



Original Article

EPITOME OF MANAGEMENT, PHILOSOPHY, AND SCIENCE: ALTERNATIVE RESEARCH AGENDAS

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to provide a synopsis of a very extensive work, highlighting the relationship between administration, philosophy, and science, using critical hermeneutics as its methodology to promote new research agendas. In an increasingly fragmented world, administrative and organizational theory faces epistemological challenges characterized by the rise of communication technologies and Artificial Intelligence, where complex patterns and behaviors emerge that confront managers and executives daily. The paradigms arising from these new research agendas are necessary and even indispensable as points of arrival, but at the same time, they must be starting points for other theoretical constructions. Understanding reality requires a creative and innovative spirit, with new ecological, economic, and social perspectives.

Keywords: Management, Philosophy, Science, Research Agendas

INTRODUCTION

To transcend the instrumental horizons of neoliberalism, administrative theory must consider new paradigms, seeking to define the complexity of the environment in which we live and to find innovative solutions. To this end, it is necessary to find the links between administration, philosophy, and science.

Contemporary administrative theory has been saturated by a wave of logical and rational authors present in the bibliographies of study programs, and with this, the orientation of the formal instruments of the reproduction of logical and measurable knowledge based on market benefits. The analysis of alternative thought calls for the use of divergent or lateral thinking, which will never coincide with the linear or logical thinking of proposals emanating from other countries. These proposals, in accordance with their time, vision, and social interests, are unique but reproduce the power structures that are reflected in organizations in a social agreement with a shared vision: the logic of administration above the free thought of man and at the service of the predominant socio-economic system. [Ballina Ríos \(2023\)](#).

We have divided the article trying to define each of these disciplines, so it does not seek to be exhaustive, but selective according to a critical hermeneutic vision, based on a diversity of authors.

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WHATS MEAN ADMINISTRATION

Is management a discipline with its own specific techniques and laws, closed off within itself, or is it a particular branch of the social sciences, like economics, sociology, etc.? Is it a technique, a science, or an art? These questions have preoccupied management scholars since the social sciences began to take shape.

The word administration derives from the Latin root's ad ("toward") and ministration. The latter comes from minister, which implies service, subordination, and obedience. Thus, the etymology of management suggests a function carried out under the direction of another, emphasizing service and responsibility. These concepts constitute the fundamental elements of management.

The challenges faced by management theory today are intensified by technological transformation, globalization, and the emergence of Artificial Intelligence. These phenomena require new forms of interpretation and innovative theoretical frameworks capable of understanding organizational realities from ecological, social, economic, and cultural perspectives.

In the classical approach, the first managers and authors of management sought "the one best way," a set of principles for creating an organizational structure that would function effectively in all situations. The main contributors to the classical approach—Weber (1969), Taylor (1978), and Fayol (1973)—believed that the most efficient and effective organizations possessed a hierarchical structure in which members were guided by a sense of duty and by rational rules and regulations.

According to Weber (op.cit), fully developed organizations are characterized by specialization of tasks, appointments based on merit, career opportunities for their members, routinized activities, and an impersonal, rational organizational climate. Weber referred to this form of organization as bureaucracy.

Weber praised bureaucracy because it established clear rules for decision-making, a defined chain of command, and promotion based on competence and experience rather than favoritism or arbitrary decisions. It also clearly defined authority and responsibility, making performance evaluation and rewards easier to administer.

The formal study of public administration began with the work of Woodrow Wilson (1887). Around the same period emerged Taylor's Scientific Management, Fayol's Administrative Process, and Weber's Theory of Bureaucracy. Together, these approaches laid the foundations of modern administrative thought.

Modern management also has roots in classical capitalist economic theory, particularly in the works of Adam Smith (2011) and Ricardo (1817). In contrast, the cooperative movement developed through the contributions of thinkers such as Saint-Simon (1966), Fourier (1989) Cabet (1780-1856), Proudhon (1959), and Owen (1814). These theorists criticized liberal economic doctrines and proposed alternative economic models based on cooperation, solidarity, and social responsibility.

Unlike purely market-oriented systems, cooperative economics is closely linked to ethical principles. It seeks to preserve personal freedom while encouraging social solidarity. Rather than eliminating individual initiative, it promotes economic planning that benefits the broader community. Today, cooperative organizations play an important role in many countries and represent a significant alternative for the twenty-first century.

Modern management science and organization theory, developed primarily in Anglo-Saxon liberal contexts, often treat companies and organizations as similar entities. They are viewed as relatively permanent communities or social systems oriented toward common objectives. However, the concept of organization remains ambiguous. It may refer to: A: Function involving the coordination of activities. B structural design or strategic decision. C: Specific activity aimed at organizing tasks and resources to achieve objectives.

