(On) the becoming of culture
Rethinking organisational culture inspired by the "becoming" perspective

Darmer, Per; Bøgetoft Christensen, Jens

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**Per Darmer &
Jens Bøgetoft Christensen**

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Draft

Per Darmer
Copenhagen Business School
Institute of Organization and industrial sociology
Solbjerg Plads 3
2000 Frederiksberg
Phone (dir): +45 38 15 29 50
E-mail: pd.ioa@cbs.dk

Jens Bøgetoft Christensen
University of Southern Denmark
Institue for organization and management
Engstien 1
6000 Kolding
Phone (dir): +45 65 50 14 17
E-mail: jbc@sam.sdu.dk

Introduction

Over the years, the organizational culture debate has become not only extensive and diverse but also quite motley. Starting back in the early eighties as a response to a growing frustration over traditional organizational analysis among management scholars, in their attempt to understand the inability of the western industry to match the Japanese competition and success, culture soon became the topic in the management debate. A debate that by no means was characterized by a common understanding of how to understand this newfound theme, but on the contrary cover a wide field from flat out common sense, over mainstream contingency theory thinking toward a sprouting social constructivist inspired line of thinking.

Through the eighties and the first part of the nineties, the culture debate continued, and as far as the more constructivist inspired part of the debate[1] is concerned, it contributed significantly to the development of an alternative to the mainstream neo positivistic tradition. Since the mid nineties though, the culture debate seems to have ebbed, and there has apparently been only little further development in the cultural approach to organizational theorising. Although the concept has spread to newer areas of interest, where it has generally been taken for granted in a rather common sense and unreflective way[2].

Meanwhile in other areas of organizational theorising the social constructivist line of debate have developed further and with inspiration from postmodernism moved towards a more reflexive debate on not only the epistemological questions facing organizational research, but also on the ontological conception forming the basis for the research and theorising taking place in the praxis of organizational theory. Lately new books on culture have appeared (Parker, 2000 ; Martin, 2002 and Alvesson, 2002). These authors represent reflections on more contemporary debates, but their purposes and insights differ from the ones we want to bring forth in this paper.

We can only speculate, why culture has lost most of its appeal as an approach to organizational theorising, but we think that the concept of culture is still essential for the understanding of sociality and organizing. On the other hand, a late modern theorising of culture needs to reflect on some of the substantial questions raised in the postmodern debate of organizational theorising in order to recreate the cultural debate as a trustworthy way of talking about the organizing of work life. Therefore, we like to present some of our reflections on the concept of culture, inspired by a becoming perspective (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002). More precisely, the paper shows how we rethink our social constructivist based conceptualisation of organizational culture in relation to a becoming perspective.

The inspiration from a "becoming" ontological perspective

Although Chia (1997, 1996) and Tsoukas & Chia, (2002) is part of a more recent debate in organizational theory, taking a "becoming" perspective is not exactly a new idea, but can as they remark themselves, be traced back to Heraclite. In his philosophy, he gave the becoming of things, events and stabilized effects ontological primacy and thereby placed himself in opposition to the

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[1] Including for example contribution inspired by symbolic interactionism, ethnographic, phenomenological, hermeneutic and later postmodern discourses.
[2] Such as the idea of the learning organization or value based management

Platonic and Aristotelian "being" ontological understanding of reality as a world of stable things and phenomena.

In their expounding of a becoming ontology, Chia and Tsoukas is referring to, what in this perspective most be considered as, more recent thinkers like William James, Henri Bergson and Alfred North Whitehead. As inspiration for this preliminary rethinking of culture we ourselves will however rely on the writings of Chia and Tsoukas (Chia and Tsoukas 2002, Chia 1997), and it will therefore be their expounding of a becoming perspective that will be our point of reference as inspiration for our rethinking of organizational culture. It has to be underlined that the paper is a work-in-progress, where some preliminary thoughts about culture in a becoming perspective are displayed, which also bring forth some critic of Tsoukas & Chia, 2002.

In their writing the becoming perspective is defined as part of a dichotomy, where we on the one hand have a "being" ontology, that asserts "…reality pre exists independently of observations and as static, discrete and identifiable "things", "entities", "events", "generative mechanisms", etc." (p.33). On the other hand from a "becoming" ontological point of view reality is understood as a perpetual flux of becoming, "…hence unrepresentable through any static conceptual framework or paradigm of thought." (Chia, 1996, p. 46).

