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# **Power, knowledge and organizing**

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# **Power, Knowledge and Organizing**

## **Introduction**

The present paper explores the power aspect of knowledge and organizing. It combines two concepts present in organizational theory: the power/knowledge concept represented by Foucault (1978, 1979a, 1979b) and the organizing concept represented by Weick (1979). It aims at providing knowledge and organizing with a power twist that is uncommon in the literature on organizations but none-the-less is a central aspect in understanding and dealing with both.

Even if the last decade has witnessed an increasing interest in knowledge and learning, not much effort has been made in linking power and knowledge directly. There are only a few attempts from especially Australian authors (Hardy & Clegg, 1996; Clegg, 1998; Hardy & Leiba-O'Sullivan, 1998). The point is that we need to link power and knowledge more directly. Otherwise, we may not be able to exploit the insights that such perspectives have offered to organizational research and improve organizing processes. This includes an inability to use these insights to design and implement better programs for organizational change. A presumption for doing that is that organizational researchers dare to speak of the interests and intentions – and the power of these - which are parts of any organizing and change process, but also that we see power as the energy which makes organizing and change possible.

The paper is located within the context of newer approaches, which have emerged in the organizational literature in the past decades. That includes actor-network approaches (Latour, 1996, 1999), postmodern approaches (Lyotard, 1984) and narrative approaches (Czarniawska-

Joerges, 1995. Czarniawska, 1997, 1999, O'Connor, 1999). It is also of interest to authors, who are concerned with dialectics, since Foucault's concept of power/knowledge has a clear dialectical inspiration. However, the paper does not introduce new aspects of the dialectical perspective. Rather, it is located within the four aspects of the established dialectical perspective on organizations: social construction, totality, contradiction and praxis (Benson, 1977).

The paper is organized accordingly. First, the notion of power/knowledge is introduced. Second, power and knowledge are clarified separately. Third, we relate power to organizing. The final section contains the conclusions.

## **Power/Knowledge**

“The multiplicity of force relations immanent in the sphere in which they operate and which constitute their own organization; as the process which, through ceaseless struggles and confrontations, transforms, strengthens or reverses them; as the support which these force relations find in one another, thus forming a chain or a system, or on the contrary, the disjunctions and contradictions which isolate them from one another; and lastly as the strategies in which they take effect, whose general design or institutional crystallization is embodied in the state apparatus, in the formulation of the law, in the various social hegemonies” (Foucault, 1979b, 333-334).

This is Foucault's definition of power. It is one in which the notion of force is important and interesting. It is something, which exists in-between things, something, which exercises an influence over something else. However, a force is never alone but is one among a

multiplicity of forces, which have in common that they try to influence something else. Thus forces are struggling and confront each other. Through these processes they are transformed, strengthened or even reversed. The term “force relations” indicates that a force can never be seen in isolation but must be seen in relation to other forces. These forces find support, contradiction and resistance in each other and are embodied and embedded in the strategies in which they take effect, the institutional and the social set-up. As a consequence – while the terms “forces” and “force relations” indicate fluidity – they have real effects in language, in actions, in techniques, in tools, in buildings etc.

From the above definition, it appears that Foucault’s understanding of power is very complex. It is how we are to understand this concept - and how it relates to two very familiar concepts in organization theory, knowledge and organizing, which is the focus point of this paper. At a first glance the definition is confusing. For example, it only defines power. Yet, we often see Foucault’s perspective presented as power/knowledge (see for example Gordon, 1980). The section called *Method* in *The History of Sexuality* (Foucault, 1979b) brings together a series of statements on power but not very much on knowledge. That does not mean that power, power/knowledge and power and knowledge are the same. There are important differences, which we need to be aware of to understand Foucault’s approach.

