



Visualizing Change

in Organizational Arenas

Dr. Ulrich Mill

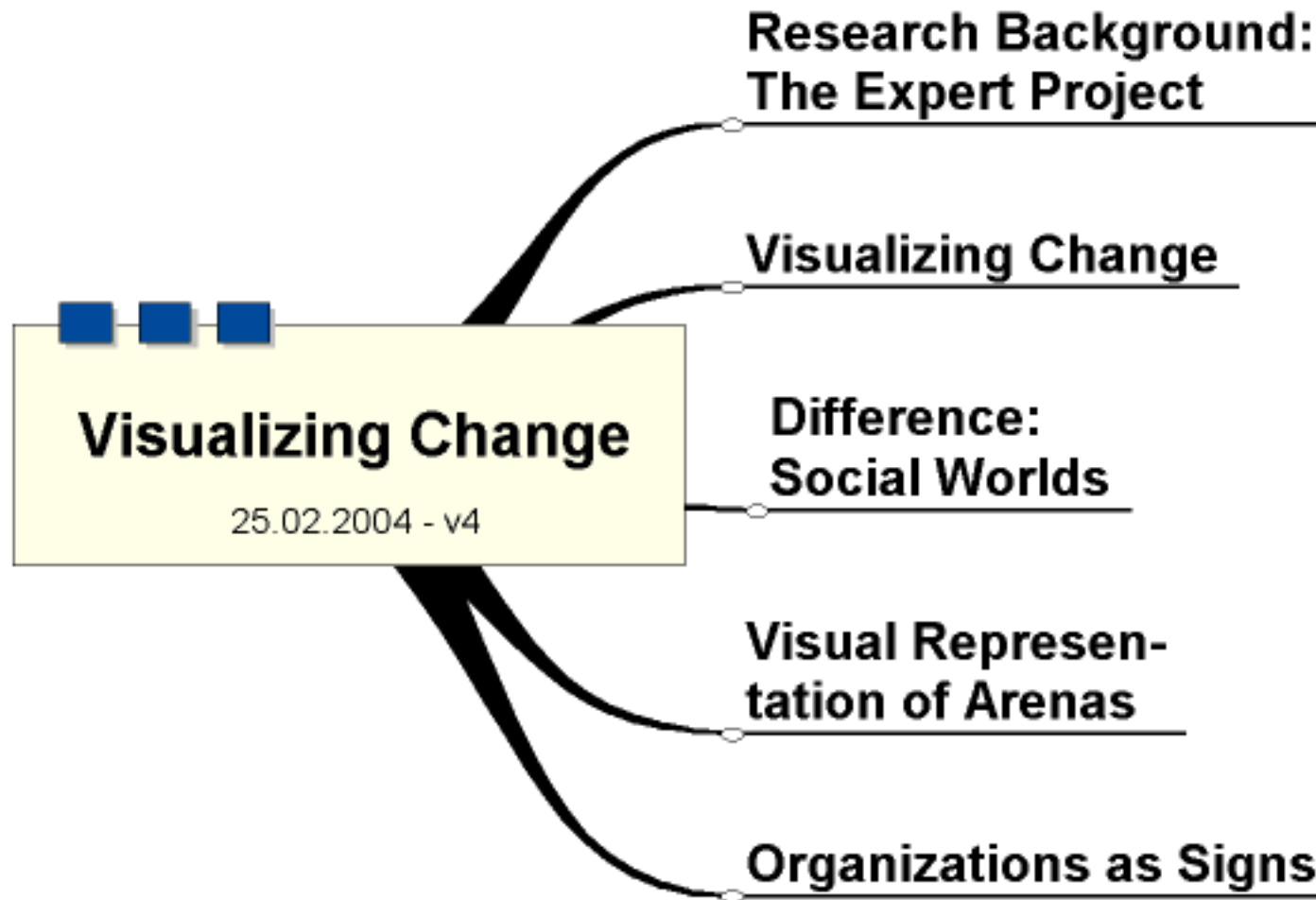


Couch-Stone
Symposium

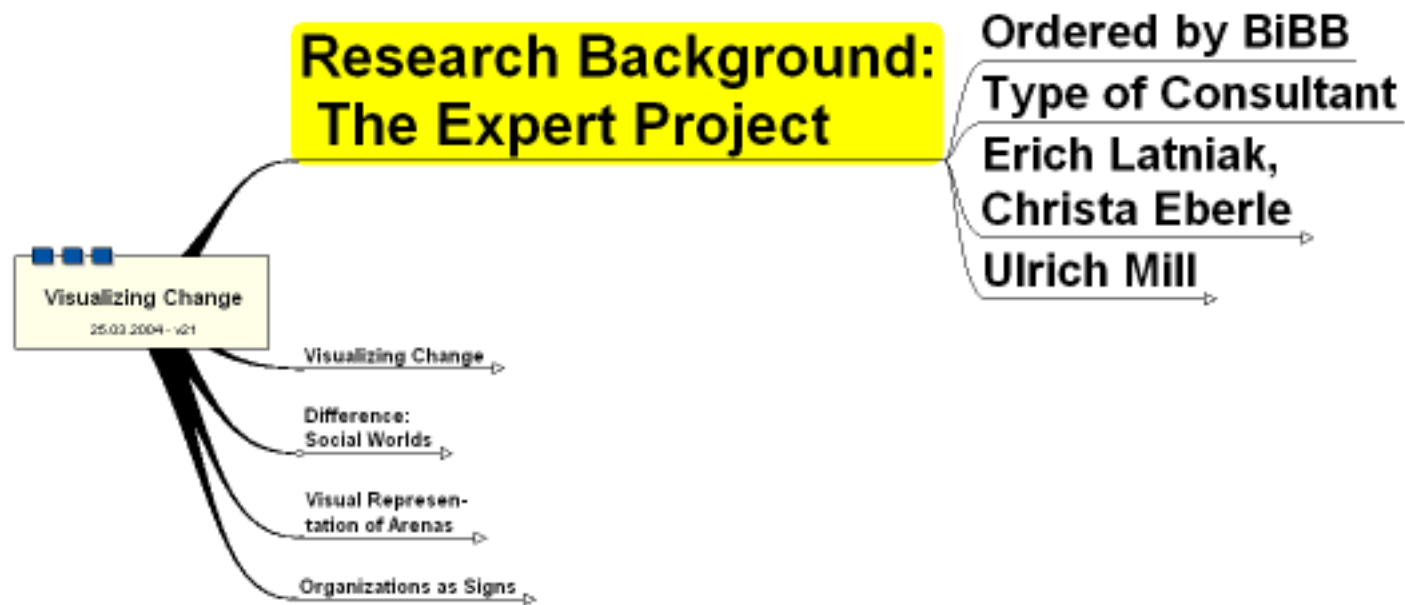
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Vancouver/Canada

Visualizing Change



Research Background: The Expert Project



EXPERT

1. Erich Latniak, Christa Eberle

21 interviews with

- Consultants
- Internal organizational developers
- TBS-Consultants
- Vocational Training Institutes

Report to BiBB

2. Ulrich Mill

6 case studies

- 3 SMEs
- 3 Corporations
- Production
- Energy economy
- Group interviews
- Personal interviews with consultants

