

EURAM
2010



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Back to the Future

Tor Vergata University, Rome, ITALY

TRACK 45: Philosophy of Management

Track chairs:

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Abstract:

There has long been an interest in the role philosophy can play in enriching the intellectual basis of management both in theory and in practice. However, this has increasingly tended to be embodied in the sub-discipline described as ‘critical management’ or ‘postmodern organization studies’. A criticism of this otherwise excellent work is that it rarely deals with the thinking of its chosen philosophers in depth; rather it perhaps creates a discourse that might be describable as ‘sound-bite philosophy’, a quasi-philosophical literary criticism set within a sub-disciplinary axiology in which breadth of philosophical citation is deemed a better indication of expertise than in-depth treatment and thoroughgoing application. In addition, rarely does this work consider the application of philosophy to the practice of management. In contrast, applied philosophy should move beyond broad-sweeping commentary or ostensibly coherent argument based around the appropriation of apparently similar thinking from numerous philosophers, to the wholehearted attempt at unpacking management phenomena by the systematic and *in-depth* application of the work of a particular philosopher; the potential for error in interpretation is reduced. In this sense, therefore, the rich history of philosophical enquiry across Europe remains

largely untapped. Furthermore, philosophy is the birthplace of all the academic disciplines; for example the founding father of Economics Adam Smith was Professor of Philosophy at the University of Glasgow. The timing is thus ripe for a dedicated track at EURAM. None more so than one whose theme is 'back to the future', whose purpose is to re-question contemporary understandings and revisit core values, and whose location is in one of the traditional centers of philosophical enquiry on the old Continent. The *Philosophy of Management* track at EURAM 2010 will provide an opportunity for theorists and practitioners to present new work in the philosophy of management to an international audience, engage with philosophical and practical issues in management within and across cultures and experience the power of philosophical skills and methods in practice. A selection of revised papers from the track will be published in a forthcoming issue of the journal *Philosophy of Management* (N. Laurie, ed.). Now in its seventh year, the journal offers an independent, fully refereed forum for philosophers, theorists and management practitioners to apply philosophical scrutiny to management theory and practice. Taking its lead from the journal's own scope, and the 'rethinking' theme of the conference itself, the track would seek to gather together work focusing on central philosophical issues of management in theory and practice. Contributions are invited on any aspect of philosophy of management and from within any cultural or philosophical tradition. Papers on the relationship between philosophy and management practice are welcomed. The only requirement of papers submitted to this track will be that they must make a genuine philosophically-oriented attempt to grapple with the topic under study.

The intention of the track is to not be too restrictive as to particular topics. It hopes to shine a strong light, but with a soft focus. Examples of specific topics include (but are not limited to) the following: 1. Specific European philosophers and their contribution - actual or potential - to management theory and practice. 2. Philosophy and philosophising in the everyday world of work: its uses for organisations and individuals 3. Non-Western philosophical approaches to management, in the light of the global shift in the balance of power 4. Management education: how philosophy, philosophising and philosophers contribute 5. Management, Organization and the Mind-Body problem 6. Epistemology of management: issues surrounding knowledge, learning, expertise, rationality, emotions, strategic thinking, decision making 7. Moral, Ethical and Political issues in management: ethics, corporate social responsibility, sustainability, and corporate citizenship and corporate governance 8. The history of management ideas, their development and philosophical origins

