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Contents

Erratum	139
Letter to the Editor	
<i>Joseph N. Manago</i>	141
Original articles	
Counseling as a practice of ethics: Some implications for therapeutic education <i>Del Loewenthal</i>	143
Living a directed life <i>William O'Chee</i>	153
Knowledge governance and ethos: Managerial work in the foreseeable future <i>Fernando Salvetti</i>	167
Self-empowerment: How to survive your job <i>Barbara Bertagni</i>	179
Book reviews	
Practice and the human sciences: The case for a judgment-based practice of care <i>James A. Tuedio</i>	183
An inconvenient truth: The planetary emergency of global warming and what we can do about it <i>Amy S. Hannon</i>	189
La communauté philosophique: Manifeste pour l'Université populaire <i>Bernard Roy</i>	191
A review of some philosophical papers at the First Prometheus Trust Conference <i>Pierre Grimes</i>	195
The philosophy of friendship <i>Carol S. Gould</i>	197
Philosophical Practice, volume 2(3), Biographies of Contributors	201

Knowledge governance and ethos: Managerial work in the foreseeable future

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Abstract

How can we manage knowledge, human and intellectual resources, cognitive and behavioral dynamics at their best within the corporations? The main challenge is to use the missing knowledge, often incomplete and contradictory, owned by a single man and globally not available to anyone.

Keywords: *knowledge governance, knowledge driven corporation, minimal governance, tacit knowledge, anthropology of knowledge*

There is always too much governing going on

There is always too much governing going on or, at least, we should suspect it. Therefore it's better to develop the art of minimal governance. Is it possible to consider liberalism as an action guideline, within organizations, to manage knowledge and, more in general, human and intellectual asset competencies? Yes it is.

Being liberal (mentioning a definition of a thinker that is beyond suspicion and above the fray: Michel Foucault) means being progressive, in the sense of a continuous adaptation of the legal order (*gouvernementale* and organizational) to scientific discoveries, to organization progress and economic techniques, to changes of societal structure, and to the most practical needs.¹ I'm convinced that a critical reflection on the *pratique gouvernementale* is needed, on behalf of minimalist governance, as a functioning value of *knowledge governance* within companies, and, more generally, within organizations investing in training and development of competencies, systems, or tools to manage human assets, knowledge, and environments.

Those who govern (a country, a city, a company) should perceive the "risk of governing too much." Minimalist government is the art of least possible governance, between a maximum and a minimum, aiming towards the minimum rather than the conceivable maximum (Foucault, 2005, pp. 29, 36). Why is this proposed self-containment needed in the *knowledge governance* field in terms of human and intellectual asset management? In what follows an answer will be provided, both possible and practicable, for organizations.

Knowledge society and managerial work

In the knowledge society the efficiency and effectiveness peaks seem to belong to companies which act depending on reticular models able to anticipate external environment changes

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with high creativity and flexibility. Living with an essentially immaterial economy, centered on knowledge and information, we find as the most operative organization (also about work organization) those models or structures similar to collages, patchworks, or networks, reducing the hierarchy intended as control and coordination forms, where instead decentralized integration and web become the main organizational drivers.²

One of the most important competitive differentiation factors among organizations is the raising and enhancing ability concerning their (not necessarily widespread) intangible assets: intelligence, experience, imagination, and the soft skills, as well as the specialized and transversal competencies, the *know-how* and the *know-what*.³

In the knowledge and connected society, as in knowledge economy scenarios, knowledge abilities and imagination, as well as *networking* concerning experiences, abilities, and knowledge sharing (the skill of learning), have more importance than the physical, technological, and financial assets traditionally at the center of economic and organizational scenarios. In current scenarios, vital economic resources are no more (or not only) financial capital or labor and least of all natural resources, relationships, knowledge, and human and intellectual assets.⁴ Peter Drucker spoke about *knowledge work* in the early 1960s, but only in the last few years have "the managers" started to consider knowledge and competencies as strategic resources that should be managed in the same way as they manage fund flows, human resources, and raw materials. For the organizations that aim to be *learning organizations* ("cognitive systems"⁵ able to structure knowledge and behaviors of their members), *knowledge governance* is a strategic target (and therefore a critical one).⁶ The *knowledge economy* demands flexible organizational models of functioning, oriented towards continuous interaction with customers and quality control, both based on an intensive use of knowledge resources. Strong abilities concerning interaction with the "outside" creation and reprocessing of knowledge, and connection between cognitive and behavioral dimensions based on the actions of individuals and groups during operative situations, are needed (Tomassini, 1993, p. 11).

