December 2008

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Journal of the North American Management Society

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Abstract: Critical ethics, according to David Boje, require a restoration of moral philosophy as a core value to the theory and practice of business ethics. Managerial business ethics often lack an answerability that challenges systemicity, which produces inhumane "unethics." This essay supports answerability for the administered world of organization, power and politics. We join critical post-modern theorists in rejecting "managerialism" and the cultural industry. We advocate an ethics of responsibility that is drawn from moral philosophy and a free spirituality (by which we mean a trust in human potential, consciousness and human evolution). Just as ethics is often a grey area constantly being rethought, so too moral philosophy is being questioned and revised in post-modern theorizing. Disciplines relating to ethics are deconstructing the philosophical and ideological theories in order to move into the future. Critical theory is a work always and already partial in its progress. (Boje 2007) The assumptions of critical theory, as well as ethics and moral philosophy, therefore remain in a flow state. Each area of theory must function in a dialectical fashion - allowing for the unknown, the unseen and the unimaginable. Only in this state of mind can a truly creative co-mingling of unfinished ethics and evolving critical theory occur.

INTRODUCTION

"There is no right behavior within the wrong world." Adorno (1963/2000: 174)

In the spirit of <u>For Ethics</u> (Jones, Parker, ten Bos 2005) we invite the reader to reflect on unfinished ethics and political philosophy. Much as critical theory and critical management studies seek to bring balance and forward movement to the study of business ethics, so too can the insights of moral philosophy bring balance to an otherwise predatory capitalism. A critical post-modern ethics may be needed to deconstruct the dominant managerialist paradigm. It is our purpose in this essay to take the discussion of spirituality in business ethics, as well as the impact of religion on business ethics, beyond the assumptions of common sense business ethics. We suggest that scholars with commitments to their versions of spirituality or religion guard against allowing the philosophy of ethics and their belief systems to simply become utilitarian and political instruments of contemporary ideology or currently popular cosmology. Great thinkers and great thoughts in every era risk cooption into the dominant power structure of the day.

Philosophy and religion too often serve the king; human progress and possibility often take the back seat. This essay urges scholars of management, spirituality and religion to offer more depth, context, and vision to the all too narrow scholarship of business ethics. Critical theory can offer a new paradigm for ethics as well as criticism of the current norms of ethics.

CRITICAL THEORY AND POST-MODERN ANALYSIS HELP KEEP DIALOGUE DEEP AND WIDE

While the field of spirituality in the workplace is dominated by the modernist paradigm, a modest alternative paradigm of what Boje (2000) calls "spiritual capitalism" has reappeared in the literature Karliner and Karliner (1997); Mokhiber and Weissman (1999); Steingard and Fitzgibbons (1995); and Biberman and Whitty (2000). From the perspective of critical theory, both spirituality addressing economics, as well as business ethics in its traditional, narrow construct, have been largely co-opted by

larger meta-systems of conformance and control. Thus, neither field can fully assume its full potential as part of the human intellectual journey toward higher consciousness. The best that moral philosophy, spirituality and critical theorists can do is keep the fundamental questions of human potential open and debated in modern organizational settings. Otherwise, virtually every spirituality and ethical system is put to work for whatever dominant dialectic is in fashion in any particular era or eon.

Critical theorists have applied their critiques to all academic disciplines from philosophy to economics. Leading thinkers such as Boje have observed that the integral spirit utopians have not incorporated the Darwinian character of economics and materialism, while, at the same time, the Darwinians have not fully considered a post-capitalist necessity to a healthy eco-humanity. Boje (2007) proposes injecting a Hegelian dialectic into the scholarship of business ethics and the new field of spirituality in economics.

Within the paradigm of reform oriented spiritual capitalism, Boje (2000) has identified six schools of thought. He suggests that each worldview affects scholarship, resulting in very different conclusions and remedies, from the affirmative postmodernists, as contrasted with the skeptical postmodernists. Some of the critics of the mainstream or dominant modernist paradigm of business ethics are found within postmodernism and critical theory. The six schools of thought that Boje identifies are as follows:

1. **Affirmative postmodernism** - assuming continuing, favorable paradigm shift toward newer forms of progress.

