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Hermeneutic processes in organizations: A study in relationships between observers and observed

Joseph, Tojo, Ph.D.
Case Western Reserve University, 1994

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HERMENEUTIC PROCESSES IN ORGANIZATIONS: A STUDY IN RELATIONSHIPS
BETWEEN OBSERVERS AND OBSERVED

by

TOJO JOSEPH

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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HERMENEUTIC PROCESSES IN ORGANIZATIONS: A STUDY IN RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN OBSERVERS AND OBSERVED

Abstract

by

TOJO JOSEPH

This thesis is an attempt to understand organizations using a methodology called *Hermeneutics*. It is argued that at a fundamental level organizational theories are embedded in language practices. *Hermeneutic methods* are ideally suited for understanding the complex role of language in shaping organizational realities because they take into consideration the "temporality" and "contextuality" of organizational constructs which are linguistically preconstituted. Further, by recognizing the epistemological primacy of both the author (subject) and the reader (interpreter/researcher) hermeneutic inquiry provides a viable alternative to both positivist and interpretive approaches to the study of organizations.

Improvising on Paul Ricoeur's (1971) *model of the Text* as well as Hans Gadamer's (1975) *Fusion of the Horizon*, organizations are conceptualized as "texts" with the intent of providing multiple "readings." With this overarching framework,
the subject of this study, an international nonprofit organization called the Institute of Cultural Affairs (the ICA) is "read" as "texts" in separate chapters. Examples include reading the ICA as a "global social change organization," "appreciative systems," and as "hermeneutic processes." Using Gadamer's notion of prejudice and fusion of horizon, the readings also demonstrate the transformative capacity of hermeneutic inquiry and establishes that the manner of reading a text has significant consequences.

The concluding reading reveals that the ICA is a hermeneutic organization engaged in the task of recovery of meaning related to its core tasks and values through a process of framing, deframing, reframing. This is so, because the core values of ICA are "plurivocal" (capable of multiple meaning) and subject to hermeneutic processes of "intense reflexivity." During the formative years of the ICA, this reflexivity was at its peak as a privileged discourse. Later, as the organization grew rapidly to a large number of international locations, the reflexivity was not as intense as in the past and was gradually deprivileged. The focus was on accomplishing results quickly and efficiently (Performativity in Lyotard's [1984] terms). However, as the growth of ICA slowing down and the organization completely decentralizing creating independent, autonomous units, intense reflexivity emerged again as a reprivileged discourse. It is concluded that the capacity to engage in intense reflexivity is of strategic value to organizations like the ICA.

In terms of implications, the inquiry demonstrates the consequences of using a hermeneutic methodology in organizational analysis through the creation of a
model of organizations as engaged in the privileging, deprivileging, and/or reprivileging of discourses. It is also argued that the flexibility of interpretations in a "living" text is liberating and transforming rather than limiting and restraining. Above all, the readings bring out the dynamic property of interchangeability between the author and the reader that exists in the intersubjectivity of a text.
To

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v
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This thesis is an attempt to understand the evolution of an organization, the Institute of Cultural Affairs (the ICA) over a 40 year period. During this period, the ICA underwent several "organizational transformations". The focus is on understanding the ICA and its transformations using a methodology called Hermeneutics. Improvising on Paul Ricoeur's (1971) *The Model of the Text: Meaningful Action Considered as a Text* as well as Hans Gadamer's (1975) *Fusion of the Horizon* approach, several readings of the "text" that is the ICA is presented here. This is accomplished by utilizing the basic tool of hermeneutic analysis, the Hermeneutic Circle.

In chapter 2, a comprehensive outline for conceptualizing hermeneutics as a research methodology for organization science is presented. A brief evaluation of organizational theories is attempted at the beginning concluding that they are embedded in language practices. Hermeneutic methods are ideally suited for understanding the complex role of language practices in shaping organizational realities because they take into consideration the "temporality" and "contextuality" of organizational constructs which are linguistically preconstituted. Further, unlike traditional approaches, hermeneutic inquiry also recognizes the epistemological primacy of both the actor (author/subject) and the interpreter (reader/researcher). Adapting this approach helps in looking at organizations as "texts". The
"paradigm of the text" as it applies to organizations is described along with the various steps and phases involved in hermeneutic inquiry of organizations.

Starting with the methodology chapter is unusual. However, hermeneutics is not a commonly used methodology in organization science and requires explanation upfront. Moreover, presenting the different readings of the texts that are the ICA requires building a logic and rationale for textual reading.

In Chapter 3, a brief description of the **history** and **core tasks** of the ICA is presented to provide a reasonable account of the research settings and context which are the starting point for hermeneutic inquiry. The intent is to demonstrate that research itself is a hermeneutic process. In Chapter 4, the first reading of the ICA text that results in a construct called "global social change organizations" is discussed.

Chapter 5 is another reading using "appreciative inquiry" as the interpretive scheme, or "prejudice", to use Gadamer’s term. Use of the Gadamerian notion of the Fusion of Horizon results in "discovering" the core values of the ICA. This chapter also demonstrates the transformative capacity of the fusion of horizon and subsequently establishes that the manner of reading a text has significant consequences.

In chapters 6 & 7, using the hermeneutic circle, two questions based on the first two readings of the ICA are raised: (1) What happened to the core values of the ICA during its transformations?
and (2) How did the ICA stay together amid these sweeping and sometimes painful changes?

Is the ICA a "hermeneutic organization", engaged in the task of recovery of meaning related to its core tasks and values through an effective deframing (Westenholz, 1983) and "intense reflexivity"? In a way, this study is an exploration into the continuous struggle for the recovery of meaning by an organization engaged in a "plurivocal" (capable of multiple meanings) task of human development. Using a longitudinal approach, the paradoxes or the multiple choices the ICA has faced all through its life as it engaged in an ever expanding process of globalization are explored. The analysis generates a construct called "privileged discourses" which are preferred ways of dialoguing in an organization. They shape the interpretive schemes which in turn privilege, deprivilege or reprivilege other forms of discourses.

As the reading proceeds, the ICA emerges as an extremely effective organization, because it has undergone sweeping transformations without being overwhelmed by them. This is significant because the ICA is an organization with very limited resources. On closer examination, one discovers that the ICA has an unusual capacity for "intense reflection" regarding their core values, mission and tasks. During the formative years of the ICA, this reflexivity was at its peak as a privileged discourse. Later, as they grew rapidly to a large number of international locations, it was not as intense as in the past and was gradually deprivileged. The
focus was on accomplishing results quickly and most efficiently
(Performativity in Lyotard's [1984] terms). However, as the growth of
the ICA slowed down, and the organization completely decentralized
and indegenized, the intense reflexivity emerged again as a
reprivileging discourse. A great deal of reflexivity is needed in
reinterpreting or deframing the core values and task of the
organization. It seems that the capacity to engage in such intense
reflection is of strategic value to organizations like the ICA.

The next question in the hermeneutic circle is "What makes the
ICA such an effective organization?" Is it because they have been
able to respond effectively to the plurivocal situations to which
they were exposed? Do the shifts in the privileging, deprivileging
and reprivileging of intense reflexivity as a discourse help them in
surviving the difficult times? Do they manage to do so by staying
close to their core values? And what is special about these core
values?

At this point two aspects of this research become evident: one,
the consequences of using a hermeneutic methodology in organizational
analysis, and two, the creation of a model of organizations as
engaged in privileging, deprivileging and reprivileging of discourses
(of intense reflexivity). Within the context of the former, this
thesis tests Ricoeur's notion of the range of interpretations and
concludes that each of these readings is valid within the context of
its own fusion of horizons. In terms of implications, it is argued
that having the flexibility of interpretations as per one's world-
view is liberating and transforming rather than limiting and restraining. Hermeneutics is therefore a powerful organizational transformation frame in addition to being a fitting methodology for organization science.
Chapter 2

METHODOLOGY

A rationale for using hermeneutics as a methodology to understanding organizational change and transformation.

How and why do changes occur in organizational structure and behavior over time? Stated more basically, How do organizations change?

A significant part of the field of Organizational Behavior addresses itself to this question. One dimension is fundamental to most of these perspectives; they all assume that organizations are logically based, ordered systems based on the notion of rationality. Organizations have purposes, missions, where actors consensually agree on what to do, and then they set out to accomplish their objectives. As Astley and Van de Ven (1983) have stated, the central debate in organizational theory today focuses on whether changes in organization are due to environment or strategic choice. Sandelands and Drazin (1989) call the first perspective exogenesis because it attributes change to the outside environment, either to causal forces (e.g., Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978), or to the action of selection process (e.g. Hannan and Freeman, 1977). The second perspective is called endogenesis because it attributes changes to actions and choices of managers inside the organizations. Debate between these two frameworks has proceeded mainly as contest of weaknesses (Sandelands and Drazin, 1989). For example, Child (1972) maintains that strategic choice occurs beyond the influence of environments. On
the other end, Hannan and Freeman (1977) argue that strategic choices
do not matter. Instead, species of organizations tend to survive in
the long run rather than individual entities.

The arguments of both these reveal a common weakness: they
speak of entities and organizing processes that can neither be
observed nor be specified. For example, the population ecology view
of organizations maintains that environment 'select' or 'choose'
organizations. Other theories rely upon verbs such as shape, adapt,
and determine. Quoting Ryle (1949), Sandelands and Drazin (1989)
argue that in organization change theories there is a confusion
between task verbs and achievement verbs. Task verbs refer to real
processes, activities or experiences. Achievements, on the other
hand, refer to outcomes that processes can have. Thus running and
key-turning are task verbs that refer to actual processes; winning
and unlocking are achievement verbs that refer to outcomes that
running and key-turning can have.

Sandelands and Drazin argue that though achievement verbs
appear to depict organizational processes, in reality they obscure
them behind empty and misgotten abstractions. These words do not or
could not have existential warrant supposed for them. They do not
explain how organizations come about, but mystify the process in a
welter of apparently complicated conceptualizations and unverifiable
processes. By having the character of achievements, their grammatical
form encompasses the very outcomes they purport to explain.
Both the theories of exogenesis and endogenesis are convincing because they appear to explain organizational phenomena. However, the exogenic processes do not specify the processes by which environments influence organizations. Environments are supposed to determine or shape organizational forms (Mohr 1971), usually by forcing managers to adapt to changing demands (Astley and Van de Ven, 1983). However, such words as determine, shape and adapt do not represent real processes. Once again, if we consider the population ecology perspective, the environment "selects out" malfunctioning organizations through the agency of its selection processes. Since the verb "to select out" is an achievement verb, it does not designate a clearly set specific set of events, but only that some such set resulted in a change. It includes any processes leading to this achievement, and by so doing, effectively refers to none (Sandelands and Drazin, 1989). Borrowing an analogy from baseball, they argue: "the concept of selection functions like the concept of 'hitting'. Hitting is not a process; but a way of referring to the fact that batting took place in a particular way. Similarly, selection is not a process; but a way of referring to the fact that unnamed processes developed in a particular way" (p 462).

According to Sandelands and Drazin, the reason no process is named in exogenic theories is not simply because achievement verbs are used, but because there is no process to be named. Environment cannot simply explain organization since it has no life of its own beyond its social construction. To quote Sandelands and Drazin again,
"Environment is the idea that there is something outside the organization that somehow explains what is inside. As a point of logic, environment could not determine organization because it is defined by organization. By definition there is no organizational environment until there is an organization to have it. Environment is not a definite thing. It is everything that is not the organization" (P. 464).

Moving on to the endogenic viewpoints, strategic choices are said to bring about strategic actions and these actions are said to culminate in organizational changes. However, no specific steps are outlined to show how these things happen. For example, if we were to consider Child's (1972) theory of strategic choice, he is unequivocal about the need to incorporate the "agency" of choice in organization theory, though no mention is made as to what this agency is, or how it should be taken into account. Whatever processes that are named such as "choice", "securing cooperation", "strategy formulation", and "assessing constraints and opportunities against values" are in effect achievements verbs. The foundation verb underlying all these, "to choose", is no different than the "to select" of exogenic perspective.

Even Karl Weick's (1979) promising theory in the "Social Psychology of Organizing" which starts out by providing an excellent example of a task verbs based theory of organizing ends up with an abundance of achievement verbs such as "choice", "selection", "variation", "enactment", and "retention".
Why do we have an abundance of achievement verbs instead of task verbs in theories of organizational changes? The answer may not be very complex. It has to do with the way questions are framed. The population ecologist asks why certain forms exist and not others; the strategist asks why one form is implemented and not another. Because of the way these questions are framed achievement verbs such as select and choose turn out to be the most obvious way to explain the process. As Sandelands and Drazin state, "it is only natural to explain an achievement with an achievement verb" (p. 464).

An argument like the above naturally takes us to the next question: What other ways are there to ask this question so that we won't explain organizational change with organizational change (achievement verbs)? It is argued that hermeneutics is a viable alternative. Some context building is necessary to substantiate such as a position. Let us start by examining the foundational logic of language itself.

The "language-problematique"

One underlying theme of Sandelands and Drazin's insightful analysis is the implication that much of organization theory is embedded in what may be called a "language-problematique". Basic to all the approaches mentioned in their analysis is the presence of a language game in which key terms have meaning only by reference to other key terms. Sandelands and Drazin have just touched the tip of the ice-berg when they wrote about the Problematique inherent in language use in organizations. In fact, the confusion is not merely
around achievement-task verb issues, but is centered around the question of epistemological and ontological primacy of language itself. The primacy of language goes far deeper than the commonly talked about explicative structures (for eg., most theories in linguistics). A thorough examination of language in its implicature forms as it is understood and used in organization theory is therefore needed.

This is achieved in two parts. In part one, which is essentially a context building effort, several arguments and perspectives representing the linguistic and interpretive turn in organizations are brought together and examined as a potential alternative to the empiricist/rationalist/positivist approaches. Recognition of difficulties in both the approaches leads us to part two which introduces hermeneutics as a viable alternative. Discussed here are the foundations of hermeneutics (temporality, contextuality, and modes of engagement) and the "paradigm of the text".

The linguistic turn in the study of organizations

One of most prominent identifying characteristics of the postmodern era is the "linguistic turn" that has forced thinkers in a wide range of disciplines to recognize the manner in which languages shape the course and meaning of the human condition. Post-Wittgensteinian philosophers have seen language as the basic vehicle by which we construct the reality of our shared world. One of the most prominent philosophers of our times, Habermas (1979) has suggested that societal development is traceable to increasing
linguistic skills of societal participants. A society progresses as its participants are able to differentiate linguistically between the 'external world, the social world, and the world of "inner subjectivity" (Giddens, 1982, p.323). It is through developing these discursive skills that society has progressed from the mythical to the modern. More recently, postmodern thinkers (Eg., Foucault, Derrida) regard language and discourse as the force through which humans create the historical and cultural traditions that only they, as humans, can understand because of their unique ability for self-awareness.

Following this we see that we live in a semiotic world. The semiotic universe does not function according to the laws of physics but according to the laws of grammar and semantics. The social actor is immersed in an incredibly complex and vast semiotic field of mixed messages, conflicting meanings and inconsistent impulses. Terms in our language affect what we see (Pondy and Mitroff, 1979) and even the logic we use to structure our thought (Tung-Sun, 1970; Alexander, 1967). Therefore, 'being-in-the-world' (Heidegger, 1962) itself is an experience of being with language. In Truth and Method Gadamer (1975) argues that language is a medium within which we move and understand ourselves and the world from various perspectives. It is an intersubjective fabric of semantic relations that both makes possible and limits understanding. In his own words "being that can be understood is language" (Gadamer, 1975, p.432) and "in language the reality beyond every individual consciousness becomes visible" (437).
Pondy and Mitroff (1979) argued that the defining attribute of human organizations is the use of language and symbolism including the attribution of meaning to things and making sense of the world. Similarly, systems theorist Boulding (1968) recognized the role of language when he proposed a hierarchy of system complexity. His hierarchy varied from level 1 (the simplest) through level 9 (the most complex) as shown in figure 2.1.

Level 9: Systems of unspecified complexity
Level 8: Multi-cephalous systems
Level 7: Symbol processing systems
Level 6: Internal image systems
Level 5: Blueprinted growth systems
Level 4: Open systems
Level 3: Control systems
Level 2: Clockworks
Level 1: Frameworks level

Figure 2.1. Boulding's (1968) hierarchy of system complexity.
Starting with level 6, internal image systems, entities at this level possess a detailed awareness of the environment acquired through differentiated information receptors which are in turn organized into knowledge structure or image. Level 6 systems, however, do not possess the quality of self awareness which is shown by the next level symbol processing systems. At level 6, the system is able to process information in the form of differences in the environment though it cannot generalize or abstract these inputs into ideas, theories or symbols. At level 7, the system is able to develop its own image of the environment and react to it using a coding scheme or language. This grants level 7 the distinction of the capacity for self-conscious language use (also called 'metacognition').

Level 8, the multi-cephalous systems, are literally systems with several brains. Boulding aptly uses the term "social organization" to characterize this category. In social organizations we have individuals acting in concert creating a linguistic consensus or agreement around why they have organized themselves into an entity. Weick's (1979) notion of organizing reveals this: "Organizing . . . is defined as consensually validated grammar for reducing equivocality by means of sensible interlocked behaviors. To organize is to assemble ongoing interdependent actions into sensible sequences that generate sensible outcomes" (P.3). Other definitions such as those by Vickers (1967, pp.109-10: "Organizations are structures of mutual expectation, attached to roles which define what each of its
members shall expect from others and from himself") and Hunt (1972, 4:
"An organization is an identifiable social entity pursuing multiple
objectives through the coordinated activities and relations among
members and objects") render support to this view.

Definitions such as the above also highlight the observation
that organizing is rooted in linguistic agreements regarding what is
real and illusory, a grounding that is called consensual validation
(Weick, 1979). In other words, "organizing is like a grammar in the
sense that it is a systematic account of some rules and conventions
by which sets of interlocked behaviors are assembled to form social
processes that are intelligible to actors. It is also a grammar in
the sense that it consists of rules for forming variables and causal
linkages into meaningful structures (called cause maps) that
summarize the recent experience of the people who are organized"
(Weick, 1979, pp. 3-4).

Although human organizations are level 8 phenomena in
Boulding's schema with high symbolic-linguistic sophistication, our
conceptual models of them are fixated at level 4, and our formal
models and data collection efforts are rooted at level 1 and 2 (Pondy
and Mitroff, 1979). Most macro organizational theorists have down
played higher human capacities, especially the capacity to use
language, an awareness of our own awareness (metacognition), and our
capacity to attribute meaning to events, and to make sense of things.
As we have seen, these capacities are characteristics of Boulding's
level 5 through level 8. Some macro-organizational theorists such as
Weick (1979) and Silverman (1971) have tried to respond to this sophistication by making language, awareness, and meaning important concepts in their theories. For instance, cognitive theories of organizations assume that human beings are not passive recipients of environmental inputs, but, rather, active, aware appraisers and interpreters, whose perceptions and interpretations are framed in the context of their existing language structures. A cognitive-interpretive view of organizations suggests that attempts to explain or predict organizational changes should reflect the linguistic sophistication of its actors as meaning makers. Now the question is: What will such a "language sensitive" approach look like?

To some extent, an approach symbolized as the interpretive turn responds to this issue.

The interpretive turn

In 1973, the celebrated anthropologist Clifford Geertz outlined the notion of thin and thick descriptions for social sciences. In his classic work, The Interpretation of Cultures, Geertz (1973) articulated his position that assigning meanings to events is a basic human process and that the task of the anthropologist is to ferret out those meanings and the meanings that lie beneath them in multiple layers. To describe only events is "thin" description, but to describe the layers of meaning underlying those events is "thick" description. Since his elegant thick description of the Balinese Cock Fight, a whole field of interpretive approaches has acquired prominence. Fundamentally, interpretive approaches assume an
epistemological primacy of the knower or the subject. This stands in marked contrast to the empiricist/rationalist/positivist traditions which exhort the primacy of the observer in an effort to get to the "objective fact" or "truth". Interpretive approaches dismiss the notion of any objective truth and instead argue that as researchers we need to understand what is going on inside of organizations from the perspective of the "subject" or organizational participants. The researcher should intentionally refrain from imposing his/her pre-existing or preconceived paradigms on the experiences of the organizational members. In other words, in order to make sense of what is going on in the work place the researcher should become a participant observer of the organizational life, observe what is going on without any theoretical or conceptual predilections, and then make sense of the data. Conventional organizational assessment approaches such as questionnaires, focus group interviews, structured interviews etc., will only bias the data in favor of the presuppositions on which those instruments were devised in the first place. The final product of an interpretive project will be a thick description of the organizational life as experienced by the actors.

Bringing this again within the perspective of the linguistic turn, the interpretive approaches underscore the need to affirm the 'language game' of the organizational actors whereas the empiricist approaches superimpose the language games of the inquirer upon those inquired.
Attempts to understand organizational change will tend to fall into one of these positivists versus interpretive approaches. An intense and often fierce debate has been going on in social sciences between the rationalists-positivist-empiricist "traditionalists" and the interpretive "reformers" for over a decade now. Burrell and Morgan's (1979) milestone work Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis took that debate right into the heart of administrative/organizational sciences. A cursory look at the past several issues of mainstream Organizational Science journals such as the Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, Administrative Science Quarterly, Academy of Management Journal, The Journal of Management, Organization Science and the Journal of Management Studies will demonstrate the growing prominence of the interpretive approaches in understanding organizational processes and changes. Further, a growing number of specialized journals in accounting, marketing, advertising, and policy studies too are showing a similar trend. A sizable number of research studies have been reported in these journals during the last 3-4 years that could be clearly considered as 'interpretive' in flavor.

