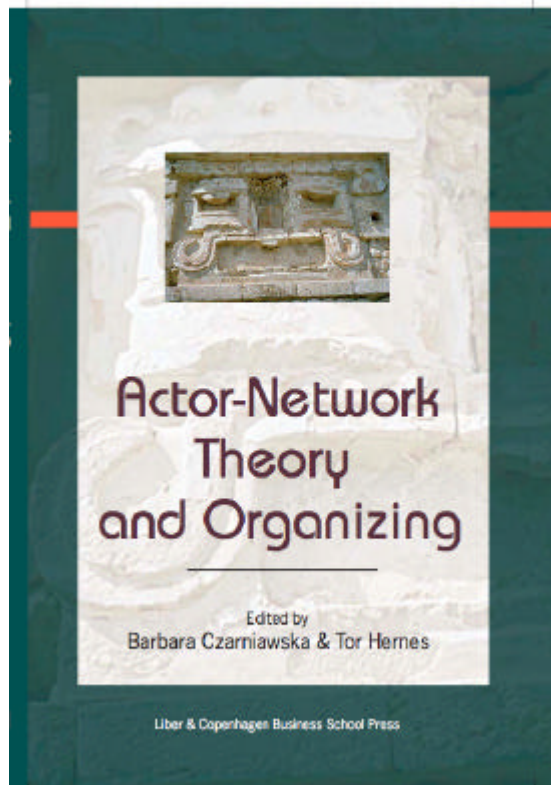
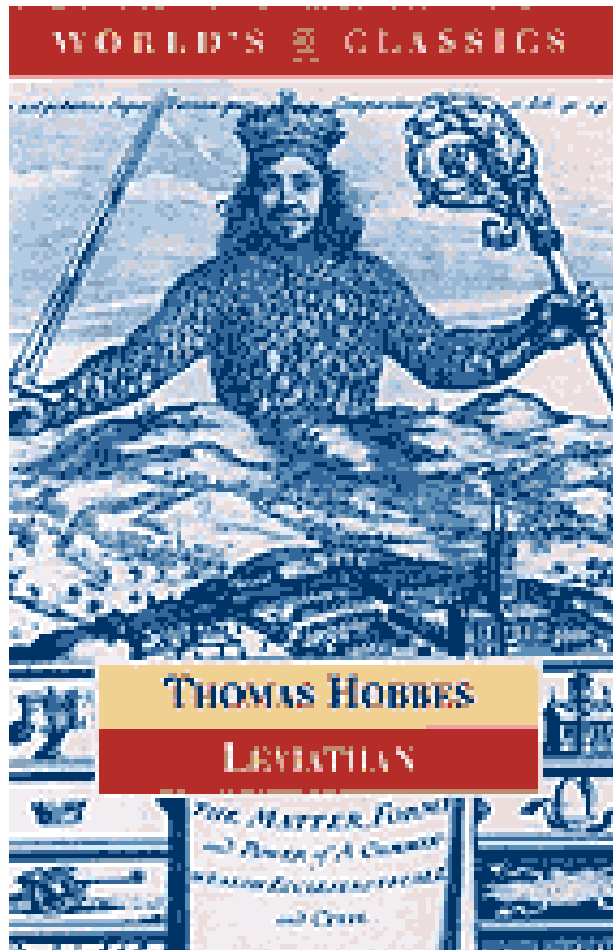


THE NON-IDENTICAL TWINS: ANT and translation in organization studies



**Barbara Czarniawska, GRI, School of Business,
Economics & Law, Göteborg University**

Constructing Macro Actors According to ANT (1)



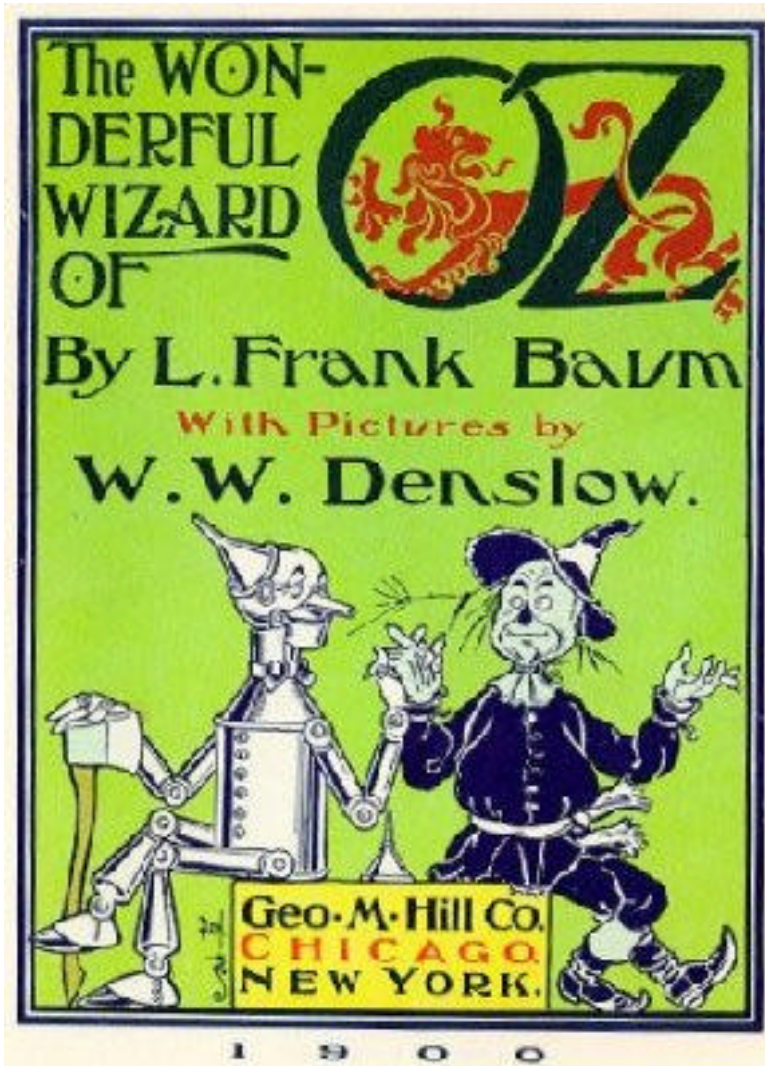
Callon and Latour (1981):

