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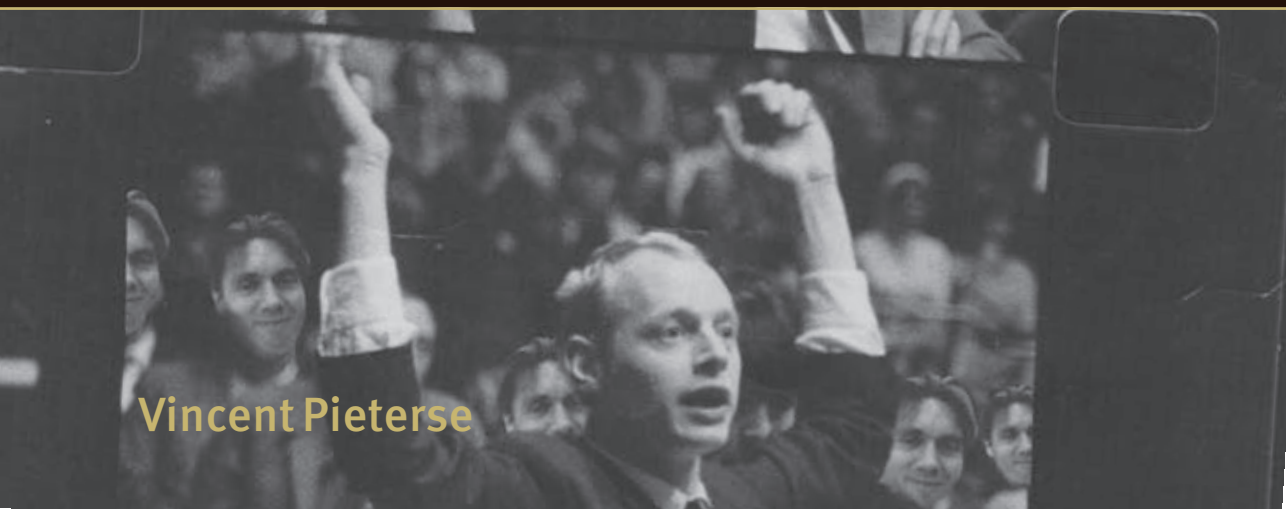
The Dutch Beat poet and performer Simon Vinkenoog as exemplar of leadership in contemporary organizations



Vincent Pieterse

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The Dutch Beat poet and performer Simon Vinkenoog as exemplar of leadership in contemporary organizations

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The Dutch Beat poet and performer Simon Vinkenoog as exemplar of leadership in contemporary organizations

Van kunstenaar-als-leider tot leider-als-kunstenaar
Dichter en performer Simon Vinkenoog als voorbeeld van modern leiderschap
(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Proefschrift
ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor
aan de Universiteit voor Humanistiek te Utrecht
op gezag van de Rector, prof. dr. H.A. Alma
ingevolge van het besluit van het College voor Promoties
in het openbaar te verdedigen
op donderdag 17 november 2011
des voormiddags om 10.30 uur

door
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Dr. B. Sørenson, Aalborg University

Like God, if this world I could control
Eliminating the world would be my role
I would create a whole new world,
Such that the freethinker would attain desired goal.

Rubá'íyah of Omar Khayyám (late 11th century/early 12th century)

Everything I know
still needs putting in words,
as though unexpectedly life awaits me
letting me know what I am
and why here and now,
with whom and what.

Everything I know by Simon Vinkenoog (1993-1996)

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contemporary organizations', provided us with lively discussions that were always amusing. Her disappointment when I failed to include Ernest Mandel in my research was mitigated by the fact that one of my main resources, Boltanski and Chiapello's *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, was "as important and as sweeping in scope as Mandel's *Late Capitalism*" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: credits). On a personal note to her, again thank you. Without you I doubt I would have started this project, and I certainly would not have finished it.

Amsterdam, July 2011
Vincent Pieterse

Introduction

It is said that their aspirations are not satisfied, that they "expect more from their work", that "through their work they want to play a useful role in society, to develop, to progress", and that "the question is whether firms, with their traditional managerial style, are responding properly to these aspirations, and whether … [professionals and managers] can make a success of their life and not waste it." (Froissart, cited in Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 63)

The influence of the above text is a frequent subject of discussion among not only my colleagues, but also the clients of the company for which I work, *De Baak Management Centre* (DBMC). These clients are mainly leaders, entrepreneurs, professionals and managers looking for inspiration, motivation, knowledge and new insights. DBMC is one of the largest management training institutes in the Netherlands. It evolved from the largest employers organization in the Netherlands, the Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers, which is considered to be "the voice of Dutch business"[1]. As described by the company, DBMC was founded upon the Humanist tradition of the 1950s and pioneered an understanding of the human side of enterprise. The institute's focus is on the individual: the individual's effective interaction within the organization and society. At DBMC, our method of teaching is supposed to appeal to the intellect and the imagination, as well as the pragmatic and creative sides of human nature[2].

In business, we discuss Daniel Froissart's text with our clients because we believe that it is essential for contemporary organizations to recognize the aspirations of the manager and the professional. If organizations respond properly to these aspirations, it is to be hoped that talented people and their knowledge will be preserved within the organization. Talented people are innovative and creative; if they stay committed to the organization it is believed that this will create competitive advantage (Stam, 2007). It is because of the "massive change in the status of knowledge" (Liu, 2004: 35), where knowledge is no longer seen as academic, but as emancipatory and based on personal experience, that DBMC talks about "lead[ing] through knowledge"[3].

At DBMC, we believe that the way to derive commitment from the professional and the manager is to appeal to their autonomy and freedom. The idea that everyone should self-develop is expected to create 'genuine autonomy' based on authenticity, self-knowledge and personal fulfilment. 'Genuine autonomy' is needed because the professional life of the manager is not framed by career paths, job descriptions and systems of sanction-rewards, but supposedly through what is called "the power of projects" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 90). The catchphrases of contemporary organizations are 'creativity', 'innovation', 'authenticity', 'activity' and 'flexibility'. As described in the DBMC texts, "this all sets the stage for self-actualization"[4] and empowerment, but in the organization there is an additional need for projects to be led by an "exceptional" person (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 91). At the beginning of the 21st century, inspired by popular management literature, DBMC decided that this exceptional person should no longer be called a manager, but a 'leader'. With the help of their own organizations, our clients could themselves be(come) such exceptional persons, realizing their dreams and sharing them with others. Leadership is no longer derived from one's official position, rather it is the authority acquired from personal qualities that makes for a good "leader" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 78). To clarify, it is this idea of leaders and leadership that is reflected upon throughout this book, providing me with the conceptual context for my exploration and analysis.

The Leader

In contemporary writing, Henry Mintzberg describes management as "controlling, coordinating and directing" (Mintzberg, 1998: 143), while John Kotter (1990) believes that management is more formal and scientific than leadership-dependent. According to Richard Barker, Mats Alvesson and Stefan Sveningsson, the function of a manager is frequently related to the creation of stability, structure, systems and bureaucracy. In contrast, leadership is often understood as producing change and activating innovation and development. It also involves vision, teamwork, creativity, inspiration, cooperation and networking (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2003: 1438; Barker, 1997: 349). In addition, David Fagiano notes that leaders must place an emphasis on helping others perform the necessary tasks in order to achieve common vision (Fagiano, 1997: 5). These views offer a variety of characteristics for being a leader as opposed to a manager. The leader is typically visionary rather than rational, passionate rather than consulting, more creative than persistent, inspiring rather than tough-minded, innovative rather than analytical and courageous rather than structured (Dubrin, 2001). The fundamental task of the leader, at least according to Christopher Bartlett and Sumantra Ghoshal, is the release of the human spirit, which makes creativity, inspiration and entrepreneurship possible. Bartlett and Ghoshall believe that the "organization man" must be transformed into someone with individuality and initiative (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1995: 134). Knowledge is most valuable when the leader controls, uses and manages it, through personal relations (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1995).

It is these ideas of contemporary leadership that are mirrored in DBMC's philosophy of learning. Leaders are the people who lead in business and society with knowledge of themselves, others, the business and the organization. They are believed to be exceptional individuals, sensitized to new knowledge and therefore better able to serve as catalysts in developing their own talents and the talents/needs of their employees[5]. This is based on a "core truth: that those who are authentic and open have the greatest chance of contributing to their organizations and to society"[6].

Froissart's text (as cited in Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 63) reflects on many of the challenges to contemporary organizations. It is the basis of the philosophy of learning of DBMC. By framing this philosophy in the language of 'new' knowledge versus 'old' knowledge, genuine autonomy versus job description and leader versus manager, DBMC provides Froissart's text and our philosophy of learning with the rhetorical language to justify itself. Though the citation above appeared in Boltanski and Chiapello's *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (2007)[7], Froissart's statement was originally published in his book *Déléguer avec succès ses responsabilités* (1969). DBMC wrongly describes Froissart's idea as 'new'. The only novelty in the text is that I exchanged the original word *cadres* for the words *professionals and manager*s. The essential part of the message, however, remained unchanged.

It is here that we arrive at the source of my research. Froissart's citation gives voice to my dissatisfaction and irritation about the 'denial of history' in the language used by DBMC. It appears that we label novelty and innovation as perpetually 'good'. In doing so, we claim that creativity, innovation, authenticity, activity and flexibility are always 'good'. The characteristics of the manager and the professional, and especially those of the exceptional person or the leader, are invariably described in positive language. This image of the leader emphasizes that his/her leadership is very significant and is something quite special. This leads people to associate the leader with acts and activities beyond the trivial and everyday.

According to Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003), contemporary writing, as well as conversations among practitioners, attaches a mystique to leadership that describes it in visionary and heroic terms. The leader possesses the talent to address others through the use of charisma, authenticity and other strongly emotional devices, the objective being to stimulate and encourage people to engage in projects. The leader is understood as having "a saviorlike quality in a world that constantly needs saving" (Rost, 1993: 94). Leadership is about being powerful and active. The leader acts, the followers react and the distinction made between the exceptional person and the manager mythologizes contemporary leadership (Alvesson and Sveningsson, 2003: 1435-1436).

While reading over DBMC's texts on the leader and his/her leadership qualities, I noticed phrases such as 'acting authentically' and 'creating trust'. Because of these attributes, the leader is perceived as being reliable. It seems that leadership is not about being authentic; rather, it is about acting authentically. Apparently it does not matter if the leader is reliable as long as s/he is perceived to be as such. This made me dissatisfied with the ideas of leadership that we impart to our clients. The management literature of DBMC displays, in effect, a tension between the possibility of genuine authenticity and opportunistic behavior.

The Critique

My book originates from the tension between the possibility of genuine authenticity and opportunistic behavior. This work provides a personal account of my search for a better understanding of the tensions within the ideas of leadership in contemporary organizations. My text is based on my personal experiences as a Program Director for the company, De Baak Management Centre. Although the book is based on personal experience, it will not be written as an auto-ethnography.

My frustration with the concept of leadership places me in a difficult position. Referring to the discourse on leadership set forth by DBMC, it is said that within organizations, dissent among employed individuals is "largely irrelevant" (Liu, 2004: 46) and that the organization "never accommodates any critique" (Liu, 2004: 46). Yet here I am, a DBMC employee, attempting to be critical.

At the same time, however, contemporary leadership is characterized as democratic (Parker, 2002a: 5), meaning that I am allowed to write a book that is critical of the leadership discourse. My situation can best be described as 'biting the hand that feeds me', and underlines what might appear to be an incoherent and ungrateful attitude. This dilemma has heavily influenced the contents of this book.

According to Theodor Adorno, critique is dynamic and must be embedded in a specific reality, referred to as "immanent critique" (Adorno, 2005: 14). 'Immanent critique' analyzes a phenomenon by locating contradictions in the rules and practices necessary to the production of the phenomenon. Only if an individual is immanently involved with the production of a phenomenon, argues Adorno, can s/he speculate about a way to get beyond it (Adorno, 1983; Böhm, 2007: 109). Through the analysis of their forms and meanings, my critique of the phenomena of the contemporary leader seeks to grasp the contradiction between 'objective ideas' and their ideological presentation (Adorno, 1983: 32). According to Adorno, a critique must operate from within (Adorno, 1983: 32). While my critique comes from within, it also involves the distress of being embedded in the very ideological structures and practices I aim to criticise. I am involved in a practice of repeating the content of the discourse with the hope that this repetition will sooner or later unravel my felt tensions.

However, "today, when ideologues tend more than ever to encourage positive thought … it takes friendly persuasion … to accustom thought to be positive" (Adorno, 1973b: 19). Therefore, the effort implied in a critical engagement "is negative already" (Adorno, 1973b: 19). According to Adorno, this negative thinking is to "resist the positive, pragmatic reality that we are always already encouraged to accept and follow" (Böhm, 2007: 111). In reality, this negative critical thinking is not just 'negativism'; rather, it is the opposite. According to Steffen Böhm, "this negative, critical thinking involves an immanent critique [of a phenomenon] … which is a positive movement in itself, as it aims to present a new knowledge" (Böhm, 2007: 111).

Adorno addresses the awkward contradiction with which I find myself faced. My exploration of the tensions within the ideas of leadership in contemporary organizations "is not one which resolves objective contradictions in a spurious harmony, but one which expresses the harmony negatively by embodying the contradictions, . . . in its innermost structure" (Adorno, 1983: 32).

My negative feelings regarding the notion of leadership in contemporary organizations connect with the critical approach of my research. Therefore, I intend to take a closer look at the possibilities of this critical approach.

The Framing

A variety of theorists have drawn on the critical theory of Adorno and the Frankfurt School. One current, of such scholars, falls under the heading of Critical Management Studies (CMS). With the publication of *Critical Management Studies* (1992), Mats Alvesson and Hugh Willmott summarized critical theory by combining the work of several scholars mostly active in Britain. This academic movement encompasses a broad range of positions apart from the critical theory of the Frankfurt School, including post-structuralism, deconstructionism, literary criticism, feminism, psychoanalysis, cultural studies and environmentalism. This theoretical pluralism, coupled with the fact that there is no unitary critical position, means that there is no single way of distinguishing the critical from the non-critical, although it seems that critical work can be recognized by, for example, the kinds of work referenced by authors (Fournier and Grey, 2000). However, it is not my intention here to introduce CMS in detail. Instead, I will explore the ideas of this movement that appeal to me in relation to my own work.

The main principle of CMS is that organizations are considered to be a social phenomenon, meaning that organizations are seen from a perspective other than a purely managerial one. Within the managerial point of view, rationalism reigns supreme and it is "hopelessly forgetful" (Spoelstra, cited in Kaulingfreks et al., 2004). CMS doubts if this management perspective gives managers and leaders enough insight with regard to organization. Managerialism usually takes too little account of coincidences, dilemmas, paradoxes and contradictions.

It is because of this exploration of coincidences, dilemmas, paradoxes and contradictions that the critical ideas of CMS appeal to me. Perhaps the ethics of business, the ideas of the self-actualization and personal fulfilment and the possibility of opportunistic behaviour and selfish personal interests within a purely management perspective are necessary for the survival of the leader. If so, where does that leave DBMC's philosophies of learning? Where does that leave the 'Other' and the society? What about the meaning of the much praised 'genuine autonomy' and authenticity? And what are the consequences of a purely managerial perspective on an individual's ideas of creativity, innovation, activity and flexibility? In the following chapters I will explore these questions from a critical perspective.

Instead of a purely managerial perspective, the perspective of CMS organizes itself around three interrelated core propositions: de-naturalization, anti-performativity and reflexivity (Fournier and Grey, 2000; Grey and Willmott, 2005). Firstly, de-naturalization is about "deconstructing the 'reality' of organizational life" (Fournier and Grey, 2000: 18); it 'denaturalizes' that which is usually taken for granted. If the imperatives that are often assumed to be immutable in neo-management discourse (change, innovation, creativity and so on) can be shown to be social constructions, rooted in specific historical moments, then they potentially become open to some kind of progressive change. Secondly, CMS has a 'non-performative' intent – i.e. it seeks the rejection of profit and revenue maximization as the only legitimate (business) goal. Instead, its aim is to expose the consequences of organization. CMS "questions the alignment between knowledge, truth and efficiency … and is concerned with performativity only in that it seeks to uncover what is being done in its name" (Fournier and Grey, 2000: 17). Thirdly, CMS is philosophically and methodologically reflexive, as it tries to problematize its own claims to identify things about organizational phenomena. Simultaneously, it presents a challenge to the objectivism and scientism of mainstream research, where an assumption of neutrality reigns (Fournier and Grey, 2000: 17-18; Grey and Willmott, 2005: 5-6; Parker, 2005: 355).

For me, these propositions of CMS provide the possibility of framing my questions and subsequent exploration. Therefore, I will problematize questions in this book such as: What are the imperatives of the image of the leader in contemporary organizations and from which specific historical moments do these imperatives come from? How can I question the alignment between knowledge, truth and efficiency within neo-management discourse and its idea of leadership? What can I say about mainstream research (as represented by popular management literature) and its neutrality? And, how can I problematize my own claims in my texts? My arguments will focus on the investigation of these questions and their inherent implications.

The Artist

In order to get a better sense of the specific historical moments in which the imperatives of the neo-management discourse are rooted, I first turn to Michel de Certeau. De Certeau envisaged interpretations of the past as localized fabrications of the present. At the same time, he problematized

the relationship that these interpretative stories have with the traces of history that they manipulate. One of his approaches was to look at the formality of the performance of discourse, organized in the practice of language. He called the practice of discourse into question by elucidating the relations between practice and its representative interpretations of the past. With a focal point on what the discourse excludes or 'forgets' in its representation, de Certeau worked on the periphery of contemporary thought. This led him to "advance towards the frontiers of the great regions which have already been explored ... moving in the direction of sorcery, madness, festival, literature ... all zones of silence" (Ahearne, 1995: 36; de Certeau, 1988: 92).

With the ideas of de Certeau, whose work combined history, philosophy, the social sciences and psychoanalysis, it is possible to give a more detailed interpretation of the core propositions of CMS in relation to my research. The practice of language in neo-management discourse is centred on the catchphrases of 'creativity', 'innovation', 'authenticity', 'activity' and 'flexibility'. In these discourses, the leader is an exceptional person and his leadership is derived from his/her personal qualities. This is understood to produce change and promote innovation and development. Doing so involves vision, teamwork, creativity, inspiration, cooperation and networking. By looking at the interpretative stories of this style of leadership and the traces of history that it represents, we can explore the blind spots of neo-management discourse.

In *From Counterculture to Cyberculture* (2006), Fred Turner, Associate Professor and the Director of Undergraduate Studies in the Department of Communication at Stanford University, investigates a 'silent zone' or 'unheard story' in the history of Stewart Brand and explores how the contemporary network culture emerged. Brand is founder of the *Whole Earth Catalog, The Co-evolution Quarterly, The WELL* (Whole Earth 'Lectronic Link) and the *Global Business Network*. By connecting the dots between the networked culture of the contemporary creative industry and the pioneers of the counterculture of the 1960s in the United States, Turner traces the ideas of creativity, personal autonomy, playfulness and communities. Turner starts in the margins, visible in the language he uses to describe the pioneers of the 1960s: 'weirdos', 'hallucinatory', 'hippie communalism' and 'nerds' (Turner, 2006). Through historical digging and sociological analysis, he tells the story of the "inspired madness" behind the contemporary idea of the network entrepreneur (Rushkoff, in Turner, 2006: credits).

Along with Turner there are other academics such as Thomas Frank (1997), Joseph Heath and Andrew Potter (2004) who have traced back the ideas of contemporary leadership to the countercultural movements of the 1960s. However, it is Luc Boltanski and Ève Chiapello, for whom "management literature as prescription for capitalism" provides a frame, who best describe the role played by criticism, in the dynamics of capitalism. In the following chapters I will describe their analysis in detail, but for now I will just elucidate on one of their main arguments: that the artistic critique of the countercultural movements of the 1960s is mainly responsible for contemporary neo-management discourse and its image of leadership. The contemporary leader takes the artist as his model (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007).

The main focus of the retracing attempted by Turner, Frank, Potter and Heath is the United States, while Boltanski and Chiapello focus on France. Inspired by these authors who have outlined the relationship between the image of contemporary leadership and the interpretations of the past that it represents, this book will reflect on the leadership ideas of artistic critique in the Netherlands. I will build arguments around the themes of what the discourse excludes or 'forgets' in its representation, based on examples from the Netherlands. The examples in my story come from the ideas of the countercultural movements and the artistic critique of the 1950s and 1960s

in the Netherlands. I will argue that these examples represent the ideas and image of the leader in contemporary organizations. My key example will be the Dutch Beat poet and performer, Simon Vinkenoog.

The next chapters will take you on a tour along the fringes of contemporary thought, moving in the direction of sorcery, madness, festival, literature and 'silent zones'. In these chapters I will reveal ideas and thoughts and provide insight into Vinkenoog's leading and influential role in the artistic critique of the 1950s and 1960s. Simultaneously, I will connect texts from DBMC with management literature and the ideas of Vinkenoog, all within the context of leadership in contemporary organizations. By drawing on Vinkenoog's texts, I will illuminate the blind spots of contemporary thought in the neo-management leadership discourse.

However, as most of Vinkenoog's texts are not translated into English, I have an immediate problem, "for a translation will doubtless present certain difficulties" (Derrida, 1977: 38). The problems of translation, as well as the problems of citation and the interpretation of Vinkenoog's texts, constitute one of the most obvious aspects of what is at stake in this thesis. Derrida's point is that translation and citation are never innocent. Similarly, Bakhtin believes that citations in the language of a narrative are "overpopulated with the intentions of others" (Bakthin, 1981: 294). For Derrida and Bakhtin, citation is never exact because it must always be adapted to new contexts. Finally, de Certeau shows that "the practice of citation" (Ahearne, 1995: 20) constructs a "layered text" (Ahearne, 1995: 20). According to Jeremy Ahearne, de Certeau "uses this term to designate a form of writing which combines in a single text, both the language of the interpreter and the fragmented language of his or her object" (Ahearne, 1995: 20). Applied to this thesis, my language must be combined with the fragmented language of Vinkenoog. Therefore, according to de Certeau, the result of this combination will be no mere transcription; rather, it represents a form of "staging" (Ahearne, 1995: 20). On the other hand, with this staging the writer does "not passively absorb the traces of the other" (Ahearne, 1995: 20), but may constitute a particular form of critical intervention in a narrative flux of a certain discourse (Ahearne, 1995: 183). By focusing on what is "lost or marginalized through the working of the discourse" (Ahearne, 1995: 142), I create a "disruptive force" (Ahearne, 1995: 142). Although, according to de Certeau, as the writer, I supply this discourse with new stories through citations and recitations, at the same time I introduce otherness into the space of the discourse. Therefore, to clarify, these are my interpretations of the texts and ideas of Vinkenoog and the texts and ideas of DBMC. They are conclusions based on my beliefs and theoretical preferences, but they are also an invitation for discussion.

The exploration, interpretations and conclusions of the ideas introduced above will be expanded upon in the following seven chapters. In the next section I will briefly outline each chapter.

The Chapters

Chapter 1 deals with the artistic critique of the 1960s in the Netherlands. It demonstrates that the processes of Boltanski and Chiapello's theory of *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (2007) in France also apply to the Netherlands. I will describe the influence of the Experimental Group in Holland and the Dutch Beats or the Fiftiers on Dutch countercultural movements and artistic critique. In short, Chapter 1 provides a history of the Magical Centre Amsterdam.

In the tradition of Boltanski and Chiapello, Chapter 2 is an exploration of one of neo-management's key problems: the tension between the demand for flexibility and the need to be

a personality with permanency. By examining the concepts of self-identity, self-fulfilment, rhythm, intentions and practical wisdom, I argue that Vinkenoog strikes a balance between 'being flexible' and 'being someone', or adaptability and authenticity.

In Chapter 3, I explore the symbolic representation of the homo ludens by Simon Vinkenoog, not only based on the ideas of Huizinga (2008 [1950/1938]) of the homo ludens as the playing man, and the ideas of Constant (1964) of the homo ludens as the creative man, but also by using the representation of the homo ludens in contemporary managerial ideologies. Here the emphasis lies on play, playfulness and creativity. I consider the complete turnaround of the perception of the homo ludens, from being viewed as subversive, destructive and a challenge to societal productivity, to being the focal point in an emerging management literature for which the creative man is the central source of management. By looking at poetry as a play-function and Vinkenoog's creativity of playing games with words, I discuss the key role of the leader in setting the boundaries for playful creativity.

For the leader in contemporary organizations, who takes the artist as the model for his/her leadership, creating a happening (like a performance artist) is an important possibility (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 359). In Chapter 4, I will show that this idea is reflected in DBMC's company texts. Based on the idea that the word 'performance artist' refers to the theatre-as-metaphor approach to performance in organizations and that the word 'happenings' refers to events of the artistic critique, I will examine the happening, based on (i) Bakhtin's (1984) concept of Carnival, (ii) de Certeau's (1984) concepts of tactics and strategy, and (iii) Lyotard's (1984) idea of performativity (managerial efficiency through re-engineering minimum inputs for maximum outputs). By discussing the idea of the happenings of Simon Vinkenoog, I argue for an artistic understanding of the idea of performance and performativity within contemporary organizations.

In Chapter 5, I discuss the fixed and rational meanings of the leader in contemporary organizations. I problematize the image of the leader, defined via 'the art of leadership'. Language that attempts to create an image of the leader as always aesthetically pleasing requires critiquing. The characteristic powers of the artist can bring the leader outside of any rational discourse, and therefore can be seen to champion irrationalism. By introducing the paradoxes of Artaud's 'double' – creativity and its 'shadow' of madness – and with the help of aesthetics and Artaud's idea of theatre, as well as Derrida's interpretation of Artaud's subjectile, and the ideas of Simon Vinkenoog, I draw attention to the tensions in this 'double' within the idea of contemporary leadership.

In the Chapter 6, I combine the former chapters in order to deliver a contribution to an alternative or counter-actualization of the image of the leader in contemporary organizations. Where the previous chapters have been concerned with drawing the threads of the analysis together and using them to create a critique of neo-management discourse and its idea of leadership, it is in this chapter that a single coherent story emerges.

In the final chapter, I am reflexive upon my findings. With the help of metis or 'cunning intelligence', I begin to understand my role within de Baak. But at the same time, metic intelligence reframes the role of Simon Vinkenoog and the leader in contemporary organizations. Moreover, I suggest that metis can be helpful in the training programs of de Baak.

With this introduction, I invite you to follow me in my quest into 'silent zones'.

Notes

[1]http://www.debaak.nl/en/Over-ons.aspx (accessed on 12 December 2010).

[2]http://www.debaak.nl/en/Over-ons.aspx (accessed on 12 December 2010).

[3]http://www.debaak.nl/en/Over-ons/Leerfilosofie.aspx (accessed on 12 December 2010).

[4]http://www.debaak.nl/en/Over-ons/Leerfilosofie.aspx (accessed on 12 December 2010).

[5]http://www.debaak.nl/en/Over-ons/Leerfilosofie.aspx (accessed on 12 December 2010).

[6]http://www.debaak.nl/en/debaak/philosophy (accessed on 12 December 2009).

[7]Here I refer to the English version of the book. The original French version *Le nouvel esprit du capitalisme* was published in 1999.

Chapter 1 Thanks for the opposition!

For Frederic Taylor ... passion was an irrelevant category ... a mistake. As individual and collective creativity became of greater interest, greater became the economic importance of passion. Once on the periphery, now it became relevant. In the post-war years, quality became central. Total quality: efficiency and effectiveness, focusing on customer satisfaction, a phase, which brought its own end in sight. After efficiency, effectiveness and quality, the world enforces ... the next step. Making a distinction, being original, becomes the new adage. Creativity, once reserved for artists ... also gains prestige in business ... Commodities are falling in price and profit. Declining margins require creativity ... On the customer's side there is a growing need for an individual, personal approach. Tailored mass production ... The meaning of human relationships is evident. This requires a growing improvisational ability ... This in turn requires authenticity and passion ... It is no longer about motivation, it is about inspiration ... In the industrial reality it was not the person that was valued, but the function. We spoke about job evaluation. Imagine a service economy where each person is held to his position. Almost the opposite is desired. It is not the job requirements that are central, but the personal commitment and involvement: that is what it is all about ... Original quality is the success of individual and collective creativity ... It calls attention to an unstoppable phenomenon. Professionals ... search for standards to reflect their desire for autonomy. (Starren, 2003: 5-7)

Harry Starren, author of the text above, is a well-know management guru in the Netherlands. He wrote the quote as an introduction to a book about passion, spirituality and authenticity in organizations. It is exemplary of most of his texts, which claim to be inspired by the freedom and creativity of artists. Supposedly, managers and professionals must strive to be like artists, combining their professional skills and creativity with a personal approach. To be good leaders they must be good listeners, combining trust and integrity with their own personal experiences. They should know their

customers and provide inspiration, knowing how and when to use their own voice. Their leadership is not about the job they perform, but about the person they portray themselves to be. The keywords are creativity and authenticity. Starren has written several books about management and leadership, starred in his own TV and radio show and is the CEO of one of the largest management training centres in the Netherlands. He is also my boss.

It was this 'passion, autonomy and authenticity' that struck me when I first started working at DBMC more than 14 years ago. I was excited about experiencing freedom and using my own voice, skills and experiences. It felt like the best place to be. However, I soon began to wonder about 'authenticity'. It seemed as if being authentic was always *good*, but what about its dark side? What about the commercial use of 'being authentic'? According to Thomas Frank (1997), Joseph Heath and Andrew Potter (2004), *it sells*. Our website must be authentic, our brochures must be authentic, even our food has to be authentic. I soon discovered that being authentic was the only right way to act. It seemed as if it was even demanded, not only by the organization, but also by our clients. Then people started to talk about *real* authenticity and my wonder slowly changed to worry. Roland Barthes (1997: 109) writes that each ornament, with adjectives gives the nothing a qualification of being, and betrays a guilty conscience. This is how I felt.

But how did it happen? Why do I feel this tension between authenticity and adaptability? Moreover, how did authenticity become DBMC's main discourse? To elaborate, I return to Starren. A former historian, Starren stated that "[t]oday's peripheries hold the essence of the future"[1]. As authenticity is the essence of the present, when was it in the peripheries of the past? According to Heath and Potter (2004), it was the countercultural rebels of the 1960s who revolted against the then *inauthentic* modern life that had emerged from the alienating effects of technocratic life, standardisation and commodification.

In their book *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (2007), Luc Boltanski and Ève Chiapello make the connection when they argue that whole sections of the critique of the rebels were integrated into the management rhetoric of the 1990s. Boltanski and Chiapello "highlight the role played by criticism in the dynamic of capitalism" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: xiii). They argue "that criticism is a catalyst for changes in the spirit of capitalism" (Boltanski, 2005: 163), providing capitalism with the lasting strength it seems to have. "Capitalism needs its enemies" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2005: 163). Boltanski and Chiapello identify two different types of criticism. The first is the *social critique*, a protest against inequality, poverty, exploitation and egoism. The second is the *artistic critique*. The artistic critique criticises the uniformity of mass society and the commodification of everything. It values an ideal of liberation, individual autonomy, uniqueness and authenticity (Boltanski 2002: 6). According to Boltanski and Chiapello, it is really the artist critique that was responsible for reinvigorating capitalism in the late 20th century, a capitalism that was capable of a substantial absorption of criticism (Arnason, 2001: 111). It seems that the term 'authenticity' has been borrowed from the critique of capitalist modernity to become a catchphrase in capitalism's self-exaltation.

Although Boltanski and Chiapello limit their scope of analysis to France, they are convinced that, in essence, similar processes have affected the principal industrialized countries in the Western world. In this chapter, I explore the implications of their thesis for the Dutch situation in the 1960s by focusing on the role of the artistic critique and the stories of the Magical Centre Amsterdam and the Dutch Beats. By using the theoretical framework of *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (2007) and reviewing the ambiguous relation between capitalism and its opposition, I attempt to understand the connection between the counterculture of the past and the tensions I experience with the narratives of contemporary management.

The New Spirit of Capitalism

"To reconstruct a critical sociology on the basis of the sociology of critique by hybridizing it with the old thematic of capitalism" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: xiii) was the ambition of Luc Boltanski, a professor at the EHESS Paris, and Ève Chiapello, a professor at the HEC Paris School of Management, in their book *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (2007). The authors' starting point is born out of confusion at the revival of capitalism and the worsening social situation of the last two decades. It is the opposite situation from the late 1960s and early 1970s. In those days, criticism was at its peak, "with demands of a very different kind, appealing to creativity, pleasure, the power of the imagination, to a liberation affecting every dimension of existence [and] to the destruction of the consumer society" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: xxxv). Quietly and smoothly, a new and flourishing capitalism, which they label 'connexionnist', took over at the end of the 1970s without attracting critical attention or any organized resistance. Boltanski and Chiapello wonder why many of the countercultural protestors of the sixties felt at ease in the emerging new society. The authors suggest that it is because capitalism is capable of developing new forms of neutralizing the opposition.

In Weberian fashion, capitalism is conceived as a system driven by the need for the "unlimited accumulation of capital by formally peaceful means" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 4), a position that is fundamentally "absurd" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 7) and "amoral" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 487). It is for this reason that capitalism makes use of ideologies through which the commitment of its participants is realized and justifies engagement. Here the term 'ideology' is defined as "a set of shared beliefs, inscribed in institutions, bound up with actions, and hence anchored in reality" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 3). This set of beliefs is what the authors call the 'spirit of capitalism', referring to Max Weber's (2003 [1958]) classic study of the Protestant ethic. By referring to Weber, Boltanski and Chiapello have "opted for a broad, positive and culturalist definition" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 3, 12) of ideology. In doing so, the authors are able "to build up a concept of ideology that makes it possible to move from a Marxist concept to a culturalist one" (Chiapello, 2003: 163). Although "it is not possible to totally drop all the Marxist connotations of the notion of ideology", referring to the idea that criticism is always "lagging" behind the injustices of the social world (Chiapello, 2003: 168), it constitutes an ideology that provides the authors with the possibility of overcoming the problems created by the Marxist concept of superstructure (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: xix).

Boltanski and Chiapello claim that historically there have been three successive 'spirits of capitalism'. The first, at the end of the 19th century, was represented by the bourgeois entrepreneur, linked to the notion of the Protestant ethic, wherein the capacity for speculation and innovation was matched by thrift, parsimony and attachment to family. This made it possible for the youth to liberate itself from the village, the ghetto and traditional forms of personal dependence. At the same time, this bourgeois-entrepreneurial spirit was denounced for its hypocrisy caused by its incompatible values: thirst for profit and moralism, scientism and familial traditionalism, avarice and charity (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007).

The second spirit, developed mainly between the 1930s and the 1960s, was more focused on the organization rather than the individual entrepreneur. Gigantic, centralized and bureaucratized industrial firms emerged with the manager as a heroic figure with faith in rationality and long-term planning. The manager was preoccupied by the desire to expand the size of the firm in order "to develop mass production, based on economies of scale, product standardization, the

rational organization of work and new techniques for expanding markets" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 18), such as marketing. This managerial spirit, often associated with the "organization man" (Arnason, 2001: 110), was especially exciting for young graduates. These graduates were often the recipients of opportunities offered by organizations for acquiring positions of power "from which one can change the world" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 18). For the majority, this spirit offered security, liberation from basic needs and the fulfilment of desires (due to mass production). The resulting effect: mass consumption. Even more than in the first spirit, the second spirit involved a strong belief in progress, science and technology and productivity and efficiency. According to Budgen, "the crisis of 1968 dealt a deathblow to this spirit of capitalism, discrediting its forms of justification as archaic and authoritarian fictions, with less and less bearing on reality" (Budgen, 2000: 152).

The third and last stage is characterised by the 'network' spirit of the 1990s. The key organizational figure becomes a lean company that has externalized its costs to sub-contractors and deals more in knowledge and information than in manpower or technical experience. It "operate[s] as a network" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 74). These flexible organizations are opposed to hierarchy and promote teamwork, personal creativity, flexibility and the "capacity to connect" (Arvidsson, 2000: 276). The 'connexionist man' replaces the 'organization man' and 'leaders' replace the concept of hierarchical superiors. Now, the *real* employer is the customer. The figure of the artist becomes the model for the new leader: charismatic, visionary, intuitive, mobile, creative, cooperative, open to taking risks and strong at networking. This third spirit of capitalism appeals to the values of self-actualisation, freedom, authenticity and "knowledge deriving from personal experience" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 113), the very values of 1960s countercultural activism that have been absorbed into capitalism. Starren posits himself as a connexionist man by bringing these values into management rhetoric. Represented by the narratives of Starren, it is the shift of values from activism to incorporation into the structures of capitalism, as well as the disarming of radical criticism by using it as a tool to upgrade the performance of capitalism, that is the challenging argument made by Boltanski and Chiapello .

Boltanski and Chiapello argue that it is necessary to review the opposition's critiques in order to understand the ambiguous relationship between capitalism and its opponents. The interaction between the spirit, the dynamic changes and the critique of capitalism plays a key role in *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (2007), where the authors state that criticism plays the role of a motor in the process of change in the spirit of capitalism. This approach "provides a justification both for capitalism and the criticisms that denounce the gap between the actual forms of accumulation and the normal concepts of social order" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2005: 163).

The Role of Criticism

From its inception, critical reactions to capitalism have accompanied its development. Anti-capitalism is as old as capitalism itself. Criticism of capitalism is usually driven by a bad experience or some source of indignation that goads protest. According to Boltanski and Chiapello, "without this prior emotional, almost sentimental, reaction, no critique can take off" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 36). This leads the authors to conclude that there are two levels of expression of criticism: (i) the domain of the emotions and (ii) the reflexive, theoretical and argumentative level. Without an emotional reaction, no critique can develop. It is this domain of emotions, referred to as the primary level, which can never be silenced and is always ready to become inflamed. However, it is a long way from the individual suffering

to an articulated critique, referred to as the secondary level, which requires a theoretical fulcrum and an argumentative rhetoric to give voice to the suffering. The secondary level makes it possible "to connect the historical situations people intend to criticize with values that can be universalized" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 36). It is only this second level that can be disarmed. Even when critical forces seem to have collapsed completely, the capacity for indignation remains intact. The domain of the emotions is especially attractive to young people and that, according to Boltanski and Chiapello, is where "the guarantee of a constant renewal of critical work is to be found" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 36).

As a result, capitalism has not radically transformed its nature. Criticism has remained relatively level since the middle of the 19th century. Within this critique, the authors identify four possible sources of indignation: (i) a demand for *liberation*; (ii) a rejection of *inauthenticity*; (iii) a refusal of *egoism*; (iv) a response to *suffering*. As these grounds for indignation are so varied, it is nearly impossible to integrate them into a coherent framework. Sometimes the attention is focused on the commercial dimension – like the critique of impersonal domination by the market or the supremacy of money as a commodifier – making this an object of marketing and advertising like any other product. Other times, emphasis is placed on the industrial dimension of capitalism – like criticism of product standardization, technology, the destruction of nature, bureaucracy, etc. Whereas the critique of egoism often goes with nostalgia for traditional or orderly societies (focused mainly on their community values), indignation with oppression and poverty in a wealthy society is based on the values of freedom and equality.

Stemming from socialist and Marxist political traditions, social criticism emphasizes inequalities, poverty, exploitation and the egoism of a world that encourages individualism as opposed to solidarity, even rejecting the egoism of artists. It allies itself with science, technology and industry and, like capitalism itself, is attached to the idea of progress.

Alternatively, the artistic critique was first developed in small artistic and intellectual circles. It criticizes oppression in the capitalist world, the domination of the market, the uniformity of mass society and the commodification of everything. It valorises the ideals of liberation, individual autonomy, uniqueness and authenticity. The artistic critique is as strongly anti-industrial as it is anti-capitalist and follows the tradition of revolutionary romanticism. However, it is not traditionalist. Only rarely does it espouse the return to an idealised past. Like capitalism, it hates the pre-capitalist past and looks towards the future. Though it emphasizes the spontaneity of individual creativity, the artistic critique can be non-egalitarian, or at least only weakly orientated towards the aim of equality. In order to achieve liberation it is first necessary that people demonstrate radical resistance in the face of capitalist modernity.

As a consequence of these different ideological and emotional sources, the two critiques are not directly compatible. Depending on the historical events under consideration, they can be associated or they may enter into tension with one another. In the opinion of Boltanski and Chiapello, one of the historical events where both types of criticism coalesced was the 1968 crisis in France, where the two critiques were equally important in the process. In the aftermath, however, the social critique became progressively weaker with the decline of French communism. The authors go on to argue that the reinvigorated capitalism of the late 20th century owed much of its strength and confidence to a massive absorption of the aesthetic critique.

As mentioned earlier, Boltanski and Chiapello's scope of analysis was limited to France. Confined by limited time, the authors decided to restrict themselves to studying one country. However, they were convinced "that it is basically, rather similar processes that have affected the principal industrialized countries in the Western world" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: xxi), or as

Callinicos states, "[t]he incorporation of soixante-huitards into a capitalism that adopted a mellow libertarian rhetoric, is not by any means purely a French phenomenon" (Callinicos, 2006: 63).

In *The Conquest of Cool* (1997), Thomas Frank shows how in the United States counterculture and business culture were mutually influential. "The corporate theory of the 1990s makes explicit references to sixties management theory and the experiences of the counterculture" (Frank, 1997: 28). Fred Turner also illustrates this idea in his book, *From Counterculture to Cyberculture* (2006). Using the narrative of Stewart Brand, Turner highlights the similarities between American countercultural ideology of the 1960s and the discourse of the network economy.

Along with Frank and Turner, one of the founders of the Dutch 1960s Provo movement, Roel van Duijn, shows that it is not purely a French phenomenon by stating that when the imagination came to power in May 1968 in Paris, the Provo seeds germinated (van Duijn, 1985: 7-8). This statement was supported by then student leader, Daniel Cohn-Bendit. Cohn-Bendit later dedicated a chapter in his memoirs to the influence of the Provos on himself and on his generation of young rebels (Horn, 2007: 39).

In the 1960s, Amsterdam operated as a sheltered haven for the bohemians and adventurous young people who were lured by its magical attractions (Kennedy, 1995: 131). Most of them joined a small group of free spirited artists, from which *Magical Centre Amsterdam* emerged. Nearly all of the literature on countercultural movements includes a historical description of the ideas, practices and initiatives of these actors (e.g. Abma, 1990; Horn, 2007; Kempton, 2007; Kennedy, 1995; Pas, 2003; Righart, 2003, 2006). This literature is mainly focused on the generation clash, sometimes laying emphasis on modernizing traditional elites and urban social movements (Mamadouh, 1992). Only Zijderveld (1970) diagnosed the sixties as a period of transition with rebellion against what Boltanski and Chiapello thirty years later described as 'the second spirit of capitalism'. All of the writers I mention attempt to debunk myths by concentrating on the dialectic between political and cultural change, most of them arguing that it was all cultural. And now, more than forty years after May 1968, more and more observers reinterpret the sixties as the root of all evil in the world today, blaming the emergence of hedonism, destructive cynicism and terrorism on the generation of '68.

I believe that this analysis does not help us to understand what happened in Amsterdam in the 1960s. However, by making use of the theoretical framework of *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (2007), I can show that the Dutch Revolt cannot simply be celebrated or called destructive. Rather, it manifests itself in the language of management in contemporary organizations. It shows that the Dutch Beats, the provocative theatrical Provo movement, the psychedelic subculture, the inner reality of mysticism and the spiritual voice coalesced in a critique of the second spirit of capitalism. They discredited its forms of justification as archaic and authoritarian fiction and transformed Amsterdam in the 1960s into a mecca for an emerging international counterculture. They also challenged the values and options of capitalism, providing it with new justifications that resulted in the third and current spirit, characterised as the 'network' spirit of the 1990s.

To develop this argument I explore the sources of inspiration for the Dutch Revolt in the 1960s. I demonstrate that the ideology-related transformation from the second spirit of capitalism to the network capitalism of the 1980s and 1990s (as identified by Boltanski and Chiapello) took place in the Netherlands[2]. This transformation is the source of Starren's and DBMC's narratives on the creativity and authenticity of the artist. It can be found in the peripheries of the Dutch Beats and the Dutch countercultural movements of the 1960s. The source of my unease is how the artistic critique of the 1960s is being translated into changes in practice in post-bureaucratic organizations. However, before we travel back to the 1950s, we must first make a stop in 2008.

The Homo Ludens

On 29 November 2008, Roel van Duijn, one of the founders of the Provo movement, said farewell after 42 years of politics. His friends and opponents celebrated this occasion by indulging him in a final debate. One of the speakers was Professor James Kennedy, who gave his view on the significance of Provo and claimed that Provo was part of a broader movement in the 1960s. Among other concerns, the movement was supposedly opposed to consumerism. "Provo contributed early on to this movement", said Kennedy. Following the theory of Heath and Potter, he described the image of the countercultural, self-developing romantic warrior who wants to distinguish himself by consuming differently, but there was more. According to Kennedy, this movement had a strong presence in the Netherlands until the early 1980s, after which neo-liberalism took over as the dominant thinking. To conclude the event, Ed van Thijn, the former social democratic Mayor of Amsterdam, described van Duijn as being "a pain, a demagogue, a jammer and not really a democrat" in the 1960s, "a penetrating and [an] eloquent opponent" in the 1980s and a "calmer and wiser" person in current times. Overwhelmed by emotion, van Thijn ended his speech with: "Roel, thanks for the opposition".

Although van Thijn's final comment was directed towards van Duijn, it is also possible to see it in a broader perspective. "Capitalism needs its enemies" claim Boltanski and Chiapello. "Criticism is a catalyst for changes in the spirit of capitalism", providing capitalism with its lasting strength (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2005: 163). By thanking his enemy for his criticism, a seemingly authentic van Thijn gives a nice illustration of this statement by Boltanski and Chiapello. But what was the criticism that capitalism had to face from Roel van Duijn and Provo? To answer this question I must start with the small, artistic avant-gardes of the 1950s in the Netherlands and their artistic critique, especially the Experimental Group in Holland and the Dutch Beats.

Before the Provo critique exploded in the sixties, the artistic critique could already be found in the small, artistic avant-gardes of the 1950s, not only in France or the United States, but also in the Netherlands. Already in the years that immediately followed the war, a group of young poets were able to break away from the thematic and stylistic formality of earlier Dutch poetry. They came to be known as the *Beweging van Vijftig* (Movement of Fifty). The main figures and early writers of the Fiftiers were Hans Andreus, Remco Campert, Hugo Claus, Jan Hanlo, Lucebert and Simon Vinkenoog. In the introduction to his book *Living Space* (1979), a book about the poems of the Dutch Fiftiers, Peter Glassgold writes that the Fiftiers' movement "had its beginnings in the art world of post-war Amsterdam among the painters who joined together in 1948 to form the Experimental Group [in] Holland (De Experimentele Groep [in] Holland), known internationally as Cobra (*Co*penhagen-*Br*ussels-*A*msterdam)" (Glassgold, 1979: ix, emphasis in original).

The Cobra painters wanted to break new ground, aspiring to an art form that spontaneously evolved out of the artist's imagination. According to the communist theories of Karl Marx, their aim was to have art made for and by anyone, irrespective of class, race, intellect and educational level. The core of the Cobra group consisted of Asger Jorn (from Copenhagen), Joseph Noiret and Christian Dotremont (from Brussels) and Constant, Corneille and Karel Appel (from Amsterdam) (Stokvis, 1990).

The impact of the Fiftiers was revolutionary. They succeeded in the complete overturning of aesthetic, social and intellectual standards, with a special stress on the very physicality of art. They sought to make not so much a 'new' poetry, but an 'other' poetry, an antipoetry. According

to Glassgold, there is a striking similarity between the Fiftiers and the Beats. The physical quality and social criticism of much Beat and Beat-related writing was also found in the work of the Fiftiers (Glassgold, 1979: x; van der Bent, 2000: 203). And like the Beats, the Fiftiers provided subsequent generations with an escape from conventional society, conformity and dullness.

In order to get a better sense of that period of 'conformity and dullness' in the Netherlands, let us first concentrate on Dutch society. Until the late fifties, outsiders generally considered the Netherlands to be a peculiar and old-fashioned country still loyal to the traditions and customs of a previous era. A well-known one-liner usually attributed to the German poet Heinrich Heine (sometimes attributed to Voltaire) has it that should the world come to an end, the Netherlands is a good place to be since history suffers there a fifty-year time-lapse. Until well into the fifties, the Netherlands was a relatively poor country and widely seen as caught in the stultifying patterns of a bourgeois, parochial and inward-looking society. Following the trauma of the German occupation, the Dutch response to the challenges of post-war reconstruction was sought in the restoration of pre-war political and social arrangements and institutions. According to the authorities of that period, the reconstruction of the Netherlands was "not only a matter of cement mixers and cranes", but it was also claimed that the Dutch people "spiritually and morally needed a thorough renovation" (Kromhout, 2007). Shortly after World War II, the Dutch *Het Maandblad voor Geestelijke Gezondheid (The Mental Health Monthly)* noticed "wild children and demoralized workers", aggression and "a very weakened respect for authorities" among citizens (Kromhout, 2007). Accordingly, discipline and order were necessary. As described by the government in the *Handleiding voor Moreele Herbewapening (Manual for Moral Rearmament)*, the Dutch had to redeem their national cultural identity, morality, unity and discipline. They "need[ed] the strength of a fighting faith" (Kromhout, 2007).

