On the Complementarity of Discourse and Power in Planning

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Abstract

At present the communicative or discoursive model of planning – excluding the scientific-instrumental one – is fundamental for many planners, in Germany as well as the USA. Its capability to map the reality of planning processes and to guide thinking and acting of planners is doubted. Evidence is provided from the experiences of other planning theorists with their practical attempts at cooperation and from observing the planning process of a large real planning project. The observation was that during the whole tedious planning process a large variety of actors try to influence the outcome of the planning process by different kinds of contributions, discoursive as well as power acts.

The concept of power is introduced, its underlying logic, its internal calculi (following a strategic rationality) and its instrumental forms in planning are shown. The conclusion is, not to replace one concept with the other, not to include one concept in the other, not to mix both up into a new kind of (real) rationality. It is rather adequate to see them as necessarily separate concepts in inevitably complementary interrelations. The kind of interrelations between both concepts in a complementarity model of planning is shown.

Introduction

The search for theoretical constructs which could guide the acting of planners of urban environments, passed through an eventful history. Decisive aspects have been the varied view of the type of problems, their relation to the context of the considered system, the procedure of their solution, the possibility to legitimate the results and – related to all these points – the underlying rationality.

Where has this search arrived? After a discussion of different directions Patsy Healey favours a model of “planning as communicative enterprise”, not like a casual enrichment, but as “communicative turn in planning theory”.¹

Forester considers design practice as “action that is fundamentally communicative in character”.² Together with Fischer he sees the “argumentative turn in policy and planning”.³ Slightly broken by the quarrel with praxis, Tore Sager develops a “Communicative Planning Theory”⁴, which tends to be nearer to reality by the position of a critical pragmatism.
Similarly in Germany, after an eventful history of the debate in planning theory, communication now has a leading role as an essential constituents in planning processes with names like “open planning”, ‘interactive planning’. Different theorists experienced also in practical experiments (situations) developed varying sights of a communicative planning praxis. Helga Faßbinder e.g. states, that in “open” planning, “interactive” planning, in “cooperative” planning, in “designing planning as a discoursive, open process” there lies the chance to plan successfully in a “symbiotic city”. Klaus Selle argues similarly. Exploring the way to “cooperative planning” he treats the relation of planning and communication, states that the latter already infiltrates planning praxis, and postulates that it should form it even stronger. In the same sense (line) Ortwin Rennstarts a project, where he tries to implement an ideal discourse situation in the praxis of planning the site of the facility for waste utilization. For all those, who see communication as the central theme of the planning theoretical debate, Habermas’ “Theory of Communicative Action” is the fundament.

Concerning the reception of the theory some comments are to be made:

1. One has to recognize, that it was not originally developed as a planning theory but more general in the context of a critical theory of modern society.
2. It stands in a conscious normative contradiction to the irrationality which arises from not justifiable but factual power relations. It is directed against coercions and power of those independent systems of action (like bureaucracy and commerce), which tend to colonize a communicative lifeworld.
3. The communicative model is normative and explicitly “contrafactual”, that means it is not to deny the existence of power, but against it it sets an ideal concept, difficult to reach, always to head for. Insofar critical comments which argue with the facticity of power cannot hit the model. At most they can doubt its ability to lead operationally the acting of planners in concrete professional situations.

Habermas was not the only one who argued against power. Around 1968 specially in the German planning theory there arose several concepts dealing with societal power structure. They belong to the store of experiences of even those who nowadays – as cited above – lay upon the strength of communication. These concepts were also directed against those planning theories, which tried to solve problems by technical-scientific methods, by Rittel called the “first generation” approach. They failed to recognize the social dimension of planning. Presuming given ends, a well defined solution space, an unequivocal measure of performance, and a well definable system of constraints and context-variables they aimed at putative (supposed) “optimal” solutions, where the allocation of resources was organized efficiently. On that basis only, the idea adopted by the concept of comprehensive planning could prosper (grow), that social systems like cities in its entirety could be steered (controlled).

Science as supplier of foundations by its representations, the experts, would guarantee – so the belief – the correct (right) planning decisions.

Against that objectivistic, expertocratic, holistic position, devout and trustful in science, which was powerful far into the sixties, there evolved substantial critique. In such mean end calculi a potential overall-rationality is assumed. It is suspected to be ignorant concerning diverging norms and interests and thereby consequently to supply (offer) an ideology for asymmetrical distribution of power. That thesis formed a new sight of planning. An eminent role now have the interests of actors, groups,
sections (layers) or classes which are concerned with or touched by planning cases and their systemically different ability to bring (put) through these interests.

In the following first of all is given an rough sketch of some planning theoretical positions with relevance to the phenomenon of power, as developed around 1968. It follows a critical view of the rationality underlying the communicative model of planning (section 3). At hand of a planning case and of some recent tendencies in planning praxis discursive acts and power acts are identified as equivalent elements in planning processes. After an analysis of the concept and logic of power a model of planning is developed, whose rationality lies – so the central hypothesis – in the complementary relation of discourse and the use of power.

2. Concepts in the frame of a critique of societal power structure

The realization, that plans re-allocate advantages and disadvantages, had consequences. Now theoretical concepts were developed, which included the different chances of conflicting groups to put through own interests in absence of consensus (Fritz Scharpf), i.e. to grasp (comprehend/conceptionalize) planning as a field of options of acting in constellations of power how they are typical for politics. Do in a planning process special groups have better chances to put through their interests than others? About that question a discourse started, and its beginning coincided with the time, where authorities valid until now where doubted fundamentally including the capitalistic system. This was around 1968. So the range of the planning theoretical discourse was not limited to the classical spectrum of elites, interest groups and institutions of a town but extended to the distribution of power in a society as a whole. The well argumented assumption was, that general societal power structures trickle down and are represented even on the local level of city planning and its actors. 12

A few main positions to the above question can be identified. 13 Following a “political economical” paradigm the political decision system depends on the strong economic forces. Political and planning institutions (also in towns) turn out to be agents of the interests of owners of large capital (in form of money, firms, land). In the best case they can settle conflicts between narrow-minded particular interests. 14 Planning is crisis management.

In another variant some theorists base upon reform executed topdown, others on the counterpower outside the political-administrative system. Planning as activity on local level and strategically organized as counterplanning will be acceptable and – according to this marxist view – successful only if they are part of the organised struggle of the working class against the class of the bourgeoisie. 15 Rationality of planning is bound to the removal of the “basic contradiction” of paid work and capital.