- the difference between micro actors and macro actors is due not to their "nature", but to negotiations (including wars) and associations.
- the process of creating the alliances that form the basis of the construction of macro actors is poorly understood, as macro actors wipe away any traces of their construction, presenting themselves through their spokespersons as being indivisible and solid.
- social scientists contribute, often unwillingly, to this construction process, by increasing this solidity and consistency in their descriptions.

Constructing Macro Actors According to ANT (2)

- **Two sources of inspiration:**
 - **the *actant theory*, structuralist analysis of Algirdas J. Greimas. Actant: "that which accomplishes or undergoes an act". Actants have *narrative programs*: a change of state produced by any subject affecting any other subject. Actants are not only human beings but also animals, objects, or concepts. Actants change roles throughout a narrative: an actant may acquire a character and become an actor or may remain an object of some actor's action. Narrative programs become chained to one another in logical succession, thus forming a *narrative trajectory*.**
 - **the *sociology of translation* (Michel Serres)**

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz



When a nasty neighbor tries to have her dog put to sleep, Dorothy takes her dog Toto, to run away. A cyclone appears and carries her to the magical land of Oz. Wishing to return, she begins to travel to the city of Oz where a great Wizard lives. On her way she meets a Scarecrow who needs a brain, a Tin Man who wants a heart, and a Cowardly Lion who desperately needs courage. Dorothy saves them from their troubles, and promises that they will acquire what they need if they follow her to the Wizard. On the way there, they encounter many adversities, which they overcome helping one another. Once in the city of Oz, they discover that the Wizard of Oz is a small, frightened man who hides behind a big mask. But it does not matter, as they all got what they wanted on the way.

Michel Callon: How an action-network emerges

1. ***Problematization***, in which an initial set of actors define (or redefine) a problem and offer itself as a solution. The acceptance of the goal is *an obligatory passage point* for entering the network.

WE MUST GO TO OZ

2. ***Interessement***: each entity that passed through the obligatory passage point is locked into place so that their reciprocal relations are invested by some interest.

**DOROTHY WANTS TO RETURN HOME, SCARECROW NEEDS A BRAIN,
TIN MAN WANTS A HEART, LION NEEDS COURAGE**

3. ***Enrolment***: in which the entities in emerging network are coordinated and aligned.

ADVENTURES ON THE ROAD MAKE THEM ALIGN.

4. ***Mobilization***: in which the network starts to speak as one, and starts to operate as a recognizable "actor".

**THEY ARRIVE TO OZ AND CONFRONTED THE WIZARD. TOGETHER,
THEY ARE "BIGGER" THAN THE WIZARD.**

Who is the hero? The actor-network!

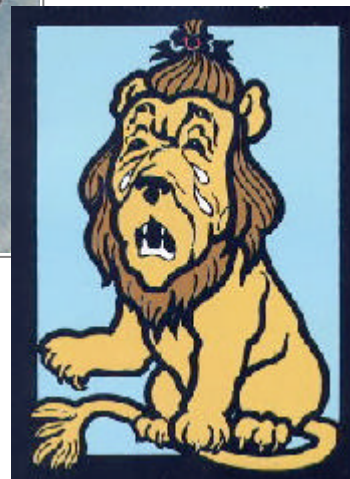
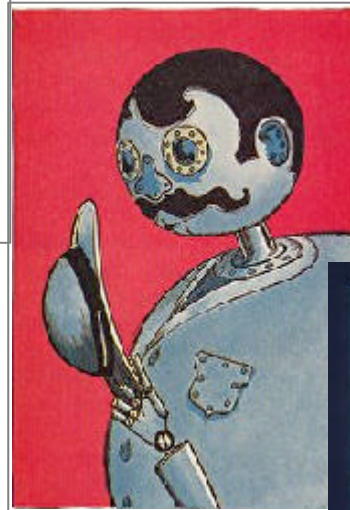
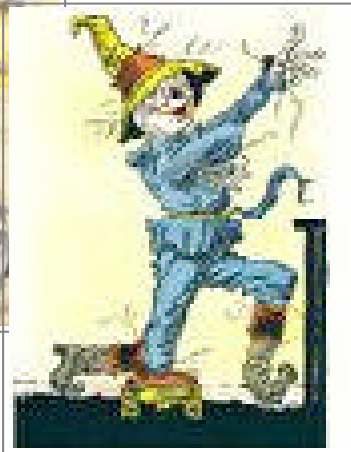