2. **Skeptical postmodernism** - the matrix and the shadow side of humanity; a continuance of power over and dominance and scarcity et al.

3. **Fundamentalist-traditionalist** assumptions about work and ethics. Both Islamist and Christian conservatives are on the march and control much capital and business thought. They have a voice in popular media and popular culture worldwide both in the west and in the east. Ultimately the universe will adopt a new live and let live thesis reconciling unity in diversity thus resolving the current clash of civilizations. Higher consciousness will absorb the various currents of belief into a oneness state, a form of human unity seen only in higher states of consciousness, the oneness state which is our common destiny.

4. **Ecological bioneers** believe nature is taking us somewhere wise and we will see it in time to save humanity and the planet. Liberal religion with the stewardship principle and much of spirituality movement has aligned with the new bio-ethics. They believe a green business ethics will help save the day.

5. **Managerialist** assumptions about business ethics are reflected in law and business higher education. A strong critique is badly needed. Where are B-schools holding things back?

6. **Humanist** - this camp can include several sub-groups such as religious humanists, secular humanists some in the case of status quo ethics and others seeking to enlarge or break the existing paradigm. Critical theorists and radical humanists often are aligned with movements for social justice and believe a better world is possible.

Many new eco-spiritual and humanistic paradigms have arisen offering a more dialectic approach to future evolution. This new set of stories accepts a dialectical and evolutionary process of give and take in all fields; i.e., a dialectical democracy. Thus, a humanistic and progressive spirituality can provide a much needed ally to the forces associated with critical theory and true democracy.

Some new thinkers are very affirmative in their vision (Wilber, 2000; Hawkins, 2002), while others remain unconvinced of the so-called progress myth (Boje, 2000). The ecologist perspective and the sustainability movement are also current versions of affirmative paradigms lodged in both the modernist and the postmodernist scholarship.

CRITICAL REVIEWS OF SPIRITUALITY IN ORGANIZATION AND SOCIETY

Critical reviewers have pointed out a number of ways in which spirituality can be misused or be used as an addiction in an organization. Some of these are as follows: 1) in an addictive organization, or in an organization where the top leaders are addicts, spirituality can itself be used as an addiction, and as a way to avoid or deny dealing with real organizational problems; 2) an organization or leader may impose spiritual or religious beliefs on its members; and 3) organizations can use spirituality or religion as a management tool.

While the literature on spirituality in the workplace has largely considered spirituality to be an individual phenomenon (e.g. Ashforth and Pratt 2003), workplace spirituality has also been advocated as a means for improving organizational performance (Mitroff and Denton 1999, Neck and Milliman 1994). Spirituality has also been described as a way to increase employee motivation (Tischler 1999) cohesion (Dehler and Welsh 1994), and better performance (Guillory 2000; Mitroff and Denton 1999). Spirituality has thus been depicted as a means of supporting "longer term enterprise stability, growth and profitability" (Burack 1999, p. 280) and "real bottom-line improvements" (Leigh 1997, p. 26).

Critics of organizational spirituality (e.g. Bell and Taylor 2003) have argued that the spirituality discourse is totalizing because it seems to advocate, implicitly or explicitly, the idea that individuals have to accept the social structures in which they work, and more importantly, come to see these structures as meaningful and good. They further argue that the spirituality discourse is totalizing because it provides mechanisms through which individuals are better able to cope with all, including exploitative and dysfunctional, aspects of capitalist systems but no mechanisms by which to recognize or critique them as exploitative and dysfunctional (Bell and Taylor 2003). This legitimizing of current organizational structures and getting individuals to believe in them as the manifestation of "a sacred power" (Bell and Taylor 2003, p. 340), leads to the individual being placed in a position of potentially increased conformity (Ashforth and Pratt 2003), a position from which the individual may lack critical distance and the impetus to resist or change dysfunctional organizational structures (Nadesan 1999). Bell and Taylor (2003) further suggest that spirituality in organizations goes further and seems more totalizing than the Protestant work ethic in positioning work as one or perhaps the only path for self-fulfillment and spiritual transformation. Critics have raised further concerns that spirituality may be misappropriated as a tool for "material gain" (Benefiel 2003) or of increased managerial control (Brown 2003; Elmes and Smith 2001).