“Rational planning can only be a mean to change societal power structures, if the underlying concept of rationality is not reduced to a mean-end-rationality, but is understood as a political concept intending the emancipation of the ruled from the ruling.” 16 Otherwise planning would serve to stabilize the system, which is to be changed.

In difference to that view another position concedes governmental planning institutions relative autonomy, i.e. to control the way of action and to settle
dysfunctionalities generated by the system. Conflicts and asymmetry of power is not bounded to marxist classes but to the disparity of areas of political action. Right across to classes there are “depressed areas” like education, living (housing), environment, health; they are underprivileged and dominated by the more powerful areas like economy, finances, traffic and defense, which directly improve the conditions to utilize the surplus accumulated capital. 17

Despite of the terminology which sounds strange after nearly 30 years and after the desaster of the real-socialistic systems, the capitalism-critical power model is still a strong device to explain many phenomena in the planning world.

The proponents of another paradigm focus on acts and decisions as the central units of planning, not on economic forces; they also state irrationality of planning outputs. They register asymmetric chances but do not give up the existing democratic model, whose basic element is the equality of chances for plural facets of interests. Reasons for dysfunctionalities are shortcomings of the decision system or just apathie or stupidity of single persons. Regeneration by reforms is possible. Means are e.g. better techniques of information management (analysis, forecast), but also new procedures of the articulation of underprivileged interests. In this paradigm forms of democratization as participation, advocacy planning, initiatives of citizens, can win the role of counter power.

In both models the underlying assumption is, that power distribution can be changed: in the marxist (polit-economical) one by revolution, in the decision-based one by reform. In the first case planning should help to prepare a revolutionary change of the political-administrative system as a whole. In the second case planning is a necessary part of the functioning of the system; it steadily gets rid of (removes) the disfunctionalities of a societal system which is basically accepted. But also in this case the distribution of power is changed, permanently, in many steps and at many places.

The theory intending a fundamental change of power relations looses its operational strength by two reasons: the system has the ability to assimilate opponents and to react on critique on economic, political and administrative level, and secondly the capitalism-critical opposition starts its “long march through the institutions” (Rudi Dutschke). It remains the respectively partial explanatory strength of the different models concerning the dysfunctionalities and irrationalities which do not disappear, not in the status quo nor in the course of planning processes nor in their results.

This short report is not complete.18 The intent was to unfold different and to some extent self-consistent concepts with an explicit reference to the phenomenon of power in planning. We now direct our view on a concept, which arose at the same time, out of the influential Francofortian School, also starting with a critique of an instrumentally shortened rationality. It is based on a critique of power in form of imperatives of independent systems of action like bureaucracy or commerce. They would “colonialise a communicative structured lifeworld”, the consequences of which occur as “social pathology” of the Modernity.19

3. The claim for rationality of the communicative model in planning
In the framework of a general theory of societal development Habermas opposes versus the model of end-rational action a model of communicative action, in which the “validity of societal norms is only founded on the intersubjectivity of agreement on intentions”. Instead of a rationality which is free of a societal context and directed to an optimal mean-end-relation, and which thereby extends technically oriented power of disposition and control, he poses a rationality which is built on the extension of communication free of power. Its basis is the possibility to give reasons for norms of acting and judging.

A key role has the realization, that knowledge (also in planning) is a social construct instead of being objective, given transcendentally, determined empirically, or found in an individual (personal) certitude. Consequently the mechanism of getting knowledge is social interaction, that means communication on the contents of knowledge. Communication coordinates the plans of action of individuals on the basis of mutual conviction. Only than results a valid agreement, which only than has a rational fundament. Agreement (consent) is based on the acceptance of validity of normative statements. They should be valid, if they pass through criteria like integrity, legitimacy, truth and comprehensiveness.

If such statements and their claim for validity are doubted, a discourse takes place. The participants try to challenge and to meet (defend) the claims for validity. The discourse is argumentative and is decided by the strange but inherent “coercion-free coercion of the better argument”. Then a consensus is reached. Though (certainly) certain ideal conditions have to apply (hold) in such a discourse in order to guarantee, that it ends in a “rational” (reasonable) not a “deceitful” (illusory, deceptive) consensus.

In such an “ideal speech situation” there are no other coercions except that of the better argument, neither external ones nor such ones originated by the structure of the communication itself. Also for all participants there must be equal and symmetric chances to participate, to open a discourse and to continue it, to choose and to exert their contributions. “The discourse can be understood as the form of communication which is free of experience and of coercion to act; its structure ensures that exclusively virtualized claims for validity of statements, recommendations or warnings are object of discussion; and it ensures that participants, themes and contributions are not limited except to the goal to examine challenged claims for validity; and that there shall be no coercion except that of the better argument: that in consequence all motives except that of a cooperative search for truth are excluded.”

In such a way plans should develop as products of discourses free of coercion. Not individual subjects acting according to an egocentric calculus, but actors which are interested in consensus should coordinate their plans of action by argumentative communication.

Nearly at the same time Rittel undertakes a similar attempt with respect to the small discipline of planning theory. He postulates that “approaches of the ‘second generation’ should be based on a model of planning as an argumentative process in the course of which an image of the problem and of the solution emerges gradually
among the participants, as a product of incessant judgement, subjected to critical argument."

The discourse is – so far the status – the steady ascertainment of the individual in exchange with others about what shall be hold for acceptable under given circumstances. This includes a limitation of a consensus to time, place and the respective community of participants, i.e. a historical situation. (This explains and gives the reason for the permanently new conceptual orientation which is typical for planners.) Important is the hope connected with the discourse: to bring on consensus about generalizable interests. It should not be necessary “to resign in face of an unpenetrable pluralism of fictitiously ultimate value systems”. Instead it should be possible “to differentiate by argumentation those interests which can be generalized from those which are and will continue to be particular.” In consequence it would be possible to differentiate norms which can be legitimated from those which establish relations of power and violence.

Habermas’ merit is to offer to the planners profession the foundation for a model of communicative planning, in which by discourse, i.e. discussion, debate, argumentation, a consensus about questions of planning can be strived for. Though at this point it is important not to forget (to keep in mind), that a constitutive attribute of the model is its ideal character. It is “contrafactual”. When entering a discourse it is presumed, it is not or difficult to be reached, but always to be strived for.

