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Cities and organisation: The information city and urban form

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What happens when we take ‘the city’ as a site of organization? The implications of posing this question perhaps explain why it has not formed part of the traditional epistemic apparatus of the organization studies community with its disciplinary claim to distinction and expertise. Analysts have a tendency to get lost in the city: the traditional modes of classification and organization that posit an object/subject, or structure/agent, tend to flounder when trying to come to terms with organizational features of the city. This editorial paper sets out a case for treating the city not as another object of attention for organization theorists in that all too familiar additive mode that recites ‘Organization Studies and …’ (in this case ‘The City’). Rather we want to think about how cities and urban forces could be the site for an ongoing re-evaluation of the way in which organization theorists can engage with questions of social and cultural transformation. Collectively, these papers challenge us to go beyond seeing cities as simply the outcome of a will to order and the excess that this produces. Instead they ask us to open ourselves up to new forms of organization which, in this special issue, we have just begun to sense and imagine.

Keywords: the city; urban; information; Latour; Kittler

Introduction

Cities, and more broadly the urban milieu, are sites par excellence for studying the manifestation of contemporary organisation. Yet up until now scholars of organisation have had remarkably little to say about the organisational dynamics of cities and urban forms. The study of cities has rather been a focus for a range of other disciplines which over the years have ploughed a series of parallel furrows over the terrain of urban life: spatial forces by geographers, the cultural dynamics of migration and community-building by anthropologists and sociologists, the functioning of the built environment by architects and urban planners, and the analysis of flows of goods and services by economists. It is perhaps the over-colonisation of the city by these disciplinary specialisms that has meant that organisation studies have tended to ignore the city as the site of organisation. Nonetheless, recent shifts in organisation studies which have turned attention away from the functioning of organisations as bounded entities towards the question of organisational dynamics mean that the lack of studies of the city as a phenomenon of complex organisation has become increasingly apparent. The

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purpose of this special issue is to begin a discussion, which might mark a change in
direction with regard to this aporia in the field.

Far from simply calling for another disciplinary voice to be added to a list of
already proliferating perspectives on cities and how they operate, the aim of this
special issue is to ask more generally what insights organisation studies might be able
to derive by taking the city as a relevant site of organisation. In particular, we are inter-
ested in positioning the city not necessarily as yet another object of attention for organ-
isation theorists in an additive mode – Organization Studies and The City, whereby
the analysis remains the same but the topic provides fresh material to be churned
through an already established theoretical mill – but rather to think about how cities
and urban forces could be the site for an ongoing re-evaluation of the way in which
organisation theorists can engage with questions of social and cultural transformation.
In this way, cities pose questions about organisation which exceed the limits of organ-
isational settings and processes as they are conventionally understood. In spite of a
lack of sustained attention to the city as problem of organisation, organisation studies
can draw on a long and illustrious line of thinkers who established the ground for the
study of the city and whose influence is still very much felt within the discipline.
Social commentators such as Benjamin, De Certeau, Lefebvre and Simmel all identi-
fied the city’s importance to intellectual analysis to lie precisely in its peculiarity as
an organisational form, and whilst organisation studies may have lost sight of the city
as an organisational problem, the teachings of these theorists still remain central to
contemporary theories of organisation. The challenge now is to re-introduce the city
into this ongoing theoretical conversation.

When Georg Simmel described the emergence of the modern city in ‘The metrop-
olis and mental life’ (1903/1971), he pointed to the metropolis as the site of the
contemporary forces that lie beyond the individual. For Simmel, the city was a site of
constant transformation, constituted by ‘fluctuations and discontinuities’ (1903/1971,
12) of urban relations, in contrast to the rural town that was organised according to ‘a
smoother, more habitual, more smoothly flowing rhythm’ (1903/1971, 12). What
differentiated the city from other social forms was not simply its size, or its geogra-
phy, its identity or its economic power, but the very nature of organisation that it
manifested. For Simmel the distinctiveness of the organisational qualities of the
metropolis was powerful enough to bring about not just a change in how we might go
about understanding the relations between external phenomena; instead, for Simmel,
the growth of the modern city stimulated a transformation in the very personalities of
the people who inhabited the city. Urban forms of organisation, for Simmel, were
responsible for the emergence of a new kind of being – the metropolitan type. This
new kind of person was distinguished by their capacity for enacting a rational and
intellectual relationship which could operate as a barrier or protection from the other-
wise disruptive and impossible complexity of the city.

