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IDEOLOGY IN MANAGEMENT STUDIES

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ABSTRACT

Ideology is a core and contested concept in the social sciences, but also long deployed in management research to highlight the political, embedded and/or obscuring nature of ideas. Indeed, many would argue that management itself is inherently ideological in legitimating or privileging managerial interests and concealing other groups and ways of organising. In the first systematic review of how ideology has been conceptualized in management studies, this article explores its diverse and changing meanings in order to develop and sustain the concept. It is based on a heuristic review of 175 articles and 41 books published between 1956 and 2018. Further developing categories used in the social sciences around its role, we found views of ideology as: (1) domination; (2) legitimation; (3) interpretation; (4) integration and; (5) normative logic. In addition, emerging perspectives were identified where ideology was an (6) object of critique; and (7) fantasy structuring social reality. We describe, illustrate and evaluate these, often internally diverse and interrelated, perspectives as well as compare them with sometimes competing notions within the management field, such as discourse, culture and legitimation. We also bring together the different approaches and argue for a pluralist, but not infinitely flexible, approach to the concept. In doing so, we identify research agendas for ideology within management and organisation studies.

Key words: ideology, management, review, social science, discourse, culture.

INTRODUCTION

'It is widely agreed that the notion of "ideology" has given rise to more analytical and conceptual difficulties than almost any other term in the social sciences' (Abercrombie *et al.* 1980, p. 187)

Why consider ideology when its 'end' has been asserted by many since World War II? While such claims can be readily dismissed as ideological themselves, the complexity and contested nature of the term – its 'semantic promiscuity' - are hard to deny (Gerring 1997, p. 957). Furthermore, in some fields of social science, such as sociology, its use has declined significantly since the 1980s (Kumar 2006). Such a context might not seem fruitful for an account of its deployment and continuing theoretical and political potential. And yet, within management and organisation studies (MOS), scholars have drawn on and renewed the concept since the 1950s, and, importantly, continue to do so, albeit mostly at the margins of the field. They have been inspired, in part, by a number of traditions and waves of social theory—from Marx, Weber and Mannheim to, more recently, Žižek – but also by the continuing rise of management and the mystification or influence it can bring.

Although it is important to distinguish between ideology *within* management and organisations and, specifically *management* ideologies, the concept has mostly been applied in the latter sense, to management ideas or movements, such as human relations, scientific management and more recently, new public management, corporate social responsibility and leadership (Tsutsui 2001; Frenkel 2005). These have been shown to emerge from, and shape institutions; to unify or dominate actors; and/or to legitimate social arrangements, notably management's powerful role within capitalism (Shenhav 1999). Although the concept has sometimes been used loosely and widely, its most distinctive analytical role has been to connect management to power and to reveal that management is not a neutral set of techniques or objectives, but inherently *social*. Most accounts define management ideology as a collective or socially embedded, and yet also contestable, set of ideas that describe and/or seek to justify managerial authority (Barley and Kunda 1992; Guillén 1994; Parush 2008). This is most evident in Bendix's classic definition as *'all ideas which are espoused by or for those who exercise authority in economic enterprises, and which seek to explain and justify that authority'* (1956, p. 2, note 1; also Sutton *et al.* 1956). However, we shall see that this view is, in fact, not the most common and that perspectives vary over time, largely in line with wider theoretical trends. While the relatively short history of management *practice* is one of challenge and conflict, the

occupation probably reached its high point of legitimacy in the post-war *managerial* capitalism of the USA (Useem 1978). Subsequent pressures emerged with the rise of *investor* capitalism, although management still retained a central and legitimate role (Useem 1996). More recently, some influential ideas reflect concern with both managerial and shareholder legitimacy, through more inclusive thinking about stakeholders, the (natural) environment and the 'non-expert' (Freeman *et al*. 2010; Sundararajan 2016). This may reflect a wider ideological shift in some societies, where management ideas are deployed as much for societal and environmental impacts as for business outcomes (e.g. Corporate Social Responsibility). Alternatively, a 'new spirit of capitalism' (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005) is emerging whereby the use of ideas can become subject to greater critique and resistance and yet, at the same time, be seen as more insidiously powerful (Fleming and Spicer 2003). Either way, it is especially timely to investigate how the concept has been theorized in management and organisation studies. Furthermore, ideology cuts across many other important, enduring and sometimes competing concepts in management studies, including *institutions, legitimacy, innovation, sensemaking and culture*, as well as other concepts in the social sciences, notably *discourse* (van Dijk 2006). Thus, unpacking its analytical use can also help us to understand a great deal about management theory more generally and assess its continuing value and *distinctive* contribution.

To date, there has been no systematic review of how ideology has been conceptualised in MOS. This is perhaps surprising given its longstanding importance in the field and because it continues to be a focus of reviews in other, related fields such as business ethics (Haase and Raufflet 2017) and media studies (Downey and Toynbee 2016). Furthermore, reviews of the concept in core social science disciplines such as politics (e.g. Gerring 1997; Knight 2006) and sociology (Kumar 2006), have not included some of the recent formulations of ideology which have been prominent in management studies. Given such neglect, within management and more generally, we seek to provide an overview of the use of ideology in MOS. More specifically, our purpose is to (1) identify, classify, illustrate and evaluate different theoretical traditions pertaining to ideology within MOS and point to future research directions and (2) use this analysis to argue for its continuing, but distinctive relevance, in relation to competing concepts in MOS. Our framing is based primarily on a development and updating of the classical conceptualisations of ideology in the social sciences, such as those based on the works of Marx, Weber, Mannheim and Geertz, and recognises both diversity within these perspectives (and even individual authors) and connections between them (see also Gerring 1997). We then outline some of the limitations of our review and identify specific future

research directions in the study of ideology. First however, we briefly introduce the use of ideology in the social sciences before discussing the method of our review.

IDEOLOGY IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

Conceptualisations of ideology emerged in Europe, firstly in France around the time of the revolution (Hassan 1986). It is claimed for example, that the term was originally formulated by Destutt de Tracy (1796) as a positive notion around the science of ideas (Haase and Raufflet 2017). In 1805, it appeared with a pejorative meaning in Napoleonic criticism of *Ideologues*. Its key initial impetus however, was in the rise of Marxist thinking, with Marx and Engels publishing their essay on *the German Ideology* in 1845. It has retained a strong association with Marxism ever since, with mixed fortunes as a result, but as we shall see, it has taken a diverse range of forms as it has become incorporated into social sciences. More generally, there is a long and continuing tradition of explaining the nature of society through its ideas and systems of beliefs, including ideologies, although such accounts compete with and/or complement other approaches which emphasise economic/material and political dynamics (Weber 1922/1968; Durkheim 1912/2001). A classic example of this is debate over the extent to which modern capitalist society is ordered and whether any such order is attributable to beliefs being shared – 'dominant' - or whether other forces such as economic inter-/dependence prevail. Positions vary, but most would concede that multiple, inter-connected dynamics are at play and that ideology has some role, if only as a way of excluding competing ideas (Abercrombie *et al*. 1980).

