



Southern voices in management and organization knowledge

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The rationale for this special issue has been to open a space for reflection about management and organizational knowledge (MOK) as it is practiced and constructed in the global South. Organizational scholars working outside the West rarely appear on the radar of the most prestigious scholarly journals of the field, the institutionalized ‘core’ of the management and organizational science. However, there is life beyond Northern academia, both in terms of management theoretical concepts and in terms of organizational practices. This special issue aims to make these voices heard, without any particular commitments to Western theoretical framework or approaches, insofar as the contributions have a critical lens, given the nature of the journal *Organization*. A detailed mapping of the nature and extent of MOK in the Global South falls clearly beyond the scope of this introduction, but before discussing the particular articles selected and which insights about this special issue topic they generate, we will make a very succinct presentation of the problems involved in the production and diffusion of Southern MOK. Before doing this, we will characterize what we understand as Global South and how this terminology has emerged.

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Constructing the 'Global South'

The terminology 'Global South' refers to developing or poor countries in general (Arrighi, 2001; Arrighi et al., 2003; Chant and McIlwaine, 2009; Connell, 2007; Thompson and Reuveny, 2009). Another interchangeable term could be 'periphery', derived from dependency (Prebisch, 1959) and world-systems theories (Chase-Dunn, 1998; Wallerstein, 1974). In fact, the countries falling under this rubric have been characterized in many ways. One designation, 'Third World' (with the correspondent 'First World'), although old-fashioned today, is useful because it makes evident the hierarchical construct that positions some places as universally 'better' than others. Rather than taking 'Third World' countries as less important or inferior in relation to the so called developed ones, it is necessary to consider that the idea of a group of countries that are 'less developed' and, therefore, inferior is a particular construction that is far from natural (cf. Escobar, 1995). In other words, the view that countries located in the periphery are 'worse' than those located in the centre has become naturalized [this particular idea gained prominence after the Second World War when developed nations (the West) emerged with the need of creating in the rest of the world societies equipped with the appropriate material and institutional to rapidly reach the life style of industrialized countries]. Thus, the Western nations positioned themselves not only as the role model to be followed by the 'Third World' but also as the countries to guide the Third World out of its underdevelopment. This was clearly present in Harry Truman's inaugural address (January, 20, 1949) when he made explicit the aim of developing 'poor countries' in order to avoid them becoming communist. It is precisely when development became a key issue in the international arena and, as such, established itself as a powerful ideology that it achieved a status of a need in the social imaginary (Escobar, 1995: 5). In so doing, the label 'Third World' and the consequent categorization of nations according to their level of 'development' emerged as a concept in the process by which West and East redefined themselves as well as reorganized the arrangement of power in the globe (Escobar, 1988). In this way, the 'Third World' has been actively produced by the practices and discourses of development since their beginning just after the Second World War. Taking development as a historically produced discourse allows us to consider why so many countries started to assume themselves as underdeveloped and how to create development became an important aim to them, subjecting their societies to interventions mainly guided by 'First World' countries. It was considered that Third World societies and populations would need interventions from the outside (Escobar, 1995).

The rationale behind the reference of the North/South divide, rather than the use of First/Third Worlds dichotomy, is the collapse of the Soviet bloc. This is so because, according to the classification of nations used during the existence of the USSR, the First World was comprised of capitalist industrialized and developed nations, the Second World was the communist countries, and the Third World countries were a residual category (Mignolo, 2011). In fact, "the South" is a herein of the "Third World" as long as the countries located in such region are still thought to be "less developed" (cf. Reuveny and Thompson, 2007).