Report to BiBB

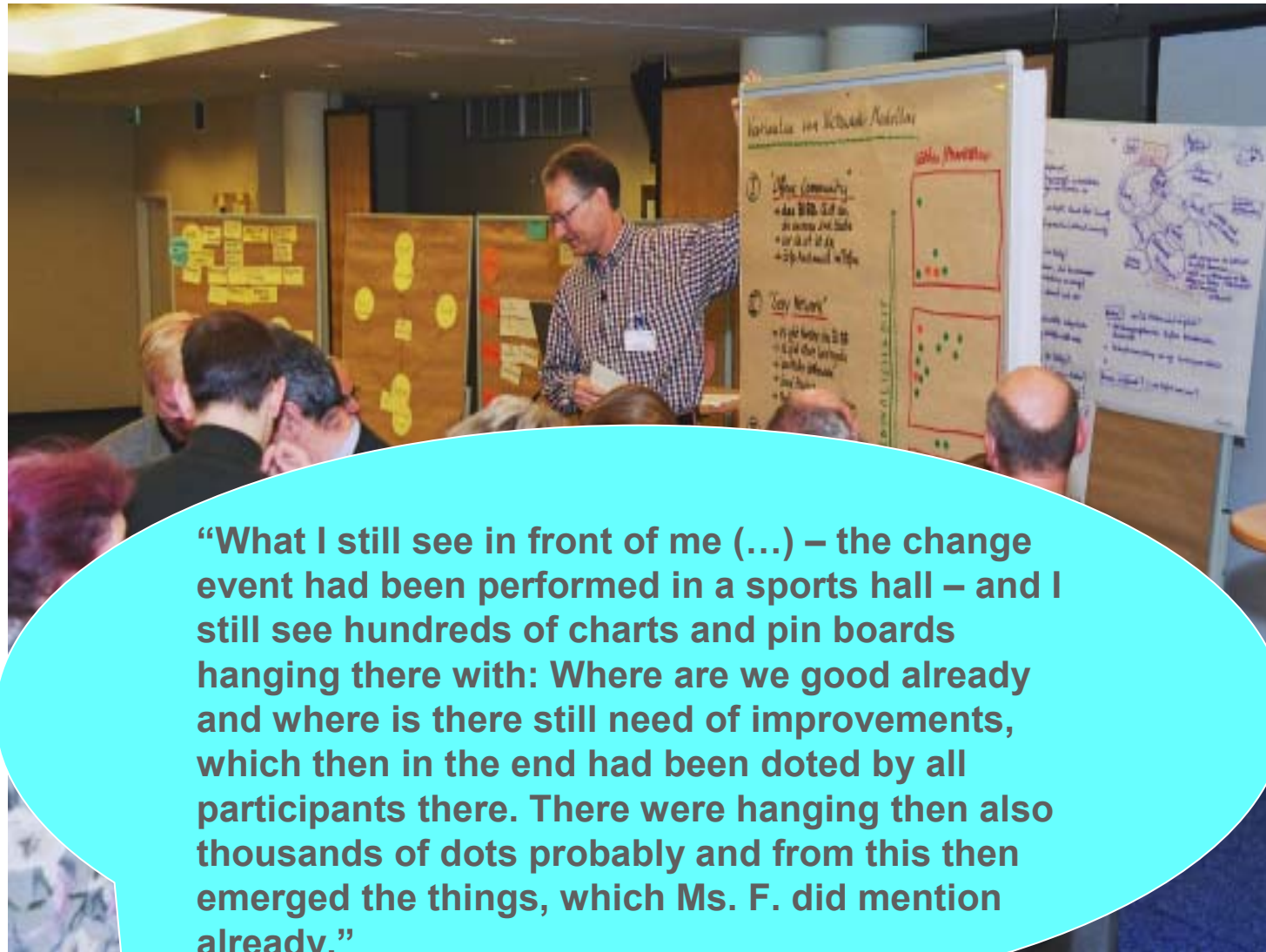
Second look:

1. Social world perspective
2. Semiotics

Visualizing Change



An Image of Change



“What I still see in front of me (...) – the change event had been performed in a sports hall – and I still see hundreds of charts and pin boards hanging there with: Where are we good already and where is there still need of improvements, which then in the end had been doted by all participants there. There were hanging then also thousands of dots probably and from this then emerged the things, which Ms. F. did mention already.”

Head of vocational training at SPARK, group interview_§ 132

Visualizing Change



“And today, in the conversation with you, we talked precisely about these three respects. So – **in the project team we would of course do it with Metaplan in a more structured way** – and here we have a tape recorder, and (...) we will receive a result somehow.”

(Head of the department organizational development, TRACTOR, group interview_§ 508)

A Standard!