Social and cultural life in the Netherlands proceeded along vertical lines under the paternalist guidance of the various segmented elites, generally referred to as institutionalized pluralism or 'pillarization' (in Dutch: 'verzuiling'), i.e. the concept that Dutch society was built on pillars. Dutch society was comprised of four pillars: Protestant, Roman-Catholic, social-democratic and liberal. They were sovereign in their own domain but shared a national identity. Each pillar had its own social organizations and political parties. With regard to individual behaviour, social distance between members of the different pillars was large. This way every ideological group could keep a grip on its followers (Bax, 1990; Kennedy, 1995; Kroes, 2008; Righart, 2006).

In particular, Dutch artist Constant Nieuwenhuys (known primarily as Constant), one of the founders of both Cobra and the Situationist International, was able to give to the following generation an answer to their expectations and anxieties. Constant developed a strong antipathy against the stifling conventions of Dutch society and its Functionalism, which he considered an elite attempt to deprive the masses of play and creativity (Kennedy, 1995: 9). In the 1950s, inspired by Lefebvre's *Critique of Everyday Life* (1992 [1945])[3]. Constant started working on an architectural proposal for a future society, the utopian city *New Babylon*. Its name was provocative since Babylon is a figure of evil in the Protestant tradition. New Babylon was designed for the awakening of the new man, freed from the need to work, and replaced with a nomadic life of creative play as *homo ludens* (the playful man, or as Constant stated, the creative man). Constant's protest represented the artistic critique as described by Boltanski and Chiapello, who argue that this critique is rooted in a bohemian lifestyle, counterposing bourgeois society with the freedom of the artist. "It is based upon a contrast between attachment and detachment, stability and mobility, as best formulated by Baudelaire" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 38). When looked at in detail, it becomes even

more clear what Boltanski and Chiapello identify as the artistic critique of capitalism, portrayed as the disenchantment, inauthenticity and misery of daily life, the authoritarian oppression, the dehumanization of the world and the 'iron cage'[4] of instrumental rationality.

In the 1960s, the Provo movement drew inspiration from the ideas of Constant, inspired, as Provo Duco van Weerlee says, by "an elusive utopia that would be created in the future, on the basis of artistic conceptions"[5]. With massification, bureaucratization and mass consumption as their main source of indignation, Provo tried to provoke the authorities at a symbolic level, hoping they would show their dehumanizing and oppressive character.

It is this 'anti-social' behaviour that provided the Provo movement with their name. In his doctoral dissertation *Achtergrond van Nozemgedrag (Background to Delinquent Behavior)* (1965), Dutch criminologist Wouter Buikhuisen studied the deliberately provocative behaviour of teenage delinquents against adult society. Buikhuisen called these teenagers *provos*, adapting this term from the French word *provoquer*, which means to provoke and is similar to the Dutch word.

A large part of the Provo philosophy was based on the concepts of New Babylon and homo ludens (Pas, 2003: 138), which gave Provo a model that contrasted with the capitalist system and provided them with a radical socio-economic critique of society (Kempton, 2007: 117). According to Provo theorist Roel van Duijn, the philosophy of Provo was based on the opposition to authorities, as well as to the addicted consumer, in opposition to the *Provotariat*. Van Duijn believed that the Provotariat would be the awakened new man or homo ludens, which included not only Provos, but students, beatniks and artists. In short, this included anyone *not* active in economic production processes (van Duijn, 1985). Inspired by Marx's son-in-law, Paul Lafargue, and his vision, as described in his humorous and ironical 1883 pamphlet *The Right to be Lazy* (2002 [1883])[6], this 'not being active in the capitalistic process' was one of the hallmarks of the Provotariat and Provo. "Call us anti-professionals", writes van Weerlee, "a job means co-operating with ... capitalism" (van Weerlee, 1966: 19). Because of this they were referred to as 'long-haired, lazy scum' by the media, an expression used by Provo as *a geuze name*[7]. "Yes, we hated work, we did not participate in it, as opposed to the Calvinist notion of Beruf as life fulfilment", says Provo Bart van Heerikhuizen looking back forty years later, "in Provo there was a strong element of criticism of the work ethic"[8]. Thus, what Provo meant by idleness was the absence of employed work, *not* the absence of activity. Here we find strong criticism of the work ethic of capitalism and its domination of human beings working for the purpose of profit. It is Provo's refusal of work that Boltanski and Chiapello refer to as the freedom of artists "in its extreme forms" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 38).

Through this revolt against the authorities and the addicted consumer, the *Provolution* and the Provotariat become the homo ludens. With Constant, according to Pas, van Duijn had found a "father" who stimulated his intellectual development and activated his fantasy (Pas, 2003: 139). According to van Duijn, it was Constant and his ideas that gave Provo a future, which "the classical anarchist movement is unfortunately lacking" (van Duijn, 1985: 60).

Based on a blend of Calvinism and Dutch anarchism and inspired by the Lutheran preacher and first socialist in the Dutch parliament, Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis (1846-1919), Provo was launched in 1965 as a furious anti-authoritarian movement (van Duijn, 1985: 7). "Anarchism", writes van Duijn in the movement's first monthly magazine, *Provo*, "aims for the most beneficial conditions for human freedom and creativity" (van Duijn, 1985: 29-30). "We have a negative view of capitalism, bureaucracy and the military-political complex" (van Duijn, 1985: 29-30), or as van Weerlee states, "the anarchist chooses freedom and with that diversity" (van Weerlee, 1966:20). Thus, Provo rejected the second spirit of capitalism through its articulation of anti-hierarchical, anti-

bureaucratic, anti-work and anti-authoritarian values and valorised personal freedom based on the artistic critique.

However, New Babylon and anarchism do not tell the complete story of Provo. It was their significant connection with the Magical Centre Amsterdam that provided the tools that "made the youth of Amsterdam ready for Provo" (van Duijn, 1985: 13).

The Magical Centre Amsterdam

At the end of June 1962, Robert Jasper Grootveld, the 'anti-smoke magician' as he was called, introduced the Magical Centre at the *Sociaal Religieus Gesprekscentrum (Social Religious Debate Centre)*. Opening with the phrase "[l]ast night I had a dream", he launched Amsterdam as the Magical Centre of the western asphalt jungle, attracting thousands of American beatniks to the biggest public urban park in Amsterdam, the Vondelpark (Duivenvoorden, 2009: 211). Although he later admitted that he had no such dream, he *did* predict an event that would take place ten years later[9]. As envisioned by Grootveld, this Magical Centre became not only a centre of dope, but also a detoxification centre, creating an awareness of the hypnotic and manipulative power of advertisement and the addictiveness of cigarettes, other 'dope' and mass consumption. To attract people to the Magical Centre, Grootveld saw a major role for "at least the hundred prophets" (Duivenvoorden, 2009: 213-214) in Amsterdam: magic and publicity.

Grootveld met most of these prophets at the Social Religious Debate Centre, a centre that Pas calls "a stopping place for 'dissidents', one of the sites on the social margin, where ideas were tried out before being presented to the public" (Pas, 2003: 59). Fiftier Simon Vinkenoog visited the centre on a regular basis. It was also the site of van Duijn's first speech in Amsterdam. According to the other founder of Provo, Rob Stolk, it was a place where "interesting political debates" took place. Provo Hans Plomp called it "an interesting and hip place"[10].

In the spring of 1964, Grootveld unfolded his ideas of the Magical Centre through the happening at *Het Lieverdje (The Little Darling)* statue. A representation of a young Amsterdam rascal, Grootveld considered this bronze statue to be significant because it was located at a square that had been part of the Miracle of Amsterdam procession route since 1345[11]. Moreover, it was located at the end of the street where all of the major newspapers and publicity agencies of the tobacco corporations were housed. A tobacco company financed the construction of the statue. For Grootveld, it was a magical spot (Pas, 2003: 95).

In his book *Bericht aan de Rattenkoning*[12] *(Message to the Rat King*, 1966), Dutch writer Harry Mulisch describes Grootveld's happening performance. "When the clock struck twelve [at night], the high Priest appeared, all dressed up, from some alley and started to walk Magic Circles around the nicotinistic demon, while his disciples cheered, applauded and sang" (Mulisch, 1966: 62). Inspired by religious and spiritual elements, and with forms of expression borrowed from the repertoire of festivals, play, poetry, liberation of speech and Surrealism, Grootveld brought "art, freedom of expression in general, literally onto the street" (Duivenvoorden, 2009: 273). Grootveld's performance is what Boltanski and Chiapello refer to as the form of expression of the artistic critique, a manifestation of a desire to express oneself with a spiritual dimension (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 170). Inspired by the New York artist Allan Kaprow, in 1962 Fiftier Simon Vinkenoog introduced the first so-called happening in Amsterdam, but it was Robert Jasper Grootveld who made the Dutch-style happenings very successful (Kennedy, 1995: 131). Due in part to cooperation from the artist

Aat Veldhoen[13] and Vinkenoog, the happening grew into a weekly ritual. Within a year, this dynamic open-air performance functioned as a local meeting point and national inspiration point, attracting over a thousand spectators (Pas, 2003: 100). Every week a collection of outsiders would gather at Het Lieverdje to take part in the event. Artists, students, writers, poets, nozems, religious fanatics, homosexuals and even tourists would attend. By that time, Constant called the happening "the first social space of New Babylon" (Kempton, 2007: 118). It was at this moment that the Provos showed up.

The visionary magician inspired Provo founders Van Duijn and Stolk with his subjectivism and irrational anti-bourgeois stance, because "changes should come from the creative individual himself and not of a social revolution" (Pas, 2003: 106). Van Duijn's theosophical and esoteric background and Stolk's advocating of change/self-actualisation through spectacle and direct action on the street explains their fascination with Grootveld (Pas, 2003: 103). According to Plomp, Grootveld made it possible to connect the Provo philosophical theories with the street. "He was someone who created the magic formula",[14] and so "[a]n alliance was struck" (DeGroot, 2008: 197).

This alliance made it possible to connect "a heterogeneous bunch, bound together by a common ideal of personal freedom and finding expression in radical nonconformity", writes Provo Bernard de Vries (de Vries, 1967: 78). Or as van Weerlee says, "[w]hat attracted me towards Provo was that one did not have to be a member. Everyone was welcome. Nobody asked for credentials, everyone could introduce his or her own hobby, trauma, or dream ... The shared aim was to put the outside world on the wrong foot"[15]. Composed of like-minded people, the Provo movement shaped itself and gave itself a focus, copying Grootveld's use of irrational mythical arguments, which made possible the creation of the characteristic feature of this phenomenon: their playful actions.

It is these actions that made Provo world-famous. "With immense creativity Provo continually devised new campaigns, usually under the general rubric of 'White [Plans]'" (DeGroot, 2008: 198). The most famous of all white plans was the White Bike Plan, envisioned as the solution to the "street terror of a motorized minority" (van Duijn, 1985: 45). The White Bike Plan proposed to ban of 'environmentally fatal cars' from the inner city, opting to replace them with bicycles. The bikes were to be provided free of charge by the city. They would be painted white and permanently unlocked to secure public availability. The Provos decided to put the plan into action by providing the first 50 bicycles. Other White Plans included the White Chimney Plan (impose a heavy tax on polluters and paint their chimneys white), the White Kids Plan (free daycare centres), the White Housing Plan (to stop real estate speculation), the White Wife Plan (free medical care for women), the White Victim Plan (anyone who causes a fatal car accident should be forced to paint the outline of their victim's body on the pavement at the site of the accident) and the White Chicken Plan (altering the image of the police, who were known as 'blue chickens').

Grootveld largely influenced the White Plans. He later recalled, "[i]t was very shocking to the establishment, they realized they were not mere dopey scum but were quite capable of some sort of organization" (Grootveld, cited in Voeten, 1990: 35). "Our tactic for the attack against the authoritarian society should consist of a mixture of reform and provocation" (van Duijn, 1985: 68), writes van Duijn. "[A]gainst every part of their machine, we need both positive white plans as well as negative provocative acts, white plans to show how it could be, and provocative acts to show how it is. The playful provotariat has to play a smart game ... a play with the effect of a sophisticated battle ... but nevertheless a play" (van Duijn, 1985: 68). Provo decided to aim their provocative acts at the authorities: "Firms and the State, personalized in large entrepreneurs and officials. They are in a[n] ... authoritarian society ... closely linked with each other. Firms dominate under capitalism. Under capitalism, the government and officials too, are bound by the decisions of large firms ... to play an independent role" (van Duijn,

1985: 67). It was this critique of the state that was so significant, a blatant rejection of the second spirit of capitalism (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 202). The main targets of Provo became the Police, the Mayor of Amsterdam and the royal family, who were all seen as the main symbols of the authorities. The authorities did exactly what Provo wanted. Unable to play along, the police acted with violence, according to Constant, "proving that they defended the world of yesterday" (van Duijn, 1985: 135). This reaction helped attract many sympathizers and was essential for Provo's growth in size. "The police, just like we do, are provoking the masses", said van Duijn, "it is obvious that the cops are our best pals" (van Duijn, cited in Voeten, 1990: 35).

But how did the police react to Provo? Allow me to briefly sketch out some clashes between Provo and the police. About 2,000 spectators were present at one of the Spui Square happenings. At exactly twelve o'clock not Grootveld, but two Provos showed up. As they tried to lay flowers at the statue, the crowd cheered. They were arrested on the spot, together with thirteen other spectators, and all served between one and two months in jail. Many Provos were arrested when they showed up at a demonstration with blank banners and handed out blank leaflets. Provo Koosje Koster was arrested and strip-searched "for bringing the public order and safety into serious jeopardy" by handing out raisins at a happening (Kennedy, 1995: 157; Pas, 2003: 200; Voeten, 1990: 64). The climax came on the wedding day of the Dutch throne heiress, Princess Beatrix, to Claus von Amsberg. Von Amsberg was German who, at the age of 17, had served in the German army at the end of the Second World War. Despite the police and army guards, Provo managed to explode smoke bombs that produced clouds of smoke, which were seen on televisions worldwide. A violent police reaction followed witnessed by foreign journalists, many of whom were clubbed and beaten in the confusion. One week after the wedding, a photo exhibition was held documenting the police violence on the wedding day. The guests at the exhibition, including well-known writers and intellectuals, were attacked by the police and severely beaten. After this, people were arrested every week at happenings, including Provo Hans Tuynman who was sentenced to three months in jail for murmuring the word 'image' (Pas, 2003: 200-201; van Voeten, 1990: 65). The more reactionary the Amsterdam police became about the disruptive behaviour of Provo, the more opportunities were given to Provo to focus on the excesses of the police. The more violence the police used, the more it contributed to making the police and the authorities look ridiculous (Kennedy, 1995; Kroes, 2008; Pas, 2003; Righart, 2006; van Voeten, 1990).

It was the Magical Centre Amsterdam and the happenings that provided the breeding ground for inspiration. The happenings provided a stage for the Provo movement, connecting their visions and dreams of New Babylon and the homo ludens with the need for action by the Provo street activists. Aside from that, the Magical Centre Amsterdam was able to combine the outside world of protest with the inner reality of mysticism, the psychedelic subculture and the spiritual voice.

The 'Road Inward'

At the beginning of the 1960s, a group of free spirited individuals gathered around Vinkenoog and started to experiment with psychedelia. According to van Weerlee, "[a]n attempt at social interaction was created in which the spiritual needs of people could find a means of expression, with the drug as a sacrament and extravagant behaviour as a unifying ritual, an experiment in the Magical Centre" (van Gasteren, 1984: 13). Meeting at the Social Religious Debate Centre and Het Lieverdje, and introduced by Vinkenoog and Grootveld, this group became part of the Magical Centre. "In Provo the

artistic and spiritual came together ... Amsterdam was the Magical Centre", recalls 'King Acid', Peter ten Hoopen.

> *Provo was more active in the outside world and we watched it with interest, and we appreciated it ... and we had a strong sense of connection, because they were also freethinkers, but I felt the most connected with the feeling that we should not change the outer world, but we should change the inner world. We should change ourselves and live a conscious life. And then at some point when the rebellion in the city around Het Lieverdje started, the two groups melted. Then there were moments when we and Provos acted jointly.*[16]

It is this characteristic of the group that the Dutch Professor Anton Zijderveld, who was one of the leading ideologists of the Christian Democratic party (CDA), calls 'The Gnostics' in his study *The Abstract Society* (1970) and that he sees as a prominent way to escape the process of institutionalization and rationalization. This hippie-like group follows the 'road inward', withdrawing from the outer world into their own subjectivity. According to Zijderveld, "many techniques have been designed to enable man to follow the 'road inward' - from religious mysticism to the artificial trip of psychedelia" (Zijderveld, 1970: 95-96). In his study of the contemporary New Age movement, *In de ban van de moderniteit (Under the Spell of Modernity*, 2004), Aupers describes how this group was radically opposed to modern society and the dynamics of the capitalist system in particular. According to the author, they opposed the dehumanization and the restrictions imposed by the bureaucratic apparatus to self-actualisation, authenticity and personal growth. He noticed that this movement belongs to the counterculture of the 1960s, but shifted from "world-rejecting" to "world-affirming" (Aupers, 2004: 59). Aupers notes how they become an integral part of the mainstream, connecting his thesis with the work of Boltanski and Chiapello, who state that the "class of '68 felt much at ease in the emerging new society" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: xxxvi).

Sources of indignation were common to all of the groups who were part of the Magical Centre Amsterdam, but the same applies to their sources of inspiration. Vinkenoog introduced the homo ludens and Constant's New Babylon to the spiritually oriented persons, calling it "prophetic"[17]. "In the words of Simon [Vinkenoog], right from the early days, it was emphasised how important it was to be a homo luden"[18], says ten Hoopen, and because of that, "people were able to see other realities, and become capable of dreaming again"[19]. It gave them the same future as van Duijn and the Provos. Grootveld's favourite cause was promoting marijuana consumption, mainly to show the absurdity of the Dutch drug laws. At the same time, he was the ideal mediator for Provos as he showed them the world of drugs. "Many Provos, who joined the movement, choose to do so not only for an intense life in a rebel club, but also because the introduction to the world of 'resources' is often just as exciting and revolutionary" (Duivenvoorden, 2009: 326). It is here that the spiritual beliefs and activities of the Gnostics are fully integrated with the active protest of the Provos, while the Provos are, in their turn, involved in religious mysticism and the artificial trip of psychedelia of the Gnostics. As Plomp expresses it,

> *I think Provo actually belongs in the spiritual world to the mad wisdom schools, the court jesters, the troubadours, the satires, the commedia dell'arte. All these people denounce things in a playful way ... and also use their wisdom in a non-religious and pleasant way. It is an ancient conflict between the euphoric spirituality, the joy, the dance and the music, and the strict Calvinist life, life is a vale of tears, human suffering, work, work. It is the oldest play there is.*[20]

So What?

As Boltanski and Chiapello suggest, my analysis indicates that the processes of *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (2007) also affected the Netherlands. Inspired by the Experimental Group in Holland, the Dutch Beats and the Fiftiers, the artistic critique in the Netherlands (especially Amsterdam) focused mainly on opposing standardization and massification (affected by the media) and the loss of authenticity. It was derived from the condemnation of mechanization, and its result: mass production. Based on what Boltanski and Chiapello describe as "accused of conditioning and standardizing consumers of mass cultural products by transforming them into passive recipients of a standard message, and hence predisposed uncritically to adopt the ideologies imposed upon them from above" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 440), it provided the Dutch countercultural movements with strong reasons for their indignation. This standardization was even extended towards language being manipulated, as in the case of advertising. Thus, according to Boltanski and Chiapello, the propaganda of advertising let the individual dissolve into the mass and was therefore no longer anything but an illusion (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 441). The denunciation of mass-production cannot be disconnected from the denunciation of the massification of human beings. That is why Grootveld wanted to create a detoxification centre, the Fiftiers revolted against aesthetic standards, Provo called for the need of a Provolution and the Spirituals chose the 'road inward'.

"Capitalism's response to the demand for differentiation" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 441), argue Boltanski and Chiapello in line with their theory of absorption of the aesthetic critique, "was to internalize it" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 441). Entrepreneurs sought to create products and services that were differentiated and authentic in such a way that the impression of massification would be dispelled. But there was also the development involving personal dimensions in transactions. Interpersonal qualities present spontaneously or derived from selection or training are important in a connexionist world. The fading of the distinction between private life and business life has brought personal relations into the commodity sphere (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 442-443).

However, according to Boltanski and Chiapello, the commodification of authentic goods and services as a response to capitalism possesses a paradoxical character. It is this paradoxical character of which I am so vividly aware every day. As Boltanski and Chiapello so appropriately describe it, "one no longer knows if they are 'authentic' or 'inauthentic', spontaneous or re-engineered for commercial ends" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 447). It reveals a tension between the truth of the original and the artificiality of the fabricated.

Next there is the contradiction between the requirement of adaptability and the requirement of authenticity in network organizations, as described in the introduction to this chapter. Personally, it is strange to experience a world in which relationships that rest upon the authenticity of the person are used in strategies aimed at generating network profits. "It makes work situations in today's firms" write Boltanski and Chiapello, "especially open to accusations of manipulation" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 459).

Thanks to the opposition, capitalism was able to assimilate the artistic rejection of consumer goods, inauthenticity and massification into a discourse of the network, supplying arguments and legitimising an increase in commodification, particularly of human beings (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 466). But does this mean that the artistic critique may be seen as a success or a failure? It was successful in the sense that the avant-gardes of the Dutch Beats and the Experimental Group in

Holland coincided in the 1960s with the aspirations of the audience of Magical Centre Amsterdam. It possessed a base and spokespersons and occupied a significant place in the media. It failed in that by helping to overthrow the conventions of the second spirit of capitalism and overcoming the inflexibilities of the industrial order, bureaucratic hierarchies and standardized production, the artistic critique opened up an opportunity for capitalism to base itself on new forms of control and commodify new, more individualized and 'authentic' goods. According to Boltanski and Chiapello, it is this success and failure that currently paralyses the artistic critique. "To escape from this dead end … perhaps the artistic critique should, to a greater extent than is currently the case, take the time to reformulate the issues of liberation and authenticity, starting from the new forms of oppression it unwittingly helped to make possible" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 468).

It is now clear from where this management rhetoric developed and why I feel uncomfortable about what seems to be one of the main tensions of a connexionist world. The next step will be to escape from the dead end by raising my voice and exposing the dark side of 'authenticity' in our world. Within my organization, it probably plays a relatively marginal role. However, is it not today's peripheries that hold the essence of the future?

An earlier version of this chapter was presented at the 'After Dark' stream, The Sixth International Critical Management Conference, 14 July 2009, Warwick Business School, The University of Warwick, Warwick, UK.

Notes

[1]Inspired by Gary Hamel.
(http://www.debaak.nl/en/courses/tomorrowsworld; accessed on 26 April 2009)

[2]Among others based on 16 in-depth interviews.

[3]A statement made in an interview, which Kristin Ross had with the French sociologist Henri Lefebvre, who was a friend of Constant.
(http://www.notbored.org/lefebvre-interview.html; accessed on 21 February 2009)

[4]In the climax to *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Max Weber writes of the *stahlhartes Gehäuse* that modern capitalism has created, a concept that Talcott Parsons in 1958 famously translated as the "iron cage". It refers to the increasing rationalization of human life, which traps individuals in an "iron cage" of rule-based, rational control.

[5]Email Duco van Weerlee, 4 February 2009.

[6]Email Bart van Heerikhuizen, 6 March 2009.

[7]A negative connotation from the 16th century that became a Dutch word with positive meaning and stands for resistance against injustice, fighting for freedom and self-government.

[8]Email Duco van Weerlee, 4 February 2009.

[9]At the beginning of the 1970s, thousands of American beatniks came to the Vondelpark. It became a symbol of a place where *everything was possible and (almost) everything was allowed*. In 1971 the American airline Pan Am advertised worldwide with special flights to "a nice hippie park" in Amsterdam.

[10]Interview with Hans Plomp by Vincent Pieterse. Amsterdam, 25 September 2008.

[11]The Miracle of Amsterdam procession route is the biggest and best-known procession of Amsterdam, which is still performed every year in March. This procession commemorates the Miracle of the Host of March 15, 1345. The oldest and probably most original version of the miracle story occurs in a charter from the Dutch Earl Albrecht from 1378, describing a miracle which involved a dying man vomiting upon being given the Holy Sacrament and last rites. The Host was then put in the fire, but miraculously remained intact and could be retrieved from the fire in one piece without the heat burning the hand of the person that retrieved it. This miracle was officially recognised by the Roman Catholic Church.

[12]*Message to the Rat King* is an essay on the students' revolts in Amsterdam in the 1960s.

[13]Aat Veldhoen is a Dutch painter and sculptor. His works are representative of a lifelong and sincere interest in *all aspects of human life*. His ambition is to make art for *the people*.

[14]Interview with Hans Plomp by Vincent Pieterse. Amsterdam, 25 September 2008.

[15]Email Duco van Weerlee, 29 January 2009.

[16]Interview with Peter ten Hoopen by Vincent Pieterse. Amsterdam, 21 October 2008.
Peter ten Hoopen is one of the founders of the *Amsterdam Psychedelic Research Centre* and the author of *King Acid* (1999) and *The Enlightened Leader* (2009).

[17]Interview with Simon Vinkenoog by Vincent Pieterse. Amsterdam, 28 July 2008.

[18]Interview with Peter ten Hoopen by Vincent Pieterse. Amsterdam, 21 October 2008.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Interview with Hans Plomp by Vincent Pieterse. Amsterdam, 25 September 2008.

Interlude 1

An Interludial space

I felt strange. Was it fear, insecurity, betrayal, guilt, pride or relief? I had just emailed my colleagues my paper for the Critical Management Studies conference, which (in a revised version) forms the first chapter of this book. I felt betrayal because I would make them aware of the uncomfortable characteristics of our discourse as described in chapter one. Or would I? Perhaps my colleagues already knew that we were not telling stories of leadership that are positioned in the peripheries. Instead, we are telling the stories of a mainstream discourse. By using the stories from the peripheries of yesterday, we re-engineer these stories for today's commercial ends with possibilities for manipulation. Perhaps they agreed? Did I feel fear and insecurity because this might lead to me being marginalized within the workplace and jeopardize my professional future? Questions, questions, questions. Doing research is asking questions, but these questions upset me and conjured many emotions. Writing these chapters made me feel like I was collecting pieces of a puzzle for which I had always searched. It answered my questions and gave voice to the frustration I felt about the continually 'positive' stories of leadership in neo-management discourse. But why am I emotional? Another question that it would be nice to have an answer to, but unfortunately I do not. Maybe it is because the people I interviewed for this research encouraged me to finally write down their stories (something they repeatedly told me to do). I interviewed people who criticised society and capitalism in the sixties, but I am now saying that this critique, in which most of them still very much believe, made capitalism stronger thanks to the vitality of their opposition! It is here that I experience guilt and betrayal. Although it is my interpretation of their stories, I want to do them justice. Though clicking the send button in Outlook is a one-second action I perform a dozen times a day, this time it was a second that provoked a lot of emotions.

The story above occurred on a sunny day in the summer of 2009, two and a half years after I started work on my PhD at the University for Humanistics. I had no doubt that this quest would be intellectually challenging, but I had no idea that it would also be such an emotional challenge; it was emotion provoked by my interactions with the people I interviewed and, after a while, my interactions with my colleagues. While most of my colleagues did not react strongly due to the fact that I did not 'sell' my research forcefully, the CEO of my company, Harry Starren, encouraged me to go on with my research. At the same time, the interviews provided pleasant meetings where it was possible to explore the ideas of the interviewee, often ending up in a lively discussion about contemporary society, sometimes with the interviewee having an occasional 'smoke', other times sitting on a terrace in sunny Amsterdam having a drink. It all felt like a continuous play between me as the 'observing eye', the 'experiencing I' and the 'reflexive I'.

As a participant in my company, a company that literally and figuratively sells the idea of the neo-management discourse and its style of leadership, I am present in this research in all the three positions mentioned above. While the chapters in this book are mostly described from an authorial position, the stage where you are right now, which I call the interludes, makes it possible for me to offer you, the reader, my reflections on my personal and professional experiences as an addition to

the whole. Therefore, the style is different from the rest of the book and might be perceived as critical or as displaying a personal bias. It is how I position myself in this discussion.

This interludial space allows for the creation of an 'in between' stage, a phrase not only important for the critique of the 1950s and 1960s, but as you will find out, important also in this book. Coming from the Medieval Latin word interlūdium, which means 'between play', it creates in the world of theatre a representation between parts of a larger stage production, in performance art a brief performance between the sections of a longer performance and in music a piece composed of one or more rhythms inserted between parts of another composition. For me it creates a voice 'in between' my observations, experiences and reflections where I can examine the different layers of my quest. It produces a dialogue between story and context, myself and the reader, developments and conclusion, and at the same time takes you as the reader from one chapter to the next one.

As we have almost arrived at the next chapter, this seems like the right place for a small introduction. In one of the last paragraphs of chapter one, I notice a contradiction between the requirement of adaptability and the requirement of authenticity in network organizations. A world where relationships rest upon the authenticity of the person, but where, at the same time, these relationships are used in strategies aimed at generating network profits, feels strange to me. Therefore, it is this apparent contradiction between adaptability and authenticity into which I will look further.

Chapter 2 ‘Fast’ performances and ‘slow’ values

The goal of this chapter is to explore the representation of the Dutch poet Simon Vinkenoog as a meaningful example of how one might strike a balance between demands for flexibility and authenticity in contemporary organizations. While mobility, flexibility and the ability to adapt at speed are essential attributes of this individualistic leader (implying discontinuity in his/her engagements), it is also necessary to appear consistent and stable in order to retain trust and authenticity. This is one of “neo-management’s key problems” (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 462). Characterizing Vinkenoog as the representation of the artistic critique of the 1950s and 1960s, I believe, is a source for exploring this tension between ‘being flexible’ and ‘being someone’. By looking at the concepts of self-identity, self-fulfilment, rhythm, intentions and practical wisdom, I want to suggest that looking at the demands for authenticity and adaptability in the representation of Vinkenoog provides the possibility of overcoming the anxiety created by those demands.

Introduction

As a Program Director at one of the largest management training centres in the Netherlands, I frequently hear about managers who are described as visionaries, authentic, intuitive, charismatic, inspired and creative leaders. At the same time, these leaders or managers must be their own entrepreneurs. The clients of the DBMC, mainly managers themselves, repeatedly recount stories using the metaphor of the network, where the emphasis is on flexibility and the ability to react. The creation of these networks is founded on mediating activities based on trust and authenticity. The status of a person is measured in terms of visibility and activity, activity being described as generating projects.

Boltanski and Chiapello describe these storytellers as a fixture in a connexionist world, where there is a desire to constantly connect with others. To succeed, managers must know how to communicate and be capable of adjusting to other people and situations (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 111-112). Knowing *how* to engage in a project is the mark of a *great man*. Successful managers

prove to be physically and intellectually mobile, as well as adaptable, a basic requirement for circulating in networks. They are innovators who use artists as their models. The *intuitive manager* is, like the artist, creative, "accompanied by disorder" (Le Saget, cited in Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 116), "in a permanent state of alert[ness] and doubt" (Vincent, cited in Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 116) and "at ease in fluid situations" (Archier, cited in Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 116)[1]. For these managers, the distinction between private life and professional life tends to diminish, and consequently they conceive of their life as a succession of projects (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 98, 110, 155). This 'living in the fast lane' is the reason why my organization sells training programs such as 'work-life integration'.

All of this raises questions about the notion of authenticity, which is seen as uniqueness and loyalty to one's self, also referred to as 'self-identity'. In contemporary organizations, there is a contradiction between the demand for adaptability and mobility on one hand, and the demand for authenticity on the other. Whereas relationships in contemporary organizations depend completely on trust and the authenticity of people, one encounters a problem when these relationships are, at the same time, seen as projects. It can create suspicion about the intentions behind these relationships, suspicion of a second level intention: opportunistic, strategic or manipulative. While individuals should develop themselves personally and strive towards self-fulfilment, it is not difficult to see that these relationships can be used to serve selfish personal interests. As a manager, while mobility, flexibility and speed must be adopted at the very core, it is also necessary to create a representation of consistency and permanency in order to retain trust and authenticity. In this way, the 'fast' values of the leader can be made credible by means of a 'slow' representation.

The key point here is the supposed creation of a relationship by the individualist leader in order to create another relationship for the purposes of his/her own self-fulfilment. This tension between the demand for flexibility and the need to be a 'personality' with permanency is, according to Boltanski and Chiapello, a "constant source of anxiety" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 461) and, following Michael Piore, one of "neo-management's key problems" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 462). The ideal of 'becoming oneself' exhibits this tension; changing in order to discover one's potential, but at the same time demonstrating "conformity to an original self" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 461). It is expressed in the texts of DBMC, which state that the main challenge you are confronted with as a contemporary leader is "unlocking your true potential"[2], "discovering yourself"[3] and recognizing that "change starts with yourself"[4], but at the same time you must stay authentic, explained by the phrase "remain yourself"[5]. Boltanski and Chiapello describe this "self-fulfilment in the sense of discovering the potential … harboured within himself" as "the happiness in prospect for the great man" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 462). Participation in a multitude of projects is seen as an opportunity for personal fulfilment, revealing the innate character that makes the leader who s/he is, distinguishing him or her from others (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 462). But, as Boltanski and Chiapello write, "this quest for the self undergoes a series of ordeals that assume both a variation in the identities adopted, depending on the project, and the preservation of a constant personality that makes it possible to capitalize assets during displacement in networks" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 462). It is this paradox between the requirement of authenticity, which the trust of personal relations is based on – 'slow' representation of 'being someone' – and the disqualification of authenticity because of the requirement of adaptability – 'fast' values of 'being flexible' – that haunts contemporary organizations (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 462).

This contradiction between an identity depending on the changing environment and a "sufficient consistency and permanency in time and memory … creeps into the very core of

the person" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 460). Consequently, the construction of the self is organized around identity, choice, autonomy and self-fulfilment, where the individual must "be fulfilled *in work*, now construed as an activity through which we produce, discover, and experience our selves" (Rose, 1999: 104, emphasis in original), while simultaneously participating in a constant process of change that requires the individual to be flexible and adaptive (Kristensson Uggla, 2008: 215; Sennett, 1998). This culture of self-fulfilment "can even result in a sort of absurdity" (Taylor, 1991: 15), "as new modes of conformity arise among people who are striving to be themselves, and beyond this, new forms of dependence, as people insecure in their identities turn to all sorts of self-appointed experts and guides" (Taylor, 1991: 15). Peter Fleming writes, "following the liberalist axiom of freedom of self-expression, one must not only have an immediate experience of subjective difference, but also express it as an *identity* that is true to itself" (Fleming, 2009: 27, emphasis in original). The paradox here is that "identity is a self that is identifiable to others and the subject to himself or herself" (Fleming, 2009: 27). Fleming argues that what makes an individual personally authentic might be race, sexuality or political associations, but that it must be represented to others as individuality. "These sources of personal authenticity perhaps explain why extra-employment themes related to one's life outside the homogenizing influence of work are often drawn upon in the 'just be yourself' management approach" (Fleming, 2009: 27). As a result, "the *development of oneself* and *one's employability* ... is the long-term personal project underlying all the others" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 111, emphasis in original), where "the distinction between private life and professional life has tended to diminish" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 155). It is this long-term personal project that DBMC describes as: "de Baak dares people to look inward and outward, seeing themselves as others see them ... to acknowledge differences, and to integrate these differences into your personal and professional life"[6]. Finally, Fleming notices that "authenticity requires an audience and visibility" (Fleming, 2009: 27), which therefore "gives it both an *expressive* or aesthetic quality" (Fleming, 2009: 27, emphasis in original).

In the contemporary management ideology of 'being someone', "sight and display are similarly essential", which is the only way to convey authenticity "when it is articulated mainly through the medium of identity" (Fleming, 2009: 142), especially when the "very term 'identity' is based upon a visual metaphor whereby an individual is recognized through visual characteristics" (Fleming, 2009: 142). When this identity is combined with the aesthetic quality of self-expression as described above, it creates "a very display-oriented notion of authentic individualism" (Fleming, 2009: 142). This "cult of inwardness" (Fleming, 2009: 142), or "liturgy of inwardness" (Adorno, 1973a: 70), must therefore be externalized and "put on show" (Fleming, 2009: 142). Fleming then goes on to say, "self and identity are from the very start made to be seen" (Fleming, 2009: 142). This holds its own tension; it makes the notion of authenticity and 'being someone' amenable to the obsession of 'being flexible'.

A Theatre of Authenticity

If knowing how to engage in a project is the mark of a leader, then it is relevant to combine 'being someone' with 'being flexible'. Authenticity and relational qualities are "the cement of projects" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 19), which are undermined by the competencies of flexibility and adaptability that are required by the leader in order to join projects and circulate in networks. In order to close the gap between being conceived as trustworthy over the long term and circulating in

networks and projects derived from situations and connections based on flexible values (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 123, 461), I will argue that it is necessary for the leader to create a substitute for missing elements, a *re*-presentation. This representation is created through the life story, which functions as an enabling mechanism for the leader. This gives him/her access to their 'true' self and, as a construction of an authentic leader, it builds up credibility (Shaw, 2010: 90). However, according to Jan Shaw, this authentic leadership is often invoked by a "mindful identity, created retrospectively through a highly crafted life-story", where it is "an explicitly subjective construct and as such is not the 'truth', but it reveals the 'true' values and goals of the leader" (Shaw, 2010: 90). Therefore, it "is then cast as 'authentic'" (Shaw, 2010: 90). She then goes on to say, this "life story, as a seamless representation of the 'true' values and goals, is told to others as a leadership mechanism" (Shaw, 2010: 91). The life-story is offered "as some kind of model or ideal, implicitly according to it the status of some kind of truth" (Shaw, 2010: 91). Through the medium of the life-story, it is the leader who deals with fast values by giving them a slow and authentic representation. "By emphasizing stability over change", authenticity is "able to make sense of followers' attributions of transparency" (Sparrowe, 2005: 422). It is what Shaw calls "the search for authenticity through narrative", which is "in fact a search for unity" (Shaw, 2010: 92). She describes this search "as a desire to close the gap" between the text of the "true self" and "exhibited behaviours" (Shaw, 2010: 92).

Peter Gronn criticises this construction of closing the gap, arguing that these "narrative ideas, imagery and discourse are corrupted and, to all intents and purposes, reduced to the status of weaponry in the defence and furtherance of a leader's interests, in her or his jockeying for advantage, or ... in safeguarding a leader's reputation and legacy" (Gronn, 2005: 482). The implications of this, Gronn suggests, are that it represents the leader and his actions as being consistent with his/her preferred view of his/her self-interest and distorts the truth, and is therefore "nothing more than straightforward propaganda" (Gronn, 2005: 482). Or as David Boje argues, following Clair, Chapman and Kunkel, these narratives are acts of "commodification, exchange, and consumption" (Clair, Chapman and Kunkel, cited in Boje, 2001: 2), while commodification of the authentic, according to Boltanski and Chiapello, consists of exploiting "values and means under the sway of capital" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007, 443). For the authors, capitalism has "recuperated the demand for authenticity in the sense that it has profited from it" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 447), while at the same time creating new forms of anxiety about the authenticity of people. One no longer knows if the authenticity of a person is "spontaneous or re-engineered for commercial ends" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 447).

Based on these analyses, Boltanski and Chiapello believe that this commodification of authenticity "has prompted a redefinition of authenticity" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 449). Authenticity is no longer defined as original and unique (as opposed to a copy or reproduction), instead it is defined as to the *intentions* behind establishing a relationship (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 449). It is Derrida, argues Saul Newman, who shows that "this authenticity, this purity of self-identity is always questionable" and that "no identity is ever complete or pure" (Newman, 2001: 3). "Derrida does not want to deny self-identity or presence", Newman goes on, "he merely wants to show that this presence is never as pure as it claims to be" (Newman, 2001: 3). With this, Derrida demonstrates that authenticity is not an either or condition. A person is neither completely authentic nor inauthentic. As an alternative, s/he can best be described as being more or less authentic or inauthentic. At the same time, Derrida also argues that authenticity "is always open to the other, and [is] contaminated by it" (Newman, 2001: 3). This will mean that "to be 'authentic' is also a job or work to be accomplished" (Kelly, 2006: 198) and that authenticity is a "calculable phenomena"

which "must be performed to make it amenable to the analysis and measurement of others" (Kelly et al., 2006: 198), while the authenticity of the leader is also a matter of the expectation of the follower (Lührmann and Eberl, 2007: 122). This performance creates, what Fleming calls, "a theatre of authenticity and inauthenticity" (Fleming, 2009: 139).

Slowing Down

According to Boltanski and Chiapello, these tensions between engaging in numerous projects and relations (in the language of authenticity), where one's self-identity is judged by others, are at their highest when there is a requirement to distinguish oneself as a professional or leader in the connexionist world (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 460). It seems that this binary opposition, authenticity or 'being someone' and adaptability or 'being flexible', creates confusion. It is Boltanski and Chiapello who believe that perhaps the artistic critique, which unwittingly helped to formulate the contemporary idea of authenticity, can help escape from what appears to be a dead end (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 468). The authors suggest that the tasks of the artistic critique, pointing to the commodification of the human, are slowing down the pace of connections or "constructing temporal spaces that are larger than the 'project', in the sense in which we found it defined in management literature" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 469).

Following Boltanski and Chiapello, as a way out of the constant source of anxiety that is created by the opposition between authenticity and adaptability, slowing down in time and enlarging spaces must be the emphasis of the artistic critique. It is with this suggestion that I will turn to the notion of rhythm. According to Robert Eaglestone, who follows Agamben, "rhythm underlies space and time" and "is the original structure of art" (Eaglestone, 2009: 275). Beyond the logic of opposition (authenticity versus adaptability), according to Derrida, there is rhythmic *différance*. "The logic of *différance* is rhythmicity" (You, 1994, 366, emphasis in original). In Derrida's work, *différance* is derived from *différer*, which means both to temporize (slow down) and spacing. Temporizing "suspends the accomplishment or fulfilment of 'desire' or 'will'' (Derrida, 1982: 8); it becomes the "original" (Oger, 2005: 105) or authentic.

For leaders in contemporary organizations, authenticity is necessary to create trust and foster credible adaptability in order to be a part of projects. In this logic of opposition, adaptability gains privilege over authenticity. However, with the notions of rhythm, différance and the artistic critique, it seems possible to move beyond this tension and open up an alternative option. This alternative "can subvert pressures of impermanence and capitalistic productivity, as represented in the 'simple life' and 'slow' movements that produce anti-mainstream counternarratives" (Kuhn et al., 2008: 166).

From the perspective of Boltanski and Chiapello's suggestion to turn to the artistic critique in order to escape the tension between 'being someone' and 'being flexible', a turn to the artistic critique of Simon Vinkenoog might be helpful in order to understand the ideas of this binary opposition. It is Vinkenoog's protest that represented Boltanski and Chiapello's artistic critique in the 1960s in the Netherlands. Having given important contributions to the avant-garde movements of the early 1950s, the Experimental Group in Holland, the poets of the Fiftiers and to many of the socially and artistically radical groups of the 1960s and 1970s, including the Beats (where rhythm, authenticity and imagination played an important role), Vinkenoog produced an anti-mainstream counternarrative. Instigating many innovative initiatives, he created radical

changes and discontinuity in the Netherlands during several decades, all the while maintaining consistency and permanency at an ethical, human level (e.g. Duivenvoorden, 2009; Glassgold and Messerli, 2005; Kempton, 2007; Kennedy, 1995; Pas, 2003; Posthuma and Goosen, 2009; Righart, 2006, 2003; ten Hoopen, 1999; van der Land, 1967; Vinkenoog, 1965, 2008a). As described above, unlike the 'fast' values and 'slow' representation of the leader, Vinkenoog created relationships as shared activities, wherein people supported one another in their pursuit of self-fulfilment. His 'fast' performances were grounded in 'slow' values. For me, Vinkenoog opens up an alternative option. Being a perfect example of a contemporary leader circulating in networks, he would appear to be the ideal representation of the modern leader.

However, before I turn to Vinkenoog, I would first like to take a closer look at the notion of rhythm.

Authenticity, Flexibility and the Avant-garde Movements

When Boltanski and Chiapello describe slowing down as a way out, they describe the rhythm of the consecutive projects in which the leader must engage. By delaying and deferring, 'temporalization' according to Derrida, laying less stress on adaptability and availability, more freedom is created. Slowing down defends non-fragmented spaces and the legitimacy/possibility of the existence of collectives (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 469). Slowing down protects people from what Richard Sennett calls, the *corrosion of character*, as the increased focus on the short-term results in people showing low levels of trust and commitment (Sennett, 1998). It is loyalty to the self, which looks like inflexibility (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 451), and therefore appears obstructive to the "bohemian ethic in order to enhance creativity, innovation and flexibility in organizations" (Costas and Fleming, 2009: 372), whereas constant change in modern organizations is important because "continual change is the only stability" (Andersen, 2009: 99). Therefore, slowing down or temporalization may seem hostile to the management discourse of the contemporary organization in the connexionist world. This could result in organizations where the "tempo of rhythmic activity may become strategic or full of suspense, and not remain merely 'spontaneous'" (You, 1994, 363).

However, the essence of rhythm is not the tempo, states You, but "is above all an activity (and action) that anticipates, expects or demands something to come" (You, 1994: 363). As well, it "intensifies expectation, including the expectation of sheer continuity" (You, 1994: 363-364). It "prepares the future" because rhythm is "future-oriented" (You, 1994: 364). According to Susanne Lang, rhythm is a relation between tensions that are constructed, perceived and created between a past, a present and a future (You, 1994: 363). This is similar to John Roberts' view of authenticity "as a kind of crafted 'imaginary' that allows one to know 'who I really am' in the past, present and future tenses" (Costas and Fleming, 2009: 358).

It is this description of rhythm and authenticity that was the emphasis of the Fiftiers, the group of poets who introduced experimental poems in the 1950s and broke away from the thematic and stylistic formality of Dutch poetry. With their imaginary and magical language, these poets created a new rhythm – different from the rhythm the spectator was used to – and therefore created a poiesis of experiences and a new creativity (Fokkema, 1979). Rhythm was their way of getting things going (Fokkema, 1979: 81).

Essential to these poets was authenticity. Lucebert, one of the Fiftiers, believed that without authenticity there is no poetry (Fokkema, 1979: 109-110). "It is always the authenticity behind the

mask, the man behind his status"[7], writes Vinkenoog, but it will not stay unchanged, because of "the experience of the change of the experience, the change of the experience itself will also change yourself, but you are still you"[8]. When Vinkenoog cites Rimbaud, stating that "poetry will no longer take its rhythm from action; it will be ahead of it" (Rimbaud cited in Vinkenoog, 2009a: 49), it is clear that for Vinkenoog authenticity comes before the action.

It was in the small avant-garde group of the Fiftiers that the artistic critique in the Netherlands could be found. Although he had no intention of acting as such, Vinkenoog was described in an editorial in the Dutch newspaper *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* (May 12, 1951) as the "spokesman for a new generation of poets" (Fokkema, 1979: 161). The outside world saw Vinkenoog as the group leader of the Fiftiers (Fokkema, 1979: 158-162).

This artistic critique, as described by Boltanski and Chiapello, criticised oppression, the uniformity of mass society and the commodification of everything. It valued the ideals of liberation and individual autonomy, uniqueness and authenticity (Boltanski, 2002: 6). As described in chapter one, whole sections of the critique of these rebels were integrated into the management rhetoric of the 1990s, characterised by the 'network' organization and the connexionist world, where the figure of the artist has become the model for a new leader. They also show that finding meaning in work in contemporary organizations "increasingly requires that people blur distinctions between private and professional lives, becoming free agents who identify with their career over any given organization, and display continual flexibility, self-control, and creativity" (Kuhn et al., 2008: 162).

It is from this artistic critique of the 1960s that the demands for authenticity and flexibility entered into contemporary organizations. The demand for authenticity was inspired by the denunciation of the inauthentic under the capitalist regime in the 1960s, which was characterized by standardization and massification, or as Boltanski and Chiapello call it, "a loss of difference between entities, whether these are objects or human beings" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 439). Authenticity should be revealed as pure and spontaneous expressiveness. The demand for flexibility was based on instrumental rationality and the denunciation of the authoritarian oppression, shaped by tradition, bureaucracy and long term planning. In its place, what was encouraged was "mobility, fluidity and 'nomads' able to circulate, as a result of many metamorphoses, in open networks" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 145)[9]. Both the Fiftiers and Cobra placed a strong emphasis on authenticity and flexibility.

