

CREATION OF AN IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM FOR THE EXCHANGE OF PUPILS IN A PRESCHOOL EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION**Raxmonova Robiya Alisherovna**

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Annotation: *Identity, identity work, identification, subjectivity, and the subject: interest in identity seems to have reached a level not previously known in critical management studies (CMS). Concepts of the self are not new to the study of management and organisation. From Durkheim's anomie and Marx's alienation, to the socially constructed self of Cooley and Mead, and the dramaturgical self of Goffman, through to the social identity theory of Tajfel and Turner, identity has underpinned many ideas in sociological and psychological studies on individuals and organisations. In contemporary theorising, one might also point to the influence of a disparate range of theorists, including: Barth, Bruner, Ricoeur, Elias, Butler, Lacan, Laclau, Žižek, and, probably the most influential in critical management studies on identities, Foucault. It is perhaps because of the appeal to both the individual and the collective that identity has proven to be a particularly attractive area for research.*

Аннотация: *Идентичность, работа с идентичностью, идентификация, субъективность и субъект: интерес к идентичности, похоже, достиг уровня, ранее не известного в критических исследованиях управления (CMS). Концепции личности не новы в изучении менеджмента и организации. От аномии Дюркгейма и отчуждения Маркса до социально сконструированной самости Кули и Мида и драматургической самости Гоффмана и теории социальной идентичности Тайфеля и Тернера идентичность лежит в основе многие идеи в социологических и психологических исследованиях отдельных лиц и организаций. В современном теоретизировании можно также указать на влияние разного круга теоретиков, в том числе: Барта, Брунера, Рикёра, Элиаса, Батлера, Лакана, Лаклау, Жижека и, возможно, самого влиятельного в критических исследованиях управленческой идентичности Фуко. Возможно, именно из-за своей привлекательности как для отдельного человека, так и для коллектива идентичность оказалась особенно привлекательной областью для исследований.*

IDENTIFICATION MATTERS ARTICLES

Notwithstanding the analytical appeal offered by the concept there is no denying the current interest, which begs the question: 'why this obsession with identity'? Is there something peculiarly prescient about contemporary society that makes identity issues more salient? Have we become more questioning and anxious about our selves in these 'liquid modern' times? Have current configurations of capitalist relations and neo-liberalism, resulting in increased employment insecurity, heightened mobility, and a corrosion of many of the traditional identity anchors such as family, work, and neighbourhood, created an *identity crisis*, fuelling the search for alternative forms of belonging and attachment? Has the rise of consumerism in contemporary societies, together with the decline in craft based industries and worker solidarity presented an individualised identity increasingly defined by consumption rather than production? And, in turn, does this speculation then fuel our academic concern? Or, might an explanation be found in the introduction of poststructuralist philosophies to organisation studies, with their concerns over subjectivity⁴⁶, power and knowledge? Of course, identity might merely be the latest academic fashion, and one that is already passing (du Gay 2007), no doubt, to the delight of some radical structuralist critics (Thompson 2005). Nonetheless, issues of identity form a core concern within CMS.

The aim of this chapter is to present some of the key debates on, and contributions of, critical work on identities. Before doing so, it is necessary to clarify that, in focusing on CMS, other bodies of work on identity in, and of, organisations are excluded. Notable exclusions include, first, work based largely on social identity theory. This has inspired many of the functionalist studies into *organisational* identity, focusing on the degree to which individuals define themselves in relation to the organisation, with the assumption that greater congruence between the two leads to enhanced commitment, loyalty and motivation. Also excluded are interpretivist studies on identities in organisations which, building on the concept of narrative identities, have sought to produce meaning-centred and descriptive accounts of the processes that individuals undergo in constructing a coherent story of self, and to document the organisational sources that influence the crafting of a self narrative. Rather, the chapter will discuss studies that have sought to analyse the interrelation of power and subjectivity in identity formation, and that are oriented towards challenge and change. The following section sets out some of the key tensions underpinning critical studies on identity, considering fundamental debates over the ontology of identity and of agency. These are then developed and discussed in the main body of the chapter, focussing first on issues of *subjectification*, *identification*, and *identity regulation*; secondly on *identity resistance* and *dis-identification*; and thirdly on *crafting identities*. The chapter then moves on to examine some of the new directions in

⁴⁶ Subjectivity is a term used to denote an understanding of individual identity as the product of discourse, ideology and institutional practices, at any given moment of time.

critical studies on identity before concluding by highlighting aspects of current research which remain underdeveloped.

MAPPING THE TERRAIN OF CRITICAL STUDIES ON IDENTITIES: KEY TENSIONS AND DEBATES

CMS is a term applied to a loosely coupled range of theoretical influences drawn from radical humanism and poststructuralism, together with some feminist and postcolonial theories. While reflecting diverse interests, the common concern is to document and challenge asymmetrical power relations: to 'ferret out' forms of domination and oppression in organisations, with the goal of emancipation (variously defined and envisaged). The attraction for CMS scholars to the concept of identity is its ability to offer powerful ways to interrogate the exclusionary practices by which subjects are constituted in organisations. Without wishing to underplay the tensions and debates among the different approaches, a broad terrain may be mapped out with regard to how identity is conceptualised, and the key influences on its construction⁴⁷ concerning, firstly, the ontological status of identity (and the extent to which it is understood as an ongoing process); and secondly, agential issues (and the dynamic relationship between self and other in the constitution of identity). Before considering in detail critical studies on identities, therefore, it is useful first to map out the debates and tensions underpinning the topic. These debates are then returned to in the subsequent sections of the chapter.

