

23 Theorizing after the Postmodern

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‘Surely there are no more postmodernists anymore!’ said Joan Acker, the distinguished keynote speaker for the Critical Management Studies Division during the 2008 Academy of Management.¹ A hush fell over the ballroom of critical theorists, and it seemed all heads turned and people began to stare at me. Reluctantly I raised my hand, ‘Am I the only postmodernist left on the planet?’ (Laughter followed). What flashed through my mind in a few nanoseconds was a postmortem of postmodern. Most of the champions (Baudrillard, Deleuze, Lyotard) of postmodern theory have died (some add Rorty to that list), as have the poststructuralists who are often mistaken for postmodernists (Derrida, Kristiva, Foucault). Who is still alive? Am I alone?

Still living: Zygmunt Bauman and Frederick Jameson. Many who write about postmodern theory are not advocates (Best, Kellner), or have turned away (Bauman). Others seem to want to annihilate it (Habermas, Norris). Then there is a genre of post-postmodern theorizing that takes postmodern theorizing to task for erasing issues of class, race, gender and postcolonial theory (Calás and Smircich’s 1999 feminism, Sandoval’s 2000 ‘US Third World Feminism’; Smith’s 1999 indigenous critique of neocolonialism). Is there is a need for a new generation of post-postmodern theorists? Or does theorizing after postmodern simply mean it’s a fad that has faded?

The purpose of this chapter is to explore what is possible to theorize after the postmodern that might advance management and business studies. The structure of the chapter is: What is theorizing after the postmodern turn, in general, followed by theorizing postmodern in management and business studies, and what the future might be. I submit a more rhizomatic antenarrative (bet on the future) may be a way to look at the splintering of postmodern and post-postmodern in its current manifestation.

WHAT IS THEORIZING AFTER POSTMODERN?

Postmodern theorists face several challenges. First, postmodern is often defined as ‘something after modern’ (Baudrillard; Lyotard). But that

assumes some demarcation event, a boundary between two paradigms, one before and one after. Most contemporary postmodern theorizing eschews any idea of a radical break with modernity, preferring instead to define postmodern theorizing as a set of concepts and analytic frames (Best and Kellner 1991, 1997, 2001; Cooper and Burrell 1988). Vattimo (1988) sees modernity in crisis, dying slowly, in agony, without any endpoint in sight to its suffering.

Second, modernity is still evolving, changing and becoming. In the words of Bruno Latour (1993), 'we have never been modern.' Have we even been postmodern? Do we date postmodern as post-Enlightenment, or post-Industrial Revolution, post-World War II, post-Fordist, post-1968 French demonstrations, post-Oil Crisis, post-Empire or some other transitional event? For Burrell (1997) premodern holds possibilities: Have we ever been premodern, let alone modern, and its pandemonium?

Third, the theorizing 'after postmodern' is highly fragmented, with at least seven types of postmodern theory directions (see Table 23.1): Naive McPostmodern, Radical Break with Modernity; Critical Theory combined with Postmodern Theory (which means any periodicity-demarcation is impossible), the post-postmodern theories of Hybridity, some Postcolonial Theory, Language Heteroglossia, US Third World Feminism, indigenous critique of Jameson 'critical postmodern' as another neocolonial, and the very Dark Side of Postmodern (such as Hardt and Negri's 2000 *Empire*, where WTO, WB and IMF would tame capitalism; Bush and neocon's war on the Axis of Evil; and Biotech Century where a doom-catastrophe is prophesized). Postmodern theorizing has become so varied, is it useful?

Fourth, while many theorizing about postmodern (e.g., Best, Kellner, Jameson) are highly critical of Enlightenment (following Nietzsche) there are theorists such as Jürgen Habermas, who is pro-modern, arguing that modernity has Enlightenment promises to keep such as a communicative rationality.

Finally, perhaps the most major challenge is that most critiques of postmodern theory focus on two of the most extreme presentations: Jean Baudrillard and Jean François Lyotard, who proclaim postmodern as the all-encompassing paradigm shift that has eclipsed modern social theory, which is theoretically bankrupt. Antonio and Kellner (1994), on the other hand, argue that most postmodern theorizing has deep roots in modern social theory, especially Nietzsche's anti-Enlightenment critique, and Weber's iron cage. Gianni Vattimo (1989) sees no end to modernity, but posits an oppositional postmodern theorizing as a possibility. As mentioned, Foucault and Derrida are often falsely accused of being postmodern theorists. They do not claim the label for themselves, preferring to be called 'poststructuralist.' On the plus side, theorizing after postmodern is more personal, with an expectation that the theorist put their 'I' voice into the text, and even be more auto-ethnographic.

