

Beyond the selfishness paradigm and “organizational citizenship”: Work-related prosocial orientation and organizational democracy

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Many economists and psychologists refuse the idea that behavior could be based on any other motives than selfish and hedonistic ones, at least in the context of economy, mainly based on a methodological premise, not so often on empirical research. The corresponding image of man that is inherent in exchange theories and expectancy-value theories has had a strong influence on research over the last decades. Despite this, concepts like Organizational Citizenship or Corporate Identity are in search of potentials concerning voluntary work engagement. And in the ‘civil society’ practical campaigns are looking for voluntary workers who help compensate socially disintegrative effects of “capitalism without adjectives” (Vaclav Klaus) and give people back meaning in self-determined work. These are two very different things which are deeply linked though. In this article we address this difference, criticize the concepts like Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), discuss concepts of prosocial work motivation and organizational democracy, and bind this all together in a conceptual alternative of mutualistic-prosocial work orientation.

Key words: organizational citizenship behavior, social motivation, utilitarianism, voluntary work engagement, networks

Jenseits von Egoismusparadigma und „Organizational Citizenship“: Arbeitsbezogene prosoziale Orientierung und organisationale Demokratie

Viele Wirtschaftswissenschaftler und Psychologen weisen die Idee, dass Verhalten auf anderen Motiven als egoistischen und hedonistischen beruhen könnte, zurück. Diese Sichtweise stützt sich eher auf eine methodologische Prämisse und nicht so sehr auf empirische Forschung. Das entsprechende Menschenbild, welches sich in Austauschtheorien und Erwartungs-Wert-Theorien niederschlägt, beeinflusste die Forschung in den letzten Jahrzehnten stark. Trotzdem sind organisationswissenschaftliche Konzepte wie Organizational Citizenship oder Corporate Identity auf der Suche nach Potenzialen, die auf freiwilligem Arbeitsengagement beruhen. In der Zivilgesellschaft wird mittels praxisbezogenen Kampagnen Ausschau nach Freiwilligen gehalten, die dabei helfen sollen, die sozial desintegrierenden Wirkungen des „Kapitalismus ohne Adjektive“ (Vaclav Klaus) zu kompensieren und Menschen Sinnerfüllung in selbstbestimmter Arbeit zurückzugeben. Dies sind zwei sehr unterschiedliche Dinge, die allerdings tief miteinander verwoben sind. In diesem Artikel beziehen wir uns auf den Unterschied, kritisieren Konzepte wie Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), diskutieren Konzepte der prosozialen Arbeitsmotivation und organisationalen Demokratie und versuchen dies alles in Form einer konzeptuellen Alternative der mutualistisch-prosozialen Arbeitsorientierung zu verbinden.

Schlüsselwörter: Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Soziale Motivation, Utilitarismus, freiwilliges Arbeitsengagement, Netzwerke

1. Rational egoists looking for exploitable normative (prosocial) orientations

It is a funny paradox: Theorists of rational choice in different disciplines, who describe man as a rational opportunistic calculus on two legs, are searching for normative commitments and volunteering of employees which could be instrumentalized by management as an unpaid surplus motivation. Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) or "the good soldier syndrome" (Organ, 1988) is a representative concept for such a conceptual inconsistency. Being motivated to do more than formally agreed on while not complaining about adverse conditions, that is the kind of subjective potential of the subject these scientists want to uncover, presenting themselves or their science as "useful" for interested users. Unfortunately, this research interest and its object, prosocial orientations or behaviors, are often equated with research on motives for voluntary work, solidarity, social responsibility, and civil society. In other words: The research motivation and tradition gets equated with (more or less) its contrary. Therefore, we reflect on the distinction between an exploitable limited rationality of employees and normative orientations beyond individual rational maximization of utility – i.e. between an a-social conception of man and a conception of the "complex man" as it is used in non-individualist traditions in the social sciences.

Many projects and textbooks of social psychology, organizational psychology, (Anglo-Saxon) sociology – and management sciences in general – still show substantial influences of individual-utilitarian thinking, the rational choice-approach e.g. in the form of value-expectancy theories or exchange theories (e.g., Coyle-Shapiro, 2002; Hewstone, Stroebe, & Jonas, 2007; House & Mitchell, 2007). Especially, radically questioning the phenomenon of prosocial organizational behavior and its potentially non-egoistic motives like employees' prosocial values or concern for their enterprise (Rioux & Penner, 2001), many management scientists from various disciplines refuse the idea that behavior and activity in daily life as well as in organizations could be based on other motives than selfish and hedonistic ones, 'at last instance', at least. Such *psychological* conceptualizations are built on the paradigm of the *homo oeconomicus*.

Considering work and organizational psychology, the problem with 'undersocialized' and context-free models of individual utilitarian behavior (e.g., equity theory of comparing reward/cost balances in relationships by Hatfield et al., 1985; the investment model of social relationships by Farrell & Rusbult, 1992) is not pri-

marily that their basic ideas stem from a non-psychological discipline, i.e. economics. The point is that the economic reference is based on the same methodological individualism (that, correctly or not, still leads back to Smith, Ricardo, and Bentham). This paradigm became so hegemonial in North American human and social sciences that its hypothesis-generating grammar seems to be natural or universal, i.e. without reasonable alternative. A Nobel prize for the 'trivial' psychology of gain maximization (Becker, e.g., 1976) in 1992 not only documented, but also fostered the hegemony of this paradigm, reinforced by a row of similar Nobel decorations.

