Modulations of the laboratory

Articulations between individual and institutional dynamics in a Flemish R&D center (Belgium)

4S Tokyo - François Thoreau
Layout

• Method and framework
• Analytical levels and how they interplay
• Two contrasting stories at the intersection of the micro- and the meso- level
• Conclusions
Framework and method

- Mid-stream modulation (Fisher & al. 2006)
- A multi-level analytical framework (micro-meso-macro)
  - Engage individuals who operate within institutional boundaries
  - Aim: Understand how these interplay
Unpacking resistance

• New rules and procedures: any new process now needs to be validated by a tool responsible

• Engaged participant view:
  ♦ Frustration; Criticism; A bad trade-off
  ♦ ➔ Former DIY culture was much faster and productive, and way less demanding

• Exploring alternatives: possibility to elude rigid procedures (“validate a process only if it works”)

• Eventual co-existence of both systems (an agenda to push forward?)
Witnessing attempts at catching up

- Work on neuronal cells, somehow improve imec chip or its efficiency
- Engaged participant situation:
  - Olfactory cells; insulation (inside); lack of solutions for external support
  - ➔ strategies of diversification for PhD
- Therapeutic feature: actually the most proactive engaged participant
- Openness to alternatives / seeking support and advise
Conclusion and discussion

• Two different ways to deal with institutional dynamics
• Much further work to be done
• Reflexiveness:
  ♦ Unpack a story
  ♦ Vs. happening to live a story