

Critical Management Studies – Administration in Chile

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Sociologists of organizations, Economists and Social Psychologists of work have generated a discussion on the merits and effects of management in Chile following the tradition of Critical Management Studies (CMS). The influence of these disciplines on the development of the field has been discussed in numerous academic texts (Imas, 2005 Pulido-Martínez, 2004; Sisto, 2012; Ossandón, 2013). Notably, while in the UK or Scandinavia CMS started in schools of Administration and Management, in Chile it was picked up mainly by Sociology and Psychology.

In 2000, Luis Ramirez presented CMS in the Chilean Journal of Public Administration, outlining its potential importance for public management in Chile, and marking an important precedent. Undoubtedly, however, a critical view of society and organizations has a history based on a greater body of knowledge in our country. Critical management studies should be oriented on the long academic tradition that has crossed paths with the struggles endured by unions and workers' organizations, classic subjects of social history and historical sociology. An exemplary case of economic and social history studies about management in Chile is presented by the awarding of the National History Prize to Gabriel Salazar, who elucidated the relationships in the world of work, from agriculture to domestic industry. Another notable individual is the sociologist Tomás Moulian, who has been analyzing contradictions in the working world of contemporary Chilean society since the early 90's.

The neoliberal revolution was implemented in Chile during the military dictatorship (1973-1989) (Moulian, 1996), and was led technically by Milton Friedman and his followers from the Chicago School (Ossandón, 2011). Transformation in the working world began in the late 70's, giving space to North American ideologues to impose neoliberal rationality. Aspects of this 'pedagogy' have been analyzed, among others authors, by Manuel Garate (2013). In this context of ideological implementation, the State outsources certain functions, such as public education and forecasting, thus stimulating the privatization of public services (Sisto, 2012). The private sector in the economy has significantly augmented for this reason, without impediment or state regulation. With the advent of democracy in the early 90's, a form of neoliberal government was reinforced, and has served as a reference for other Latin American countries (Fazio, 1997).

The so-called neoliberal capitalism has been studied from the point of view of change and social transformation in the world of work. Imas, Ascorra, and Man-

diola (2014) problematize the subject with respect to management of organizations in our country. These researchers, aligned with CMS, say that the dominant type of management in Chile is associated with the above mentioned neoliberal market ideology. Declared as the only possibility for social development in countries and organizations, it corresponds to the installation of what the philosopher Dussell (2006) has deemed 'economic rationality'.

Mandiola (2013) argues that in countries like Chile, managerialist discourses have colonized the ways of understanding society. In this scenario, she highlights that the installation of the 'mainstream management' discourse has permeated Chilean society with ease, and explains that it offers to the imagination of the Chilean organizations a means to be part of the 'developed' world. From another perspective, Tomás Undurraga (2013) explains the evolution of justifications for capitalism and the cultural change that Chilean neoliberal capitalism has gone through. Economic growth, says Undurraga, is no longer seen as the only driving force for corporate ethos. Traditional justification has become insufficient to meet the increasingly complex worlds of work and society. All of this undoubtedly impacts management practices in different aspects including corporate social responsibility, the relationship between politics and business practices and management of soft aspects, all of which are increasingly demanded by the network of stakeholders for any organization.

CMS have also been developed in Chile from the perspective of psychosocial studies of work. Various researchers have problematized the notion of subject and identity when referring to the working world (Stecher, 2014; Sisto 2014), following the lines of certain European critical management scholars (Alvesson, 2010; Dubar, 2000). Stecher and Sisto have deepened the area considering the consequences of traditional management, specifically the negative and oppressive aspects. For example, appropriating theoretical elements developed by Du Gay (1996) and Castro-Gómez (2010), Stecher (2014) argues that Foucault's contribution to the understanding of the flexible company as a subjectification device, which transforms individuals into labor subjects, can be understood from the governmentality perspective.

It is only recently that Chilean schools of business and management have focused on the development of CMS. Critical studies of organizations, using theoretical and analytical perspectives such as the Socio-Analysis (Acuña, 2012), and Critical Discourse Studies (Mandiola, 2013), have been conducted in these schools. There are certainly many aspects that remain undiscussed and large fields left to explore. For example, there is a pending conversation concerning studies of the management of cooperatives, which is being revived in local academic circles, as demon-

strated by centers of investigation arising from the social economy initiative of the Chilean Ministry of Economy. The conversation between the theoretical-empirical critique of CMS and management studies of cooperatives could become very important in the development of CMS in Chile.

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