

**SPECIAL SECTION INTRODUCTION:  
PAPEPRS FROM THE SYSTEMS TRACK  
AT ISOneWorld 2007 Conference  
April 11 – April 13, Las Vegas, USA**

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It is a pleasure to present to the readers of *Scientific Inquiry* four of the nine interesting papers and a special panel discussion that were included in the Systems Track of the 2007 ISOneWorld conference. These were selected after a detailed and rigorous review process. The diversity of the papers in the track showed the richness of the ways how systems thinking is perceived in the field of Information Systems and Information and Communications Technologies and in other disciplines.

The first paper in this section is an important theoretical paper, analyzing the fundamentals of management sciences and systems thinking by Alberto Paucar-Caceres from Manchester Metropolitan University. It is exploring in a comprehensive and deep way various cultural and other differences between these fields as they are practiced on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. It is an interesting and thought provoking inquiry that can provide insights for a better future of these disciplines. The second paper presents an application of Critical Systems Thinking to the analysis of telecenters in South Africa by Sopazi and Andrew, from The University of Johannesburg. It is an example on how critical systems thinking can be applied to analysis of problems in the field of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in developing countries and beyond.

While the first paper in this section deals with methodological aspects, the third one is about issues that are significant in a more detailed analysis – at the level of methods. Austrian scholars Lapp and Ossimitz treat an important question in feedback modeling and provide suggestions that improve its expressiveness. They are relevant not just for systems dynamics. The final paper in this section is about some of the implications of the changes in the modern world on the design of socio-technical systems. The topic of Designing Socio-Technical Systems for Ubiquitous Information Environments is addressed in several dimensions by Singh, Wood-Harper and Wood from The University of Manchester Business School, one of the major centers that has contributed to socio-technical systems theory.

Since it is impossible to cover every aspect of information systems development and their relationships in a conference track, there could be many other ways in which the systems approach might be applicable to Information Systems (for some of them please see Petkov et al. (2008), which is based partly on a paper by this writer, delivered at the same conference). Still, I hope that the papers presented in this special section enrich our understanding of important aspects of systems theory and its applications.

**References**

- Petkov, D., Edgar-Nevill, D., Madachy, R., O'Connor R. (2008). Information Systems, Software Engineering, and Systems Thinking: Challenges and Opportunities, *Int'l Journal of Information Technologies and the Systems Approach*, 1(1), 64-80.