

Editorial

There are five papers in this June issue, the first three on various aspects of management. When *Prometheus* spread its wings some ten years ago to embrace that part of management involved with change, it was not expected that *Prometheus* would be publishing typical management papers. The idea was to offer an outlet to a growing subset of management that found no natural home in the core journals of management. In particular, *Prometheus* offered a new home for papers in the critical management tradition. The core journals of management reel from papers critical of anything. These first three papers certainly live up to our original expectations: they are fiercely critical of managers and management.

Peter Senker considers the support the corporate world – meaning its managers – receives from the naked neoliberalism that provides the theoretical underpinning to so much economic policy. The result, according to Senker, is political neglect of the implications of such policy. Senker gives the example of creeping privatisation of the health service and education in the UK. More fundamentally, the notion that whatever benefits are reaped by the corporate sector will soon enough trickle down to everyone else and are thus in the public interest has made legitimate the triumph of private interest over public interest. Among the examples provided by Senker are the effect of huge state support for road construction, facilitating the domination of cars over other means of transport, and the role of marketing and technological change in the food and agricultural industries. A picture is painted of a world in which change is a function of corporate lobbying in the hands of managers accountable only to their shareholders.

José Quesada-Vázquez and Juan Carlos Rodríguez-Cohard look at the awkward relationship between managers and government policy in their study of the Andalusian furniture technology centre. They describe an innovation policy that had everything to do with what government wanted to be seen to be doing, and very little to do with making furniture. A policy to help SMEs in the Andalusian furniture industry soon came to support only the provision of consultancy services for large firms. The case highlights what can happen when innovation policy is defined and implemented in a hierarchical and siloed fashion with little attempt at policy alignment across the various areas and levels of government. It demonstrates the need for a multidisciplinary approach to innovation policy. As ever, there is usually much more to be learnt from failure than from success, an experience that has made little impact on management studies.

A terrible tale of management madness is told by Richard Joseph. He looks at the managerialism rampant in many universities these days, a subject that will shortly be covered in a *Prometheus* debate in which Ben Martin asks what has become of the modern university. Richard Joseph gives some idea of what has. His exploration is the more telling because he speaks from personal experience of bullying, whistleblowing, inadequate regulation, suicide, and eventual external inter-

vention by the authorities. Joseph's time at Murdoch University Business School demonstrates just how easy it is for an academic organisation, driven by managerial imperatives and protected from public scrutiny by academic reputation, to go thoroughly bad.

This issue's final two papers are not about managers at all. Mario Coccia looks at the geography of innovation. In a paper that may not be uncontentious, he considers the relationship between climate and innovation. His conclusion is that warm temperate climate is conducive to innovation in that it allows the adaptation and learning that create complex societies, efficient institutions and communications systems. These, rather than climate itself, are conducive to innovation.

And finally, an intriguing paper from Lucy Resnyansky looks at the role of social media data in disasters. On the face of it, the role would seem to be obvious, and to be beneficial. Surely greater awareness about people in trouble can only be to the good. Not necessarily so. For a start, the diversity and sheer volume of relevant and irrelevant information circulating throughout social media creates instant information overload. The problem of finding out what is happening becomes the problem of finding out what is important to know about what is happening. Resnyansky suggests bringing in social scientists to tackle the task of data detection, filtering, analysis, and representation. Resnyansky's paper is less concerned with how they might do this than with the dialogue between social scientists and developers of analytic capabilities appropriate for social media.

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