Strategic Design, Cosmopolitics and Obscure Situations

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ABSTRACT

This reflection takes as its starting point the assumption that what matters for strategic design is something that dwells in an obscure realm. Various concepts are explored in order to think about how to strategically design within such darkness. To engage with this obscurity, the strategic designer has to radically modify the position of *Authority* frequently employed, instead adopting a democratic, cosmopolitical modification that accentuates response-ability and permits the murmuring of the idiot. It also requires substituting the concept of *context* with the concept of *situation*, since the situation makes us think in dark organizational terms; its dynamics exceed the plain process of defining and recognition presented in the idea of context, instead driving one toward a radical transformation at the core. In this regard, the dark matter of organizations needs to be triggered with care, through a pluri-relational tentacular approach that perturbs its ordinary condition and brings its neglected actors to the fore, thereby allowing strategic design.

Keywords: strategic design, obscures, situations, cosmopolitics, science and technology studies.

INTRODUCTION

There seems to be a shared comprehension within design literature that associates strategic design with organizations[1]. It recommends that to explore relations within the organization's network, one should be involved with contextual research (see, for instance, how Deserti [2007] and Moraes [2010] explore the issue). When the strategic designer engages with the organization, some elements are distinctly apparent. Documents, furniture, diagrams, computers, employees, managers, clients and mugs of coffee. These elements are somehow achieved through observation, interviews, maps of actors… and they endorse an understanding about what the matter is that the organization is concerned about and what the organization is made of (its interests and identity).

This paper takes as its starting point the assumption that such apparent material is not the material that the strategic designer needs in order to design. This material is not at one's disposal, waiting to be collected through the methods described. What matters for strategic

design is something that dwell in an obscure realm, something related to what Hill (2012) calls dark matter, a kind of a messy politics that involves "(...) organizational culture, policy environments, market mechanisms, legislation, finance models and other incentives, governance structures, tradition and habits, local culture and national identity, the habitats, situations and events that decisions are produced within".

The paper also draws on the comprehension that, to achieve such darkness, the strategic designer has to radically modify the position of Authority frequently employed. This assumption requires a revision of the concept of strategy as knowledge produced through the power that experts (originally military elite and later strategic management and strategic designer) exert over other actors in the organization, providing legitimacy for the perpetuation of these power relations and avoiding agonism and critical assessment of what the organization is and should be about. This critique will be addressed through a reflection based on the essential role that strategy plays in war and more specifically emphasizing strategy as an element of processual interaction (Whittington, 1996), which allows thinking about the strategic designer as a kind of speculative compositionist. It is necessary to emphasize that this critique invokes more than 40 years of discussions in design, somehow crystallized by arguments related to studies on colonialism (Martins and Oliveira, 2016), the debate about new political design practices (Escobar, 2015; Fry, 2008), agonistic and adversarial design (DiSalvo, 2012), the process of social innovation (Manzini, 2015), participation (Björgvinsson et. al., 2010) and democracy (Binder et. al., 2015); on the role that design has to play in the 'real world' (Papanek, 1971).

This concept of strategy cannot flourish with the idea of context. The etymology of context indicates circumstance, environment, background. The contextualization that regularly occupies strategic design involves an effort to place things in an appropriate setting in order to be properly considered during the design process. As such, to contextualize requires adopting a program of demarcation and a definitive choice. Based on the concept of context, it is recommended to define boundaries, which entails choosing stakeholders, the territory, niche markets, etc. Such elements determine the context parameters, its domain and idiom. The strictness of the idea of context seems to be attenuated by some design methods that suggest designers should conduct non-contextual research. These methods include Blue Sky Research, for example, which seeks to find information in contexts that are not covered by contextual research (Cautela, 2007). However, instead of an attenuation, such methods lead to stringency that separates internal and external aspects of the organization. The argument here is that strategic design should adopt the concept of situation instead of context, since

this option allows the blurring of internal and external, micro and macro, thereby incentivizing flexibility and openness. In short, situation allows the movement of relations, while context requires the idea of pre-determined dualized entities.

In summary, this paper will defend the argument that strategic design has (1) to engage with the obscurities of organization; (2) to modify the position of Authority that the strategic designer frequently employs; and (3) to amplify the concept of context toward the concept of situation. As such, the argument is elaborated on the issue of blindness that avoids action; on the issue of the role that the strategic designer plays, and on the issue of where and with relation to what design takes place. In this regard, speculation can elucidate a central strategic design specificity: the comprehension that the dark matter of organizations needs to be triggered through a pluri-relational approach that perturbs its ordinary condition and then unfolds its terms.