Some critical theorists have seen a more positive role for workplace spirituality in organizational transformation. Boyle and Healy (2003), for example, suggest that organizational spirituality may be a tool for increased managerial control, but that it may also be illusionary to believe that employee spirituality can ever be totally controlled and that it may not also lead to employee resistance. That is, by creating a space for individual spirituality, the organization may also create a space for individual resistance. Further, Boje (2000) has suggested that organizational spirituality should lead to the rejection of existing paradigms and the adoption of a new business paradigm characterized by non-violent business practices, sustainable growth, ecological awareness and the cultivation of personal development. He therefore agrees with Horkheimer (1997) that "the maxim that would be made universal, be done at the level of people organizing with others to change the social system that is producing the unethical behaviors" (Boje 2007).

Postmodern critics argue that most spirituality writings are pro-management, overly optimistic, and don't pay attention to the social and environmental consequences and other injustices brought about by business practices – even spiritually oriented practices. Against their assertion, we argue that criticism alone of the existing system will not, in and of itself, bring about change in the system – but will, instead, simply result in current practitioners of the system digging in their heels and defending the status quo. Rather than criticize the status quo, we suggest that individuals engage in personal growth and other spiritual practices that will bring about their own personal transformation and change. Our hypothesis is that as a person grows into progressively higher levels of consciousness, the person's commitment to ethics and social and environmental issues naturally deepens – resulting ultimately in practices and policies that create organizational and political system change. Such change may ultimately usher in a new spiritual organizational paradigm.

SPIRITUAL PARADIGMS INTEGRATING INTO BUSINESS VALUES

Organizations and their executives both in Japan and in the USA are beginning to show an interest in spirituality and spiritual values (e.g. Brandt 1996; Labbs 1995; Vicek 1992). A number of organizational writers are urging organizations and their members to pay more attention to spiritual values and spirituality (e.g. Bolman and Deal 1995; Gunn 1992; Russell 1989; Schechter 1995; Scherer and Shook 1993; Walker, 1989).

Some authors have related spirituality to organizational learning processes. Mingin (1985), for example, describes how information-based technology will lead to "spirituality oriented fundamental abstractions." Vail (1985) proposes a "process wisdom" explanation of organizational transformation that involves four elements - grounding in existence, appreciation of the openness of the human spirit, understanding of human consciousness, and an appreciation of the spirituality of humankind. Hawkins (1991) relates the spiritual dimension in learning organizations to Gregory Bateson's concept of double loop Level III learning.

Interest in organizational learning and creative thinking has also led to the increased use of certain spiritual practices - particularly meditation - among organization members, and an increased interest in intuition and whole brain thinking in organization decision processes (e.g. Agor 1989). Increasing numbers of executives and managers are turning to various types of meditation and spiritual disciplines as a way of coping with stress and for finding meaning in their turbulent work environments (Dehler and Welsh 1994) and in dealing with recovery from job loss (Byron 1995).

At the same time that organizations and managers are paying more attention to spirituality and to whole brain thinking and learning, global competition and other conditions are bringing about increased attention to team development and employee empowerment. When one examines the various descriptions of organizations using work teams (e.g. Levine 1994) one is struck by the similarity of the values, behaviors and processes that emerge from these teams to those described in relation to spirituality, creativity, and organization learning. Indeed, Poe (1991) points out that the Japanese, with their knowledge of Zen Buddhism, understood Deming's Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle as a spiritual discipline. As employees master this PDSA discipline, they continually trade information with each other until individual wisdom fuses into powerful group intelligence. Poe says that excessive reliance on logic and reason led many Westerners to misunderstand this aspect of Deming's theories. Similarly, Fort (1995 p. 16) describes how total quality management's emphasis on fulfilling the needs of customers and stakeholders is a contemporary managerial articulation of what Pope John Paul calls solidarity, or the goodness of understanding the self in terms of the self's dialectical relationships with others. Fort asserts that "this expresses an overlapping wisdom that grounds a spirituality of connectedness in all aspects of life, including business."

