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# Rediscovering Becoming: Insights from an Oriental Perspective on Process Organization Studies

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Process is an ambivalent term. Its use in organizational research and theorizing is widespread. Yet, there are important subtle differences in how the term is understood. Process may be construed either as an epiphenomenon of substantial organizational entities *or* as a primary condition of reality from which the phenomenon of organization spontaneously emerges. Each perspective gives rise to a different theoretical focus and agenda for the field of organization studies. In this chapter, I explore new avenues for understanding process and organization. I show that the idea of ultimate reality as formless, undifferentiated, and ceaselessly changing has been a basic intuition of the ancient Oriental world since time immemorial; one that remains widespread and influential in shaping contemporary Eastern mentalities and dispositions. I further show how this Oriental metaphysical attitude towards process, flux, and self-transformation enables us to better appreciate the phenomenon of social organization as essentially the cumulative effect of a stabilizing, simple-locating, and identity-creating human impulse. From a process organization perspective then, organization studies ought to be more concerned with analyzing the dominant organizational mentalities involved in structuring social reality than with the analysis of ‘organizations.’

What is immediate reality before we have added the fabrication of thinking? ... At the time of pure experience. ... Reality is a succession of events that flow without stopping

Nishida Kitaro, *An Inquiry into the Good*, 1921/1990: 47–54

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### Introduction

In ancient Greece the verb *eisagō* carried the meaning “to import new, strange, foreign or even heretical ideas” into a dominant orthodoxy. A book collection that explicitly encourages various *Perspectives on Process Organization Studies* offers a novel opportunity to undertake such a risky and seemingly extravagant exegesis but one perhaps timely within the context of changing global economic and political relations as we enter the second decade of the new millennium. The study of alternative *organizational mentalities*,<sup>1</sup> from either a different epoch or a different geographical region, and its effect on the structuring of social reality, can reflexively help us better understand contemporary Western<sup>2</sup> concerns with social order and organization. In this regard, the term organization is used here to denote a stabilized social form, pattern, or order of a more generic nature than a circumscribed socio-economic entity.

In this chapter, therefore, I intend to explore and examine the rich tradition of Eastern thought to show that the notion of an ever-fluxing and interminably changing reality has been deeply embedded in the unconscious collective psyche of the Oriental<sup>3</sup> world since time immemorial. I show that this is variously intimated and expressed through traditional Oriental cultures and practices, and in particular in the practice of the fine arts that continue to survive the onslaught of modernity. The idea of life as intrinsically chaotic, precarious, and ever-changing is a taken-for-granted, living, breathing reality in the Oriental experience. Order is regarded as a temporary respite so much so that behind all human pursuits and endeavours in the traditional Eastern world is a deeply-ingrained attitude and disposition to eschew form and organization and to pursue that Zen-like pure contact with ultimate reality. The Japanese philosopher Nishida Kitaro accurately observes that: “at the basis of Asian culture, which has fostered our ancestors for over several thousand years, lies something that can be called *seeing the form of the formless and hearing the sound of the soundless*. Our minds are compelled to seek for this” (Nishida, 1921/1990: x, my emphasis). This Oriental primordial urge to seek the form of the formless and the sound of the soundless gives rise to an ingrained and relentless self-perfecting tendency (Chia, 2003a) that manifests itself as a spirited restlessness and dynamism often associated with Japanese “kaizen” (continuous improvement) or as an Asian “Confucian dynamism” (Hofstede, 1991) that is used to account for the recent impressive achievements of China and the newly-developing East-Asian economies of

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Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Korea. Yet such surface explanations do not get to the heart of the Oriental mentality, attitude, and disposition to life which derives from a fundamental metaphysics that is rooted in an alternative ontology of *becoming*. I call this process-based mentality *complex processual thinking*.

My purpose here is to show that analyzing this metaphysics of *becoming* and its associated comprehension of process, emergence, and self-transformation from *within an Oriental problematic* offers us a different way of understanding and construing organization, not as a substantial social entity but as an abstractive “world-making” bundle of micro-strategies and techniques developed by human agents to fashion out a more predictable and hence liveable world. This process of organizational world-making has been going on since the dawn of human civilization but it occurs in a variety of different ways that make for interesting comparison and a deeper appreciation of the diversity of modes of societal ordering available in practice. In this regard, an excursion that brings us into contact with a less-than-familiar Oriental mentality enables us to reflexively understand the dominant Western mentalities and preoccupations better and to appreciate how more subtle and less conspicuous self-organizing events occurring through the course of Western history have contributed immeasurably to its modern sense of order and its current ways of life. In other words, it is only by reaching out and analyzing a radically different and unfamiliar mode of social ordering, that we can come to know our own organizational tendencies afresh. Organization studies, in this regard, by taking process seriously, become more the comparative study of *organizational mentalities* than the study of “organizations” as a socio-economic entity. In this regard, it has enormous potential for illuminating the global issues and tensions currently prevalent in the world today.

## The value of complex processual thinking

Western physics not only disenchanting the universe, it devastated it. ... In tearing her secrets from Nature, physics denatured the universe ... hiding all that was not simplifiable, that is to say all that is disorder and organization.

Morin, *Method: Towards a Study of Humankind*, 1977/1992: 373–4

We are currently experiencing an era of unprecedented global turmoil where the seemingly improbable, the unanticipated, and the downright

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catastrophic appear to occur with alarming regularity. What we *do not know* or *do not expect* seem intent on thwarting our best-laid plans and disrupting our everyday lives in innumerable ways. Witness the shocking events of 9/11, the Asian Tsunami disaster of December 2004, the global financial crisis of 2008–9 (and possibly beyond) precipitated by the collapse of the sub-prime mortgage sector in the United States, as well as the ever-rising tide of terrorist suicide bombers that constantly threatens to disrupt our cherished modes of existence and our ways of life by any and all means conceivable. “Black Swans” (Taleb, 2007), those outlier events that occur at the periphery of our focal attention, abound in virtually every aspect of society and in our everyday lives. Within the last decade, in particular, we have been made more painfully aware of the existence of a realm of the *unthought* and *unthinkable* that continues to confound our orthodox comprehension of events in the world. Who would have imagined a decade ago that the Chinese habit of saving excessively and the American habit of spending excessively could unexpectedly give rise to a seemingly symbiotic “chimerica” that eventually collapsed under the weight of American debts and excesses (Ferguson, 2008: 331–40)? Such an idea would have been unthinkable three decades ago. The French philosopher of complexity, Edgar Morin insists that there is an urgent need therefore to “lay siege on this unthought which commands and controls” us (Morin, 1977/1992: 16) so that we can better grasp and more adequately respond to these surprising and life-changing events occurring all around us.

