CHAPTER TWO

MANAGEMENT AND POWER

The universal need for power. Organizational management as a form of command and exercise of power. Competition as a power struggle. The dimensions of power as a strategic behavior: internal vs external directedness, attraction vs fight, offensive vs defensive direction of fight, acceptance vs despise of moral and legal limitations. The degree of power is a function of the balances existing in society. The ambiguity of society's messages.

One could hardly find a more fundamental motive of human behavior than the aspiration for power. Perhaps we inherited it from our zoological ancestors. Schjelderup-Ebbe (1922) first discovered the existence of a peck order among chickens. The top bird has the "right" to peck all the others without being pecked in return, and each bird occupies a place in a linear series with respect to one another, down to the lowest bird, which all may peck without fear of retaliation. The relative positions of two birds may be decided once and for all at their first meeting, either through actual fighting or because one yields to the other.

Human motivation is social par excellence. This, however, does not mean the abolishment of natural drives. Humans' social motivation only changes the content of behavioral stimuli and the nature of response, the fact of power retaliations in society remains untouched. In Spinoza's words a majority of people aspire to pleasures, wealth and glory, but we could add, that the precondition to have them all is achieving power. Power brings pleasures, wealth and glory, and they, in return, fasten and strengthen people's power. The same happens in the animal realm, where food privileges go with status, and where a minority of dominant males virtually exclude all others from participation in breeding (Wynne-Edwards, 1962).

In several theories of human motivation (Maslow, 1954; Alderfer, 1969) power needs appear at a later stage, after existence needs (Alderfer), physiological, security, and affiliation needs (Maslow) have been satisfied. I showed (Krau, 1989a) that the stepwise entry of needs onto the stage of human behavior is one of the cardinal flaws of these theories. Research results evinced the presence of the highest and "last" motive of self-realization in modest industrial workers, in immigrants entangled in the fight for their every-day bread, and in persons who were at the start of their careers, as they had no opportunity to satisfy the "lower order needs" (Krau, 1989a). A similar situation had been recorded by Betz (1984) who found that the need for self-realization ranked first in home makers, even though they had deficiencies in the gratification of their safety/security needs. In a five-year-long longitudinal study with management trainees at the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, Hall and Nougaim (1968) tested the hypothesis that in the first years of managerhood the strength of gratified "lower" needs would decrease, while the level of superior needs would rise. It was thought that in the last year of the research (the fifth) successful managers would rate lower on need...
strength for safety and higher on need for self-esteem and self-realization. Nothing of the kind happened. Changes in needs were unrelated to an objective measure of gratification in the safety and achievement areas.

This means that human motivation is based on a fundamental need profile, whose rank order of intensities has not only biological, but personality determinants, whereby the concrete content of the various needs is conditioned by society's culture. This conclusion is in line with the research of Hofstede (1980) showing that achievement motivation is culture-bound, and not a universal category, and in line with Krau's (1991) research on changes in the needs of immigrants. The main aspiration of Israeli immigrants was to regain their lost status through rebuilding their careers. They could succeed in this endeavor only by adjusting to the dominant culture of the host society, and indeed, the reasearch evinced the transition from national-religious values, they had adopted in order to prepare for a culture they were thinking as characteristic of their new country, to the materialistic outlook that actually dominates the Israeli society.

Status is power and the need for status is to be found not only in the upper echelon of the social hierarchy. The tavern braggard is in search for status among his drunkard peers, and tries to achieve it by the means that are at his disposal, just as an office clerk demonstrates his power by refusing to receive a document, because certain words are misplaced. Power aspirations are universal, we need not Schopenhauer or Alfred Adler to tell us this, but precisely because of the ubiquity of power aspirations, power struggle too is a universal phenomenon. Even from a moral point of view, we cannot argue with the existence of power struggles, because they are anchored in our very nature, the problem is what forms do they take. Are there some viable balances and limitations, or is it a jungle in which anything goes, a bellum omnium contra omnes?

In its very essence, organizational mangement is a form of command, i.e. of power behavior having its hallmarks and limits set by the dominant culture of society. On the market, organizations are in competition, and competition is also a power struggle. The power behavior of organizational management is directed against other organizations, sometimes against the existing political establishment, but above all, against groups and individuals who may, sometimes by their sheer presence, constitute a threat to the ambitions of the leaders and/or of the leading interest group.

Management entails the exercise of power in order to reach the goals of their organization. For that matter it is not important whether these goals have been set by management itself, or by a body of higher authority, like the board of trustees, the owners. The goal of economic organizations, of the manufacturing, the commercial, and service companies is to make profits, as they satisfy the needs of the population in goods and services the organization has to offer. The exchange that takes place between the company and the public is a social behavior, in which the public has the choice among varieties of products from different manufacturers, vendors or service providers. The organization's task is to persuade the public to choose its products (and not those of another organization), and this persuasion is a power behavior by influence.

Actually, the economic process on the market consists not only of an exchange behavior between the company and the public of consumers. There are local and foreign