In his seminal review of ideology in the social sciences, Shils argued that, 'compared with other patterns of beliefs, ideologies are relatively highly systematized or integrated around one or a few pre-eminent values, such as salvation, equality, ethnic purity' (1967, p. 66). In advancing a worldview, ideology, he maintained, addressed structurally unmet cognitive (explaining), psychological (distortion, identity), social (legitimating) and moral (guide for conduct) needs. Similarly, Ricoeur (1986) brought to light three functions of ideology: *legitimation*, depicted in Weber's work; *integration*, as proposed by cultural theorists such as Geertz (1973); and *distortion* ('false consciousness'), as described in part of the Marxist tradition. By contrast, from a *sociology of knowledge* perspective, Mannheim's (1929/1936) work has been used to explore ideology more neutrally, both as a means of understanding the world and as the product of particular social groups (Berger and Luckmann 1966; Camic *et al*. 2011), distinct from notions such as utopia (Vogt 2016). Similarly, Gerring (1997)'s definitional analysis from a

politics perspective identified five functions of ideology – *explaining, repressing, integrating, motivating* and *legitimating* – which informs our starting point for classifying ideology in management.

Gerring's (1997) work is also important as he seeks to adopt a reasoned position, somewhere between imposing another 'best' definition of ideology and allowing complete flexibility. He notes for example, that all accounts in his wide ranging review share a view of ideology as having some sense of *coherence* in terms of ideology as a *framework* of beliefs. However, in other respects accounts can be wholly contradictory (e.g. as dominant/dogmatic or alienated/sophisticated) (1997, p. 957). Nevertheless, he identifies 35 core attributes from which different definitions draw, including the five functions outlined above as well as 16 dimensions of a 'cognitive structure' such as 'distortion' or 'knowledge' and 'locations' – as thought, language (see below) or behaviour. Given such variety and the resulting ambiguity, he raises the question as to whether the term might be abandoned in favour of others such as 'belief system'. Indeed, it was at this point that, for many in the social sciences, ideology lost some of its analytical appeal.

This change was also discussed by Kumar (2006), from a sociological perspective. He points to a combination of developments that threatened ideology as a concept in use in the 1980/90s. In particular, the decline of Marxism, which had a strong connection with ideology in the sense of being pitched against truth, was important. It coincided with the rise of post-modernism and its challenge to the notion of truth itself, which also resonated with existing constructionist traditions. Here, the concept of *discourse* comes to the fore, especially in the Foucauldian sense of *both* illuminating and concealing. Thus, Kumar posits that 'one can read Foucault's studies of (the) changing discourses…. as simply successive forms of ideology' (2006, p. 173). In this sense then, ideology became *more* relevant in that it no longer needed to be tied to (de)mystification and could have a wider field of connection. However, Kumar, along with others, rejects the conflation of ideology with discourse. Van Dijk for example is quite definitive in asserting that ideologies 'are not the same as discourses or other social practices that express, reproduce or enact them; and they are not the same as any other socially shared beliefs or belief systems' (2006, p. 117). Gerring (1997) too, insists on rejecting the idea of there being synonyms for ideology for they often miss the political or systemic nature of the term and, in any case, do not resolve definitional challenges – a position we share. Rather, and as we shall see, all these approaches and social science trends are played out, but also often

developed in the management studies literature. Indeed, we shall also identify new, emergent approaches to ideology. Furthermore, at the same time, we shall include a consideration of the *content* of ideology, notably between management ideologies, our main focus, and those associated with organisations.

METHOD

To examine how the concept of ideology is used in management studies, we conducted a *heuristic* review (Crossan and Apaydin 2010). Our aim was to explore the underlying theorisations of ideology and its contemporary relevance rather than its growth through article citations. We conducted the first round of searches in September 2015 and the final round in February 2018. We primarily used two electronic journal databases—EBSCO Business Source Premier (1886-2018) and SAGE Journals (1847-2018)— which provided the largest return and full-text access to some 2,071 peer-reviewed business and management journals. The objective was to identify peer-reviewed theoretical and empirical articles (explicitly) addressing ideology in management and organisational studies[1]. We searched both databases for 'management' and 'organisational' ideology and related terms (e.g. management rhetoric and philosophy) and their abbreviations in different forms in titles and/or abstracts. We then examined the presence of 'ideology' in 'all text' or together with the names of notable social science theorists of ideology (e.g. Marx, Weber, Mannheim and Geertz) as referred to in social science reviews by Gerring (1997) and Shils (1967). We also conducted additional searches on ISI, for example, on Althusser, members of the Frankfurt School, Gramsci and Žižek to verify that we had not overlooked relevant articles. We included articles that discussed management ideology or ideology in the context of management such as the political ideologies held by CEOs (Briscoe *et al*, 2014). This selection process yielded a final list of 175 articles which included concerns with both *management ideology* and management *and/of* ideology, as if ideology is extrinsic to management. We then read them all to identify their definitions, perspectives and the labels that they used. To extend our understanding, we also included 41 books that were systematically cited as primary references in the domain of 'management ideology' (e.g., Bendix 1956; Guillén 1994). Indeed, the number of books in management with an ideology focus appears relatively high compared to articles which may reflect the marginality of the concept in the field, compared to in the social sciences for example. (See online appendices: a full list of the articles and books reviewed, and; a table of empirical examples).

Informed by Mabey's (2012) review methodology and based on an initial reading of the texts,

we identified the most common views of ideology. In a number of the articles reviewed, perspectives were not explicit, but could be inferred from the ways in which the authors described the purpose of their papers and from their definitions, theoretical frameworks and trajectories. Our framework for categorising these was devised *in part*, from our understanding and integration of the different definitional categories as proposed by wider reviews such as that of Gerring (1997), mentioned above. Thus, we identified the following ideological functions and associated theoretical perspectives: the Marxist function of *domination*; the Weberian function of *legitimation*; the *normative* function, as proposed by the Mannheimiam tradition; the *interpretive* function, as depicted in the work of Dilthey; and the *integrating* function, based both on the Geertzian and Parsonian approach. During further coding of the data, two additional categories emerged: ideology as an *object of critique* (as depicted by Habermas) and ideology as a *fantasy structuring social reality* (as described by Žižek). In this way, in addition to our main focus on ideology within management studies, we have updated and added to wider social science categorisations of the concept, for example, in political theory and sociology (cf. Shils 1967; Gerring 1997; Gould 1964; Johnson 1968; Kumar 2006).

We recognise that different categorisations are possible. However, our intention was less to categorise papers in a definitive manner than to find illustrative examples of different categories and then provide an indication of the number and nature of management studies exemplifying these conceptualisations and how they have evolved in the field. The categories are conceptually distinct. However, and as we shall see, not only are there sometimes important variations *within* perspectives, but there are connections between them (e.g. domination and legitimation; interpretation and integration) (also Gerring 1997). Furthermore, because most papers and books have secondary, and at times more than two, theoretical trajectories, we noted this separately, rather than through double classification. Finally, having conducted our initial review and analysis, we were keen to develop insight into ideology beyond that which could be provided simply through classification. We thus carried out a critical evaluation with a view to identifying qualities of the different perspectives, but also research opportunities for ideology overall in MOS. This is a key element in what makes our review *interpretive* in approach as well as heuristic (see also Suddaby *et al.* 2017).

THE ROLES OF IDEOLOGY IN MANAGEMENT STUDIES

As noted above, we found seven distinct and yet related perspectives on ideology within management studies literature that all explicitly draw on seminal social theory works. We now address each in turn: referring to how these original works have been developed; outlining examples in MOS and providing a brief evaluation. We discuss possible areas of further research in the subsequent discussion.

