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Preface

The Transfer of Management Knowledge to Peripheral Countries

Recent literature has increasingly recognized the expansion of management knowledge and its application beyond its original cultural and institutional context (e.g., Engwall and Kipping 2004; Sahlin-Andersson and Engwall 2002). Most empirical studies in this respect have examined the influence of U.S. management and technology models on Europe and Japan after World War II (e.g., Djelic 1998; Kipping and Bjarnar 1998; Kudo, Kipping, and Schröter 2004) or the application of Japanese management techniques in Western companies during the 1980s (e.g., Lillrank 1995; Pascale 1982; Shiomi and Wada 1996). Particular attention has been devoted to the different carriers of management knowledge, including productivity centers, business schools, consultancies, and multinationals (e.g., Amdam, Kvålshaugen, and Larsen 2003; Engwall and Zamagni 1998; Kipping and Engwall 2002). In many cases, the adoption and adaptation of U.S. or Japanese management ideas and practices are seen as an important ingredient for the subsequent success of companies from these countries in international markets (e.g., Kudo et

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al. 2004), even if there are also some accounts of resistance and rejection (e.g., Zeitlin and Herrigel 2000).

Even though this research points to the appropriateness of paying more attention to variations between different cultural and institutional contexts, the actual settings studied have been limited almost exclusively to the highly industrialized countries of Western Europe and Japan. Research on the transfer of management knowledge to other parts of the globe has been almost entirely absent. Among the early exceptions is Hofstede (1980, 1983), who, based on his broader cross-cultural research, argued that U.S. management ideas are likely to be inappropriate for other countries, both in the developed and the developing world. Others, in particular the more recent studies that are still few and far between, have tended to look at this issue from a neo-colonial perspective. Thus, based largely on her personal experience, Kostera (1995) likened the efforts of Western management educators in post-Soviet Eastern Europe to Christian missionaries preaching to “heathens” in the colonial era. Based on the Israeli case, Frenkel and Shenhav (2003) explicitly drew on the postcolonial literature to argue that U.S. efforts to introduce their management models after World War II were broadly similar to those under British colonial rule beforehand.

Therefore, the purpose of this issue is to examine the efforts to introduce foreign management knowledge into “peripheral” countries. The main question is to what extent the transfer process and its outcome are different from those that have been observed and theorized for “central” countries. The papers in this issue make much needed empirical contributions for little-known regions and at the same time critically examine existing theories and conceptualizations derived from a rather limited set of countries. This issue tries to address these empirical and conceptual shortcomings in the current literature by attempting to answer three sets of questions:

1. What was *the content* of the Western management knowledge exported to and received in these countries? What kind of ideas were presented and perceived as “typically American” or “Western?” To what extent were ideas about professional and efficient management linked to those about the superiority of the free-market system? Did the Western influence replace earlier approaches to management, both those of domestic and foreign origins?

2. What were *the carriers* involved in this process, including, for example, the U.S. productivity missions, the national productivity centers, nongovernmental organizations (e.g., the Ford Foundation), existing and new business schools and universities, management consultancies, and foreign direct investors? Were there any clearly identifiable key individuals and what were their roles?

3. What was *the actual influence* of Western management ideas and practices? Did they lead to debates among leaders in business and government? What kind of changes did they provoke in management practice

at the microeconomic level in both private and public-sector organizations? To what extent were these ideas modified at the implementation stage? To what extent and by whom were these ideas and practices resisted?

The remainder of this preface summarizes the results of the studies included in this issue and compares and contrasts them with the findings of the previous research mentioned above. We explore in particular the kinds of management models being disseminated; the diffusion process—namely, the roles of both senders and receivers and the types of carriers involved—and the results of these efforts and the drivers for the actual outcomes. However, for the purpose of this issue we first need to define "periphery."

