Call for papers for CMS7:
Critical perspectives on strategy as discourse and practice

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In recent decades, we have witnessed the spread of ‘strategic management’ as discourse and practice. This discourse has proved to be a powerful means to transform organizational and managerial practices. In particular, strategic management practices that originate from American corporations have conquered and colonized other kinds of organizations across the globe. This diffusion has brought with it problems such as the reproduction of a neo-liberal world order and neo-colonialism, preoccupation with financial performance and instrumentalist thinking, managerial hegemony and lack of democracy and transparency, and the legitimation and naturalization of questionable organizational practices. Furthermore, ‘strategy’ has often become a means to justify decisions and actions that would not otherwise be seen as appropriate.

In this stream, we intend to analyze such problems, but also seek to explore alternatives to predominant models and ways of thinking about strategic management. This includes critical analysis of organizational discourses and practices, but also reflection upon what we as management scholars can do to provide alternatives; for example, new practices of strategizing, novel ways of engagement with organizational members (both at the top and at the bottom), or innovative pedagogical approaches.

Hence, this track invites all kinds of contributions that adopt and/or develop various kinds of critical approaches to strategy. These can be practice-based perspectives, discursive ones, but also other kinds of theoretical or methodological approaches which propose an alternative to mainstream research. We are keen to accept both conceptual and empirical papers from a range of disciplines representing interesting theoretical or methodological ideas or which otherwise advance the critical scrutiny of strategy as discourse and the associated practices. The list of potential topics may include but is not restricted to themes such as:

- What are the ideological underpinnings and/or what kinds of discursive struggles characterize strategy as a body of knowledge?
- How do strategic management research and discourses contribute to the naturalization of domination and inequality within and between organizations? Are there alternatives?
- What are the hegemonic implications of strategy discourses and prevailing decision-making practices? How can alternative discourses (e.g., of responsibility and sustainability) be introduced, blended or even elevated, displacing the elevation of an instrumental rationality?
• What are the new opportunities of strategy making and thinking which can transform the social issues and the classical frames of strategic management?
• How does the discourse of strategy construct subjectivity and identity in organizations? How do the gendered aspects of strategy as discourse and practice surface and with what effects?
• How does strategy language diffuse and what are the implications?
• How are strategy texts authored, edited, and re-contextualized in organizations? How do specific discursive practices enable or constrain participation in organizational decision-making?
• What role do MBA or other education play in the ability to mobilize and appropriate strategy jargon?
• What are the methodological issues around undertaking critical strategic management research? How can we empirically unveil the hegemonic and power dimensions of strategic management discourses and practices?
• What are the ontological and epistemological challenges that critical strategic management research faces?
• What are the ethical issues and dilemmas in conducting critical strategic management research with companies and other organizations?
• Case studies of exemplary critical strategic management approaches which demonstrate alternative forms for leading a company.
• Alternative and critical ways of teaching and learning in strategic management

Those interested are asked to submit abstracts (maximum 1000 words), A4 paper, single spaced, 12 point font) to Dalvir Samra-Fredericks by e-mail (dalvir.samra-fredericks@ntu.ac.uk) by 1st November 2010. The convenors decisions about the acceptances will be sent no later than November 30, 2010. Full papers will be expected by May 1st 2011.

Convenors:

Damon Golsorkhi is Assistant Professor of Strategic Management and Organizational Sociology at Rouen Business School, France. His research interests focus on the craft of strategy (both practice and discursive sides), organizational, institutional and social change, the role of power and domination in strategy and change making and social movement. He is the co-editor of Cambridge Handbook of Strategy-as-Practice (with Linda Rouleau, David Seidl and Eero Vaara, 2010) and Rethinking Forms of Power in Organizations, Institutions and Markets (With David Courpasson and Jeffrey Sallaz, forthcoming in 2011). Email: dgl@rouenbs.fr

Dalvir Samra-Fredericks is Reader in Organizational Behaviour at Nottingham Business School. Her research pivots upon a talk-based ethnographic approach - extended to include audio-recordings - of managerial elites/strategists doing their everyday work
over time and space. This embraces the broad conceptual terrain of effective practice (skills, forms of knowledges and modes of rationalities) and gendered identity-work where emotions, morals, power are conceived as phenomena interactionally observed and ‘done’. This research has been published in a number of journals such *Journal of Management Studies, Organization, Management Learning, Human Relations*. She is co-Guest Editor for two *Organization Studies* issues: One is a Symposium Issue (2008) on ‘The Foundations of Organizing’ and the second is a Special Issue on ‘Return to Practice: Understanding Organization as it Happens’ (2009). Email: dalvir.samrafredericks@ntu.ac.uk

**Eero Vaara** is Professor of Management and Organization at Hanken School of Economics in Helsinki, Finland, and permanent Visiting Professor at Ecole de Management de Lyon, France. His research interests focus on strategy and strategizing, organizational change, multinational corporations and globalization, and the role of the media in organizing and management. He has lately worked especially on narrative and discursive perspectives. His work has been published in leading academic journals (e.g., *Academy of Management Learning and Education, Academy of Management Review, British Journal of Management, Culture and Organization, Gender, Work and Organization, Human Relations, International Journal of Human Resource Management, Journal of International Business Studies, Journal of Management Inquiry, Journal of Management Studies, Organization, Organization Science, Organization Studies and Strategic Management Journal*). He is the co-editor of *Cambridge Handbook of Strategy as Practice* (forthcoming, 2010). He is a board member of EGOS (European Group of Organizational Studies). Email: eero.vaara@hanken.fi