eastern states such as Pernambuco and Paraíba. For Andrade (2005), it is a "transition zone, with stretches almost as wet as the forest (Zona da Mata region) and others as dry as the semiarid areas, like in Sertão region, alternating constantly and the short distance, the people called Agreste" (p. 37). Moreover, for the same author, what characterizes such localism "is the diversity of landscapes it offers in short distances, functioning almost like a miniature of the Northeast, with its very dry and very humid areas" (p. 44).

Due to the agricultural decline in the region between the mid-18th and 20th centuries, people's needs and families of that region were directed to the urban universe. The main destinations of the departed people were the nearest major cities, particularly Recife, and metro cities like São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro (Andrade, 2005; Oliveira, 2013). At the same time, local alternatives emerged - such as the use of leather in shoes in Caruaru and Toritama, and the case of sewing with fabric scraps in Santa Cruz do Capibaribe (SCC) (Lira, 2011) - for the residents who were already living in those villages and cities, as well as others that arrived from the rural surroundings.

Through this historic course, there was a continued place conjugation characterized by (1) demand for products needed to survive in rural areas, (2) the sale of agricultural products grown by the family members including children, (3) a context of life where the communities had their own Mass and fairs as main events, due to (4) the need of the inhabitants of these small villages to obtain supplies of items produced in rural surroundings and (5) the traveling salesmen's transit, which promoted the circulation of

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coastal-backland goods (Andrade, 2005; Ferreira, 2001; Oliveira, 2013). All these form the local collective trajectory that shapes and has been shaped by encouraging the street fair trade that was endangered there (Sá, 2015a, 2018a).

The origin of Caruaru, the main urban center of Pernambuco, is decisively linked to the constitution of its street fair (Ferreira, 2001). The way how this inheritance became embedded in the directions taken by Caruaru is unique. Even today, in a city of roughly over 350,000 inhabitants, (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatítica, 2016) self-styled as the "capital of the Agreste", it is hard to imagine an individual from its lower classes, and even from other not so popular classes, that does not have at least one relative, friend or neighbor who engages in activities related to its commerce or its manufacturing sector. In the case of Pernambuco's Agreste, its street market (street fair) can be seen as if it were an ancestral gift incorporated by a significant part of its present population. The inherent and habitual dynamics of street fairs, to familiar domestic sewing practices, to rural inheritance present in the family organization, as well as to migration of some of its family members to major Brazilian urban centers, especially Rio and São Paulo, are common to the broader spectrum of its region. They are historic remains, which still constitute the local socio-cultural fabric that is incorporated in its inhabitants (Sá, 2015a, 2018a).

In summary, from the second half of the last century, Agreste ceased to be simply a rural area connected by little communities, which saw the emergence and consolidation of manufacturing jobs from the fabric scraps in the trash by the fabric industry from Recife and São Paulo. It, in part, reversed its historical trend of being a perennial source of unskilled labor for the main Brazilian metro cities. In the last decades, thousands of people returned to "The Agreste's clothing" from various places, mainly from Northeast Brazil, to try their luck there. All this was been happening without the presence of big foreign industries from other Brazilian regions, which activity have started and continued from their homes and backyards of numerous families, by exploiting the labor of their children, aggregates or subcontractors in precarious work conditions, creating an urban landscape like Toritama, a place that, according to an informant, "looks like a big factory disguised as a city by its houses' facades".

Families that manufacture jobs in their yards, youth that start a small business (many of them with the desire of transforming their business into something bigger), and small and medium industries, which have formed over the past decades, are just some of the possible productive configurations found in the region. The street fair commerce tradition such as the Sulanca's Fair and sales centers' modernity are its version "for clothing", as in the Caruaru's Commercial Polo or the Santa Cruz's Fashion Center (proclaimed in its advertising as the largest fashion center of Latin America) that coexist in Agreste as market spaces for regional clothing production in the 21st century.

A TRAJECTORY OF SOCIAL RESEARCH IN RETROSPECTIVE (2007-2016)

The research experiences that nourish the development of epistemic clues, the main scope of this text, emerged from a research trajectory located in that specific socio-historical context. Its starting point is in 2007 when the author of this essay changed his home address to Caruaru and started to investigate the way people design and conform to business characteristics related to peripheral conditions from that area.

Initially, it seemed reasonable to direct questions to people who, along with carrying that local collective history, lived and acted there as owners of small fair businesses. Many of them still have those businesses as their main occupational activity, which have been their income source and input mode in the economic and socio-cultural dynamics of truncated modernization. Accordingly, we began to make use of Bourdieu's sociology and initially, undertook two surveys in Agreste. The first one focused on people's condition who lived there and acted as owners of small fair businesses. Even though the activity is not uncommon, it took on very particular proportions in its urbanization of the constitution of its social fabric, in short, in the *habitus* of Caruaru's and Agreste's people (Sá, 2018a).

From 2007 and 2010, investigations were carried on these two issues: Who are Caruaru's fair merchants? How do they carry on their businesses? We resorted to various techniques (ethnographic observations, conversations, surveys, interviews, etc.) to characterize the set of small trade fair owners' provisions, as well as how the demands of the modernization process were incorporated even in a business environment like that (Sá, 2013b, 2018a, 2018b).

Parallel to this, another exploratory investigation was carried out on the contemporary businessman's ways of thinking, acting, and feeling. Through a series of articulated initiatives, a preliminary analysis was done at the end of the study, which pointed to three profiles of executives and recurrent entrepreneurs in the region: those trained for business, the social ascendant through business, and the heir to the tradition of commerce (Sá, 2010, 2013a). From these two results, doubts arose that they were problematized in methodological and epistemic terms, which allowed to establish some guidelines, premises, and

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understandings for the systematization of the clues that constitute the next section (Sá & Mattos, 2016).

Over the past few years (2011-2016), the investigative trajectory covered the condition of specific characters among the various owners who worked in the business universe. Due to the prominence of the clothing business on the local level, as well as the need to delimit the empirical field in these terms, the focus was directed to the business owners of clothing production and commercialization in Agreste, Pernambuco. The results of this latest research were presented in a thesis on Sociology that proposed to understand how those people and their businesses evolved from a common local collective history shared through street fairs, and the dimension that this story took in the regional dynamics; today, they constitute a specific business field (Sá, 2015a, 2017).

In the first study, the reflexes imposed by the modernization process on the investigated characters are emphasized and in the second one, the local collective history incorporated in the individuals stands out and its remarkable configuration of a peripheral market is visible. Moreover, it is also believed to have advanced in the understanding and more reflective use of Bourdieusian epistemology by articulating it with the impacts of the second Wittgenstein philosophy and the new bases of rationality and argumentation based on Habermas' work. In summary, it was mainly from (a) the epistemic advances promoted due to the doubts inherited from the initial years of the research trajectory recovered here and (b) from this last experience, the next section could be elaborated with theoretical-epistemic increments in its approach and achieve greater practical-linguistic clarification.

EPISTEMIC TRACKS FOR RESEARCH ON PEOPLE AND BUSINESS IN A PERIPHERAL CONTEXT

The clues that follow are attempts to synthesize some learnings and convictions that have been progressively consolidated along that practical research trajectory with epistemic reflexivity. Each of them stems from demands arising from the challenges faced by a type of constructivist practice in which it is understood that the field and researcher are unique and constitute a relationship in these terms. With new situations, alternative approaches to the production of knowledge under local measures need to be (re)articulated. It is also worth noting that the following directions were also progressively incorporated, practiced and only now, a *posteriori*, systematized in the terms that follow.

First clue: to progressively develop an appropriate understanding of that context as peripheral (in an "escape route" from two extremisms, the totalitarianism of the universal and the local fundamentalism)

A particular context such as Agreste needs to be properly understood, that is, emphasizing its own traits, but without losing the notion that it can be compared with others. This is precisely what qualifies its condition as peripheral. On the one hand, it is inserted in the plot of "globalization," with historical specificities still significant in the dynamics of life (culture, society, and economy) and work (organization, relations, and occupations) of its population.

Ideas such as those of the center and periphery are here appropriated and reframed as notions. They, thus, play the role of situating relationally in the global and national geopolitics and the symbolism associated with it, and highlight the importance of investment in the elaboration of understanding about the place. In other words, they do not assume their own essentialist meanings, but rather they are support instruments to understand that the locus of such investigative experiences. The clues presented here are a reference to others that serve as a parameter for the judgment of what is taken as "more developed" or "legitimate"- for example, Caruaru can be seen as a periphery to Recife, which can be seen in the same way in relation with São Paulo. In summary, the contexts that have been seen as central, offer the standards by which peripheries tend to be evaluated.

In particular, concerning the place of Agreste in such a framework, it is noted that:

> In general terms, I think it is reasonable to say about this portion of Agreste that: (a) the trajectory of the last decades of the micro-region is constituted through a truncated modernization process, with different dynamics which are characteristic of the margins of contemporary capitalism that, in a relational perspective, can be seen as a peripheral process; (b) coexistences and associations to the ideas of "modern", "traditional" and hybridism are still remarkable today; (c) the type of "knowledge" most valued was (and still is) what can be associated with the idea of "social capital" (Bourdieu), that is, meeting people and being able to use them when necessary (it is common the expression "someone has knowledge" being used in this sense, speaking of "sci-

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> entific knowledge" does not yet have a reasonably defined meaning and valuation locally); (d) social relations have strong traits of personalism, patriarchy and informality, with little observance and recognition of institutional instances and relationships. (Sá, 2019, pp. 370-371)

An appropriate understanding of such a context does not pass through two extremisms that persist among the narratives that also dispute scientific legitimacy. At the end of an imaginary continuum, a "totalitarianism of the universal" may exist. In this, generalization and generalizable ideas are taken to the extreme, such as approaches to entrepreneurship (or "entrepreneurial" ideology). Perhaps in reaction to this totalizing extremism, another one, "local fundamentalism," gained strength. Here, the context becomes a unique and different dimension from everything else and everyone else, which cannot be compared with other contexts around the world. Atavistic regionalism and theoretical Bairrism are ways that can serve to illustrate this other extreme attitude.

In recent years, the need for an escape route from these two extremisms in the author of this text led to building Agreste as a peripheral context. Conceiving it like that is to imply, on the one hand, its geopolitical and cultural place when compared to the main regions, cities, and activities in Brazil and around the world. After all, these occupy a central position not only in the economy but also in consumption patterns, lifestyles, ways of thinking and understanding each other in the world, and even in the dreams that constitute themselves on the judgment of what is outside, taken as more modern, and which operates very intimate symbolic violence in life outside the centers.

With their particular and typical features, businesses are also a reflection of the context in which they are inserted. If, on the one hand, strong singularities can be seen in these, on the other hand, they can still be similar to others also located on the periphery of the contemporary world market. Seeing them like this can be useful in two ways. In the first one, not to repeat uncritically a type of faith-practice of cultural Atavism that sings a street fair as a *sui generis* local heritage, something particular and distinctive to the region - when a look around the world allows us to find street fairs that happened for centuries and even today, they take place in the new millennium. In the second, to not simply strive to accept the universalized diktats of the global market. If, on the one hand, local history should not be overestimated in terms of becoming a source of identity extremisms without reasonable arguments, on the other, it should also not be devalued by generalizing views that bring previously articulated explanations to localized phenomena (Sá, 2018a).

To research social phenomena in peripheral environments, it is necessary to consider both the features of local collective history and those of world modernization, particularly in a way where both mix and reconfigure themselves in the productive and commercial forms and dynamics of the Agreste context. There is no predefined analytical formula for phenomena that emerge in such an environment. However, some examples of such mixtures and reconfigurations can be recovered to explain such analytical challenges. A significant part of the machines used in the manufacturing process is imported (from China and Japan, for example), but it is used with improvisation (as in the case of the use of polyethylene terephthalate bottle cap to mark jeans during the industrial washing process), local users put into practice their creative empiricism to overcome their limitations to the domain and fully use such equipment resources. Global-local hybridism can also be seen in the clandestine production of world brands (Lacoste, Nike, etc.) or "little fashion", a specific type of production that quickly reproduces (in the following week) the fashion trends worn by the characters that stand out in national soap operas. Such examples indicate the need for an analysis tailored to local needs because there is no way to separate the effects of such symbiosis in this scope.

In summary, through the construction of the peripheral as a relational notion, this clue may direct greater attention to the insertion of a context such as Agreste in the global plot of this new millennium, but in its own way, in its geopolitical condition. This can allow learning to characterize in the best possible way - through comparisons with other similar contexts, as well as beyond the economy, that is, also in socio-cultural, political and historical terms - a business context set on the margins of the "global" market. The section "Socio-historical features of what here is called Agreste" also serves to illustrate nuances of the historical trajectory of the region's present and suggest that its insertion in the global plot represents a challenge to social research.

Second clue: to advance the construction of a scientific method of local production (in this case, from the legacy of Bourdieusian epistemology)

In this sense, it starts from the previously mentioned premise - "it is understood that the practice of social science in a wild context is a historical-cultural product conditioned by the circumstances and interactions from which its result is generated; that social immersion is a necessary condition [...] for the design of appropriate epistemic approaches." (Sá & Mattos, 2016, p.

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629) This builds a method of scientific production tailored to the local business, taken as a reference and strongly inspired by the legacy of Bourdieusian epistemology.

If Pierre Bourdieu achieved different status in contemporary social sciences, it was due to his skill in handling the different authors and contexts that he used. In particular to what we want to deal with here, the specialized literature highlights the remarkable innovation promoted by its *modus operandi* (Baranger, 2012; Brubaker, 1993; Wacquant, 2006), that is, by its way of producing knowledge about the social - something that was more or less shared with his followers and disseminated through publications and courses. However, what is special and useful about this legacy for those who research peripheral contexts (and phenomena) is that such *modus operandi* allow re-elaborations tailored to localisms and geopolitically situated scientific research experience.

The relevance and emphasis that Bourdieusian epistemology attributes to the construction of an object of study are one of its most distinctive contributions in this field. In his view, such a process does not occur by a "foundational act" or "only once," but by successive approximations between the researcher and what one wants to study (Bourdieu, 1989; Sá, 2015b, 2018a).

The constructed object of study, which is intended to be scientific, is covered by the socio-historical, cultural, economic and political context where the phenomenon, to which the object under study (created by the researcher) refers, occurs. Thus, it is not reasonable to repeat formulas made for other problematizations but to move forward, based on what is inspiring and fruitful in the practical knowledge of scientific tradition, towards the construction of its own *modus operandi*. It is precisely here that attention comes to the measure of localized contingency since "practice is always underestimated and under-analyzed, whereas, to understand it, a lot of theoretical competence is needed, much more, paradoxically, than to understand a theory" (Bourdieu, 2014, p. 60).

It is interesting to note that even his theoretical metalanguage (the concepts-notions he created: *habitus*, field, social space and symbolic capital, etc.) needs to be used by the researcher, who proposes this, as instruments to organize and make sense of research practice. This would be the role of theory in its epistemology (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Robbins, 2004) and, consequently, in that related to those who wish to build elaborate arguments about new objects from it. As Brubaker (1993) pointed out, Bourdieu's social theory needs to be observed as a *habitus*, a specific way of elaborating rigorous studies and proper arguments about social phenomena because after all, "the true principle of scientific practices is a system of basic dispositions [...] This *habitus* takes specific forms according to specialties" (Bourdieu, 2014, p. 63).

The in-depth study of Bourdieusian epistemology (Baranguer, 2012; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) compels us to think with and against its bases; in other words, there is constructivist epistemology in it. The theoretical and epistemological instruments, developed in this original approach, can be re-signified and thus serve as inspiration for other creations due to demands for their own conceptual shortcuts, that is, to elaborate the terms capable of serving as a theoretical-epistemic compass to the localized work of empirical research (Bourdieu, 1989; Sá, 2015b, 2018a).

Two shorthand solutions can serve to illustrate what is intended to be highlighted with this clue. Due to the need to designate the cultural matrix of street fair commerce socially incorporated by a significant part of the Agreste's population, a re-signification of a Bourdieusian notion was undertaken; "*habitus* marketer" was the term that came to be used in this sense, enabling the characterization of social aspects incorporated by individuals who were socialized amid this type of commercial activity.

Given the modes of incorporation and disincorporation of dispositions associated with the aforementioned market *habitus*, observed along the last decade's historical trajectory of Agreste's area, a term was needed that could highlight the intra-individual and interindividual variations of the emerged (Lahire, 2006) local collective heritage. A term was needed that would allow the research to be guided not only by the inherited dispositions but also by the changes that such *habitus* has been undergoing in the 21st century. The term "sons of fairs" was the solution found both to express the history of the bond of one of the audiences surveyed (owners of clothing production and marketing businesses), with the aforementioned cultural matrix and its market *habitus*, as well as to support the characterization of the most recent objective and symbolic distinctions and similarities among some of their selected profiles in research (Sá, 2015a, 2018a).

Both the theoretical-epistemic instruments do not have a substantive value limited to a conceptual definition, but rather the practical utility of guiding research work in that empirical field. On one hand, the Bourdieusian epistemology can support social research in a peripheral context, and on the other hand, the phenomena re-elaborated as objects-themes of research demand their own language developed through a *modus operandi* progressively incorporated as scientific *habitus*. It is understood that the *opus operatum* of his work is an argumentative construction inseparable from his conditions of production. that is, from the context and a progressive understanding of it, exactly

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as indicated in the previous clue. In addition, it is believed that such clarifications can be properly nourished by the contributions that are sought to be made explicit in the following clues more directed to language issues.

Third clue: to clarify that language is also an ordinary action in social research and that it is necessary, in addition to scientific, to invest in the language knowledge of those surveyed

Both this and the next clue had already been hinted before (Sá & Mattos, 2016). However, an advancement in the elaboration and systematization of both clues has been proposed with new increments. Here, the lesson of the "language game" of the second Wittgenstein is incorporated, and, in the next, the advances in rationality and scientific argumentation from Habermas are incorporated.

How can we better know the meaning of what is said by people who live and negotiate in a context like Agreste? How to do linguistically enlightened social research there, too? Wittgenstein (2011) turned against a representationalist conception of language, which he had previously adhered to (in Tractatus...), and abandoned the search for the best way to say what things are and turned to the understanding of the meanings that the terms acquire in historically situated pragmatic interactions, specifically, "forms of life" (in Philosophical Investigations). A metáfora que ele mesmo criou para se esclarecer sobre tais interações, a ideia de "jogos de linguagem", é um recurso que também tem potencial de esclarecimento tanto para o próprio pesquisador, sobre a linguagem que constitui em sua prática ordinária de pesquisa, quanto acerca da linguagem dos pesquisados, que reelaboram jogos próprios ao contexto no qual se encontram imersos.

Wittgenstein (2011) pointed out that language games show "how language works", and they also show that, even following the same rules, nobody plays the same way and that "it is by playing the game that we learn, in fact, its rules". The idea is presented as a pertinent way of understanding the limits of language itself, in a metaphorical and contingent way in which impressions are communicated (inseparable from each other's linguistic repertoire and the way they can be elaborated from it). In this perspective, how to issue previous definitions of the meaning of a term or statement, if what is likely to be observed is a circumstantial use? Such uses, even if starting from common rules in which interaction is inserted, are unique and need to be understood by themselves.

Communication performances need a context in which they can occur and, in this situation, acquire meanings. We are always elaborating images of what we see, such as kinships and the similarities between "families of concepts" that allow us to establish associations between the terms used in different language games.

Such reflection highlights the need for an epistemic preparation for the practice of social research in the most diverse contexts in which it can happen. To problematize the very way in which it is conceived and called what it studies seems to be a challenge that still prevails in social research. When advancing in this direction, how to talk about what is being studied becomes a pertinent question.

In a peripheral context such as Agreste, this clarification points, on the one hand, to the need to learn, live and analyze the language of those surveyed who constitute and are constituted by such cultural matrix, and, on the other hand, that the allegedly scientific language generation from local immersion is also an ordinary action to those who are inserted there. The researcher sees himself, then, as a double player; on the one hand, it plays with abstractions and efforts towards the construction of an argument, and, on the other hand, with the ways of saying things by including the native terms and expressions that it has learned. After all, for Oliveira (2006), "it is impossible to determine the meaning of words without considering the socio-practical context in which they are used" (p. 131).

What has been exposed so far on this track is the development of a second premise previously presented in Sá and Mattos (2016): "it is believed that the classical conception of language - expression of something interior (thought, etc.) - has to be giving way place for a pragmatic understanding: it is a form of action, always symbolic. You cannot separate language and relationship, or interrelation, because every language is a form of social relationship" (p. 631). As a result, the possibilities of understanding what is being said (and its implicitness) depend on the level of immersion and self-investment that the researcher makes in that practical and historical context, that is, in the broadening of understanding of the objective and symbolic meanings of the language- localized action.

As an illustration of this clue's usefulness, below, two experiences are recovered that explain how such an understanding of respondents' language is integrated with the interpretation and textual production in Social Science.

A marketer, interviewed in the first research experience mentioned earlier, used to repeat that he was "too *stubborn*" (spoken differently from usual to the researcher's context and knowledge). By listening to their stories and observing their daily action (through techniques inspired by ethnography), it was possible to construct an interpretation of what would be behind

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such expression. Through investing in deepening the understanding of the interviewee's language and context, it was possible to argue that what he said as "stubbornness" (spoken differently from usual to the researcher's context and knowledge) expressed his socio-cultural inadequacy to the São Paulo context, which did not happen in his current action context at the fair (Sá, 2018b).

While speaking (in a semi-structured interview) about the biggest difficulties he had been through, a clothing business owner interviewed in his most recent experience (referred to in Section 2) used the term "biting" to differentiate his living situations from "business break". According to him, it had "cracked" several times, but it had never broken. Due to the nature of the clothing business in Agreste being informal and having much to deal with post-dated checks, reports from owners who went broke a few times were recurring (many of them due to bad checks issued by buyers from other states).

In summary, with these two examples, we tried to highlight that more emblematic expressions only start to make sense to the researcher-listener after self-investing in the context of the interviewed-interactants. It is the meaning of such sayings and implicitness that needs to be articulated in the "piece of argumentative rhetoric" (Mattos, 2002) to be subjected to peer screening.

Fourth clue: to support the presentation of its results with well-justified argumentative rhetoric, before peers and in the context, to achieve legitimacy in both spheres

Who to turn to and what to rely on for the elaboration of doubly justified argumentative rhetoric, that is, with the claim of recognition as valid before peers and the context? In what ways would it be possible to elaborate a reasonable argument capable of being considered knowledge in Social Sciences as much as with the public it deals with?

In Post-Metaphysical Thinking, Habermas (1990) outlines four main paths he takes throughout the book and, perhaps, along with the epistemological movements of his thinking. Its "modern motives" can be taken as elementary positions to the constitution of contemporary social thought. The latter would need to follow (1) the trail of the issue pursued by the Vienna Circle (the search for criteria for the validity of supposedly scientific propositions, as opposed to metaphysical thinking); (2) the repositioning of what was believed to be scientific "knowledge" as "discourse", a linguistic product, starting from the second Wittgenstein; (3) the revision of the conception of reason centered on the individual-subject (which relates to objects of study) for that of a communicative reason, centered on the constitution and constitutive intersubjectivity of the social fabric and its subject-subject relations; (4) the primacy of the practical world, of its dynamics, of its needs and questions for the elaboration of theory, an inversion in the traditional logic adopted in social research, in particular in Sociology - where "good theory comes first" (Habermas, 1990).

In general, Habermas' theory points to a common demand in science: convincing arguments are presented that satisfy a complex set of logical, dialectical and rhetorical patterns of evaluation, obviously within a social-institutional context of a dispute, patterns of conduct, and recognition (Rehg, 2009). "So the question is, what arguments should we consider as convincing indicators of the truth of your conclusions? In response, Habermas' theory says: those arguments that persuade us in the right way, that is, by the virtue of logical merits with dialogical credentials" (Rehg, 2009, p. 151).