What do these emerging trends have in common? It is our contention that they represent a postmodern management paradigm that is emerging - one that emphasizes spiritual principles and practices, as opposed to the current prevailing modern management paradigm. Moral philosophy is a practical and theoretical starting point for critical post modern theory to explore in its search for new scholarship in the field of organizational ethics.

Rose (1990) describes a new paradigm that is beginning to develop among managers and executives which incorporates ideas from quantum physics, cybernetics, chaos theory, cognitive science, and Eastern and Western spiritual traditions. It contains two main components - everything is seen as being interconnected, and there is a focus on empowering people. Rose attributes the vogue for Japanese management techniques, the spread of technology and the spread of idealism as fueling the trend. Fox (1994) describes many of these same characteristics as depicting what he calls the green (sheen) era of Creation as Sacrament paradigm. James Redfield (1993, 1996) has summarized many of the components into the ten insights described in the Celestine Prophecy and the Tenth Insight, and Deepak Chopra (1994) has distilled the spiritual laws involved in this paradigm (from the Indian Vedic tradition perspective) into the Seven Spiritual Laws of Success.

It is our contention that this paradigm is continuing to emerge, and will become more widespread in future years, and that the existing stress that managers and organizations are experiencing may actually produce the catalyst for organization spiritual transformation, in ways similar to that in which personal crises have led to personal spiritual growth and transformation (Grof and Grof 1989).

Persons operating from a spiritual paradigm perspective would be open to change, have a sense of purpose and meaning in their life, appreciate how they are connected with a greater whole, and have individual understanding and expression of their own spirituality. In contrast to a scarcity belief, they possess what has been referred to as an "abundance" mentality - a belief that there are abundant resources available to all, so that there is no need to compete for them. They would also be more likely to trust others, share information and work in concert with teams and co-workers to accomplish mutual objectives, and to empower their co-workers and people below them in the organization hierarchy. They would be more likely to use intuition and emotions in reaching decisions. They would also be more likely to use win-win collaborative strategies in conflict situations.

Organizations that operate from the modern paradigm possess rigid, bureaucratic structures and hierarchical chains of command. They are more likely to use formal communication channels, have very formal policy manuals and procedures for every activity and job title in the organization. They are more concerned with following policies and procedures than in pleasing either internal or external customers. The belief in scarcity of resources leads to competition between organization units for budget, personnel, and other resources, and leads to politics and power struggles between units.

In contrast, organizations that operate from the spiritual paradigm would be expected to have flatter organization structures and a greater openness to change. Their belief in abundant resources would lead to greater interconnectedness and co-operation between organization units, and empowerment of workers at all levels of the organization. Rather than believing in the preservation of the self at all costs, these organizations would be more concerned with existing in harmony with their environment, and would thus be more supportive of the ecology and environment, and more concerned with meeting the needs of internal and external customers. These organizations would be more likely to encourage creative thinking and the working together of organization units to establish and accomplish mutually agreed on mission statements and objectives for the organization.

It is our contention that the human relations movement, organization development, and its attendant concepts developed as a reaction to the prevailing modernist paradigm, and existed within it, rather than

trying to create a new paradigm. Thus, the proponents of the human relations movement and organization development accepted most of the underlying tenants of the modernist paradigm - such as the belief in the scientific method - as true and as fact, and then attempted to use the methods of that paradigm to call for what were largely cosmetic changes in the way organizations were managed.