Ideology as domination

The view of ideology as domination and control was the first to emerge and was especially prevalent in the social sciences and some management studies in the 1950s and 1960s. Overall, research in this school tends to refer to Marx (Marx and Engels 1845/1967), and to a lesser extent Weber and Mannheim, and is closely related to notions of ideational control or hegemony in the context of capitalism (Gramsci 1957; Birnbaum 1960; Apter 1964; Abravanel 1983). Here then, ideology is both an ideational and a material weapon to control or subordinate individuals and social groups or classes (Putnam 1971). It is something used by elites in general, including management, to justify their dominant position in an existing social order - discourse *plus* power (Thompson 1984, p. 4). Our review illustrates that its use is closest to the original conceptualisation of ideology in the social sciences, although this includes some significant diversity within the approach. For example, the emphasis on ideology as distortion is closest to Marx's earlier work (see Boudon 1986) and is not shared by all in this tradition (cf ideology as manipulation) (Hassan, 1986).

In management and organisation studies, this perspective became most prominent with the rise of labour process theory and then critical management studies (including critical discourse analysis). The seminal text in labour process analysis (Braverman 1974) argued that scientific justifications of labour division and deskilling serve to increase or maintain control and extract surplus value to favour both management and capital (see also Marglin 1974). As Spencer (2000, p. 223) noted, Braverman's 'main motivation lay with the subversion of pro-capitalist ideologies', notably Taylorism, but also (bourgeois) sociology. Likewise, Friedman (1977, p. 6) charts how conferring status and autonomy on workers served to obscure their alienation and win loyalty ideologically. Also building on Braverman, but with a more explicitly subjectivist focus, Burawoy (1979) drew attention to how exploitation is obscured through the labour process itself, rather than explicit management ideas. He argued that the way in which work is structured (such as through piece-work compensation) gives workers the illusion of

choice and results in competitive effort among workers to their own detriment. Thus, Burawoy used Gramsci's (1957) notion of *hegemony* to explain consent to management control (see also Gill and Law, 1989; Carroll and Carson, 2003; Hackley, 2003; Musson and Duberley 2007). Similarly, the idea that the management need not resort to coercive methods to ensure domination, but can rely, in part, on ideational control is evident in Edwards (1979) and many subsequent authors who use the term ideology to varying degrees (e.g., Rosen 1984; Alvesson 1984; Frenkel *et al*. 1997; Hackley 2003; Kalev *et al*. 2008; Dallyn 2014).

A similar tradition is evident in studies on the use of specific management ideas and forms of communication, including those propounded by academics. Clegg and Dunkerley (1980), for example, also drew on Gramsci (1957) (who rarely actually used the term) (see Gerring, 1997) to suggest that 'intellectuals' in management and academic circles have diffused ideological discourses across organisations, particularly in the theories of leadership and motivation, to help shape employees' perceptions of organisational issues and interests and of themselves (see also Alvesson and Deetz, 1999). Mumby (1988, 1997a, 1997b) for example, shifted the focus of this to the context of organisational communication and public relations, as senior executives sought to legitimate their own systems of thought. This also reflected part of a wider discursive turn in management and organisation studies in the form of critical discourse analysis (CDA) and Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) post-Marxist discourse theory around hegemony (see e.g. Thomas and Hewitt 2011). Here, as noted earlier, ideology was sometimes replaced by discourse, although for others, it retained a distinct meaning – as a property of social structures *and* 'events' or talk in a dialectical relationship (Fairclough 1995, p. 70; also Fairclough and Wodak 1997; Hardy *et al*. 2000).

Related to this shift was the wider development of critical management studies (CMS). Although we explore this tradition further in relation to ideology as an object of critique below, the works of Grusky (1962), Brown (1978), Rosen (1984), Carlisle and Manning (1994) and Cobb et al. (2001) are worth noting within the categorisation of ideology as domination over five decades. These scholars point to the economic, political and cultural forces through which ideas supporting management (and patriarchy) are diffused, established and contested. Such observations have their parallels in debates within public administration since the 1980s, with the rise of neo-liberalism and New Public Management (Reed 2019). Once again, such meaning construction in organisations has also been pursued with discursive, rather than a social structural, focus on domination (for reviews, see Smircich and Calás 1995; Fournier and Grey

2000; Alvesson and Willmott 1992; 2003).

The view of ideology as domination has a rich and controversial history, especially as regards just how dominant and dominating a specific ideology might be (Abercrombie *et al*. 1980). Also, positions have changed and fractured, echoing internal debates and diverse positions within Marxism and 'post-Marxism'. In particular, the relative autonomy of ideas or the 'superstructure' (e.g. Althusser 1971) varies up to the point of challenging a materialist basis of ideology (Laclau and Mouffe 1985). As we shall see with later perspectives, these debates gave rise to new positions within management, but they were mostly rehearsed in other fields of study. Nevertheless, neo-Gramscian studies of hegemonic struggles and the circulation of ideas among business elites remain highly topical and helpful in understanding how management accommodations ultimately contribute to the reproduction of relations of power and domination, but also their transformation (e.g. Levy *et al*. 2010; Moog *et al*. 2015). Indeed, it is in changing or contested regimes that ideology as domination can become most visible. For example, it is hard to make sense of recent and emerging changes in public administration or HRM without reference to neo-liberalism/s as a powerful (if flawed) set of ideas which are coercive in many contexts (also Baccaro and Howell 2017).

Ideology as legitimation

Very closely related to ideology as domination is its conceptualisation as a form of legitimation. Indeed, this parallel was also recognised by Marx (Marx and Engels 1845/1967; see also Althusser 1965). However, Weberian approaches focus less on coercion and distortion and more on governing through consent and cooperation (Weber 1922/1968). The role of ideology in this sense then, is to *legitimise* authority (charismatic, traditional and/or legal-rational), even if it is not always successful. Bendix (1956) is probably the most well-known adherent to this view of ideology in the context of management. In his now classic historical and comparative study of authority, he applied it to organisations both within and beyond capitalist or industrialised societies (e.g. *entrepreneurial ideologies in* pre-revolutionary Russia). Indeed, the emphasis is on management or entrepreneurs, as a group, seeking to justify its role and position, as opposed to justifying capitalism specifically, although the two are clearly related (Armstrong 1991).

This work inspired or informed further classic historical studies of management in the USA and more widely (e.g., Barley and Kunda 1992; Guillén 1994; Shenhav 1999) although it is not

widely cited more generally, given its influence. In our review, for example, we found only 23 articles on management ideology that cite Bendix (e.g., Bennis 1959; Weiss and Miller 1987) although many others adopt a similar position (e.g., Perrow 1986; Shenhav 1995 and, more recently Seeck and Kuokkanen 2010; Engwall *et al.* 2016). These researchers also see managerial ideology as a system of ideas that describe and justify managerial authority based on assumptions such as those regarding human nature and the organisational environment. For example, consistent with the work of Barley and Kunda (1992) and Guillén (1994), Abrahamson (1997, p. 512-515, emphasis added) analyses the emergence and consolidation of five key 'managerial rhetorics' or ideologies of the twentieth century. These correspond to 'different types of widely spoken and written discourses *justifying* the use of particular sets of techniques for managing employees' although similar dynamics are also evident in other occupations (e.g. Kitay and Wright 2007).