This dichotomy raises the question of whether reality is best understood primarily in terms of stability, order and fixity or reality is best understood in processual terms as a flux of becoming. A question that generally has been answered in favour of the former, as a common feature across scientific paradigms, forming a ruling tradition in western philosophy (Tsoukas & Chia 2002; 569), witch, as we will come back to, also applies to social constructivism. However the postmodern as an understanding of the present, with its focus on development and desire for change and newness seems also to have displaced the attention of the organizational theory debate towards these themes and, as in the case of this paper, a rethinking of our understanding of organizing from a radical process perspective.

As part of this debate Chia (1996) formulated what can be considered, not only an anti "being ontological" doctrine, as the reference to postmodernism might let us expect, but to a wide extent as a new "becoming ontological" doctrine: "The actual world is fundamentally in a process of becoming so that every phenomena of which we are aware – from galaxies to electrons, from human being to amoebae, from human society and families of crystals to nursery rhymes and creational myths – each exist only as a stabilized moment in an interminable process of becoming. Thus, there are no fixed entities, no ultimate terms, no essences. In short, transition is the ultimate fact." (1997; p. 696).

Chia (1997; p. 696-697) continues by charactering the becoming perspective in four themes, that together outline a set of theoretical priorities of a perspective taking such a process-based becoming perspective. First and obviously, a radical process perspective is privileging activity and movement over substance and entities. Instead of thinking in terms of discrete individualities, the emphasis is on the primacy of process, interaction and relatedness. This does not differ from traditions of social constructivism or social constructionism in social science, that both focuses on the process of the social construction of reality, stressing respectively either the cognitive or the relations as there primary area of interest. (Berger and Luckmann 1963, Schutz 1975, Gergen 1994).

Secondly, this is leading to thinking in terms of the constantly state of becoming that will have to be the consequence of a world that is never coming into being. Thirdly, in a world that never comes into being, the understanding of change as something that takes place between periods of equilibrium and stability doesn't make sense. On the contrary, change is the essential existence of nature, and stability only an abstraction. Fourthly, in this continuous process of becoming, every moment of activity is already incorporated in the next moment, as an immanent part of the many activities going on as the world is in the process of becoming, transforming and perishing. This idea of immanence is also part of the social constructivism, as for example thematized in the phenomenological concept of incorporation or in the concept of the hermeneutic circle.

Thus in Chia and Tsoukas' expounding of an becoming perspective there seems to be clear similarities with a social constructivist tradition, while at the same time it also seems to challenge what is left of fixity in this tradition, from a more postmodern perspective. Yet, as already indicated, there seems to be some contradiction in terms, because the outline of the becoming ontological line of thinking is not only formulated as anti "being ontological" doctrine, as the clear reference to postmodernism (Chia 1996) might let us expect, but to a vide extent as a new "becoming ontological" doctrine.

We agree with the deconstruction of the becoming ontology as doctrine where essences and fixity as findings only mirroring the predisposition of certain researchers to think in static, structured and discrete terms. But the very same thing can be said about the predisposition of Chia, Tsoukas, and Heraclite to think in activity, movement and process terms. It is no solution to the reflexivity problem raised with the reference to postmodernism in Chia 1996 (p.46) to replace one doctrine with another (that of the Whiteheadian process cosmology).

Leaving that aside, when looked upon critically there seems to be yet another couple of problems with the becoming of the becoming thinking. On the way towards thinking in terms of "flux", there still seems at least one fixed term and one essence, the idea that everything is in flux (in the becoming) is the only thing not in flux or in the becoming. It seems to be something firm. It might be argued that the flux is in itself not an essence, but it seems to us that it becomes unquestionable that everything is in flux, making it reassemble a universal truth as the essence of the world.

This is becoming more interesting as Tsoukas & Chia, 2002 talks about things both changing and remaining the same in the world of becoming: "The organization is both a given structure (i.e., a set of established generic cognitive categories) and an emerging pattern (i.e., the constant adaptation of those categories to local circumstances)(p.573). Then everything is apparently not in flux all the time (we return to this discussion later in the paper at a more specific level).