We predict that more and more organizations and their workers can be expected to shift to this new spiritual paradigm in the coming years. This shift is not only likely to occur for the reasons Boje and others cite as pushing organizations into postmodern practices, but also because of the shift in the consciousness of workers and managers at all levels of organizations that is already beginning to occur as workers and managers seek to find more meaning in their work.

Organizational soul and the spirit of the workforce have been too often ignored or neglected. Nonetheless, the history of economic reform movements and the thread of social justice in philosophy and religion have long called for a basic change of heart in human behavior. This has always implied a more communal approach to organizational theory and practice as well as a more humanistic psychology for individual behavior. These democratizing concepts were often introduced by social democrats in alliance with unions. Liberal religion supported these community building reforms.

Religious faith has also played a role in the thinking of critical theorists. For example, the writings of Horkheimer and Adorno are influenced by their Jewish faith, especially the case when they talk about Jews and Fascist Germany anti-Semitism (Horkheimer and Adorno 1997), and Boje's writings have been influenced by the Jainism (Boje 2000). We suggest that as critical theorists continue to pursue their own spiritual practices, and as they grow into progressively higher levels of consciousness, their commitment to ethics and social and environmental issues will naturally deepen – resulting ultimately in a reconciliation of their spirituality and their critical ideology.

Spirit-based organizational theorists might profit from further interdisciplinary research into aspects of all major work reform movements of the last 200 years. With the rise of modernism came a heightened materialism that marginalized sharing and caring. Industrialism weakened community and sidelined religion. Employees were often excluded stakeholders. Now a post-industrial age yearns for community and spiritual nourishment in both personal and organizational terms. Selfishness seems dysfunctional to many global thinkers. Only by reinventing work from the inside out will individuals acquire a sense of deeper purpose in work.

In the postmodern future, humankind's eternal search for meaning may require not only reinventing work and the workplace but also a renewed reflection on the deepest intentions behind human activity. Spirit-based organizations might also profit from such an arrangement. Co-operation may be good for the future of organizational culture and for people's sense of shared destiny.

A CRITICAL ETHICS MAY REQUIRE NEW PARADIGM THINKING FOR MORAL PHILOSOPHY

A critical post-modern moral philosophy of work can be the common ground for the new work community. The philosophy of participation adopted from the team concept model could be expanded in the twenty-first century to involve human unity and higher consciousness as well as continuous improvement. This may require a fuller understanding that management makes decisions that have far-reaching impacts on the spiritual lives of employees. Work life reaches into the very soul of all working people. Employees in touch with their spirituality seek to have more input into those decisions. Rekindling the spirit in work will deepen these efforts. The final step would be a corporate attitude of servant leadership towards all stakeholders. Visionary groups such as the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership and the Noetic Sciences Institute have path breaking conferences and workshops designed to

encourage new paradigms in business. These groups believe that shared power will insure that the future "borderless world" values diversity embraces pluralism and provides global servant leadership. Workplace unity and high purpose can create a service-learning atmosphere which will result in high standards, adequate competitiveness and an agile business system for the century to come. A deepened form of organizational stewardship could evolve from reforms in organizational decision making. A new work community based on spirit at work will result in economics as if people mattered thus reinventing the purpose of business ethics.

Working people and human evolution itself are constantly seeking meaning, purpose and a sense of contribution to work life. These needs are served and deepened when a spiritual paradigm frames the intentions of all stakeholders. Real human nourishment is provided by the soulful organization.

The postmodern work organization can transform the purpose and meaning of work without excluding employee stakeholders. During the rest of our professional lives we can teach the wisdom and skills of organizational harmony and evolution. Reframing the meaning of work has support of the servant leaders worldwide who see that a life of service best fits the basic human need for relevance, recognition, meaning and self-transcendence. Critical theory has been a major thought leader in the post-modern deconstruction of ethics, human organization and political philosophy.

If critical post-modern theory and critical management studies could expand to embrace consciousness studies as well as an updated Marxist Humanism the basis for an empowered ethics could arise. This essay is one step in that direction: a new interdisciplinary paradigm not only for business ethics but the meaning of life and the possible future.