A complex, perpetually changeable, and inextricably interconnected world, however, calls for complex, processual thinking: thinking that is concretely grounded in the intimacy and immediacy of pure lived experience (Morin, 1977/1992: 392–3; Ruskin, 1927, Vol. XV: 27; James, 1912/1996: 23; Nishida, 1921/1990: 3); thinking that acknowledges the reality of spontaneous, self-generated social orders, entities, and institutions (Ferguson, 1767/1966: 122; Hayek, 1948: 86; Simon, 1996: 33; Kauffman, 1993: 173); thinking that accepts and embraces the inherent messiness, contradictions, and ambiguities of reality (Morin, 2008: 6; James, 1911/1996: 50); and thinking that overflows our familiar categories of thought (Bergson, 1946/1992: 161–2; James, 1911/1996: 78–9; Whitehead, 1926/1985: 64; Morin, 1977/1992: 393). Thinking in these complex processual terms means that the starting point for organizational inquiry ought not to be the stately *being* of discrete social entities, be they “institutions,” “organizations,” or “individuals,” but their oftentimes unexpected and precarious coming-into-presence; their *becoming* and spontaneous emergence from an undifferentiated multitude of actions, events, and interactions.

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Complex processual thinking invites us to construe organization in terms of spontaneous emergence, ceaseless change, and self-transformation. It urges us to recognize that what really exists are “not things made but things in the making” (James, 1909/1996: 263). It reminds us that each instance of individuation and organization is an *exceptional* and precarious accomplishment in its own right so that social phenomena are not to be construed as naturally existing entities with state-like qualities but as relatively stabilized epiphenomena consisting of patterns of relationships and event-clusterings. Instead of thinking about organizations as “enduring totalities that resist change” (Tsoukas, 2003: 608), complex processual thinking recognizes that contingency, creativity, and complexity are fundamental to our understanding of the spontaneous emergence of organization. Organizations are “mediating networks” (Cooper and Law, 1995: 239), patterned effects of “a scattered and heterogeneous social process” (Chia, 1998: 6–7) which Karl Weick (2009) insightfully calls “organized impermanence.” They are often social orders that have emerged not through any deliberate and purposeful intent on the part of wilfull agents, but as the cumulative unintended consequence of a plethora of coping actions and interactions involving a multitude of individuals none of whom have any intention to contribute to any preconceived plan. This idea of the possibility of spontaneous emergence and self-organization has been recently acknowledged by a science of complexity, but such an observation had already been made well over two hundred years ago by the Scottish Enlightenment thinkers especially in the works of Adam Smith and his lesser known contemporary Adam Ferguson. As Ferguson asserts in his study of the spontaneous emergence of societal orders:

Mankind . . . in striving to remove inconveniences, or to gain apparent and contiguous advantages, arrive at ends which even their imagination could not anticipate . . . Every step and every movement of the multitude, even in what are termed enlightenment ages, are made with equal blindness to the future, and nations stumble upon establishments, which are *indeed the result of human action, but not the execution of any human design* (Ferguson, 1767/1966: 122, my emphasis).

This acknowledgment of the possibility of the spontaneous emergence of social, economic, and political orders was also reiterated in the observations of the French economist Claude Frédéric Bastiat (1845/2006) and more recently in the writings of the Austrian economist Friedrich Hayek (1948). Thus, in seeking to explain the emergence of organization, it is unnecessary to invoke the existence of a centralized initiating agency endowed with

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intention, conscious choice, and deliberate goal-oriented behavior. The accomplishment of organization need not be attributable to the pre-existence of deliberate, planned interventions. This is a central observation of complex processual thought.

Furthermore, according to complex processual thought, not only are organizations to be construed in this way as emergent, self-transforming social patterns of relations, but even individuals themselves must likewise be understood as historical effects of social relations and event-clusterings; socio-cultural practices and relationships precede identity and individuality. As Nishida Kitaro points out the notion of an independent individual agent is an abstract concept well removed from the reality of raw experience. This is because an individual exists, not *in order to* experience but *because of* experience: “It is not that there is experience because there is an individual (agent), but that there is an individual because there is experience” (Nishida, 1921/1990: 19). Experience is *trans*-individual. The individual is not some prior-constituted entity but an emergent property of experience itself. Thus, an individual’s identity and characteristics are the “condensation of histories of growth and maturation within fields of social relations” (Ingold, 2000: 3). The “coming-into-being of the person is part and parcel of the process of the coming-into-being of the world” (Ingold, 2000: 168). As social beings we are first and foremost evolving “bundles” of relationships and event-clusters not self-contained subjects. Ingold paraphrasing the Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset puts it especially well: “We are not things but dramas; we have no nature, only history; we *are* not, though we *live*” (Ingold, 1986: 117, emphasis original). Every individual agency emerges, lives, and dies as a locus of development within the context of a specific field of social practices. As a consequence, the human agent, like all other things, are marked by an inevitable sense of transience and perpetual striving; an immanent “pathos of things” that the Japanese call *mono no aware*.

To understand “individuals” and “organizations” in complex processual terms, therefore, is to regard them as emergent and precarious “assemblages of *organizing*” (Cooper and Law, 1995: 239) temporarily abstracted from an underlying “sea of ceaseless change” (Chia, 2003b: 131). Entities such as individuals and organizations are theoretical reifications that refer to slower-changing configurations of social relationships resulting from the sustained regularizing of human exchanges (Chia, 2003b: 123; Weick, 2009: 3). Complex processual thinking rejects what Rescher (1996: 53) calls the *process reducibility thesis* insisting that social entities and generative mechanisms are no more than “stability waves in a sea of process”. Such a

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strong process philosophical viewpoint promotes a de-centered and disperse view of organizational reality as a fluxing concatenation of event-clusters that resists simple location and static representation. It is a worldview that is currently experiencing a welcome revival in the West, but one that has always been deeply embedded in the traditional Oriental outlook.

### Rediscovering a *becoming* worldview

Upon those who step into the same river flow other and yet other waters

Heraclitus, *Fragments*, in Mansley Robinson, 1968: 91

there is something which exists, though it emerges from no roots. . . . It is real . . . it survives, but it has no beginning nor end. . . . It is born, it dies, it emerges, it returns

Chuang Tzu, in Chan, *A Sourcebook of Chinese Philosophy*, 1963: 205

The vague intuition that “all things flow” and are in a continuous self-generating process of *becoming* and *changing* remains an abiding, albeit vague, intimation in the modern Western consciousness. Such a worldview first made its appearance as one of the key propositions of the Pre-Socratic Greek philosopher Heraclitus who insisted that the universe is in constant flux, so much so that “all things come to pass through compulsion of strife” (Heraclitus, quoted in Wheelwright, 1974: 29). For him, conflict, struggles, and temporary reconciliations are unavoidably the very stuff of life, were it not so all of life as we understand it would cease to exist. Thus, the universe flows along of its own accord, shaping its own destiny. Human actions and interventions are therefore accorded less significance than our egos would have us believe. As Wheelwright observed: “To say that the universe flows along as it is destined . . . or that counters are moved arbitrarily and by chance, are different ways of asserting that the major occurrences in the universe lie outside the range and power of any man” (Wheelwright, 1974: 36). In this worldview there is little place for heroic acts and spectacular human achievements. Given the relative unimportance and impotence of man suggested by this worldview, it is not surprising that Heraclitus’s views gave way to a Parmenidean-inspired system of thought, which elevated the importance of human agency and which emphasized the primacy of *being*, permanence, stability, and equilibrium as the stuff of reality. This privileging of *being* over *becoming* and *substance* over *process* have since provided the underlying

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metaphysical framework for Plato's systems of Ideals, Aristotle's system of knowledge based upon observation, and the modern, Western worldview.