Scope: center and periphery

The definition of the periphery obviously depends on what is considered the center. Most would agree that for the diffusion of management knowledge, there is only one center, the United States. Some have suggested that more recently certain countries, such as the United Kingdom, might be considered "semi-periphery" (e.g., Üsdiken 2007) or perhaps "secondary centers." However, it has to be pointed out that such a view implies a focus on the second half of the twentieth century. Historically, other countries also provided organizational models internationally. Thus, during the Meiji Restoration in the late nineteenth century, Japan drew on the examples of France and Great Britain for the reforms of its police and postal system, respectively (Westney 1987). Similarly, for the creation of business education in Scandinavia at the beginning of the twentieth century, the German commercial schools (the *Handelshochschulen*) served as models, as did the French *écoles de commerce* for the Mediterranean countries (Engwall 2007; Kipping, Üsdiken, and Puig 2004). Again, with respect to the content of what was taught, the *Betriebswirtschaftslehre* (business economics) tradition that developed in Germany influenced much of Europe and Japan (Locke 1989; Üsdiken, Kieser, and Kjaer 2004).

Nevertheless, during most of the twentieth century, the United States was the main "producer" and even more importantly the main diffuser of management knowledge worldwide (see Guillén 1994). This has prompted many authors to refer to the introduction of organization and technology models originating in the United States as a process of "Americanization" (e.g., Djelic 1998; Kipping and Bjarnar 1998; Zeitlin and Herrigel 2000). Even during the 1970s and 1980s, when Japanese management ideas and tools were widely considered superior, their diffusion often took the route via the United States or, in fewer cases, other countries, such as the United Kingdom and France (e.g., Shiomi and Wada 1996). This is partially due to the fact that, at least during the second half of the twentieth century, the vast majority of the carriers of management knowledge originated in the United States, including the major foundations, management gurus, consultants, and business schools (see

Amdam et al. 2003; Engwall and Zamagni 1998; Gemelli 1998; Huczynski 1993; Kipping and Engwall 2002). Thus, for the purpose of this issue periphery refers to countries other than the United States (the "center"), and the core developed countries in Western Europe and Japan (the "secondary centers").

The contributions to this issue cover a wide range of these peripheral countries with rather different levels of development. First, there are two countries on the European periphery Israel and Turkey—peripheral not only for their geographical location but also for their religious differences with the predominantly Christian traditions in Europe. In terms of management knowledge, both had been under European, in particular German, influences during the first half of the twentieth century. In the case of Turkey, this can be seen, for example, in the form of the penetration of the *Betriebswirtschaftslehre* as the content for the teaching of business after the mid-1930s until it was completely replaced by U.S. influence after World War II (Üsdiken and Çetin 2001). Israel was de facto under British rule for the first half of the twentieth century until its independence in 1948. As Frenkel shows in her contribution, however, many of the early management ideas had been shaped in the German-speaking parts of Europe, reaching Israel through different waves of immigration. Two of the other countries examined in this issue, India and Australia, are former British colonies, and the third, China, was never a formal colony but was subject to external influences during the second half of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, with Britain once again playing an important role.

Nevertheless, even though all of these countries had been under European influences earlier, the papers in this issue clearly confirm the predominance of the United States as the center for the flow of management knowledge during the second half of the twentieth century. In all the cases examined here, the management models originated in the United States. In the case of China, the British Council acted as an intermediary, but the ideas regarding project management had largely originated in the United States, even if they were previously also introduced in the United Kingdom. Turkey is an example that even ideas originating elsewhere—Japan in the case of total quality management—found their way through the United States. In Israel, U.S. ideas conflicted with and ultimately replaced a previous model that had its origins in European thinking. The strong role of the United States is perhaps most surprising in India and Australia, given their status as former colonies and the previous influence of British industry and organizational models, particularly in the latter (see Wright 1995). It is only in India that indigenous ideas about management education eventually challenged those imported from the United States. But even here, they have been constructed specifically as a departure from the North American models, thus confirming the role of the United States as a "reference society" (Guillén 1994, 290).