As we noted earlier, the concept of ideology resonates with a number of core themes in management and organisation studies and this is especially evident in the case of ideology as *legitimation*. With institutional theory so dominant and largely based on a 'logic of appropriateness', this view of ideology could be seen as having been partially substituted or absorbed, especially perhaps in the emerging field of discursive institutionalism (Schmidt, 2008) which gives primacy to the independent role of ideas. Indeed, research focusing on ideology is often described as lying within the field of institutional theory (e.g. Guillén 1994) and Bendix's work too, emerged from 'from the legacy of institutions and ideas' (1956, p. 444). However, ideology as legitimation is not restricted to institutionalist accounts. In the context of CSR for example, securing legitimation is a strong theme in its own right (e.g. Bres and Gond 2014; Joutsenvirta and Vaara 2015), often with explicit reference to ideology (e.g. Levy *et al.* 2016). In addition, seminal articles from the 'political CSR' stream discuss the powerful (re)legitimising effects of multi-stakeholder CSR initiatives and regulations by connecting them with the ideal of 'deliberative democracy' (Scherer and Palazzo 2007; 2011). Likewise, legitimation is a core construct in studies of identity and reputation and yet ideology tends only to be used in reference to management occupations and the professions in these contexts, rather than organisational identity (see also integration below), perhaps as a result of a stronger sociological tradition in the former domains (Whittington and Whipp 1992; Robson *et al.* 1994).

While the view of ideology as domination has often been undermined by the critique around

distortion, and the false consciousness this can imply (see also below), the Weberian approach has fared better in MOS. It puts power front and centre and challenges any claims to the neutrality or objectivity of management or similar occupations, but does not necessarily undermine its truth claims. With the publication of Bendix's (1956) book, this perspective formed the study of "management ideology" as a particular and historical phenomenon, distinct from the societal and class ideologies of the Marxian and, as we shall see, Mannheimian traditions. Furthermore, the black box that the firm had once been, was opened, revealing a host of political practices through ideas. At the same time however, it has fallen under the shadow of institutional theory, which typically lacks the same critical edge by often neglecting the role of power in 'establishing and naturalizing' meaning (Willmott, 2015, p. 105).

Ideology as interpretation - a means of describing and explaining the world

Both ideology as *domination* (Marx) and ideology as *legitimation* (Weber) have clear political dimensions and are perhaps, the most familiar approaches within management studies. However, from our review, and as we shall discuss later, they are not the most common. This is the view of ideology as a way of *interpreting* the world, based on shared values and beliefs, which draws particularly on the writings of Dilthey (1883/1988; 1957) and their intellectual legacy. Here, ideology is seen to influence how individuals perceive their surroundings and the problems they confront within a particular historical context (Adorno *et al*. 1950; Birnbaum, 1960; Shils 1967; Geertz 1973; Dilthey 1883/1988; 1957). This 'apolitical' view of ideology reflected a wider tendency in the social sciences since the writings of Marx, to neutralise its 'negative' connotations (Thompson 1984). This was largely influenced by Mannheim (1929/1936), who recognised that ideology was rooted in social structures and served group interests, but explicitly opposed the Marxist distinction between truth and ideological illusion (false consciousness) (also Vogt 2016). He argued, in what became known as the 'paradox of Mannheim' (Geertz 1973), that if all our representations of reality were deceptive, then Marxist science would itself be nullified (see also Voirol 2008).

Applied to the realm of management and organisation studies, the Diltheyan view has led to studies of ideology as *frames of reference, interpretive schemes* or *cognitive maps* (Shrivastava and Mitroff 1984; Bartunek 1984) – on *perception rather than power* (Dunbar *et al*. 1982). For example, inspired by social constructionism, Abravanel (1983, p. 274) defines ideology in an *organisational*, rather than managerial sense, as a set of basic ideas and operational consequences related to one another within a system of dominant beliefs, often producing

contradictions (also Dunbar *et al*. 1982). For Pfeffer (1981, p. 11) though, *organisational* ideologies are closely linked to *management* and influence: 'it is the task of management to provide explanations, rationalizations, and legitimation for the activities undertaken in the organization […] done through the construction and maintenance of systems of shared meanings, shared paradigms, and shared languages and culture' (see also Trice *et al*. 1969; Pettigrew 1979). However, this is not necessarily seen as being directed towards legitimating management interests, but to address organisational crises, threats and change (e.g., Starbuck *et al*. 1978; Meyer 1982). Thus, combined with the emphasis on 'shared meanings', it comes close to particular notions of organisational *culture* (e.g. myth, ritual and ceremony) which, again, emerged as a central concept in management and organisational studies (e.g. Barley *et al*. 1988; Alvesson 1991).

The legacy of ideology as interpretation on MOS has been rather ironic or self-destructive. The late 1970s saw ideology become a new dirty word generally, gradually removed from political and societal discourses. At the same time, in terms of management models, systems rationalism, in which political and human logic models were not fully taken into account, was on the rise (Guillén 1994; Barley and Kunda, 1992). In part, these processes emptied ideology of its political character in MOS and, as others have argued in different domains (e.g. Gerring 1997), almost annihilated it. The danger was that it was becoming replaceable by the notions of beliefs, values, myths, frames of reference, and, notably, culture.

Ideology as integration – a means of reinforcing cohesion and identity

This view of ideology sees it as a crucial mechanism for social integration (Parsons 1951; Geertz 1973). Although such a function was also clearly implied in the above perspectives, especially as regards *interpretation*, here it is more prominent. In other words, ideological systems are primarily a means of binding community members together through norms and values (Erikson 1958; Apter 1964; Shils 1967). Proposed by Geertz (1973), it was again, partially inherited from Dilthey (1883/1988) and appears to be another neutral form - a system of beliefs, a social institution (Parsons 1951; also Erikson 1963). Various scholars in management studies, such as Kunda (1995) and D'Enbeau and Buzzanell (2013), have used and developed this integrative approach to ideology. Following Parsons (1951) for example, Beyer et al. (1981) considered *organisational* ideology to be a mechanism that targets the imbalances and dysfunctions of the organisational system. Without ideological arrangements then, values cannot provide an identity framework for organisations and their members.

Similarly, Staw (1980) insisted that organisational ideologies offer a vision of success through which employee identity and involvement can be reinforced. Finally, at an occupational, rather than organisational level, Wright and Kitay (2004) used ideology to highlight the cohesion used by consultants in diffusing American management concepts (ideologies) into Australia.

As displayed in the most recent articles drawing on this perspective on ideology (most notably D'enbeau and Buzzanell 2013), there continues to be a great deal of empirical phenomena that could be illuminated by this approach. Specifically, the prevalence of identity politics in many contemporary societies is increasingly linked to the identities of organizations too as they seek to celebrate and/or appropriate individuals' characteristics for commercial ends as for example, fun and diverse workplaces (Fleming and Sturdy 2009). Here then, the strength of organizational cohesion is a product of how strong the ideological identity is. However, without a political dimension, it is difficult to see how this adds to studies of culture or social psychological concerns with group cohesion and identity, except perhaps by its exclusively ideational focus.