Such a metaphysical attitude remains dominant notwithstanding the fact that a number of recent important thinkers, especially Henri Bergson (1911/1998, 1946/1992), and Alfred North Whitehead (1926/1985, 1929), as well as other more contemporary "process physicists" (Bohm, 1980; Prigogine, 1996) have unequivocally upheld the "flux of things" as the ultimate basis of reality. As Whitehead (1929: 295) writes: "Without doubt, if we are to go back to that ultimate integral experience, unwarped by the sophistication of theory ... the flux of things is one ultimate generalization around which we must weave our philosophical system." Similarly, the physicist David Bohm insists that, "Not only is everything changing, but all *is* flux. That is to say, *what is* is the process of becoming ... objects, events, entities, conditions, structures, etc., are forms that can be abstracted from this process" (Bohm, 1980: 48, emphasis original). It is this resurrecting of the primacy of movement and change (what Bohm calls the "implicate order") over that of Parmenidean substantial entities and end states that enables a radically alternative *becoming* ontology for understanding social order and organization to become more *thinkable*. This metaphysical "reversal" from *being* to *becoming* in the Western consciousness displays a surprising affinity to the rich ancient tradition of Oriental thought. As Whitehead astutely noted, it is a worldview that "seems to approximate more to some strains of Indian, or Chinese, thought than to western Asiatic, or European thought. One side makes process ultimate; the other side makes fact ultimate" (Whitehead, 1929: 9).

In the East the idea of a ceaselessly fluxing, relentlessly changing, and self-transforming reality is readily accepted as a given and finds numerous expression in the classic ancient Chinese texts including the *I Ching*, or Book of Change, and in the enigmatic writings of the Chinese philosophers Lao Tzu and Chuang Tzu, both of whom insisted on the fecundity and primacy of a pro-generative, emergent, and undifferentiated "Tao" as the ultimate basis of reality. In more recent times the Japanese philosophers Nishida Kitaro (1921/1990) and Nishitani Keiji (1982) have constructively engaged with the dominant Western philosophical thought and identified the primacy of process and "radical impermanence" as the unique founding basis for a quintessentially Oriental worldview. Similarly, Chinese philosophers such as Thomé H. Fang (1986) and He Lin (1980) a student of Alfred North Whitehead at Harvard University have both noted and explored extensively the strong affinity that exists between Whiteheadian process thought and ancient Chinese philosophy. For all of them, the world



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of flux and chaos that presents itself to our pristine unadulterated experience is the only reality there is. There is no presumption of some stable “Platonic” realm above or beyond it. For example, the Buddhist idea of *radical impermanence* (what the Japanese call *mujō*) is extensively expressed in the writings and sayings of the thirteenth-century Japanese Zen thinker Dōgen Kigen while for the Chinese both Chuang Tzu and Lao Tzu constantly allude to the restlessness and changefulness of nature and the heavens. For this reason, the various Oriental cultural practices and the learning of the fine arts especially the tea ceremony, flower arrangement, archery, calligraphy, and painting in both Japan and China are all aimed at self-cultivation and self-perfection to bring one into contact with this pristine, fluxing, and undifferentiated reality. As the Zen master D. T. Suzuki notes in his introduction to Eugene Herrigel’s *Zen in the Art of Archery*, “One of the most significant features we notice in all the arts as they are studied in Japan and . . . in other Far Eastern countries, is that they are not intended for utilitarian purposes only or for purely aesthetic enjoyment, but are meant to train the mind . . . to bring it into contact with the ultimate reality” (Suzuki, in Herrigel, 1953/1985: 5).

A complex processual outlook on life remains second-nature to the Oriental mind; it is embedded in their “blood” and “veins” even as Western metaphysics, modernity, and materialism continues to make not insignificant inroads into the modern Eastern way of life. In what follows, I shall explore in greater detail how this complex processual mindset and disposition is expressed through traditional Oriental culture and artistic practices.

### Oriental complex processual thinking

For the Chinese the real world is dynamic and ultimate, an organism made up of an infinity of organisms, a rhythm harmonising an infinity of lesser rhythms

Joseph Needham, *Science and Civilisation in China*, 1962, Vol. 2: 292

In traditional Oriental culture the “three jewels,” often referred to as fundamental to the Eastern emphasis on process and becoming, are calligraphy, painting, and poetry. Each of these, by their unmistakable expression of energy, vitality, and dynamism through the relentless emphasis on contrasts and renewals, exemplify a widespread attitude that embraces the inexorable necessity of change, emergence, and evolutionary self-transformation. The French sinologist Francois Jullien (1995: 131) notes that all these three

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**Fig. 7.1** Similarities between calligraphic strokes and Tai Chi movements

*Source:* Liu Xuemay, Beijing, China

cultural practices resort to the medium of the brush to “express the unfathomable vitality of the Invisible . . . through the ‘actualization’ of a perceptible ‘configuration’.” Like the art of Chinese shadow boxing (Tai Chi) or the Japanese art of archery, their aim is to convey the invisibility of breath, rhythm, and flux, through the gestures and the “uninterrupted and spiraling unfolding of contrasted movements” (Jullien, 1995: 132). This similarity of movement between calligraphy and Tai Chi is illustrated in Fig. 7.1.