Nonetheless, there's a large group of other, non-utilitarian traditions which share some common ground, like philosophical pragmatism, Weberian sociology, symbolic interactionism, structuration theory in sociology, socio-economics or Schumpeterian economics, activity theory and Critical Psychology in psychology, etc. In particular they share two ideas: history matters, and "human nature" is social, i.e. also historic and depending on culture. Using this paradigm as basis some questions concerning ~~on~~ two influential groups of theories about social relations and motivation, namely exchange theories (section 2.1) and ostensible concepts of prosocial orientations in organizations (section 2.2), must be reformulated, e.g.:

- Which perspective on action do theories based on the selfishness paradigm assume referring to interaction and cooperation compared to non-utilitarian theories?
- What are the resonances between recent psychological theories and liberalistic economics (of the "free market")?
- Can the rise of OCB concepts be interpreted as a change in the image of man that underlies organizational psychology theories on social motivation?
- How is work-related prosocial behavior or solidarity conceptualized in approaches like OCB?
- What are the consequences of short-term and one-sided instrumentalization of OCB in complex stakeholder situations and trust-based knowledge economy (and how to study them)?

As a consequence of our criticism of rationalistic-utilitarian theories, in section 3 we will raise two further questions for research:

- What are the sources of social motivation and behavior beyond the individual-utilitarian calculus?
- How to conceptualize prosocial behavior, orientations, and competences beyond the exploitation of instrumentalized OCB?

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2. From the instrumentalization of selfish individualism to the instrumentalization of prosocial work orientations?

2.1 Exchange theories:

Interaction as interpersonal trade of goods?

Despite its moderate criticism of the individualistic concept of man and some actual progress (see Rusbult & Agnew, 2010; Scholl, 2007), classical exchange theory (or interdependence theory) of Kelley and Thibaut (1978) represents an anthropology which conceptualizes man primarily as egocentric, selfish, and economically oriented. Many versions of the value-expectancy model of human behavior and of organizational leadership (in the tradition of Vroom, 1964) have this underlying image of man. Representatives of exchange theory tried to solve the problem of the psychogenesis of social motivation, preferences, and expectancies.

Influenced by economic game theory and behaviorism, Kelley & Thibaut (1978) stress the interdependences and temporal perspectives of interacting partners who exchange goods, gifts, and acts of behavior (including social support or caress) in dyads or small groups. Their theoretical basis suggests: Social motives, value orientations, interactions, and human relations are determined by economical laws of exchange ("costs," "profits," "rewards," "losses," "comparison level for alternatives"), by balance of power, and by interdependence. Adding and stressing the importance of individual "investments", (poor) "alternatives", and "satisfaction", Rusbult (for a review see Farrell & Rusbult, 1992) radicalized Kelley and Thibaut's exchange theory. According to her, both commitment to industrial relations as well as to close relationships is influenced deeply by the "investments" each actor has made. Thus, activities of married couples, romantic lovers, or close friends are described in the same utilitarian language. Any dimension of activity - time, emotional energy, intimate knowledge, shared property etc. - gets reduced to "investment" and further constructs stemming from economics. In a similar way, representatives of equity theory, who claim to have a general theory of social behavior, conceive socio-economical status, beauty, personality, expression of love, self-sacrifice, or sexual practices as goods exchanged by interacting partners along a reward/cost balance (Hatfield et al. 1985). In several formulas that were established the value of very different personal qualities and human behavior is expressed as a quantity or a currency (for a criticism cf. Cropanzano et al., 2005; Sohn-Rethel, 1978). There is no doubt that be-

havior like this occurs. The question is whether this explains "human nature", interaction, culture, society sufficiently, not mentioning all questions concerning development.

Compared to the traditional expectancy-value approach, one theoretical progress within exchange theories is that Kelley and Thibaut and other representatives of exchange theories like Rusbult and Agnew (2010) have recognized, that interaction partners are able to develop a *reciprocity* of their individual perspectives and of their actions under specific conditions (e.g., in experimental prisoner's dilemma games; in win-win games). This *perspective of action* could be viewed as a simple element and rudimentary 'predecessor' of a pattern of prosocial work orientation. Due to the experimentally created interdependence of their conditions of interaction, the participants in experimental games of scholars of exchange theories often recognize that each of them can achieve his or her own goals more effectively, or only, by cooperation with his or her interaction partner. This implies an individual *social perspective* that may be characterized as an instrumental readiness for social compromise, if this compromise is useful for one's own selfish *individual* interests. Analogous to entrepreneurial utilitarianism, this represents utilitarianism in a longer perspective. Though, one might point out, that the image of man in social exchange theory is that of a permanent competitor, of an independent tradesman or salesperson, or a customer in a game that frequently requires some cooperation if one wants to make a profit for one's own sake. The experimental control of conditions or the operationalization in questionnaires referring to terms of economics only allows a perspective of action which is limited to "rational choice" and equity-oriented social comparison within dyads or triads. Compared to daily working life, this is a radical reduction of social and societal complexity, of culture and history, as criticized by Cropanzano et al. (2005), Ferraro, Pfeffer, and Sutton (2005), or Miller (1999).