Several scholars have criticized traditional organizational theories for their inability to adequately address issues of power, domination, and exploitation. Researchers such as Reed and Mills argued that there is no "neutral" social science because every theoretical perspective reflects certain interests and values.

Weber (1969), power and domination are distinct concepts. Domination requires an administrative apparatus—institutions, organizations, and personnel capable of enforcing authority. Within organizations, domination refers to the probability that a command will be obeyed by a group of people.

Society itself functions through a wide range of organizations, including families, churches, armies, political parties, labor unions, government offices, and prisons. Each serves specific social needs while reflecting different systems of values and structures of authority.

Organizations are closely connected to the expansion and exercise of power. They regulate behavior, establish relationships of superiority and subordination, and contribute to maintaining social order. The concept of domination is therefore central to understanding organizational life.

The author argues that conventional management theory often fails to explain the transformations associated with postmodern capitalism, particularly in developing countries. Many contemporary managerial practices remain rooted in Taylorism and post-Taylorism paradigms focused on efficiency, control, and productivity.

Influential management thinkers such as [Drucker \(1990\)](#), [Toffler and Toffler \(1995\)](#), [Porter et al. \(1975\)](#), [Senge \(1997\)](#) and [Goleman \(1999\)](#), have shaped managerial practices worldwide. However, their models are largely based on liberal economic assumptions originating in Europe, the United States, and Japan.

These approaches emphasize employee identification with the organization and rely on concepts such as: Managerial excellence, Quality circles, Management by Objectives (MBO), Just-in-Time production, Continuous improvement.

Another problem identified is the excessive emphasis on concepts, measurements, and statistical formalism. Abstract empiricism seeks to standardize and rationalize every phase of research, especially in fields such as marketing, often serving bureaucratic and commercial interests.

Classical management theory is strongly influenced by positivism and views management as a rational process governed by universal principles. According to this perspective, organizations can be designed and managed according to objective laws that apply across different societies.

However, the author argues that management should not be viewed merely as a technical skill independent of its object. Management is also a philosophical and ethical activity concerned with human well-being and social development.

The Greeks provided one of the earliest and most universal conceptions of management. In the dialogues of Socrates and [Xenophon \(1999\)](#), the concept of Oikos (household management) referred to the administration of both family and society. They regarded management as both a science and a philosophy.

According to Xenophon, good household and public management are directly linked. Effective administration promotes prosperity and happiness, while poor administration leads to decline and social deterioration. Public and private management influence one another through either virtuous or vicious cycles.

Furthermore, in this text, the Greeks proposed a universal philosophical thesis, valid throughout time and irrefutable: they established that an inexorable and indissoluble link exists between family and public administration, as they mutually determine each other. Thus, if the overall family economy is in poor condition, this will affect public administration, since it will receive less revenue from taxes; and vice versa: if public assets are managed wastefully and corruptly, family administration will undoubtedly be affected. Therefore, a virtuous or vicious cycle exists between the two, depending on the case. We can trace this thesis through history and examine which countries and circumstances have fostered virtuous or vicious cycles between the public and private spheres. In addition to the ethical and philosophical dimensions, the Greeks also distinguished the technical dimension of administration.

[Aristotle \(2008\)](#) defines household management “as the science of the natural and just way of acquiring what constitutes the family patrimony, of how its wealth can be increased,” and adds: “The practice consists in thoroughly knowing the kind, the place, and the use of the products that show the most promise [...] it is necessary to know when to buy, when to sell, and to make profitable use of money” (p. 28). “What do we mean by the name of family patrimony?” Xenophon asked, to which Socrates replied: “Everything that is inside and outside the house, everything that constitutes a possession, all of these are goods if we make proper use of them.” The technique of household management consists of conserving, preserving, and increasing the household's assets in order to achieve the manifest destiny of the family and of society, which is for each member to develop their abilities.

Among the methods for increasing wealth, they point to agricultural and livestock techniques, good stewardship practices, and the public and private virtues that should exist between citizens and rulers. Aristotle highlighted the virtues that should be cultivated in women and children: “Women should be prudent, courageous, and just like men; children should be modest and control their passions.” And in general, he emphasizes the virtues of leadership and obedience, both of which possess absolute merit.

For the Greeks, management was not limited to technical competence; it also involved ethical virtues such as prudence, justice, courage, self-discipline, and responsibility. Good leadership required balancing authority with fairness and ensuring the well-being of both the household and society as a whole.

In this regard, Socrates added the rewards and incentives for good household management: “There are two ways to tame animals: punishment, if they are untamed; and good treatment, if they are obedient,” and he added:

“The same is true of men. The surest way to make them obey commands is by showing them their benefit [...]. Satisfy their appetites and you will get whatever you want from them. There are others for whom honor is the primary motive of their actions. And in these, esteem and glory can be as important as food and drink are in those [...]. The clothes, shoes, and all the furniture I have to give my servants, I don't have them all made of one quality, but some better than others, to reward the active with the good, and give the bad to the negligent and lazy.” (op.cit.2008, p.35,36).

WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY

The word philosophy comes from the ancient Greek terms *philos* (“love”) and *sophia* (“wisdom”), meaning “love of wisdom.” Philosophy represents the human vocation to think, reflect, and seek truth. The philosopher is understood as a person dedicated to the pursuit of truth, someone who questions reality and reflects critically on existence.

Philosophy encompasses reflections on life itself as well as reflections upon those reflections. Questions concerning the origin of the universe, human existence, death, identity, and purpose belong to the philosophical domain. Questions such as “Who are we?”, “Why do we live?”, and “How did the universe, the Earth, and life originate?” have been central concerns throughout the history of philosophy.

According to Ferrater Mora (1964), philosophical doctrines, methods, and arguments are so diverse and often contradictory that it is more accurate to speak of a philosophical disagreement than of a single philosophy.

The earliest Greek philosophers challenged the mythological explanations of Homer. They criticized the portrayal of gods as beings who behaved much like humans—selfish, unreliable, and morally flawed. In doing so, philosophy gradually separated itself from religion and began to seek rational explanations for reality.

Heraclitus Abbagnano (2004), argued that everything is in constant motion and that nothing remains unchanged forever. Reality is characterized by contradictions and opposites. According to him: Both good and evil are necessary parts of the whole. Love and hate are opposing forces operating in nature. Without the tension of opposites, the world could not exist.

A universal rational principle, the Logos, governs reality. Heraclitus philosophy emphasized change, conflict, and becoming as fundamental characteristics of existence.

Parmenides and Heraclitus Jaeger (2022), introduced one of philosophy’s enduring questions: Should we trust reason or the senses?

Empedocles attempted to reconcile these positions by proposing that nature consists of four fundamental elements: Earth, Air, Fire, Water.

These elements continually combine and separate to produce the changing phenomena of the world. While appearances change, the basic elements remain permanent.

Similarly, Democritus argued that although nature is constantly changing, there must be underlying realities that remain unchanged

Socrates Silverberg (1982) was more interested in human beings than in nature, he challenged the Sophists, dismantling their arguments: a true philosopher knows that he actually knows little, he recognizes that there are many things.

Plato (1998 a, 1998 b), developed one of the most influential philosophical systems in history. His famous Allegory of the Cave illustrates the human condition. Most people live among appearances and illusions, mistaking shadows for reality. Through philosophical inquiry, however, one can ascend from the world of appearances to the world of truth.

According to Plato: The world perceived through the senses is temporary and imperfect.

- Behind physical reality exists an eternal world of ideas or forms.
- True knowledge is attained through reason rather than sensory experience.
- Mathematical truths demonstrate the existence of eternal and unchanging realities.

For Plato, everything we can perceive belongs to the world of the senses. This world wears down over time, but at the same time, everything is made from an “eternal and immutable mold.” He calls these molds “ideas.” There is a reality behind the world of the senses, and he calls these realities the world of ideas. We can only have knowledge through reason. He was very interested in mathematics because its relationships never change. All the phenomena of nature are merely shadows of these eternal molds or ideas. The allegory of the cave is the path the philosopher takes from vague concepts to the true ideas that lie behind the phenomena of nature. He also argued that the ideal state should be governed by philosophers because they possess knowledge of justice, truth, and the common good.

Aristotle (2001) reverses Plato’s view, arguing that the highest degree of reality is what we think through reason, although it is also evident that we perceive through the senses. Aristotle did not deny that humans possess innate intelligence, but he maintained that no one can be born with any ideas. transformed philosophy by grounding it more firmly in observation and experience.

Unlike Plato, Aristotle believed that knowledge begins with sensory perception. While reason is essential, human beings do not possess innate ideas.

Aristotle (2008), argued that reality is composed of: Matter, Form, Qualities. He also developed logic as a systematic method for understanding and classifying the world. In ethics, Aristotle sought to determine how human beings could achieve happiness and fulfillment. He identified three major forms of happiness: Pleasure and enjoyment. Living as a respected and responsible citizen. Participation in community life, since human beings are inherently social and political creatures.

Aristotle (2001), the highest form of happiness arises from the full development of human potential through virtuous activity. Reality is comprised of matter, form, and quality. Logic is how human beings recognize the things of this world. In this way, we classify things into different categories: living things, plants, and animals. Ethics establishes what ought to be in order to achieve happiness. What is needed to be happy, to fully develop?

The Indo-Europeans inhabited the Black Sea and Caspian regions 4,000 years ago, migrating to Greece, Italy, Spain, and eventually England, France, and Russia, where they mixed with pre-Indo-European cultures. The two major Eastern religions, Hinduism and Buddhism, have Indo-European origins, and Greek philosophy draws from Buddhism and Hinduism, which share a penchant for philosophical reflection.