If Simmel’s insights were timely observations at a moment when industrialised
countries were undergoing a process of unprecedented urbanisation, contemporary
global patterns of rural to urban migration are at least as compelling a reason to re-
engage with the question of city organisation. We are commonly told that we are now
living in a situation where very soon more than 50% of the world’s population will be
living in cities. Some have gone so far as to suggest that the logic of urban life is so
ubiquitous nowadays, particularly in western nations, that it makes little sense to talk
of an urban/rural divide (Lacour and Puissant 2007). No longer does it make sense to
see the urban as industrial and the rural as agricultural. Nowadays villages are more
likely to exist as home to commuters or destinations for holidaymakers than as ‘communities’ with an inward-facing focus and a cohesive community ethos, whilst city spaces have been reconceived of as urban villages and the now ubiquitous ‘cultural quarters’ at the heart of many large conurbations invoke the village to describe an urban form of community relations intended to fill the gaps left by the closure of heavy industry. If Simmel’s diagnosis of the urban condition was accurate at the beginning of the twentieth century, it is less certain whether the distinctions he posits can be seen to hold any longer. Indeed, we might ask, are we all now merely manifestations of Simmel’s metropolitan man or are there other forces at play in cities which are working to constitute and divide us, organise us and disaggregate us in ways which Simmel could never have imagined?

A century of thinking on the city since Simmel was writing serves to alert us to the diversity of organisational forces that we can find at play in contemporary urban settings. Patterns of building, demolition, construction and decay reveal the city as memory bank (Benjamin 1999; Hart 2000); the forces of change provoked by a density of interactions has led to the imagination of the city as a growth machine (Molotch 1976), and histories of migration reconfigure cities as cosmopolitan spaces, sites of difference and containers of global processes (Hannerz 1980, 1990; Toulmin 1992), providing a vantage point from which the world itself can be re-imagined as a network of interconnections and a space of flows (Castells 1989). Cities are both the drivers of change and sites where transformations, which organisation scholars have observed elsewhere, can be re-interrogated and rethought. Indeed, if, as Chia (1999) has suggested, contemporary society’s preoccupation with the problem of organisation is indicative of a dominant mode of world-making, then the history of city management and current dreams of new means of ordering of the city should be central to our analysis of the relationship between order and organisation. Complex, distributed, processual spaces, subject to systems of planning, calculation and prediction that are provoked by the threat of breakdown in the form of congestion, disorder and decay, cities promise to reveal to us some of the central dynamics of the will to order and the spectre of fragmentation that haunts it. If Simmel saw the importance of the city to lie in its intensification of a money economy, its reliance on new relations of production and consumption and a concentration of state powers, then the management of contemporary cities has, in their attempts to ensure order, recast these issues as problems of knowledge and reconfiguring the city as information.

Cities in the information age

The spread of information technologies since the second half of the twentieth century has been a central preoccupation for theorists of the city (Wheeler, Aoyama, and Warf 2000; Graham 2004). The implications of information technologies have been imagined by urban theorists and city planners in terms of the ways in which they might transform the spatial dynamics of work in the knowledge economy (Gillespie and Richardson 2000), alter the urban-built environment through the possibilities afforded by computerised design technologies (Mitchell 1995), or affect the dynamics of social and political engagement of urban citizens (Norris 2001). Information management captures the very essence of a will to order the world according to rational systems of coding, connection and information flow. As technical solutions to social problems, information and communications technologies encapsulate the promise of order over
disarray and knowledge over ignorance as a path to an emancipatory politics of modernity.

Castells’ (1989) work on the informational dynamics of city organisation is perhaps one of the most widely cited and most powerful works to outline the potentially radical effects that the emergence of information technologies have had on how cities are organised. Interested in the spatial implications of the development of information technologies, Castells suggests that cities can no longer be conceived as cohesive social spaces. Instead, he argues that in the globalised space of flows, produced in response to the possibilities offered by information technologies, the dynamics of how cities work are no longer driven by local concerns and relations within the city, but as much by the interactions that take place between the high-earning urban dwellers of city suburbs spread around the world. To illustrate how this has occurred, Castells focuses on the interplay between three specific concerns – informationalism, capitalism and technological change – and tracks the shifts in each as they have transformed US cities and regions in recent decades. For Castells, informationalism is evident in the ways in which the three spheres of production, consumption and state control have all become increasingly organised around informational processes. Production has transformed from small-scale processes to the large corporation characterised by a whole series of dispersed or ‘distributed’ activities which must be linked up through information technologies. Consumption activities have also become the object of increasing informationalisation as marketing has become the central means of knowing the customer; meanwhile, the state has invested massively in technological apparatuses that allow for the tracking and monitoring of the activities of their citizens.