By means of experimental result matrices or equity formulas, different phenomena like helpfulness, intimate relations, political negotiations, financial affairs, and military conflicts are reduced to the *same abstractified* dimension, which is the exchange value of goods (cf. Israel, 1971). The *analogy to the free market economy*, its implicit social rules, and its inherent power structures is obvious, and explicated for every day life situations by Becker (1976). Of course some behavior can be interpreted this way, but it is not the whole story. Indeed, a specific sort of 'love' can be exchanged for money on the free market. Its exchange value can be calculated from a business management standpoint, just the same as the value of other services like those of scientists, physicians, em-

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ployers, engineers, or unskilled workers. According to Critical Theory, this reduction is a reification. This means that *specific* economical relations and calculations are considered everlasting natural conditions of interpersonal exchange (Israel, 1971; Sohn-Rethel, 1978).

2.2 Organizational citizenship behavior: The bad wages of the good deed?

Some post-modern philosophers praise the deregulation and radicalization of market economies because they discover rising tendencies of "individualization", "flexibility", and "freedom" etc. However, reflective sociologists, management scientists as well as organizational psychologists point - to continue in the language of economy - out the evident costs and losses, or in other words, the side-effects of radical de-regulation: the danger it imposes on organizational trust and psychological contract (Rousseau, 1998), on social security and coherence, and the threatening of physical, mental, and social health of the employees (e.g., Moldaschl, 1998; Rifkin, 1995; Rothschild, 2009; Volpert, 2002). Because of a decoupling of productive net value added and stock-market transactions, because of high levels of unemployment, or exploitive work contracts (Ackers & Wilkinson, 2003; Korczynski, 2002), or because of a polarization between highly mobile and less mobile workers (Shperling & Rousseau, 2001), economists, sociologists, and psychologists discuss whether traditional principles of equity lose their power as a medium of social integration and employees' commitment. For a lot of employees, the social exchange motivation, including calculative commitment or transactional psychological contracts, may not be very profitable any more. Though, how can we evaluate research on and campaigns for Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB; Organ, 1988; see reviews: Hoffman, Blair, Meriac, & Woehr, 2007; Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009; Wesche & Muck, 2010)? The conception can be considered as an attempt to counter the described motivational gap and - at the same time - to tap new potentials of labor intensification ("human resources"). Probably, the *conceptual change from the selfishness paradigm to the citizenship construct* in parts of organizational psychology and organizational behavior research was a response of researchers and management consultants to the danger that (post-)modern firms would fail without a strategy for social integration. This attempt required some change of the homo oeconomicus model. (Of course, that does not mean that psychology as a whole had ever accepted the selfishness paradigm). Thus, the question comes up whether this conceptual change represented through

OCB mirrors a radical change in the image of man or not.

Among others, Brief and Motowidlo (1986) have demonstrated that voluntary behavior occurring in organizations can be distinguished clearly from selfish behavior with reference to the behavior motive.

"Prosocial organizational behavior (abbrev.: POB) is behavior, which is [...] directed toward an individual, group, or organization with whom he or she interacts while carrying out his or her organizational role, and [...] performed with the intention of promoting the welfare of the individual, group, or organization toward which it is directed" (p.711).

For example, a study by Rioux and Penner (2001) indicated, that, according to supervisor and peer ratings, prosocial motives were substantially associated with OCB-Altruism and, besides, with Civic Virtue, while organizational concern motives were associated with Civic Virtue and Conscientiousness. Impression management motives (as an indicator of selfishness) showed only a minor influence on Sportsmanship. Other researchers in pedagogics, cultural anthropology, social, cultural or developmental psychology support the evidence, that prosocial behavior beyond the verdict of selfishness does exist as an anthropological possibility of humanity, and as an implicit potential of social embeddedness (overviews: Harris & Johnson, 2006; Miller, 1999; Shamir, 1990; de Waal, 2008). Concepts related to POB, like OCB, have provided organizational psychology with a construct of prosocial behavior, which allows to differentiate *prosocial* and *selfish* (incl. individual-utilitarian) work orientations within organizations. According to Konovsky and Organ's empirically approved operationalization (1996, p.255) which influenced many further studies OCB encompasses five factors:

- "Altruism, or acts of helping specific individuals in face-to-face interaction at work"
- "Courtesy, which describes the gestures that people exhibit at work to help prevent work problems for others"
- "Sportsmanship, [...] the inclination to absorb minor inconveniences and impositions [...] without complaints"
- "Generalized Compliance" that means "adherence to rules regarding attendance, punctuality, use of time [...], and respect for organizational property"
- "Civic Virtue, e.g. attendance at meetings, keeping oneself informed about developments [...] and otherwise practicing constructive and appropriate forms of involvement in the governance of the workplace"

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Moorman & Blakely (1995) presented a similar influential operationalization comprising the four factors "Interpersonal Helping," "Individual Initiative," "Personal Industry," and "Loyal Boosterism" while Van Dyne, Graham, & Dienisch (1994) found empirical support for the three factors "Loyalty," "Obedience," and "Participation". Furthermore, Podsakoff, Ahearne, & MacKenzie (1997) suggested a three-dimensional model, namely "Helping," "Civic Virtue," and "Sportsmanship".