In scenarios characterized by precarious consumer needs, and by increasingly less defined regional and national markets, competition is similar to a war of movement in which competitive advantage depends on the ability to anticipate market tendencies and to respond quickly to changing customers' needs. Indeed, one of the methods of detecting "successful competitors" is to look at the ones who are able to move most rapidly "inside and outside" products, markets, and sometimes even in entire economic sectors. This demonstrates that the center of the organization's strategy is not products or market structure, rather it is its own dynamic abilities and, therefore, the dynamism of its own behaviors (Stalk, Evans, & Schulman, 1992, p. 62; Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1991; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1997, p. 87).

If we consider an organizational and directional perspective, the critical points are the interdependence between knowledge and behaviors, individual and collective knowledge, and routine and innovation. Future managerial work will be characterized by the development of human and intellectual assets: creation of organizational knowledge, abilities, competencies, and knowledge management and development, in order to support them inside/outside the organizations and translate them into products, services, and systems.⁷

Social construction of knowledge and abilities

"The problem concerning how a knowledge system emerges, is the same for every collective good" (Douglas 1990, p. 81), writes Mary Douglas, an anthropologist committed to the

exploration of connections among individual minds, cultures, and societies. Cognition is one of the human activities most subjected to social conditioning. Knowledge is a “social structure”⁸ therefore, a collective good (Douglas, 1990, p. 46).

Human beings have limited or inconsistent capacities for rationality, and thus organizations (which are composed of people) manifest, at a foundational level, our limitation of ability to find, elaborate, and manage information. At a second level, through organizing, we can “create” new information, knowledge, abilities, and competencies useful to find/ redefine solutions to our work-related problems. At a third level, through these activities we discover pathways that, if not interrupted, allow us to detect our *ways of worldmaking*⁹: they allow us to discover the modalities through which we “create” the organizational or market-related reality within which we act.

This is the nodal point: the intersubjective social “construction” of reality.¹⁰ The organization delineates its own scenario, observes it using binoculars, and tries to find pathways through the landscape (Cf. Weick, 1993, p. 193). Even the most elementary idea of our logic, namely similarity, depends on social interaction.¹¹ Obviously, the fact that the meanings of things and, in general, images of reality are collective, are shared with other persons immersed in the same culture and learned through social interaction, makes isolated understanding difficult. We are caught in a web of meaning woven by ourselves.¹²

Knowledge systems, as webs of shared meanings, are a socially constructed reality: in particular, we can say that organizational “reality” is not represented so much by physical or natural world conditions, but rather is defined through interpersonal connection and consensus. Therefore, socially constructed entities exist as long as their members think they exist, and act accordingly. There is an explicit knowledge base in organizations that finds its numeric or verbal expression and can be easily communicated and shared in the form of procedures, patterns, and axioms. There is also an important level of tacit knowledge, hard to formalize but implicit as reference values or simply the whole set of abilities expressed using the term *know-how*. Moreover, in tacit knowledge a meaningful cognitive dimension based on schemas, mental models, beliefs, and subjective perception is also implicit, so strengthens the point that they are “axiomatic” because, though they are difficult to explain, these implicit models determine our way of perceiving the surrounding world.

To understand dynamics that generate webs of shared meanings, norms and reference values, and forms and practices through which beliefs, emotions, meanings, values, and action principles are expressed, asserted, communicated, and respected (or violated), tacit and implicit meanings must be considered (often unconsciously) as contributing to structure the way in which organizations’ members perceive, think, and feel.¹³ Therefore, knowledge is a complex and multifaceted object: next to numeric or verbal (or verbalized and recited) knowledge, we find insights, intuitions, mental models, beliefs, perceptions, and varied forms of what is usually defined as “tacit knowledge.”¹⁴ It reminds us that we can know and do more than we can express and, moreover, that most of the precious knowledge can hardly be taught and transmitted through direct modalities belonging to the family of what we Occidentals are used to connecting to “Cartesian rationalism.”