1. ENGAGING WITH OBSCURITIES WITHIN ORGANIZATIONS

The problem with the obscurities has been a concern of Science and Technology Studies for decades. Discussions on neglected things (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2011), missing masses (Latour, 1992), actors that disappear when *punctualized* (Law, 1992) and when the network is stabilized and closed (Pinch e Bijker, 2012) and the notion of equipment (Heidegger, 1962) are establishing a significant compendium that can serve as nourishment for strategic design on how to proceed with the darkness that permeates organizations and characterizes its mode of design. This discussion is relevant since one recognizes that the pivotal feature that distinguishes strategic design from other kinds of design is the manner with which it engages with such dark matter. According to Hill (2012) "the difference between traditional design practice and strategic design is that strategic design recognizes that this 'dark matter' is part of the design challenge". Latour's notion of 'sociotechnical assemblages' (2005) is helpful here since it highlights that the organization is not only composed of a material assemblage but also of several social entities related to it. The organization is also not only composed of humans' exchanges of information, but it is a society, which for Sloterdijk (2005) is a foam that includes humans, structures and the climate that entangles them together. This idea entails a recommendation: to design with organizations requires expanding design's perspective as a form to become capable of considering a multitude of actors, relations and atmospheres that make organizations what they are.

This atmosphere that permeates and defines the organization is hard to see and to describe; it is not something to be traced. As Hill (2012) has argued, dark matter constitutes 83% of

the universe, yet it is virtually undetectable. It is worth referring here to Butler's statement that "(t)he public sphere is constituted in part by what cannot be said and what cannot be shown. The limits of the sayable, the limits of what can appear, circumscribe the domain in which political speech operates and certain kinds of subjects appear as viable actors" (2004, xviii). If that condition affects the relationship between design and organization, it also requires a particular effort from the strategic designer. Before one argues about what characterizes this effort, it is necessary to think about dark matter's dynamics of obscuration. This matter is obscure because of its nature and because of certain mechanisms that make it invisible. With regards to the nature, it is easier to access materials that product design frequently relies on, such as wood, glass, color, shape, balance, contrast, user necessities and industry capacities. Nonetheless, the materials that are of interest for strategic design are culture, policy, social mechanisms, sustainability, legislation, local laws, power, conflicting interests, identity and situations. For social constructivists, it does not matter whether the Three Little Pigs built houses made of straw, wood or stone. The social construction does not involve the material from which the houses are made, but rather the collective process through which they are built. As such, it is necessary to consider what makes it difficult to deal with the darkness of such strategic design matter. Law (1992, p. 384) questions why only sometimes we are aware of the complex network that lies behind "an actor, an object or an institution"? Why can some actors sometimes be completely removed from view, from thinking? Clarke & Montini (1993) draws attention to actors silenced or actors invented in someone else's discourse, presented only as a way to defend her own interest. These implicated actors can be physically present but ignored or silenced; or they are not physically present, but solely discursively constructed, as an object of another.

Law (1992) defends a process that has to do with a kind of simplification that unifies the network and its infinite ramifications. When we tend to see networks as single blocks, they tend to disappear, being replaced by their actions. For Latour, this process is explained by the concept of black box (Latour, 2011); for Law (1992, p. 385) such precarious simplification takes the form of "*punctualizations",* and for Pinch and Bijker (1984, p. 424-25) it is somehow understood as 'closure mechanisms' of social groups. If, on one hand, these procedures are always precarious (i.e. it entails reduction and blindness), on the other hand, they offer a facilitation: they can draw quickly on the social networks without the need to face its infinite complexity. Designers adopt these procedures for their simplicity, which ensure convenience and agility, although the procedures entail a critical impossibility of acting at the strategic level.

Heidegger (1962), in his well-known discussion on equipment in Being and Time, describes how some backgrounds become 'transparent' in habitual activities. When the hammer is ready-to-hand, it is an ordinary means to an end; it becomes imperceptible. However, when the hammer is broken or reveals itself as inappropriate to an end, its characteristics become rapidly apparent: the hammer is now 'occurrent', 'present-at-hand'; it has emerged from darkness. The brokenness or inappropriateness of the equipment reveals its affordances. Heidegger investigates how such worlds become manifest through the notion of 'clearing' or, as Tresch explains, "'the 'world', or the context of significance and goals that is 'there' before anyone has observed or ascertained it, becomes manifest" (Tresch, 2007, p. 87). One becomes aware of a system of reference of which the hammer is part. The friction between the hammer and its elementary function reveals its systematicity, hence the perspective transforms the product into a system.

