Instrumentality and Influence of Fayol's Doctrine:

History, Politics and Emotions in Two Post-War Settings

To be published in BUSINESS HISTORY

(Accepted Version, 29 July 2020)

Aykut Berber

University of the West of England, UK

aykut.berber@uwe.ac.uk

Nancy Harding

University of Bath, UK

h.n.harding@bath.ac.uk

Farooq Mughal

University of Bath, UK

f.mughal@bath.ac.uk

Abstract

Why does *Administration Industrielle et Générale* have a major status in the history of management thought? We argue that the rational reason for the enthusiasm for Fayol's theory disguises the irrational and unconscious fears in societies for which the cool rationality of Fayol's work offered a soothing balm. We discuss this in two different but relatively similar post-war settings—France in the 1920s, which saw the first major upsurge of interest in Fayol's work, and the mid-twentieth century USA, where his work was rediscovered and attained canonical status. The reception to his work in the aftermaths of the two world wars prove particularly important in understanding how historico/politico/emotional affect influences the reception to a body of work. We suggest it is not the ideas themselves that were of prime importance, but how those ideas resonated with the historical, political and emotional context in which they were debated and taken up.

Keywords: Henri Fayol, Doctrine, Habitual Narrative, US, France, War, Context

1. Introduction

The history of management and business studies contains a small and select number of names of seminal thinkers such as Henri Fayol, the subject of this paper, whose works, it is implied, are superior to all others, offering an edge over other notable management thinkers. However, historical research has shown that elevation to canonical status is decided not necessarily by genius, innovation or contribution, but by such factors as power (e.g. Pollock, 1999), misreading (e.g. Cohen et al. 1975), miswriting (e.g. Hassard, 2012), misinterpretation (e.g. Neher, 1991) and social construction (e.g. Clarke, 2014). Canons can be defined as '[…] benchmarks of greatness' that set 'the single standard of the greatest and the best for all times', but, '[a]lways associated with canonicity as a structure […] is the idea of naturally revealed, universal value and individual achievement that serves to justify the highly select and privileged membership of the canon that denies any selectivity' (Pollock, 1999, p.4). Rather, any canon should be understood as 'a discursive formation which constitutes the objects/texts it selects' and therefore as a 'retrospectively legitimating backbone of a cultural and political identity, a consolidated narrative of origin, conferring authority on the texts selected to naturalise this function' (op cit, p.3). In sum, canons constitute the objects they speak of through retrospectively conferring authority on texts which thus become the most significant in the field. The choice appears so natural that the inclusion of some names and exclusion of others is put beyond question.

This paper asks why Fayol's work became part of the canon of great management thinkers. There were many rivals for such a place (e.g. Reid, 1995a; Reid, 1995b). Koontz and O'Donnell, who were amongst the pioneers of writing management textbooks, published the first edition of their influential textbook in 1955, and also published two edited collections of readings to support it in 1959 and 1964. Both textbook and readings are organised according to Fayol's *modified* functions of planning, organising, commanding,

coordinating and controlling. The revisions between the first and second editions show the ferment and speed of the establishment of the canon. The number of papers included rose from 56 to 81 (Harding, 2003: p. 113). Three of the six original readings supporting 'The Basis of a Theory of Management' were dropped, with texts by Fayol, Talcott Parsons, and James D. Mooney going forward to 1964. The works of Leon C. Megginson, Catheryn Seckler-Hudson and an anonymous piece entitled 'The Source of Managerial Authority' disappeared into oblivion. The ten readings on 'Organization' were expanded to 15 in the second edition, but only one of the original ten (one of Lyndall Urwick's three original contributions) were excluded. Only one of the original seven papers remained in the 'Staffing' section, which featured 11 papers in 1964. Five of the original seven papers on 'direction' were deemed worthy of being included in both editions, with the works of Auren Uris jettisoned and eight new readings added. The 'Planning' section expanded from 14 to 17, but five of the original contributions had disappeared. The 'Control' section rose dramatically, from 12 to 20 readings, with only the writings of T.S. McGinnis and Earl J. Wipfler being consigned to the dust-bin of history.

Of the 81 authors included in 1964, perhaps only nine are now remembered: Fayol, Mooney, Urwick, Ernest Dale, Rensis Likert, F.J. Roethlisberger (but in association here not with Elton Mayo with whom he is customarily accorded the role of amanuensis, but Carl Rogers, who was to attain fame in another field), Peter Drucker, Chester I. Barnard, and Herbert A. Simon (Harding, 2003: p. 114). Notably, authors whose work was published in these early books of readings who were to become regarded as significant thinkers by the 1976 edition of the textbook were not distinguished from the crowd in the earlier texts. There are no illustrations from Taylor's work, nor from the Gilbreths, Gantt, or Weber, in what Koontz and O'Donnell (1964: 26) described as a 'management theory jungle' with numerous authors jostling to have their ideas read, discussed and heard. By 1976 Koontz and O'Donnell

had reduced the numbers of authors whose work they thought worthy of inclusion in a textbook to the select few who formed what is now known as the classical school of thought: the canon had been established.