Ideology as a normative logic

According to this view, ideology consists of rules, guidelines and norms that facilitate and prescribe action (Lane 1962; McClosky 1964; Shils 1967; Gerring 1997) and are more or less adapted to particular situations (Boudon 1986). Once again, it resonates with other perspectives we have discussed, especially that of legitimation and interpretation. Indeed, this conceptualisation has also often relied on the work of Mannheim (1929) whereby ideologies not only describe the world, but also influence or mould it (Gerring 1997). In the context of management studies, this perspective has been adopted from the 1970s onwards, including in the work of Garnier (1972), Barley and Kunda (1992), Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992), Ramsey et al. (2007) and Ruiz-Palomino and Martinez-Cañas (2011). For example, both Pettigrew (1979) and Trice et al. (1969) see organisational ideologies as providing rationalisations that mobilise and encourage managers to act, rather than as managerial tools as above. Similarly, Kalev et al. (2008) examined scientific management over a 20-year period showing how state leaders relied on its normative function (also Frenkel and Shenhav 2003). In another study, Erçek and Say (2008) studied TQM as an ideology which was propagated through a normative strategy and contributed to legitimising the actions and regulations of a professional Quality Association. Thus, in this instance at least, the normative view can include legitimation, but generally, this is not the case. Rather, ideology here contains both an

interpretive sense - as a ready-made frame of reference - but is mostly seen practically, as a guide for action. This rather particular take on ideology, one which also resonates with other perspectives, makes it difficult to evaluate. As with ideology as interpretation and integration, it lacks an explicitly political dimension. Nevertheless, it does not risk substitution so easily and could be used, for example, to refer to a set of standards that lack a formal basis, but shape action. In the context of MOS, this resonates well with managerial prescriptions as 'action points' or management fashions that offer seemingly apolitical guidelines.

Ideology as an object of critique

Work from each of the five previous approaches corresponds more or less explicitly to established social science perspectives, identified in reviews of ideology outside of management, even if the labels used are sometimes different (e.g. Gerring 1997). A quite distinct approach is that of ideology as an *object of critique* in that this is a self-reflexive or meta-conceptualisation of the term. However, as we shall see, it does also resonate with, and draw on, the more critical perspectives of ideology as *legitimation* and *domination* in particular. It is derived mostly from the Frankfurt School and the work of Habermas in particular. According to Habermas (1972), the main contemporary ideologies in our society are focused around science and technology, whereby *social* issues such as financial capitalism are largely ignored or transformed into *technical* matters requiring solutions by expert elites which is to the detriment of human interaction and culture (Grundmann 2018). This critique seeks to emancipate human beings by removing or revealing the domination and legitimation of ideologies through self-reflexivity and communication. In this sense, it can be seen as post-Marxist, but it also relates to the Geertzian approach to action as symbolic mediation (Geertz 1973) and to Freud's legacy around self-knowledge (Reynolds, 1998). In the Habermasian view then, as with Marxist notions of false consciousness, ideology appears as a *distortion* of praxis by reducing human activities to a, far from neutral, technological rationality (Habermas 1972). Thus, the ideology critique is not simply analytical like the previous views, but seeks to generate alternative, open and emancipatory or 'non-ideological' forms of communication such as through critical reason and open participation.

As we have already seen in relation to Marxist and Weberian scholars, domination and legitimation have been central themes in the use of ideology in MOS (Alvesson and Deetz 2006). However, Habermasian work expands on these critiques of the workplace and of management in particular, representing a 'development from a focus on socially repressive

ideas and institutions to the explorations of the communicative processes through which ideas are produced, reproduced and critically examined' (Alvesson and Deetz 2006, p. 263). Its use in management began to emerge in the 1980s, with the rise of critical management studies (CMS) (e.g. Stablein and Nord 1985; Alvesson 1991; Cunliffe 2009). A notable example is Shrivastava's (1986) study which identified different ways in which strategic management – hitherto seen as a highly rational aspect of management practice - is ideological and how this might be resolved by treating it as *praxis*. As noted earlier, the emergence of such approaches echoed trends in the social sciences more generally with a more cautious or critical approach to Marxism and/or greater interest in post-structuralism and discourse (e.g. Ogbor 2000). Knights and Willmott (2002: 73) illustrate this meeting of views in a Foucauldian critique of autonomy at work. They argue that 'unlike Habermas, Foucault …. is deeply sceptical of any analysis that perceives or even anticipates a human discourse free of power'. Nevertheless, Habermasian approaches continue in MOS such as Erkama's study (2010, p. 153) on discursive struggles over organisational restructuring. This is linked to global and local ideologies or representations 'which contribute to establishing and maintaining relations of power, domination and exploitation' and thus also echo a domination view. However, less critical management studies too, have been inspired by Habermas's progressive communication model and discourse ethics (e.g. Palazzo and Scherer 2006).

One of the consequences of the introduction of a Habermasian perspective to MOS was to shift debate on ideology more towards the issue of communication and, in doing so, away from questions of group or particular interests and from the weight of social structures. Indeed, ideology as an object of critique elevated managerial ideology to the rank of a "pseudo-communication" produced by the systematic distortion of language practice (Habermas, 1970b). Such concerns are evident today in debates about 'bullshit jobs' and 'business bullshit' for example (Spicer 2017) and in relation to liberal and democratic traditions of participation in communication and debate as opposed to technocracy or 'thought leadership' (Grundmann 2018). However, for many in the critical tradition, the discursive turn in MOS has rendered the Foucauldian critique mentioned earlier all too persuasive and a new variant has emerged, to which we now turn.

Ideology as a fantasy structuring social reality

While the role of the Frankfurt School and ideology as an object of critique may have been partially incorporated into social science reviews, albeit as a variant of

domination/legitimation, the last of the perspectives we identified is more recent in its emergence. Indeed, many articles on ideology in management studies published in the past decade or so have drawn on Žižek's (1989) Lacanian conceptualisation of ideology, notably from his book *The Sublime Object of Ideology*. Given its relative novelty and still marginal status, we describe this view in a little more detail here. Firstly, while it, once again, partly develops Marxist understandings of ideology, it is also a sort of reversal or critique of this, but also of critical theory itself (Lennerfors and Sköld 2009). In particular, to Žižek and scholars drawing on his work, a Marxist emphasis on ideology as false consciousness or distortion is not problematic in the senses of earlier critiques such as those of Mannheim and Weberian analysis (see Abercrombie *et al.* 1980). Rather, it is more naïve because the management world is characterised by 'enlightened false consciousness' (e.g., Cederström and Marinetto 2013, p. 427).

What this means is that, while we are not unaware of—and thus not fooled by—ideology, we *'act as if'* we are (Fleming and Spicer 2003, p. 164; emphasis in originals). In other words, Marx's famous dictum that 'they don't know it, but they are doing it' is reframed to 'they know what they are doing and do it anyway' (Fleming and Spicer 2005). Thus, management research in this tradition shows how employees may cynically distance themselves from, but perpetuate ideologies of managerialism, consumerism or neoliberalism (Fleming and Spicer 2003; 2005; Murtola 2012; Willmott 2013). This *dis*-identification leads to an 'ideological transference' in which we let the rituals of submission to ideology be performed by surrogate objects (Fleming and Spicer 2005). People do not need to hold ideological beliefs – as shared values - as long as they assume someone, or something, does the believing for them. Here then, the main role of ideology is to deliver a fantasy whereby social reality itself provides a form of escape. This, it is argued, promises to extinguish a psychological or existential and traumatic sense of 'lack' and provide instead a sense of consistency and continuity, although the ideological fantasy never delivers such fulfilment (Contu and Willmott 2006; Lennerfors and Sköld 2009).