In a discussion on how to engage with neglected things, Puig de la Bellacasa (2011, p. 94) explain that "(i)n strongly stratified technoscientific worlds, erased concerns do not just become visible by following the articulate and assembled concerns composing a thing". To make them visible "means counting in participants and issues who have not managed (...) in articulating their concerns" (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2011, p. 94), and whose articulation is invisible according to the traditional way of understanding. The author advocates giving marginalized and excluded actors and issues a voice that is habitually silenced within the fog of the obscurities. She proposes a perspective that seeks to trigger a dynamic way of thinking-with, which implicates different relationalities and practices. Puig de la Bellacasa dialogues with the need for re-scaling actors (following Latour and Callon's voices, 1981, p. 279), not distinguishing them based on their dimensions (macro and micro-actors) or on a hierarchy established according to a predefined ranking of importance. This perspective shows that the dark matter that occupies an organization is not something to be unveiled, but something that can be treated by generating and activating neglected relationships.

2. ACTING-WITH, DEVASTATING AUTHORITY

Activating neglected relationships requires radically modifying the position of authority that strategic designers frequently adopt. This assumption requires criticizing the concept of strategy as knowledge produced through the power that experts (originally military elite and later strategic management and strategic designer) exert over other actors in the organization, providing legitimacy for the perpetuation of these power relations and avoiding agonism and critical assessment of what the organization is and ought to be. This critique relies on the concept of "cosmopolitics" (Stengers, 2005a), but it is also close to

Tsing's idea of response-ability (2015), which requires a commitment to living and dying in unexpected company. It is also related to a paradox that constructionism entails: things are not simply at one's disposal, they are socially produced, nonetheless the constructor is not the powerful human who masters its own making; He (in this case, it has to be a capitalized masculine "He") has to share its agency with an intricate universe of actants over which He has neither clarity nor control. As such, the critique based on which the argument is developed is an attempt at avoiding separation, or *partition* (in the words of Rancière, 2000), between ordinarily excluded individuals and those who have legitimacy to decide for others.

Although the idea of responsibility has been used widely in the past three to four decades in different fields interested in the relationship between technology and society (see for instance Durbin and Lenk, 1987), it is frequently associated with a realm in which human actors are protagonists (see for instance how Heller and Vienne (2003) relate responsibility and humans). Such comprehension suggests considering a specific kind of 'other', that encompasses only those who succeed in manifesting their concerns. If strategic design is about care and response-ability, or, in other words, if it is about dealing (responsively) with different qualities of hidden actors, as such its greatest concern is how to hold open space for the other. The 'other' here entails those whose articulations are imperceptible within prevalent narratives. So, such open space should be understood here based on the concept of "cosmopolitic" which implies considering the other according to the notion of the "idiot" (Stengers, 2005a, p. 994). The idiot is one:

> "(…) who resists the consensual way in which the situation is presented and in which emergencies mobilize thought or action. This is not because the presentation would be false or because emergencies are believed to be lies, but because 'there is something more important' (…) the idiot demands that we slow down, that we don't consider ourselves authorized to believe we possess the meaning of what we know" (Stengers, 2005a, p. 994).

The cosmopolitical proposal is about how "to slow down the construction of (a) common world, to create a space for hesitation regarding what it means to say 'good'" (p. 995). For Stengers, 'good' does not imply only "respect for others", so it is not something to be achieved through our judgments, our practices or our knowledge. 'Good' is thus related to what Puig de la Bellacasa defines as care, that is, distinguished from her understanding about concern. The latter "denotes worry and thoughtfulness about an issue as well as the fact of belonging to those 'affected' by it; …. (while the former) adds a strong sense of attachment and commitment to something" (2011, p. 90-91). When one say, '*I am* concerned about (something, someone)', the concerned one is the affected subject. The concerned one occupies the place from which the judgment happens. It differs from 'I care about', which

entails an essential displacement, which requires cosmopolitical knowledge. Following Stengers (2005a, p. 996) "The cosmopolitical proposal is incapable of giving a 'good' definition of the procedures that allow us to achieve the 'good' definition of a 'good' common world". It requires what Haraway calls "embodied objectivity" (1988, p. 581). Following Stengers' argument, we understand that the concept of the idiot helps designers to comprehend that the actors that constitute a design network (including the designer) are incapable of knowing (Meyer et al., 2020), so it is not enough to give them a place to express themselves. It is not a question of how to discover, but of how to create. Therefore, in Stengers' cosmopolitical proposal, it is necessary to design possibilities for the murmuring of the idiot, and to recognize that the design procedure has no particular anticipated manner. This openness is not interested in identifying what is important to the idiot, rather it is interested in slowing down the pace, which avoids the urgency of the dominant idiom (of those who succeed the obscure realm) and then allows strategic design.