One of the unintended consequences of this debate has been its polarizing effect in the field of organizational science. Thus, many researchers in our field tend to place their faith either on the epistemological primacy of the observer (researcher) or that of the subject (organizational members). Moving beyond this methodological dogmatism, and as an alternative approach, a unique methodology that
will (1) respond both to the epistemological primacy of the observer and the observed and (2) at the same time depict a sophistication to incorporate the linguistic nature of organizational realities is introduced. The methodology is called Hermeneutics.

What is Hermeneutics?

The term hermeneutics comes from the classical Greek verb Hermeneuein, to interpret. In ancient Greece the priest at the Delphi oracle was called Hermeneios. The Greek god Hermes, the messenger of Zeus, was credited with "transmitting what was beyond human understanding into a form that human intelligence can grasp" (Palmer, 1969, p. 13). During the 17th century, hermeneutic study emerged as a discipline devoted to establishing guidelines for the proper interpretation of Biblical scripture. Since then, hermeneutic study has evolved into a form of inquiry primarily concerned with the processes by which human beings interpret or discover the meaning of human action in general and linguistic expression in particular (Gergen, Hepburn, and Fisher, 1986; Bleicher, 1980). According to Hollnagel (1986), hermeneutics deals with the understanding of understanding. As a scientific discipline, hermeneutics is defined as the study of the methodological principles of interpretation and explanation of any kind of text or action (Ricoeur, 1971). It involves two different and interacting focuses of attention: (1) the event of understanding a text, and (2) the more encompassing question of what understanding and interpretation, as such, are (Palmer, 1969).
In an organizational context, hermeneutics may be seen as a useful methodology ideally suited for the task of interpreting the "organizational texts" (De Vries and Miller, 1987). The end result of a hermeneutic inquiry is a "fusion of horizon" (Gadamer, 1975) of the meaning making of the interpreter (researcher) and the interpreted (organizational actors).

The basis of hermeneutics may be found in Hegel’s (1931) critique of Kantian epistemology as seen in Hagel’s Phenomenology of Mind. Any critique of knowledge itself presupposes knowledge or, at the very least, a framework within which knowledge is constituted. For example, Gadamer (1975) maintained that to have a method is to already have an interpretation. Similarly, Faulconer and Williams (1985) comment that investigators choose and trust their methods on the basis of some already existing interpretation that, Gergen (1982, 1985) reminds us, is likely to change over time.

Hermeneutical thinkers share a common concern to resist the notion of a wordless and a timeless source of insight. "The human intellect, pace Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Descartes, Spinoza, et alia, does not have the capacity for a pure seeing of reality 'in itself', a wordless intuition of reality sub specie aeternitatis" (Wachterhauser, 1986, p. 5). Instead, hermeneutical approaches underscore the fact that all understanding is never without words and never outside of time. Human understanding always takes place within an emerging linguistic framework evolved over time in terms of historically conditioned concerns and practices.
Another way of appreciating the importance of language is through a construct called *denaturing* that has been recently introduced to the social sciences primarily by postmodern writers (eg., Hayles, 1990).

**Denaturing**

According to Hayles (1990), to denature something is to deprive it of its natural qualities. Alcohol is said to be denatured when its natural chemical composition is altered by additives. Denaturing also carries a technical sense of altering macro-molecules by treating them with chemicals or radiation. One of the molecules commonly treated this way is DNA. Denaturing was an important step in breaking the secret of DNA’s structure, for it allowed the double helix to be unwound. Denaturing is an important metaphor for deeper implication of hermeneutics. "When the essential components of human experience are denatured, they are not merely revealed as constructions. The human subject who stands as the purportive source of experience is also deconstructed and then reconstructed in ways that fundamentally alter what it means to be human" (Hayles, 1990. P. 166). Similarly, when the organizational text is denatured from its commonly held views, it is deconstructed and then reconstructed in ways that essentially transforms what it means to be an organization.

**The Denaturing of Language**

Language is denatured in the sense that it is seen not as an mimetic representation of the world of objects but as a sign system generating significance internally through series of relational
differences. According to Hayles (1990), denaturing of language resulted from the confluence of two currents of thought. One was the effort in the beginning of this century to eliminate ambiguity and self-reference from formal systems. Logical positivists tried to purify all forms of discourse from subjectivity and bias. In Physics, Einstein developed the special theory of relativity whereby observations from different inertial systems could be reconciled. The underlying assumption was that it was possible "to create a meta-language that would not be contaminated by the assumptions of the object language" (Hayles, 1990: 267). However, one by one, they were discredited or reinterpreted to accommodate the realization that, as Niels Bohr observed, "we are suspended in language".\footnote{For example, quantum field theory unseated the dominance of the theory of relativity validating the view that language is inherently self-referential and ungrounded. Similarly, philosophers of science such as Kuhn, Hanson, and Feyerabend showed that observational statements are always theory-laden.}

The second influence came from Saussurean linguistics where language is defined as a sign system generating significance through differences between language elements. Language is an interactive field in which the meaning of any one element depends upon the interactions present in the field as a whole. Saussure shows that if any one word is removed, the field is altered, and consequently, the significance of all other words changes.

It may be concluded that the denaturing of language has resulted in the following propositions: (1) Any utterance can be deconstructed to show that it already presupposes what it would say
and hence has no prior ground on which to rest. (2) All texts are penetrated by infinite numbers of intertexts so that contextual horizons are always constructions rather than givens. (3) Signification is a construction rather than a natural result of speaking or writing. "Denatured language is language regarded as ground painted under our feet while we hang suspended in a void. We cannot dispense with the illusion of ground, because we need a place from which to speak. But it is bracketed by our knowledge that it is only a painting, not natural ground" (Hayles, 1990: 269).

In summary, both hermeneutics and denaturing make the point that language and history are always both conditions and limits of our understanding.

The theme of time and language run like dual leitmotifs in hermeneutical literature functioning as special types of transcendental conditions of all understanding. Habermas (1979) saw language and history as the "transitory a priori" of thought. Because these a priori are transitory in nature, i.e., different in different contexts, they always evade the final theoretical account of how they function in this transcendental capacity.

This has important implications for this study, and therefore needs some explication.

Language and the historicity of the person

As stated earlier, both Heidegger and Gadamer attributed great importance to language in the human participation of being. "Language allows humans to dwell in the house of being", said Gadamer. For him,
language is the medium of all human experience. "Language is the fundamental mode of operation of our being-in-the-world and all embracing form of the constitution of the world" (Gadamer, 1976, p 3). We are able to understand the world only through the use of words. Yet, the human world is linguistically preconstituted. We inherit language in the "social uterus". In other words, language precedes us in the world.

The existence of human society, itself a historical entity, is a necessary condition for the existence of a human individual. To be a person is to be history. "A human being becomes the person he is within, and as one expression of, a complex network of artifacts-language, ritual, social institutions, styles of art and architecture, cosmologies and myths- that constitute a culture" (Greene, 1990. p 168-69). A culture is itself a sedimentation of the actions of past persons but is preexistent with respect to the development of any particular person. All of us are born into some society. Thus, there is a natural artificiality about man (Plessner, 1965). Kant himself asserted this distinction between the natural, which merely survives, and the human, which exists historically. We are all members of the species homo sapiens and to our development or even for the very survival, inherence in an artificial medium is necessary. Greene (1986) wrote about this elegantly: "It is our nature to be artificial; we come to ourselves not only as users of, but as dwellers within, a tightly woven net of artifacts...Thus human nature, being dependent on culture, is itself historical. As Kenny
(1973) et al elucidated in their classic work "The Development of Mind", to be a person "is to have the capacity to acquire the ability to operate with symbols, in such a way that it is one's own activity that makes them symbols and confers meanings upon them" (p47). This is what it is to exist historically in a uniquely human sense. Thus, rationality, language or symbol systems are not human being's portable property. We come to ourselves within symbol systems. They have us as much as we have them (Grene, 1986). In summary, historicity refers to the thesis that who we are is a function of the historical circumstances and the society we find ourselves in.

Implications of historicity for the study of organizations.

The thesis of historicity is central to our understanding of the organization that is the focus of this research (The Institute of Cultural Affairs) because historicity colors our ability to make sense of what happened to this organization. Our knowledge of organizations is intertwined with the historical situation of both of its creators and users. In other words, there is no knowledge or truths in organizations that are independent of a historical context. They can only be true in a pragmatic sense of being the best solution at that time to a problem that has been generated out of a set of historically mediated understandings, interests and practices. For example, we have just not one Plato, but a history of interpretations of Plato (Aristotle, Augustine, Kant, Rousseau, Ryle). Similarly, there is just not one Bible, but Bibles according to the Catholics, the Protestants and the tele-evangelists (There are also similar
changes in our interpretations of organizations which will be demonstrated in subsequent chapters).

Historical changes in the meanings of commonly used personality constructs have also added to the evolution of meaning in organizations. For example, describing oneself as independent and decisive is often viewed as a sign of masculinity, whereas portraying oneself as emotional, intuitive and sensitive implies a feminine disposition (Gergen, Hepburn, & Fisher, 1986). As language usage within the culture evolves, the appropriateness of these terms has drastically changed. A well known psychological instrument created in the 1950s, Rotter's F scale, and widely used in organizations, has items such as "homosexuals are hardly better than criminals and ought to be severely punished", the use of which in today's context is unthinkable. Finally, usage of terms such as "chairperson" instead of "chairman", or "physically challenged" or "differently abled" instead of "physically handicapped" has become commonplace, suggesting a reinterpretation of the concept of gender and personhood.

It is not just psychological, social or historical truths that get reinterpreted over time. Post-positivist philosophers like Kuhn, Polanyi, Lakatos, and Feyerabend have noted that science itself is a historically located agreement or consensus among scientists. This was well articulated for the social sciences by Gergen (1973) with an example of Social Psychology as History. However, the historicity of natural sciences was not well documented till philosopher of science Heelan (1983) demonstrated that physical or natural sciences itself
is based on hermeneutic processes. According to Heelan, in all
perception/observations in natural science the observer learns to
"read" instrumental or other perceptual stimuli as one learn to read
a text. He described the discovery of several hermeneutical
components within scientific observation which showed that the
natural sciences are indeed open to reflecting cultural and
historical values; they provide a culturally acceptable reading of
the "book of nature". The book of nature which science reads was not,
as Galileo thought, written in final form from time immemorial, but
its 'text' is generated in response to human form of inquiry. "What
counts as a satisfactory answer (in science) depends on the time and
place, and the cultural interests of the scientific community"
(Heelan, 1983; p. 203).

There is yet another construct in hermeneutics that is closely
related to temporality. It is called 'contextuality'. As the term
suggests, historicity is always understood in a context as explained
below.

The context of organizations and the context of inquiry

In hermeneutic inquiry, the primary origin of knowledge is
taken to be practical activity; direct, everyday practical
involvement with tools, artifacts, and people. Such activity takes
place prior to any conceptualizing or theorizing and has a character
markedly different from the latter (Packer, 1985). To explicate this,
Heidegger made a distinction among three modes of engagement or
involvement that human beings have with their surroundings: the
practical (the ready-to-hand), reflective (unready-to-hand) and theoretical (present-at-hand).

The *ready-to-hand* mode of engagement is the mode we are in when we are actively engaged in practical projects in the world such as a carpenter using his hammer. The skills and practices we bring to our everyday activities are, for the most part, so over practiced and familiar to us, so taken for granted, that we are simply unaware of their existence. We *assume* them to be common knowledge. When we are involved in ongoing practical activities, we have no need for focal awareness of ourselves and our tools because both become fused into the activities (Packer, 1985). To use Heidegger’s favorite example, the carpenter’s experience is not of the hammer, nor of the wood and nails as separate entities, but of the hammering, the putting together of different pieces and creation of the furniture.

The *unready-to-hand* mode is entered only when we encounter some problem or get upset in our practical activity. The source of the breakdown of action now suddenly becomes salient in a way it was not in the ready-to-hand mode. The *present-at-hand* mode is entered only when we detach ourselves from ongoing practical involvement in a project at hand, usually because we have been unable to find a direct way of dealing with a problem. On such occasions we have to step back, reflect, and turn to more general and abstract (context-free) tools such as logical analysis and calculation in order to solve the problem.
Practical activity, the focus of analysis in hermeneutical inquiry (Heidegger called it "ready-to-hand" mode of engagement) has a holistic character. Understanding a particular activity is not possible without understanding the context within which it occurs. Heidegger called this the referential totality. The concept of context of inquiry runs parallel to the temporality issue within historicity. Gergen (1982, 1985, 1991) has been one of the most articulate proponents of the view that context creates meaning. The same action or event will have different meaning in different contexts. For example, consider an organizational intervention to introduce participative management and teamwork within a context of massive lay-offs. Employees have little control over the process. The concept of "team" is meaningless if one or two members of the team are laid off. Thus, the image of participation stands in contrast to the overall context of loss of control over the environment.

Denaturing contexts

We can further expand the notion of context of inquiry using the denaturing construct. As Hayles (1990) points out, context has been denatured when information technology severed the relationship between text and context by making it possible to embed any text in a context arbitrarily far removed from its point of origin. In fact, the distinction between text and context is disappearing. A text is continually changing as the context keeps shifting.

Biogenetics is an area where the separation of the text from the context can be easily shown. Organisms may be seen as
informational texts that can be opened to literal embodiment of intertextuality by a variety of gene-splicing techniques. These techniques in effect generate the possibility of the deconstruction of the body as text, making it difficult to distinguish between copy and the original. This is what Baudrillard (1985) meant by the notion of simulacra and hyper-real. Copies refer to other copies rather than the original. Like cyberspace, the hyper-real presupposes a radical erosion of context, because the sense that something is an original depends upon its association with a unique context. Hayles would like us to hypothesize the possibility of dismantling the London bridge stone by stone and transporting them to Arizona and reassembling them. The bridge is physically the same, but is it an original or a copy? Similar deconstructions are happening with traditional ideas of parenthood as new birth technologies are making it possible to withdraw eggs from a woman, sperm from a man, and freeze them as long as one wants, fertilize them in vitro, and place them in the uterus of another woman. In such instances, the intimate connection between the embryo or child and the womb which once provided a natural context has been denatured. Recently a man sued and successfully prevented his ex-wife from using his frozen stored sperm to conceive even though she had possession of the sperm. Such "custody battles" are yet another instance of this denaturing process.

Other instances denaturing contexts include the MTV where scenes are mixed without any logic or order. In fact, G. W. S. Trow (1978) has maintained that contemporary Americans live "within the
context of no context". According to him, our lives are split between an enormous grid of two hundred and fifty million people and the intimate family circle gathered around the TV set. With very little in between, the typical suburbanites pretend that they share the same context. Consequently, context becomes a construction rather than a natural result of shared activities. Another good example is TV talk show. In talk shows, an expectation is created in the minds of the audience that something indecorous is about to happen. However, in order to create this dramatization, first a context will have to be created and then violated. To create and then violate a context the host arranges the guests so that they appear to form an intimate circle of friends.

For professional image makers, the term "context control" implies that if one can control the context in which damaging information is released, one has a better chance of influencing the way the information will be interpreted. Note that in this instance, the context is seen as a construction to be manipulated rather than a preexisting condition.

Other examples are the image enhancement of computer figures in Gulf war. Images of the Tomahawk missiles sliding thorough the windows were highly enhanced. Later it was found that the actual hits were much less than reported. Satellite transmissions to the public and the government are typically in an "image-enhanced" form. The original informational text is fed into a computer and reconstituted into a more coherent image designed to enhance its salient features.
In this process several variables are changed, because it is this alterations that permit the image to be enhanced for the context of interest. "The process blurs the boundaries between the text and the context, for an assumed context has already changed the image before we see it. In these instances controlling context is literally equivalent to controlling interpretation" (Hayles, 1990: 274).

To cite another example, in February 1993, NBC Dateline report on the safety of GM trucks showed pickup catching fire in a test crash but did not reveal that incendiary device had been attached to the vehicle to help ensure the blaze. A week later, anchor Tom Brokaw expressed regrets for several aspects of Nightly News report about environmental abuses on an Idaho river. It featured footage of "dead fish" - but the supposedly deceased denizens of the deep were only stunned as part of an experiment.

It is now widely appreciated in organizational change literature that context free descriptions of change techniques and effects are gross oversimplifications. What is important is to explore the contextual dynamic of these changes. Pettigrew, (1987) was probably mindful of this when he said that the new orthodoxy is to concentrate on understanding the content, context and process of organizational change. Devoid of context, organizational change has little meaning. For example, think about IBM's recent decision (March 1993) to bring a C.E.O from outside computer industry (Gerstner from RJR) in order to turn around the organization. The act acquired great significance when seen in this new context that in order to change an
organization it is useful to have a leadership that can start with a clean slate without any rigid notions of what is right for the industry.

Modes of engagement in language

Bringing this notion of modes of engagement to the linguistic context, language use too appears similar to the use of hammer. When we are hammering, we are not conscious or aware of the hammer as a tool or object but rather attend to what we are doing with the hammer. Similarly, when we are dealing with words, we are not conscious of the meanings of the words as such but are engaged in what we are saying (doing) with the words. Further, like a tool language may become an object for a subject only if an interruption occurs that inhibits its further use. Though not explicitly, Gadamer (1975) had considered this issue when he talked about the 'unconscious nature' of language referring to our 'forgetfulness' of language in our use of it (thus bringing to awareness the mode of "being of language"). In other words, language in use is not an object present-at-hand (Vorhandensein) for a subject of consciousness.

Having discussed contextuality and temporality in hermeneutic inquiry, it is appropriate to consider how a researcher will apply the hermeneutic paradigm to organizations. However, if we recognize this social constructionist, symbolic nature of organizations the question of grounding inquiry becomes problematic. Hermeneutic inquiry gets around this problem by creating the model of a "text".
We will first discuss the characteristics of the "text" in the hermeneutic tradition and then outline a procedure to apply them to the study of organizations.

The paradigm of the 'text'

In simple terms, a text refers to any structure that contains a network of interrelated meaning. But in hermeneutic inquiry it is much more than that. To the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur (1971; 1981) who has provided the most comprehensive account of the 'paradigm of the text' so far, "It is the paradigm of distanciation in communication. As such, it displays a fundamental characteristic of the very historicity of human experience, namely that it is communication in and through distance" (Ricoeur, 1981, p131).

According to Ricoeur (1981), a text is a work of discourse (fixed by writing). Both the words work and discourse need clarification. A text is a work in the sense that it is a structured whole that cannot be reduced to its individual components (eg., a sentence). And it is as discourse that language is either spoken or written. As a discourse, the text preserves the properties of the sentence, but preserves them in a new constellation which calls for its own type of interpretation (Thomson, 1981). Both speaking and writing are legitimate modes of discourse. However, the realization of discourse in writing involves a series of attributes that effectively distance the text from the conditions of the spoken discourse. Ricoeur insists that it is this dialectic of speaking and writing that creates the hermeneutic problem of writing and
distanciation. Distanciation may be seen as the process in which the intended meanings of the speech or act are separated (distanced) from the acting, speaking or writing of a text.

Ricoeur discusses several criteria of textuality such as 1) the realization of language as discourse 2) the relation of speaking to writing in discourse 3) the works of discourse as the projection of a world and 4) discourse and the work of discourse as the mediation of self-understanding. Following is an attempt to explicate the most relevant of these for our discussion, the realization of language as discourse.

The realization of language as discourse.

The central theme here is the dialectic of event and meaning. Discourse (speaking) is given as an event; it is realized temporally and in the present, whereas a system of language is virtual and outside. The dialectic of event and meaning implies that if all discourse is realized as an event, all discourse is understood as meaning. What needs to be understood is not the fleeting event, but the meaning that endures. "Just as language, by being actualized in discourse, surpasses itself as system and realizes itself as event, so too discourse, by entering the process of understanding, surpasses itself as event, and becomes meaning" (Ricoeur, 1981. p134).

The important point to consider here is that it is the meaning that gets inscribed in writing. This is achieved, according to Ricoeur, by the "intentional exteriorisation" of the speech-act. However, as Honey (1987) pointed out, the dialectic of speaking and
writing is built upon a more primitive form of distanciation in oral
discourse around the relationship between event and meaning. To
outline this relationship, Ricoeur underscores the importance of
seeing language as discourse. He makes a case for seeing spoken
discourse as an event by identifying four instances.

1. Discourse has a temporal dimension that refers to the here and
   now of the speaker.

2. Discourse has a self-referential component whereby a person
   expresses himself or herself in speech.

3. Discourse is always about something. Discourse refers to a
   world which it attempts to describe, express or represent.

4. Discourse is always addressed to another source, i.e.,
discourse is always a dialogue or exchange among people.

Integrating these four notions one may state that in speech or
conversation meaning exists among participants, and that meaning is
located in the event of discourse itself. So far as a conversation is
going on in the here and now and the actors in the dialogue
communicate their intent to each other, the object of the
conversation is apparent. However, as soon as the spoken word is
‘fixed’ by writing, a hermeneutic problem of understanding what was
actually said emerges. In other words, at this stage, the
relationship between events and their meaning is altered. This
transformation occurs in all the four instances mentioned above and
is further explicated.
1. In speech, the temporal dimension appears and disappears. In writing, on the other hand, the discourse is 'fixed' because writing involves a translation, a fixing of the 'saying' in the 'said'. Therefore, what is inscribed in the writing is not the event as an event, but a meaning of the event. In order to identify the meaning in what is said, Ricoeur turns to speech act theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969). The act of speaking according to these authors is constituted by a hierarchy of subordinate acts which are distributed on three levels: 1) the level of locutionary propositional act, i.e., the act of saying; 2) the level of the illocutionary act or force, that which we do in saying; and 3) the level of the per-locutionary act, that which we do by saying.

To summarize, distanciation is achieved here by the surpassing of the event of saying by some of the meaning of what is said. It is the meaning which is inscribed in writing, and this inscription is rendered possible by the 'intentional exteriorization' of the speech-act.