Firstly, authenticity was important to these avant-garde movements, not only as a spontaneous expression of life force and intuitive creativity, but also because of its dialogical and (unknown) communicative aspects (Fokkema, 1979: 46). Their poetry became a quest for authenticity and an authentic life (Fokkema, 1979: 48). For Vinkenoog, authenticity made "a revolution of the mind" (Vinkenoog, 1950a: 2) possible, shaped by the use of spontaneous language (Vinkenoog, 1950c: 2) with an anti-traditional rhythm (Vinkenoog, 1951a: no pagination). This authenticity and the revolution it entailed were essential to Vinkenoog; they were grounded in his basic values of liberation, autonomy and self-discovery (Vinkenoog, 1950b: 2). The interpretation of Vinkenoog's liberation and autonomy, shaped by authenticity, is what Boltanski and Chiapello call "the inflection of the artistic critique" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 433). Following Taylor, Vinkenoog's self-discovery has a close analogy to artistic creation and its creative originality (Taylor, 1991: 62).

Secondly, flexibility was especially appealing to Constant. In the 1950s, Constant saw the authoritarian oppression and instrumental rationality as a threat to free creativity, and therefore a threat to freedom because "there cannot be true freedom without creativity" (Constant, 1974: 160). It was his analyses of the society of the 1950s that inspired him to start working on an architectural

proposal for a future society, the utopian city New Babylon. This long-term project occupied Constant for nearly two decades, roughly from 1956 to 1974. Inspired by the Dutch historian Johan Huizinga and his concept of the homo ludens, or playful man, as described in his book *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture*[10] (2008 [1950/1938]), Constant imagined a society in which each man is free to live a life of creative play. As a way of life, the homo ludens (or as Constant stated, the creative man) will "respond to his need *for playing, for adventure, for mobility*" and is "free to use his time for the whole of his life" (Constant, 1974: 160). "Starting from this freedom in time and space", Constant stated that mobility, flexibility and an open network of nomads was a "logical consequence of this new freedom" (Constant, 1974: 160). This freedom was measured by the rhythm of life. It had to be short-lived and intended to be succeeded by new and different situations (Constant, 1980: 222). However, because of the scale of flexibility and its continuity, the rhythm of fast changes could only be "traversed by a slow and continuous flux" (Constant, 1974: 161). Although the New Babylonians "favour fortuitous contacts and encounters" (Constant, 1974: 162), Constant writes, it is "their simultaneous activity that creates the new collective culture", with "an authentic collective creation" (Constant, 1974: 163) as the climax.

Analyzed by Boltanski and Chiapello, this tension between flexibility and its fast changes and authenticity and its permanence was also noticed by Constant. His solution was that an intersection of fast changes, innovations and the "intensity with which time is spent, will take on a more continuous character" (Constant, 1980: 223). Therefore, continual changes, innovations, mobility and flexibility were not, according to Constant, the criteria for creation or creativity as long as they were not grounded in individual and collective values (Constant, 1971: 209). Only then innovation could take place with "an authentic relation [to] reality" (Constant, 1974: 163).

With a description of rhythm, time and space and authenticity as the basis of the avant-garde movements, the Fiftiers, Cobra and Constant's future-oriented New Babylon, I return to the representation of the modern leader, Simon Vinkenoog.

The Poet Simon Vinkenoog

Now I must distinguish the key characteristics of Vinkenoog as a representation of the authentic and flexible leader, the characteristics that shaped his fast performances and slow values. Based on the ideas of authenticity and flexibility in contemporary organizations and on the artistic critique of the 1960s in the Netherlands, Vinkenoog can be described as an artist who used poetry for self-identity and self-fulfilment and as a means of finding his own voice (Vinkenoog, 2009a: 18). Poetically, he described it as:

I trade in gestures
buy and sell expertise
I wave my hands
as the days pass without pursuit of gain

I trade with my voice
an empty voice a barbed voice
and in my fingers the air dances
full of naked drawings

...
I am always measuring my self-
esteem up against life
I no longer lie nor do I speak
any truth or oracles either

(Vinkenoog, 2008b: 55-56)

Vinkenoog used the aesthetic quality of self-expression and his performances to reach out to his audience. In order to make creativity possible, he used the rhythmic tension between authenticity and flexibility. It is important here to note that Vinkenoog's representation is based on his values of liberation and autonomy, not only for his own self-discovery and self-identity, but also for the other, the collective: "care for your fellow man and care for yourself" (Vinkenoog, 2009a: 40). Note here the order of his priorities, putting others before himself. Before I deal with the implications of this statement of the collective, I will first consider a few key themes.

Inspired by the analyses and descriptions of Constant's New Babylon, it was Vinkenoog who stated that it is necessary "to overcome the duality" (Vinkenoog, 1965: 144) between flexibility and authenticity. It is important for the homo ludens to be continuously creative and flexible, but always keeping flexibility and fast changes grounded in his/her values. As he wrote in his book *Liefde (Love*, 1965), "don't let your spirit fall behind during this journey" (Vinkenoog, 1965: 297). While authenticity was the basis of Vinkenoog's values of liberation, autonomy and self-discovery, the same applied to the interpretation of the free nomad. It is with this belief that Vinkenoog saw 'being someone' and 'being flexible' not as an opposition or duality, but as two alternatives on the same continuum, a continuum that was shaped by his being a creative poet and performer. With "self-discovery as a goal" (Vinkenoog, 1965: 9), he wanted "nothing other than writing" leading to "knowing yourself, the world and the Other" (Vinkenoog, 1965: 9). Vinkenoog wanted to be "an authentic realist of the beautiful presence" (Vinkenoog, 1965: 20), where "everything is rhythm" (Vinkenoog, 1965: 40), but at the same time, he himself as the authentic realist would also be changed because of his own poetry (Vinkenoog, 1965: 291). He could only activate, provoke and create changes (Vinkenoog, 1965: 475) through performances of his poetry (Vinkenoog, 2009a: 17). It was his way to serve others (Vinkenoog, 1965: 369).

Although he tried to overcome the opposition – *différance* – between adaptability and authenticity, Vinkenoog shows in his 1960's text that he made efforts to avoid extremes, but not to destroy the opposition. It is what Derrida tried to do, acknowledging the difficulties of balancing both extremes and being wary of the tendency of falling into one or the other (Linstead, 2004: 46) because of the forces created (Derrida, in Linstead, 2004: 45). It is also what Vinkenoog tried to do, "simultaneously, without getting caught up in a double-bind situation ... and torn, but rather alive and resurgent between the paradoxes, the contradictions, the complementarities"[11], in order to use this opposition to make it possible for "creativity to dominate"[12]. If the extremes can be avoided, the opposition seems to stimulate a creativity in which rhythm is important. It is with this rhythm that the poet creates his own voice, performances, changes and values (Vinkenoog, 2009a: 50). Occasionally the rhythm changes; sometimes it's rapid, sometimes motionless, even seeming to stagnate or standstill at times[13]. For Vinkenoog, the opposition created a "lifelong arrhythmic tempo"[14] between "clusters of synchronous experiences and stagnation"[15]. In his book *Liefde* (1965), Vinkenoog connects the forces of flexibility and authenticity with his own voice or authenticity, searching his own rhythm and identity as the creative man in New Babylon (Vinkenoog, 1965: 63-64).

Vinkenoog believes that rhythm, or more specifically breaking the rhythm, is a way to flourish, a process of self-awareness a self-discovery[16]. For him, it was the act of being a poet and his poetry that created the possibility of self-fulfilment and flourishing. It was poetry that gave him the possibility of expressing himself in his performances. By stating that "performance is as important as the poem itself"[17], Vinkenoog connects his self-discovery with his performances. This self-discovery in relation to exhibited behavior is what Shaw calls "the constitutive pairing" of authenticity "in relation to authentic leadership" (Shaw, 2010: 95). According to Shaw, this pairing of authenticity is mediated through self-regulation (Shaw, 2010: 95). While Shaw argues that "self-regulation is a key component in authentic leadership" (Shaw, 2010: 95), it is Bruce Avolio and William Gardner who describe self-regulation as "the process through which authentic leaders align their values with their intentions and actions" (Avolio and Gardner, 2005: 325). Finally, for Raymond Sparrowe, "self-regulation seeks to ensure that one's words are spoken from the inner voice and one's deeds reflect inner purpose and values" (Sparrowe, 2005: 422). This is exactly what Vinkenoog achieved with his poetry and performances.

Through his poems and performances, Vinkenoog tried to show his inner voice based on his values of liberation and autonomy. In his poetry, Vinkenoog searched for his inner voice and self-fulfilment, and by making it visible to his audience and followers, he showed them his values. However, showing his inner voice was not Vinkenoog's only goal. He also found it important to be a guide and show "other contemporaries"[18] "what the hell is going on"[19]. Through consistency in his values, Vinkenoog was able to create relationships and connections[20]. His consistency helped in the creation of communities and "projects" which, because of his influence, made him "a sort of guru" (Glassgold and Messerli, 2005: 267) for younger generations in the Netherlands. It made him a "someone", as implied by the phrase 'being someone'. Next to the aesthetic function of Vinkenoog's authenticity, his authenticity also performed a social function.

While the authenticity of a leader in contemporary organizations depends on a consistent narrative or life-story, the 'slow' representation, Vinkenoog's authenticity is, as he believed, a continuing snapshot, a discontinuity[21]. On the one hand, being flexible entails fast changes and therefore requires that contemporary leaders have flexible values depending on the context (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 461). On the other hand, the demand on these leaders is to 'be someone' with a constancy of authenticity in order to create trust and transparency. However, it is Vinkenoog who takes an explicitly dynamic perspective on authenticity. His authenticity would change with his performances, but without flexible values. While with the leaders in contemporary organizations the values depend on the context, with Vinkenoog it was his authenticity that depended on the circumstances. Vinkenoog describes these changes as a result of his own "flawless blind eyes"[22] and lessons learned from his experiences and his connections[23]. Vinkenoog's idea of his authenticity is similar to what Sparrowe believes. Following Luthans and Avolio, he writes "the true self of the leader is not static" (Sparrowe, 2005: 422) and that "the working self concept of the leader can be changed and developed" (Sparrowe, 2005: 422) because experiences and exposure to different people and contexts can require a leader to change, develop, or improve. It is not authenticity that needs permanence, 'slow' representation or rhythm; rather, it is the values of the leader.

Based on liberation and autonomy, this interpretation of Vinkenoog's idea of authenticity is, according to Boltanski and Chiapello, rooted in the artistic critique, particularly manifest since the mid-nineteenth century and shaped by Parisian artists. Their view of authenticity was conceived as "being able to posses several lives and, correlatively, a *multiplicity of identity*" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 434, emphasis in original). Here, authenticity as an expression of liberation,

autonomy and self-fulfilment is believed to be a setting free of the idea of 'being someone' as conceived by others. This liberation of 'being someone', stimulated by the artistic critique of the 1960s, was then rehabilitated by capitalism into the possibility of changing identities as frequently as projects (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 436). It changed into the idea of 'being flexible', the same flexibility that in contemporary organizations needs a consistent authenticity to be trusted. According to Boltanski and Chiapello, many people find themselves far from liberated because they are "obliged to confront undefined, unlimited and distressing exigencies of self-fulfilment and autonomy in greater solitude" and, the authors go on, "separated from the inhabited world where nothing helped them to fulfil themselves" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 436).

The paradox here, as Taylor argues, is that in contemporary culture, autonomy creates self-fulfilment "*in opposition* to the demands of society" (Taylor, 1991: 40, emphasis in original) and shuts out "the bonds of solidarity" (Taylor, 1991: 40). This contemporary and specific manner of self-fulfilment becomes a synonym, argues Fleming on the lines of Taylor, "for self-obsession over difference" (Fleming, 2010: 147). It creates a "hyper-individualism" (Fleming, 2009: 148), which Taylor describes as, "many people feel *called* to do this, feel they ought to do this, feel their lives would be somehow wasted or unfulfilled if they didn't do it" (Taylor, 1991: 17, emphasis in original). Consequently, this contemporary idea of authenticity promotes a "purely personal understanding of self-fulfilment" (Taylor, 1991: 43), where the relationship with others "is secondary to self-realization" (Taylor, 1991: 43). Following this argument, 'being flexible' only serves 'being someone', because circulating in projects only subserves personal fulfilment and therefore personal authenticity.

It is this "culture of narcissism" (Taylor, 1991: 55) as Taylor calls it, arising from the highly individualist idea of authenticity, that creates the tension between authenticity and adaptability. Authenticity in this form does not create the trust necessary in projects, but is open to the suspicion that relationships are committed to only for one's own self-realization. Analyzed by Boltanski and Chiapello, this result of the artistic critique of the 1960s was already noticed by Vinkenoog and was, according to him, inappropriate. Autonomy and self-discovery bring man freedom, but this freedom also brings interdependency[24]. This statement by Vinkenoog is what Taylor observes as "authenticity requiring dialogue with the community" (Fleming, 2009: 147), where authenticity is placed "within a social setting of interconnectedness and solidarity" (Fleming, 2009: 148). Next to Taylor, Boltanski and Chiapello also believe that only "constructing a collective" can create genuine freedom and authenticity, where self-realization respects the limits of this collective (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 428). Or to cite Vinkenoog again, "life is freedom, for every man to do with his own body and mind what he wants, as long as he/she does not harm any other"[25].

Vinkenoog's aesthetic actions and 'fast' performances as a poet/storyteller (for which experiences and rhythms were essential) was his way of self-discovery and self-realization. It created a dynamic authenticity in favour of his self-fulfilment, but always serving and related to the communities and projects in which he was involved and, at the same time, performing a social function. Vinkenoog saw himself as a storyteller relating "stories with ethics", intending to "create actions, activate, publicize, provoke, and act, always" (Vinkenoog, 1965: 475) with society's well being in mind. Vinkenoog's intentions were always grounded in his 'slow' values of liberation and autonomy. For him, his values created a balance between 'being flexible' and 'being someone'. Using this balance, I present my reflections on Vinkenoog's intentions and interests, not only in the context of the 1960s, but also as a contribution to one of neo-management's key-problems: the tension between the demand for flexibility and the need to be authentic.

Practical Wisdom and Re-framing the Demands for Authenticity and Flexibility

In *Everyday Strategic Preparedness* (2007), Matt Statler and Johan Roos write "that any attempt to balance interests, time horizons, and environments depends significantly on the *medium* through which actions and decisions are expressed" (Statler and Roos, 2007: 94, emphasis in original). They could have been describing Vinkenoog, whose *medium* was his poetry and performances. They believe that this attempt or action, which "appeals to values, and enacts the common good, must be considered and deliberated on in view of its contextual circumstances" (Statler and Roos, 2007: 95) and that these circumstances can "also be considered in aesthetic terms" (Statler and Roos, 2007: 95), another hint that they are giving a description of Vinkenoog. However, they are not. What they describe here is the concept of *practical wisdom*. They also explore the implications of this concept for management theory and practice. For Statler and Ross, the concept of practical wisdom is a framework in which they attempt "to re-frame the response to the challenge of preparedness", where this preparedness[26] requires leadership based on certain values (Statler and Roos, 2007: 70). In a world that developed from long-term planning to continuous adaptation and came to be characterized by increased complexity and uncertainty, according to Statler and Roos, this preparedness becomes the most important strategic challenge for organizations (Statler and Roos, 2007: 8, 21).

To recall, it is this changed world that Boltanski and Chiapello describe as the shift from the second to the third spirit of capitalism (Arnason, 2001: 110). The third spirit is characterised by the 'network' spirit of the 1990s, where the organization became a lean company operating as a network, promoting teamwork, personal creativity, flexibility, adaptability and the "capacity to connect" (Arvidsson, 2000: 276). The 'connexionist man' replaced the 'organization man' and the figure of the artist became the model for a new leader. This third spirit of capitalism appeals to values of self-actualisation, freedom, authenticity and knowledge derived from personal experience (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007).

Referring to Aristotle and many others, it is this knowledge derived from personal experience that Statler and Roos see as an important part of practical wisdom. Practical wisdom, according to the authors, "must involve all the richness of human experience" (Statler and Roos, 2007: 104). It not only involves the mind, but "the entire body with all of its senses" (Statler and Roos, 2007: 104). Practical wisdom reflects on these experiences and its "re-engagement in practice" (Statler and Roos, 2007: 104). Therefore, the development of practical wisdom needs "longer-term habituation through experience" (Statler and Roos, 2007: 105). However, Statler and Roos argue that despite its 'slowness', practical wisdom can be important for contemporary organizations because it "refers to an optimal ... orientation towards uncertainty and risk" (Statler and Roos, 2007: 75). Since contemporary organizations lay emphasis on creativity, change and innovation, and practical wisdom is characterized by "the application of intelligence, creativity and knowledge" (Sternberg, 2004: 287) as "an integration of cognitive, reflective and effective personality characteristics" (Ardelt, 2004: 274), and "good judgement skills, psychological health, humor, autonomy, and maturity" (Statler and Roos, 2007: 80), practical wisdom, argue Statler and Roos, can help organizations prepare for the dynamics of (unexpected) change.

It is important here to notice that practical wisdom involves, according to the 'balance theory' of Robert Sternberg cited by Statler and Roos, "balancing intrapersonal (one's own), interpersonal (others'), and extrapersonal (institutional or other larger) interests over the long and short terms, through the mediation of values" (Sternberg, 2004: 287).

With this idea of practical wisdom, I re-frame the tension between 'being flexible' and 'being someone', the 'fast' values and the 'slow' representations. For me, the 'fast' performances and 'slow' values of Simon Vinkenoog are characteristics of an individual who used practical wisdom. With this re-framing, I suggest that looking at the demand for authenticity and adaptability in a different way provides an opportunity to overcome the confusion and distrust I describe at length above.

Homo Ludens Simon Vinkenoog as a meaningful example

For Statler and Roos, the most relevant element of practical wisdom for contemporary organizations and their leaders involves "the (thinkable) goals and desires of the individual" (Statler and Roos, 2007: 75), leading to experimentation and action (Statler and Roos, 2007: 93). The individual's desires and goals "might include the desire to enhance one's prestige, to make more money, ... to increase one's spiritual well-being [or] to increase one's power" (Statler and Roos, 2007: 88). According to Statler and Roos, this element can be characterized as a particular mode of intentionality, a term inspired by Heidegger's differentiation between inauthentic and authentic modes of intentional awareness (Statler and Roos, 2007: 93) (and a term that the authors prefer to authenticity). They also argue that experimentation and action are dependent on contextual circumstances, a key element of practical wisdom. The authors connect with Boltanski and Chiapello's definition of authenticity when they state that authenticity is the intention behind establishing a relationship (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 449).

The second element of practical wisdom, again according to Statler and Roos, is that the goals and desires of the individual and his/her actions must be "good for the community" (Statler and Roos, 2007: 75). The third element of practical wisdom is that these actions "involve the explicit claim" that they "provide an instantiation" (Statler and Roos, 2007: 75) of one's ethical values. Lastly, following Aristotle, Statler and Roos argue that practical wisdom requires taking action by oneself, because nobody can truly know what is good for the community or society without first trying it out (Statler and Roos, 2007: 75).

For me, all of these elements connect Vinkenoog's storytelling with ethics and dynamic authenticity, which for him created a balance between 'being flexible' and 'being someone'. Therefore, it seems that Statler and Roos' idea of practical wisdom and Sternberg's balance theory look for the same balance between authenticity and adaptability in contemporary organizations and their leaders. While the ideas of authenticity and flexibility (and their tensions) entered contemporary management discourse through the artistic critique of the 1960s, it seems as if they got disconnected from the idea of practical wisdom. This idea of practical wisdom was important for the artistic critique of the 1960s, as represented by Simon Vinkenoog. Re-connecting practical wisdom with authenticity and adaptability can help restore the balance between hyper-individualism and the wellbeing of the community.

To re-connect practical wisdom with the avant-garde movements of the 1950s and 1960s, I look back at Vinkenoog's ideas, but this time in the context of practical wisdom. The ideas and actions of the Fiftiers and Cobra were based on fast changes and slow rhythm. Next to this, their ideas were focused on authenticity and lived experiences, which led to new creativity, imagination, dialogue and the idea of homo ludens. While these ideas appear to connect with the elements of practical wisdom, it was Vinkenoog who, through his poetry, told the story of these ideas. It is this

storytelling, as Statler and Roos believe, that is an effective method of developing practical wisdom. "If indeed any activity can complement or improve on lived experience" (Statler and Roos, 2007: 115) write the authors, it "is the sharing of stories" (Statler and Roos, 2007: 115) which creates a context for interpretation, dialogue and integrated experiences (Statler and Roos, 2007: 116-117). This storytelling is not the highly crafted life-story of the authentic leader building credibility; rather it involves narratives full of experiences and unseen effects that are to discussion and interpretation.

Emphasized by the Fiftiers and Cobra, practical wisdom involves the richness of the human experience, the entire body, with all of its senses and reflections. They placed special importance on the very physicality of art, exploring "the space of complete living" (van der Bent, 2000: 202) and experimental poetry, where experiment is not derived from the word experiment, but from the *'experience'* gained from the new creativity and the creative process. It allowed these avant-garde movements to experience a cyclical process, the same dynamic model the Statler and Roos see at work in practical wisdom, where these processes are "co-constitutive of each other on an ongoing basis" (Statler and Roos, 2007: 92). In a direct way, this cyclical process also refers to another important element of practical wisdom, the time horizon.

While Boltanski and Chiapello argue that slowing down in time, which should be the aim of the artistic critique in contemporary times, creates a way out of the anxiety posed by the opposition between authenticity and adaptability, it is the same artistic critique that believes in an arrhythmic use of time and rhythm. Vinkenoog believed that using different rhythms created a poiesis of experiences and, at the same time, inspired by Constant, a slow and continuous flux, creating the change of experience and imagination, anticipating a new creativity and moving into the future. Serving the collective is this idea of rhythm that Statler and Roos describe as the development of practical wisdom: a slow habituation through experience, experimentation and dynamic actions on an ongoing basis, each contributing to the wellbeing of the community or society. Here the model that most connects with practical wisdom, believes Statler and Roos, is the homo ludens (Statler and Roos, 2007: 93). Referring to Ralph Stacey, Statler and Roos believe the actions of these homo ludens, like play, bring together reality and fantasy in the form of metaphors, analogies and images, which is important for creativity, adaptability and change, and can contribute to contemporary organizations (Stacey, 1996; Statler and Roos, 2007: 17, 124-125, 136). This description connects with Constant's and Vinkenoog's ideas of homo ludens or creative man.

It seems that Boltanski and Chiapello's suggestion that the artistic critique should focus on slowing down to overcome the *différance* between adaptability and authenticity is contradicted by the same artistic critique. Vinkenoog only wanted to overcome the extremes of the opposition between adaptability and authenticity, not the opposition itself. He believed that when the extremes could be avoided between these contradictory forces, it would create experiences of creativity and change.

I argue that the artistic critique of the Dutch avant-garde movements of the 1950s and 1960s illustrates a way of overcoming the tension between authenticity and flexibility in contemporary organizations. Although Vinkenoog and the other Fiftiers and Cobra artists had no intention of developing the idea of practical wisdom by the leader for use in contemporary organizations, I suggest that using this idea of practical wisdom, as shown and represented by Simon Vinkenoog, changes the way we look at the anxiety created by the tensions in the demands for 'being someone' and 'being flexible'. His fast performances were always based on (and this is essential for practical wisdom) his values and slow habituation through his experiences. Inspired by Aristotle, Statler and Roos contend that it allows the possibility to look at the leader's involvement in projects in terms

of a "golden mean" (Statler and Roos, 2007: 139) or the desirable middle between two extremes. When we accept the importance of the concept of practical wisdom for contemporary organizations and the connexionist man, it will open up numerous possibilities. Practical wisdom, defined as one's intentions and flexibility, the virtuous habit of making decisions and taking actions playfully and creatively (actions that serve the common good, rooted in experience and values and balanced in time, context, individual and community interests) (Statler and Roos, 2007), will give us an alternative way of looking at the practice and actions of the leader.

When we stress these actions and experiences as primarily relational instead of individual, the artistic critique of homo ludens Simon Vinkenoog can be a meaningful example of how one might strike a balance through the poiesis of experiences and intuitive collective creativity. It might also strike a balance between his 'fast' performances and his 'slow' values.

An earlier version of this chapter was presented at the 'Organizing slow answer(s)' stream, 26th EGOS Colloquium, 3 July 2010, Lisbon, Portugal.

Notes

[1]Here Boltanski and Chiapello refer to the French books, translated by Gregory Elliott, of Meryem Le Saget's *Le manager intuitif* (1992), Claude-Pierre Vincent's *Des systemes et des hommes* (1990) and Georges Archier, Olivier Ellisalt and Alain Setton's *Mobiliser pour reussir* (1989).

[2]http://www.debaak.nl/debaak/OntLeren (accessed on 12 March 2010).

[3]Ibid

[4]http://www.debaak.nl/peiv (accessed on 12 March 2010).

[5]http://www.debaak.nl/eil (accessed on 12 March 2010).

[6]http://www.debaak.com/en/over-ons/leerfilosofie.aspx (accessed on 14 December 2010).

[7]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Tuesday, 14 November 2006. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/november-2006.htm; accessed on 20 March 2010).

[8]Interview with Simon Vinkenoog by Vincent Pieterse. Amsterdam, 28 July 2008.

[9]Here Boltanski and Chiapello refer to Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* (2004) as the source for their use of the term 'nomads'. According to Deleuze and Guattari, the open space of these networks is the space that inhabits the nomads and their flow of intensities (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004).

[10]Huizinga describes within his book the conceptual space in which play occurs and suggests that play is primary to, and is a necessary condition of the generation of culture. For Huizinga, play has an important creative function, and play, freedom and creativity are intertwined. The essence of play is fun and the man who plays is called homo ludens. I describe Huizinga's 'Play Theory' in more detail in chapter 3

[11]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Saturday, 3 November 2007. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/november-2007.htm; accessed on 24 March 2010)

[12]Interview with Simon Vinkenoog by Carina Molier, Amsterdam, 17 September 2003. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/pages/hic/2012.htm; accessed on 23 February 2010)

[13]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Thursday, 12 April 2007. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/april-2007.htm; accessed on 29 March 2010)

[14]Ibid

[15]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Thursday, 12 April 2007. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/april-2007.htm; accessed on 29 March 2010)

[16]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Tuesday, 14 November 2006. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/november-2006.htm; accessed on 30 March 2010)

[17]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Sunday, 8 October 2006. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/oktober-2006.htm; accessed on 30 March 2010)

[18]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Friday, 7 December 2007. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/december-2007.htm; accessed on 31 March 2010)

[19]Interview with Simon Vinkenoog by Vincent Pieterse. Amsterdam, 28 July 2008.

[20]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Friday, 7 December 2007. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/december-2007.htm; accessed on 31 March 2010)

[21]Ibid

[22]Ibid

[23]Interview with Simon Vinkenoog by Vincent Pieterse. Amsterdam, 28 July 2008.

[24]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Tuesday, 10 August 2004. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/aug04.htm; accessed on 20 April 2010)

[25]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Wednesday, 1 March 2006. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/maart-2006.htm; accessed on 16 May 2010)

[26]Preparedness refers to the state of being prepared for specific or unpredictable events or situations.

Interlude 2

‘Break me open’

“The experience of the change of
the experience, the change of
the experience itself will also change
yourself,
but you are still you”[1].

But who are you?
Are you the reader or the meaningful example?
Are you Simon Vinkenoog or a leader?
Are you in between?
The golden mean of being someone,
and at the same time being flexible

The change of rhythm,
here,
gives me the space
to slow down,
to create a pause.

A moment of the experience of
my expression
and to prepare the future for
chapter three.

Authenticity.
Flexibility.
From the artistic critique
to the leader in contemporary organizations
to Vinkenoog’s artistic critique.

To avoid extremes,
to create opposition.
Is this what I do?

By sharing the stories
above.
A context for
interpretation, dialogue and integrated experiences.

“Translate me. Master my language
so not a word is lost –
translate me, break me open”[2].
Says Vinkenoog on page two one eight.

Translate me into what?
A representation?
A meaningful example?
English?
A source of inspiration?

The contemporary leader
and the artist as his model,
referring to the artistic critique,
opened Vinkenoog up
for me.

Not as a ’how to’ manual,
But to realize the tension
and full potential
as a consequence of
the leader seen as artist.

It brings us to
chapter three.
It brings us to
‘the translation of’ Vinkenoog’s ideas.
It brings us to
his language games and the creative man.
It brings us to
the experience of the homo ludens.

Notes

[1]Interview with Simon Vinkenoog by Vincent Pieterse. Amsterdam, 28 July 2008.

[2]Part of Vinkenoog’s poem *I, Thou* (1962) (Vinkenoog 2008b: 218).

Chapter 3 Simon Vinkenoog, the playing poet

The goal of this chapter is to explore the symbolic representation of the *homo ludens* by Simon Vinkenoog, not only as representing the ideas of Huizinga (2008 [1950/1938]) of the homo ludens as the *playing man* and of Constant (1964) of the homo ludens as the *creative man*, but also as the representation of the homo ludens used in contemporary managerial ideologies, where the emphasis lies on *play, playfulness* and *creativity*. Characterizing Vinkenoog as the *ideal type* in Weberian terms of the homo ludens, I believe, is a source for exploring the tension between the complete turnaround of how the homo ludens is perceived. Having been viewed as subversive, destructive and a challenge to society and productivity, a management literature emerges for which the creative man is the central source. I will argue that the example of Simon Vinkenoog can be used to understand the meaning of creativity and play within organizations. Looking at poetry as a play-function and Vinkenoog's creativity at 'playing games with words' will not only reveal a key role for the leader in setting the boundaries for playful creativity, but also that s/he must participate in this play. The leader must be the *creative man*.

Introduction

"Simon Vinkenoog called himself Homo ludens, a playing man who takes pleasure in what he undertakes, showing enthusiasm and interest towards everything that comes his way, an attitude which Vinkenoog held until the very last"[1]. On 13 July 2009, it was with this text that the Dutch newspaper *de Volkskrant* announced the death of Simon Vinkenoog. Inspired by the Dutch historian, cultural theorist and Professor Johan Huizinga and the Dutch artist Constant, Vinkenoog saw a special role for homo ludens in society. Huizinga saw an affinity between poetry and play apparent in the structure of the creative imagination (Huizinga, 2008: 161-162). Inspired by Huizinga, Constant developed an architectural proposal for a future society, New Babylon, as a solution for the creativity and playfulness of the homo ludens, or as Constant stated, the creative man (Constant, 1964). The ideas of Huizinga and Constant provided Vinkenoog with an escape from conventional society, the

conformity, inauthenticity and seriousness of the 1950s and 1960s, to a life of creative play (Vinkenoog, 2008a), with poetry as the source of imagination, emotion and creativity[2]. As a protest poet, he wanted to contribute to the revolt of the homo ludens against morality and the institutions of the utilitarian society. This revolt, according to Vinkenoog, will not end until the playful society is a fact[3].

With his influence in the avant-garde groups of the 1950s and later in many of the socially and artistically radical groups of the 1960s and 1970s, including the Beats, Vinkenoog became a kind of guru for younger generations in the Netherlands (Glassgold and Messerli, 2005: 267). In *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (2007), Boltanski and Chiapello describe how Vinkenoog's protest represented the artistic critique of the 1960s in the Netherlands. They argue that this critique is rooted in a bohemian lifestyle, counterposing the bourgeois society with freedom of the artist. Boltanski and Chiapello then go on to argue that this artistic critique is particularly responsible for the neo-management discourse and reinvigorated capitalism of the late 20th century (Arnason, 2001: 111). Thomas Frank (1997) and Fred Turner (2006) also show that contemporary management theory and the discourse of the network economy make explicit references to the experiences of the counterculture of the 1960s.

Indeed, in recent years we have seen an increasing managerial interest in incorporating play into everyday working life, with a special role for the creative man. According to Mathieu Weggeman, a Dutch Professor of Organization Science and former Chief Innovation Officer at DBMC, "an organization is not a money machine but a playground for homo ludens" (Weggeman, 2006: 42). It is about the playing man, not about the market, states Weggeman, with a key role for leadership and authenticity (Weggeman, 2006: 46). Daniel Hjorth writes that the neo-liberal *homo oeconomicus* is manipulable, both a product of and a target for managerialism, and that there is the need for a different idea of the individual to develop concepts for entrepreneurship as a tactical creative process. He concludes, "if management cannot learn to live with *homo ludens* as neighbour, it is difficult to see a role for management in organizational entrepreneurship" (Hjorth, 2004: 430, emphasis in original). Bogdan Costea notices a complete turnaround from 'play' being viewed as subversive to being the source of management's most precious commodities, creativity and innovation. The blurring of boundaries between 'work' and 'play', according to Costea, "echoes contemporary managerial discourse dominated by the obsessive recurrence of 'change' and 'progress'" (Costea, 2006: 173). This emphasis of constant change in modern organizations is important, argues Niels Åkerstrøm Andersen, because this "continual change is the only stability" (Andersen, 2009: 99) in these organizations. In another article, Costea argues that management has entered into a kind of 'Dionysian' mode, "what might lie behind the increased use of ludic technologies in management" (Costea, 2005: 141). Vinkenoog also noticed this Dionysian influence. He remarked that Huizinga "would have enjoyed the way Dionysus dances again" (Vinkenoog, 2009a: 79).

However, Peter Fleming shows that the dominant emphasis on play or fun in organizations leads to cynicism and alienation, with the symbolic blurring of traditional boundaries between work and play manifest in the critique of condescension and inauthenticity (Fleming, 2005: 295). He argues that, "by placing current fun initiatives in a political context, it has been suggested that authentic fun may not only be incongruous with managerial control, but gain its very inspiration from being against authority" (Fleming, 2005: 300). He goes on to say, "as more nonwork dimensions are symbolically drawn into the sphere of work, dissent is arguably inevitable because the public sphere is traditionally a space of debate" (Fleming, 2005: 300). According to Boltanski and Chiapello, it is this diminishing distinction of boundaries between private life and professional life that creates new risks for management control (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007).

Before I describe the role of Simon Vinkenoog in the artistic critique and his interpretation of the homo ludens, I first explore his sources of inspiration: Huizinga's idea of the player man and the interpretation of Constant's idea of the creative man.

Huizinga's Homo Ludens

In 1938, the Dutch historian, cultural theorist and Professor Johan Huizinga wrote a book titled *Homo Ludens* or 'Man the Player' (alternatively, 'Playing Man'). "Since then", according to Robert Anchor, "this controversial pioneering work of cultural history has become a landmark in the growing literature on the concept of play" (Anchor, 1978: 63). Huizinga uses the term 'Play Theory' in the book to define the conceptual space in which play occurs. He suggests that play is primary to and a necessary condition of the generation of culture. Important sources of Huizinga's theory of play are Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* (2007 [1872]) (Burke, 1971: 40), Schiller's *Aesthetic Education of Man* (2004 [1795]) and Plato's view of play (Anchor, 1978: 63). "Although Huizinga was not the first to discover the value of play in explaining human behaviour", writes Anchor, he was the first to attempt an exact definition of play and the ways in which it infuses and manifests itself in all spheres of culture, the arts, intellectual life, politics and even legal institutions and warfare (Anchor, 1978: 63).

Huizinga's book introduced the word *ludic* to the Dutch language. Derived from Latin ludus, which literally means playful, ludic connotes anything that is fun. Huizinga needed the word ludic, according to his own explanation, to describe the playful element of culture in a neutral way (Huizinga, 2008: 27). By playful he meant not only the game element, but also the qualities of freedom and intrinsic satisfaction (Burke, 1971: 40). In his book, Huizinga describes the significance of play in areas of culture such as law, war, knowledge, art, myth, poetry and sport, providing a picture of play as a free space within the culture, a place with its own order. Play is an activity outside of the sphere of material utility or necessity (Huizinga, 2008: 161). "It is an activity connected with no material interest, and no profit can be gained from it. It proceeds within its own proper boundaries of time and space according to fixed rules and in an orderly manner. It promotes the formation of social groupings that tend to surround themselves with secrecy and to stress their difference from the common world by disguise or other means" (Huizinga, 2008: 41). For Huizinga, play has an important creative function. The notions of play, freedom and creativity are intertwined. The essence of play is fun, and the man who plays is called homo ludens.

According to Huizinga, play must remain pure. "It should be open and honest, deliberately cultivating certain uses of play, to realize ends that are unidentifiable. The real game does exclude all propaganda. It has its own ends" (Huizinga, 2008: 244).

Next to this, Huizinga notices a "convulsive craving for originality" (Huizinga, 2008: 234), which is derived from romanticism and "becomes the main impulse of production" (Huizinga, 2008: 234). He argues that art is especially open to this constant striving towards the new and its adverse effects mean that in this type of production, the play element is hard to find. At the same time, he saw the possibility of making more of the play aspect of art. With the artist as genius and his audience of admirers, sympathizers and modern publicity, it is possible to create a community of play. According to Huizinga, in this community, as in poetry, a certain esotericism and myth is necessary (Huizinga, 2008: 234). In fact, Huizinga found poetry so intimately bound to the structure of play (Huizinga, 2008: 189) that he dedicated a special chapter to play and poetry.

This section about poetry was of special interest and a source of inspiration for Simon Vinkenoog. He always had an English copy of this chapter in his pocket and often recited parts of it while performing[4]. It therefore adds to this work to take a closer look at Huizinga's views on poetry.

Huizinga states that *poiesis* is a play-function. "Play manifests itself in language most visibly as metaphor, which is essentially a play on words, a representation, an imaginative reconstruction of reality in figurative or poetic terms" (Anchor, 1978: 80). "It proceeds within the play-ground of the mind, in a world of its own which the mind creates for it" (Huizinga, 2008: 148). For Huizinga, the poet is "*vates*[5], the possessed, the God-smitten, the raving one" (Huizinga, 2008: 149, emphasis in original) and "these qualifications", he goes on, "imply at the same time his possession of extraordinary knowledge" (Huizinga, 2008: 149). In any flourishing, living civilization, poetry "has a vital function that is both social and liturgical" (Huizinga, 2008: 149). He argues that play permeates poetry. Fusing "ritual, entertainment, artistry, riddle-making, doctrine, persuasion, sorcery, soothsaying, prophecy, and competition" (Huizinga, 2008: 149), poetry performs social and aesthetic functions.

Huizinga has shown that the relationship between this world and the equally symbolic world of art is a close one. According to Richard Burke, here lies the true significance of homo ludens, "in its more complex forms, play in the life of man develops his creative, imaginative ability, enabling him to live not only in the 'real' world but also in countless symbolic worlds of his own making. No doubt this makes him a more efficient solver of practical problems, but it also enables him to endow his life with form and meaning" (Burke, 1971: 42).

Homo Ludens ends with Huizinga's observations on contemporary civilization. Having been written in 1938, the observations in his book date back to the dawn of the Second World War and are overshadowed by the crisis in Europe in the 1930s. In the book, he recognizes a tendency towards the breakdown between seriousness and play, "whereby the serious business of life – politics, war, economics, and morality – degenerate into pseudo-play, and play loses its indispensable qualities of spontaneity, detachment, artlessness, and joy, and thus its power to act as a culture-creating activity" (Anchor, 1978: 83). Huizinga describes this as the decadence of the play element in modern times, where seriousness and rigidity have become the catchphrase of modern life. He depicts contemporary society as one in which material interest, the desire for entertainment, crude sensationalism and an adolescent mental attitude are elevated into absolutes in place of the rules that underlie all play (Huizinga, 2008: 237). Because of the decadence of the play element, modern, future-oriented people have robbed themselves of the opportunity for spontaneity and ecstasy. With that loss has come the shrinking of the possibilities that life has to offer (Henricks, 1988: 38-39).

From such statements, one can imagine that Huizinga had romanticized the past; for example, "all of life was play for the ancient Greeks" (Huizinga, 2008: 59). For such reasons, authors like Richard Gruneau appraise Huizinga's legacy for the contemporary analysis of play in fairly modest terms (Henricks, 1988: 39). Pieter Geyl criticizes Huizinga for idealizing the past, "one would almost say, wilfully" (Geyl, 1963, 236), so as to make the present appear worse than it is (Geyl, 1963, 236). Other criticisms of *Homo Ludens* come from Jacques Ehrmann and Eugen Fink. Ehrmann blames Huizinga's failure to recognize the economic function of play, wherein participants give in order to receive, and play is therefore the ritualization of an economic and political ethos (Anchor, 1978: 91). The relationship of play to reality is also the subject of Fink's criticism. According to him, "if we define play in the usual manner by contrasting it with work, reality, seriousness and authenticity, we falsely juxtapose it" (Fink, 1968: 22). Apart from this, Thomas Henricks argues that for an explanation of playfulness in modern times, progress or cultural innovation, instead of looking

at Huizinga's *Homo Ludens*, "one might look with equal or greater success at the very bureaucratic organizations that Huizinga despised" (Henricks, 1988: 39). At the same time, however, Henricks sees this as a wrong way to approach Huizinga's work, arguing that such an approach overlooks the utility of *Homo Ludens* as an *ideal type* in Weberian terms. To him, the work is a dynamic source of insights. Ernst Gombrich noticed the same but as a criticism, stating that Huizinga succumbed to the temptation of treating play as an *Urphänomen* and, by taking this approach, has mistaken its concepts for realities (Anchor, 1978: 87).

An ideal type of methodology, most closely associated with Max Weber, is formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view, as well as by the synthesis of countless diffused, more or less present and occasionally absent, concrete individual phenomena. In its conceptual purity, this ideal type is arranged according to a one-sided emphasis of a viewpoint into a unified analytical construct. Empirically, it cannot be found anywhere in reality (Weber, 1922: 191). In using the word 'ideal', Weber refers not to perfection, but to the world of ideas. Weber's ideal type is valuable because it highlights a set of issues for study.

According to Henricks, Huizinga's model of *Homo Ludens* serves much of the same function, writing that "[i]t should be remembered that Huizinga did not seek some separate realm for play in society" (Henricks, 1988: 40). As Huizinga explains, his book is about the play element of culture instead of the play element *in* culture (Huizinga, 2008: 26). Arguing that "his quest was for the playful, as it may be found in all social and cultural forms", Henricks states, "with some imagination then, one can use the model to compare the playfulness of different activities, organizations, institutions, societies, or even historical epochs (as Huizinga himself attempted)" (Henricks, 1988: 40).

However, Henricks approached Huizinga's work as an ideal type for its implications for the study of sport. Moreover, I am not looking for the ideal type of the homo ludens based on the qualities and descriptions of Huizinga's work, but on the characteristics of Simon Vinkenoog as the homo ludens. In this case, the phenomena of play and creativity described by Huizinga only tell half of the story. However, before I illustrate a more systematic version of Vinkenoog's ideal type, I must first return to Constant.

Constant's Homo Ludens

As described above, Eugen Fink argues that to approach a study of play by contrasting it with work, reality, seriousness and authenticity creates a false juxtaposition (Anchor, 1978: 92). However, it is exactly this juxtaposition that appealed to the countercultural movements of the 1960s in the Netherlands. These movements saw the 'impossibility of leading an authentic life' as a basic defect of the social system. Authenticity became the 'radical act' of revolutionary rejection of the existing society. This rejection was, among others, shaped by Constant with his design of the utopian city New Babylon, in which he called for the playful, creative and authentic new man.

Constant started painting under the influence of Cubism and of German expressionism. His meeting with the Dane, Asger Jorn, in 1946 led him to search for other means of expression. With Corneille and Karel Appel, who were also searching for a free and spontaneous form of painting, he founded the Experimental Group in Holland. In the first issue of their magazine *Reflex* (1948), Constant wrote a Manifesto stating that modern art will be followed "by an experimental period … from the experience gained in this state of unlimited freedom, the rules are being formulated which

will govern the new form of creativity" (Constant, 1948: no pagination). This does not mean that their art is based on experiences; rather it means that these experiences are gained from the creative process (Fokkema, 1979: 45). From the start, the group was in touch with similar associations in Copenhagen and Paris and strengthened already-established links with Revolutionary Surrealism. In this context, following a meeting of different avant-garde movements, the Cobra group came into being in November 1948. After having withdrawn from Cobra in 1950, Constant joined a group of avant-garde interlocutors, which ultimately resulted in the founding of Situationist International, a group in which he would participate until 1960 (Calis, 2001; McDonough, 2008; Stokvis, 1990).

As a founding member of the Situationist International, Constant strove to overthrow the status quo by dissolving the boundaries between art, social praxis and theoretical reflection. His aim was a revolution at all levels of society, which would permeate the whole experience of life. It was clear that modern architecture had long abandoned any opposition to the conformism and rationalization that were part of a capitalist consumer society. An attack against the popular functionalism, which he considered an elite attempt to deprive the masses of play and creativity (Kennedy, 1995: 9; Wigley, 1998), was one of his priorities and found its most concrete manifestation in New Babylon (Heynen, 2000: 152).

With Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* as one of the main theoretical grounds of New Babylon, Constant defined the new society as the world of homo ludens. It was designed for the awakening new man, freed from the need to work, and replaced with a nomadic life of creative play. "The world of plenty is New Babylon, the world in which man no longer toils but plays, with poetry as a way of life for the masses"[6], writes Constant. "New Babylon, perhaps, is not so much a picture of the future as a leitmotiv, the conception of an all-comprehensive culture"[7]. He goes on, "the outlines of the creative man of the new world to come, are important in that at last he deliberately turns away from the utilitarian world in which creativeness was only an escape and a protest, and he becomes the interpreter of the new man, homo ludens"[8]. New Babylon was elaborated in an endless series of models, sketches, etchings, lithographs, collages, architectural drawings and photo collages, as well as in manifestos, essays, lectures, and films. New Babylon, as a *ludic* society, is a form of propaganda that criticises conventional social structures and opposes the utilitarian society (Constant, 1974). It envisaged a space where people were free to engage in creative work, shaping the world in accordance with their desires and in which they could invest all their energy in a playful experience of freedom. New Babylon "was from the start an attempt to test hypotheses regarding particular conditions of life in the postwar world" (McDonough, 2008: 88). Operating on the boundaries between art, politics, architecture and social criticism, Constant pushed the playful and performative interplay of cities and their inhabitants to extremes. Creating this city was his solution for the creativity and playfulness of the homo ludens. According to the French writer, filmmaker and strategic activist Guy Debord, also a founding member of the Situationist International and a close friend of Constant, New Babylon had quickly gone from being considered "pre-situationist" to "the most advanced" manifestation of the Situationist International group's efforts. In the early years of New Babylon, Debord was deeply involved in the project (Wigley, 1998: 16).

Very important to Constant in understanding the concept of New Babylon and the concept of the ludic or playful society, as he stated at a lecture at the Delft University of Technology in 1980, is how to understand the *concept of ludic*. This concept was originally used to refer to alternative behaviour, to represent life as *creation* as opposed to life as duty. In Huizinga's original meaning, according to Constant, "the word 'ludic' was always used in a social context, in other words, not for the behaviour of a particular individual" (Constant, 1980: 225), but "for the interaction within larger

groups of individuals" (Constant, 1980: 225), and was "therefore always used in connection with the concept of 'collective creativity'" (Constant, 1980: 225). This collective creativity is a theoretical concept that is closely connected with the idea of a ludic society. In his creative activity, the homo ludens is in direct contact with his peers. This action will become an "authentic collective creation" (Constant, 1974, 163). Constant finishes his statement with the argument that, "it goes without saying that a culture produced by collective creativity is on a higher level than a culture made by only a few, and which the majority of people experience as a mere spectacle or do not notice at all" (Constant, 1980: 225).

Constant believed that in the ludic society, unlike the utilitarian society, the human being is at least in a position to develop his creativity and that this creativity is the realization of freedom. While artists as a social group abandon their resistance to modern society, the "creative person awakens" (Constant, 1964: 179). Whereas the artist finally became socially integrated, according to Constant, the creative person, "is on the watch for his chance and he sees that circumstances develop in his favor" (Constant, 1964: 179), which will result in the revolt of the homo ludens. "The worldwide phenomenon of youth refusing to accept the existing society" (Constant, 1964: 180), he goes on, referring to a tumultuous climate of the early sixties, "has revolutionary force" (Constant, 1964: 180). It is this revolution of the homo ludens that will bring total liberation, where authenticity and individual commitment to the collective will be the essential characteristics of the new society (Heynen, 2000: 174). Constant recognized that the youth was being driven by a desire to achieve this new society and that this urge could not be restrained. It was this analysis that made him issue a warning in the literary magazine *Randstad*[9]: "until the sublimation of that creative instinct to playfulness becomes possible, it will manifest itself in aggression, and oppose anything in the way of its gratification" (Constant, 1964: 181). It is what Fleming describes as authentic playfulness that gains its inspiration from opposing authority (Fleming, 2005: 300). According to Constant, the ludic society with authentic collective creation is the only way forward; otherwise, this revolt will never end. He finishes by stating that "the era of the homo ludens lies before us" (Constant, 1964: 181).

I will now return to my 'ideal type' of the homo ludens, Simon Vinkenoog, who, impressed by the analysis of Constant, also found it necessary to act.