This aspect of the Habermasian communication explains why with the transfer of a normativ constructed contrafactual model (wich postulates the possibility of consensus via discourse free of repression) into the practice of planning necessarily there emerged “dislocations” which provoked critical discussion. In the daily practical work the claim of the model seemed to be unredeemable. Even those who favoured communication as nucleus of acting in planning like e.g. Fassbinder or Selle (see above), got into conflict with their own experience and with their knowledge about fundamental power-structures. On the other hand they follow inevitable the intention of the communicative model, insofar they realize its subversive function in the context of practice, being to remove gradually differences in power and to minder the success of actors pushing through their narrow-minded particular interests.

In the following section some of the critical comments on the communicative model are reported.

3.1 Some comments on the communicative model

Following logics, factual statements (concerning a practice imbued by power) cannot defeat (disprove) normative sentences (concerning communicative acting), except in connection with a superior deontic premise. In that respect (inssofar) the following comments cannot hit the theory, at most the capability of the model to guide (to give orientation to) the acting of planners operationally in concrete practical situations.

A1 During planning processes, advantages and disadvantages are distributed on persons and groups; therefore actors with legitime particular interests in exactly that plan which is most favourable (optimal) to them, get inevitably in conflict. Finally there does not result a consensus but a compromise, whose
fairness depends on the equivalence of power of the actors in conflict. This assumption applies seldom.  

A2 Rather (on the contrary) the influence of well organized interest groups on the planning output is typically larger than the one of concerned people or groups with less bargaining power. 

A3 The ideal speech situation is not given: there is no adequate appreciation of the contributions of a contrahent; such a discourse is not free of experiences, is not free of coercion to act, not free of repression. Participation is not freely accessible, the right to set themes and to give contributions is not equally distributed but limited. 

A4 The symmetry of chances to participate in a discourse presupposes social equality, which firstly would have to be reached by a discourse and by argumentation.

A5 Progress in equality of individuals, groups or classes in front of the powerful is not reached by argumentation, because the powerful normally shapes the conditions of possible discourses such that they are profitable for himself, and does not put them on the agenda. These conditons must be changed by other means.

A6 Connected with the supposed ability to participate in a discourse is the competence of judging. To ascertain it again needs that competence, and so on, an infinite regress.

A7 The readiness (willingness) for discourse needs a rational attitude; but the will for reason (rationality) cannot be generated by reason. If the discourse would be enforced (commanded), it would contradict the self-posed aim.

A8 Actors who do not want to participate in the discourse and who do not share the supposed moral of an ideal discourse, behave (move) outside the range of the model, especially if it is organized in practice.

A9 Ideal discourses do not have a time limit; planning discourses do have. 

A10 Calcoli of power infiltrate the discourse, if the use of media in order to spread out arguments, or the employment of authorities, who are rhetorically brilliant, intellectually mobile, etc. is part of tactical considerations of single actors.

A11 Participants, even well organized ones, do not exclusively use argumentation as a mean to put through their interests, but also acts of power. Such acts are e.g. threats (of firms to leave a city which means loss of tax) or producing a new situation, new facts, which are relevant for the planning process (like buying building sites, manipulating prizes, etc.).

These “distortions” of a rational communication are well known to Habermas. However, in face of the ideal character of the discourse we have to drop the simplistic notion, we could apply in real planning situations the discourse according to
Habermas as a more or less mechanical procedure. Nevertheless it remains the only instrument (mean) to detect even these distortions.36

4. Complementarity of discourse and Power
So far two concepts seem to be involved in a theoretical construct about planning processes, that of discourse with a strong normative stress and that of power with a strongness in depicting factual phenomena.

Before trying to explore the relation of the two concepts, a short view on the practise of city planning is to be inserted. Thus, beside theoretical exploration there will be also an empirical standing leg based on a case study.

4.1 Planning practice – a mixture of contributions

One of the greatest city planning projects in Germany at present (2000) started 1994 with the decision of the privatized German Railway to replace the existing terminal station in Stuttgart by an underground through station. To finance the project with costs of more than 3 billion USDollar, the overground defunct train track area was to be sold in order to expand the central city.

The interest of the German Railway as potent initial and main actor was, to link up Stuttgart with the European High Speed Train System and – also concerning the image – to compete with air traffic.

There are some strong arguments: the project brings about advantages in the competition of cities and regions, produces room (place) for about 24000 working people and 11000 inhabitants; new tax payers come into the city; during a period of eight years there will be created 4200 jobs, of 25 years 1600 jobs. With a volume of altogether up to 8 billions US dollar to be invested the project has effects of a program to stimulate the economic development of the region.

The minister of economic affairs and the major of the city turn out to be important coalitioners. They enter into a Public Private Partnership, in persuance of particular own interests. The removal of the train track, a barrier in the valley, will result in an improved communication between the northern parts of Stuttgart. The expansion of the city in the periphery with its consumption of nature will be diminished by using central city land which is sealed anyhow.

Also the counter argumentation is carried out openly and publicly: the existing inner city gets concurrence, single traders can loose their chance to survive; monostructures with office functions in the new area bring about a hole of non-“urbanity” in the context of the city; high density of buildings can deteriorate the sensitive climate in the Stuttgart basin; constructing tunnels in connection with the underground station dangers existing mineral water wells; the surplus value concerning the transport system is minimal, if any; the famous station building designed by Paul Bonatz at the beginning of the last century will be demolished partially. There are many arguments, no one repressed, and via various platforms they reach the public.

Not only professional arguments determine a plan. The German Railway e.g. is interested in high profit by real estates in order to finance the tunnel construction, an
interest leading to the preference of lucrative functions and high density. Both are fixed in a contract between the partners, German Railway and public authorities, during the early phase of the planning project. According to the wishes of that strong partner without whom the project would not be feasible, the city develops a plan. Against legal prescriptions it is without alternatives to discuss, and its balanced consideration which is also legally prescribed is not possible anymore without bias, because the contract named above contains already restricting obligations.

Another case: the demands of participating citizens for more housing, less office buildings and more mixture of different functions fizzes out (goes up in smoke). Their influence is minor, accordingly their good arguments weigh less than those interests of the German Railway. In the last analysis citizen participation appears like a ritually compensating surrogate. The manipulative public relations activities of the private German Railway, its presence in the media and its high level of technology in presenting its visions provides advantages to its arguments in comparison with those of other interest groups.