Of the above three, the perlocutionary act is the least inscribable aspect of discourse. Illocutionary acts, to the extent they rely on the author's intent, fall next in line, whereas locutionary acts can be culled from the predicative structures of the sentence itself. These three components, taken together, reveal the first instance where meaning surpasses discourse as event.

2. The second dimension of discourse as event (self-referential nature of speech) refers to the relationship between subjectivity and
the speaker. "The subjective intention of the speaking subject and the meaning of the discourse overlap each other in such a way that it is the same thing to understand what the speaker means and what his discourse means" (Ricoeur, 1971, p. 78). This is not the case with written discourse. The intent of the author and the meaning of the text no longer coincide. Ricoeur (1971) explains this in detail:

This dissociation of the verbal meaning of the text and the mental intention is what is really at stake in the inscription of discourse. Not that we can conceive of a text without an author; the tie between the speaker and the discourse is not abolished, but distended and complicated...The text’s career escape the finite horizon lived by its author. What the text says now matters more than what the author meant to say...Using Plato’s expression again, written discourse cannot be ‘rescued’ by all the processes by which spoken discourse supports itself in order to be understood- intonation, delivery, mimicry, gestures... Only the meaning ‘rescues’ the meaning (in discourse), without the contribution of the physical and psychological presence of the author. But to say that the meaning rescues meaning is to say that only interpretation is the ‘remedy’ for the weakness of discourse which its author can no longer save (p.78).

In other words, Ricoeur is saying that text outlives the life of its author and is opened up to an infinite number of readings. So what can be interpreted is what the text says, not what the author intended. The meanings inscribed in the text surpasses the meaning and intentions of the author.

3. Let us now consider the third instance where the event is surpassed by the meaning. Discourse refers to the world, to a world of the text. The notion of the world of text denotes to reference or denotation of discourse. Following Frege, Ricoeur (1981) distinguished between the sense and reference of any proposition:
"The sense is the ideal object which the proposition intends, and hence is purely immanent in discourse. The reference is the truth value of the proposition, its claim to reach reality. Reference thus distinguishes discourse from language" (p. 140). The question for a researcher is: What happens to reference when discourse becomes a text?

In oral discourse, reference is ostensive. When we watch a sports commentary, our understanding of the event is influenced by what we see in the field and by the gestures of the commentator. In contrast, written discourse does not have any ostensive reference such that when we read about the game next day in the newspaper we may be constructing a different interpretation of what happened. Ricoeur considers this lack of ostensiveness a blessing. He calls it the 'spirituality' of the text. "In the same manner that the text frees its meaning from the tutelage of the mental intention, it frees its reference from the limits of ostensive reference" (Ricoeur, 1971, p 79). According to Ricoeur, reference "opens up the text" and thereby the world for us. The text is thus "freeing us from the visibility and limitations of situations by opening up a world for us" (p79). This is similar to the dimension of 'being-in-the-world' as used by Heidegger. For example, in his analysis of verstehen in Being and Time, Heidegger (1962) says that what we understand first in a discourse is not another person, but a project, the outline of a new being-in-the-world.
Ricoeur took this Heideggerian notion of "the projection of our own most possibilities" and applied it to the theory of text. Only writing, according to Ricoeur, frees itself from its author and the narrowness of the dialogical situation, and thereby reveals this destination of discourse as projecting in a world. In other words, to interpret is to explicate the type of being-in-the-world unfolded in front of the text. What should be interpreted in a text is a proposed world of possibilities.

In the organizational context, this distinction implies that once an event takes place in an organization, it acquires an indefinite potential for interpretation for as long as language exists. The intent of the author of the event is no longer relevant. In other words, in the third form of distanciation the text "decontextualizes" itself from its social and historical conditions of production, opening itself to unlimited series of readings.

4) The fourth form of distanciation emancipates the text from the limits of ostensive reference. In speech discourse the audience is known whereas in written discourse, the audience is potentially unknown.

In writing the narrowness of the dialogical relation explodes. Instead of being addressed just to you, the second person, what is written is addressed to the audience that creates itself... In escaping the momentary character of the event, the bounds lived by the author, and the narrowness of ostensive reference, discourse escapes the limits of being face to face. It no longer has a visible auditor. An unknown, invisible reader has become the unprivileged addressee of the discourse (Ricoeur, 1971, P. 80).

In other words, the audience to whom the text addresses itself both defines and creates itself over time. When a poem is written
and published, the audience is no longer the audience anticipated or controlled by the author. One of the most striking examples of this is Salam Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*. He certainly did not anticipate that the late Ayottollah Kohmeini and his zealous followers in the Islamic world would turn out to be the most interested audience for his book.

Coming back to our description of the text, the above four criteria together constitute what Ricoeur called the "paradigm of the text". In effect, as we can see, it addresses the issue of 'distanciation in communication' because in each of these instances the meaning surpasses the event (Honey, 1987). Throughout his writings, Ricoeur maintains that text is the medium through which human beings understand themselves. "To understand is to understand oneself in front of the text. It is not a question of imposing upon the text our finite capacity of understanding, but of exposing ourselves to the text and receiving from it an enlarged self.." (1981; p143). In this perspective, the goal of the Organization Science researcher should not be to impose his/her models or frameworks upon the organizational text, but to be open in order to fully appreciate what the text is trying to reveal. In most cases, the researcher collects data at the locutionary level, analyzes it using an existing model and at times feeds the interpretations back to the actors. The 'distanciation' of the event into multiple meanings does not usually engage the attention of the researcher. Over a period of time and with experience, researchers get used to a
model of organizational change and develop a facility to use it skillfully. However, use of a pre-set model or framework in organizational analysis is inherently opposed to letting the text reveal its meanings.

It is not hard to see how the metaphor of writing can be easily applied to actions and events in organizations. Action and events in organizations get fixed just as in writing and therefore they are subject to all the qualities of writing. And it is this text of actions and events that the researcher reads in this study.

HOW TO READ THE TEXT

Fusion of horizon

According to Gadamer (1975), the meaning of a text is defined not by the subjective intention of its author, but by the horizon of meaning provided by the cultural setting in which the author writes, in other words, the horizon of the interpreter and of the text. By this Gadamer is rejecting the epistemological primacy of the knowing subject while at the same time rejecting the positivist’s injunction to ignore the actor’s meaning. Understanding is a dialectical process involving both the interpreter and the interpreted. It is the fusion of these two horizons that constitutes interpretation. To read the organizational text the actor’s horizon of meaning (understanding or interpretation) is merged with the reader’s (researcher’s). However, there is no one correct fusion or interpretation of the text. Rather interpretations are subject to revision because the horizon of the
interpreter and the actor can vary both historically and ideologically (Gadamer, 1975). In other words, depending on the conceptual schemes (models) or theoretical predilections of the researcher and the actor, there will be different analysis of the organization though the organizational text remains the same. Explication of this overlooked notion is perhaps the most valuable contributions of Gadamerian hermeneutics to the study of organizations.

Prejudice or Pre-understanding

To expand the model of fusion of horizons, the core task of reading a text, Gadamer also defines a concept called "prejudice." Prejudice refers to the existence of prejudgments and preconceptions regarding any subject of inquiry. No text simply sits before us and proclaims its meaning. Prejudice is the pre-understanding that is the necessary condition of all human understanding. For Gadamer prejudice is not a barrier to truth, but a "positive possibility" of interpretation, not a problem to be solved.

The Hermeneutic Circle

The process of hermeneutic inquiry is an iterative one in which the examination moves between the whole, the parts and back again. The process of understanding is a dialectical one between the parts and the whole and between comprehension and explanation. This is so because every understanding must be based on some pre-understanding of the concepts used to express meanings. This is called the hermeneutic circle where "the anticipation of the global meaning of
a text becomes articulated through a process in which the meaning of the parts is determined by the whole and also determines the global meaning of the text, etc, as a whole" (Radnitzky, 1968, p.23). In other words, the process of understanding is a dialectical one between the parts and the whole and between comprehension and explanations. Every understanding must be based on some pre-understanding of an already existing understanding.

The first comprehensive description of the hermeneutic circle was provided by Frederich Schleiermacher (Palmer, 1969). Understanding inevitably involves reference to that which is already known; it operates in a circular, dialectical fashion. For example, consider the meaning of a sentence. The sentence derives its meaning from the individual words it comprises, but our interpretation of word meanings within a sentence is also governed by their relation within the sentence and the meaning of the sentence as a whole. Thus, interpretation always occurs in a circle in which the parts are always interpreted within some understanding of the whole, which, in turn, is understood by coming to understand constituent parts. The hermeneutic circle thus describes the contextual nature of knowledge which was discussed earlier. A fact does not stand on its own independent from its context or its interpreter, but rather is partially constituted by them. A fact can be evaluated only in relation to the larger structure of theory or argument of which it is a part. At the same time, this larger structure is dependent on its individual parts, as well as on other related information. In
explicating the circle of understanding, we move back and forth between part and whole. Geertz (1973) describes this as a "continuous dialectical tacking between the most local of local detail and the most global of global structure in such a way to bring both into view simultaneously" (p.239).

Four canons of "hermeneutical science" (Kockelmans, 1975) should help us make effective use of the notion of hermeneutic circle in organizational research.

1. The first canon underscores the autonomy of the object (in this case, organizational reality as experienced by its members). The meaning of that which we study must not be projected into it; it must be derived from the phenomenon itself. The identification of the organizational actor's framework is a central part of this process. Research should explain the importance of knowing it and elicit information pertaining to it.

2. The second canon demands that the interpretation should make the phenomenon maximally reasonable in human terms. The complexity and historical roots of the phenomenon must be explored and articulated, the mystifications uncovered. This is important because actors in organizations are relatively oblivious of their place in the overall context of the organization and the larger context of the environment.

3. The third canon requires that the interpreter (researcher) must achieve the greatest possible familiarity with the phenomenon in all its complexity and historical connectedness. The interpreter needs just not collect data cross sectionally (one point in time), but longitudinally (historically). Time constraints do not normally permit this, in which case, a reconstruction of the historicity of the organization should be attempted through questioning and making use of secondary data sources.

4. The fourth canon calls for the recognition of the researcher's or practitioner's initial framework. The interpreter must also show the meaning of the phenomenon for his own situation. By implication, it means that the researcher should openly state his/her basic assumptions,
values, and beliefs (personal theories) of organizations in general.

Sullivan (1984) has provided a slightly similar list of four criteria for the construction of an adequate interpretation. (1) an adequate account is negotiated by the researcher with whom the account is about. (2) the adequate account is presented itself as an argument. A plausible explanation is presented as one of the alternatives. (3) it expresses the possibility of choice in the individual’s socially and historically constructed situation. (4) explanations are supposed to be critical and bring something new to our understanding of the original account. In other words, the steps are as follows: (i) make explicit one’s own point of view (ii) elicit the point of view or framework of those we are studying, the actors in the situation. (iii) Make a close study of the text examining in detail the words, images, metaphors and themes (Guy, 1967), the relationship between them, and between the wholes and the parts of the text, in order to develop an interpretive framework. What we have thus constructed does not derive from inference, rather we have created a new order (Shotter, 1984).

Thus, according to the fusion of horizon perspective, researchers need to state their own framework or pre-understanding of organizations. In all the reading in this study, the inquirer needs to do that explicitly, right at the beginning. For example, in one of the readings, an organizational analysis model called appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987) that looks at organizations as affirmative systems was adopted. Unlike the traditional action
research approach where the researcher wants to find out what is going wrong and what needs to be fixed, in appreciative inquiry, the focus is on affirming the "miracle" that organizations are. Thus, the paradigm for the fusion of horizon in this investigation is the researchers' impositioning their research paradigm of appreciative inquiry and the interpretations arising out of it onto the interpretations or horizon of meaning of the actors. The resulting meaning or understanding that emerges out of this interaction (fusion) is the product of hermeneutic inquiry. Using another paradigm, a researcher may expect to find another "truth" about the organization which, however, does not diminish nor increase the value of the earlier "truth" (In fact Hermeneutics as a philosophy of science makes a convincing argument that there are multiple truths or layers of truth in all forms of science, physical, biological and social).
Further, this fusion of horizon reveals the temporality and contextuality of organizations. Each fusion is valid at a given point in time. The fusion will have different constituents at different times, because, both actors' and researchers' interpretive schemes (Bartunek, 1984) or world views may change over time. Hence our understanding of organizations will continue to change, as new definitions of person (Sampson, 1989), inquiry (Gergen, 1982) or organizations (Clegg, 1990) continue to evolve. In the postmodern era, the concept of individualism has already moved off center stage and is being replaced by a more globalized notion (Poster, 1984) that understanding the individual qua individual is no longer relevant to understanding human life. A new theory of the person where persons are creatures whose very identities are constituted by their social locations is gradually emerging (Sampson, 1985; Gergen, 1985; 1991; Connor, 1989). This in turn has contributed to the development of a notion of postmodern organizations as fundamentally different from the modernist models we are immersed in (Gergen and Thachankary, 1984).

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2 For example, Sampson (1985) argues that psychology's current theories of the person were developed during the era of modernism in a world dominated by industrialization, technology, secularism, individualism, and democracy, and a world in which the self-contained individual emerged from embeddedness in various collectivities to become the free-standing, central unit of the new social order. Premodern western society, on the other hand, understood persons as defined by their particular social contexts. Persons were fundamentally citizens of the polis, members of their religious communities, spouses, soldiers and so forth, not merely individuals as such. Unlike our current understanding, which distinguishes between real persons and the roles they must play, in premodern society, roles were the elements that constituted the person as such (Sampson, 1985).

By implication, this would mean that "our understanding of life is only a constant approximation; that life reveals quite different sides to us according to the point of view from which we consider its course in time is due to the nature of both understanding and life (Dilthey, 1976, p.109). The same way, our understanding of organizations too is only a constant approximation, they reveal quite different sides to us according to the point of view from which we study them. For example, Srivastva and Cooperrider (1987) outlined the model of an "egalitarian organization" based on their research in a large health care facility in the United States. Using "appreciative inquiry" Cooperrider and Srivastva, (1987) argue that hierarchical structures in organizations can be replaced by egalitarian ones. Contrasting appreciative inquiry with the traditional problem solving oriented action research they argue that the appreciative inquiry approach affirms the "life giving forces" of organizations and therefore brings out a markedly contrasting organizational reality than one which looks for "felt need". Similarly, Morgan (1986) has shown that organizations can be analyzed as 'machines', 'organisms', 'brains', 'cultures', 'psychic prisons', 'political systems', 'instruments of domination' or as 'flux or transformation'. Each image is a powerful metaphor which brings out different realities of organizations like the proverbial six blind men describing an elephant.
To summarize, the ultimate intent of reading a text is to dig out or excavate different layers of meaning out of organizational experiences. The researcher is like a miner or geologist who wants to know what lies behind the surface. De Vries and Miller (1987) suggest that the researcher may act like a translator and cryptographer, transforming different levels of understanding. This new understanding or reading of the text itself is the beginning of organizational change, because, the reading of the text invariably leads to new fusion of horizon each time.

The following guidelines helped this researcher read the organizational text studied herein.

Guidelines for textual analysis

1. Look for central themes in the story. There should be one or two basic themes for decoding a text. For example, for Segmund Freud it was "desire". He developed a whole theory of psychoanalysis that revealed its different manifestations.

2. See the decoding as a process of discovery rather than a single stab at explanation. Go through several stages of refinement by testing it against data.

3. Look for thematic unity. The attempt here is to organize different observations into an inter-connected, cohesive unit (De Vries, and Miller, 1987).

4. Engage in pattern matching, looking for distinctions between current and earlier incidents in history of the organization (De Vries and Miller, 1987). Geertz (1973) characterized this as "revealing repetition".

5. Apply the rule of psychological urgency (Freud, 1920; Lagan, 1978). Somewhere in the text it is possible to find out the cause of the problem (De Vries and Miller, 1987). This applies very well to an organizational setting where the researcher or practitioner is called in to solve a problem. It is our assumption that the carefully trained eyes of the researcher/practitioner will detect some contradictions,
inconsistencies or uniqueness in the organization which in turn becomes the focus of the hermeneutic circle.

6. Remember and internalize the continuous back and forth process between the part and the whole that constitutes the hermeneutic circle. In hermeneutic circle, this circularity is not viewed as a "vicious circle" but rather as a "circulus fructuosus", or spiral which implies the possibility of a continuous deepening of the understanding. It's a "return with a difference".

7. Continue the hermeneutic circle movement till saturation of meaning is reached. The interpretation of a text ends when one has reached a "good gestalt" or the "inner unity" in the text which is free of logical contradictions.

8. Develop a good knowledge about the theme of the text. Obviously, this calls for a method of data collection that will necessitate the extended participation of the researcher in the research setting. Observing actors in ready-to-hand mode requires that the researcher is available to capture the organizational experiences at different points in time.

9. Appreciate that reading the text is not pre-suppositionless. The interpreter cannot jump outside the tradition of understanding he lives in (Gadamer's prejudice). However, it is important for the interpreter to make his presuppositions explicit so that he is aware about them. In all the reading in this study, the researcher makes his prejudice explicit by stating the conceptual framework used.

10. Give one's imaginative or intuitive self a chance for experimentation. Every interpretation involves innovation and creativity. This is worth stating because as researchers or practitioners we are trained to look at organizations in a particular way which in turn determines how we will read that text. By conscious efforts, we can harness the organizational text to facilitate the creation of its own conceptual guides which might help us see organizations in different perspectives.

The above guidelines are by no means exhaustive and are only meant to help researchers and practitioners to ground themselves in the craft of hermeneutic inquiry.

CONCLUSION

The intent of this study is two-fold;
1. To show the potential impact of a choice of a methodology on research outcomes. Each of the chapters that follow (except chapter 3) are readings based on different interpretive schemes of the researcher and those researched. In other words, one part of this thesis focuses on the process of inquiry: By developing hermeneutics as a research methodology for organizational sciences, it is demonstrated that inquiry is a social process of collective realization of knowledge through a creative and egalitarian dialogue between those observed and observing.

2. To bring out substantive content in each readings. While the process of inquiry is a significant factor to be considered, it is equally important to learn something substantive and new from doing research. In this thesis, the "fusion of horizon" section in each chapter list such content based learnings. In a way, therefore, this study is unique, because it has attempted to bring out both the process and content issues inherent in social sciences research simultaneously.

Prelude

Based on the above analysis, the following may be listed as a prelude to the readings to follow in the chapters ahead.

1. The primacy of the author (actor) should be evidenced in the reading. This imples incorporating the understanding as experienced by the author (in this case, the ICA members).
2. The **primacy of the reader (observer)** should also be equally evidenced in the reading. This would involve explicating the role of the various conceptual scheme, models, etc., used by the researchers.

3. Demonstrate the **fusion of horizon** in each reading. This is traditionally presented as "results" or "findings" in most researches.

4. The reading should bring out the **historicity** of the phenomena under investigation. This may be accomplished by demonstrating how the meaning of the core concepts associated with the phenomena have changed or might change over a period of time.

5. An articulation of how the **context** of inquiry will influence the findings.

6. The reading should demonstrate the potential impact of the choice of **language** in the textual analysis outcomes.

7. A clear demonstration of the steps involved in the **hermeneutic circle**. This may be accomplished by showing how the whole is influenced by the parts and how each reading is mediated by previous readings.
CHAPTER 3

THE HISTORY AND CORE TASKS OF THE ICA

Before we proceed further with the readings, a description of the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA), the sample organization is necessary including its history and core task. The history is provided with least interpretations. The intent of this narrative is informational and not interpretive. The readings in subsequent chapters reveal how the history and core tasks of the ICA have been subjected to reinterpretations over a period of time.

The history of the ICA

The Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) is a nonprofit organization, and at its peaks operated in 35 nations with over 100 field offices. They call themselves as "a research, training and demonstration group concerned with the human factor in world development". A significant part of ICA's work is developing practical means of stimulating local citizen participation in the planning and implementing of human development. To that end the Institute maintains a research effort that creates new methods for community and organization development. The work of the Institute is broad and varied, ranging from management seminars for executives to comprehensive development projects in local communities.

1952 is the year that marks the Institute's beginning. In that year, the Christian Faith and Life Community (CFC) was formed in Austin, Texas. Founded by Jack Lewis, a former Navy Chaplain, this group of faculty and students at the University of Texas decided to
experiment with a life-style of "research and study", the focus of which was the creation of a curriculum of social and religious studies. These studies were initially designed to awaken the university community, and later the church, to the "fundamental issues people faced in their lives." Dr. Joseph Wesley Mathews, an associate professor of Social Ethics at Perkins Theological Seminary in Dallas, Texas, was invited by Fred Buss, a student, to visit the community after Fred heard Dr. Mathews speak at a Methodist Church. Dr. Mathews became the Director of CFC in 1956, and developed a curriculum called Religious Studies-1. By 1957, there were 14 courses offered including Religious Studies-I which were taught all over the U.S. While continuing to develop the curriculum for local congregations, the staff also continued to probe the meaning and form of contemporary Christian community. Studies of the form and learnings of historical religious orders were undertaken and the staff began to model itself after historical family orders. This included participating in common worship, study and missional life in service to the church and world. The Institute's curriculum evolved into two distinct branches called the Religious Studies, focusing on Biblical and theological courses, and the Cultural Studies, focusing on contemporary society and the changing trends in the family, in communities and the world.

During the post World War-II years, critical issues facing the Church were being reviewed both by Vatican II and by the Second General Assembly of the World Council of Churches which met in
Evanston in 1954. In its deliberation, the Council called for a lay training center for North America similar to the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey, Switzerland. This led to the formation of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies, in Evanston, Illinois in 1956 (Ecumenical, derived from Greek, means universal or worldwide). Following the resignation of its director Walter Liebrechtin, Joseph Mathews was invited to become the Dean in 1962. Seven families of the CFC decided to join the staff as teaching faculty without compensation. Several members of the families worked full time at other jobs and pooled their salaries.

