report, de Man was faced with the problem of accounting for this lack of impact. This book represents the longer-term product of his efforts.

Given the need for a perspective which can situate organizational change projects in a context which combines the influences of society at large, the dynamics of specific sectors of industry or activity, the strategy and politics of a firm or unit and the internal functioning of departments, and which can also embrace their manifold interrelations and developments through time, the agenda which is set for the empirical work is complex and demanding. In addition to providing accounts of the origins and progress of six of the thirteen projects, de Man explores the recent history of the Dutch industrial relations system, the changing character of behavioural science involvement in social experiments in the Netherlands, and the influence of global political and economic changes on the Dutch industrial relations system during the period of the projects. The confluence of these streams of change is seen as the rule system underpinning the conduct of organizational change projects. This system, which is boldly depicted within a scheme of universal categories of institutional grammars, is argued to have undergone a progressive disintegration and de-legitimization as a result of changes in the game rules at other levels. In effect, these projects were caught up in broader processes of institutional transition which generated a critical lack of synchrony between their own logics and those of related games. Nor is de Man content with reconstructing the past, for he goes on to present a stimulating prognosis for the rule system which might well come to govern such projects in the future.

A contextual approach to organizational change is necessarily wide-ranging. The risk of producing analyses which are faithful to the complexity and untidiness of organizational processes, but which are thereby almost as incomprehensible as the reality itself, is therefore substantial. Intelligibility requires some sacrifice of empirical richness, a firm but undogmatic grasping of conceptual nettles and a systematic application of a carefully constructed analytical scheme. This book has generally managed to steer its way through the rocks and reveals new possibilities for the development of the contextual perspective.

## Willem F. G. Mastenbroek: Conflict Management and Organizational Development

1987, Chichester: Wiley. 166 pages.

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The author asserts, correctly, that this field of study and professional practice is well supplied with diverse theories and models, styles of consultancy, alternative management practices, and experimental vigour. However, the field is fragmented. There are advocates of seemingly competing models, perspectives and methods for inducing change. What is needed is some means for integrating these resources, since all appear to have merit. Bridges need to

be formed between individual factors and systemic factors, between observed behaviours and recurrent systemic problems on the one hand and the relevant concepts and theories that are needed for and between diagnoses and choices among broad strategies for change, and the conversion of a strategy into operational programmes for change. The author attempts this task with considerable success.

The book is addressed most specifically to the professional consultant engaged to advise and assist in the improvement of someone else's organization. But it is not merely a cookbook of tricks of the consultant's trade. It is replete with models, diagrams, tables, lists and summaries of conceptual and theoretical import. Although a very dense volume, it includes brief examples and case summaries, and no more jargon than is necessary. It is accessible to a wide range of readers.

Organizations are viewed as networks of sub-units (persons, groups, departments, etc.) connected by relationships of power, cooperation, competition for resources, and dependencies. The task of the manager is viewed as being primarily the management of these relationships. The task of the consultant is, in large part, one of locating the relationships that are troublesome, diagnosing their nature, and suggesting or initiating appropriate measures. These relationships are considered to be pervasive and persistent, and not necessarily 'good' or 'bad'. Within limits, power imbalances are unavoidable and constructive, competition is energizing, cooperation may be excessive, and dependencies may be constructively managed. These relationships, however, tend to become dysfunctional. The power relationships are judged to be pre-eminent among the 'types' of sub-unit relationships on grounds of impacts on the other three.

It is significant that the first word in the title is 'conflict'. The relationships between sub-units all tend toward tension and conflict, with consequences that may be constructive or dysfunctional for both persons and for the organization. Conflict, however, is not an undifferentiated condition. The author chooses to differentiate among conflicts that stem from power and dependencies, from negotiations about scarce resources and advantages, from instrumental relationships (e.g. getting work done, coordinating, division of tasks, etc.) and from socio-emotional relationships. These 'types' are not differentiated for reasons of conceptual nicety but because they demand quite different approaches for their diagnosis and for imposing or inducing or maintaining their optimization. Dependencies might be modified by structural or technological changes (other means as well); negotiating norms and skills (often deficient) can be fortified by persuasion, example and training; divisions of work can be rationalized and clarified, socio-emotional relationship problems might result in improved communications, the fostering of common values, or help training in interpersonal and intergroup skills. The array of available approaches and methods is manifold, but none is an all-purpose matter and most operate in related sets. There is a correspondence between types of conflicts and the preferred or feasible set of corrective actions.

The above paragraphs stem from the first chapter of the book — seven pages in all — and they set the plan for the rest of the book. Successive chapters deal with an elaboration of the network model, four types of change strategies matched to change goals and targets, the critical role of power relationships, the development of negotiating competencies, and the management of socio-emotional relationships.

The chapter on change strategies deals, first, with the preferred general organizational goals to be sought. The author puts forward a prescriptive image of the capabilities an organization needs to have and the conversion of such general goals into more specific aims and the planning of an overall, programmatic approach to action, blending consideration of the four relational domains mentioned earlier. He deals, for example, with the adaptations of organizational structures as differentiated from adaptations of the organizational culture, defining both and giving illustrative examples of potential actions.

Chapter 4, on power relationships, defines three prototypical structural forms: relationships between equals, between unequals, and among hierarchical levels. These raise unlike potential problems and suggest different approaches to change efforts. On page 56 there appears a summary list (there are many such summary lists) of ways to alter the power relationships between equals to serve the more general aims of the change programme.

Similar remarks could be made about the chapters on negotiating relationships, instrumental relationships and socio-emotional relationships. One chapter is addressed to the role and functions (and limitations) of a consultant working within the political environment of the host organization. This chapter reflects what must be an extensive, varied and thoughtful career as an organizational consultant. We should pay attention.

I think the most useful feature of this book for most readers will be its guidance in assessing the initial and changing states of the organizational relationships and in searching for available and feasible lines of action, given the circumstances. Many failures of attempts at organizational change arise not from deficient skills of the consultant/intervenor, but rather from the poor fit of the chosen treatment to the case. The book forces a broader consideration of options.

This is an important book, not so much for the invention of new ideas, but more for the integration of what we all 'know' but seldom use in an integrated fashion. It is a complex and demanding book, and contains some themes that are and will remain controversial. It is recommended as a textbook for theoretical and professional training, and as a handy reminder for practitioners engaged with hard problems. It is also suitable for joint study with sophisticated client groups.