The Semites originally came from the Arabian Peninsula, spreading to Palestine. The three major Western religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—share a common origin in the prophet Abraham, and their foundation is the Old Testament and the Bible. All of them hold a linear view of history. God created the world one day, and from that moment history begins, but one day history will end; it will be the day of "Judgment Day," when God will judge the living and the dead. [Attali \(2019\)](#).

As Christianity spread throughout the Roman Empire, Greek philosophy became increasingly integrated with religious thought.

The philosopher and theologian [Saint Augustine \(2014\)](#), adapted many Platonic ideas to Christian doctrine. He emphasized the relationship between faith and reason and helped shape medieval philosophy.

During the Middle Ages, religious institutions dominated education and intellectual life. Philosophy largely served theological purposes until the Renaissance revived independent inquiry and scientific investigation.

Modern philosophy began with René [Descartes \(2020\)](#). His famous statement, "I think, therefore I am," established thought as the foundation of certainty. Descartes argued that: Human reason is the basis of knowledge. Some ideas are innate. Mind and matter are distinct substances. His philosophy profoundly influenced modern science and epistemology.

The first great systematizer of science was [Descartes \(2020\)](#), followed by [Spinoza \(2014\)](#), [Leibniz \(1982\)](#), [Locke \(2006\)](#), Berkeley [Bennett \(1988\)](#), Hume [Bennett \(1988\)](#), and [Kant \(1973\)](#). The Middle Ages produced Thomas Aquinas (2010) and Descartes [Williams \(1995\)](#), with his "I think, therefore I am." The idea of God is innate, imposed upon us all from birth. Thought is entirely free in relation to matter, and vice versa: material processes also act completely independently of thought.

[Spinoza \(2014\)](#) argued that everything that exists is nature, and also stated that God is equal to nature, seeing God in everything that exists, based on pantheistic doctrine.

The British empiricists emphasized experience as the source of knowledge. [Locke \(2006\)](#), argued that the mind begins as a blank slate (tabula rasa). Knowledge develops through sensory experience. Berkeley, [Bennett \(1988\)](#), denied the existence of material reality independent of perception. According to him, reality exists because it is perceived.

Hume [Bennett \(1988\)](#), questioned many assumptions about causality and certainty.

He maintained that: Human knowledge is limited. Cause-and-effect relationships are habits of thought rather than logical necessities. Moral judgments arise more from feelings than from reason.

The enlightenment promoted reason, liberty, and human progress. Thinkers such as: [Montesquieu \(2015\)](#), [Voltaire \(2023\)](#), [Rousseau \(1999\)](#), advocated freedom, equality, and social reform.

Rousseau argued that human beings are born free but become constrained by social institutions and structures.

Immanuel [Kant \(1973\)](#) sought to reconcile rationalism and empiricism. He argued that knowledge results from two elements: External experiences. Internal structures of the human mind. According to Kant: Human beings perceive reality through the categories of time and space. We can never know reality exactly as it is in itself. Moral law arises from reason. Human beings possess free will and moral responsibility.

Kant's philosophy became one of the foundations of modern thought.

[Hegel \(1987\)](#), developed one of the most influential philosophical systems of the modern era.

For Hegel, reality is not static but dynamic. Human history unfolds through a dialectical process in which opposing forces interact and eventually produce higher forms of consciousness and social organization.

According to Hegel: History is the progressive development of human freedom. Contradictions are essential for growth and transformation. Human beings understand themselves through their relationship with others. Reason manifests itself throughout historical development.

The highest form of knowledge is achieved when the human spirit becomes united with Absolute Reason. Art, religion, and philosophy represent different expressions of this Absolute Spirit, with philosophy occupying the highest position because it reflects upon its own activity within history.

[Marx \(1978\)](#), criticized Hegel's idealism and developed a materialist interpretation of history. One of Marx's most important concepts is alienation. According to Marx: Capitalism transforms people and social relations into commodities. Human beings become objects within the marketplace. Science, technology, and social relationships are increasingly subordinated to economic exchange. Personal dignity is converted into market value.

The decisive argument for dialectics is that the subject is only a subject in relation to the object, and the object is only an object in relation to the subject. Both are only what they are insofar as they are for the other. But this correlation is not reversible. To be a

subject is something entirely different from being an object. The function of the subject is to apprehend the object; the function of the object is to be apprehendable by the subject.