THE ONTOLOGY OF IDENTITY

CMS of identities have challenged the notion of the fixed and unified essential⁴⁸ self. Instead, studies have sought to understand the dynamics of identity regulation and resistance in contexts of power and knowledge, thus working with a conceptualisation of identity that is fluid, fractured, and reflexive⁴⁹. Identity can be understood, therefore, as a reflexively ordered narrative (Giddens 1991), its construction being stimulated by social interaction and ordered by institutionalised patterns of being and knowing. Conceptualising identity in this manner facilitates a focus on the operation of power relations in context, as well as opportunities for micro-political resistance.

The individual as 'identity worker' is a popular metaphor in conceptualising the processes of identity constitution and contestation within work organisations. Identity work describes the ongoing activity that an individual undertakes in constructing an

⁴⁷ I am aware of the irony of constructing the identity of a 'CMS on identity'. Inevitably, attempting to capture and put boundaries around such a theoretically complex issue not only necessitates pragmatism but is also an exercise of power.

⁴⁸ See Kondo (1990) for a detailed exploration and deconstruction of the binary divide between self and social.

⁴⁹ The anti-essentialist assumption of identities, as fluid and constituted through discourse, has become almost a hegemonic discourse in itself. For a critical questioning of anti-essentialist positions, see Sayer (1997).

understanding of self that is coherent, distinctive, and (in the main) positively valued. Identity work is defined as ‘forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising constructions that are productive of a precarious sense of coherence and distinctiveness’. Identity work is prompted by social interaction that raises questions of ‘who am I?’ and ‘who are we?’. In attempting to answer these questions, an individual crafts a self-narrative by drawing on cultural resources as well as memories and desires to reproduce or transform their sense of self. People engage in identity work when the routinised production of a self-identity is challenged, through, for example, uncertainty and anxiety. For Alvesson and Willmott (2002), self-identity is constructed from a range of identity resources, such as language, symbols, and values, to which individuals are exposed in their day-to-day experiences: ‘It forms a complex mixture of conscious and unconscious elements, an interpretive and reflexive grid gradually shaped by processes of identity regulation and identity work’.

Identity work involves, therefore, an element of choice and intentionality in making up the self. For example, Musson and Duberley observe: ‘Appropriating certain discourses and rejecting others is thus central to identity construction’. However there remains a black box surrounding how individuals might ‘choose’ one identity rather than another and the motivation for this. This draws attention to the second key concern, that of agency.

AGENCY AND IDENTITY

Issues of agency lie at the core of theorising on identity, as will be seen in the remains of the chapter. Agency refers to the thinking subject possessive of intentional actions. The extent to which the individual is viewed as someone who is active and/or acted upon in the crafting of self is an enduring tension in the study of identities. Socio-psychological studies in organisations, for example in the study of motivation, take a relatively naïve humanist stance, where a unified and essential self has unimpeded access to the realisation of their self-actualisation. Conversely, Neo-Marxist analysis has traditionally viewed the individual as the ‘personification of economic categories’, where agency is structurally determined by the location in the sphere of production. Appropriations of Foucault in the study of workplace relations have been criticised for suggesting overly deterministic portrayals of discourses exercising their iron grip over the fragile individual. This has led some to reject the dualistic thinking of the autonomous individual, separate from but located within social structures, arguing that identity can be understood as the outcome of the *interaction* between discourse and human agency, rather than determined by one or other. Discourses provide the resource by which identities may be constructed yet at the same time, discourses can constrain because their normalising effect bears down on the individual attempting to inscribe what can be said and who can ‘be’. However, discourses can never fully constrain given that they operate within discursive fields where their polyvalence and saturated meaning means that there is always indeterminacy: ‘while discourses endeavour to impose order and necessity on a field of meaning, the ultimate

contingency of meaning precludes this possibility from being actualised'. Thus, individuals are located in social contexts that both constrain and sustain identity construction. Nonetheless, the tensions around agency as for ontology, previously discussed, remains an enduring theme in the CMS of identities, as will become clear in the remains of this chapter.

CONCLUSION

Its call to arms is twofold: first to document and challenge forms of exploitation and oppression in organisations; and secondly to engage in research oriented towards changing things for the better. This raises two concerns. With regard to the former, the attraction to CMS scholars of the concept of identity is the analytical promise of its ability to bridge the micro-political and the wider organisational, socio-cultural and temporal context. In doing so, studies draw attention to how power relations operate in organisations and wider society in ways to construct and stabilise identities within specific historical periods. However, there is still the tendency with studies to either deemphasise the 'global' in concentrating on the local and vice versa. Consequently, the conceptual promise in analysing the dialectic and dynamic relationship between self and social remains underdeveloped in many empirical studies. In other words, studies that take a micro-political approach, focusing on identity work in local situational contexts can under emphasise the wider socio-political and historical context and it is often difficult to appreciate the links between the individual and larger social constructions and institutions. Studies that have analysed the complex and contradictory ways in which organisations provide a setting for the construction and constraint of identities, conversely, can underappreciate the nuances of identity work and the myriad of ways in which individuals challenge attempts to inscribe their identities. Thus there is still the opportunity to develop better understandings of the complex and mutual constructions of self and organisation, each in themselves bound up with wider social, historical and political settings. In particular, this calls for empirical studies that examine how individuals might craft sustaining identities located within particular configurations of discourse.

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