Table of Contents

- 1. Constructing Macro Actors According to Ant: Barbara Czarniawska and Tor Hernes**
- 2. "My Name Is Lifebuoy". An Actor-network Emerging From an Action-net: Lena Porsander**
- 3. Technological Strategy As Macro-actor. How Humanness Might Be Made of Steel: Kjell Tryggestad**
- 4. The Little Engine That Could. On the "Managing" Qualities of Technology: Marcus Lindahl**
- 5. Artifacts' Rule! How Organizing Happens in Open Source Software Projects: Giovan Francesco Lanzara and Michèle Morner**
- 6. Organizational Routines and the Macro-actor: Martha Feldman and Brian Pentland**
- 7. The Organization As Nexus of Institutional Macro Actors. The Story of a Lopsided Recruitment Case: Tor Hernes**
- 8. Powers in a Factory: David Vickers And Steve Fox**

Table of Contents ctd.

- 9. Macro-actors and the Sounds of the Silenced: Claes-Fredrik Helgesson and Hans Kjellberg**
- 10. Inscribing Organizational Change with Information Technology : Jonny Holmström and Daniel Robey**
- 11. The Internet Web Portal as an Enrolment Device: Lars Norén & Agneta Ranerup**
- 12. The Making of Knowledge Society. Intellectual Capital and Paradoxes of Managing Knowledge: Jan Mouritsen & Kirsten Flagstad**
- 13. The Re-formatting of Electricity, and the Making of a Market: Per Ingvar Olsen**
- 14. Explaining the Macro-actors in Practice: Peter Hägglund**
- 15. Productive Power, Organized Markets and Actor-network Theory: Tuomo Peltonen and Henriikki Tikkanen**
- 16. Actor-networks. Ecology and Entrepreneurs: Silvia Gherardi and Davide Nicolini**
- 17. Net-working on a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. The Baby As Virtual Object: David Middleton & Steven D. Brown**

"My Name Is Lifebuoy". An Actor-network Emerging From an Action-net Lena Porsander (1)

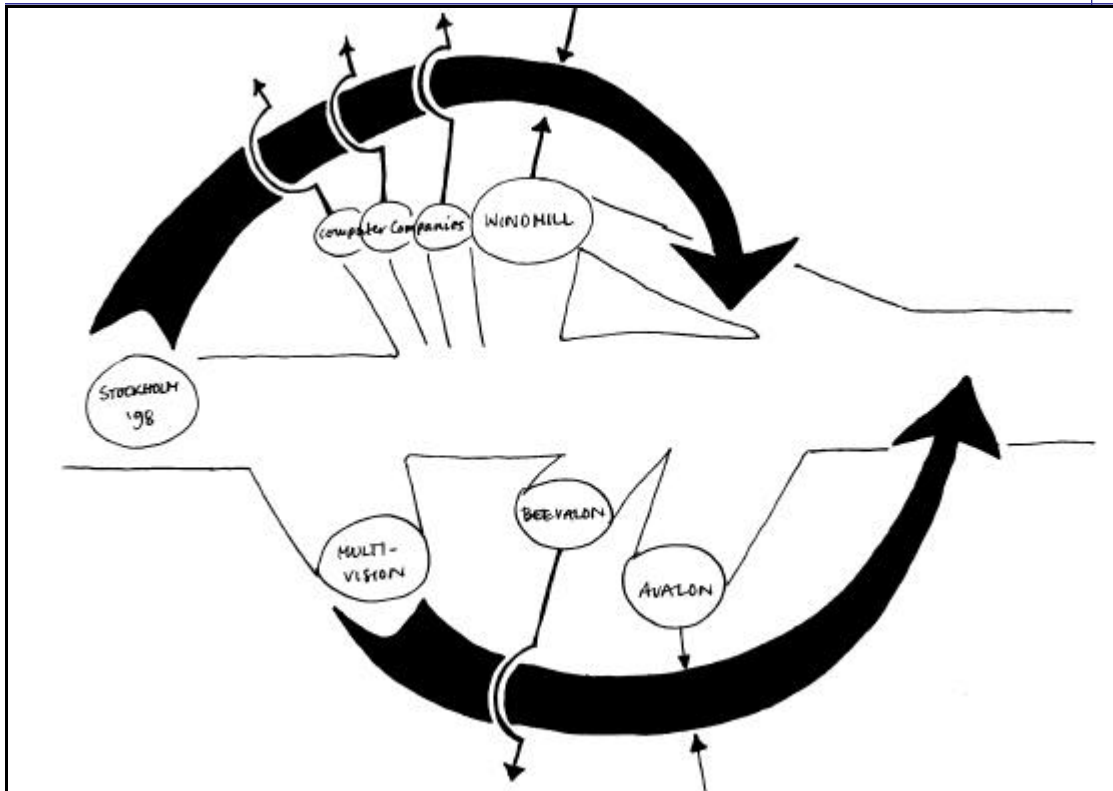


Lena Porsander described the organizing of the Cultural Capital of Europe '98 in Stockholm. A temporary organization created to organize cultural events needed also to organize itself. Therefore, two different logics of organizing were developed, and many different products manufactured: a cultural peep-show for the city and its tourists, a software that the city will inherit and, last but not least, the stories that helped to hold the Cultural Capitals together over time.