Despite the critique of false consciousness, a sense of distortion or deception in ideology often remains in such accounts. For example, de Cock and Böhm (2007) suggest that ideology is never as powerful as when it is dressed up or concealed as non-ideological or post-ideological - the naturalisation of domination. However, they do not explicitly call for 'emancipation' from false consciousness in the same way that is evident in the Frankfurt School. For example, one possible route to subverting ideology and the exploitation associated with it is through 'over-

identification' (cf. cynicism) with the tenets of customer service, corporate culture or CSR for example, and pushing them to their absurd limits (Murtola 2012; Fleming and Jones 2013). Indeed, the combination of playfulness and the subversive potential of this approach may make it particularly seductive to critical researchers within management. This is in the context where critique, as with mainstream management research, is increasingly expected to engage with practice, in activist forms of enquiry for example (see Spicer *et al.* 2009; Bryar 2018). The full potential and significance of this approach, in either scholarship or activism in the management domain is too early to judge. It remains at the margins, even within critical traditions, and research from this perspective is necessarily highly theoretical and sometimes not always easily accessible, despite its playful edge.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

From a review of articles and books published in management over more than 60 years, we have, for the first time, identified and evaluated the different views of ideology in management studies, pointing to their relevance and, in some cases, their continuing analytical purchase on important issues. In doing so, we have hopefully demonstrated something of the importance, place and development of ideology in MOS to date. In this section, we bring the views together in different ways in order to see them in more relative and developmental terms and to assess the potential future of ideology in management research. We also show how our study of ideology sheds light on the nature, criticality and trajectories of MOS more generally. First, in a tabular form, we summarize the main conceptualizations and applications of ideology we have outlined above, but also identify their primary assumptions and core definitions. Second, we reveal how approaches have changed over time and their relative popularity or use in MOS. We then discuss the concept's boundaries directly, by considering its relation to sometimes competing notions such as discourse, culture and legitimation within the management field and argue for a pluralist, but not infinitely flexible, approach to the concept. We end by identifying research agendas for ideology within MOS, based on the limitations of our own and prior research and the current socio-political climate.

Our seven distinct, but also often overlapping views of ideology were organised around the role or function that each is seen to perform in management and organisations. Each one has also been explicitly linked with different social science traditions, assumptions and authors and, in turn, illustrated through its use in management and its sub-fields (see Table 1). Of course, other means of classification could have been adopted. For example, using Gerring's

(1997) full range of definitional attributes, beyond the functions and content of ideology, would have revealed the extent to which ideology was seen to be more discursive or practice-based or dominant or subordinate and so on. Likewise, further analysis might reflect more on the epistemological positions and assumptions on which the views are based. However, as is implicit in the basic summary of positions in Table 1, doing so takes us further into an assessment of social science more than providing insight into ideology in MOS specifically. Furthermore, it would open up the complexity and diversity present *within* the different perspectives. For example, while ideology as domination might often be founded on a materialist position within Marxism, it also comprises perspectives where ideas have an independent effect.

Table 1: Summary - conceptualisations of ideology in management studies

Approach	Research perspective	Seminal author's definition of ideology	Primary assumptions	Main application	Illustrative studies
Ideology as domination	How ideology is used by elites, including management, to maintain and consolidate their dominant position in an existing social order. Ideology as distortion/ manipulation.	(Early) Marx and Engels (1845/1967, p. 64): "The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas, i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas; hence of the relationships which make the one class the ruling one, therefore the ideas of its dominance."	Materialism: "The production of ideas…is above all interwoven into the material activity and the material interaction of people." (Marx and Engels, 1845/1967).	Labour process theory and some CMS.	Friedman, (1977); Alvesson (1984); Weiss and Miller (1987); Filby and Willmott (1988); Frenkel *et al*. (1997); Hackley (2003); Kalev *et al*. (2008); Dallyn (2014).
Ideology as legitimation	How ideology is used to legitimate authority and a specific social order.	Weber (1922/1968, p. 325): "It is an induction from experience that no system of authority voluntarily limits itself to the appeal to material or affectual or ideal motives as a basis for guaranteeing its continuance. In addition, every such system attempts to establish and to cultivate the belief in its legitimacy."	Social and individual actions as meaningful and motivated. Focus on individual and collective beliefs based on values of equivalent legitimacy and validity.	Institutional theory; organisation studies; management/ occupational history.	Ruef and Harness (2009); Redding (1987); Wright and Kitay (2004).
Ideology as interpretation	How ideology serves everyday perception of the world around us.	Ideology "is in each case a totality in which, on the foundation of a perception of the world or a world picture, questions about the meaning and sense of the world are decided. From the latter in turn…the supreme principles of the conduct of life are derived" (Dilthey 1883/1988, p. 82).	Idealism: Properties that individuals discover in objects depend on the way that these objects appear to them as perceiving subjects.	Cognition studies	Dunbar *et al*. (1982); Beyer *et al*. (1988); Prasad and Prasad (1994).
Ideology as integration	How ideology serves to bring individuals and groups together	Geertz (1973, p. 196, 220): Ideology "as an ordered system of cultural symbol…most distinctively, maps of	Action is mediated and articulated by symbolic systems.	Organisational and occupational culture	Boot and Reynolds (1984); Goll and Sambharya (1995);

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	in societies, organizations and occupations.	problematic social reality and matrices for the creation of collective conscience." Parsons (1951, p. 349–350): Ideology is a "system of beliefs, held in common by the members of a collectivity…which is oriented to the evaluative integration of the community."			D'Enbeau and Buzzanell (2013).
Ideology as normative logic	How ideology is used as a set of prescriptions and serves as a road map.	Mannheim (1936/1960, p. 49–50 and p. 56): "Here we refer to the ideology of an age or of a concrete historico-social group, e. g. of a class, when we are concerned with the characteristics and composition of the total structure of the mind of this epoch or of this group… Ideologies are the situationally transcendent ideas which never succeed de facto in the realization of their projected contents" (also, Boudon, 1989, p. 52).	Social groups' and individuals' ideas reflect specific social and historical situations (see also the epistemology associated with the sociology of knowledge).	Studies of management practices and ideas.	Linstead and Grafton-Small (1992); Barley and Kunda (1992); Carlisle and Manning (1994); Cobb *et al.* (2001).
Ideology as object of critique	Identifying and exposing ideology via a critique that aims to emancipate people.	Critique of "ideologically mystifying legitimations." (Habermas 1970a, p. 87) whereby "social interests still determine the direction, functions, and pace of technical progress." (Habermas 1970a, p. 105)	Social theory as ideology-criticism with emancipation achieved through rationality and open dialogue.	CMS and management communication/ discourse studies.	Alvesson (1991); Ogbor (2000); Erkama (2010).
Ideology as a fantasy structuring social reality	How the power of ideology revolves around a fantasy that is all the more powerful when people are cynical towards it.	"The fundamental level of ideology…is not that of an illusion masking the real state of things but that of an (unconscious) fantasy structuring our social reality itself." (Žižek 1989, p. 30)	Argument that no experience of social reality can be 'outside' of ideology, as ideology structures social reality itself.	CMS including second wave of activist-oriented research	Fleming and Spicer (2003); De Cock and Böhm (2007); Lennerfors and Sköld (2009).