Hegemonic MOK

Historically, the West has acted upon other regions of the world attempting to impose its will in the form of colonization (Escobar, 1995). Within the modern/colonial world system, local (imperial) stories tend to have global reach (see Mignolo, 2000). At first, during the colonial period, the West acted upon other places under the excuse of delivering 'civilizing missions'. The European colonial metropolis aimed to 'civilize' the places under their ruling as long as natives were thought to

be non-civilized people living in non-civilized places. Years after the colonial period was over, a logic that resemble the logics of colonization was followed by the US while aiming to develop and modernize Third World nations (Walter Mignolo in Delgado and Romero, 2000: 8). Within the context of the ideology of development, management played a crucial role as long as development could only be achieved by the First World led 'management of the Third World' (cf. Cooke, 2004). In other words, management has been an important instrument in attempting to deliver modernization and development to the Third World. As such, it was instrumental in helping to produce the Third World construct. In fact, US style management has become naturalized within the discourse and practices of development. At the same time, it has spread across different regions being imposed as the correct way of managing and thinking about management so that US based authors, universities and management schools have become the role model to be copied worldwide (cf. Alcadipani, 2010; Alcadipani and Rosa, 2011; Kipping et al., 2008; Westwood and Jack, 2008). Actually, using 'periphery' in relation to management and organization knowledge involves an additional problem, since even Western countries can be considered 'peripheral' to the US style of management theorization and education (Meriläinen et al., 2008). For example, management education in different European countries, even in the UK, has suffered a process of Americanization (cf. Tiratsoo, 2004; Üsdiken, 2004).

The consequence has been that MOK has assumed a one-dimensional façade being a discipline under US epistemic coloniality (cf. Alcadipani and Rosa, 2011; Ibarra-Colado, 2006a). In so doing, management as a body of knowledge and a bundle of practices has been globally diffused as a mainly Anglo-Saxon phenomenon shaping the MOK produced in and about the South. So, although often claiming to be 'international' and 'universalist', MOK has a tendency towards hegemonic ethnocentrism, thereby marginalizing ideas from the South to the homogenizing tendencies of dominant (Western) thinking (Alcadipani, 2010; Alcadipani and Reis Rosa, 2011; Ibarra Colado, 2006b). However, nations that comprise what today is the Global South have demonstrated the possession of relevant MOK throughout history. At present, non-exploitative forms of economic exchange like the worker democracy of the 'solidarity economy' (Singer, 2008) or the way prisoners organize themselves in Brazil (see Biondi, 2010) offer contemporaneous illustrations of this.

Yet can the subaltern speak in a voice that is without contradiction and paradox? Indigenous knowledge from the South has largely been categorized and determined through the gaze of the North, making elusive its claim to being endogenous. On the other hand, in efforts to excavate and foreground the contributions of knowledge from the past or present, scholars from the South often end up evoking essentialisms, putting forward arguments that have also been used to marginalize and denigrate contributions from the 'other'. So, terms like 'indigenous knowledge' can suggest stasis and romanticism, encouraging idealization and confirming prejudice. In any case, the study of MOK in the South has been largely neglected and when it appears in the 'centre', it is usually in particularly dedicated spaces such as this special issue. On one hand, initiatives such as this special issue are important to enable a Southern MOK to surface. On the other hand, it may run the risk of making Southern MOK appear as an exotic endeavour, which has always to be kept in the margins. Hence, the importance of a deeper examination of Southern praxis and theory, and especially of giving voice to scholars working there not only in special issues, but also as regular journal editions.

As the universalizing force of Anglophone academia imposed its perspectives on the social sciences in general, and in MOK in particular, its own logic dictated the need to verify if theories originated in developed countries were useful when applied to different national environments. International and comparative management (Farmer and Richman, 1965; Haire et al., 1966;

Richman, 1965), first, and cross-cultural management (Adler, 1983), later, were germane in dealing with these concerns. However, these different 'environments' were mostly in developed countries, while the studies about management practice in developing countries were far less numerous. There were naturally some exceptions (Negandhi and Prasad, 1971; Prasad and Negandhi, 1968), which grew as it became obvious that local variables could play a role in explaining different outcomes when US models were imported to developing countries. Among the most comprehensive studies conducted on a world scale, the Globe project (Chhokar et al., 2007; House et al., 2004) should be mentioned.