Deploying what is essentially a form of Marxism, Castells’ treatment of capitalism emphasises the ways in which the years leading up to the 1980s were characteristic of inter alia: a restructuring of capital that placed increasing emphasis on profit over labour rights; a shift in the role of the state towards one which supports control and accumulation rather than political legitimation and wealth distribution; and the growing internationalisation of capital flows. The way in which Castells sees this characterisation of capitalism playing out in the making of contemporary cities shares much with the work of David Harvey and Saskia Sassen. Recent work by Harvey clarifies how he sees urbanisation over the past century as intrinsically linked to the capitalist requirement to produce surplus value whose concentration itself has been responsible for producing the concentrations of people and processes that constitute the city (Harvey 2008). Sassen (1991), on the other hand, has worked to illustrate how international flows are constitutive of contemporary conurbations as global cities.

Technological change is described by Castells in terms of the simultaneous development of a range of computing and communications technologies which made possible the transfer and circulation of large quantities of information. Making a link between information transfer and cultural processes, Castells suggests that the technological transformations which took place during the 1960s and 1970s had led to a change which meant it was no longer relevant to make an opposition between craft and industrial production, or customised markets and mass consumption. Information technologies in tandem with the social environments in which they were developed were becoming responsible for a more adaptive form of industrial organisation. He clarifies: ‘By increasing the flexibility of all processes, information technologies contribute to minimising the distance between economy and society’ (Castells 1989,
17). Whilst Castells focuses on the broad effects of technological change, he is nonetheless concerned to avoid charges of technological determinism and sets out early on that the aim of his work is not to extrapolate direct causal linkages between new technologies and social change, but to understand the development of these new technological means in tandem with informationalism and the dynamics of contemporary capitalism.

For Castells then, we can only understand processes of fragmentation and inequality that characterise contemporary cities if we take into account the combined shift towards information processing activities and the related explosion in the material production of information technologies. To sum up, for Castells ‘People live in places, power rules through flows’ (1989, 349). It is this complex process of the production of information technologies, and the ubiquitous requirement for information processing capacities, both of which are seen to be taking place under an urbanist capitalist rubric, that for Castells constitutes what he calls the ‘informational mode of development’. It is within these terms that Castells conceives of a decentring of urban power and the associated disintegration of the city as a meaningful entity. The challenge for Castells is how to redirect the informational mode of development in such a way that the split between global flows and fragmented, tribalised local identity might be recombined.

This highly theoretically-informed empirical analysis of the city thus provides a particular model of what an organisational analysis of a city might look like. Whilst most organisational analyses take place within more conventional kinds of organisations, Castells provides a bridge between theorists of globalisation and those analysing internal organisational dynamics so that we might think of ways that allow research to interrogate the patterns and ‘structures’ of organisation as they manifest at the level of the city. This provides organisation theorists with a suggestive model for understanding the ways in which global forces of capital might have affected the capacities of people (in particular and defined places) to intervene in the management and organisation of their own lives. Whether one agrees or not with Castells’ diagnosis of the disintegration of the city in the face of global flows, he nonetheless sets out an interesting position that illustrates how the city provides a methodologically meaningful site through which questions regarding the organisational dynamics of the city can begin to be posed.