In particular, calligraphy and painting, because they rely more on brush strokes than poetic words for conveying meaning, have had to develop sophisticated ways of expressing movement and life through the tip of a brush. The Chinese scholar and artist Chiang Yee, who spent considerable time painting in the English Lake district and who subsequently wrote about his aesthetic experiences, insists that the principle aim of Oriental painting and calligraphy is to capture and portray what he calls a “rhythmic vitality” whereby the superficial covering of material form is pieced to reveal the “rich inner life of the object in harmony with the artist’s own soul” (Chiang Yee, 1936: 84). In the traditional Chinese worldview it is generally believed that all things in the universe are possessed of life: ‘We believe that . . . a stalk of grass

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can feel the rhythm of life, and the artist of receptive mind can with his ready brush free the spirit imprisoned in the form' (Chiang Yee, 1936: 105–6). The skill of a painter or calligrapher is, therefore, reflected in her ability to breathe life, energy, and vitality into the piece of work by employing a variety of subtle strokes (as opposed to lines) to enable her to convey the sensuous perception within the composition of the work itself. Thus: 'Every stroke, every dot, suggest a form of Nature. If not, it would simply be a dead stroke. . . . All these living lines or strokes join together in harmony or in rhythm to form a scene which expresses a . . . feeling or thought' (Chiang Yee, 1936: 176). For example, in a typical Chinese painting the brush strokes are suggestively linked together through the constant emphasis on form, continuity, and outline rather than on substantial detail. Similarly, calligraphic work comprises a variety of strokes each of which in their execution are intended to convey a sense of movement, momentum, and transformation. Each type of brush stroke employed including the "dot," "dash," "hook," "iron-wire," "willow-leaf," "bamboo-leaf," "silk-threads," "bending-weeds," "earth-worm," "water-wrinkles," and so on, when properly executed, has the effect of conveying this energy, rhythmic vitality, and change.

The mastery of these brush strokes and the techniques of movement associated with them, betray a deeply-cultivated sensitivity to the change-fulness of reality and enables the painters and calligraphers to convey quite precisely the specific mood and feelings experienced in their aesthetic encounter with living Nature. "Chinese painting expresses the inward expression in man of that vitality, that mobility which is Nature's, and which identifies itself, for him, with his own feelings" (Chiang Yee, 1936: 186). Calligraphy and Chinese painting provide an exemplar of "dynamism *in operation*, as a coming-to-be" or *becoming*: as "registering the temporality of movement" (Jullien, 1995: 133) in all its spontaneity and fluent emergence. In particular a calligraphic brush stroke, once executed can never be subsequently touched up unlike that in a Western painting where it is not uncommon for the artist to go over several times what has already been painted. For Oriental painting and calligraphy, once that brush stroke is completed its "*dynamic continuity* remains forever active in the eyes of the beholder" (Jullien, 1995: 133) because in the execution of the stroke, there is evidently a deliberate imbalance of force applied on the brush so that the movement that ensues never becomes "stiff or frozen": "*a horizontal bar is never horizontal*, especially if it is not the final element in the character; its slight upward curve or discreet downward flick betrays the tension expressed in the continuation of the stroke" (Jullien, 1995: 134, my emphasis). The brush is impelled to move on and a continuum of strokes is created.

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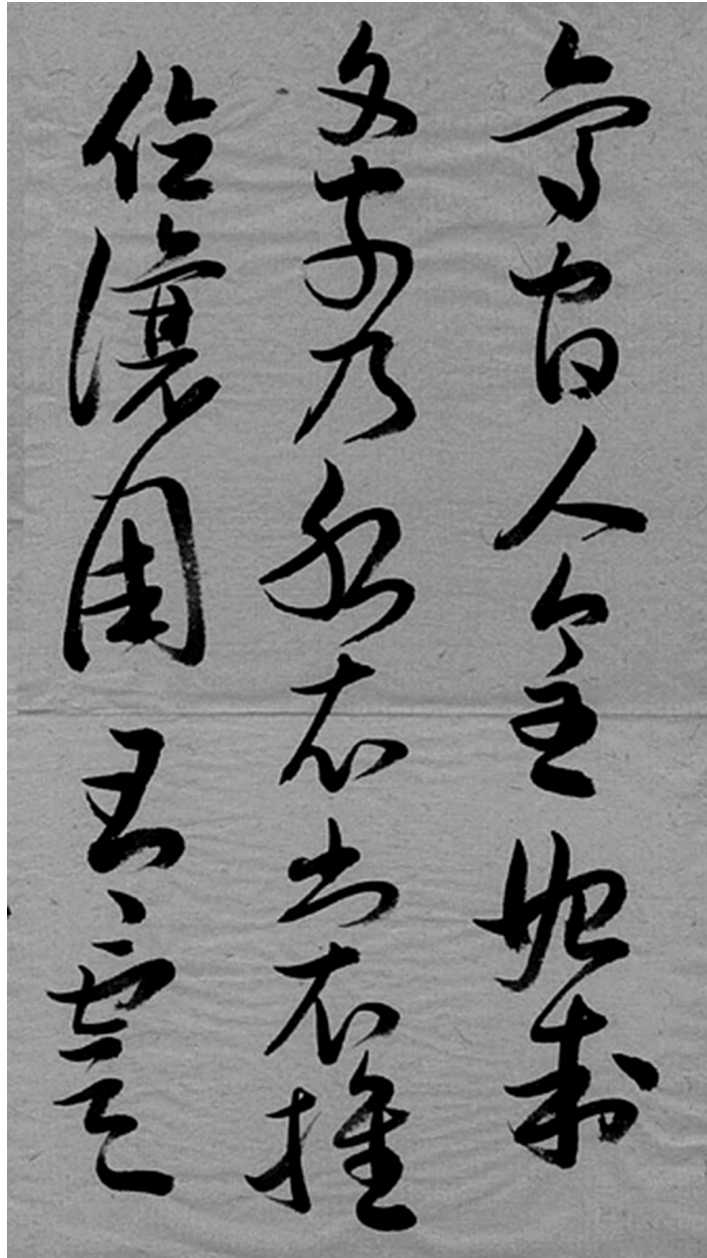


Fig. 7.2 The dynamic continuity of brush strokes  
Source: Liu, Xuemay, Beijing, China

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In this regard, calligraphy bears a similarity to all forms of cursive writing such as when a signature is made the impulse and momentum it initiates carries on beyond the scriptural finitude. “Even when the line is broken, the rhythmic surge is not cut off. . . . At one point the hand slows down, at another it speeds up, at one point the brush tip is ‘incisive’ at another it is ‘blurred’” (Jullien, 1995: 135). This continual contrast and tension between opposing tendencies “enables each successive stroke to attract in its wake the next line” so that “the dashes, the oblique strokes, the curves and the verticals, in all their twists and arabesques, are always determined by the propensity of the impulse of energy” (Jullien, 1995: 135). Contrast and creative tension is generated so that not only does one tendency “throw the other into greater relief but also so that the former *necessarily cries out for the latter to follow it* all the more forcefully precisely because the balance needs to be restored” (Jullien, 1995: 137, my emphasis). The sublime art of calligraphy and Oriental painting consists in managing to depict the uninterrupted metamorphosis of a piece of work “*in its unceasing process*” (Jullien, 1995: 138, my emphasis). This emphasis on process is replicated in the art of Chinese poetry which places paramount importance on the vitality of the “breath” as the source of the poetic ability to make the poem unfold temporarily in the same manner as a calligraphic or painted piece of work.