Why did Fayol's work not only survive but take on such a major status? Jacques' (1997) review of Wren's (1997) selection of texts of 'Early Management Thought' suggests the answer is political. Jacques argued that the list of major writers *omitted* from Wren's selection of contributors reveals the reinforcement of 'the dominant managerialist ideology that the coalescence of today's industrial order was an inevitability, that all responsible authorities agree today (and agreed then) on the problems and solutions, and that the present order, as it developed, was in the unified interests of all' (op cit, p.4). The majority of writers are written out of history, he argued, because they challenge a hegemonic perspective on business, management and work.

This may be true, but we suggest it is only one part of the answer. We rule out the possibility that the stature of his work is because of its inherent excellence: Fayol's work was not the work of a genius, nor based on research. He was neither a philosopher nor a scientist. His work was based on his experiences gathered within the framework of the French coal mining industry in the second half of the nineteenth century (see Peaucelle and Guthrie, 2015). We suggest the reasons for the receptivity to his ideas in the USA is to be found in the wider context, one which has similarities to the French context that had proved to be the ideal proving ground for his work. That is, the rational reason for the enthusiasm for Fayol's ideas (it seemingly offers a clear way of running organisations) disguises the irrational, sometimes unconscious fears for which the cool rationality of Fayol's work offered a soothing balm.

This paper will thus, firstly, explore why Henri Fayol's work was embraced so ardently that its author was elevated to the status of father of management thought (Koontz and

Weihrich, 2015). In other words, how did Fayol's work become part of the 'habitual narrative' (Hassard, 2012) of business history while others' works are forgotten? Habitual narratives help narrators to strengthen certain argumentative points about the rightness of the ideas and explanations presented (e.g. Georgakopoulou and De Fina, 2012: p. 104) and the same narrative may be repeatedly used to explain very different phenomena spanning numerous contexts and time-settings. To understand how Fayol's ideas became acknowledged as a key foundation of general management theory we explore the historical context in which his ideas rather than other meritorious thinkers gained favour. We suggest it is not the ideas themselves that were of prime importance; what was of importance was that those ideas resonated with the historical, political and emotional context in which they were discussed, debated and taken up.

This leads to this paper's second contribution, which is a theory of the importance of the 'historico/politico/emotional affect', or the feelings engendered by the politics of a specific era, in influencing the habitual narratives of business history. Fayol's work came to prominence firstly in 1920s France, after which it seems largely to have been forgotten, but it was re-launched in the USA in the 1950s and thereafter became highly influential. We will show that 1920s France and America in the era of the Cold War and Vietnamese wars shared similar political affect structures, notably, war, its aftermath and fears of revolution or insurrection. We will argue that the works that enter the canon are those that hold out the implicit promise of resolving the conflicts that are peculiar to a particular era.

The methodology we use is influenced by Hassard's (2012) approach of deconstructing 'the habitual narrative on organisation and management theories', that involves exploring the context in which an idea emerges and takes hold. This contrasts with approaches that investigate management's history as if it is a natural, teleological evolution of thought (Gillespie, 1991; O'Connor, 1999; Bruce and Nyland, 2011). This approach sees business

history as a field emerging almost accidentally through the shaping of events by desire, need, politics, the psyche and affect, amongst other influences. The habitual narrative may tell how a phenomenon happened to exist in a specific context at a particular period of time, but what is common to that specific context might have become rare, obsolete and even irrelevant at the time of narration (Linde, 1986: p. 197). We see this in the reception given to Fayol's work in two different post-war settings—France at the beginning of the twentieth century, which saw the first major upsurge of interest in Fayol's work, and mid-century United States of America, where his work was rediscovered and eventually attained canonical status. It is through analysing these two locales that we can show how accident, politics, economics, desire and other influences effect what comes to be regarded as canonical and what is allowed to be forgotten. The reception to his work in the aftermaths of the two world wars prove particularly important in understanding how historico/politico/emotional affect influences the reception to a body of work.

2. France

Fayol was 75 years old when what became regarded as his masterpiece, *Administration Industrielle et Générale,* first appeared in the third issue of the newspaper *Le Bulletin de la Société de l'Industrie Minérale* in 1916, in the thick of the First World War (WWI) (Urwick, 1972, p. v). In 1917, while WWI still raged, it was published as a book, giving impetus to debates on management in France. The first edition of 2,000 copies ran out immediately and reprints followed. He originally planned the work in two volumes, although the second volume appeared only in part and not until 2003. The first volume, published in 1917, consisted of two parts: The Necessity of Management Education (Part I), and Principles and Issues of Management (Part II). The first chapter begins with a categorisation of operations carried out in an enterprise and, according to Fayol, there were six: technical, commercial,

financial, security, accounting, and managerial activities. 'To manage' Fayol wrote, 'is to foresee, to organise, to command, to coordinate and to control', adding that 'the managerial function is distinguished remarkably from the other five essential functions' (Fayol, 1979, pp. 1-5). He was one of the earliest pioneers of regarding management as a process—i.e. a series of activities that follow one another (Wood & Wood, 2002: p. 2). In the second part of the book, Fayol presented fourteen general principles of management, generated from his own experience as a general manager. They are: division of work, authority and responsibility, discipline, unity of command, unity of direction, subordination of individual interest to general interest, remuneration of personnel, centralisation, hierarchy, order, equity, stability of personnel, initiative, and *esprit de corps*. According to Fayol, as a product of his personal opinions and his experiences as a manager of mining companies, these were open to amendment. He wrote, 'Do they take place in the management code which is to be established? It will be decided upon public discussion' (Fayol, 1979, p. 47). Following the general principles of management, he dwelt at greater length on the five elements (functions) of management—foreseeing (*prévoyance*), organising (*organisation*), commanding (*commandement*), coordination and control (*contrôle*).