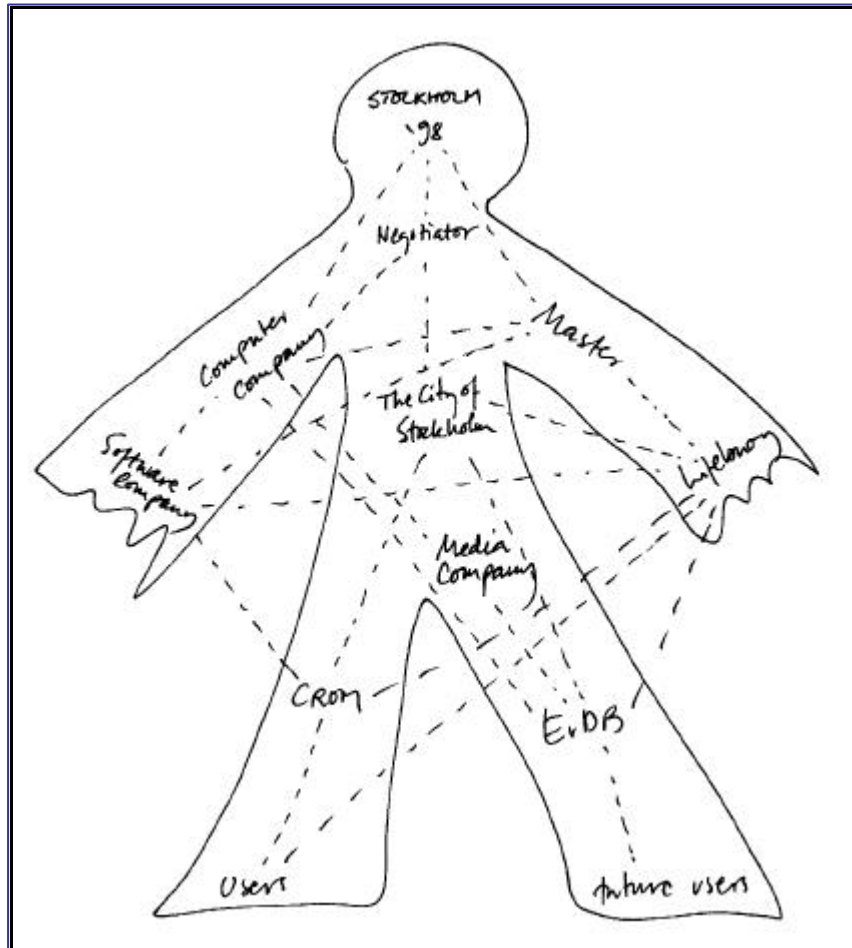
"My Name Is Lifebuoy". An Actor-network Emerging From an Action-net

Lena Porsander (3)

- The municipality of Stockholm creates a temporary organization, Stockholm-98
- The municipality has a contract with a software company Windmill S-98 needs to collaborate with media company Multivision
- Multivision does not like Windmill and begins to obstruct them; they prefer Beevalon
- S98 is forced to sign a contract with Avalon, a daughter company of Beevalons ...
- ... but under condition that Avalon will collaborate with Soft, a company that constructed the software Lifebuoy, and so on...



"My Name Is Lifebuoy". An Actor-network Emerging From an Action-net Lena Porsander (2)

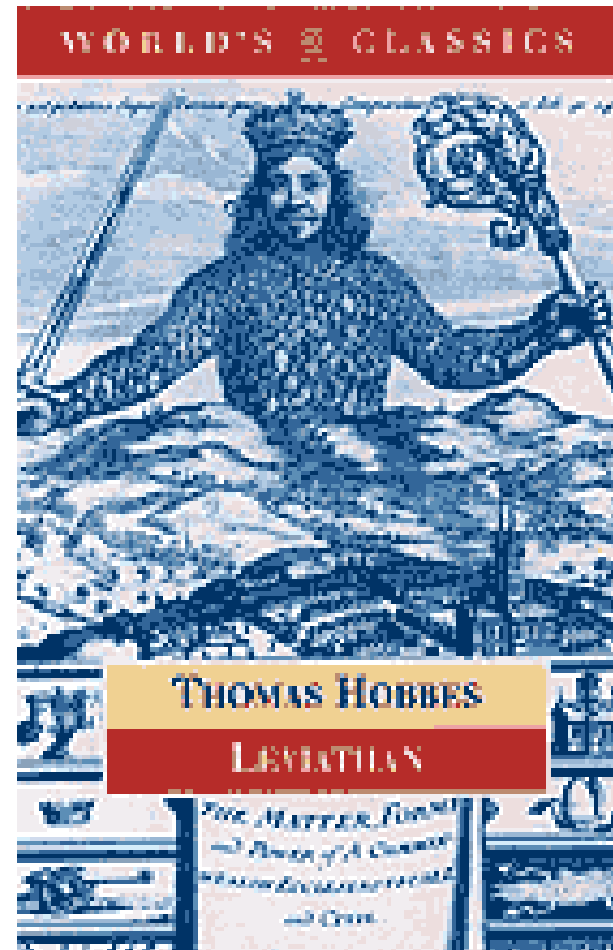


"I work with administrative duties", said the Lifebuoy. "I exert administrative control over all the projects suggestions that have been sent to the organization 'Stockholm-Cultural Capital of Europe 1998'. My database contains around 5.000 suggestions of cultural projects. I sort, pack and save information concerning each of them. I also construct links between different systems. For example, I attach economic information, sent to me by my chum Crom, an economic software, to each project. In this way, the decision makers receive an information as exact as (inhumanly) possible. I am fully aware of power of associations, of the importance of networking. To connect is to exist!"