However, an important characteristic in most studies that analyse the South is that their underpinning assumptions relied on the implicit thesis that what should ultimately be explained is the economic backwardness of poor countries, which was supposedly related, to a large extent, in their faulty administrative practices (typically reported as inefficient, nepotistic and associated to a social logic other than the rational economic one). The precise link between administrative practices and economic inefficiency was something worthy of identification and, therefore, of change through modernization. This idea was present in much of the economic and technical assistance to developing countries, legitimated under the theoretical framework of modernization theory (Apter, 1965) and the global design of development, which although conscious of its limits, did have an optimistic faith on the civilizing force of Western, and mostly, US social science knowledge (Gilman, 2003). Drawing mainly on preconceptions and negative characterizations of MOK practices in the Global South, the studies in MOK portraying the South partly depicted domestic practices as dysfunctional relative to some ideal form of effective and modern management practices from the North. These epistemic limitations of dominant perspectives were recently put to critical scrutiny by Jack et al. (2008), although there are earlier examples of similar criticism (Oszlak, 1977; Suárez, 1975).

Another equally important shortcoming of the Northern or Western approach to the study of MOK in the South is that it is mainly focused either on public organizations—the State as such is understood as an entity to be reorganized and modernized—or in large private capitalist enterprises. Usually, the emphasis on the studies that analyse the South from a Western perspective is placed on the successful transfer of management models from developed countries to Southern ones. Those organizations that were not part of these domains were left largely unexplored, and it is precisely within them where some original indigenous practices, with practical and theoretical interest, were and are being developed (Singer, 2008). Of course, we do not claim here that there is something indigenous in its pure sense (as we will argue later). As Ibarra Colado (2011) observed, in our contemporary society MOK is inextricably hybrid, being created, imported, transformed, adapted and even reimported at times. Still, in any case, domestic features and contributions are easily discernible, to the point that 'successful' management models from abroad are even transferred to the United States—ranging from the popularity of Japanese management systems in the 1980s through to the current interest in Chinese and Indian management (Capelli et al., 2010; Chen and Lee, 2008). Our point is basically that much remains to be learned from MOK in the South, either because some of the scant studies depicting our local realities follow a Western perspective that can limit our apprehension of the Southern realities or just because some interesting aspects of Southern organizational practices were simply ignored. In sum, we want this special issue to open up a space for the marginalized MOK voices in the periphery to speak and to be heard, preferably on their own epistemic and ontological terms and at the same time to critically examine the idea and production of indigenous MOK.

However, no sweeping generalizations can be made in this regard because the global South is really far from being a homogeneous set of countries. For instance, while the presence of authors

from the South in international scientific databases is almost invisible (Baruch, 2001; Gantman, 2009; Wong-Mingji and Mir, 1997), a few scientists from certain developing countries do contribute to the international arena of scientific MOK. The case of Brazil, where there is a significant research community in MOK, with journals and conferences, is a particularly relevant example of how the research conditions varies from one Southern country to the other. This calls for more comparative research about how this knowledge is created in different national environments (Fernández Rodríguez and Gantman, 2011; Gantman, 2010). However, as most of the Brazilian thought in management and organizations is produced in Portuguese, it is not even readable by the North. Being able to speak and write in English in acceptable academic standards usually means years of study and spending time abroad. Such opportunities are usually only available to very few citizens of the global South. The language barrier puts academics from the South at a clear disadvantage when publishing in 'top journals' which are only considered to be the ones published in English (Hwang, 2005; Tietze and Dick, 2009). Beyond language, the practical means to carry out research in most Southern countries are simply not there. Academia is not a profession per se and being able to survive being an academician is a rare possibility. In most of the cases, professors need to carry out other duties (e.g. consulting, executive education, administrative jobs) in order to have a decent living (Gantman and Parker, 2006). Moreover, research infrastructure is in most cases absent. Libraries, access to journals and databases are totally different when comparable to universities in the North. In fact, when management scientists in the South take a look at their own situation in terms of the prospects of developing meaningful research agendas, the picture they describe is mostly negative, as expressed by Malaver Rodríguez (2000) and Dávila (2005) in relation to Latin America. This makes evident that the scant presence of Southern scholars in what is considered to be 'top journals' in MOK does not mean that this group is 'inferior'. Moreover, it is important to point out that the higher education systems of countries in the Global South may have urgent priorities other than fostering research in management and organization studies. Ultimately, policy makers may not even consider higher education itself as being a relevant priority, since there are many pressing social needs to be fulfilled.