In contrast, those organisation theorists who have set out to study the city tend to do so from a resolutely institutional perspective. That is, their analysis of the city has proceeded from the study of an organisation itself, conceived in more conventional terms than the city as space of organisation – such as municipal councils (Pipan and Porsander 2000) or city development organisations (Schein 1996). This is perhaps unsurprising given a more generalised tendency within organisation studies to focus on the formal organisation rather than attempting to understand more broadly the organisational character of modern society (cf. Chia 1999). It may therefore be more apt to call the majority of studies by organisation theorists who have engaged in city dynamics as organisation studies in the city, rather than an organisation studies of the city. Yet whilst Castells employs sociological analysis of datasets to produce analyses which appear to extend beyond the locale, the more case study-based, ethnographic or interview-based research methods that have been used by scholars of organisation to study institutions in the city offer methodological approaches which extend our analytical framing in interesting and innovative ways. A number of recent research projects located in the field of organisation studies shift our attention away from a
preoccupation with institutional dynamics. This has a tendency to end up with bombastic claims to epochal transformation – a proclivity that Castells does not remain immune – and therefore tends to miss a more complex patina of change and continuity. Barbara Czarniawska (2002), for example, has used a comparative technique to conduct an organisational analysis of three cities: Warsaw, Stockholm and Rome. The use of a comparative and networked approach allows her to extend her analysis from being a study of individual city councils, to a study of a more generalised process of city managementorganisation in three different locales. For Czarniawska, the key to understanding different cities lies in understanding their management dynamics, which takes place through what she calls a dynamic of ‘glocalisation’.

Changes in the informational infrastructures of cities have, as we have seen, been very important in making claims for cities as key sites through which globalisation is played out (Sassen 1991). Large cities around the world vie for their place as global cities, whilst even smaller cities and developing nations have to show themselves to be connected to global flows of information and capital and developing themselves as information economies (Hultin 2007). Ironically, the very globalising potential of network technologies has been a key means through which city place-making activities have been produced (Czarniawska 2002; Green et al. 2005). Yet whilst scholars like Sassen, focusing on the global flows of capital, risk a homogenising view of the processes by which cities come into being, Barbara Czarniawska’s use of the term glocalisation is an attempt to re-think the relationship between global process and local form in a way that results neither in a techno-deterministic flattening of the field – where connectivity inevitably means globality – nor in cultural stereotyping, where places are conceived of in terms of their internal dynamics and studied through ‘methodological nationalism’.

Cities as information

If a diversity of methods provides one answer to the question of how to reinvigorate the study of the city as organisation, an openness to alternative forms of theorising offers another path out of the cul-de-sac of disciplinary specialisations that have dominated the study of the city. Recent work in the philosophy of technology, for example, has provided some radical alternatives to the kind of empirical engagement with the notion of the city as a place transformed by new information technologies that we have seen above.

Friedrich Kittler’s (1996) work on the informational city provides a powerful undercutting of the notion that cities have simply been transformed through information management techniques. Instead he introduces a much more profound relationship between the city and information, by analysing the very constitution of the city as the locus of the birth of informational logic itself. In a neat reversal of the claims of Castells and his followers, what is interesting about contemporary information technologies for Kittler is less the way in which they are transforming the organisational dynamics of the city, and more the way in which the material logics out of which they are constructed are derived from the city as some kind of originary informational force. For Kittler it is no coincidence that the component on a computer motherboard which acts to transfer data between different components that make up the computer is termed a ‘bus’. This is not simply a serendipitous homonym, but a direct borrowing from urban transport into computer technologies. For Kittler, the city
was informational long before we entered into what we now so loosely call the information age.

As an analysis of city dynamics, Kittler’s approach is to search not for an underlying unifying logic in the vein of a conventional sociological analysis such as that which Castells relies upon, where patterns could be discerned through the accumulation and analysis of data which would reveal social class, or gender dynamics or economic status to be a determinant of how cities are organised. Whilst there is a claim for a relatively coherent logic holding the city together in Kittler’s work, this cannot be tapped into through aggregation and averaging but rather through a more forensic, archaeological analysis of the language and the material means that technological systems build upon and produce themselves through.

In a very different sense, Bruno Latour’s study of Paris (Latour, Hermant, et al. 1998) through the multiple practices of knowing which he traced as a path through the city can also be read as a radical informational analysis of the city, though one with an important proviso. Unlike Kittler, Latour distances himself explicitly from the logic of information posited by information theory which would emphasise the communicative potential of information and the frictional effect of noise on allowing information to ‘get through’. Latour embarks upon a study of Paris via a journey through the sites through which the city could be seen to be produced in multiple ways. Moving from the planning department responsible for assigning street names to the office of the university administrator planning lessons, from the water management firm in charge of the flows of drinking water and effluence to an interaction between a customer and a waiter at a Parisian Café, Latour describes the detail of the movements that simultaneously take place in Paris, and necessarily therefore of Paris, and which also have the effect of producing Paris as an imagined space of representation ‘from above’.