Experts are used by both groups to strengthen their position by the authority of science. A potent investor acquired with hard effort goes beyond the size of the blocks as fixed in the official plan; the plan is changed to his favour. In addition the privatization of a part of public space is accepted in face of the threat of the investor to withdraw his engagement.

It belongs also to the exercise of power, when high ranking actors in southern Germany inclusive the presidents of the federal states appeal to the chancellor and ministers of the central state to influence the German Railway considering its withdraw from the entire project. The uttered argument by itself is not sufficient; the one who carried it forward, the one to whom it was directed and those who are the audience, the public, they alltogether are important to bring through an argument. There are numerous acts in this planning case which can be attributed either to the categorie of argumentation or to the categorie of power.

Actors are e.g. banks, investors, single traders, mangement and consulting firms, architects, the chamber of architects, landscape planners, the organization of the concrete industrie, citizen initiatives, city council, advisory committee of city planning, assoziation of German architects, university institutes, its directors as experts, Members of Parliament, ministers, the chamber of industrie and commerce, and many others.

1999: five years after the start of the project the plan changed several times. Further on many different actors try to influence the plan. The planning process turns out to be a mixture of contributions of the various actors, whether in form of arguments in a discourse, of threats or of actual (factual) alteration of the real circumstances (conditions) and of intermediate decisions. Each of the contributions is an intervention. Thereby another participant is called to react, to agree, to doubt, to ignore, to reject, to answer with a counterthreat, to give in, to initiate a change in plans, to offer a compromise, and so forth. All these acts create a network representing a planning process. (see figure 1)
Figure 1: Network of acts: schematic diagram of a planning process
(case: 'stuttgart 21')
4.1.1 Excursus: is the institutional framework still adequate to that kind of practice?

Legally (de jure) a city – in the reported case Stuttgart – is the responsible holder of the planning sovereignty. That is its most effective base of power. Legally the participation of citizen is prescribed by German law (§3 of federal building law). But is the planning sovereignty of the city maintained (still kept), if the project is initially put on the agenda by a private firm and if the first plans are presented by the firm? If the particular interest in high profit by real estate gets decisive power in forming the masterplan and the development plan? If furthermore other private actors like investors threat to withdraw their capital and thereby are able to put through their idea (conception) of functions and buildings against a city, which in a labile state of economic affairs thinks to be dependent on an increase of jobs and tax payers, specially in the growing European concurrence of regional capital cities?

The model of an autonomously planning city administration and of occasionally participating citizens which are supposedly underprivileged and weak in influence seems to be obsolet. Rather there act powerful interest parties, equipped with planning capacity and competence as well as scientific expertise. On formal and informal ways they strive for getting through their particular advantages with all available means as thought to be adequate in a respective situation.

Thus a planning practise emerged, where on the occasion of a project various actors with different potential of influence, coming from areas like politics, administration, economy, industry, citizenry, interest associations, etc and coalitions of these, form a “network of connections”. Stierand identifies a variety of such informal acts of influence, arrangements, clarifications, regulations, coordinations. He tries to fix them to a kind of pre-phase in the course of planning. But there is no phase of the planning process where that practise of formal and informal acts of influence is not a characteristic phenomenon. In face of that practise at the same time an image of planning evaporates, where the pure production of a plan is considered to be the aim and the end of the planning activities. Just concerning that aspect Selle points out an essential change.

The process of realisation, whether in intermediate rungs, in projects, festivals or in other forms, becomes part of a planning strategy. For the first time explicitely formulated as elements of a strategy, „project-centered planning“ and „informal planning“ appear in the context of the International Building Exhibition Emscher Park. Implicitly such terms hint on the erosion of the existing institutional frame caused by a shifting of planning activities from a former singular planner to a legally unruled conglomerate of actors with more or less effective influence. The magnitude of influence disappears uncontrolled in the so called „elbow-room of discretion“ (play room of disposition) of the administration. There is no procedure to be seen which would perform to legitimate democratically just that part of the planning result which is determined (caused, influenced) by particular interests.

If the „farewell from making plans“ is carried out, then there grow, as Weick says, „continuous-cooperative bargaining systems“, a totally new institutional construct. „Planning learns the acting“, states Selle and characterizes the new practise as „cooperative acting“. Though the label „cooperative“ has the connotation of a
supposed common will and acting. In view of the notorious incompatibility of
interests, wishes and even values as to be found in political processes such a term
turns out to be euphemistic, particularly since even those who actually cooperate are
already a selection conditioned (implied) by power. The remaining unbalances of
power are well known to the proponents of the strategies of cooperative planning.

4.2 Cooperation – a form of planning between discourse attempt and power
technique

Various new planning experiments base on the potential of the discourse, i.e. the
influence, „the strangely coercion-free coercion of the better argument”, as
Habermas formulates. But after sufficient (extensive) reflection all the protagonists of
discoursive communication arrive at the not clearly definable iridescent limit between
discourse and power.

In the case of the location of an incinerator Ortwin Renn undertakes the most
extensive attempt to operationalize an ideal discourse situation according to the
Habermasian criteria. The concept of his project he calls „Cooperative Discourse“.44
Without being able to draw consequences, he recognizes (identifies) the points
where power intervenes (becomes effective): concerning the lacking equality of
chances of participants to understand (comprehend) the planning matter, concerning
the selection of participants, the demarcation of the whole procedure from a broad
general public45, and concerning the potential inefficiency of the result of such a
cooperative discourse.46

Helga Faßbinder describes her project forming the CityForum of Berlin as follows:
„Interesting is the open planning process where the consideration of all aspects and
interests by experts and proponents of various groups is undertaken in a public
debate.“47 Following the spirit (genious) of the Habermasian model she relies on the
power of the procedure itself which should „induce a common perspective“ to all
participants. That means that by the structure of the procedure the particular interests
can be orientated toward a common overall end, that they can be „embedded in a
broadly shared feeling of responsibility“48, and that the hoped-for result can be a
consensus49. But on the other hand she knows that the embodiment of the forum at
the Berlin senat as the sole responsible body (holder) is a limiting shortcoming
(deficiency)50. She also knows that the output of the Forum at best will serve as
orientation or recommendation for the decisionmaker. There is no guarantee of
consideration. In addition nothing hinders the participants of the Forum and those
actors who are not represented there to pursue their interests parallel to and external
of the Forum, i.e. behind the scenes of the public discourse, and with all non-
discoursive means.