As we will discuss in the next sections, the five selected articles expand our theoretical and empirical knowledge about MOK in the South by addressing different topics. Some of them were written by scholars working in these countries; while others were authored by expatriates, deeply acquainted with management practices of organizations within peripheral countries; and of course, scholars from the North were also interested in studying Southern MOK. As a result, we were able to gather a plurality of voices that contributed perspectives and topics that are often neglected in the mainstream journals of the field.

The 'authentic' in indigenous management knowledge

A key issue in analysing the South is the question of authenticity. In his article entitled 'Epistemic and Performative Quests for Authentic Management in India', Nidhi Srinivas tackles a very relevant issue about the nature of the MOK produced in countries of the Global South: can we really speak of some form of authenticity in such a knowledge? According to Srinivas, there are fundamental epistemological difficulties to identifying a really distinctive subaltern voice in which we can hear an undertone of authenticity. However, what matters is the notion of the quest for authenticity, an endless pursuit whose empirical existence is clearly evident. His reflection on the possible nature of Indian management is of great interest for this special issue because the potential rise of India as an economic world power (Swaminathan, 2009) has currently led to the appearance of a recent literature dealing with the managerial practices behind the economic growth of the country

and the success of its entrepreneurs (e.g. Capelli et al., 2010). Clearly, the real world of business organizations is one where domestic practices of organizing are currently melted with others originated in the most developed countries (the US, mostly), which were diffused through processes of economic, cultural or political domination. Management knowledge qua organizational praxis is thus intrinsically hybrid (Ibarra Colado, 2011), but the question remains as to the degree to which some form of knowledge that is both indigenously generated and locale-specific really exists.

In order to study the topic of authenticity, Srinivas explores two related instances of Indian management knowledge to find out what specificities of the 'Indian' are empirically discernible: (1) a line of domestic inquiry on the nature of Indian management and (2) the example of a yoga camp, which was used as a training seminar for people interested in getting good positions in the business world. In so doing, he offers the reader an account of how American management thinking entered management education. After some decades, it became evident that this Western import was not as efficient as previously expected; hence, the need to generate an alternative, rooted in domestic culture and traditions, which set the tone for the emergence of a local variant of MOK. Srinivas reviews some of its most prominent developments and concludes that the search for traces of Indian identity has been basically guided by an instrumental logic, which ultimately defines a nationalist project that is aligned with Western capitalism. Moreover, the yoga camp, narrated as a personal experience, exemplifies how a training program blends the traditional discipline of yoga with a more modern, management-friendly approach, conflating spirituality with a Western pop-management style.

In conclusion, Srinivas suggests that the notion of authenticity, as applied to indigenous knowledge, appears as problematic. In his view, the Other (the subaltern in MOK) is unable to articulate an autonomous voice, completely uncontaminated by the dominant foreign influences in the field. Drawing on different theoretical frameworks, Srinivas argues that the search for authenticity is a quest for meaning and identity, an artifact of expectation. Therefore, he warns about an uncritical understanding about how 'authenticity' is constructed. His analysis has major implications for Global South scholars generally in respect to any project or effort to offer a distinctively 'Southern' form of MOK.