The Sixties was a time of expansion for the Institute, initially in North America and later around the world. In 1963, the Institute moved from Evanston to a sixteen-block area in Chicago’s west side (later named the "5th City") and began working with local residents to discern the community’s problems and design practical, locally-based solutions. Neighborhood workshops and door-to-door interviews identified over 6,000 discrete problems. In response, forty-five programs in social and economic development were designed and implemented to build a strong sense of community identity and pride through voluntary cooperative action. Surviving the destruction of the 1968 race riots in Chicago, the project became a prototype for citizen participation in community renewal around the world.

The development in 5th City was impressive. Four years after it began, it had new community gathering places, a health center, a
preschool, stores, parks and businesses. Documents written in 1965 record five presuppositions used in carrying out the project:

(1). Community reformulation projects should be conducted in a limited geographical area. This gives the community a sense of identity and allows them to recognize precisely the problems that exist there. This facilitates the development of realistic solutions.

(2). Community reformulation must deal with the depth and intensity of human problems found in the area. The key problem identified in 5th City was a negative self image among its residents which were transformed by addressing them directly. A method called "Imaginal education" was used to help people change their images of themselves.

(3). The key to identity building is intentional use of symbols. In 5th City, the major symbol was a sculpture called "the Iron Man" erected in a central neighborhood location. It represented strength and endurance of black people. The learning was to use symbols which are authentic representations of life in the community and which promote positive self images among its people.

(4). Community Reformulation must deal with all critical problems of a community simultaneously. This means addressing issues of education, health care, violence, drugs, and identity all at the same time. In doing so, one acknowledges the interrelatedness of these problems and works toward more comprehensive solutions.

(5). Everyone needs a way to participate and make a contribution unique to their position in the community. Throughout the development of the project, it became increasingly important to have community members as the leaders of the projects.

In 1965 Summer Research Assemblies were held in 5th City. During these programs, learnings from experiments with different methods were synthesized, assimilated, and put into manuals. In 1966, a six week long Summer Research Assembly was initiated using Religious Studies-I and Imaginal Education for 3 groups: teachers, students, and church laity. In addition, each year Councils were
held after the Assemblies to emphasize writing that clarified the continually evolving mission, task and basic structures of the Institute.

In 1967, 14,000 people participated in Institute programmes nationally. In that year the Institute made trips to do research in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and Asia. Over 2,000 people took courses taught outside North America during these trips. In 1968, "Global Odyssey" was created which was described as a spirit event experiment. In one month, a group travelled to a dozen countries. The term Odyssey was a metaphor for the journeys the Institute was undertaking all over the world.

The Chicago riots in 1968 greatly affected 5th City. An important time in the history of ICA, the staff faced a dilemma about to whether to stay in 5th City or move out. Ultimately, they not only stayed but made the decision to become global in their outreach. The Institute expanded to 400 staff, started an 8-week Academy program, and established offices in Chicago, Rockford, Boston, Atlanta, Los Angeles, Kuala Lumpur, and Sydney.

In the Fall of 1968 the staff taught the first Global Academy. In 1969 the Urban Academy and the International Training Institute (ITI) were launched. The ITI model proved to be a key awakening tool for churches in Asia, Latin America and Africa.

The Summer of 1970 brought about a significant shift. The Institute formally started the Local Church Experiment which was an attempt to introduce 5th City model into social forms of a culture.
The story was that a renewed church will help bring about a renewed world. In terms of reflection and research, a lot was happening. The institute embarked upon Corporate Reading Research Projects (CRRP) in all offices during 1970-71. They reviewed 2000 books in preparation for the 1971 research assembly. Summary sheets of all books and articles were compiled into two volumes, each about five inches thick (Griffith, 1992).

Everyone read books in the economic, political and cultural arenas and summarized key insights. It was "edge" stuff, but what we were really pushing for were the functions of each societal dynamic. We sent in the results of reading prior to the summer program where the results were tabulated and translated into the more detailed levels of the Social Process Triangles. I forget how may thousands of books were read, but I recall the excitement of being a part of such a huge and innovative method of social research. (C. Welsch quoted in Griffith, 1992, p. 6)

The 1971 summer research assembly created the "Social Process Triangles" paving the way for eventual Global Social Demonstration projects (GSD). During this time, the planning methods developed in the Fifth City were refined and made available to the private and public sector through seminars entitled "New Individual in the New Society" (NINS) which were conducted on weekends. It was later called Leadership Effectiveness and New Strategies (LENS).

The Institute was steadily expanding during this time. In 1971, as an offspring of the 5th City model, the first experiment in the Australian Aboriginal Community of Mowwanjum began. By this time, the Institute had grown to over 1,000 members. There were 51 offices, 15 outside North America. The infrastructure, too, expanded when in the same year James Kemper of the Kemper Life Insurance
Company presented their building in Uptown Chicago to be the International Training Center for the Institute.

1973 was a turning point. As the work of the Ecumenical Institute expanded much beyond the confines of the church, there was a need to adapt the organization accordingly. This resulted in the formation of the Institute of Cultural Affairs (the ICA) to further the application of methods of human development all around the world based on a secular philosophy. Subsequent Summer Research Assemblies reflected this turn to the secular.

By the mid-70's, ICA had expanded from its Chicago base to 100 offices in 30 countries. Subsequently, the ICA International (ICAI) was founded in 1977 in Brussels, Belgium as an international non-profit association which facilitates the activities of autonomous national member institutes. By 1974, three programs emerged as primary to the ICA's work: Town Meetings, the Human Development Program, and Global Social Demonstration projects (GSD).

The Town Meetings

The Town Meeting Programs began in the United States in 1975. A typical Town Meeting included vision, challenge, proposal workshops which focussed on the basic economic, political and cultural issues of the local community. Local citizens began by creating a community vision of its future. Then they named the social issues which blocked the realization of their vision. The next step analyzed issues and grouped them into clusters. Participants then looked at the clusters and named the single
underlying contradiction in each one. Finally, these insights were written up and presented as challenges faced by the community.

The Town Meeting format enabled local citizens to create and implement practical proposals for solving local problems based on their own resources and cooperative effort. From 1975-1977, 5,000 Town Meetings were held covering every county in the United States ranging from small rural communities to crowded urban neighborhoods.

The Human Development Projects

Simultaneously with the Town Meetings, the ICA developed Human Development Projects. Since 1975, pilot Human Development Projects were initiated in every time zone based on the learnings from the 5th City Project. During the first phase, 2-week "consults" were held in locations in each community involving a broad cross section of local residents, ICA staff, and volunteer consultants representing a wide range of expertise. The learnings from 5th City were used testing their applicability in diverse cultures and settings. The next phase was replication. This involved broad scale training in the methods of community development. The product of each consultation was a document of an integrated four year plan for comprehensive local development. Within 10 years, the ICA developed a worldwide reputation for comprehensive community development with a strong bias for grass roots participation. This culminated in the creation of a Human Development Training School.
Global Social Demonstration Projects (GSD)

The 1976 Summer Research Assembly launched the Global Social Demonstration Projects (GSD). This was called the "Band of 24" symbolizing the 24 places across the world in the 24 time zones.

The Summer Research Assembly in 1977 brought new methods into focus as a result of experiences in the field. The death of Joseph Wesley Mathews, the ICA Director marked the beginning of a new phase for the organization. For example, in this year members began questioning the use of gender specific (male) language which resulted in rewriting many songs.

All these years, the ICA has maintained a close watch on societal discourses and changes. For example, the Summer Research Assembly of 1978 created a Task Force on Awakening, Demonstration, Interchange & Formation. There were modules on The Seven Revolutions, Learnings, Framing, and Awakening. Questions of the New Reality resulted in a work called A New Vision of Reality, Part I and II, which was an anthology of current works on the paradigm shift. It contained articles, tapes, and videos for systematic study by the community.

During 1978-79, the ICA began initiating some work with corporations. For example, the LENS program was redesigned and used with Fortune 500 companies. LENS was also held in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. One of ICA's basic models, the Social Process Triangles was adapted for use in business as the "Corporate Process Triangles". Courses on "Effective Supervision" and
"Effective Leadership" were created for training with major corporations.

The 1979 Summer Research Assembly was a "Global Symposium" to determine its priorities. Town Meetings were globalized, and were held in thousands of communities in many parts of the world, ranging from small rural villages to crowded urban neighborhoods. During this period, the structure of the organization was changing drastically because of expansion outside of North America.

In 1980, the Summer Research Assembly was called "Global Symposium on Human Development in the 80s". Six hundred people from 40 nations attended. In 1981, a journal called Image was published quarterly in Chicago which summarized the work and methodology of the ICA until then. For example, the January-March issue focused on Corporate Research Methods while the April-June issue focused on Imaginal Training Methods. July-September issue dealt with Human Development Demonstration and the last issue (October-December) focused on the Human Factor in World Development.

Responding to the world wide recognition of the need for local human development, starting in 1982, the ICA, with United Nations agencies and several private agencies, sponsored the International Exposition of Rural Development (IERD) - a three-year program (1982-1984) for sharing successful rural development approaches. The IERD brought global attention to more than 300 successful, locally managed projects from 55 countries. The data base from this meeting has been published in three volumes. The Exposition's theme of
"Sharing Approaches that Work" was picked up by numerous participating organizations and is also the title of one of the volumes ("Approaches that Work in Rural Development", 1988).

Two unrelated yet significant results came out of the International Exposition of Rural Development.

1. The process of de-centralization began here. Each of the locations was becoming more autonomous.

2. The economics of the ICA began to shift. The conference consumed almost all the resources of ICA and thus self sufficiency of each unit became a necessity.

Two years later, in 1986 at the Global Council in Chicago three functional teams were launched: (1) a long term investment team in Chicago, (2) a research team in Toronto, and (3) an international development team in Brussels.

The Institute’s research effort in the mid 80s was to explore the trends, values, ideas and approaches that help people face the future. As part of this research effort, two international programs were held, one in Brussels during July and August 1985 called "Summer '85". The other, called "Planetary Connections" was held in Chicago in July 1985. At these events, participants examined factors that lead to social change and identified social trends leading in new directions.

The Global Council Plenary held in 1986 in Bilbao, Spain was another turning point. Decisions on major moves in ICA’s economic life took place to demonstrate its commitment to the emergence of a
new planetary vision for society. It was also a statement of confidence about ICA's future. The decision was made to meet globally once every two years.

A Statement on the Evolutionary Transformation of the ICA was documented by the Global Panchayat in June 1987, in which six areas of major challenges were also identified. They were, Missional Modes, Common Myth, Mature Pluriformity, Financial Viability, Human Resource Journeying and Covenantal Relationships.

From mid-November 1987 to May 1988, the Global Panchayat travelled to 7 continents and visited some 35 locations to discuss questions of "What is going on?" in the planet and "If this is going on, What does it mean?".

Toward the end of 1988, each region was becoming more autonomous. In this "self reflection stage," many felt that "now we are a network rather than an organization." The ICA was undergoing a transition whose nature was very differently understood by staff in different locations. The metaphor ranged from "death" to "rebirth".

The Earthwise Learning Series (ELS) was conceived in Phoenix in 1988. A conference called "Our Common Future" took place in Mexico where members from 30 nations attended. In 1989 an ICA International gathering took place in Brussels, Belgium where the main agenda was understanding the evolving network structure of various ICA's to one another. Later in 1990, networking became an important agenda with the ICA network meetings taking place in New Orleans and continued yearly in a variety of geographic locations.
For example, ICA Kenya and ICA Zambia jointly developed the Southern Africa Grassroots Training Programme (SAGTP). ICA Egypt and UNICEF published 7000 copies of an ICA health manual in Arabic to be used as a health training tool in Egyptian Villages. The "Space Between" was launched in Lima, Peru for learning to function more effectively in intercultural situations. In 1990, ICAI met in Taipei. Two years later in 1992 the geographic choice was Prague in Eastern Europe.

Having made a sketch of the ICA's history until the time of the beginning of the research, the focus is shifted to core tasks of the ICA.

THE CORE TASKS OF ICA

Due to ICA's holistic development orientation, its core tasks are hard to identify in precise terms. Fundamentally, the ICA is concerned with human development at a global level primarily using their "technology of participation" which has been developed over the last 35 years. This is accomplished through their work with small groups, communities, organizations (both profit and nonprofit), voluntary associations (both NGOs and FVOs), government agencies, and educational institutions. Beyond that, the core tasks assume such diversity that a thematic analysis of the published mission statements, objectives, past and current activities of 46 ICA offices located in 28 countries is included in order to accurately represent ICA's core tasks. Table 3.1 outlines the distribution as of 1989. Rank ordering them we have the following
activities of ICA. Within the brackets are shown how many countries out of the 28 considered mentioned each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Frequency mentioned</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Training</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Education</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Developing collaboration with UN agencies and other government/non-government organizations and communities</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Consulting with Government agencies, NGOs, PVOs, business organizations and rural/village communities</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Initiating/ managing health programs</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Integrated rural development including agriculture and irrigation development</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Leadership training/ village leaders training</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Women programs</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Environmental/ Ecological preservation</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Strategic Planning</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Global Consciousness dissemination</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>13. Research</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>14. Volunteer programs</td>
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<td>15. Management Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Spiritual development</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

Table 3.1. ICA activities and core tasks (Source: ICAI Handbook, 1989)
The first category in the list, training, implies a wide variety of activities ranging from village "consults" to working with corporations on organizational transformation. The category is retained as the core task of ICA since the term was used by most of the ICAs, though activities under this field are very specialized now. We may see that training is a basic activity in most of the other programs outlined in the organizational activity chart of ICA. Education, the second most frequently cited activity, too is a general one. This includes raising the literacy level in villages, adult education programs, and a variety of specialized educational activities. Later in the analysis (chapter 5), we will see how "teaching and learning" orientation is a life giving force for the ICA.

Summary

Examining the activities of ICA it may be safely concluded that they are in the business of sustainable development. It is not merely helping a community or group to improve their lot, but to empower them to sustain the development. Beyond this basic philosophy, the nature of ICA’s work varies from location to location. The historical focus on village development has undergone changes with structural modifications in ICA networking and resource sharing. Rural development is now largely confined to ICAs in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Some ICA’s within these continents are focused not only on village development but also on consulting with NGOs, Governmental agencies, and corporations. ICA’s in the
United States and most of Europe are not actively involved in rural development but have started attending to more local issues such as drugs, street violence, unemployment, and illiteracy.

Table 3.2 shows a country-wide distribution of the core tasks of the ICA extracted from the ICAI Handbook of 1989.
CHAPTER 4

THE ICA AS A GLOBAL SOCIAL CHANGE ORGANIZATION

During the four years of involvement writing this thesis, the researcher has learned that understanding organizations is a process rather than an end product. The different readings that are presented in this thesis demonstrate that process in the infinite loop of the hermeneutic circle. This chapter represents the first reading of the ICA, where it was characterized as a global social change organization (GSCO). Following the discussion in chapter 1, it is important to describe how the seven criteria listed therein were used in this construction.

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF THE ICA AS A GLOBAL SOCIAL CHANGE ORGANIZATION

Using the hermeneutic inquiry criteria the following should be evident in the reading.

1. The primacy of the author (actor) should be evidenced in the reading. This implies incorporating the understanding as experienced by the ICA members. In what way did the ICA see themselves as involved in the task of global social change? Using their own words, it is demonstrated how actively and intensely the ICA has been involved in this task for the last 35 years. Yet, it is important to note that the discussion of the primacy of the author is ultimately influenced by the primacy of the reader, in this case, the researcher. Over four hundred archival data files that contained extensive documentation of the various activities of the ICA were
examined in order to identify good examples of their global social change focus.

2. The primacy of the reader (observer) should also be equally evidenced in the reading. This involves explicating the role of the various conceptual schema, models, etc., used by the researchers. In this instance, it will be the conceptualization of organizations like the ICA as GSCOs. The research team started with some clear characterization of who or what the GSCOs are. In all the research that were done, this "horizon" (Gadamer, 1975)\(^1\) significantly influenced what the researchers were looking for, or even what they were likely to find. Accordingly, the chapter starts with this "horizon" of global social change organizations.

3. Demonstrate the fusion of horizon in each reading. This is equivalent to the "results" in a traditional form of inquiry. Listed here will be the knowledge gained in the process.

4. The reading should bring out the historicity of the phenomena under investigation. This may be accomplished by demonstrating how the meaning of the core concepts associated with the conceptualization of global social change organizations have changed or might change over a period of time.

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\(^1\) The concept of horizon as used by Gadamer shares close affinity to constructs like "interpretive scheme" (Bartunek, 1984), world-view (Beyer, 1981) and "frame of reference" (Westenholtz, 1993).
5. An articulation of how the context of inquiry will influence the findings regarding GSCOs and the ICA.

5. The impact of the choice of language in the textual analysis outcomes. That is, in what way did the intentional use of language create the construct called "global social change organizations?"

7. A clear demonstration of the steps involved in the Hermeneutic circle. This may be accomplished by showing how each reading is influenced by previous readings.

It is important to highlight that the kind of hermeneutic analysis developed here is different from a deconstructive approach. The intent is not to tear apart the construction, but to show the value of it. At the same time, the analysis would seek to demonstrate that the knowledge gained indeed is a construction, made so by the choicefulness of the language and constructs used.

THE PRIMACY OF THE READER (OBSERVER)

The axial ages and the coming of a new global civic culture

To appreciate the significance of conceptualizing GSCOs, two related concepts called the "axial ages" and "global civic culture" (Boulding, 1988) are described. The concept of axial ages (Boulding, 1988) is useful in understanding the conceptualization of GSCOs and the global civic culture. Axial ages are periods when people, ideas and cultural traditions from diverse regions come together in a great flowering of human creativity. These are periods when people formerly isolated from one another begin significant contact.
According to Boulding, the first axial age might have begun in around 12,000 BCE with the transition from millennia of hunting and gathering existence to the early beginning of settled agriculture. The establishment of the first Great Central Empires of Africa and the Mediterranean - Egypt and Sumer - about 3000 BCE may be the first documented axial age civilization. Later, the problem of asymmetric contact between colonizers and colonized limited the two way dialogue and learning process that give rise to greater periods of civilization flowering. The emergence of global social change organizations (Boulding initially used the term International Non-Governmental Organization) bridge this gap by helping to open up the two way learning process and inspiring new visions for an emerging world civilization.

Axial ages emerge out of a triad of 1) exploring new terrains, 2) interacting in a sustained way with strangers and 3) imagining the other and better. The genesis of GSCOs fits this description. GSCOs have emerged in response to a series of imminent survival issues facing this planet and its species. They include the population explosion, environmental degradation, greenhouse effect, poverty, unemployment, human rights violations, and war (see Brown, 1992 and Brundtland Commission, 1987 for a comprehensive description of global problems). To be precise, the Encyclopedia of Human Problems (1989) lists 10,233 global problems. In less than 40 years, since World War II literally thousands of GSCOs have emerged addressing these issues. For most GSCOs, this required a true
exploratory venture into "new terrains" because little was known as to how to address these issues. Especially early on, there was a lack of scientific and political will to understand and act on any of global issues. With little support from governments and industry GSCOs had to trek a path of the 'unknown' to figure out what to do. Soon they discovered that they were intensely interacting with "strangers" from all around the world who shared similar concerns. Such effective and sustained networking with people who hardly knew each other made it possible, for example, for Amnesty International to persuade dictatorships in several parts of the world with thousands of letters generated from across the world to release 'prisoners of conscience'. All these was possible, because, on the most basic level, the GSCOs do imagine the "other and the better". GSCOs are born when ordinary human minds visualize a drug free society, a safe and clean environment, peace and prosperity for everyone, and realization of human rights and dignity.

The sustained transnational efforts of the GSCOs have created a new form of culture which Elise Boulding (1988) calls the global civic culture. She gives the idea of civic a new meaning by proposing that we learn to live comfortably in a "two hundred year present." People are alive today who were born 100 years ago, and some people born this year may celebrate their centenarian birthday in 2093. Our present is continuously moving, stretching out 100 years in both directions. The global civic culture represents the texture of how we share a common space, common resources, and manage
our interdependence in a "company of strangers" (Palmer, 1981, p. 61) which constitute the public. Global social change organizations are increasingly taking on that role of facilitating the creation of a common civic culture by bringing together people from all across the world.

Perlmutter (1989) has the global civic culture in mind when he talks about the first global civilization. According to him, it is the process whereby nations and cultures are open to influence each other while recognizing the identities and diversities of people where no ideology prevails over the other but increasingly more values are shared regarding the critical problems related to the survival of humankind and the planet. The first global civilization according to Perlmutter and Trist (1986) follows a developmental pattern moving from "I" values (industrial era) toward "D" (Deindustrial) and "S" (Symbiotic, societal) values. It is argued that GSCOs represent the symbiotic, societal values.

GSCOs have significantly shaped the notion of a global civic culture partly by their demography. The Yearbook of International Organizations (1985-86) lists more than 18,000 non-governmental organizations out of which about 8000 may be called GSCOs. Most have come into existence in the past 40 years. The remaining 10,000 are specialized types that have substantive participation by private citizens.

GSCOs embody the diversities found in the diverse perspectives. They stand for life, liberty, and autonomous
interdependence among societies fostering a sense of community and kinship.

GSCOs as Social Innovations

The term social inventions is used by Coleman (1970) to describe "fundamentally new forms of social relationships or new forms of organizations" (p.163). The first use of the term "social innovations" as opposed to "social inventions" was by James Taylor (1970) who used the term to describe the introduction of interdisciplinary based "improved forms of action and new ways of doing things" (p. 70) at the community level. His project dealing with introducing more effective psychological rehabilitation procedures for low-income people in Topeka, Kansas was a forerunner of the global social innovations (Cooperrider and Pasmore, 1990). GSCOs are social innovations because they have created innovative ways of constructively reacting to the global problematique.