Postmodern theory has appropriated many moves from modern social theory, making it difficult to claim that postmodern supersedes modern

Table 23.1 Postmodern Approaches to Organizations¹

Post-moderns	Naive - McPost-modern	Bell; Berquist; Boje and Dennehy; Drucker; Peters	Confuses late modern postindustrialism and complex/adaptive organization with postmodern; Drucker takes a post-Cartesian position; Peters has a shallow approach to deconstruction
	New Age Postmodernism	Wilber; Wheatly	New Age postmodern treatments weave transcendental/spiritual with complexity
	Radical Break with Modernity	Baudrillard	Hyperreality; simulacra of culture
		Liotard	End of grand narratives
		Cilliers	Postmodern Complexity
		Vattimo	No radical break, or over-coming of modernity is possible; Nihilism and fragmentation are part of modernity
	Critical Theory and Post-modern Theory	Jameson	Cultural logic of late capitalism; is it a neocolonialism?
		Debord	Situationist International; accumulation of spectacle; transition to consumer Marxism
		Deleuze and Guattari	Postmodern Rhizomatics in schizophrenic capitalism
		Best and Kellner; Baumann	Postmodern Turn, and Adventure are ambivalent about postmodernism; Baumann's Liquid Modernity taking ambivalent turn from earlier enthusiasm
Burrell		Pandemonium retro-organization theory	
Boje		Unrepentant critical theory postmodernist	
Post-Post-moderns	Hybridity	Latour	Hyper-incommensurability of modern/postmoderns; we have never been modern
	Post colonial/ Anti-Neocolonial	Calás and Smircich; Sandoval; Smith	The post-postmodern is a postcolonial theorizing or ills of capitalism; critiques of Jameson's 'critical postmodern' as 'neocolonialism by First World.
	Language Heteroglossia	Bakhtin	Polyphonic dialogism; stylistic dialogism; chronotopic dialogism; architectonic dialogism
	Dark Side of Post-modern	Hardt and Negri	WTO, IMF, G8, NAFTA, etc as postmodern networking control of global reterritorialization; is Empire neocolonialism?
		Bush and Neocons	Evangelical capitalism; Bush's Post-post-modern War II (Bush Sr. led first one).
	Rifkin	Biotechnology Century	

¹Adapted from Boje (2006a, 2006b, 2008); here it is extended with more categories.

theorizing (Fukuyama's end of history; Lyotard's end of grand narratives; Baudrillard's everything is simulacra). Late modern theory (e.g., complexity, post-bureaucratic) has also appropriated postmodern theoretic moves, so that it's hard to sort out the differences between modern and postmodern theorizing.

THEORIZING POSTMODERN IN MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS STUDIES

What are the key elements of postmodern analysis? Postmodern analysis once was all about an episodic shift or radical break with modern. Then the episodic shift/break with modern became problematic, since much that is modern has postmodern hunch or instinct. And, finally, postmodern analysis began to fragment, to go every which way, from New Age, radical, an interplay with critical and the post-post hybrids including postmodern-postcolonial (see Table 23.1). It's clear that contemporary (post) postmodern theory is informed by modern theory, and that modernity is still kicking. The hybrid positions are far less radical (dualistic) than Baudrillard or Lyotard, and the naive McPostmodern approaches are quite popular (giving new fashion to systemic modernism of Taylor and utilitarianism). As for me, I have gone the way of critical postmodern.

In terms of management and business studies, theorizing after the postmodern is a battle between those who advocate it and those who favor more pragmatic, critical theory, or other theorizing positions. The first theorist in management and business studies to deploy the term *postmodern* was Peter Drucker (1957), who restricted it to post-Cartesian (overcoming Descartes mind-body duality). Cooper and Burrell (1988) did the earliest work that developed postmodern theorizing beyond just a break with Descartes. Clegg (1990) writes about a break of postmodern organization from modern organization. Bergquist (1993) uses a rather tame version of complexity theory to claim sightings of 'postmodern organizations.'

The neo-reductionist school of complexity promises that the age of mechanistic (linear) systems thinking is over, but as Richardson (2008: 19) argues:

Many complexity theorists of this variety have actually inherited many of the assumptions of their more traditional scientific predecessors by simply changing the focus from one sort of model to another, in very much the same way as some managers jump from one fad to another in the hope that the next one will be the ONE.