Homo Ludens Simon Vinkenoog

It is Constant's warning that restraining playfulness will lead to aggression and Huizinga's theory about the importance of play for culture and society that inspired Vinkenoog to become a "protest poet"[10]; a poet who called for rebellion against the repression of play, authenticity and autonomy[11]. Inspired by Huizinga's book, which he described as very powerful[12], Vinkenoog saw himself as a homo ludens. Huizinga's special role of the poet also became a great source of inspiration to him. According to Vinkenoog, he was different to any other Dutch poet. He represented the cult orator, a bard in the Romanticist way, a lyric poet[13]. It was his task to show others "what the hell is going on"[14] and also to warn them. According to Vinkenoog, it is what a poet does: *worry, watch and warn* (Vinkenoog, 2009a: 16). It is this role that Vinkenoog expounded on in his poem *Resistance* (1955):

> *Protest is proclaiming in public,*
> *for people, in life, in the theatre*
> *or in the market of goods and ideas*

The free word lives for ever
and the spirit goes on flying free.

Only he is free who sees the lie
& does not spare his energy
in proclaiming his lust for life.

'Reject war. Inspire peace'
that's the finale of every meeting.
He who speaks of love and friendship
will do so all his life:
light on your way – be on guard
against indifference & don't
be fooled by the current trend.

DO THE RIGHT THING!

(Vinkenoog, 2010: 126)

Being a protest poet with an openness to people, an interest in new experiences and the ability to connect people with each other (van der Bent, 2000: 202), Vinkenoog played an important role in the artistic critique of the 1950s and 1960s in the Netherlands. According to Peter ten Hoopen, "Simon [Vinkenoog] was a central figure, because he was very well known. That's why people focused primarily on Simon"[15]. As mentioned earlier by poet Hans Plomp, Vinkenoog played a role in everything, every movement and every renewal. His role started when he published his anthology of poetry *Atonaal (Atonal*, 1951b), which had a major influence on experimental Dutch poets. Fourteen poets[16] were published in the anthology, and this is how they came to be known as the *Beweging van Vijftig (Movement of Fifty)*. According to Glassgold, the Fiftiers' movement began when Vinkenoog met Constant and other poets and the Beweging van Vijftig joined together with the painters of the Experimental Group (Glassgold and Messerli, 2005: 9). "It seems obvious", writes Redbak Fokkema in his book *Het komplot der Vijftigers (The conspiracy of the Fiftiers*, 1979), "that it was coincidental who became a member of the Fiftiers, but it is also obvious that Simon Vinkenoog played an important role as a coordinator" (Fokkema, 1979: 138). According to Fokkema, the Fiftiers was called *a movement*, not a *school*, because it had a literary-political character, but was not a literary-theoretical group (Fokkema, 1979: 41). Vinkenoog's Atonaal (1951b) was the first time these poets came to the attention of the public. Because of Vinkenoog's initiating role, the outside world saw him as the group leader.

The impact of the Fiftiers was revolutionary, overturning the aesthetic, social and intellectual standards with a special stress on the very physicality of art. They sought to make not so much a 'new' poetry, but an 'other' poetry, or an antipoetry. As Fiftier Lucebert said, "they wanted to write experiential poems, unfettered by form and subject matter, that explored 'the space of complete living'" (Lucebert, cited in van der Bent, 2000: 203). It is experimental poetry, though not derived from the word experiment, but from '*experience*', the same experiences gained from the new creativity and creative process, as explained by Constant's Manifesto.

As mentioned earlier, Glassgold notices a striking similarity between "the prophetic anarchy" of the Fiftiers and the angry satire of the Beats (Glassgold and Messerli, 2005: 10), a resemblance that created a problem for most of the Fiftiers. By 1957 they "had succeeded in freeing Dutch poetry" (van der Bent, 2000: 204), but also became aware that their once new and revitalizing writing was turning into just another convention, and perhaps into senseless imitation. As a result, many of them changed their highly imaginary use of language into a very sober and down-to-earth sort of writing, and because of this, most of the Fiftiers "did not respond favorably to the romanticism and the transcendental urgency of a poet like Ginsberg" (van der Bent, 2000: 204), though this did not include Vinkenoog. For a while, according to van der Bent, "Simon Vinkenoog was the only Dutch poet who was completely enthusiastic about Ginsberg's work" (van der Bent, 2000: 204) and as a direct consequence of his enthusiasm, the younger generation opened up to the writing and behaviour of the Beat Generation. Through Simon Vinkenoog, the Beats exerted influence on the Dutch countercultural movements (van der Bent, 2005: 100-101).

The central role played by Vinkenoog in the 1950s continued into the 1960s when in Amsterdam a small group of free spirited artists gathered into what became the Magical Centre Amsterdam. "The leading person of this group was the passionate poet Vinkenoog" (Kennedy, 1995: 131). From the Magical Centre, several socially and artistically radical groups emerged and, inspired by the New York artist Allan Kaprow, Vinkenoog introduced the first so-called 'happening'[17] to Amsterdam. He connected the founders of the Provo movement, Roel van Duijn and Rob Stolk, with their sources of inspiration, Constant's New Babylon and homo ludens and the visionary magician Robert Jasper Grootveld.

It was during the early 1960s that Vinkenoog became increasingly aware that there was a way out of Constant's warnings and Huizinga's bitter analysis of society of the 1930s. To provide an answer for himself, as well as providing others with a solution, Vinkenoog, as he writes in his book *Liefde* (1965), started "manifesting and creating" (Vinkenoog, 1965: 197). Manifesting and creating were how Vinkenoog saw the homo ludens. It is from the viewpoint of this background that I further discuss the qualities and characteristics of the homo ludens as represented by Vinkenoog.

Vinkenoog's Homo Ludens

Based on Huizinga's and Constant's ideas, it is possible to distill six key themes from Vinkenoog's idea of the homo ludens: creativity and imagination, collectivity, freedom, playfulness, non-utilitarian perspective and authenticity. The combination of these elements created for Vinkenoog the possibility of sharing his experiences, or as he himself wrote: "the by life revealed resources"[18]. As with the homo ludens, "gaining, processing and providing knowledge, form a whole"[19]. It is therefore possible that "our will agrees with our core being"[20]. It is important to note, however, that all of this is grounded in Vinkenoog's representation of the cult orator as described by Huizinga. Before I come to the implications of this last statement about the ideal type of the homo ludens, I first wish to consider these key themes.

When Vinkenoog wrote his "testament" (Ringnalda, 2009: 134) about creativity on his web log, *Kersvers (Brand New)*, he believed it was not, as it is seen in contemporary organizations, a source for "managers who seek more effective means to earn more money and to uncover new markets"[21]. He followed this statement with an explanation in which he argued, "[w]hen we talk about creativity deriving from art we allude to imagination, the heart and the life of the mind, rather

then the ratio, the head, which weighs and counts, judges and rejects"[22]. He noted further that poetry is the compassion and the source of this creativity[23]. Creativity is a way to discover stories and explore many worlds. At the same time, giving an account of these stories and worlds brings great joy to others[24]. The imagination creates new situations in an eternal festival. Inspired by Lefebvre's idea of the festival[25] (1992 [1945]), Vinkenoog believed that this creativity would allow for the achievement of one's full potential, with a new perspective and a broadening consciousness that would transform everyday life into a play[26]. Vinkenoog also believed that this would reinvent the homo ludens[27]. Being a poet, however, he also issued two warnings. "In this theatre of reality"[28], the creative man must understand that this play "is not only for his own life, but also for that of others"[29]. The second was aimed at the managers of contemporary organizations, warning that it is an *abuse* of the homo ludens when his/her creativity is used to demand more effectiveness or is taken over by the demand for more money[30].

For Vinkenoog, an acknowledgement of the creative man, with his intense imaginative powers, leads to Constant's idea of the ludic or playful society and the concept of collective creativity. Where Huizinga saw the possibility of heightening the play element in society by creating a community of play with a genius artist as the source of inspiration for his audience of admirers and sympathizers, it was Vinkenoog who took up the challenge. As a poet, he believed that he "must help other seekers to understand and to endure the world" (Vinkenoog, 2009a: 77-78), wrote Vinkenoog in *Goede raad is vuur (Good advice is like fire*, 2009a). His solution to the endurance needed was to create or connect autonomous zones/autonomous communities as a sanctuary for homo ludens. In 1966 he started the first *Sigma Centre*[31] in the Netherlands and by doing so, he laid the foundation for the Cosmic Relaxation Centre and the contemporary 'pop temple,' *Paradiso*, one of the first places in the Netherlands where the sale and use of soft drugs was tolerated (Kennedy, 1995: 139; van Riemsdijk, 2001: 65). Following in his footsteps, several others started communities, such as the cultural centre *Melkweg*, New Age centre *Kosmos* and the cultural free haven *Ruigoord*. Like the happenings, the Provo movement and the group of free spirited individuals, Melkweg, Kosmos and Ruigoord were considered to be part of the Magical Centre Amsterdam. These were places where the homo ludens could play and be in direct contact with his/her peers. In all of this Vinkenoog saw himself as a *mediator* (Fens, 1973: 28), the artist who actively participates in creating a playful society for the creative man. For Vinkenoog, the importance of these communities was the realization of autonomy, the freedom to play and to work and the sense of collectivity – "from I to we"[32] – with an active, playful and guiding role for the poet. As described by Constant, it was only then that the "authentic collective creation" could take place, or as Marjolijn van Riemsdijk called it, "the collective imagination" (van Riemsdijk, 2001).

In these communities or social groupings, according to Huizinga, creativity, play and freedom are intertwined and the essence is fun or playfulness (Huizinga, 2008). Vinkenoog not only believed that Huizinga was right, but also that these elements of the homo ludens were fundamental to the projects of self-realization, participation and communication[33]. When Vinkenoog looked at the work place, a particular form of community as he saw it, he proposed that man should prefer *being* to *having* and must work to live instead of living to work, only then would playfulness and fun prevail. But he warned again that this way of working was still far from collaboration, which is the only thing that really matters[34]. It is this collaboration and shared experiences, according to Vinkenoog, that create the meaning of play and playfulness in communities, and therefore also in the work place[35]. The individual homo ludens can only come to full maturity through his association with a community based on playfulness. As a guiding poet, Vinkenoog had to play along. He had to stay *in-play*, not

to impose his truth on another[36], but to continuously show other ways or alternatives[37]. It is this, Vinkenoog believed, that Constant described as an authentic collective creation, one which creates powerful communities.

However, the playfulness in these communities pursues purposes internal to itself. Play can result in the production of something material or symbolic, but making such a product is not the primary reason for the activity. Instead, one plays to experience the act of creativity or transformation (Henricks, 1988: 43). It is this play that made Vinkenoog feel at home in these communities, being creative without purpose, but expressing the fun of the moment[38]. It is creativity with a non-utilitarian objective. Vinkenoog wrote, "I'm not in favour of utilitarianism. Art is perhaps a better answer to life than action"[39]. By experiencing creativity and the creative processes of art itself, which was already the starting point of the Fiftiers and Cobra, rather than determining its outcome, "life can be made more beautiful, penetrating, emotional, and more real. That is the purpose of Art"[40]. In this way, the homo ludens creates "beauty to the beauty"[41] and "knowledge to the knowledge"[42], according to Vinkenoog.

Vinkenoog saw creativity as the core value of the homo ludens and therefore adopted it as his own core value. He believed that this *creativity as experience* was as authentic as life itself and could be found in art, especially in writing poetry[43]. And while writing, it was not the poem that was important, but the creative process leading to it. Vinkenoog's view on creativity and authenticity connects here with Huizinga's view on play, which Huizinga called the defining human quality (Pope, 2005: 119). While being authentic, Vinkenoog's playful and creative man shoulders his responsibility, showing his audience the relativity of their opinions and values and opening them up to the idea of spiritual renewal.

This brings me back to the six key characteristics of Vinkenoog's homo ludens. These characteristics create an ideal type of Dionysian playful man, with creativity as the main characteristic of homo ludens. However, Vinkenoog's homo ludens is also an inspiring guide and a connector between his peers. With this description, I have not tried to create an analytical concept; rather, I have attempted to capture the spirit of the contemporary homo ludens, as represented by Simon Vinkenoog.

The Homo Ludens as a Poet

In contemporary organizations, managers and professionals are innovators and take artists as their models (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007), while play is the central source of management's commodities (Costea, 2006). Rob Pope describes the activities of an artist as a form of play, spontaneous, free and pleasurable of itself, with the result that "it became increasingly common to talk about play in positive terms as a form of liberation and creative fulfilment" (Pope, 2005: 119). This analysis nicely fits most of the characteristics of the ideal type of Vinkenoog's homo ludens. However, it seems to represent a fairly standard conception of the homo ludens. The essential difference is Vinkenoog's emphasis on the play-function of poetry as a key characteristic of the homo ludens. He framed all of the important characteristics of the homo ludens via language.

While creativity, the core value of Vinkenoog's homo ludens, is basically a form of play (Pope, 2005: 119), he valued language as an imaginative reconstruction of reality (Anchor, 1978: 80) in which creativity manifests itself as play with words. Wittgenstein and Lyotard developed this idea of 'language-games', with the suggestion that there are two different kinds of 'progress' in knowledge. One corresponds to a new move (a new argument) within the established rules, the

other to the inventions of new rules. In other words, a change to a "new game" (Lyotard, 1984: 43). One such 'new game' was played by Vinkenoog in his attempt to overturn the received aesthetic and social standards (Glassgold and Messerli, 2005: 9). Inspired by the Beats, Vinkenoog decided the emphasis on vitality and the spontaneous process of writing poetry was more important than his 'products'. The result was this 'new game' (Fokkema, 1979). Fink writes that it is precisely these spontaneous acts and vital impulses that are the modes of play (Fink, 1968: 20). Vinkenoog's spontaneous language experiments searched for the unknown potential of language. He believed that poetry was a liberating force for all of life and that his revolution was not only literary, but a total reorganization of consciousness (Fokkema, 1979).

The revolutionary and process-oriented language-games played by Vinkenoog can be described as 'freeplay', a conception of Derrida's that opposes the goal directed version of play (Pope, 2005: 121). Like Huizinga, Derrida believed that all culture is played, but denied that individuals determine the play. He argued that authors, readers and texts have no stable significations, and therefore interpretations result from various constituting (historic) factors (Derrida, 1966). According to Pope, play is a "highly charged and deeply positive concept for Derrida", "identified with 'joyous affirmation'" (Pope, 2005: 121). It is Pope who states that "freeplay" is influenced by Nietzsche's idea of the ecstatically Dionysian impulse in art (Pope, 2005: 121), while it is Vinkenoog who allows "Dionysus to dance again" (Vinkenoog, 2009: 79). This play is not only a release of excess energy, but can also have political and revolutionary effects (and can therefore be liberating) (Pope, 2005: 121). With his poetic approach, the play of Vinkenoog's homo ludens is "carried in the sound, rhythm and patterning of the words, the images they carry with them, the tension at play between the words and experience and the multiple levels of meaning that surround them" (Linstead, 2000: 73). This poetizing discourse consists of flow, play and connectivity, whereas propositional discourse relies on establishing fixity of meaning (Linstead, 2000: 73).

In organization theory, propositional language attempts to limit the effects of 'negativity' and constructs truth only in positive terms (Linstead, 2000: 61-62). It is often the sole purpose of poetry "to challenge assumptions about meaning and disrupt convention, to disturb rather than comfort" (Linstead, 2000: 78). Poeticizing pursues the gap between the 'reality' of propositional language and present performance, thereby creating a space to play (Linstead, 2000: 74). According to Roger Caillois, there are four basic categories of play that can be distinguished within all sorts of activities and play, influencing all of social life, and therefore these processes are also at work within 'language-games' (Caillois, 2001). In describing these four kinds of play, called by their Greek names, I shall draw on the description of Caillois[44] (2001), Linstead (2000) and Pope (2005).

First, in *agon*, competition is dominant; a contest in which the player (or team) desires to win under conditions or regulations, relying only on himself/herself (or the team). Second, in *alea*, chance is dominant; the player desires to win by luck, relying on everything except himself/herself. Third, in *mimicry*, illusion is dominant; it is the play of representation, a simulation where it is demanded of the player that illusion will be shared. The crux is constant innovation. Fourth and last, in *ilinx*, carnival is dominant; the player desires ecstasy and unbounded freedom from constraint in a space where the only rule is that all rules are there to be broken. The first two prototypes are seen as regulated and result-oriented games, whereas the last two are seen as improvised and process-oriented games. However, not one of these four kinds of play is exclusive; they combine and dominate each other in different ways. At the same time, it is remarkable, according to Caillois, that in this mixture only one of the elements "is always active and creative and the other is passive and destructive" (Caillois, 2001: 76).

Without presenting Caillois' arguments in detail, it is possible here to identify the language-games Vinkenoog played. I believe that Vinkenoog primarily played *ilinx* and *mimicry* as his dominant games. I chose *Ilinx* because he created what Caillois calls, "collective passion to sustain and encourage the intoxication" in order to create "collective turbulence" (Caillois, 2001: 40). By elaborating on the active and creative features of *ilinx*, Linstead succeeds in describing precisely why *ilinx* was so appealing to Vinkenoog, "offering a powerful release, self-discovery, a redrawing of boundaries and a discovery of limitless imaginings and inexpressible experience" (Linstead, 2000: 76). *Mimicry* would be obvious because of Vinkenoog's public spectacles and inspirational performances, and again, because it "encourages imagination and can increase emotional and cognitive range, leading to greater understanding of others" (Linstead, 2000: 76). In this combination, the player relies on a guiding fantasy and inspiration where *mimicry* is the truly creative category, preventing *ilinx* from being destructive (Caillois, 2001: 75, 78).

Caillois describes those societies where the combination of *mimicry* and *ilinx* is dominant as "Dionysian", and where the combination of *agon* and *alea* is dominant, as societies with a competitive spirit (Caillois, 2001: 87, 110). He also warns that collectivity rests on a precarious balance, and when *mimicry* and *ilinx* have been suppressed it "may result in important contrasts in the collective and institutional behaviour of peoples" (Caillois, 2001: 85). Caillois' warning seems to have had the same intention as Constant's warning, the latter providing Vinkenoog with the inspiration for his homo ludens.

In combination with the arguments above, I demonstrate that the creative power of Vinkenoog's play and language-games, coalescing with the other characteristics of the homo ludens, results in a better understanding of the creative or playful man in contemporary organizations.

Conclusions

When looking at texts of the homo ludens in contemporary organizations it is striking, but not surprising, that they are written as propositional language. Some examples of this are: Burke's utopia, "a community in which everyone plays at work and works at play" (Burke, 1971: 47); Weggeman's homo ludens, a professional who plays like a tinkering child (Weggeman, 2006: 46); or Costea's argument that "managerialised play is more than a mere extension of mechanical exploitation, alienation or commodification" (Costea, 2005: 140). According to Fleming, "cultures of fun" have been an important feature of management programs "ever since the trend gained momentum in the early 1980s" (Fleming, 2005: 285). In cultures of fun, managers "should revitalize employees by creating a corporate environment that is conducive to fun, humor, and play" (Fleming, 2005: 285) in order to establish communities, group loyalty and bonding. Creating this playfulness at work is a key role of leadership and it is an important precondition (Fleming, 2005: 285, 287). In these texts, the homo ludens is the employee or the professional who should be invited to play in order to be empowered and creative, with flexibility, competitive advantage, innovation and increased motivation as the benefits for the organization, and the main impulse of production.

However, as far as the employees or the professionals are concerned, there is something inexplicably unreal about these fun cultures orchestrated by management (Fleming, 2005: 298). It seems that management sets the boundaries, but they don't play along. Establishing group loyalty and communities, according to Martin Parker, needs *management from inside*, where management is not positioned above or outside the organization or community (Parker, 2002a). This implies that

not only must the employee or the professional be the homo ludens, but also their leader. It is this leader who must revitalize collective capacity (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 76) and establish communities (Fleming, 2005: 285). He or she must do more than just play along; s/he has a very special role as leader. Instead of initiating and mobilizing playfulness at work and then withdrawing (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007), he or she has to take on an active participating role as the creative man. Doing so prevents the leader from being seen as a "false player" or inauthentic (Huizinga, 2008: 39). Only by being a homo ludens does the leader stimulate playful – collective – creativity, which results in other perceptions or alternatives.

The leader can bring poetry and poetic function into play because this play with words, where the form of the message is an important part of the message, creates an imaginative representation of reality. As mentioned earlier, it pursues the gap between the 'reality' of propositional language and the present performance, and therefore creates a space in which to play. The poetic is based on inspiration and imagination, as were Vinkenoog's language-games, and it performs a social as well as an aesthetic function. It creates free play based on experiences of self-discovery, the unlimited possibilities of the imagination (*ilinx*) and leads to a greater understanding of others (*mimicry*). This process-oriented play is opposed to rational, competitive, regulated and result-oriented play, the crucial difference between these two being, according to James Carse, the way man participates in play. Process-oriented play exhibits all of the formal characteristics of play except for the element of rules. The only rules in the process-oriented play are the rules of performance, which require cooperation. In the process-oriented play, man plays with and for others. They play co-operatively with no determinate ends in view, which tends to be a more creative play, while result-oriented players play for themselves, competitively and to a desired or required end (Carse, 1987: 26; Pope, 2005: 123).

This free play opens up the possibility of dealing with the relationship between playful creativity and the boundaries of the organization. With the homo ludens as shaped by Vinkenoog, it is not the rules of the organizations that create the framing of creativity and playfulness, but the rules of the performance, which can be understood as a creative constraint (Pope, 2005: 122; Sharples, 1999). The joyfulness of free play offers a different way of looking at experiences of playfulness at work. A leader based on Vinkenoog's idea of the homo ludens must take an active leading, participating role and must play it to the limit (*ilinx*) without being destructive (*mimicry*), and within the collective. When Hjorth stated that management must live with homo ludens as neighbour, he was wrong. Management is not the neighbour of homo ludens, but must be a homo ludens him/herself.

An earlier version of this chapter was presented at the ephemera Conference 'Work, Play and Boredom', 7 May 2010, University of St. Andrews, St. Andrews, Scotland.

Notes

[1]*de Volkskrant*, Monday, 13 July 2009.

[2]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Friday, 16 September 2005. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/pages/archief/sept05.htm; accessed on 5 December 2009).

[3]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Friday, 1 December 2006. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/december-2006.htm; accessed on 7 December 2009).

[4]Interview with Simon Vinkenoog by Vincent Pieterse. Amsterdam, 28 July 2008. During this interview Vinkenoog indeed took a copy, with traces of heavy use, out of his pocket.

[5]Huizinga describes the vates as the poet-seer, 'the wisest of all creatures who was never questioned in vain' (Huizinga, 2008: 149). According to him all the early Greek poets show characteristics of the vates, they were the nation's leaders. In modern German philology, the vates is translated as the word Kultredner, literally 'cult orator'. They were the recorders of history, tradition and genealogies, the spokesmen and criers at public festivities (Huizinga, 2008: 149-150).

[6]Constant (1970) New Babylon: the world of Homo Ludens. (http://www.notbored.org/homo-ludens.html; accessed on 7 December 2009).

[7]Ibid.

[8]Ibid.

[9]*Randstad* was a literary magazine (1961-1969), founded by the Fiftiers Hugo Claus and Simon Vinkenoog and the writers Ivo Michels en Harry Mulisch.

[10]Interview with Simon Vinkenoog by Vincent Pieterse. Amsterdam, 28 July 2008.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Interview with Peter ten Hoopen by Vincent Pieterse, Amsterdam, 21 October 2008.

[16]At first, only eleven poets published their work in the anthology *Atonaal* (1951b), the first public manifesto of the Fiftiers: Hans Andreus, Remco Campert, Hugo Claus, Jan Elburg, Jan Hanlo, Gerrit Kouwenaar, Hans Lodeizen, Lucebert, Paul Rodenko, Koos Schuur and Simon Vinkenoog. The third edition, published in 1956, carried a supplement with the work of three additional poets: Rudy Kousbroek, Sybren Polet and Bert Schierbeek.

[17]A happening is a performance, event or situation that is considered to be art. Happenings can take place anywhere, are often multi-disciplinary, with the active participation of the audience. This active participation aspect of happenings eliminates the boundary between the artwork and its viewer. The interactions between the audience and the artwork make the audience part of the art. The term happening was first coined in the Spring of 1957 by Allan Kaprow. It was Robert Jasper Grootveld who made the happenings in the Netherlands very successful. I will describe the happening in connection with Simon Vinkenoog and contemporary leadership in more detail in chapter 4.

[18]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Tuesday, 29 January 2008. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/januari-2008.htm; accessed on 11 February 2010).

[19]Ibid.

[20]Ibid.

[21]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Friday, 26 May 2006. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/mei-2006.htm; accessed on 12 February 2010).

[22]Ibid.

[23]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Friday, 16 September 2005. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/sept05.htm; accessed on 12 February 2010).

[24]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Tuesday, 6 July 2004. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/juli04.htm; accessed on 12 February 2010).

[25]In the first volume of *The Critique of Everyday Life*, Lefebvre set up the idea of the festival in opposition to the everyday (Elden, 2004: 118). The "festival differed from everyday life only in the explosion of forces which had been slowly accumulated in and via everyday life itself" (Lefebvre, 1992: 202). This is because the festival and everyday life are two parts of the same whole; "festivals contrasted violently with everyday life, but they were not separate from it. They were like everyday life, but more intense; and moments of that life … were reunited, amplified, magnified in the festival" (Lefebvre, 1992: 207).

[26]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Wednesday, 29 November 2006. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/november-2006.htm; accessed on 12 February 2010)

[27]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Saturday, 17 December 2005. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/dec05.htm; accessed on 12 February 2010)

[28]Ibid.

[29]Ibid.

[30]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Tuesday, 13 February 2007. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/februari-2007.htm, emphasis in original; accessed on 12 February 2010)

[31]Sigma Centre was the first of a collection of cultural projects in the Netherlands, inspired by the ideas of the Scottish novelist Alexander Trocchi and his text *Invisible Insurrection of a Million Minds*, which proposed an international 'spontaneous university' as a cultural force.

[32]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Friday, 6 October 2006. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/oktober-2006.htm; accessed on 12 February 2010)

[33]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Wednesday, 29 November 2006. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/november-2006.htm; accessed on 14 February 2010)

[34]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Wednesday, 13 October 2004. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/oktober-2004.htm; accessed on 14 February 2010)

[35]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Monday, 13 August 2007. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/augustus-2007.htm; accessed on 14 February 2010)

[36]Ibid.

[37]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Wednesday, 13 October 2004. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/oktober-2004.htm; accessed on 14 February 2010)

[38]Paraphrasing Simon Vinkenoog in *de Volkskrant*, Monday, 13 July 2009.

[39]Sunday morning lecture *Utopian Life* by Simon Vinkenoog, 1 February 2004, Free Church Amsterdam. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/pages/credo/utopischleven.htm; accessed on 11 February 2010)

[40]Ibid.

[41]Ibid.

[42]Ibid.

[43]Interview with Simon Vinkenoog by Carina Molier, Amsterdam, 17 September 2003. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/pages/hic/2012.htm; accessed on 23 February 2010)

[44]Interesting here to note that in 1953 Vinkenoog had a meeting with Roger Caillois to discuss his theories (Vinkenoog, 2009b: 64-66).

Interlude 3

Again 'in between'

Here we are starting the fourth chapter and, at least until now, this quest has provided me with some interesting ideas on the neo-management discourse of leadership. As I have suggested in the previous chapters, the phenomenon that Boltanski and Chiapello refer to as the artistic critique also occurred in the Netherlands, most obviously with the avant-garde movements Fiftiers and Cobra in the 1950s and in Provo and Magical Centre Amsterdam in the 1960s. Through the academic texts cited in these chapters, I have tried to reveal some of the key ideas and have also suggested that the ideas of this critique have entered neo-management discourse by quoting texts from DBMC. Inspired by the ideas of creativity, 'becoming oneself' and authenticity based on popular management books, or "Heathrow Airport Organization Theory"[1] as Gibson Burrell so aptly calls it, we tell stories in our training programs to leaders and professionals, stories about leadership where the artist becomes the model for this leadership. If you listen to these stories in our training facilities, whether overlooking a sandy beach and the waves of the North Sea or surrounded by a relaxing forest, they can be very inspirational. However, as I have pointed out before, to me it feels like a 'thin' model and reduced to propositional language. It creates the 'ideal type' of artist, which can be used as a model for leadership. Most of the time, as I describe in chapter three, this type is the synthesis of a great many diffused, more or less present or occasionally absent, concrete individual phenomena. Are we creating a myth? Does this generate creativity and innovation within organizations as we 'promise' in the texts of my organization? Will this "ideological mystification of capitalist interests"[2] really inspire others or will it lead to cynicism and alienation? In the end, it was this cynicism and alienation that drove me to write this critical work. The new leader in contemporary organizations can borrow the terminology of the artistic critique of the 1950s and 1960s, only it would appear to be another form of justification of control and the optimization between input and output, with the emphasis on a cost/benefit analysis of each use of human resources.

Although this book is hardly neutral about the language of new-style leadership, as you may have noticed by now, I am not trying to set it up against the new leader who acts as an artist. I am merely arguing that this version of the creative and authentic leader is a reduced and constructed version, described in propositional language, with a variety of political and ethical problems.

Maybe the crude sketch in this interlude misses much of what I have described in the previous chapters, but it does capture some of the tension I feel and wanted to explore in this book. The language games of Simon Vinkenoog are opposed to the language games of capitalism, according to neo-management leadership, even though they are a source of inspiration for the latter. They are part of different 'forms of life', which cannot be rightly compared by me, as I am not an impartial outsider. Why should I assume that the game of new leadership is the same as the game of the artistic critique? Perhaps the rules are simply different and the dominance of *agon* and *alea* in organizations is really good. This is why I must do justice to both sides of these language games and not reduce one in relation to another, because I cannot find a position outside these games in order to resolve it. All that I can do is to explore, pushing and pulling at the contradictions and silences

with the idea that I might provoke some relevant thinking for developing a critique of the idea of the new leader, who has the figure of the artist as his/her model. In this exploration, the artistic critique of the 1950s and 1960s has been helpful to me, not only because this artistic critique is the source of inspiration for the neo-management discourse, but also because "the past is one of the obvious places to look"[3]. This is where I explored a position 'in between' the language games, a position Simon Vinkenoog tried to establish during his lifetime while playing a leading role in the artistic critique.

It is this interludial space, the 'in between' stage, that I want to use now for the story of my meeting with Simon Vinkenoog, a meeting that accelerated my exploration. Let's go back in time:

> *On a sunny day in July 2008, I walked through the allotment garden Buitenzorg, close to the centre of Amsterdam. In my hands I carried a present, a book by the Iranian poet Sadeq Hedayat (1903-1951), The Blind Owl (1994 [1937]). This novel is Hedayat's major work, one of the most important in modern Iranian literature, in which he used techniques of French symbolism and surrealism, giving Hedayat a prominent position and a unique place in the annals of Persian literature[4]. After the First World War, because of his subversive writings and the style of his personal life, Hedayat became an iconic example for a generation of young Iranians. This is why I chose this present, because I saw a resemblance between the Iranian writer and the person I was going to visit. I was on my way to meet the 80-year-old Dutch poet, performer and writer Simon Vinkenoog. Because of his anthology of poetry Atonaal, Vinkenoog, like Hedayat, had a major influence on experimental Dutch poets. With this anthology, just after World War II, Vinkenoog launched the Dutch Fiftiers movement and their radical sense of poetic structure and subject. Later, in the 1960s, he embraced many of the socially radical groups, becoming a guru for the younger generation. Soon I found out that there was not just a similarity between Vinkenoog and Hedayat in how they influenced the literature and younger generations in their country, but that they actually met each other in 1950 in Paris, a year before Hedayat ended his life. I also discovered that Vinkenoog knew the Persian classics and was especially inspired by the Persian poet Omar Khayyám[5] (1048-1123). Hedayat too deeply admired Khayyám for being a freethinker and named his book The Blind Owl after a quatrain of Khayyám. It was a present that made it easy to start my conversation with Vinkenoog. The reason for this meeting was to discuss the role Vinkenoog played in the Dutch countercultural movements of the 1960s. Doing research on the artistic critique of the sixties in the Netherlands, I interviewed several people who told me I absolutely had to meet Vinkenoog, and it became a meeting I will remember for a long time. Over almost three hours, he gave me an insight into his stories, images of the world, the 1950s, the 1960s and poetry, all while smoking several marijuana cigarettes. After a fresh apple juice, I left with the promise that in my thesis defence, Vinkenoog should be my paranymph, and that we should stay in touch, which we did. He wrote me a letter and sent me several emails, and when I sent him the paper I wrote for the Critical Management Conference 2009 – chapter one of this book, he suggested meeting again. We set a date, 16th of July 2009 and I looked forward to it. Then, on a sunny Saturday in July 2009, the eight o'clock news on the Dutch national television announced that Vinkenoog had suffered a seizure and was dying. He died the next day, the 12th of July, a couple of days before our second meeting.*

Let's leave it at that, for now it is time to move on to chapter four. In this chapter I explore ideas of performance in contemporary organizations and Vinkenoog's idea of performance. In the former chapters we have already come across performance; for example, when the new leader used the aesthetic quality of self-expression and his performances to create a heightened visibility to better reach his audience. We also came across the importance of performance for Vinkenoog in his language games and his happenings. Let's explore this further.

Notes

[1]Burrell, 1998: 27.

[2]Parker, 2002a: 104.

[3]Parker, 2002a: 211.

[4]Katouzian, 2008: 10.

[5]Omar Khayyám was a polymath and critical thinker. Next to a poet, he was a mathematician, philosopher, physicist and astronomer. He also wrote treatises on mechanics, geography and music.

Chapter 4 The Performing Genius

As a performance artist, it is important for the leader in contemporary organizations to create a *happening*. This statement from Boltanski and Chiapello in their book *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (2007) is reflected in texts of DBMC. The phrase 'performance artist' refers to the theatre-as-metaphor approach for performance in organizations and 'happenings' refer to events of the artistic critique of avant-garde movements in the 1950s and 1960s, shaped by live performances with a participating audience. According to Boltanski and Chiapello, the idea of the contemporary leader as a performance artist results in this artistic critique being absorbed into neo-management discourse. In this chapter, I will argue that this absorption, based on Bakhtin's concept of Carnival, de Certeau's concepts of tactics and strategy and Lyotard's idea of performativity, creates a tension between different language games. To create a balance between these games, I will discuss the idea of Simon Vinkenoog's happenings in order to achieve a better understanding of the idea of performance and performativity within contemporary organizations.

Introduction

"As with the 'performance' artists, the important thing for the networker is to create a *happening* and to *put his name* to it" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 359, emphasis in original). By *networker*, Boltanski and Chiapello are referring to the leader in contemporary organizations (whom they also call the *great man*). This leader takes the artist as the model for his/her leadership: authentic, charismatic, visionary, intuitive, mobile, creative, always ready to operate a shift or take a risk and strong at networking. The status of this leader is, according to Boltanski and Chiapello, measured by *activity* (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 109), which must be visible to make it open to the analysis and measurement of others. This performance is linked to authenticity and is connected to the self, self-realization and attitude (Fleming, 2009: 140). Further, Boltanski and Chiapello write that the self is "the only element worth the effort of identifying and developing, since it is the only thing that presents itself as even minimally *enduring*" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 359, emphasis in original).

At the same time, Boltanski and Chiapello see the possibility for opportunistic behaviour by this *networker* when he behaves like a performance artist who *puts his name* to happenings or activities (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 360). The authors distinguish this selfish *networker* from another figure in contemporary organizations, the *network-extender*. The *network-extender* and the *networker* share the characteristics that create a high status for these leaders and perform the same actions that guarantee a successful leadership. Therefore, according to Boltanski and Chiapello, the *networker* and *network-extender* relate to the same spectrum of values. The difference, however, is that the success of the *networker* benefits him alone, whereas the achievements of the *network-extender* benefit others (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 356).

Referring to Boltanski and Chiapello's statement at the beginning of this introduction, this means that although the demand for the *networker* to *put his name* to happenings does not apply to the *network-extender*, there is still the demand for both to create a happening like the performance artist. Where the leader of contemporary organizations takes the artist as the model for his/her leadership, performance seems to be a key element in the idea of authentic leadership.

Performance plays an important role in contemporary organizations. This idea is reflected in the texts of DBMC. For example, "[a]s a boss", states a text on the company website, "your organization expects you to give a good performance and be a motivator to your people at the same time"[1]. Or, as the text of an Art and Leadership event organized by DBMC mentions, "the movement from the leader as hero to the leader as artist"[2] entails an understanding of performance and presence, and a transformation "from a focus on language that is instrumental ... to the expressive power of stories and the truth of one's own personal voice"[3]. DBMC also organizes special workshops for female leaders in which they search for their own authenticity in order to inspire, influence and convince other people. This workshop is described in the brochure as a program that lays an emphasis on performance, performance being explained as the verbal and non-verbal presentation of leadership[4]. Another leadership program uses the techniques of performing artists, namely performing "knowledge and the use of the own body, voice and imagination"[5], in order to achieve personal impact as a leader.

In these texts, performance seems *not* to be viewed as what is called "the performativity of organizational performance", relating to organizational efficiency and effectiveness and involving "inscribing knowledge within means–ends calculations" (Fournier & Grey, 2000: 17). This characterization relies on Jean-François Lyotard's idea of performativity as "the optimization of the global relationship between input and output" (Lyotard, 1984: 11), with a demand for "a cost/benefit analysis of each use of human resources" (Letiche, 2004: 81). This "strategy sets out, via technological development, to achieve performance improvement" (Letiche, 1992: 53). Performativity involves an attempt to use science in order to increase technological control of a phenomenon, thereby "minimizing risk, unpredictability and complexity" (Benhabib 1994: 35). For Lyotard, performativity was one of the dominant ways in which postmodern knowledge might be legitimized (Spicer, Alvesson and Kärremann, 2009: 541).

What appears in the texts of DBMC can be seen as what Jon McKenzie calls the emergence of the coalescence of social and organizational performance (McKenzie, 2001: 84). Borrowing the phrase from Amanda Kemp, "performance both as a way of knowing and as a way of showing" (Kemp, 1998: 116) gives a nice description of this coalescence. This way of showing connects with Boltanski and Chiapello's idea of the leader as a performing artist. This idea creates a perspective of 'doing leadership' with art and theatre as metaphors for leadership and organizations. Noted by Georg Schreyögg and Heather Höpfl, "theories of acting provide insights into the social performances

of the organization, and metaphors in particular, enable parallels to be drawn between theatrical performances and organizational performances" (Schreyögg and Höpfl, 2004: 692). According to Joep Cornelissen, this perspective creates "an image of organizational life (in terms of how actions are carried out and ordered) as essentially a creative and artistic affair in which organizational members 'enact' roles, interpret 'scripts', work in 'scenes' and 'act' towards 'plots', use dramaturgical and rhetorical styles, and address an 'audience'" (Cornelissen, 2004: 715). According to David Boje, as a result of these performances, leadership has become more of a spectacle; "leadership and organization are theatre", where "the theatrics of leadership [are] diffused throughout capitalism"[6].

It seems that the idea of performance as described in the texts of DBMC connects with the idea of the performing artist and theatrical performances. Although McKenzie describes this coalescence as "uncanny" (McKenzie, 2001: 84), he calls it at the same time "intriguing" (McKenzie, 2001: 84). Therefore, I first turn to this idea of performance, as represented in the texts of DBMC, to find out from where it came and what is so intriguing about it.

Organizational Theatre

One of the earliest and most influential contributions to the theatre-as-metaphor approach to performance in organizations is to be found in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959) by Erving Goffman, a sociologist who conducted performance research on the theatrical structure of organizational behaviour. Some decades later, these ideas were explored further by Iain Mangham's work on the theatricality of organizational life. In his 1986 book *Power and Performance in Organizations*, he began to define a new concern with the theatrical approach that, together with Michael Overington, he followed up with his book *Organizations as Theatre* (1987). The authors write, "an approach to organizations through the conceptual framing of a theatrical model, allows us to use all that theatre as a performing art, implies", where "it allows us to think about creativity" (Mangham and Overington, 1987: 3). At the same time, Peter Vaill explicitly brings together social performance and organizational performance. Studying high performance organizations as in the definition of Lyotard's understanding of performativity, he explores the potential for the theatrical model to provide lessons for creating high performance. In his book *Managing as a Performing Art* (1989), he writes that he "reach[es] for better ideas about what action in organization is" (Vaill, 1989: 112), and looking at the performing arts and the performing artist, he "invites us to consider some rather offbeat ways of talking about management and leadership" (Vaill, 1989: 112).

Questions about the logic and effects of the performance in organizational theatre are, according to Schreyögg and Höpfl, "mostly asked from a *causal point of view*" (Schreyögg and Höpfl, 2004: 697, emphasis in original). "Theatrical performance", write the authors, "is thought of as a stimulus which brings about a foreseeable response, that is, the response of the audience in terms of intended attitude changes or new behavioural patterns" (Schreyögg and Höpfl, 2004: 697). William Beeman describes the transformative potential of performance as the achievement of specific pragmatic goals, where the author sees "transformational" as equivalent to "effective" (Beeman, 2002: 86-87). He also notes that "it strives to affect human affairs" (Beeman, 2002: 87) and leaves "the individuals involved in the performative act in a changed state" (Beeman, 2002: 87). Later he writes that performance behaviour as a transformational force "has the power to restructure social order through the persuasive power of rhetoric and through the power of redefinition of both audience and context" (Beeman, 2002: 95). As described by Marvin Carlson in the introduction to

Erika Fischer-Lichte's book *The Transformative Power of Performance* (2008), "this very American concept of the transformational potential of performance" (Carlson, in Fischer-Lichte, 2008: 9), speaking of Beeman's focus, "is upon the pragmatic, the utilitarian and the model… is that of a performer seeking to achieve a certain effect *on* the audience" (Carlson, in Fischer-Lichte, 2008: 9, emphasis added). In Beeman's formulation of the performer's performance aimed at affecting the audience, Fischer-Lichte sees nothing of the "dynamic of performer and audience mutually involved in an ongoing dynamic of the fulfilment of the process of life and consciousness, not under the control of either" (Fischer-Lichte, 2008: 9). Also, Schreyögg and Höpfl believe that Beeman's formulation is too simple; "the mechanistic logic of stimulus and predetermined response cannot match the complex nature of organizational theatre and its effects" (Schreyögg and Höpfl, 2004: 697). In order to understand the effects, it is therefore important to include the audience's perception.

Although Schreyögg and Höpfl make this analysis based on organizational theatre, a theatrical presentation of performers intended as intervention, their analysis, next to Fischer-Lichte's idea, is also relevant to the performance of the leader. Not only is the effect of the performativity of the performing artist – the leader – based upon his/her body, his/her autobiography, his/her own specific experiences and his/her consciousness in displaying it to an audience (Carlson, 2004: 5), the effect is also based on how the audience handles the confrontation and provocation aspect of the performance (Schreyögg and Höpfl, 2004: 697).

With this idea of the important dynamic between the performing artist and his or her audience, I want to revisit Boltanski and Chiapello's statement on the leader in contemporary organizations who, as a performing artist, must create a happening. Based on the theatre-as-metaphor approach, it seems that the status of the leader is not only measured in terms of his/her performed activities, but that this performance also must initiate events that create a dynamic process between performer and audience. This dynamic process sets the stage for performance as movement, motion, fluidity and fluctuation, which gives privilege to, according to Dwight Conquergood, the rule-breaking rebel (Conquergood, 1995: 138) who values change, flexibility, mobility and playfulness. It creates the figure of the performing artist and, in line with the text above, the leader in contemporary organizations as a countercultural person. This rebel arises, as described before, from the artistic critique of the 1960s and is the model for leaders in contemporary organizations.

Therefore, if we have a leader who must perform as an artist and create happenings, a closer look at the idea of performance and its artistic critique will help explain the dynamics between the performing leader and his or her audience.

The Tactics of the Performing Rebel

Until the 1960s, performance and theatre could have been substitutes for one another. It was the avant-garde artists of the 1960s who created a revolution and changed the idea of performance forever. Under the influence of performance practitioners in the 1960s, the idea of performance moved away from "the stage or performance space into constructs of identity" (Huxley and Witts, 2002, 4) and, at the same time, created "a recognition of the importance of performance as experience" (Fischer-Lichte, 2008: 4). Inspired by writers such as Roland Barthes, Walter Benjamin and Antonin Artaud who saw "the necessity of talking of performance as a means of understanding the world" (Huxley and Witts, 2002, 7), this idea of performance gave performance artists a new social and aesthetic role and a voice to their – artistic – critique (Huxley and Witts, 2002, 4-7).

Meanwhile, in 1955 John Austin introduced the term *performative* to language philosophy. He discovered that "linguistic utterances not only serve to make statements but they also perform actions, thus distinguishing constative from performative utterances" (Fischer-Lichte, 2008: 24). As described above, the coining of the term 'performative' went hand in hand with the period of the changed idea of performance and is portrayed by Fischer-Lichte as "the performative turn in the arts" (Fischer-Lichte, 2008: 24). Austin's idea of performative as the notion of "culture as text" dominated until the 1980s, after which a shift in focus occurred towards the notion of "culture as performance" (Conquergood, 1991; Fischer-Lichte, 2008: 26). Cultural performance re-established "the intimate connection between our bodily experience in the everyday world and our conceptional life" (Jackson, 1989: 18). Influential in present-day performativity theory are Judith Butler and Jacques Derrida, who "enabled a powerful appreciation of the ways that identities are constructed iteratively through complex citational processes" (Parker and Sedgwick, 1995: 2). According to Joseph Hillis Miller, "Butler had some influence on general received ideas about performativity in the 1980s and 1990s" (Hillis Miller, 2007: 224), certainly influenced by Lyotard's "pragmatic" (Lyotard, 1984: 23) idea of performativity as know-how (Lyotard, 1984: 21) and performativity as "legitimation by power" (Lyotard, 1984: 47), as Lyotard calls it (Hillis Miller, 2007: 224).

The description of performativity and performance given above shows that philosophy and theatre "now share 'performative' as a common lexical item" (Parker and Sedgwick, 1995: 2), where "the stretch between theatrical and deconstructive meanings of 'performative' seems to span the polarities of, at either extreme, the *extroversion* of the actor, the *introversion* of the signifier" (Parker and Sedgwick, 1995: 2, emphasis in original).

At the same time, in his book *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1984), de Certeau states that performance – the act and all of the strategies it implies – is not reducible to competence or knowledge. The act affects an appropriation, or reappropriation. "It establishes a present relative to a time and place; and it posits a *contract with the other* ... in a network of places and relations" (de Certeau, 1984: xiii, emphasis in original), where power relationships define these networks (de Certeau, 1984: 34). Although de Certeau's point of view here is the speech act, he believes the effects can be found in many other practices and that his point of view can be applied to many non-linguistic operations (de Certeau, 1984: xiii, 33). The effects described by de Certeau are also what Boltanski and Chiapello see as the characteristics of the leader in contemporary organizations, and therefore call him or her the *connexionist man* (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 114). Linked with these effects of the performance, de Certeau also mentions the dynamic between the performer and his or her audience. Because of the manipulation or "consumption" (de Certeau, 1984: xiii) by the audience, since they are not the performer, there can be a "difference or similarity between the production of the image" (de Certeau, 1984: xiii) – the performance – and "the secondary production hidden in the process of its utilization" (de Certeau, 1984: xiii). Later on, de Certeau argues that the tactics of this consumption, "the ingenious ways in which the weak make use of the strong" (de Certeau, 1984: xvii), the manipulation by the audience, "thus lends a political dimension to everyday practice" (de Certeau, 1984: xvii). This manipulation by the audience, the "activity of the non-producers" (de Certeau, 1984: xvii), forces the performer "to have meaning and [remain] again in the assertion of supplementarity" (Linstead and Grafton-Small, 1992: 350).

De Certeau makes the distinction between tactics and strategy, where strategy for him has its own place and is legitimated to define the power of knowledge. Recall here Lyotard's definition of performativity as "legitimation by power" (Lyotard, 1984: 47). The author sees management, and therefore the leader, as a representation of this strategy, seeking its "own" place of power and will

to distinguish it from an "environment" and "bound by its very visibility" (de Certeau, 1984: 37). Tactics, on the other hand, have no "own" place; they belong to the other, the "art of the weak" (de Certeau, 1984: 37). The tactics, represented here by the performing art and the audience of the performer, "must constantly manipulate events in order to turn them into 'opportunities'" (de Certeau, 1984: xix). In its focus on performance, de Certeau's framework for understanding social and artistic critique, which "highlights how the marginalised represent their marginality, resonates in provocative and productive ways with comparative perspectives on ... resistance" (Napolitano and Pratten, 2007: 7).

Here it seems that de Certeau's idea of tactics identifies with Conquergood's idea of the performing artist as a rule-breaking rebel (Conquergood, 1991: 185; 1995: 137). This acting rebellious can, according to de Certeau and Conquergood, be a source of creativity (de Certeau, 1984: 30; Conquergood 1995: 137). This way of operating as a rebel with "artistic tricks" (de Certeau, 1984: 29) creates a life on the margin, "an art of being in between" (de Certeau, 1984: 30), of "making do" (de Certeau, 1984: 29) or "makeshift creativity" (de Certeau, 1984: xiv). This way of operating, according to de Certeau, is "alternately playful and threatening, and extends from the microbe-like forms of everyday narration to carnivalesque celebrations" (de Certeau, 1984: 130), "making it the principle of physical existence" (de Certeau, 1984: 130).