The abstract virtues of the Protestant ethic—industriousness, abstinence, thrift, calculation, and so on—ultimately become the social virtues of the accumulating bourgeoisie. The mercantile or monetary character, which in a way is the image of the Midas described by Marx, is the prototype of the bourgeois. Midas desires that everything he touches be transformed into gold and money, into forms of insatiability. The economic motive of the accumulating bourgeoisie becomes the collective neurosis of Protestantism, of an anal-retentive nature, according to Freud's theorem, which becomes the renunciation of the senses, while correspondingly repressed are the oral qualities, the psychosexual capacity for immediate enjoyment, for surrender, for the joy of the senses. [Freud \(1982\)](#).

The dichotomy that developed with the rise of capitalist accumulation, on the one hand, and wage labor, on the other, transforms personal dignity into an exchange value. Thus, any imaginable form of human conduct becomes morally compatible the moment it becomes economically possible and acquires value; anything is valuable insofar as it is profitable.

[Marx \(1978\)](#), in his introduction to Political Economy, writes: "Are not all the

advantages of society for the powerful and the rich? Are not all the favors and exemptions reserved for them? And does not public authority always incline in their favor? Whether a man enjoys a certain standing, steals from his creditors, or is guilty of other misdeeds, is he not always assured of impunity? Are not the beatings he gives, the violence he commits, the very crimes and murders he carries out, the very acts of violence he commits, the very crimes and murders he carries out, perhaps these are events that are kept quiet, and about which nothing more is spoken after six months?"

"...How different is the situation of the poor. The more humanity owes him, the more society rejects him...he is always obliged to carry, in addition to his own burden, also that of his richer neighbor who has enough influence to be exempt [...] Let us summarize in a few words the social contract of the two estates: you need me because I am rich and you are poor; so let us make a deal: I grant you the honor of serving me, but on the condition that you give me what little you have left, to compensate me for the effort it will cost me to command you." [Marx \(1978\)](#).

[Kierkegaard \(2007\)](#), reacted against Hegel's emphasis on universal history and abstract systems. Kierkegaard argued that: Every individual is unique. Human existence cannot be reduced to historical categories. Personal choice and responsibility are central to life. Each person lives only once and must confront existence directly. He described an aesthetic stage of life in which individuals seek pleasure, beauty, utility, and immediate satisfaction through sensory experience

[Freud \(1982\)](#), examined the psychological foundations of culture and social behavior. The text connects Freud's ideas with critiques of capitalism and Protestant ethics, arguing that values such as discipline, abstinence, saving, and accumulation became social virtues that reinforced economic systems.

Freud maintained that human beings occupy a unique position in nature because they possess self-awareness. According to him: Human existence itself becomes a problem to be solved. Consciousness separates humans from the instinctive harmony of animal life. Reason and imagination create both freedom and suffering. Human beings become aware of loneliness, ignorance, and mortality.

Romantic thinkers reacted against the mechanistic worldview promoted by the Enlightenment. [Schelling \(1989\)](#), argued that nature and spirit are deeply interconnected. He proposed that: The world exists within God. Nature reflects unconscious dimensions of divine reality. Reality contains creative tensions and oppositions. There is a mysterious and even dark aspect of existence.

During the 19th and 20th centuries, various anthropologists, historians, political scientists, philosophers, and scientists—[Tylor \(1856\)](#), [Frazer \(1935\)](#), [Müller \(1871\)](#), [Nietzsche \(1979\)](#), [Sorel \(2011\)](#), [Cassirer \(1972\)](#), [Spengler \(1918\)](#), [Marx \(1978\)](#), [Freud \(1982\)](#), and [Einstein Isaacson \(2016\)](#)—called into question the rationality of Western culture. [Ballina Ríos \(2024\)](#).

For the aforementioned thinkers, the history of Western civilization stems from a misinterpretation of words and terms: "the history of culture is the product of a mere illusion, a juggling of words, and language is not only a school of wisdom but also of folly." [Cassirer \(1972\)](#).

[Nietzsche \(2021\)](#), became one of the most influential critics of modern Western culture. According to Nietzsche: Traditional values had lost their authority. Religious certainties were collapsing. Modern society faced a crisis of meaning. Humanity needed to create new values. The text identifies Nietzsche as the principal precursor of modern nihilism, a philosophy that questions whether life possesses any ultimate purpose or objective meaning.

For Nietzsche, the decline of traditional beliefs created both danger and opportunity: danger because meaning could disappear, and opportunity because human beings could become creators of new values.

[Schopenhauer \(2013\)](#), emphasized the role of suffering in human existence. Influenced by Buddhist thought, Schopenhauer described life as driven by an endless and restless will to live. According to his perspective: Desire constantly generates dissatisfaction. Human beings pursue goals that never fully satisfy them. Suffering is an unavoidable aspect of existence. Wisdom comes from recognizing life's limitations.

[Weber \(1969\)](#), argued that modern society increasingly resembles an iron cage.