Hassard and Parker (1993) compile critiques of postmodern theory, especially the idea that any kind of postmodern organization could exist. My own early work with Dennehy (1993/2008) posited the interplay of premodern

survivals, modern exploitation and affirmative and skeptical postmodern processes. However, the book is also rightfully critiqued for being a bit too McPostmodern (lacking a Nietzschean critical look at the dark side).

Much of my subsequent after postmodern theorizing is a combination of critical theory and postmodern theory (Boje 1995, 2001, 2006a, 2006b, 2008; Boje et al. 1996). Next, is a summary of my own work in the field.

Disney

In my critical postmodern Disney theorizing (Boje 1995), I try to show that Disney is not all that postmodern, and is more accurately a hybrid of craft (or premodern), modern and postmodern histories and processes. By ‘critical postmodern’ I mean a combination of ‘critical theory’ and ‘postmodern theory’ (see Alvesson and Deetz 1996; Clegg 1989). Cooper and Burrell (1988), for example, differentiate between the ‘critical modernism’ programs of the Italian Renaissance and the Enlightenment (including the anti-Enlightenment by writers such as Nietzsche), versus the ‘systemic modernism’ projects of instrumental rationality, including Weber’s critique of the ‘iron cage of bureaucracy’ and the continuance of systemic modern in Taylorism (Taylor 1911), open systems theory (Boulding 1945; Pondy 1976; von Bertalanffy 1956), Bell’s (1973) postindustrial society and the transaction cost rationality models of strategy. Throughout the Disney piece, I am attempting to violate the idea that there is a historical break between pre-, mod- and post-theorizing (in my own work Boje and Dennehy 1993/2008; see Baudrillard 1983; Clegg 1990; Lyotard 1984). I do this by deploying a postmodern rhizomatic theorizing (Deleuze and Guattari 1987), one that moves away from linear and hierarchical theorizing so embedded in systemic modern theorizing. I begin the analysis with a review of more craft (premodern) roots of animation (looking at how Baudrillard situates postmodern in a premodern nostalgia, resurrection of premodern tribes and desires), and then trace a Foucauldian/Nietzschean genealogy of modern mishaps. This situates postmodern/poststructuralist theorizing about Derrida’s deconstructing voices, Lyotard’s marginalizations, totalisms, universalisms, essentialisms and Foucault’s panoptic gaze.

In the Disney piece, I develop postmodern theorizing:

- *Voices*—Who has a voice and who is voiceless? When does the narrator impose voice over other stakeholders? The next four are from Lyotard (1984).
- *Marginalizations*—In managerialist monologue, only the voice of the perspective of other stakeholders gets marginalized or erased completely.
- *Totalisms*—A retrospective narrative erases the individual ‘living stories’ and presents a hegemonic account.

- *Universalisms*—These are grander narratives such as global capitalism, neoliberalism, Marxism, postindustrialism, culture difference theories and even postmodernism itself (Boje 2001).
- *Essentialisms*—more micro, such as human character traits, gender or race bias posited in organization culture narratives. Gherardi and Poggio's (2007) *Gender Telling in Organizations* looks at storytelling within male-dominated environments. Males tend to put their telling into more linear, adventure plots, where as females are less linear, more apt to take chance into consideration.
- Panoptic—Foucault (1977: 19750180) defines panoptic gaze as a multiple, automatic, continuous, hierarchical and anonymous (micro) power in a network of relationships from top to bottom, and bottom to top, as well as lateral.

In sum, the Disney study developed several approaches to theorizing after postmodern. Subsequent studies took a more rhizomatic approach (Deleuze and Guattari 1987).

Enron

In the Enron work, I try to show how the slide towards a failure in ethics is a rhizomatic-antenarrative process, a kind of strange attractor that draws the whole systemicity into more and more ethical collapse. Antenarrative is defined as 'the fragmented, non-linear, incoherent, collective, unplotted, and pre-narrative speculation, a bet, a proper narrative can be constituted' (Boje 2001: 1; Boje et al. 2007). Antenarratives lack the cohesive accomplishment of narratives, and do not as yet possess their closure of beginning, middle and ending. Antenarrative is a nonlinear, fragmented, emergent account of incidents or events. I found work by Bougen and Young (2000) in rhizomatic studies of auditing and bank fraud is useful for understanding the rhizomatic networks at Enron.