Klaus Selle presents a broad spectrum (variety) of methods of communicative
planning and substantiates them by practical cases51. On the one hand they have a
tradition52, on the other hand a new actuality due to different reasons: if orientations
diverge with increasing intensity, a discourse about values turns out to be
undisclaimable (unavoidable); if new technologies spell risks, the uncertainty which
ones should be acceptable can only be handled by a discourse; if the political control
fails, it needs negotiation and cooperation; if the consent of citizens dwindles as
usual at large planning projects, only communication can bring it back53.
Though Selle critically comments the position that one could overcome the limits of traditional participation, „if all would sit around the table“, if just would be cooperated. In the new forms of cooperation he discovers new old problems. Sure-hitting he addresses (marks) the problems of power which had been left out of consideration so euphorically: Who of the numerous cooperating actors is responsible, after all? „Cooperations exist on the basis of segregation (exclusion)“; the excluded win power to form future; if the most important features and parts of a plan are already settled during the cooperation of e few, the formal citizen participation is too late; who hinders that weak interest groups are bulldozed (dominated) by strong ones; muddled (obscure) interweavings of roles hide (veil) the share of the public actors in the final decision; opposition from outside of the cooperating circle signalizes non-considered positions; the timing of the participation allows to confront the participants with already fixed pre-decisions; acceptance is desired, not co-determination.

Communication and cooperation do not reduce automatically differences in power. Selle draws the conclusion that traditional demands of participation should be kept up, which were directed to an extension of the power of the powerless. The concept of cooperative planning apparently cannot master (handle) the deficiencies of unequal chances of influence in planning processes. In the contrary, by the multitude and diversity of those gathered around the table – which in fact is an elite selected with a power bias - it runs the risk of generating the impression of well balanced and extensive influence and a fair consideration of all interests. Thereby it disguises the deficits of an asymmetric distribution of power.

By the way, such institutionalized forms of cooperation are power techniques themselves. For example the Berlin „Forum“ or the „Cooperative Discourse“ enable the Berlin Senat respectively the Minister of Environmental Affairs of Baden-Württemberg: to early identify points of conflict which could danger the project, to limit the number of actors, to induce them to disclose their intentions, to hinder them to bypass official ways of arguing and acting, in short to absorb and to canalize counter-energy. In addition the decisionmaker, here senat or minister, can use the result as basis of his intended measures which are now easier to bring through, because they have the image of a decision already formed to a compromise and legitimated by a public discourse.

The knowledge about the permanence of unbalanced power distribution shows up in the postulates in which the constructors of communicative and cooperative planning devices embed their procedures. Their success is secured only if the postulates are fulfilled. These are e.g. Renn’s claim for “fairness”, for “openness” and “transparence” in the case of Fassbinder, for “strengthening the public” and establishing rules by which „the differently long spears ... can be equalized a bit“, as Keller demands. However the fulfilment of those postulates is hindered just by the imbalances of power, which they want to eliminate.

4.3 Two kinds of planning acts

Observing such a planning practise one can identify two kinds of „smallest units“, which are relevant for the construction of a theory, discoursive acts and acts of power. This distinction is meaningful because the underlying concepts are decisive for the rationality which is to be postulated. Both kinds of acts have a basic profile
which is characteristic for planning. There exist at least one actor and a context (of
time, place and persons). Both kinds of acts are intentional, as to change a status by
intervention as well as to realize the imagination of somebody about a future and
better state of the world or at least to influence it\textsuperscript{58}.

4.3.1 Discoursive acts

All statements which are contributed to questions arising during a planning process,
inclusive the raising of the questions, are called „discoursive acts“. Habermas
attaches importance to those „speech acts“ which put forward reasons leading to a
rational motivated acceptance of the statements. Their claim for validity can be
doubted. Discoursive acts are argumentative justifications of claims for validity of
norms. The justification takes place by factual arguments, rules of conclusion or
supporting arguments, which again are object of challenges\textsuperscript{59}. All utterings of such
arguments and counter arguments are also discoursive acts.

Rittel structures the discourse mainly in the following discoursive acts: raising of an
issue (question relevant for the planning case); giving an answer or taking a position;
giving an argument, which supports or challenges a position or answer; developing
successing issues out of already existing issues, positions or arguments, etc.
Furthermore he differentiates planning issues as factual, deontic, instrumental,
explanatory and conceptual ones. All these elements of discourse are related by
references of different qualification. So a network of issues, positions and arguments
is developed, which grows with the ongoing planning process\textsuperscript{60}.

4.3.2 Acts of power

Power does not rely on the convicting force of arguments, but uses all possibilities on
which the chances are based to put through own interests\textsuperscript{61}. Argumentation may be
one of the chances; but then it would not be interested in truth but – strategically
seen – in putting through, and thereby no discourse in the sense of Habermas.
Already the limitation of the participation in the discourse, of the chance to raise the
thematic, the restriction of its treatment, are acts of power. Power explicitly is in the
foreground if a discourse is interrupted because of time running out. Then it is
decided according to rules like that the highest in hierarchie directs, or according the
best of all bad rules, the majority rule, or in form of a compromise. Specially in
democratic societies such decisions and compromise bargainings are preceded by
extensive power games. After the power struggle is carried out the decision often is
just the symbolic use of a democratic ritual\textsuperscript{62}. Since the compromise will reflect the
actual power distribution, each party tries to enlarge its power beforehand. There
exists an abundant repertoire of power acts. It differs from the one Macchiavelli
developed 1513 in „Il Principe“ only in the adaption to actual customs. Macchiavelli
presented the instruments of power acting being aware of moral, but not dependent
on it. He positioned the factual acting which happens under the premise of survival in
preference to an acting steered by norms\textsuperscript{63}. To act according to virtues is rather for
the outward appearance, if it is opportune\textsuperscript{64}. The calculus of power has no obligation
\textit{(commitment)} except power itself. His compendium of „observations“ and
„knowledge“\textsuperscript{65} contains \textit{(holds)} behavioural rules how to get, how to hold and how to
increase power. Without difficulties it can be transferred and actualized for todays
planners, as shown in the following listing:
Use persons with charisma or charm, with rhetoric brilliance, in order to present a position or to push through an interest by argumentation. Use mass media like newspapers, TV, radio, internet to multiply your opinion. Use money to influence decisions. Use expertises of (payed) scientists who carry the authority of science. Be best informed, to be ahead in knowledge; use advantages of knowledge and don’t pass on knowledge too generously. Try to obtain an office to increase your weight. Use powerful influential institutions. Form networks of influence, use connections, formal as well as informal ones.