CONCLUSION: UNFINISHED ETHICS, HOPEFUL IDEAS FOR CRITICAL POST-MODERN THEORY

Our conclusion is eclectic and dialectic. Critical theory could profit from expanding its own ideological and philosophic framework to include the new science, transpersonal psychology, post-post modern visionary moral philosophy and post capitalist economics. We suggest a gradual process of convergence of several hopeful themes and trends will result in continued upswings of higher levels of consciousness by ever larger numbers of thought leaders. The diverse contributions in this reader are a prophetic sign that significant intellectual scholarly trend is underway to enlarge the philosophic scope and authority of business ethics and societal politics in general. All of this results from a combination of several of the visionary political reform movements with the evolutionary shift to a post-post modern theory used to inspire a new radical moral ethic for business, commerce and economics. This new business ethics may transform economics, work and the politics of meaning for the human race.

We appreciate the usefulness of the dialectical method and the various schools of critical theory as applied to the field of business ethics and see much value in its methods. This has implications for the application of critical theory not only in the teaching of business ethics but also the entire fabric of the oncoming knowledge society. Philosophy, economics, business, technology, science, education as well as the field of ethics are now offered a new cosmology with a hopeful view of the future. Philosophy can profit from a healthy dose of science and futurism, while economics can benefit from more ethics, compassion, love and generosity.

Ethics, business, science and technology may need a post-modern redefinition of their ultimate purposes and intentions. We may rethink the human uses of materialism from the perspective of evolution and higher consciousness. Ethics along with critical theory might look forward to the possibility of achieving the preferred future.

Education is catching up with the hopeful megatrends of the future. Education for higher consciousness could facilitate a new leadership class holding global ethics requiring not only sustainable economics but a sustainable human ecology. Our vision of the future is post-Hegelian, a step beyond criticism to a new level of seeing premised on a post-philosophic evolution to higher consciousness which may be already underway (Wilber, 2004).

We propose that spirituality's contribution to business ethics, as seen through the lens of critical theory and post-modernism, is to offer new ways of seeing the future. A future with an ongoing, organic evolution of human ethics and human behavior is already documented by mainline forecasting groups such as the World Future Society. This way of seeing is the way of the great inventors, scientists and visionary philosophers, and - dare we say - the way of the mystics.

Business ethics infused with a critical post-modern theory, consciousness and moral philosophy can be both a critical social science and a progressive social practice. Within the framework of an inclusive, open ended critical theory, combined with an appreciation of the evolutionary shift to higher consciousness, the field of business ethics could empower people to reject false consciousness in its theory and practice. Critical theory is vital for this process to affect economics, accounting, strategy or deep cultural norms such as the "creed of greed." Consciousness theory or spirituality is a new mega-theory which can offer a hopeful scenario to the field of post-modern ethics and critical theory.

Just as business ethics has no business simply acting as an ideological prop for dominance and power holding, so too must spirituality guard against being used as thought control. The progress myth is just that - a questionable assumption that our species is guaranteed to prosper and prevail. A little intellectual and spiritual humility is in order in an age of utilitarianism and rationales for social Darwinism. Wrong economic ethics undercuts the personal codes of business ethics in every greed centered economic system. Life cannot be lived rightly in a system based on false consciousness, fear, greed and power seeking. Scholars of business ethics can question the "progress myth" (Boje 2000) while still drawing some inspiration from those with an affirmative vision - whether modernists or postmodernists. The current evolution (or devolution) of capitalism has even given pause to optimists such as Wilber and many of the mainstream scholars of business social responsibility.

With that having been said, we still hold out the torch of human possibility, the possible human, and the possible future as a human potentiality. We offer the hopefully, visionary possibility of evolution to higher consciousness and with it the liberation of the corporate soul. We offer the post-capitalist premise of business ethics being implemented as if people really mattered and money was only a means to a much more sacred end.

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