

## Organising Outside Organisations – Part I

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It is generally assumed that organisational studies began as an academic discipline in the 1890s, when Frederick Winslow Taylor launched scientific management, while the scholars could also revoke even earlier writings of Max Weber. Since that time, many scholars have been studying formal organisations to the point where there was scarcely anything new that could be said about them. Yet times change, and so do formal organisations. The recent phenomenon of digital transformation has attracted much attention, and many great studies were and are being done, with interesting results. But digitalisation also opened wide doors to organising outside, oftentimes in spite of, and against, formal organisations. How do people organise demonstrations in Iran, in Russia or, for that matter, how did The Proud Boys do it in the USA? We need to know more about such informal organising, which was always present, but now has become widespread thanks to globalisation and digitalisation. After all, it is connecting collective actions, or ‘doings’ to one another, which is the main trait of organising. ‘Organisations’ are legal units; a ‘network’ can exist, yet do nothing; in order to accomplish anything, good or bad, ‘doings’ are necessary, and they have to be coordinated, connected, and stabilised – temporarily or for good. For this Thematic Issue, we invited

contributions based on studies that can throw some light on the phenomenon of organising outside organisations.

Kurt Rachlitz addresses the new organisational form that was born in the digital age – the platform. He introduces an important distinction between the two concepts, often used synonymously: platform organising versus platform organisations. While both exist, they are not necessarily identical. Platform organisations are formal organisations dependent on the infrastructure of a digital platform. According to Rachlitz, platform organising is a new kind of social ordering that combines organising outside and inside formal organisations.

Kelsie Nabben takes up a case of organising against organisations within the world of blockchain and its ideal of Decentralised Autonomous Organisation governed by and through algorithms. She describes and analyses Gitcoin, a blockchain-based funding platform that uses crowdfunding cryptocurrency donations to fund projects considered important for public blockchains' growth. A new problem – of 'sybil attacks', that is, donations made by fake accounts – is being addressed by the Gitcoin community, with humans and algorithms participating equally, organising and governing the platform without a need for formal organisation. The blockchain's autonomy means acting away from established actors and designing governing algorithms in a participatory way that allows for decentralised and distributed decision-making. At present times, it is crucial to understand how algorithmic governance unfolds.

New kinds of organising are many. Monica Nadegger focuses on non-human actors and analyses the role of the hashtag *#wirsindmehr* in consolidating political action in German-speaking communities. Showing how a neo-tribe has been constituted out of the usually ephemeral social media activism, she is relating the communicative constitution of organisations to what she calls 'organisationality'. In order to capture the peculiarities of a social formation made of words and coordinated actions, she uses a mixed-method approach, bringing together Critical Discourse Analysis and Social Network Analysis.

Andreas Diedrich brings migrants to the centre stage by describing the 'spectacularisation' of their conditions after arrival to Sweden. Many local attempts to support the integration of migrants consist of creating dramatic spectacles, which become an end in themselves rather than helping migrants enter the labour market. His idea of 'spectacled organising' revamps Debord's work about spectacle society, reminding the readers that the reality beyond spectacle may be challenging to grasp. This approach helps to rethink the portrayal of migrants in contemporary societies, which is especially relevant now in the face of the Ukrainian crisis. And, decades after Debord, it is worth asking if spectacularisation can be avoided, or if it will stay for good.

In a similar vein, Leo Bancou and Francois-Xavier De Vaujany argue that by increasingly doing remote work, workers are participating in a cinematographic experience upon which they have limited possibility of acting, being part of an assemblage of images. The authors use notions from Merleau-Ponty and Deleuze to introduce cinematography as a central dimension of organising remote work nowadays and discuss that, in this new context, workers have more difficulty reaching a true self at work.

Deirdre McCloskey ends by claiming that even formal organisations need another look at their doings, as organising – formal or not – is more like jazz improvisation rather than an orderly road to achieving strategic goals. Perhaps this is the analogy that should be used more in organisation studies.