Our theory is that for Enron (Boje and Rosile 2002, 2003), an antenarrative rhizome process ends up in mega-scandals packaged to entertain and reeducate spectators through story spinning. For example, each year (between 1998 and 2001), an elaborate theater stage was constructed on Enron's sixth floor to simulate a *real* trading floor; it's expensive theater, \$500 to set up each desk, and more for phones in this stage-crafted spectacle, and more for the 36-inch flat panel screens and teleconference conference rooms; the entire set was wired by computer technicians who fed fake statistics to the screens. On the big day several hundred employees, including secretaries, played their rehearsed character roles, pretending to be 'Energy Services' traders, doing mega-deals, while Jeffrey Skilling and Kenneth Lay played their starring role in the Enron *dramatis personae* to a target audience of invited Wall Street analysts, who cannot tell *real* from *fake*. Bill Smith and I are using antenarrative theory and rhizomatics to trace patterns of the September 2008 global financial collapse.

Rhizomes Are Not Like Hierarchies

Hierarchies have such stable layers, and they hardly move. It is worth commenting that a rhizome is a particular type of antenarrative, one that is less hierarchic, more nonlinear and nonreversible (temporally). Rhizomes are tubular, the roots grow and network, and the configuration sends out roots in all directions. Accounting gives accounts of the rhizomatic lines of movement, the connections, the lines of flight, the numbers tell a story, but one must be able to decipher the tale and follow the trail of calculations. There is a story in the ledgers, but only professionals can read the flow. Accounting, if we apply the words of Deleuze (1977: 208) can be described as ‘assemblages, refrains, rhizomes, and becomings’; in short, accounting is movement. Doing a tax return, audit or annual report, even a budget tells a story. And accounting itself is suspended in movement, in a world of moving transactions (i.e., it’s an antenarrative process).

What Is Movement in Accounting?

Accounting is about doing accounting, about reports that are becoming real, about lines that intersect and what is in between the numbers. Accountants start to worry when they tune into the movement, into the swirl that clients present to them, especially if they suspect this client is misbehaving. Accounting is constantly changing its methodologies, trying to get a handle on new technologies, new laws, new devices to save clients money and strategic advice to keep them solvent.

Movement in accounting is contagious. Accountants are always a little breathless, especially during tax season. The work is cyclical, seasonal, and at times the movement is furious, overwhelming, taxing. Speeding attracts fraud. Accounting is multiplicity and only outsiders see accounting as unified, rigid or fixed, or use words like ‘bureaucratic’ to describe the life of accounting. Accounting is fluid, about formulations, tracing lines of flights, transactions at varying speeds, and it’s all being automated. Once done by hand, the transactions are subject to more artificial intelligence, software to do the tabulations, and this just adds to the speed.

In sum, theorizing after postmodern rejects the episodic shift or radical break with modern. Modern theory informs postmodern theory, and modernity has not ended. So why use the term ‘postmodern’ at all? Postmodern theorizing can be seen as simply a set of theories that are located in modernity. For me, there is a need to keep the ‘post’ as a modifier to modern. This is because at each turn what was a radical critique of modern becomes appropriated, tamed and, if you will, McModernized, so that the need for postmodern critique, and critique of the McPostmodern slippage, becomes necessary.

Hybrid positions, less radical than Baudrillard or Lyotard, that eschew less naive McPostmodern theories that do not differentiate between systemic

modernism (functionalism, structuralism, pragmatism, Taylorism, utilitarianism, formalism) and critical modern theories (Critical Theory, critical discourse, etc.) are theorizing after postmodern.

Theorizing after postmodern is facing a major problem: How to think about collective dynamics without reducing its complexity and diversity to systems, rational, progressive enlightenment.

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF THEORIZING AFTER THE POSTMODERN?

Every so-called ‘progress’ in technology or science needs an accompanying philosophy to legitimate its future. Pauline Rosenau (1992: 180) argues, ‘The future of post-modernism in the social sciences is open to a number of potential scenarios.’ For me, ‘post’ after ‘postmodern’ is a kind of antenarrating about the future (bets on the future of after ‘post’).