Strategic designers seem to be interested in everyone, in everything, but they used to consider everyone and everything from the designers' point of view, so, everybody and everything orbited a single point, the designers' one. Hence, it is never an equilibrated relationship. This triangle is not triangular. It is never one plus one plus one. The designer occupies one distinct point, and the others are something else outside put together. Many are reduced to one, and the designer chooses in the name of everyone and everything. This categorical reduction entails violence and simplification which produces silence and obscurity. In the meta-language of the design process this is called convergence, and this entails political expertise. The designer is the single core part from which stance he or she grasps, deliberates, produces and decides, in the name of a hyper-condensed group that is profoundly bigger than it appears to be. Taking cue from Puig de la Bellacasa, this designer can be recognized as a master of concerns, but whose practices lack care.

Turner (2001) points to a conflict between expertise and democracy, since the idea of expertise draws on the creation of disproportions that subjugate the ordinary actor. This argument is related to Habermas' argument (1987) that expert culture makes democratic discussion impossible. Collins and Evans (2002) explore the conflict between expertise and democracy through Waves of Science Studies, more specifically examining the process of political decision-making. The authors explore the "problem of extension" that would substitute the "problem of legitimacy", or the "tendency to dissolve the boundary between experts and the public" (2002, p. 235). Collins and Evans understand that the idea of extension is problematic since it implies that "there are no longer any grounds for limiting

the indefinite extension of technical decision-making" (2002, p. 235), which hinder identifying which expertise can be considered as legitimate. This discussion is built on decision-making premises that regularly overlook political aspects constituting expertise. Latour (2004) amplifies this scheme by suggesting that the legitimacy process is something to be deliberated upon by the collective, which means a heterogeneous republic composed of human and non-humans. As such, legitimacy in strategic design is a term that should be thought of with a cosmopolitical compromised approach and not as part of the taken-for-granted framework of Authority.

Authority is, as Turner (2001) explains, a political concept under which experts exercise power over decisions. It is frequently used in conjunction with the idea of knowledge. The concepts are regularly positioned as extreme opposites: if you have authority, you do not need knowledge and vice versa. Etymologically, authority has to do with *auctoritas* and authorship. That is to say, authority possesses, produces, achieves *first* something that others (non-authors) only access later. What is complicated in strategic design is that the author (i.e. strategic designer) does not construct anything *ex nihilo*. As Latour explains, "[i]f there is one thing toward which 'making' does not lead, it is to the concept of a human actor fully in command" (2003, p.6). Creating "means to learn how to become sensitive to the contrary requirements, to the exigencies, to the pressures of conflicting agencies where none of them (the human creators) is really in command" (Ibid, p. 8). These agencies that are of interest to strategic design are essentially produced (there is nothing given in advance) when the strategic designer is in the company of neglected, more-than-human actors.

Authority should be considered here as something to be acquired through trials of strength. In war, it is necessary to respect or to consider the enemy. It is in the atonement of a clash that authority is configured and reconfigured (it is designed) incessantly. There is no judge that would determine who possess legitimacy to decide in the name of the others. This idea of strategy has to refuse Authority (with a capital "A") as a pre-existent attribute that some actor has acquired. In strategic design[2], all actors dispute what is the concern that affects and permeates organization. Hence, strategy involves a process of enactment, in which actors build together their subjective world through social interactions in a fluid and multiple manner. This processual characteristic implies thinking of strategy as *strategizing* (Whittington, 1996). Here, instead of a dispute interested in controlling some domain, in strategic design the dispute aims to produce differences that will nurture the design process through sensitiveness. Strategic Design (with a capital "S" and "D" and singularized) has to do with Authority. While strategic design builds on the idea of a composition (among a plurality of actors, situated practices

and democracy), it has to do with producing agonism and requires cosmopolitic competence. This bias is not something to be adopted or not, because it is not a matter of choice. The strategic designer needs this non-authoritarian perspective[3] in order to be able to engage with the pluri-materials that make his or her design strategical. As such, strategic design has to conceive of strategy as a concern with which the actors *are* and *do* in relation to strategy and how this being-in-organization influences the design situation. Situation and strategy are concepts that cannot be placed far apart from each other. As I will argue in the next section, this proximity entails considering strategy as something that is always in the making and that has to be conceived as a continuously precarious thing. When the strategic designer stops making-with (transforming) strategy, it ceases to exist. The design ceases to be strategic. It becomes tautological, an allegory of a regular, non-original and non-transformative repetition. As such, strategic design is compromised by keeping strategy in the making, which requires cosmopolitics.