Latour is provoked by the very complexity of the city that makes it a challenging object to study. The size of the city clearly means that choices have to be made about how any empirical study might be conducted and what would be its focus. The city is made up of its inhabitants, its material structures, the commodities that flow through it, the organisations that administer and govern these entities and many other phenomena besides. Attempting to understand how all of these entities of different orders hold together is somewhat of a Sisyphean task, and moreover, it is unlikely that a mastery of these particular elements would actually lead to an understanding of ‘the city’ as an object in its own right. Cities are both more and less than the sum of their parts, the essence of the city (if such a thing exists) exceeding the details of its constitution, whilst the identity of the city seems as lodged in marketing slogans and branding exercises as in a collective sense of what a city means for its population as a whole.

In order to cut through this complexity, Latour does not turn to abstraction as a mode of description, but instead encourages the reader to accompany him as he traces his way through the situated practices which constitute urban complexity. For Latour, partiality is a feature of the city and not something to be overcome. In following some of the practices that he finds in the city, he comes to a useful distinction between how we can understand complex processes and how we can tackle complicated processes in our analysis.

For Latour, modern practices which work to metre, inscribe and rationalise the space of the city have the effect of producing the city as a complicated space which is ripe for technological mastery. As a historically constituted and politically powerful means of rendering the world, rational mastery of the city works through specific
practices to provide a picture of a space through a logic of abstraction which involves
the stripping out of superfluous influences of different orders with the aim of produc-
ing a mark, or a channel or a trace which can be tracked, reconstituted and reassembled
and in the process can make the city reappear. The very birth of the modern city can
be traced to the emergence of these kinds of techniques of description, inscription and
abstraction for reassembly at a later date (Foucault 1977; Rabinow 1989; Scott 1998).²
Contemporary information processing techniques might well be seen to be following
in the same vein as characteristically modern technologies with their capacity to
process greater and greater amounts of data producing a picture of an increasingly
complicated world (Dodge and Kitchin 2005).

In contrast, complexity is, for Latour, the multifarious linkages and connections
that occur between things of different orders and whose description necessarily defies
the processes of abstraction described above. Complexity is irreducible, and yet if we
are to embark on a description of a space like a city in a way that does not just end up
reproducing or extending the idea that the city can be understood through the genera-
tion of partial abstractions, then it is to the problem of describing complexity that we
must turn.

For Latour, the complex is not the other to the complicated, but a difference of
effect produced as much by different practices of description as different forces in the
world. By analysing the production of the city as a complicated space through a
description of complexity, Latour is able to provide a picture of Paris in the making,
which feels remarkably different from the studies of the makers of cities that dwell on
the abstractions of planners and designers who have left such a prominent mark on
urban spaces (Scott 1998). What Latour manages to do in studying Paris in this form
is to transcend the separation between planning and acting, between representation
and experience, and to show how the city emerges in a complex process of rationali-
sation borne out of complex socio-material practices. The notion of Paris: Invisible
City is striking for the only conclusion we can come to is that Paris is both there and
not there – a powerful lesson for thinking about what organisation studies can offer to
the study of the city, and what the city can offer to organisation studies.

In the papers that follow, the authors describe cultural and organisational dynamics
as they tap into this absence/presence of the city, concentrating variously on practices
of rational management, fiction, imagination, collective action and experience as
modes through which we might fruitfully detect the city as a space of organisation.
The first paper, by De Cock, considers the city as it has appeared in the fictional
writings of John Berger. De Cock picks up on the relationship between the urban and
the rural as played out in Berger’s writings, providing a powerful critique of the
colonising power of cities as manifestations of capital accumulation. Using three
examples from Berger’s oeuvre, De Cock explores how cities manifest in spaces of
marginality, exclusion and oppression. The peasant, as figure of marginality, is re-
located not as the excluded other to the city but placed at the centre of a description
of contemporary urban experience, as both allegory of oppression and the promise of
a breaking away from the tyranny of the organisational forces of domination and
control that cities, as intensifications of capital, reproduce.