It is this performance or way of operating and the dynamic relationship between the performing artist and the audience that can be described as the artistic critique of the 1950s and 1960s. The artistic avant-gardes of the 1950s developed tactics, as in the idea of de Certeau's description of tactics, as a reaction to the inauthenticity, loss of autonomy, the absence of creativity, and the "poverty of everyday life" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 170). The forms of this performance were, according to Boltanski and Chiapello, referring to de Certeau's *The Capture of Speech and Other Political Writings* (1997) (which is largely devoted to the student revolt of May '68 in Paris and the characteristics of its way of operating), "often borrowed from the repertoire of the festival, play, the 'liberation of speech' and 'Surrealism'" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 170).

However, there seems to be a tension between the performance of the performing artist of the 1950s and the 1960s, which was the expression of the tactics of the artistic critique and, at the same time, the performance of the contemporary leader as a performing artist, which is seen in neo-management discourse and the texts of DBMC as the expression of the strategy of management. This tension not only creates confusion for the leader, but it also creates confusion for his or her audience. In order to better understand this tension, I turn again to the development of the idea of the artistic critique and its countercultural performance and how it became incorporated into mainstream management discourse.

Performance as Experience

As described in earlier chapters, in their book *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (2007), Boltanski and Chiapello analyze how the development of the idea of performance and the artistic critique takes part within the expression of a *new capitalist spirit*, where this idea is a part of contemporary managerial discourse with a crucial role for *flexibility*, the efficiency of *networks* and the importance of creativity and self-development within contemporary organizations. Developing Weber's notion of the Protestant ethic and adding insights from Boltanski's work with Laurent Thévenot, *On Justification* (2006), Boltanski and Chiapello define the *spirit of capitalism* as a set of symbolic resources that

can be organized in order to judge the "common good" of economic activity. Boltanski and Chiapello continue to define the spirit of capitalism rather differently from Weber, not as a meaningless iron cage, but more as a meaningful ethic, the "ideology that justifies engagement in capitalism" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 8).

To study the changing managerial discourse, Boltanski and Chiapello turn to popular management literature of the 1960s and the 1990s, where the normative dimension of capitalism is particularly present, leading to "a spirit to capitalism" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 64). In the managerial literature of the 1960s, according to Boltanski and Chiapello's analysis, there is a strong emphasis on formal rules and central planning, as opposed the arbitrariness and subjective nature of the pre-existing family capitalism of the 1920-30s. The writers of the 1960s literature also address the emancipation of managers and the adoption of American methods. The neo-management literature of the 1990s, on the other hand, pays "obsessive attention" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 71) to change, adaptation and flexibility. By valuing the *network* over the organization, *coaching* over leadership and *projects* or *self-organization* over management by means of formalized goals and job descriptions, it prescribes a *connexionist world*, as Boltanski and Chiapello call it, that is not only openly anti-hierarchical, but where *personal creativity* and *ability to connect* have become valuable resources. The authors of the 1990s literature write not only of liberating management, but also of liberating all wage earners. Moreover, themes such as competitive pressures and consumer demand emerge in this literature and, like its predecessor, Boltanski and Chiapello argue that this *new spirit of capitalism* results from an absorption of critique, especially the artistic critique of capitalism from the 1950s and 1960s (Arvidsson, 2000; Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007).

This artistic critique, voiced mainly by the avant-garde and counterculture movements, was framed in diffused terms such as authenticity and self-realization. Boltanski and Chiapello identify two ways in which the language of the artistic critique came to form a new spirit of capitalism. In the first place, consultants, industrial sociologists and human relations experts defined the artistic critique as a progressive aspect worth listening to. In the second place, there was a substantial shift of former rebels from the counterculture into fields like advertising, marketing and management. This merging of the artistic critique with business has produced a capitalist spirit that is functional in relation to a new, post-Fordist mode of the performative. This merging has permitted a large-scale incorporation of personal creativity into the capitalist valorisation process as a source of creative innovation. It has also come to promote adaptability and authenticity as a means of continuously reconstructing the fluid and flexible projects that keep the connexionist world together. It has replaced the rigid Fordist disciplinary management by directives with an internalized *self-control* of people (Arvidsson, 2000; Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007; Frank, 1997).

Here we have Boltanski and Chiapello's analysis of the artistic critique of the 1960s incorporated into contemporary management discourse. It is particularly the critique of the avant-garde movements of the 1950s and 1960s, visible in their performances and use of tactics as defined by de Certeau, that is responsible for the reinvigorated capitalism of the late 20th century which was capable of substantial absorption of this critique (Arnason, 2001: 111). It is this "performance as experience" (Fischer-Lichte, 2008: 4) of the 1950s and 1960s, creating "constructs of identity" (Huxley and Witts, 2002, 4) "as a means of understanding the world" (Huxley and Witts 2002, 7) that gave the avant-garde performance artist a social and aesthetic role and voice (Huxley and Witts 2002, 4-7). It is also this performance that Boltanski and Chiapello refer to as the performance of the leader in contemporary organizations when they stated that just like the performance artists, the leader must create a *happening*. In order to explore the already mentioned tension between the

performing rebel and the performing leader in contemporary management discourse, I now turn to the avant-garde movements of the 1950s and 1960s to better understand their ideas of performance and happenings.

The Performing Experience in the Netherlands

As discussed in the previous chapters, Boltanski and Chiapello limited the scope of their analysis of the artistic critique to France. However, as mentioned earlier, the authors believe that it is "rather similar processes that have affected the principal industrialized countries in the Western world" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: xxi). This limitation provoked Martin Parker to state that "it is the very reach of [Boltanski and Chiapello's] general arguments that runs the danger of being lost in the certainty with which they generalize their Parisian experience to everyone else" (Parker, 2008: 610), and that "parts of this book should really be a book titled *The New Spirit of Capitalism in France*" (Parker, 2008: 611, emphasis in original). With the Parisian experience, Parker refers here to the student revolt of May '68 in Paris. Indeed, Boltanski and Chiapello refer to the events of May 1968 as the demonstration of critique "at its zenith" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: xxxv), explaining why Parker made his statement.

However, as mentioned earlier, Alex Callinicos analyzed that "[t]he incorporation of soixante-huitards into a capitalism that adopted a mellow libertarian rhetoric is not by any means purely a French phenomenon" (Callinicos, 2006: 63). In his study *The Conquest of Cool*, Thomas Frank shows that in the United States the first signs of a coming revolution in management appeared as early as the 1960s in the so-called *Creative Revolution* (Liu, 2004: 137). Frank argues, "the corporate theory of the 1990s makes explicit references to sixties management theory and the experiences of the counterculture" (Frank, 1997: 28). Moreover, one of the founders of the Dutch 1960s Provo movement, Roel van Duijn, states that it was when the imagination came to power in May 1968 in Paris that the Provo seeds germinated (van Duijn, 1985: 7-8). This statement was supported by then student leader, Daniel Cohn-Bendit (Horn, 2007: 39).

From these arguments it seems that Boltanski and Chiapello were correct in their belief that the incorporation of this critique in contemporary management discourse has affected other Western countries as it did in France. Callinicos, Frank, van Duijn and Cohn-Bendit do not mention the artistic critique as such, however, it is clear that they were inspired by the avant-garde movements Cobra and the Situationist International and their critique of capitalism (Horn, 2007; Kennedy, 1995; Mamadouh, 1992; Pas, 2003; Righart, 2006, 2003). These movements criticize oppression in the capitalist world, the domination of the market, the uniformity of mass society, the commodification of everything and valorise an ideal of liberation and individual autonomy, uniqueness and authenticity. It is this critique that Boltanski and Chiapello describe as the artistic critique (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). According to Gerd-Rainer Horn, "the symbolic developments of great importance" (Horn, 2007: 22) of the artistic critique were found earlier in the Netherlands, and "in more unadulterated fashion" (Horn, 2007: 22) than in France or the United States. By the use of tactics in their everyday pursuits, as in de Certeau's definition of tactics, the Dutch countercultural movement Provo performed, openly staging spectacles, happenings, theatrical self-dramatizations and other audience-oriented activities as part of the Magical Centre Amsterdam, with the aim of changing society as outlined by the artistic critique of the avant-garde movements. The performance of Provo in the Netherlands, gathering around Roel van Duijn, Rob Stolk and Robert Jasper Grootveld,

"provided the creative spark which fused the various artistic traditions and creative aspirations into a powerful and innovative weapon taken over or adapted by rebels elsewhere" (Horn, 2007: 39). The significance of Provo and the Magical Centre Amsterdam was that it "constituted the spiritual and organizational bridge" (Horn, 2007: 39) between art and politics (Mamadouh, 1992: 54) and art and business (Horn, 2007: 40).

Unlike the avant-garde movement Cobra, the ideas of the Provos were not based on Marxist critique. The creative expression and revolutionary ideas of Cobra were inspired by Marx's conception of "material" history, believing that the political and cultural history of man is decided by economics (Stokvis, 1990: 86). Provo, however, rejected the economic deterministic approach taken by Cobra. According to van Duijn, the psychological subjective factors in a revolution are as important as the economic factors (van Duijn, cited in van Dullemen, 1970: 65-66). Besides this, inspired by the ideas of Russian revolutionary and theorist of anarchism Mikhail Bakunin, Provo believed in an ideal of freedom, individual autonomy and uniqueness, and therefore, according to van Duijn, they were against Marx's idea of equality (van Duijn, 1985: 142-143). It created a seemingly unbridgeable gap between the artistic critique of Provo and the social critique of communism (Buikhuisen, 1967).

Notwithstanding the different notions of revolution, the avant-garde movement Cobra, and also the Situationist International, played an important role in Provo tactics. Simon Vinkenoog was partly responsible for the influence of these avant-garde movements on Provo, and according to Niek Pas in his 2003 book *Imaazje! De verbeelding van Provo 1965-1967 (The Imagination of Provo, 1965-1967)*, until now the most comprehensive chronicle of the Dutch Provos, the contact with Vinkenoog was "of great importance" (Pas, 2003: 71) for the development of Provo and for them, Vinkenoog became "a sort of guru". Essential to Vinkenoog, as described in chapter two, were the basic values of liberation and autonomy (Vinkenoog, 1950b: 2), and because of Marx's idea of material determinism (Vinkenoog, 1950a: 1), he describes himself as a 'non-Marxist' (Vinkenoog, 1950d). It was these ideals and his statement of being a non-Marxist, already expressed by Vinkenoog in the late 1940s and early 1950s, that made it possible to connect the tactics and the critique of the avant-garde movements with the performances and critique of Provo, therefore giving the young rebels of the 1960s the ability to express their suppressed aspirations.

Vinkenoog played an important role in the Netherlands in connecting the artistic critique of Cobra and the Situationist International with the countercultural movements of the 1960s. Vinkenoog not only connected these movements, but as described above, also played an important role in creating another avant-garde movement, the Fiftiers who, according to Peter Glassgold, "to this day [are] the leaders of the Dutch literary avant-garde" (Glassgold and Messerli, 2005: 9, emphasis in original). To understand the importance of Vinkenoog's "undeniable qualities as a performer and personality, as organizer, motivator and initiator"[7] to the artistic critique of the 1950s and 1960s, it is necessary to take a closer look at his ideas on this critique and the way he performed it.

The Dutch Answer to the San Francisco Renaissance

Born in 1928 in Amsterdam, like many of his generation Vinkenoog was drawn to Paris in 1948, "away from the grey dullness, the provincialism", Vinkenoog stated in his book *Am*dam Madmaster* (2008a). "The military authorities, the military offensives in the Dutch East Indies and the post-war reconstruction", Vinkenoog goes on, "made me flee from Amsterdam" (Vinkenoog, 2008a: 7). It was in Paris that he formed, with the Dutch poets Rudy Kousbroek, Remco Campert and Lucebert, the

Dutch Cobra artist Karel Appel and the Belgian poet Hugo Claus, an artistic enclave that gained an important reputation[8]. It was also in Paris that Vinkenoog started his critique on the identification of the artistic critique with the social critique of the Experimental Group in Holland. His attack is aimed mainly at his friend Constant and his statements in the Experimental Group in Holland's founding manifesto. Referring to a statement in 1948 from the founder of Dada, the avant-garde poet and performance artist Tristan Tzara, in which Tzara warns that the pure and simple return to outdated forms is a denial of faith in progress, he accuses the Experimentals of "a dependency on an obsolete materialistic ideal" and therefore, "unable to create something new" (Vinkenoog, 1950a: 1). "For think not", Vinkenoog warns the Experimentals, "that in a society such as envisioned by Marx ... the artist would be in a better position than he is now" (Vinkenoog, 1950a: 1). Vinkenoog believed that artistic critique was of greater importance than the social critique. It was not about a social revolution, but about the revolution of spirit and imagination (Vinkenoog, 1950a: 2). Only the artistic critique is, according to Vinkenoog, capable of this revolution and is created by the revolution of performative speech (Vinkenoog, 1950c: 2, 6). He believed that a coalescing of the two critiques could only consist of "heavy words" (Vinkenoog, 1950a: 2). This analysis by Vinkenoog is also what Renato Poggioli in 1967 describes in his statement, "the identification of artistic revolution with social revolution is now no more than pure rhetoric, an empty commonplace" (Poggioli, 1967: 182). This revolution, Poggioli believed, would fail because it depended on the capitalist bourgeoisie (Poggioli, 1967: 181), or as Roland Barthes claimed in 1956, this revolution of the modern avant-garde would fail because it was part of the bourgeois theatre (Barthes, 1956).

Vinkenoog believed it was important "not to improve the world", but that it was sufficient to emphasize creative autonomy, "freedom with minimal concessions", "total independence" and to stay "neutral from each camp engagement" (Vinkenoog, 1950b: 2). Although Vinkenoog later regretted the sharpness of his attack on the Experimentals, he remained radical in his defence of creative autonomy (Vancrevel, 2009: 126). At the same time, he believed that it was not his role to show people how to be autonomous, but only to make them sensitive to autonomy and authenticity (Fokkema, 1979: 147; Vinkenoog, 2009b: 13-14).

Vinkenoog soon found that not just the Experimentals, but also the Fiftiers Movement he initiated did not completely share his radical views on the senselessness of the coalescing of the artistic critique and the social critique and the importance of creative autonomy. By 1957, the Fiftiers "had succeeded in freeing Dutch poetry" (van der Bent, 2000: 204), but had also become aware that their once new and revitalized writing was turning into yet another convention and senseless imitation. As a result, many of them changed their highly imaginative use of language into a very sober and down-to-earth style of writing. It was then that Vinkenoog decided to look for kindred spirits and turned his gaze outwards.

Inspired by Artaud, he believed that poetry was not only literature; it was a way of looking and a way of life (Fokkema, 1979; Vancrevel, 2009) with a special stress on the very physicality of art that explores "the space of complete living" (Glassgold and Messerli, 2005: 9). To Vinkenoog, this meant that looking was not only *looking-at* from a shorter or larger distance, but especially *looking-into*, so that he was not a passive observer, but an active, involved participant. This active participation was to Vinkenoog the real importance of the artist as a performer. He realized that not just he himself had to be an involved participant, but that he also needed an involved audience. The passive role of the traditional audience had to be replaced by participation of the audience in the creative process. This idea resulted in him forming an acquaintance with the American Beat poets Allen Ginsberg and Gregory Corso, for whom he felt a deep kinship[9].

With Vinkenoog's experimental poetry, his idea of creative autonomy and his growing interest in his role as performing artist, "it is hard not to think of the Beat Generation, of the immediacy of Charles Olson's writing, of Jack Kerouac's 'deep form', of Ginsberg's desire" (van der Bent, 2000: 203), writes Jaap van der Bent in *O fellow travelers I write you a poem in Amsterdam: Allen Ginsberg, Simon Vinkenoog, and the Dutch Beat Connection* (2000). In Peter Glassgold's view as well there is a striking similarity between Vinkenoog, the other Fiftiers and the Beats (Glassgold and Messerli, 2005: 10). Although most of the Fiftiers "did not respond favourably to the romanticism and the transcendental urgency of a poet like Ginsberg" (van der Bent, 2000: 204), a close artistic relationship developed between Ginsberg and Vinkenoog.

In October 1957, Vinkenoog and Ginsberg met during Ginsberg's three-week stay in Amsterdam. The fact that three Americans poets, Allen Ginsberg, Gregory Corso and Peter Orlovsky, had visited the jazz club Bohemia every evening drew them to Vinkenoog's attention. After their first meeting, where Vinkenoog and Ginsberg had a lively conversation, they started meeting regularly and having an occasional "smoke"[10]. It was at one of these meetings that Vinkenoog contributed to a poem written by the three Beat poets, *Poem Rocket*, later published in Ginsberg's *Kaddish and Other Poems* (1961). It was especially the openness towards people, the interest in new experiences and the ability to connect people with each other that Vinkenoog and Ginsberg shared. Because of their friendship, Vinkenoog also became interested in drugs and began to experiment. The way Ginsberg "wrote about drugs and their possibilities, to transcend the self and to expand the mind, clearly had a liberating effect on Vinkenoog" (van der Bent, 2000: 206). In fact, Vinkenoog was so excited about his meetings that he immediately wrote an article for the Dutch weekly, *Haagse Post*[11]. It is an enthusiastic article with the title *'Gejank' en 'benzine' ('Howl' and 'Gasoline')* and the subtitle *'New American Generation of Poets?'*, illustrated with a photo of Ginsberg, Corso and the rock 'n' roll singer Little Richard. This was "the first Dutch publication to pay attention to the early achievements of the Beat Generation" (van der Bent, 2000: 204).

As an effect of Vinkenoog's enthusiasm for the Beats and his connection with them, they exerted an influence on the Dutch countercultural movements of the 1960s (van der Bent, 2005: 100-101). It is this influence that created "the Dutch answer to the San Francisco Renaissance" (Horn, 2007: 40) of the Beat poets and "a climate of mild insanity" (Pas, 2003: 90) in certain parts of Amsterdam in the early 1960s.

With his idea of individual and creative autonomy and without a Marxist signature, Vinkenoog, heavily influenced by the Beats, developed an idea of the importance of live performance and its audience. With this idea he created a "freedom of the imagination" (Vancrevel, 2009: 127), and through his openness towards people, his interest in new experiences and his ability to connect people with each other, he was a source of inspiration to the countercultural rebels of the Magical Centre Amsterdam of the 1960s and their tactics. He provided them with "an invaluable service" (Vancrevel, 2009: 127) and it is here that the connection between the performing artist and happenings came into play.

Vinkenoog's Carnival of Tactics

On 11 June 1965, together with Beat poets Allen Ginsberg, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Gregory Corso, and other poets, Vinkenoog read in public during the famous *International Poetry Incarnation* at the Royal Albert Hall in London, compeered by the Scottish writer Alexander Trocchi.

This "feast of illumination … was in many ways an undoubted success", where "7,000 people thronged the Hall for four hours of poetry" (Lykiard, 1965: 3). Lykiard, who wrote the introduction for the book *Wholly Communion* (1965), which was a recording of the event, described the evening as "the first genuine, large-scale Happening" (Lykiard, 1965: 3). As the first performer of the evening, Vinkenoog made "a spectacular appearance when, trying to elate the spirit of the meeting" (van der Bent, 2000: 200); he unexpectedly stood up, and raising his arms began to shout 'Love, Love, Love,'[12, 13] a performance which got him on to the front pages of the London tabloids. Referring to this as one of the most impressive moments, but at the same time as descriptive of the entire Poetry Reading event, Lykiard wrote that it was a "most extraordinary event, parody and warning, cacophony with its own logic, rational collapse of reason, and despair of communication communicating itself. Artaud, who understood the sanity of madness, would have relished it" (Lykiard, 1965: 4).

Vinkenoog was impressed by the event and managed to organize something similar in Amsterdam: *Poëzie in Carré (Poetry in Carré)*, a get-together of twenty-six Dutch poets who read their work to an audience of two thousand people on 28 February 1966 in the Carré Royal Theatre in Amsterdam.

> *Netherlands, do you know what I'm talking about,*
> *are you there, Netherlands, do you still have a conscience somewhere –*
> *and do you do something about it,*
> *or have you sold your soul to comfort, to food and drink*
> *and the worthless royal gold paper-printed millions?*
> *Netherlands, you can make things easier for everyone*
> *Netherlands, there aren't any problems –*
> *if there are they can all be solved,*
> *Netherlands, make yourself useful, Netherlands –*
> *the world awaits its liberation.*
> *Netherlands, lead the way...*
>
> *(Vinkenoog, 2008b: 359)*

Thus spoke Simon Vinkenoog, reading his poem *Netherlands* at this event. "This major event in the history of performance ... in the Netherlands", write van der Bent and Mourits, "was the blueprint" and "the beginning of a long tradition" (van der Bent and Mourits, 2009: 1045). Van der Bent and Mourits focused on the poetry and the performance of poetry in the Netherlands. However, for Vinkenoog, *Poetry in Carré* was the continuation of previous performances, the happenings of the Magical Centre Amsterdam.

As described in Michael Kirby's *Happenings* (1965), the New York artist Allan Kaprow invented the term *happening*. He chose the name in preference to terms such as theatre piece or performance because he wanted this activity to be seen as a spontaneous event, something that "just happens to happen" (Kirby, 1965: 47). "Nevertheless", writes Carlson, "most happenings of Kaprow were scripted, rehearsed and carefully controlled. Its real departure from traditional art was not in its spontaneity, but in ... its manner of presentation" (Carlson, 2004: 105). However, according to Higgins, it is the almost "unbounded imagistic improvisation" happenings of Jean-Jacques Lebel and Al Hansen "that caught the journalistic eye, thus the public came to think of all happenings as wild, irrational free-for-alls" (Higgins, 1976: 269).

Inspired by Kaprow and the French cultural activist Jean-Jacques Lebel, who organized a happening in the summer of 1962 on the Spanish island of Ibiza, Vinkenoog organized a similar event on 9 December 1962 in Amsterdam[14]. The concept of 'happenings' made it possible for Vinkenoog to implement his idea of the importance of live performance, connecting it with his audience. For Vinkenoog, this happening created the important connection between art and life. Looking back at the event, Vinkenoog described it as "the early years of the Magical Centre Amsterdam"[15] and, continuing with his description in relation to happenings, he mentions, "art and life are one, the grandest event imaginable. Life is a Carnival"[16].

Vinkenoog's idea of happenings connects here with Mikhail Bakthin's idea of carnival. This becomes clear in Bakthin's statement that "because of their obvious sensuous character and their strong element of play, carnival images closely resemble certain artistic forms, namely the spectacle ... It belongs to the borderline between art and life. In reality, it is life itself, but shaped according to a certain pattern of play" (Bakhtin, 1984: 7). In *Rabelais and His World* (1984), Bakhtin characterizes his Rabelais study as the interaction between the carnival and the literary. According to Bakhtin, the carnival conduces to freedom through release from time, which is "a respite from the relatively closed and rigid historical patterns that dominant ideologies impose on time's flux" (Clark and Holquist, 1984: 302). This creates a "time filled with profound and rich experiences" (Clark and Holquist, 1984: 302) where "the people become aware of their sensual, material, bodily unity and community" (Bakhtin 1984: 255). Next to this, the peculiarity of laughter in carnival is very important and has "an essential relation to freedom" (Bakhtin, 1984: 125). Carnival laughter "builds its own world in opposition to the official world" (Bakhtin, 1984: 88), because "power, repression and authority never speak in the language of laughter" (Bakhtin, 1984: 365). The literary in the carnival echoes in Bakhtin's analysis in the fact that he "carnivalizes language itself" (Clark and Holquist, 1984: 318) and that this language is "penetrated by a system of values inseparable from living practice" (Bakhtin, 1984: 471).

Based on his ideas of playfulness, *freeplay* and *ilinx* language games, Bakhtin's idea of carnival characterizes the essence of Vinkenoog's idea of happenings. To recall, in the *ilinx* play, according to Roger Caillois (2001), the carnival is dominant. It is a play where the player desires ecstasy and unbounded freedom from constraint in a space where the only rule is that all rules are meant to be broken. It is also the special role the audience plays in this category of language games that appealed to Vinkenoog. Based on Bakhtin's definition of carnivalized play and speech and Caillois' definition of the *ilinx* language game, the characteristics of the happenings are, according to Vinkenoog, "a collectively experienced (performance) play" (Vinkenoog, 1965: 264) and that the "audience and participants are no longer distinguishable from each other" (Vinkenoog, 1965: 39). For Vinkenoog, carnivalized play and speech (as employed in the happenings) were a means of tying together play, theatrical events and the practices of everyday life (Vinkenoog, 1966: 252), whereby the opposition of *we* experiences and *I* experiences is suspended and "merge[d] in the language of the carnival collective" (Lachmann, Eshelman and Davis, 1988: 146). As described in chapter three, for Vinkenoog this led to collective creativity and the beginning of a playful and ludic society.

At the same time, his idea of happenings was a source of inspiration for and characterizes the ludic tactics of the Provo movement. Renate Lachmann, Raoul Eshelman and Marc Davis argue that the countercultural aspect of Bakhtin's carnival, here represented by the tactics of Vinkenoog and Provo, "is not played out on the same level as that of the official culture" (Lachmann, Eshelman and Davis, 1988: 132). Bakhtin's concept of carnivalesque counter-ritual practices in opposition to the authorities connects with de Certeau's concept of tactics.

The importance of Bakhtin's, Caillois' and de Certeau's concepts, enhanced by the "imagistic style of Kaprow", the "almost unbounded imagistic improvisation of Jean-Jacques Lebel" (Higgins, 1976: 269) and the idea that "some Happenings are the best examples of Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty" (Kirby, 1965: 35) as sources of inspiration, persuaded Vinkenoog to describe the happening as an artistic event based on "processes in ancient times, black and white masses, medieval mystery plays, travelling fairs, carnivals, circus and pantomime, Dada, Surrealism, and the performance of Cobra and of the Fiftiers" (Vinkenoog, cited in van Duijn, 1985: 184). Encouraged by the recognition in the Dutch weekly *Vrij Nederland*, where Hans Gabriëls wrote that "in many chemical processes a catalyst is needed"[17] and that "Vinkenoog is a typical catalyst, the essential element needed for a reaction, even an explosion"[18], the happening created a stage for Vinkenoog's performances. By then he had started "manifesting and creating" (Vinkenoog, 1965: 197) "a stage where he as a poet, cult orator or a bard in its Romanticist way could put his ideas forward, a stage where he could confront"[19] the people with his ideas, "wake up people with words" (Vinkenoog 1965: 496), and a stage where he could get "people thinking" (Vinkenoog, 1965: 496). According to Gaston Franssen, Vinkenoog's action was the beginning of a post-war tradition of performances and the happening in the Netherlands (Franssen, 2008: 266-267).

The Redefinition of the Happening

Let us return to Boltanski and Chiapello's thought that it is crucial for the leader in contemporary organizations to create happenings like the performance artist. Traced back to the artistic critique of the 1950s and 1960s in the Netherlands, these happenings were used as tactics as in the definition of de Certeau. For the avant-garde movements of the 1950s, Cobra and Fiftiers, and the Provo rebels of the 1960s, these tactics offered opportunities for anarchy and resistance to the authorities, as well as a stage where they could promote their vision for a new society. The characteristics of happenings were borrowed from the repertoire of Bakhtin's idea of carnival and play and de Certeau's idea of "liberation of speech" and "Surrealism", with a key and co-creating role for the audience. According to Bakhtin's carnival theory, this idea is not reducible to sheer anarchistic behaviour, nor irresponsible behaviour. It is, in fact, a diverse tactic, as in de Certeau's theory, one that may be implemented and sustained wherever there is a dominant regime. The spirit of the happenings offered the participants of the Magical Centre Amsterdam "the chance to have a new outlook on the world, to realize the relative nature of all that exists, and to enter a completely new order of things" (Bakhtin, 1984: 34). Inspired by Artaud, Ginsberg, Kaprow and Lebel, Vinkenoog played a leading role in introducing these happenings into the Dutch artistic critique. For him, the happening connected art and everyday life, the experience of language and the physical. He represents, I argue, the performing artist as in Boltanski and Chiapello's statement.

The leader in contemporary organizations must act as a performing artist to create the happenings as described above and must therefore, according to Boltanski and Chiapello, take the artist as the model for his/her leadership. The performance of this leader is connected to the self, self-realization and authenticity and is open to the interpretation, analysis and measurement of others. It is this model that is reflected in the texts of DBMC.

However, this model of the leader as a performing artist is not unproblematic. As noticed earlier, the performance of the happenings of the artistic critique, as in de Certeau's theory of tactics, is opposed to the dominant authorities, whereas the performance of the leader, as in Boltanski and

Chiapello's analysis, is part of the strategy of management and therefore the dominant authority itself. The intention of the happenings is to uncover, undermine or even destroy the hegemony of any ideology that seeks to have the final word, and also to project an alternate conceptualization of reality. On the other hand, the role of the leader in contemporary organizations is to perform his/her self and his/her authenticity, 'restricted' by the rules of propositional discourse. This propositional discourse is not meant to uncover the hegemony of an ideology as in the performance of the happenings; rather it is intended to limit the effects of negativity and "to construct truth only in positive terms, ingesting or expulsing inconsistent elements" (Linstead, 2000: 62). The propositional discourse creates a happening or performance that does not leave the stage or the script, fearing "improvisatory anarchy" (Derrida, 1965: 239) will obstruct the official ways of representing power[20]. The performance of the leader is permeated with propositional language and the demands for performativity of organizational performance, as in Lyotard's idea of performativity, with emphasis on minimizing risks, unpredictability and complexity. As expressed in the texts of DBMC, it is this demand for performativity that regulates the meaning of the performed activity in the projects of the leader and is connected to the self, self-realization, attitude and authenticity.

It appears that I must add to my statement in the beginning of this chapter where I argued that the reference to performance in the texts of DBMC and contemporary organizations seems not to be referring to organizational efficiency and effectiveness, but to the coalescence of social performance and organizational performance within organizations. Apart from this argument, I must add that not only does the idea of performance, where the leader acts as a performing artist with the theatre-as-metaphor approach to performance in organizations, coalesce with Lyotard's idea of performativity, but that this performativity also governs the intentions of the performance from a distance. It is with this argument that we encounter the deeper tension between the tactics of the avant-garde artist of the 1960s and the leader as the performing artist in contemporary organizations. It creates different language games where each language game functions on its own, while the relationship with the audience plays itself out. It is the audience – the professional or the worker – who analyzes and measures the performance of the leader, while at the same time the leader measures the performativity of the professional. Here, the unity or disunity of the leader and the audience determines the nature of the social bond.

In contemporary organizations there is a special place for the leader in these language games. As the connexionist man, he or she knows the customers and how to satisfy them. This gives him/her the privilege of being a referent on behalf of the customers and therefore is legitimized to lead, mobilize and inspire his or her audience – or followers – in order to satisfy the customers. It is this satisfaction that is "an essential ingredient" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 81) of the performativity of contemporary organizations and their success in the network economy. According to Boje, this is why leaders "are persons who write scripts"[21] for the organizational theatre. Moreover, these leaders, Boje believes, no longer create happenings as acts of carnival in the way that Bakhtin described and as used by Vinkenoog; rather they create the performances of happenings as acts of spectacle. This spectacle is opposed to the carnival, according to Boje, and is a meaning-making process through theatrical events and the performance of the leader in order to serve the strategy of contemporary organizations[22]. This redefinition of the happening is what Boltanski and Chiapello describe as the absorption of the artistic critique into the reinvigorated capitalism of the late 20th century (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). It is because of this redefinition of the happening in neo-management discourse that the leader as a performing artist can create happenings. It is no longer a carnivalesque act of opposition; rather it is a performance of an act of strategy by the leader.

This redefinition of the happenings and the performance of the leader as an artist and as an act of strategy, all based on performativity "as one of the bases of legitimation" (Jones, 2003: 511) or "the iron law of performativity" (Letiche, 1992: 53), "leave[s] little room for an Other, i.e. for alternative points of view" (Letiche 2004: 81). According to Lyotard, if one associates leadership with hierarchy and bureaucracy, as did the avant-garde movements of the 1950s and 1960s, the appeal to values of self-actualization, freedom and authenticity would appear to be an attractive alternative. He believes, however, that connecting leadership with innovation, creativity and renewal, as in neo-management discourse, leads to mediocrity at the cost of excellence, constrains imagination and creativity and values action above reading, thinking and reflection (Jones, 2003: 515; Letiche, 1992, 2004; Lyotard, 1984). Here we arrive at a problematic point. By valuing the ideas of the avant-garde movements of the 1950s and the 1960s in contemporary organizations, but at the same time redefining the language games, creativity, reflection and imagination are restricted, even though it is exactly these qualities that are important for flexible network organizations. Individual and collective experiences being dissolved into the calculation of performativity (Lyotard, 1989: 209) creates an incompatibility of language games, described by Lyotard as the concept of the *différend*.

Where Caillois already warned that collectivity rests on a precarious balance when different language games are at work, represented here by tactics versus strategy, carnival versus spectacle, or Caillois' *ilinx* and *mimicry* versus *agon* and *alea*, it is Lyotard who tries to maintain contact between different language games while admitting that such an attempt is problematic (Letiche, 1992: 53). Lyotard names the experience of trying to hold these two discourses in interaction: the sublime. He associates the concept of the *différend* with the feeling of the sublime, the mixture of pleasure and pain that accompanies the attempt of "the intuitive total appreciation of reality that cannot be captured in discourse" (Letiche, 1992: 60).

The conflict with the two discourses in interaction or performance forces the leader and the audience to respond. Language, however, cannot come to terms with this situation. The confrontation produces silence, leaving the leader and audience unable to express reality. Before speech, they are confronted by the limits of language and it is the inability to do justice to the forces of the different language games. "The inability to achieve the sought-after unity of experience is the abyss that is valorized by the experience of the sublime" (Letiche, 1992: 60). To look for this sublime experience, Lyotard turns to the expressive significance of the genius artist within avant-garde movements. The way these movements employ language and use the physicality of art in a search for the imagination of the unknown is, according to Lyotard, surprising and thus forces the audience to rethink their natural expectations.

When Vinkenoog and the Fiftiers wrote that they wanted to write experiential poetry unrestrained by form and subject (Glassgold and Messerli, 2005: 9) in order to exploit the unknown possibilities of language (Fokkema, 1979: 46) and search for the difference between expression and reality (Fokkema, 1979: 48), creating an awareness of the sublime, they showed exactly what Lyotard found interesting in relation to his idea of the sublime in the avant-garde movements. According to Lyotard, and with reference to the art of performance and happenings (Lyotard, 1989: 207), this creates space for imagination, innovation, creativity and excellence.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I changed my definition of Simon Vinkenoog's tactics and his ideas of happenings and performance to the performance of a leader in contemporary organizations as a strategy dominated

by performativity. I also pointed out that this redefinition compromises creativity, imagination and innovation in organizations. When the tactics and beliefs of the avant-garde movements entered contemporary organizations, they created two conflicting language games. This underlines my belief that the leader, although he or she takes the artist as his/her model, does not foster a creative and inspiring environment when the criteria of legitimation becomes that of performativity, where the goal is to do more, be more efficient or outperform others.

However, if one only stresses the powerlessness of creativity within this *différend*, one arrives at nihilism. The perspective of the sublime and the imaginative use of the *différend* can create space for reflectivity and creativity, bringing creativity back into reality and experience. In order to explore this prospect we must return to the artistic critique of the avant-garde movements of the 1950s and 1960s, the movements that created the ideas of neo-management discourse in the first place.

If the leader in contemporary organizations really wants to create a highly performative organization, to use the words of one of the language games, he or she must encounter the sublime or the space to exercise the *différend*. He or she must meet the ideas of Vinkenoog and the avant-garde movements of Fiftiers and Cobra again.

When the leader must act as a performing artist and create happenings in order to achieve personal impact as a leader, to be inspirational, influential and convincing, he or she must remember the special role of the audience, audience and participants being no longer distinguishable from each other. Besides this, the happening was a release from time and a respite from the closed model that dominant ideologies impose on time's flux, the model we now call performativity. It creates a time filled with experiences, reflectivity and imagination, where people become aware of their sensual, material, bodily unity and the unknown. If the contemporary leader is able to embrace the *différend*, it seems that the happenings created by this leader can create a theatre where tactics meet strategy. This theatre can be the place where the leader and his/her audience can meet the ideas of the performing artist of the avant-garde movements of the 1950s and 1960s and his/her audience. It creates an interaction between the language games of neo-management discourse and the carnival, theatrical events and the practices of everyday life.

Notes

[1]http://www.debaak.nl/en/courses/mbc (accessed on 14 July 2010).

[2]http://www.debaak.nl/kenniscentrum/nieuws/executivedevelopment/michaeljones (accessed on 14 July 2010).

[3]Ibid.

[4]http://www.debaak.nl/themas/women/workshops (accessed on 14 July 2010).

[5]http://www.debaak.nl/programmas/417 (accessed on 14 July 2010).

[6]http://business.nmsu.edu/~dboje/theatrics/S17%20THEATRICS%20OF%20LEADERSHIP.DOC (accessed on 10 September 2010).

[7]As stated on the website of the *National library of the Netherlands* two days after Simon Vinkenoog died. (http://www.kb.nl/dossiers/vinkenoog/index.html; accessed on 24 August 2010)

[8]http://www.kb.nl/dossiers/vinkenoog/index.html (accessed on 24 August 2010).

[9]Interview with Simon Vinkenoog by Vincent Pieterse. Amsterdam, 28 July 2008.

[10]As mentioned by Vinkenoog in an interview by Jaap van der Bent in 1998. Van der Bent writes subtly that the 'smoke' which Vinkenoog refers to 'is of course not a regular American cigarette' (Van der Bent, 2000: 210).

[11]By that time, Vinkenoog was also working as a journalist for this weekly magazine.

[12]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Wednesday 21 December 2005. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/dec05.htm; accessed on 2 September 2010)

[13]The cover of this book shows exactly this moment of Vinkenoog's performance.

[14]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Tuesday 11 April 2006. (http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/april-2006.htm; accessed on 6 September 2010)

[15]Ibid.

[16]Ibid.

[17]Vrij Nederland, 13 October 1962. http://www.kb.nl/dichters/vinkenoog/vinkenoog-04.html; accessed on 16 November 2009)

[18]Ibid.

[19]Interview with Simon Vinkenoog by Vincent Pieterse. Amsterdam, 28 July 2008.

[20]http://business.nmsu.edu/~dboje/theatrics/S01%20ANTENARRATIVE.DOC (accessed on 12 September 2010).

[21]http://business.nmsu.edu/~dboje/theatrics/S17%20THEATRICS%20OF%20LEADERSHIP.DOC (accessed on 12 September 2010).

[22]http://business.nmsu.edu/~dboje/theatrics/S06%20WHAT%20IS%20CORPORATE%20THEATRE.DOC (accessed on 12 September 2010).

Interlude 4

A 'bad example'

In each chapter of this book so far there has been a mention of the avant-garde movements of the Netherlands from the 1950s and 1960s and especially of Simon Vinkenoog. At the same time, we meet the leader in contemporary organizations as he is represented by, among others, the texts of DBMC and analyzed by Boltanski and Chiapello. For Vinkenoog, as well as the leader, performance is very important; strategic for the latter, tactical for the former, and therefore it creates the *différend*. At the same, however, Lyotard suggests that we can go back to these same avant-garde movements and its 'genius artists'. The art of their performance and happenings creates space for imagination, innovation, creativity and excellence, not just for the leader but also for his/her audience. A space that creates a release from neo-management discourse, reflectivity, practical wisdom and collectivity is all given an opportunity.

At the same time, I wonder if this is not a particular combination of nostalgia and elitism; nostalgia for the imagined complex ideas of the artist of the avant-garde movements of the 1950s and 1960s and the subsequent loss of this complexity with the advent of the contemporary leader. By acknowledging the time and place from where my own thoughts arise, I hope to give you, my reader, enough space to create your own thoughts about my exploration.

Aside from wondering about nostalgia and elitism, I have become increasingly aware that during my quest, Simon Vinkenoog has become for me the representation of the leader in contemporary organizations. He is seen as a 'great man' by many participants in the socially and artistically radical groups of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s and the representation of the leader in contemporary organizations, a representation that will not be without problems. Vinkenoog is a 'bad example', as I have been told by the DBMC's clients. How can a 'pot smoking hippie' be an example of the leader in contemporary organizations? For them, my exploration makes no sense. For me, on the other hand, it is exactly this seemingly unbridgeable tension that gives me the opportunity to push and pull at its contradictions. I might provoke some relevant ideas on developing a critique of the new leader who takes the figure of the artist as his/her model, as I mentioned above in interlude three. With the life and work of a poet and performer, I want to open up the propositional language of neo-management discourse. This bears expressive witness to the inexpressible, which is at the same time the fundamental task of the sublime, resulting in the creation of contradictory feelings like pleasure and pain, joy and anxiety, exaltation and depression (Lyotard, 1989: 198-199). However, I still have to deal with Vinkenoog as 'an example'.

Therefore, my quest in chapter five continues with a closer look at the idea of representation and its contradictions, like creativity and madness, sense and nonsense, rationality and irrationality, the body and language, and the apparent contradictions between the contemporary discourse of leadership and the artist Vinkenoog.

Chapter 5 Theatre of Creativity

Throughout the texts of DBMC, the image of the contemporary leader is depicted as impassioned, inspirational, intuitive, creative, imaginative, innovative and full of life. The texts suggest a leadership that derives inspiration from the figure of an artist, introducing the leader-as-artist and bringing aesthetics and ethics into play. Again, this model for leadership is based on the artistic critique of the 1950s and 1960s, whole sections of which were integrated into the management rhetoric of the 1990s (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). The image of the new leader is always "aesthetically pleasing" (Hansen, Ropo and Sauer, 2007: 546) and "involves positive psychological qualities and a highly developed organizational context, which results in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviour" (Luthans and Avolio, 2003: 243). This image defines the leader within the reference of the idea of "the art of leadership" (Hansen, Ropo and Sauer, 2007: 545) in propositional language, a language that tries to limit the effects of negativity and create truth using only positive expressions (Linstead, 2000). However, the model of the artist for contemporary leaders is more problematic. The characteristic powers of the artist can lead away from any rational discourse, causing the leader to be seen as irrational (ten Bos, 2008: 154-155). The characteristics of this leader can either be manifested constructively as 'creativity' or destructively as 'madness'. Based on whether it is stigmatized or assimilated, and in the end rejected or respected, the manifestation may be called 'madness' or 'creativity' (Nettle, 2002; Pope, 2005).

In this chapter, with the help of aesthetics, Artaud's idea of theatre, Derrida's interpretation of Artaud's subjectile, the ideas of the artistic critique and the poetizing discourse of the Dutch poet and performer Vinkenoog, I want to problematize the fixed and rational meanings (Levin, 1988; Linstead, 2000) of the leader in contemporary organizations. Discussing the 'double' – madness or creativity – of the leader-as-artist will refocus our attention to the connection between the body, language and experience.

Introduction

I started off chapter one with a statement from Harry Starren. Starren believes that leaders and professionals in contemporary organizations must be like artists, combining their professional skills and creativity with authentic and trustful behaviour in order to inspire others. To recall, Starren, the CEO of one of the largest management training centres in the Netherlands and also my boss, is a well-known management guru in the Netherlands. I showed how Starren's idea connects with Boltanski and Chiapello's analysis in their book *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (2007), when the authors show that the figure of the artist has become the model for a new leader. Next to this, they argue that this model for leadership in contemporary organizations is based on the artistic critique of the 1950s and 1960s and that whole sections of this critique were integrated into the management rhetoric of the 1990s.

Thereafter, based on Boltanski and Chiapello's ideas of the artistic critique and the ideas of the Dutch poet and performer Simon Vinkenoog, I wrote about this contemporary leadership in the following chapters. These chapters are texts on authentic leadership, the leader as homo ludens, the performing leader and his/her performativity and the *'fast'* values of the leader and his/her *'slow'* representation. These texts also echo the texts of DBMC, which represent the image of the leadership of the contemporary leader as magically creative, inspirational and full of life (Hansen, Ropo and Sauer, 2007: 545). Although the distinction between the private and professional life of the leader diminishes and creates disorder, a permanent state of alertness and doubt, it promises at the same time an image of the lived experiences of autonomy, creativity, visionary intuition, openness to others, self-fulfilment and always being ready to criticize rules or rule-breaking (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 97). This image creates a notion of the "romance of leadership" (Meindl, 1995: 330), emphasising the "importance of leadership factors to the functioning of groups and organizations" (Meindl, 1995: 330), which "embraces the phenomenological significance of leadership to people's organizational experiences" (Meindl, 1995: 330).

Mathieu Weggeman believes that the notion of the 'romance of leadership' brings aesthetics and ethics into play. This notion refers to Plato's Truth, Beauty and the Good and connects with the authenticity of the leader and professional (Weggeman, 2006). Fred Luthans and Bruce Avolio add that this leadership "involves positive psychological capacities and a highly developed organizational context, which results in both greater self-awareness of, and self-regulated positive behaviours" by the leader and his/her followers, instigating a positive self-development (Luthans and Avolio, 2003: 243). According to Peter Fleming, this creates a "'just be yourself' management approach" (Fleming, 2009: 27) with "an *expressive* or aesthetic quality" (Fleming, 2009: 27, emphasis in original).

With these aesthetic appearances and values, the new leader in contemporary organizations, who Boltanski and Chiapello also refer to as the connexionist man or the *great man*, possesses intuition and talent "in the sense in which we speak of an artist's talent" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 113). It creates the image of the *leader-as-artist*. In his article *The Revolutionary Romanticism of May 1968*, Michael Löwy points out that the leader-as-artist draws his/her inspiration from the revolutionary romantic spirit of the 1960s, which is an intoxicating mixture composed of various ingredients (Löwy, 2002: 95), and therefore connects with Boltanski and Chiapello's idea of the integration of the artistic critique of the 1960s into the new style of management with the leader-as-artist. This is why Löwy believes that what Boltanski and Chiapello call the artistic critique is essentially the same phenomenon as what he refers to as the *romantic critique* of capitalism

(Löwy, 2002: 98). This romantic critique of the 1960s countercultural movements, according to Löwy, had a sort of spiritual "elective affinity" (Löwy, 2002: 96) with the critique of the tradition of the romantic literary school of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century. The rebels of the 1960s shared the same criticisms of oppression by the authorities, as did the Romantic poets, articulated by both through "breaking the rules", valorising an ideal of liberation, individual and aesthetic autonomy and unique and original creativity.

The Romantic poet must be a guiding spirit who leads his/her audience into changing from one perspective to another, inspiring the audience through his/her creations and personal life. According to the romantic critique, the guiding spirit must be an exceptional artistic-creative personality called *genius*. To be this leading source of inspiration, the artist genius must be authentic, autonomous, intuitive, deriving knowledge from personal experience and always ready to criticize or break rules. The genius is a visionary, possessing creative powers and creative imagination, who makes a plea for independence and innovation and will set our passions on fire through performances imbued with his personal feelings and beliefs (Bromwich, 1985; Morley, 1918; Murray, 1989; Schmidt, 1985).

These are the characteristics of the 'genius artist', but also the hallmarks of the leader in current times[1] as described by Boltanski and Chiapello. The Romantic period is of most significance for our own experience of genius (Murray, 1989: 114). Dutch Professor of philosophy and organizational theory, René ten Bos, in his book *Het geniale dier (The Genius Animal*, 2008), recognizes the influence of these Romantic conceptions of genius on contemporary management and leadership (ten Bos, 2008: 272).

The Aesthetic Insanity

Here we have the concept of the genius poet, which meets the leader-as-artist. The characteristics of this concept are related to sensory-based knowledge, knowledge based on experience where the leadership's qualities meet their followers' sense and experiences. The impressions and effect that the genius or leader-as-artist has on followers, as well as what followers make of the authenticity of the leadership, are all related to sensory-based knowledge, which is based on the aesthetics of leadership (Hansen, Ropo and Sauer, 2007: 548). The aesthetics refer to sensory knowledge and felt meaning of experiences, whether sensuous or artistic. Next to this, aesthetics allow for imagination to be expressed, complementing traditional ways of leading and knowing (Bathurst, Jackson and Statler, 2010: 313). From romantic poets to contemporary philosophers, several authors stress that this knowledge is as much about feelings as it is about cognition. It engages sensuous perception in and through the body and is inseparable from our direct experience of being in the world, emphasized by the authors' beliefs that the felt meaning based on experience is just as important as cognitive understanding (Linstead and Höpfl, 2000; Hansen, Ropo and Sauer, 2007; Schmidt, 1985). Next to Truth and the Good, this brings, as Weggeman noticed, the aesthetic category of *Beauty* into play.

However, the association with art or beauty is too confining. It creates Luthans and Avolio's (2003) description of the positive image of authentic leadership. I have experienced this at DBMC and described it in the introduction and chapter one when referring to my feeling that authenticity always seems to be good, or in the words of Hansen, Ropo and Sauer, "aesthetically pleasing" (Hansen, Ropo and Sauer, 2007: 546). This image defines the leader-as-artist within the reference of "the art of leadership" (Hansen, Ropo and Sauer, 2007: 545) idea in a propositional language that

tries to limit the effects of negativity and construct the "truth only in positive terms" (Linstead, 2000: 62). It begs the question, what about authenticity's dark side?