On the contrary the becoming line of thinking seems only to apply to their more general (ontological and epistemological) discussion, whereas when it comes to their more specific discussion of organizing, they seem to relay more on a traditional social constructivist line of thinking. Thus, what we are going to take with us in the rethinking of organizational culture is the becoming ontology as outlined above, whereas we will try to take their reflection on "organizational becoming" (2002; 573) on step further in the direction of a radical becoming perspective, in our rethinking of organizational culture. Not as yet another grand theory, but on the contrary as just one perspective among many others as part of and situated in a contemporary organizational theory debate. A perspective that might displace our attention towards interesting possibilities of new understanding and handling of everyday life.

Organizational culture as social construction.

Before we delve into the rethinking of our understanding of organizational culture with the inspiration of the becoming perspective, we will shortly outline what has, up to now have characterized our understanding of culture and therefore will form the basis for this rethinking.

Looking back, the culture debate of the early eighties' organizational theory looks like a substantial step towards the deconstruction of the conceptualisation of "the organization" as a firm thing. Thus when these researchers, later known as the "revolutionary vanguard" brought in the concept of culture in the debate (Martin and Frost 1996, pp. 601), they did not only contribute significantly to a organizational theory debate expressing a growing discontent with mainstream organizational theory. They were also contributing to a movement towards a more reflexive debate on not only the epistemological questions facing organizational research, but also on the ontological conception forming the basis for the research and theorising taking place in the praxis of organizational theory.

It was argued that a new way of looking at organization theory was needed, and the new way was obviously in opposition to traditional organization theory. A theory, which was regarded as mainly quantitative, oriented research, an arid, fruitless, antiseptic and lifeless approach to organizations due to its reliance on "a rational model of human behaviour, a structural approach to questions of corporate strategy, and a love of numerical analysis." (Martin & Frost 1996, p. 601).

Although this was a polemic simplification of the mainstream literature on organization theory, the argument paved the way for a more interdisciplinary approach and studying organizations with new perspectives and ways of researching that provided a better understanding of organizational life. The adoption of the concept of culture from anthropology was but one of these new perspectives, but as we know now the concept of organizational culture had an enormous impact and gave rise to an extensive debate within organization and management theory.

This debate did not have a unified acceptable definition of organizational culture. On the contrary, as within anthropology, the debate reflected a very diverse understanding and conceptualisation that manifested itself in a whole range of different schools of culture (Smircich 1983, Darmer 1992). However, we did not bring up the subject of culture with the intensions of rehearsing the culture debate of the eighties. Therefore, we will very briefly, indeed recapitulate the themes in the debate in order to outline our understanding of this debate and position our ideas within this theoretical context.

To show our position we need only the organizational culture dualism proposed by Smircich 1983, dividing the literature into a dichotomy consisting of a Critical Variable and a Root Metaphor perspective respectively. The latter has been further elaborated by Darmer (1992) and at the same time renamed the "social construction perspective" to emphasize the broad but mainly social constructivist foundation of the different contribution within this perspective. In this way, we end up with a distinction between two fundamental different perspectives on organizational culture consisting of a critical variable and a social construction perspective.

Since we take the tradition that evolved from the social constructivist part of the culture debate, as our point of departure we will not unfold the debate between a functionalistic understanding of

culture as critical variable and a social construction perspective. Instead, we will allow ourselves the luxury to consider this discussion already dealt with and take the social constructivist understanding of culture as our point of departure. However, taking a social constructivist approach is not exactly unambiguous, as it includes a wide variety of contributions that, besides being in opposition to a functionalistic approach, share only a rather vague assumption about reality being a social construction. On our way towards a becoming ontological inspired rethinking of culture, we will therefore (have to) unfold our understanding of culture in more detail.

Towards a becoming ontological
inspired understanding of organizations as cultural flux.

As a an approach to organizational culture, the social construction perspective includes a rich discussion of organizational life, embracing among other things the significance of legends, stories, myths and ceremonies for organizational life and even discussing management and organizations as a symbolic activity (Smircich 1983).

The thinking of the social construction perspective did not only suggest another understanding of culture and the undermining of the conceptualisation of the organizations as a firm thing. With this line of thinking also followed objections towards meta-narratives and universal theories and the emphasising of the local and specific as a starting point for perceiving organizational life as inevitable heterogeneous and fragmented, with no solid foundation for a universal and objective reality (Kvale 1995, p. 19), leaving it to individuals to interpret and create an understanding of reality for themselves. An understanding that has to be created and recreated in an ongoing interplay with a plurality of other actors' similar understandings through the social interactions of daily life.