There is a second problem with the word power, since it is used differently. Especially when applied in organization studies, power often means something that people possess to get other people to do something they otherwise wouldn’t. Within this line of thinking, power is coercive and located in the hands of individuals, groups or classes and through its exercise people are forced to do something that is against their own desires and aspirations. As observed by Clegg (1998) and Hardy & Leiba-O’Sullivan (1998) this is the traditional image

of power in the organizational literature. However, Foucault's notion of power is different. As an example, Hardy & Leiba-O'Sullivan (1998, 458-460) identify four points in which it is different. First, it contests the concept of sovereign power, which is the underlying assumption of all other dimensions of power - that is the dimensions identified by Lukes (1974). Power is a network of relations, which capture advantaged as well as disadvantaged in its web. All individuals are subjected to power relations. Second, the assumption of a single autonomous individual is abandoned. Instead, Foucault draws attention to how individuals are socially produced by the power relations surrounding it. In this respect, the individual is a socially constructed category of analysis, who has multiple fragmented identities. Third, the status of the researcher is also challenged. Instead of viewing the researcher as all knowing and objective, he too is subjected to specific power relations, which influence his actions. Fourth, power produces identity and thus secures individuals with a sense of what it is to be worthy and competent. In other words, power does not necessarily exercise its influence despite what individuals want. Power penetrates into the very soul of individuals including their wishes, aspirations and knowledge of the world (see also Clegg, 1998). As a consequence the use of the word power is considerably broadened and it means much more than the traditional concept of sovereign power, which Foucault describes as only the terminal form that power takes (Foucault, 1979b, 333). Obviously however this is not only an advantage. It also constitutes a problem, since power very easily becomes everything. When it is everything, it is also nothing. Thus, it loses its power.

As a consequence, we need to be more specific and precise about power and its relations to knowledge. The first step in such an operation is to remind the reader that power can mean different things in English. For example, Kendall & Wickham (1999) suggest that power in the Foucauldian framework should be understood as energy sources. However, that does not

mean that power is not political because power in the Foucauldian sense of the word is definitely political. Rather, power must be viewed as both political and as energy sources. What I mean to suggest though is that power is not negative, but on the contrary that power provide the energy, the power, which produce, reproduce and changes society. Viewed as an energy source, power is not only perceived as productive. It is also something, which finds its opposite in resistance. The interesting thing is of course that one of Foucault's statements on power is that "Where there is power there is resistance" (Foucault, 1979b, 336). Thus we have a dialectical tension between power and resistance, in which development is the result of the interaction of these mutually interdependent, yet opposing forces. In this sense it resembles the concept of contradiction in the dialectical perspective on organizations (Benson, 1977). This concept of contradiction is essential to Foucault's perspective, both in the analysis of power but also in the analysis of knowledge, which are two interrelated, yet different, things in Foucauldian terminology. In the two next sections the knowledge dimension and the power dimension of power/knowledge are dealt with separately.

### **The Knowledge Dimension**

The knowledge dimension is – as with everything else in Foucault's approach - difficult and confusing. Sometimes Foucault uses the word "discourse" to denote a particular field of knowledge. This happens frequently in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault, 1972) in which he is focussed on things like discursive formations, discursive regularities, formation of enunciative modalities, statements etc. However, the word practice also appears before - namely as a "discursive practice," in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault, 1972, 46). At other times, Foucault uses the word "practice" or "practices" to denote particular patterns of knowledge. This is for example the case in the essay known as *Two Lectures* (Foucault, 1976). The shift from "discourse" to "practice" may indicate a shift in focus or a shift in the

relative importance, which Foucault gave the discursive and non-discursive. What is central though is that the word practice abolishes any indication of a hierarchical structure of knowledge – that is the discursive is not primary to the non-discursive –and emphasises that the discursive is only a part of particular practice, which is understood as a pattern or network of relations between statements, meanings, actors, activities, technologies and institutions. That is that the discursive can only be understood in context. In this paper, we use the term “practice” or “practices” to denote a particular pattern or patterns of knowledge. A practice can be more or less local or more or less global but it is always pieced together by a series of smaller practices, which have their role to play in the totality but none-the-less are distinct from the totality in the sense that they preserve an own identity.

In Foucault’s writings practices are relationships between the discursive and the non-discursive. These two poles and their relations constitute a particular field of knowledge. In Foucault's books these fields of knowledge are disciplines within for example the treatment of madness (Foucault, 1967), punishment (Foucault, 1979a), and sexuality (Foucault, 1978, 1979b). The *discursive* is a group of statements and their relations. It denotes the language and concepts that members of a particular community use to communicate and understand each other. It is way of speaking of the world, and it entails a way of seeing, approaching and solving problems. The functions of discourse is thus not just to communicate, it is also to classify, to distinguish, to evaluate, to assess etc. It also entails explanations, representations and justifications of the world.