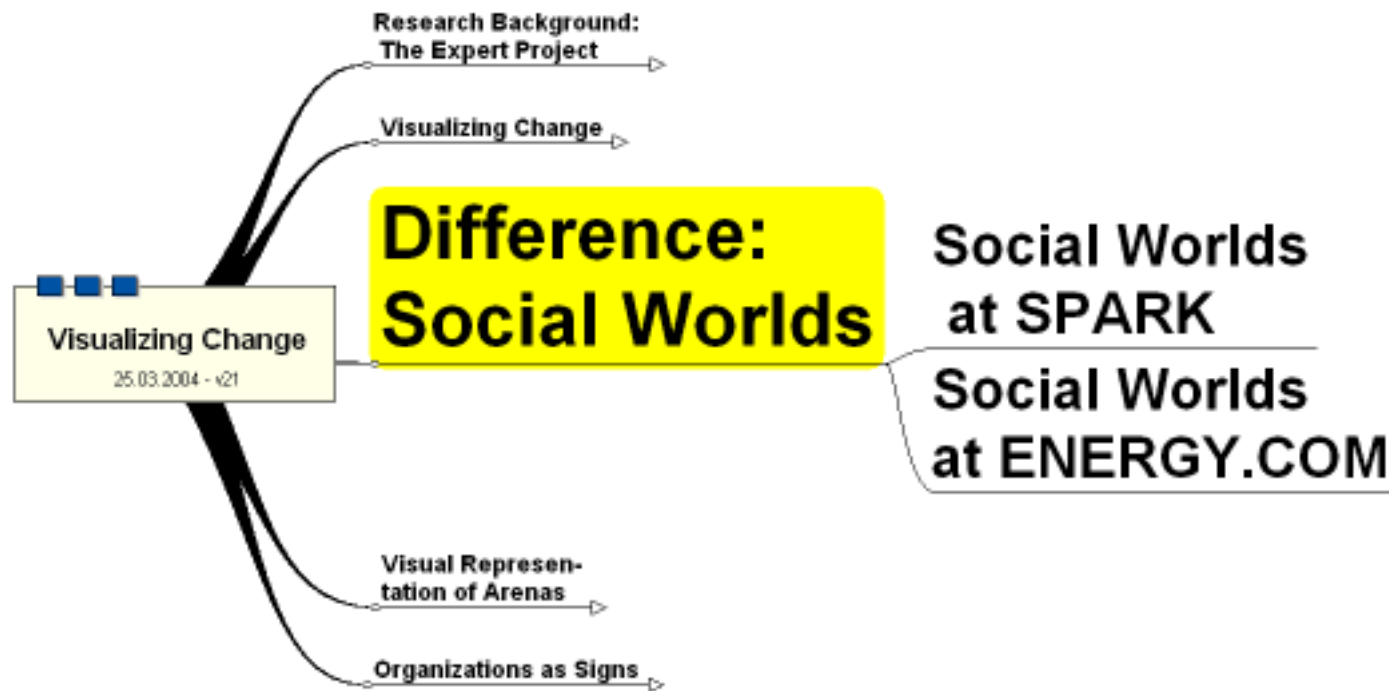
“But if you have to carry your own pinboard to the factory, than ... all is there not so carried through. (...) You really have to include the environment conditions. It is deep Bavarian forest and these are [just; UM] trained housewives. They are not used to it....

(Consultant, FRAME case, personal interview_§§ 81, 83)

Visualizing Change

Why does visualization play such an important role in processes of organizational change and involvement of consultants and **which** role does it play?

Difference: Social Worlds



Social Worlds

Shibutani, 1955: **Limits of effective
communication**

Strauss, 1978: **Evident primary activity
Activity sites
Technology
Organization**

Social worlds at SPARK

We... the department for vocational training
the SPARK factory site Death City
the vocational trainers at SPARK
factory site Death City
as apprentices