3. TRANSFORMING CONTEXT TO SITUATION

The concept of situation adopted here draws broadly on grounded theory (Glasser and Strauss, 1967), and more specifically on its abductive perspective in which one approaches back and forth going between empirical and conceptual materials. It is also related to Haraway's (1991) comprehension of situated action[4] and finally with Clarke's (2003) approach called "situational analysis". The idea adopted here is that "(i)n situational analysis the conditions of the situation are in the situation. There is no such thing as 'context'" (Clarke and Star, 2008, p. 128). Hence, what defines a situation is something produced empirically. Ingold (2015, p. 45) explains that "[w]e say 'the wind blows' (...) but we know that the wind *is* the blowing. Similarly, the stream *is* the running of water. And so, too, I *am* what I am doing. I am not an agent but a hive of activity". As such, this ontological comprehension entails considering that the situation *is* something related to the movement of situating. The idea of context, differently, requires a position, a framework, a structure from which one can deal with the delimited domain. Context has to do with concern, not with care. Within the context's reference, the objectivity that orients design is something to be defined as a search for universality (which Haraway [1988, p. 580] defines as "when one language must be enforced as the standard for all the translations and conversions"). The conditional elements that characterize a context are not something revealed from within, but something chosen to frame the action, the language that will orient the design rhetoric all the way down. When Latour (2005, p. 148) quotes Koolhaas by saying that: "(context)It's simply a way of stopping the description when you are tired or too lazy to go on", he emphasizes a problem with the arbitrariness of the context as a final point. But its problem is not only a matter of determining a way to stop, it is also problematic because of how it chooses to begin. The

elements that characterizes context are always external to what the context is or ought to be. Whilst in a situation, these elements are not conditionals since they are produced in the engagement with the situation.

As stated earlier, the idea of context influences initially the quality of methods and finally characterizes the whole strategic design process. Since the notion of situation is incorporated within strategic design practice, the investigation (as earlier in contextual and non-contextual research) cannot be oriented by a preliminary structure (as the one determined based on the design briefing): every parameter of investigation is essentially produced in the situation. As such, the tendency that actors should be identified before the design begins is inconsistent and problematic. The same renunciation should be amplified, which means that the situation avoids grounding pre-definitions, an ideal horizon or theoretical schema to use as constant references. In a situation, there are no structures, mechanisms or systems to work with. In other words, borrowing from Stenger (2005b), these 'major keys' are less important than the 'minor keys'. It is recognized here that 'minor keys' can be the uncountable "events" that constitute the world. Drawing on Whitehead (1978 [1929]) and Stengers (2005a), the event is an 'actual occasion' that encompasses social/material, micro/macro, context/non-context. It is not a matter of how these elements interact but how they *intraact* (Barad, 2007), or how they become-with. Such understanding of situation borrows from the idea of cosmopolitic (Stengers, 2005a), as it explains that when actors interact, they reformulate their interests as well as the point of the event. As such, it is not a matter of seeking a deep comprehension of the context, because the context has itself modified. Instead, it is a posture that gives the situation the ability to make us think, not just make us recognize something that one once supposed to be there.

Despite its inherent radical vicissitudes, the situation with which strategic design designs is always placed. Situation entails placing. According to Haraway (2016, p.31), "(n)obody lives everywhere; everybody lives somewhere. Nothing is connected to everything; everything is connected to something". Hence, the organization has a place. The strategic designer has a place. The event has a place. They are bound together in a particular way. They design together and discover together what it means to design with such places. This assumption does not avoid considering that we are all connected. It rather tells that the quality, the distance, the fragility of such connections determines what/who are the actors and what/who is to be designed. It entails considering that the designer is designing here, now, in an idiosyncratic atmosphere that raises awareness about the strategic design practice. As such, the strategic designer must grasp how such situation entangles and transforms its

actors within this obscurity. The dark matter that interests strategic design is not something to be discovered, recognized or clarified. It is something to work with. Since strategic design embodies the concept of situation, its challenge becomes grasping how to make the situation reveal and become itself according to its own terms. Here, it is worth taking from Haraway the concept of tentacular thinking (2016, p. 30-58). The strategic designer needs to engage with the situation as a tentacle, which comes from the latin *tentaculum* meaning *feeler* and *tentare*, which means *to feel* and *to try*. The designer has to use his multiple, tentacular arms thereby provoking the situation in order to reveal what was missed within the dark matter, and, at the same time, to feel the matter produced.

