

Call for Papers

Tenth International Symposium on Process Organization Studies

www.process-symposium.com

Theme:

About Time: Temporality and History in Organization Studies

General process-oriented and theme-focused papers are invited

20-23 June 2018

Professional Development Workshop: 20/6/2018

Conveners:

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Keynote Speakers:

William Blattner, Professor of Philosophy, Georgetown University, USA, author of *Heidegger's "Being and Time"*

Tor Hernes, Professor of Organization Theory, Copenhagen Business School, Denmark, author of *A Process Theory of Organization*

Eviatar Zerubavel, Board of Governors and Distinguished Professor of Sociology, Rutgers University, USA, author of *Time Maps: Collective memory and the Social Shape of the Past*

Rationale: What is Process Organization Studies?

Process Organization Studies (PROS) is a way of studying organizations that is grounded on process metaphysics – the worldview in which processes take precedence over substance. A process view: rests on a relational ontology, a performative epistemology, and a dynamic praxeology; focuses on becoming, change, and flux, and pays particular attention to forms of agency; prioritizes process over outcome, activity over product,

novelty over stasis, open-endedness over determination; invites us to acknowledge, rather than reduce, the complexity of the world and, in that sense, it is animated by what philosopher Stephen Toulmin called an “ecological style” of thinking.

Purpose, Venue, and Organization

The aim of the Symposium is to consolidate, integrate, and further develop ongoing efforts to advance a sophisticated process perspective in organization and management studies.

PROS is an annual event, organized in conjunction with the publication of the annual series *Perspectives on Process Organization Studies* (published by Oxford University Press), and it takes place in a Greek island or resort, in June every year. Details of all hitherto Symposia, including topics, conveners and keynote speakers, can be seen at www.process-symposium.com.

Around 100 papers are usually accepted, following a review of submitted abstracts by the conveners. PROS is renowned for offering participants the opportunity to interact in depth, exchange constructive comments, and share insights in a stimulating, relaxing, and scenic environment.

The **Tenth Symposium** will take place on **20-23 June 2018**, at the Porto Carras Grand Resort, Halkidiki, Greece (<http://www.portocarras.com/>). The first day of the Symposium (**20 June**) will consist of the Professional Development Workshop. The Symposium venue, comfortable, relaxing, and situated in one of the most beautiful beachfront locations in rural Greece, in the feet of a mountain of pine trees, seventy minutes’ drive from Thessaloniki Airport (transportation will be arranged), will provide an ideal setting for participants to relax and engage in creative dialogues.

As is customary by now, the Symposium is organized in two tracks – a *General Track* and a *Thematic Track*. Each track is described below.

1. The General Track includes papers that explore a variety of organizational phenomena from a *process* perspective.

More specifically, although not necessarily consolidated under a process metaphysical label, several strands in organization and management studies have adopted a more or less process-oriented perspective over the years. Karl Weick’s persistent emphasis on *organizing* and the important role of sensemaking was an early and decisive contribution in the field. Early management and organizational research by Henry Mintzberg, Andrew Pettigrew and Andrew Van de Ven was also conducted from an explicitly process perspective. More recently, scholars such as Martha Feldman, Wanda Orlikowski, Paula Jarzabkowski, Robert Chia, Tor Hernes, and several others, have applied variations of process-related issues in their research. Current studies that take an explicitly performative (or enactivist/relational/practice-based) view of organizations have similarly adopted, in varying degrees, a process vocabulary and have further refined processual understanding of organizational life. Indeed, the growing use of the gerund (*-ing*) indicates the desire to

move towards dynamic ways of understanding organizational phenomena, especially in a fast-moving, inter-connected, globalized world.

Since a process worldview is not a doctrine but a sensibility, or a disposition towards the world, it can be developed in several different directions. For example, traditional topics such as organizational design, routines, leadership, trust, coordination, change, innovation, learning and knowledge, accountability, communication, authority, materiality and technology, etc., which have often been studied as “substances”, from a process perspective can be approached as *performative accomplishments* – as situated sequences of activities and complexes of processes unfolding in time. A process view treats organizational phenomena not as *faits accomplis*, but as created and recreated through interacting embodied agents embedded in socio-material practices, mediated by institutional, linguistic and material artifacts.

Papers exploring any organizational research topic with a process orientation are invited for submission to the General Track.

2. The Thematic Track includes papers addressing the particular theme of the Symposium every year.

For **2018** the theme is:

About Time: Temporality and History in Organization Studies

A description of this theme and its importance follows.

Process studies of organizations focus attention on how and why organizational actions and structures emerge, develop, grow or terminate over time (Langley, Smallman, Tsoukas & Van de Ven, 2013). Time, timing, and temporality, therefore, are inherently important to organizational process studies as “[no] concept of motion is possible without the category of time” (Sorokin & Merton, 1937: 615). Yet time remains an under-theorized construct in organization studies that has struggled to move much beyond chronological conceptions of “clock” time (Ancona, Goodman, Lawrence & Tushman, 2001; Clark, 1990).