The emphasis placed, above, on 'public discussion' is noteworthy. That is, at a conscious level Fayol's work could be argued to be straightforwardly related to how it fitted into a culture of dynamic innovation and development we see in late nineteenth-century France (e.g. Hatchuel & Segrestin, 2019), particularly alongside the prospective need to rebuild industry at the end of WWI. It may have been particularly powerful because, in pointing towards the future, it also echoed something of France's more traditional heritage. That is, it reflected 'the remnants of French continental feudal thinking' and aimed to maintain the 'existing order' (Gomberg, 1985: 255)—it offered both excitement (the future) and security (the familiar past). It stated it knew the best way of securing efficiency, effectiveness and, ultimately,

profits. At an unconscious level it offered the return of a father figure of a very big family whose authority would be sufficient to re-impose and retain order and security.

A close reading of Fayol's discourse shows how he takes the place of the controlling and reassuring father. He balanced rigidity and flexibility, attaching great importance to self-discipline and rational thinking as ways of dealing with the unexpected. Each of his principles contains careful consideration of how the unexpected intervenes and how subjectivities influence actions. For instance, he portrayed the principle of centralisation as a reality of the natural order—sensation streams through organs towards the brain and the brain sets out the order to organs. But he also argued that adopting centralisation or decentralisation is a matter of proportion and the degree of centralisation depended on the manager's character and values but also on the values of the manager's subordinates and the conditions of the business (Fayol, 1979, pp. 36-37). In other words, the strong father and obedient children would overcome chaos. Even more interesting was the timing of the publication of Fayol's masterpiece as his ideas found the best climate of diffusion during and after the war: Management could and had to be taught, and this was only available by means of a doctrine—a doctrine that applied not only to business organisations, but also to the society as a whole (Bertilorenzi, 2019: p. 173). This period was one of chaos: a world war had caused the deaths of millions of people and destroyed towns and villages and the means of livelihood of many across France. Soldiers returning from the war needed work (e.g. Franchet & Franchet, 1923). Fayol intended to publish lessons from the war as additional insights into his doctrine. Meanwhile the Bolshevik revolution in Russia in 1917 ushered in the first communist state, causing in the later decade's consternation and ambiguity across Europe and the USA.

It is this accident of timing that perhaps suggests why it was Fayol's and not the work of other thinkers on management that was to achieve greatest prominence in France. Predating

him by several decades, for example, mathematician and naval engineer Charles Dupin suggested that management could be taught through specialised training based on a particular body of knowledge other than technical knowledge. He suggested, 'Manually done jobs have secondary importance for a person to be a manager of others; what brings him to the top is the intellectual force (*la force intellectuelle*) he possesses, and this could only be developed through training' (Dupin, 1831, p. 1). Dupin, however, was writing in a very different historical context. Fayol's ideas echoed some of those of Dupin's, but now they fell on fertile ground. Fayol published his masterpiece in 1916, but he was, for many years, already in search of ways for a template that would provide the specialised training advocated by Dupin (e.g. Cohen, 2003; Wren et al., 2002; Fayol, 1908). He believed that the technical education then provided was inadequate in developing managerial skills (Wren, 1995). Teaching management was not even part of the curricula of the engineering schools—Fayol asked, 'Is it that the importance of managerial ability is misunderstood?' For him, the answer was simple: 'No'. It was clear that when a foreman was to be selected from among workers or a superintendent from among foremen or even a manager from among engineers, the decision was almost never based on the technical ability of the person to be appointed (Berber, 2016; Berber, 2013: p. 220). The real criteria were such qualities as authority, discipline, and organisation (those, we suggest, of the strong father). According to Fayol, the argument that managerial ability could only be acquired at the workplace was unsound and erroneous—management could and should be taught first at school, but, he added, 'The real reason for the absence of management education in our vocational schools is the absence of doctrine. Without doctrine, there is no education possible' (Fayol, 1979, pp. 14-15).

A related aspect, fundamental to the establishment of a work as canonical, is that it is advertised, disseminated and promoted by large numbers of people. Works do not become canonical without such support. Fayol proved an adept disseminator of his idea. He promoted