In a fascinating comparative study of the methods of Western and Oriental painting, the art historian Norman Bryson (1982: 92) similarly observed that, in Oriental paintings and calligraphy “The work of production is constantly displayed in the wake of its traces” through the assiduous cultivation of what he calls “deictic markers.” Calligraphy and Oriental painting do not seek to hide the “traces of the body of labour” (Bryson, 1982: 92). Mastery of the brush strokes lie in the subliminal ability to paint out the traces that have brought the piece of work into being. They “permit a maximum of integrity and visibility to the constitutive strokes of the brush” (Bryson, 1982: 89) and in so doing, as we have previously noted, allows the brush to express fully the fluidity and immediacy of living experience. For this reason, because such artistic strokes unfold in time, “calligraphic work (and Oriental painting) cannot be taken in all at once . . . since it has itself unfolded within the *durée* of process” (Bryson, 1982: 94).

Western art, on the other hand, is predicated upon what Bryson calls the “*disavowal of deictic reference*” (1982: 89) whereby the individual history of the emergence and transformation of a painting into a completed piece of work is largely irretrievable because previous artistic efforts are deliberately buried in a “palimpsest of which only the final version shows through, above an interminable debris of revisions.” As such, the viewer has no way

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of ascertaining “the degree to which other surfaces lied concealed beneath the planar display” (Bryson, 1982: 92) because the artist is solely concerned with displaying the final version. Her brush:

traces *obliteratively* ... and whatever may have been the improvisational logic of the painting’s construction, this existence of the (prior) image in its own time ... is negated by never referring the marks on canvas to their place in the vanishing sequence of local inspiration (Bryson, 1982: 93).

The easel paintings of the West are “autochthonous, self-created, parthenogeneses, virgin-births” (Bryson, 1982: 95). In calligraphy and Oriental art, the process of *becoming* of the painting or calligraphy is incorporated into the works’ display while in Western art the process is hidden or eliminated. Only its final completed state matters. The painting is placed outside duration. The entire motivation of the Western painter is to arrest and capture the flux of experience and to comprehend it “from a vantage-point outside the mobility of duration, in an eternal moment of disclosed presence” (Bryson, 1982: 94). It is this search for a Platonic atemporal *essence* which drives the Western painter.

This Western tendency to focus on and only privilege the final singular moment of revelation was also noted by the art critic John Berger. In *Ways of Seeing* (1972) he shows how, during the Renaissance period, paintings of nudes came to be increasingly objectified as a *spectacle* to an external viewer. According to him the first Renaissance nudes depicted were those of Adam and Eve which showed their evident shame at being naked in the presence of each other. This was in contrast to a prior medieval period when the story of Adam and Eve was often illustrated in a narrative sequence involving several scenes leading up to their ejection from the Garden of Eden. In these narrative sequences it was the whole story and not the singular moment of shame that was emphasized. With the advent of the Renaissance, however, “the narrative sequence disappeared, and the singular moment depicted became the moment of shame ... now their shame is not so much in relation to one another as to the spectator ... [they] are now naked as the spectator sees [them]” (Berger, 1972: 49). The painting no longer contains an unfolding *narrative*; it has now become a *spectacle* for an external observer. What both Berger and Bryson have usefully identified is a cultivated Western modernist penchant for the spectacular and the manifest end-state. Their analyses of Western paintings reveal an important metaphysical attitude and visual apprehension that focuses entirely on that specific moment of revelation. This is in stark contrast to an Oriental attitude that views the continuity of events as a seamless unfolding drama in time. One speaks of

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atemporal *essences* the other of the finitude of *existence*. Each betrays its fundamental commitment to an underlying metaphysics; that of *being* and *becoming*. Each reflects an internalized cultural disposition that has wide-ranging implications for our understanding of the alternative *organizational mentalities* involved in dealing with human affairs.

### From spectacular intervention to “allowing” silent self-transformation

[A]ncient Chinese thought is above all concerned with avoiding *confrontation* ... it conceives of a model of efficacy based on correlation ... detectable at the heart of the objective processes

Francois Jullien, *The Propensity of Things*, 1995: 259

From our comparative analysis of Western and Oriental art, it is not difficult to see that the contrast between the Western emphasis on attending solely to the significant moment of consequence and the Oriental emphasis on viewing reality as a continuous unfolding flow of events brings with it different cultivated impulses and tendencies when dealing with the exigencies of life including especially issues relating to order and organization. What quintessentially characterizes the Western attitude is a cultivated penchant for the heroic, the dramatic, and the spectacular: it is the arrested moment of spectacular success or triumph that attracts most attention. The romantic appeal of an oftentimes unexpected and sensational overcoming of the odds to triumph over adversity is deeply ingrained in the Western collective psyche. This instinct is intimately allied to a cultivated preference for direct, visible engagement, and mastery in dealing with affairs of the world whether it be in warfare, politics, business, art as we have noted, or even in the seeking of personal relationships.

This penchant for the dramatic and the spectacular may be found in virtually every walk of life in the West particularly in the United States and, increasingly, with its vast reach and global influence, in virtually every other part of the world. From the glitz and glitter of presidential campaigns to the high drama of reality television, the glamour and hero-worshipping of movie stars and sporting super-heroes, to the insatiable appetite for eye-catching and attention-grabbing marketing stunts and ultimately, in the world of business, to the irresistible tendency to lionize successful corporations and captains of industry for their impressive and often short-term achievements; all these are symptomatic of a deeply-entrenched adulation

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for the dramatic, the heroic, and the spectacular within the realm of human affairs. Even in the methods of art, as we have seen, it is the final spectacular and triumphant display that captures attention. The natural attitude of the democratic West, born of this ancient legacy, therefore, has been to lionize human agency and to eulogize transparency of purpose, openness of competition, and the direct and heroic mobilization of available resources and capabilities to spectacularly achieve a widely publicized end. Without doubt this overall positive attitude and disposition has provided the metaphysical outlook and ideological platform for the impressive entrepreneurial and innovative achievements of the West and in particular in the United States.