It is necessary, according to Antonio Strati, to make use of other aesthetic categories; there is also the aesthetically ugly, the comic, the gracious, the sublime, the picturesque, the tragic and the sacred (Strati, 2000). In this way, the aesthetic "problematizes the rational" (Linstead and Höpfl, 2000: 1) or deconstructs the "fetishized constructions" (Linstead and Höpfl, 2000: 1) of the leader-as-artist. This approach moves in the spaces between the organization as authoritarian and as experience. By doing so, it works outside conventional categories and challenges the logic of the organizing process (Linstead and Höpfl, 2000: 1) and of the leader-as-artist.

Another way to problematize the propositional language of the leader-as-artist is to turn to its relation with the characteristics of the idea of genius. The impassioned, inspirational, intuitive, creative, imaginative and innovative powers of the leader in contemporary organizations, his leadership qualities and the 'genius' qualities as a guiding spirit, above all, according to ten Bos, position the leader outside any rational discourse, indirectly referring to the aesthetics. This authentic leader or genius is therefore seen as irrational (ten Bos, 2008: 154-155). More strongly expressed, the characteristics of the leader-as-artist can be manifested constructively as 'creative' or destructively as 'madness', where it depends on the discourse whether the manifestation is seen as creative or insane. Based on whether the manifestation is stigmatized or assimilated, and in the end rejected or respected, it may be called "madness" or "creativity" (Nettle, 2002; Pope, 2005).

Love and Hate as Creative Principles

This idea is also the approach chosen by Simon Vinkenoog. In his book *Liefde* (1965), he writes that "[t]he idea of 'madness' is based on a semantic misunderstanding. There is no madness, no norm, no standard and no rule. 'Madness' is determined by society, which settled for the common denominator, *massgehend*" (Vinkenoog, 1965: 373, emphasis in original). He believes that the act of creativity based on aesthetics and senses is the most essential, wherein there are no limits, nothing is normal or abnormal and nothing is dead or alive. Acting like this, Vinkenoog goes on, is the only way out of mass society and will reveal the guiding leaders and geniuses (Vinkenoog, 1965: 373-374).

For Vinkenoog, *Liefde* (1965) marked the end of a personal era and the beginning of a new one. In the concluding sentences he describes it as "a test of my ability to in communicate", a book that marks the end of fear and hate and the start of love and being an orator (Vinkenoog, 1965: 496).

From almost his first introduction to Artaud, Vinkenoog was inspired and stimulated by the Frenchman's work. For Vinkenoog, as the performance of his critique, death was the "final victory" (Vinkenoog, 2009b: 30) and the ultimate weapon of his "hate as creative principle" (Vancrevel, 2009; 124). This promotion of death as the expression of his critique releases man, according to Vinkenoog, into freedom, creating a free man (Vinkenoog, 2009b: 30). Here Artaud's influence is clearly noticeable. Like Vinkenoog, Artaud saw this flirting with death "as the only conceivable form of resisting organized rational modernity" (Brown, 2007: 210). It is Steve Brown who adds that Artaud is not only promoting death, but inevitably "madness" (Brown, 2007: 210). This "suicide by society" (Brown, 2007: 210) as Artaud's only resistance to rationality, believes Brown, is therefore very problematic for organizational theory, robbing it of every resource (Brown, 2007: 210).

This presents several problems for my exploration of the idea of aesthetics in connection with the artistic critique as a resource to 'problematize the rational' or to deconstruct the 'fetishized constructions' of the leader-as-artist. However, it is here that I want to suggest that turning to the language games of Vinkenoog and his "rebirth" (Vancrevel, 2009: 127), leading to the switch towards "love as the creative principle", brings back the idea of aesthetics as a resource. This challenges the assumptions about the positive image of authentic leadership or the leader-as-artist. The rebirth of Vinkenoog's work created a confrontation between his hate and the emotions and experiences of his love or the 'beautiful'. It is this rebirth that a poet is looking for; otherwise, he or she will become lost in madness. It provides the poet with the chance of remaining on the margin, the edge of madness, but still deriving insights (Linstead, 2000: 81).

Simon Vinkenoog's Oeuvre

To recall, Simon Vinkenoog played an important role in the artistic critique of the 1950s and 1960s avant-garde movements, the Fiftiers and the Experimental Group in Holland, the countercultural movement Provo, the Magical Centre Amsterdam and was closely connected to the Beats. Besides this, Vinkenoog started the first *Sigma Centre* in the Netherlands and was also involved in the foundation of the youth entertainment centre and 'pop temple', known nowadays as *Paradiso*, one of the first places in the Netherlands where the sale and use of soft drugs was tolerated (e.g. Kennedy, 1995: 139; van Riemsdijk, 2001: 65). In addition, he organized and performed in *The Living Theatre*[2] performances in Amsterdam together with *The Living Theatre* founders Judith Malina and Julian Beck. These performances were strongly influenced by Artaud's vision of theatre (Tytell, 1997: 218, 228). Finally, it was Vinkenoog who organized the first *Happening* and the first poetry reading *Poëzie in Carré (Poetry in Carré)* in the Netherlands, two major events in the history of performance in the Netherlands (van der Bent and Mourits, 2009: 1045). Vinkenoog himself later described this period as a "MadMaster explosion" (Vinkenoog 2008a: 14). As I mentioned earlier, the essential role that Vinkenoog played in all of these movements and events is reflected in the words of the poet Hans Plomp when he states, "he [Vinkenoog] has played a role in everything, every movement, and every renewal"[3]. This was reiterated by the texts in the newspapers the day after Vinkenoog died. They described him as "the symbol of the Sixties", "the playing man", "the creative man", "a catalyst", "a magician", "a modern shaman", "the Dutch Beat poet" and "a genius"[4].

However, the same newspapers also noticed that Vinkenoog was a frequently heard but unread poet. "Vinkenoog's life was more powerful than his poetry" was a statement from one of the newspapers[5]. His poetry was wordy, with an extravagance and unrestrained desire for language[6]. Vinkenoog was never generously received in the mainstream literary world[7]. This is made clear when we look at the first editions of anthologies. In the first edition of Peter Glassgold's *Living Space: Poems of the Dutch "Fiftiers"* (1979), "the first major collection of Dutch poetry to appear in English" (Glassgold, 1979: 8) and especially dedicated to the Fiftiers, the initiator of this movement, Vinkenoog, is not even mentioned. Only in the 2005 expanded version, with co-editor Douglas Messerli, was Vinkenoog assigned a place in the anthology. He was added, writes Messerli, only because the Dutch translator of Vinkenoog's work "kindly suggested that I include the poetry of Simon Vinkenoog" (Glassgold and Messerli, 2005: 13). In the first edition of Gerrit Komrij's *De Nederlandse poëzie van de negentiende en twintigste eeuw in duizend en enige gedichten (Dutch poetry of the nineteenth and twentieth century in a thousand and some poems,* 1979), Vinkenoog is only represented by one poem.

In later editions, more of Vinkenoog's poems can be found. In the 1996 book *Literatuur in moderniteit in Nederland 1840-1990 (Literature in modernity in the Netherlands, 1840-1990)* by Frans Ruiter and Wilbert Smulders, Vinkenoog is only mentioned once, in a footnote.

Apart from the modest amount of attention his poetry received in anthologies and literary history, Vinkenoog only ever received one literary award, in 1986. Nearly all of the other Fiftiers received more than one literary award, eight of them being honoured with a total of 14 prestigious oeuvre awards. Vinkenoog received his award not for his literary achievements, but for his *stimulating* activities for the cause of Dutch poetry[8]. It is from this lack of appreciation for Vinkenoog's poetic oeuvre, according to one of his publishers, Vic van de Reijt, that he "felt misunderstood as poet, though he had no talent for bitterness"[9]. Moreover, Vinkenoog himself believed that he had no bestsellers, few readers and a select audience because he was a maverick and "more a communicator of ideas than a writer"[10].

As one of the most productive writers of the Fiftiers[11], a productivity Vinkenoog maintained throughout his life, his works could never be characterized as static or as fixed in a poetic form[12]. According to the summary of the book *Vinkenoog verzameld (Vinkenoog collected*, 2008), Vinkenoog's prolixity poetry does not always deliver the enjoyment a reader might expect[13]. Apart from this, according to fellow Fiftier Rudy Kousbroek, Vinkenoog was always seeking a new experience, illumination and self-realization[14]. This drove him, with the regular help of hallucinogenic drugs, up a variety of side roads. He was a "traveller in the mind"[15], but also a madman. This created an oeuvre that left him on the fringe of the literary mainstream, his writing not easy to categorise and a life that cannot easily be categorized either. His work was not considered to be of a type that would create for him "the halo of a Great Writer"[16].

However, according to Vinkenoog as expressed in his book *Goede raad is vuur* (2009a), his literary pretensions acted only as the mirror of his life (Vinkenoog, 2009a: 52). To Vinkenoog, poetry got rid of all boundaries, as a result of which the spirit could be expanded (Vinkenoog, 2009a: 9). He wrote in his poem *Jazz & poetry* (1964):

If I tell you I'm an experimental poet
it means my being here is a poem; then everything
that happens here is poetry; experiment
as way of life.

A new poetry, no words, but movement,
no rhymes, only people,
no metre, only the rhythm of breathing in and out,
no prosody, only the pure love poem
based on contact between one person and another.

(Vinkenoog, 2008b: 322)

Poetry brought him shimmering excitement. It took everything he had, and therefore Vinkenoog discovered more about himself through his poetry. Vinkenoog noted that poetry created a rhythm that unconditionally took possession of the body, as a heartbeat does. He was convinced that nothing was excluded from the emotion of poetry and that it was therefore the source of all life and creativity (Vinkenoog 2009a). Because language, body and mind coincide with poetry, it is

inextricably linked to life, and therefore poetry, like life itself, should not be trammelled by any coercion, formalism or rationalism (Vancrevel: 2009: 126, 127). Thus, unfettered by form and subject, this poetry created "the space for complete living" (Glassgold and Messerli, 2005: 9). Inspired by a statement of Artaud's that profoundly affected his life, Vinkenoog wanted to perform his poetry with an audience, "not to be applauded, but to feel the bodies of men and women, I say BODIES, shaking and turning in unison with mine"[17]. This emphasis on the spoken word instead of the printed word created an escape from rationalism, or as described by Beat poet William Everson, "a rise in *participation mystique*" (Everson and Gelpi, 2003: 303, emphasis in original), where "the poetry reading was transformed from recital into *encounter*" (Everson and Gelpi, 2003: 303, emphasis in original).

In conclusion, we end up with a mixed image of Vinkenoog – from hate to love, creative man to madman, experimenting with language to experimenting with drugs. But at the same time, it is possible to see through these apparent contradictions how Vinkenoog treated language in purely physical terms. Like Artaud, Vinkenoog wanted to communicate his ideas "*authentically* by reconnecting his language with the body" (Scheer, 2009: 41, emphasis in original), and therefore have "immediate physiological effects on the body of the listener" (Scheer, 2009: 41). Although the work of Vinkenoog did not result in any specifiable 'School of Vinkenoog' or any 'masterpiece', at least according to the mainstream literary world, his lived experiences, language and experiments with drugs were resources he used throughout his oeuvre and were fundamental to connecting language with the body. Treating language in this way, according to Deleuze, "things and propositions have no longer any frontier between them" and because of this, "every word is physical, and immediately affects the body" (Deleuze, 2004: 99-100). Although this idea of Deleuze refers to Artaud, it certainly can apply to Vinkenoog's language games as well.

As a fundamental part of Vinkenoog's language games were inspired by Artaud, I feel it is necessary to take a closer look at those ideas which appealed to Vinkenoog before I address the implications of the aesthetic irrationality of Vinkenoog's oeuvre and life for the leader of contemporary organizations.

Vinkenoog's Own Voice

"Opposite to the *Siège Central* in the former Hotel Majestic on the Avenue Kléber, was located a bookshop owned by Jean Marabini, who directed me to the work of the Surrealists, the Lettrists and the subsequent Situationists" (Vinkenoog, 2009a: 22). It is in this way that Vinkenoog described his first acquaintance with Artaud, a couple of months after Artaud died in March 1948. "In one of the smaller editions of Antonin Artaud, I believe in *Lettres de Rodez*" (Vinkenoog, 2009a: 22, emphasis in original), Vinkenoog goes on, "I read his 'Post-Scriptum'" (Vinkenoog, 2009a: 22). The hatred he encountered in this text, the wounded and tormented love, evoked sympathy in Vinkenoog. It was with these very feelings that he had left Amsterdam. "Where every poet is in search of his own voice" (Vinkenoog, 2009a: 18-19), explained Vinkenoog, "I thought I heard that voice the most clearly in the lyrics written, sung, cursed and spat out by Antonin Artaud" (Vinkenoog, 2009a: 18-19).

Artaud's influence marks Vinkenoog's entrance onto the Dutch literary scene, noticeably in the introduction to his anthology of poetry *Atonaal* (1951b) and with the beginning of the Fiftiers. In this introduction, Vinkenoog mentions Artaud as a representative of a movement that had almost

entirely passed the Netherlands by, but had the same "realm of thoughts and associations" (Vinkenoog, 1951b: 11) as the Fiftiers, which they would finally bring into the limelight. Like Peter Glassgold, who writes that the emphasis of the Fiftiers and the Experimental Group in Holland was on the very physicality of art (Glassgold and Messerli, 2005: 9), Hugo Brems, in his detailed study *Lichamelijkheid in de experimentele poëzie (Embodiment in Experimental Poetry*, 1976), also writes that the experimental poetry of the Fiftiers was characterized by its physicality (Brems, 1976). However, it is Constant who reflected on Vinkenoog's idea of the physicality of art and the related thoughts and associations in his Manifesto in the first issue of the Experimental Group in Holland's magazine, *Reflex* (1948). Although Vinkenoog did not agree with the political statements in the manifesto, he agreed with the analysis of the aestheticisation of everyday life and that he believed the Surrealist movement had failed because of its intellectualism (Vinkenoog, 2009b).

Constant wrote that there is an aesthetic "ideal of beauty" (Constant, 1948, no pagination) designed by the bourgeois "to prevent the flowering of a new, conflicting sense of beauty which emerges from the vital emotions" (Constant, 1948, no pagination). This aesthetic ideal creates an outmoded set of aesthetic criteria and forms, which people need to break away from by violent means. The act of destruction of the old ideal of beauty "forms the key to the liberation of the human spirit from passivity" (Constant, 1948, no pagination). However, Constant went on to mention, the people themselves must be actively involved in this experience. It creates an escape from a fixed, aesthetic ideal of beauty and recognizes the idea of expressivity, spontaneously directed by its own intuition. The experience of the individual "signifies the end of art as a force of aesthetic idealism on a higher plane than life" (Constant, 1948, no pagination), what once was the role of genius. The role of genius however, wrote Constant, is nothing less than "the power of the individual to free himself from the ruling aesthetic and place himself above it" (Constant, 1948, no pagination). When the individual becomes actively involved in this creative process, it establishes a powerful interaction between the creator, the audience and their creativity. This interaction creates a "spontaneous sensation of life" and the participant "feels no need to express anything else" (Constant, 1948: no pagination). Constant claimed that this experience "makes no distinction between beautiful and ugly because it sets no aesthetic norms. The ugly, which in the art of past centuries has come to supplement the beautiful, is a permanent complaint against the unnatural class society and its aesthetic of virtuosity" (Constant, 1948, no pagination). It is all of this that creates "living art", the physical process of the mind and body, which "gives expression to the emotions, yearnings, reactions and ambitions" (Constant, 1948, no pagination).

This text by Constant appears to be a reflection of Vinkenoog's ideas and a call to revolt against the rational dominance of the aesthetic criteria of the leading discourse. While Hans Renders (2000) writes that *Braak*[18], the magazine that succeeded *Reflex*, created a bridge between Cobra and the anthology of poetry *Atonaal* (Renders, 2000), it seems here that the ideas of Constant and Vinkenoog indeed converged. However, it is not just a bridge between the ideas of Vinkenoog and Constant, but also a bridge between the artistic critique and the idea of the leader-as-artist, with his/her propositional language and its aesthetic beauty.

I have described the physicality of art of the avant-garde movements of the Fiftiers and Cobra, in which the ideas of Vinkenoog played an important role, and I have pointed out where these ideas were inspired by Artaud. Yet, almost nothing has been said about Artaud himself, so let us next take a closer look at the voice of Artaud.

The Voice of Artaud

Antonin Artaud's personal biography has acquired near-iconic status (Brown, 2007: 203; Sontag 1988: xix). Artaud's oeuvre is enormous (twenty-six volumes in French) and is composed of published books, prose, poetry, essays, writings about cinema, lectures, manifestos, letters, paintings and several plays. He explored many strategies of expression in his effort to overcome sham and the repressive order in order to realize the genuine or living-order (Letiche, 2005: 233). What he left behind were not achieved works of art, but "a singular presence, a poetics, an aesthetic of thought, a theology of culture and a phenomenology of suffering" (Sontag, 1988: xx). In *Antonin Artaud: Selected Writings* (1988), Susan Sontag describes that Artaud's gift was not for psychological understanding, but a sort of physiological phenomenology of his never-ending desolation. According to Sontag, for Artaud, "the extreme mental – and also physical – pain that feeds (and authenticates) the act of writing is necessarily falsified when the energy is transformed into artistry, when it attains the benign status of a finished, literary product" (Sontag, 1988: xxii). This link between suffering and writing is, according to Sontag, one of Artaud's leading themes (Sontag 1988: xxii) and the reason why Vinkenoog was so influenced by him. Vinkenoog's suffering from intense feelings of hatred was linked to and formed his poetry. It was his reason for existence. Also important to Vinkenoog was Artaud's idea that the creative experience of writing is more important than the finished product (Fokkema, 1979; Vinkenoog, 1950a: 4; 2009a: 22).

Artaud also believed in the Surrealists' idea of the essential romantic notion of closing the gap between art (and thought) and life. In *The Umbilicus of Limbo* (1925), he states that he is unable to conceive of "work that is detached from life" (Artaud, 1925a: 59) and that he "do[es] not like detached creation" (Artaud, 1925a: 59). Artaud considered thinking as a work of the body, which is clearly visible in *Situation of the Flesh* (1925b) where he states, "I do not separate my thought from my life. With each vibration of my tongue I retrace all the pathways of my thought in my flesh" (Artaud, 1925b: 110). According to Sontag, "Artaud assimilated all art to dramatic performance" (Sontag, 1988: xxix). For Artaud, poetics, art and thought were actions of the body. They had to be cruel to be authentic and also an experience suffered and filled with emotions. However, closing this gap between art and life destroys art, but at the same time universalizes it. Once merging with life becomes the leading principle of art, the existence of separate art forms is no longer defensible (Sontag, 1988: xxix). It is this merger between art and life that was also important to Vinkenoog and was ultimately shaped by him in his performances and the happenings[19]. It is these happenings, according to Sontag, that represented the taste of Artaud's thoughts (Sontag, 1988: xliv).

The later ideas of Artaud were centred on the theatre. In *The Theater and Its Double* (1938), he calls for a "pure theatre" (Artaud, 1958 [1938]: 62), with the aspects of the "physics of the absolute gesture, which is the idea itself" (Artaud, 1958 [1938]: 62), as a revolt against the moral cheapness of most art (Sontag, 1988: xxxii). This theatre must have a valuable spiritual effect on its audience, with the separation between actor and audience reduced. Artaud wanted to get rid of the rules of theatrical etiquette that allow the audience to disassociate itself from its own experience. The meaning that Artaud applied to theatre was to cure the split between language and the body, to reconnect it. The critique of theatre was exercised against the separation between life and art, reality and representation, the mind and the body. Artaud believed in an alternative relation to the mind by overriding what was to him the superficial distinction between the rational and irrational. This was why the alternative relation to the mind of non-Occidental cultures held an attraction for

Artaud, although it was not what brought him to drugs. Drugs, for Artaud, were not to expand his consciousness, but to reduce the neurological pains he suffered (Sontag, 1988: xxxiii-xxxvi).

Although Artaud was not the only one who influenced Vinkenoog, his ideas created in Vinkenoog a powerful fascination with the different aspects of Orientalism. Religious mysticism and psychedelics had a great influence on Vinkenoog's art and life, bringing the artistic and spiritual together. For Vinkenoog, however, drugs were to expand his consciousness and life, which is made clear by a reference to a statement from Artaud that people who use drugs do so "because as a poet of their own existing I, they have felt earlier than others what was missing in life" (Vinkenoog, 2009a: 117). This created, according to Vinkenoog, the *Magic Theatre*[20]. It is interesting here to note that Vinkenoog made the ideas of Artaud accessible to the Dutch by translating *The Theater and Its Double* into the Dutch language in 1982. Where Artaud was one of Vinkenoog's sources of inspiration, introducing him to the attractions of non-Occidental cultures, Vinkenoog's experiments with these cultures and the manifestations of it inspired others and took shape in the Magical Centre Amsterdam. For Vinkenoog, the art and life experiments, in interaction with others, created a spiritual transformation with "the drug as a sacrament and extravagant behaviour as a unifying ritual" (van Gasteren 1984: 13). According to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, the price of these experiments is that they incur censorship and repression; "[t]hey will not let you experiment in peace" (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004: 166). Vinkenoog felt the full force of this price of censorship and repression and expressed it in his statement: "You want peace and you see a barricade of war"[21]. According to Artaud, the extravagant behaviour, as in the Magical Centre Amsterdam, is necessary especially when art is made public and is used "in a secular society for the purpose of spiritual transformation" (Sontag, 1988: xliv). Because this art that intends a spiritual transformation is "robbed of its true adversarial power" (Sontag, 1988: xliv), only a few situations in modern secular society seem adequately extreme and uncommunicative enough to escape this cooptation, states Artaud. He then goes on to write, "madness is one" (Sontag, 1988: xliv). When Vinkenoog writes in his book *Liefde* (1965) that this madness is determined by society, he seems to repeat Artaud.

Artaud, according to Sontag, made it clear that in every society the definitions of sanity and madness are arbitrary and political and have a repressive function. How the standard of madness is applied to a person differs from one person to another, depending on who is "protected" or "partly excused", mainly for reasons of economic or social privilege, or who is seen as mad or not making sense and therefore society does not have to feel obliged to listen to his voice (Sontag, 1988: lv). Furthermore, writes Sontag, it is psychiatry that draws a clear line between art as a 'normal' psychological phenomenon manifesting objective aesthetics and the symptomatology, "[t]he very boundary that Artaud contests" (Sontag, 1988: liv). The same boundary drawn by psychiatry was experienced by Vinkenoog, which forced him to act as a protest poet instead of the love poet he wanted to be. He felt he had to raise his voice to fight against the power play of society[22]. With his poetry and its performance, Vinkenoog wanted to cause a "shock of recognition"[23], "mobilizing the spirit of people"[24] by revealing the "truth for the sake of catharsis, liberating from the known"[25]. He wanted to create "the mechanism of disorder, which contrasts with the 'order' that is called reality" (Vinkenoog, 2009a: 98). Vinkenoog believed that this created a renewal of the rigid society (Vinkenoog, 2009a: 98). Related to this belief is Artaud's idea that cultural performances such as poetry and theatre can serve to heal people from the effects of the power play of society. This belief refers to poetry and theatre and its ability to affect a 'catharsis', which to Artaud meant relieving the individual of the repressed instinctive and unconscious drives and desires, or the restrained creative

instinct and aesthetics (as Vinkenoog believed), by a deliberate derangement of the mind and senses. In so far as this relief of the individual is an extension and intensification of this individual, as with the genius, Artaud suggested that there is the existence of a natural affinity between genius and madness (Crombez, 2008; Goodall, 1994; Morelos, 2009; Sontag, 1988).

To conclude this sketch of Artaud's life and work as a source of inspiration for Vinkenoog, I would like to turn again to Sontag. In the concluding part of her introduction of *Antonin Artaud: Selected Writings*, she writes, "[o]ne can be inspired by Artaud. One can be scorched, changed by Artaud. But there is no way of applying Artaud" (Sontag, 1988: lvii), although at the same time he became relevant. In the last decade, writes Sontag, most of the once exotic themes of Artaud's work have "become loudly topical, the wisdom (or lack of it) to be found in drugs, Oriental religions, magic, the life of North American Indians, body language, the insanity trip, the revolt against 'literature' and the belligerent prestige of non-verbal arts" (Sontag, 1988: lviii). Almost towards the end of her conclusion, Sontag states, "[u]nknown outside a small circle of admirers ten years ago, Artaud is a classic today" (Sontag, 1988: lix). Sontag is referring to 1973 when the first edition of the text was published. When she writes that the exotic themes of Artaud became relevant in the last decade, she is referring to the 1960s. And when she writes that before becoming relevant Artaud was only known in a small circle, she could have easily been describing Vinkenoog. Essentially, the themes of Artaud became the themes of Vinkenoog. In this way, Artaud's influence on Vinkenoog became an important influence on the artistic critique in the Netherlands. When Sontag describes Artaud as someone "who has made a spiritual trip for us - a shaman" (Sontag, 1988: lviii), the same can be said of Vinkenoog. Where Artaud's exotic themes and schizophrenia created an image of a mad artist, the comparable exotic themes of Vinkenoog, however without schizophrenia, created a comparable image of another mad artist.

While the relevancy and inspiration of Artaud undoubtedly shows in the philosophical works of, for example, Derrida's *The Secret Art of Antonin Artaud* (1998), Foucault's *Madness, the absence of work* (1995), in Deleuze and Guattari's work where Artaud's extravagantly performative style is presented as both fully mad *and* entirely credible (Scheer, 2009: 37) and in Allen Ginsberg's performance of *Howl* at the Six Gallery Reading (Ginsberg, 1986: 175), the influence of Artaud on Simon Vinkenoog and the artistic critique in the Netherlands also undoubtedly shows in Vinkenoog's language games and performances.

To summarize the importance of Artaud to Vinkenoog, it seems clear that the unity between art and life, language and the body, body and experience, thought as an action of the body and his aesthetic ideas were the concepts that Vinkenoog found most appealing. This gave Vinkenoog the opportunity to be the hate poet, love poet and protest poet he was. "There was no Vinkenoog before Artaud"[26], stated Vinkenoog in a radio program in 2007. Artaud showed Vinkenoog that the world was a representation of illusions and delusions, a fake world. However, at the same time, Artaud gave Vinkenoog an escape from the repression and control of the world to 'the real world' by the creativity and experience of art and language and the perceptual world. However, while Artaud was very unhappy all of his life, Vinkenoog stressed that for himself, the creativity of performed poetry changed his feelings from hate and frustration to love[27].

What does this bring to the propositional language of the leader in contemporary organizations, for whom the figure of the artist has become the model? As the representation of this artist, he or she makes sense of the aesthetic quality of beauty and brings in the intuition and creativity of this artist. All of this is staged at a 'theatre' (a metaphor for organizations), where this creative and authentic leadership can be performed. However, when reading descriptions of the

lives and works of 'real' artists such as Artaud and Vinkenoog, the model of the leader-as-artist becomes much more complex and problematic.

The Space of the Subjectile

Although the management discourse of the leader-as-artist is derived from the poetizing discourse of the artistic critique of the avant-garde movements of the 1950s and 1960s, a discourse that consists of flow, play and connectivity, it has now been transformed into a discourse in which words are assigned clear, fixed and rational meanings (Levin, 1988: 436-437; Linstead, 2000: 73). Therefore, I want to return to the poetizing discourse of Vinkenoog to better understand the rational representation of the leader-as-artist in contemporary organizations. This will open a door to the aesthetics and the connection between the body, language and experience.

The most relevant notion, for the purpose of this chapter, is the similarity of the ideas between Vinkenoog and Artaud. Through the voice of Vinkenoog resonates the voice of Artaud, which is why I chose the discourse of Artaud, here Derrida's reinterpretation of Artaud, to give voice to the ideas of Vinkenoog's artistic critique in relation to the leader-as-artist in contemporary organizations.

In *La parole soufflée*, Derrida's first text on Artaud published at the end of 1965, he writes that speaking towards Antonin Artaud, a dialogue would need to have been opened between *critical* discourse and *clinical* discourse (Derrida, 1965: 212). Derrida here refers to Foucault and the problematic unity of these two discourses, the unity of "madness and work of art" (Foucault, 2001: 272), and that this unity is "driving primarily, at their enigmatic conjunction" (Derrida, 1965: 213). Where, according to Derrida, Foucault concludes that these two discourses are deeply incompatible (Derrida, 1965: 213), Derrida writes, "[a]t the moment when criticism (be it aesthetic, literary, philosophical, etc.) allegedly protects the meaning of a thought or the value of a work against psychomedical reductions" (Derrida, 1965: 214), it produces the same result: "*it creates an example*" (Derrida, 1965: 214, emphasis in original). This example, Derrida goes on, creates a work or an adventure of thought, which is made to bear witness to a structure whose necessary stability becomes the main concern of the commentary. He then states, for criticism to make a meaningful or valuable case, to be taken seriously, is to read the essence of purity in the example (Derrida, 1965: 214). It is the case of Artaud that Derrida uses as his example.

When one tries to move between the critical and the clinical discourse, "meaning from the works, or what Artaud said, to the madness or what can be said about Artaud; the two levels remain separate" (Letiche and van Mens, 2002: 173). This creates "Artaud's pathetic error, the weight of example and existence which keeps him remote from the truth he hopelessly indicates, the nothingness at the heart of the word, the 'lack of being,' the 'scandal of thought separated from life'" (Derrida, 1965: 215). It seems, therefore, "that which belongs to Artaud without recourse – his experience itself – can without harm be abandoned by the critic and left to the psychologists or doctors" (Derrida, 1965: 215). However, Derrida believes that Artaud would "never accept the scandal" of his experiences and thoughts being "separated from life" (Derrida, 1965: 215). Even so, the separation between speech and the speaking subject will not go away. Regardless of Artaud's will to annihilate this doubling, what is said can always be doubled; it can be analysed and repeated, where, according to Artaud, distance between theme and expression, vitality and idea, experience and psyche, is the norm, a distance he attempted to overcome (Letiche and van Mens, 2002: 180).

Artaud tried to overcome the doubling between body and language. Otherwise, only text that deadens life and betrays the physical base of existence will be created. Derrida explores the constant sliding in representation between the levels of the physical and the textual, between the life and the work and between the madness and work of art, taking Artaud as his case. Derrida agrees with Artaud that rationalizing texts are part of the power game that, in the text, destroys the living. Both raise questions "about a text being (or not being) able to do justice to awareness and circumstance" (Letiche and van Mens, 2002: 175). This can create propositional language. However, Derrida is not in favour of Artaud's highly charged attacks on the doubling. He tries, as is nicely described by Hugo Letiche and Lucie van Mens, to "set up a subtle play of doubleness of his own" (Letiche and van Mens, 2002: 180) with his idea of the *subjectile*.

"Derrida invites a slipping into doubleness that keeps the space between the opposites to a minimum" (Letiche and van Mens, 2002: 180). He tries to let there be as little empty space as possible between the body and the mind (Letiche and van Mens, 2002: 180), a space that is imagined by Artaud as subjectile (Barker, 2009: 18). Organizations create propositional language by which the body becomes absent from itself. But what exactly is a 'subjectile'? Mary Ann Caws writes in the introduction to *The Secret Art of Antonin Artaud* (1998) that it is "the underlying support of canvas, paper, text" (Caws, 1998: xi). It is this that makes the image, the text, the representation, possible (Wolfreys, 2004: 85) and the action of the subjectile is "the visibility, the element of representation, the presence of a subject, even an object" (Derrida, 1998: 61). Subjectile, writes Derrida, is "the word or the thing [that] can take the place of the subject or the object – being neither one or the other" (Derrida, 1998: 61). In subjectile, there is 'subjectif', 'subtle', 'sublime' and 'projectile' (Derrida, 1998: 62). However, the subjectile cannot be separated from the body (Derrida, 1998: 100). Where the 'real' body dies, the life and experience of the artist – the survivor, the work of the artist – undergoes a reductive distancing from that language and is separated from the body. The subjectile transcends the opposition of the exterior text and the interior spirit of the text (Marder, 2009: 119). The subjectile, writes Michael Marder, "is the aesthetic means or the 'how' capable of disengag[ing] and liberating the thing's alterity" (Marder, 2009: 115). By reducing the space between madness and the work of art, the subjectile "infiltrates aesthetic practices" (Marder, 2009: 115).

Julian Wolfreys warns, however, that the experience of that which makes art and its implications possible is not art. The artist and his/her art are haunted by a performative event that is not amongst those elements that define art. For Wolfreys, the subjectile, being a constant movement between the representation and its other, betrays the very art that it upholds. Being "never literally what it is" (Derrida, 1998: 139), the subjectile "bears the traces of the constant un-sensing of meaning, of a stable presentation, and thus gives the lie to the promise of presence, and of full meaning that representational art would appear to guarantee" (Wolfreys, 2004: 86).

With his interpretation of Artaud's subjectile, Derrida overturns the double. Artaud tried to escape the deadening process of doubling, the reduction of existence into rationalized texts and formulaic experiences via 'cruelty'. Derrida, in his turn, believed he could make use of "the unstoppable process of doubling, to achieve the paradoxical position of the subjectile wherein opposites continually play with one another" (Letiche and van Mens, 2002: 180). While Artaud's double is about consciousness and physicality, the double in Derrida's work is directed to the body and repetition. Artaud's concern was the difference between original living texts and the reduction of texts by repetitions. Derrida's idea of the double is that language is always a play of meanings, a pattern of pasts and presents, a constant play of variation. For Derrida, language, text and meaning are a double, a double that one hates and embraces, assumes and avoids, liberates and

colonizes (Letiche and van Mens, 2002: 175). It is particularly Derrida's interpretation of Artaud's subjectile that bears a resemblance to Vinkenoog's idea. As a poet and with his images and ideas of language, Vinkenoog saw the importance of language in relation to others in his performed poetry and happenings. By repeating his text, but changing rhythms, bodily performance, flow, play and connectivity, he created his language games, always using many statements, voices and expressions. It was his way of shaping the paradoxical position of the subjectile wherein opposites constantly played against one another.

According to Letiche and van Mens (2002), while the violence of Artaud's strategy seems to be unsustainable and probably counter-effective, Derrida's aestheticization of opposites makes it possible to discuss the life and art – the madness and the work – of Vinkenoog's artistic critique in relation to the propositional language of the leader-as-artist.

The Romantic Notion of the Leader-as-Artist

With the figure of the artist as the model for a new leader in contemporary organizations, the leader must embody the characteristics of an artist, which include authenticity, creativity and innovation. This creates an image of "the romance of leadership" (Meindl, 1995), which brings aesthetics and ethics into play, referring to the aesthetic 'ideal of beauty'. It creates a neo-management discourse around this idea of the leader-as-artist, a discourse in which words are assigned clear, fixed and rational meanings. In fact, it creates propositional language. The leader-as-artist engages positive psychological capacities and a highly developed organizational context. This results in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviour.

However, as we have seen above, the artist in this model seems to be represented only in positive terms. The model constructs the leader-as-artist as 'aesthetically pleasing' and ignores other aesthetic categories such as the ugly or the tragic. As well, it seems that the influence of the Romantic conceptions of genius on the leader-as-artist model, as noticed by ten Bos, is also represented in positive terms. Nothing is said about the irrationality of the artist from those who live outside any rational discourse. Although the contemporary leader must inspire his audience through his creations and personal life and be "magically creative, inspirational and full of life" (Hansen, Ropo and Sauer, 2007: 545), with apparently no distinction between private life and professional life, it seems that the model or 'the example' of the artist creates a separation from the thought of the artist and his/her life. In the discourse of the leader-as-artist, the artist is, not surprisingly, created as an example that is made to bear witness to this new leadership, whose necessary stability becomes the main concern of the propositional language. To take seriously this artist as an example is to read into the essence of this example.

As Boltanski and Chiapello analysed, the idea of the leader-as-artist entered contemporary organizations through the artistic critique of the avant-garde movements of the 1950s and 1960s. The new management discourse created a rhetoric out of the connection between the new leader and the creative potential of the artist (Lui, 2004). This rhetoric resulted in statements about everyone in the neo-management discourse ceasing to be rational and instead, "realiz[ing] their deep desires and flourish[ing]" (Le Saget, cited in Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 98). These statements appear to challenge the bounded nature of the typical body image, based on the separation of body and rationality and the stability of our identities. While the idea of the leader-as-artist seems to appear more fluid and flexible at the level of the separation between body and rationality and creates a

transgression of boundaries, Karin Dale and Gibson Burrell argue that "despite the hype" (Dale and Burrell, 2000: 15-16), Foucault's "judges of normality" (Foucault, 1991) are "still at play" (Dale and Burrell, 2000: 15-16). Despite the idea of the artist becoming embodied in the contemporary leader, the rigid boundaries are maintained. However, according to Dale and Burrell, the normal representation of abstraction and distance of the body is a "safe" falsification of the physical and the emotional reality (Dale and Burrell, 2000). This falsification is necessary because the representation of raw physical existence destabilizes managerial hierarchy and the primacy of control (Ackroyd, 1990) or as Burrell believes, with the representation of the raw physical existence and the emotional reality, the appearances of control and of rational organization crumble. This representation is seen as an opponent of the rational organization and is therefore charged with unreasonableness, madness, obscurity and indecisiveness (Burrell, 1998). The "romance of leadership" in the idea of the leader-as-artist seems to help to cover the "passion for control and hierarchy", creating an illusion of personal control over organizational life despite the impersonality of rationality (Calás, 1993), where the preservers of "normal" representation try to marginalize and silence the non-representable (Letiche and van Mens, 2002: 181).

It seems that the essence of the neo-management discourse is the highest level of representation of the artist. This creates the separation between, to use the words of Foucault, the "work of art" of the artist and his/her "madness" (Foucault, 2001: 272). This is the double that Artaud tried to un-think; he tried to escape this closure of representation. It is this thought separated from life that Artaud or Vinkenoog would never have accepted, therefore, if we want to take the concept of the leader-as-artist seriously, it is time to bring the subjectile into play.

'The Example' of Vinkenoog

Just as Derrida was "speaking towards Antonin Artaud" (Derrida, 1965: 212) in this book, we are also 'speaking towards Simon Vinkenoog'. As a cult orator[28] he played an important role in the artistic critique of the 1950s and 1960s in the Netherlands. However, as Derrida believed, for criticism to make a meaningful or valuable case it is necessary to read the essence of purity in the "example" (Derrida, 1965: 214). But, like Derrida's 'example' of Artaud, a dialogue opens between the critical discourse and clinical discourse.

An adventurous life without compromise, experimenting with language by means of spontaneous poetry and prose and experimenting with the use of drugs such as marijuana, hashish, peyote and LSD, created for Vinkenoog a "stream of consciousness-experiments"[29]. With no separation between his art and thoughts, his language and his body, Vinkenoog believed that he had to perform his thoughts and language, inspired by Artaud, in his performances. Vinkenoog's life resembles the life of Artaud. However, Derrida warns in a reference to a text of Maurice Blanchot, "we must resist the temptation to make overgeneralized affirmations" (Derrida, 1965: 215). Each poet says the same, although what each poet actually feels is unique. "What is Artaud's is his alone. What he says has an intensity that we should not bear" (Derrida, 1965: 215). Derrida was right in his assertion that where Artaud is unique, Vinkenoog is also unique. Artaud suffered from schizophrenia, while Vinkenoog did not; Vinkenoog experimented with drugs to expand his consciousness, whereas Artaud used drugs to calm the migraines and other neurological pains he suffered; while Artaud became "an example of a willed classic" (Sontag, 1988: lix), including his appearance in philosophical works and organization theory, Vinkenoog remained unknown except

in Dutch circles; whereas Artaud is, according to Sontag "relevant and understandable, a cultural monument, as long as one mainly refers to his ideas without reading much of his work" (Sontag, 1988: lix), Vinkenoog remains marginalized, silenced, and non-representable.

To introduce him in this book as 'an example' of the idea of the leader-as-artist might therefore open possibilities. Not yet included in the 'safe' falsification of the 'normal' representation, it creates a little empty space, the subjectile, a possible space between his madness and his work of art. Vinkenoog remains "thus between sense and nonsense, *outside of sense*" (Derrida, 1998: 146, emphasis in original) and keeps "the subjectile softened" (Derrida, 1998: 147). It is this 'being outside of sense' that is the underlying support, which makes the image, the text and the representation possible. It is the aesthetic means of liberating Vinkenoog's ideas. With the aesthetics, the rational representation can be problematized. With the subjectile, it moves in the spaces between leadership as intellectual knowledge and leadership as a sensory and emotional experience (Ropo and Sauer, 2008). By doing so, it challenges the logic of the organizing process and the propositional language of the leader-as-artist discourse. With the subjectile and the aesthetic, we focus on the tension between the sensory knowledge and felt meaning of objects and experiences and the text of the leader-as-artist. This is the tension between the symbolic imagery of the leader, who is described in propositional language as a creative artist, and the physical imagery of the leader who must act as an artist, who searches, experiments and plays with possibilities, with all the sense and non-sense that comes with it. It is a tension between a coherent action of the leader-as-artist and the language and the body.

However, if the aesthetic view of the leader-as-artist only values spontaneous insights and its imagination in order to avoid the notion of becoming "seduced and trapped by the rational" (Guve, 2007: 131), but at the same time approaches the bodily and aesthetic knowledge with suspicion and as non-sense (Guve, 2007: 131), Artaud's subjectile will immediately refuse this. The purpose of the aesthetic view of the leader-as-artist is an ability to create plausible narratives in various representational forms to stabilize meaning through self-discovery, believable enough to be read for relevance, consistency, composition, judgment, comprehension and value (Atkinson, 2007; Woodward and Funk, 2010). These texts create examples or 'cases', which, in order to enable us to read into the essence, need stability and will therefore become a reduced representation. There is a risk of suffering from a repetition of texts, which according to Artaud, is the difference between a living text and the simple performance of stock phrases. This is Artaud's fear for the double, and the death of the subjectile (Barker, 2009: 21).

On the other hand, Derrida and Vinkenoog's concept of the subjectile allow for a different view. Whereas Letiche and van Mens argue that this concept allows us to intermediate the speaker/spoken and subject/object doubling (Letiche and van Mens, 2002: 175), we can add here another category, that of leader/artist. A doubling as represented by the idea of leader-as-artist is not only implied by the use of the forward slash symbol, but also by his/her own embodied, contextualized and lived experience of leadership. The concept of the subjectile here allows for a constant motion between the ambiguity and complexity of propositional language and the personal and sensed experiences.

While the aim of this constant motion seems to create plausible narratives, the subjectile creates the constant un-sensing of meaning, destabilizing the representation. It is exactly this motion between sense and un-sense, madness and the work of art, according to Derrida, "that [is] stabilizing itself in a certain form" (Derrida, 1998: 77), constituting a space where performances can be staged (Barker, 2009), although this form of performance always "exasperates and keeps you in

suspense" (Derrida, 1998: 78).

It is with the ideas of Vinkenoog's subjectile and the aesthetics that the leader-as-artist can create a space where critical and clinical connects. As this involves physical expressions, relational processes with "the audience" and performance, it can initiate a stage for creativity, reflexivity and "practical wisdom" (Ladkin, 2010). The emphasis on the leader's bodily presence and the shared aesthetic situation constitutes theatre (Fischer-Lichte, 2008; Lehmann, 2006; Ropo and Sauer, 2008) and introduces Artaud's idea of theatre into organizations. It is this notion that Brown describes as the renewed importance of Artaud (Brown, 2007: 217-218). Nevertheless, writes Brown, this idea might well be "another grandiose failure on Artaud's part" (Brown, 2007: 219). However, adding Vinkenoog's language games, the flow, creative play and connectivity of his poetry, and his emphasis on the bodily performance, can be a means of switching between the interiority of the personal and the exteriority of the logical. Referring to Linstead's idea of the ability of poetry to see situations simultaneously from different angles and the "passionate engagement of the self with the world – without attempting to dominate it" (Linstead, 2000: 84), Vinkenoog's art and life tried to bring sensitivity and awareness to the problem of attempting to catch the ambiguities and contradictions of life. As a communicator of ideas, his assignment was, as Vinkenoog believed referring to Herman Hesse, "small and limited" (Vinkenoog 2009a: 77-78): he had to tell others in the living language of (performed) poetry "what the hell is going on"[30]. He had to warn them, but at the same time wanted to understand the world together with his audience[31]. He acted as an artist-as-leader[32], or as I argue here, as a leader-as-artist. With the help of Artaud's subjectile and the Theatre of Cruelty, Vinkenoog created for himself and his audience the Theatre of Creativity, where "leaders are not remembered largely for their professional, technical or cost-cutting skills, but for their wisdom, presence, intuition and artistry" (Jones, 2006: 6). Much of a leader's work today is to pay attention to "what's emerging in the space between" (Jones, 2006: 6). Vinkenoog's oeuvre can thus be of importance and helpful for the leader-as-artist in contemporary organizations.

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Notes

[1]Statement made by René ten Bos at a workshop, University for Humanistics, Utrecht, 14 March 2007.

[2]*The Living Theatre* was founded in New York in 1947, by Judith Malina and Julian Beck, as an imaginative alternative to the commercial theatre. During the 1950s and early 1960s, *The Living Theatre* pioneered the unconventional staging of poetic drama and in the mid-1960's, the company changed into a nomadic touring ensemble. In Europe, according to the website of *The Living Theatre*, they evolved into a collective, living and working together towards the creation of a new form of non-fictional acting, based on the actor's political and physical commitment to using the theatre as a medium for furthering social change (http://www.livingtheatre.org/history.html; accessed on 4 October 2010). It is these performances in which Vinkenoog was involved.

[3]Interview with Hans Plomp by Vincent Pieterse. Amsterdam, 25 September 2008.

[4]NRC Handelsblad, de Volkskrant, Trouw, de Telegraaf, 13 July 2009.

[5]Statement made by the Iranian-Dutch writer Kader Abdolah, de Volkskrant, 13 July 2009.

[6]Statement made by the Dutchman Bas Kwakman, managing director Poetry International Foundation, De Telegraaf, 13 July 2009.

[7]Statement made by the Dutch writer, poet and theatre producer Bart Chabot, NRC Handelsblad, 13 July 2009.

[8]http://www.literatuurplein.nl/litprijseditie.jsp?litPrijsEditieId=434 (accessed on 6 October 2010).

[9]Statement made as a reaction to Vinkenoog's death in de Volkskrant, 13 July 2009.

[10]De Telegraaf, 13 July 2009.

[11]Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant, 25 June 1966.
(http://www.kb.nl/dichters/vinkenoog/vinkenoog-04.html; accessed on 16 November 2009)

[12]NRC Handelsblad, 13 July 2009.

[13]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Friday, 3 April 2009.
(http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/april-2009.htm; accessed on 7 October 2010)

[14]NRC Handelsblad, 13 July 2009.

[15]Introduction to the television program *Profile: Simon Vinkenoo*g.
(http://reporter.kro.nl/uitzendingen/2006/20060920-simon_vinkenoog/intro.aspx; accessed on 7 October 2010)

[16]Ibid.

[17]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Saturday, 18 December 2009.
(http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/dec04.htm; accessed on 8 October 2010)

[18]Braak (1950-1951) was a monthly literary magazine of prose, poetry and criticism.
The editorial board consisted of Fiftiers Remco Campert and Rudy Kousbroek, and from the third issue the editorial board was extended with the editors and Lucebert and Bert Schierbeek. One of the key writers of the magazine was Simon Vinkenoog. The name of the magazine Braak was chosen, according to the editors, because it refers to two meanings of the Dutch word *braak*: fallowing land and vomiting (Calis, 2001: 132-133).

[19]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Tuesday 11 April 2006.
(http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/april-2006.htm; accessed on 6 September 2010)

[20]Statement made by Simon Vinkenoog during his presentation at a conference in honour of the hundredth birthday of the Swiss chemist Albert Hofmann on 11 January 2006. Hofmann was the first person to synthesize, ingest and learn of the psychedelic effects of lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD).
(http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/pages/gowiththeblow/Albert%20Hofmann%20100%20jaar%20-%20reportage%20LSD-congres%20Bazel.htm; accessed on 13 October 2010)

[21]Interview with Simon Vinkenoog by Vincent Pieterse. Amsterdam, 28 July 2008.

[22]Ibid.

[23]Statement made by Simon Vinkenoog in *Simon Vinkenoog his words*, a collection of columns written by Simon Vinkenoog between June 2005 and November 2007.
(http://www.dichttalent.nl/upnc/ZegrrswHC_SIMONVINKENOOG.pdf; accessed on 13 December 2009)

[24]Ibid.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Statement made by Vinkenoog in a radio program *De Avonden (The Evenings)* in which Simon Vinkenoog tells about his source of inspiration: Antonin Artaud.
(http://boeken.vpro.nl/personen/22544526/; accessed on 16 November 2009).

[27]Statement made by Vinkenoog in a radio program *De Avonden (The Evenings)* in which Simon Vinkenoog tells about his source of inspiration: Antonin Artaud.
(http://boeken.vpro.nl/personen/22544526/; accessed on 16 November 2009).