The second pole of knowledge is the *non-discursive*. It includes instruments, techniques and technologies. It includes institutions (the hospital, the prison, the laboratory), architectures, specific objects and instruments of verification, division of labour, machines, systems, tools,



statistical data etc. The discursive and the non-discursive are interdependent in the sense that they continuously influence each other. One example is *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1979a) in which statements around criminality produce specific techniques and institutions like the panopticon (the non-discursive), which in turn produce statements around criminality (the discursive). Another example is *The History of Sexuality* in which new statements on sex produce for example techniques and architectures like the schoolroom - which in turn produce new statements on sex. When Foucault argues that power is productive he means the process by which the discursive and the non-discursive continuously produces new kinds of statements and new kinds of techniques, architectures, actions etc.

“We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: It includes, it represses, it censors, it abstracts, it masks, it conceals. In fact power produces; it produces reality, it produces domains and objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production” (Foucault, 1979a, 194).

The interaction produces reality including domains and objects and rituals of truth. When Foucault states that the individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production, he means that knowledge is a historical product, produced through decades and centuries of interaction between multiple force relations. As a consequence the individual is not the centre of knowledge. Instead individuals tend to take predetermined positions and roles in the particular practice according to the expectations, which are associated with these positions and roles.

Now, we have already observed how the relations between the discursive and non-discursive are productive, which suggests not only that change happens in a continuous interplay between the two categories but also suggests mutual interdependence in the sense of mutual reinforcement of both the discursive and the non-discursive. To acknowledge this interdependence is to acknowledge the distributed character of knowledge but also of power, as we shall observe in the next section. It also suggests that the discursive and non-discursive are to be understood as dialectically related to each other in the sense of being both mutually interdependent but also mutually exclusive and in a state of continuous contradiction.

A practice has at least three different aspects, which are important to recognize - a communicative aspect, a cognitive aspect and a control aspect. The communicative aspect suggests that a practice has a common set of symbols with which its members can relate meaningfully to the world, with which it can communicate, understand and learn from each other. Within organization science, this aspect is explored within organizational symbolism, which finds its inspiration in the writings of Geertz (1973, 1983). The cognitive aspect denotes how the members of a community perceive the world. The cognitive and the symbolic are closely intertwined – nonetheless they will never be the same (see Hall, 1979). These two aspects are closely interrelated with the third aspect, which is often not recognized in organizational analysis but none-the-less is a central issue in a Foucauldian analysis, the control aspect. The essential thing to recognize is that applying particular practices on a particular field is at the same time an attempt to master and control that particular field. That is to apply specific statements, specific techniques, systems, tools, etc. on a particular field is to try to master and control that field.

In other words, it is not knowledge in itself, which is the driving force of knowledge. The driving force is a wish to master and control a particular field. This is “the will to power” as one of Foucault’s predecessors, Nietzsche, called it (1887, 515) and to which he referred as the essence of being alive.

## **The Power Dimension**

“Resistance is a technical component of governance, a component heavily involved in the fact that governance is always subject to politics. Resistance is part of the fact that power can only ever make a social machinery run imperfectly or incompletely...In Foucault's words, resistance is the counter-stroke to power, a metaphor with strong technical, machine-like connotations. Power and resistance are together the governance machine of society, but only in the sense that together they contribute to the truism that "things never quite work," not in the conspirational sense that resistance serves to make power work perfectly” (Hunt & Wickham in Kendall & Wickham, 1999, 51).

In the discussion of the power dimension, I will as before mentioned turn to Kendall & Wickham’s observation that power is to be understood as energy sources (Kendall & Wickham, 1999, 48-49). We thus have the permanent opposition between power and resistance, which together are the governance machine of society but only in the sense that they contribute to the truism that “things never quite work.” Thus we are going to pursue the idea that an application of a particular practice on a particular field is essentially based on a will to power, that is a desire to control that particular field. The fact that things never quite work is a state of permanent incompleteness, which makes sure that the processes of

development and change in society are never-ending. In other words, there is always an incentive to do better.