In any pyramid the most important things are not on the surface, but must be discovered by following pathways leading to the treasures hidden inside. The knowledge economy seems to prefer organizations structured as reticular models, as they are able to anticipate the mutability of the outer environment with high degrees of creativity and flexibility. Flexible organizations can be operative and proactive in their referential markets, especially by developing that peculiar competitive factor symbolized by knowledge and distinctive competencies of different companies’ cultures. In order to allow organizations to develop along this line, a segmentation is needed in small and medium production units, based on

interfunctional self-managed teams,¹⁵ the implementation of integrated information networks, the ability to establish tendentially stable relationships with the customer (thanks to information technology and digitalization), and the active use of the brains of the largest number of people available.

Cosmos and taxis

Organization is not an absolute concept. To organize is never intended in any unique way, because it implies the possibility of elaborating a strategy and a group of operative tactics in order to guarantee the productivity (possibly without forgetting the "wellness") of the people who are organized. Universal organizational prescriptions, useful in every context, do not exist. Ideal organizations do not exist. However, operative organizations do exist, and are able to elaborate and enact successful strategies in complex and constantly changing environments. Functional organizations are less and less "managed" by a management level with total control of strategic direction and productive processes, and more and more "managed" by leaders able to influence people, channel activities, and processes not only in inner workgroups, but also outside traditional organizational boundaries, in order to integrate (using varied cooperative strategies) operative *teams* of other connected structures with shared interests and targets. Such organizations are oriented towards nurturing entrepreneurial spirit, continuous innovation, and inner cultures characterized by proneness to change.

Therefore, such organizations must sustain motivating and satisfying work conditions, and must try to "take care" of people in order to motivate them exactly within the organization and not somewhere else. Such organizations sustain always less *τάξις* (taxis), contrived order through strict rational planning and strict control of management hierarchy, and always more *κόσμος* (cosmos), spontaneous order autocreating itself as it emerges from the inner part of the organizational system as "invention." Cosmos is based on the organizational actors' ability to create organizational dynamics that are not simply adaptive responses to the environment, but realizing in action strategies and tactics worked out (consciously or not, tacitly or explicitly depending on the cases) by means of acting in complex and disordered situations restoring eventually their own action model.¹⁶

If we consider organizations as machines, control is then essential. But machines generate rigid pyramids and monocular perspectives¹⁷ or, at the most, binocular ones. Control as a priority management strategy, especially in the medium and long terms, generates traps: rigid role interpretations (by the side of executives and managers, employees and workers as well) and usually unable to open to confrontation, closed and auto referential behavior systems, beliefs, and thinking habits. Machines give rise to a disciplinary environment¹⁸ where the pure imperative way can exist, as an organizational instance: a one-dimensional environment, in which the *output* is supposed to be determined by the *input*, assuming the command forms and contributing to build psychic prisons and produce disciplined, demotivated, and alienated subjects.

Multiperspectiveness belongs to another universe, where hierarchy is not eliminated but mediated and diluted by other organizational principles (coordination and interfunctional team, integration, negotiation in order to define targets and working load allocation, "budget account" and, therefore, negotiation of resources and their allocation criteria). Here organizations are considered as collages, cultures based on partial knowledge, provisional and contextual interpretations, and, therefore, as evolving structure and processes,¹⁹ unstable synthesis of *τάξις*, that opens its way to *κόσμος*.

Knowledge governance

The strengthening of an idea, as well as more generally the development and management of knowledge and abilities, are social processes that must be taken into account very seriously, and must be managed with equal attention and, especially, discretion. *Discretion* in the original sense of the term, deriving from the Latin *discernere* and intended as moderation, opportunity, and focused sensibility, adjudicates recognition and generation of clarity even in vague and ambiguous situations.²⁰ In other words, discernment and discretion intimately entail “being able”, in addition to “understanding.”²¹

How can we best govern knowledge, human and intellectual assets, cognitive and behavioral dynamics within organizations? How are the knowledge and ability assets characterizing an organization built and managed in a flexible and dynamic way? In other words, is it possible to devise organizations that can be flexible, elastic, and creative, as are well-trained human minds? (Morgan 1998, p. 96).