Historical turns and theoretical preferences

Identifying the different perspectives and their analytical qualities says little about the dominance or otherwise of each one and their trajectory or development. We have hinted at some of the shifts in popularity and usage of perspectives in both the social sciences and management, but not in sufficient detail to give an overview over time. In MOS, two specific theoretical shifts or 'turns' can be identified with distinct implications for our understanding of ideology in management. The first can be understood as a reaction against the Marxist notion of ideology (at least that where a sense of false consciousness is implied), towards a seemingly more neutral or apolitical notion. Even in studies informed by a critical perspective, where management is seen as an imperfect form of control (e.g. Barley and Kunda 1992), the concept lost some of its Marxist character and critical purchase. But this reaction—the '*culturalist turn*'—laid research open to the charge that 'ideology' could be synonymous with, and therefore substituted by, notions such as ideas, beliefs or attitudes, terms associated with social psychology and anthropology (Weiss and Miller 1987). At the same time, the concept of power and its relationship to knowledge evolved with the '*linguistic turn*' in management studies such that, for some critical scholars at least, 'discourse' became a preferred term to 'ideology' (Parush 2008). This second shift, mainly from the 1990s onwards, however, is also related to what might be seen as a resurrection of the concept of ideology as political or critical. This is reflected in a re-emergence of the Weberian view from the 1950s, perhaps with the rise to dominance of institutional theory in management. It is also evident in our last two categories which developed some post-Marxist notions of ideology related to distortion (Habermasian studies) or enlightened false consciousness (Žižekian studies). However, at least until now, such positions remain at the margins of management studies, given their mostly critical intent.

The relative academic popularity or success of the different views is evident from our study although, of course, our data cannot be seen as wholly representative. Nevertheless, given the breadth of our review in terms of the number of journals (25) and books (41) and the period of time covered (1956-2018), we can shed some light on the nature of management studies in general, especially how (un)critical it is at particular points in time (Figure 1). For example, in terms of numbers of reviewed papers, 21% conceptualised ideology primarily as a normative logic drawing on Mannheim/Weber. This view was strong in 1950s and 1960's although it competed with ideology as domination and control which was then at its peak (16% of all articles). However, as noted above, this Marxist view declined in popularity in the 1970s, effectively replaced with the (numerically) most common approach overall - ideology as

interpreting the world (27%) – which was especially prevalent in 1980s and 1990s. As already noted, by way of a return to a more political approach, the Weberian focus on ideology as legitimation (19% overall) was especially visible in the 2000s. The remaining perspectives were less common, with 7% of papers adopting an integrative (Parsonian/Geertzian) view and the same for ideology as a fantasy structuring social reality, with only 5% primarily taking a Habermasian position, although the latter two perspectives have not had as long to become established. And once again, with the continued prospect of the replacement of ideology with concepts such as discourse, or its use becoming quite restricted in meaning (e.g. party political views of CEOs), its future as a mainstream concept remains uncertain (cf Mees-Buss and Welch, 2019). However, as the following discussion will argue, there is reason to suggest that it should and could develop further.
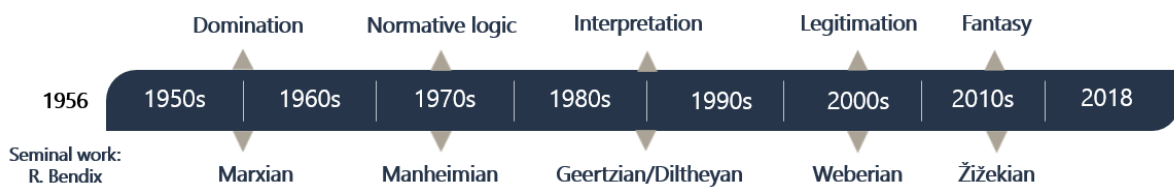
Figure 1: Timeline of the prominent conceptualisations of ideology in MOS over decades

Towards non-substitutability

Overall, our findings confirm the observation of many in the social sciences (e.g. Gallie 1956; Gerring 1997) that ideology in the field of management studies is a contested and ambiguous term with multiple meanings – 'semantic promiscuity'. This is reflected in at least three different ways. Firstly, while we have attributed dominant perspectives to individual research studies, in practice, a secondary and even tertiary perspective was sometimes evident (e.g. see Bennis 1959; McLean *et al.* 2017). Secondly, and as we have already noted, there are often overlaps between perspectives, to the extent to which notions such as legitimation and integration are evident in different positions (also, Gerring 1997). Indeed, an alternative way of conceptualizing the perspectives would be as points on a number of continua. Thirdly, and our focus here, we have seen how the term is often close to, or synonymous with other concepts and labels. This is something that was noted a long time ago. For example, Campbell (1963)

observed the counterproductive proliferation of terminology in organisational studies, noting that 76 terms had been used as synonyms for ideology. Indeed, ideology has been explicitly treated as synonymous with 'frames of reference' and 'cognitive maps' (Shrivastava and Mitroff 1984), 'perceptions and norms' (Dunbar *et al*. 1982), 'values' (Trice and Beyer 1984), and 'beliefs' (Pettigrew 1979). Likewise, more recently, emerging terms such as the 'imaginary' (O'Reilly and Reed 2011; De Cock *et al*. 2013; Zanoni *et al*. 2017) can be seen as yet another related concept. While some semantic pluralism is both desirable and inevitable, following Gerring (1997), it is essential for the term to have some *distinctive* meaning*s* to achieve analytical purchase and prevent it being subsumed by synonyms. This also allows for continued theoretical diversity and tension (both interpretivist and realist positions, for example). However, given that there has been no review of the diverse meanings of ideology in MOS, nor any systematic consideration of related terms, it has not been possible to identify or map those positions which hold the greatest potential for future development.

The systemic or analytically cohesive (system-like) nature of ideology was Gerring's (1997) single common attribute of the term in the field of politics. And indeed, *worldviews, individual or societal beliefs, movements of thought, myths* and *rhetoric* all belong to the same category of comprehensive models or frameworks of thought. However, they also differ from the views of ideology we have outlined in that they do not have a close link with the notion of authority and/or are not systematically characterized by promoting a certain social order or defending the interests of a particular group (Shils 1967). Furthermore, beyond its descriptive and interpretative meanings, ideology calls for a transformation of behaviours according to the principles it promotes, among its "members" and/or its targets. Likewise, ideology is also part of a specific cultural framework, which is why it is made up of elements shared by a collectivity or era and transmitted from generation to generation (Kroeber and Parsons 1958). The boundary between *culture* (or mentalities) and ideology is therefore often thin (Pettigrew 1979), but important in terms of emphasis on "persuasive content" (Geiger 1932, p. 77; Guillén 1994, p. 25) and/or defending a social order (Guillén 1998). Furthermore, ideology differs from *values* in its systemic nature (Abravanel 1983), and once again, in its advocacy of particular interests (Weiss and Miller 1987).