That sounds like a summing up for the defense of prosocial behavior and democracy at work. The theoretical progress of OCB is considered as a turning away from mere "economic exchange" or "reciprocity in trade" orientations (see Graham & Organ, 1993; Organ, 1990). A closer look at theory and operationalization of OCB and closely related constructs (Coleman & Borman, 2000; Konovsky & Organ, 1996; Lee & Allen, 2002; McNeely & Meglino, 1994; Moorman & Blakely, 1995; Podsakoff et al., 1997; Van Dyne et al., 1994) reveals, however, that OCB is not so much aimed at the support of prosocial or moral competencies, personality development, individual well-being, or democratic decision making for its own sake, but at the effectiveness of "the" enterprise (see an exemplary meta-analysis by Podsakoff et al., 2009). Most item-contents of scales like "Generalized Compliance," "Conscientiousness," "Obedience," "Loyalty," "Sportsmanship," or even "Civic Virtue" from several OCB measures are clearly oriented toward the financial interests of owners and their management agents. The subordinates primarily play the role of "good soldiers" (Organ, 1988) who practice virtues like company patriotism, sparingness, housekeeping, punctuality, flexible conformability, not complaining about minor nuisances, attendance, and creation of improvement suggestions. Here, "Civic Virtue" is not referring to employees' democratic participation in organizational decisions or to their civil courage and solidarity but "... implies an obligation to participate in appropriate ways to governance, even though this participation may assume no grander forms than reading and responding to one's mail, attending meetings, and in general keeping up with developments and issues" (Organ, 1990, p.48). Altogether, operationalization of OCB does not refer to *civic culture* and *democratic citizenship* but to obedience of subordinates – which is consistent with the repeated notion of the "good soldier" ... This normative economic tendency already appears in Organs' well-accepted definition of OCB as "individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and

that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization" (Organ, 1988, p.4). In several contributions proponents praise OCB as a mean to open up new resources that do not have to be remunerated (per definition!). Though, in representative texts and literature reviews, normally nobody raises questions whom OCB serves, if concrete practices of OCB are socially acceptable, or, might even have negative effects for the people or the public. We all know examples where employees were loyal to their company, defending its environmental harms or damages for suppliers (sweatshop labor), thus being loyal to the firm but not to colleagues, suppliers, the public. According to the classical definition, such behavior represents (organizational) "citizenship" behavior whereas it is not compatible with positive civic or citizenship behavior according to its prevailing notion in political science (see below). Just like a soldier who fights for a dictator and does not ask whether the order is legitimate or not: just obey and do what you have been told. This is an unconditional application of a value without any moral conflict and reflection.

In the view of management scientists like Organ helping acts *only* are considered *if* they contribute to the effectiveness of "the" organization. In this way of thinking, OCB is an instrumental strategy to exploit orientations that people bring from outside the firm (family, community etc.) into the firm, including the risk to consume them, to use them up (Moldaschl & Weber, 1998; Moldaschl, 2005). Coleman and Borman (2000) even go further on this. Their conceptual clone "Citizenship Performance Behavior" including "Job/Task Citizenship Performance"¹ affirms this economic instrumentalism explicitly: Citizenship here is limited to values and behaviors which are functional for "the" enterprise. The same is true for representative research reviews considering outcomes of OCB that focus upon economic criteria like productivity, efficiency, profitability, cost reduction, turnover, absenteeism, and customer satisfaction (Podsakoff et al., 2009). In 1990, already, falling back into the economic exchange paradigm, Organ recommended to managers: "Do not depend on OCB; define it away with a thorough going basis of contractual exchange, in which every desired form of contribution is specified, weighted, rigorously measured, and systematically rewarded by formal systems" (Organ, 1990, p. 69).

That's *management science*, not science oriented towards or useful for other stakeholders. Of course, it might also be useful for owners, big shareholders. But its simple causal logics are far

¹ Like "persisting with enthusiasm on own job"; "working hard with extra effort"; "engaging in self-development to improve one's own effectiveness"; or, displaying dedication on the job"

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beyond the complexity of multi-actor exchange processes, mutual solidarities and power struggles, contradictory normative obligations, and cultural contexts. And thus, suggesting simple exploitability of non-reflecting work subjects, this kind of science might also be harmful for management, owners, stakeholders in the long run. Concepts of simple causality tend to fail when they inform actors in complex environments.