The central idea is that the application of a particular practice stems from a desire to control. This indicates that the practice is political and promotes specific interest and intentions. It promotes specific world-views, specific ways of dealing with the world, it produces specific institutions, techniques, statements etc. In societies and organizations we may find a multiplicity of different practices, which are in a state of continuous contest with each other. A contest which is reinforced by the fact that practices - although in themselves being rigid and relatively stable - can be applied on a wide range of different fields. One example comes from *Discipline and Punish* in which the practice applied in punishment became translated and applied in a wide array of other institutions in society – the factory, the hospital, the school camp, the class room etc. But from the above discussion, it is clear that the difference between power and knowledge is not that knowledge is not political. In fact power serves to make the connections between the discursive and non-discursive. Thus, a field of knowledge relies on the exercise of power. Yet power is something different than knowledge. It is a difference, which is sometimes referred to as the difference between forces and forms.

“Thus far we have established power as a series of relations between forces, and knowledge as a series of relations between forms. The question remains: what are the relations between these relations, what are the relations between power and knowledge? The two are completely heterogeneous, but engage in a process of contest with one another similar to that we saw operating between the forms of knowledge. However power passes through forces not forms; it is diagrammatic” (Kendall & Wickham, 1999, 51).

Thus, we may define knowledge as being a specific technique, institution, ritual, tradition, strategy, innovation etc. When these forms of knowledge are directed towards something, they become intentional and purposeful. They become techniques of power to try to govern and control a specific field. It is power, which brings specific statements, institutions and techniques together in a productive relationship. But power comes from outside the poles of knowledge. The multiplicity of forces goes beyond the domain of the practice in that a field of knowledge must be seen as a part of a much broader context. It is from here, that a practice gains its strengths or weaknesses - its power. Since power passes through forces, it is mute and blind. It is strategic but tacit precisely because it avoids the forms of knowledge, the discursive and non-discursive. It is diagrammatic.

In all his writings, Foucault attempts to carry out a diagnosis of the present. He does that by submitting particular practices like punishment or sexuality to historical scrutiny. His aim is to analyse the conditions under which these practices emerged, grew and changed in order to question them from within. That means that these practices find their strengths but also their weaknesses in the surrounding general conditions of their existence. For example we can say that Keynesian economics was able to gain a dominating position because of the great depression in the 1930'ies while it was considerably weakened after the oil crisis in 1973. Even if Keynesian economics didn't change much, its power to speak and to be heard changed significantly. In society a multiplicity of different practices are continuously struggling to make their case. They try to promote specific intentions and interests. But the power of these intentions and interests varies considerably depending on the general conditions in which they speak and are heard. This is also why power is always local and

unstable (Foucault, 1979b, 334) since the strength of an argument can be radically altered in just a short period of time.

This is one of the reasons that Foucault is controversial, since a practice primarily does not find its strength in itself – that is in its basic explanation, basic beliefs, its internal consistency etc – but is found primarily in the general conditions of its existence and the support and the alliances it can find here. In other words, the truth and legitimacy that any practice claims are not only questionable, the existence and power of any practice are also quite arbitrary and incidental products of history. Further, by questioning the truth-value of any practice, he also questions the distribution of prestige, positions, status, rewards, identities, roles, beliefs, etc., which are parts of that practice.

## **Power and Organizing**

“Power is not something that is acquired, seized or shared, something that one holds and allows to slip away; power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of non-egalitarian and mobile relations” (Foucault, 1979b, 334-335).

Power is not something, which is possessed. It is something, which is exercised. Therefore do not ask what power is, ask how it works. It suggests that power must be understood as a process. As a consequence, what we usually refer to as an organization is at any given point in time constituted by series of smaller tiny forces. The organization is never static. It is always moving and changing. It is never perfectly consistent, neither perfectly inconsistent. A multiplicity of different intentions and interests are always in play, and its sub-patterns may

follow different directions. It is how power relates to these organizing processes, which is the focus of this section.

Weick (1979, 6) describes the process of organizing as to reduce equivocality by means of sensible interlocked behaviors. This interlocking is to establish mutual prediction so that actions can be predictably related to each other. The precondition for organizing is then not mutual sharing but *mutual prediction* (Weick, 1979, 100). Mutual prediction is then also a precondition for intelligent action. We may even go as far as saying that intelligent action is defined by the fact that it is predictably related to the actions of other agents, whether these are human or non-human. If not, it is an act of ignorance, although of course this act may have a very intelligent purpose, as in experimentation for example (see also March, 1971, on *The Technology of Foolishness*). Please note, that I am not speaking of mutual prediction in the absolute term but in the relative term – that is actions are not measured according to dimensions of right and wrong but according to dimensions of understood or misunderstood. In the first, actions are measured after a general and objective scale. In the second, actions are measured in relation to the context within which they take place – that is the network of agents, techniques, machines, tools, systems, physical conditions and general circumstances, which are assembled in the event. To speak of mutual prediction in the relative term is also to speak of organizing as social construction.