Content: types of knowledge

The first issue addressed by the papers in this issue concerns the type of knowledge flowing from the center to the peripheral countries. The relevant literature highlighted the fashion-like nature of management knowledge (e.g., Abrahamson 1991, 1996) and identified different waves of ideas that spread quickly and then slowly declined, making room for new, but equally ephemeral, ideas. They looked at the recent, more rapid succession of fad-like ideas such as Just-in Time (JIT), Total Quality Management (TQM), or Knowledge Management (Abrahamson and Fairchild 1999; Scarborough and Swan 2001; see also Pascale 1982). Some of the research identified longer waves of more fundamental ideologies of organizing since the second industrial revolution (e.g., Barley and Kunda 1992). Yet others have highlighted the lasting influence of certain management principles, such as the decentralized, multidivisional form of organization (see for its early applications, Chandler 1962, and for the subsequent diffusion, Whittington and Mayer 2000).

Again, most of these studies have drawn their empirical evidence from the developed Western economies, predominantly the United States and the United Kingdom. Regarding the more peripheral countries, the main question is to what extent were the ideas introduced there fundamentally different or, at the very least, arrived with a significant time lag? Only recently, there have been a small but growing number of studies that provided some evidence to start addressing this question. Thus, several authors looked at the introduction of different types of management knowledge in the European periphery. Üsdiken (2004), for example, has shown that as soon as political, military, and economic ties began to strengthen between the United States and Turkey, various forms of technical assistance projects were instituted to transfer models and content for management education. These entailed transferring knowledge in various functional fields of business. With respect to management, two central ideas were perhaps most paramount. One involved the notion of professional management and the second were human relations ideas not only as content but also as a way of turning employment issues into a managerial problem inherent to the firm and for helping to foster "free" (i.e., noncommunist) trade unions.

The contributions in this issue confirm these earlier indications about the importance and fairly rapid introduction of Western and, in particular, U.S. management ideas in the peripheral countries. Thus, in the case of Israel examined by Frenkel, the U.S.-type human relations model was introduced with some delay but then rapidly gained ground and the upper hand in the dominant discourse, even within the initially hostile trade-union organization. As Srinivas shows, the same is true for India where the Ford Foundation played a significant role in the introduction of U.S.-style management education during the 1950s with little or no time lag, compared to Western Europe, for example (see Gemelli 1998). The closer we get to the present, the faster the transfer of Western, most importantly U.S., management ideas appears. Thus, TQM made its way into Turkey almost simultaneously with other European countries and so did the U.S. version of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in Australia. The case studied by Kerr is interesting in that it seems to take longer for the idea of accountable project management to reach the United Kingdom from its U.S. origins than to be applied in China.

Overall, we can therefore conclude that peripheral countries seem to be exposed to the same content of ideas as are the more central and developed ones and that this exposure seems to occur almost instantaneously, once the idea has become popular in the center or the "secondary centers." The time lag concerns not the appearance of the idea, but its integration into the dominant discourse. The cases examined in this issue suggest that there is a somewhat more important time lag when the new management models have to contend with previous models—all incidentally also of foreign origin. The only case where indigenous ideas played any role was India, but even here, as Srinivas shows, they were not only a reaction to the previous import of U.S. ideas but also strongly conditioned by them. With respect to efficiency and free-market related arguments, these were indeed used in the cases where the U.S. management ideas had to contend with established or competing alternative approaches: in Israel with its socialist labor relations tradition; in China where the free-market was a new, albeit readily espoused, notion; and in Australia where the efficiency-based U.S. model of corporate social responsibility competed with a European approach that emphasized the involvement and respect of all stakeholders.

Process: sender, receiver, and carrying organizations

Much of the existing literature clearly conceptualizes the transfer of management knowledge as an interactive rather than a one-directional process, with the involvement of both senders and receivers. Thus, several studies highlighted the important role of "active" importers both in the transfer of Japanese and U.S. management models (Kipping and Bjarnar 1998; Lillrank 1995). This is in contrast with earlier and some recent studies that related the economic, political, and military power of the United States—in particular, after World War II—to its dominant role in the transfer of management knowledge (e.g., Carew 1987; Djelic 1998; McGlade 1995).