Missing from this linear view of time are ongoing debates about objectivity versus subjectivity in the experience of time (Butler, 1995), linear versus alternative structures of time (Dawson & Sikes, 2016) or an appreciation of collective or culturally determined inferences of temporality (Zerubavel, 1981; Cunliffe, Luhman & Boje, 2004). This is critical because our understanding of time and temporality can shape how we view and relate to organizational phenomena – as unfolding processes or stable objects (Reinecke & Ansari, 2017). But we are only beginning to appreciate the role of temporality in organizational processes – i.e. how the materials of the present are used to impose meaning and understanding on both past experience and possible futures (Schultz & Hernes, 2013; Hernes, 2014; Reinecke & Ansari, 2015). As the noted German sociologist Norbert Elias (1993) observed, echoing St. Augustine, while we all experience time and have an intuitive

sense of its passing, the concept of time so eludes precise articulation that it has attained the status of the “ultimate puzzle” in social theory.

History is an equally important but under-theorized concept in organization studies. While we have an intuitive sense of history as a process, organizational theorists have struggled to move beyond two limited conceptualizations of historical processes. One approach is to see history as a constraint on organization’s capacity for change. History, thus, limits agency through “path dependence” (North, 1990), “structural inertia” (Hannan & Freeman, 1984) or institutional “entropy” (Oliver, 1992). An alternative view is to see history as a unique source of competitive advantage, either through the conferral of unique resources (Porter, 1998; Barney, 1986), or through the historical conversion of routines into dynamic capabilities (Teece, Pisano & Shuen, 1997; Feldman, 2000). Both approaches suffer from the restrictive view of history as an objective set of “brute facts” that are somehow exterior to the individuals, organizations and collectives that experience them.

Emerging streams of process-oriented research have begun to move beyond viewing the past as a historically fixed object, instead conceptualized the past as being “as hypothetical as the future” (Mead, 1932: 31), or “up for grabs” (Kaplan & Orlikowski, 2013). Studies have addressed how actors continually reconstruct their view of the past in light of the emerging present (Bakken, Holt, & Zundel, 2013; Hernes, 2014). But much work remains to be done. For instance, there is a distinct absence of understanding the socially constructive link between history and memory (Bluedorn & Denhart, 1988), history and organizational identity (Delahaye, Booth, Clark, Procter & Rowlinson, 2009) and, perhaps more significantly, an oversight of the common generic underpinnings of collective memories (Halbwachs, 1992) and how they constitute “mnemonic communities” (Zerubavel, 2003).

Despite these conceptual tensions, there is clearly a growing interest in time, temporality and history in organizational studies. The turn to process has contributed to this interest (Chia, 2002; Thelen, 2000; Pettigrew, Woodward & Cameron, 2000; Roe, Waller & Clegg, 2009). The historical turn in management has similarly triggered an effort to re-theorize history in organizations in a more nuanced manner (Bucheli & Wadhvani, 2013; Rowlinson, Hassard & Decker, 2013; Kipping & Usdiken, 2014; Mills, Suddaby, Foster & Durepos, 2016; Suddaby & Foster, 2017). Increasingly, management theory is acquiring a “historical consciousness” – an awareness of time, history and memory as critical elements in processes of organizing (Suddaby, 2016).

The aim of this symposium is to draw together these various emerging strands of interest in adopting a more nuanced orientation toward time, temporality and history to better understand the temporal aspects of organizational processes. In this year’s Thematic Track we seek to encourage and enrich our understanding of different ways in which, by adopting a process-oriented view of time, temporality and history, we can reinvigorate established subjects in organization studies.

In particular, we encourage conceptual, empirical and methodological papers that use a process-oriented view of time, temporality and history to enrich our knowledge of topics that include, but need not be limited to:

Organizational identity: What is the role of time, temporality and history in shaping organizational identity? For instance, how do organizational members revise and re-imagine their collective past to re-construct its emergent present identity? (see Anteby & Molnar, 2012; Suddaby & Foster, 2016; Gioia, Schultz & Corley, 2000; Howard-Grenville, Metzger & Meyer, 2013; Lamertz, Foster, Coraiola & Kroezen, 2016; Schultz & Hernes, 2013; Ybema, 2010; Delahaye et al, 2009).

Organizational memory: How are different understandings of time, temporality and history involved in the emergence of organizational memory? How do collective memories emerge and come to constitute history? (see Rowlinson, Booth, Clarke, Delahaye & Proctor, 2010; Walsh & Ungson, 1991).

Strategic Management: What is the role of time, temporality and history in strategic management? How do actors construct collective organizational futures? How do they resolve the intertemporal paradox between present-day exploitation and future-oriented exploration? (see Brunninge, 2009; Foster, Suddaby, Minkus & Weibe, 2011; Hatch & Schultz, 2017; Kaplan & Orlikowski, 2013; Suddaby, Foster & Quinn-Trank, 2010).