In the context of the linguistic turn, Rehg (2009, p. 21-30) deals with what he calls "rhetorical turn". Its repercussion is in the rupture of disciplinary boundaries, the emergence of "interdisciplinary cooperation", and even what he calls "cross-fertilization" between different disciplines through frontier concepts, such as discourse, rhetoric, and text that come to be freely used between areas such as Literary Studies, Sociology, Linguistics, History, Philosophy, and Communication. In general terms, it is proposed to "understand science as an argumentative process"; this argument is understood not as a deductive demonstration, but as a construct to convince an audience. It is necessary to go beyond the concept of "formal" argument (assumptions-analyzes-conclusions) and face argumentation as a type of social interaction from that precise point.

Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1992) present a proposal to break with the Cartesian conception of reason/reasoning (which deals with reason as something inherent in a "more geometric" system of thought) from the rescue of Greek rhetoric and dialectic. It is in this sense that they propose a theory that turns to the structure of argumentation and aims at "the study of discursive techniques that allow provoking or increasing the spirits' adhesion to the theses that were presented to their consent" (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1992, pp. 4-5).

The acceptance of the post-turn philosophy validity also imposes particular attention to the necessary adaptation of the speaker to the auditorium on the social scientist; after all, "it is in function of an auditorium that all arguments are developed" (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1992, p. 7). In other words, the results of the research must have their presentations adapted

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to the public (whether it is "general," students, an examining board or even peers at a scientific event). Adaptation is the duty of the speaker and not the audience with which one wishes or needs to communicate. If, on the one hand, the same skills and argumentative techniques can be found/used in very different situations, on the other, it is up to the speaker/writer to discern and make the appropriate use of those that can lead him to communicative success in each type of interaction or auditorium.

In addition to being recognized as valid in a specific scientific community, arguments made with such a pretension must also be exposed to the general public's scrutiny of the context in which (and for what) what is called scientific knowledge was supposedly elaborated.

Only part of this clue can be illustrated by the experiences gained during the period defined here. It precisely refers to the argumentative justification with the pairs, something that is confirmed through the previous works mentioned throughout this essay. In the second part, by referring to the argumentative construction directed to the researched characters and the local context, only the most recent experiences (post-2016) can exemplify another premise formulated previously: "in addition to the approval of the objective quality in the scientific work presented to the pairs, it needs to be reworked in an appropriate and viable language to be presented to the local public potentially interested in its results" (Sá & Mattos, 2016, p. 632).

This clue intends to open a rhetorical-argumentative horizon to expose, and thus to put at the sieve of the local public debate, what is presented as the scientific result of the research work. The translation of arguments and elaborations, with a greater degree of theoretical-epistemic-methodological sophistication, into a language that is less distant from the ordinary, is the path that has been taken from the understanding of the rhetoric and the audience place in what presents itself as a research product. In addition to these "new garments" necessary to be accepted and heard in the public debate in a peripheral context like this, research activity has been progressively considered and carried out in an integrated way with the extension to build clues for the participation in the dialogue on topics dear to the development of the region over the past few years.

Participation in non-profit associations (of residents, of class or anything that provide community services) as well as involvement in advisory services to such types of organizations, have proven to be viable alternatives for a greater insertion in the problematic of new research themes. This is done by embracing a way to better understand (a) the audiences with whom one wants to interact, (b) how the argument will need to be formulated when directed at it and (c) which paths and strategies may be more viable for its exposure.

FINAL REMARKS

The above-mentioned systematized four clues and the main objectives of this study point to (1) the need for an adequate application of a context as peripheral, that is, as constituted from and in the function of its geopolitical position; (2) the advancement in the construction of a scientific production mode appropriate to the referred context; (3) a relevance of clarifications about a language as its own and researchers' ordinary action; and (4) a rhetorical argument as a means to achieve legitimacy with the audience to which it is addressed.

Once Social Science was understood as a field in which an argument based on empirical bases and localized theoretical meanings could prevail as a dialogical sphere; a discourse that was justified with competence and was accepted as valid if imposing when confronted with others who did not present the same performance capable of achieving such intersubjective recognition. It is also necessary to take as crucial both the context understanding and the researcher's working epistemological preparation in Organizational Studies in this sense. If the research activity, particularly the social one, demands awareness and clarification about what is at stake, about what they believe to be doing from its practitioners, it is possible to act mature without acting as if they are in a broad process that aims the construction of a persuasive and convincing argument.

When a researcher proposes to work considering the linguistic paradigm, the argument needs to be repositioned in the performance-rhetorical language pragmatics plane by understanding and interpreting the need to be translated into a discourse with the power to convince the target audience. The incorporation of this, in addition to projecting the argumentative construction to the core of the social research activity, demands continued evolution of the *modus operandi* and attention to the linguistic dimension of the scientific *habitus* to be put into practice in a peripheral context. After all, the validity of what is elaborated and presented as results will be conditioned to the success of the discursive justification, necessarily supported by rigorous theoretical-empirical work, together with the public that wants to be impacted. At least, that was the sense gathered by the clues.

Finally, it may still be pertinent to note that there are several challenges in carrying out a research agenda with a focus

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on the condition of people and businesses in a peripheral context. As an illustration, I would like to highlight three challenges. The first would be the insertion in the field and gaining the trust of its informants and interviewees; after all, most of them are not clear about the motivations and consequences of that interaction with someone who presents himself as a professor-researcher linked to a university, that is, the first challenge for the researcher is to be able to "get close" and socialize (Sá & Mattos, 2016) in a social fabric somewhat different from his origins or from those to which he is more accustomed. The second would be to develop their interpretive capacity in relation to the individual dramas and the collective plots in which these owners and their businesses are inserted, that is, to articulate meanings and elaborate visions about these two dimensions of the phenomenon in terms consistent with their peripheral condition. The third can be made explicit in the need for investments in the creation of theoretical instruments (notions) that allow a more appropriate characterization of such types of businesses that, even after materializing a form of organization of contemporary productive-commercial activity, present different constitutive features when compared with conventional capitalist companies.

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AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

The author declares that he performed all stages of the study's development. From conceptualization and theoretical-methodological approach, the theoretical review (literature survey), as well as the writing of the text and, finally, the final review.

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NO POLITICS, NO SOCIETY: QUESTIONING THE JUSTIFICATION OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN CHILEAN PUBLIC POLICIES

Nem política, nem sociedade: Questionando a justificativa de políticas públicas pró-empreendedorismo no Chile

Ni Política ni sociedade: Interrogando las justificaciones de la política pública pro emprendimiento en Chile

ABSTRACT

Studies show that the state plays a positive role in shaping conditions for entrepreneurship and promoting economic growth through entrepreneurial activity. However, the question of how state intervention in entrepreneurship is justified in neoliberal regimes has received scant attention, although it can legitimize public policies. We examine the entrepreneurial slant of the Production and Commerce Development Corporation of Chile (CORFO), which implements regulations and grants financial support to startups. Analyzing interviews with CORFO's state officials, public statements, and official documentation, we review the advent of state-led entrepreneurial policy and explore the post-dictatorial government's principles justifying current state policy. This policy relies on double de-politicization: i) divesting entrepreneurship from political affiliation and ii) propagating a meritocratic rhetoric of social and individual development, oblivious of structural inequalities. We argue that this is functional for this regime as long as it guarantees state intervention in entrepreneurship as a policy of common good.

KEYWORDS | Entrepreneurship, state-led Entrepreneurial public policy, State intervention, Chilean neoliberalism, discourse analysis.

RESUMO

A literatura sobre a relação entre estado e empreendedorismo mostra que o estado joga un papel positivo na configuração das condições para empreendedorismo e promoção do crescimento econômico através da atividade empresarial. No entanto, a questão de como a intervenção estatal é justificada no empreendedorismo em regimes neoliberais tem recebido pouca atenção, apesar de legitimar políticas públicas. No presente estudo, analisando entrevistas com autoridades estatais da Corporação de Desenvolvimento de Comércio e Produção Chilena (CORFO), declarações públicas e documentação oficial, examinamos o advento das políticas pró-empreendedorismo no neoliberal Chile e exploramos o princípios que justificam a política do estado nos governos pós-ditatoriais. Essa política estabelece uma dupla despolitização: i) despojar o empreendimento de filiação política e ii) difundir uma retórica meritocrática imbuída de desenvolvimento social e auto-realização e cega às desigualdades estruturais. Argumentamos que a intervenção no empreendedorismo se justifica como uma política para o bem comum.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE | *Empreendedorismo, política pública empresarial liderada pelo Estado, intervenção do Estado, neoliberalismo chileno, análise do discurso*

RESUMEN

La literatura indica que el estado desempeña un papel positivo en la configuración de las condiciones para el emprendimiento y la promoción del crecimiento económico a través de la actividad empresarial. Sin embargo, la cuestión de cómo es justificada la intervención estatal en el emprendimiento en los regímenes neoliberales ha recibido poca atención, a pesar de que legitima las políticas públicas. En el presente estudio, analizando entrevistas con funcionarios estatales de la Corporación de desarrollo de la producción y el comercio de Chile (CORFO), declaraciones públicas y documentación oficial, examinamos el advenimiento de las políticas pro-emprendimiento en el Chile neoliberal, y exploramos laos principios que justifican la política estatal en los gobiernos post-dictatoriales. Dicha política establece una doble despolitización: i) despojando al emprendimiento de afiliación política y ii) propagando una retórica meritocrática imbuida de desarrollo social y autorrealización y cegada hacia las inequidades estructurales. Argumentamos que así la intervención estatal en el emprendimiento se justifica como una política para el bien común.

PALABRAS CLAVE | *Emprendimiento, políticoa pública pro-emprendimiento, intervención estatal, neoliberalismo chileno, analisis del discurso.*

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INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship enjoys a large following around the world, with approximately four hundred million people actively participating in the implementation or realization of a new business (GERA, 2018). In Chile, this entrepreneurial frenzy is fed not only by the businesses that participate but also by the State. Entrepreneurship has become a top priority for public policies in various areas, ranging from new economic innovation to education for children and adolescents. In 2013, 0.24% of Chile's annual public investment budget was spent on promoting entrepreneurship (Ministerio de Hacienda, 2012).

In contemporary capitalist societies, the boundary between the private and public sectors is always blurry (Duvall & Freeman, 1981), as long as the public sector is entangled in any process of consumption and production. In the context of entrepreneurship, Adelman (2000) maintained that the government can act as a first mover when there is no private initiative or at least can support financial and other structural conditions to foster private sector action, particularly entrepreneurship. Indeed, several scholars of entrepreneurship policy have confirmed the benefits of state intervention in entrepreneurial activity (Lundstrom & Stevenson, 2005) as a means of increasing job growth (Birch, 1979, 1981) and national competitiveness (Amorós, Fernandez, & Tapia, 2012). In Chile, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development has studied the effects of entrepreneurial activities in national productivity and growth, supporting the reduction of regulatory "red tape" and the simplification of bankruptcy procedures (Schwellnus, 2010). Examining the case of the Production and Commerce Development Corporation's—Corporación de Fomento de la Producción y el Comercio (herein CORFO)— *Start-Up Chile program*, the leading entrepreneurial program in the country, another quantitative study measured changes in the "entrepreneurial ecosystem" as an effect of the policy (Mandakovic, Cohen, & Amorós, 2015). Here, the authors concluded that, "public policy could play a significant role in terms of the design of appropriate institutional and regulatory conditions to support entrepreneurship, especially in developing countries" (p. 122). In discussing Chile, Kantis (2004) contended that Chilean entrepreneurs exploit market differentiation to a higher degree than other Latin American countries rather than embrace innovation. Thus, dynamism and potential growth based on technology is not well developed in the entrepreneurial activities in Chile and demand further State support (see also Benavente et al., 2003). Additionally, scholars working from the viewpoint of developmental economics, such as Naudé (2011), have stressed that fewer start-up creation barriers and permits is a minimum condition for private sector development.

In this context, Naudé explains that the pro-active stimulation of opportunity entrepreneurship is needed. Opportunity entrepreneurship is measured by the percent of adults in first-phase entrepreneurial activities who are exploiting business opportunities. Opportunity entrepreneurship is a significant determinant of economic growth and constitutes activities that develop into dynamic entrepreneurship, leading to the creation of innovative firms and a developmental state (Lazonick, 2011).

Taking a contrasting view, other scholars argue that such economic development approaches can serve as justification for a policy where the state actively acts to foster entrepreneurship. The point of such critical literature on entrepreneurship is to show how entrepreneurship is embedded in political discourse on market ideologies and how entrepreneurial activities lead the economic machine. Weiskopf and Steyaert (2009), for example, have called attention to concepts being disseminated through entrepreneurial discourse, such as the robust entrepreneur, a neo-positivist tradition, and optimistic policymaking, grounded in the discourse of neoliberal economic success. Such concepts seem to represent "the holy trinity of the entrepreneur." In turn, Perren and Jenings (2005) critically assessed the State agenda involved in supporting entrepreneurs in their study of the United Kingdom government's entrepreneurial discourse. Here, diverse actors —agencies, banks, consultants, and entrepreneurs, among others— provide evidence of the potential for a "colonising discourse of subjugation" (p. 181), where entrepreneurs become a "cog" in a neoliberal capitalist model.

At this point, as Foucault (2008) sustained, it is important to distinguish between the promotion of an enterprising culture within an economic system and the cultural hegemony of entrepreneurship as a societal project. Whereas traditional research on entrepreneurship (Casson, 1990 ; Kirzner, 1973), such as Schumpeter (2014[1942]), Sombart (1913), and Weber (2006) referred to its justification within the economic system of production in terms of fostering "innovations," "creative destruction," and "opening of new markets", Marttila (2018) suggests that the legitimacy of entrepreneurship as a societal project involves the dissolution of the distinction between economic and non-economic rationalities of social action. According to Marttila, the blurring of this distinction relies on two shifts; one of "de-differentiation," where the enterprise culture "is decoupled from its previous economic connotation;" and the other of "universalization," where enterprise culture is "made to apply to a range of unprecedented objects of reference such as

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individual persons, public sector, schools, states, universities, working-life, and the like" (pp.4-5).

This article extends this line of thinking Marttila (2018). We do this by examining the entrepreneurial slant of state policy in neoliberal Chile over the past 25 years. Despite the critical position the State can have in entrepreneurial development that goes beyond the economic system, Chile's historical and discursive justification for its entrepreneurial policy has received scant scholarly attention. We investigate this through a case study of Chile's leading state agency in promoting economic activity, CORFO. In the wake of a state-interventionist model, this state agency was founded in 1939 in the context of the 1930s great depression and the massive earthquake that devastated Chile's southern region that year. By boosting national industrialization and an active state role, CORFO emerged to "promote a society of more and better opportunities for all and contributing to the economic development of the country" (CORFO, 2014b, p.1). However, in post-dictatorial Chile (1990-2010), and following the neoliberal reforms implemented in the 1970s and 1980s by the military dictatorship, CORFO shifted into an agency for the promotion of opportunity and dynamic entrepreneurship (Audretsch, Kuratko, & Link, 2016; Sengupta, 2014); those initiatives that exploit business opportunities — in contrast to necessity and barefoot entrepreneurship (Naudé 2011; Imas, Wilson, & Weston, 2012). Thus, we understand that in Chile, CORFO represents the main actor triggering what Mazzucatto (2011) calls the "entrepreneurial state."

We approach this case study through an exploration of a repertoire of justifications at the core of the institutionalization of state-led entrepreneurial policies in neoliberal Chile. In the wake of the thoughts of Weber (1975[1905]) and Boltanski and Chiapello (1990), we understand the justification of economic activity as closely associated with the self-perpetuation of capitalism in the current neoliberal era. Further, we suggest that the analysis of the dissemination of ideas around the common good needs to consider the historical processes that support changes in the social realm in a given society; namely, how history affects the way we speak in social interactions and, particularly, the central role state entrepreneurial discourse plays in establishing entrepreneurial culture. Our diachronic analysis of CORFO's repertoire of justifications provides evidence of *a double de-politicization of Chilean society* at the basis of the process of de-differentiation and universalization of the entrepreneurial culture as a general form of action. We first demonstrate how, at a seminal stage, CORFO developed an explicit ideological label for entrepreneurship as a third-way strategy as a means to advance private initiative. Such a move represented a critical political gesture in a society that, barely out of a 17-year-long military dictatorship, remained deeply divided. We go on to show a second stage when CORFO vested in entrepreneurship the values of individual interests, technocracy, optimism, and others closely related to the neoliberal model implemented during the dictatorship years, justifying entrepreneurship with a plethora of arguments—ranging from job rates to human dignity; from innovation and creativity to the realization and emancipation of the self. This rhetoric maneuver, we argue, helps to conceal capitalist accumulation and exploitation in a highly unequal society while entwining economic and non- economic social action within entrepreneurial rationality. In other words, the institutionalization of state -led entrepreneurial public policy relies on two highly ideological operations of de-differentiation: one by which entrepreneurship is divested from political affiliation; the other, based on ignoring Chilean society's exorbitant social inequalities. These operations open the way for the universalization of the enterprising culture through a meritocratic discourse whereby entrepreneurship is disseminated as a panacea for all. These processes, we argue, enable the State to support entrepreneurial activity as a matter of common good.

The remaining article structure begins with a conceptual framework, which is followed by the description of the case study and data set we examined. Next, we present a brief historical narrative of the neoliberal change in Chile as a prelude to the analytical section on CORFO's growing repertoire of values imbedded in entrepreneurial activity over the years. Then, we discuss these findings to argue that state-led entrepreneurial justification in Chile goes beyond economic goals and relies on a double de-politicization of society, which is useful for the self-perpetuation of the neoliberal regime. Finally, in the conclusion, we show that entrepreneurship justification by the State leads us to a better understanding of its policies not merely as instruments that foster entrepreneurial activities, but as an outlook that shapes the society we inhabit in Chile. This society is one where entrepreneurship is de-politicized from the right- and left-wing historical ideology and is culturally de-differentiated, leading to the subsuming of any value under the entrepreneurship society.

JUSTIFYING ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Classic (Weber, 1975[1905]) and contemporary social thought (Boltanski & Chiapello, 1999) conceives of the promotion of economic activity as an endeavor that is not exclusively based on capital accumulation but also on adherence to general values that present capitalism as an acceptable and desirable order.

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Justifying a pro-entrepreneurial policy implies being equipped with a moral repertoire that can be applied to concrete activities (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006). Young (2004), Harding (2007), Lamont (1994), Lamont and Small (2008), Colonomos (2005), and Finnemore & Sikkink (1998), among others, have advanced this vision of morality as a "cultural toolkit" (Swidler, 1986) used, for example, to produce boundaries between social groups; the so-called "moralization of capitalism" (Colonomos, 2005). In this sense, we assume that the State, through its public policies, may pursue cultural intervention, promoting a discourse on the value of entrepreneurship with a pretension of truth. Therefore, the State's arguments not only "must take account of their context," but also "must be specific and relevant" (Keith & Rehg, 2007, p. 215); that is, be plausible, viable, and acceptable to the situation they are used in.

However, ideas about the common good do not emerge in a vacuum. They arise from historical processes that support change in the social realm where people live and engage in social and economic relations. Working from different latitudes, Foucault (2008), McNay (2009), and Bröckling (2015) have demonstrated that a discursive rhetoric consistent with the morality and politics of neoliberalism permeates the social market economy. Similarly, we need to consider that State discourse is embedded in historical roots. As Goodwin (2018) indicated, the history of any activity is intrinsically related to the form in which communication occurs. Therefore, history is not external to policy enactment; it is alive in the associated interactions and, in our case, in how actors use different devices to deploy entrepreneurship policies.
Moreover, in line with recent studies, we understand that State policies and the surrounding discourses through which they are communicated and disseminated, are not merely instruments that foster entrepreneurial activity. These discourses that justify public entrepreneurship policies are avenues that frame and construct the very phenomena they are addressing, as Örge (2013) has shown through a study of the Turkish government's entrepreneurship policy. Following this line of thinking, we take inspiration from Foucault's treatment of discourse, which focuses on what speech does or what discourse institutes (Holstein & Gubrium, 2013). We also understand *discourse* as an active process of composition (Brown 2001, p.180), organization, designation, and acceptance of a given entity.

CASE STUDY

Our analysis here is based on a research project led by one of the authors. The project's goal was to explore how entrepreneurship was practiced across a socioeconomic spectrum —from microcredit solidarity lenders to high-tech entrepreneurs. Additionally, the project studied the stages of entrepreneurial development; the startup, the rollout, and ongoing management of the business.

The project had two phases. The first involved a general exploration and description of the entrepreneurial system, aimed at identifying the actors, programs, and policies in Chile that promote entrepreneurship. To do this, public entrepreneurial events were observed and interviews were conducted with 24 different actors (some just once, and others in two or three sessions), including professionals at private and public agencies, entrepreneurs, mentors, investors, and coaches. The second stage, based on ethnographic techniques (field observations, interviews, document classification and analysis, review of web pages, etc.), was an in-depth examination of concrete entrepreneurial activities. Ten ventures met or derived by other parties during the research process in Santiago were selected to trace commonalities and differences in the way entrepreneurship was practiced in three main scenarios identified in the previous stage. The scenarios were defined by the public (ministries, public policy, public funds) and private actors (incubators, training programs, intra-organizational initiatives) as: i) self-employment for the inactive poor, ii) small businesses for technical workers usually of the middle class, and iii) high-tech, innovative and scalable projects often led by upper-middle class professionals. The cases were: four startups in different stages of development to cover a venture's full trajectory in less time, four organizations that worked with entrepreneurs daily (an innovation Centre, business incubator, scientific entrepreneurship promotion Centre, and microcredit institution), the creation of the trade association of entrepreneurs in Chile, and the development and transformation of public policy on entrepreneurship since 1990. In total, the project conducted 66 interviews, 85 field observation sessions, and gathered documentation on 25 organizations.

This article draws on data from the research on the development and transformation of entrepreneurship public policy. Specifically, we explore the discourse of the actors who enacted state-led entrepreneurial policies in Chile. To do this, we analyzed interviews and documents related to CORFO. The data set was composed of i) 59 documents pertaining to CORFO's entrepreneurship programs, ii) notes and transcripts from a two-day introduction to CORFO's public programs from one of its officials, and iii) interviews with three former CORFO executive vice presidents (in the period 1997-2012), two CORFO assistant managers, and two CORFO intermediate-level officials. To complement these interviews, we also analyzed speeches delivered by public officials, such as the Minister of Economy,

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at the time. The content analyzed included justifications for entrepreneurship, either spontaneously or in response to our questions. To analyze the discourse, we adhered to the general guidelines developed by the Loughborough School (Antaki et al. 2003; Potter & Wetherell 1987), which follows, among others, Michel Foucault and poststructuralist thought. Notably, we focused on the rhetorical dimensions of entrepreneurial discourse —that is, the capacity of the text to achieve its purposes (e.g., to persuade and gain legitimacy). Thus, *discursive analysis* is mainly based on a subtle and context-based understanding of text in that context. In the following, we offer a brief review of Chilean economic history during the 1970s and the 1980s as a way of giving depth to the analysis of CORFO's policymakers' justifications.

THE ADVENT OF NEOLIBERALISM AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Imas (2010) convincingly explained that Chile's recent history represents an "ideal" construction of a society under the principles of neoliberalism. This neoliberalism was implemented during the bloody military dictatorship led by General Augusto Pinochet (1973-1990). As Chilean historian Verónica Valdivia (2010) has argued, the political challenge during the dictatorship was not only to annihilate the institutionalized left and demobilize society, but also to dismantle the political culture rooted in the country throughout the 20th century. This political culture was based on a preponderance of political parties in the State as an entity that expressed citizen demands, and a system of constitutional guarantees based on political and social freedoms. The dictatorship replaced the principles of collectivity and solidarity with that of individual interest; it reduced state powers and introduced technocratic approaches to political decisions (Imas, 2005).