Organizing as social construction is to put an emphasis on actors and how they produce, reproduce, and change the social patterns. Thus, organizing does not just entail the communicative and cognitive aspects. It also entails the control aspect and is thus a political process. In this connection, Foucault gave to individuals two different roles in relation to power. They “...are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this

*power. They are not only its inert or consenting target; they are always also the elements of its articulation*” (Foucault, 1976, 98). They are both the target of power and the instrument of its exercise. That is power is embodied in individuals and their actions. But power is also embedded in techniques, systems, tools, machines and physical conditions. Latour (1996, 56-58) goes as far to distinguish between human and non-human agents to emphasise that systems, techniques, machines etc. also make requests. They demand things and they have their roles to play in the practices simply because individuals have learned to attach particular meanings to these artefacts.

To discuss the relations between power and organizing is to discuss how human agents establish mutual prediction so that actions can be predictably related to each other in a context, in which many different forces are in play. Looked in this way, organizing is a process, which works continuously to establish mutual prediction between multiple fragmented identities and thus between a multiplicity of different intentions and interests embedded in human and non-human agents. The meaning of the word "organizing" relies on this basic assumption. Organizing is thus also a way of piecing together the many small local practices into larger patterns of practice. Organizing however depends upon the exchange of intentions and interests – “...to speak is to fight” (Lyotard, 1984, 10). In other words to communicate is to try to *persuade* human and non-human agents to do something they - perhaps - otherwise wouldn't. It is to try to influence the actions of human and non-human agents. Communication is intentional and happens in an attempt to dominate and control. There are innumerable examples of how these attempts are framed: to request, to ask for, to order, to demand, to expect, to oblige, to manipulate, to cheat etc. Likewise the receiver can respond in an innumerable number of different ways: to accept, to modify, to inquire into, to resist, to overhear, to forget, to lie etc.



Similarly non-human agents are applied in attempts to produce, to maximize, to improve products, to manipulate genes, to enhance service, to distribute, to differentiate customers, to inform them, and in other innumerable and almost unthinkable ways in the attempt to stay competitive. However as these non-human agents have become increasingly complex, they are often poorly understood and thus contain still greater unpredictability (see Perrow, 1984 and Weick, 1990 on this point). The point is that a complete understanding between the agents is never accomplished, since every individual is shaped by a variety of different circumstances and thus will perceive words and other symbols differently (see also Wittgenstein, 1953). As a consequence it is impossible to acquire a complete understanding between agents. Even if an individual B chooses to accept another individual's request, the force will be modified and altered in the act of B. It is never completely the same. The dialectical relationship between power and resistance suggests among others that agents are never mere extensions of other's interests and intentions. Looked in this way organizing is an open process – always. A situation in which a particular organizing takes places always also contain a number of openings and possibilities than the one, which actually becomes the result. Organizing is always also under construction.

Viewed in this way, organizations are at any given time constituted by a series of small organizing processes. The output however, is not determined by the quality of the different intentions. From a Foucauldian viewpoint, the output is determined by the power of the intentions. In other words, what makes intentions different from one another is not only the specific content of the intention but also the power of them. When an individual A tries to persuade B to do something he perhaps otherwise wouldn't, B's response not only depends on his understanding of A's request. It also depends upon the power of the request including also

the position B is in. In other words, while the, wording, content, meaning and understanding of two requests might be alike, the power of them might be very different.

What it suggests is that any organizing and communication process is never an isolated process but must be seen in wider context. These are the power relations, which Foucault took such an interest in, and which are both part of, but also apart from the political or control aspect of any practice. The question is from where do specific intentions and interests gain the power to speak and to be heard. In the *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault defines some of the rules, which determine this power (Foucault, 1972, 50-53). It includes “*who is speaking*” – that is who is accorded the right to use such a discourse - who is qualified, what is the status of individuals who have the right to speak such a discourse. It also includes *the institutional sites*, from which for example a doctor makes his discourse, from which this discourse derives its legitimate source and point of application. Finally it includes the *situation* that it possible for the subject to occupy in relation to the various domains or groups of objects: Is he the questioning subject, the listening subject, the seeing subject or the observing subject.