Additional acts of power are: to give information in well measured doses; to establish irreversible facts; to divide large projects into reasonable pieces; to satisfy the need or desire for influence on decisions by offering symbolic decision-making; to feign a coercion of facts („Sachzwang“); to generate deadline pressure (artificial time-limits); to make use of experts; to launch arguments via persons of public authority; to bring into play persons with special skills in argumentation; to divide opposing groups; to intimidate them; to spread a well-calculated rumour; to defame opponents; wrong citation; wrong information; to withhold information; to mislead; to criminalize; to provoke; to infiltrate; etc.

Still other means of power, especially for those „on the other side“, are mobilization of concerned people, their solidarity, all forms of participation aiming at real influence on the decision process, counterplanning, recall, referendum, initiative, protest, strike, symbolic acts, civil disobedience, mobilization of public opinion, specially of press and television. There are many other techniques of that kind.

4.4 Which is the underlying model?

Now we got some more evidence concerning the statement (at the beginning of section 4), that there are two concepts involved in modelling the planning process, the one of discourse which is oriented normatively and the one of power acting which has its emphasis on depicting the reality of planning. They enter into in a model of planning as a kind of acting in social context. Insofar planning deals with the problem of „the possibility of collective acting in face of not supposable consense“66, it is a discipline of politics.

The technocratic model and in an ideal way also the discoursive model are based on and directed to the possibility to reach consent (in a unit of action formed by time, space and persons), in the first case as product of instrumental and scientific conclusion, in the second case as product of the exchange of arguments. Since as shown we cannot proceed from any of both possibilities, for the conception of a planning model we follow a model of politics, in which different ways of acting such as attempting to convince, bargaining, influencing and poweracting mix up. In this model all concerned or interested persons or groups try to influence directly or indirectly the decisions about a considered planning measure, in order to receive little disadvantage and much advantage. Object of the activity of the participants of the planning process is to influence, to determine or to conceptualize a new distribution of given circumstances and consequently a new distribution of advantages and disadvantages. The actors normally aren’t unselfish protagonists of a general interest. They keep it in mind only insofar they have to accept it in the sense of a strategic rationality as framework (context) for their activities. The actors use all their chances to get through their interests even against the resistance of
other participants, the chance of the convincing argument in a discourse as well as the chance of power oriented acting. Both claim for rationality, which is different in each case.

The rationality guiding power oriented behaviour lies in the calculi about the best possible strategies to put through the interest of a single actor; so far it is instrumental. The rationality of the communicative model is based on the possibility to distinguish just the single and particular interests from generalizable ones, by communication in a discourse; so far it is societal.

In the following sections fragments of a model will be unfolded, in which discourse as well as power are involved. It will be developed on the abstract level of a conceptual construct. Object is the operational procedure, thus a partial aspect of the method of planning, starting with raising a problem up to the implementation and control of its „solution“. For the communicative model it can be referred to the Habermasian theory and Rittel’s pragmatic and instrumental propositions. For the aspect of power there will be developed some contributions in more detail, mainly to its logic and calculus. Even on the operational level the assumption of a fixed power structure in societies (marxistic view) and the taboo of power as a negative concept hindered a sharp focus on power acting.

Meanwhile, i.e. since those concepts emerging around 1968 as capitalism-critical planning theories (see section 2), there are some recent attempts to include power into a theory reflecting the acting of planners. One was made by John Forester. He knows about the repercussions of ignoring the power of others: planners themselves become powerless. The use and handling of information as a source of power plays an eminent role, especially the possibility of the planner to act against misinformation, as a kind of conspirative practise. In that respect he moves within the model of communicative rationality as Habermas postulates it. Though beyond that and out of the position of a critical pragmatism, he directs the attention to the disturbances due to the use of power, against which can be struggeled by critical theory and practice.

Another position is that of Flyvbjerg. After an exact observation and a disillusioning experience in the low points of the planning practice in Aalborg he drops not only the scientific rationality but also the communicative one. He seeks theoretical support in Macchiavellis instrumentalism, Nietzsches biologism and Foucaults structuralism. Correctly he notices that power defines and creates realities. (Though the ability to install and stabilize them in the long run ends with the deficiencies to legitimate them, even if in the meantime facts were brought about which are difficult to be revised.) Also he registers the rationality of power, e.g. in the talent (capability) of the powerful, to legitimate their actions in the respective context. This is called „rationalization“. (Though it can be unmasked as such one.) It is a correct observation, that knowledge and rationality are less important, if open confrontations (conflicts) increase, while at the same time the attempts of the planning partners to win by power acts come to the fore. In situations with a stabile power balance knowledge and rationality get more room. Flyvbjerg is – like Forester – on the way, to pull the phenomena of power out of taboo, in favour of the planning theoretical discourse. But his conclusion that we cannot rely only on democracy, which is based on rationality, in order to solve our problems, is very general, leaves open where else we can base on and neglects the various kinds of rationality and their differentiated mutual relations. In a fatalistic –
pragmatic jump, following the normative force of the factual, he plaida for a
„RealRationality“, which he seems to identify with power. It remains open, which
kinds of rationality are involved in the interplay with power and in power acts
themselves. He masks the necessary and to be sustained difference between
factual and normative aspects and ignores that the latter can be handicaped and
distorted by the former, but not refuted.

On the contrary the following attempt stresses the difference of both concepts and
directs the attention to their mutual relation. First, as announced, there follow some
statements (explanations) on the concept (understanding) of power.

4.4.1 On the logic of power

„Power means every chance in a social relation to put through the own will even
against resisstance, no matter where the chance is based on“, defines Max Weber71.
Explicitely arguing against a fixed duality of rulers and ruled Foucault develops a
concept of power, where its respective distribution is a result of a permanent struggle
between individuals, groups and institutions72. Hence power in planning
organizations is something unstable, undetermined, not fixable, in many situations
new to win, diffusive, dispersed on many actors73. An analysis of the logical structure
of power relations74 shows the soundness of this model and in addition the kind of its
embedded rationality

The relation between a holder of power (A) and a subject of power (B), the one to
whom it is exerted (exercised), essentially is determined by the ability of A to
motivate (cause) B by a threat to do something, which A wants but B does not want.
Part of the rationality is that both realized the difference of their aims; precondition is
communication about that. Also the powerholder calculates with the sensitivity of the
threatened for his threat. In face of the threat the threatened can give in – than a
situation of power is given (exists). But on the other hand he has the possibility to
refuse. It is a decision on the basis of a calculus of detriments against benefits, i.e of
an argumentative weighing. If B gives in, he also calculates with the ability of A to
execute the threat. Both contrahents mutually presuppose consequential behaviour,
a condition of rationality.

