



17TH OAP WORKSHOP

Apocalyptic Times & Organization Studies

Organizing New Futures in an Age of Multiple Existential Crises

16, 17 & 18 June 2027, Paris

At Université Paris Dauphine-PSL and Neoma Business School (Paris campus)

CALL FOR PAPERS

ABOUT OAP

The OAP network (Organization, Artifacts & Practices) examines the ontologies of organization and of organizing, with particular attention to their temporal, spatial, material, technical and corporeal dimensions. Committed to plurality, OAP remains open to the full range of philosophical prisms — Western and non-Western — that can be mobilized to think through these ontologies, and it pays close attention to questions of methodology and to organizational phenomena themselves, in their empirical as much as their theoretical depth. Beyond a logic of “gaps” to be filled in the literature (which risks reducing research to a game of chess played against itself), OAP is committed to exploring the structuring political, societal, and organizational questions of our time, together with its pasts and futures, always in a process of becoming. In this spirit, the present workshop is convened around three core principles: OAP is open to all (1), free (2), and collectively documented (3).

APOCALYPTIC TIMES AND ORGANIZATION STUDIES

The twenty-first century has profoundly altered the temporal horizon within which organizations emerge, endure, and disappear. Climate change, biodiversity collapse, geopolitical instability, the return of interstate wars and the specter of nuclear escalation, pandemics, democratic erosion, socio-economic inequalities, the rapid dissemination of generative artificial intelligence, and a growing crisis of meaning at work no longer appear as isolated disruptions. Rather, they constitute intertwined existential challenges that redefine what organizations are, what they do, and perhaps most fundamentally, whether they can continue to exist in forms we currently recognize and understand.

Organization studies have long examined crises, disasters, uncertainty, resilience, institutional change, and organizational adaptation. More recently, the literature on Grand Challenges has encouraged scholars to examine complex societal issues that require collective action across organizational boundaries (Ferraro et al., 2015; George et al., 2016; Howard-Grenville et al., 2019). At the same time, research on organizational temporality shows that organizations actively construct multiple temporal orders rather than merely evolving within (unique) objective chronological time (Ancona et al., 2001; Orlikowski & Yates, 2002; Hernes, 2014; Pulk, 2022; de Vaujany, Holt and Grandazzi, 2023). Crisis scholars have also shown that catastrophic events fundamentally reshape sensemaking, decision-making, and organizational learning (Weick, 1993; Pearson & Clair, 1998; Roux-Dufort, 2007; Boin et al., 2017).

In continuation with these streams of literature, we want to explore what is too often an implicit assumption: there remains a future and larger institutional frame within which organizations can recover, adapt, innovate, or transform. *Today, this assumption itself deserves critical examination.* What if the defining characteristic of our historical moment is not simply uncertainty, but the possibility that there may be no future to organize for? Something requiring a reaction which goes far beyond the current possibilities of contemporary organizing, should it be through corporate strategy renewal or a change in contemporary public-policies.

Climate scientists increasingly discuss irreversible tipping points. Military analysts openly reconsider scenarios involving nuclear escalation. Artificial intelligence raises unprecedented questions regarding human agency, expertise, creativity, and the future of work: in this context, democratic institutions appear increasingly fragile. At the same time, employees experience growing existential uncertainty manifested through burnout, eco-anxiety, quiet quitting, digital exhaustion, loneliness, and a profound crisis of meaning.

Organizations therefore confront something different from risk, crisis, or disruption. They increasingly operate under the possibility of *radical existential discontinuity*. Something which require much more than a ‘reaction’, ‘strategic shift’, ‘new mission’, ‘new ways of working’ or ‘alternative forms of organizing’. We need more than ever a radical refoundation and re-invention of organizations and organizing and their role in the volatile socio-eco-technical dynamics of our societies.

This workshop proposes ‘Apocalyptic Times’ as a new conceptual lens for Organization studies.

Importantly, in renewing the debate about the end(s) of the world, the apocalypse should not be understood solely as catastrophe. The Greek *apokalypsis* means ‘unveiling’ or ‘revelation’. Apocalyptic moments expose the fragility of institutions previously perceived as stable, reveal hidden infrastructures of organizing, and force societies to imagine futures beyond established assumptions

of growth, progress, and continuity. Apocalypse is therefore simultaneously destruction and disclosure, ending and beginning, collapse and major moment of (re-)invention and (re-)subjectivation. For Organization studies, this invites a profound theoretical shift; rather than asking how organizations survive crises, we may ask the following questions:

Beyond an episode of crisis and usual logics of competition, innovation and mission, what happens when organizations cannot assume continuity anymore or should not assume continuity?

How do organizations act when planning no longer guarantees a future?

How do practices change when time itself becomes unstable and a void?

How does organizing continue under the possibility of societal collapse?

What forms of work remain meaningful when the future becomes radically uncertain?

How do technologies simultaneously amplify and mediate existential uncertainty?

CONVERSATIONS TO BE BRIDGED

These questions invite dialogue across several important conversations in organization studies, philosophy, and anthropology. Rather than treating them as separate bodies of literature, this workshop seeks to connect their insights into how organizations inhabit, sustain, and transform temporal horizons when continuity itself is in question.