I... am an apprentice industrial
electronician
am trainer in metal working

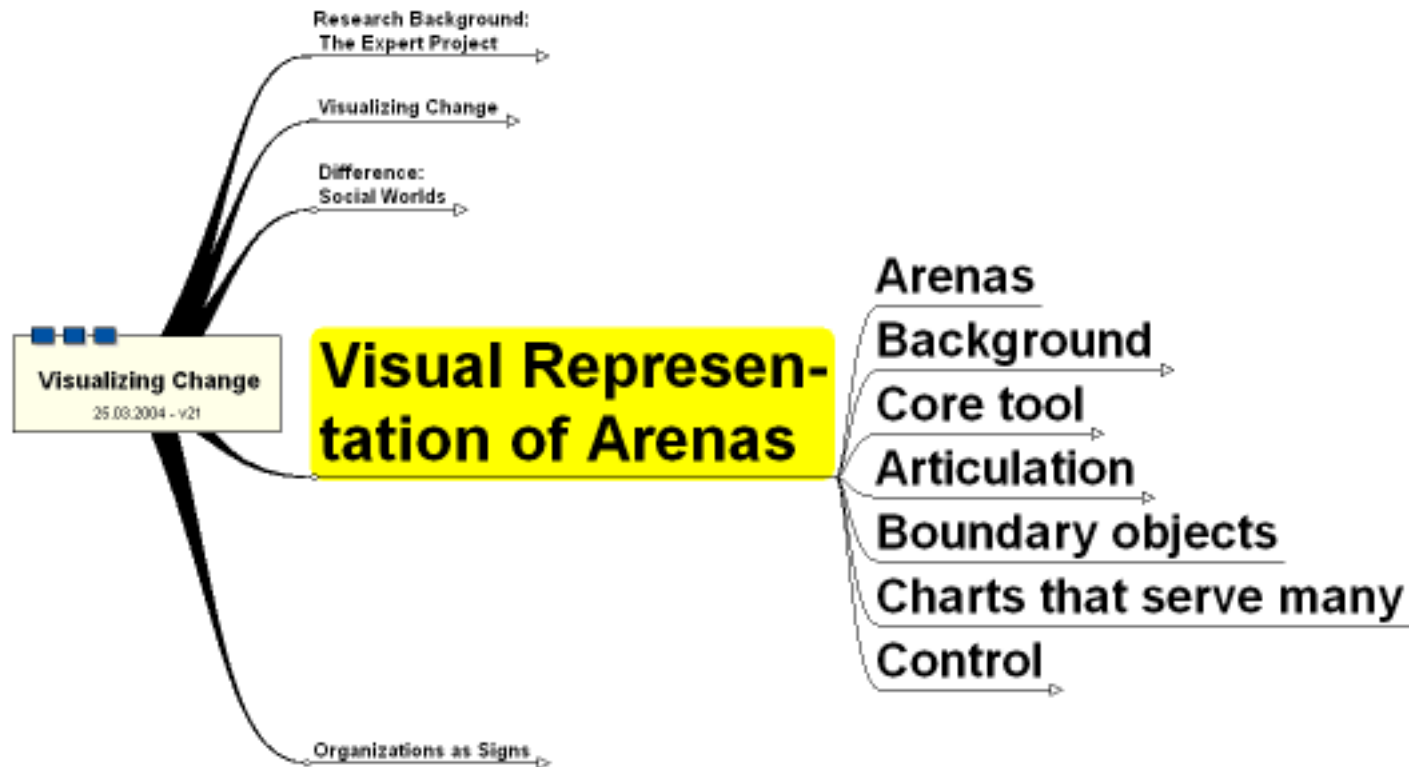
They... the industrial mechanics
from the group of supervisors
from the group of young skilled
workers

Social Worlds at ENERGY.COM

“Always heard: they get paid better and feel like better people. And at the electricity supply system side they recognize the same.” (Group interview, ENERGY.COM, § 45)

They: Department for electricity supply
We: Department for gas and water supply

Visual Representation of Arenas



Arenas

“The concept of arena will refer here to interaction by social worlds around issues” (Strauss, 1993, p. 226)

- **Issue identification:**
 - What is first: Problem or solution?
- **Representation of social worlds in arenas**

Background of visualized discussion methods

- The 60th
- Social movements
- Planning euphoria
- Participation
- Metaplan/ Neuland