In fact, if we consider the historical colonial role of the West in relation to countries from the global South and especially when we take into account MOK which is a field whose Western presence and predominance is undeniable as discussed above, the question of authenticity is crucial and is also relevant to another article in this special issue. Gazi Islam, in his article 'Can the Subaltern Eat? Anthropophagic Culture as a Brazilian Lens on Post-colonial Theory', also tackles the issue of authenticity from a non-Western perspective. In contrast to Srinivas, authenticity is not the key focus of analysis, but is a theme that emerged from the encounter between South and North under scrutiny in his article. Discussing Anthropophagism in Brazil, Islam analyses how it has historically been a particular manner of how people in Brazil relate to the Northern influence. At first, it was an aspect in the interaction between natives and Europeans in the country. Later, this mechanism functioned in a way of allowing identity negotiation between Brazilians and Europeans in a form of a cultural movement (antropofagia) by which European modernism was re-interpreted and re-read from the Brazilian standpoint. Anthropophagism has also been present in music movement (tropicalismo) in which Northern manners of doing music were adapted and mixed with traditional Brazilian musical trends. Anthropophagism thus works as an effective metaphor to discuss the relation between North and South. It has been used by Brazilian scholars to analyse the adaptation of MOK and practices to the local Brazilian reality (Faria et al., 2001; Wood and Caldas, 1997).

Islam argues that Anthropophagism shows a Brazilian ambivalent attitude of admiration and aggression towards Western references especially by cultural elites that are in between affirming

native roots and appropriating the foreigner reference. This is not exclusive to Brazil and has parallels to the experiences of other encounters between the North and the South. The notion of translation in postcolonialist studies indicates this. However, Islam argues that the Brazilian case can offer the possibility of creating parallels and dialogue between different subaltern perspectives. For Islam, such dialogue may take place around three issues: otherness, authenticity and corporality. In fact, Islam's article highlights the agency of Brazilians in the process of negotiating foreign references to the Brazilian reality. In his analysis the South emerges as the key factor in the process of adaptation between different references and realities. This, in fact, suggests that the Brazilian case is an example that can make us think differently about Northern and Southern relations and suggests that the South has much more agency and possibilities than are usually considered. This opens up the possibilities to think and to act in a different manner as we can challenge the naturalized Northern central position in MOK. Furthermore, Islam's article encourages us to consider that one aspect of the uniqueness of the South in terms of MOK is this possibility of selective adaption according to its needs and interest. As such, the quest for authenticity may be considered in a different manner as we take into account that hybridism is the key element of authenticity in the South in a context of global power shift.

The rise of new economic powers and its challenge to MOK

One of the significant shifts of the 21st century has been the economic rise of 'emerging' nations from the South and East, such as China, Brazil and India. In the case of China, it has been forecasted that China's economy could overtake that of the United States in a decade (*The Economist*, 2011). China's economy has grown by an average of more than 10% a year over the past ten years. A key to China's continued growth is access to energy and mineral resources and it appears that Africa has become the main site for their attainment. Over the last decade, China has become one of Africa's most important partners for trade and economic cooperation but has also intensified its cultural and political relations with the continent (Lumumba-Kasongo, 2010; Maswana, 2009). Because of the magnitude of China's activities and investments in the continent, scholars have begun to debate the nature, motives and intent of its involvement. China does not fit the theoretical concept of centre country, nor does it any longer fit the standard periphery nation-state (Maswana, 2009: 68). Additionally, while China is distinct in many respects from powers in the North and West, it is also behaviourally similar to emerging global powers of the past (Adem, 2010). Its paradoxical position in the current geopolitical dynamic presents a challenge in considering what effects its rise will have on Africa. Some scholars worry that China will replicate the hegemonic tendencies of countries of the West, extracting resources with little benefit to Africa's development (Maswana, 2009). Others argue that China's engagement with Africa will make a positive contribution to the continent's development (Shaw et al., 2007). These debates over China's engagement with Africa hold significance for South-South relations and the influence such relations will have on management and organization knowledge.