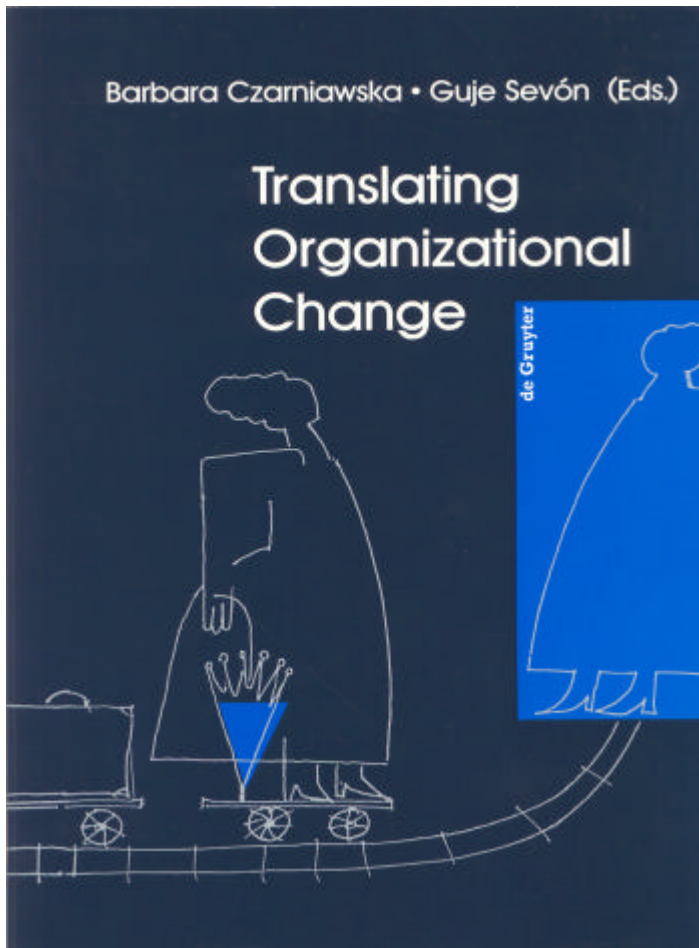
"Unscrewing the big Leviathan"

Michel Callon and Bruno Latour, 1981/1998

In order to grow we must enroll other wills by translating what they want and be reifying this translation in such a way that none of them can desire anything else any longer. Hobbes restricted this process of translation to what we now call “political representation”. The scattered wills are recapitulated in the person of the sovereign who says what we want, and whose word has force of law and cannot be contradicted. And yet it is a very long time now since “political representation” was alone sufficient to translate the desires of the multitude. After political science, the science of economics also claims to sound loins and coffers, and to be able to say not only what the goods, services and people making up the Leviathan desire, but also what they are worth.



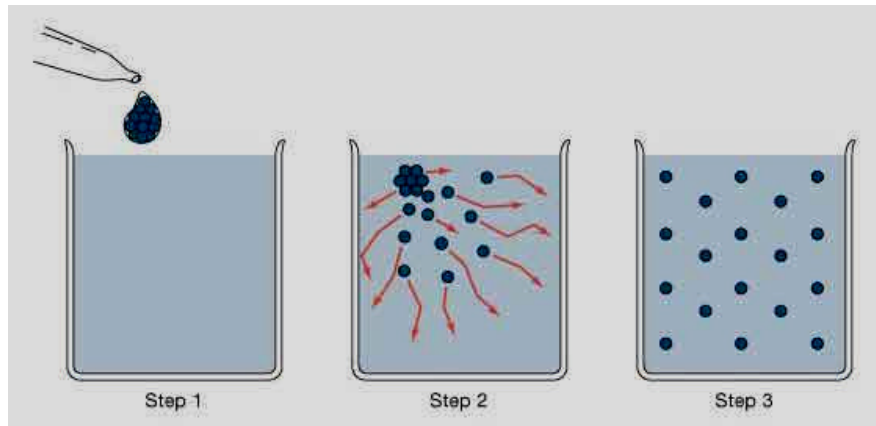
Travels of ideas



- **how do ideas, objects and practices travel?**
- **why do ideas, objects and practices travel?**
- **which ideas, objects and practices travel?**

How do ideas travel?