Boulding (1989) considers GSCOs one of the most prominent social innovations of contemporary times. GSCOs provide society with 1) a longer term time horizon and vision, 2) educational forums of world's citizenship, and 3) an integrative knowledge vehicle providing data and conceptual innovation in the areas between disciplines. Above all, according to Boulding (1989), the GSCO is one of the most effective vehicles in existence for "going to school", whereby we can all be active learners of the 10,000 societies that inhabit our planet in today's axial period of "heterogeneous universalism."
Research on GSCOs

GSCOs are differently called International Non-governmental Organizations (INGOs), International Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs), Global Partnerships, International Coalitions etc., and are studied under topics such as social innovation, voluntarism, pressure groups, interest groups, and so on. Though a fairly large number of research has been done in each of these fields (for example, James, 1983; Holtman, 1983; Hansmann, 1981; Bigoness and Perreault, 1981; Daft, 1982; Meyer and Goes, 1988; Wilson and Butler, 1986), they are usually fragmented and do not have the global social change theme as a central thrust of the research argument or discovery. Thus, despite the phenomenal rise of these organizations, relatively little is known about their organizational properties such as how they are born, nurtured or maintained. Cooperrider and Pasmore (1989) in reviewing the top journals in management found only one empirical/theoretical article focused on the dynamics of GSCOs in the last 25 years. Similarly, most management professionals focus their activities on private and public sectors largely ignoring GSCOs.

Only recently have management researchers and practitioners recognized the role-modeling potential of nonprofit organizations and GSCOs (Young, 1986; Drucker, 1989; Byrne, 1990). Traditionally, management researchers maintain that these organizations should learn from businesses (for example, Wortman, 1983; Anthony and Young, 1984). Though a detailed discussion on the lessons to be
learned from GSCOs, or the ICA in particular, is not within the scope of this chapter, some of them are briefly mentioned here.

GSCOs start with a mission or desire to make a difference outside their boundaries. In contrast, business organizations start with the inside, their own survival, financial returns, etc. In general, GSCOs top management personnel have risen through the ranks, and have an intimate knowledge of all the aspects of managing rather than narrow specializations (Hayes and Abernathy, 1980; Sehrman and Levin, 1984).

The innovative use of collectivism and voluntarism to create the climate for the axial ages is probably one of the most useful lessons to be learned from the GSCOs. This is evident from the increasing interest of organizational scientists in the collective or voluntary organizational forms as an alternative to bureaucratic, service, or commercial organizations (Butler, 1983 and 1986; Knoke and Wood 1981; Rotschild-Whitt, 1979). Ouchi (1980), for example, argued that collectives are likely to be the most suitable organizational form mediating transactions where performance measures are ambiguous and individual and organizational interests are highly congruent. Amitai Etzioni (1988) too supports the notion by suggesting that the proper unit of analysis for economic behavior is not the individual but the collectivity. According to him, "collectivities are more consequential in forming the choices of individuals than the individuals themselves" (p. 181).
In many sectors of the U.S. economy employees are behaving more and more as if they are volunteers (Inglehart, 1977; Pearce, 1982); they let their own standards and preferences dictate their work rather than organizational standards, and where the primary emphasis of membership originates not from anticipation of material incentives, but solidary and purposive incentives (Clark and Wilson, 1961). 'Volunterization of the work place', techniques of motivating people other than through a pay check are increasingly being discussed by employers concerned about productivity and quality control (Ellis, 1985). GSCOs are trend setters and leaders in this field because they accomplish much of their organizational goals without the "carrot and stick" philosophy of businesses.

Yankelovich and Immerwahr (1983) suggest that incentives, institutional practices and managerial systems of traditional organizations are incongruent with the changing values and attitudes of personal development and expressivism of contemporary times. As a result, traditional management practices blunt rather than stimulate the work ethic. The new values of expressivism, designated in different terms such as "reproductive" (Zetterberg, 1984), "post-materialist" (Inglehart, 1977), and "inner-directed" (Mitchell, 1982) attach a different meaning to success. GSCOs seems to offer different meanings to success by successfully tapping into new values of expressivism. Thus, working with GSCOs is of strategic advantage to management professionals who can positively transfer their learning to businesses and government organizations.
Conclusion

GSCOs are one of the most significant social inventions of the past half-century and are one of the greatest unrecognized resources in the world today. In spite of their rapid proliferation, the GSCOs largely have been overlooked. An expanded focus on the GSCOs will open exciting vistas of learning and will compel change in our current theories of human organization, management, and processes of change. Most important, the GSCOs provide management professionals with a ready made and rapidly developing arena to not only practice their profession but to take part in building the global civic culture.

THE PRIMACY OF THE AUTHOR (ACTOR)

The primacy of the author (actor) should be evidenced in the reading. This would imply incorporating the understanding experienced by the ICA. In what way did the ICA see themselves as involved in the task of global social change? Using their own words, it is demonstrated how actively and intensely the ICA has been involved in this task for the last 35 years. A document "corporately" (meaning as a group) written by the participants in the 1971 Summer Research Assembly and titled All the Earth Belongs to All the People, is one such instance. The 40 page booklet opens with:

Never before have the world and its societies been faced with such incredible options. Rising expectations for the quality of man's life, promised by technological miracles, and the demand for individual fulfillment are at the same time offset by our deepest fears for the future, resulting in dislocation of society. Out of this age rises a wrenching cry of despair
for the future of mankind which reflects the chaos of radical change, the breakdown of traditional systems, and the collapse of humanness in each man. Yet from the depth arises a ground swell, a revolution which brings the tidal wave of a new future . . . From this lucidity arises a new hope that this condition can be arrested, the forces coordinated again to work in concert, and the possibility opened for directing the future of mankind.

As men stand now on the moon and see the globe as one village, this achievement exposes the impoverishment and sterility of science and lays the demands for a new image of man's possibilities. The imperative is to create a new vision to which still holds all the wisdom which has been valid for all people in all times.

It is now clear that the forces of revolution and reform have had but one vision: that human sociality means all the earth belongs to all the people; all the goods of nature belong to all the people; all decisions of history belong to all the people; and all the gifts of humanness belong to all the people. These revolutionary principles grounded in a wider consciousness can create global brotherhood and the possibility of a human future. For it has been disclosed to us that this commonness has always been at the heart of society. It is the sharing of life which creates society; and in these times of our self-consciousness of that reality gives us the possibility of choosing a free and fertile future.

The 1971 Summer Research Assembly went to great lengths to demonstrate what they meant by a related statement, "All the goods of Nature belong to all the people." The passage which was a summary sentiment of the thousand who had assembled in Chicago that year bore a close resemblance to the global focus of the ICA for the rest of its existence.

Our consciousness is seared by the . . . the shouts of the workers in South America who are not paid enough wages to feed and clothe their families, the demands of the grass roots people across the globe who do not have access to the goods and services of the corporate body. There is no longer any place to hide from the collapse of the existing economic structures, nor can we escape from the reality that not until a man's basic needs are met will he engage himself significantly in the corporate order or celebrate the uniqueness of his own life as a gift. To stand before this
reality is to see that, indeed all the goods of nature belong to all the people . . . The principle that all the goods of nature belong to all men is the foundation of society, for without the embodiment of this fact in men's actions, men cannot be released to the restructuring of society and unleashing of creativity for the entire globe."

This sense of globality was not meant to be accomplished unilaterally. The ICA was convinced from the beginning that the creation of a global mind-set would come about only if people participated in it. In other words, the decision making styles should reflect the consensus of those affected by them. This philosophy, which later became a core value of the ICA, was stated at the 1971 gathering in one sentence: All the decisions of history belong to all the people. After discussing this issue in detail, the ICA concluded:

We have heard the groans, the shouts, and the demands and stand in the reality that all the goods belong to all the people. Now we see that we are responsible for seeing that every man participates meaningfully in the use of common resources . . . All the basic covenants of social order, all representative decisions made, and all the care structures of society belong to every man. The political malfunction reveals that present structures do not adequately detect and hold accountability for a consensus on both the local and global level that guarantees participation in decision making, the fulfillment of basic needs, and the right of creative opposition for the good of all people.

A related value to this global consciousness was stated as "All the gifts of humanness belong to all the people." The ICA set the ground for it's validity in the following "presuppositions."

The collapse of the nineteenth century images, styles, and symbols since the recent economic and political revolutions set the stage for a cultural revolution. This collapse carries with it the demand for the creation of a global self-consciousness that will draw all men to forge out their rapidly changing universe. The cultural dynamic is a key to
all human life, for without self-consciousness there is no way for man to be that which he is;... One sees that all the gifts of humanness belong to all the people when he sees himself as one with the body of mankind, as one with the historical human experiment, and that the givenness of that reality is a gift which belongs to all...

History will be created in our time by those who hear the scream from the depths of unrealized self-consciousness and who decide to create the images that call forth from the dark womb of the past the new humanness. This task demand humanness as wisdom for all men, or that which releases the individual into society... and symbol for all men as the interpretation of final reality. To then talk about all the gifts of humanness belonging to all the people is to say that life belongs to life and that the way society interprets final reality determines the whole of its life, economic and political, through its basic images, styles of action, and common symbols.... Every society has a repertoire of skills accessible to and usable by all people. The accrued wisdom of the world informs the journey of every man.

Saying that all the gifts belong to all the people also signifies ICA's focus on racial diversity. As a global social change organization, they wanted to represent people of all races and colors.

The revolutionary principle that all the gifts of humanness belong to all the people demands that the racial barriers which have prevented men from sharing their particular insights and wisdom with all mankind be eliminated. The principle that the wisdom of the ages concerning the meaning behind human existence is the birthright of every man affirms the decision that all the earth belong to all men.

Egalitarian global leadership

The ICA also showed other characteristics that were relevant in creating a good description of GSCO's. For example, if we look at how leadership was organized at the global level, the egalitarian nature of the ICA as a global social change organization becomes evident. This may be located in the "Panchayat Trek Reflections," published in 1988. "Panchayat" is a concept the ICA borrowed from
the Indian village governance system. In essence, it is an elected leadership team consisting of five village elders. In the ICA, it represented five members from the ICA worldwide operations chosen by consensus to act as symbolic leaders. A quote from their "reflections" reveals this:

From mid-November 1987 to May 1988, the Global Panchayat along with selected members of the Global Priory travelled to 7 continents and visited some 35 locations . . . It was our good fortune to meet a variety of people who represent the vast spectrum of our body . . . Over 280 specific items were listed as "values" (by various ICAs during this trek) . . . In addition, these trends are informed by our overall reflections and represent a description of the living reality that the values point to. Each trend is titled with a familiar term in order to broadly name the area.

**Global Order Presence:** The Order is assuming an expansive identity involving various people and relationships . . . Every location is involved in inventing inclusive metaphors and functional forms to nurture this expansive identity.

**Global Order Forms:** The Order is embodying a variety of indigenous expressions. Culturally, economically and socially appropriate indigenous organizations are being shaped. Each organization is concerned with the intent of being a viable option for anyone who desires to be of service. Leadership and polity forms point to multiple centers of information flow and decision-making. A new story of planetary unity is emerging.

**What we are becoming:** A metaphor that seems to be a more accurate description of our emerging values, patterns and potential is the "Planetary Spirit Association". The evolutionary task of these times is to co-create the healthy emergence of the planetary stage of earth history. This requires the embodiment of a breadth and depth of the planetary ethic that is being birthed.

This Planetary Spirit Association is non-residential and residential, manifesting many covenantal relationships and activities, but in essence is one planet-wide community committed to co-creating and sustaining . . . the planet.
The leadership structure was not simply egalitarian in terms of authority, but also in terms of gender dynamics. For example, it showed signs of being sensitive to feminine issues in a section titled "Intimations of what we are becoming:"

There is a re-empowerment of previously undervalued "feminine" aspects such as trust, co-creativity, intuition, altruism and mutual support, that are part of a planetary shift from a "masculine" dominated historical past to a more balanced partnership future.

Organizational flexibility: Dismantling leadership structures that are no longer useful

Yet another aspect of the organizational or leadership structure of the ICA was its flexibility to adapt and change. For example, they were able to dismantle leadership titles and organizational structures that were perceived to be redundant.

Quotes from "reflections" document show how forthright and open the leadership structures were in recommending their own dissolution:

Global Panchayat. In light of the new organization that we are becoming, it is our recommendation that we call out of being the "Global Panchayat" structure as it is presently constituted. This will give us an opportunity to perceive afresh any global leadership needs and to invent the required forms.

Global Priory. In the context of the emerging multiple leadership modes, it is our recommendation that we discontinue the practice of assigning "globally designated" priory. This will enable the current leadership experimentation to continue in each location and give us ways to explore future options.

Global Commissions - It is our recommendation that the four Global Commissions - Legal, Finance, Order Life and Assignments - be called out of being. Any support structures necessary in the future will be created by individuals and local units. When necessary to involve the wider organization this will be done through a networking mode.
Conclusion

The characterization of the ICA as a GSCOs was initially made based primarily on secondary data sources. In that sense, the preceding analysis is not entirely based on the primacy of the author. Still, the stakeholders of the ICA find the GSCO characterization very appropriate and befitting of who they are. The term GSCO has gradually assimilated into the discourses of the organization. For example, several newsletters that have come out of the ICA during the last three years have used the notion that the ICA is a global social change organization. The ICA found the characterization so appealing that they invited one of the researchers from the Case Western Research University team to give a speech on global social change organizations at their most recent international gathering in Prague, Czechoslovakia in September 1992.

Fusion of Horizon

It is clear that the conceptualization of the ICA as a global social change organization overwhelmingly influenced the reading of the text. In addition to that, the data obtained by examining the history and activities of the ICA further strengthen this characterization. As a result, the following fusion is possible.

The Organizational Attributes of the ICA as a GSCO.

In coming up with this list, the researcher looks at the organizational profile of the ICA which makes them suited to undertake the task of creating a global civic culture. These are tangent axial age characteristics originating from such notions as
"exploring new terrain," "interacting with strangers," and
"imagining the other and the better."

**Attribute 1. Dispersed Organizing**

The global social change organizing activities of the ICA involve mobilizing people all across the world from diverse geographic, economic, social and cultural backgrounds. This calls for high managerial and leadership competencies and organizational understanding like resource optimization, managing trans-cultural differences, and drawing deep commitment from actors. Most of human organizing is *local* or *concentrated* (Louis and Sieber, 1979) in the sense that the process take place in the physical proximity of humans in a given location. But in GSCOs, like the ICA, mission fulfillment requires the organization members to stay dispersed.

**Attribute 2. Social Change Orientation**

The ICA has a clear *change* focus because they challenge the status quo and actively seek a normative future based on ideology (Cooperrider and Pasmore, 1989). The social change is sought in political, economic and cultural aspects such as human rights, peace, socio-economic justice, the environment, and human development.

**Attribute 3. Missions**

The missions of ICA appear to be different from other organizations. Their espoused mission (but not always their enactments) evokes a universal, trans-cultural agreement of justice and compassion. From these arise the espoused mission of the ICA,
such as furthering the human potential, safeguarding the environment, eradicating hunger and human misery, seeking peace, and valuing basic human dignity.

Attribute 4. Moral and Value Rationality

In Weberian terms, the global social change organizing of the ICA may be interpreted as value rationality rather than purposive/instrumental rationality (Weber, 1964). Purposive rationality involves an orientation to a set of distinct, but not absolute ends. It differs from value rationality because both means and ends are open to change if the secondary consequences of either are unacceptable to the actor (Weber, 1964, p. 117). Value rationality is oriented towards the realization of an absolute goal (Weber, 1964, p. 115). The actor has a conscious belief in an absolute value (Satow, 1975) or a "faith in the absolute value of a rationalized set of norms" (Willer, 1967, p. 235). Governance is based on commitment to ideological norms rather than formal laws or rules (Satow, 1975).

Organizations exist on purposive/instrumental rationality basis. Etzioni (1988) calls this economic rationality which is based on a neoclassical paradigm of a society that is "mainly market place, in which self serving utilitarian individuals compete with one another" (p. IX). Alternatively, in organizations such as the ICA, utility maximizing is balanced by values, emotions, morality and notions of ethics and integrity (Srivastva, 1987; Etzioni, 1988). In contrast to the neoclassical assumption that people seek
to maximize one utility, e.g., pleasure or profit, they may pursue at least two utilities: pleasure and morality (Etzioni, 1988). The latter is a value rational (Weber, 1964), normative, ideological attribute and has important implications for understanding organizational governance (Scott, Mitchell, Peery, 1981).

**Attribute 5: Authority**

The ICA as a GSCO typically demonstrates a distaste for bureaucratic, hierarchy-based authority structure (Cooperrider and Pasmore, 1989) and a predisposition for developing an egalitarian culture (Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987). Leadership in the ICA actively encourages the process of eliciting participation and consensus building. As a result, the ICA is collegial as they band together individuals and groups who share similar interests. In the ICA there is little need to rely upon hierarchical supervision to assert control over organizational members since they are dedicated to seeing the organizational mission succeed.

**Attribute 6: Holographic knowledge**

In the ICA, knowledge becomes widely spread among organizational members in a holographic way—most actors typically understand the diversity of the organizational work and are competent to take on a variety of roles. In contrast, traditional bureaucracies ensure security by specialization and information control. In the ICA, security is often the result of open information sharing.
Attribute 7: Growth Orientation

The growth rate of the ICA as a GSCO seems to be much faster than traditional organizations. Growth often leads to the birth of more ICAs. The spin-off organizations tend to manifest characteristics similar to those of the parent and are usually helped by the older organization in learning to survive and grow in unfamiliar circumstances. This is very atypical of bureaucratic organizations where the tendency is to centralize and create more hierarchies as a response to growth.

Attribute 8: Loose role definition

Roles in the ICA are loosely defined. Members often find themselves sharing responsibilities as their role boundaries are ambiguous and diffuse. As their work changes so do the requirements for skills and effort. Bureaucracies look at role overlap with suspicion since it is an indication that tasks have not been sufficiently routinized and sorted.

Attribute 9: Transitory membership and relationships

Most ICAs have transitory membership since the turnover in the organizations is very high. The extent of involvement of members varies over a period. Traditional organizations generally seek to obtain an open ended commitment from actors in order to perform fixed tasks whereas the ICA depends heavily on volunteers who demonstrate varied levels of involvement over a period of time. The ICA has devised ways of creatively dealing with transitory
membership and is skillful in using this attribute to their advantage.

Attribute 10: Organizational learning

The ICA responds to complex environmental demands in innovative ways. Though, generally they may assume a reactionary role in "being up-against something," they are committed to educating the stakeholders. In addition, the ICA is an exceptionally self-reflective organization, making it a double-loop learning organization. According to Senge (1990), a learning organization is one that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future. "For such an organization, it is not enough merely to survive. Survival learning, or what is often termed adaptive learning is important—indeed it is necessary. But for a learning organization, adaptive learning must be joined by generative learning, learning that enhances our capacity to create" (p. 14). ICA defines themselves as an organization in the business of creating a new reality for those whom they serve.

These organizational characteristics help create a distinctive image of the ICA as a GSCO, a unique species of organizations. Such images are necessary for us to make the connection between GSCOs and the global civic culture they are helping create.

HISTORICITY

The reading should bring out the historicity of the phenomena under investigation. This may be accomplished by demonstrating how the meaning of the core concepts associated with the phenomena have
changed or might change over a period of time. The phenomena here is organizations like the ICA and not the characterization of GSCOs. From the historicity point of view, an interesting observation is that in the past these organizations have been called International Not-for-profit Organizations, International Development Organizations, Transnational Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO), Private Voluntary Organizations (PVO), etc.

However, as Cooperrider and Pasmore (1989) argue, many among these may now be characterized as global social change organizations. This has been accomplished by reinterpreting their organizational characteristics and selectively underscoring their significance in the global scenario.

To substantiate this textual analysis, excerpts from an overview statement and theme paper created by Cooperrider and Pasmore (1989) which summarized the understanding of the ICA and similar organizations at that time are heavily used. The paper was written to articulate the objectives of an international conference called "Social Innovations in Global Management" hosted by the Weatherhead School of Management, Case Western Reserve University in November, 1989.

On May 8, 1980, the World Health Assembly declared that smallpox had been eradicated from the planet. It was the first and as yet, the only global problem in human history ever to have been solved by organized action on a world scale. Dr. DA. Henderson’s work with a quarter million volunteers from 69 countries stands as a towering symbol of humankind’s cooperative capacity.

The Global Hunger Project operates in 152 countries and has enrolled more than six million people in its
campaign. Recently it held an unprecedented meeting via satellite, in which 47,000 people from Africa, Asia, Europe and North and South America talked, listened and learned with one another about strategies for ending hunger.

In 1985, less than five years after this remarkable organization was born, the Nobel committee awarded the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) the Nobel Peace Prize for its service to all mankind in "creating an awareness of the catastrophic consequences of atomic warfare." Today, the IPPNW has 72 affiliates in 69 countries, representing over 500,000 physicians worldwide.

In recognition that the 1990s will be a pivotal decade, a new transnational organization has been formed, not by grass roots activists, but by active executives. The World Business Academy, made up of managers from the world's largest multinational corporations, exists to find ways to secure the planet's ecological and economic sustainability. Their credo: "Beyond Business Through Business."

In a precedent-setting ruling in 1988 by the Council of Ministries, the International Foundation for the Survival and Development of Humanity became one of the first independent, international voluntary organizations ever to exist in the (then) U.S.S.R. The promise of the foundation: to harness the best minds and the best technology the world has to offer for a collective assault on the perils that stalk humankind.