Organizational Change: How do different, often implicit assumptions about time, temporality and history shape our models and conceptualization of organizational stability and change? How may (re-)constructions of the past, present or future affect actors' ability to initiative, accelerate or prevent continuity or change? How does change become 'inevitable' or 'irreversible' over time? (see Dawson, 2014; Dawson & Sikes, 2016; Huy, 2001; Suddaby & Foster, 2017; Tsoukas & Chia, 2002).

Institutional Theory: How do institutions become 'enduring'? What are the temporal qualities of institutions? What temporal patterns underpin processes of creation, maintenance and disruption of institutions? What is the pace and rhythms of institutionalization and institutional change? How may temporal norms and patterns themselves be socially constructed so as to enable or constrain certain institutional processes? (see Lawrence, Winns, & Jennings, 2001; Suddaby & Foster, 2013, Granqvist & Gustafsson, 2016; Rowell, Gustafsson & Clemente, 2016).

Creativity, Innovation & Entrepreneurship: How do actors imaginatively generate possible future trajectories of action that underpin entrepreneurial ventures? How is the past and future re-negotiated and re-invented in the present so as to create opportunities for creativity and innovation? How does history and tradition become a resource so as to allow actors to innovate from the past? (see Popp & Holt, 2013; Bátiz-Lazo, Haigh & Stearns, 2015).

Sensemaking: How do conceptions of time enter sensemaking processes? What is the role of temporal sensemaking in engaging with anticipations of the future and memories of the

past to reconfigure present relations and structures? How do actors project sense into an uncertain future? (see Gioia, Corley & Fabbri, 2002; Wiebe, 2010).

Sustainability: How do actors reconcile multiple temporal orientations and timescapes, such as balancing the demands of the present with needs in the future, a tension that is at the heart of business sustainability? (see Reinecke & Ansari, 2015; Slawinski & Bansal, 2015).

Routines: How is the performance of routines played out in time? How does history shape the enactment of particular routines? How do particular temporalities implicated in different routines interact, with what results? How does timing affect the unfolding of routinized performances? (see Mutch 2016; Feldman, 2016).

Methodology: What research designs are best to capture time? How can methodologies move beyond chronological conceptions of time to include more experiential types of time? How might process researchers move beyond producing what Weick (1999: 135) labels “artifacts of retrospect” that look backward in time towards “narratives of prospect” that capture the experience of living forward? (see also Fachin and Langley, 2017; Shotter, 2006).

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Professional Development Workshop (20/6/2018)

Aim

The aim of the PDW is to provide a stimulating and interactive context for researchers to further develop their ideas and projects. More specifically, the PDW is designed to enable participants to: (a) refine their understanding of process thought; (b) share with others some of the methodological and theoretical challenges they have encountered in conducting, theorizing, and teaching process research, or putting process insights to practice in organizations; and (c) elicit/offer suggestions about how researching, theorizing, and teaching process may be further advanced.

The PDW will consist of (a) Workshop papers, (b) Panel Discussions, and (c) Plenary Panels.

Workshop Papers

We invite submissions of extended abstracts from researchers who have papers at an early stage of writing and would like helpful feedback as to how their papers may be further developed and published. Such submissions will be presented and extensively discussed in a roundtable format.

Panel Discussions

We invite submission proposals for panel discussions related to any process-related topic. An ideal submission will aim to: discuss a topic of broad relevance to process research and the challenges it presents; consolidate, update and further advance our knowledge of it; or introduce new topics that process-oriented researchers need to know about.

Panel discussions can focus either on theoretical or methodological topics. Up to four panel discussions will be accepted. Topics related to the conference theme are particularly welcome. Proposals will be evaluated in terms of clarity; novelty, relevance for and attractiveness to the process studies community; and developmental possibilities for its participants. A panel discussion will last for 90 minutes.

Plenary Panels

The following plenary panels will take place:

- **Taking time seriously in organizational research: Theoretical and methodological challenges**

Tima Bansal, Ivey Business School, Canada

Paula Jarzabkowski, Cass Business School, UK

Majken Schultz, Copenhagen Business School, Denmark

- **History matters: The value and challenges of historical approaches to organizational and management research**

Matthias Kipping, Schulich School of Business, Canada

Michael Rowlinson, University of Exeter Business School, UK

Dan Wadhvani, University of the Pacific, USA

Submissions

General process-oriented papers, theme-focused papers, as well as PDW workshop papers and panel discussion proposals are invited. Interested participants must submit an extended abstract of about 1000 words for their proposed contribution by **January 31st, 2018** through the following link:

<http://www.process-symposium.com/abstractsubmitform/abstractsubmitform.html>

The submission should contain authors' names, institutional affiliations, email and postal addresses, and indicate the Track for which the submission is made (General or Thematic), or whether the submission is intended for the PDW. Authors will be notified of acceptance or otherwise by **March 7th, 2018**. Full papers will be submitted by **June 4th, 2018**.