his own 'doctrine' through the founding of the *Centre d'Études Administratives* (CEA) in 1919. Fayolists, influenced by his work, promoted the teaching of management. Jean Carlioz, for instance, successfully devised 'business management (*gouvernement des entreprises*)' courses at the École des Hautes Études Commerciales in 1919 (Meuleau, 1995, p. 137). Fayol went on to deliver lectures and talks and to publish articles to disseminate his doctrine across the business community and to raise awareness of the need for management education. The CEA soon became a meeting point for students and professionals coming from a variety of industries who aimed to learn more about management principles from Fayol and the followers of his doctrine (Breeze, 1995). Among these disciples, Paul Vanuxem advocated that Fayol's doctrine was universal and its application could not be limited to public organisations or large-sized enterprises. He believed that management practices in private companies provided favourable conditions for the emergence of a management theory. Another of Fayol's followers, Joseph Wilbois, was an educator. He regarded managerial education as part of the social sciences and dwelt on the practical development of the qualities of a *patron*; e.g. 'strength of will, decisiveness, risk-taking spirit, and intellectual rapidity' (Clarke, 2014, p. 50; Wilbois, 1926, pp. 92-93; Duval, 2002; Wilbois and Vanuxem, 1919, p. 178; Vanuxem, 1917; Peaucelle, 2003; Chatriot, 2003; Breeze, 1995). Fayol also committed himself to affairs of public administration, contributing his ideas to government projects in France and Belgium (Wood & Wood, 2002: p. 2).

Most importantly, in regard to spreading an author's words, is its introduction into the curriculum of educational establishments. *Administration Industrielle et Générale* helped convert implicit knowledge (i.e. Fayol's managerial experiences) into explicit texts which can be used for education and training purposes. He provided means to interconnect Frederick W. Taylor's focus on the worker-supervisor dyad on the factory floor with Max Weber's concerns with company structure, consolidating them to offer guidelines on effectively

managing organisations through identifying precise managerial actions or functions (Parker and Ritson, 2005).

In summary, there had been previous theories of management circulating in France prior to Fayol's theory of management achieving its first flowering in his home country in the last years of WWI and the decade that followed its ending. Those earlier ideas had not gained traction. Fayol's ideas appeared in print at a time when France was in chaos, suffering from the carnage of war and, later, the global Spanish flu pandemic. Fayol's ideas promised to bring order out of chaos and so fitted very well the needs of the historical context. They spoke to the unconscious of the era as well as the conscious need to rebuild. We believe, Fayol proved capable of marketing his own ideas, recruiting disciples who spread the word and ensured they were taken up by a wide and receptive audience. Fayol's guidelines therefore proved so attractive in France in the first three decades of the twentieth century because they implicitly offered ways of imposing order and control in a world turned upside down. The offer was neither overt nor explicit and was never framed in words. Rather, it was an indirect and not-conscious offer that promised to appease the similarly not fully conscious expression of a desire for control over the radical disorder evoked by the conditions of the time. It implied that one could plan a strategy for combating terror, organise the means of implementation, secure the willing participation of the people needed in the struggle, coordinate their activities, and thus impose control on chaos, even on fending off death itself.

However, they eventually fell out of circulation in France and were forgotten. They could have disappeared from history, as have the works of numerous other writers on management in the first three-quarters of the twentieth century. But they were resurrected in the USA in the period after the Second World War (WWII). We now turn to the how and why Fayol's theory of management was not only reborn but grew to achieve canonical status

in what appears, at first sight, to be a very different geographical and cultural context—the Post-WWII USA.

3. The United States of America

Fayol's book was translated first into Russian in 1923, and subsequently into German in 1929, English (Coubrough's version) in 1930, Turkish in 1939, Spanish in 1942, Portuguese (partial translation) in 1945, English (Storr's version) in 1949, Swedish in 1950, Chinese in 1951, Hebrew in 1955, Japanese in 1958, and Italian in 1961 (Cowan, 2002, I, pp. 18-19). However, American scholars showed very little interest in it during the inter-war years. Meanwhile, in France, it slipped out of fashion and was gradually forgotten. However, it was to be rediscovered and elevated to canonical status in the New World rather than the Old after WWII. The seeds of its rediscovery were sown before the outbreak of WWII in 1939, by a British colonel turned management scholar, Lyndall F. Urwick.

Urwick was an eager exponent of Fayol's ideas in English-speaking academic circles. He collaborated with the American scholar Luther Gulick, to edit Papers on the Science of Administration, that included a translation of one of Fayol's conference papers from 1923. The editors' own papers also reflected Fayol's ideas. For example, Gulick (1937, p. 13) rearranged Fayol's functions of management, identifying seven rather than five that he organised using the acronym POSDCORB—planning, organising, staffing, directing, co-ordinating, reporting, and budgeting. In the meanwhile, Urwick synthesised his own work with that of Fayol and other prominent authors in a text published in 1943 (Smith and Boyns, 2005). At the end of WWII, when American scholars were seeking guidelines for imposing order and control in every aspect of life, these earlier seeds found themselves planted in fertile soil. Although France during and after WWI and the USA after WWII would seem to

be very different socio-cultural-historical locations, they shared the common characteristic of war and the disorder, threat and change of war's aftermath.