Consequently, the Junta dismantled Chilean political culture and transferred social regulation to people and the market. Indeed, the neoliberal "brainwashing" involved not only the economy but society as a whole (Imas, 2005). Juan Andrés Fontaine (1993), an economist trained at the Chicago School in the free market and monetarism political ideology, explained that a vital piece of Chile's neoliberal project was to radically reverse the interventionist regime; and, to remove almost every single redistributive policy in the Chilean economy. Although the new military junta quickly began to suppress the control of prices and regulations to reform the tax system and return nationalized companies to private hands, the transition to a free market-based economy began when Minister of Finance Jorge Cauas, announced his draconian "Economic Reconstruction Plan" in 1975. This plan involved economic policies and social reforms guaranteed with legal changes approved by *ad hoc* commissions appointed by the dictatorship. Since the 1990s, state-sponsored entrepreneurship and related policies have renewed the commitment to the neoliberal regime in Chile. However, policies that embrace intervention that fosters entrepreneurial activities have not changed the fundamental type of capitalism implemented during the 1970s and 1980s in Chile. This phenomenon, where things change but at the same time remain the same, demands a careful analysis of discourse strategies. In the next section, we disclose this discursive maneuvering based on our diachronic analysis of state-policy documents and interviews with CORFO officials.

Renewing the commitment to capitalist accumulation in neoliberalism

A sociogenesis of entrepreneurship as state policy

For an activity to emerge, it must generate interest. Within the so-called Chilean "entrepreneurship system," several milestones have stimulated interest. In the 1990s, CORFO marked the first of these milestones when it shifted its politics toward "the care and promotion of private enterprise" (Former CORFO executive vice president, personal communication, April 28, 2012). The advancement of entrepreneurship and innovation aimed at increasing economic productivity was the means to that end. First through the Ministry of Economy and CORFO and then through the Solidarity and Social Investment Fund (FOSIS), under the Ministry of Social Development.

At the beginning of the 1990s, a democratic government was re-established following 17 years of military dictatorship and the implementation of a profound neoliberal set of reforms. A group of *center-left* professionals, composed mainly of economists, lawyers, and engineers, entered the political administration. Several had previously lived in exile in Europe and witnessed the renewal of the left's political thinking. They returned to Chile inspired and willing to stop viewing the entrepreneur through the lens of Marxist class conflict and adopt the Schumpeterian vision of the entrepreneur as an innovator (former CORFO vice-president, personal communication, May 7, 2012). The argument put forward by Austrian economist Joseph Schumpeter (1883-1950) was that the dynamics of capitalism depend on the ability to innovate and that such innovations are generated by entrepreneurs, or "wild spirits" who challenge the establishment. One of CORFO's former vice presidents explained this in an interview.

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> The modern concept of the entrepreneur is an ideological way to recover the idea of the private business owner as the engine of development minus the burden that the idea of capitalist accumulation had (...). First, we went one way: socialism. Then, we went the other way: neoliberalism. And in the end people say 'hey, let's take care of the private sector, particularly the innovative sector, which is generating new activity, we'll call that entrepreneurship'. (Former CORFO executive vice president, personal communication, April 28, 2012)

This former CORFO executive placed entrepreneurship in the middle of two alternatives considered mutually exclusive societal models—socialism and capitalism. These two models had in the previous three decades not only been tested in Chilean society but had also supplanted one another via the force of a bloody military *coup d'état* that practiced state terrorism against the previous regime's supporters. At the dawn of Chilean society's political transition, entrepreneurship appeared as a *third model*. The construction of this alternative is necessary to understand the boldest concept in the quote: divesting entrepreneurship of "the burden of capitalist accumulation" associated with rightwing ideologies that supported the coup. Once distanced from the two main ideologies of Chilean society's contemporary history, the path of entrepreneurship would be free to appeal to all who are or who wish to situate themselves somewhere in between. With this maneuver, CORFO produces fertile ground for the State support of entrepreneurship.

In the extract, the executive also gives voice to those who understand that an innovative private sector generates economic activity. Through this approach, he constructs a reality external to himself (Potter, 1996) and separate from his opinion. The Chilean transition public policy agents agreed to call this private innovative initiative "entrepreneurship." Entrepreneurship, then, can renew a general commitment to capitalist accumulation. This discourse inherits the whole "ideological" gesture of the Chilean neoliberal regime at the dawn of the 1990s. According to this former vice president, however, initially there was no consensus regarding the "social impact" of entrepreneurship. On the one hand, the nascent state programs and policies that subsidized entrepreneurship generated controversy among the right's elite; especially among "those technocrats who were worried about the return of state intervention mechanisms within the economy" (Former CORFO executive vice president, personal communication, April 28, 2012). This official reminded us of a recent precedent in this respect. In the 1970s, during the popular government of socialist president Salvador Allende, "CORFO had been the big holder of more than 500 nationalized companies" that later, during the military regime, became privatized following an economic plan that advocated a drastic reduction in the State's participation in society. On the other hand, the new policy of incentivizing private initiatives created tensions for the economists of the outmoded left. Those economists considered the allocation of state money to finance the country's entrepreneurs unjustifiable. Against this backdrop, the ideological shift of the 1990s was bolstered by a global phenomenon that began at the end of the decade: the so-called "Dotcom Bubble. " This phenomenon highlighted the lack of support tools from the State for new businesses and startups. Another former CORFO executive vice president stated it this way.

> In Silicon Valley...a group of companies begin to appear...Yahoo, Amazon...with a business model that grows very quickly...a new entrepreneur who gets established and grows very fast. But CORFO's framework of instruments and programs...was intended only for existing companies; that is, we had nothing for a person who wanted to start a company. (CORFO Manager, personal communication, February 6, 2012)

This describes an international economic reality that moves faster than any CORFO tool would to develop Chile's domestic economy. Once again, this reality appears as an external construction affected by two actors: innovative entrepreneurs acting quickly and the State (CORFO) moving slowly. A third actor was introduced into this scenario, Silicon Valley, which operates as a common ground for innovative technological entrepreneurship; that is, the "benchmark" to emulate. The message here was that the nation's instruments and programs were not attuned to this inescapable international reality—an economy based on innovative technological entrepreneurship. Additionally, the executive discourse expressed that the alignment of national policy is a matter of keeping pace with global developments, a formula with a long tradition in political economic literature in America's Southern Cone (see Fleming, 1979; Lipset, 1967; Germani, 1970). The point of this discursive maneuver was, we argue, to divest once more a State decision of political elements.

Consequently, CORFO's instruments to foster entrepreneurial activities, frame and construct these themes accepting and aligning the State towards an international global political economy (Örge, 2013).CORFO, thus, assumed the task of designing "a resource-heavy policy towards new

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enterprises with greater potential for growth," (Former CORFO executive vice president, personal communication, April 28, 2012) creating "instruments" for this purpose —that is, programs that "systematically search for business ventures" (Entrepreneurial acceleration agency manager, personal communication, May 14, 2012). Thus, in 2005, INNOVA-CHILE emerged, a component of CORFO designed to "support the development of new businesses, the creation of new enterprises, as well as to foster entrepreneurial skills in the country" (CORFO, 2014a).

While entrepreneurship as public policy began with the advent of the *Concertación Coalition,* the center-left coalition of political parties that led the democratic transition after the military regime's 1988 defeat on the polls, this brief sociogenesis of state-led entrepreneurial policy in Chile shows that the entrepreneurial regime emerged from a complex web of State policy justifications that connect the neoliberal Chile of the 1990s with that of the 1970s. Nonetheless, the ideological dissemination of private enterprise, as a politically purified activity, was not triggered by the dictatorial regime's rightwing technocrats, but rather by left-centered ideologies during the democratic transition. In this context, entrepreneurship emerges as an alternative to the traditional capitalism of large corporations/companies, once divested of the burden entailed by the processes of capitalist accumulation. This entrepreneurship policy discourse de-politicized entrepreneurship from rightwing neoliberalism and from its leftwing inheritance. De-politicization rhetoric is enacted in a new space, where the new concepts relate to entrepreneurship.

Innovation through productivity: entrepreneurship's moral guarantee

As of 2012, the association between entrepreneurship and innovation was still at the center of the justification rhetoric in Chile. In our interview, CORFO's entrepreneurship program manager at the time discussed it in the following terms.

> The initial question is, why do countries decide to support entrepreneurship? That is founded on economic theory; there is evidence that societies that are more entrepreneurial achieve greater productivity levels than those that are less; therefore, countries that are in an economic stage like Chile's, which is a stage of transition...between underdevelopment and development...have to take the issue of innovation as an important element within politics, and unfortunately our society, because of the characteristics it has had, is a society that has trouble being innovative, because of cultural issues and because of economic issues too (...). So states have to make up for this through policies proactively. (Former CORFO executive vice president, personal communication, April 28, 2012)

Similar diagnosis can be found in the Chilean government's 2006 report from the National Innovation Council for Competitiveness, which served to justify the "Seed Subsidy of Flexible Allocation for Entrepreneurs," one of CORFO's leading entrepreneurial programs; and, in the foundational "background report" of the Chilean National Council for Development and Innovation: "If Chile does not advance, soon and fast, on innovation and technological transfer, the country will start lagging behind, to the point that its current static competitive advantages could be seriously threatened and displaced" (CNID, 2006, p.11). Through this line of argument, entrepreneurship has been placed in the evolutionary trajectory of economic and social progress, and Chile, in an intermediate but promising stage at a global scale.

Concepts of change and innovation are channeled into the construction of the image of Chile as an entrepreneurial society. In this discursive strategy, social change is reduced to development, development to increased productivity, and innovation (specific to various fields such as art, science, technology, culture, and sociality, among others) to the sphere of business. Thus, a society that is innovative and even developed becomes an entrepreneurial society, one that would justify pro-entrepreneurship policies insofar as its ultimate purpose is social development (having already set aside unlimited accumulation as its goal). In sum, if the justification for an entrepreneurial society is based on concentrating the ideas of change and innovation into the field of business, the promise of its effects surpasses this, blessing the goal of "social development." The reference to the role of Chile's culture in this trajectory is another discursive maneuver aimed at de-differentiating the social context where entrepreneurship operates. Instead of calling for the integration of entrepreneurship into national culture and social diversity, State discourse not only points to Chilean culture as an obstacle for an entrepreneurial society, but identifies it as one of the reasons for public intervention in entrepreneurship. The diagnosis is that Chile needs to adapt to an entrepreneurial culture quickly; the world demands it. Our entrepreneurs' must have resources that operate with the same speed as the market and the State must align with this need.

In short, the State policy discourse associates entrepreneurship and innovation so closely it makes them

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indistinguishable. To quote a CORFO manager, "entrepreneurship is the concretization of innovation". According to this reasoning, the "evidence" shows that any country wishing to attain rapid development must increase its productivity. Entrepreneurship is a means to that end. CORFO's slogan, "dream, venture, grow," situates entrepreneurship in a mediating role. It is important to remember that at the moment of its inception in the 1990s, entrepreneurship also had this intermediate position between two political poles. In this case, entrepreneurship's "moral guarantee" lies in its ability to increase economic productivity by creating innovation. CORFO's discourse shapes entrepreneurship as the possibility for innovation and social development, something that it is always good and acceptable for the country.

Entrepreneurship as a Hyper Good

In the last years, the entrepreneurial discourse has added new concepts and actors. In fact, according to the current promoters of this, in conjunction with being the "hypergood" of growth (Taylor, 1989), entrepreneurship brings with it several benefits, a common good, and "positive externalities." First, it plays a cohesive and redistributive role. In countries like Chile, where wealth tends to be concentrated in the hands of a few economic actors, developing a tremendous entrepreneurial capacity would redistribute wealth among a more significant number of small business owners. Mainstreaming entrepreneurship would allow "homogenization" to take place and offer "an umbrella that brings together and helps close the inequality gap" (CORFO Manager, personal communication, February 6, 2012).

For those who fail to become integrated as entrepreneurs— that is, the poorest —the success of those who are able can bring benefits to the extent that the expansion of entrepreneurship will make the market more efficient, thereby becoming a tool of inclusion and another means for neoliberal ideological principle support (Harvey, 2005; Fontaine, 1993). In the following excerpt, a CORFO manager alludes to the famous "trickle-down theory" espoused by the promoters of Chilean neoliberalism, and closely linked to the history of neoliberalism (Harvey, 2005).

> If one believes in this economic model, all people must be reached, and the trickle-down path takes a long time. We could include these people in the economic model and not segment them, not stigmatize the base of the pyramid, an atrocious term [he clarifies]. According to CASEN [national survey of the population's socioeconomic traits], this is 15% of the population; it's a lot of people who consume, to begin with. However, they pay more for sugar, oil. There's a hidden economic power there, which you can open and give them dignity as buyers, from a public policy perspective; it's an inclusive tool. (CORFO manager, personal communication, April 24, 2012)

The "base of the pyramid" concept comes from the literature on first world business education. It refers to the four million poor who are neglected throughout the world by the organized private sector (Prahalad, 2006). More broadly and referring to Chile, CORFO (2012, p. 3) understands the base of the pyramid as those Chileans classified in the lowest income quintile. In CORFO's manager rationale, an entrepreneurial society fosters social cohesion because it integrates even the poor into aggregate demand (via consumption). Additionally, the manager concedes that "base of the pyramid" is an "atrocious" concept. Thus, a discourse covering the concepts of dignity, consumption, inclusion, and the terrible/inhuman is used to create an entrepreneurship–inclusion pairing to make entrepreneurship more appealing, even for those who are unable to embrace the entrepreneurial class directly but can benefit from its success (the poor).

At this stage, the policy discourses among the higher authorities put more emphasis on the benefit of job creation resulting from new ventures, and, thus, on the capacity of entrepreneurship to lead societal change. In an excerpt from a speech given at the inauguration of the 2011 Global Week of Entrepreneurship, the Minister of Economy under President Sebastián Piñera's former administration (2010-2014) stated the following.

> We want to turn entrepreneurs into people who contribute most toward social change in Chile, each talented entrepreneur who begins a journey is someone who creates jobs, who creates employment and helps improve the dignity of all Chileans, no matter what many say, there is no one more supportive than entrepreneurs, than those who dare, those who embrace the adventure of developing the talents that each one of us possesses. (Longueira, 2012).

In this, the concept of "social change" is incorporated, implying that there is no area in society that entrepreneurship could not contribute to. The theme of the quality of that change

is not considered, instead following a strategy that transfers the benefits of change to its effect. The speech idealizes entrepreneurship and pairs it with concepts such as dignity, solidarity, and social change, ignoring the equally potential realities of job insecurity and individualism, which not only differ but also conflict with the promoted values. Moreover, the speech excludes central aspects of the economy, such as competition for scarce resources, necessary creative destruction, as analyzed by Schumpeter, and the inevitable mistakes and failures that such entrepreneurship entails. It furthermore raises the entrepreneur to the rank of a hero who suffers the "loneliness" of the "adventurous" act in line with the image of the cowboy, as referenced by Kaulingfreks, Lightfoot, and Letiche (2009).

In short, entrepreneurship is shown as a means for individuals' inclusion in the economic system, either through consumption or work. Whether it is in the offer or the demand, such justifying policy discourse grants human beings a moral sense of dignity. Unlike yesterday, the value of dignity is not anchored in collective projects, solidarity, and finite human needs (Max-Neef, Elizalde, & Hopenhayn, 1990) but rather in the inclusion of individuals in the market economy.

> "At the end of the day, we talk about entrepreneurship because we believe it's a very powerful tool for social mobility, firstly, because it generates income and secondly, because it generates dignity. It makes you part of the system". (CORFO Manager, personal communication, February 6, 2012)

However, the constructed reality excludes from its discourse the unexpected effects of the policy that originates and disseminates the reality. For example, politics is simplified by encouraging a type of entrepreneurship that would increase social cohesion, close the inequality gap, and, even among the poor, operate via a "trickle-down," reducing the phenomenon of exclusion by incorporating this population as aggregate demand. Finally, this discourse recognizes human dignity as an individual ability and resource of self-generation. This concept, as discussed by the CORFO manager, is what is genuinely "atrocious" about the way this regime has developed in the past decades in Chile.

Discussion: the double de-politicization of entrepreneurship

The Chilean State entrepreneurial slant is a means for the renewal of neoliberal Chile's commitment to capitalist accumulation in the post-dictatorship era. Discursively, entrepreneurship emerges in Chile through its differentiation from the main ideological currents (it belongs neither to the Right nor the Left) and with the promise and urgency of becoming the engine of societal and individual change. This approach represents an epic and luminous story for a transitional society fresh from its worst political and moral catastrophe. Twenty-five years later, entrepreneurship is associated with other values that complement that initial rhetoric, such as job and income creation, inclusion, and human dignity. This gradual and systematic expansion of the justifications in the repertoire of entrepreneurship is indicative of the growth of the neoliberal governmental economic rationality.

Underlying the practical realization of entrepreneurial projects and granting sense to the act of enterprising, the state-led entrepreneurship policy relies on the production of a precise subjectivity (Bröckling, 2015). In the words of one of CORFO's managers,

> The good thing of entrepreneurship is that it allows you to discover yourself, to take care of yourself, to own yourself, self-entrepreneurship means that you are who you want to be. You make a living out of that, and you operate as if you were a company, in the sense of planning, strategizing. And on a personal level, I think that's good. There's learning in entrepreneurship that helps people be what they want to be part of the system. (CORFO Manager, personal communication, February 6, 2012)

At this intrapersonal level, entrepreneurship is specified through the very experience of enterprising, regardless of the achievement of any economic goal. Indeed, entrepreneurship becomes a means for individual self-realization. Ultimately, the state-led entrepreneurial discourse addresses a demand for a substantive transformation of the individual into an *asset* which, in turn, leads to the intensification of the neoliberal entrepreneurial society. Moreover, this strategy promotes entrepreneurship as an individual "skill" or "talent" that anyone can develop regardless of socioeconomic position or competencies. To the extent that entrepreneurship requires "talents" that anyone can develop, the activity disseminates in meritocratic fashion (it depends on myself only), without acknowledging distinctions of class, ethnicity, origin, sex, or capital. This strategy ignores the existing structural arrangements and extensive inequalities in the Chilean population, (where, according to data from 2012, the proportion is 9.5 of the average of OECD [1996] countries) (Retrieved from

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http://www2.compareyourcountry.org/crisis-impact). Therein lies, in part, the discursive fertility of the pro-entrepreneurial lexicon. On the one hand, as Beckert (2013) points out, the characteristic of entrepreneurial meritocracy tries to protect entrepreneurship from the effects of the structural barriers of stratified and unequal societies, like Chile's, that can hamper the upward mobility promised by enterprising activity. On the other hand, the discourse excludes key questions such as whether Chileans possess the same capacity to innovate or networks to create the right teams and secure financing at an early stage, as it is required in most seeds subsidy programs). According to Tirado and Domenèch (2009), the task of meritocratic discourse is precisely to make skills look like resources emerging out of isolated beings who are no longer dependent on a wider network of alliances, positions, and support (p. 252). This discourse is appealing to a general and broad audience.

The second discursive maneuver of state-led entrepreneurship policy is based on the enactment of a homogeneous and *smooth* social fabric (Deleuze & Guattari 1980) where entrepreneurship can be de-differentiated (Marttila, 2018), decoupling the concept from previous economic and ideological aspects related to the culture of the enterprise. At the same time, this maneuver separates entrepreneurship from any unequal distribution regarding capabilities, ideologies, and power struggles. Similarly, because all resources required for this activity are conceptualized within the semantics of "individual skills," no notion of sociality seems necessary beyond the network of mutual benefit on which entrepreneurship is sustained. This is a second central concept that supports this discursive framework: to assume that entrepreneurship does not require society, or, more strictly, that it requires no other company than the "entrepreneurial society." In the words of CORFO's manager, a "more entrepreneurial society would be a more self-reliant society, owning more of the things that happen to us, [with] more *ownership*" (personal communication, February 6, 2012).

Placing these two maneuvers in historical perspective, a third appears. In the review of 25 years, we detected that the pro-entrepreneurial state discourse in Chile recurred and displayed a double de-politicization of entrepreneurship: 1) at the moment of its emergence, where the political affiliation of entrepreneurship is stripped away (it belongs neither to the Right nor to the Left) and 2) today, where the State's discourse avoids the role of power games and structural inequalities in the shaping of entrepreneurial activity in Chile. In this way, the justification of pro-entrepreneurial public policy in Chile excludes the role of society and that of politics and in this way contributes to the de-differentiation and universalization of the entrepreneurial culture.

CONCLUSION

In this article, we attempt to contribute to the literature on entrepreneurship policy by filling the gap in the research on Chile's public policy entrepreneurship justification. Our analysis considers public policy official discourses of CORFO, its highest government entrepreneurship agency. Taking this case, we shift the analysis from public policy entrepreneurial evaluation to a study of the State entrepreneurship policy justification. Our diachronic analysis sensitive to the historical trajectory of this society has enabled us to understand better the cultural, political, and economic processes with which entrepreneurship development intertwines.

The Chilean neoliberal system uses entrepreneurship universalization discourse for the sake of its perpetuation. Contradictions arise because, paradoxically, to actively promote entrepreneurship leads to certain principles of neoliberal ideology, like non-intervention in markets and the economy. However, the contradiction is only apparent because state entrepreneurship discourses decoupled from previous economic ideology create a place where entrepreneurship subsumes any cultural message and significance, universalizing entrepreneurship. The investigation of entrepreneurship state justification leads to understanding these policies not merely as instruments that foster entrepreneurial activities, but as a means to shape the society that we inhabit in Chile. CORFO's rhetoric intensifies the values of individualism, technocracy, personal interest, and optimism. In this sense, the justification of state-sponsored entrepreneurship sheds new light on how entrepreneurial subjects can permanently accept the uncertainty that neoliberal society imposes.

Entrepreneurship support becomes merely propaganda to sustain ideas that have a long historical tradition related to dictatorship times. Such propaganda is not harmless and creates double de-politicization where the ideological affiliation of entrepreneurship is stripped away from rightwing historical neoliberal roots. Additionally, entrepreneurship state-led policy avoids acknowledging the role of power games and structural inequalities in the shaping of entrepreneurial activity in Chile, producing a new pervasive bio-psychological entrepreneurial culture. This culture is based on the fall of community values, the rise of personal talent, and the occlusion of any reference to privilege. The "entrepreneurial society" envisioned by the Chilean State's discursive justifying strategy is reminiscent of Margaret Thatcher's belief of society to be a mere illusion, since "there is no such thing as society, there are only families" (Thatcher, 1996).

Further research on public entrepreneurship policies is needed. For example, a detailed examinations of entrepreneurial

policy justification rhetoric, that may trace links between State discourse on entrepreneurship at the local, national, and regional levels. A more robust analysis of entrepreneurship justification demands the inclusion of historical, political, and cultural factors. Overall, it is now clear that more culturally sensitive research is required to understand entrepreneurial activity and its effects. Researchers need to engage in cultural-comparative studies to fully assess the principles on which the institutionalization of the State becomes a tool for neoliberal justification and therefore, for this regime's self-perpetuation.

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ETHICS AND CONSENT

Authors declare that the research was performed in accordance with the Helsinki declaration.

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"TUPI, OR NOT TUPI THAT IS THE QUESTION": AMERINDIAN PERSPECTIVISM AND ORGANIZATIONAL STUDIES

"Tupi, or not Tupi that is the question": Perspectivismo ameríndio e Estudos Organizacionais

"Tupi, or not Tupi that is the question": Perspectivismo amerindio y Estudios Organizacionales

ABSTRACT

This essay discusses the possibilities that Viveiros de Castro's concept of Amerindian perspectivism offers to Organizational Studies. Oswald de Andrade's Anthropophagous Manifesto is the guiding thread of our investigation. Amerindian perspectivism suggests a reflexive shift to the position occupied by the object of inquiry, which, thus, becomes the subject from which we must question our own premises. What matters is knowing how our subject/former object perceives the categories/concepts we created to describe it. For Viveiros de Castro, the reflexive displacement should occur using a controlled equivocation. Therefore, we must be reflexive on the consequences that our onto-epistemological choices will have on our research from the Other's point of view. The concepts of reflexive displacement and controlled equivocation have much to contribute to the construction of the other in Organizational Studies and to the concept of border thinking in decolonial studies.