Warren and Kaulingfreks return us to the role of communications technologies in
the contemporary city, but they subvert the usual association of information technol-
gies with systems of rational control, by turning their attention to the phenomena of
self-organising flash mobs. Focusing, in particular, on ‘mobile clubbing’, they disas-
semble and critique analyses of urban living which see it as alienating and devoid of
community, arguing that we need to better appreciate specific forms of relationality in urban spaces by rethinking the notion of community itself. Drawing on the writings of Jean-Luc Nancy, their contribution explores mobile clubbing as an example of ‘inoperative community’, a form of self-organisation which is not driven by the desire for order and control that rational planning has been associated with but rather strives for effect through pure public action. Neither a romantic version of social cohesion nor the organised project of societal order, the inoperative community is revealed as a powerful means of describing the politics of urban living in an information age.

Beyes’s piece picks up and develops the question of how the city can be better understood as emergent and unstable phenomena through attention to subversive, artistic intervention. Drawing on Massey’s (2005) theory of space, and Ranciere’s work on the aesthetics of excess, Beyes explores the installation of a controversial art project in Vienna, which aimed to draw attention to the politics of Austrian immigration debates by parodying right wing Viennese calls for the deportation of immigrants and asylum seekers. Beyes shows how the dynamics of spatial organisation in the city can be revealed in new and powerful ways by paying attention to an uneasy kind of politics information that becomes discernable when art temporarily disrupts and subverts the conventional will to order that we tend to understand as characterising organisational spaces.

Carter and Jackson’s paper also dwells on the question of the role that the political plays in the organisation of the city. Prompted by their observation of fascist inscriptions on the buildings of Trieste, the authors wonder about the analytical potential and scholarly responsibility that an acknowledgement of such inscriptions entails in a description of a city as a place of memory, history and meaning. By exploring the sense of disjuncture and not-knowing produced through their urban encounter with the material residue of a past political moment, they raise important questions about the possibilities and limits of organisational analysis more generally. To what extent, they ask, is it the job of the organisation theorist to excavate informational objects and inscribe them with meaning? Does this end up extending our understanding of complex organisational phenomena or, as Beyes points out, does it sanitise and reduce the complexity of organisation in a way that erases the political and descriptive force of aesthetic excess.

Phillips takes forward the question of the methodological possibilities that the city affords organisation theorists through her use of the method of the derive. Once again interested in how to re-approach city spaces in ways that disrupt an easy dichotomy between the colonising power of a top-down, ordering process and the practices of resistance or identity formation that they produce in their wake, Phillips takes a wander through the familiar urban space of the shopping mall. Traversing the mall not as a consumer but as a practitioner of the derive, Phillips rediscovers the mall as a place which is as much about waste as it is about consumption and finds her attention drawn to the disordering tendencies that are at play in the making of organisational spaces like the city.

Finally, we end this special issue with an original contribution from Czarniawska, who approaches the question of cities as spaces of organisation and disorganisation through a historical analysis of the presence of women in the discourse and practice of city planning and management. Constructing a typology of three epochs of the city – the pre-modern, modern and post-modern – Czarniawska invites the reader to consider the shifting role of women as variously forces of subversion, figures of disorder, obscured subjects and agents of change in urban settings. Whilst women have
frequently been considered the ‘other’ to the civilising, ordering tendencies of city management, Czarniawska asks us to reconsider how we think about the modern will to order, in a way that both draws upon and acknowledges the ways in which women have, and continue to organise the city.

In each of these contributions we see an attempt to open the city up through an analysis of urban forces as organisational phenomena. Each of the papers raises questions that challenge us to re-conceive and re-vision the city in new ways. Moreover, in destabilising conventional descriptions of what cities are and how they operate as organisational phenomena, each of the papers in their own way opens up the possibility of asking deeper questions regarding our understanding of complex organisation. The issues raised by these papers pose a challenge to organisation studies to engage anew with the methods through which cities as organisational phenomena can be understood, and the descriptive means through which the kinds of complex organisation that cities exhibit can be articulated. Collectively these papers challenge us to go beyond seeing cities as simply the outcome of a will to order and the excess that this produces. Instead they ask us to open ourselves up to new forms of organisation which, in this special issue, we have just begun to sense and imagine.

Notes
1. There are of course problems with using this term, evoking, as it does, a genealogy of work in sociology that tends to reify the notion of structure and to oppose structure to the concept of agency. We offer the term ‘structure’ as a tentative characterisation of the form that organisation takes through the practical activities of its members with the proviso that the problem of its reification will be one that is familiar to scholarship in organisation studies.
2. Also see Toulmin (1992) for a thought experiment on what might have happened had Montaigne, and not Descartes, provided the model for the organisation of urban life.

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