Some historical studies introduced important qualifications and nuances in this respect by identifying various stages in the relationships between the senders and the receivers over the post–World War II period (see especially Kudo, Kipping, and Schröter 2004a): Stage 1 (up until the early 1970s) with a politically motivated active exporter (i.e., the United States) interacting with active importers in search of security and development; Stage 2 (from the early 1970s to the 1990s) where the active role of the United States as an exporter has become diminished due to abandoning various forms of aid and the rise of serious challengers in term of economic, but not political or military, power and alternative ways of organizing and managing (see Kenney and Florida 1993; Piore and Sabel 1984). During this period, the importers have continued to be active, though only as much as their own funds allowed and smaller-scale nonsystematic U.S. funding was available.

This has also been coupled with the emergence of ideas within the "secondary centers" questioning the universality of U.S. management ideas and practices together with the rise of Japan and the East Asian tigers (Amsden 2001). One would expect the impact of the senders to be reduced or perhaps rather limitedly replenished with newer content in the peripheral contexts. Stage 3 (from the 1990s onward) saw a kind of "re-Americanization" (Kudo et al. 2004a) with a broader but at the same time less-targeted influence, though perhaps also enabling greater selectivity and the diffusion of ideas that cherish the value and usefulness of indigenous management ideas and practices.

Distinguishing such stages appears to be of particular importance for the contributions in this issue, because the papers cover different time periods. Thus, it seems less surprising that the United States managed to overcome a strong and deeply rooted socialist labor-relations ideology in Israel during Stage 1 when its power and attractiveness as a management model were quite overwhelming even in the more central countries. Three of the other cases are situated during Stage 3 when once again management ideas from the United States (or transferred via the United States) were quite uncontested worldwide. More room for selection and interpretation of the underlying ideas seems only to have played a role in the Turkish case where domestic turbulences and constraints had a significant influence on how TQM was presented by the professional association.

The case of management education in India is perhaps most telling because the initial introduction of the U.S. management education model occurred during Stage 1, and the indigenous rejection and alternatives arose, not surprisingly, during Stage 2. The most recent indications suggest that India has also, once again, embarked on the trail of Americanization with many North American business schools opening campuses there, sometimes in conjunction with consulting firms. Overall, therefore, the transfer of management ideas to the periphery seems to follow a periodization broadly similar to the one identified for the more central countries. It still remains to be seen, however, what the actual reaction of the receivers was during these different stages.

In addition to the senders and receivers, many of the earlier studies on the international transfer of management knowledge also highlighted the significant role played by different "carrying organizations" in this process (see Sahlin-Andersson and Engwall 2002). In the context of post–World War II reconstruction, these were mainly governmental organizations from the United States, such as the Marshall Plan Administration (Carew 1987; McGlade 1995), with corresponding organizations set up in the receiving countries, usually in the form of productivity centers, some of them at the intergovernmental level, such as the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) and the European Productivity Agency (Boel 2003). But even in this context, individual consultants already played an important role (e.g., George Kenning in the case of Norway or W. Edwards Deming and Joseph Juran in the case of Japan). At that time, there were also a number of private foundations, in particular, the Ford Foundation which had a significant part in the transformation of European management education (see Gemelli 1998) albeit not with equal success everywhere (see Kipping et al. 2004).

Much of the recent literature has focused almost exclusively on profit-oriented private-sector carriers, in particular, consultancies that seem to have taken on a dominant role in the transfer process in recent decades (e.g., Kipping and Engwall 2002; McKenna 2006), even if the consultancies are far from being exclusive with business schools and, increasingly, the business press also contributing (see Engwall and Kipping 2006). In the peripheral countries, these private, commercially oriented carrying organizations seem to have played a lesser role in the cases analyzed here, with the possible exception of Australia. In a number of cases this might be due to the time in which the transfers took place.