KEYWORDS | Amerindian perspectivism, anthropophagy, border thinking, controlled equivocation, reflexive displacement.

RESUMO

Esse ensaio discorre sobre as possibilidades que o conceito de perspectivismo ameríndio de Viveiros de Castro oferece aos Estudos Organizacionais. O "Manifesto antropófago" de Oswald de Andrade é o fio condutor de nossa investigação. O perspectivismo ameríndio sugere um deslocamento reflexivo para a posição ocupada pelo objeto de investigação que, assim, se torna o sujeito a partir do qual devemos questionar nossas próprias premissas. O que importa saber é como nosso sujeito/ex-objeto percebe nossas categorias/conceitos criadas para descrevê-lo. Para Viveiros de Castro, o deslocamento reflexivo deve ocorrer considerado-se uma equivocidade intencional. Portanto, devemos refletir sobre as consequências que nossas escolhas ontoepistemológicas terão sobre nossa pesquisa a partir do ponto de vista do Outro. Os conceitos de deslocamento reflexivo e equivocidade intencional têm muito a contribuir com a construção do Outro em EOR e com o conceito de border thinking nos estudos decolonais.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE | *Perspectivismo ameríndio, antropofagia, border thinking, equivocidade intencional, deslocamento reflexivo.*

RESUMEN

Este ensayo analiza las posibilidades que el concepto de perspectivismo amerindio de Viveiros de Castro ofrece a los Estudios Organizacionales. El Manifiesto Antropófago de Oswald de Andrdade es el hilo conductor de nuestra investigación. El perspectivismo amerindio sugiere un desplazamiento reflexivo a la posición ocupada por el objeto de la investigación, que se convierte así en el sujeto a partir del cual debemos cuestionar nuestras propias premisas. Lo que importa es saber cómo nuestro sujeto/objeto anterior percibe nuestras categorías/conceptos creados para describirlo. Para Viveiros de Castro, el desplazamiento reflexivo debe ocurrir considerando una equivocidad intencional. Por lo tanto, debemos reflexionar sobre las consecuencias que nuestras elecciones onto-epistemológicas tendrán en nuestra investigación desde el punto de vista del otro. Los conceptos de desplazamiento reflexivo y equivocidad intencional tienen mucho que aportar a la construcción del otro en EO y al concepto de pensamiento fronterizo en los estudios decoloniales.

PALABRAS CLAVE | *Perspectivismo amerindio, antropofagia, border thinking, equivocidad*

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INTRODUCTION

"Tupi, or not Tupi that is the question" is one of the most well-known and cited aphorisms from the "Anthropophagous Manifesto" that was published in May 1928 by Oswald de Andrade in the first issue of the *Anthropophagy Review*. The Manifesto is illustrated by the painting *Abaporu* —the term means "man who eats man" in Tupi—that was gifted to Oswald by his companion, Tarsila do Amaral. The painting expresses the anthropophagic process that Oswald describes in the text; the following year, Tarsila would create the painting *Antropofagia*. In this aphorism, Oswald devours the Hamletian dilemma and, without using a Portuguese word, represents, through the binomial Tupi/To be, "one of the central tensions that will be explored throughout the text of the Manifesto" in which he promotes a subversion of the "Brazil/world relationship, or primitive tribe/Western culture" (Azevedo, 2016, p. 109).

A similar subversion is proposed by the Brazilian "Americanist ethnologist" Viveiros de Castro (2015, p. 155) while introducing his concept of Amerindian perspectivism. Viveiros de Castro (1986) developed this concept during his PhD research among the Araweté, the Tupi-speaking people from the Western Amazon region. Therefore, the origin of this concept is quite different from the concept of anthropophagy proposed by Oswald de Andrade by drawing inspiration from the modernist movement that grew out of the 1922 Art Week in São Paulo-Brazil. However, both anthropophagy and Amerindian perspectivism are based on "cannibal metaphysics" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, 2016).

For Viveiros de Castro (2016), Oswaldian anthropophagy is the most original metacultural reflexivity ever produced in Latin America; further, he suggests that Oswald de Andrade's "*Anthropophagous Manifesto*" is an *avant la lettre* decolonial proposal. Anthropophagy in social thought reveals itself as the reflexivity that seeks to identify what is best in the other, and absorbing that which makes us stronger. It does not reject what comes from outside; it seeks to identify what may be useful for the present reality, based on the location of the subject. It does, however, relegate what comes from the outside to a subordinate position (Azevedo, 2016).

The Amerindian perspectivism of Viveiros de Castro (2015) suggests a "reflexive displacement" (p. 72) to the position occupied by the object of investigation, which, thus, becomes the subject from which we must question our own premises. What matters is not how our categories understand/describe the object, and much less what part of us is reflected in the object, but how our subject/ex-object perceives the categories/concepts we created to describe it. Further, we must ask ourselves whether—from the point of view of our subject—the categories/concepts are, in fact, necessary. In other words,

> it is necessary to seek an anthropological concept of concept that assumes the extrapositionality of all creative thinking ("wild") in its integral positivity, and that develops in a completely different direction from the traditional notions of category (innate or acquired), of representation (propositional or semi) or belief (simple or "folded", as they say of flowers) (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 75).

For Viveiros de Castro (2015), the reflexive displacement must occur using a "controlled equivocation" when we try to occupy the Other's point of view, since "to translate is to assume that there has always been a mistake; it is to communicate by difference, instead of silencing the other by assuming an original univocity and an ultimate redundancy—an essential similarity—between what he and we 'were saying'" (p. 91).

This essay discusses the possibilities offered by the concept of Amerindian perspectivism to Organizational Studies (OS). The *Anthropophagous Manifesto*, with its 51 aphorisms, as dissected by Azevedo (2016), will be the guiding thread of our theoretical essay—a trajectory that commenced with the choice of the title. The aphorisms of the manifesto will emerge throughout this essay as demarcators, or exclamations, and will be guide us in the process of anthrophagizing the main work of Viveiros de Castro (2015) investigated here: *Cannibal Metaphysics: Elements for a Post-structural Anthropology*. Thus, we have already started our essay with a reflexive displacement when we treat the manifesto literature as science, in contrast to the proposal of "treating science as literature" for the production of knowledge (Czarniawska, 2004, p. 103). The following questions will guide us in this essay. What onto-epistemological reflexive practices can we employ in OS based on the concept of Amerindian perspectivism? What should we consider in the construction of the other in OS based on a reflexive displacement that assumes a controlled equivocation?

OS has already appropriated contributions, such as Bruno Latour's actor-network theory—something on which Viveiros de Castro also relied—from the field of anthropology. Similarly, decolonial studies includes anthropologists, such as Arturo Escobar and Fernando Coronil, among their prominent researchers. Thus, another objective of this essay is to popularize—as a product of our anthropophagic process—the thought of Oswald de Andrade and Viveiros de Castro to expand the frontiers of decolonial studies in Latin America. Decolonial studies has endeavored to focus thinking, and shed light, on the Latin American reality. However, we note that the role of Brazil in

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decolonial studies has not been properly explored. Some Brazilian thinkers, such as Paulo Freire, Darcy Ribeiro, and Milton Santos, are mentioned, but their theoretical constructions are not duly explored (Wanderley & Barros, 2019). Brazilian social thought has theoretical propositions that can strengthen decolonial studies (Maia, 2009). We believe that OS can drink from the source of social sciences to expand its epistemological paths without falling into the dangers of "epistemicide" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 104), thereby avoiding Euro-American thinking as the unique possibility. After all, "without us, Europe would not even have its poor declaration of human rights" (Andrade, 1928).

Moreover, as suggested by Oswald de Andrade, we seek to promote the "inversion of temporal and geographical hierarchies" (Azevedo, 2016, p. 155), and, thus, to rotate the geography of reasoning to escape the colonization of time-space imposed by the Euro-American modernity (Mignolo, 2011). Above all, we are committed to the task of "*penser autrement* (Foucault) thinking—thinking 'otherwise', thinking another mind, thinking with other minds" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 25).

After this section, we discuss the tradition and autonomy of critical OS in Brazil and current trends in the field, with an emphasis on the concept of anthropophagy. In the third section, we present the concepts that Viveiros de Castro elaborates from "cannibalistic metaphysics," discussing the possibilities of Amerindian perspectivism in OS and how these concepts can support decolonial studies. We close the essay with our final remarks.

"WE WERE NEVER CATECHIZED": CRITICAL ORGANIZATIONAL STUDIES IN BRAZIL

"We were never catechized" is one of the few phrases that Oswald de Andrade (1928) repeats in the manifesto. This phrase highlights the indigenous resistance to Portuguese colonization and, above all, the reaction to the Catholicism imposed by the Jesuits. More than resisting, the inversion process suggested by Oswald in the manifesto aims to emphasize that Brazil "is not" behind "in relation to Europe. There is no need to 'copy' anything or be guided by foreign laws, on the contrary, Brazil is a pioneer and original matrix of the future" (Azevedo, 2016, p. 196). In the same sense, this section aims to present the tradition and autonomy of critical organizational studies (COS) (Paes de Paula, 2010) in Brazil and some of its current trends.

Oswald de Andrade (1928) starts his manifesto by pointing out that "Only anthropophagy unites us. Socially. Economically. Philosophically." Thus, as pointed out by Azevedo (2016), he demonstrates a response to the communist manifesto, and he intended to illustrate that, even before the communist ideal developed, anthropophagy was already practiced by the original peoples, thereby rescuing the ancestral ritual of the nation. The work is called a manifesto because the title is political and provocative, and that is the author's intention. Thus, Oswald continues unveiling and trying to demonstrate how life existed before the "discovery;" further, he states that there was no need for introducing a new movement to the world, life was already lived in it, a daily life unfolded in the lands of the original peoples (Azevedo, 2016).

The penultimate aphorism of the manifesto contains the sentences "our independence has not yet been proclaimed" and "It is necessary to expel the bragantino spirit," thereby referring critically to the official event of the proclamation of independence. These phrases highlight the cultural independence movement proposed by the Week of 22 during the centenary commemoration of the official proclamation of Brazilian independence (Azevedo, 2016). Thus, Oswald denounces the fact that it is still necessary to proclaim Brazil's liberation even 100 years after it occurred. In other words, epistemic coloniality (Ibarra-Colado, 2008) continues to this day, long after the end of colonial domination. This is one of the reasons why we can consider the *Anthropophagous Manifesto* to be a manifestation of the decolonial project long before the political project was launched by Latin American (Hispanic) researchers.

In the same sense, COS in Brazil predates the critical movement in the Anglo-Saxon world that became known as Critical Management Studies (CMS). Thinkers, such as Alberto Guerreiro Ramos, Maurício Tragtenberg, and Fernando Prestes Motta, produced studies possessing the characteristics of CMS, even before this aspect was formally inaugurated (Paes de Paula, 2010). It is argued that "the central idea is that this anticipation constitutes a tradition, which is autonomous because the theoretical and epistemological basis used by these critical thinkers is different" (Paes de Paula, 2015, p. 410). For example, Ramos (1954, p. 67) denounced "canned sociology," that is, the rancidness of Brazilian thought in carrying out mere transplants of experiences already lived in the contexts of more advanced countries. In turn, Oswald de Andrade (1928) proclaimed: "Against all importers of canned conscience."

The anthropophagy suggested by Oswald was already considered within OS and management studies. The pioneering study by Wood and Caldas (1998), titled "Organizational Anthropophagy," found that importing foreign models is problematic. Thus, it sought to discuss why this import occurs, and, then, to show that local peculiarities prevent the implementation of this import as planned; finally, it proposes and illustrates an "anthropophagic method" of action for this import by emerging

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countries. This method, for importing management models, aims at an adaptive and reflexive approach based on a creative and appropriate commitment; it suggests that organizations from emerging countries do not import "foreign technology directly and thoughtlessly, but should, when it is essential to, use foreign models, to select without prejudice and in a creative way the best that such foreign references can offer" (Wood & Caldas, 1998, p. 17).

Anthropophagy was also explored in the study of Faria, Carvalho, and Collares (2001), who focused on the proposal for organizational anthropophagy and the need for a less "nationalistic" and scientific proposal to address issues of knowledge and culture. Then, based on the careful reconstruction of the original anthropophagic movement and its particular epistemology, the authors propose the creation, in Brazil, of a line called tribal studies.

Islam (2012) used anthropophagy as a metaphor for: understanding knowledge in organizations; approaching the concept of post-colonial thought; and contributing to a better understanding of the issues of mixture and hybridism essential to contemporary social theory. In his next article, Islam (2014) sought to make a theoretical contribution by introducing the concept of cultural anthropophagy in the literature on diversity. The author appropriated Kristeva's notion of abjection to understand cultural anthropophagy more clearly; further, he put forward the argument that cultural anthropophagy crosses borders and builds identity through desire and aggression toward those who are valued by them. Islam (2015) investigates corporality and the mixture of culture. The objective was to contribute to organizational thinking on cultural mixing by considering it as an embodied sensory process, and investigating the concept of organizational anthropophagy as a metaphor for a particular way of organizational understanding. It is worth mentioning that Islam (2012, 2014, 2015)'s writings used Viveiros de Castro, among other authors, to further understand anthropophagy.

Faria, Wanderley, Reis, and Celano (2013) used anthropophagy to present the lessons learned from a case study conducted at Galpão Aplauso (GA). The main objective of GA—an NGO based in Rio de Janeiro—is to (re) socialize low-income young people through a critical methodology informed by anthropophagy. The authors pointed out that appropriating this methodology reveals its capacity to contribute to the knowledge produced in GA that these young people possess. In addition, Faria et al. (2013) demonstrated that, through the critical methodology informed by anthropophagy, it is possible to go beyond the Eurocentric traditions, thus expanding the geographical and cultural references.

Pinto's work (2014) sought to develop a method for accelerating the transplantation of managerial technologies. This work was based on the sociological reduction of the Oswaldian poetics and is part of the anthropophagic movement for promoting creative strategic responses in the face of institutional pressures.

Prado and Sapsed (2016) focused on bringing anthropophagy to management studies through innovation. The authors highlight how project innovations can be successfully disseminated within a project-based organization and how these projects evolve through adaptation. To develop this work, Prado and Sapsed (2016) based it on the metaphorical notion of anthropophagy, using it to explain the appropriation of the resulting otherness in the ongoing life of the organization.

Thus, it is noted that the contributions of anthropophagy have already sparked debates in OS, management, and even strategy, innovation, corporeality, and diversity. In addition, we would like to highlight some of the current debates in OS that seek to expand the possibilities of understanding phenomena through other epistemologies and ontologies. To do so, we aggregate the discussions on intersectional theory and the Anthropocene.

The intersectional theory has its origins in the field of black feminism, where it seeks to propose theories that contribute to the deconstruction of inequality structures (Teixeira, Oliveira, & Mesquita, 2019). Intersectionality appropriates a metaphorical conceptualization of the intersection by understanding that the problem it seeks to capture comes from the "structural and dynamic consequences of the interaction between two or more axes of subordination" (Crenshaw, 2002, p. 177). Intersectionality deals specifically with how racism, patriarchy, class oppression, and other discriminatory processes result and generate basic inequalities that shape the relative positions of women, races, ethnicities, classes, and others (Crenshaw, 2002). Disempowerment is also an aspect addressed by intersectionality because "specific actions and policies generate oppressions that flow along such axes, constituting dynamic or active aspects of disempowerment" (Crenshaw, 2002, p. 177). It is possible to notice works that appropriate this theoretical contribution in the field of OS and discuss it in congresses (e.g. Teixeira et al., 2019).

Viveiros de Castro (2019) is currently dedicating himself to science studies by exploring the notion of the Anthropocene in dialogue with theorists, such as Bruno Latour (2014), Donna Haraway (2016), and Isabelle Stengers (2018). The Anthropocene can be understood as the present era during which human beings and societies have become a huge geophysical force on the planet; further, the great acceleration of development and the increase in the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere during this era has consequences relevant to the terrestrial system (Steffen, Crutzen, & McNeill, 2007). The discussions about the Anthropocene, as well as the

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intersectional theory, have also been gaining ground in the area of OS (e.g., Figueiredo & Marquesan, 2019).

Latour (2014), in his discussion of the Anthropocene, warns of the tension between science and politics based on the concepts used to determine this era; this is because there is no consensus on its existence if one relies on geological parameters. The author proposes that the concept of the Anthropocene must go beyond the geological dimensions and touch upon philosophy, anthropology, and politics. However, in view of the uncertainties and dissent in the scientific and political fields over this concept, it is important to highlight that the relevance of the Anthropocene is its appropriation as an option for the notion of modernity (Latour, 2014). Latour also understands that the Anthropocene makes clear the inseparability between nature and culture—the separation between these two elements was something pre-established by modernity and it is no longer supported in the current era (Latour, 2014).

In turn, Haraway (2016) pointed out that "the relevance of naming the Anthropocene, Plantationocene, or Capitalocene has to do with scale, rate/speed, synchronicity and complexity" (p. 139). The author questions whether there is an inflection point that changes "the name of the game of life on earth for everyone and everything," that is, something beyond climate change, and also including toxic chemicals, depletion of rivers and lakes, and genocides; all these factors may cause recursive collapses of the system (Haraway, 2016, p. 139).

Stengers (2018) introduces the cosmopolitical proposition into the Anthropocene discussion. Such a proposition is not intended to become theory or universal; thus, "the cosmopolitical proposition is even incapable of giving a 'good' definition of the procedures that allow the 'good' definition of a 'good' common world" to be achieved (Stengers, 2018, p. 446). The author emphasizes that "cosmos, as it appears in that cosmopolitical term, designates the unknown that constitutes these multiple, divergent worlds" (Stengers, 2018, p. 447). Stengers (2018) seeks to highlight the differences and inconsistencies, without worrying about proposing neutral solutions or standards that allow generalizations in the social world.

In his most recent work, Viveiros de Castro (2019) sought to draw the sketch of a notion of "ontological anarchism" as the appropriate method of existence for the Anthropocene; this is based on the understanding that Anthropocene thinking requires the practice of a radical form of ontological pluralism. We can say that this pluralism is present in the Amerindian worldview (Viveiros de Castro, 2015). Viveiros de Castro (2019) distinguishes between model and example as contrasting ways of articulating thought and action in the Anthropocene. The author considers the distinction to be useful in understanding the ontological assumptions of geoengineering as a technopolitical correction.

Latour (2014), Haraway (2016), and Stengers (2018) are not anthropophagic thinkers; however, their discussions around the Anthropocene and within science studies related to issues, such as post-humanism, nature and the body, are part of the worldview of several peoples from Latin America, including the Araweté surveyed by Viveiros de Castro (1986).

"IN THE MATRIARCHY OF PINDORAMA": VIVEIROS DE CASTRO AND THE CANNIBAL METAPHYSICS

"In the matriarchy of Pindorama" (referring to the name given to Brazil by the Amerindians) is a wildcard aphorism that Oswald de Andrade (1928) used to create an invented "space-time" and, thus, demarcate his own territory—timeless—by inverting the patriarchy inherited from the west (Azevedo 2016, p. 91). It was from his immersion in the Araweté space-time that Viveiros de Castro (1986) developed the concept of Amerindian perspectivism. Therefore, in order to preserve the originality of Viveiros de Castro's research, we retain, whenever possible, the original citations.

Eduardo Batalha Viveiros de Castro, who was born in Rio de Janeiro, holds a degree in social sciences from PUC-RJ (Catholic University) and is a professor of social anthropology at the National Museum of UFRJ (Viveiros de Castro, 2015). His seminal work, *The Cosmological Pronouns and the Amerindian Perspectivism* (1996), was translated into several languages and inspired anthropological reflexivity around the world. Roy Wagner (an influential American anthropologist) says that Viveiros de Castro's contributions made people like him acquire a critical perception of the work they were doing (Wagner, 2011). According to Wagner (2011), the introduction of this concept was a major contribution from Brazil to the world of anthropology.

In this section, we present the concept of Amerindian perspectivism and seek to understand its potential contribution to OS and decolonial studies. This section is divided into subsections to present the different concepts that Viveiros de Castro (2015) proposes to understand the worldview of the natives; these concepts—multinaturalism, reflexive displacement, controlled equivocation and shamanism—make up Amerindian perspectivism. Before that, however, the warnings of Viveiros de Castro (2015, p. 95 and 231) are appropriate: "[...] indigenous theories do not present themselves in such a practical way, dear reader [...] because we cannot think *like* the Indians; at most, we can think *with* the Indians".

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"Against all Catecheses" (Andrade, 1928): Amerindian Perspectivism or Perspectivist Multinaturalism

To illustrate how perspectivism takes place, Viveiros de Castro (2015) reports his starting point as the Lévi-Strauss parable about the conquest of America. According to this parable, while the Spaniards created commissions in the Antilles to discuss whether the Indians possessed a soul, the Indias tried to submerge the bodies of the Spaniards for a long period to check whether their bodies also rotted. Viveiros de Castro's (2015) analysis of this parable points out the following:

> According to the perspectivist hypothesis, Amerindian ontological regimes diverge from those more widespread in the West, especially over what concerns the inverse semiotic functions attributed to the body and soul. For Spaniards from the West Indies incident, the marked dimension was the soul; for the Indians, it was the body. In other words, Europeans never doubted that the Indians had bodies (animals also have them); the Indians never doubted that Europeans had souls (animals have them too). Europeans ethnocentrism consisted of doubting that the bodies of others contained a soul similar to those inhabiting their own bodies; Amerindian ethnocentrism, on the contrary, consisted of doubting that other souls or spirits were endowed with a body materially similar to indigenous bodies. (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, pp. 36–37)

Lévi-Strauss' conclusion to this parable is that, in the face of mutual ignorance of the other, the Indians were more human in imagining that the Spaniards could be gods, whereas the Spaniards, in understanding that the Indians had no soul, considered them as animals. Being animals, they were liable to be hunted and domesticated (Viveiros de Castro, 2015). Moreover, by being decimated and despoiled, they allowed Europeans to practice the *ego conquiro*, without which the *ego cogito* would not have appeared (Dussel, 1993).

The parable of the Antilles helps us to understand the grounds on which the thought on Amerindian perspectivism begins; it demonstrates an ontological turn, and not only an epistemological one. It is necessary to understand how other beings understand their own nature, besides understanding how they understand us; this is required to, then, understand how their actions, rituals, beliefs and ways of life, and organization occur.

Amerindian perspectivism has, as its starting point, the Amazonian ethnographies and their countless references, which address an indigenous theory that deals with worldviews, where

> the way humans see animals and other subjectivities that populate the universe—gods, spirits, dead, inhabitants of other cosmic levels, meteorological phenomena, plants, sometimes even objects and artifacts—is profoundly different from the way these beings perceive them, see them and see themselves. (Viveiros de Castro, 1996, p. 117)

Therefore, it is necessary to disregard our point of view to capture how the Other's worldview and nature direct their actions. Amerindian perspectivism puts forward the notion that

> humans, under normal conditions, see humans as humans, animals as animals and spirits (if they see them) as spirits; whereas animals (predators) and spirits see humans as animals (of prey), whereas animals (of prey) see humans as spirits or as animals (predators). (Viveiros de Castro, 1996, p. 117)

However, from another point of view, animals and spirits "see themselves as human: they apprehend themselves as (or become) anthropomorphic when they are in their own houses or villages, and experience their own habits and characteristics under the species of culture" (Viveiros de Castro, 1996, p. 117). These beings also organize their mental map and perceive "their food as human food ([...] vultures see the worms of rotting meat as roasted fish), their bodily attributes as adornments or cultural instruments, their social system as organized in it like human institutions (with chiefs, shamans, parties, rites)" (Viveiros de Castro, 1996, p. 117). In short, "*the original condition common to humans and animals is not animality, but humanity*" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 60; italics in the original).