The main challenge is to utilize absent knowledge, often incomplete or contradictory, owned by the individual and not belonging to anyone in his globality. Possible strategies and tactics, as well as supporting *tools*, are relatively well known among organizational specialists. Many of us, in fact, have familiarity with keywords like *managing knowledge and intellectual capital*, *corporate learning and knowledge creation*, *knowledge generation and development* rather than *freeing knowledge*, *embedding knowledge in key-processes*, *knowledge codification and coordination*, *building knowledge-based products and services*, *assessing knowledge and human capital*, *linking knowledge across borders*, *networks and new organizational focus as vehicle for knowledge building*, *knowledge transfer* and relative technologies, and rather than debates concerning the possible creation of the *Chief Knowledge Officer* positions. In the same way many of us attend *communities of practice* and discuss organizations as cognitive systems, rather than assume diverse approaches to *knowledge management* which, depending on cases, are focused on mechanisms that manage explicit knowledge (*data warehousing*, *data mining*, *knowledge mapping*, *electronic libraries*, *intranets and networks*) or on mechanisms that manage tacit knowledge (dialogue as an access to collective intelligence, stories of learning and organizational narrations useful for disseminating action models and reference and trend metaphors).

In substance, what is the purpose of all these mechanisms? And above all, why are there always more *managers* encouraging and supporting not only activities such as *knowledge mapping*, but also organizational dialogues and narrations? Nowadays successful organizations are generally ones that more than others are able to efficiently carry out activities of knowledge harvesting, warehousing, distribution, and utilization. Technologies alone cannot grant optimal use of human and intellectual assets. The key element for efficient utilization (or, in other words, for effective productive “capitalization”) of knowledge and abilities is the strengthening of an organizational culture committed to encouraging and supporting the sharing of knowledge and competencies.

Avoiding emphasis and imperative, it can be useful to introduce an ad hoc concept representing an operative guideline: one of the *epistemic drivers*,²² intended as factors (in first place subjects, then organizational processes) able to create shared values, beliefs, and concepts useful to assuring a sufficient level of compactness and, at the same time, of flexibility concerning the knowledge and abilities system within the organization. Subjects who have the necessary competencies can ease the collective processes of *knowledge integration* and new knowledge, abilities, and action perspectives invention (Cf. for example Reich 1991), especially through the expression of perceptions, emotions, insights, and

subjective beliefs, and, moreover, through the formalization at an organizational level of mental models and cognitive schemes considered more effective.²³

In particular, an organizational subject who assumes the role of *epistemic driver* finds himself in the role of an internal entrepreneur equipped with a sufficient measure of commitment and inner sponsorship to give him the possibility of generating dynamics of *knowledge sharing* as well as *knowledge development*.²⁴ Such an epistemic driver can coordinate interactive situations of diverse information, knowledge, and abilities beyond received methodologies, in order to support the development of new knowledge, abilities, concepts, plans, products, services, or systems.

All of this, *ça va sans dir*, creates conditions that favor minimal governance and, therefore, that increase the rate of *κόσμος* so reducing *τάξις*. An organization is a complex phenomenon not reducible to predefined taxonomy, a phenomenon which can be apprehended through sophisticated cognition that is always approximate, incomplete, and only partially expressed and expressible as comprehension.²⁵ From this perspective, *knowledge governance* means not only building and minding processes and procedures, but also learning to create and manage knowledge imbued with competitive value. An organization based on knowledge and being *knowledge driven* is a space (eventually physical, surely cultural) in which people keep on discovering modalities through which they create their reality and ones through which they can modify it,²⁶ by the recursive activation of experience-sharing in knowledge-experience virtuous circles, in which the shared knowledge at an organizational level becomes the basis for new tools, new experiences, and new knowledge.

The knowledge driven organization is then configured as a cognitive and social dimension characterized by processes in constant evolution, where “to know” doesn’t only mean “to recognize.” This kind of organization creates a dimension in which people find them immersed in “worlds of thinking” and at the same time of action, that can generate new worlds: something like living in Heraclitus’s *λόγος* (*logos*) where being and change spawn continuous innovation. This has supreme importance for those who work in an organization based on knowledge, which configures itself as a process of “re-creation of the world,” in the light of an ideal or a particular vision, distinctive to the organizational culture which it permeates.

