

METHOD(E)S:

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Call for Papers

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Epistemological Fractures in a Globalized World: *Normalizations, Debates and Alternatives in the Social Sciences*

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The recurrent allusion to the “globalization of the social sciences” validates the idea of the dominance of Western scientific norms and practices over those of “the rest of the world”. The triumph of the “connected world”, aligned with the Western world, seems indisputable and this “self-evident fact” often mutes the expression of “other” epistemologies. Instead, such knowledge from “elsewhere” is often dismissed as mere folkloric fiction; “pastoral reveries” used to satisfy a certain, seemingly obsolete indigenous pride. Linked to political and economic domination, the resulting imbalance in the scientific communities rarely allows for such dissonance to be heard in its own right. This project of scientific hegemony, based on a strong tendency towards standardization and “normalization” (Stephen Hawking, 2007) of knowledge on societies is, however, far from complete. In contrast with dominant epistemological doxa, a large epistemic diversity is brewing under the hegemonic surface, and current cultural and technological measures resulting from the acceleration of exchanges are, paradoxically, encouraging the assertion of epistemic identities from the periphery and thereby exacerbating contradictions in the political realm as well as in the social scientific community.

In preparation for the next issue of *Méthod(e)s*, we invite colleagues to critically engage with the production of hegemonic methodologies, epistemologies, and ontologies in the social sciences: their enlargement and/or constriction, while taking into account the assertions of autonomous, and even counter-hegemonic movements from within or without these sites of power, to be understood as important moments of particular historical materialist contexts. We support the hypothesis that, however powerful this contemporary hegemonic tendency may be, it is contested on various levels by different epistemic communities. Throughout the world, concurrent scientific and autonomist spaces present scientific and political challenges to this dominant

scientific order. Upon close examination, multiple poles of resistance and of alternatives to the dominant scientific discourse are active throughout the world, leading to some authors considering seriously the advent of a “post-hegemonic” era (Jon Beasley-Murray, 2010). This issue of *Méthod(e)s* will put forth critical reflections on the forms and interactions of these scientific movements that challenge the dominant scientific order.

Recognition of larger political projects (neoliberalism, decolonization) and their structuring effects on scientific proposals is essential to an understanding of struggles for epistemological hegemony, as the tension internal to political arenas provides a referential normative framework for the production and circulation of scholarly knowledge. What role do the social sciences play in these political battles that may either subjugate or liberate the social groups and communities with whom we work? What consequences do these clashes add to the cognitive and technical order on which the science is based? We should keep in mind that the history of human societies provides us with numerous examples of scientific hegemonies, and retracing their trajectories will give us an invaluable perspective on the conditions of the appearance and disappearance of past and present epistemological communities. Scholarly spaces are also born, live and die.

It would be relevant to revisit the various moments demonstrating phenomena of hegemony and counter-hegemony on more “local”, “less global levels”: continental, regional, even national and disciplinary. Assertions of scientific autonomy demonstrate an **epistemological fracture**, a conceptual, methodological and even ethical break with the dominant scientific order. Although this conflict with the dominant science is concealed depending on the asserted epistemic distance, we should closely examine the normative divergences which appear in the very content of knowledge, in the intrinsic logical origins and social values in confrontation at the core of the process of construction of scientific knowledge. This analysis of the form of knowledge is only complete when closely linked to the nature of the political regime which imprints upon it its essential characteristics. This is why we feel it is important to always clearly identify the political framework in which the structures of knowledge are emerging, whether it be oppositional or hegemonic. From the articulation of these levels of domination, we can suggest a better refined understanding of the process of normalization and arguments of all sorts constructed to this end. A final line of questioning will deal with the way in which methodological concepts and instruments contribute to establishing domination or challenging it. These points of dominating or oppositional meeting are numerous and run throughout the process of knowledge production and use: a) in referential quotation and discussion; b) in the order of exposition and argumentation; c) in the choice of subjects; d) in the choice of the relevance of identification and manipulation of facts.

In this volume, the editors would like to feature articles that explore modes of domination and resistance in the social sciences. The upcoming issue of *Méthod(e)s* will contain the following sections:

The section *Thematic Dossier* welcomes analytical articles dealing with the question of scientific hegemony in line with the multiple dimensions put forward above (70,000 characters, spaces included);

The section *Issues in the Field* will allow us to revisit or expound on the empirical experiences of the roll-out of a hegemonic or counter-hegemonic choice in a specific area of research (50,000 characters, spaces included). **The editors are particularly interested in seeing contributions based on experiences in the field, using empirical materials in the *Issues in the Field* section;**

The section *Varia* remains open to editorials with an original point of view on one of the aspects of scientific hegemony (40,000 characters, spaces included);

The section *Guest Papers* will debate a classic text dealing with or expressing one of the scholarly forms of hegemony. Colleagues from different geographical, political and intellectual backgrounds will discuss the main text in short texts (40,000 characters, spaces included);

On this critical issue of hegemony, we are looking for texts capable of carrying a wide-ranging discussion, beyond the usual narrow disciplinary, national, continental and linguistic frames.

The *Critical Notes* will offer one or two articles which examine one or several significant works on methods related to this issue's theme. These critiques will highlight the importance of issues raised in the work discussed (40,000 characters, spaces included);

In the section *Reviews*, colleagues are invited to write critical comments on recent publications in the framework of ongoing discussions (15,000 characters, spaces included).

Proposals for articles will be examined until the end of June and articles are due by the end of October 2016.

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