In this system: Bureaucratic structures dominate everyday life. Individuals become trapped within administrative systems. Rationalization replaces personal meaning. Efficiency becomes more important than human fulfillment.

Weber feared that modern individuals might become technically efficient but spiritually impoverished, living within systems they no longer control.

[Heidegger \(1980\)](#), linked existentialism with modern nihilism. He argued that: Modern individuals increasingly experience disillusionment. Traditional concepts such as intention, free will, and progress lose certainty. Human beings confront a world that often appears chaotic and meaningless. Nihilism emerges when no convincing interpretation of reality can be maintained.

[Derrida \(2022\)](#), challenged many assumptions of modern philosophy.

He argued that Western thought relies heavily on: Binary oppositions. Logocentrism (the privileging of speech and presence). Fixed meanings and stable foundations.

Derrida proposed a process of deconstruction, which examines how texts and ideas contain internal tensions and contradictions.

Postmodern thinkers generally question grand narratives that claim to explain all of history, society, or human experience. Toward a New Understanding of Knowledge

WHAT IS SCIENCE

Scientific thought is the most powerful intellectual tool developed in the Western world for deciphering and understanding the mysteries of the real world. Its origins can be traced back to Greek culture, where figures such as Thales of Miletus, Democritus, Parmenides, Empedocles, Hippocrates, Pythagoras, Ptolemy, Euclid, Archimedes, and Galen, among others, laid the initial groundwork for the emergence of science in the Western world. [Abbagnano \(2004\)](#)

Later, in the Middle Ages, the contributions of Giordano Bruno and Galileo Galilei, recently acquitted by the Vatican for their stubborn assertion that the Earth was not the center of the solar system and that it revolved around the Sun, along with Isaac Newton (2023) and [Descartes \(1960\)](#), culminated this process. These thinkers established many of the foundations upon which Western science would later develop. [Jaeger \(2022\)](#)

During the Renaissance and the Scientific Revolution, important advances transformed humanity's understanding of the universe.

One of the most influential modern theories of science was proposed by [Kuhn \(1975\)](#), In the Structure of Scientific Revolutions, introduced the concept of a paradigm.

A paradigm can be understood as: A shared framework of beliefs. Accepted scientific theories. Established research methods. Common standards within a scientific community.

According to Kuhn, scientific progress does not occur in a smooth and continuous manner. Instead, science alternates between periods of: Normal Science. Scientists work within an accepted paradigm, solving problems and refining theories.

When anomalies accumulate and existing theories can no longer explain observed phenomena, a crisis emerges. Eventually a new paradigm replaces the old one, creating a scientific revolution.

[Lakatos and Musgrave \(1975\)](#), expanded upon Kuhn's ideas, argued that scientists do not simply abandon theories when contradictory evidence appears. Instead: A core theory is protected. Auxiliary hypotheses are developed. Research programs evolve over time. Competing explanations are tested and refined.

[Toulmin \(1977\)](#), rejected the notion that science advances mainly through revolutions. Inspired by evolutionary theory, he proposed that scientific ideas evolve through variation and selection, much like biological organisms.

[Popper \(1959\)](#), argued that science advances through the correction of mistakes.

According to Popper: Scientific theories can never be definitively proven. They can only survive repeated attempts at refutation. New hypotheses emerge to solve problems.

Scientific progress occurs through error elimination.

According to David Hull (1997), science is not merely the activity of isolated individuals. Scientists form: Intellectual communities. Research traditions. Conceptual lineages.

Competitive groups that seek evidence for their theories while challenging competing explanations. Science advances through cooperation and competition simultaneously.

[Bacon \(1985\)](#), compared different approaches to knowledge. He described: Empiricists as ants that merely gather information. Rationalists as spiders that create systems from their own minds. Scientists as bees that gather material from experience and transform it through reason. For Bacon, genuine knowledge requires both observation and rational analysis.

The text proposes that human beings employ two fundamental forms of cognition:

Analytical Thinking. This mode emphasizes: Logic, Calculation, Explicit reasoning, Abstraction, Systematic analysis.

Synthetic Thinking. This mode emphasizes: Pattern recognition, Contextual understanding, Creativity, Relationships among phenomena. Holistic perception. Human intelligence depends upon the interaction of both forms of cognition: Ontology and epistemology. Ontology studies what exists. It asks questions such as: What is reality? What kinds of entities exist? Which phenomena can be studied?

Epistemology studies knowledge itself. It investigates: How knowledge is obtained. Whether knowledge is reliable. Which methods produce valid knowledge. The limits of human understanding. Both disciplines play essential roles in scientific inquiry.

This text identifies four factors involved in the production of knowledge: 1) The thinking subject. 2) The object being known. 3) Language. 4) The social environment.

Knowledge does not perfectly reproduce reality. Rather, it consists of symbolic constructions that emerge from interactions among these factors.