However, this "humanity is reflexive, but it cannot be mutual" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 62); this is because two "human" poles cannot be activated simultaneously and recognize themselves and the other as human. This is explained by the fact that

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> it is the human who vicariously occupies the position of cosmological subject; everything existing can be thought of as thinking ("it exists, therefore it thinks"), that is, as "activated" or "managed by a point of view"; in other words, a radical real or objective diversity. Perspectivism is a multinaturalism, because a perspective is not a representation. A perspective is not a representation because representations are properties of the spirit, but the point of view is in the body. (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 65)

Viveiros de Castro (2015, p. 69) presents the concept of "perspectivist multinaturalism" as being similar to Amerindian perspectivism; this is because "Amazonian multinaturalism does not affirm a variety of natures, but the naturalness of variation, variation as nature." Multinaturalism serves as a counterpoint to the Western concept of multiculturalism, as it starts from a "unity of nature and a multiplicity of cultures," whereas the Amerindian conception presupposes the opposite—nature or the object is the form of the particular; further, in this case, "culture or the subject would be the form of the universal" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 43).

In this intermingling of worlds, indigenous theory realizes that animals are also people, or are perceived as people because the point of view is in the body (Viveiros de Castro, 1996). This construction "is almost always associated with the idea that the manifest form of each species is a mere envelope ('clothing') to hide an internal human form, normally visible only to the eyes of the species itself or those of certain trans-specific beings, such as shamans" (Viveiros de Castro, 1996, p. 117). In this dialectic of the different worlds, the figure of the shaman becomes essential. Shamans are "dedicated to communicating and managing these crossed perspectives, they are always there to make concepts sensitive or intuitions intelligible" (Viveiros de Castro, 1996, p. 117).

The clothing is the way the body presents itself because the fundamental issue for perspectivism is that all beings—living or not, human or not—have the ontological potential to acquire human form. It is from this (dis)continuity between living humans or dead-non-human-nature, and in the different forms that they present themselves, that perspectivism emerges. Therefore, "'personitude' and 'perspective'—the ability to occupy a point of view—are a matter of degree, context, and position, rather than a distinctive property of this or that species" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 46). It is for this reason that Oswald de Andrade (1928) exclaimed that "what trampled the truth was clothing, the impermeable between the inner and the outer world." What Oswald seems to propose to us here is "a greater interpenetration between these two worlds, reviving a natural dialog that was corrupted by the "clothes" that (re) clothe civilization" (Azevedo, 2016, pp. 117-118).

Moreover, being limited by our "clothes"—or by the "armor" of our theoretical and methodological premises—is what makes us perceive other ways of thinking and the nature of other beings as something distant and external to us; therefore, it causes our ancestry/locality to be rejected and, thus, can lead us to praise the vision of the North. In this way, "to suppose that all 'European' discourse about peoples of non-European tradition only serves to illuminate our 'representations of the Other' is to make of a certain theoretical post-colonialism the most perverse manifestation of ethnocentrism" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 21).

The author criticizes the way of working and researching in his field—Anthropology. For him, "it is necessary to address all the consequences of the idea that the societies and cultures that are the object of anthropological research influence, or, [...] co-produce the theories about society and culture formulated from this research" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 22). In this sense, to deny this question means to assume one-way constructivism, where the researcher perceives the other only as an object, and not a denial of impartiality. It is important not to subject the native to an "othering," which means "any anthropological characterization that does not make him a mirror in which we recognize ourselves" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 22).

What Viveiros de Castro (2015) proposes is that we do exactly the opposite, that is, we should take native thinking "as a *practice of meaning*: as a self-referential device for the production of concepts, of 'symbols that represent themselves'" (p. 229; italics in the original). Therefore, perspectivism "is not a type, but a concept; in fact, it is not a type of type, but a concept of a concept, the most interesting use of which is not so much to classify cosmologies that seem excessively exotic, but to counter-analyze anthropologies that are all too familiar" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 73).

As in the *Anthropophagous Manifesto*, "everything passes through the body and to the body it will return; (Azevedo, 2016, p. 205), this is because "perspectivism is a corporal mannerism" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 66). Perspectivism presupposes a unity of spirit and diversity of bodies and "it is the body as a bundle of affections and capabilities, and that is the origin of the perspectives" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 66). In the words of Oswald de Andrade (1928), "the spirit refuses to receive the spirit without the body.." So, if animals, or the dead, see themselves

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as human and, in this way, are able to see objects in the same way as we see different objects, we have the representation of a single sense, but based on multiple references: "all beings see ('represent') the world in *the same way*—what changes is *the world they see*" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 64; italics in the original). Therefore, "perspectivism presupposes a constant epistemology and variable ontologies," and its quest is not "to find the common reference, but, on the contrary, to find the mistake" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 67).

"Against the Reversible World and the Objective, Cadaverized Ideas": Reflexive Displacement/Controlled Equivocation

To "find the mistake," it is necessary, for the understanding/occupation based on the point of view of the Other, that we carry out a reflexive displacement based on a controlled equivocation (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 67). This is another way for OS to go beyond "objective, cadaverized ideas" (Andrade, 1928).

In his coexistence with the Araweté, Viveiros de Castro (1986) suggests that one of his inspirations for formulating the concept of Amerindian perspectivism was the singing during the cannibal ritual of the warrior who will make the sacrifice of the enemy captured in combat. It is important to note that the Araweté do not devour their victims, who are offered as a sacrifice to "supernatural entities [who were] in the role of the active pole of the cannibal relationship" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 158). The warrior sings in the voice of his enemy and tells, from the point of view of his enemy, how he sees the warrior himself and how many of the Araweté he, the enemy, would have exterminated. What is devoured is not the body, but what it symbolizes—the enemy's relationship with its devourer. In other words, "what was assimilated from the victim was the signs of his otherness, and what was aimed at was that otherness as a point of view on the self" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 160).

Mainly, we realize that the cannibal ritual of the Araweté represents "a paradoxical movement of reciprocal self-determination from the point of view of the enemy" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 160); thus, on the basis of a reflexive displacement, the warrior, from the point of view of the enemy, apprehends himself as a subject, "or rather, in which he pronounces his own uniqueness through the voice of the other. Perspectivism" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 161).

Viveiros de Castro (2015, p. 159) ended up defining Tupi cannibalism as an "actantial scheme" and "a process of transmutation of perspectives, where the 'I' is determined as 'other' by the very act of incorporating this other, which in turn becomes an 'I', but always *in* the other, *through* the other ('through' also in the solecistic sense of 'across the body')".

The reflexive displacement is performed with the intention of "settling in the space of the mistake and inhabiting it. Not to undo it, which would suppose that it never existed, but quite the contrary, to enhance it, opening and expanding the space that was thought not to exist between conceptual languages" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 90). Further, equivocation takes, as its premises, that the languages at stake are heterogeneous and that there is a blank space between them: "equivocation, in short, is not a subjective failure, but a device of objectification. It is not a mistake or an illusion [...]" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 90).

"Low Anthropophagy... it is Against it that we are Acting. Anthropophagi (Andrade, 1928): Shaman a Border Thinker?

We are here in our sterile research environment trying to practice high anthropophagy. We were not with Oswald de Andrade at the 1922 Art Week; we did not write for the Anthropophagy Review; and we did not live for some years—as Viveiros de Castro did—with the Araweté. We did not even visit an indigenous tribe to write this essay. The most we can do is think *with* them—Oswald and Viveiros de Castro—since "we cannot think *like*" them (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 231). After all, "what do we [in OS] have to do with it?" (Andrade, 1928).

Above all, the concept of Amerindian perspectivism leads us, as researchers, to become reflexive about the theoretical and methodological choices we make to investigate our object/subject. We should practice reflexivity not only from our own perspective, but also from the point of view of our subject/ex-object. After all, "every experience of another thought is an experience of our own" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 96). We must be reflexive on the consequences of our task as researchers when we master a theoretical-methodological structure—our clothes—and go around the world looking for objects/subjects in which we can—dress—apply this structure-clothes. In Amerindian perspectivism, "an object is an incompletely interpreted subject" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 52).

Therefore, in order to interpret this subject, we must be reflexive on the consequences that our onto-epistemological choices will have on our research from the point of view of the Other. At this point, we understand that the concepts of reflexive displacement and controlled equivocation (Viveiros de Castro, 2015) have a lot to contribute to the construction of the Other in

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OS and to the concept of border thinking in decolonial studies. The border thinker seeks to produce knowledge that is different from the knowledge to which it relates, without being a mere reproducer; rather, he or she seeks to be an agent that transits between borders without identifying with any of them (Faria, 2013), that is, it moves on both sides and traditions without belonging to any (Mignolo & Tlostanova, 2006). After all, "the object of interpretation is the object's counter-interpretation" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 52).

In this ontological turn of perspective, the researcher would be a shaman outside the border when dialoguing with the knowledge produced on the inside. Viveiros de Castro (2015) points out that "shamanism is a way of acting that implies a way of knowing, or rather, a certain ideal of knowledge" (p. 50). We realize that this function of the shaman comes close to a border thinking attitude because "Amerindian shamanism can be defined as the ability of certain individuals to deliberately cross body barriers between species and adopt the perspective of 'foreign' subjectivities, in order to manage the relationships between these and humans" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 49). Further, managing these relationships does not mean finding synonyms among similar representations for different objects that each species makes, but "it is not to lose sight of the hidden difference within the equivocal *homonyms* that connect and separate our language and that of other species" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 68; italics in the original).

In this sense, it is important to emphasize that this perspective is the result of another way of thinking that moves away from the objectivist logic that is motivated by the modernity of the West. For such a modernity, "to know is to 'objectify'; it is to be able to distinguish in the object what is intrinsic to that which belongs to the knowing subject, and which, as such, was improperly and/or inevitably projected onto the object" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 50). Modern epistemology understands that to know "is to de-subject, to make explicit the part of the subject present in the object, in order to reduce it to an ideal minimum (or to enlarge it demonstrably in order to obtain spectacular critical effects)" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 50).

In this way, everything becomes an object for Western modernity and is liable to be objectified; thus, it is necessary to rationalize and shape what is intended to be known:

> The subjects, as well as the objects, are granted as the result of objectification processes: the subject is constituted or recognizes himself in the objects he produces, and he knows himself objectively when he can see himself "from the outside", as an "it" [...] what was not objectified remains unreal and abstract, the form of the Other is a thing. (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 50)

Border thinking brings different actors from the field to the surface; these actors develop theories and ideas of knowledge; seeking to shed light on everyone; shifting the exclusive legitimacy of articulating concepts and theories from European modernity; seeking to empower those who were "unemployed by the ego and the politics of knowledge" (Mignolo & Tlostanova, 2006, p. 207). Border thinking comprises the existence and coexistence of all worlds and aims at "building a world in which many worlds and knowledge can coexist" (Faria, 2013, p. 278). Therefore,

> The decolonial epistemic shift is no longer grounded in Greek and Latin categories of thought that informed modern epistemology (since the Renaissance) in the six European imperial languages (Italian, Spanish and Portuguese for the Renaissance; French, English and German for the Enlightenment), but in the epistemic borders between European imperial categories and languages and categories that modern epistemology ruled out as epistemically non-sustainable (e.g., Mandarin, Japanese, Russian, Hindi, Urdu, Aymara, Nahuatl, Wolof, Arabic, etc.) (Mignolo & Tlostanova, 2006, p. 207)

We must add to this list not only the languages of the peoples of Latin America, but also, and above all, the worldview they developed based on these languages, such as the Tupi of the Araweté studied by Viveiros de Castro. It is important to note that Viveiros de Castro (2015) suggests that some of the elements of the Araweté worldviews are common to several peoples in Latin America.

Whether as a shaman or a border thinker, what matters to us, as researchers, is that we must be aware that "to know is to 'personify', to take the point of view of what should be known. Or rather, that who; because the question is to know 'the *who* of things' (Guimarães Rosa), indispensable knowledge to answer with intelligence the question of 'why'. The other's form is the person" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 50; italics in the original). Further, to take the form of the other, or to inhabit his or her body so that we can activate his or her point of view, we must be aware that equivocity is a premise. The epistemological proposal

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introduced by Amerindian perspectivism is based on the principle that "true knowledge aims to reveal a maximum of intentionality, through a systematic and deliberate 'agency abduction' process" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 51).

What we are suggesting here is that we "want the Caraíba revolution" (Andrade, 1928), that is, we want to "decatechize" thought, the "canned conscience", just as Oswald operates "through the ruptures he introduces in his own language and in the chain of aphorisms in the Manifesto, where there is no predictable sequence or 'domesticated' syntax" (Azevedo, 2016, p. 141). What we aim for is "the undated world. Not initialed. Without Napoleon. Without César" (Andrade, 1928). This is achieved through the inversion of the temporal and geographical hierarchies that dominate the construction of knowledge (Mignolo, 2011). In short, "it is a question of reading philosophers in the light of wild thought, and not the other way around: it is a question of updating the countless becoming-others that exist as virtualities of our thinking;" this is because "now it is the native's turn - *the turn of the native* " (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 88 and 90).

"AGAINST THE INDIAN TORCH BEARER"

The objective of this essay was to investigate the possibilities of the concept of Amerindian perspectivism in OS. Keeping in mind the content of *Anthropophagous Manifesto* (Andrade, 1928), we devoured the book by Viveiros de Castro (2015) and, as a consequence, presented the concepts of anthropophagy and Amerindian perspectivism to expand the space for debates in OS and decolonial studies. By bringing indigenous worldviews closer together, we can broaden the perspectives used in this field, thereby understanding perspectivism as a way of breaking onto-epistemological barriers. However, as Andrade (1928) warns, we are "against the Indian torch bearer" and against the "Indian dressed as a Senator of the Empire," which symbolize the "images of Brazilian romantic Indianism and its uncritical transfer of values" (Azevedo, 2016, p. 170).

In no way do we intend to exhaust, in this essay, the possibilities of using concepts from Amerindian perspectivism in OS; on the contrary, we want to encourage other researchers to explore all possible developments. We understand the potential of perspectivism, just as Azevedo (2016) understands Oswald de Andrade's *Anthropophagous Manifesto*: "it is not a closed work, on the contrary, *it is a space full of possibilities and virtualities, it can and must be reread and recreated infinitely*" (pp. 213–214; italics in the original).

In an attempt to decolonize the theories that dominate OS, we believe that returning to the thoughts of the original peoples can provoke reflexivity about our locus of enunciation by taking into account that these perspectives can help us to trace a history of organizational knowledge, even as we try not to reproduce the mental maps and conceptual concepts. Thus, we believe that both Amerindian perspectives and anthropophagy can support the guidelines for (re) telling the possible stories of organizational knowledge based on the Latin American decolonial commitment; this can promote an ontological turn in which the researcher would be a shaman on the external side of the border when dialoguing with the knowledge produced on the internal side of the border.

Like a shaman who wears the Other's "clothes" to transit through other worlds, we need to make our clothes a harness for the encounter with the dominant thought on the inside of the border, just as we must undress our theoretical-methodological armor when we seek to (re) build the Other in OS. During this transition or reflexive displacement, we must assume a "border thinking" attitude that is based on an exercise of double consciousness (Mignolo, 2011); after all, "the sign of a first-rate shamanic intelligence is the ability to see simultaneously from two incompatible perspectives" (Viveiros de Castro, 2015, p. 63). In this reflexive displacement, we must assume a controlled equivocation so that we can seek from the inner side of the border that which strengthens us—anthropophagically—without allowing ourselves to be catechized and return to the outer side of the border. Thus, we can enable ourselves with the clothes provided by Amerindian perspectivism to investigate theories that seem too familiar, instead of using them to investigate objects that seem exotic to us.

We believe that Amerindian perspectivism for us, the researchers in the field of OS, comes close to a research attitude that exalts equivocation, that is, equality between voices. We also highlight, as a contribution of perspectivism, the importance of: entering the research field with the understanding that all voices have the same value, and understanding that it is in the nature of the field to have differences and not repetitions; further, our contribution is to highlight the differences that emerge between our understanding of the field and how the field perceives what we think we understand. It is from this heterogeneity that we must commence our investigation.

Following Oswald de Andrade's *Anthropophagous Manifesto*, we must fight to inscribe our diverse indigenous origins on the house of knowledge, and thus "expel the bragantine spirit" and break away from the epistemic coloniality; we need to fight "...against memory as a source of habits. The renewed personal experience."

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

The work was thought and reflected together from the knowledge of the work of Viveiros de Castro, the search to know more and bring the Amerindian perspectivism of the EOR closer together led us to develop this work. The authors participated in all stages of development of the manuscript from conceptualization and theoretical-methodological approach, theoretical revision (literature survey), to the writing and final revision of the text.

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ORGANIZING ORGANIZATIONAL STUDIES IN CHILE: HISTORY OF THE CREATION OF THE MINGA GROUP

Organizando os Estudos Organizacionais no Chile: História da criação do Grupo Minga

Organizando los Estudios Organizacionales en Chile: Historia de la creación del Grupo Minga

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ABSTRACT

This article addresses the experience, history, and particularities after the process of shaping Minga, an academic group of Organizational Studies in Chile. Following a historical-narrative methodology, a biographical account of this group is built, in which its protagonists participate as researchers and authors of the process. To analyze this story, a decolonial view is adopted, simultaneously investigating the leadership styles and the knowledge network that this experience mobilizes, paralleling the tradition of the minga chilota. The results show how the question for organizational studies in Chile coincides with a process of epistemic detachment from the global north, through which the collective and shared leadership among its members is consolidated in Minga, as well as its functioning as an inter-organizational academic network. The conclusions cover some of the learnings that the history and conformation of this group offer for other groups with similar intentions in the field of Organizational Studies in Latin America.

KEYWORDS | Organizational studies, Chile, decolonialism, leadership, organizational networks.

RESUMO

EEste artigo aborda a experiência, a história e as particularidades após o processo de formação do Minga, um grupo acadêmico de Estudos Organizacionais no Chile. Seguindo uma metodologia histórico-narrativa, é construído um relato biográfico desse grupo, no qual seus protagonistas participam como pesquisadores/as e autores/as do processo. Para analisar essa história, é adotada uma visão decolonial, investigando simultaneamente os estilos de liderança e a rede de conhecimento que essa experiência mobiliza, paralelamente à tradição da minga chilota. Os resultados mostram como a questão dos estudos organizacionais no Chile coincide com um processo de distanciamento epistêmico do norte global, através do qual a liderança coletiva e compartilhada entre seus membros se consolida em Minga, bem como seu funcionamento como uma rede acadêmica interorganizacional. As conclusões abrangem alguns dos aprendizados que a história e a conformação deste grupo oferecem a outros grupos com intenções semelhantes no campo dos Estudos Organizacionais na América Latina.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE *| Estudos Organizacionais, Chile, decolonialismo, liderança, redes organizacionais.*

RESUMEN

Este artículo aborda la experiencia, historia y particularidades tras el proceso de conformación de Minga, un grupo académico de Estudios Organizacionales en Chile. Siguiendo una metodología histórico-narrativa se construye un relato biográfico de este grupo, en el cual sus protagonistas participan como investigadores/as y autores/as del proceso. Para analizar este relato se adopta una mirada decolonial, indagando simultáneamente en los estilos de liderazgo y la red de conocimiento que esta experiencia moviliza, haciendo un paralelo con la tradición de la minga chilota. Los resultados muestran cómo la pregunta por los estudios organizacionales en Chile coincide con un proceso de desprendimiento epistémico del norte global, a través del cual se va consolidando en Minga el liderazgo colectivo y compartido entre sus miembros, así como su funcionamiento como una red académica interorganizacional. Las conclusiones recorren algunos de los aprendizajes que la historia y conformación de este grupo ofrecen para otros colectivos con similares intenciones en el campo de los Estudios Organizacionales en Latinoamérica.

PALABRAS CLAVE *| Estudios Organizacionales, Chile, decolonialismo, liderazgo, redes organizacionales.*

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INTRODUCTION

The question concerning Organizational Studies (OS) in Latin America is an open inquiry of extensive discussion and debate followed by an inconclusive answer. The development of OS in Latin America involves the cumbersome translations encountered in this field while considering its origin through specific epistemological and political tensions between Europe and the United States (Ascorra, Rivera-Aguilera, Mandiola, & Espejo, 2018; Gonzales-Miranda, 2014; Ibarra-Colado, 1991; Sanabria, Saavedra, & Smida, 2013). This openness has also enabled the creation of organizational ways of thinking from the margins of a pre-constituted field of study, thereby reflecting on what could become its foundations from local organizational experiences. In this context, it is especially relevant to review the Latin America praxis of OS and to consider its varied trajectories, the degrees of its legitimacy, the states of its consolidation, and the breadth of the national academic networks in this field. In the specific case of Chile, it involves examining its own understandings and stories of the organizational realm as well as analyzing what it might mean for a local community of OS to emerge as an interlocutor facing a Latin American and international dialog. Notably, the growth stage of OS in Chile is incipient, where debate and progress confront disciplinary tensions and policies closely linked to the country's recent history (Ríos, Toro, Perez-Arrau, Mandiola, & Espejo, 2018). More specifically, we could say that in Chile this field is fragmented by various standout disciplines such as administration, organizational psychology, and work sociology—with special reference to the organizational development of the 1980s. In this way, the installation of the North American business school model was not discussed within the academic community, being imposed on Chile in that particular decade. This made the incipient idea of the "organization" obsolete, replacing it with the concept of "company" to address the world of work. Thus, a single way of organizing has prevailed, in which the *why* and *what for* questions are blurred and focusing only on the *how* to meet objectives that are taken for granted (Mandiola, 2010, 2013). Today, in this scenario, there are divergent rationales and epistemologies used to approach this organizational phenomenon; however, the analysis of productive contexts, institutional interventions, and work relations are predominant. All of them additionally have repercussions in the field of organizational consultancy and subsequently concentrate a wealth of professional experiences that represent the above (Rios et al., 2018).

Accordingly, since some of us are familiar with the multiple approaches, objects, and forms of study that characterize the heterodox field of OS in other territories, we identified the opportunity to bring these debates to our own context. We connected the local academic community with other vocabularies and references in the organizational field. It is in this context that Chile has become the scene of three meaningful events for OS in Latin America. One of these events is the sixth Latin American and European Meeting on Organization Studies (LAEMOS). Then there is the fifth Congress of the Graduate Network of Latin Research in Management and Organizational Studies (PILARES); its abbreviation is in reference to its name in Spanish, which is *Red de Postgrados de Investigación Latinos en Administración y Estudios Organizacionales*. Finally, there were two successive meetings that took place at both events which led to the formation of the Latin American Network of Organizational Studies (REOL); its name in Spanish is *Red de Estudios Organizacionales de Latinoamérica*. These events were fertile ground for the evolution of the academic group known as Minga, the Chilean Group of Organizational Studies.

For this article, we investigated the history of Minga, which runs parallel to the organization of the above-mentioned events. We will explore the varied episodes that have marked its development from its inception to the present day. Through this exercise, we built a historical narrative that allows us to contextualize the different initiatives that have contributed to generate spaces for OS in Chile. We analyzed our own experiences as members and founding partners of Minga and exposed the collective reflections generated by narrating this story among its protagonists. In this sense, we created a narrative construction of the history of this group from three analytical axes: the decolonial outlook (Quijano, 2000),the view of their internal leadership process (Yammarino, Salas, Serban, Shirreffs, & Shuffler, 2012), and the perspective of knowledge networks (Pugh & Prusak, 2013). Each of these axes allows us to reveal valuable aspects that make our organization unique along with its forms of organizing and the way in which it has become independent from the instituted routes for the formation of academic groups.

METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Our methodological design was inspired by some of the principles that characterize historical organizational research (Maclean, Harvey, & Clegg, 2016), ascribing to a biographical and narrative perspective, in which the positions of informant, researcher, and author overlap (Busse, Ehses, & Zech, 2000). The qualitative character of this design responds to our interest in developing

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an exercise of organizational reflexivity based on an investigation into the collective history of our organization. This inquiry allows us to conduct an analytical process that unfolds throughout the exercise of historical narration condensed around the three above-mentioned axes.

History, Narrative, and Organizational Research

The process of building an organizational history involves organizing the story that is going to be told. This organization entails the choices regarding what is going to be narrated—a process in which emphasis and omissions are played out—subject to the point of view of the narrator. Likewise, the organization takes place at a point in time in which the story being told is composed and unfolded. For this reason, paying attention to the way the story and the resulting narrative is organized enables us to study the political and cultural dimensions "revealing how wider organizational issues are viewed, commented upon, and worked upon by its members" (Gabriel & Griffiths, 2004, p. 114). As Czarniawska (2004) states, "what is considered a vice in science—openness to competing interpretations—is a virtue in narrative" (p. 7). This statement invites us to overcome the differentiated legitimization of science and history as forms of organizational knowledge, where the production of the latter emerges from the same narrative process in which the story has been articulated and presented in the form of literature (Coraiola, Foster & Suddaby, 2015; Czarniawska, 2000; Rhodes & Brown, 2005). Adhering to these premises, we carry out a collective exercise of narrative production around the history of Minga. As witnesses, and at the same time, key informants of its history, the process of the historical narrative of Minga takes on an autobiographical tone. From this perspective, the position of those who build knowledge is not alien to the known phenomenon as native actors of the organization whose history is narrated (emic perspective). In other words, in the adopted historical perspective, those who conduct research are also the protagonists, narrators, and authors of the story that will be analyzed and where those who study the research process will collide (Musson, 2004). In this choral dimension, it is noteworthy that those who research from the historical perspective take on the role of a "fellow-traveler on the narrative" (Gabriel & Griffiths, 2004, p. 115), accepting the ambiguity and contradictions within and between different stories.

In operational terms, the construction of the historical narrative of Minga was organized and based on four successive moments. The first moment was the periodization of the organization's history based on key events recognized by all of its members. Second, there was a distribution of the writings and narrations from these periods. This was from an agreement for a minimum of style and criteria that would encourage storytelling rather than mere reporting. Based on the resulting narratives, the narrators implemented recursive triangulation exercises. The purpose of this third moment was not to correct the narratives, the order of the events, or the accuracy of their content, but rather to delve deeper into the issues that each narrative triggered among the members in order to include these elements in new rounds of writing. Finally, the stories were re-linked to develop a transversal reading of the history of the organization.

Three Analytical Perspectives: Decoloniality, Leadership, and Knowledge Networks

To conduct the analysis of our history, we have chosen to focus on the three axes of reflection that retrieve the most relevant discussions and ideas that have emerged from the collective process of narrative construction. They are as follows: decolonial, internal processes of leadership, and the articulation of a knowledge network. The decolonial gaze assumes that after the formal end of Western colonialism, many of its dynamics of conquest and control have continued through other forms of domination, such as the epistemic domination. The latter emphasizes how, in the name of modernity and rationality, stories have been silenced, subjectivities have been repressed, and knowledge and languages have been subalternized. In Latin America, a line of thought and activism has developed around what has been called a "decolonial turn." In the words of Aníbal Quijano (2000), this shift proposes "epistemic detachment" as a way of changing the terms of the conversation and not just its contents. Echoing the above and looking at the organizations, Escobar (2007) argues that what is understood to be organizational, and what has been disseminated among us, is its Anglo-Saxon conception. Hence, the privilege of instrumental reason that in our latitudes—both in theory and in practice—we repeat, reproduce, import, translate, and imitate. The production of Latin American organizational knowledge is scarce and unequal in part due to the colonial way of structuring academic practice through dissemination, writing, and publishing in English. Coinciding with this idea, Eduardo Ibarra-Colado (2006), one of the most important Latin American authors in organizational theory, invites us to problematize the very concept of "organization." He tells us that the functionalist organization does not reflect the historic evolution of peoples who have articulated themselves around community and solidarity, silencing politics in the installation of that concept. In summary, the decolonial

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view is an invitation to reflect about our own realities and needs, to critically examine the concepts and practices of management and organization, and to raise and resolve them through strategies and solutions that are also our own. Notably, for example, the discussion about the prevalence of competition as an articulating element in cultures and customs that have traditionally cultivated collaboration as an organizational practice.

Another perspective that we apply to our analysis comes from the new ways of understanding and organizing leadership. Applying this view at Minga speaks not only about the uniqueness of its members, but also about the way they relate to each other in terms of common tasks and purposes. Recently, literature on leadership is increasingly giving more importance to collective processes. Groups without assigned hierarchical leadership can come to develop different forms of collective leadership. Leadership in a group can be defined as interdependent connections that ensure that leadership roles are fulfilled through influential interactions within the group (Cullen-Lester & Yammarino, 2016). These processes of influence occur among different members of the group as necessary, both to fulfill the task (task leadership) and for the good functioning of the group at a personal level (relationship leadership) (Coluccio, Adriasola, & Espejo, 2019). Yammarino et al. (2012) distinguished different types of collectivist leadership such as network leadership, complexity leadership, team leadership, shared leadership, and collective leadership. The first two types tend to consider comprehensive systems in which teams are inserted, thus they do not conform to the analysis of the case of Minga, whereas the third one focuses on the team and its formal leader and not so much on the interactions among its members. Both collective leadership, which is based on harnessing diverse knowledge and experiences to a collective resolution, and shared leadership, which is based on the adoption of the roles of both the leader and the follower at different times by different members of the team, can help in the comprehension of the processes occurring in Minga.

Finally, a third view that we will develop in the analysis consists of the knowledge networks. We believe that the origin, development, and dynamics of the functioning of Minga constitute a unique opportunity to understand the recent phenomenon of academic knowledge networks in the Latin American social and cultural context. Despite the fact that networks have been a subject of growing interest in the literature of OS, their study in the Latin American context has not been thoroughly explored, which makes it difficult to understand in this specific environment (Weersma, Fernandez, & Shintaku, 2019).

The term knowledge network has been defined as a group of people and teams that cross organizational, spatial, and disciplinary borders; it creates and shares knowledge for the purpose of coordinating, learning, innovating, translating/adapting, and supporting its members (Pugh & Prusak, 2013). The reason for the growing importance of networks in the functioning of organizations is to improve access to opportunities in the environment, share risks, use complementary resources, and facilitate the responsiveness to changes (Jones, 2000). Moreover, networks are a way of learning in that they enable the sharing of the individual experience with the collective, thus taking advantage of the lessons learned (Cross, Parker, Prusak, & Borgatti, 2001). Finally, a network is also a powerful source of influence in a specific disciplinary field, as it informally facilitates the accessing of sources of power, which are difficult to acquire through traditional bureaucratic connections (Weersma et al., 2019). Considering that the more dynamic the knowledge environment of an organization is, the greater the tendency to form external knowledge networks (Powell & Giannella, 2010). Universities are fertile ground for inter-organizational knowledge networks to emerge, as they consist of researchers whose field of knowledge is common (Zucker, Darby, & Armstrong, 2002). As a result, Minga can considered as an inter-organizational network of knowledge creation and development in the field of OS.

THE STORY OF MINGA

The word *minga* refers to a practice of solidarity deployed by the members of a community for the benefit of all or some of its members. As an ancestral social practice, it still exists among the native peoples of South America, particularly in the Andean region. In the specific case of the Chiloé Archipelago, which is located in southern Chile, *minga* is a traditional collective work whose origins are traced to the Huilliche culture of the Pre-Hispanic period (Doughters, 2016). The *minga* comes into play when the volume of work—usually agricultural—exceeds the capacity of a family. This usually leads to a collaborative effort among the neighbors, who in turn are compensated with traditional food and drinks served at a party characterized by symbolism, rituals, and community ties. Similarly, when the task is of a shorter duration, the feast may be replaced by a tacit agreement of "returning the favor," where the person benefiting from the *minga* commits to working for his or her neighbors for a period similar to the one they received. In both cases, the fundamental principal of reciprocity and the value of mutual compensation take place (Slater, 2017).

As the Chilote *minga* suggests, both reciprocity and mutual support are principles supported by neighborly relations among those who share a territory. Coincidentally, our *minga* arises from

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binding university trajectories, relations of academic friendship, and field kinship. Juan Pablo Toro was Marcela Mandiola's undergraduate professor and Marcela was Nicolás Ríos González's undergraduate professor. Gregorio Perez-Arrau and Marcela met while they were finishing their doctorate degrees in England and were returning to Chile. One thing they share is that they are all familiar with the international field of OS. While Álvaro Espejo was engaged with the academics of EGOS (European Group for Organizational Studies) during his PhD endeavors, Marcela and Gregorio maintained connections with EGOS and Critical Management Studies (CMS)—with the latter being shared with Juan Pablo.

These academic links and trajectories are expressed in a view that is starting to become shared with regard to the disarticulation, isolation, and/or formation of ghettos in the field of OS in Chile. In addition, the predominance of a functionalist approach limited to the field of management is recognized which gives way to a search for inclusive heterodoxy to open spaces for new questions, focuses, alternatives, and critiques.

All of the above-mentioned subjects mature into matching projections involving the need to create, share, and articulate interdisciplinary organizational knowledge that is complex and sensitive to the Chilean context and to the evolution of its sociocultural and economic transformations. It is also a need to enrich one's own perspectives and teaching and research paths in areas such as work studies, educational organization, knowledge management, and organizational behavior.

It is these shared links, views, and projections that explain our group that has come to articulate, collaborate, and support each other in a challenge that has exceeded the individual capacities of each member. We refer to the organization, in Chile, of the sixth LAEMOS conference, the academic gathering for OS which is dependent on the European network EGOS. With a 10-year history, LAEMOS has been bringing together OS researchers from Latin America and Europe since 2006.

Initially, the contacts for organizing the conference had two independent paths. In particular, Marcela and Nicolás, during the fifth LAEMOS conference, expressed their willingness to organize the next event in Chile with EGOS. At the same time, EGOS had already made a first contact with Álvaro for the same purpose. These Chilean academics did not know each other; they had strengths to act as organizers, but they also had gaps—at individual and institutional levels—to fit the part. Thus, the idea of forming an organizing collective came up as an interesting alternative.

Organizing the conference was not only about the production of the event itself, it was also the chance to show and develop OS in Chile. A challenge like this demanded more than two people and so a broader team was necessary. Accordingly, Marcela began to recruit other colleagues such as Paula, Juan Pablo, and Gregorio. Thus, the team already existed when the European organization gave its approval for the joint work between Álvaro and Marcela. It was comprised of people from five different universities—one of them public, and four of them private; there were three men and two women, two cities, three business schools, and two schools of psychology represented. Until that moment, it was the best bet for diversity within the Chilean academic practice interested in organizations. Nicolás—the sixth member of Minga—was added. He was the youngest and was still a graduate student and had no institutional affiliation; above all, he made (and still makes) possible the material articulation of the group. He combined production skills and group cohesion with a deep understanding of the subject matter that brought us together. The organization of the sixth LAEMOS gathering in Chile was the first collaborative work experience among these six colleagues.

LAEMOS

The first meeting of the group took place in a pizzeria in June 2014. The objective was to get to know each other and prepare the proposal for LAEMOS, which was due soon. Nicolás wrote and shaped the initial proposal based on the issues raised at the meeting. Collaboration was the theme chosen for convening the conference, and subsequently identifying it with the concept of Minga. The general proposal was accepted but we had to solve some issues relating to our headquarters, the university that would assume the financial risks, and the scope of the central theme of the conference. Once these were resolved and we received the final response from EGOS in October 2014, the group began to meet on a regular basis until the date of the conference. Our team's first definitive action was to receive the "inspection visit" from a European delegation, and so we had to finance the travel and accommodation expenses of the three representatives of EGOS from Europe. This made us realize that our partners saw us as executors of their planning, rather than as proposers of the conference. It became visible to us that we needed to play a more proactive role in the organization in order to give agency to the Latin American voice that was supposed to be relevant for the conference. We set out to influence the development of LAEMOS through important decisions that were not exempt from complex negotiations with EGOS. For example, to announce the convening of the conference in three languages (English, Spanish,

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and Portuguese) which would take into account local geopolitics, instead of communicating only in English—which had been heavily criticized. In the same spirit, we proposed to have simultaneous interpretations for the three keynote speakers, which would be available throughout the conference for any stream upon request. It was also recommended that in different streams, the works could be presented in any of the three languages while maintaining the written text and visual support in English. All of these decisions were reached by consensus at Minga meetings.

The conference was a success, and for us, it was a great challenge and learning experience. Respecting the framing, during our time at LAEMOS we managed to present several aspects that were not considered before which sought to highlight the Latin American participation offered by the conference. These proposals emerged from our group and we collectively decided to promote and defend them. Consequently, our collective perception of the group became more evident as did a form of organization that still holds today that is inspired by horizontality, transparency, and collaboration as organizational principles put into practice in relation to this event. Differentiating ourselves from our counterparts and identifying the aspects that supported that differences triggered our perception of community and with it, a collective identity of sorts that even led us to propose a relationship with the influential EGOS that would go beyond the mere organization of this particular event.

The Continuance of Minga

The conclusion of LAEMOS was not synonymous with the dismantling of the group as we "almost naturally" decided. We had projects in common, partly because we had produced an objective that went beyond the conference; last, but not least, we also felt good about working together from the friendship and fellowship that had been generated. In particular, our immediate challenge was the dissemination and development of OS in Chile. We wanted to focus on interdisciplinary collaboration, organized collaborative work, strengthening national authorship, and seeking "forms of organization" that transcended and challenged Anglo-Saxon heritage in favor of situated knowledge and practices. Until then, Minga had only been the theme of the conference, but we discovered that we could also give this meaning to our way of working (i.e., collaborative and collective benefits) so we informally adopted the same concept as the name of our collective—and thus, Minga was born.

Far from building rules, policies, or obligations that would bring the team together, we decided to establish our existence through conclusive activities that would keep us together and committed. These certain activities would provide us with achievements and would make the collective visible by motivating and interesting others. For this objective, we decided to continue the coordination role played by Nicolás, which was necessary for the effective functioning of the team. The main goal of the nascent Minga was its articulation as the first Chilean network of OS. To accomplish this, we defined three work strategies: to explore and build a proposal for understanding OS for Chile, to hold a national academic meeting, and to publish a special issue on OS edited for a national journal.

First Achievements

The first of the assumed tasks was the organization of a national seminar, under the question about OS in the country. This seminar was "Organizational Studies in Chile? Opportunities, Perspectives, and Projections." Preparing the seminar was also an opportunity for internal debate on what makes up OS, the approaches, and the current tensions between Europeans and North Americans. The calls and the debates that took place were illuminating and stimulating.

At the end of the seminar, we considered the idea or organizing a panel discussion using a methodological design adopted by the group based on the World Café. The idea was to achieve systematized and collective production by recording some of the discussions that emerged from the seminar. The guiding questions for the activity were: "What are Organizational Studies and what is their status in Chile?" and "What would be development opportunities for them from the academic field?" Approximately 20 academics from different disciplines and institutional affiliations participated in the event.

The material collected at the seminar and the discussion—as well as the reflection and debate that had been taking place within the group—stimulated the publication of a special issue on OS in a specialized journal in the country. We wanted to create a space not only to disseminate the work of Minga, but also to give rise to the conceptual and methodological diversity of the varied contributions to this field of study that have been developed in Latin America in recent years. In this way, the journal *Psicoperspectivas* agreed to publish a thematic section and a call for papers was written from a broad and pluralistic view, coherent with the diversity of organizational forms in the Latin American Global South. The section was finally published in Volume 17, Number 3, 2018, and it included 13 articles by authors from four countries in the region. Minga participated in the authorship

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of the article with the piece, "Organizational studies in Chile? Between fragmentation, ambiguity, and rationalities in dispute."

PILARES Congress 2018

While Minga continued to work on their projects and actions according to the agreements reached as a group, Gregorio was invited to organize the fifth congress of the Graduate Network of Latin Research in Management and Organizational Studies (PILARES). The PILARES network is the primary OS meeting point in Latin America, so in this regard hosting its congress was a major challenge in terms of organization and resource mobilization. Gregorio accepted the proposal under some conditions, of which the most important one was to incorporate Nicolás into the organizing team, specifically taking on the role of general coordinator for the assemblage.

The organization was launched, but the low level of progress created evident problems in task distribution, communication, and group management style. Because of this, the organizers extended the invitation to join in the organizational tasks to the whole Minga group. Marcela joined the main organizing team, while Álvaro and Juan Pablo took on functions in the scientific committee. The local organization of the PILARES congress then adopted a management and leadership style similar to that of LAEMOS—influenced by the Minga group—taking advantage of previous learning. Among the most significant changes were the collective and consensual decision-making (never by a simple majority), and ad hoc as well as rotating leadership according to the circumstances. This was in addition to a style of direct and horizontal communication focused on the task; the recording of agreements on record ordered systematically, and a consensual, transparent, and orderly financial control with austere and responsible resource allocation. Accordingly, the fifth PILARES event was overwhelming

Additionally, during the development of the PILARES congress, at a workshop, Minga managed to bring together representatives of the national networks of OS with the longest trajectory and consolidation of Latin America. This was a key milestone for the subsequent formal creation of REOL on July 16, 2019 in Colombia.

Minga Today

Minga is currently in the process of expanding, and it is clear that in the end it will only be able to consolidate itself if it transcends the work of those who make it up today. For this reason, in April 2019 we performed the first open meeting to join the group; to date we have carried out two assemblies with more than 20 participants each. The first round of objectives proposed for this new stage are to create a roster of academics and specialists to share academic events, publications, and a variety of invitations; and give way to more ambitious objectives such as holding its own academic event, publishing books, joint research mechanisms, and the creations of a means of publication exclusively focusing on OS.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

A first step in this analysis is to reflect on the name chosen for our organization. Why call an OS group Minga? The term Minga was spontaneously suggested during a creative moment at the organizing committee for the LAEMOS 2016 conference. Once the conference was over, this name was selected by consensus as the one that would represent the group during its next activities. The reasons for this choice were diverse with the first being that it represented the collective work of academics from different universities in favor of a common cause, making a parallel with the objective of the Minga of Chiloé. Second, it was chosen because Minga was close to the values of cooperation, solidarity, and the common good that were present in this group as opposed to the imperative of individuality and the acute competition that dominates the current Chilean organizational environment. Third, the choice is because the term *minga* carries in itself a local, critical, and decolonial view of our work. This is definitely the case if we consider that this term is associated with one of the native peoples that inhabited Chiloé before the arrival of the settlers and that today this tradition persists in the deep roots of the inhabitants of that island. This is all in spite of the accelerated processes of modernization to which they have been subjected in recent years (Doughters, 2016).

Thus, *minga* as both a word and a popular and ancestral practice in the territory we now call Chile emerges as an authentic and representative figure of what we have been doing and what we wanted to be, as opposed to the managerialist current that tends to use Anglo terms that are unanchored from our context. For this reason, what this term condenses for us is more of a practice than an identity, where the experience of emerging, articulating, and conforming our collective comes to implement a way of doing and organizing. This can be demonstrated with the three key points that we have developed and will now present in the next section; they are decolonial view, shared and collective leadership, and knowledge networks.

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The Decolonial View

As stated by Ibarra-Colado (2006), the approach to OS in Latin America began and developed from uncritical subordination to Anglo-Saxon influence. Aware of this phenomenon, in the early 2000s, he was one of the promoters of the LAEMOS conference, articulating along with representatives of EGOS, an academic meeting that brought together and provided opportunities for dialog on Latin American and European developments regarding these issues. However, when we were received at the sixth conference in Chile, we were faced with a unilateral setting, where the role of the organizing team in Latin America (our role) was simply to execute with no requirement to propose. The experiences of having to wait for external authorization to finish assembling our Chilean group to begin to work did not reflect well on LAEMOS. Additionally, having to submit for approval themes for the conference, its venue, logistics, guest lists; and especially having to receive (at the cost of the conference) an unforeseen inspection visit represented a "way of organizing" that was not productive. We were not attending a "meeting," but rather executing a standardized plan designed in other latitudes that required only to be locally materialized. It was evident then that not only was it relevant to "speak" about OS from here or there, but to deploy the *way in which we were organizing ourselves to organize the conference* had already triggered certain critical reflections.

In this way, although our organization was born in a collaborative partnership with EGOS, this relationship soon became tense and then was transformed due to its asymmetric nature regarding decision-making. This forced Minga to become an organizational counterweight in Latin America and this is why our history is a story that begins with a certain awareness. The awareness of a subordinate role condemned to reproduction, and that even in the position of local organizer of the academic meeting, its guidelines did not belong to us. From this point of view, our efforts can be seen as a deployment that is close to the "pragmatics of the decolonial turn." Following Quijano (2000) we try to articulate *detachment*—that is, aiming to change the terms of the conversation, not only its content. We did not conform to proceed as instructed. Our original aspiration was to open the door to OS in our country and that could not be achieved by presenting a discipline that was expressed in another language and was deployed by a completely foreign community. It was necessary to show the dialog, to increase Latin American participation, and to prove that there was local work. In this way, our strategic goal was:

a. Articulate ourselves from a diverse collective, instead of from merely individual liaisons. Previous meetings only had a local organizer. There were even certain gatherings—Buenos Aires 2010 and La Habana 2014—without an organizing counterpart in the country where they were held. Latin America had to contribute with more than just the geographic location of the meeting. Organizing from a collective enabled us to represent the local voice of a community and to speak from one group with another group, even though we were a small unit.

b. Emphasize the importance of a multilingual conference. The imposition of a single language for the conference (English) not only is a pragmatic and functional option, but an imposition of a way of knowing and communicating (Alcadipani, Rafi-Khan, Gantman, & Nkomo, 2012). We managed to have the official communication of the conferences in the three languages along with simultaneous interpretation.

c. Endeavor to present three keynote speakers—one international, a woman, and two local representatives. Finding our Chilean keynote speakers was a challenge because we do not have an academic tradition of OS. Hoping for interdisciplinarity, we invited academics in related areas to share meaningful local contributions.

d. Advance the figure of Ibarra-Colado by continuing with the award in his name that had been presented during the previous gathering. It seemed that acknowledging the main promoter of this academic effort symbolized one of our fundamental objectives.

e. Elevate the importance of a permanent Latin American representation (voice) behind the conference because organizing an event open to dialog cannot be accomplished from only one perspective. We wanted to have an impact on the constitution of a permanent team behind LAEMOS that included local representatives.

Collective and Shared Leadership

Minga was born as a collective effort, so it has never had an imposed leadership. Since Marcela brought the group together, she has often taken on a leadership role—especially in relationships. However, looking at the events over the five years

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of Minga's existence shows a much more complex distribution of leadership. Analyzing the development of Minga's activities, we can see that the leadership is mostly collective as we often share this role. Moreover, decisions are usually collective; we reach a consensus for all of them. This consensus, which has naturally emerged naturally in the development process of Minga, is not trivial as there are certain conditions that could have made collective leadership difficult. For example, several members did not previously know each other. The group was organized by one person; they have different backgrounds (psychology, engineering, sociology); they work in schools with different orientations (schools of psychology, business schools, and faculties of economics and administration); and they have different academic requirements in their institutions and live in different cities. Despite this, we utilized the context of the meetings—whether face-to-face or online—as the foundation of our decision-making.

Accordingly, the history of Minga shows that, in the various activities carried out, and even within the same activity, one person assumes the leadership spot for each separate task or relationship. Subsequently, this particular individual then hands it over to another person, who then acts according to the situation the group faces. This reflects shared leadership (Conger & Pearce, 2003). In Minga's initial stage, Marcela and Álvaro continually exchanged the leadership position in relationship management with EGOS, using their contacts to become the headquarters of LAEMOS. Nicolás then took on a clear leadership role in tasks, drafting documents and setting deadlines for the review. Since the conference took place at Álvaro's university, he took on an active leadership role with the university, handing over the leadership in the relationship with EGOS to Marcela, who held the vast majority of the informal conversations because the formal ones were drafted by the Minga team. In parallel to LAEMOS, Marcela and Paula took the lead in organizing the first meeting of REOL. In this first stage, Gregorio and Juan Pablo often conceded the leadership, although they were fundamental in consensual decision-making—therefore, in what we have called collective leadership. Notably, the dynamics of influence were modified after LAEMOS.