In the USA, scholars were already aware of the need for a theory of general management and top control to secure profit and production and by the end of WWII, these scholars also began to associate management with the capability of dealing with ambiguity (Berber, 2016). Norman M. Pearson (1945) writing towards the end of WWII, drew attention to one of the War's outcomes: new organisations with massive structures 'formed to fight battles, manufacture *matériel*, and administer government programs'. He posed the question of how such giant corporations could be managed and pointed towards to the works of Urwick and Gulick and to Coubrough's translation of Fayol's book. He argued, 'It has been common knowledge for many years that frequently a top-notch engineer who has become head of his technical department fails as general manager', and praised Fayol for his awareness of this problem and his efforts to include 'training for the 'administrative function' in the engineering curriculum'. Although 'placing administration at the heart of business' was Fayol's major aim (Bathurst and Kennedy, 2017), Pearson's paper saw it as a call for teaching management as a profession and thus approaching business management problems from a wider perspective. As business enterprises were growing into giant organisations with even more complex structures, the academic world required a comprehensive theory of management and understanding of the governance of giant corporations (Mees, 2015) if it was to provide that teaching, and Fayol's approach was seen, by its advocates, as fulfilling that function.

In 1949, Fayol's work was translated into English once again, this time by Constance Storrs, and published as *General and Industrial Management*. In the foreword of the book, Urwick expressed his wishes that Fayol's theory would finally be taken into consideration by English speaking—and particularly American—scholars. He explained why Fayol's word

'*administration*' could be translated as '*management*', because 'The activity which Fayol discusses in this book is unquestionably the activity popularly described in the English-speaking countries as *management*' (Fayol, 1972, p. xiii; also see Brodie, 1962).

The eager reception to Fayol's work in the USA in the 1950s was exemplified by a group of scholars who became—as Wren (1994, p. 350) called them—Fayol's 'intellectual heirs'. Among them were Newman (1951, p. 17) who delineated the functions of management as planning, organising, assembling resources, directing, and controlling, and Terry (1953, p. 8) who similarly understood management as a series of tasks. Perhaps more far-reaching of all, in that their textbook would be read by millions of management students globally, were Koontz and O'Donnell who wrote in the first edition of the textbook (1955, p. 3) that 'The coordination of human effort is the essence of all grouped activities … The fundamental component of this association is management' and this involves planning, organising, staffing, directing, and controlling the activities of subordinates. Such an approach has become sedimented, with many textbooks still structured around management's presumed major tasks. Indeed, the tenth edition of the Koontz textbook, published in 2015, 60 years after the first edition, (Koontz and Weihrich, 2015), and now titled '*Essentials of Management: An International, Innovation, and Leadership Perspective*', continues to be structured according to the functions of planning, organising, staffing, leading and controlling, or, in the more archaic terms used by Fayol, planning, organising, commanding, coordinating and controlling. Fayol, called 'the father of modern management theory' in the textbook, shares pride of place with Frederick Taylor and the Hawthorne studies as one of *the* major contributors in the evolution of management theory. This textbook has been translated into many languages and used by students of management around the world for more than 60 years, suggesting the reach of Fayol's ideas. Even though the discussion of Fayol in later editions of the textbook extends only to a few paragraphs, the continuing structuring of its

contents according to Fayol's tasks of management inculcates generations of students into his system of thought (Tsoukas, 1994; Harding, 2003: p. 13). In other words, Fayol's reflections on his experiences as a manager in the parochial circumstances of the French coal mining industry of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century have evolved into a habitual narrative, or an account of what management *is*, how it should function, and a supposition that it rests on solid grounds. It thus achieved canonical status, in the terms suggested by Pollock (1999, p.3).

There were critics—some of them influential, including Herbert Simon. He referred to Fayol's principles as 'proverbs', adding that Fayol's experience of managing coal mines was insufficient grounds for a theory, as he said, 'I see no reason to conclude from this that he is a man who can state propositions of organization theory' (Simon, 1946; Koontz, 1964: p.110; Wren, 1995). But such criticism did not prevent Fayol's ideas from becoming embedded uncritically within widely used textbooks, through which his ideas have taken on a biblical, doctrinal influence, in defining what management is and what managers should do.

The US context in this period has marked similarities with the French context that had allowed Fayol's works to first rise to prominence, that is, a period of depression followed by a world war, and a general sense of insecurity. Urwick and Gulick were advocating Fayol's work while the Great Depression of the 1930s was recent history for the soldiers returning from WWII. Unlike the French soldiers of WWI, they did not return to a war-ravaged economy and did not suffer the terrors of the Spanish Flu pandemic that killed millions of people worldwide. However, they returned to a country that soon became enmeshed in far-away 'hot' wars, in Korea (1950-1953), and Vietnam (1955-1975). The Cold War with the Soviet Union (1947-1991) threatened nuclear Armageddon that would eradicate life from the entire planet. The potential reality of this was captured in Nevil Schute's (1957) novel, *On the Beach,* that articulated the fears of a population about the slow death each might face if

the nuclear bomb had been dropped. For the 13 days of the Cuban Missile Crisis in October 1962, while the world waited for the Soviet Union's President Khruschchev and the US's President John F. Kennedy to end a stand-off, the fear of nuclear annihilation felt very close.

The virulent propaganda of the Cold War saturated the US culture with fear not only of nuclear war but of communism. In Congress, Senators Joe McCarthy and Richard Nixon (the latter was to become president) sought 'reds under the bed', believing that the government, educators, union activists and the entertainment industry were hotbeds of communists determined to overthrow the Constitution and usher in Russian hegemony. The threat of a Third World War was openly discussed in the press, and Europe was thought to be about to topple into the Soviet camp (Sabin, 1986). Americans represented themselves to themselves as living in the last bastion of freedom and democracy, in contrast with totalitarian regimes that were believed to be spreading out from the Soviet Union (Guilbaut, 1999). They also told themselves that if they failed, the USA and its people faced the ravages that they thought would follow upon Communist world domination. This was the atmosphere of the time in which Fayol's work grew to prominence in American business schools.