Human knowledge may originate from multiple sources: Sensory experience- intuition- action-reason- collective unconscious processes.

Scientific inquiry increases our understanding of reality, even if such understanding remains incomplete.

Einstein (1984), suggested that many individuals are drawn to science and art because they seek to escape the monotony and limitations of everyday life.

Scientific inquiry provides access to a world of objective observation and understanding that transcends personal concerns.

The twentieth century transformed scientific thinking through two revolutionary theories: Relativity. Developed by Einstein, relativity challenged traditional ideas about:

- Space
- Time
- Motion
- Causality

Quantum Mechanics: introduced uncertainty and probability into physics. Unlike classical Newtonian mechanics, some interpretations of quantum mechanics allow for genuine randomness in nature. These developments reopened philosophical debates concerning: Determinism. Consciousness. Human freedom. The nature of reality

Mind and Matter: One of the enduring philosophical questions concerns the relationship between mind and matter. Monism: Mind and matter are fundamentally the same reality. Dualism: Mind and matter are distinct entities. The development of relativity and quantum mechanics forced scientists and philosophers alike to reconsider long-held assumptions about consciousness, reality, and human experience. A notable feature shared by relativity and quantum mechanics is the importance of observation.

This text emphasizes that: Observers influence what is measured. Consciousness remains one of the deepest scientific mysteries. Reality may be more complex than traditional scientific models assumed. Philosophers, psychologists, and physicists continue to debate the nature of conscious experience.

NEW RESEARCH AGENDAS IN MANAGEMENT

We are living in a world that is becoming increasingly complex and sophisticated. Unfortunately, our ways of thinking and reasoning do not always adapt to that complexity. As a result, people often convince themselves that reality is simpler than it truly is and attempt to manage complexity as if it did not exist. This tendency produces oversimplified explanations that can be misleading and even harmful.

From the perspective of traditional systems theory, organizations have frequently been viewed as orderly and stable structures. This orientation encouraged functionalist approaches that interpreted reality through highly static and mechanistic frameworks. For much of the period between the end of the Second World War and the late 1970s, organizational studies were dominated by functionalism and positivism, providing intellectual support for bureaucratic forms of power.

From the perspective of the traditional systems approach, organizations are conceived as ordered structures, and this predisposition fosters functionalism, which conceptualizes reality within a highly static and mechanistic framework. From the end of World War II until the late 1970s, the theoretical and methodological consensus in organizational studies revolved around functionalism and positivism, providing a foundation for bureaucratic power. In contemporary management theories—the operational approach McGregor (1969)—and in current systems theory—the contingency approach—tolerance and eclecticism prevail. This situation can be seen in the curricula of American business schools, where confusion abounds in the theoretical field of management, with the positivist philosophical position governing their actions through a combination of rationalism and empiricism.

The traditional view of consensus and cooperation in the study of organizations is being transformed by the view of social classes, whose conditions of existence are very different from those recognized by functionalists and positivists. Critical theory has

distinguished itself by its commitment to new social, political, and economic conditions, as a historical and dialectical theory that attempts to capture and conceptualize historical changes and evaluate their impact [Kellner \(1988\)](#).

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Another event that marked a milestone in the scientific community was the conclusion presented by meteorologist and mathematician Edward [Lorenz \(1963\)](#), that the conditions of a meteorological model can vary due to some minute factor; something as simple as the flapping of a butterfly's wings can contribute to triggering unforeseen cascade effects.

[Lorenz \(1963\)](#) demonstrated that extremely small changes in initial conditions can produce dramatically different outcomes.

This insight became known as the Butterfly Effect:

- Minor variations may generate major consequences.
- Complex systems can behave unpredictably.
- Long-term prediction becomes difficult or impossible.
- Order and disorder coexist within dynamic systems.

The implications of chaos theory extend far beyond meteorology and have influenced organizational studies, economics, and management.

A fundamental shift occurred with the development of General Systems Theory by [Bertalanffy \(1984\)](#), challenged traditional causal explanations and proposed that living systems should be understood as open systems.

Open systems:

- Interact continuously with their environments.
- Exchange matter, energy, and information.
- Cannot be understood by examining isolated parts alone.
- Exhibit emergent properties arising from interactions among components.

This systems perspective contrasts with reductionist approaches that attempt to explain reality solely by breaking it into smaller pieces.

The Three "R's" of Scientific Thinking

Three principles that characterize scientific inquiry:

- 1) Reductionism
- 2) Replication
- 3) Refutation

The interaction of these principles allows scientific thought to generate knowledge and improve understanding of reality.

[Luhmann \(1984\)](#), proposed an integrative systems perspective that differs from traditional reductionism.

According to Luhmann: Organizations should be viewed as complex systems. Multiple interpretations of reality are possible. Organizational goals are not fixed and predetermined. Different stakeholders may perceive the organization in different ways.