Notes

- 1 Foucault (2001, p. 820; 2005, pp. 135, 262): “*Je serais tenté de voir, dans le libéralisme, une forme de réflexion critique sur la pratique gouvernementale.*” Foucault didn’t directly deal with organizations’ *knowledge governance*, but the perspectives that his studies open seem to me very interesting. In general on Foucault and the management cf. McKinlay & Starkey (1998), or about his liberalism analysis cf. the recent essay by Deschênes (2005).
- 2 Cf. for example Drucker (1993), Hatch (1997), Hassard & Parker (1993), Borum & Strandagaard-Pedersen (1989, p. 219), Bell (1981), Linstead (2004), and also the wealth of interesting ideas in number 100/2005 of *Sociologia del lavoro* dedicated to the new paradigms and to the new economic, organizational, and work

- scenarios: in particular the essays by Bonazzi (2005, p. 24), Butera (2005, p. 45), De Masi (2005, p. 81) and La Rosa (2005, p. 199).
- 3 And the *intangibles* list can even continue: brand equity and reputation, strategy execution, innovative culture, ideas and relationships, professional qualification, technological competencies, talents, abilities, guide-values and behavioral rules sharing coming from the specialized and qualified professional communities membership and perhaps even peer-to-peer relationship with the best members of the best practice international communities.
 - 4 For a general panoramic on this themes cf. for example the works published by OECD (1999) and the studies of Lipparini (1998, 2002), Rullani (2004), Vittadini (2004), Cravera, Maglione, & Ruggeri (2001), Rifkin (2000, p. 69), Stewart (2002), Michaud & Thoenig (2004), Guida & Berini (2000), Riboud (1978), Porter (1989), Prahalad & Hamel (1990), Stalk, Evans, & Shulman (1992, p. 57), Eppler (2003), Davenport & Prusak (1998), Panzarani (2004), Bettiol (2005), Low & Cohen Kalafut (2002). In particular many in the last years are the works on the human and intellectual asset, but this is a theme already explored in the past along various lines: this is not the place for a bibliographical *excursus*, even if it seems proper to me to point out the Foucault treatment (2005, p. 176) during his course at *Collège de France* of 1979 *sur la naissance de la biopolitique*, within which he dedicated a specific attention to “the work intended as economic behavior” and to his “division into asset-competence and income,” to the *homo oeconomicus* redefinition “as entrepreneur of himself” and, therefore, to the “notion of ‘human asset’ together with his constitutional elements.” Along this line the comparison with the classic studies of Schultz (1958; 1960, p. 571; 1962, p. 1; 1981) and Becker (1962, p. 9; 1964; 1976) appears really interesting; as can the romance written on this theme by Amidon (2005).
 - 5 Concerning this, cf. the classic studies by Simon (1988). Also consider the critique of Nonaka & Takeuchi (1997, p. 75); according to them, his “Cartesian” rationalism precluded him to understand important dimension as the “behavioral knowledge” written by Barnard (1938) and the “tacit knowledge” by Polanyi (1966). For a recent panoramic on these themes cf. also North (2005) and Rizzello (2003). In general, Senge (1990, 1992), Argyris & Schön (1998), Tomassini (1993), and Miggiani (1994) can be particularly useful on learning organization. Equally useful are Nonaka & Takeuchi’s critique and counterpoints (1997, p. 35).
 - 6 On the *knowledge management*, as well as on *learning organizations*, voices and opinions are obviously manifold and sufficiently dissenting each other to feed a wide debate: for a quick synthesis cf. for example Daft (2001, p. 271), Quagli (2001), Garvin (1998, p. 47), Venzin, Von Krogh, & Roos (1998). For an introduction of *knowledge development* cases and experiences achieved in Italian organizations cf. Montironi & Genova (2004), rather, for a systematic knowledge management in the organizations theme analysis very up-to-date and deep, even with a comparative Italian–French research built on event studies, the work by Minguzzi (2006) is interesting.
 - 7 Cf. for example Nonaka & Takeuchi (1997, pp. 27, 300), in their opinion in the near future “the top management will evaluate not only through economic performance criteria, but also through the knowledge *vision* quality able to offer to the others both within and outside the organization.” As Quinn reminds us (1992), the ability to manage the “intellectual asset” has quickly become, in our time, the critical and distinctive manager ability.
 - 8 As an example, see Fleck (1983, p. 101). Obviously an unlimited theme: personally I find useful *knowledge* and *epistemology* definitions of Abbagnano (1988), the *anthropology of knowledge* by Elkana (1989), the *sociology of culture* by Griswold (1997), and the *social story of knowledge* by Burke (2002) as maps to orient the navigation. Concerning the corporate organization the synthesis on *knowledge management* by Daft (2001, p. 271) can be useful.
 - 9 On *ways of worldmaking* cf. Goodman (1978) and Douglas (1990, p. 43). Cf. also De Geus (1988).
 - 10 It’s a duty to mention at least a classic: Berger & Luckmann (1967).
 - 11 As pointed out by Douglas (1990, p. 96), “it’s ingenuous to treat the identity characterizing members of a class as a quality concerning things or as a power of recognition concerning the mind.” Comparisons among different cultures make clear that “no superficial identity concerning qualities explains how the elements are assigned to a class.”
 - 12 Other classics: Geertz (1987, p. 6) and Bruner (1992).
 - 13 Cf. for example the corporate culture survival guide by Schein (2000).
 - 14 In addition to the classic Polanyi (1966), cf. Nonaka & Takeuchi (1997, p. 68) that support one of the most important representatives of the Austrian economic school, Hayek (1945), “pointed out as a pathfinder the importance of tacit knowledge, specific of the context and concerning the particular space-temporal circumstances,” even though not succeeding to fully understand the importance of the conversion process of specific context knowledge, mostly “tacit,” in explicit knowledge. Cf. even Daft (2001, p. 273): the explicit knowledge (the know “what”) is that kind of knowledge “which can be coded, written and transmitted,” instead the implicit or tacit knowledge (the know “how”) is often very difficult to translate in words as “it’s built on