Just as Fayol's work proved receptive to a nation (France) emerging from the trauma of WWI, the fear saturated culture of the USA in the decades after WWII responded to his calm, rational and seemingly systematic process for achieving order: it promised how to restore order in the midst of an omni-present threat. Note that its principles do not include freedom to dream, to contemplate or to explore the meaning of work and of life but does just the opposite: it offers ways of closing down anything but rational thought. Its principles can be turned inwards to govern the imagination: when the mind wanders into the terrors of forthcoming total war, it can be calmed through focusing on planning in the mundane present. Through offering a way of controlling the chaos of the external world, it allows the unconscious to protect the conscious mind through suppressed the fears that are too engulfing

to comprehend (Rose, 1981). Fayol's recommendations offer ways of controlling the mind so that it does not stray into areas where the fears lie. If one calmly plans, organises, controls, then one imposes order and the traumas of the external world can be controlled. In other words, at one level, the USA needed to fight communism, and teaching 'American management knowledge' in American-style business schools was a useful weapon (e.g. Alcadipani and Faria, 2014). But at another level, Fayolian management knowledge taught how to control the fear of communism, and of Armageddon.

In other words, just as Fayol's ideas successfully addressed the unconscious of French people in a time of chaos and fear, through offering a plan for how to control the external world and thus instil the terror reverberating in the unconscious, it did the same in the USA in the era of the Cold War and continuing 'hot wars'. Its implicit message, one that may not be consciously heard because it appeals to the unconscious, was: stay calm, relax, organise control, impose order, and all will be well.

4. Conclusion: Historico/politico/emotional affect—a theory of the irrational reasons that influence the contents of the canon of 'great' thinkers

This paper has used the work of Henri Fayol to explore why some management theories appear so widely regarded they become part of the field's canon of great works. Fayol's work was particularly useful because it rose to influence in two different epochs and two different cultures. Its first success was in France during and in the decade after WWI, after which it slipped into obscurity. It grew to prominence in the USA after WWII, from where it gained global influence through its inclusion in management textbooks. Our historical case study allows us to argue that elevation of work to canonical status is not due to any intrinsic genius in its arguments, but rather because it offers something, almost intangible, that is necessary in the social, cultural and political context in the era when it becomes popular. What it offers is

the promise of a way to control and contain the existential dread of the particular era. Both France, first, and the USA, later, were experiencing historico-politico-emotional climates that were at best highly uncertain, and more generally were terrifying. The context of the first quarter of the twentieth century in France and the third quarter of the twentieth century in the USA were similar in that each had recently experienced totalising global wars, and each experienced trauma after the wars' end. WWI had destroyed much of France and the country found itself faced with a global flu pandemic that killed millions of people. WWII rescued the USA from the Great Depression of the 1920s and 1930s, but soldiers returning from the War were to enter very soon into other wars, and the citizenry faced the prospect of annihilation in a nuclear holocaust. Fayol's work offers a straightforward and direct remedy to manage the existential threats of such times: through planning, organising, staffing, coordinating and controlling the means to manage the threats could be contained. This is not a conscious offer—its suggestions are implicit, appealing to the unconscious fears of the era. Fayol's work promised that where there was chaos there would be order; where there was fear there would be security; where there was confusion there would be certainty. That is, Fayol's logical approach to breaking management down into its essential tasks is a nostrum for particular times, when the dominant emotion of the epoch is toxic insecurity. Hidden in the interstices of what would later become POSDCORB was a balm for unconscious fears and existential insecurities.

Analysing management theories not for their content alone, but within the historical context in which they come to prominence, is necessary if we are to understand why some management thinkers are regarded as 'great thinkers' whose work should be saved for posterity and others are not. We suggest the judgement that someone is a 'great thinker' is awarded because their ideas touch the nerve of the historical context in which they are read and discussed. Fayol's elevation to the managerial canon arose because of its appeal not only

to those searching for a general theory of how to manage organisations, but to those experiencing politically induced feelings of foreboding and existential panic. Where people dreaded chaos and the world falling into pieces, Fayol showed how to buttress the self against such fears. Although his writing looked outwards, to the everyday world of management and organisation, its implicit message looked inwards, to the mind and the psyche. The habitual narrative of business history is one of a teleological journey towards ever greater control. Where many authors have understood this to be control over the production process, or over the workforce, or over events more generally, we have argued that the works that enter the canon appeal to something less obvious—the historico/politico/emotional context of a specific epoch.