The understanding of the social interaction as constituent of our understanding of reality as a social constructed phenomenon of consciousness, made up the leading idea of the social construction perspective. This means that reality on the one hand is an individual matter of subjective interpretation, forming one's world of life or "lifeworld" (Schutz, 1975 & Christensen, 2002). On the other hand, this lifeworld is also always inevitably a social matter as the continuous process of the creation of meaning is always imbedded in a sociality given by the social cultural context - a context created within the very same process.

As mentioned earlier in this text, the being ontological domination of western research traditions also apply to social constructivism. Even though the social interaction is seen as the process in which the lifeworld is socially constructed, and therefore to some extent focuses on the process – it is still something that is "constructed". Social constructivism shares the focus on the process in stressing the social interaction as basis for the constitution of our lifeworld, but still attempts to capture something firm, to which the activities of organizing can be nailed. E.g.: "Cognitive structures", "systems of symbols", "structures of language", "structures of relations" or "lifeworld" (the concept prefered in this paper).

Therefore, a paradox exists within social constructivism between the understanding of the lifeworld as constituted through the ongoing social interaction an at the same time and understanding of the lifeworld as a rather firm cognitive structure. This is exactly the puzzle that we hope to bring some kind of relief to, by giving social constructivism a becoming ontological twist. Compared to social constructivism, taking a "becoming" perspective means that we radicalise our understanding of

"process" and focus on the verbs instead of trying to arrest (Chia 1997, p. 697) the reality in its unfolding through the reification and use of substantives. Why do we primarily talk about organizations, when it is organizing that is taking place? Or for example knowledge management, when it is knowing in the concrete context that matters? With this in mind let's try to rethink the idea of lifeworld as socially constructed and how that is going to influence our understanding of culture.

First of all, taking a "becoming" perspective means that, in stead of regarding the social interaction as the process that constitutes the lifeworld of everyday, this process of social interaction is the lifeworld in itself. In other words, the process is not something that leads to reality - on the contrary, it is the reality as it is lived in the here & now. Thus from a becoming perspective we therefore have to rethink lifeworld in that we do not consider it to be a reality that can passively be called forth, but rather as an active process of life in which every lived moment is brought into, or as Berger puts it: "…memory itself is a reiterated act of interpretation. As we remember the past, we reconstruct it in accordance with our present ideas of what is important and what is not." (Berger 1963, p. 70, jf. Tsoukas & Chia 2002, p. 575).´

In social constructivism the lifeworld has the character of cognitive categories and classifications, that as a stockpile of knowledge or repertoire of actions can be retrieved into any given situation and thereby function as our possibility to make sense of and handle this situation. Rethinking the concept of lifeworld with inspiration form a becoming perspective lead in the direction of a lifeworld that emerges as a flux of understanding in everyday life. A flux of interpretation and ascription of meaning that comes into a state of being but is always in its becoming as we try to deal with our life in a meaningful way.

This rethinking of the lifeworld implies, that the sociality which the culture concept refers to, will have to be considered an ongoing process of interpretation and creation of meaning, as regards this specific sphere of a person's lifeworld. Whereas the lifeworld concept draw our attention towards the individual side of meaning creation in the process of living, the concept of culture draws our attention towards the social side of this process. As such the concepts of lifeworld and culture thematize the same flux of ongoing life, but with the substantial difference, that lifeworld is a concept of individuality and culture is a concept of sociality.

A rethinking of culture as social constructions, from a "becoming" perspective, means that we turn our attention towards the social interaction and the ongoing process of creating and organizing meaning in the handling of everyday life, as the proper meaning of organizing. Instead of speaking of organizations as socially constructed cultures, maybe we should talk about organizing (verb) as cultural flux – a social praxis of interpretation, the reinterpretation of remembrance and oblivion in daily social interaction among those taking active part in a sociality. A process in which culture emerges as a cultural flux that never comes into being, but is always in the process of becoming.

Culture always in becoming.