- personal experiences, on approximate rules, intuitions and subjective judgment," practical competencies and creative solutions.
- 15 On the group value and on the "group attitude" in the industrial society cf. the interesting pages written by Actis Perinetti (1956), which anticipate many themes that the specialized Italian literature will develop only later in time.
 - 16 On these categories cf. the interesting study by Hayek (1986, p. 51), that moves partly within the paradigm of the general theory of systems, but mostly within the perspective of methodological individualism, according to which the comprehension of social actors actions and perspectives is the fundamental moment of every analysis. In particular Hayek affirms that Greeks of the classic period "were luckier" than us, because "they own two different words to point the two kinds of order, that are *taxis* to indicate built order, as for example the order of a battle array, and *cosmos* for a spontaneous order. Albeit a working organization is structured as *taxis*, that is an 'artificially built' order," to be more precise willfully planned "aiming to achieve concrete purposes." In this paper, I extend the meaning of *cosmos* in order to include some auto-organizational dynamics evolving in the flattened and knowledge-driven pyramids of net economy: these auto-organizational dynamics don't consist only of simple adapting answers to the environment (as could be argued being inside a traditional systemic vision), but they realize themselves into elaborate action strategies and tactics (consciously or not, tacitly explicitly depending on the instances) in specific situations by organizational actors. This circumstance implies for the organizational actors, as argued for example by Lanzara (1993, p. 11), the possession of *negative capability*, that is the ability of "being" in the uncertainty, of acting in complex and messed up situations keeping themselves oriented towards the "activation of contexts and possible worlds." *Negative capability* that represents the distinctive competence of *man of achievement* and consists in the ability of managing moments of indefiniteness and of absence of direction, eventually reorganizing their own action model and developing new routines understanding the action potentiality disclosed in those moments. For a specific analysis dedicated to organization, enterprise, and knowledge concerning Hayek cf. Fiori (2006) and Novarese (2006). For an analysis of static and dynamic orders in the complex society through the Hayek's perspective cf. Robilant (2006), moreover, for a deep dynamics examination of spontaneous social order concerning Hayek (but not only), cf. Moroni (2005).
 - 17 Moreover, as pointed out by Kaneklin and Olivetti Manoukian (1990, pp. 31–32), within the work organizations we can often find people with the thought of the organization "as a strong, complete, mono-dimensional, flat idea: the ambiguity of communications, the pluralism of variables through which decisions must be confronted with, the existence of multiple, differed, contradictory connections, the occurring of difficulties and denials and the arising of new needs, all that is organization's life cannot be seen, taken into consideration, taken into account (...). For these persons—using an effective Bion's expression (1971, p. 125)—'words are things: those things that are supposed to be represented by words, are for them undistinguishable from the name that designate them and viceversa.' From here comes a sort of impossibility to switch from the specific case to a trasversal generalization, to an abstraction, or also to conjugate a general principle with the determined situation."
 - 18 In this sense Foucault (1975) has masterfully explored in terms of prison, military, hospital, scholastic, and industrial manufacturing disciplining.
 - 19 Considering Landier's (1988, pp. 63–70) contribution often considered almost "subversive" by many organizational specialists apparently inspired especially to Edgar Morin's epistemology, therefore, schemes, concepts, and languages of organizational tradition are completely inadequate facing new conditions of world competition characterized by uncertainty, upheaval, globality, and interdependence of phenomenons, while appropriate organizational answers can be supplied looking at complexity scientific models: therefore, the organization must subdivide itself into cells following the systemic-cybernetic logic surpassing every recall to the pyramidal organization, the "centralized and arborescent" communication webs, the not differentialized growth of varied organizational parts and organizational joints, the lock up regarding the entrepreneurship or the inter-entrepreneurship among (inner or outer) cells of an organizational system subdivided in auto-managed, independent, and nimble groups.
 - 20 As Dante reminds us, "the most beautiful branch that the rational root grows up is the discretion."
 - 21 As Wittgenstein said (1964), there is an evident use of the verb "know": when we say "now I know!" meaning "now I can do it!" and "now I understand!" For an interesting journey in the fields of knowledge and management cf. also Nonaka & Takeuchi (1997, p. 49).
 - 22 By proposing the concept of *epistemic driver*, I imply the reference to the *episteme* written by Foucault in *Les mots et les choses* (1966) which refers (given the intended differences) to the whole of the conceptual matrix, anonymous and unconscious, being then the base of knowledge (and practices) of a certain epoch, forming the common background. The passage from an *episteme* to an other one takes place through a series of enigmatic discontinuities, being them in other words, radical and unexplainable breakups by whom who lives them as he

