

Literature Review

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The book “Solidarity and Organisations: thinking management in a different way”, previously published in French and now in Portuguese (*Solidariedade e Organizações: pensar uma outra gestão*) provides a very interesting, original and urgent approach to the analysis of organisations in contemporary times. It can be said that it disenfranchises the debate on Solidarity Economy from its marginal position in management studies by challenging some assumptions and strategic orientations brought by the management literature, such as (1) the entrance of associations into a concurrency-based participation in public tendering, expected them to adapt to a market-based efficiency discourse and (2) the devaluation of the very concept of solidarity in the organisation theory. Challenging this latter trend, the book leads us to a very interesting statement: that a different history of ideas and practices in this field could emerge if this persistent fading was not stimulated. It also contributes to epistemologically enhance the debate on the social management subfield as it questions the underlying market-based management technics to guide other sectors, such as the public one.

Elucidating some common misinterpretation of relevant thinkers such as Adam Smith, Karl Polanyi and Max Weber, the authors lead us through some theoretical frameworks and political contexts, in order to demonstrate how the literature on organisations could really benefit from a historical overview of some relevant concepts in the Economics and Management fields. The work debates to what extent management tools and strategies have overflowed on the public space and the public affairs governance. Not only in the language disseminated but also, and mainly, through the naturalisation of some key market concepts, such as efficiency, rationality and so on. Consequently, the regulation towards the public interest was being progressively replaced by an universalised perspective of resources optimisation - as if it was the main goal to be achieved. In this context, cooperatives, associations and mutualities were expected to follow business' path, no matter how these methods could affect the achievement of their primary goals. The book not only describes this process in historical terms, by undoing the dominant view that it has always been this way, but also unveils the ideological sense which underlies this tricky isomorphism.

Although this book does not debate gender issues, it opens the way for some epistemological debates in management literature which might be of interest for feminist scholars and activists. Having in mind the institutionalist perspective by the authors and given that a feminist reading seems to be lacking in the theories of organisation, I draw attention to five aspects that make this book useful for those who are concerned with gender issues and feminist thought.

The first aspect has to do with the approach to the complex contribution brought by Polanyi, since it effectively helps us think out of the box regarding the organisational environment. Similarly, some feminist theories towards the everyday economy (by authors such as Gibson-Graham) have invited us to creatively think about some common concepts such as value and commensurability. França Filho and Eynaud call our attention to some aspects that are usually under the radar, namely (1) the everyday strategies by community

economies (Solidarity Economy, the commons, and citizen-led informal economic arrangements) towards decommodifying labour, money and nature; (2) the underrepresented contribution of economic principles such as reciprocity, redistribution and household in the organisational theory which could allow more complex readings of organisational environments; (3) some leads to comprehend some mismatching between the so-vaunted rationality (and efficiency) in management literature and the usual neglect of what has turned organisations into inefficient spaces to guarantee economic democracy, specially for women - and women of color.

The second idea has to do with the ground offered by this book for (future) feminist readings of the organisational theory (or the theories of the organisations). A fruitful dialogue could be fostered here. As seen, the emphasis on some aspects in Economics and Management fields such as abstraction, mathematical efficiency, to name but a few, reveals the androcentric perspective assumed by the organisational theory. I remember, for instance, the contributions brought by Feminist Aesthetics (Korsmeyer, 2020) that demonstrated to what extent the idea of abstraction (since Plato) fostered a gendered perspective in Philosophy and in epistemological terms.

The third aspect is the authors' concern with debating the interactions among actors in a more complex way, by evoking a broader sense of temporality, not grounded on a narrow perspective of a time-limited and formal contract. This book allows us to think of the contributions that more complex time and space logics might offer to the management literature. Two aspects should be here stressed: (1) the way different time logics in economic exchanges (for example, reciprocity) have contributed/affected socialisation, an undervalued issue in organisational theory; (2) the idea of reciprocity allowing us to see other rhythms and commensurability strategies not linked to individual gain or grounded on the official currency.

Other aspect that might be further explored in dialogue with the book, since the focus relies on Solidarity Economy, is the possibility of considering both household as a principle which goes beyond the private space and redistribution as an issue overcoming the State domain. I am referring to the valuation of provisioning into the small businesses' everyday management, particularly the ones led by women in the peripheries of big cities. I thus refer to small economic arrangements, collectively organised or not, whose rhythm takes into consideration children's timetable, caretaking duties or redistribution of available resources (in money, time or goods) whenever needed, such as a different opening hours considering the time for kids or the possibility of informal wage advances.

The fifth and last aspect has to do with the de-commodification of labour, money and nature mentioned in the book. Attention to externalities' reduction and more participative mechanisms in everyday decisions are addressed here. However, from my perspective, one of the main contributions comes from the debate on the double blind spot in rationality discourse against which Guerreiro Ramos spoke out. Bridges may be forged between feminist concerns on economic issues and a critical theory applied to the rationality in management. The first question refers to the decision-making algorithmisation in the everyday organisations' management, which has brought new problems for minority women. For example: the bias of credit systems and the gender-based or racial-based credit evaluation. Where is the rationality and the efficiency to guarantee economic democracy?, we might ask. The second question is grounded on the commodification of labour and its connection with inequalities in organisational environments. França Filho and Eynaud have stressed the insufficiency of having a job to guarantee the provisioning despite the organisational discourse.

From an intersectional point of view, it is not possible to ignore the multiple biases produced by the rationality discourse within the organisations and the concrete material life constraints experienced by minority women, and particularly the black peripheral ones - and the book might be a lever to raise this debate in the management field. Just to mention some of these undervalued aspects in the commodification of labour: let us think of (1) the occupational concentration of some women in low paid jobs, maintaining them in a situation of in-work poverty; (2) the ethnicity pay gap and/or the occupational segregation by gender and race, with consequences in material life constraints. It is also worth recalling the way these two phenomena - commodification and algorithmisation - have differently affected women in labour market, being a concrete example of what is argued more generally by the authors in this book. Focusing on the very concrete example of minority women either in Latin America or in European countries might be a next step to debate the way economic democracy has been a neglected issue within the literature on organisations and management.