Tsoukas & Chia, 2002 use the mentioned dichotomy between being and becoming and relate it to organizational change resulting in two different perspectives on change. The first perspective is related to the traditional view on organizational change (with stage models like Lewin's: Unfreese – move – refreese) and ortodox theories (Stacey, 2000). In ortodox theory organizational change is

seen from a cybernetic perspective, where organizations strive for and focus upon stability and equibrilium. In other words when the "real" world outside the organization changes the organization have to adapt to the real world, so the organization fits the "real" world (the enviromnment of the organization) in order to stay alive and get competitive advantages. The organizations that are able to adapt and find the equibrilium with their environments are those that will survive and prosper. A regulator of the domestic central heating system is an example of cybernetics, just like the regulator of the home temperature the organization will stabilise its own fit with the environment. Meaning that change occurs when things (stability) are interrupted, and they have to be disinterrupted to get back to "normal", again. The idea of Tsoukas & Chia is to replace the ortodox view of organizational change from a stability perspective with a more radical view on organizational change from a perspective of change. This is similar to Stacey's, 2000 radical theory, at least to some extent. It seems to us that Stacey in his radical theory is more radical about the becoming perspective than Tsoukas & Chia, 2002. The paper will go further into this discussion, which as indicated is a critic of Tsoukas & Chia as well. Before the paper goes into that discussion. The paper takes a brief look on what is meant by a change perspective.

Tsoukas & Chia, 2002 builds on and extend the ideas of organizational change as a process, in doing so they build on Weick, Orlowski and Feldman. Meaning that Tsoukas & Chia has the ambition of developing a more radical process view on organizational change than the ones proposed by Weick, Orlowski and Feldman. It can be discussed how much further (if at all) Tsoukas and Chia go than the three scholars they are inspired by and claim they use as their theoretical foundation. The reason it is considered a claim is that the three scholars are not applied very much in the text, and in some regards it seems to us that Tsoukas & Chia are not going as far in a change perspective as those scholars they aim to extend upon. The paper will not go into this critic in more detail, but we find it is part of discussing a becoming perspective to critisise Tsoukas & Chia for not taking the "full" consequence of their own change perspective. Instead, they end up in something in between stability and change. Reassambling what Stacey did in his former book (Stacey, 1996), where Stacey talked about ordinary and extraordinary management that had to be balanced. In doing that he returned to ortodox theory by making stability (the right balance between ordinary and extraordinary management) ontologically prior to change. Tsoukas & Chia to some extend repeat the mistake of Stacey, 1996 by making stability prior to change in talking about a balance between stability and change. Stacey, 2000 realised that and called it a theory with radical elements that end up in ortodox conclusions, and therfore becomes ortodox in nature. Stacey, 2000 overcomes the problem by introducing radical theories that remain radical.

Stacey's, 2000 radical theories of gesture-response and conversation is another way to look at social interaction. Thereby, making conversation an ongoing process, as conversation is always developing in gesture and response, since every gesture is followed by a response, and every gesture is in itself a response. Therefore, conversation is an ungoing process of change, where we never can predict where it will end, because we can never be sure how others respond to our gesture, or how we ourselves respond to the gestures or responses of others. Conversation becomes an uncontrolable process that is always in motion.

We find that Stacey, 2000 fits better with the becoming perspective of Tsoukas & Chia than they do themselves. An elaboration will illustrate this (we hope). Tsoukas & Chia, 2002 emphasise that "change must not be thought of as proporty of organization. Rather, organization must be understood as an emergent proporty of change. Change is ontologically prior to organization – it is the condition of possibility of organization." (p. 570). What is said here is that change is the

essential and organization is a manifestation of change – a way of dealing with change. The central question for Tsoukas & Chia, therefore, becomes: " What must organization(s) be like if change is a constitutive of reality?" (p. 570). Organizations are the result of change. Tsoukas & Chia talks about organizations being both a way of dealing with change and something emerging from change. It is through this duality of organization and change that we find Tsoukas & Chia reassemble what Stacey calls theory with radical elements ending up in ortodox conclusions. Because when Tsoukas & Chia take this point of view change becomes stabilised by organization and thereby a stabilising perspective "creeps" in and takes over. This is highlighted in the following quote that ends by underlining that organizations aim at stabilising ("stemming") change. Meaning that stabilising change is what it is all about. "Viewed this way, organization is a secondary accomplishment, in a double sense: First, it is a socially defined set of rules aiming at stabilising an ever-mutating reality by making human behavior more predictable. Second, organization is an outcome, a pattern, emerging from the reflective application of the very same rules in local contexts over time. While organizations aims at stemming change, it is also the outcome of change." (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002, p. 570). We find that Tsoukas & Chia, if they were to be "true" to their own idea of a change perspective and change being a proporty of organizations would have to see organizations as continuously changing, but they conclude: "Our argument in this paper has been that there are ongoing processes of change in organizations. That, however, should not be taken to mean that organizations constantly change." (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002, p. 580). The blend between stability and change is obviously present. In our view, it is necessary to go beyond that.

