



## ISM SEMINAR

Spring Term 2014

**Speaker:** Professor Haridimos Tsoukas, WBS and the University of Cyprus

**Title:** What has process philosophy to offer management studies? Resources for process thinking

**Date:** Wednesday 19 March 2014

**Venue:** B0.01, WBS, Scarman Road

**Time:** 14.00

**Abstract:** Process philosophy advances a worldview that sees processes, rather than substances, as the basic forms of the universe. A process view rests on a relational ontology, namely the recognition that everything that is has no existence apart from its relation to other things. A process orientation prioritizes activity over outcome, change over persistence, novelty over stasis, expression over determination. I will argue that, by seeing process as fundamental, such an approach does not deny the existence of entities, but insists on unpacking them to reveal the complex processes - sequences of activities and transactions - that are involved in and contribute to their constitution. Drawing, mainly, on the philosophy of Henri Bergson and Alfred North Whitehead, I will offer a vocabulary to help advance process thinking in organizational and management research. I will argue that these philosophers help us better understand time and events and, by focusing on experience, they make it possible for management researchers to both stay close to the world of practice and to capture the dynamic character of organizational life. I will discuss a number of papers of process-oriented research in organization studies and will offer suggestions for how to develop further process thinking in the field.

**Biography:** **Haridimos Tsoukas** holds the Columbia Ship Management Chair in Strategic Management at the Department of Business and Public Administration, University of Cyprus, Cyprus and is a Distinguished Research Environment Professor of Organization Studies at Warwick Business School, University of Warwick, UK. He obtained his PhD at the Manchester Business School (MBS), University of Manchester, and has worked at MBS, the University of Essex, the University of Strathclyde, and at the ALBA Graduate Business School, Greece. He is the co-founder and co-organizer of the International Symposium on Process Organization Studies, and co-editor of the series *Perspectives on Process Organization Studies*, Oxford University Press (both with Ann Langley). He was Editor-in-Chief of *Organization Studies* (2003-2008). His research interests include: knowledge-based perspectives on organizations and management; organizational becoming; practical reason in management and policy studies; and meta-theoretical issues in organizational research.

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This seminar has been organised by the iSM Group.