

Harnessing the Power of Loss: On the Discriminatory Dynamic of Non-Emancipatory Organization Identity

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Abstract : In this paper, Lacanian theory will be used to illustrate the way discourses interact with the material by way of reifying antagonisms to shape our sense of identities in and around organizations. The ability to 'sustain the loss' is, in this view, the common structure here discerned in the very texture of a discourse, which reifies 'lack' as an ontological condition into something contingently absent (loss) that the subject hopes to overcome (desire). These fundamental human tendencies of identification are illustrated in the paper by examples drawn from history, cinema, and literature. Turning to a select sample of empirical accounts from a management consultancy firm, it is argued that this 'sustaining the loss' operates in discourse to enact identification in an organizational context.

Keywords : Lacan, identification, discourse, desire, loss

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