[28]Interview with Simon Vinkenoog by Vincent Pieterse. Amsterdam, 28 July 2008.

[29]*Kersvers*, weblog Simon Vinkenoog. Tuesday 20 February 2007.
(http://www.simonvinkenoog.nl/archief/februari-2007.htm; accessed on 21 October 2010)

[30]Interview with Simon Vinkenoog by Vincent Pieterse. Amsterdam, 28 July 2008.

[31]Ibid.

[32]Stated by Bart van Heerikhuizen, Hans Plomp, Peter ten Hoopen, Aat Veldhoen and Simon Posthuma during the interviews I had with them.

Chapter 6 Thanks to the opposition?

The aim of this study has been to explore and question, not to deliver answers such as 'how to become more creative' or 'what Vinkenoog brings to business', but to contribute to a counter-actualization of the image of the leader-as-artist in contemporary organizations. Most of the text has been about drawing a variety of forms of concern together and using them to raise a critique of neo-management discourse and its idea of leadership.

Introduction

This book is an attempt at an analysis of the figure of the leader-as-artist in neo-management discourses. In doing so, it interacts within the social order shaped by the principles and practices of this leadership. At the same time, it is an exploration of the artistic critique of the 1950s and 1960s in the Netherlands. As mentioned earlier, this criticism was a catalyst for change in the spirit of capitalism and was responsible for the reinvigorated capitalism of the late 20th century, which was capable of substantial absorption of this critique. Thanks to the opposition! It is this reinvigoration, the new and third spirit of capitalism, which created the management rhetoric of the leader-as-artist. It is this rhetoric through which the commitment of its participants is realized and justifies engagement. The aim of the rhetoric of the leader-as-artist is to create a set of shared beliefs, bound up with actions and anchored in reality.

Boltanski and Chiapello use an ideal type methodology in order to carry out a series of thought experiments about justification, or legitimation in Weberian terms, of which the third spirit of capitalism made use. According to Boltanski and Chiapello, describing the dynamic of the artistic critique of the 1950s and 1960s that helped to create the third spirit of capitalism makes a critique of this spirit and its justification of engagement possible. This critique, to do anything useful or significant, must also be embedded in the logic of the third spirit (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007). However, if we stretch Boltanski and Chiapello's arguments, useful or significant criticism does not

matter. In the end it will be absorbed into capitalism. If we push their argument, there is no reason to believe that there will be no 'fourth spirit of capitalism'. It is this very cynical view of the authors that creates a paradoxical position.

In the first place, the position of Boltanski and Chiapello and their critique on the third spirit of capitalism is a paradoxical one. Martin Parker notes, "the critique that the book poses might never even be read, because … the incorporation has already happened. The book has been pre-digested, and its oppositional spirit [is] already lost" (Parker, 2008: 614). Jacques Bidet puts it even stronger. According to Bidet, Boltanski and Chiapello "offer both a critique and a therapy for capitalism. They contribute to the improvement of the existing system but they do not question whether or not this system should hold" (Bidet, in Leca and Naccache, 2008: 618). The paradox in which Boltanski and Chiapello seem to find themselves is that *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (2007) can be read as "a critical success" (Lecca and Naccache, 2008: 619) and, at the same time (as the authors recognize), as a hymn of praise to new capitalism (Parker, 2008: 614).

In the second place, it also puts my 'example' Simon Vinkenoog in a paradoxical position. Following the cynical analysis of Boltanski and Chiapello, Vinkenoog should be held partly responsible for the reinvigorated capitalism of the late 20th century, which was capable of substantial absorption of his artistic critique. Although the former Mayor of Amsterdam, Ed van Thijn, sincerely thanked Provo Roel van Duijn for the opposition, thanking Simon Vinkenoog for his opposition could be seen as cynical. Although Vinkenoog appears to be a nice man who meant well, he provided capitalism with an ideology that justifies engagement in the third spirit. The artist-as-leader Vinkenoog provided the leader-as-artist with a set of shared beliefs, bound up with actions and anchored in reality through which the commitment of his/her audience is realized. Like Boltanski and Chiapello's book, Vinkenoog's life can be read as a hymn in praise of the third spirit. He can be seen as a smartly dressed management guru who sells the third spirit of capitalism. Ultimately then, Harry Starren is a smartly dressed Simon Vinkenoog.

In the analysis of Boltanski and Chiapello, Vinkenoog is just a pawn in "an ideological machine" (based on Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 333). However, Vinkenoog would have resisted this role, but he wouldn't have been the only one. Based on the analysis in this thesis, founded on the deconstruction of the meaning of the texts of Vinkenoog and the deconstruction of the texts of DBMC, I must oppose it as well. If I accept the analysis of Boltanski and Chiapello, I would have deconstructed the texts of Vinkenoog in a way that would have completely destroyed its spirit and vitality. My analysis, however, is very different; it puts the emphasis on the process-oriented language games of Vinkenoog, as opposed to the rational and result-oriented play of the leader-as-artist. Where Vinkenoog's process-oriented rhetoric exhibits the rules of performance, which require cooperation with no determinated ends in view, performance in the result-oriented rhetoric of the leader-as-artist is based on the rules of performativity – the *mercantilization* of knowledge based on the criteria of the most efficient input/output ratio.

In contemporary organizations, knowledge has become above all a commercial commodity. Knowledge is produced in order to be sold and is consumed in order to fuel a new production. Knowledge in the third spirit has mainly lost its value as truth. It is no longer an aspiration to produce the truth (Lyotard, 1984).

In neo-management rhetoric, performance seems to be controlled by performativity. For the leader-as-artist, the performance of creativity and authenticity is pure performativity, or to put it more clearly: Vinkenoog performed, Harry Starren's actions resemble performativity. But what is the difference? It is here that I want to (re)turn to the idea of the organization-as-theatre.

The Theatre of Performativity

In the third spirit of capitalism, leaders often seem to be "not mere performers but actors who play characters, moving from character to character and audience to audience with a 'theatrical consciousness' which enables them to retain a concept of an acting self" (Schreyögg and Höpfl, 2004: 692). Schreyögg and Höpfl's argument of moving from character to character connects here with the demand for 'being flexible', while the moving from audience to audience connects with the demand for engaging in projects. In this way, the 'actor' is able to inspire, influence and convince other people in order to achieve personal impact, where his/her status is measured in terms of visibility and activity and his/her success is measured by an ability to adjust to other people and knowing how to communicate. Being able to play this role demonstrates and validates the "professional competencies" (Höpfl, 2002: 258) of the leader-as-artist to his/her audience. In the third spirit, the characteristics of these competencies are derived from the figure of the artist. The relationship between the performance of the leader and these characteristics derived from the figure of the artist manifests itself in language, most visibly in texts such as 'acting authentically'. The play of the characteristics of the figure of the artist creates the metaphor of the leader-as-artist. And as Huizinga points out, the play of the characteristics is essentially rhetorical, a representation, an imaginative reconstruction of reality (Anchor, 1978: 80).

The problem that the notion of the performance of the rhetoric presents has to do with the way in which this performance is regulated. As we have noticed before, the behaviour and the performance of the leader-as-artist are controlled by performativity. It is the idea of performativity that provides the 'script' for the performance of the leader-as-artist and the interpretation of the audience of this performance. Because of performativity, which creates the ethics of esteemed success and survival in competitive circumstances (Letiche, 2008: 160) for the leader-as-artist, it is essential for the performance of the leader-as-artist to "allocate parts of his/her experience along the lines of what is required in performance to support ... [his/her] role and what is set aside" (Höpfl, 2002: 258) in order to be successful.

In theories of theatre, it is the allocating of parts based on the actor's experience that is regarded as the most significant achievement of the actor's skill. Essential to this argument is the idea of a dual consciousness: the notion that great acting requires an ability to possess a dual personality (Roach, 1993: 148), to be achieved via autonomy and self-control (Höpfl, 2002: 260). This notion refers to a willingness to accept the script of the performance and it means that the actor can play the role because s/he is detached from it. This is to say, "that the embodied role can be in performance detached from a superior intellect which permits its body to be used, yet remains disdainful of its appropriation" (Höpfl, 2002: 260). The paradox here is the contrast between the notion of the actor as manipulated in the performance and the actor as autonomous, exercising choice over the extent of the script. It is arguable, writes Höpfl, as to whether or not the latter can be realized without the disrespect of the actor to his/her audience (Höpfl, 2002: 260).

In contemporary organizations, the role of the leader-as-artist is constrained by context and the 'script' of performativity. What is significant is that the construction of the role regulates the emotional repertoire attached to it (Schreyögg and Höpfl, 2004: 695). It involves the simulation of behaviour and emotion, a practised dissimulation, the "professionalization of two-facedness" (Roach, 1993: 137). As a result, according to Höpfl, "it is the consummate counterfeit of experience. Nothing is as it appears. It is a performed hypocrisy" (Höpfl, 2002: 261).

If the 'script' of the leader-as-artist is not based on his/her own values and emotions, but on the ethics and responsibilities controlled by performativity (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 390), the rhetoric of the leader-as-artist, centred on the catchphrases of 'creativity', 'innovation', 'authenticity', 'activity' and 'flexibility', might be seen as a situational play of *persuasion*, *manipulation* and *seduction* (ten Bos, 2005). Because of this play, a key component of the performance of the leader-as-artist "has become the presentation of emotions that are specified and desired by their organizations" (Morris and Feldman, 1996: 987), where "the ambivalence, anxiety, distress, fear of failure, lusts, tears and so on, often are most manifest on the very margins of the performance" (Höpfl, 2002: 260).

In order to serve the strategy of contemporary organizations, this sense-making process through the theatrical performances of the leader might lead to the "obscuring" (Burrell, 1997; Burrell and Dale, 2002: 108) of contemporary organizations and is "permeated by rational-utopian tendencies, such as the reduction of complexity and ambivalence" (ten Bos, 2005: 30), where leadership is the culmination of the rhetoric of "control of things, the control of people and even the control of control itself" (Parker, 2002a: 5). In the end, this sense-making process leads "many to believe that passionate cynicism or even principled withdrawal are more coherent responses" (Parker, 2002b: 7).

In the contemporary organization-as-theatre, the performance of the leader-as-artist is based on the convention of the third spirit and is controlled by performativity. It creates the acting/being paradox that demands both control and the individual initiative of the leader-as-artist, or to put it differently, a paradox that ultimately asks Harry Starren to be true to his biographical and emotional memories (and at the same time to subordinate himself to legitimisation by performativity).

'The Paradox of Acting'

Considering Artaud largely influenced Vinkenoog's performances, it would be helpful to have a closer look at Artaud's idea of theatre and the role of the actor. Artaud believed, as he described in *The Theatre and Its Double* (1958 [1938]), that a radical distinction between discourse and speech is possible (Brown and Stenner, 2009: 99). Taken in its widest sense, language is a system that includes rhetoric, as well as introspective thought and knowledge, and is a process of repetition and different codified elements. For Artaud, language

> *does not 'signify' anything, that is, it does not point outside of itself to worldly referents, since it is the things themselves that are being put into play to construct a complex live space. And as part of that language – since there is no external 'God's eye' position from which to observe the proceedings – we apprehend what comes to pass through the effects which arise as we are ourselves put into play and moved about. (Brown and Stenner, 2009: 100)*

According to Artaud, because of this idea of language, the linguistic is not primarily a medium for the constitution of meaning, but for the creation of *affects*. He believed that words themselves are physical beings with their own affective force. "Words and the human voice itself literally 'strike us', and in doing so establish connections, an ordering between things in the world" (Brown and Stenner, 2009: 100). It is this conception of language that also determined the life and performances of Vinkenoog.

The writings of Artaud explore the 'silent zone', revealing and explaining the madness of performance and the control placed on the mind and body. Artaud, who had a problematic relationship with his own body, reminds us that no matter how much rationalizing and conceptualizing we do, all we are is "our existence in this body" (Pitsis, 2009: 69). How we "process our thoughts, identity, our plans and projects and at the same time carry our body through a process is at the crux of most of what happens in the organizational realm" (Pitsis, 2009: 69). For Artaud it relates to suffering and creating a new form of knowledge around experiencing life (Pitsis, 2009: 69).

Artaud's writings can be read as a manifesto of the tensions between authenticity and controlling the performative outcomes of the body and emotions in organizations. It can be argued, writes Alexandra Pitsis, that some of Artaud's writings are about authenticity in organizations in the sense that the act of being authentic is antithetical to any notion of productivity and performativity and that "this will always remain an aporia in organization[s]" (Pitsis, 2009: 75).

Artaud's search was for authentically reconnecting his language with the body centred upon the theatre. In *The Theatre and Its Double* (1958 [1938]), he violently attacks the idea of the role of the actor, which best can be described by the French philosopher, art critic and writer Denis Diderot's "paradox of acting" (Finter, 2008: 49). In an essay entitled *The Paradox of Acting* (1883 [1773]), Diderot argues that in order to move the audience, the actor must himself remain unmoved (Diderot, 1883: 7). The performance of the actor should be a studied exercise in 'authentic' emotional expression, rather than a spontaneous outpouring of the actor's feelings. For a great actor it is neither appropriate nor even plausible that s/he feels the same as s/he contrives to make the audience feel. According to Diderot, "he, then, who best knows and best renders, after the best conceived ideal type, these outward signs, is the greatest actor" (Diderot, 1883: 74). Diderot celebrated the duplicity, the artifice of the imitation. In short, the 'outward signs' of the 'ideal type' or the 'professionalization of two-facedness'. In the twentieth century, Diderot's approach became known as *Method Acting*.

According to Artaud, the performances of these 'great actors' tell lies. Artaud revolted against the moral cheapness of most art, including the performances of actors. Like Plato, Artaud believed that art generally lies. He would not banish artists from his Republic, but he would tolerate artists only insofar as they are authentic. No art would satisfy him "unless it is at the same time Knowledge" (Artaud, 1926), where the knowledge must "be kept as free from mediating elements as possible" (Sontag, 1988: xxxiii). Theatre must dispense with the mediation of a script in order to make the embodiment of thought and knowledge of the actor and the audience possible. According to Artaud, the control of script permits the audience to disconnect itself from its own experience and "distracts people from their authentic selfhood by leading them to concern themselves with imaginary problems" (Sontag, 1988: xxxiv).

Unlike Plato, Artaud opposed the separation between art and life and resisted all theatrical forms that imply a difference between representation and reality. Plato assumed an unbridgeable difference between art and life and representation and reality. In the seventh book of the *Republic*, Plato likens ignorance to living in a lit cave, for whose inhabitants life is a spectacle consisting of only shadows of real events. Plato's cave (2008) is a place where the inhabitants learn all about superficial "truth, beauty and wisdom". The inhabitants are 'trained' by 'puppeteers', where the 'knowledge' taught by the puppeteers becomes reinforced by their own manipulations. Reality or truth lies outside the cave in the sun. For Artaud, the cave is theatre. In the Platonic metaphors of *The Theatre and Its Double*, Artaud took a more tolerant view of shadows and spectacle. He believed that there are false and true shadows and spectacles, and that it is possible to distinguish between them. Far from identifying wisdom with an emergence from the cave to gaze at reality,

Artaud "thought that modern consciousness suffers from a lack of shadows" (Sontag, 1988: xxxv). The answer is to stay in the cave but devise better spectacles. The theatre that Artaud proposed will serve consciousness by "naming and directing shadows" and destroying "false shadows" to prepare the way for a new generation of shadows, around which will assemble "the true spectacle of life" (Artaud, 1958: 12).

According to Artaud, a performance must always be a place of singular duplicity: the 'doubles' and 'shadows'. It is a Nietzschean duplicity of the Dionysian and the Apollonian that foreshadows the "doubles" and "shadows" of Artaud's theatre (Weber, 2002: 30). As described by Artaud, "this releases conflicts, disengages powers, liberates possibilities and if these possibilities and these forces are black, it is the fault not … of the theatre but of life" (Artaud, 1958: 31).

In "the true spectacle of life" action cannot be measured, either negatively or positively, in terms of actuality (Artaud, 1958: 12). According to Samuel Weber, this idea cannot be separated from Lyotard's idea of performativity, "the economic dictates ... which ... have a very definite, if problematic, goal, that of the maximization of profit" (Weber, 2002: 27), profit that demands not just the production of 'knowledge', but knowledge that is appropriable. Performativity therefore continues to impose its goal upon knowledge, which is permitted to develop only insofar as it serves this particular end. It is this goal that is explicitly challenged by Artaud's theatre (Weber, 2002: 27).

'Staged authenticity'

So far, there is Vinkenoog's performance inspired by Artaud's idea of theatre and Starren's performativity. By using the metaphor of the organization-as-theatre, I reflect on the role of the actor. According to Artaud, this metaphor doubles reality, or reality becomes the double of theatre. The world cannot be understood without the copy of the theatre and Artaud believed that "only in the very relationship between the world and its copy that the truth of the world is to be found" (Butler, 2002: 43). Artaud's ideas and Vinkenoog's performances might be an alternative framing of theatre in organizational life. Organization and theatre literature tend toward two clusters – those that look at theatre as an instrument to improve business performance and those that resist such claims, preferring a critical view on theatre as a discourse of managerial control. The introduction of performance art and happenings might help "to recognise the complexity of theatre and organization as simultaneously instrumental and oppressive, subversive and uncontrollable, beautiful and ugly" (Beyes and Steyaert, 2006: 107).

It is this complexity of theatre and organization that is the most visible in the notion of authenticity. The performances of Artaud and Vinkenoog reached the heart of the matter whenever they performed with most sincerity. The performances were most pure when they unveiled themselves, gave themselves in extreme, solemn gestures and were not held back by any obstacle set by custom or behaviour (Grotowski, 1968: 64). Artaud and Vinkenoog wanted to express their 'authentic' self; by this they meant revealing spontaneously some inner meaning of themselves. To be 'authentic', this "revelation has to be unmediated by rationality, because this rationality separates speech and writing, body and mind" (Thiher, 1999: 268). It was the difference between the body and the mind, the deadening process of 'doubling', which was Artaud's concern. Derrida and Vinkenoog agreed with Artaud that this 'doubling' is part of the power game of language that destroys the authenticity

of the actor and that the actor must "break through language in order to touch life" (Artaud, 1958: 13). Artaud and Vinkenoog believed that authenticity comes before language.

For the contemporary leader-as-artist, however, there is a demand for authenticity in order to be visible and to create trust and transparency. Therefore, to be 'authentic' is a job that must be accomplished and performed to make it open to the analysis and measurement of others. Following Judith Butler, this performing is to some degree "inauthentic" because it is only through ritualized repetition of controlled performances, acting according to a script, that it takes on the appearance of truth (Bearn, 2000: 459; Scott, 2009: 334). It is this repetition that Artaud wanted to erase. According to Artaud, "[r]epetition separates forces, presence, and life from themselves" (Derrida, 1978: 310). "Repetition summarizes negativity, collects and continues the past present as truth, as ideality. The truth is always that which can be repeated" (Derrida, 1978: 311). It is the economy of repetition, "the economy of truth" (Derrida, 1978: 311), which creates false shadows.

The tension has to do with the existential authenticity of rhetoric. There are two different types of rhetoric at play; Vinkenoog is rhetorical and Starren is rhetorical. The difference is that Vinkenoog and Artaud believed that rhetoric can be fully authentic, while Parker, Burrell, ten Bos and Starren finally see rhetoric as "staged authenticity" (MacCannel, 1973) of contextually determined power relations and actions. It is these different types of rhetoric that seem to generate the incompatibility of language games; it creates Lyotard's *différend* (Parker, 2002a: 100). Following these arguments, it may be that DBMC is not there for the truth, but instead to sell the third spirit.

'Vinkenoog the Subjectile'

It is here that I want to return to 'the source' of this research, my dissatisfaction and irritation with the propositional language of DBMC and popular management literature. It seems that this dissatisfaction and irritation comes from the incompatibility of language games. The incompatibility of the ideas of 'authenticity' as envisioned by the avant-garde artists of the 1950s and 1960s, with the ideas of 'authenticity' legitimated by the notions of performativity and the third spirit. Throughout this project I have become more aware of Diderot's 'paradox of acting'. By deconstructing the texts and performances of Vinkenoog's and the texts of DBMC, I identify the complexity of the role of the leader-as-artist in contemporary organizations as simultaneously instrumental and oppressive, rebellious and uncontrollable, beautiful and ugly.

But why is this of importance? Why is Vinkenoog's 'authentic' performance of importance for the 'staged authenticity' of the leader-as-artist? Is it perhaps naïve of me when, in this thesis, I call for leader-as-artists – and indirectly DBMC – to reintroduce the ideas of Vinkenoogs's artistic critique so that they can break through the propositional language in order to touch life? Are Harry Starren's acts legitimized by performativity? Of course! Otherwise he would not be successful; indeed he might even be fired. Is it naïve of me to state that DBMC 'teaches the third spirit' instead of 'the truth'? Of course it does, that's the whole point of DBMC. Management centres are as ideologically related to capitalism as managers are to shareholders.

However, I consider this important as it points to the limitations of the discourse of the third spirit, the limitations that I open up with 'the figure of the artist', Vinkenoog as a model for the leader in contemporary organizations. Following Derrida (1998), 'Vinkenoog the Subjectile' is between two places and has two situations. As the support of the third spirit, it is Vinkenoog who might become

a *gisant* – a grave sculpture, a recumbent figure representing the person in death – spread out, stretched out, inert (Derrida, 1998: 76). 'Passed' into physical death, Vinkenoog's language might be captured as the spirit of an era that served the reinvention of capitalism, where he will always be perceived differently depending on the specific social, economic and cultural context of the time.

But if it does not happen like this, if Vinkenoog is "not abandoned to this downfall or this dejected state, it can still be of interest for itself and not for its representation, for *what* it represents or for the representation it bears" (Derrida, 1998: 76, emphasis in original). Vinkenoog will then be treated otherwise, treated as one who "participates in the forceful throwing or casting, but also, and for just that, as what has to be traversed, pierced, penetrated in order to have done with … the inert support of representation" (Derrida, 1998: 76). In the words of Derrida's interpretation of the subjectile, Vinkenoog then "becomes a membrane; and the *trajectory* of what is thrown upon it should dynamize this skin in perforating it, traversing it, passing through to the other side" (Derrida, 1998: 76, emphasis in original).

In this way, the language game(s) of Vinkenoog "lives, as it were, on the boundary between its own context and another, alien context" (Bakhtin, 1981: 284). Where boundaries are approached and challenged, the *différend* is experienced as a feeling of not being able to find the words to express something. The *différend* signals the limits of one language game and the attempt to move on to another (Lyotard, 1984, 1988).

My aim is to approach and challenge the boundaries of the language games of the leader-as-artist. Therefore, I deconstructed Harry Starren with Simon Vinkenoog and Simon Vinkenoog with Harry Starren. It is I who constructed the 'stage' for Vinkenoog and the leader-as-artist. I created a space to find the words to express the tension within the ideas of leadership in contemporary organizations. It is a story situated at the *différend* between language games and phrase regimes. It created my own language game.

However, the main threat I face is that this story will be reduced to its operational value, whose only criterion is efficiency and all knowledge to be judged in terms of its operational value, the threat of capitalism and its potential to absorb my story. Capitalism, according to Lyotard, "necessarily entails a certain level of terror, be operational … or disappear" (1984: xxiv). The threat faced by 'non-efficient' knowledge is that it will disappear as it ceases to be supported or respected.

The 'Cheat' and the 'Spoil-sport'

All play has its rules. These rules are a very important factor in the play-concept. Here I refer to Huizinga's 'Play Theory' (2008 [1950/1938]). Within the third spirit, with the rules of performativity and its 'staged authenticity', where the status of a person is measured in terms of visibility and activity, one must stick to the rules of the game. The rules of this play are absolutely binding and permit no doubt. According to the French poet, essayist and philosopher Paul Valéry, "no scepticism is possible where the rules of a game are concerned, for the principle underlying them is an unshakable truth" (Valéry, cited in Huizinga, 2008: 11). Indeed, as soon as the rules are disobeyed, the whole play-world collapses. "The player who trespasses against the rules or ignores them is a 'spoil-sport'" (Huizinga, 2008: 11).

The 'spoil-sport' is not the same as the 'false player' or the 'cheat' because the latter pretends to be playing the play and respecting the rules. S/he takes advantage of the other players' loyalty to the rules (Caillois, 2001; Huizinga, 2008). In contemporary organizations, according to ten

Bos (2005), the behaviour of the 'cheat' is based on "postmodern cynicism" as he 'suspects' that many leaders and management gurus comply with this behaviour (ten Bos, 2005: 45).

In the world of organizations, the 'cheat' always has an easier time than the 'spoil-sport'. Organizations are much more tolerant of the 'cheat' than the 'spoil-sport'. This is because the 'spoil-sport' destroys the play-world itself. By withdrawing from the play, s/he uncovers the relativity and fragility of the play-world in organizations. He or she robs play of its *illusion* – a word that means literally 'in play' (from *inludere*). Hence, the 'spoil-sport' must be cast out, for he or she threatens the continuation of the play community. The organization is not concerned whether the spoil-sport withdraws because s/he dare not stay in the game or because s/he is not allowed to stay. Rather, the organization is unaware of the possibility of 'not being allowed' and therefore describes it as 'not daring'. According to Huizinga, the problem of conscience and conformity is no more than fear of punishment. The 'spoil-sport' destroys the magic world of play and therefore s/he must be ejected. However, it sometimes happens that the 'spoil-sport' forms a new community with rules of its own (Caillois, 2001; Huizinga, 2008).

In the end, my quest brings me to the conclusion that there are two alternatives 'at play'; alternatives that many of 'the actors' of this thesis have faced before, or maybe will face in the future: the choice between being a 'cheat' or a 'spoil-sport'.

Chapter 7 The Evoked Spirit of Metis

"[I]t disappears into its own action, as though lost in what it does, without any mirror that re-presents it: it has no image of itself" (de Certeau, 1984: 82). With the word *it* in the previous sentence, de Certeau refers to one of the elements of 'metis' or 'cunning intelligence', a concept I will explore later in this chapter. At the same time, *it* can refer to me, the author of this book and storyteller of the ideas of DBMC represented by its texts, and the ideas of Simon Vinkenoog in the context of contemporary leadership. By describing the paradoxical positions of Starren and Vinkenoog in my stories, I have created a tension between the authentic rhetoric of Vinkenoog and the rhetoric as 'staged authenticity' of Starren. However, I disappeared into my own action of telling the stories. As Vinkenoog and Starren's stories are rhetorical, my stories are rhetorical too. Although I described my paradoxical position as 'biting the hand that feeds me', it never becomes quite clear what role I played. What about my authenticity? Do you, the reader, trust my story if there is no image of me, the author? You know by now that I am a Program Director at de Baak Management Centre. If I am dissatisfied and irritated with their texts on leadership, what are the consequences of my actions within the company? Did I create my own 'staged authenticity'? Perhaps you have asked yourself these questions in the course of reading this book. Therefore, it is time that I 'reveal' my image in the mirror.

The 'Shakespearian fool'

My research created for me a tension between the theoretical knowledge of contemporary ideas of leadership and my practically concrete responsiveness to specific situations within DBMC. It was the theoretical knowledge that provided me with a 'safe', 'in between' position, a place where I could approach the questions I described in the Introduction to this book. At the same time, the 'in between' disconnect me from 'the practice of everyday life' within DBMC. I was not capable of sharing my critical stories with our clients and my colleagues, because research was only measured

by its operational value, an operational value I could not make clear at that time. However, gradually I began to tell my story, first to some of my colleagues and later on, to some of our clients. Inspired by the ideas of Vinkenoog, it was important for me to make my ideas visible. It was a story I wanted to tell, a story that I thought would amplify so-called 'weak signals'.

Change frequently starts with such 'weak signals' described by Letiche and Statler as "individual behaviours grounded in personal sense-making, undertaken in concrete circumstances" (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 7). The 'weak signals' often come from the periphery, but generally provide sensemaking and improved knowledge. 'Weak signals' often go unnoticed, however, they can make a real qualitative difference for an organization (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 7; Letiche, 2008: 111). It is this description of 'weak signals' that explains why I wanted to share my story. These signals seem to emerge most frequently and easily from puzzling circumstances and tend to mobilize tacit knowledge (Baumard, 1999). I was often confronted with such 'puzzling circumstances'. As required, in any organization of the third spirit of capitalism, I had to be visible within DBMC. As part of this 'visibility', I had to show my authenticity in order to be trusted; authenticity that must be performed so that it is open to the analysis and measurement of others. These puzzling circumstances made me try to maintain myself the 'in between' place, and, at the same time, perform my authenticity; a position that eventually evoked questions about my loyalty to the ideas of DBMC. Was I a 'cheat' or a 'spoil-sport'? With a story that appears to call the 'truth' of DBMC into question, I created a place for myself on the periphery of the organization. If we go back to the idea of the organization-as-theatre, this role felt similar to the 'Shakespearian fool'.

Historically, the 'Shakespearian fool' is an ironic and paradoxical figure who enjoyed unusual toleration and relative freedom in speaking his mind. He was often able to offer strange insights through his foolery. Shakespeare was fascinated by this freedom of speech. He used his fools not only to entertain, but also to deliver humorous critiques and to enlighten his audience with crude observations about other characters and events in the play. The 'Shakespearian fool' is understood to be effectively different from the clown, who was described as a 'natural idiot'. Shakespeare used the fool's freedom to offer critical observations that coming from any other character, would have been rebellious to the system. Behind his foolery, the fool could cover up sharp comments on contemporary discourse. Mark Edmundson (2000) describes the role of the 'Shakespearian fool' by saying, "Shakespeare's fools are subtle teachers, reality instructors one might say, who often come close to playing the part that Socrates, himself an inspired clown, played on the streets of Athens". Basically, the 'Shakespearian fool' serves to offer an overlooked or otherwise unspoken insight in a thought-provoking manner. The character type is important mainly because it can express a dissentient point of view. The paradox is that the fool must not only be authentically intelligent, observant, practical and insightful, but he must be aware of being truly foolish in either going too far beyond the fragile limits of toleration or being confusing and unclear to the audience (i.e. Goldsmith, 1958; Kaiser, 1963; Speaight, 1980; Wells, 2000).

It is the role of the 'Shakespearian fool' that is described in Huizinga's *Homo Ludens* as the role of the cult orator (Huizinga, 2008: 121) or 'spoil sport' (Huizinga, 2008: 12). And it is the role of 'cult orator' that Vinkenoog saw as the role he had to play in order to offer insights in a thought provoking manner. Therefore, it can be said that Vinkenoog acted not only as a cult orator, but also as a 'Shakespearian fool'. This raises a question for me; is it possible that I play the same role as Vinkenoog did? After all, he inspired me. He gave voice to 'weak signals', especially in the 1950s and 1960s. Vinkenoog also inspired me because of his 'performance' during my interview with him in the summer of 2008. It was a performance that combined his wisdom, flamboyance, opportunism and

passion, all while sharing his insights with me. During the interview he continually changed rhythm, sometimes thoughtful, sometimes performing a poem or rushing inside his small log cabin to look for a book or a photo. It was this experience that made me decide to research Vinkenoog's role in the artistic critique in the Netherlands. I was especially struck by his openness, his interest in new ideas and his ability to share his ideas. Other people I interviewed for my research told me that they were also inspired by Vinkenoog's ideas and performances and that no inquiry into the artistic critique in the Netherlands could be done without interviewing him.

Aside from the suggestion made by others to meet Vinkenoog, perhaps you are wondering why I chose Vinkenoog instead of Constant as the representation of the artistic critique in the Netherlands. After all, Constant also played an important role in the avant-garde movements of the 1950s and 1960s. The academic answer to this question is that Constant came from art and was only seen as an artist (Wigley, 1998). Constant acted from a perspective of realism and not from a choice between reform and revolution[1]. Although Constant's utopian vision of New Babylon was eagerly adopted, at first by the Provos (van Duijn, 1985: 20), but later on he became too theoretical for them (Kennedy, 1995: 22). Moreover, Constant's appreciation for technology was contrary to the ideas of technology within the Provo movement, and therefore Constant was alienated from the Provos. While New Babylon's image of a culture full of play and creativity increasingly came into the spotlight during the sixties, the personal influence of Constant slowly disappeared (Kennedy, 1995: 10). Constant's ideas became detached from Constant as a person, a separation occurred between his art, thoughts and his body. Vinkenoog, however, acted from a perspective of imagination. He acted as a 'connexionist man' and a rebel. As a person, he appealed to the imagination of his audience. Vinkenoog certainly appealed to my imagination. That being said, aside from the academic response, it was truly my experience with Vinkenoog that led to his major role in my work.

Let us turn back to the 'Shakespearian fool'. For the purpose of this book, it is not important if I play the same role as Vinkenoog, rather it's the consequences of this role that are of interest. An advanced understanding of the consequences of the role of the 'Shakespearian fool' is essential, because I believe that it is not only me who plays this role. I believe that the clients of DBMC, the leaders-as-artists, buy 'our products' because my colleagues and Harry Starren also play the role of the 'Shakespearian fool'. Our clients want us to be subtle teachers and to enlighten them with critical observations and 'humorous' critiques. As trainers and Program Directors, we create relative freedom to offer observations and critiques, because, as the 'Shakespearian fool', we remain outside the frame of our client's organizations. We are the ones who look in, commenting on what we see. We must act authentically intelligent, observant, practical and insightful; but at the same time, we must be aware of not going too far beyond the delicate limits of toleration, or being too confusing and unclear to the audience. The tolerance of our clients and their demand for clarity is framed within the third spirit of capitalism. The knowledge we offer our clients is restricted by the 'script' of the third spirit, and is therefore only tolerated if it is based on the rules of performativity – i.e. the mercantilization of knowledge, based on the criteria of the most efficient input/output ratio. We are 'allowed' to play the role of the 'Shakespearian fool' as long as we are not there for the 'truth', but to sell the third spirit. Like the boy who saw the Emperor with no clothes, we may speak truths that can be heard - indulgently, patronizingly and with amusement - but they will not be received if we are not selling the third spirit. If our clients were to object to our observations, then it would be easy to point out that it was merely a fool who said it. Our knowledge is then turned into nonsense, our freedom into anarchy, and our outspokenness into irony.

It seems that we are now returning to the puzzling circumstances or paradoxes that I am experiencing. But now there is more at stake. Now it appears that not only am I experiencing these paradoxes, but also my colleagues. And there is more at stake, because selling the 'truth' of the dominant discourse, blocks learning (Hardy and Clegg, 1996). It is with this paradox that I return to de Certeau's (1984) ideas of tactics and strategy.

The Classical Concept of Metis

De Certeau's ideas on tactics and strategy draw a distinction between strategy as a dominant principle, while tactics are 'waiting to jump'. De Certeau (1984: xix) writes:

> *I call a 'strategy' the calculus of force-relationships which becomes possible when a subject of will and power (a proprietor, an enterprise, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated from an 'environment.' A strategy assumes a place that can be circumscribed as proper (propre) and thus serve as the basis for generating relations with an exterior distinct from it (competitors, adversaries, 'clientèles,' 'targets,' or 'objects' of research). Political, economic and scientific rationality has been constructed on this strategic model.*
>
> *I call a 'tactic', on the other hand, a calculus which cannot count on a 'proper' (a spatial or institutional localization), nor thus on a borderline distinguishing the other as a visible totality. The place of a tactic belongs to the other. A tactic insinuates itself into the other's place, fragmentarily, without taking it over in its entirety, without being able to keep it at a distance. It has at its disposal no base where it can capitalize on its advantages, prepare its expansions, and secure independence with respect to circumstances. The 'proper' is a victory of space over time. On the contrary, because it does not have a place, a tactic depends on time – it is always on the watch for opportunities that must be seized 'on the wing'. Whatever it wins, it does not keep. It must constantly manipulate events in order to turn them into 'opportunities'.*

This paragraph in *The Practice of Everyday Life,* where de Certeau introduces his concept of strategy and tactics, ends with the statement, "the Greeks called these 'ways of operating' *metis*" (de Certeau, 1984: xix, emphasis in original). For me, it is the concept of metis that will produce a greater understanding of the puzzling circumstances and the ambiguities I find myself in. And at the same time, metis might open up the possibility to incite further discussion with my colleagues on the role we play within leadership education. Based on my analysis of the rhetoric of Vinkenoog and the leader-as-artist, I will raise questions concerning the ethical value of metis for management theory and the practice of management training. I hope to produce a greater understanding of the tactical and innovative power of metis, as well as provoke further discussion concerning the ethical significance of the cunning form of intelligence (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 1). Metis concerns a way of operating that enables people to "disguise or transform themselves in order to survive" (de Certeau, 1984: xi).

Next to this, metis provides me with the possibility to escape the dualism or opposites between the artist-as-leader and the leader-as-artist that I created in this book: the artistic critique

versus the social critique; the authenticity of Vinkenoog versus the 'staged authenticity' of Starren; the tactics of the rebels versus the strategy of the contemporary leader; selling the third spirit versus selling the 'truth'; propositional language versus poetry; the 'cheat' versus the 'spoil sport'. The dualism seems to overlook the ambiguity, complexity and dynamics of the practice of everyday life. Therefore, let us turn to metis as a form of knowledge dedicated to the ambiguity of today (Baumard, 1999: 64).

To begin with a better understanding of metis, I first want explore the concept of metis by looking at classical Greek sources. The Greek civilization was atune to the reconciliation of opposites and the acknowledgement of ambiguities. Rules were profoundly linked to their transgression. An ethical life did not mean "necessarily abiding by the rules but rather the practice of the metis" (Babeau, 2007: 32). Practical knowledge was considered crucial to the Greeks, as it was the road to both practical wisdom (*phronesis*) and cunning intelligence (*metis*). It was in the interaction based on this knowledge, that the Greeks saw the roots of learning and education. They saw practical knowledge as the essential source of all wisdom, but also of all ruse (Baumard, 1999: 64).

In the Greek myth, Métis, a female Titan and first wife of Zeus, was known as the patroness of wisdom, good counsel and cunning intelligence (Hesiod, *Theogony*: 927). After attempting to drug Zeus, who had just killed his father Kronos in the hope of begetting his offspring, she is swallowed by Zeus with the intent to provide him with the power to stabilize his own new order. The result of this act is ultimately the creation of Athena, a different form of wisdom that is appropriate to an orderly cosmos. Athena becomes the protectress of the orderly divine polity, Athens. As a result, the logic of chaos and dynamic change are absorbed and consumed, giving rise to the ideal of an everlastingly unchanging order. The implication of this myth is that the cunning, practical power of metic knowledge and responsive action is constrained in the interest of protecting a fundamentally static order.

Plato and Aristotle are similarly concerned with preserving the static, eternal order. For that reason, Plato and Aristotle affirm the dominance of theory over practice. They clearly distinguish theoretical knowledge from the practical forms of knowledge that involve metis. The classical philosophers find that metis is particularly relevant in the areas of military strategy, politics, medicine and the skills of the artist, and it was a key element in Greek learning (Detienne and Vernant, 1978: 5). The metic intelligence appears to be comprised of two main elements. First, there is the sharpwittedness (*agchinoia*) and alertness that is required to identify and understand dynamically changing circumstances. Second, there is the 'good eye' (*eustochia*) or skill to take aim accurately for a specific goal or target. Therefore, according to Letiche and Statler, "the practical metic intelligence necessary for sustaining strategic advantage, leadership and well-being depends both on an awareness of change, and on the capacity to respond adaptively to it" (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 3). As these goals do not necessarily involve 'truth', but 'survival' or 'advantage', the development of metic intelligence is associated with the sophists' rhetorical practice of making the weaker argument seem stronger (de Certeau, 1984: 39; Letiche and Statler, 2005: 3). Such practices, although certainly useful in the domain of leadership, "cannot be formalized abstractly into general principles, and thus they are deemed inappropriate for an orderly society by Plato and Aristotle" (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 3), and the successive Western intellectual tradition (Detienne and Vernant, 1978: 318).

According to Detienne and Vernant, it is "not difficult to detect the presence of metis at the heart of the Greek mental world in the interplay of social and intellectual customs where its influence is sometimes all-pervasive" (Detienne and Vernant, 1978: 3). However, there is no text that explicitly

formulates, analyzes, or discusses the basic characteristics and beginnings of metis. Metis must be found elsewhere; in areas which the politician or leader usually pass over, or mention only with hostility or irony so that, by contrast, he can perform "to its fullest advantage the way of reasoning and understanding which is required in his own profession" (Detienne and Vernant, 1978: 4).

Metis and the Leader-as-artist

The concept of metis was introduced into contemporary thought by Marcel Detienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant, with their book *Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society* (1978). The authors' survey the term's usage in classical sources such as Homer's *Odysseus* and *Iliad,* Hesiod's *Theogony*, and Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. They demonstrate, as I describe above, that cunning intelligence was a lively and important aspect of Greek culture and society, but that it has been overlooked and marginalized because of the dominant legacy of the Platonic tradition that condemned metis as an unreliable corrupter of the "truth" (Detienne and Vernant, 1978: 3). In the name of a metaphysical tradition, the theoretical and implicit knowledge of the clever and the practical was rejected as non-knowledge (Baumard, 1999: 65). However, according to Detienne and Vernant (Detienne and Vernant, 1978: 3-4),

> *There is no doubt that mêtis is a type of intelligence and of thought, a way of knowing; it implies a complex but very coherent body of mental attitudes and intellectual behaviour which combine flair, wisdom, forethought, subtlety of mind, deception, resourcefulness, vigilance, opportunism, various skills, and experience acquired over the years. It is applied to situations which are transient, shifting, disconcerting and ambiguous, situations which do not lend themselves to precise measurement, exact calculation or rigorous logic.*

What better definition of the practices of the artistic critique, can we find than the concept of metis or cunning intelligence and its dynamic logic. It is an even better description of the actions of the artistic critique than the description of 'practical wisdom' (*phronesis*), I used in chapter two. Phronesis is practical, but not inherently oblique, indirect or devious (Raphals, 1992: 5; Statler and Roos, 200: 73-74). By contrast, metic intelligence operates with a "peculiar twist, the unexpressed premise that both reality and language cannot be understood (or manipulated) in straightforward 'rational' terms but must be approached by subtlety, indirection, and even cunning" (Raphals, 1992: 5). It reflects the internalized ability to attain a surprising reversal of situations. At the same time, metis seems to offer a partial definition of the ever-fleeting identity and activity of the leader-as-artist. It presents a description of the practice of everyday life of the contemporary leader.

However, Detienne and Vernant's description of metis is also a vivid description of Simon Vinkenoog. It is this 'metis behaviour' of Vinkenoog that I experienced during our interview. This portrayal of Vinkenoog is the best way to explain why he inspired me and why he became a key figure in this book.

In the classical Greek sources, the gods demonstrate two different styles of action. Some gods influence the orderly structure of events and of the world, but do not appear in specific situations to assist human activities. By contrast, other gods intervene as direct agents in the lives of humans and lead them to safety and victory. The sociological divide between structure and

agency is portrayed as a characteristic of the two categories of gods. Metis, as a form of intelligence, refers to those gods with agency who intervene in specific situations. They make it possible for humans to respond successfully to circumstances against the odds. But, write Letiche and Statler, "can human individuals truly hope to out-smart fate, with passion, humor or innovativeness? Or put in contemporary terms, will the brute logic of economically determined power relations prevail in organizations?" (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 3) If metis pertains to the human level, Letiche and Statler go on, "can we say anything 'in general' about it? Can metis be described in theory at all if its key characteristic is that it emerges only in specific and unique circumstances?" (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 3) As an answer to this question, Plato and Aristotle recommend that the conceptual model most suited to metis is a paradox in which the shortest way of reaching one's goal is by way of a detour (Detienne and Vernant, 1978: 308). To the extent that such a metaphorical detour involves both semantic and performative evocation of metis, Letiche and Statler suggest that metis can be successfully approached as a theme of rhetorical analysis (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 3). This rhetorical analysis examines specific moments of communicative interaction. Metis refers to a mode of intelligent action that reacts to particular events in the context of recognizable circumstances. If specificities count, then what is said and how it is said becomes significantly important. As rhetorical analysis "focuses on the situationally specific efficacies of communication, metis is revealed in and through what is said and how it persuades" (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 3-4).

The rhetorical analysis is an appropriate description of the method I use throughout this book. By deconstructing the texts of Vinkenoog's artistic critique and the propositional texts of the leader-as-artist, the notions of 'the paradox of acting', 'staged authenticity', the 'cheat' and the 'spoil-sport' emerged. But does this foster a shift from a rhetoric of creativity and freedom to a rhetoric of performativity with its repression and control? As noticed earlier, metis can simultaneously be associated with both rhetorics. However, according to Letiche and Statler, these two rhetorics appear incompatible and contradictory (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 4).

Is metis there, for the repression and control of performativity? Or does it emphasize the unanticipated consequences of action and the ability of the specific person, group or circumstance to 'make a difference'? Could metis perform the rhetorical function of surreptitiously announcing and justifying an action that makes a difference? Could metis win out, in practice, over the rational, propositional language of the third spirit that is centred on performance and performativity? Or on the other hand, does metis only offer an occasional 'in between' or interlude between the rhetorics of the third spirit? Might metis function as a 'staged authenticity' to evoke creativity and innovation by promising that the specific individual has some value in organization? Or does metis offers a genuinely alternative logic that can liberate people in organizations from the logic of performativity?

According to Letiche and Statler, the immediate effect of these questions is "to destabilize certain logics of organizational leadership and control" (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 5). According to popular management theories, the leader-as-artist should do his or her best to speak with 'the voice' of the third spirit, a clear message that is grounded in the basic 'truths' of this spirit. The leader thus assumes a special role, presupposing that his or her own actions function as a first principle, setting in motion a series of efficient causes leading to success. According to this logic, the leader is required to be a visionary and to predict (through analysis) how the organization will be successful. If the organization implements and executes the third spirit correctly, then by necessity it will succeed. It is, therefore, implied that a single 'truth' (as in 'strategic goal') of the third spirit is possible, and that this 'truth' can match necessarily and completely with organizational success. In addition, it is implied that a 'good' leader knows (or can discover) the personal qualities s/he needs,

in order to meet the requirements of the 'truth'. A leader who is unable to do this is inadequate, failing personally in his or her commitment. Consequently, the ethical quality of the leader – whether it is 'good' or 'bad' – is presumed to stem primarily from his or her "ability to know and express the strategic 'truth' in the organization" (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 5).

This analysis is not new, as I describe it extensively in the previous chapters. However, metis "challenges certain assumptions about the human subject that inform this characterization of strategic intent" (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 5). In short, metic intelligence is never exclusively the product of the subject. Although the notion of metis does refer to a subject's situationally specific action in the context of dynamic circumstances, it does not presuppose that the actor (here the leader and his/her strategic intent) is the first cause of that action. In the Greek myths, human metis is (co-)created when the gods intervene against the inevitability of fate. However, from the perception of human experience, a puzzling, problematic or unsolved situation simply arises and then a cunning, unforeseen and clever action occurs in response. This response "is not earned with virtue, hard work or analytic power. Instead, it is intuitive and gratuitous, emergent and fleeting" (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 5).

This notion of the role of the individual implies that the role of Vinkenoog within the artistic critique was merely an intuitive, cunning and clever reaction to the puzzling situations in the context of dynamic circumstances of that time. Perhaps this book is a result of the puzzling situations that I experienced with the rhetorics of the third spirit and is also an act of metic intelligence. Although this text is a result of hard work, it started as a cunning action in response to the context of dynamic circumstances of DBMC. However, this notion of the role of the individual also has consequences for the leader-as-artist.

Metis, thus, involves a partial abandonment of control – that is, "it involves not assuming oneself to be the agent of every solution, or the cause of each decision" (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 5). By the logic of metis, one cannot will oneself to be the master of organizational destiny. Instead, one must accept the interference of a cunning, imaginative power that arises from the concrete, practical circumstances. "This power apparently 'comes from elsewhere', irrespective of any prevailing analytic rationality, or 'best practice'" (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 5), and this notion makes the authors raise the question: can leaders "who rely on metis ever really 'know' that this is the case?" (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 5) What do leaders do when they face "transient, shifting, disconcerting and ambiguous situations?" (Detienne and Vernant, 1978: 3) If these questions are asked within the discourse of the third spirit, (with its demand for a cost/benefit analysis of each use of human resources, transparency, and its demand for 'being someone'), the foundations of the role of the leader-as-artist are inherently unstable, and the power of metis has been implicitly acknowledged but explicitly denied (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 5).

Learning or Not

Metis happens in organizations when actions exceed the limits of control domination. Anytime individuals question, look, reflect, learn and act on immediate circumstances, they directly experience their work situation. However, shared encountering with what 'is', instead of what 'should be', remains exceptional (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 6). In many organizations, propositional language replaces lived circumstances. Experienced faults, encountered dilemmas and problematic situations must be rephrased into positive, action-oriented language. Difficulties and 'negativism'

are avoided, certainly not discussed and collectively denied. In many organizations, one is not free to admit mistakes or to question practices or procedures. Learning is blocked because issues are not clear, real problems cannot be analyzed and the unforeseen is feared. However, when annoyed by events, irritated by outcomes or shocked by consequences, people start to look for explanations (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 6). This is generally the point at which leaders approach DBMC with a 'learning question'.