Since it is an empirically statable fact that constellations of power often change, we
ask for the logical possibilities how power confrontations can end. They are in the
possibility of A to decide not to demand anything from B, of B to decide against a
demand inspite of A’s threat. Both results of B’s weighing are possible, to follow and
to refuse. In case of refusal he risks the threatened measure except of course he or
she has a counter strategy up his sleeve. This strategy can calculate its success e.g.
on a change of the basis of power. A dynamic game is constituted. The logic shows
that there is no fixed distribution of power.

We assume a network of power relations, where each actor in some respect and to
some extent can exert power on each other actor.

4.4.2 Calculi of power

Normally the participating actors try to hold down their risk to be defeated in a power
struggle. Their weighing of power acts follows a calculus which we can represent. It is
the strategic rationality of a single actor, who calculates the possibility to put through
his own interests against other rational antagonists (counter players, opponents). It is a calculus of mutual „images“: B thinks about how to react on a threat of A. A develops an image of the considerations of B and thinks about his own possible reactions. From this image of A about the thinking of B, B for his part develops a new image and so on.

Different such calculi were analysed\textsuperscript{75}. Typical components are: Can A execute the threat? If yes, would he do so in the acute case? If yes, what would be more detrimental for B, to take it into account or to avoid it? Can B hinder A's measure? E.g. with a counterthreat, or by looking for a new ally, or by searching for a compromise by negotiation or by undermining A's power? Is it possible to give in ficticiously, but to act differently? How would A argue in a bargaining? Which compromise would be acceptable for A? Would it be acceptable also for B?

One of the results of the analysis was, that there crystallize a limited number of possible behaviours, which come up again and again\textsuperscript{76}. Some of them are:

- a threat of the other party is countered with an own threat;
- a threat is ignored, because one does not believe in its feasibilty or the will to execute it;
- a threat is answered with a not announced measure;
- the threat of a party is undermined by weakening its base (diminuation of base, means, scope or extension of the power of the opponent);
- the parties negotiate with the result, that both reach their intentions completely; or both reach them partially; or only one party reaches them totally or partially; or both agree on something third never intended before;
- the threatened party gives in;
- the threatening party makes a concession by itself;
- the threatened party does not react and
- the threatening party realizes its threat.

There are only a few possibilities of behaving in order to end the escalation of power acting. One is that the threatening party makes concessions to the threatened one by own initiative. Another one is that the parties bargain such that the resulting compromise is satisfying both parties in the long run. So even power-acting seems to end up in and by discourse and argumentation.

But previous experience has shown, that satisfying compromises are only achieved in an equivalence of power. The inferior one can achieve it by acts of counterpower, using techniques as shown in section 4.3.2. The other possibility is to neutralize the misuse of power by procedures, which by their construction and their institutionalization hinder (or minder) the misuse of power. Such procedures are e.g. mutual control, self-determination, self-organisation, self-help, extensive participation, minimal planning, principle of small steps, special rights for minorities, proportional consideration of interests, detection of the anonymity of the responsible\textsuperscript{77}.

But also such procedures were elaborated (developed) by a discourse, their institutionalization was enforced by power, and the different actors and parties participate in the procedures partly because of conviction but partly enforced by power. We see the mutual interweaving of power and discourse and come back to it in the following section.
4.5 The relation of complementarity between discourse and power

We include the use of power in the planning process as we did with the discourse. The discoursive acts as well as the acts of power we treat as equal units. But the two concepts, the concept of discourse and that of power, are related to each other in complicated ways.

- In the logic of power as well as in the calculus of power it is evident that discourse e.g. in form of a weighing before a decision or of strategic argumentation precedes acts of power.
- Also we saw that a „discoursive speech act“ (raising an issue, uttering a position or an argument) has influence on real situations also concerning the actual distribution of advantages and disadvantages, i.e. it develops power by itself.
- Power can hinder argumentation and some of its effects.
- But only argumentation can have as an object and reflect power and its misuse and can just thereby state the existence of power.
- In weighing it against other means, tactically used argumentation is a mean of power. But in the moment it results in conviction of the opposite, one cannot speak any longer of a relation of power but of solidary acting based on consensus.
- Power which cannot be legitimated is irrational. But legitimation of power can only be reached by argumentation.78

We see the mutual relationship of both concepts. (see fig. 2)

![Fig. 2 Mutual relation of power and discourse](image)

As argued at the end of the last section, we had recurred to strategies, which hinder the misuse of power by their procedural construction. The weighty reason was the realistic suspicion that even in situations of power a discoursive and ethical control
fails, because the powerful ignores the ethical argument. The intention was, not to tie rationality to the uncertain outcome of a discourse, but rather to incorporate it into procedures. The procedural rules then, by their power, would be the guarantors of rationality. But a first step of regress (concerning time and logic) leads us to the point that the procedures as well as their rules are based on a discursively generated consent, that they are results of a discourse coagulated to conventions.

The next step of regress shows that even this discourse is subject to the same dilemma, to be not feasible in presence of power, and that its result could not be pushed through, if a holder of power fearing the deprivation of his power hinders it. Furthermore, the better argument for a procedural rule has to overcome the holder of power using power against him according to logic and calculus of power. We run into an infinite regress without chance to resolve the permanent relatedness of discourse and power in planning. (see fig. 3)

![infinite regress](image)

Fig. 3 Infinite regress in generating procedural rules for planning processes

The impossibility to disconnect the two concepts suggests to theorize the planning process as a permanently repeated relation of the one kind of acting to the other, as a entity showing two different, not harmonizing sides, i.e. as the complementarity of the concept of discourse and the concept of power in planning. If we look for „rationality“ in planning, it is to be found in the complementarity of the two concepts. Basis is the distinction of both kinds of action. Their unsolvable relatedness in planning becomes evident in the logic of power (see section 4.4.1) and in the
calculus of power (see section 4.4.2) as well as in their mutual limitation in the infinite regress concerning the constitution of formally ruled procedures of planning which are directed against the misuse of power.