By taking into account some of the core features of ideology in this way, we hope to have achieved some selectivity, but not exclusivity. In particular, the greatest potential is in highlighting not *only* the systemic nature of the term (shared by all approaches), but also its

contestable and political form. In short, we argue that the more neutral perspectives should be lost to 'culture', 'cognitive frames', 'set of values' or beliefs and myths (Weiss and Miller, 1987) leaving ideology as concerned with *domination, legitimation, critique and/or fantasy*. This still eludes the distinction we identified between *management ideology* (present in all seven perspectives) and management *and/of* ideology. In the latter case, management is implicitly *extrinsic* to ideology, something to be managed, like 'culture', or an independent variable, such as in recent longitudinal studies where the nature of management practice is seen as being shaped by wider *political* ideologies such as neo-liberalism (McLean *et al.* 2017; Briscoe and Joshi 2017; Carnahan and Greenwood 2017; Gupta and Wowak 2017). There are risks associated with 'reifying' ideology as an *independent* variable among others, if the concept is regarded as inherently political, social and pervasive. Again, such a position allows for other terms (e.g. management discourse) to be used for different purposes. In other words, following Parush (2008, p. 65) in relation to both management ideology and management fashions, there should be a 'logic of supplementation rather than the logic of displacement'. This allows for a sharper, if still variable, sense of the concept.

Where next?

Having argued for a more limited, political series of meanings for ideology, there still remains significant potential for further research. This is based around some of the limitations of our own study, but also on what has been missed in ideology research in management and on what the contemporary context presents as important empirically, theoretically and in terms of policy and practice. Firstly, and as already discussed, there are different ways in which ideology can be reviewed and mapped. In identifying and charting distinct perspectives and pursuing non-substitutable positions, we have acknowledged, but downplayed connections between perspectives and related terms. Exploring these could provide new insights, much as calls for interdisciplinarity do, both into the concept and management studies. For example, we have pointed to various competing terms such as discourse and culture. These can now be mapped together, historically at a macro-level, but also how they are used more precisely in research. This would allow us to test the strength of non-substitutability and provide precision from a comparative lens.

An extension of this would be to explore the form or *content* of ideologies and *processes*. Our focus on perspectives left little room for specific cases or micro-level analysis. How for example, do leadership, new public management/governance and neo-liberalism compare and

connect (O'Reilly and Reed 2011)? Or how do *managerial* ideologies compare with those in politics or religion? And what about the rise and fall of ideologies and their competition for dominance? These issues are often the focus of other fields of research such as discourse analysis and studies of management ideas and of de-/institutionalisation (Perkmann and Spicer 2008), but do sometimes fall under ideology research (e.g. Guillén 1994). At the same time, there has been a tendency to focus on particular types of ideas and processes with little empirical attention to the *effects* of ideology. This neglect has long been evident in sociological studies as well, and prompted notable critiques such as that over the extent of dominance of a given ideology (Abercrombie *et al.* 1980). Such debates remain partially unresolved in management. Indeed, we have seen how research is relatively clear on the roles *claimed for* ideology, but demonstrating these empirically is often more challenging. For example, to what extent does, say 'leadership', legitimate, integrate, distort etc? Here, the movement towards *evidence-based management* might be helpful methodologically, but there are also complementary theoretical developments such as that of discursive institutionalism or 'framing', in addressing the issue of the independent power of ideas.

Empirically, too, gaps remain and continue to emerge. For example, and perhaps unsurprisingly, the content of ideology in management research has typically been around occupational (managerial) and organisational concerns, having little engagement with other critical management perspectives, such as those on gender, race and post-colonialism, for example (cf. Cooke 2004). Some exceptions exist, such as Hearn's (2004) work on ideology and masculinity (also Hochschild 1990). Likewise, while mainstream management research has come to address wider explicitly political ideologies in terms of CEO engagement for example, there has been very little attention given to the role of such ideologies in management and organisations more generally. Thus, to what extent do recent developments towards left and right wing polarisation in Europe, and populism more widely, effect employees relationship to work and organisations? Indeed, there is a lack of multilevel analysis, including on the links between societal and organizational ideologies. Furthermore, other non-management-specific ideologies are potentially highly significant for management such as those around modernist concerns with '*development*' and '*progress*'. These are reflected in recent discussions and debates about technology, climate change and the future of work for example, but rarely in explicitly ideological terms (e.g. Nyberg *et al.* 2018). What are the emerging ideologies, such as digitalization or transhumanism, and how are familiar ones, such as leadership, changing?

A longstanding issue in politics, but also in MOS is the connection between ideas and action, words and deeds (Abercrombie *et al*. 1980). Indeed, to an extent, words and ideas make up the very practice of management (Gronn 1983). The importance of this connection remains and has applications in the study of ideology specifically, such as identifying the conditions under which ideologies take hold as practice in particular organisational, market or geographical contexts (Guillén 1994). This has wider contemporary relevance too in the sense of how firms may deploy or appropriate – manage - emerging popular ideologies (e.g. CSR) for business advantage, including reputation, sales or employee control. Likewise, it applies to resistance or activism (Blee 2012) in the context of corporations (Den Hond and De Bakker 2006), including making choices about the numerous alternative forms of organising to business and management (Parker 2019).

Of course, it is possible that the relative lack of use of ideology in recent years, compared to its peak in earlier decades, reflects the emergence of alternative concepts with equal or better utility, the success of managerialism or simply academic fashion. It is interesting for example, how in a recent special issue devoted to CSR and entitled 'Ideologies in Markets, Organizations, and Business Ethics' in the *Journal of Business Ethics* (Haase and Raufflet 2017), all the contributors refrained from seeing CSR as ideology, managerial or otherwise. However, one of the most important insights brought by Žižek (1989) to contemporary understandings of ideology is that it is precisely when ideology seems to have disappeared from the political landscape – in a seemingly 'post-ideological' world – that it is in fact at its most powerful, intrinsic to the very structure of our social reality. Thus, while capitalism may have become dominant, developments such as the financial crisis, global climate change, the rise of China (and as yet unknown future possibilities) mean that different forms will compete for supremacy and with this, different spaces for management as an agent of capitalism, but also as a distinct occupational group charged with the role of organising. For example, we have already seen this in the ongoing shift from *managerial* to *investor* capitalism and are perhaps witnessing a shift towards *sustainable* capitalism or less optimistically *surveillance* capitalism (Zuboff 2019). Furthermore, not only in competition between these forms, but *within* them, tensions, paradoxes and contradictions will require legitimation, including for the role, power and status of management, as well as its research and education (Adler 2014). In other words, ideology has the potential to enlighten empirical, theoretical and geo-political issues which lie at the heart of contemporary global challenges and the place of management

within them.

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[1] Discussions of ideology in management studies appeared to occur primarily in the following journals, which we then searched individually: *Academy of Management Journal, Academy of Management Review, Administrative Science Quarterly, Asia Pacific Journal of Management, British Journal of Industrial Relations, British Journal of Management, California Management Review, Culture and Organization, Human Relations, Industrial & Labor Relations Review, Industrial Relations, International Studies of Management & Organization, Journal of Management, Journal of Management History, Journal of Management Inquiry, Journal of Management Studies, Journal of Organizational Behavior, Management & Organizational History, Management Learning, Organization, Organization Science, Organization Studies, Research in Organizational Behavior, Scandinavian Journal of Management, and Strategic Management Journal*.