Cooperrider and Pasmore's (1989) theme paper had more to say about the historical significance of these organizations:

Historically a vast majority of organization and management theory has called attention to the entropic forces of organizational life, the naturally fragmenting and deteriorating processes that must be offset to guarantee the ongoing survival of the system. Many of our studies have emphasized the problematic and untenable features of collective existence at the expense of a depth understanding of the spontaneous life-enhancing factors. As researchers, there has been a tendency to adhere to a half-empty view of the world; indeed, as L. L. Cummings aptly wrote in recent review of literature in management, we have rapidly become "the paid professional cynics of the world." Have we painted a picture of the world's cooperative potential by
leaving out a whole series of possible colors? By looking at SOCIAL INNOVATIONS IN GLOBAL MANAGEMENT we hope to give insight and scholarship to the nascent and creative forces in the transnational development community. Times like ours require examination of those general overall, suggestive conceptions that provide pathways for dealing with our dilemmas and can move us to positive action; there is a need for "vital ideas." We believe SOCIAL INNOVATIONS IN GLOBAL MANAGEMENT is one small but exciting step in this direction. We look forward in joining with you in what will no doubt be an important learning experience for us all.

The brief description above illustrates how the social innovations conference helped in reframing many International Non-Governmental Organizations as global social change organizations. By intentionally focusing on certain specific qualities of such organizations, a new and empowering organizational identity emerged for many of them.

CONTEXT OF INQUIRY

An articulation of how the context of inquiry will influence the findings should be stated here. As we have seen, the starting point in any hermeneutic inquiry is explicating the contextuality of the research. In this case, this amount to stating the various circumstances under which this inquiry began. Two forms of contextuality are present here, one dealing with the temporal dimension, i.e., the unfolding of this research as part of a time bound sequence of inquiry called "A Ten Year Project on Social Innovations in Global Management." The second is the conceptual context - one dealing with characterization of these organizations as engaged in Social Innovations in Global Management.
The temporal context.

The researcher started noticing several properties of international nonprofit organizations as he came in close contact with several of them prior to and during an International Conference on 'Social Innovations in Global Management' held in September 1989. The Social Innovations Group at the Department of Organizational Behavior had undertaken a decennial, multi-disciplinary research program of such organizations. Ethnographic studies on five of these transnational organizations were presented during the conference and the researcher had primary responsibility for conducting a collaborative inquiry with one of them, the Institute of Cultural Affairs (the ICA). The data was collected over a three year period starting in April 1989. By characterizing the inquiry as a "A ten year project on Global Social Change Organizations," a temporal context was already created. This had to do with the temporal finality of the project, it is not a stand-alone, cross-sectional piece of research, but a longitudinal approach as is evident in the quote: "this event launches a ten year (1990-2000) program of action oriented research designed to discover, understand, and strengthen socially innovative groups and organizations that have emerged to manage complex world problems and processes of sustainable development."

One consequence of this is the long term relationship formed with the organization under study (the ICA). They were willing to make a commitment to stay tuned to the long period involved and make
contributions in the process. Considerable trust was placed in the Case Western Reserve researchers as a group interested in a genuine understanding of the organization.

There were also several other temporal references in the reformulation of what was historically simplified as international nonprofit organizations. For example, the theme paper listed "thoughtful deliberations concerning (1) the current transnationalization of world affairs whereby international relations of the nation-state system have been superseded or supplemented by "non-territorial" relations among private individuals, groups, and organizations and (2) the emergence of new forms of organization and management that illuminate the pathways by which peoples of the world may enlarge their spheres of cooperation in the service of sustainable global well being".

It has been stated that "SOCIAL INNOVATIONS IN GLOBAL MANAGEMENT has been chosen as the theme for the fall of 1989 agenda setting forum, (because) it is our view that the establishment of this program represents an important breakthrough for schools of management everywhere" (Cooperrider & Pasmore, 1989, p.6).

Further, there was a strong sense of temporality about the notion that GSCOs represent a significant development in societal evolution and that they demonstrate competencies that are crucial for the survival of the planet and its inhabitants. For example, the theme paper produced by Cooperrider and Pasmore (1989) stated:

As we stand in the threshold of the last decade of the 20th century, the recognition is growing that we are, as
yet, still infants when it comes to our cooperative capacity for building a global community congenial to the life of the planet and responsive to the human spirit. For many people throughout the world, the image of the future engenders a sense of fear, defeatism, and despair. Indeed, as we scan the scholarly reports on the global crises, . . . we are frequently touched by feelings of disbelief and sadness, frustration and helplessness . . . mass starvation and poverty in the midst of plenty . . . and the impending collapse of our ecosystem and species . . . At the same time, however, a radical shift has been quietly taking place in the way the world organizes itself in the management of global concerns. Social Innovations in Global Management hopes to recognize that although the present apocalyptic era is one of exceptional crises, there is also an exceptional movement at work giving birth to insights about the evolution of global consciousness and the social architecture required to bring about transnational cooperation. The present era is demanding of us a level of management capability and organizational know-how beyond anything we have ever known or needed. And people on every part of the planet are, in fact, responding. It is to understanding this "invisible continent" this unprecedented attempt to forge a new vision of the world's cooperative capacity, that Social Innovations in Global Management is dedicated.

Finally, an analysis of the objective of the project brings out the temporality issue clearly. For example, the theme paper underscored that:

In less than 50 years, since World War II, literally thousands of transnational development oriented organizations have emerged to partake in the collective action transcending the barriers between nations, races, professions, religious disciplines, cultures, and geographic distances . . . Our aim for this event (the conference) is to initiate a decade long series that features scholarly inquiry into the cognitive, affective, and behavioral processes involved in the leadership, organization and management of transnational social innovation. Our task is to enlist the world's best minds to serve as intellectual catalysts helping to advance new and better forms of organization that allow for global cooperation around pressing issues that know no regional, ideological or spiritual boundaries. Recent developments in many areas of thought -- from studies into the potential of the human mind, the nature of self-organizing systems, the
socially constructed nature of reality as well as new understandings in the areas of future-oriented learning and human system transformation -- all have generated exciting new perspectives allowing for timely and meaningful reconsideration of the promise and potential for significant social innovation.

The conceptual contextuality

As mentioned earlier, when the ten year program to study the transnational organizations began, the new term, global social change organizations (GSCO) was coined to highlight the global civic mentality of this species of transnational non-governmental organizations. By characterizing them as global social change organizations, we had already created a conceptual contextuality. For example, in terms of what they are not, they are not (1) local social change organizations, (2) global political change organizations, (3) local political change organizations, or (4) status quo organizations. In terms of what they are, we had a lot to say. The kind of conceptualizations we have about them were invariably going to color our perceptions of these organizations. Let us now look closely at some of these.

Novelty and uniqueness.

In order to start studying GSCOs, we had to be interested in them. There are reasons why a researcher would want to study organizations. In positivist research, this is not stated explicitly. In most cases, it is seen as a bias against which the researcher should guard. On the contrary, in hermeneutic methodology, this is important contextual information and forms part of the knowledge production.
Here is how we perceived the GSCOs in 1989. The passage below is from one of the writings at that time.

But there are at least four things in common among the estimated 20,000 transnational efforts: (1) Many have as their primary task a commitment to serve as an agent of change in the creation of a healthier and sustainable world (2) They have discovered and mobilized innovative social-organizational arrangements that make possible human cooperation across previously polarizing and constraining boundaries (3) They hold values of empowerment (i.e., egalitarian, people-centered forms of social action) in the accomplishment of mission and (4) they function or have membership across two or more countries without primary loyalty, identification, or reliance on national governments, i.e., they exist as entities beyond the nation-state" (Cooperrider & Pasmore, 1989, p. 5)

In a theme paper written around the conference dates, Cooperrider and Pasmore (1989) also discussed other aspects such as the following.

(a) The social architecture of global cooperation

Sustainable development requires the discovery and enactment of post-bureaucratic, egalitarian forms of organization. Because of its dialogical and regenerative capacity, the egalitarian form of organization has become a powerful complementary structure to the bureaucratic apparatus of the nation-state system. In ideal-type terms, the critical issue will evolve around the question: What are the new organizational structures, belief systems, and core competencies associated with heightened potential for transnational cooperation?

(b) Integrative consciousness

Social innovation in global management implies geographic dispersion and increases in heterogeneity and diversity. Yet, the
global social change arena is fraught with schisms and humanly constructed boundaries of all kinds. According to Cooperrider and Pasmore (1989), a core challenge of our era is, therefore, the discovery of new integrative languages, metaphors, and ways of knowing. It will be impossible to fear diversity and enter a co-creative global future at the same time. Heterogeneity, not homogeneity, is the energizing force of creative synthesis. Experience shows that when diversity is authentically welcomed, valued, and cherished, there is unleashed a vital force - the unifying spirit. A deep understanding of the human condition of social innovation implies, therefore, an understanding of the poetic and affective underpinnings of the social bond.

(c) Emerging strategies for change

According to Cooperrider and Pasmore (1989), useful strategies in this arena are empowerment and people centered development, especially involving the formation of partnerships between sectors requiring symbiotic response capacity. Two challenges emerge continuously in this regard are: (1) the methods and uses of communication, including the media, in mobilizing the collective will to act; and

(2) the discovery of practical methods in both small and large groups for the enactment of consensual decision making.

In some sense, what we may be learning is that power equals the formation of group will. Power in the transnational arena can be viewed as a function of the participatory process leading to the
formation of collective public opinion. Power in a sustainable development sense is not, therefore, individual centered; it is situational and interactive and can be measured by a group’s capacity for synthesizing collective vision in response to specific challenges.

(d) The spirit of volunteerism, altruism, and care

According to Cooperrider and Pasmore (1989), social change organizations are genuine volunteer systems, not only in narrow economic or legal terms, but in the broader sense that innovative action is based largely on human values, choice, and vision of possibility. Significant social innovation happens because people care. Care pervades all action and interaction within the expanding global community. Care is a state in which something does matter; it is the opposite of apathy. Heidegger thinks of care as "the basic constitutive phenomenon of human existence." The emotion of care is at the core of social innovation. People organize in self-transcending ways because someone or something matters. The voluntary act of altruism based on care is an expression of our essential relatedness with one another ecologically, socially, and spiritually.

THE IMPACT OF THE CHOICE OF LANGUAGE IN THE TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OUTCOME

There is an abundance of choiceful, meaning laden words in the theme paper that distinctly characterize these organizations as engaged in a socially and globally meaningful task. For the sake of brevity, only a few are discussed.
1. This is an "important conference on Social Innovation in Global Management". According to Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary (1983), to innovate is to change or alter by introducing something new. Per the same source, innovation is the act of innovating or effecting a change in the established order or introducing something new. Thus, the choice of these terms has already signified that these organizations had something to do with changing the established order or introducing something new. Therefore, they are different from those that are not socially innovative. The second signifier implies that these organizations are involved in global management, as opposed to management within the boundaries of the nation state. In other words, they represent the "current transnationalization of world affairs whereby international relations of the nation-state system have been superseded or supplemented by non-territorial relations."

2. These organizations are engaged in the task of the "creation of a healthier and sustainable world"

3. They have "discovered and mobilized innovative social-organizational arrangements that make possible human cooperation across previously polarizing and constraining boundaries"

4. "They hold values of empowerment... and the spirit of volunteerism, altruism, and care... Heidegger thinks of care as the basic constitutive phenomenon of human existence"

5. "A new world is being born. It is a non-territorial invisible continent that is linking up concerned citizens, activists, research
groups, volunteers, and pressure groups in many varied and dynamic ways. We are participants in an inspired and creative era where human beings are beginning to think and act upon the ethic that the Earth is indeed one”.

The above are just a few examples from the text. It is obvious that the nature of the language used will certainly determine what one can say later about these organizations. To that extent, they have a directional and self-fulfilling capacity that influences the course of the research. Later in this thesis we will also discover that this is an excellent example of generative theory building (Gergen, 1982) and affirmative (Weick, 1982) or appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987).

HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE

A clear demonstration of the steps involved in the hermeneutic circle is needed here. This may be accomplished by showing how each reading is influenced by the previous readings. For example, in this chapter, we could see how the reading that was co-authored by me and appearing in International Organization Development on "building a global civic culture" was influenced by the preliminary reading (theme paper) of the "Social Innovations in Global Management". Further, the characterization of organizations like the ICA as global social change organizations was influenced by the "Social Innovations in Global Management" research project. One could also see this impact for other researchers involved in this project. For example, Pamela Johnson has written extensively about GSCOs (1991a,
1991b, 1992). Her entire Ph.D thesis (1992) dealt with the "global integrity ethic" which, according to her, is the foundation of the GSCOs. In yet another doctoral dissertation, Tian (1992) looked at the co-construction of the social reality, especially using the ICA's technologies of participation. In the following chapter, we could see how all these readings influenced the subsequent reading of the ICA as appreciative systems.
CHAPTER 5
THE ICA AS APPRECIATIVE PROCESSES

The reading of the ICA as a Global Social Change Organization provided the researcher, or the reader, with an exhaustive narrative of the scope of the ICA’s operation around the world. Gradually, an appreciation for the impact the ICA had generated in their social change agenda began to develop in the reader. Further, reflecting on their history, the first question that surfaces is "what has been sustaining them this long?" Where did they draw their inspiration from? How did they accomplish so much with so little and continue their social experimentation? At this stage, an element of curiosity rather than skepticism guides a reader in understanding the evolution of the ICA. A choice is looking at the ICA with a sense of wonderment and mystery instead of cynicism and doubt. Stating this mind-set explicitly is important since most of the training a social scientist acquires naturally prompts him/her to question and doubt rather than appreciate and affirm. This reading, therefore, is an exploration of the life-story of the ICA based on a central metaphor that organizations are mysteries.

The chapter starts with the primacy of the reader (researcher), the context of inquiry, and the hermeneutic circle criteria. Subsequently, the results will be presented as a reading or fusion of horizon. There will also be a section on the primacy of the author (actor) in which exhaustive readings generated by members of the ICA will be presented. The remaining criteria listed in
chapter 1 will then be explored to complete the analysis. Moreover, this reading represents an excellent example of co-inquiry (Reason & Rowan, 1981; Torbert, 1982). Members of the ICA were involved in generating the reading to an extent that is considered unusual even by co-inquiry standards.

PRIMACY OF THE READER (OBSERVER)

In this phase of the research, an action research methodology called appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987) is used which clearly acts as the interpretive framework in understanding the ICA. The method derives its roots from a metaphor that organizations are miracles of human interaction the mystery of which deepens as we probe more into them. The plethora of organization theories and research only adds to our curiosity about organization. We have more questions now than 50 years ago. In fact, organizing is a miracle to be understood in a sense of wonderment and curiosity (Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987). As Wittgenstein said, "It is not how things are in the world that is mystical, but that it exists."

In a similar vein Tillich said that, viewed from the standpoint of the possibility of non-being, being is a mystery. To take this metaphor a step further, Keel (1973) felt: "However odd it may be linguistically or logically, there are states of mind in which the very existence of the world seems strange and miraculous, as if its being were a triumph over nothingness" (p.22). From this viewpoint, the very existence of organizations leaves us with exciting questions to comprehend the mystery that they are.
Metaphors of organizations

An analysis of the metaphors we hold to understand organizations (Morgan, 1986) clearly demonstrates the impact of our images on reality perception. Describing organizations metaphorically is a powerful way of understanding the organizing dynamics. A way of seeing and a way of thinking is implied that pervades how we understand our world generally. Organizations have been described as psychic prisons, cultures, machines, organisms, political systems (Morgan, 1986), as paradigms, processes (Pfeffer, 1982), and as mere cognitive images (Sims and Gioia, 1986). In this chapter, we use yet another metaphor, organizations as mysteries.

Organizations as Mysteries

Gabriel Marcel has introduced into philosophy a distinction between problem and mystery. Mystery produces a diffused experience where the distinction between subject and object disappears. "A mystery is something in which I am myself involved, and it can therefore only be thought of as a sphere where the distinction between what is in me and what is before me loses its meaning and its initial validity". Thus, "mysteries are not truths that lie beyond us, they are truths that comprehend us" (Jouve, 1935, p.78).

On the contrary, a problem is something to be fixed. There is very little to appreciate in a problem other than getting rid of it or solving it. This distinction between mystery and problems is generalizable to organizations. The way we view organizations are a natural outcome of how we view life in general. If everyday
experiences of life are drawn in terms of efficiency, comfort and problem solving, organizational experiences are not likely to be different. Thus, we have two contrasting, unconscious images of organizations, organizations as problems to be solved or fixed, or as mysteries to be appreciated (Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987).

This phase of the study is based on the metaphor that organizations are mysteries. The process of research are acts of getting glimpses of that miracle in incremental ways. Organizing is a miracle of cooperative human interaction, of which there are no final explanations. "To the extent that organizations are indeed born and recreated through dialogue, they truly are unknowable as long as creative dialogue remains" (Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987, P. 162). However, the "mysteriousness" of organizations has little to do with how well or poorly we know them. "An object, event, or person may be well understood and adequately explained, yet evoke more wonder than a less well understood phenomenon . . . the more intimately known and ardently loved a place, thing, or persons is, the more mysterious it is, because it is so homogenized into the psychological fabric of the knower that knower and known form one reality" (Keel, 1973, pp. 25-26). An example is conception and birth. Scientifically the process is well understood, yet it is one of the most touching mysteries of human existence.

However, the nature of the writings of organizational theorists does not reflect the mystery of organizations. When we hear statements such as variables X and Y in the external
environment cause outcomes A and B in organizations or that employees are motivated by motivators A to Z, they are actually gross understatements of the complexity and mystery of organizing. So are theories/hypothesis which list the distinctive attributes of "excellent" organizations, traits of outstanding leadership, or characteristics of exemplary work culture. In fact, many of the "excellent" companies identified by Peters and Waterman (1982) are no longer identified as such. Qualities of "visionary" leadership change within and between organizations and from time to time. We have even attempted to import work culture from Japan and industrial democracy from Europe. The dynamics of what happens in each of these situations makes one wonder about the mysterious nature of human organizing.

In this context, Appreciative Inquiry as a methodology or conceptual framework seeks to locate and heighten the "life giving properties" of organizations (Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987). An affirmation of the uniqueness of the organizational processes is most likely to help the researchers realize what makes such organizing possible and understand the possibilities of newer and more effective forms of organizing. Thus appreciative inquiry seeks out the very best of "what is" to provide an impetus for imagining "what might be."

Intense affirmation might also show faults and inadequacies more readily than do intense criticisms (Weick, 1982). If we have only weak images of organizations to work with we are likely to end
up with weak theories of their organizing. As researchers we could also make an intentional choice to play the "believing game" as opposed to the "doubting game" (Elbow, 1973). In the doubting game the researcher has a suspicious eye whereas in the believing game the efforts are directed at understanding the organizational dynamics from the organizational actors' point of view. In context, explanations and interpretations are affirmations that assert what organizations are more than what they are not. We first have to affirm that it is there, in order, second, to discover that it is there (Weick, 1982).

Affirmation makes inquiry more honest. As Weick (1982) pointed out, most social sciences research is a demonstration of things we already know to be true, but about which we feel hesitant to make propositions given our academic socialization and norms about the nature of truth. For the sake of peer and professional acceptability we picture the inquiry process as if it were a detached scientific observation and as if the goals were disconfirmation of the hypotheses. Ultimately we are moving toward affirmations rather than disproof, in which case, as in appreciative inquiry, we may do that more explicitly and directly.

To summarize, two basic guiding propositions emerge from this analysis.

1. Research into organizations should be affirmative (Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987; Weick, 1982).

2. Affirmation is a process of discovery and transformation.
The stance that the inquiry should be appreciative in character has several consequences. The most important pertains to the way the members of the organization (the ICA) and the researchers relate to each other. The research process ought to be truly collaborative in nature. In order to affirm or understand who they (the ICA) are, it would be useful to be part of them as far as possible. Earlier, we had the picture of the ICA accumulated out of the reading of it as a GSCO. While that ignited our curiosity to study this organization, we soon realized that an intense affirmation of the ICA is naturally possible by an active involvement of researchers as partners in an inquiry with them.

The second consequence of the first basic proposition is that an affirmation of the organization calls for an in-depth understanding of its life giving forces (Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987). Life giving forces refer to the unique structure and processes of an organization that make its very existence possible. Like building blocks, they are the central pillars of a huge architectural marvel. Life giving forces (LGF) vary from organization to organization. They may be ideas, beliefs, or values around which the organizing activity occurs. This becomes very clear once we look at the following definition of organizations: "Organizations are systems of shared meaning and beliefs where the critical activity is the continued construction and maintenance of the meaning and belief systems which assure compliance, commitment, and positive affect on the part of the participants" (Pfeffer,
1982).

This definition amplifies the life-giving nature of values, beliefs and ideology around which people organize themselves for collective action. However, values, beliefs and ideologies soon create processes and structures that facilitate their continued maintenance. Thus, when we talk about life giving forces we are talking not only about the values, and ideas but also of the resultant structures and processes. To give an example, consensus building is one of the life giving forces of this organization. The underlying value is the belief that everyone should have a voice. The process that acknowledges the value is the emergence of consensus building as a core decision making processes in the ICA. **Tapping Life Giving Forces: peak experiences, performance and flow**

The mystery that organizations are is partly unraveled when their life giving forces are identified and located within the core of the organization. This is a collaborative process of discovery. The researcher’s task is not to unilaterally look for discoveries and insights and take ownership of them. The researchers and the members of the organization should become a community of inquirers to seek and together discover the organizational life giving forces.

Peak experiences, Peak performances and flow are constructs useful to tap the life giving forces of this organization. Peak experience (Laski, 1962; Maslow, 1964 and 1971) may be seen as an intense and highly valued moment, or moments of highest happiness and fulfillment. Peak performance (Privette, 1968, 1981 1982;
Privette & Landsman, 1983) may be viewed as episodes of superior functioning. Each construct represents both optimal levels and subjective experiences that are not dependent on particular types of behavior (Privette, 1983). Therefore, a shared quality is that peak experience and peak performance are models for optimal human experiencing, just as self actualization (Maslow, 1971) is a model for the evolution of human personality.