No Compromise

First, antenarrative pattern: Postmodern theorizing is split into two directions, one tracing the causes of social movements (genealogical), and the other preoccupied with language, social construction and meaning-interpretation. With the no-compromise historical shift (one of several genealogical approaches) of Baudrillard, Lyotard and some early work in management studies by Drucker (1957), Clegg (1990) and myself (Boje and Dennehy 1993/2008), there is an enduring conflict with modern social theory, and with various factions of postmodern and post-postmodern theory (see Table 23.1). To the extent that extreme postmodern theory (Lyotard and Baudrillard) becomes the stereotype for all postmodern theorizing, there is an academic isolation of the entire genre of postmodern theorizing in social science. My proposal would be to treat the various strands of postmodern theorizing (Table 23.1) as intertwined, as oppositional and rhizomatic rather than entirely incommensurate.

Integration and Compromise

Second antenarrative bet on the future: the scenario where there is an integration of postmodern theory and other disciplines, such as critical theory (Jameson 1991; Alvesson and Deetz 1996; Boje et al. 1996), or poststructuralism (Cilliers 1998; Boje 1995, 2001, 2008), less critical approaches such as appreciative inquiry (Gergen 1992; Gergen and Thatchenkery 1996, 2006) and adaptive systems theory (Bergquist 1993), complexity theory (Cilliers 1998) or more New Age theory (Wilber 2000). The question Rosenau raises is does such compromise and integration of postmodern and some other discipline compromise the integrity of a postmodern point

of view, be it more affirmative (appreciative inquiry or New Age spiritual) or more skeptical (critical theory or poststructuralism). For critical theory, New Age is a return of transcendental, and appreciative inquiry attempts to create a 'positive science' where criticism is disallowed, and deconstruction is a negative-method, becomes the path to one-dimensional thinking (something Marcuse critiqued). The question is: Do these compromises abandon the more radical positions of Baudrillard and Lyotard that are so problematic to mainstream modern social science? Within the panoply of this variety of compromises (from critical theory to New Age), the skeptics' positions are incommensurate with the more affirmative ones.

Enemy or Ally

Third antenarrative pattern: Modern social theory will find postmodern theorizing, in all its varieties, to be more enemy than ally. To me, the problem is that integrated approaches to postmodern (as described earlier) take away an alterity position. Feminists, race and labor theorists are unlikely to find postmodern theory an ally, when the issue of genre, race and class become reduced to merely social constructions, identity or language games devoid of material conditions. To the extent that postmodern wars (Best and Kellner 2000) continue, such as Gulf Wars, where spectators sit before TV screens watching so-called 'smart bombs' perform 'surgical strikes,' there will be a need for postmodern theory.

The Death of Postmodern Theorizing

Fourth antenarrative: Am I the last postmodernist? With few exceptions, the gurus of postmodern theory have died (Baudrillard, Debord, Foucault and Deleuze). Still living: Zygmunt Bauman, Frederick Jameson. I don't count poststructuralists as postmodern; there is a difference, but postmodern theory certainly borrows from Derrida, Kristiva and Foucault. There are plenty alive writing against postmodern theory (Best, Kellner and most every Third World or Indigenous Feminist). There is certainly a long list of New Age Postmodern Theorists (Wilber) and postindustrialists masquerading at Postmods (Bergquist).

Yet Another POST-Postmodern: RHIZOMATICS

Every postmodern theory (except Deleuze) has been dethroned (and Deleuze was appropriated in Empire as a next evolution of late modern capitalism). I thought I was safe in 'McPostmodern theory' until I discovered that it was a colonizing tool of Empire's knowledge management wave. I thought I was safe in Debord's Spectacle critique of industrial capitalism, which Baudrillard appropriate into a theory of hyperreality, simulacra everywhere, and in Lyotard's expulsion of all grand narrative in favor of a thousand little

stories. But it turns out that some grand narratives are needed. I don't want to be absorbed by hyperreal or Spectacle. I was safe in my 'Critical Postmodern theory' until I discovered it was a neocolonialist tool of Empire's culture, where the aesthetic of pastiche rules. I read 'US Third World Feminism' as a dethronement of Frederick Jameson's postmodern theory. How? By declaring that indigenous and (non-First World) feminist positions were going to create a critique of postmodern theory as a First World Neocolonialist Project. Critical postmodern becomes problematic when there is no grand, privileged history or where history is just a thousand little stories, each vying for position. The dissolution of historical grand narrative means that there is no counterposition of alterity from which to establish critique and to resituate the hegemony. When postmodern becomes neocolonial, it succeeds in overwriting historical grand narratives of modernity, with a postmodern grand narrative (Boje 2001). For Sandoval (2000), globalization becomes just such a neocolonial grand narrative of postmodernism (in its late cultural logic discourse). In simple terms, Enlightenment is to Modern as Neocolonialism is to Postmodern. If 'postmodern is dead,' then what is next? Some form of post-postmodern, or post-post-postmodern? To me, such a death forecast misses the 'we have never been [fully] modern' and 'modern while splintered, fragmented, is still here.' Post and post-postmodern theorizing has not sent modernity off the stage. If anything, not only is it hybrid with various postmodern strands, it's rhizomatic.