is dipped into them. Breakups cause things to be suddenly not perceived described, told, characterized, classified, and known in the same way.

- 23 Cf. once more Nonaka and Takeuchi (1997, p. 33): "The difficulty of Occidental observers to take into exam the issue of the creation of cognitive organization has a fundament in the absolute adherence to the assumption by which the organization is a machine engaged in the 'elaboration of information.' This concept is deeply rooted in the history of management in the West, from Frederick Taylor to Herbert Simon, and is explained into a vision of knowledge as a necessarily 'explicit' and sometimes formal and systematic event. The explicit knowledge can find a numerical and verbal expression and can be easily communicated and shared in raw data, formulas, codified procedures and axioms. It is often assimilated to an informatics code, a chemical formula or a system of general rules (...) The representation of knowledge in the Japanese companies is perhaps radically different. For them verbal and numerical knowledge is nothing but the tip of an iceberg, being knowledge *in primis* a 'tacit' event, something difficult to catch and to express. The tacit knowledge is especially personal and not formalizable, features that complicate its communication or sharing with others. It's a comprehensive category in which subjective *insights*, intuitions, and clues fallout. It, in the end, has its deepest roots in action and individual experience, in addition to ideals, values, and personal emotions. In detail, two dimensions of tacit knowledge can be distinguished. The first is the technical one, including the whole of anilities and informal strengths summed up in the term *know-how* that are to be caught (...) In the meanwhile, in the tacit knowledge a relevant cognitive dimension concerning, schemes, mental models, beliefs, and perceptions are strengthened to the point that they have become axiomatic. This cognitive dimension of tacit knowledge reflects our representation of reality (the being) and our vision of the future (the compel of being). Despite their difficult formulability, these implicit models determine our way of perceiving of the surrounding world."
- 24 Somehow it's an organizational figure similar to the *project leader* delineated by Nonaka & Takeuchi (1997, p. 302), even if not necessarily under the subjective profile the *epistemic driver* has to find out the "particular pleasure of experiencing new things and take risks." Cf. also, in very operative terms, Coulson-Thomas (2003).
- 25 Cf. Kaneklin and Olivetti Manoukian (1990, p. 29). Morin (1983, p. 74), "today we know that everything that ancient physics considered as a simple element is organization; the atom is organization, the molecule is organization, the star is organization, life is organization, society is organization. We completely ignore though meaning of this term: organization."
- 26 To learn to create and manage knowledge gifted with competitive value means not only being able to gather chances that appears and supply high quality services and products, but especially being able to create new opportunities, new services, and new products.

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