Wesche and Muck (2010) present a thorough review on OCB and other forms of voluntary work engagement and criticize their one-sided and short-term instrumentalist perspective. They propose to include constructive-critical behavior (e.g., whistle-blowing in case of corruption) and "voice" behavior (e.g., protest and counter proposals) in OCB-definitions ensuring that those definitions tend more in the direction of established constructs of citizenship in terms of political science. Nevertheless, they restrict citizenship behavior again to long-term, "legitimate interests of the organization" and reproduce reification and instrumentalization on a higher (maybe more social responsible) level. As if *the interest of the firm* is always clear, transparent, and indisputable. What we find here is an oversimplifying conception of organization and its dynamics.

Brief and Motowidlo's (1986) construct of Prosocial Organizational Behavior opened up a theoretical alternative to the narrow definition of the existing semantic framework of OCB: "There are other expressions of prosocial behavior, though, that can detract from organizational effectiveness" (p.711). For example, a strike of colleagues against exploitative work intensification threatening health and well-being or against their supervisor who has mobbed one of them, or an employees' collective fight to take over a badly-managed enterprise to save their own workplaces is compatible with Brief and Motowidlo's definition of prosocial behavior but incompatible with the OCB concept.

In the end, we must question seriously whether the behavior addressed by OCB can be called "prosocial" or "citizenship" behavior. OCB more or less resembles stupid, non-reflective behavior which we even wouldn't like to expect from soldiers. Representatives of OCB expect exploitable extra-role orientations like "altruism", courtesy, cooperation, et cetera. In doing so, they neglect that membership in instrumental organizations which are not constituted democratically is different than being a member of society. Being loyal to representatives of capital (who quite often have different goals than owners themselves, for e.g. the principal-agent-approach states) is not the same as mutual help, solidarity, and democratic participation (see also Ferraro et al., 2005; Israel, 1971).

What are the *unintended consequences* of such a one-sided *instrumentalization* of prosocial behaviors? If a minority among the stakeholders is able to draw (extra-)profits by the utilization of prosocial orientation, this very probably will lead to the destruction of these resources; people cannot be fooled over a long period of time. Based on a socio-economic theory of immaterial resources, we could show empirically far-reaching, unintended effects of utilitarian instrumentalizations of prosocial orientation and competencies, e.g. concerning dimensions such as *social support* and *cohesion* in industrial work groups (Moldaschl 2005). Neglecting imbalances between assigned tasks and given resources (e.g. time, personnel, information, skilling, qualification, competence), managers' strategies to instrumentalize prosocial orientation resulted in the erosion of citizenship behavior. Employees for instance became aware that the more they compensated (e.g., sick leave or personnel displacement) by mutual support, the more the shown reserves were demanded by management in the next round of rationalization. One reaction was that social support and group cohesion turned into solidarity *against* managerial objectives and strategies. Resources remained the same but, in this case, they were utilized by other actors for their own interests - still *resources* for employees, but *restrictions* and barriers now for management; it is a matter of perspective and affiliation.

Another reaction (or better: counter strategy) of employees was to reduce their helping behavior, i.e. social support more and more. Or their group cohesion eroded because of conflicts about workload, responsibilities, protective tactics, and intra-individual contradictions between autonomy interests and collaboration norms. In some of the cases studied the inter-group cooperation also decreased. For example: Living resources grow by utilization - but not by simple instrumentalization for the interests of one group of actors; at least not in the long run.

One lesson that can be learned from observations like this is that an *unreflected transfer of societal conceptions of citizenship to the organizational level* leads to false conclusions. And vice versa: Failures like the above teach us that the emergence or production, the reproduction, and augmentation of prosocial orientations (*social capital*) depends on recognition and is embedded in contexts of substantial participation. Definitions of "real" citizenship behavior can be found for instance in theories of democracy and social philosophy (e.g. Barber, 1984; Galbraith, 1997; Pateman, 1970; Ulrich, 2004). Arguing with Kant, those activities and values (or orientations) can be seen as *prosocial which can be generalized*; i.e. they in the worst case do not cause any harm or disad-

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vantage to any other actor, and contribute to the wealth of all in the best case. A lot of mature citizens' orientation toward civic behavior can be regarded as interpretation of the enlightenment-principles: freedom, equality, and brotherhood/sisterhood as the basis of modern western societies. That includes e.g. protecting human dignity, tolerance towards differing opinions and ways of life, active political participation, shared responsibility for collective governance of the community, readiness to reflect and to legitimate one's own acting, accordance with fair treatments in regulating conflicts, moral courage, fighting against poverty, and engagement against social discrimination (see several studies reported by Klicperová-Baker, 1998). Ideally, these civic orientations or virtues are coupled with forms of solidarity, e.g. with unprivileged people geographically far abroad.

3. Mutualistic-prosocial work orientation in organizations which practice organizational democracy

As a consequence of our criticism of rationalistic-utilitarian theories (here in the field of organizational and social psychology) we raise two further questions for research in organizational behavior:

- What are the sources of behavior beyond the individual-utilitarian calculus?
- How to conceptualize prosocial behavior, orientations, and competences beyond an ideal type of naïve altruism that disregards the social context and provokes the exploitation of "good Samaritans"?