Thus, in the Israeli case, one finds the same actors we know from the immediate post–World War II period in Western Europe: the U.S. government agencies, a national productivity center, and an individual bridging both cultures. The same is true for the role of the Ford Foundation in the Americanization of management education in India. The Chinese case is interesting, because of the role of a government-sponsored agency, the British Council, in the process—somewhat unusual for the current time period but probably explained by the peripheral nature of the country and the "missionary" role of Western governments in the conversion of China to capitalism. In Turkey, the main carrying organization was a local professional association, something not unknown for the Americanization of Western Europe after World War II but certainly much less common today (see Kipping 2004).

What is also noteworthy for all these cases, even in Australia, are the direct and indirect roles played by other associations, such as the employers' federation or trade unions. While known to have been important for the transfer process in post–World War II Europe (e.g., Carew 1987; Rollings and Kipping 2008), today one would not expect to see them participate in the transfer of management ideas to the extent that occurred in these cases when, in the central countries, their role seems largely confined to political lobbying or wage bargaining.

A similar difference between the central and the peripheral countries concerns the role of the state, which has seen its importance diminished within the former (Strange 1996) but continues to play an active or at least a background role in the cases examined in this issue (which is not surprising given the developmental nature of most of the countries concerned). The involvement of the state actually might have contributed to the prevalence of public or associative organizations in these countries noted earlier. Thus, what has been observed for Western Europe immediately after World War II seems to persist until today in the peripheral countries studied here: U.S. dominance as an active sender or a broader center of global influence combined with active importers and government-run or -backed carrying organizations on both sides. It remains to be seen to what extent this pattern also influenced the outcome of the transfer process.

Results: adoption, adaptation, or rejection?

The recent literature on the transfer of management ideas has produced a number of sophisticated accounts regarding the outcome of the process, conceptualizing it alternatively as “re-working” (Zeitlin and Herrigel 2000), “translation” (Czarniawska and Sevón 1996), “hybridization” (Frenkel and Shenhav 2003; Kipping et al. 2004), or “bricolage” (Campbell 2004). Although they are far from being identical (for important nuances, see Sahlin-Andersson 1996; Zeitlin 2000 and the contribution of Frenkel in this issue), these concepts and the underlying empirical evidence suggest that the foreign—mainly U.S.—management models usually undergo significant transformation and adaptation to the new context, both in terms of the national environment and the specific organization. There are also some accounts, mainly based on historical case studies, which show considerable resistance and sometimes total rejection within the receiving organization. It is interesting to note that these cases of rejection and resistance often tend to involve management consultants (e.g., Kipping and Armbrüster 2002; Littler 1982).

The question is to what extent the different conditions in peripheral countries, at both the national and organizational levels, have influenced the outcome of the transfer process. One argument is that the transfer of management ideas and knowledge to the periphery is located within or injected into developmentalist-*cum*-modernizing orientations. This probably implies a number of things: (1) a greater state involvement and endorsement in the reception and application of ideas, models, and practices from the center; (2) overall, a relatively less critical or questioning attitude toward imported knowledge because ideas in particular are likely to be adopted and espoused in uncritical ways, and resistance is likely to be seen as reactionary behavior as the center is perceived to be upholding the most modern and the most functional management models while, by contrast, extant practices are considered as being in need of being eradicated and replaced by the imported ones (e.g., Üsdiken 2004); and (3) at the opposite end, a more negative reaction—and possibly a total rejection—toward the imported ideas and the country of origin (the United States, in most cases) as part of nationalist revivals in the receiving country.