Although Nicolás continued to coordinate the main tasks and Marcela continued to lead most of the external relations, Paula withdrew and Gregorio and Juan Pablo assumed leadership on multiple occasions with Álvaro being a follower at such times. This are several reasons for this such as both the national seminar and the discussion panel were hosted at Juan Pablo's university, which made it easier for him to assume the leadership position in coordinating these events. Nevertheless, it was not only in the coordination, because his leadership role was key. For example, he settled the discussion between Marcela and Álvaro about similarities and differences in OS and Administration, which was one of the relevant aspects in the seminar and in the call for the thematic selection for *Psicoperspectivas*. Thus, different members of Minga highlighted Juan Pablo's opinions and his ability to reconcile different points of view. A new form of influence appears here, beyond the tasks and relationships: the ability to influence the generation of consensus, which is a key input of collective leadership. Gregorio's leadership was clearly noticeable in the organization of the PILARES network congress, where he incorporated Minga and enabled the organization to function in a way the group had done in previous years. There is a comparison between the organization of the PILARES network congress and that of LAEMOS. This is because it shows that collective leadership processes do not always occur naturally and that sometimes actions need to be taken, such as incorporating certain people with experience in collective organization in order to facilitate the process.

Knowledge Networks

A third angle used to analyze the development of Minga is that of knowledge networks—and, more specifically—inter-organizational academic networks. During the last few decades, networks have been the object of intense analysis in the OS literature, as they play a fundamental role in the exchange of knowledge and the development of innovations, thereby facilitating the adaptation of the latter to technological development and to change (Jones, 2000; Lam, 2007). In this context, many have argued that the traditional hierarchical bureaucratic organization has lost its capacity to respond to changes in the environment and that inter-organizational networks have taken their place, gaining importance to the extent of even being considered as the prevailing form of organization in the knowledge economy (Baker & Faulker, 2017; Dahlin, 2019; Hedlund, 1986).

From this perspective, Minga can be understood as a network of knowledge workers whose purpose is to collectively innovate through the use of supplementary resources such as knowledge, institutional funds, administrative support, and infrastructure. This would show the trend, pointed out in the literature, toward the formation of knowledge networks in areas that, due to their dynamics and complexity, require collaborative structures beyond organizational boundaries. Belonging to networks would facilitate individual and collective learning, creating a wealth of knowledge in topics specific to academia—

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for example, in the development of conferences and publications. When analyzing the results of the Minga organization, it is clear that the formation of this network has been more beneficial to the institutions involved than if they had opted for the exclusive use of internal resources. Many of the completed activities could have been accomplished in isolation. In other words, while the formation of Minga seems to be an intuitive response of highly motivated researchers, it can be seen as a rational response to the urgent need to create and develop innovation and knowledge in a highly complex and changing environment.

Nevertheless, while the knowledge networks are clearly necessary and desirable for organizations, they fall outside the contractual and regulatory frameworks and policies of the universities, which generates an ambiguous territory in terms of their direction and control (Giuliani, 2007; Hedlund, 1986). This poses a dilemma and perhaps even tension between the personal and institutional sphere of each subject, because, although the decision to belong to Minga is individual, it is common understanding that there is a university institution indirectly supporting the participation of each of its members. Hence, the following questions arise: "To what extent are knowledge networks influenced by the organizational guidelines of the universities?" and "To what extent do they develop as autonomous entities of collaboration?" In the case of Minga, it is interesting to observe how the developed collective identity ("Minga member") prevailed over the universities of the academics, thereby producing a fruitful field of collaboration and understanding. Likewise, implicit coordination and social regulation mechanisms were generated among its members such as a flexible work system based on commitment, distribution of leadership according to the task, open and direct communication, interpersonal trust, and a horizontal decision-making system.

Finally, it is necessary to mention that the fact of belonging to Minga allowed each of its members to gain access to higher levels of political influence in the academic world of OS. This effect is consistent with what is in the literature in relation to the virtuous aspects of inter-organizational networks. On the one hand, each member was able to access a greater number of contacts and acquaintances through other members of Minga. This accessibility was based on the trust inherent to interpersonal relations and, on the other hand, this "group effect" enabled for a greater presence and influence with regard to other groups and organizations. The latter was evident in the counterweight provided by Mingo facing EGOS and in the subsequent participation in PILARES and Latin American Association for Labour Studies (ALAST).

CONCLUSIONS

Telling the story of Minga has shown us that it is a reflexive and critical opportunity. It is reflective because it invites us to look at the experiences of collective works from different points of view and through this view, to reveal and preserve the strategies and tactics that have been successful in the pursuit of the sustainability of the collective. It is also critical in making visible its own proprietary and situated ways of organization.

First, from the story about the origin and development of Minga, we may conclude that it represents a collective effort to convene and organize relevant agents for the development of an academic debate on OS in Chile. Considering the above, this article describes the richness and peculiarities that characterized the formation of this group, not only to leave a testimony of this process but also to contribute to the learning of other groups with similar intentions.

Second, the formation of Minga represents a significant effort to change the historic dependence of OS on the Global North by proposing a local presence of knowledge creation and development regarding the Chilean organizational phenomenon. Traditionally, the orientation and the agenda of OS has been governed by intellectuals and guided with instructions provided by developed countries through the powerful influence of thinkers, universities, and institutions whose outlook tends to focus on the reality and interests of those countries. Yet, they tend to ignore the participation of peripheral regions in that debate. In the best of cases, the reality of organizations in countries like Chile is considered in other developed countries—but from a non-egalitarian view and a clear colonialist hue.

Third, the constitution of Minga represents a collective and collaborative effort in an academic territory that is characterized by free market competition. In this sense, Minga is a clear example, that in midst of a scenario that incites competition (which in Chile includes universities), there are "spaces of exception" generated by the networks. It is in these spaces that inter-organizational collaboration is much more beneficial than individual isolated work within an organization.

Fourth, it is relevant to analyze the internal processes of the group, both in its formation and during its activities. Perhaps the most striking group process is its shared leadership, which is present throughout each stage and activity. Unlike the literature that tends to focus on the figure of a sole leader, Minga tends to work at times through a collective leadership. Its decisions are reached by a consensus of its members; sometimes they are made through a shared process, where different members take the lead depending on the situation. In this context, sometimes certain members assume

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a less visible role—but that is key to collective leadership. Thus, a highly flexible working system is established in the context of a wide diversity of tasks and circumstances faced by the group.

Fifth, the analysis of the process by which the actions were developed with definitive results is proof of the importance of inter-organizational networks through which complementary resources are put at the service of common objectives. The formation of networks facilitates individual and collective learning in knowledge-intensive environments where the dynamics of change are greater. It also allows for higher levels of political influence of its members—both individually and collectively.

Finally, the existence of inter-organizational academic networks such as Minga exposes the ambiguity and tension they generate within the traditional university organization. For the members of Minga, their work has not been explicitly defined among their tasks; however, universities valued it when it became visible. This raises questions about the formal recognition of networking, its productive status, and the centrality of traditional university logics. Although Latin American literature is scarce on the subject of inter-organizational networks, the Minga case clearly illustrates the benefits and challenges of this form of collaboration.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

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ESSAY

Invited article
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WHERE DID WE COME FROM, WHERE ARE WE GOING? A COLLECTIVE SELF-CRITICISM AND DESIRABLE HORIZONS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL STUDIES IN BRAZIL

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The following texts, versions of those presented at a free session of the Sixth Brazilian Congress of Organizational Studies (CBEO), view collective self-criticism as essential to the evolution of researchers of Organizational Studies (OS), a field that needs to forge desirable horizons for itself. They also invite peers to reflect on our recent trajectory, in particular on: (1) inheritances, contrasts and demarcations regarding OS' parent discipline, Administration; (2) a possibility of growth when we are touched by academic virtue; (3) the challenges and propositions which may arise from a recent editorial experience; and, finally, (4) new work directions for a research group to become more effective and articulate in its teaching, research and outreach actions. In the end, an effort at reflective summary is added.

PRESENTATION

By Marcio Sá

At the Fourth Brazilian Congress of Organizational Studies (CBEO), in Porto Alegre, a debate titled "The Habitus, Rather than the Method, of a 'Political' Researcher" was held which was later published in the *Revista Brasileira de Estudos Organizacionais* (Barros, Sá, Mattos, & Oliveira, 2016). At the Fifth CBEO, the previous debate was extended and inscribed into the title "Political Self-education in Social Research: Lasting Intentions and the Priority of the Local", whose starting point was a simple provocation: researchers are in a permanent (self-)education process. The texts presented were collected and published in the *Teoria e Prática em Administração* journal (Mattos, Barros, Sá, & Costa, 2019) under the same title. My purpose for the above summary was simply to record the trajectory that precedes and enables the debate that took place at the Sixth CBEO and was later adapted for this publication.

Criticizing, in contexts where the adjective "critical" seems to work as a recurrent password or surname, does not sound like an innovative task, even though there are Critiques (well-designed, insightful and inspiring ones) and "critiques" (innocuous replication). With the purpose of going beyond both, this debate starts from the following thought: in order for a young scientific community to mature, it is necessary to practice and encourage the development of its *collective self-critical* capacity.

Self-critical competence does not usually appear openly in academic settings. However, the more a community demonstrates openness to exercises of this nature, i.e., of substantial, radical and public reflection on itself, the more it will deserve recognition as a plural space that welcomes and respects genuine and diverging testimonies – of course, as long as ethical premises

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are observed. It is by means of the freedom to take a stand on collective transformations that we can both look at its recent trajectory in order to learn from our perceived (mis)directions and to outline plans beyond the short term.

The following texts view self-criticism as an essential component for the substantive evolution of a community that recognizes and constitutes itself as a national society of researchers; they also invite peers to reflect on aspects of their/our recent historical trajectory from that perspective. In so doing, their purpose is to expand the discussion up to the scope of the community itself in order to raise and expound a debate about: (1) inheritances, contrasts and demarcations regarding OS' parent discipline, Administration; (2) a possibility of growth when we are touched by academic virtue and the way of life of more experienced peers we work with; (3) the challenges and propositions that may arise from a recent editorial experience; and, finally, (4) new work directions of a research group in its efforts to be more effective and articulate in its teaching, research and outreach actions. After all, we believe that in order for a community – which undertakes to wear the garments of Science – to progress and develop in the best possible way, it must come to terms with the accomplishments and frustrations of its recent past.

In sum, what motivated us to embrace this proposal was the desire to promote a debate about more recent aspects of OS in Brazil and extend our gaze towards the next decade so as to discern horizons. Each participant was given the necessary freedom to render an account with any degree of intimacy about their personal experiences as they saw fit. But, beyond rhetoric, we came together to discuss ideas about and for ourselves. At the end of the original presentations, an effort at reflective summary was added.

FRIENDSHIP AS THE FUTURE

By Rafael Alcadipani

The origins

Any appreciation about Organizational Studies (OS) in Brazil will necessarily be a partial account from the perspective of its renderer. Therefore, my appreciation of our field of knowledge makes no pretense of being neutral or bearing the truth about what national OS have been so far. This text is a reflection on what I have perceived during my 20-year career in the field.

There is no consensual definition as to what OS are; to me, OS are research and academic reflections that analyze the functioning, broadly defined, and the peculiarities of organizations. I believe that their origins in Brazil can be found in the works of Alberto Guerreiro Ramos, Mauricio Tragtenberg and Fernando Prestes Motta. Although Guerreiro Ramos and Tragtenberg had an important part of their careers in departments of Social Sciences, and Prestes Motta also taught at the Faculty of Education of the University of São Paulo, Brazilian OS, as in other countries, gained prominence within Administration schools. In its origins, Brazilian organizational thinking was hardly concerned with conducting empirical studies. An important exception is the work of Liliana Segnini (1988), supervised by Tragtenberg. In her book *A liturgia do poder: Trabalho e disciplina* [The Liturgy of Power: Work and Discipline], she analyzed the mechanisms of power operating at Bradesco [N.T.: Brazil's largest privately held bank.]. I consider this to be one of the classic texts of national OS.

The Malaise in Organizational Studies

The eminently theoretical verve, the strong sociological, reflection-driven inspiration and the lack of concern with managerial applicability have deprived our OS of an easy position within the country's Administration schools. On the one hand, the other areas of Administration, such as Marketing, Finance and Operations, identified with a functional character and the applicability of knowledge, viewed OS with suspicion; on the other hand, the OS themselves felt little identification with what a traditional Administration program is and perceived themselves much more as a form of Social Science.

However, a good part of Brazilian Social Science has always nourished great prejudice about the work developed in Administration. It is as if anyone with an Administration degree were unable to understand the complexity of social thinking and were necessarily pro-market – a great sin in the eyes of Brazilian social thinking. Brazilian Social Sciences, largely insular and provincial in the way they were established and maintained, have never viewed Administration as a field of knowledge they could respect. This adds to the fact that, in OS, until recently, there was minimal commitment to empirically grounded analysis, which drove the field further apart from Administration schools, since some field studies created a stereotyped view of what companies and organizations are, what managers do, etc. More recently, some empirical concern became established, but largely under a labor division logic where the teacher does not collect or analyze data. Many Administration teachers do no research, students do it. In addition, empirical studies are rarely inductive, and the vast majority of them resort to some European thinker and try to

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force the empirical material into the explanations provided by that great European theoretical master.

In this context, I consider that Brazilian OS have an identity problem at their root, since while they are not recognized by Brazilian social thinking, they do not feel comfortable within Administration schools either. It is as if OS did not recognize the validity of Administration's functional areas. In other words, OS are in a seriously paradoxical condition in Brazil: they are not recognized by those they want recognition from, and they do not recognize those in the same space as them. Under this logic, an important part of Brazilian OS tends to deny the traditional company and its contemporary variations as an object of analysis, focusing instead on organizational types on the verge of the economic system. This is not a problem in itself. The consequence is that OS talk less and less about the object of the Administration schools they are situated in, which drives them further apart from Administration from a traditional point of view. By no means do I advocate that OS need to produce shallow managerialism, or the closure of the field. On the other hand, we have missed many opportunities to produce in-depth knowledge about the complexity of traditional and emerging capitalist organizations. The lack of an empirical concern following a rigorous methodology means that many analyses are superficial and do not take into account the complexity of organizations.

In addition, the OS area has always been filled with conflicts. Disputes one can hardly know why and to what end, between critics, institutionalists, behaviorists, symbolists, and so on, mark the trajectory of our field. These almost childish disputes of meaningless egotism, also characteristic of Brazilian Social Science, have caused coexistence at public debates in the field to be, at times, marked by a symbolic violence that, in my view, inhibits new talents. There is also another inconsistency: some study power and commit abuse of power. Some study culture and disrespect different cultures. Some self-declared critical researchers practice exactly what they criticize. Some researchers study diversity but do not show the slightest respect for diversity in their daily practice.

Moreover, although OS try to present themselves as different from other areas, there are OS researchers who practice overt academic productivism, which weakens the field. One last aspect worth highlighting is that it has been and still is very common for "researchers" in our area to be more concerned with engaging in political disputes in the academic field, with pursuing positions of power in program boards, development agencies and deans' and provosts' offices at public and private universities, and with creating journals and holding editorial positions at them, to the detriment of consolidating a solid research career. Finally, and unfortunately, many from the new generations can be seen repeating what they saw as a model in the previous generations, and some figures that should be role models for the young seem to act rather with their liver than with reason, spreading bitterness everywhere. A serious problem here is the strong endogeny of our educational institutions, which means that graduate students find employment at the same institution as their supervisors, who often hold a sort of academic vassalage over them. National OS come close to Brazilian Social Science by adopting inconsistency between theory and practice, by getting caught up in spurious power struggles and by settling down in endogenic inertia. As I reread this session, I believe I conducted a somewhat negative analysis of our area so far. Nevertheless, I believe the future of OS in Brazil is very promising.

What is our future?

First of all, I can see that we are finally talking about many of our problems, thus bringing reflectiveness into the field. We owe this, to a large extent, to the organization of women researchers and the emergence of black people to positions of visibility in OS, who help think of the established practices and open the "Pandora's box" of the inconsistent and violent ones. Of course, the rancidity of those who always seek positions of power tries to hinder the emergence of the diverse in the field, but the strength of the future is much greater than the resentment of the past.

In addition, the current changes in our society towards being more attentive to diversity, and the dramatic changes organizations are undergoing due to changes in the social and technological order, place our field in a position to have a lot to contribute to thinking and reflecting about the future of organizations in our country. For this task, OS are well equipped with concepts and can develop research that raises important questions and outlines answers for a society in which the challenges are greater and greater. The current context calls for the kind of reflection that can be done in OS.

The generation that is gradually assuming positions of power in the field has, in my view, a greater sense of friendship and respect than the previous ones and seeks to open avenues for new ways of thinking and acting. The future construction of OS in Brazil depends on strengthening the feeling of being a friend, rather than a competitor, in order to generate catalyzed collaboration in times such as these. It is also important that teachers in the field take on their role as researchers and not just as managers of students' research.

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It is necessary to think of an OS area that seeks dialogue with academic communities abroad, towards both South and North. International exposition is essential for exchanging experiences and innovation.

Finally, it is important for us to have people who, by their daily example, make us better. Today, in our field, we have numerous inspiring figures and many others that I believe can help to build our OS. There are also many students I have met at so many congresses in Brazil that personify the change we need. These are figures that make me believe in a promising future for our area. It is this window of hope that makes me see a better future. May it be so!

IN DEFENSE OF ACADEMIC VIRTUE OR ON A "WAY OF LIFE" FOCUSED ON STUDYING, TALKING AND RESEARCHING

By Ariston Azevedo

> *This is necessarily a personal account, but one written in the hope that others, in special those who are beginning independent work, will make it less personal through the facts of their own existence.* (Mills, 2009, p. 21)

At first glance, perhaps what I am going to say here has more in common with what was discussed at the aforementioned sessions "The Habitus, Rather than the Method, of a 'Political' Researcher" and "Political Self-education in Social Research: Lasting Intentions and the Priority of the Local", held at the Fourth and Fifth CBEO editions, respectively. I say this because after taking stock of "Where Did We Come from, Where Are We Going?", what occurred to me was the desire to talk about "a way of going". If I change the direction of my speech, I do so because I realize the fact that the "way we are going" has revealed a facet, at least in the last 10 years, that is very harmful, and not only to me, I believe, but to many who desire a more vigorous and challenging academic community, and therefore refuse to or show frequent resistance against "playing the game". But I also do so in order to suggest an alternative to the prevailing "way" we are going.

Although we as academics, or would-be academics, have a wide range of functions, such as teaching, studying, researching, outreach, consulting, university management, scientific management, specialist services, etc., our careers are mainly focused on teaching and researching. These two activities summarize our craft, so to speak. And it is exactly here that, in my view, we face a serious problem today: the "way" we are going has caused us to fail to do either well.

We are increasingly moving away from teaching excellence, because by promoting the belief that those who know how to research know how to educate, we virtually cancel the process of didactic-pedagogical training of graduate students in Graduate Programs and Courses (PPGs). In other words, we have insisted too much on training "researchers", to the detriment of training educators. The cultivation of pedagogical illiteracy that prevails in PPGs, especially in Administration, is inadmissible, since, as Paulo Freire (2013) and Pedro Demo (1997) have pointed out, teaching requires research, but we must not forget that what is at stake in education practice is human education, i.e., the challenge, through the educational process, to educate and be educated as human beings. Thus, teaching requires a different type of knowledge that the graduate student, for the correct exercise of educational practice, needs to master.

We are also moving away from excellence in research as philosophical-scientific-technological research practices submit to the imperatives of a homogenizing instrumental rationality, thus eliminating the complexities and diversity of scientific practice to make them fit into a single assembly line aimed at indiscriminate production of papers. This elimination deprives students of a conscious, critical, autonomous, creative and responsible education committed to the development of knowledge just to offer them the role of a swift, alienated producer who, albeit fully equipped for the formalistic or ceremonial handling of theories and methods, almost always produces papers detached from any long-term research or study project, which is one of the reasons why we are rather consumers than producers of theory.

Apparently, this is not my view only, since these facts have long been denounced. In 2006, for example, upon finding that Administration PPGs' curricula and educational practices emphasized "the training of researchers" over "the training of teachers", Fischer (2006) proposed a change in course to counter this situation: PPGs should create "a strand of research, a program, or at least an activity that promote reflection on teaching and learning in Administration" (pp. 193-194) (emphasis in original). One cannot deny that PPGs have been making efforts to alleviate the problem. Since then, teacher training activities for graduate students have proliferated, such as: teaching internships, the co-supervision of students in undergraduate, Master's and even Ph.D. programs, article evaluation for congresses and journals, classes requiring

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presentations, flexibility in scholarship rules so as to allow graduate students to teach, class sharing in graduate programs, among others. Nevertheless, nearly a decade after Fischer's diagnosis (2006), the problem still echoed in the words of analysts like Patrus and Lima (2014): "graduate programs are primarily aimed at training researchers and clearly distant from pedagogical training" (p. 6). Two years later, the accusation would come up again in Lourenço, Lima and Narciso (2016), in the following terms: in administration graduate programs, the pedagogical dimension is "a forgotten dimension" (p. 708). Except for a few initiatives here and there, on the whole, almost nothing has changed.

Having abandoned teacher training in our postgraduate programs, it is worth inquiring about the training of researchers. One of the aspects that stand out – and is the result of this exclusivist education process – is the fact that we have reached such high levels of paper production that we refer to the results of our activities as academic productivism. Let us not forget that there is much controversy about what counts as academic output. The productivism we attribute to ourselves and is required of us concerns only the number of articles; it does not necessarily concern readings, studies, research, talks, article evaluations, participation in examination committees, congresses, supervision, teaching, university management, etc. In other words, it does not cover other activities we carry out, also in excess. In fact, in his semantic analysis of names ending in "ism", Barbosa (2014) highlights those words that receive the suffix "ism" and carry the meaning of a pathology (p. 84). To me, this seems to be exactly the case with our productivism, which is pathological and one-dimensional.

Making the formalistic, alienated production of papers the focus of researcher training created this dysfunction. Among its external causes are: adopting managerialist views and practices into our daily activities at universities, PPGs, research groups and even in our classes, which has turned teachers and especially researchers into science managers and bureaucrats; increased institutional pressure by funding and control agencies (CAPES, CNPq, Research Foundations); the dramatic increase in co-authoring due to institutional pressure; the distribution of funds through calls for projects, which further encourages competition between researchers and their PPGs. There are also internal causes, such as: a distorted view of academic glory and excellence which associates success with the number of papers published; the unbridled quest for monopoly over themes, objects, theories and methods; the dogmatic scientism that almost always leads to formalism in doing science and to an endless repetition of case studies; the exacerbation of intellectual vanity that has turned the Lattes Platform into a glamorous catwalk of egos; the use of the "sliced science" tactic to boost one's Lattes curriculum, and so many others.

In analyzing the issue, Mattos (2012) says that the main cause of productivism lies in a kind of "distortion" created by researchers themselves; in other words, it is a direct consequence of the poor quality of our academic output (theses, dissertations and especially papers), since it seeks to "conceal" with scientific formalism "the maturation that research projects have failed to achieve. Thus, productivism becomes the expansion of poor academic output, since with good output, the more, the better" (p. 566). Specifically, Mattos says, the problem is being caused by some types of vicious behaviors that have become customary among us, such as the overuse of indirect citation and misappropriation of ideas, the use of data treatment instruments that allow recurrent replications and similar experiments, the excessive methodological permissiveness granted to the so-called qualitative studies, and the disregard, in texts, for the non-academic reader. Not for no reason, both in relation to congresses and the vast majority of papers we produce, are we faced daily with accusations such as: "weak articles, shallow discussions, lack of conceptual innovation, lack of rigorous arguments, methodologically worthless articles" (Alcadipani, 2011, p. 1175) or "immature, incomplete, 'sliced', repetitive or 'recycled'" texts with evidence of ethically questionable academic conduct (plagiarism, self-plagiarism, undue co-authoring) (Rego, 2014, pp. 340-341).