The ancient military scholar Victor Davis Hanson (1989: 224) maintains that there is much evidence to suggest that this Western penchant for the spectacular and the heroic can be traced to a decisive shift in approach to warfare initiated by the Greeks beginning from about the seventh century BC. For Hanson, it was the ancient Greeks during this period who insisted on the superiority of a face-to-face frontal clash between opposing armies as the most noble way to do battle. Henceforth, a new structure, the *phalanx*, was introduced in which two bodies of heavily armed and cuirassed hoplites were made to advance in tight formation towards the enemy with no possibility of fleeing from a direct head-on confrontation with the latter. This frontal spectacular clashing of opposing forces represented a mode of engagement that has been lionized in the conduct of warfare. It is an approach well exemplified by the “shock and awe” strategy adopted in the Allied invasion of Iraq in 2003. Heroic and spectacular actions and interventions have thus become the default *modus operandi* first in warfare and then subsequently in the conduct of human affairs especially in the world of business (Jullien, 2000). In other words, the open, direct face-to-face, and often adversarial approach employed in the battlefield has been mirrored and replicated in the dealings in human affairs so that an “agonistic structure of confrontation” exists “whether in the dramatic, the judicial, or the political realm” (Jullien, 2000: 44, emphasis original). Both warfare and the display of performances, whether in public debates or business competition, share the same direct confrontational *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1990) that leads to the valorizing of agency, intentionality, decisiveness, immediacy, and spectacular outcomes; it is a practice that is ennobled by the language of radical discontinuities, revelations, and revolutions. Victory is accomplished “loudly” in spectacular and triumphal terms through the visible and unequivocal overwhelming of the opposition: “it is always by *surplus*—of arguments presented, not of secret obliqueness—that a victory is won” (Jullien, 2000: 47). Thus, in virtually all aspects of Western life,



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it is the overt, the visible and the dramatic that captures attention and adulation and invites glorification.

This penchant for the dramatic and the spectacular contrasts with a much more subdued and inconspicuous Oriental approach which relies more on the innate *propensity of things* to realize its ambitions. Such an *obliqueness* in dealing with human affairs is what marks the difference in *organizational mentalities* between East and West. It is one which arises from a deep belief in the existence of immanent, inexorable forces driving and transforming reality and of how that can be efficaciously mobilized to one's benefit. In his study which we have previously drawn from, Bryson (1982) identified two distinct modes of visual apprehension which he called the *Gaze* and the *Glance* respectively. In the Western Gaze the preoccupation is fixing, objectifying, and representing of the object of apprehension. It is a vision primed to the dramatic and the spectacular. The Gaze intervenes and forcibly abstracts a phenomenon from its fluxing and changing context presenting it successfully as a triumphant static display. The Gaze is what creates things and entities through arresting the flux of experience and contemplating the "visual field from a vantage-point outside the mobility of duration, in an eternal moment of disclosed presence" (Bryson, 1982: 94). It relies on an "enduring, motionless and august logic of architectural form" (Bryson, 1982: 122) that speaks of mastery, control, and domination. In this cultivated disposition, therefore, Western attitudes mirror the philosophical aspirations of Western thought since the time of Plato and Aristotle; the spectacular grasping and mastery of the essences of things.

The Oriental Glance, on the other hand, is a furtive or sideways look; it seeks to *obliquely* apprehend phenomena in their necessary transience and durational temporality. It finds in itself "no counterpart to the enduring, motionless and august logic" (Bryson, 1982: 122) of Western thought. Instead, all it knows is dispersal, mobility, and fleeting configuration; the rhythmic vitality that is living Nature. What Bryson is getting at is the inevitable temporality and transience of the appearances of entities and things for the Oriental mind for whom the very concept of an entity is clearly the result of an arbitrary perceptual framing: "an optic that ... makes a *cut* from the field and immobilizes the cut within the static framework" (Bryson, 1988: 97). In other words, the viewing of an object *qua* object requires a prior perceptual framing in order to render the object comprehensible. As soon as the frame is removed or withdrawn the object becomes inextricably entwined with its past and future as part of a mobile continuum that resists logical differentiation and isolation. A flower for instance exists only as a phase of that evolving self-transformation between

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seed and dust “in a continuous exfoliation or perturbation of matter” (Bryson, 1988: 97). The seed is a potential that is always already turning itself into a flower and the flower always already potentially becoming dust so that the flower “is inhabited by its past as a seed and its future as dust, in a continuous motion of postponement” (Bryson, 1988: 99). An object like a flower or an organization is never fully present to us in all its meaning and comprehension. This appreciation of the inherent and fleeting transience of things explains why in Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan, large crowds gather each spring to wait for the blooming of the cherry blossom and to picnic under the trees. The cherry blossoms are intrinsically no more beautiful than the blossoms of, say, the pear or apple tree, but they are much more highly valued because they exemplify the inherent transience of nature and of life: they usually begin to fall within a week of their first appearing. It is precisely this evanescence that evokes the *mono no aware* in those who go there to soak up the experience.

This acute Oriental awareness of the natural *propensity of things* leads to an ingrained reluctance to overtly intervene spectacularly into human affairs and leaving it to unfold in the natural course of things. For this reason, the Oriental disposition for harmony and non-intervention is sometimes construed as a debilitating passivity which accounts for its seeming indecisiveness or lack of ambition. Francois Jullien (1995), in his extensive comparative study of the Oriental mind shows that this is far from the case. What underpins the apparent reluctance to spectacularly intervene into the course of things is a rich historical appreciation for an immanent potentiality always already at work in the configuration of reality at each particular moment in time. From the Oriental point of view, “every kind of reality . . . may be perceived as a particular deployment or arrangement of things to be relied on and worked to one’s advantage” (Jullien, 1995: 15) so much so that the need for forceful spectacular intervention is readily eschewed. Timeliness of intervention, not magnitude of force, is the key to efficacious action. When, for instance, the *Tao Te Ching* alludes to “non-action” what is really meant is action that is inconspicuous and that does not create unnecessary “ripples.” This preference for “silent” intervention (Jullien, 2004: 46), allowing things to take its natural course, comes from a deep appreciation of why there are significant downsides to directly intervening in a spectacular way.

For the Oriental mind, direct confrontation often result in the active *destruction* or “mutilation” of the adversary in question (Morin, 1977/1992: 373) because such dramatic and heroic interventions are, by definition, unavoidably *intrusive* and inevitably provokes elements of resistance

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or reticence that undermine its efficacy “Because it impinges from outside ... by forcing itself into the course of things, it ... tears at the tissue of things and upsets their coherence” (Jullien, 2004: 54).

Furthermore, because intervention occurs at one moment and not another, it becomes a *spectacle* that forces itself onto our attention: it becoming an “event” to be accounted for. It’s “*asperity* ... provides a hook on which to hang a story” (Jullien: 2004: 55) even though its overall effect may be as lasting as a momentary “shower of spray.” Such spectacular actions may well satisfy our need for drama and excitement, but they are not necessarily the most efficacious or productive both in terms of deep learning and/or longer-lasting outcomes.

For these reasons, the traditional Orientals have a built-in aversion to direct engagement and confrontation. The emphasis is on achieving one’s ends silently and inconspicuously by harmonizing one’s actions with the internal “propensity of things” and “going with the flow” of events.