In the arena of strategic design practice, situation allows strategy, while context does not. Etymologically, strategy originates from the Greek "strategos", a word that meant trick or deception, only later being used to refer to the military realm (Best, 1984, p. 513). This tricky quality of strategy is close to the notion of action, as presented in Best's definition: "(a) strategy can be defined as a move, trial, or probe, designed to alter the problem array and produce information by doing so" (Best, 1984, p. 513). Context entails a procedure that does not allow tricking or alteration to the problem array. Strategy requires flexibility since it occurs in the making and involves "ontological politics". Annemarie Mol's definition concerning ontological politics considers it to be a theatre in which "the conditions of possibility are not given" but instead it is a theatre in which "reality does not precede the mundane practices in which we interact with it" (1999, p. 75). Strategy, from this perspective, is an ongoing activity that accentuates the everyday dynamics of organization, such that it concerns something that organization *does* rather than something that organization *has*.

Here, it is necessary to remember the comprehension that Hill (2012) offers on strategic design and dark matter. To the author, "the dark matter of strategic designers is organizational culture, policy environments, market mechanisms, legislation, finance models and other incentives, governance structures, tradition and habits, local culture and national identity, the habitats, situations and events that decisions are produced within". If we assume that the context from which such dark material is explored is necessarily modified (it is a situation rather than a context), then the dark matter never is something to be achieved but something to be designed-with. The strategic design process doesn't involve a disclosure, or an enlightenment, but rather an intervention, what Law sees as "our own unavoidable complicity in reality making" (Law, 2004, p. 154). Strategy hence is interventionist, and it is about becoming aware to a situation as it modifies and adapting incessantly as it does so. It is

about feeling and caring. Strategy involves letting others intervene with what you are provoking-with the situation.

4. CONCLUSION

This paper explores some incongruences that avoid strategic design to design strategically. They are related to how strategic designers mostly (un)comprehend and deal with the nature of actors necessary to design at the strategic level. This incomprehension is related to the darkness that always surrounds the strategic realm. Amidst the obscurities, the excluded, marginalized and invisible actors need to be elicited in order to allow design action and transform things. To design within these obscurities - generating and activating neglected relationships - entails modifying the position of Authority that the strategic designer frequently held. It is awkward to comprehend strategic design as something oriented toward an ethical and political ideological version of what *should be* the organization and the world. This *should be* implies a process of designing-with, which requires eliminating the Authority stance. It involves a democratic cosmopolitical modification that accentuates response-ability and permits the murmuring of the idiot. It is in the expiation of this cosmopolitical modification that authority is recursively reconfigured, and design starts embodying strategy.

Strategy requires modifying the idea of context, abandoning grounding pre-definitions, declining the adoption of 'major keys' and pre-delimited frameworks. This paper recommends substituting context for situation, based on which one can develop the idea of event, allowing a process of incessant ontological reformulation. Moreover, situation makes us think about what is happening in the organization, so its dynamics involve more than a process of recognition, involving radical transformation. From this perspective, the strategic designer is less interested in discovering what an actor is and wants and is more interested in making the situation reveal and modify its actors according to its own terms. In this regard, the dark matter of organizations needs to be activated with care, through a pluri-relational, tentacular approach that perturbs its ordinary condition and then brings to the fore its neglected actors according to their own terms. This argument should constitute the building blocks for continuing with this research, thereby making it possible to broaden the discussion on strategic design along with contemporary challenges.

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ENDNOTE

1 Organization is considered here in a broad way, as something that comprises a multiplicity of actors that are somehow connected to external environment and has collective interest.

2 The concept of strategy has been discussed widely based on distinct fields and approaches. There is an overview on how design is exploring the issue in Franzato and Campelo (2017); Meroni (2008); Mauri (1996); Freire (2012).

3 This perspective is related to discussions in feminist studies, which take into consideration neglected and marginalized actors as a way of transforming realities (see for instance Harding, 2004), and to discussions on colonialism that criticize the model of domination (see Césaire, 2000).

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