Diffusion theory



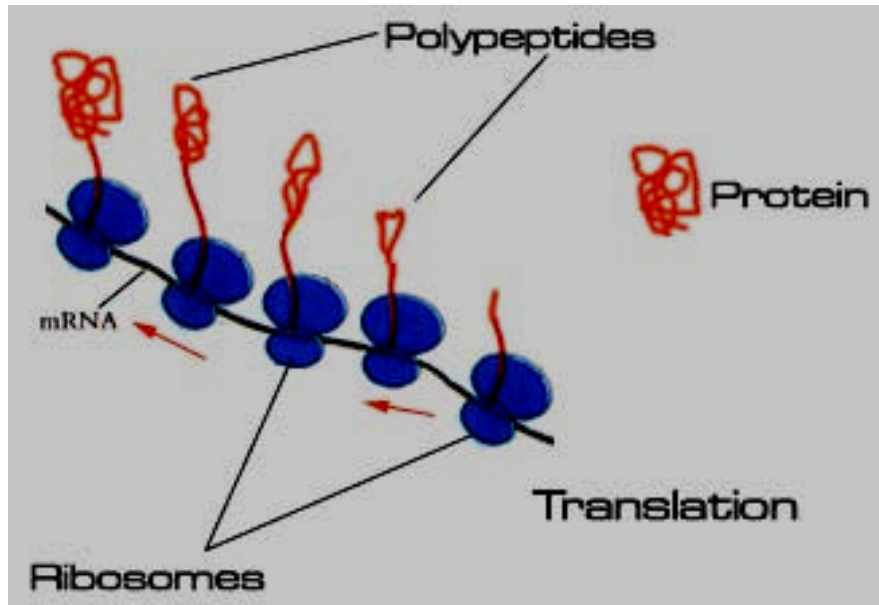
- **movement originates in a source of energy (=leadership)**
- **in ideal conditions ideas travel without friction (=minimum resistance)**
- **changes in the original idea must be prevented (=distortions)**

There is a net movement of a substance from an area of high concentration to an area of lower concentration.

Diffusion is a passive process because it requires no energy from the cell.

How do ideas travel?

Translation theory

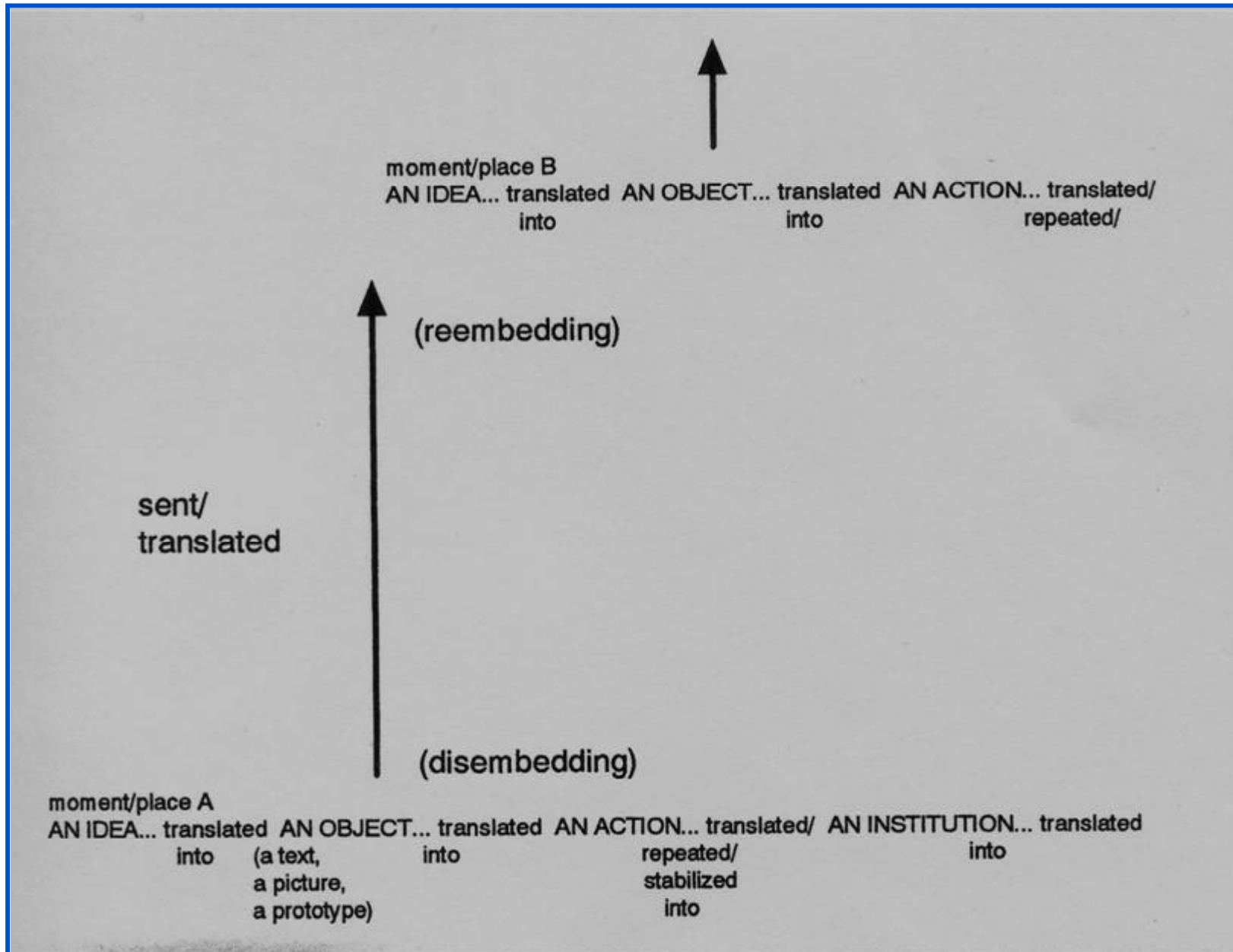


Translation of messenger RNA
in a bacteria *E.coli*

- it is difficult to trace back “the original movement”
- energy results from “friction” and resistance
- changes in the original idea are inevitable; they transform and often enrich it
- translation is an active, collective creation process

How do ideas travel?