If we drop the scientific conception of rationality in planning and if we maintain the conception of the discursive rationality as an „ideal“ construct, following the proposal of Habermas, then - after including power - we rather should speak of 'complementary rationalities' during the planning process. In this complemental constellation two components stay in an unstable relation: the strategic power calculi of actors with particular interests and the search for generalizable interests following a communicative rationality.

With such a concept of the complementarity of argumentation and use of power in planning situations, in which the dependance on judgements and the forming of a normative will is dominant, and in which at the same time the development and maintenance of interests is legitimate, we are not obliged to accept plans as arbitrary products of an accidental constellation of power; on the contrary we can value them as a result of a quarrel (confrontation) with conditions which are transparent, with the possibility of mutual control and in which planners shall, can and do intervene.

The latter is a decisive consequence. Such a model of complementarity stresses the active political role of the planner in difference to the image of a planner, who by self-chosen isolation in the capsule of clean science, secure method and ideal discourse misses success.

2 Forester, John: Planning in the Face of Power, Berkeley 1989, p. 132
4 Sager, Tore: Communicative Planning Theory, Aldershot 1994
5 Fassbinder, Helga: Stadttorium Berlin, Hamburg 1997, p. 117
7 Renn, Ortwin, Kooperativer Diskurs, in Selle, Klaus (ed.): Planung und Kommunikation, Wiesbaden 1996, pp 101
8 Habermas, Jürgen: Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns, Frankfurt 1981, p. 8
13 Concerning the following classification see: Naschold, Frieder: Zur Politik und Ökonomie von Planungssystemen, in: Politische Vierteljahresschrift, special issue 4, 1972, p. 18
Concerning that position see authors like Flatow/Huisken, Müller/Neusüß or e.g. Altvater, Elmar: Zu einigen Problemen des Staatsinterventionismus, in: Probleme des Klassenkampfes, issue 3, 1972, pp 1-53

Fassbinder, Helga: Kapitalistische Stadtplanung und die Illusion demokratischer Bürgerinitiative, in: Probleme des Klassenkampfes, special issue 1, June 1971, p. 94

Arbeitsgruppe der Planer an der TU Berlin: 'Planerflugschrift 2' in: Stadtbauwelt 1970, Heft 25,


Habermas, Jürgen: Technik und Herrschaft als Ideologie, Frankfurt 1968, p. 64


Habermas, Jürgen: 1973, p. 149

Habermas, Jürgen: 1981, vol. 1, p.71

Habermas, Jürgen: Die Neue Unübersichtlichkeit, Frankfurt 1985, p. 243


Habermas was familiar with the discrepancy of factual deficits and postulated conditions of a discourse situation. Anyhow, everybody entering in a discourse inevitably quasi in anticipation supposes ideal conditions which should hold in a discourse. In addition Habermas observes that even if the supposition contradicts the reality, it is “a fiction which is operationally effective in the procedure of communication”. He admits, that if “special interests are involved, the conflicts even in ideal cases are not settled by argumentation, but by bargaining and compromise”. Though this is fair only if the participating parties “are provided with the same amount of power.” In case of a pluralism of interests compromises would be acceptable. (Habermas, Jürgen: Die Neue Unübersichtlichkeit, Frankfurt 1985, p. 243)

Habermas knows the argument: rationally motivated consent principally could be achieved, “if the argumentation could be continued sufficiently open and sufficiently long”. (Habermas, Jürgen (1981): Vol. 1, p. 71) If that is impossible, than e.g. the majority rule is used. The decision by majority is “the fallible result of a discussion which was closed temporarily because of pressure to make a decision”. (Habermas, Jürgen: Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit, Frankfurt 1990 (1962 1st edition), p. 42

Reuter, Wolf: Die Macht der Planer und Architekten, Stuttgart 1989, p. 159 and 179

also see Selle, Klaus: Planung und Kommunikation, in: DISP 120, p. 46

Stierand, Rainer: Neuorientierung in der Planung in Raum Planung 61, 1993, p. 143

ibid., p. 145


Ganser, Carl; Siebel, Walter; Sieverts, Thomas: Die Planungsstrategie der IBA Emscher Park, in: Raum Planung 61, 1993, p. 115

Weick, Theophil,: Abschied vom Plänemachen, in: Raum Planung 66, 1994, p.176


ibid., p. 110

ibid., p. 112

In a former paper I called them with a more general term „pragmatistic acts”. (Reuter, Wolf: Discourse and Power in Planning – Pragmatistic Acts in a New Planning Model, paper presented at the Planning Theory Conference in Oxford Brooks University 1998, Proceedings of papers, p. 205) At the one hand it was a reference to Habermas who calls his favoured model with this term, distinguishing it from the “technocratic” and the “decisionistic” one. On the other hand it was a reference to Hilda Blanco who points out that the true background of planning would be the philosophical pragmatism as formulated by Pierce, Dewey et al. In comparison with “pragmatic” the term “pragmatistic” is to be preferred, in order to set it off against the meaning of an opportunistic and normatively uncontrolled acting.

Habermas, Jürgen: Wahrheitstheorien, op. cit., p. 137; see also section 3
Kunz, W.; Rittel, Horst: Issus as Elements of Information Systems, Working Paper no. 131, Center for Planning and Development Research, Berkeley, California, University of California, 1976
One of the most fascinating ideas in that concept is the systemtheoretical power of the network, which does not know any limits or if so, goes beyond them. Thereby Rittel contributes to the operationalization of the often cited “complexity”.
Edelmann, Murray: The Symbolic Uses of Politics, Chicago, University of Illinois Press, 1974
Macchiavelli, Nicolo,: Der Fürst, Stuttgart 1961, p. 95
ibid., p. 105
ibid., p. 23
Forester, John: Planning In the Face of Power, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1989, pp 36
A similar position takes Tore Sager in: Communicative Planning Theory, Aldershot 1994
ibid., p. 234
Weber, Max: Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, Tübingen 1980, p.28
Foucault, Michel: Wille zum Wissen, Frankfurt 1983, pp 113, 115
Foucault, Michel: Mikrophysik der Macht, Berlin 1976, p. 115
ibid, pp 51
ibid, p. 48
ibid, p. 199
Thereby it is also stated that the „strategic“ rationality guiding the acts of single power actors, is exposed to that „societal“ rationality, which is realized by communication and discourse.