To be "faithful" to a becoming perspective we find it "more appropiate to talk about re-construction. Re-construction is transformation, since nothing is ever re-constructed the same way it was constructed before (just like you never step into the same river twice)." (Darmer & Christensen, 2002). Your conception of re-construction is in line with the radical theories of Stacey, 2000. Gestures and responses are never quite the same, as they are always relational and situated. Meaning that even when we make the same response, we made yesterday, we can never be sure that it will be interpreted the same way, as gestures and reponses are interpreted all the time in order for os to make sense of them (both the gesture and response from ourselfves and others). Conversations are never the same, as our responses are never quite the same – even though our verbal response may be so, our quiet conversation (Stacey, 2000) with ourselfes will not be so. Meaning that when we respond with the word: Hello, to the gesture: Hello. We are sometimes happy to see people, other times just polite, and some times not even aware that we reponded as the quiet conversation we have with ourselves goes on uninterrupted by the mechanical response to the mechanical gesture. It is these quiet conversations that makes conversation unpredictable, because we never know which associations we get on the gesture of others and which implications it will have for your response. Conservation is always (ex)change of words, and thereby never the same, as the meaning of words are always re-constructed. We never have exactly the same interpretation of a word, since we already heard it before, and we always relate it to the siuations and relations, we are in. Meaning that everything is related and situated, and contiuously re-constructed.

What does a becoming perspective and the concept of re-construction imply for organizational culture? It means that culture is constantly re-constructed, making culture a fragile social construction that is always changing. Culture as becoming means that culture should certainly not be seen as a firm thing, but as something emerging from a process of re-construction. It becomes a process that never really ends, where we continuously are making sense (Weick, 1995) of our organizations by re-constructiong them as cultures. It should be underlined that it is more appropriate to talk about organizing (Weick, 1979) in relation to this as it is about (neverending)

processes. We have had a hard time finding a concept for culture similar to organizing, since culturization is not a good concept, we ended up prefering organizational culture formation. Using culture formation underlines another important point, when culture is related to a becoming perspective the way it is done here. The point being culture and culture formation becomes two sides of the same coin as culture is always in-the-making, being dynamically re-constructed. Therefore, it does not make sense to distinguish between organizational culture formation, organizational culture and organizational culture change. Culture is always in formation and changing. We can never say that this is our culture, as it is being re-constructed and altered, as we outer that.

Culture is in flux, as it is contiuously being re-constructed by its members. Talking about organization formation in the traditional sense becomes obscure, because nothing is ever going to stabilise itself as something firm, which is there. Organizational culture will always stay in formation. We can never pin it down, frame it in a couple of values, and exhibit it on the wall, for everyone to follow, as it is forever changing. Change being the proporty of culture means (to us) that change is the perspective we have on culture. Implying that culture is contiuously re-constructed and never stays the same. We might use the same words or values but the meaning of them is constantly changing. Therefore, it gives no meaning to talk about cultural change in a becoming perspective, culture is always changing and can be understood only this way.

Above we said that we never can pin the organizational culture down, frame it in a few values, and stick them on the wall. That is not quite right. Many organizations actually do write down their values and frame them on the wall for all members to see and follow. What we do mean is that organizations might do that, but that does certainly not mean that members interpret the values alike and interpret them the same way all the time. On the contrary, we argue that organizational members will continuously re-construct such values, making them being in a constant process of becoming.

The paper will end with a short illustration of what we mean by this. Collins & Porras, 1991 give some examples from organizations that they use in their linaer argument for how to use vision as the tool to gain competitive advantages. We reuse one of Collins & Porras' examples to illustrate what culture might become in a becoming perspective with change as the basic proporty. This of course stands in clear opposition to how Collins & Porras, 1991 use the example themselves.