Translation theory



Why do ideas travel?

The new institutionalists speak of
“isomorphic mechanisms”

- coercive (rarely)
- normative (yes: but norms only direct imitation)
- mimetic (**yes! imitation**)

Imitation



imitation is the basic social mechanism

imitation and invention go hand in hand:

- **as soon as something new is invented, it becomes imitated**
- **but: imitation weakens the original attraction of the invention**
- **people look for some other thing to imitate (Gabriel Tarde, 1890)**

Which ideas travel?

“ ... **fashionable** worldwide...”



- fashion = a collective choice mechanism
- fashion permits conformity **AND** deviation
- fashion reproduces **AND** changes the old order of things
- fashion moves through revolutions **BUT** is evolutionary

So... how do concepts,
technologies and practices move
around the world?



- **translation** is a vehicle, and **imitation** its motor; **fashion** sits at the wheel

How ideas, objects and practices travel in the global economy

- 1. WHAT IS TRAVELING? NAMES, PRACTICES, OBJECTS, AND PEOPLE**
- 2. HOW DO IDEAS TRAVEL AND HOW DO THEY LAND?**

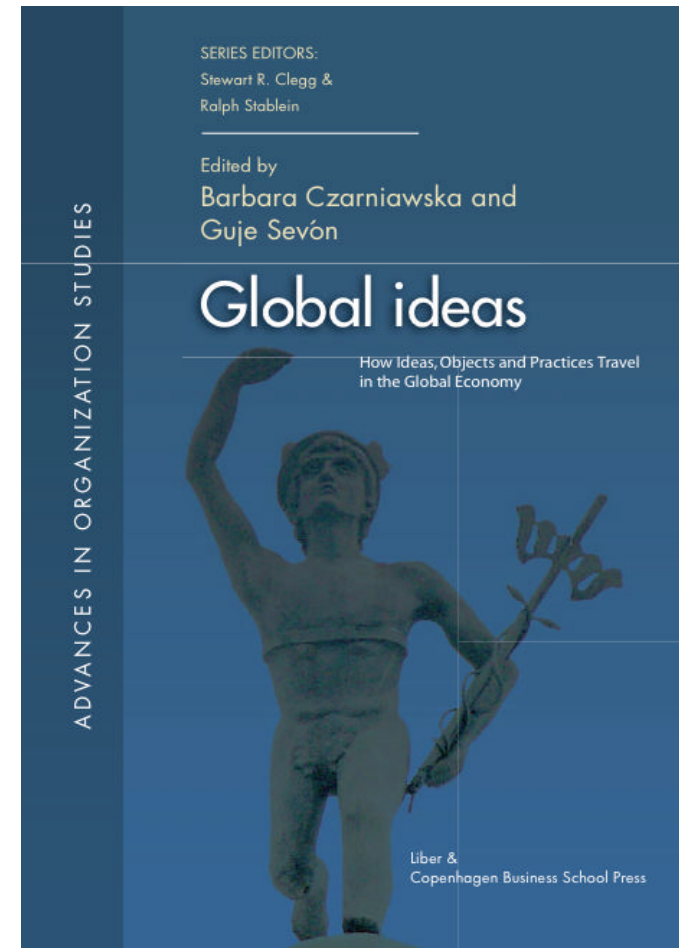


Table of Contents

1. Translation is a vehicle, imitation its motor, and fashion sits at the wheel

Barbara Czarniawska and Guje Sevón

2. Cultural alchemy: Translating the experience economy into Scandinavian

Orvar Löfgren

3. The namesake: On Best Value and other reformmarks

Rolf Solli, Peter Demediuk & Rob Sims

4. Isomorphism, isopraxism, and isonymism: Complimentary or competing processes?

Gudbjörg Erlingsdóttir and Kajsa Lindberg

5. Lost and found in the translation of strategic plans and websites

Hokyu Hwang and David Suarez

6. Environment's many faces: On organizing and translating objects in Stockholm

Petra Adolfsson

7. From "Nature" to "Economy" and "Culture": How stockfish travels and constructs an action net

Tor Korneliussen and Fabrizio Panozzo

Table of Contents ctd.

8. Fashion in organizing

Barbara Czarniawska

9. Something new, something old, something borrowed...: The translation of the "Family Friendly Organization" in Israel.

Michal Frenkel

10. Articulating agendas and traveling principles in the layering of new strands of academic freedom in contemporary Singapore

Kris Olds

11. Fields of imitation. A global expansion of management education

Tina Hedmo, Kerstin Sahlin-Andersson and Linda Wedlin

12. Globalizing webs: Translation of public sector e-modernization

Hans Krause Hansen & Dorte Salskov-Iversen

13. Close encounters: The circulation and reception of managerial practices in the San Francisco Bay Area Nonprofit Community

Walter W. Powell, Denise L. Gammal, and Caroline Simard

14. Code-switching, or why a metacode is good to have

Richard Rottenburg

Petra Adolfsson

From air and water to organizing Stockholm



Collecting air:

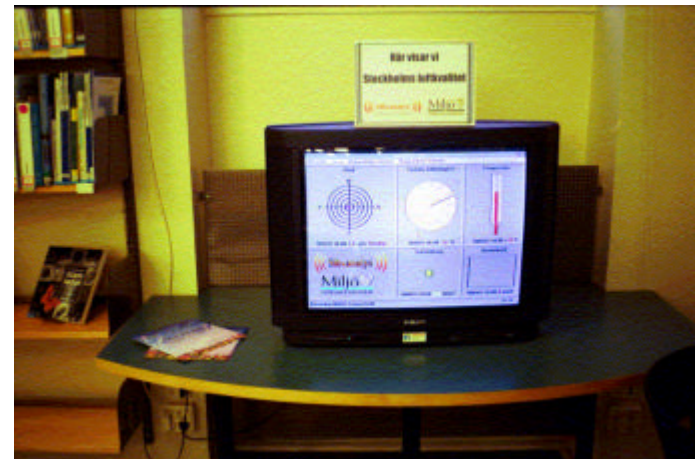
a woman from Stockholm Air and Noise checks a sample of the air collected within a traffic project. Otherwise monitoring is now automatic; the first air monitoring station has been put on a roof in the middle of Stockholm in 1965.

Petra Adolfsson

From air and water to organizing Stockholm

Inscribing air: 1:

The automatic monitoring systems generate data on air quality, which are transferred to the database at the office at specific time intervals. Some staff members work primarily with the computers, calculating the collected data based on models and report production. The results can be seen on a special screen in the library.



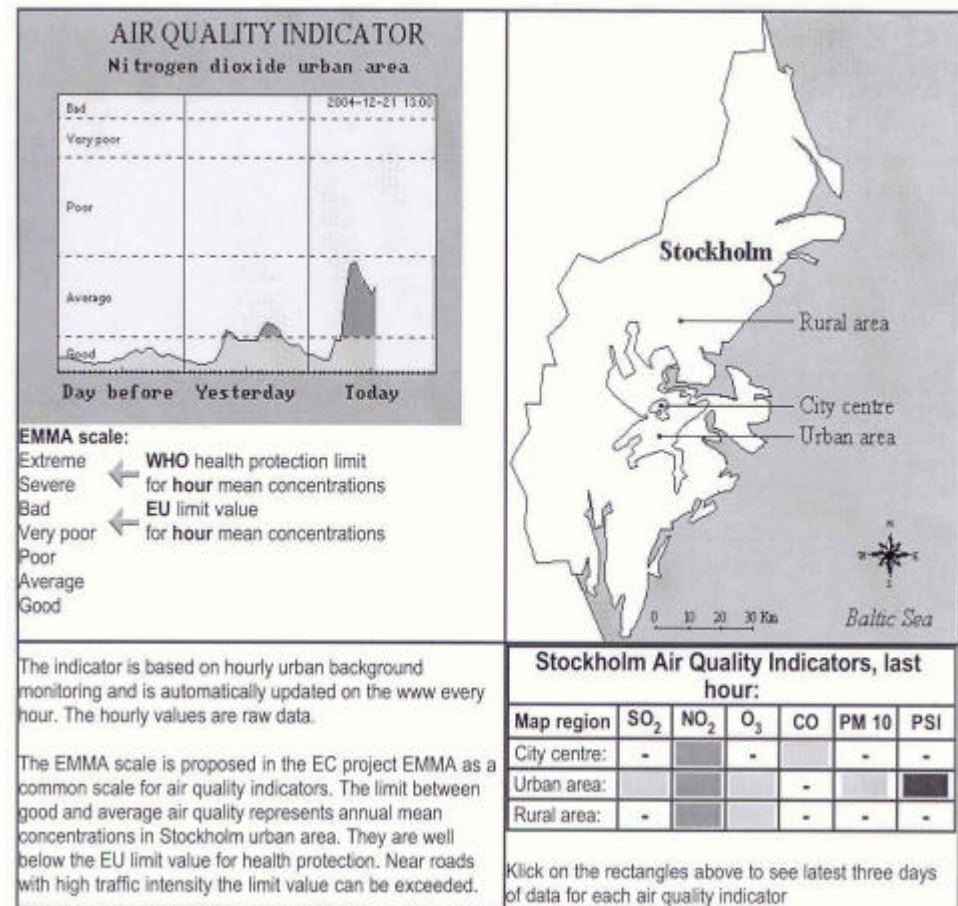
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From air and water to organizing Stockholm

Inscription 1: Air Quality Indicator

Calculations often focus on the relationship between air pollution levels and the limit values, which are based on the air indicators for health protection suggested but the EU and the WHO. The indicator can be found on SAN's website.

Air Quality Indicator nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) for Stockholm County urban area.



Petra Adolfsson

From air and water to organizing Stockholm



Inscription 2. Organizing Stockholm

**A picture at the exhibition
advertising the Energy
Company: The caption
under the picture says
"Distant heating makes
Stockholm's air much
more pleasant to
breathe"**

Petra Adolfsson

From air and water to organizing Stockholm

Organizing Stockholm: In 1994, two obelisks, one showing the air quality in the city and the other the state of the water. Carl XVI Gustaf sponsored and opened them.



ANT and translation: Antihumanist organization studies?

- **YES**, if it means more attention to things, plants and animals
- **YES**, if it means attracting attention to management techniques that make people into objects (e.g. HRM)
- **NO**, if it means a hostility to people: how can a narrative approach be hostile to the narrators?