Although productivism is a recent problem and goes hand in hand with "poor-quality academic output", I do not think that the latter is entirely a consequence of the former. Machado-da-Silva, Cunha and Amboni (1990), in one of the first analytical bibliographic surveys of scientific output in the area of Organizational Studies, had already noticed the problem of poor-quality texts produced during the period from 1985 to 1989. It remained throughout the 1990's, as Bertero, Caldas and Wood (1999) observed, but it has become blatant nowadays. Science, as we know, is a historical-cultural phenomenon, and so is its quality. There will always be good-quality and poor-quality science. What changes is whether it is, in a given period, a rare or common phenomenon as it is today.

Unfortunately, this way of doing science distorts researchers' training by supporting a type of productive sociability founded on ephemeral research with very low scientific and social impacts, where productivism and its corresponding "academic surplus value" proliferate, as well as the annihilation of autonomy of thought, of the plural space of necessary dialogues between ourselves and between us and

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society, and of researchers' commitment to the real problems of their immediate social reality. In my view, the naturalization, in graduate programs, of the contempt for teacher training, on the one hand, and the exaltation of researchers' training in the productivist way, on the other, have become a pathological case among us. We are facing what Ramos (1995), in his criticism of the national sociology of his time, called "pathology of normality": once a given modus operandi settles in a community, certain mental attitudes and their corresponding conducts are assumed to be normal. Thus, its members internalize certain habits by considering them normal, although they are pathogenic, although they are morbid. More recently, other authors have designated this type of behavior as "normosis", which they defined as "a set of norms, concepts, values, stereotypes and habits of thinking or acting, which are approved by consensus or by the majority in a given society and that cause suffering, illness and death. In other words, it is something pathogenic and lethal that is executed without its creators and actors being aware of its pathological nature" (Weil, Leloup, & Crema, 2003, p. 22).

This pathology that affects us distorts the very notions of academy and science as it creates a social consensus that drives the academy to disregard criticism about itself, especially since the main beneficiaries of this widespread illness organize in order to preserve the status quo. Therefore, they form a conservative-reactionary academic stratum that wants to continue to shape the training and working patterns of the young in graduate programs in order to guarantee, by means of quantity, their funds and academic prestige. They do not seek distinction through ideas, but through numbers! Therefore, it seems necessary to offer alternatives.

My proposal is to rehabilitate the didactic-pedagogical training process in PPGs and reshape the current researcher training process in order to enable the consolidation of a virtue specific to the academic way of life – academic virtue. It is a virtue whose main ingredient is what my friend Paulo Grave and I call Conceptual, Methodological and Teleological Rigor (RCMT) and which manifests itself in academic work activities, i.e., studying, talking and researching understood as activities aimed at building knowledge.

This proposal implies changing habit (automatism, routine) for habitus, understood here in the Aristotelian conception. At the Fourth CBEO, habitus was referred to in the Bourdieusian sense; here I speak of habitus as a virtue in the Aristotelian sense: virtue is a habit {habitus} or disposition {hexis} of character that enables its bearer to perform an activity or function perfectly, and therefore perform good deeds (Aristotle, 1999, II, 5, 1106a 14-25). At the Fifth CBEO, "self-education" and "lasting intentions" were dealt with; here I speak of virtue as a {hexis} disposition that is also self-educative and lasting: the activities developed in accordance with virtue or excellence are "more durable because those who are happy spend their life most readily and most continuously in these; for this seems to be the reason why we do not forget them. The attribute in question, then, will belong to the happy man (...) always, or by preference to everything else, he will be engaged in virtuous action and contemplation" (Aristotle, 1999, 1100b 6-12).

In sum, it is hexis, understood as a stable possession, i.e., lasting as long as possible, that expresses one's autarchy or mastery over oneself so as to be virtuous, or a spoudaios. Thus, spoudaios academicus is one who studies well, talks well and researches well, that is, in accordance with the conceptual, methodological and teleological rigor that his purpose and object require. Sociologist Wright Mills, for example, was clearly aware of the need for this rigor in the training of those who go about the academic (and intellectual) endeavor: "I do not know the full social conditions of the best intellectual workmanship, but certainly surrounding oneself by a circle of people who will listen and talk – and at times they have to be imaginary characters – is one of them." (Mills, 2009, p. 28).

It is opinions such as that of Mills and of people I have worked and still work with, as well as so many others I have read and studied, that led me to affirm that RCMT could be pursued as a quality of the academic, whether of Administration or Organizational Studies. Observance of such rigor is what has marked the incessant quest of those I call spoudaios academicus. They are, in relation to this virtue and its purposes, tireless and bold, which is why they have always fought the pathologies of normality that incessantly affect the academic world.

"ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COUNTER": THE CHALLENGE OF PEER REVIEW IN THE ACADEMIC PUBLISHING PROCESS

By Ariádne Scalfoni Rigo

The invitation to participate in the free session of CBEO 2019 arrived in March. By that time, the decision to leave the editorial board of *Organizações & Sociedade* (*O&S*) was already mature. According to some friends in the academy, that would be a good opportunity for a farewell. Privately, I had doubts about accepting the invitation as it involved asking ourselves where the field of Organizational Studies (OS) is coming from and where it is going

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in Brazil. To me, that sounded like one of those analysis sessions (I actually mean psychoanalysis) that are uncomfortable, yet essential for one's self-knowledge and consequent reinvention.

Challenge accepted, I will try here to contribute with what I was tasked with: to present some challenges and propositions from my editorial experience as head of *O&S*. I will make some remarks on the trajectory of the field, but I stress that my contribution in this respect is limited. I will start by contextualizing, since I believe that our main concerns, challenges and propositions originate from the context we have built and in which we live.

The "scientific civilization" and the pain of publishing

Created to protect us and compensate for our individual limitations, our scientific community is at once a source of security and of suffering. Freud (2010) explained the existence of civilization, in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, as a way of limiting individuals' transgressions by submitting them to its norms and rules. Our "scientific civilization" (here we can only think of the field of Administration or, more specifically, OS) is filled with laws, rules and codes that guide our behavior and often impose painful processes, among which is publishing . Yes, the publishing process often hurts. It hurts when it is imposed and meant for compliance with tough performance metrics. Academic productivism, well translated by the phrase 'publish or perish', is violent. From having an idea, to studying it, to writing it down and submitting it to peer appreciation and acceptance, a long and often frustrating process takes place.

Consequences of what we may view as the "policy" of academic productivism are already being discussed in the Brazilian academy of Administration (Freitas, 2007, 2011). The consequences most commonly discussed – and even published – are the mass production of papers of dubious quality (Freitas, 2011), authors' misconduct such as plagiarism and self-plagiarism (Clair, 2015), reviewers' misconduct such as vague reviews and discourteousness (Gondim, 2004), the perverse effects on the health and psyche of researchers under pressure, conflicts and rivalries between co-workers (Rego, 2014), among others. In addition to the consequences laid on researchers' shoulders, the fact is that producing articles to meet targets established by our scientific community produces direct effects on editorial processes. Of course, these effects are not exclusive to the field of Administration, let alone OS, however, some challenges at *O&S* may be related to the field's characteristics.

The apparently impassable challenge of peer review

The pressure to publish in well-reputed journals contributes to "inflate" and "inflame" editorial processes. It "inflates" them by increasing the number of articles. It "inflames" them by making the process more painful. In its almost 26 years of existence, *O&S* has built recognition in the field and, since 2010, it is a Qualis Capes A2-rated journal. Therefore it receives about 400 articles a year, but publishes about 10% of them. These numbers are not higher than those of *RAE*, for example, which is more general in scope and receives almost 1,000 articles per year. But in my view, the theoretical and empirical peculiarities of the OS field make "the whole thing" more complicated.

OS mobilize a number of theories and methodologies in curious realities. Rationalities, temporalities, critical discourse analysis, semiotics, critical theory, bodies, sociomateriality, discourse/image-oriented sociological analysis, silences... Examples of theoretical categories and methodological approaches to understand, for example, circuses, tribes, samba schools, candomblé temples, funeral homes and the unconscious itself. Not rare are the cases where finding reviewers who are willing to tackle authors' theoretical-empirical and methodological "endeavors" becomes a nearly impossible mission.

I have made efforts to identify some pattern in the trajectory of subjects published in *O&S*' hundred-plus published issues (about a thousand articles) by means of keywords and titles. The variety of subjects is immense and portrays well the field's plurality. I found that some subjects were "diluted" along the way (from 1990 to 2019), perhaps due to saturation and consequent disinterest. For example, subjects like organizational culture and power relations in organizations are rarely submitted or appear as secondary categories in the analyses. Others have remained present since the 1990's, such as organizational learning, as well as subjects related to work (meaning and market) and organizational change processes. I was also able to identify some subjects that have become frequent in the last decade. For example, approaches related to all types of discrimination in the organizational environment (such as gender, homophobia and race), those on consumption and consumerism and those related to sustainability and corruption. I know that these approaches do not portray the entire OS field, but they indicate its concern with the course our society is taking.

This plurality of theories, methods and realities investigated in the OS academic output is welcome, but it comes at a price. It further narrows what to me is the main bottleneck in the publishing process: peer review. Where are the peers? They are

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few and very busy already. How to find more peers? In Sociology, Psychology and Philosophy, perhaps, though not without facing some prejudice due to the fact that we are "from Administration", which is believed to exist only to make the market work. An interesting alternative is to involve our young PhDs (or even PhD students) in journal evaluation processes. However, if we ignore the need to prepare them better for this task, we will reinforce the well-known problem of opinion quality. We will become poorly trained reviewers with no feeling for the job. Evaluating a scientific article requires more than knowing the theory and the methods. It requires knowing and recognizing one's role as a reviewer and its importance in the process. In OS, evaluating a scientific article also requires knowing the complexity of the field and being open to the multiple possibilities of building knowledge. It requires sensitivity and openness to plurality in research.

Conquering the challenge of peer review: A possibility

It is undoubtedly very important for us to enhance the training activities of our graduate students on all aspects of the review process, as well as on the topics, fields and methods we consider relevant to discuss and publish. Our research groups and curricular routes are the proper contexts for this. In OS, we can dedicate more efforts to a broad training in epistemology and possibilities of qualitative methods and analyses; a type of training that points to the plurality of the field and, of course, teaches how to build constructive opinions. I also believe it is important to continually discuss how to live better in the "scientific civilization" and how to rebuild it.

But institutional mechanisms for valuing the reviewer's work are fundamental. This idea is not new, but no action has been taken in our country yet. As we know, the reviewing of articles in journals has no actual value in the Capes [TN.: Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel] evaluation system. Over the past five years as an editor, I was disturbed to find innumerable opinions that contributed significantly to the improvement of published articles and say nothing to the reviewers but "thank you very much". We know that, at some points in the academic career, these reviews count, but in the publication process, they should count more than some dubious cases of co-authorship.

Of course, building and institutionalizing such a recognition process is not simple. After all, the way the scientific community works has been in place for a very long time, thus making it difficult to imagine significant changes. But they are possible. To begin with, aspects such as impact factor, Brazil's Qualis journal rating system, and objectiveness of opinion by editors and by the authors themselves could be considered. I believe in this possibility and in its potential to untie the knot of academic publication processes, including shortening the time span from submission to publication. It is essential to recognize that critical appreciation by our peers is what allows us not only to improve the quality of what we publish, but also to enrich our academic trajectories.

ERODING THE IVORY TOWER: THE EXPERIENCE OF NEOS/UFMG

By Luiz Alex Silva Saraiva

Although the term university encompasses great differences as to its concept, it has been known for some time that, as an institution, the university is in crisis around the world. Several discussions suggest its inadequacy as a locus of professional training (Tight, 2010), its conservatism, elitism and limitations in promoting social inclusion and emancipation (Amano & Poole, 2005), its failure to break institutionalized professional hierarchies (Fry, 2015), its lack of dialogue with society (Mamdani, 1993), among other aspects of a complex group of problems in the university.

In part, this is due to an uncertainty about the weight of society and the market on its framework (Fischer, 2001). Although concepts have been developed around society and around meeting social needs, a good part of universities is built and evaluated in function of meeting market demands (Saraiva, 2011), which makes decisions related to curriculum (Fischer, Waiandt, & Silva, 2008), faculty selection, teaching, research, etc, instrumental to those demands. Thus, it is hardly surprising that there is a growing weight of academic managers (Saraiva, Bauer, & Paiva, 2009), who are much more focused on management than on the academy (Costa, Barros, & Saraiva, 2014).

In a peripheral context like Brazil, this lack of definition takes on even more dramatic contours, not only because of the discrepancy between the number of slots in public and private universities, but also because of the concentration of students in private universities, primarily focused on teaching, while public universities, despite the recurring problems of public policy continuity, are stronger in teaching, research and outreach. Given the relevance of public universities in Brazil, I will talk about them in this text from an organizational perspective.

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The field of Organizational Studies possibly experiences these issues more acutely than the other subjects in Administration, due, among other aspects, to its predilection for theorization and for the criticism of thoughtless empiricism, which brings it dangerously close to the ivory tower metaphor: an academy with complex, hermetic concepts and practices, resplendent in the distance in all its pomp and glory, but inaccessible to non-academics who wish to approach it. The result is a group that speaks to itself most of the time. With its back turned to society and its needs, this group is condescendingly satisfied in listening to its own voice on topics that it considers relevant, in approaches it deems appropriate, in a minimal context of contact with society.

I intend to briefly report the experience of the Center for Organizational Studies and Society at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (NEOS/UFMG), which has been redesigning its configuration and actions in order to work more effectively in terms of teaching, research and outreach with a view to coming actually closer to society. The perspective we have adopted erodes the ivory tower and proposes other ways of creating the university. It is noteworthy that we are not talking about tearing down the tower; that would be pretentious, considering that we are part of a historically established institutionality. However, this should not prevent us from thinking about eroding, weakening, wearing thin what is presented to us as the only possible form of university, in favor of other concepts and practices that are more committed and close to social concerns.

NEO's Scientific Dissemination project (NEOS/FACE/UFMG) (Saraiva, 2018) consists of 17 outreach actions in the Communication core area that systematize, record and promote the group's actions according to the guidelines for outreach in Brazilian higher education (Ordinance No. 7, 2018).

The NEOS/UFMG is organized in Study and Work Groups (GETs) that aim to associate undergraduate and graduate researchers around aggregating topics that combine teaching, research and outreach. There are currently three GETs in place: "Gender, Sexuality and Race", coordinated by Professor Rafael Diogo Pereira, "History, Daily Affairs and Power", coordinated by Professor Alexandre de Pádua Carrieri, and "Cities", coordinated by Professor Luiz Alex Silva Saraiva. There are GETs that hold periodic study meetings to design their practices, others are research-based, and others are organized around outreach.

These GETs have their own sub-coordination bodies in charge of organizing activities, assigning tasks, designing and managing projects. The three sub-coordination bodies include students, in addition to the GET coordinator, who reports to a management group whose purpose is to plan, organize and monitor all processes related to teaching, research, outreach and university management carried out within the scope of the Center. This group works under the supervision of a general coordinator in charge of the academic management of the group. The group's outreach actions are:

- maintaining the NEOS blog, which announces and provides online registration for society-oriented events, reporting activities and meetings held by the various GETs, and recording general information;
- the NEOS newsletter and annual activity report, which publishes information on academic activities related to individual or collective research;
- the NEOS YouTube channel: a free digital, public collection of events held by the Center;
- internal communication: a formal communication channel between the coordination body and its members, which centralizes the entire flow of communication;
- DeConstructions: a set of debates that aim to promote discussions of interest to researchers and of social interest. The event is free, and attendees are awarded a certificate; the hours count as complementary activity time for undergraduate students;
- Research results: public, free disclosure of results of the work carried out by NEOS researchers to society;
- Farol – Revista de Estudos Organizacionais e Sociedade: a scientific journal published every fourth month by the NEOS/UFMG which aims to contribute for Organizational Studies from a non-functionalist perspective;
- NEOS methodological workshops: at these workshops, theoretical concepts and content are addressed by faculty with recognized experience and expertise in the topics covered, as a means to expand the theoretical-methodological repertoire of the group's members;
- NEOS Facebook page;
- NEOS talk circles: these allow informal discussions with guests who approach issues that are innovative and challenging to the group's researchers;

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- NEOS institutional website: it presents in general terms the Center for Organizational Studies and Society and its positions in relation to the community;

- NEOS general meeting: it brings together all NEOS researchers around an agenda concerning strategic aspects and challenges to the group;

- GET on Cities meeting: it problematizes knowledge about the relationship between Cities and Organizational Studies;

- GET on Gender, Sexuality and Race meeting: it problematizes knowledge about the relationship between Gender, Sexuality and Race and Organizational Studies;

- GET on History, Daily Affairs and Power meeting: it problematizes knowledge about the relationship between History, Daily Affairs and Power and Organizational Studies

All these face-to-face activities are announced through social media, free and open to the public, and attendees are awarded a certificate including the number of hours of activity time.

The GET on Gender, Sexuality and Race develops an outreach work with the Tina Martins Shelter for Women which involves management support and a partnership with the shelter's design course where the sheltered women make objects they can sell, thus generating jobs and income for themselves. This activity is officially recognized by the UFMG Human Rights Network.

The outreach actions of the GET on History, Daily Affairs and Power take place around the project "Governance of Water Resources: Analyzing the Profile and the Training Process of Representatives for State Water Resources Councils and River Basin Committees", funded by the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES). The project has conducted dozens of actions for the training of agents to deal with the issue of water in society. There are two doctoral theses in progress, and numerous actions combined with teaching, mainly in undergraduate programs.

The GET on "Cities" develops the outreach program "Exchange of Knowledge, Valuing and Visibility for the Identity and Culture of Quilombo Luizes" which conducts a series of training actions, debates and talk circles. These activities have provided the foundation for two elective courses in the graduate program, namely "Differences and Territorialities in the City" and "Territorialities and Differences in the City" (total of 45 hours), in the first semester of 2018. These courses, in combination with the outreach experience and research data, were the starting point for the elective course "Differences and Territoriality in Cities" (total of 60 hours) in the undergraduate program in Administration, in the second semester of 2018. In addition to the evident gains for the faculty and graduate students involved, there was an extraordinary feedback by undergraduate students, who had not had the experience of elective courses based on the research-outreach combination. The same occurred in 2019, though with a different focus. Since there are three black women in the group who are from the outskirts of Belo Horizonte, the elective course "Organization, Territoriality and Blackness" (60 hours) problematizes the silence about the racial issue in the training of administrators based on discussions about "baile funk" parties, favelas, urban quilombo communities and African Brazilian carnival bands. All of these activities have also generated dissertations and doctoral theses.

This account makes no pretense of guiding anyone, since, within the same institutional context, the university can be understood, conceived of and implemented in very different ways. However, I believe it is important to make a successful experience public. Our trajectory suggests that creativity and organization can change the face of a research group and make it increasingly concerned with the social relevance of its concepts and practices. This seems to us to be the way to erode the ivory tower, i.e., by making the university actually oriented to society, its true reason for existence.

AN EFFORT AT SUMMARY AND QUESTIONS

By Marcio Sá

I could not begin this effort to highlight some of the points addressed by my dear colleagues without reiterating what I did when the aforementioned table was opened, that is, to affirm the personal affection and professional respect I nourish for each of them. As I reread them to prepare this attempt at a "closure", I was happy to see again that, each in their own way, they were all successful in personally and professionally engaging in the initially proposed discussion; I am grateful to them for that too.

What may add more strength to what was said that afternoon is the spirit of what we sought to inscribe in the terms "collective self-criticism" and "desirable horizons". After all, we were willing to explain what we think about the dimensions of a collectivity of which we are part and for which we desire a better future. In addition, we were also driven the shared belief that exposing ideas with freedom, intellectual honesty and respect

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for opposing views is a healthy academic practice that we wish to cultivate.

Rafael was firm in reiterating aspects of his (self-)critical stance on the trajectory of the field in which he was immersed and through which he constituted himself professionally over the last two decades, but he also sought to sow hope by highlighting bonds of affection that he believes are growing stronger among some of us, after all, this can be contagious. On the one hand, "friendship as the future" can work as a motivation to overcome the historical "malaise" in national OS; on the other hand, it can be the relational ballast that allows joint constructions and glimpses of potentially more fruitful horizons. But I wonder how far we are from it. Do we really need this feeling to build a healthy and prosperous atmosphere for the field? Perhaps a first step for this is to sow cooperation, but how germinate it in such a competitive time-space?

Ariston summarized his reading of "productivism" and proceeded to present an original proposal for the training of teachers and researchers in the area, i.e., "to enable the consolidation of a virtue specific to the academic way of life" among us. In his thesis, the rigors (conceptual, methodological and teleological) and the activities (study, talk and research) in which the former should manifest themselves could set us on a good path in terms of training and knowledge-building. The challenge I can see in the proposal is collective, the (re) incorporation of social practices more suitable to an academy with a more explicit virtuousness, and intimate, the (re) conversion of beliefs that are internalized and encouraged by the "new economic ideology of science" (Serva , 2017). Here, I confess my hope is smaller than I would have liked, but the recurrent manifestation among peers of dissatisfaction with the prevailing modus operandi works as encouragement. If many are not satisfied with what they see or experience in the training of teachers and researchers in our graduate programs, perhaps dimensions and practices that are more substantive to the profession can be reframed in terms of the 21st century. But are we willing to do so? I do not believe the majority can come to act with 'yes', but I do not doubt that it is possible for each of us if we are inspired by our spoudaios. The ones I had were a minority, but even today they are significant to me, both at times which require major decisions and in the pursuit for reducing the inconsistency between convictions and daily practices.

After years at the O&S editorial office, Ariádne has amassed a set of experiences that allow her to carry out analyses and present proposals in the area of peer review from the perspective of those "on the other side of the counter". The issue of training and virtue in our profession also reverberates here, since there is no systematic training for this function among us who "learn it by doing it". In addition, the non-virtuous performance of such a critical role in the scientific publishing market has caused pain to and left marks on many of us. The proposal to increase the valuing of the work of those willing to play this role with fairness, seriousness and respect for others is relevant and could echo among those who occupy decision-making positions at the national level. A fairer and more generous accreditation system for those who dedicate time to exercising this activity with quality can help reduce the productivist drive that has been shown to be harmful in several aspects and levels of analysis.

When one of the main research groups in the subarea, if not the main one, proposes to erode the "tower" in which it also raised itself, and conducts teaching, research and outreach actions directed to the social problems in this part of the world in which we live, we realize how much self-criticism and horizons can strengthen each other. What Luiz Alex proposes and the initiatives already underway in the NEOS can reverberate among several other groups (formal or not) throughout Brazil, that is, NEOS can also be at the forefront in terms of a greater involvement of national OS with urgent social and organizational issues. In other words, perhaps by pursuing a greater engagement in social and organizational change we can devise and plan more effective meanings for our teaching and research practices combined with outreach. However, just as the incorporation and practice of publish or perish take a toll, so will the turn in the direction pointed out by NEOS, it is impossible not to reiterate the question: who among us will be willing to do so?

The answers are up to each of us. What I allow myself to say, finally, is that at least some of us are questioning ourselves, devising alternatives and giving us reasons for hope. I end by mentioning two pleasures, namely to bring together Rafael, Ariston, Ariádne and Luiz Alex in a debate, and to summarize and reflect on their opinions, initiatives and proposals.

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AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUITION

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