In his article, 'Postcolonialism and Organizational Knowledge in the Wake of China's Presence in Africa: Interrogating South-South Relations', Terence Jackson focuses on the significance of China's engagement with Africa to management and organization knowledge. He questions the adequacy of existing critical management theories for understanding the management and organization implications of China's engagement with China. Jackson points out that while postcolonial and dependency theories have been useful for studying and challenging the hegemony of the North's colonial and modernization projects, they may not be readily applicable to understanding or challenging China's presence in Africa. Critical management scholars, for instance, have

fruitfully utilized postcolonial theory to challenge the hegemony of management and organization knowledge from the West and North (e.g. Banerjee and Prasad, 2008; Jack and Westwood, 2009; Jack et al., 2010; Prasad, 2003) and to demonstrate the ways in which African management and knowledge has been marginalized and made invisible as a result of colonialism and modernization projects (Nkomo, 2011). In essence, the central question in Jackson's article is whether postcolonial and dependency theories adequately account for this new geopolitical dynamic, especially in terms of a South-South relationship embedded within the historical anti-colonial relationship China has had with the continent, and China's Marxist-Leninist-Maoist political traditions. While Jackson focuses on South-South relations, he contextualizes his analysis within a South-North-South dialectic because prior relations between African countries and the West as well as China's relationship with the West have to be taken into account.

Ultimately, though, Jackson is interested in the effects China's present day engagement will have on MOK in Africa. There has been very little critical management research on the China's engagement with Africa, particularly over what it may mean for management and organizational knowledge in Africa. Jackson raises and explores a number of questions about what these effects may be in terms of possible synergies between Chinese management and African management given previous research suggesting overlaps on some cultural dimensions. He is concerned with whether management and organization knowledge in Africa will be subsumed and dominated by China's presence. In an effort to ponder this question, he provides a comparative analysis of modernization theory, dependency theory and postcolonial theory in terms of their general and specific implications for management and organization knowledge in Africa. A broader implication of Jackson's analysis for MOK is whether we need new theoretical lenses for understanding not only MOK within a North-South geodynamic (i.e. when the West is no longer dominant) but at the same time different conceptualizations for understanding management and organization knowledge within South-South geopolitical dynamics. In this regard, Jackson offers a number of suggestions for future research. Jackson is necessarily speculative given African-Chinese relations are quite fluid making it much too early to assess the full impact.

Excluded MOK: marginalized forms of management thought and praxis

The importance of analysing the South using its own lenses also emerges in the article 'From Harare to Rio de Janeiro: Kukiya-Favela Organization Narrative of the Excluded'. Miguel Imas and Ala Weston highlight the organizing experiences of marginalized and excluded people from the South. Via an ethnographic account of two different slums in Brazil and Zimbabwe, which have different histories, cultures and traditions, they are capable of showing the similarities in terms of struggles and resistances of the excluded way of organizing. Their analysis highlights how in these settings solidarity, integrity, participative modes of learning and survival strategies are key to their struggles and resistances challenging their normal given status of (insignificant) organizational and management-less groups. The article argues that despite exclusion, the marginalized can construct diverse identities that can represent them and account for their own experiences in their everyday struggle for surviving. Such identities are not colonized by the traditional Western/elite way of reasoning that places the marginalized as inferior in relation to their mode of operating. The article argues that understanding such modes of organizing may imply a paradigm shift from the neoliberal managerial discourse that has much harmed the 'Third World'. Imas and Weston argue that the organizing of the excluded may express a more participative way of producing knowledge, distributing resources and protecting lives. They also contribute by pointing out that we need in our field

of study to engage in understanding and dialoguing with the ones excluded without imposing our way of reasoning.

Shoaib Ul Haq and Robert Westwood also focus on what has been marginalized and excluded by MOK in the North but in terms of epistemic perspectives situated primarily in, but not exclusively to, the South. In 'The Politics of Knowledge, Epistemological Occlusion and Islamic Management and Organization Knowledge', Haq and Westwood review the mainstream MOK literature. They are perplexed to find that a major epistemic perspective of the South (i.e. Islam) is by and large veiled from the literature. Their review brings to surface another crucial finding. Not only is Islam missing in MOK, but so too is the much touted and celebrated internationalization of the field. Their careful analysis of the current state in MOK convincingly shows that there is hardly any content from the South and that much of the self-congratulatory speeches in academic conferences in the recent past about the increasing diversity of perspectives in MOK appear groundless. The field is monopolistically dominated by voices (mostly male and white) from the North.