The literature on organizational temporality has examined temporal structuring, rhythms, process, temporal work, ambitemporality and intertemporal tensions (Gherardi and Strati, 1988; Chia, 2002; Ancona et al., 2001; Orlikowski & Yates, 2002; Kaplan & Orlikowski, 2013; Hernes, 2014; Slawinski & Bansal, 2015; Pulk, 2022; de Vaujany, Holt and Grandazzi, 2023). More recent work on future-making explores how actors co-produce and enact futures through anticipation, imagination, and situated practices (Beckert, 2016; Wenzel et al., 2020 & 2025). Research on distant pasts and futures further shows how actors translate remote events into present activity (Hernes & Schultz, 2020). Building on these perspectives, we ask what becomes of temporal work when established trajectories are radically threatened, when desirable futures become difficult to imagine, of when making a future requires first recreating the conditions of its possibility.

The literature on Grand Challenges, crises, disasters, and resilience offers complementary resources for examining collective action, emergency response, and the fragility of organizational sensemaking (Ferraro et al., 2015; George et al., 2016; Weick, 1993; Pearson & Clair, 1998; Roux-Dufort, 2007; Boin et al., 2017). Apocalyptic times invite us to revisit the conditions under which recovery, adaptation, or transformation remain possible. How do organizations respond when disruptions extend beyond a bounded episode, when restoration is uncertain, or when the ecological, institutional, and political conditions sustaining organizing are themselves at stake? This question extends these conversations without assuming that they all share a single model of crisis or continuity.

Philosophical and anthropological work on catastrophe and the end(s) of the world opens a further conversation. Stengers (2015), Latour (2017), and Danowski and Viveiros de Castro (2017) interrogate political thought when the Earth can no longer be treated as a stable backdrop for action. Tsing (2015) explores possibilities for life in capitalist ruins, while Escobar (2018) develops the pluriverse as a way of thinking the coexistence of multiple worlds beyond a universal promise of growth and progress. These perspectives invite organization scholars to ask whose world is

understood to be ending, how endings are experienced unequally, and what forms of collective life can emerge within damaged worlds.

Organization scholarship has also engaged apocalypse more directly. Ybema (2010) examines how narratives of lost and anticipated golden ages shape organizational identities; Kostera (2020) explores meaning and hope in organizing through the metaphor of apocalypse; and Fleming (2018) proposes “revolutionary pessimism” as a response to contemporary capitalism. Bendell's *Deep Adaptation agenda* (2018; with Read, 2021) offers another, more explicitly collapse-oriented position. Carollo et al. (2025) develop “apocalyptic reflexivity” to look into the generative possibilities of apocalyptic thought. These different orientations raise questions about the relationships between loss, hope, and action, without requiring contributors to endorse a common diagnosis of collapse.

A related conversation concerns how organizations narrate and deploy endings. Drawing on literary and theological perspectives, apocalyptic thinking offers resources for examining rupture, decisive moments, promises of salvation, and the deferral of an anticipated (Wright and Nyberg, 2015; De Cock et al., 2021). Work on managerial apocalypse, digital acceleration, and technological “end-time” likewise opens questions about permanent revelation, fragmented attention, and the time needed for cooperative creativity (de Vaujany, 2022, 2024, 2025; Bronner, 2021; Jarvenpaa & Välikangas, 2020). The workshop welcomes contributions that clarify how these temporal dynamics operate in organizational practices and processes.

Finally, aesthetics and existential phenomenology help connect apocalyptic imaginaries with lived organizational experience. Aesthetic approaches examine the images, forms, and sensory experiences through which organizational worlds become meaningful (Strati, 1999, 2019; Guillet de Monthoux, 1993; Hjorth & Steyaert, 2009). Phenomenological work brings attention to disclosure, finitude, mortality, and care (Introna & Ilharco, 2004; Reedy & Learmonth, 2011; Holt, 2023). Together, these approaches invite inquiry into how endings are made perceptible and experienced through bodies, artifacts, and everyday practices, and how such experiences may open or constrain possibilities for organizing otherwise.

This 17th OAP workshop builds on, and seeks to extend, these emerging conversations together around concrete organizational phenomena and new theoretical propositions. We welcome contributions examining the tensions between continuity and rupture, destruction and disclosure, and the loss of familiar futures and the possibility of creating others.

APOCALYPSE AS UNVEILING: THE ENDLESS REVELATION

Philosophers have long considered the apocalypse from its etymological meaning, considering apocalypse as a revelation rather than destruction and reflecting on catastrophe becoming endlessly deferred in late capitalism (Baudrillard, 1992; see also Ellul, 1975; Derrida, 1983; Deleuze, 1993; Agamben, 2004; Anders, 2007). More recently, organization scholars such as de Vaujany (2022, 2024) or Véliz (2026) have reframed the apocalypse not as a collapse but as perpetual disclosure part of capitalistic processes themselves and their organizationality.