In peak experiences, we recognize a level of psychological experiencing that surpasses the usual level of intensity, meaningfulness and richness (Maslow, 1962). Leach (1963) defines peak experience as "that highly valued experience which is characterized by such intensity of perception, depth of feeling, or sense of profound significance as to cause it to stand out in the subject's mind in more or less permanent contrast to that which surrounds it in time and space." Laski (1962) defined peak experience as "characterized by being joyful, transitory, unexpected, rare, valued and extraordinary to the point of often seeming as if derived from a praeternatural source" (p.5).

Peak performance is the prototype of superior use of human potential; it is "behavior which exceeds typical behavior". Peak performance is a high level of functioning rather than a type of activity. As a prototype construct, therefore, peak performance is useful for understanding human potential and for an examination of qualities common to all experiences that tap human power (Privette, 1983).
The third concept, flow, may be seen as enjoyment, an intrinsically rewarding, autotelic experience (Privette, 1983). People seek flow for primarily itself. They simply enjoy it. Csikszentmihalyi (1975) describes flow as a common experiential state found in play or similar activities.

Peak experience seems to have a mystic or transpersonal quality that is not as clearly defined in peak performance or flow. Peak performance involves a holistic experience of clear focus on self and valued object in transaction. Flow is fun. It is the structure of the activity that largely determines the motivation, the goals and acts of completion, and the action and guidance (Privette, 1983).

If we combine these three qualities, the common arena my be called life giving forces. In other words, the life giving forces to be identified in the ICA are attributes that encompass aspects of peak experiences, peak performances and flow.

[Insert figure 5.1 about here.]

CONTEXT OF INQUIRY

The intricate connection between being struck by the wonder of creation and appreciative knowing was felt by thinkers from all fields of life (Sankara, 780; Jung, 1933; Maslow, 1968; Gandhi, 1958; Einstein). According to Albert Schweitzer (1969), it is the recognition of the ultimate mystery that transforms our perception beyond the mundane and ordinary, creating a "reverence for life". To quote Schweitzer, "In all respects the universe remains mysterious
Figure 5.1: Model used for conceptualizing life giving forces
(Source: Privette, 1983)
to man... As soon as man does not take his existence for granted, but beholds it as something unfathomably mysterious, thought begins... (Such) thought... leads us out of a naive and into a profound affirmation of life and the universe."

**The experience of mystery: ontological wonder and affirmation**

Organizations as mysteries ought to be experienced in two attributes. One is in a sense of wonderment (Keen, 1973, Virhoeven, 1972) and the other is in a spirit of profound appreciation (Polanyi, 1958; Weick, 1982; Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). Wonderment and affirmation are, in fact, inextricably interwoven. We may even say that wonder is an affirmation of the object, person or process under consideration. When the organizational reality is experienced in wonder, certainties give way to questions, and the self-confidence of expertise turn into humility. William James (1890) commented on this power of wonder: "Existence then will be a brute fact to which as a whole the emotion of ontological wonder shall rightfully cleave, but remain eternally unsatisfied. Then wonderfulness or mysteriousness will be an essential attribute of the nature of things, and the exhibition and emphasizing of it will continue to be an ingredient in the philosophic industry of the race."

James' comments elsewhere establish a more concrete connection between inquiry and affirmation: "I now perceive an immense omission in my Psychology. 'The deepest principle of human nature is the craving to be appreciated" (1890, p. 234).

Wonder is the foundation of values because a wondering encounter is the basis of a non-utilitarian approach to things and
persons. In wonder we experience the others as inexhaustible, as the locus of meanings which are only revealed as we cease to be dominated by the impulse to utilize and possess the other and learn to rejoice its presence. In wonder there is a continuous dialectic between investigation and admiration (Keel, 1973) which is a central process of this reading. As the appreciative inquiry process begins, it starts unraveling aspects of organizing that added richness to our admiration of the ICA.

**Organizational attributes of the experience of wonder**

The following organizational attributes of wonder are relevant in the context of our understanding of the process of inquiry in the ICA.

a) **Surprise and puzzlement**

Wonder begins with an element of surprise. It breaks into consciousness with a dramatic suddenness that produces amazement or puzzlement (Keen, 1973). The experience of wonder in the process of understanding organizations provokes one with more curiosity. As new meaning or learning are revealed, more questions emerge.

b) **Ambiguity and tentativeness**

What we learn from the mystery of organizing produces ambiguity and tentativeness. Our certainties about organizations dissolve as we realize how complex they are and how tentative and messy whatever we know about them are. Organizations operate out of informational inputs that are ambiguous, uncertain, and equivocal (Weick, 1979). "Organizations must deal with equivocality, but their
ways of dealing are often themselves equivocal and subject to many interpretations" (p. 11). Similarly, Cohen and March (1974) maintained that many organizations have goals that are inconsistent, ill-defined and loosely-coupled, technology that no one understands, and participants who vary in how much time and effort they will put in the organization. A thick description of any organization, in this case of the ICA, will be ambiguous and plurivocal (Packer, 1990). Such a scenario prompted Weick (1979) to call organizations "superimposed structures" implying that there is no underlying "reality" waiting to be discovered. Instead organizations may be seen as the "inventions of people; inventions superimposed on flows of experience and momentarily imposing some order on these streams." (pp. 11-12). This last statement was extremely useful in understanding the ICA. As this study unfolds, it will become increasingly clear how the ICA is truly an invention of people, existing in a complex network of experiences based on spiritual and humanistic values.

**c) Admiration, reflection and celebration**

Organizations as a miracle and mystery present to us with dignity, worth, meaning, value and grace which demand admiration and affirmation. To admire organizations is to celebrate the miracle they are. For example, there is ambivalence within organizations toward being open and closed and toward being suspicious and trusting (Weick, 1979) and for the same reason organizations have a hand in creating the realities which we often view as facts.
Research in organizations has traditionally followed a disaffirming problem solving focus (Elbow, 1973; Cooperrrider and Srivastva, 1987; Weick, 1982; Whyte, 1981) Typical images are that organizations are problems to be solved and that research equals problem solving. To do good research is to solve real problems. Various definitions of action research also support this contention (Susman and Evered, 1978; French and Bell, 1978). Similarly, the notion of organizational diagnosis implies the existence of a basic clinical condition that characterizes organizations. This deficiency model of organizational research calls for researchers to develop techniques to accurately identify and diagnose problems. Even the familiar case method in social sciences originates from a medical model where the history of the pathology is thought to provide insights into what actions to take.

In contrast to this clinical or problem solving focus, appreciative inquiry as a form of organizational research is an alternative. In fact once we look at organizations as a mysteries, the choice of this methodology soon becomes natural. A mystery or miracle is best understood in appreciation. We affirm a mystery standing in front of it with a sense of wonderment and surprise. The more we focus on its attributes, the more alive the phenomena becomes.

**HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE, OR THE STEPS INVOLVED IN THIS READING**

Before we move onto seeing how the process of inquiry or
reading unfolded, an outline of the events involved in the process will be useful. The appreciative inquiry research process used in this research was based on the following four assumptions that our research efforts should be "appreciative," "applicable," "provocative," and "collaborative" (Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987). By appreciative we mean that the research process will not be based on the problem solving mode, but instead will build on the uniqueness and specific qualities of the ICA. By applicable we mean that the research should be both relevant, useful and potentially capable of generating knowledge of consequences. The provocative focus refer to a type of analysis that becomes suggestive, challenging, and prompting. A suggestive approach points toward realistic potentials that are latent in the system. It becomes challenging when enactment of those potentials represents a moderately high risk requiring the development of unused or untried possibilities. It becomes prompting when the data are used in a way that generate interest and support because of their applicability. Finally, by collaborative we mean that the research is the joint responsibility of the organization members and the researchers. Ideally, it should also build a community of inquirers from within the organization.

To fulfill the above criteria and after several preliminary meetings, we formally met with a representative group of members from the ICA at Chicago and explained the whole research process to them. A consensus to go ahead with the project emerged after careful
deliberations. They appeared convinced that the research process might add value to their understanding. The next step was to create the appreciative inquiry topics for which we did 20 half-hour interviews covering the following three areas.

1. What are some of the peak experiences you have had in this organization? 2. What are the basic values you cherish in this organization?

3. What do you want the future to be?

The data were thematically analyzed and a feedback session was conducted at the end of the day. After the first feedback, a week later we completed another round of 25 interviews using the same questions as in the first, and presented our combined findings to a large audience of the ICA members who had come to Chicago for a "heartland (of America) gathering." To generate this composite analysis, the interviewers extracted statements from the transcripts considered as significantly reflective of life giving forces (LGFs). Data from the two phases of interviews yielded a total of 230 statements suggestive of LGFs. Each extracted statement was transferred to a card. The cards were then sorted and screened to remove identical statements. 190 cards were retained. These cards were shuffled and then read. Cards interpreted as being related in meaning were stacked together so that each stack represented a category of LGF. This exercise generated six LGF categories. Cards in each category were reviewed to identify the underlying theme which led them to be considered as being related in meaning.
Alternative labels were generated for each theme. Each interviewer then ranked his/her preference of labels for individual themes. The ranking of alternatives was discussed. Thematic labels were selected on the basis of consensus.

The six card-stacks were re-examined again to identify subcategories or dimensions within a theme. Cards pertaining to one dimension shared a greater affinity than did cards belonging to another. Each dimension was labeled. However, no dimensions could be identified for some themes. That is, there were some themes with only a single dimension.

**FUSION OF HORIZON**

Several themes pertaining to the following six categories emerged from the use of the procedure described above: Basic assumption, ideology, beliefs, identity, enrichment, and enhancement.

**Basic assumption** refers to the very core which underwrites the ICA’s ideology, beliefs, identity, enrichment and enhancement. **Ideology** is the set of values the ICA considers desirable. **Beliefs** mean the set of operating notions which guide what the ICA does and the structure of decisions underlying these acts. **Identity** is how the ICA members construct their organization. **Enrichment** refers to inputs provided by the ICA to its members which are perceived to be of consequence to them. **Enhancement** is what members believe will be salient attributes of the ICA’s future.

These are individually elaborated below in two parts. The
first fleshes out the theme and its dimensions. The second presents one or more corroborative statements extracted from the interviews.

Basic Assumption.

Underlying the ICA’s evolution as an organization is its basic assumption that collective realization of a better future through spiritually-driven service is not only possible but also necessary. The assumption surfaced in each of the 45 interviews as representing the starting point, binding agent and continuing impetus for both the ICA and its members. For instance:

"The internal mythology of the organization is its sense of destiny, the sense of changing the course of history, that we ought to talk about what it meant to be an organization at this particular time in the civilizing adventure and look back over the major eras and name them and talk about their characteristics... and how it was a bridge to the future... So it called for a certain kind of response from people who cared about the continuum of history."

"We talk about ourselves as being not the only ones, but among those people at this time in history who have a sense of the past and the future and who understood their role to be continually re-inventing the human face of things. That is, the understanding of meaningful life and reconstruction of social, economic and other systems, so that they are always appropriate for the greatest good of the greatest number."

"It has to do with being a people who cared in a structured and spiritual way so that the future for generations to come would be improved... These things are deep in our psyche and persist as our self-understanding which is not tied to any organizational form or practice."

Ideology.

The ICA’s ideology or value-system appears to be universalistic pragmatism directed toward global development through a reverence for human talent. This ideology is spun off from the ICA’s assumption that a collective realization of a better future
through spiritually-driven service is not only possible but also necessary. Like any other organizational ideology, it provides anchors to how members make sense of what goes on within the ICA and how these connect with what goes on outside of it.

**Universalism** is reflected in statements such as:

"All the world belongs to all the people as do all the gifts of nature, all the decisions of history, all the goods of nature, all the gifts of humanness".

"The thinking that captures our mind the most is the vision of the planet earth."

"We started as a Christian group and because we were working in non-Christian countries, we worked with Hindus and Muslims who were a part of us, we became something different. We experienced that we are a people of faith – one human family grounded in different places. We were a microcosm of the world."

**Pragmatism** is revealed in statements like:

"We believe that people can solve their own problems."

"Solutions to problems reside in situations."

"Think global, act local."

**Global development** is highlighted in statements like:

"We are not a parochial people, we are a global people."

"We live on behalf of the biggest possible picture."

"There is a need around the globe to expand thinking beyond villages and communities."

**A reverence for human talent** is emphasized in statements such as:

"Commitment from anybody from any station of life is key to the ICA process."

"Everyone has a voice and input to give to history."

"All intelligence is valuable regardless of the source."
Beliefs

Two streams of beliefs appear entrenched in ICA. The first concerns beliefs about human consciousness. The second pertains to beliefs about organizing.

The ICA members interviewed believed human consciousness to be metaphoric, generative and experimenting in character. They emphasized the primacy of experience as central to the development of consciousness. These beliefs were captured in statements like:

"People operate out of images they have about the world."

"To be part of a network of consciousness is to understand what it means to be a human being."

"Intentionality is what makes you not afraid of moving away from traditional ways of thinking."

Beliefs about organizing cohered with beliefs about human consciousness as well as the ICA ideology. These beliefs surfaced in statements such as:

"An organization stops growing when it gets comfortable with the way things are."

"Cultural diversity is our seeking to make sure we do not become complacent in our viewpoints."

"Complexity and richness of a group is needed. Hence we involve people from all strata of society."

Identity

The ICA members interviewed identified several features which in their opinion distinguished the ICA from other organizations.

Community as a feature of the ICA’s identity was reflected in statements as:

"We trust collectivity."
"We share everything, we have a capacity for intimate caring relationships."

"We are a cell without a nucleus."

**Consensus** as a characteristic of the ICA, surfaced in statements such as:

"The power is at the center of the table. We operate by consensus."

"We have an internal insistence on consensus."

**Practices** reflecting the identity of the ICA showed up in statements such as:

"We down play materialism."

"We tackle complex issues with global implications."

"We create educational opportunities. There is an honoring of people."

**Transformations** as a part of the ICA identity were shown in statements like:

"The ICA values willingness to change and grow. In the sixties, it was a top-down male dominated organization. As society changed it changed and was in the forefront of this change."

"An important part of our operating story is that we have to be aware of the times one is living in and be responsive to its demands. We do not balk at throwing out-dated structures."

"Our organization was in a state of metamorphosis. It was very clear that the other side of the cocoon was going to be radically very different from that we knew . . . We did not know where to move or how to get there. It drove us to experimentation."

**Enrichment**

The ICA enriched the lives of its members in terms of
providing a forum to generate meaning in life, a sense of
planethood, opportunities for personal growth, challenge and
realization of profound insights.

That the ICA provides a forum for members to generate meaning
in life was evidenced in statements like:

"The ICA’s mission is valuable. Life is for a purpose and the
ICA corporately pulls you out when it requires you to do
something significant with your life."

"The intent behind the ICA’s public events . . . reflect the
depth component, the spirit component, even though they are
not specifically religious or highly structured as in a
monastery."

"Everything is one hundred per cent exciting."

That their association with the ICA gives members a sense of
planethood emerged in statements as:

"We have been global citizens. We have worked in other
countries. Our families have learnt to appreciate other
cultures."

"Doing things around the world. Appreciating other cultures.
Discovering that there are lots of great people in the world.
These are valuable."

"Our network helps me know about what’s going on globally. I
felt I was linked to the globe in a very practical way. It
makes me feel that I am not isolated."

That the ICA affords members with opportunities to experience
personal growth was indicated by statements like:

"The gift of the organization is that it has given me freedom
to think and participate."

"My sense of self worth, my self esteem, my sense of
responsibility has developed. The ICA has continually honed my
skills."

"We have learned to live on a little. It has built
imagination, responsibility and creativity."
That the ICA supplies members with challenging opportunities were suggested by statements as:

"I was pushed to my limits."

"The structure of the group pushed me to do things where I could learn things."

"The organization challenges me to grow in whatever I am doing."

"You felt the organization was behind you ... It gave a sense of security as it challenged you to go into difficult situations."

That the ICA supplies opportunities for members to realize profound insights were revealed in statements like:

"I was impressed by how ideas got birthed and acted upon quickly and how consensus was developed . . . I was impressed with the can-do idea, that we can decide and act and not get trapped in inaction."

"We spent a life-time fraught with ambiguity."

"There is this understanding that life is always continuing, while our journey has a beginning and an end. This understanding helps you keep connected with the mystery of life, so that you are not proud of what you have done or be ashamed of what you have done."

Enhancement

Members viewed the ICA's future in terms of enhancing networks, organization, activities and experimentation.

Networking was emphasized in statements such as:

"We have been through a transformation in the last two years ... It is now left for people to do what they are going to do. The numbers are down. As people build up it will be out of their decision . . . So you have individuals rooted in their own roots but working together and wanting this kind of networks to happen."

"We will maintain our global links through cultural interchanges."
"Networking is our future. We need a framework that allows us to stay in touch with each other. There will be several different forms of involvement. Community living has been important to me. There are some who will continue. Others will have community relationships. Some will be globally assigned. Others will be locally assigned. Networking will then be important."

Based on this thematic analysis we presented the following understanding of ours to the ICA members.

**Ambiguity**

The ICA’s processes and structures derive their sustenance from its basic assumption that a collective realization of a better future for all through spiritually driven service is not only possible but necessary. This assumption lends itself to multiple viewpoints, interpretations and perspectives. The key terms, collective realization, better future for all, spiritually-driven service, do not lend themselves to any one best definition. Indeed there would be as many definitions of such terms as there are people who care to define them. Such a breadth of the ICA’s mission statements generate multiple realities of what is possible creating a certain amount of ambiguity.

Most organizations consciously strive to reduce the uncertainty resulting from multiple interpretations of their core assumptions by prescribing, ordaining, enforcing, dictating and in other ways supplying what these mean. The ICA, on the other hand, is characterized by a relative absence of any rigidly mandated understanding of collective realization, a better future for all and spiritually-driven service. For some, collective realization is
expressed in the form of social demonstrations. For others, collective realization is expressed in terms of conflict resolution. Some of the ICA members, likewise, read a better future for all as implying a preservation of ecological quality. Others interpret a better future for all in terms of poverty alienation. Similarly, spiritually-driven service carries a plurality of meaning.

**Structure.**

The ICA has evolved into a loosely coupled organization. The loose coupling has been further increased in recent years through a decentralization of governance, resources and polity systems. The primary advantage of a loosely-coupled organizational structure is increased freedom at local unit levels to be responsive in meeting local community needs. At the global level, loose coupling reduces overall administrative costs. The expanded scope for exploration and experimentation at the local unit level implies an increase of the ICA's repertoire of responses. Innovations carried out by a specific local the ICA unit are available and accessible to other ICA units through human interchange and electronic networking. The increased repertoire of responses and expertise across local units increases the effectiveness of ICA as a global organization. Regional, national and international levels of ICA are relevant to local level units of ICA primarily as forums of collection, exchange and diffusion of information about developments in society, spirit-life and developmental work. The collation and interchange of such information furthers the identification of specific local units with
the ICA network and continuously consolidates the ICA identity, basic assumption and ideology. Processes

The ICA provides ample opportunities for experimentation and exploration. Its culture is one which consciously accepts change and flows with it at all levels, the individual, the group, and the organization. The only constants are the endorsement across the ICA units of the basic assumption and ideology. Over the years, the endorsement has been taken as an organizational given. Consequently, the freedom to be and the opportunities to become which characterize the organization are more or less subterranean. These freedoms fertilize the ongoing dialog, discussion and debate over the ICA's future, its concern for the development of rituals and myths and its enthusiasm for exploration of intellectual, spiritual and cultural diversity.

Organizational control at the local through international levels of operation in the ICA is principally exercised in terms of individual accountability, the generation of consensus and engagements in interchange. Accountability, consensus generation and interchange mutually reinforce the demands of personal integrity and responsibility the ICA makes on its members. Membership in the ICA is primarily through self-selection, potential members bring to it the levels of integrity needed to work in a geographically dispersed, loosely coupled, continually innovating organization. Since membership involves maturation and socialization processes through extended lengths of apprenticeship as well as exposure and
participation in interchange and networking, the integrity potential members bring to the organization is reinforced. Consequently, organizational control translates itself in the monitoring, regulation and presentation of self by members to a community to which they have elected to belong.

The ICA’s organizational evolution is thus a record of defining balances between the individual and the group, the male and the female, the spiritual and the temporal, the western and the eastern, reflection and action, Christianity and other religions, centralization and decentralization, development of redressals and creation of processes. Such attempts inhibit the calcification of organizational structures and entrenchment of specific processes. Consequently, there is little in the ICA of the bureaucratization that so often accompanies organizational expansion. Instead, there is considerable consistency obtained between the ICA’s basic assumption, its ideology, culture and practices obtained through their being voluntarily endorsed by members. This consistency obtains for the ICA rather uncommon and somewhat paradoxical position of simultaneously being both a young and a mature organization.

SUBSEQUENT READINGS (THE BACK AND FORTH STEPS IN THE HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE)

Our analysis and interpretation of the ICA were presented to them as feedback and was well received. Comments made by several ICA staff members after the session clearly indicated that they were in
agreement with out reading. In addition, they expressed considerable interest in continuing this exploration. As a result, we created an appreciative inquiry team (AIT) to generate appreciative inquiry topics. This may be seen as steps involved for further reading. The AIT was drawn from the organization's membership and researchers. The group functioned as a research team searching all aspects related to the inquiry.