[u]like with action, which is always “one-off” ... transformation is “without locale”. Not only is it not local, as action is, but it is impossible to localize ... its effects are diffuse, all-pervading, never limited (Jullien, 2004: 57)

Because this more oblique and indirect form of engagement is less attention-grabbing, because it is more dispersed, not simply locatable, and harmonizes with the status quo and is hence non-threatening, it often surprisingly bears more productive fruit than the direct, frontal approach widely advocated. The efficacy of such an elliptical and *oblique* approach in apprehending and dealing with phenomenon is all the greater the more discreet and unnoticed it is. The notion of actively “waiting for the fruit to ripen” before intervening and grasping is widely appreciated and this again offers an implicit acknowledgment of the appropriate mode of engagement with an essentially transient and changeful reality.

What this excursion into the traditional Oriental mind reveals is a wholly alien attitude towards dealing with human affairs than that which characterizes the dominant Western approach; one which is inherently sensitive to the spontaneous self-transforming nature of reality and which thereby appreciates deeply the quiet efficacy of intervening *indirectly* or *obliquely* into the world of affairs be it in politics, business, or the cultivation of human relationships. Such difference in attitude derives from a vastly different metaphysical commitment to an ontology of *becoming* and a appreciation that economy of effort and eventual success can often be realized and sustained through small seemingly inconspicuous organizational initiatives

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than through large-scale organizational efforts. Indeed, one could say that the modern organizational world is what it is today precisely because of the cumulative effect of countless and nameless events, relationships, and individuals that have wittingly or unwittingly contributed to its ultimate realization.

### From analysing organizations to analysing organizational mentalities

Fire does not burn fire. Water does not wash water. The eye does not see the eye

Nishitani Keiji, *Religion and Nothingness*, 1982: 116

The study of the phenomenon of organization is itself an organized epistemological endeavor; one shaped by socio-cultural and historical contexts. That this is the case is not always obvious just as the eye does not normally see the eye. In inquiring into the nature of organization, therefore, we are inevitably opening ourselves up to the wider question of the organization of our forms of knowledge, our ways of understanding and our means of intervening and engaging with the world we find ourselves in. How our worldviews, perceptions, knowledge, and modes of comprehension affect our concerns and preoccupations and shape our objects of inquiry must be correspondingly investigated if we are to begin to grasp this wider sense of organization as a generic reality-constituting activity. Organizational analysis, thus, become unavoidably meta-theoretical. In rigorously seeking to understand the phenomenon of organization we are necessarily but almost unwittingly brought back to the question of our own philosophical roots, our habits of thought, and our organizational mentalities. And, this is perhaps as it should be given the shifting global economic and political realities as we move into the second decade of the twenty-first century. No longer can we take for granted the theoretical agendas of the Western world in general and the United States in particular as the sole reference point for political stability, economic progress, or even as the necessary “axis for moral good.” With the emergence of BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China) as a potential countervailing economic and political force, it is time the field of organization studies look elsewhere for viable alternatives to our understanding of organizational processes.

What then can we say about the phenomenon of organization as a generic human impulse given our excursion into an Oriental worldview?

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For one thing we can begin to see that organizing as a generic process is quintessentially a social reality-constituting process involving the everyday actions and incisions of a complex multitude of individuals none of whom are deliberately intent on producing an organized or structured social order. Were they not to do so, all they would be experiencing is an “aboriginal sensible muchness” (James, 1911/1996: 50), that irreducibly dynamic, fluxing, and hence paralyzing and unliveable reality. Humans, as social beings, regardless of their culture or tradition, need a sense of collective order, stability, and predictability and it is for this purpose that organization exists as an inherently simplifying technique for arresting, fixing, and simplifying our otherwise complex and ambiguous experiences so as to make them more amenable to manipulation and control in the light of our otherwise precarious existence. Organization exists to selectively frame what would otherwise be a “blooming, buzzing confusion” (James, 1911/1996: 50), to “steer us practically in everyday life,” and to make our “actions turn upon new points of emphasis” (James, 1911/1996: 73).

What this way of thinking implies is that all of social reality that we find so very familiar and necessary, and to which we often attribute an independent existence, is really only the arbitrary collective aggregation of habituated social practices, mannerism, and behavioral codes and norms such that a regular coincidence exists between an established social representation and that which a society takes to be its reality. Thus, the slow and complex evolutionary formation of *organizational mentalities* involving modes of thought, codes of behavior, social mannerisms, dress, gestures, postures, the rules of law, ethical codes, disciplines of knowledge, and so on, serves to orient us towards ourselves, others, and to our environment in particular ways that reflect a historically-informed and culturally-situated understanding. Understood in this way, organization is not so much a social entity as it is an advantage-gaining socio-economic activity involving the “transformation, use and exchange of matter and energy” (Cooper, 1987: 406) in which the remote, the obdurate and the intractable are rendered more accessible and hence more amenable to control and manipulation. From this way of understanding organization, various historico-social analyses undertaken by writers as diverse as Max Weber (in Gerth and Mills, 1948) on rationalization, professionalization, and bureaucracy, Michel Foucault (1970) on epistemes, social epochs, and the underlying order of things, and Norbert Elias (1979–82) on the civilizing process as well as Marshal McLuhan (1967) on the effects of alphabetization and the invention of the printing press on the mentality of the Western world, all redirect our concerns with organizational analysis as the study of the reality-constituting impulses underlying

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each socio-cultural and historical epoch. Understood thus, it becomes the analysis of *organizational mentalities* and not discrete socio-economic entities called “organizations” that become the primary focus of attention. We can then revisit the concerns and preoccupations of familiar figures like Max Weber and to appreciate that what they were preoccupied with was not so much the study of organization or management, per se, but the study of *organizational mentalities*.

Max Weber’s study of the almost inexorable rationalization of modern Western society, for instance, is one exemplary instance of this kind of analysis. For Weber, despite the rise and fall of modern social institutions and the changing fortunes of political and ideological affiliations, the general drift of secular rationalization was indelibly marked by the progressive and almost inexorable *disenchantment of the world* through the method of systematic, *instrumental rationality*. In his view, the persistence and pervasiveness of this process of disenchantment was best exemplified by the sustained attempts to apply principles of instrumental rationality to such an apparently subjective area of experience as music. Hence, the “fixation of clang patterns, by a more concise notation and the establishment of the well-tempered scale . . . the standardization of the quartet of woodwinds and string instruments as the core of the symphony orchestra” (Weber, in Gerth and Mills, 1948: 51) were all seen by Weber as telling instances of the almost inexorable process of representational abstraction and rational ordering taking place all around him and in every sphere of human activity. It was this observation of the general burgeoning of an instrumental-rationalist mindset associated with modernity that led Weber to devote his whole life to an understanding of its wider effects on modern social life.