A precondition of such a conceptualization of prosocial organizational behavior requires giving up the theoretical dichotomy between selfish and altruistic behavior. We should build on a theoretically sound and empirically testable culture-historical anthropology. Many authors do agree that "prosocial behavior is behavior which the actor expects will benefit the person or persons to whom it is directed"; without himself having individual advantages of it, as Brief and Motowidlo (1986, p.711) summarize well-known definitions. To a certain degree, this dichotomy is an artifact, which gains more (internal) validity within very restricted settings of social-psychological laboratory experiments concerning short-term attitudinal or behavioral effects than within complex organizational contexts in working-life and in everyday-life. Therefore, authors like Rioux and Penner (2001), Shamir (1990), or Tjosvold (1998), who are influenced by cross-cultural research, argue that it would make more sense to conceptual-

ize prosocial and selfish orientations as of two independent types of human motives, which can be shared by the same person, depending on respective contexts and biographical history (cf. the study by Rioux & Penner, 2001). Nevertheless, the question to what extent biographical incidents, conditions of socialization, and current organizational contexts contribute to the stabilization of a respective actors' specific orientation is of high theoretical and practical importance. Knowing more about such influencing factors would help orientate principles of leadership, communication, and decision making toward a promotion of prosocial behaviors in the organization.

Further, there is a need for a clear conceptual differentiation between prosocial and selfish components of behavioral orientation. If not, if each behavior is labeled as "selfish", such a pure semantical explanation of behavior may result in a prescriptive doctrinaire tautology. On the one hand, researchers, among them many economists, who consider human selfishness an universal and exclusive motive give up the possibility to differentiate distinct qualities of social motivation. Thereby, they narrow possibilities of scientific cognition artificially. On the other hand, *ways of thinking* within *organizational psychology* research are influenced by very specific concepts of *business economics*, namely 'neo-liberal variants'. Ferraro et al. (2005) have demonstrated how universal selfishness as an axiom of economics becomes a social norm influencing mindsets of organizational scientists as well as of everyday actors provoking self-fulfilling prophecy effects in a societal climate of market radicalism whereas its societal construction by means of business education and mass media is ignored. For that reason, there is a risk that selection of research questions, criteria of research funding, and the way, how psychological models are constructed is influenced by postulates and goals that do not primarily stem from psychology (cf. Etzioni, 1988; Miller, 1999).

Coming from theory to empirics: Is there any empirical evidence for the existence of prosocial orientations (as a readiness for prosocial behavior) embedded in specific socio-economic systems, beyond pure selfishness or pure, 'selfishless' altruism or naïve, exploitable OCB? Moreover, under what conditions and in which contexts does such an *alternative form of prosocial orientation* occur - if it occurs at all?

Of course, answers to these fundamental questions cannot be context-free. But the hypothesis is plausible that components of a further form of prosocial work orientation may occur more frequently within organizational settings that are characterized by self-governed, collaborative work or by communitarian principles. In fact, the existence of several (attitudinal, value-based, or behavioral) phenomena connect-

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ed with a pattern of prosocial work orientation was demonstrated empirically

- in kibbutz or communitarian communities (e.g. studies by Colby, Kohlberg, Snarey, & Reimer, 1988; Rosner, 1998; Shamir, 1990; Wiesmüller, 2004); and in former Eastern Europe socialistic work collectives (e.g. Neubert & Tomczyk, 1986; Petrovsky, 1985; see a research review by Weber, 1997);
- in high-participative, democratically structured or in employee-owned collectivist firms in Western Europe (see studies by Goletz, 2001; Weber, Unterrainer, & Schmid, 2009 and a research review by Vilmar & Weber, 2004) and in the United States (e.g. Rothschild, 2009);
- in enterprises practicing corporate volunteering or corporate citizenship (see a study by Mieg, Gentile, & Wehner, 2008);
- and in self-regulated work groups practicing direct democratic decision making in industry (promoting common task orientation and mutual support as it was conceptualized with regard to Scandinavian, German, and

Swiss Humanization of Work projects within the socio-technical systems approach, e.g. Emery & Thorsrud, 1976; see reviews by Moldaschl & Weber, 1998; Ulich & Weber, 1996).

With reference to the mentioned research, we suggest calling the pattern of work orientation and related phenomena that is presented summarily in Table 1 *mutualistic-prosocial*. The term "mutualistic" refers to Robert Owen (Owen, 1963) and other theorists of a co-operative economy. In its ideal-typical form, the mutualistic-prosocial work orientation represents the readiness of organization members to execute supportive actions directed toward others within one's organization, society, or in other societies, with the intention of promoting the welfare of those others (cf. Weber et al., 2009). Opposite to the employer-oriented focus in OCB research, mutualistic-prosocial work orientation incorporates solidarity at work, namely willingness to show consideration for work-related political interests of one's peers. Work-