These patterns are probably most obvious in the case of India examined by Srinivas. Thus, although the modernizing and developmental aspects contributed greatly to the initial acceptance and largely unmodified introduction of the U.S. model of management education, its rejection and the search for indigenous alternatives was equally strong, if not stronger, in the subsequent period when U.S. hegemony was in apparent decline and less pronounced and when India became more assertive in economic, political, and even military terms—the country making its first nuclear weapon test in 1974. Such an “antihegemonic” feeling might also be behind the ridicule with which the Chinese participants reacted to the ideas transferred by the British Council (see the contribution by Kerr). This attitude is culturally consistent, as most East Asian cultures would avoid direct confrontations—in this case, an open rejection. The initial reaction in Israel was also rather hostile given the strong indigenous, socialist-inspired tradition of labor relations. But, as Frenkel argues in her contribution, the Americans managed to influence the dominant discourse that gradually translated into revised practices.

The reaction toward TQM in Turkey suggests a persistence of the modernizing discourse until the most recent period, which appears consistent with the dominant ideology in the country (e.g., Eralp 1994). Nevertheless, the Turkish quality-management association studied in detail by Erçek and Say modified its discourse several times to adapt to the changing circumstances in the country, marked by macroeconomic and political turbulences. In the Australian case, by contrast, there seems to have been neither resistance nor significant adaptation to national and organizational contexts. But as Wailes and Michelson suggest, this is probably not the result of a modernizing developmental attitude but rather due to the cultural proximity and the institutional framework in terms of shareholder power, which created the conditions for an almost identical model of corporate social responsibility (CSR), despite some discrepancy at the discursive level where a limited number of Australian firms used a stakeholder-based approach for legitimating purposes.

Overall, the cases examined in this issue confirm the importance of the macro-context, in particular, the role of the state and the pertinence of a modernizing discourse. Management knowledge was adopted not necessarily because of its inherent qualities but because it received strong support from governments in the exporting central and the importing peripheral countries and it was inserted into a developmentalist ideology. Similarly, rejection was often a function of a broader movement toward political, economic, and ideological independence from the originating countries.

Conclusion

Compared to the existing literature for the more industrialized and developed countries of the "secondary center" (i.e., Western Europe and Japan), research on the transfer of management knowledge to the periphery is still in its infancy. The contributions in this issue therefore provide some of the much needed empirical evidence and also allow us to critically question the generalizations and conceptualizations in the current literature. On the one hand, they confirm the clear dominance of the United States as the source or at least the major transit hub for new management models and ideas. This situation has prompted some previous studies to conceptualize this process as post- or neocolonial, but the papers in this issue suggest that the most important differences lie elsewhere—namely, in the types of carrying organizations involved and in the range of outcomes.

With respect to the former, one can observe an important role for the state and public or private associations in this process, on the side of both the sender and the receiver. This was also the case in the transfer of U.S. management models and ideas to the more developed West European countries in the immediate post–World War II period. There, however, these types of carriers have since then given way to other organizations—namely, consulting firms and business schools. In the peripheral countries by contrast, although business schools have also had some role to play, the state and various kinds of associations have retained their predominance. This might be due to the cost of management consultancies, on the one hand, and the more cooperative or state-led institutional setup, on the other. Efforts in some of these peripheral countries such as India or China to remain economically independent from the West might also have contributed to a more state- rather than market-centered approach toward the transfer of management knowledge—at least until more recent years.

With respect to the results of the transfer process, the contributions to this issue suggest that the peripheral countries show a more extreme reaction compared to the more central ones—that is, they either enthusiastically espouse the management ideas from the center, based on a developmental-modernizing approach or, in the case of a nationalistic attitude or backlash, reject it either openly or in more subtle ways. Even though there is at times some adaptation, especially at the discursive level in terms of retaining existing terminologies, there seems to be less of an effort to translate the ideas into the specific context. This might be an important reason for the fact that, in many of these countries, the Western management ideas have remained somewhat alien and contributed little to the improvement of economic development and international competitiveness—unlike in Japan and Western Europe where reworking and translation helped firms and countries to catch up with and, at least temporarily, surpass the United States in terms of management ideas and practices. Such a wide-ranging conclusion remains somewhat speculative, and only additional research on other peripheral countries will be able to shed more light on this vital issue for global economic development and prosperity.

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