Likewise, Foucault’s (1970) analyses of the history of ideas show that each cultural epoch contains fundamental organizing codes that govern its language, schemas, values, logics, and techniques of ordering as well as hierarchies of practices which are often hidden from the view of those immersed in their everyday activities. These *organizational mentalities* can only be accessed through an “archaeological” exposition of the knowledge practices of a particular cultural epoch. Foucault shows that implicit rules of formation constitute the underlying generative code for organizing and sensemaking for a particular epoch or episteme. These rules of formation educate the senses, direct attention, and cause the selective focusing of specific aspects of lived experiences to the exclusion of others since the sensory inputs of humans are invariably abundant and overwhelming. Each episteme therefore establishes rules that enable us to harness our sensory perceptions in order to drive it better to fit our needs and ends. In

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great part therefore, the episteme of a given epoch or culture organizes our sensorium (McLuhan, 1967; Ong, 1967) in such a way that we are made to attend to some types of stimuli rather than others by making an issue of certain ones while relatively neglecting other ones. Each episteme allows us to think in ways foreign to the others.

Foucault shows, for example, that during the Renaissance period things were ordered and hence known through the principle of *resemblance*. The human heart for instance was often thought of as a mechanical pump because of its similarity of function. Similarly, the seeds of the aconite plant were often used as a cure for eye diseases just because their appearance was that of “tiny dark globes seated in white skinlike coverings whose appearance is much like that of eyelids covering an eye” (Foucault, 1970: 142). Likewise, walnuts were used for wounds of the pericranium because the physical appearance of the walnut resembled the human brain. We can therefore see that during the Renaissance the conception of knowledge was one involving “the essentially incomplete pursuit of an unending chain of similarities” (Gutting, 1989: 146). Science, alchemy, palmistry, and astrology all sat comfortably with one another during this period. Proximity, convenience, analogy, and emulation provided the organizing code for the creation of knowledge during the Renaissance period. What Foucault identifies are the underlying *organizational mentalites* that act as rules of formation for each epoch in the history of Western thought from the Renaissance to the present.

This same concern for an understanding of the underlying *organizational mentality* shaping societal concerns and aspirations is what defines the efforts of Marshal McLuhan. For him the invention of the printing process was a seminal moment in the shaping of the collective consciousness of the Western world for what it precipitated was a kind of “typographic thinking” that enabled the idea of mass production to become more thinkable. Thus, the invention of typography “extended the new visual stress of applied knowledge, providing the first repeatable commodity, the first assembly line and the first mass-production” (McLuhan, 1967: 124). It significantly changed the nature of the relationship between a writer and his audience. For while the previous manuscript culture was effectively conversational in that “the writer and his audience are physically related by the form of publication” (McLuhan, 1967: 84), the print culture created a clear distinction between impersonal authors and a consuming public. Conversational exchange gave way to the *commodification* of output and uniform quantification, measurability and centralized control became important priorities in the management of economic and social life.

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What these three brief examples illustrate is how a re-directing of the focus from “organizations” to *organizational mentalities* can help us open new ways by which the field of organization studies can contribute to our understanding of major complex societal issues and challenges in the modern world by showing how different epochs and different cultures wittingly or unwittingly formulate rules of engagement to deal with abiding and universal human concerns. Our excursion into the Oriental outlook and its radically different ways of dealing with human affairs should cause us to pause and ask ourselves how it is that the concerns and priorities of the Western world have come to be what they are. They sensitize us to the possibility of alternative ways of thinking and dealing with the predicaments we face in our day-to-day lives. The expanding of organization studies to include the study of *organization of mentalities* allows us to widen the scope of our concerns beyond a narrow preoccupation with economic organizations to a concern with the wider challenges of a global and inextricably interconnected society.

## Conclusion

This chapter is prompted by reflections on the fragility, vulnerability, and precariousness of human organizational accomplishments and how it is only sustained by ongoing acts of world-making. We can study organizations as a *fait accompli*, in its sanitized and easily recognizable stable state, in the luxurious settings of downtown hotels at prestigious management academy conferences, or we can alternatively examine the organization as a quintessentially human cultural achievement: a symbolic artefact precariously sustained through language, discourse, actor meanings, social interactions, and power relations. In the latter case, one acquires an intimate understanding of the ongoing practical struggles and the everyday coping strategies involved in wresting order and organization, if only temporarily, from the constant entropic tendencies of social and material reality. To recover this more intimate form of understanding, one must strive to abandon academic distance, immerse oneself in the initial flux and flow of reality and attempt to understand organizational emergence from within the phenomenon itself.

Human organized life, in all its varied forms, charts a rich and oftentimes surprising trajectory as it painstakingly and laboriously bootstraps itself into independent existence from the oftentimes debilitating and chaotic circumstance it initially finds itself in. Social organization is a human technique for appropriating nature’s energy and putting it to service to enhance life



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chances and to expand our degrees of freedom. The taming of fire, the development of tools, oral language, and then written inscriptions, the building of homes first in caves in mountainsides and then in tents and subsequently in more permanent durable and settled forms, the organization of transport mobility and communication; all these and many others constitute the gradual progression of humans' systematic overcoming of the limitations of their immediate environment and of space-time. It is a temporary triumph of order and organization over chaos and change. Whilst the history of civilizations is often presented as a tallying of the dynasties, governments, wars, and cultural transformations that have taken place over this brief period, this is not the whole picture of human progress. Instead, the attainment of modern organizational life is fundamentally a story of how humans have slowly extricated themselves from a slave-like dependence on their immediate environment by developing more and more sophisticated tools and systems in order to more efficiently exploit the latter for their own benefit. *It is this human ingenuity for devising techniques and mechanisms for trapping, conserving, retrieving, and productively utilizing energy and resources to secure and enhance our own level of existence* (Sahlins, 1960) that constitutes what we mean here by the phenomenon of ORGANIZATION. But, as we have been starkly reminded, yet again, by natural catastrophes such as the Asian Tsunami, the effects of Hurricane Katrina, and now the tragedy of the Haitian earthquake disaster, human organizational accomplishments are never totally secure: they remain precariously balanced, perpetually in tension, and irretrievably incomplete.

Nevertheless, some modes of human organizing appear more durable in the longer-term, more sustainable, more economically justifiable, more politically acceptable and ultimately more amenable to a richer and more fulfilling life. Why and how this is so can only be answered, if at all, by a sustained investigation of the different *organizational mentalities* which have spontaneously emerged in different socio-historical and cultural contexts. An identification of their various strengths and weaknesses can help us to forge a more realistic and comprehensive solution for dealing with the unintended consequences and challenges of globalization.

## Notes

1. By organizational mentalities I mean the collectively cultivated ways of dealing with raw experience; the mindsets, attitudes, and dispositions that distinguish one community from another.

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2. By Western I mean especially the dominant American and European ideologies and approaches especially circumscribed by the concerns with individualism, freedom, democracy, and capitalism.
3. By Oriental I mean a traditional outlook on life common to countries in the Far Eastern world including especially China, Japan, Korea, and the East Asian countries.

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