A final note

We are writing in another period of uncertainty, when the rise of right-wing populism and the election of unpredictable political leaders threaten the status quo, and in which there are constant reminders about environmental degradation, global warming and an end to life as we have known it on earth. The certainties of neoliberalism and the power of the market are fading, challenged by evidence that they were palpably wrong. The political effect of the present era is one of confusion and doubt. It is perhaps because we are living in an era of such uncertainty that we ourselves have been drawn to return to Fayol who, we have argued, has offered a means of staving off such dire political affect twice before. But it is not just us. We see echoes of Fayol's work in the attempts to control the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020—through planning how to control the contagion through locking down the world's population; organising health and vital support services so that health services are not overwhelmed and populations (at least in the richer countries) would remain fed; staffing through identifying the personnel actively needed for this effort (while the rest stay quarantined in their homes);

controlling through testing for the spread of the virus through the population, and evaluating, through checking the spread of the virus. There is, at the time of writing, no equivalent of Fayol's work to draw upon, or at least none that can be identified by a person's name. However, there is a strong sense that such a person is needed.

References

Alcadipani, R., and A. Faria. "Fighting Latin American Marginality in 'International' Business". *Critical Perspectives on International Business* 10, nos. 1/2 (2014): 107-117.

Bathurst, R., and F. Kennedy. "Hunting the 'play': A leadership suite in 12 movements". *Leadership* 13, no. 1 (2017): 20-34.

Berber, A. "100 yil öncesine bir yolculuk: 'Genel ve Endüstriyel Yönetim' ve Fransa'da Fayolizm-Taylorizm kutuplasmasi". *Istanbul University Journal of the School of Business* 45, special issue (2016): 118-132.

Berber, A. *Klasik Yönetim Düsüncesi.* Istanbul: Alfa, 2013.

Bertilorenzi, M. "L'administration dans son contexte". In M. Bertilorenzi, N. Dubruc and J-P. Passaqui (eds.), *Henri Fayol: Les multiples facettes d'un manager*. Paris: Presse des Mines – Transvalor, 2019: 171-188.

Breeze, J. D. "Henri Fayol's Centre for Administrative Studies". *Journal of Management History* 1, no. 3 (1995): 37-62.

Brodie, M. B. "Henri Fayol: Administration Industrielle et Générale—a re-interpretation". *Public Administration* 40, no. 3 (1962): 311-317.

Bruce, K., and C. Nyland. "Elton Mayo and the deification of human relations". *Organization Studies* 32, no. 3 (2011): 383-405.

Chatriot, A. “Fayol, les fayoliens et l’impossible réforme de l’administration durant l’entre-deux-guerre”. *Entreprise et Histoire* 34 (2003): 84-97.

Clarke, J. *France in the Age of Organization: Factory, Home and Nation from the 1920s to Vichy*. Berghahn Books, 2014.

Cohen, J., L. E. Hazelrigg, and W. Pope. “De-Parsonizing Weber: A critique of Parsons' interpretation of Weber's sociology”. *American Sociological Review* (1975): 229-241.

Cohen, Y. “Fayol, un instituteur de l'ordre industriel”. *Entreprises et Histoire* 34, no. 3 (2003): 29-67.

Cowan, R. A. “Annotated bibliography”. In J. C. Wood and M. C. Wood (eds.), *Henri Fayol: Critical evaluations in Business and Management*. Taylor & Francis, 2002: 11-38.

Dupin, C. *Discours sur le sort des ouvriers, considéré dans ses rapports avec l'industrie, la liberté et l'ordre public*. Paris: Bachelier, 1831.

Duval, N. “L’éducation nouvelle dans les sociétés européennes à la fin du XIXe siècle”. *Histoire, Économie et Société* 21, no. 1 (2002): 71-86.

Fayol, H. “Administration industrielle et générale, 3e partie: Observations et expériences personelles”. In J-L. Peaucelle (ed.), *Henri Fayol, inventeur des outils de gestion: Textes originaux et recherches actuelles*. Paris: Economica, 89-124, 2003.

Fayol, H. “Le cinquantenaire de la Societe de Commentry-Fourchambault et Decazeville”. *Societe de l'Industrie Minerale: Comptes Rendus Mensuels* Juillet (1908): 240-242.

Fayol, H. *Administration industrielle et générale*. Paris: Dunod, 1979.

Fayol, H. *General and Industrial Management* (tran. C. Storrs). Pitman Publishing, 1972.

Fayol, H. *Industrial and General Administration* (tran. J. A. Coubrough). Geneva: International Management Institute, 1930.

Franchet, A., and L. Franchet. *Pour former les hommes qu'il faut à la France de l'après-guerre*. Paris: Bibliothèque d'Education, 1923.

Georgakopoulou, A., and De Fina, A. *Analyzing Narrative: Discourse and Sociolinguistic Perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Gillespie, R. *Manufacturing Knowledge: A History of the Hawthorne Experiments*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Gomberg, W. "The historical roots of the democratic challenge to authoritarian management". *Human Resource Management* 24, no. 3 (1985): 253-269.

Guilbaut, S. "The New Adventures of the Avant-Garde in America". In F. Frascina, and J. Har (eds.), *Art in Modern Culture. An Anthology of Critical Texts.* London: Phaidon Press, 239–51, 1999.

Gulick, L. "Notes on the theory of organization with a special reference to Government in the United States". In L. Gulick & L. Urwick (eds.), *Papers on the Science of Administration*. New York: Institute of Public Administration, Columbia University, 3-45, 1937.

Gulick, L., and L. Urwick (eds.). *Papers on the Science of Administration*. New York: Institute of Public Administration, Columbia University, 1937.