Rhizomes are assemblages that send forth roots (belowground) and runners (above) to create new plants (called tubers). Common examples are strawberries and crabgrass. In the social world, rhizomes are networks, ones that have nonlinear relationships, so that cause and effects are linked strangely (e.g., positive feedback loops; given cause can have multiple outcomes), and predicting the future becomes highly problematic. Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle, for example, alerts us that just observing relationships can change them. At the simplest level, a social rhizome is a complex adaptive system, one that I think is a new form of storytelling that I call an 'antenarrative.' It is possible for individuals to live and work in a range of social rhizome antenarratives, as well as in more linear and cyclic ones. In a linear rhizome, the prospective sense-making allows the storyteller to take information or experience from one situation and apply it to predict the next one with some probability of accuracy. In cyclic antenarrative, the loops of sequenced events are assumed to be stable and to repeat with some measure of probability in the future. Rhizomatic antenarratives, by contrast, make links to contexts outside the cycle, and small causes that seem inconsequential can have huge outcomes. In this triadic, linear, cyclic and rhizomatic antenarratives can interplay, and the rhizome will play havoc with its playmates. Although linear narratives of history and its retrospective sense-making give some level of prediction of a progression by extension, the future can take off in many unforeseeable ways. Events that never occurred and factors never involved in the cause-effect chain, or a cycle,

mean the past references are no longer useful, and may even lead to mistaken assumptions about the future.

With 'rhizomatic antenarrative,' I hang on to Deleuze and Guattari with a death grip, lest I fall into the abyss and there is no more postmodern theorizing. It is possible to tame rhizomes with linear and cyclic theorizing. When accounting and management systems are set up to claim the future, they will extend from linear patterns from the past, a thief with a rhizome will recreate Enron. Nietzsche, for example, looked at patterns of 'eternal return' where the same set of forces would recur and result in tyranny.

Out of rhizomatics comes the possibility of an ante-postmodern (something that is a bet on the future, and a before, perhaps way before even premodern). My bet on the future is that the varied strands of postmodern and modern are networking and counter-networking in all directions. The apocalyptic forecast of Baudrillard (1983) where all of modernity has been swallowed whole by hyperreal simulacra (anti-representationalism) has not come to pass. Rather, a worse case, where neocons elect conservative candidates with spin campaigns and sneaker companies sell shoes by using postmodern consumer advertising appeals. Next are some thoughts on antenarrating an after postmodern theorizing.

Ante-Postmodern

Ante is a bet on the future, and a before. Ante-postmodern is a bet that the future of theorizing after postmodern. So for me, ante-postmodern is just one more antenarrative. First, the most dominant form of antenarrative is linear (goals and plans of the future). For example, a recurring postmodern theory, declares a periodization, a chronology, in which postmodern follows modern.

Second is the cyclic antenarrative, the eternal return (Nietzsche) of another attempt to go beyond the current malaise of social theory. Given a constellation of forces, there is a reemergence of tyranny, colonialism, and in the postmodern, the neocolonial, with no sights at all of any post-colonial. The imperialism of modernity has reinvented itself in the Empire of postmodern. One has only to witness the postmodern wars that followed Vietnam, where the Spectacle and the Hyperreal Virtual of CNN/Fox displaced blood-and-guts reporting. If imperialism becomes the pet of European capitalism, then Empire is the monster of US capitalism, and its result: globalization of US Empire.

Finally, there are rhizomatic antenarratives. This is a kind of storytelling organization made of a very special interplay of order and disorder, one that has lines that are nonlinear, and both an above- and a belowground networking. In biology there are rhizome plants, with runners aboveground (like strawberries) that form new plants (called tubers), and plants with roots forming tubers (like potatoes, crabgrass), and a mix like irises, trumpet vines, etc. In social rhizomatics there is the first bank crisis of the

1800s, then the stock market crisis in 1920s, the gas crisis of 1970s, the Enron contagion that pulled Arthur Anderson under in 1990s, and now in 2008, yet another rhizome. You cannot catch a rhizome fraud (whose roots are subterranean) with a linear approach. Rhizomes just go around, below, and above lines. You cannot break a rhizome by declaring it a cycle. Rhizomes encounter a cycle, imitate it like a chameleon and move right through it. Rhizomes are ever moving, extending in all directions, until they reach an obstacle. Then it strangles it, breaks it or moves around it.