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| Level of generalized validity | Foresight and care for subsistence | |
|---|--|---|
| | short-term | long-term |
| Individual (interaction with coworkers) | social perspective-taking, empathy, sparing each other mistakes or frustrations (forthought) giving assistance, help, support (also beyond pure reciprocity) high-level individual moral reasoning concerning direct interaction partners | |
| Group or organization | using production resources (tools etc.) together waiving of individual short-term returns in favor of long-term benefits for the collective collectivistic work motivation as shared motive to work together in collective effort (also beyond effort-related equity) applying equality principle or need principle when distributing revenues (e.g., with respect to handicapped coworkers) acts of solidarity (e.g., against a supervisor's unjust behavior) high moral standards of justice and fairness applied to processes of operational decision making | sharing and collective promoting of common knowledge and skills (also beyond expectation of service in return) continuous (further-) development of common tools, knowledge stores, methods which are useful in future work situations acts of solidarity (e.g., participation in a countrywide strike for better occupational health) high moral standards of justice and fairness applied to processes of strategic decision making |
| Society or humankind | applying humanitarian-egalitarian ethical principles (e.g., putting pressure on a supplier who exploits his workers ruthlessly) applying high moral standards of justice and care to societal or cosmopolitan problems (e.g., recruiting refugees) | contributing to interorganizational resources and collective goods (also beyond expectation of service in return) applying humanitarian-egalitarian ethical principles (e.g., engagement in an organization that is serving the public good) engaging in democratic political activity (e.g., supporting an employers' initiative for economic democracy) applying high moral standards of justice and care to societal or cosmopolitan problems (e.g., developing and applying rules for fair global trade) |

TABLE 1:
Indicators of mutualistic-prosocial work orientation

Note. Level of generalized validity: Universality in the sense of Kantian ethics, i.e. the extent in how far the work orientation includes concerns of all human beings, in principle, or excludes specific groups of people.

ers who demonstrate solidarity consider their own behaviors as part of community collective action, eschew short-time selfish interests or opportunism, and do not accept a social-darwinist perspective of the world of labor. Solidarity includes workers' readiness to join together in opposing unfair treatment by management.

Table 1 summarizes components of mutualistic-prosocial work orientation as they appeared in the above mentioned empirical studies and research reviews. They are classified concerning two dimensions, namely the (spatial) level of generalized validity and the (temporal) level of prosocial foresight and care for subsistence. The schedule is non-exclusive and the allocation is only accentuating (i.e., some components fit into other cells, too).

One of the research traditions interested in dynamic relations between the socialization of prosocial orientations and the development of democracy is the research in *organizational democracy*. In her seminal work on participatory democracy, Pateman (1970) pointed out a field of socialisation, which supports peoples' readiness to engage voluntarily for societal concerns, that was yet rarely taken into consideration in research on volunteering. Enterprises that offer employees opportunities to participate in substantial decisions on organizational issues potentially support their involvement far beyond selfish interests, resulting in a sense of political efficacy and solidarity behaviors at work. Pateman expected democratic employee participation to enhance civic virtues outside of the organization as well, assuming that organizational participation gives rise to employees' prosocial orientations toward societal or cosmopolitical purposes. Also in contrast to OCB and in accordance with the spillover hypothesis, we conceptualize a close link between mutualistic-prosocial work orientation and *community-related behavioral orientations*, i.e. *societal citizenship behaviors*, which are also important for the functioning of the civil society. These orientations encompass citizens willingness to act on humanitarian-egalitarian ethical principles (Doll & Dick, 2000) like protecting human life and dignity, serving the public good, supporting the social welfare system, fighting against poverty, on the one hand, and ~~their~~ readiness to engage in democratic political activity (see Klicperová-Baker, 1998) like defending democratic institutions and freedom of opinion, engaging in protests against corruption, political repression, or anti-democratic movements, showing openness to differing opinions and ways of life, or advocating minorities' rights, on the other. All in all, this spillover hypothesis has gained much conceptual but only little empirical attention, especially, if democratically structured enterprises are considered (for a supporting study see Weber

et al., 2009). Existing research indicates moderate empirical support as brief literature reviews by Greenberg (2008), Moldaschl and Weber (2009), or Rothschild (2009) have demonstrated.

Thus, fostering the development of elements of the mutualistic-prosocial work orientation through employees' participation in democratic decision-making, participative leadership, and sociomoral climate can be considered complimentary to corporate volunteering (see Christen Jacob, Seyr, & Wehner, 2009). The latter strategy is serving the public good *directly* through organizing and supporting the social engagement of a firm's employees which, in turn, may cause a (further) development of their prosocial orientations. Conversely, in creating a field of intraorganizational democratic socialisation the former strategy aims at an *indirect* support of employees' voluntary service for the society.

In contrast to Organ's (1988) definition of OCB, the concept of prosocial work behaviors presented here includes collective acts (of 'micro-political' or institutional industrial-relations type) of employees to assert their genuine interests, for instance against intensification, downsizing, or ideological domination by corporate identity concepts. Interestingly, in a typology Graham and Organ (1993) distinguished the Covenantal Organization from the Transactional (i.e., utilitarian) and the Social Exchange Organization. To some extent, covenantal enterprises seem to support similar behavioral orientations as those listed above. Covenantal organizations "... are generally characterized by a high level of involvement of people at all levels in various forms of government" (Graham and Organ, 1993, p.495). They describe this "... as a form of OCB that is akin to responsible political participation". What, at first, sounds like an approval of organizational democracy, though ends in appeasement: "This participation, however, does not assume or require pure democracy, since DePree notes, 'having a say differs from having a vote'" (p.495).