Harding, N. *The Social Construction of Management: Texts and Identities*. London/New York: Routledge, 2003.

Hassard, J. S. "Rethinking the Hawthorne Studies: The Western Electric research in its social, political and historical context." *Human Relations* 65, no. 11 (2012): 1431-1461.

Hatchuel, A., and B. Segrestin. “A century old and still visionary: Fayol's innovative theory of management”, *European Management Review* 16, no. 2 (2019): 399-412.

Jacques, R. “Review of: Early Management Thought”. *Electronic Journal of Radical Organizational Theory* 3, no. 2 (1997).

Koontz, H. “The management theory jungle”. *The Journal of the Academy of Management* 4, no. 3 (1961): 174-188.

Koontz, H. (ed.) *Towards a unified theory of management (A symposium held at the Graduate School of Business Administration, University of California, Los Angeles, November 8 and 9, 1962)*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1964.

Koontz, H., and C. O’Donnell. *Principles of Management: An Analysis of Managerial Functions*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1955.

Koontz, H., and H. Weihrich. *Essentials of Management: An International, Innovation and Leadership Perspective*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2015.

Linde, C. “Private stories in public discourse: Narrative analysis in the social sciences”. *Poetics* 15, nos. 1-2 (1986): 183-202.

Mees, B. “Corporate governance as a reform movement”. *Journal of Management History* 21, no. 2 (2015): 194-209.

Meuleau, M. “From inheritors to managers: The École des Hautes Études Commerciales and business firms”. In Y. Cassis, F. Crouzet, and T. Gourvish (eds.), *Management and Business in Britain and France: The Age of the Corporate Economy*. Oxford University Press, 128-145, 1995.

Neher, A. Maslow's theory of motivation: A critique. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 31, no. 3 (1991): 89-112.

Newman, W. H. *Administrative Action: The Techniques of Organization and Management*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1951.

O'Connor, E. S. "The politics of management thought: A case study of the Harvard Business School and the Human Relations School". *Academy of Management Review* 24, no. 1 (1999): 117-131.

Parker, L. D., and P. A. Ritson. "Revisiting Fayol: Anticipating contemporary management". *British Journal of Management* 16, no. 3 (2005): 175-194.

Pearson, N. M. "Fayolism as the Necessary Complement of Taylorism". *American Political Science Review* 39, no. 1 (1945): 68-80.

Peaucelle, J-L. "Les disciples de Fayol". *Entreprises et Histoire* 3 (2003): 108-114.

Peaucelle, J-L., and C. Guthrie. *Henri Fayol, the Manager*. Routledge, 2015.

Pollock, G. *Differencing the Canon*. Abingdon: Routledge, 1999.

Reid, D. "Fayol: From experience to theory". *Journal of Management History* 1, no. 3 (1995a): 21-36.

Reid, D. "Reading Fayol with 3D glasses". *Journal of Management History* 1, no. 3 (1995b): 63-71.

Rose, G. *Hegel Contra Sociology*. A&C Black, 1981.

Sabin, P. A. G. *The Third World War Scare in Britain: A Critical Analysis*. Springer, 1986.

Schute, N. *On the Beach*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Heinemann, 1957.

Simon, H. A. "The proverbs of administration". *Public Administration Review* 6, no. 1 (1946): 53-67.

Smith, I., and T. Boyns. “British management theory and practice: The impact of Fayol”. *Management Decision* 43, no. 10 (2005): 1317-1334.

Terry, G. R. *Principles of Management*. Homewood, IL: Richard D. Irwin, 1953.

Tsoukas, H. “What is management? An outline of a metatheory”. *British Journal of Management* 5, no. 4 (1994): 289-301.

Urwick, L. “Foreword”. In *Henri Fayol, General and Industrial Management* (tran. C. Storrs). Pitman Publishing, v-xvii, 1972.

Urwick, L. *The Elements of Administration*, second edition. London: Pitman, 1972.

Urwick, L. *The Making of Scientific Management*. London: Management Publications Trust, 1949.

Vanuxem, P. “Introduction théorique et pratique à l’étude de l’administration expérimentale”. In *Henri Fayol, Administration industrielle et générale: L’eveil de l’esprit public*. Paris: H. Dunod et E. Pinat, 1917.

Wilbois, J. and P. Vanuxem. *Essai sur la conduite des affaires et la direction des hommes*. Paris: Payot, 1919.

Wilbois, J. *Le chef d’entreprise, sa fonction et sa personne*. Paris: Félix Alcan, 1926.

Wood, J. C., and M. C. Wood (eds.) *Henri Fayol: Critical Evaluations in Business and Management*, vol. 2. Taylor & Francis, 2002.

Wren, D. A. “Henri Fayol: Learning from experience”. *Journal of Management History* 1, no. 3 (1995): 5-12.

Wren, D. A. (ed.). *Early Management Thought*. Dartmouth, 1997.

Wren, D. A. *The Evolution of Management Thought*. John Wiley & Sons, 1994.

Wren, D. A., A. G. Bedeian, and J. D. Breeze. “The foundations of Henri Fayol's administrative theory”. *Management Decision* 40, no. 9 (2002): 906-918.