In the rare instances when Islam is discussed in MOK, Haq and Westwood claim, it has to pay a severe admission price in terms of leaving behind or occluding its own epistemic resources (e.g. Revelation) in favour of those found in the West. As a consequence, they point out Islam finds itself re-presented in MOK that bears the imprints of Orientalism's ongoing legacy and the refraction of Islam through privileged Northern epistemic coordinates (e.g. positivism) that dilutes much of what makes it a distinctive voice from the South. Haq and Westwood suggest that this refraction process occurs not only by scholars from the North but also by several scholars from the South. These scholars, they argue, have become intellectually captive to Western epistemologies to the point that they see little of value in their own traditions and are thus willing to either ignore them altogether or reshape them in a way so that they become palatable to whatever epistemologies and concerns are fashionable in the North. For example, using positivist research to show how Islam can be 'used' to help market Western brands to Muslim populations.

The implications of Haq and Westwood's study are far reaching not only for MOK in general but also for critical management studies (CMS) scholarship in particular. Much of their criticism against MOK for ignoring Southern perspectives such as Islam can be directed with ease at CMS notwithstanding a few exceptions (e.g. Khan and Koshul, 2011). Moreover, they make a strong case for creating space in MOK for religious perspectives to be taken on their own terms and not be granted a subordinate role of being subjected to a deconstructive vivisection by secular critical social theory, as has been the overall fashion thus far. The point is that there are religious outlooks in the South that can shape critical perspectives, and this thus raises an important question for CMS scholarship about how it might engage with the Other in this regard.

With the growing reassertion of religion in the public space, as Haq and Westwood highlight in their article, CMS can no longer ignore the question of religion, whether it be Islam or some other dispensation. Is not the concern of keeping science and religion separate itself a power knowledge truth regime that may silence voices from the South that do not accept such a separation? If CMS were to banish such voices because they fail to adhere to its established epistemic regimes, which themselves are deeply contested and historically situated, it would thus disregard its own aspirations of democratic inclusiveness and sensitivity to other voices. The deeper point raised by implication in Haq and Westwood's study is how is the Other be accorded space in CMS and on whose terms, terms that have thus far largely been articulated by privileged individuals from the West adhering to a large extent to non-religious outlooks. Haq and Westwood's article is thus an important contribution because it asks difficult, often uncomfortable questions over debate in CMS scholarship.

Given the clear presence of Islam and social exclusion in the West, the two articles above can also contribute by indicating that Western MOK needs to open up to the insights that can be gained

from analysing other religions and other people living within its own borders. MOK has mainly ignored the organizing of the excluded in cities such as Paris, London and New York in a time where social exclusion is increasing significantly in the 'centre'. Also, other forms of religious beliefs are excluded and marginalized. In fact, the North and South divide is not any more a mere matter of countries, but an interwoven reality in different geographical locations.

Final thoughts

Overall, the articles in this special issue provide an overview of the complex mosaic of issues involved in the topic of MOK in the Global South. Indeed, the countries of this side of a broad dichotomic classification of the world compose a heterogeneous group with different problems and agendas. While Srinivas questions the notion of authenticity in indigenous MOK, Islam indicates that hybridism may be one of the Southern's most authentic achievements and that the South has more agency than is usually considered. Haq and Westwood present an indigenous perspective that is struggling to become visible in the international scene, showing how religious thinking is still marginalized in our field of inquiry and how it also works to exclude certain modes of life considered to be 'inferior'.

South-South relations are also an emerging topic for the study of MOK, basically because the new 'big players' in the world economy, such as China and India, do not belong to the 'elite club' of developed nations and are expanding their sphere of influence to other Southern countries. As Jackson's contribution shows, this issue poses new perspectives, both theoretical and practical for MOK. The administrative and organizational solutions developed to address problems of marginality in Southern countries are an issue that merits more attention and whose consideration could even carry relevant implications for organizational praxis. Imas and Weston present two instances of such examples of Southern organizational models in action, but there is more to explore about, and to learn from, similar experiences. This special issue opens up more questions than it provides answers. It is a step towards offering contributions from Southern MOK to the 'international' scene and, at the same time, to making MOK truly international.

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