This demand to understand 'what and why', to investigate alternatives and possible transformations, indicates change and learning. Learning thrives on questioning and openness, doubt and investigation, reflection and searching. It is this 'demand to understand' that my colleagues and I try to address. We believe that we provide a space where our clients can question, look, and reflect on organizational circumstances. Creating a space of "psychological safety" required for learning and change to be developed and shared (Edmondson, 1999: 350), supports interaction as innovative and circumstantial, instead of routinized and prescribed. In this "psychological safety", the participant feels free to question, doubt, criticize and change practice(s) (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 6).

However, as I described earlier, this learning approach seems to champion the 'truth' of the third spirit. Our clients expect us to do so. By 'buying' a training program, our clients know they will hear stories on 'how to become successful in the third spirit'. In this way, our programs are predictable. Our clients participate in our training programs to look for explanations, where they try to reassert control in the face of unpredictability. Our training programs are then perceived by our clients to be sense-making activities that form an abstract map for action. It is this sense-making process, that Karl Weick (1999) understands as the most important characteristic of how organizations and their members make sense of their environment.

> *[A]uthors such as Weick (1979) view an organization's understanding of its environment [whereby] interpretation is …categorized …as a succession of three steps: scrutiny (understood as an acquisition of date); conferral of sense to the information obtained; followed by organizational learning, defined as the process by which certain knowledge about action dominates the organization's relationship with its environment (Daft and Weick, 1984: 286). It would seem that interpretation is to be understood as both a process and a product. Understood as a product, it serves as a basis for the taking of action, and so precedes organizational learning (Argyris and Schön, 1978). Understood as a process, interpretation is the sequence through which a signification is given to information and through which actions are chosen (Daft and Weick, 1984). The tendency is then to attempt to establish a retroactive relationship between each step; interpretation influencing scrutiny, learning through action influencing interpretation. (Baumard, 1999: 9)*

For DBMC, this sense-making and its prospective action make it possible to frame the training within the 'script' of the third spirit and its performativity. Besides making sense of puzzling circumstances, it is a way to meet the demands of our clients and to tell them upfront what spending their scarce resources will 'produce'. An experienced engagement with circumstances is sacrificed to the logic of performativity, where the sense-making must be efficient and have an operational value. However, for metis, this does not suffice to respond to the unexpected (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 6).

What is missing is any real engagement with the circumstances in question and the experiencing of the tension, of dealing with the "fuzzy" and undefined (Letiche and Statler, 2005:

8). Leaders often deal with puzzlement associated with blurred contours and non-codifiable circumstances, but the logic of performativity is only willing to deal with those aspects, which can be made sensible. Leadership in the third spirit is about creativity and innovation, based on rationality and performativity, which is described in propositional language and that must make sense. All of this represses unexpectedness, imagination and non-sense, advocating the normalization of creativity and innovation. And it will not (necessarily) lead to change (Edmundson, 1999). The ability of persons, in their concrete circumstances, to question and transform their situations is far more important. Cunningness, creativity, innovation and change must be specific and hands-on; "metis always manifests itself in particular events" (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 7). It has to do with intuitive attentiveness, heightened awareness and situational intelligence (Baumard, 1999). However, because metis operates without a map, it appears that the principle of transparency upon which sense-making is grounded does not apply to it. With metis, write Letiche and Statler, "there is something outside of sense-making that takes over when unforeseen and unforeseeable events gain control" (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 8). Hence, whereas the leader-as-artist tries to make sense of the situation and reassert control in the face of unpredictability, Baumard believes that "we must head for there … where reason likes to be in danger" (Bachelard, cite in Baumard, 1999: 1). Vagueness of events gives occasion for metic knowledge and action, but it brings disaster for rationality and performativity. The sense-making procedures, rationality and performativity, do not know what to do when confronted by the indiscernible, paradoxical and seemingly random.

The required knowledge for the leader-as-artist appears as intuitive, tacit and unique. Logics of rationality and performativity described in propositional language may well lead to success some of the time, but a purely imaginary, short-lived response (metis) also has a tactical validity (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 9). Implicit, nonintentional circumstances demand highly speculative answers and minimally grounded extrapolations. 'Weak signals' require interpretation. Vague possibilities and uncertain circumstances can allow for the leader-as-artist to learn and for organizations to change and develop. Alternative practices, possible options, and to-be explored scenarios, undeniably occur and can open patterns of discovery. To respond, intuitive forms of recognition are needed. Metis is the logic of such exploration and response (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 9).

It is here that we arrive at an important consequence for my colleagues and me. This reality has implications for our learning programs. First, if we want to evoke metis in our training programs without a map for action and where circumstances are not codifiable, it will be difficult to offer our clients a sense-making program answering to the demand for performativity. How does one describe a 'fuzzy' and undefined program? Second, what will this create for my colleagues and me as professional trainers and Program Directors? In the shifting, ambiguous and uncertain situations of metis, some will feel themselves much more at home than others. Some will sense the direction of events, identify the nature of possible threats, and react spontaneously, appropriately and effectively. Others may become overwhelmed and inflexible. The ability to deal successfully with uncertainty is not grounded in one's analytical skills or in best practices. But how should one react for the indistinct, vague, implicit and non-intentional circumstances of metis? Interesting is to notice that within the logic of metis, and opposed to the logic of the performative, the questions I raise apply to my colleagues and me, but also to the leader-as-artist.

To deal with these questions, I want to follow the suggestion of Letiche and Statler who suggest that turning to de Certeau's (1984) distinction between tactics and strategy will bring more concretization for the claim that organizations and their leaders require metis to respond to the

empuzzlement of their circumstances (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 9). While Baumard powerfully calls for metis his case studies do not tell much of its practice (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 9). Nevertheless, Baumard's theoretization of the differences between representative and analytical sense-making and metis can be thought to hold up (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 9). Baumard explains how metis functions as an addition to and critique of the sense-making tradition of the Weickian School. He reveals the extremely rationalist bent to sense-making and points us to the intuitive, uncodifiable and inimitable characteristics of creative action (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 9). Baumard's idea of 'puzzling circumstances' matches de Certeau's idea of the 'tactical'; it is de Certeau who links metis with storytelling. It is this insight, from de Certeau, that seems important to the 'puzzling circumstances' of the leader-as-artist and my colleagues, but also to me. It deals with my experience of 'puzzling circumstances' within the rhetoric of the leader-as-artist. Next to this, it deals with the paradoxes within the strategy of the leader-as-artist that originate from the tactics of the artistic critique of Vinkenoog.

The Story of Metis

I have already described de Certeau's concept of strategy and tactics, ending with his statement that "the Greeks called these 'ways of operating' *metis*" (de Certeau, 1984: xix, emphasis in original). Strategy is subservient to a main discourse and is performed in accordance with convention. Tactics are unpredictable and indeterminate. Therefore, metis, or the unexpected exploitation of circumstance, is 'tactical'. Referring to Detienne and Vernant's *Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture & Society*, de Certeau describes metis "close to everyday tactics through its 'sleighs of hand, its cleverness and its stratagems', and through the spectrum of behaviours that it includes, from know-how to trickiness" (de Certeau, 1984: 81). According to de Certeau, the characteristics of metis can also be attributed to stories; "storytelling is also something like metis" (de Certeau, 1984: 82).

In the third spirit, the leader who frames his/her strategy by the tactics of the artist or rebel creates a notion of 'strategy-as-practice' (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 10). Following Letiche and Statler, it seems clear that in the contemporary balance between an ideal of permanent control (grounded in the concept of performativity) and an ideal of transient responsiveness, between strategy's 'principles' and tactics' 'circumstances', tactics appear to be an attractive way of reflecting further on the considerations of the role of a Program Director.

When I state that our role is to sell the 'truth' of the third spirit, I am referring to the idea that we claim to grasp the truth of tactics – i.e. effectively to 'strategize', in theory, the role of the leader about his/her 'tactics' based on the model of the artist. We thereby assume that the leader-as-artist does not master his or her paradoxes and that the leader understands little about the culture of his organization. The Program Director claims to see what our clients cannot see. We claim to be able to formalize and 'know' the lived assumptions of daily practice, while the leaders-as-artists have no such access to their own 'truth'. This is how the 'tactics' of lived experience are set down into 'knowledge' – 'tactics' are tamed, symbolized and rationalized. The unconscious and the organization are made to be logical, understandable and predictable. 'Tactics' lose their spontaneity, playfulness and unpredictability. Learning makes reality logical, ordering it in a way that makes sense of it, at the cost of reducing 'tactics'.

Where de Certeau saw tactics in opposition to the powerful, in the third spirit tactics are incorporated into the strategy. Does this mean that Zeus swallows Métis once again? And if so,

is learning possible? We seem to be back at the puzzling circumstances I found myself in at the beginning of this chapter. Although it seems that I cannot settle this question here, we can return to de Certeau. While it is clear that metis never produces objective truth or theory (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 11), it does in fact create stories (de Certeau, 1984). De Certeau praises Detienne and Vernant's book because it is not an argument, but a sequence of stories (de Certeau, 1984: 81). To remain loyal to itself, it seems that metic intelligence must remain indissociable from the time of its experiencing. Metis must not be strategized into a theory or concept, but must be left as raw experiential possibility. Stories of metis are therefore entirely appropriate, while theories of metis are entirely inappropriate (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 11).

For the leader-as-artist, my colleagues and me, metis can be called upon to emerge in the anecdotal form of stories. Though there seem to be ways to appeal to metis, still one cannot pre-program or plan for its effects (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 13). One can, however, evoke metis. As explored in the text above, openness to listening is crucial to such an evocation, inclusive attending to 'weak signals', creating psychological safety, accepting puzzling circumstances and a preference for tactics. But we also must pay attention to the dark side of metis: its unpredictability, unruliness and (possibly) its fickleness. Change is unmanageable, involving unpredictable events that may lead to good or bad. Metis refers to the notion of intelligence that responds to real-time events by powerfully grasping opportunity and embracing possibility (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 13-14).

After all, 'it is only a story'

It is with this book that I tell stories of the artistic critique of the 1950s and 1960s in the Netherlands. I also tell stories of the leader-as-artist within the third spirit of capitalism. The 'weak signals' amplified by Vinkenoog have become a 'strong discourse' of the third spirit. This book is a telling of the cunning intelligence and cleverness of Vinkenoog, applied to dynamic situations. This book is also a telling of the metic intelligence of the leader-as-artist, associated with the rhetoric of performativity. But most of all, this book is a telling of my experience with both rhetorics. For me, this experience created paradoxes and puzzling circumstances, as metis is contradictory and incompatible. I was inspired by the metic intelligence and tactics of Vinkenoog, but at the same time irritated by the cunning intelligence and strategy of the leader-as-artist. Perhaps the stories in this book are my cunning form of intelligence, dealing with these paradoxes. The contemporary interpretation of the Greek concept of Métis has helped me understand these paradoxes, particularly with respect to the association between the artist-as-leader and leader-as-artist. However, it has also helped me understand the 'truth' of DBMC. Metis seems closely linked to my way of dealing with the demand for performativity. I started this research as a sense-making activity, in order to gain control of my engagement with puzzling circumstances. The sense-making did not settle my questions; the only way out seemed to be to act as a 'spoil-sport' or a 'Shakespearian fool'. However, by evoking the notion of metis, the apparent paradoxes of the 'non-creativity of creativity' and the 'non-learning of learning' produced by the logic of performativity and its effects, raised the question of my own role in a new way.

Metis is applied to situations that are "transient, shifting, disconcerting and ambiguous, situations that do not lend themselves to precise measurement, exact calculation or rigorous logic" (Detienne and Vernant, 1978: 3-4) and it "never produces objective truth or theory" (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 11). Therefore, this book only seems to leave narratives and stories in its wake.

There can be no 'true' descriptions of metis because description requires an author's perspective that controls the text and provides purpose and order. In metis, the narrative itself takes detours, meanders and presents its acquired experiences (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 11), continuously oscillating between two opposite poles (Detienne and Vernant, 1978: 5). No "objects of knowledge are produced", just tales of "flair, sagacity, foresight and intellectual flexibility" (Detienne and Vernant, 1978: 9). However, in doing so, the story "does not express a practice. It does not limit itself to telling about a movement. It *makes* it" (de Certeau, 1984: 81, emphasis in original). Therefore, this storytelling takes on "scientific importance" (de Certeau, 1984: 81).

As a result, metis can give voice to the paradoxes of the third spirit of capitalism. The narratives of metis identify the most important logics of the third spirit and its style of leadership. By pressing the principles underlying these logics, the stories of metis can destabilize certain 'truths'. It is interesting here to note that metis cannot be silenced by capitalism; it must not be strategized into a theory or concept, but instead left as a raw experimental possibility (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 36). Where a theory or concept can be consumed by capitalism, the narratives of "puzzling circumstances" and "transient, shifting, disconcerting and ambiguous situations" can never be disarmed by it (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 36). Therefore, evoking stories of metis may constitute the ground on which a constant renewal of critique becomes possible (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 36). This means that in order to place value on Simon Vinkenoog as an exemplar, we must be careful not to deal with the artist-as-leader Vinkenoog as an object of knowledge. We must also be careful not to consider the stories of Vinkenoog as "true" descriptions, but instead as tales of "flair, sagacity, foresight and intellectual flexibility" (Detienne and Vernant, 1978: 9).

Within the notion of metis, the stories of Vinkenoog's artistic critique are not about an agent of change, but are stories from one who accepted the intrusion of an imaginative, cunning power that arose from concrete, practical circumstances. When Vinkenoog acted in a cunning, innovative, hands-on and specific way, which became manifest in particular events and his involvement in exceptional 'moves', he merely showed his contemporaries the 'weak signals' of change.

At the same time, the concept of metis provides "a critique of managerial intentionality that problematizes the self-similarity of the subject from which any intentional awareness might originate" (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 14). Metis "calls attention to the irreducible excess of the self, or rather to those aspects of intentional awareness that can never be fully or finally represented, reconciled and incorporated as explicit self-knowledge" (Letiche and Statler, 2005: 14). It problematizes the core characteristics of the leader-as-artist, where self-knowledge is "the happiness in prospect" (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 462) for him or her, where s/he must express an identity that is true to his/herself.

However, as metis is suited so close to paradox, and seems to emerge most frequently from puzzling circumstances, maybe now is the time to evoke the escape of Métis from the belly of Zeus. And as I have learned from metis, I can evoke metis by telling stories of metis, but not pre-program or plan, its effect. Perhaps for individual leaders who face uncertain futures, the evocation of metis makes it clear that 'leading' is not simply an act of authentic behaviour that serves to inspire his/her 'audience'. In its place, 'leading', even under the best conditions, always involves a singular and irreversible set of situations, and its sustainability in the face of an unpredictable future requires at least a margin of creativity and cunningness.

Finally, for my colleagues: if we provide training programs for the leader-as-artists, telling them that they must take artists as their models, we create paradoxes and ambiguities. Where the leader-as-artist is associated with acts and activities beyond the trivial and everyday, he or she is

confronted with the practice of everyday life; the everyday that will bring puzzling circumstances. I believe we must tell stories of the 'knowledge of ambiguity'. By doing so, our evocation of metic intelligence and its aspects of organizational life can raise questions of 'weak signals', ethics and values in a new way, as in the suppressed classical Greek tradition, placing value on metis and its 'knowledge of ambiguity'.

Notes

[1] *Discussion on an Appeal to Revolutionary Artists and Intellectuals*, where Constant insisted on clarifying that he acted from a perspective of realism; not from a choice between reform and revolution: Published in Internationale Situationniste #3 (December 1959).
(http://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/si/appeal.html; accessed on 09 May 2011)

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Samenvatting in het Nederlands (Abstract in Dutch)

Van kunstenaar-als-leider tot leider-als-kunstenaar
Dichter en performer Simon Vinkenoog als voorbeeld van modern leiderschap

In deze Nederlandse samenvatting zet ik uiteen waar mijn verhaal over gaat. Ik geef eerst aan wat de aanleiding is geweest voor dit onderzoek, daarna beschrijf ik de thema's die van belang waren voor mijn onderzoek. Tot slot deel ik mijn conclusies met u. Deze paragraaf blijft vóór alles een samenvatting. Hierdoor is er weinig ruimte voor detail en nuance.

Introductie

In de huidige managementliteratuur wordt de manager beschreven als formeel, controlerend, coördinerend en sturend (o.a. Kotter, 1990; Mintzberg, 1998). De functie van een manager is vaak gericht op de handhaving van stabiliteit, systemen en bureaucratie. Dit in tegenstelling tot modern leiderschap, dat vaak wordt gezien als het organiseren van verandering en het activeren van innovatie en vernieuwing. De moderne leider wordt beschreven als visionair, authentiek, intuïtief, charismatisch, inspirerend, innovatief en creatief. Deze ideeën bieden een verscheidenheid van kenmerken voor een leider in tegenstelling tot die van een manager. De leider is visionair in plaats van rationeel, gepassioneerd en inspirerend in plaats van sturend, innovatief in plaats van analytisch en moedig in plaats van gestructureerd (o.a. Alvesson en Sveningsson, 2003; Barker, 1997; Boltanski en Chiapello, 2007; Dubrin, 2001). De fundamentele taak van deze leider, althans volgens Bartlett en Ghoshal, is de bevrijding van de menselijke geest, zodat creativiteit, inspiratie en ondernemerschap mogelijk worden. Bartlett en Ghoshall geloven dat de "organization man" moet worden omgevormd tot iemand met een persoonlijkheid en eigen initiatief (Bartlett en Ghoshal, 1995).

Het zijn deze ideeën van modern leiderschap die worden weerspiegeld in de leerfilosofie van de organisatie waar ik werk, de Baak Management Centrum VNO-NCW, een opleidings- en kennisinstituut op het gebied van leiderschap en ondernemerschap.

Volgens deze filosofie zijn leiders mensen die in het bedrijfsleven en de samenleving leiden met kennis van zichzelf, anderen, de business en de organisatie. Ze worden verondersteld uitzonderlijke individuen te zijn, openstaand voor nieuwe kennis en daardoor beter in staat de ontwikkeling van hun eigen talenten en de talenten/behoeften van hun medewerkers te beïnvloeden. De leerfilosofie is gebaseerd op de "kernwaarheid" dat degenen die authentiek en open zijn, de grootste kans hebben bij te dragen aan hun organisaties en de maatschappij.

Bij de Baak zijn wij van mening dat het leren van de leider een persoonlijk avontuur is dat leidt tot inzicht, innovatie en vooruitgang. Verondersteld wordt dat dit leidt tot 'echte autonomie' op basis van 'authenticiteit', 'zelf-actualisatie' en 'persoonlijke ontplooiing'. Op deze manier kan de leider zijn potentieel ten volle ontplooien, wat bijna 'automatisch' zorgt voor meer werkplezier en effectiviteit. Deze 'echte autonomie' is nodig omdat het professionele leven van de leider niet bestaat uit loopbaantrajecten, functiebeschrijvingen en systemen van de sanctie-beloningen, maar door wat wordt genoemd "de kracht van de projecten" (Boltanski en Chiapello, 2007: 90).

Dit alles creëert een beeld van leiderschap dat niet langer is afgeleid van een officiële functieomschrijving, maar is gebaseerd op de persoonlijke kwaliteiten van een persoon. De leider beschikt over het talent om anderen te inspireren door zijn charisma, authenticiteit en andere sterk emotioneel georiënteerde middelen met als doel mensen te stimuleren om deel te nemen aan projecten. De leider wordt gezien als een "uitzonderlijk persoon" (Boltanski en Chiapello, 2007: 91) met "redding gevende kwaliteiten in een wereld die voortdurend gered moet worden" (Rost, 1993: 94). Leiderschap gaat over krachtig handelen. De leider handelt, de volgelingen reageren en het onderscheid dat gemaakt wordt tussen de 'uitzonderlijke persoon' en de manager mythologiseert hedendaags leiderschap (Alvesson en Sveningsson, 2003: 1435-1436). En volgens de Baak kunnen onze klanten zichzelf ontwikkelen tot zo'n 'uitzonderlijk persoon', waarbij ze met de hulp van de eigen organisatie hun dromen kunnen realiseren. De kenmerken van deze 'uitzonderlijke persoon' of de leider zijn steevast beschreven in een positieve taal. Dit beeld van de leider benadrukt dat zijn leiderschap erg belangrijk is en iets heel bijzonders. Dit alles leidt ertoe dat mensen de leider associëren met handelingen en werkzaamheden buiten het triviale en het alledaagse. Het is dit idee over leiders en leiderschap dat het conceptuele kader voor mijn onderzoek en analyse vormt.

Echter, in de teksten van de Baak over de leider en zijn leidinggevende kwaliteiten staan ook uitdrukkingen als 'authentiek en betrouwbaar overkomen'. Het lijkt erop dat leiderschap niet gaat over authentiek *zijn*, maar veeleer over authentiek *overkomen* om vertrouwen te creëren. Blijkbaar maakt het niet uit of de leider authentiek en betrouwbaar is, zolang hij maar wordt gezien als zodanig. Het creëert in feite een spanning tussen de mogelijkheid van 'echte authenticiteit' en opportunistisch gedrag. Het is deze spanning die aan de basis ligt van mijn onderzoek. Vanuit een kritische benadering geeft het boek een persoonlijk verslag van mijn zoektocht naar een beter begrip van de spanningen binnen de ideeën van leiderschap in hedendaagse organisaties. Het is gebaseerd op mijn persoonlijke ervaringen als programmamaker bij de Baak.

Critical Management Studies

De kritische benadering is geïnspireerd op de ideeën van de Critical Management Studies (CMS). CMS is een stroming die als uitgangspunt heeft dat organisaties sociale fenomenen zijn. Wanneer organisaties worden beschouwd als sociale fenomenen, worden ze gezien vanuit een ander perspectief dan louter vanuit een managementperspectief. Binnen het managementdenken viert

rationalisme hoogtij, claimt het vóór alles praktische relevantie en is het "hopeloos vergeetachtig" (Spoelstra, geciteerd in Kaulingfreks et al., 2004). CMS betwijfelt of dit managementperspectief managers en leiders voldoende inzicht geeft met betrekking tot organisaties. Mainstream managementdenken houdt meestal te weinig rekening met toevalligheden, dilemma's, paradoxen en tegenstellingen.

Het is vanwege de verkenning van toevalligheden, dilemma's, paradoxen en tegenstellingen dat de kritische ideeën van CMS mij aanspreken. Misschien zijn de bedrijfsethiek, de ideeën van de zelfactualisatie en persoonlijke ontplooiing en de mogelijkheid van opportunistisch gedrag en zelfzuchtige persoonlijke belangen vanuit een puur managementperspectief gezien noodzakelijk voor het voortbestaan van de leider. Maar als dat zo is, hoe zit het dan met de betekenis van de veel geprezen 'echte autonomie' en authenticiteit? En wat zijn de gevolgen van een uitsluitend managementperspectief op de ideeën van creativiteit, innovatie, activiteit en flexibiliteit? In mijn onderzoek ben ik ingegaan op deze vragen vanuit een kritisch perspectief.

In plaats van een puur managementperspectief profileert CMS zich rond drie samenhangende kernproposities: denaturalisering, antiperformativiteit en reflexiviteit (Fournier en Grey, 2000; Grey en Willmott, 2005). Ten eerste: denaturalisering gaat over "deconstructie van de 'realiteit' binnen organisaties" (Fournier en Grey, 2000: 18), het 'denaturaliseert' datgene wat meestal vanzelfsprekend is. Als kan worden aangetoond dat de vermeende onveranderlijke uitgangspunten van neomanagementdiscours (verandering, innovatie, creativiteit en dergelijke) sociale constructies zijn, geworteld in specifieke historische momenten, dan staan ze mogelijk open voor geleidelijke verandering. Ten tweede: CMS heeft een 'non-performatieve' opzet, dat wil zeggen dat het winst- en omzetmaximalisatie als het enige legitieme (organisatie)doel verwerpt. In plaats daarvan stelt CMS "vragen over de verbinding van kennis en waarheid met efficiëntie ... en beoogt het te ontdekken wat er gebeurt in naam van performativiteit" (Fournier en Grey, 2000: 17). Ten derde: CMS is filosofisch en methodologisch reflexief, het probeert de eigen beweringen te problematiseren om op deze manier organisatiefenomenen te identificeren. Tegelijkertijd biedt CMS een ander perspectief dan het objectivisme en het sciëntisme van mainstream onderzoek, waarbij dit onderzoek een aanname van neutraliteit hanteert (Fournier en Grey, 2000: 17-18, Grey en Willmott, 2005: 5-6; Parker, 2005: 355).

Voor mij bieden de kernproposities van CMS de mogelijkheid mijn vragen en het onderzoek in een kader te plaatsten. Vragen zoals: welke beeldvorming speelt een rol in het denken over de leider in hedendaagse organisaties en door welke specifieke historische momenten wordt deze beeldvorming bepaald? Hoe kan ik vragen stellen bij de verbinding van kennis en waarheid met efficiëntie binnen het neomanagementdiscours en de idee van leiderschap? Wat kan ik zeggen over mainstreamonderzoek (zoals zichtbaar wordt in de populaire managementliteratuur) en zijn neutraliteit? En hoe kan ik mijn eigen beweringen problematiseren? Mijn argumenten zullen zich richten op het onderzoeken van deze vragen en hun implicaties.

De artistieke kritiek

In mijn zoektocht naar de specifieke historische momenten van waaruit het huidig leiderschapsdenken is voortgekomen heb ik mij laten inspireren door Fred Turner (2006), Thomas Frank (1997), Joseph Heath and Andrew Potter (2004) en Luc Boltanski en Ève Chiapello (2007). In *From Counterculture to Cyberculture* beschrijft Turner met behulp van het levensverhaal van Stewart Brand (oprichter van de

Whole Earth Catalog, The Co-evolution Quarterly, The Whole Earth 'Lectronic Link en *Global Business Network)* de overeenkomsten tussen de Amerikaanse tegencultuur van de jaren zestig van de 20e eeuw en de huidige netwerkeconomie. In *The Conquest of Cool* laat Frank zien hoe in de Verenigde Staten de tegencultuur moderne organisaties heeft beïnvloed. "De organisatietheorieën van de jaren negentig maken expliciete verwijzingen naar ideologieën en ervaringen van de tegencultuur van de jaren zestig" (Frank, 1997: 28). Heath and Potter komen in *Nation of Rebels: Why Counterculture Became Consumer Culture* (2004) tot dezelfde conclusie. In *The New Spirit of Capitalism* (2007) zijn het echter Boltanski en Chiapello voor wie "management literatuur als voorschrift voor het kapitalisme" een kader biedt dat de rol van kritiek in de dynamiek van het kapitalisme het best beschrijft.

Boltanski en Chiapello concluderen dat het neokapitalisme zich zo lang heeft kunnen handhaven, omdat het in staat is zich continu aan te passen aan de kritiek. Het neokapitalisme ontleent zijn kracht aan het vermogen om kritiek te absorberen en te incorporeren in zichzelf. In dit proefschrift beschrijf ik hun analyse in detail, gebaseerd op één van hun belangrijkste argumenten: de artistieke kritiek van de tegenculturele bewegingen van de zestiger jaren van de 20e eeuw is voornamelijk verantwoordelijk voor het hedendaagse neomanagementdiscours en het imago van modern leiderschap. Ontleend aan Max Webers studie over de protestantse (werk)ethiek en het kapitalisme wordt dit discours door Boltanski en Chiapello omschreven als 'de derde geest van het kapitalisme' waarin de leider de kunstenaar als model heeft (Boltanski en Chiapello, 2007).

Echter, Turner, Frank, Potter en Heath hebben zich in hun onderzoek gefocust op de tegencultuur in de Verenigde Staten, terwijl de analyse van Boltanski en Chiapello zich heeft beperkt tot Frankrijk. Geïnspireerd door de conclusies van deze auteurs ben ik in mijn onderzoek op zoek gegaan naar de ideeën van de artistieke kritiek in Nederland. De voorbeelden in mijn verhaal komen van de tegencultuurbewegingen en de artistieke kritiek van de jaren vijftig en zestig van de 20e eeuw in Nederland. Ik zal betogen dat deze ideeën verantwoordelijk zijn voor de ideeën en het imago van de leider in hedendaagse organisaties. En waar de hedendaagse leider de kunstenaar als model heeft, vertegenwoordigt de dichter, schrijver en performer Simon Vinkenoog in dit proefschrift de kunstenaar.

De thema's

In de hoofdstukken in dit boek neem ik u mee op een tocht langs 'de rand' van het hedendaags leiderschapsdenken. Gebaseerd op onder andere 15 interviews met 'hoofdrolspelers' van de tegencultuur uit de jaren zestig en een diepte-interview met Vinkenoog geef ik inzicht in de leidende en invloedrijke rol van Vinkenoog binnen de artistieke kritiek van de jaren vijftig en zestig. Tegelijkertijd zal ik de teksten van de Baak verbinden met de huidige managementliteratuur en de ideeën van Vinkenoog, alles in de context van het leiderschapsdenken in hedendaagse organisaties. Door gebruikmaking van de teksten van Vinkenoog bespreek ik de toevalligheden, dilemma's, paradoxen en tegenstellingen in het hedendaags denken over leiderschap.

Hoofdstuk één introduceert de artistieke kritiek van de vijftiger en zestiger jaren in Nederland. Het toont aan dat de analyse van Boltanski en Chiapello ook van toepassing is op Nederland. Ik bespreek de invloed van de Experimentele Groep in Holland (later overgaand in CoBrA) en de Vijftigers op de Nederlandse tegencultuurbewegingen en de artistieke kritiek. In het

kort: hoofdstuk 1 geeft een beschrijving van het *Magisch Centrum Amsterdam*. Het laat zien dat de Nederlandse Beats, de provocerende theatrale provobeweging, de psychedelische subcultuur en de innerlijke werkelijkheid van vrijdenkende geesten samenkwamen in een kritiek op het kapitalisme. Ze brachten de ideologie van het kapitalisme en zijn vormen van rechtvaardiging in diskrediet en transformeerden op deze manier Amsterdam in de jaren zestig tot een mekka voor een opkomende internationale tegencultuur. Ze daagden de waarden en mogelijkheden van het kapitalisme uit om zichzelf te voorzien van nieuwe rechtvaardigingen wat resulteerde in de huidige vorm van het kapitalisme, gekenmerkt door het huidige 'netwerk' denken.

Hoofdstuk twee is een analyse van één van de belangrijkste problemen van het huidig leiderschapsdenken: de spanning tussen de eis om tegelijkertijd flexibel te zijn én om authentiek over te komen (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2007: 462). Terwijl mobiliteit, flexibiliteit en aanpassingsvermogen essentiële kenmerken zijn van de huidige leider (wat discontinuïteit in zijn relaties impliceert), is het ook noodzakelijk om consistent en stabiel over te komen om vertrouwen en authenticiteit te behouden. Door binnen dit kader de concepten van eigen identiteit, zelfontplooiing, dynamiek, intenties en praktische wijsheid te onderzoeken verbind ik de ideeën van Vinkenoog en Constant Nieuwenhuys (beter bekend onder zijn kunstenaarsnaam Constant) over authenticiteit en flexibiliteit met de ideeën over de authentieke leider.

In hoofdstuk drie beschrijf ik de symbolische representatie van de homo ludens door Simon Vinkenoog. Deze beschrijving is niet alleen gebaseerd op de ideeën van Huizinga (2008 [1950/1938]) van de homo ludens als de spelende mens en de ideeën van Constant (1964) van de homo ludens als de creatieve mens, maar ook op de representatie van de homo ludens in het huidig leiderschapsdenken. Door te kijken naar de functie van poëzie in de idee van de homo ludens en de creativiteit van Vinkenoog in 'het spelen met taal' (Lyotard, 1984) analyseer ik de volledige ommekeer van de perceptie van de homo ludens. In de jaren zestig werd de spelende/creatieve mens gezien als subversief, destructief en protesterend tegen de maatschappij en massaconsumptie, terwijl in de huidige managementliteratuur de creatieve mens wordt gezien als de belangrijkste bron binnen een organisatie.

Voor de leider in hedendaagse organisaties, die de kunstenaar als model heeft, is het creëren van een happening (zoals een performancekunstenaar) essentieel (Boltanski en Chiapello, 2007: 359). In hoofdstuk vier laat ik zien dat deze stelling van Boltanski en Chiapello wordt weerspiegeld in teksten van de Baak. Gebaseerd op de idee dat de 'performancekunstenaar' verwijst naar de theater-als-metafoor-benadering van performance binnen organisaties en dat het woord 'happenings' verwijst naar uitingen van de artistieke kritiek beschrijf ik de happening gebaseerd op Bakhtins (1984) concept van carnaval, de Certeaus (1984) concepten van tactiek en strategie, en Lyotards (1984) idee van performativiteit (de preoccupatie met performance in termen van efficiëntie en effectiviteit door middel van voorspelbaarheid, kostenbeheersing en het herscheppen van bedrijfsprocessen om te komen tot een maximale opbrengst en die de regie voert over kennis). Het is de "ijzeren wet" (Letiche, 1992: 53) van de performativiteit die de happening herdefinieert van een carnavaleske act van de oppositie naar een act van de strategie door de leider. Echter, innovatie, creativiteit en vernieuwing gestuurd door performativiteit leiden tot middelmatigheid ten koste van excellentie, inperking van de creativiteit en ze waarderen actie boven lezen, denken en reflectie (Jones, 2003: 515; Letiche, 1992, 2004, Lyotard, 1984). Daardoor laat performativiteit "weinig ruimte voor een Ander, dat wil zeggen voor alternatieve standpunten" (Letiche 2004: 81). Op basis van een analyse van de ideeën van performancekunstenaar Simon Vinkenoog over de happening pleit ik voor een artistiek begrip van de idee van performance en performativiteit binnen hedendaagse

organisaties. Het laat zien dat de 'eisen' van performativiteit niet overeenkomen met de complexe aard van organisaties en de effecten ervan. Om deze effecten te begrijpen is het belangrijk de dynamiek van de performanceartiest en zijn volgers erbij te betrekken, waarbij de dynamiek niet onder de controle van één van beiden staat.

In hoofdstuk vijf beschrijf ik het beeld van de leider gedefinieerd door middel van 'de kunst van het leiderschap'. De huidige leider wordt omschreven als gepassioneerd, inspirerend, intuïtief, creatief, fantasierijk, innovatief en levenslustig. Het beeld van deze leider is altijd "esthetisch plezierig" (Hansen, Ropo en Sauer, 2007: 546) en benadrukt de "positieve psychologische eigenschappen en een sterk ontwikkelde organisatorische context, wat resulteert in een groter zelfbewustzijn" (Luthans en Avolio, 2003: 243). Dit beeld definieert de leider binnen de referentie van de idee van "de kunst van het leiderschap" (Hansen, Ropo en Sauer, 2007: 545) in propositionele taal, een taal die probeert negativiteit te vermijden en door middel van enkel positieve uitingen de 'waarheid' creëert (Levin, 1988; Linstead, 2000). Echter, de kunstenaar als model voor hedendaagse leiders is meer problematisch. De karakteristieke kenmerken van de leider-als-kunstenaar kunnen ervoor zorgen dat hij zich buiten ieder rationeel discours bevindt, waardoor de leider kan worden gezien als irrationeel (ten Bos, 2008: 154-155). Door deze kenmerken kan de leider worden gezien als 'creatief' of als 'waanzinnig' (Nettle, 2002; Pope, 2005). In dit hoofdstuk problematiseer ik de propositionele taal van de leider-als-kunstenaar gebaseerd op Artauds concepten van theater, Derrida's interpretatie van Artauds 'subjectile', de ideeën van de artistieke kritiek en het poëtische discours van Vinkenoog.

De paradoxen

In hoofdstuk zes combineer ik de voorgaande hoofdstukken om een bijdrage te leveren aan een alternatief of contra-actualisering van het beeld van de leider in hedendaagse organisaties. Waar ik in de voorgaande hoofdstukken verschillende kenmerken van het huidige leiderschapsdenken heb geanalyseerd en geproblematiseerd, is het in dit hoofdstuk dat een samenhangend verhaal ontstaat. Ik beschrijf hier ook de paradoxen van mijn onderzoek. Moet Vinkenoog medeverantwoordelijk worden gehouden voor de vernieuwing van het kapitalisme van de late 20e eeuw? Teneinde deze paradoxen te bespreken keer ik terug naar de benadering van de theater-als-metafoor voor organisaties. Ik concludeer dat in de zoektocht naar kennis voor Vinkenoog het proces belangrijker was dan het eindproduct, terwijl het 'script' van performativiteit kennis alleen waardeert als zinnig of waardevol wanneer deze kennis direct toepasbaar is en een 'verkoopbaar' product oplevert. Alle overige kennis wordt gezien als on-zinnig of waardeloos. Het is dit 'script' waaraan de leider moet voldoen om succesvol te kunnen zijn, maar het creëert tegelijkertijd 'de paradox van de acteur' (Diderot, 1883). Het creëert een 'geënsceneerde authenticiteit' (MacCannel, 1973).

Het laatste hoofdstuk is een reflectieve benadering van mijn bevindingen. Daarnaast beschrijft het tot welke inzichten dit onderzoek heeft geleid. Het schetst mijn paradoxale positie van een kritische benadering van het hedendaagse neomanagementdiscours binnen het neokapitalisme dat zijn kracht ontleent aan het vermogen om mijn kritiek te absorberen en te incorporeren in zichzelf. Het beschrijft mijn positie als programmamaker binnen een organisatie die er niet is voor 'de waarheid', maar om succesvol te zijn, de 'derde geest van het kapitalisme' 'verkoopt'. Ik omschrijf mijn paradoxale positie als die van een 'Shakespearean fool'. Shakespeare gebruikte de vrijheid van de 'fool' voor kritische opmerkingen die, afkomstig van een ander karakter,

als rebellerend tegen het systeem zouden zijn opgevat. Verborgen achter zijn dwaasheid kon de 'fool' scherp commentaar op het hedendaagse discours leveren. Het karakter is vooral van belang omdat het een afwijkend standpunt kan uitdrukken. De paradox is dat de 'Shakespearean fool' niet alleen authentiek, intelligent, oplettend, praktisch en analytisch moet zijn, maar hij zich er ook van bewust moet zijn de grenzen van tolerantie niet te overschrijden of te verwarrend voor het publiek te worden (o.a. Goldsmith, 1958, Kaiser, 1963; Speaight, 1980; Wells, 2000). Daarnaast zijn 'Shakespearean fools' subtiele leraren en instructeurs van de werkelijkheid, een rol die vaak dicht in de buurt komt bij de rol die Socrates, zelf een geïnspireerde clown, speelde in de straten van Athene (Edmundson, 2000). In dit hoofdstuk kom ik tot de conclusie dat niet alleen ikzelf deze rol speel en Simon Vinkenoog deze rol speelde, maar dat ook mijn collega-programmamakers deze rol spelen. Onze klanten vragen ons subtiele leraren en instructeurs van de werkelijkheid te zijn. Als programmamakers creëren we een relatieve vrijheid om opmerkingen en kritieken te geven, omdat we net als de 'Shakespearean fool', buiten het kader van de organisaties van onze klanten blijven. We moeten authentiek, intelligent, oplettend, praktisch en inzichtelijk handelen, maar tegelijkertijd moeten we ons ervan bewust zijn niet de grenzen van tolerantie te overschrijden. De tolerantie van onze klanten en hun vraag die wordt bepaald door de derde geest van het kapitalisme. De kennis die we bieden is beperkt door de regels van de derde geest en wordt alleen getolereerd als deze gebaseerd is op het 'script' van performativiteit. Wij 'mogen' de rol van de 'Shakespearean fool' spelen, zolang we er niet zijn voor de 'waarheid', maar om de derde geest te 'verkopen'. Als onze cliënten het niet eens zijn met onze waarnemingen dan is het gemakkelijk om erop te wijzen dat het slechts een 'fool' was die het zei. Onze kennis wordt dan vervolgens omgezet in onzin, onze vrijheid in anarchie en onze openhartigheid in ironie. Het lijkt erop dat niet alleen ik de paradoxen ervaar, maar ook mijn collega's. Maar er staat meer op het spel, want de 'verkoop' van de 'waarheid' van het dominante discours, blokkeert leren (Hardy en Clegg, 1996).

Het concept van metis

Uiteindelijk betoog ik dat het gebruik van het concept van metis leidt tot een beter begrip van deze paradoxen en complexiteiten. Metis is een vorm van intelligentie en van denken, een vorm van kennis. Het impliceert een complex, maar zeer samenhangend geheel van een mentale houding en intellectueel gedrag gebaseerd op intuïtie, wijsheid, bedachtzaamheid, flexibiliteit, misleiding, vindingrijkheid, waakzaamheid, opportunisme en verschillende vaardigheden en ervaring die door de jaren heen zijn opgedaan. Metis wordt toegepast op complexe situaties die van voorbijgaande aard zijn en zich niet lenen voor nauwkeurige meting, exacte berekening of strenge logica (Detienne and Vernant, 1978). Het produceert geen objectieve waarheid of theorie (Letiche en Statler, 2005: 11). Metis heeft betrekking op intelligentie die op realtime gebeurtenissen reageert door het krachtig grijpen van kansen en het omarmen van mogelijkheden. Het is een praktische wijsheid die de Grieken in de klassieke oudheid zagen als de basis voor leren en onderwijs.

Voor mij omschrijft metis de tactiek van de artistieke kritiek en Simon Vinkenoog, maar tevens is het een beschrijving van de dagelijkse praktijk van de leider in huidige organisaties. Tegelijkertijd is de vaagheid en niet meetbaarheid van metis rampzalig voor de rationaliteit, de propositionele taal en de performativiteit van de derde geest van het kapitalisme. De prijs hiervan is de miskenning en onderdrukking van metis. Op deze manier worden beleefde ervaring, 'zwakke signalen' en paradoxen getemd, gesymboliseerd en gerationaliseerd.

Echter, volgens de Certeau kan metis ook worden toegeschreven aan verhalen; “verhalen vertellen is net zoiets als metis” (de Certeau, 1984: 82). Hoewel het duidelijk is dat metis nooit objectieve waarheid of theorie produceert, creëert het in feite verhalen. In metis worden geen objecten van kennis geproduceerd, maar verhalen van flair, scherpzinnigheid, vooruitziendheid en intellectuele flexibiliteit. Het uitlokken van deze verhalen beperkt zich echter niet tot het vertellen over ervaringen, maar “het maakt het” en is daarom van “wetenschappelijk belang” (de Certeau, 1984: 81).

Verhalen van metis leiden tot inzicht in de paradoxen en onduidelijkheden van de leider die de kunstenaar als model heeft. Voor de leider-als-kunstenaar, mijn collega’s en mijzelf kan metis ontstaan in de vorm van anekdotische verhalen. Op deze manier zijn alternatieven bespreekbaar, inclusief aandacht voor ‘zwakke signalen’, het creëren van psychologische veiligheid en acceptatie van ‘onbegrijpelijke’ omstandigheden. Maar het biedt ook de mogelijkheid om aandacht te besteden aan de ‘donkere’ kant van metis: de onvoorspelbaarheid, manipulatie, weerbarstigheid en wispelturigheid. Op deze manier ontstaat de mogelijkheid op een nieuwe manier vragen te stellen over ‘zwakke signalen’ en ethische kwesties, volgens de onderdrukte klassieke Griekse traditie, door het waarderen van metis en haar ‘kennis van ambiguïteit’.

About the author

Vincent Pieterse (1964) studied Pedagogics (BA) at the Pedagogic Academy of Oegstgeest (the Netherlands), Special Educational Needs (MSEN) at the University of Applied Science in Tilburg (the Netherlands), and Educational Leadership (MSc) at the Southern Connecticut State University (New Haven, USA). He also studied Special Education at the Herzen State Pedagogical University (St. Petersburg, Russia) and Marketing at the Dutch Marketing Institute Nima.

He is currently working as a Program Director at de Baak Management Centre, one of the largest management training institutes in the Netherlands. He came to de Baak in 1997 and has recently been involved in a project that aims at connecting education and business, in order to enrich development and leadership talent. Prior to this, he worked as a teacher and (interim) principal, at a special school for children with learning and behavioural problems.

His research interests are concentrated around leadership, philosophy and organization, and critical theory.

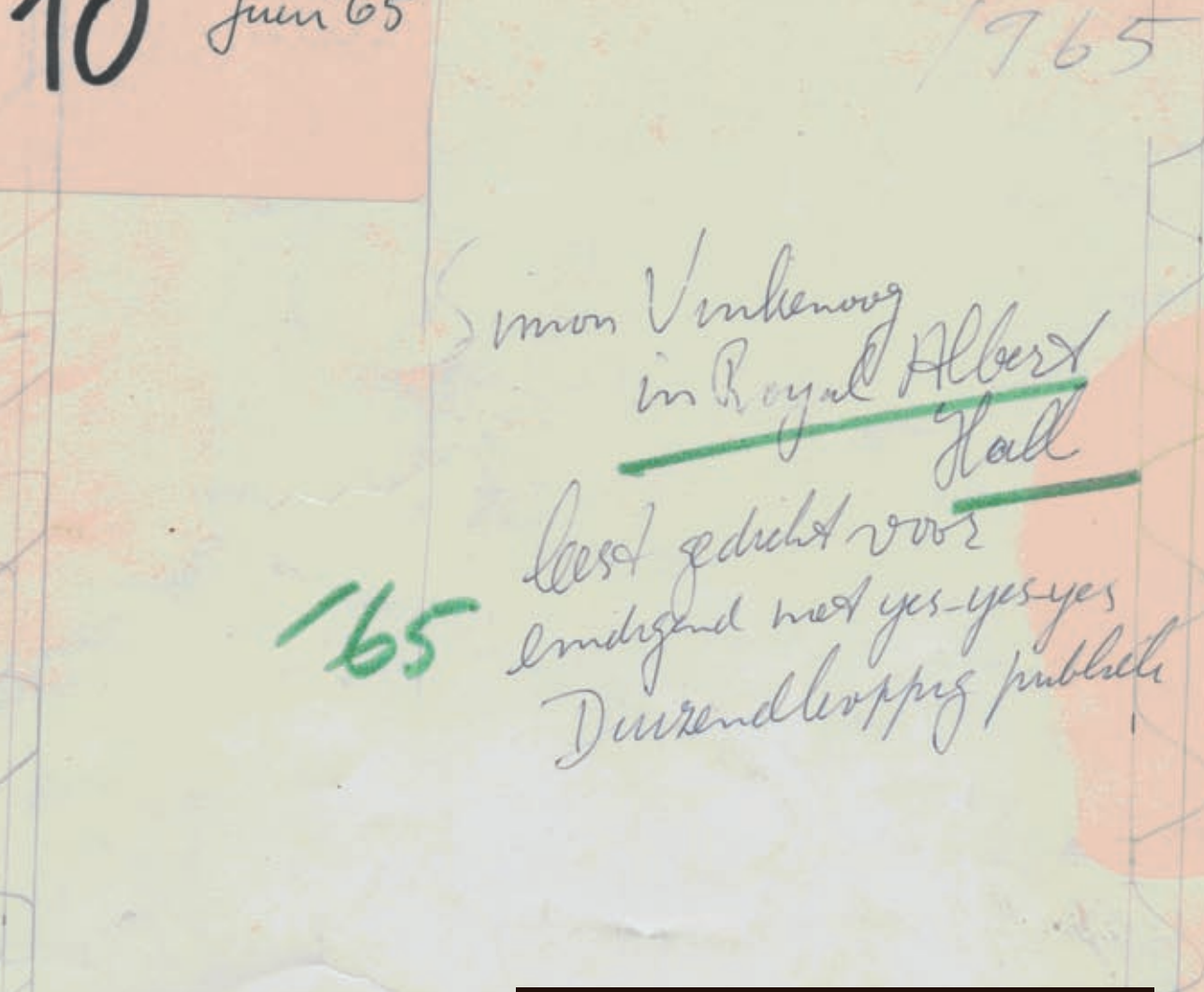
Voicemail by Simon Vinkenoog (2009)

I'm not here right now
You can no longer reach me
I no longer go without saying
No longer eager to please
Self-explanatory.

What you hear now is the silence
that connects us
in the unprecedented
that unexpectedly:

the supreme being.

The final word is NOW.



From artist-as-leader to leader-as-artist is a critical examination of the image of contemporary leadership and its roots.

Through the lens of modern management texts, Pieterse explores the link between contemporary management speak and the artistic critique of the avant-garde movements of the 1950s in the Netherlands, focusing specifically on the Dutch Fiftiers group, the Cobra movement and 1960s countercultural activism. Subsequently, a neo-management discourse is generated whereby the figure of the artist becomes the model for the modern leader: charismatic, visionary, intuitive, mobile, creative, cooperative, open to taking risks and strong at networking. Such a discourse appeals to the values of self-actualization, freedom, authenticity and "knowledge deriving from personal experience" (Boltanski and Chiapello 2007: 113), the very values of the artistic critique that have been absorbed into modern-day capitalism.

Pieterse explores this transformation of the artistic critique into contemporary leadership rhetoric by unfolding the life and work of the Dutch Beat poet and performer Simon Vinkenoog, a highly influential leader in the artistic critique. In doing so he examines the dilemmas, paradoxes and contradictions present within contemporary leadership.

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