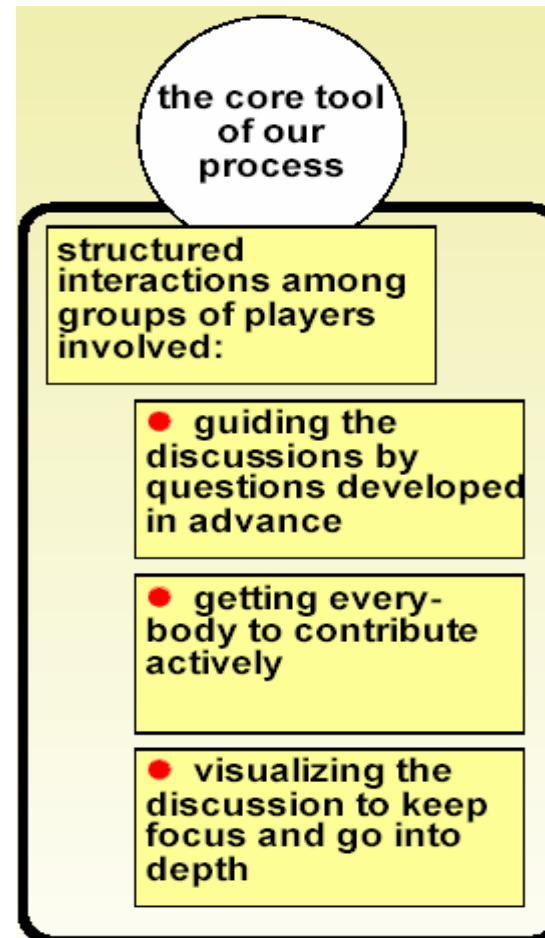



Image from www.metaplan.com

Articulation

“Articulation stands for the coordination of lines of work. This is accomplished by means of the interactional process of working out and carrying through of work-related arrangements.” (Strauss, 1993, p. 87)

- Articulation process
- Articulation work
- Invisibility  Creating dialogs

Charts that serve many

Change Event at SPARK

- **Summarize the discussion of a subgroup**
 - Audience: the subgroup
 - Composition: Maximum diversity
- **Representation of this discussion**
 - Audience: the whole group
- **Part of the documentation**
 - Audience: Management, steering team

Control

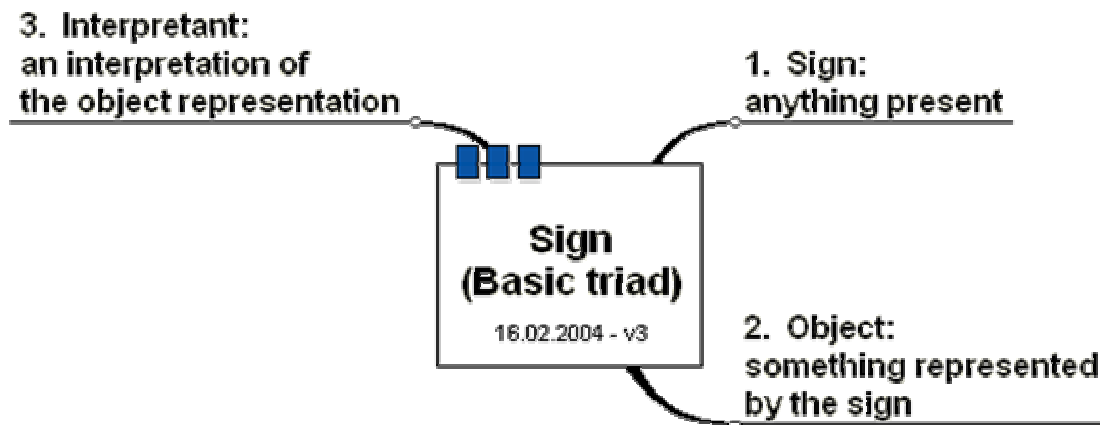
- **Moderation**
- **Stay in the frame**
- **Schedule**
- **Deliverables**
 - ➡ Visual representation of project progress
- **Power at the backstage**