In contrast to research in kibbutz industry and communitarian firms not much empirical research has been done with regard to an appearance of prosocial behavior in democratic enterprises. This is astonishing because democratically organized enterprises could be seen as social laboratories for the benefit of research and practice in work and organizational psychology. For example, in 2011, the European Confederation of Workers' Co-operatives, Social Co-operatives and Social and Participative Enterprises (CECOP) represents about 50.000 enterprises with 1.4 million employees. Further firms similar to collectivist enterprises will probably develop in the service sector, for example, start-up firms in IT and software branch,

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as Shperling and Rousseau (2001) suggested in a review.

A basic but under-researched question is whether the *developmental chances* for components of *mutualistic-prosocial work orientation* are different in different socio-economical settings. Results of a small, explorative focused-interview study on orientations of 21 representatives of 13 Swiss firms that were interested in participating in an interorganizational network of idea exchange support a differentiation between four different work-related social orientations (Weber, Ostendorp, & Wehner, 2003). One of them lends support that actors tend to demonstrate mutualistic-prosocial orientation in enterprises that practice a high level of organizational democracy.

Since most of the research on communitarian or democratic enterprises is based on qualitative research methods and case studies with relatively small-sized samples, and because frequency rate and context factors of the specific form of mutualistic-prosocial work orientation still remain unexplained existing research should be complemented by broader studies, including quantitative methods and more sophisticated research designs. However, available cross-cultural studies on organizational participation with large sample-sizes often suffer from under-represented sub-samples of enterprises with democratic constitution (for a review see Strauss, 1998), although the latter *do* exist in reality. Thus, there is a risk within the mainstream of organizational psychology research that findings stemming from quantitative studies on participation which are characterized by under-represented or excluded sub-samples of high-democratic firms are considered as the *only* possible, universal findings. Therefore, the normative power of facts leads to a confusion between *prevalent states* of (individual-utilitarian) social motives at the present time, represented by the statistical average, and *developments* of (pro-)social motives whose growth would be *possible* in the future. One open question, for example, is whether an identical amount of OCB or mutualistic-prosocial orientation would be found within settings characterized by substantial organizational democracy, compared to non-democratic enterprises (cf. studies by Goletz, 2001 and Weber et al., 2009).

Our conceptual proposal does not imply that a mutualistic-prosocial work orientation would exclude conflicts among members of democratic enterprises, co-operatives, and communities – on the contrary. Just *because* we do not base our perspective in harmonistic and moralistic a priories, the question, how prosocial orientations and practices can develop and be developed becomes so important. Kibbutz research as well as research on democratic enterprises demonstrates, that prosocial work orien-

tations and conflicts of interests both occur (e.g., Moldaschl & Weber, 2009; Rosner, 1998; Viggiani, 1997). Moreover, we do not assume a deterministic connection between organizational democracy and prosocial orientations. Further factors, like earlier education in family and school, organizational conflict regulation styles, resources under the control of the employees, or the economic situation of their enterprise have a considerable influence upon workers' social orientations (Greenberg, 2008). For example, under the pressure of "neo-liberal" deregulation of the markets a part of the Israeli kibbutzim have left some of their main principles while others retain democratic governance and collective ownership (Palgi, 2004).

4. Some concluding remarks

Since chapter 3 already presents some of our conclusions about the present mainstream in (psychological) management science, we want finish here by sharpening the arguments.

1. The construction of the homo oeconomicus as a research paradigm is a recursive process. Science informs practitioners designing organizational reality (and everything else) *as if* it would be true – and vice versa, in confirming transaction. Even if the results often are so poor, the circle tends to push reality more in that direction. This represents a process of *self-fulfilling prophecy* (see e.g. Miller 1999, Ferraro et al. 2005) If management (and its zealous science) follows the instrumentalism-paradigm, employees (and all other stakeholders) will likely reduce their extra-instrumental inputs – and of course: vice versa. Whether the contrary may happen in firms like several enterprises in Germany (see Pulig, 2000) as well as in Switzerland (see Netzwerk sozial verantwortliche Wirtschaft, 2004) should be researched empirically. Together with researchers managers of those firms are developing criteria for social and ecological values concerning responsibility for the employees and for national economy.
2. Criticizing utilitarian and causalistic theories (deterministic theories which understand the world as a collection of simple causalities) of social motivation in organizational contexts is an important political and educational task. It is necessary to preserve, produce, and communicate knowledge about the other side, about principles of human dignity, quality of working-life, and organizational democracy. As John Kenneth Galbraith stated (1997), a market economy can only work if there are non-market preconditions, resources, and regulations. The awareness of these preconditions and of their genesis should be developed in academic education. If not, there is a risk that students may adapt

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reifications and knowledge of instrumentalization without any critical and ethical reflection and that students develop indifference towards the effects of their later activities in enterprises, that is, indifference towards the victims of globalization, towards organizational injustice, and towards the downsizing of the welfare-state.

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