CONCLUSIONS

I have asserted in this chapter that rather than a linear progression or succession of cultural periods, there is an interweave where modernism keeps eating away at postmodern. When I look at arts and aesthetics where I live, there is a delicate interplay between cultural modernistic art that seems to hate history and the nostalgic frontier and postfrontier art that reveres history. Here and there are strange juxtapositions of the oldest buildings in the City of Las Cruces with very contemporary facades, in an almost postmodern way. My city has been called a place and time without identity. This is because after Urban Renewal of the 1960s and 1970s, the spatial heart of the city shifted to the first shopping mall, then to a newer one in 1980, then to the two Wal-Marts, and a third one planned to open this year that seem to hate history, community and to displace 'made local' with made in China. Postmodern, and the post-postmoderns, continue to struggle with not only modernist styles, but with Mexican, Spanish, African-American, Anglo-American, European and Wal-Mart Made-in-China styles. Rather than convergence of cultures in a multicultural environment, there is a need to develop a living story that is collectively imagined to compete with the sweeping grand narratives, such as Urban Renewal and Globalized Wal-Mart Un-culture.

All postmodern roads (and there are so many) lead back to Nietzsche. Nietzsche, living at the peak of modernity and the Enlightenment project, challenged the so-called progress of Enlightenment (Vattimo 1998: 2). He radically interrogated modernity.

To me linear ante-postmodern theory is dead. We postmodern theorists can no longer define the 'post' in postmodern as taking leave of modernity for some new era of history. If we toss epoch-shift (linear) ante-postmodern theory, we are left with a toolbox of concepts without a singular, monologic, mono-voiced history.

Cyclical ante-postmodern theory is also a dead end. The past is not recurring at some later point. Perhaps a spiral, but not a cycle! Nietzsche wrote against cycles, preferring to identify recurring patterns or constellations of forces, where a phenomenon could reemerge. The problem with cycles is the assumption that the sequence of stages occurs in that same order. If

theorizing after postmodern, as I imagine it, is the end of linear and cyclical determinacy, then perhaps the idea that history is a unitary process needs to be challenged. For me, that challenge comes from rhizomatics.

We are left with rhizome postmodern theorizing. At each moment, there is a multiplicity of histories unfolding. The powerful try to persuade us to live on their historical line. Theorizing after postmodern, to me, means that there are still sightings of something that is liberatory, something beyond the recurring appropriation of postmodern theory into the Empire project, something beyond neocolonialism. But, for every rhizomatic postmodern offshoot in one direction, there are counter-shoots in opposing directions. For every living story there are counterstories. For every historical narrative, there are counternarratives. For every antenarrative of the future, there are counter-antenarratives. This is a point I tried to make in looking at linear, cyclic and rhizomatic antenarratives of globalization (2007a). My own theorizing after postmodern looks at linear antenarratives, cyclic antenarratives and rhizome antenarratives as a dialogical process, as something dynamic with counter-antenarratives, in collective struggles to control the future, past and present, all mixed together. We do have a rhizomatic way to theorize after postmodern, in its interplay with the linear succession way of post and the cyclic way of modernity never seeming to do anything but reappropriate each post attempt.

In closing, it appears that instead of a postmodern organization, we may need to return to postmodern as an aesthetics of time and place. I live in the Wild Southwest, in New Mexico, on the borderlands of Mexico and the US, at the crossroads of Native American, frontier, postfrontier, modern, late modern and postmodern cultural heritages. The different cultural heritages seem to compete and to interweave with one another. While most postmodernists now reject periodization, there does seem to be historical trends and fashions. They do not seem to displace one another. Rather as Joan Jenson (1993: 5) puts it, the cultural changes 'proceed in concentric circles until the last of the old and first of the new seem to merge' and at other times 'change may grow at the edges leaving the center of the circle without growth.'

NOTES

1. Session 1470 Academy of Management meetings in Anaheim, CA. 'How Critical Organization/Management Studies?' August 12, 2008.

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