Figure 1 briefly highlights the values and beliefs and the purpose of the corporation Giro Sport Design in 1991.

Figure 1
Giro Sport Design (from Corporate Vision Statement, 1991)

Values and beliefs:

- Customer satisfaction is first and formost
- It takes great products to be a great company
- Integrity is not to be compromised; be honest, consistent, and fair
- Commitments made are to be fulfilled
- Never cut corners, get the details right

- The Golden Rule applies to peers, customers, and employees
- Teamwork should prevail, think "we" not "I"
- There is no reason to do any product that is not innovative and high quality
- Style is important, all of our products should look great.

Pupose:

- Giro exists to make a positive impact on society to make peoples live better – through innovative, high quality products.

Source: Collins & Porras, 1991, p. 49.

Giro Sport Design did exhibit their values and purpose by framing them on the wall (or rather in the corporate vision statement). The idea behind doing so is that all members of the corporation shall internalise and follow the values, making the corporate army march to the same valuebeat and accomplish effectiveness. Just like it is prescribed in theories about organizational culture in the critical variable perspective, the theories of valuebased management and the learning organizations etc. Thereby, creating a stable core of values that everybody have internalised and apply to, making culture a firm thing that controls and make the behavior of members predictable and controlable.

Our argument is a different one, altogether. We argue that although all memebers of the Giro Sport Design corporation are exposed to the values in figure 1. There is still a long way to go from exhibiting the values on the wall to get them to be applied homogenuously in practice. We find it most unlikely that all members should construct (and re-construct) these values the exact same way, and even more unlikely that they should put them into practice in the same way. Meyerson, 1991 supports our argument in her research on hospital social workers. The social workers all shared the overall purpose to help people. But when the overall purpose was to be applied in practice, it was certainly not done in any common way. Since "social workers vary in their beleifs about medical orientation, how to "help", and even what it means to "help"." (Meyerson, 1991, p. 132). The same way the members of Giro Sport Design most likely differ in their interpretation of what integrity and great products are, and how to avoid compromising the first and make the second.

Change is an immanent part of this process, as the values of Giro Sport Design are interpreted continuously to put them into practice. However, this does not mean that we think values and practice surely are tightly coupled. It might be that they are loosly coupled or even decoubled, depending upon how the members of Giro Sport Design interpret the values in general, and interpret to follow them in particular. The managers of Giro display these values, but that is certainly no guarantee that the members of Giro follow them. Meaning that some members might deliberately go against the values (counterculture). This implies that different members have both different positions to and interpretations of the values of Giro Sport Design. Making it very difficult, indeed to get a common practice. The culture of Giro Sport Design will be relational and situated and continuously re-constructed. The last as the practice of these values influence, how the values are interpreted, so that the contents of the values change over time or rather all the time. As conversation (gesture-response) between practice and values and about the values and how they are to be practised permanently take place in Giro Sport Design. In short: There is an ongoing

interaction (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002) or conversation (Stacey, 2000) about the values, where they are constantly re-constructed and changed.

Giro Sport Design has briefly been used to argue that change is a permanent feature of values, practice and culture, as they are all processes, and it is imperative that they are understood and (re-)constructed as such.

Concluding remarks

The paper has argued that culture in a becoming perspective is to be understood as something always in motion. Meaning that culture is a process, where it is always in formation and never get stabilised as a firm thing.

The paper agrees with Tsoukas & Chia, 2002 that change is essential. On the other hand, the paper disagrees with Tsoukas & Chia regarding what a becoming perpsective implies, as the paper critisise Tsoukas & Chia for not taken the becoming perspective far enough. The paper has tried to move further than Tsoukas & Chia by relating the becoming perspective to Stacey's, 2000 radical theories and our own concept of re-construction.

Taking culture to be a continuous stream of re-construction is one way of making sense of organizational culture in relation to a becoming perspective and the whole paper. On the other hand, the whole paper can be interpreted as an enactment of our becoming perspective on culture (or the other way around, for that matter) as continuously re-construction, as well. This goes to show that the two hands are very difficult to distinguish from one another, since it turns out to be a difficult task to seperate retrospective sensemaking and enactment in a becoming perspective, where everything is in motion, constantly being re-constructed, and where change is the essential.

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