This perspective recognizes that organizations are shaped not only by present circumstances but also by their history, culture, values, and aspirations for the future.

The search for more adequate understandings of organizations has generated new research agendas focused on: Culture. Cognition. Language. Politics. Ideology.

These perspectives attempt to explain organizational life in ways that move beyond purely technical or economic models.

Critical Theory and Classical Thinkers

One major orientation within contemporary research draws upon the works of: Karl Marx. Max Weber. The Frankfurt School.

These approaches assume that: Technological innovation is often driven by economic accumulation. Organizational structures serve mechanisms of control. Power relations shape workplace experiences. Administrative systems can reinforce inequalities.

Psychoanalysis and Human Behavior

Research agendas have also incorporated insights from: [Fromm \(2019\)](#), [Viktor Frankl \(1991\)](#), [Reich \(1941\)](#), [Freud \(1982\)](#).

These perspectives investigate how bureaucratic structures may contribute to depersonalized and dehumanized behavior within organizations.

Postmodern Perspectives

French postmodern thinkers challenged many assumptions of critical theory and modernity.

Important contributors include:

- [Saussure \(1987\)](#)
- [Lévi-Strauss \(1964\)](#)
- [Barthes \(1994\)](#)
- [Lyotard \(1990\)](#)
- [Baudrillard \(2002\)](#)
- [Lacan \(2008\)](#)
- [Foucault \(1970\)](#)

These thinkers questioned: Universal truths. Grand historical narratives. Claims of objective knowledge. Enlightenment ideals of progress. [Ballina Ríos \(2024\)](#).

Phenomenology and Hermeneutics

Modern systems thinking has also incorporated philosophical traditions such as:

- Phenomenology, associated with [Husserl \(1989\)](#).
- Hermeneutics, associated with [Gadamer \(2003\)](#)
- Existentialism, associated with [Heidegger \(1980\)](#)
- Historicism, associated with [Dilthey \(1998\)](#).

These traditions emphasize interpretation, lived experience, and historical context rather than purely objective observation.

The Ecological Paradigm

An important contemporary development is the ecological paradigm. This perspective proposes that organizations should learn to operate within environmental limits while simultaneously creating sustainable relationships with their surroundings.

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The ecological paradigm [Lyotard \(1990\)](#) establishes new rules for companies and organizations to learn how to manage not only the limitations of environmental realities but also the possibilities of shaping their relationship with the environment. Consequently, what they are proposing is the development of small, learning ecological communities, in which participants can develop appropriate scenarios with suitable technologies, based on the resources and needs of the community's ecosystem.

In postmodernity, change has not allowed for taking root; progress has lost its direction, its purpose; no technology guarantees a promising future; we don't know where we are going; there are countless possible scenarios that await us or that can be created. This is the great challenge of the future.

The ecological paradigm encourages: Small learning communities. Appropriate technologies. Sustainable resource use. Local participation. Long-term environmental responsibility.

Future lines of research will focus on chaos and creative destruction in organizations, and on the management of discontinuity.

FINAL REFLECTION

The article ultimately argues that understanding reality requires intellectual openness, creativity, and the willingness to question established assumptions.

Science is presented not merely as a collection of facts but as a dynamic process involving observation, theory, experimentation, interpretation, and philosophical reflection. Scientific knowledge evolves through the interaction of empirical evidence, conceptual frameworks, social communities, and human creativity. Consequently, science remains one of humanity's most powerful tools for understanding reality while also confronting its deepest mysteries.

No single theory can fully explain the complexity of organizations or society. Instead, progress depends upon continuous dialogue among different perspectives.

The twentieth and twenty-first centuries have witnessed critiques of rationalism, science, technology, capitalism, bureaucracy, and traditional concepts of truth. These debates continue to influence management, organizational studies, and scientific inquiry.

Philosophy therefore serves not only as a historical discipline but also as a tool for examining the assumptions that shape modern society and guide future research.

Contemporary management theories often emphasize pragmatism, tolerance, and eclecticism, many business schools continue to operate under philosophical assumptions rooted in positivism, combining rationalism and empiricism while neglecting broader social and historical dimensions.

Traditional approaches tend to emphasize consensus and cooperation, while overlooking conflicts among social groups whose interests and living conditions differ significantly. Critical theory emerged as a response to these limitations, seeking to understand historical transformations and evaluate their social, political, and economic consequences.

The future of management will therefore depend on its ability to integrate scientific rigor, philosophical reflection, ethical responsibility, and innovative thinking.

Only through such integration can organizations contribute meaningfully to human development, social well-being, and the sustainable future of our increasingly interconnected world. Future research should focus on themes such as: Complexity and chaos; Organizational learning Systems; Cognition and knowledge Artificial.

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