Organizations as Signs



New Definition of SI

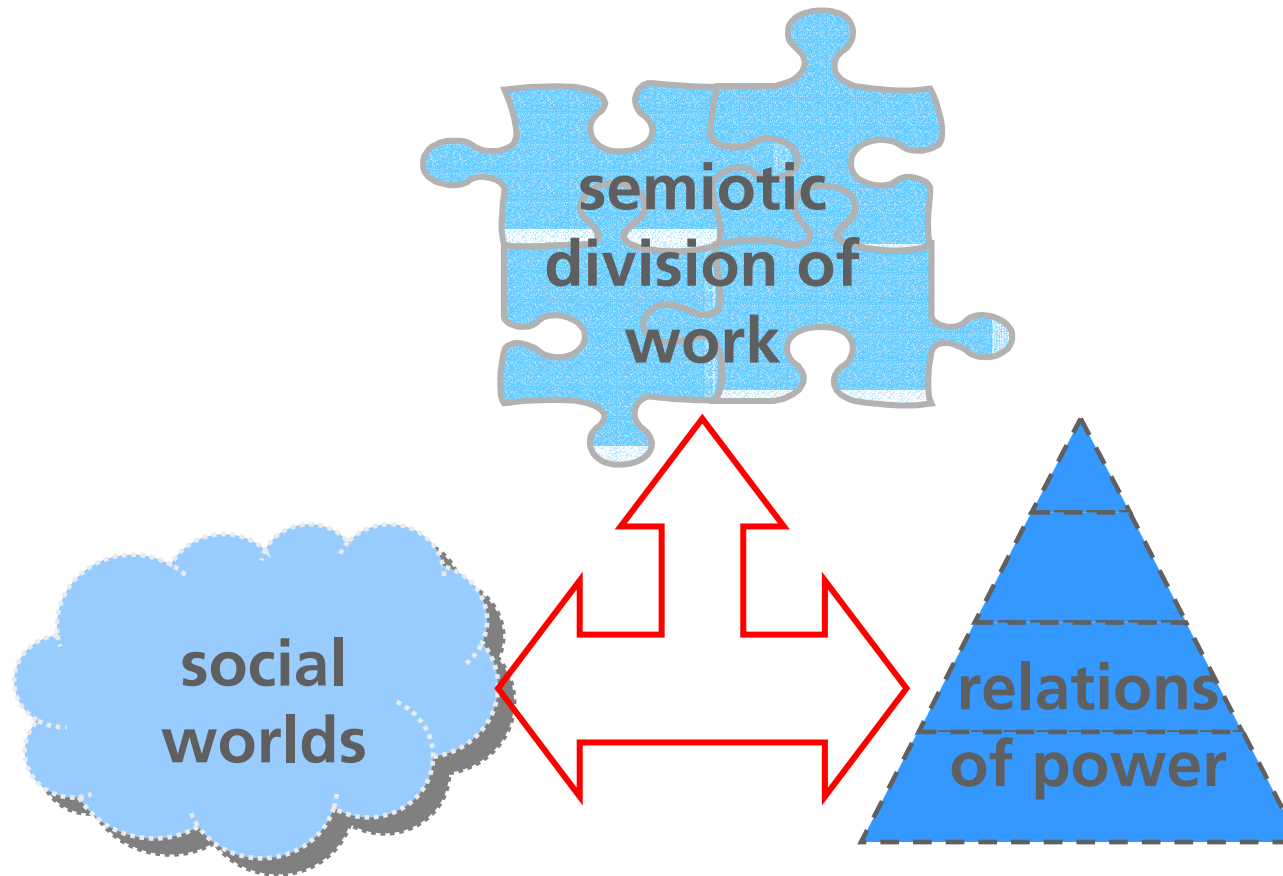
- Social interaction between signs (E.Houlton)



Semiotic Definition of Organizations

- Organizations are signs, which are valid because of contracts
- These signs signify men, things & procedures
- Several types of signs
- Net of interpretants
 - Legitimate interpretants
 - Working interpretants
 - Hidden interpretants


Semiotic Definition of Organizations



Final Interpretant

- Negotiated order (Strauss)
- Institutionalization (Mead & Peirce)
 - Social objects & Generalized others (Mead)
 - Habits (Peirce)

Organizational Change

- The sign-process (semiosis)
starts again
- As a semiotic drama

Visual representation

Concluding Remarks

A marriage of
the semiotics of pragmatism
&
the social world perspective
may result in a healthy offspring
in the field of organizational analysis
and even consulting