Historically, management has continuously revealed innovations, disruptions, and novelties that promise to reveal the future while endlessly postponing its arrival (de Vaujany, 2025; Celiz, 2026). In the current capitalistic regime, crises and disruptions are thus not external threats to capitalism but are continually absorbed and reconfigured as sources of its own renewal (Fisher, 2009). In that sense, managerial apocalypse is less an event than a temporal regime: a continuous production of anticipation whose rhythms and pace sustain its generative power. Rather than anticipating collapse,

it institutionalizes permanent revelation as a condition of organizational life, transforming the disclosure of an always-emerging future into one of the central mechanisms through which narrative and digital capitalism secures its own reproduction (de Vaujany, 2022, 2024; Véliz, 2026).

Unlike earlier forms of capitalism structured around promises of future redemption (Benjamin, 1921), digital capitalism increasingly organizes the future itself through infrastructures that continuously generate, calculate, personalize, and operationalize possible futures. Indeed, the future becomes continuously disclosed through recommendations, anticipations, scores, and opportunities, while desires, frustrations, and intimate traces become the very material through which these revelations are generated. From this perspective, a technical approach of apocalyptic organizing could extend beyond the classical critique of capitalist promises: it could help to identify a mode of organizing in which revelation itself becomes infrastructure. Managerial and digital capitalism no longer relies only on the symbolic promise of transformation but on technical dispositifs (Leclercq-Vandelannoitte and Bertin, 2018) that perpetually unveil what individuals, organizations, and societies are becoming. Apocalypse, therefore, is not the announcement of an external future to come, but an ongoing algorithmic and managerial operation through which futures are continuously disclosed, enacted, and renewed.

This reading invites contributors to interrogate apocalypse not only as a figure of disaster yet to come, but either critically as a potential space for revelation and hope (Kostera, 2020) or experientially as an organizational device already at work likely to be reconfigured (de Vaujany, 2022, 2024), that of a present which self-generates by endlessly unveiling itself. This shift opens a fertile research space. Between apocalypse as an announced end (climatic, nuclear, ecological) and apocalypse as an infinite, self-sustaining process of revelation (managerial, narrative, digital), what are the tensions, complicities, and ruptures likely to be identified in contemporary organizational practices?

POSSIBLE THEMES (not exhaustive)

Organizational Temporalities

- Apocalyptic temporalities
- Temporal work, ambitemporality and existential uncertainty
- Waiting, suspension, interruption, and acceleration
- Temporal paths, path creation, and remote futures
- Anticipation, preparedness, and foresight
- Apocalyptic events and non-events
- Future-making and future unmaking
- Organizational futures beyond continuity

Grand Challenges and Existential Risks

- Climate change and planetary boundaries
- Artificial intelligence and organizational futures
- Wars and geopolitical instability
- Nuclear imaginaries
- Biodiversity collapse
- Democratic erosion
- Pandemics
- Polycrisis and cascading crises

Crisis, Disaster, and Collapse

- Crisis management
- Disaster organizing
- Organizational resilience reconsidered
- Collapse of sensemaking
- High Reliability Organizations
- Long emergencies
- Irreversible crises

Technology and Digital Apocalypse

- AI and managerial work
- Algorithmic management
- Scroll cultures
- Digital acceleration
- Platform organizing
- Cognitive overload
- Attention and organizational experience

Work, Meaning, and Existential Organization

- Crisis of meaning at work
- Burnout
- Eco-anxiety
- Climate grief
- Organizational hope
- Despair
- Care
- Repair
- Regeneration

Imagination, Fiction, and Futures

- Science fiction as organizational theory
- Speculative methods
- Organizational imaginaries
- Design fiction
- Utopias and dystopias
- Post-human organizations
- Alternative futures
- The pluriverse and worlds-in-common

We also welcome all proposals covering more traditional and regular topics of OAP workshops around the ontologies of organizing and their time, space and place dimensions in the context of our digital societies.

The deadline for submitting an abstract is **3 February 2027** (midnight CET).

Please note that OAP 2026 will include two pre-events, the 11th Dauphine Philosophy Workshop (DPW) 2027 and the 2nd GeoHos workshop (the workshop about Geopolitical and Historical Organization Studies).

Extended abstracts of no more than 1,000 words for the 17th OAP workshop should be sent to **workshopoap@gmail.com**. Abstracts must outline the proposed contribution to the workshop. The proposal must be in .doc/.docx/.rtf format and should contain the author's/authors' name(s) as well as their institutional affiliations, email address(es), and postal address(es).

Authors will be notified of the committee's decision by 28 February 2027.

Please also note that OAP 2027 will take place fully onsite.

There are no registration fees for attending this workshop; however, participants will be responsible for covering their travel and accommodation expenses.

Scientific committee of OAP 2027: Albane Grandazzi (Grenoble Ecole de Management), Aurélie Leclercq-Vandelannoitte (CNRS LEM & IESEG), Marc Lenglet (Neoma Business School), Elise Lobbedez (Neoma Business School), Kätlin Pulk (EBS), François-Xavier de Vaujany (UPD-PSL, DRM)

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