The differences in power determine the output of organizing and thus the constitution of the organization. When relatively stable patterns of actions endure, it can be said that a practice has established itself. It is a network of relationships, which makes sure that activities and actions can be predictably related to each other. It determines the kind of actions that are legitimate, how actions are rewarded in regard to economic payments but also prestige, it distributes the role that individuals play in the network and it determines a number of other policies. It determines the borderlines between legitimate and important and illegitimate and unimportant and thus determines the criteria for measuring performance. Thus, every organization defines its own criteria for knowing in it's payment systems, promotion systems,

education systems, its values, traditions, narratives, stories, myths etc. As a consequence, the organization reinforces the reproduction of similar patterns and it becomes a power, which are embodied in individuals and embedded in the technology of the organization. This is what is meant when it is said that power penetrates individual's knowledge, desires and aspirations of the world and when it is said that power is not located but distributed in the whole context of relationships.

## **Conclusions**

Latour tells the story of ARAMIS (Latour, 1996) as an Agatha Christie story, in which the detective seeks to find out who killed ARAMIS. Unlike an Agatha Christie story – but alike a Foucauldian approach to history - there was no single killer. ARAMIS was killed by the multiplicity of forces, which together created the pressure so that ARAMIS in the end died. It didn't die out of necessity - as a natural cause of death - but died because of growing pressure, which had been built up through its history and in the end forced this particular event through in competition with other possible events. This is one implication of following a Foucauldian approach - that events must be analysed in their historical and geographical context to make sense. Following this route, we observe that actors are nothing but parts of a wider context - something, which is known as the principle of totality in the dialectical perspective on organizations (Benson, 1977). Organizing and change comes about from a multiplicity of forces interacting in a particular fashion. That is the power to produce, reproduce or change practices and thus the social order finds its strength in a multiplicity of smaller forces.

The fait of a new practice in an organization will always be the outcome of two questions: (1) how it is organized to gain power and (2) the resistance it meets from more established practices. New management philosophies, organization principles, strategies, methods and

systems are thus something, which are put into play in organizations as attempts to control work or markets in a different manner. The outcome depends not only and often very little on these new principles or methods but the social context in which they are located. Instead of just concluding that this is the case, change agents may also use this insight strategically. That is to implement new philosophies by trying to gain support from some of the existing powerful forces within the new philosophy's field of application - a strategy known as *translation* (Sevon, 1996). That does not mean that the quality of these philosophies will decrease. Rather, they are improved.

The organizational literature is full of studies in which a new practice meets a local context or in which a particular technology is shaped according to the interests and intentions it faces during its development. This includes not only ARAMIS but also Tryggestad's study of flexible manufacturing systems (1995), classical studies like Trist & Bamforth's (1951) study of the introduction of the long-wall method of coal getting in the English coalmines and also Selznick's (1949) study of decentralization and co-optation in the Tennessee Valley Authority. These are all examples in which the development or implementation of a new technology meet with a series of counterstrokes from the local context within which they are applied. However while the classical studies of organizational change tended to make use of a simple equilibrium – disequilibrium model, a Foucauldian analysis emphasizes how power continuously shapes, reshapes, alters, and destroys patterns of knowledge in favor of others in a continuous process in which equilibrium is non-existent.

The target is to analyse the conditions, which shaped the present. It is a historical diagnosis of the present or in other words a test of the present. In organizational analysis such a test is purposeful in regard to evaluating the legitimacy and thus also the strength of a particular

practice. In regard to organizational change projects this means that focus is not so much on the output of the project – that is if the new system or philosophy is implemented – but on the process of its implementation. This includes a focus on question like who are involved, how are they involved, the status and prestige of these people, from where do they speak, what are their positions in the organization of the projects, how many people participate in the project, who is not participating, what is the opposition, how is this opposition organized, what is the institutional set-up, what are the market conditions, what are the societal conditions etc. The purpose of such a test is exactly to assess its strengths and weaknesses - its power to speak – in order to evaluate the possible effects in the present and in the future.

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