The AIT had the task of designing questions so that the organizational factors that give "life" to the life giving forces would become apparent. To do that, the AIT met in workshops and looked at the data again. They also discussed the philosophy and rational basis of Appreciative Inquiry in addition to practising how to do Appreciative Inquiry Interviews. The AIT looked at the themes, quotes and interview responses again and wanted to extract no more than five life giving forces out of them. Each member of the team worked individually on themes and identified what they thought were the life giving forces. Then the team pooled their identified LGF themes and looked for similarities and differences among them. The "Card Technique" outlined in the ICA's ToP ("Technology of Participation") method (Spencer, 1989) was used to finally extract the Life Giving Forces. (Technology of Participation, or ToP, are a series of methods developed by the ICA based on their work with several organizations, both in profit and nonprofit sector). The Card Technique facilitated the process of consensus building with respect to the life giving forces and elicited strong participation
from members of the team. The AIT talked about differences and agreement and finally came to consensus to include the following as the five LGF for the purpose of this research.

1. SPIRIT LIFE/SPirit STORY/FAITH STANCE

For members of the ICA, spirituality is one of the key dimensions of their very existence. The term spirituality is defined very broadly and includes what they call "spirit practices," "meditative councils," "secular religion," "spirit rejuvenations," etc. They also included the symbols, metaphors, and anecdotal stories individual members hold in their mind.

2. CONSENSUS DECISION MAKING

A very distinctive feature of decision making style of the ICA is consensus building. In terms of its importance, consensus building is a central value for the ICA members. All decisions are made by consensus because of the value that everybody should be heard.

3. CORPORATENESS

This is a term unique to the ICA that is used and understood differently than common usage. It refers to a consensually validated sense of togetherness and oneness for the ICA members where they feel like a family and a community. The family and community experience become one, as if the community is an extended family. According to the ICA members, corporateness has three ingredients: team building, community life, and family roles.

4. MISSIONS
Service for others is the most salient mission of the ICA. Most other stated mission originate or are related to this core service mission.

5. TEACHING AND LEARNING ORIENTATION

The ICA members see themselves as a learning and teaching community. It is also a reflective and thinking organization. They believe that learning is a life long endeavor and therefore one never stops learning. From that notion comes the focus on experimentation and social inventions. Their commitment to life long learning and their willingness to be open and change make them a good example of double loop learning (Argyris and Schon, 1978).

Once the five LGFs were finalized, an appreciative interview format was created by the AIT during the workshop. A copy of the interview format is attached in Appendix A. A careful look at the format reveals how the questions are designed to appreciatively generate a wealth of knowledge with respect to the LGFs. During the following month members of the AIT did over 100 interviews using this format in all the ICA Midwest locations which include Minneapolis, Kansas City, Detroit, Cincinnati, Columbus, Milwaukee, Chicago and Cleveland. The interviewees included (1) all paid staff in THE ICA Chicago and Midwest locations (2) members of the board of directors and (3) a representative sample of volunteers. The interviews took on an average 1 1/2 to 2 hours to complete and all interviews were audio-taped. Later the interviews were transcribed by volunteers from ICA.
This was followed by another event called the "Appreciative Research Carnival" (ARC). This week long gathering was organized for everyone from the ICA Midwest locations. The carnival image was used to highlight the celebrative aspect of the research which followed from the ICA's basic philosophy that life itself is a celebration. The research carnival consisted of three major events. (1) data analysis and formation of vision statements, (2) feedback and consensual validation, and (3) action planning.

During the week long "research carnival" the AIT analyzed and interpreted the findings of the study for the ICA. An organizational analysis was then done on the life-giving-forces of the ICA which yielded interesting results. At the end of the week, the participants had created over 80 "provocative propositions" related to their vision of the future that they wanted to create for themselves. Members of the ICA felt the entire research process as a powerful organizational transformation experience.

Data Analysis

The data analysis was done by the AIT over a three day period in Chicago. In a moving demonstration of commitment, almost everyone from the ICA got involved in transcribing these long interviews. Each member of the team read through the interview transcripts and highlighted what they deemed significant. The AIT then discussed overall themes which emerged from the interview. This was followed by an extensive organizational analysis of the interview data. Eight organizational factors were identified. As shown in figure
5.2, they are:

[Insert figure 5.2 about here.]

Organizational Structure

Refers to the overall set-up of the ICA. Includes the term "structure" as historically used by ICA. O.S is an overarching category and pertains to relatively permanent forms of organizing. Examples are the "Panchayat", corporateness, Program Enterprise, 2020 team, the ICAI, and primary units.

Organizational Practices

Originates out of the structure. Any standardized mode of living. Examples are singing, meditation, daily office, obedience, housekeeping, celebrations, and rituals. In short, organized activities of the ICA which may have acquired a shared meaning to be seen or experienced as organizational practices or rituals.

Basic beliefs and values

The basic assumptions and core values around which the organization is based. This is what attracts a person to the ICA. Examples: Beliefs in the basic human potential of all, seeing the whole world as one single family, belief in participation and consensus, willingness to risk, and so on.

Decision Making Processes

Refers to the way decisions are made. The methods, procedures
Figure 5.2: Constructs used for organizational analysis of life giving forces
and related explicit assumptions behind the methods. Examples: Consensus building, participatory methods etc.

**Leadership**

Used differently than the way it is used in traditional organizations. Denotes to statements regarding the presence of someone/small group who have an inspiring quality about her/him/themselves. The power to the leader is granted by the members and s/he can enjoy that only to the extent the members allow him/her/them to do so. Examples: different leadership forms such as the "priors", the first among the equals, task forces Panchayat, etc.

**Communications**

Refers to the way people share information, beliefs, values, and ideology. Includes face to face communications, channels of communications, and the style of communications. Examples: Reporting, Interchange yearly councils, regional new letters, ICAI network exchange.

**Interpersonal relationships**

Refers to the quality of interpersonal relationships in the ICA. The quality of being engaged with others. Examples: Openness, care and concern about others and their lives, individual journey, mutual support, spirit care, and physical care.

To perform the organizational analysis, the AIT considered each Life Giving Force. Then the team split into groups of three, each group working on two life giving forces. For example, the group working with spirit life looked at the interview responses under
this category and then looked for organizational factors that make spirit life possible in the ICA. Before doing this, the AIT also did similar preliminary analysis with the LGF Corporateness. Essentially, these were meant to be practice opportunities for the following day, when the research carnival were to begin with many more people joining in from different ICA locations.

The following day the "Research carnival" began in full force where the same procedure that was done on the previous day was repeated with the new larger group. The participants were divided into groups of three each. The life giving forces interview responses were divided in such a way that two groups were independently working on a LGF. This was done to obtain a reasonable inter-rater reliability. Thus, two groups would do an organizational analysis of spirit life and then compare how their categorization stand. They would then talk about their difference and finally come to an agreement on their ratings. This procedure was followed for analyzing all the five LGFs. The following is an example:

1. LGF: Spirit life; Organizational factor: Basic Beliefs and Values
   a) Being Universal and Ecumenical.
   b) Key stories that the ICA members live out of, the insights, and the meditative councils
   c) Being a "full self", asking the question "Who I am" and "Where do I belong"
   d) The learning from Religious Studies -I.
   e) Spiritual values
f) Intentional experimental stance

g) Image of life as a mission

Similarly, spirit life was analyzed in terms of Organizational Structures, Organizational Practices, Leadership, Communication, Decision Making Processes, Interpersonal relations, and Strategies, Task and Technologies. The same procedure was used for analyzing the remaining four LGFs. Under each category several quotes were put in order to illustrate the point. The end result was that the walls of a large auditorium at the ICA building got filled up with the organizational analysis categories along with supporting quotes. The participants at the ARC then looked through the analysis done by each group, commented on, revised them, and finally arrived at a consensus on the outcome of the analysis.

Creating Provocative Propositions

One of the key steps in the appreciative inquiry process is creating "provocative propositions." A provocative proposition is a statement that bridges the best of "what is" with one's own intuition of "what might be." It is provocative to the extent to that it stretches the realm of the status quo and helps suggest real possibilities that represent new potentials for the organization. It is inspiring because it challenges us to create a new future. A provocative proposition builds on the life giving forces and heightens our attention thereby releasing powerful energy to make visions a reality.
A model for conceptualizing provocative propositions is outlined in figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3: The model used for conceptualizing provocative propositions
The model considers three aspects of organizational life and continuity. "Novelty" refers to the idea that provocative propositions should bring in an element of surprise, challenge, and intrigue. "Continuity" suggests that whatever new strategies/changes are planned they must ensure that continuity from the old to the new is maintained. The third aspect, "transition," calls for making sure there is a smooth transition from the familiar to the unfamiliar and that the change is not felt too abruptly that the continuity and novelty are lost. The common area where all these circles intersect are from where a true provocative proposition is most likely to emerge, because this area has accommodated all three demands there by suggesting that the propositions may be realized.

The AIT also developed a check list of 10 criteria which will determine whether a proposition is provocative enough or not. Considerable energy was spent by the participants to write "real" provocative propositions. The AIT had meanwhile spent a night session working on a sample proposition related to spirit life. After writing three sample PPs, the AIT critically looked at them from the criteria of PPs. All of them were rewritten several times and finally presented to the ARC participants as examples of PPs. This was followed by a full session devoted to provocative proposition writing. The ARC participants then looked at the organizational analysis data and started experimenting with writing the provocative propositions. Participants worked in the same team they worked earlier for the organizational analysis.
Writing the PPs was one of the most exciting part of the research process. This was something that gave the participants an opportunity to be brave, creative and inspiring about their visions for the ICA. The PPs were written in several stages and refinements. Each time it was written, the members would evaluate the proposition in terms of 1) the definition 2) the novelty-continuity-transition model, and 3) the check list. Most of the first attempts were understandably not considered "provocative" enough; therefore each group worked on them several times. Once they were satisfied that the PPs were reasonably provocative, each group invited another group to look at the PPs and comment on them based on the same three criteria. This was done mutually between groups resulting in several revisions of the propositions. Then finally, the PPs were posted on the wall so that everyone could read all the PPs. At this stage, the participants were requested to write their comments on the propositions they read from the perspective of the earlier three criteria sets. Once this was done each group took their PPs off the wall, and worked on them based on the innumerable feedbacks they received from other members. The final, fully revised provocative propositions were then posted on the walls.
VALENCING

The next step was to rate each PPs in terms of the following

1. THE IDEAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least Desirable</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Most Desirable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. THE PRESENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Absent</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Strongly Evident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. For immediate (6 months) | medium (1 year) | long term realization (5 years)

All together 77 propositions were created and valanced. The act of valencing was an intense and involving act for everyone, because they felt they were writing the future history of the ICA there. Each participant was given color dots so that they could stick their preferences using the dots under each PPs. Thus, altogether a person had to make about 240 decisions regarding the future of the ICA.

Once the valencing acts were over, participants could clearly see in which direction the visions of the ICA were going. Subsequent sessions discussed these differences between the "ideal" and "actual" ratings. In no case was the discrepancy too wide to cause any concern. Yet, there were differences which provoked them to resolve that they would work collaboratively to harmonize the actual and the ideal. One of the members commented that it was the first
time that the ICA has ever agreed ("Consensed") on more than two ideas (Not to talk about 77!) in such a short time.

The ARC participants then discussed action planning strategies with respect to realizing the provocative propositions. It was decided to take the 'research Carnival' message and learning to all the ICA gathering such a forthcoming meeting in Indianapolis and then to the ICAI General Assembly in Brussels, Belgium, in September. The carnival concluded with most participants expressing their overall experience with the project. Significant learnings and high points from the process were also shared.

READING AS PER THE PRIMACY OF THE AUTHOR (ACTOR)

The following may be seen as a fusion of horizon because this understanding emerged from the thematic analysis of the appreciative inquiry interviews jointly performed by the researchers and participants (the AIT). Appreciative inquiry represented the interpretive scheme of the observer, which was also accepted by the actors in this case. Therefore, it is obvious that an analysis that comes out of the responses to the interview questions represent both the observers' and the actors' understanding. Yet, as one will soon realize, the reading that follows reveals primarily the primacy of the actors as opposed to the observers.

In presenting this analysis, we consider each life giving force as understood by the organizational factors analysis described earlier. In other words, the AIT looked at the transcripts of the interview responses of one LFG at a time, thematically separated the
responses for each organizational factor (beliefs & values, communication, decision making, leadership, organizational structure, organizational practices, interpersonal relationships, strategy and task). Within each organizational factor for a LGF, additional sub-thening was done by members of the ICA in the AIT.

The organizational analysis performed by the AIT was thorough and exhaustive. The result was a voluminous amount of knowledge and insight regarding how the various organizational factors contributed to the sustaining and enhancement of the core values of the ICA. A summary of this analysis may be found in Appendix 1. What we have done in the appendix is to present, using an "in-house" model of organizational analysis, an abbreviated thematic analysis of the data that came out of the over one hundred interviews that were conducted in the United States. Going through this section, one can find that the ICA had done a remarkable job of owning the data and making creative use of them.

After the organizational analysis was finished, participants of the appreciative research carnival went on to the task of creating what we call "provocative propositions" using the procedure discussed earlier in this chapter (e.g., they are always written in the present tense). Propositions were drafted for each life-giving force and within that for each organizational factor. For example, for the service mission life-giving force, there were propositions relating to each organizational factor (beliefs & values, decision making, communication, leadership, organizational structur
organizational practices, interpersonal relations, and strategy & task. Appendix 2 lists the provocative propositions written for each LGFs.

Conclusion

A careful look at the above 77 provocative propositions suggests that the process of creating them was indeed a "corporate writing" exercise for the ICA, as mentioned by several members. In their discourses, corporate writing signifies "creating the future together." In the appreciative inquiry framework, generating provocative propositions implies a similar process, i.e., envisioning the future based on the strengths of the present. Thus, under each LGF, participants considered what they did well and how to do them still better. As Cooperrider and Srivastva (1987) stated, "A provocative proposition is a statement that bridges the best of "what is" with one's own intuition of "what might be." Those 77 statements were provocative because they stretched the status quo and pushed the ICA to think of possibilities that would ensure survival and vitality. Participants at the AIT reported that the process was inspiring because it challenged them to create a new future for the ICA at a time when it was undergoing sweeping transformation.

The propositions written also considered three aspects of organizational life and continuity. These were the "novelty-continuity-transition" elements mentioned earlier in this chapter. The "novelty" brought in an element of surprise, challenge, and
intrigue. The focus on "continuity" made sure that the new strategies would ensure continuity from the old to the new. Finally, the emphasis on "transition" made sure that there would be a smooth passage to the unfamiliar from the familiar. In addition, the AIT developed and used a check list of 10 criteria to determine whether a proposition was provocative or not.

According to many of the participants at the "carnival" writing the provocative propositions was the most exciting part of the research process. This gave them an opportunity to be brave, creative and inspiring about their visions for the ICA.

FUSION OF HORIZON: THE DISCOVERY DURING THE RESEARCH PROCESS

In this section two forms of learnings are discussed: one pertaining to the process of appreciative inquiry and the other regarding the content.

1. The flexibility of the organization in undergoing change

Since their origins in late 1950s, the ICA underwent sweeping changes in its structure and processes. In 1959, the ICA started out as a Christian organization concerned with social action. From a seven member family living together in Evanston, they expanded to a very large organization experimenting with community living. They showed a readiness and excitement to live in the most inhospitable circumstances with the firm belief that their basic faith in people will ultimately transform the surroundings. It worked starting from their classic 5th City Experiment in a Chicago inner city. By 1973, ICA had transformed itself into a completely secular organization.
committed to global development. They also showed remarkable resilience and strength when their charismatic founder and leader Joseph Mathew died in 1978. Joseph Mathews happened to have a tremendous influence over the members and several of them drew direct inspiration from him. Yet his death did not cripple the organization. On the contrary, the ICA emerged demonstrating a more prominent role in the field of social action and change. In 1984, in yet another transformation, the local ICAs all over the world became completely autonomous and financially independent. Meanwhile, they also subjected themselves to an intense soul searching process as an organization and dialogued about alternate forms of organizing. Such flexibility and adaptability are truly impressive.

2. The Social Inventions of the ICA

Another learning centered around social inventions of the ICA (Whyte, 1981). In addition to the 5th City Experiment, the Town Meetings, Human Development Projects, Emerging Generations etc. were intriguing social experiments. Town Meetings, for example, were an innovative method of organizing people in a location where they could demonstrate the power of local citizens to take charge of their social surroundings and create social action. Emerging Generations was an interesting way of dealing with the issue of raising children within the ICA community. Panchayat was an interesting experiment in shared global leadership. These features added to our inquisitiveness of exploring this organization.
3. Affirmation and the climate of Inquiry

Our overall appreciative focus created a sense of trust and collegiality between the organization members and the university researchers and initiated a mutual process of respect for each other. ICA acknowledged a university taking a appreciative research interest in them. They also felt our affirmative focus coincided with their basic philosophy of valuing all segments of human existence. In fact, one of them reported that this was the first time they were granting permission to be studied by an outside research organization because in earlier instances the researchers were there with a problem solving eye to identify gaps and deficiencies in their organizational forms.

Affirmation is more than a mere research approach to the ICA. It is a basic value for the organization, which is emphatically stated as "All is good, we are accepted, the past is approved, and the future is open" Such an outlook encourages them to see themselves as worthy human beings capable of making a difference in this world. In fact, most of the ICA's works are instances of affirmation. When they go to a remote village in Africa or Asia, or work with local school systems, they start by acknowledging that people are capable of taking charge of their lives.

Propositions

Irrespective of whether one uses traditional research methods or hermeneutic inquiry, it is useful to engage in some form of sense making or theorizing based on the data analysis. The term
propositions as opposed to theories or hypothesis is used because both the latter terms imply some future validation or verification based on strict "empirical" designs and methods. Theories need to be proved and hypothesis need to be tested. However, at this point the researcher is only able to state some learnings specifically regarding the process of appreciative inquiry using the generative theory (Gergen, 1982). Ten such propositions are listed below.

Proposition 1. The nature and quality of the inquiry process and their outcomes are determined by the choice readers make between playing the doubting game or the believing game.

In this case we made that choice to play the believing game because of our theoretical predilections. There were clear evidences to suggest that our choice did make the difference. Several members of the ICA made it explicitly clear that this was the first time they made themselves available to research. Earlier efforts to study the ICA were not encouraged because the "the professors were out to get us, to describe us as a religious community ... to put us into straight jackets of this category or that." In that context, the Appreciative Inquiry focus intuitively appealed to them since it was very compatible to their values.

Proposition 2. Making provocative propositions and transforming an organization are possible more out of an appreciative mode than out of a critical mode.

As is evident from the theory of appreciative inquiry, traditional action research creates a vocabulary of deficit resulting in a problem-solving mentality. Talking about provocative propositions becomes extremely difficult because the focus is on
what is not working as opposed to what is working. This line of reasoning was validated by statements made by the ICA members such as "but for the appreciative inquiry we wouldn't have let you in" and "you were doing to us (ie., AI) what we were doing to other organizations." Ethnographic notes taken during the Appreciative Research Carnival also showed a surge of energy among participants for writing provocative propositions.

Proposition 3. The commitment that an organization demonstrates towards a form of inquiry is directly proportional to the sense of ownership they experience with the research process.

This is an important learning from this research. Right from the beginning, we had sent detailed notes on what was being planned and accomplished from this research process. A clear shift in energy level took place during an AIT workshop. The research process was schematically outlined on a board and members read through it aloud describing what they understood of each step. A transition took place when one of the members said: "Now I know what you guys are trying to do, this is not just a case study for the November conference, but this is going to be a transformational experience for us . . . You want to take us through this transition" We noticed a dramatic shift in energy level. There was a surge of enthusiasm about the research process and its scope. More resources were committed and expectations started rising. There was more excitement, commitment and involvement in thinking of this research beyond a case study and to translating it into a long awaited transformational experience.
Such an attitudinal shift in interpreting the scope of the research process took place because of an increased ownership of the study by key stakeholders of the organization. Initially, the study was perceived as a research project with a clearly defined intent of writing a case study for presenting at the International Conference on Innovations in Global Management. This itself was a worthwhile job, and full cooperation was extended to the research team to accomplish it. However, once the process started, ICA was able to perceive the potential utility of the process beyond merely writing a case study about an organizational transformation intervention. The outcome is based on the clear initiative and proactivity they demonstrated in seizing the opportunity. Thus, the commitment to the research process the organization members develop are clear indicators of how much ownership they take of the process.

Proposition 4. The affirmative process of inquiry brings people together in a way that makes them more a cohesive team and community.

As a result of this inquiry, the ICA members came to know each other in a way that acknowledged their strong team spirit and corporateness. Earlier, they had mentioned that years of hard work and job pressures resulted in a gradual decrease in the amount of time they could spend with each other. As tasks became more challenging and demanding, they invested a growing proportion of their daily lives in getting tasks successfully accomplished. There was little time left to talk about the core values and mission. The beginning of the AI project brought about a significant change. The
conversation that occurred during the interviews and later in the

carnival had several qualities of a renewal process. The dialogue

around their service, mission, peak experiences, core values, and

future visions brought together the groups to a single platform. The

language of affirmation helped reduce the deficit mentality and

raised the awareness of the group that their greatest gift has

always been their ability to work together as a team.

Proposition 5. For those engaged in appreciative Inquiry, trusting

the process of inquiry is more important than directing it as

experts.

The ICA is one of the first organizations in which the

appreciative inquiry methodology has been introduced on a large

scale. Naturally, we were apprehensive - how will the system work?

There were unresolved questions - to what extent micro-management

should be applied?, Who would lead the process? and, how much

control should be exercised in the research process? Interestingly,

all these questions became non-issues as soon as the inquiry process

began. The project was on "automatic pilot" once everyone

internalized the appreciative inquiry philosophy. It was difficult

to determine who was in control. The process developed a life of its

own. The project became larger than anyone and assumed control of

its course. Appreciative inquiry became the focus of attention as

opposed to the ICA. This indeed was a learning experience for the

researcher who is used to micro-managing all the aspects of a

project like this. He learned to trust the process and believe, as

ICA members say, that "the power is in the center of the table."
Proposition 6. **Possibilities for positive outcomes in collaborative inquiry efforts are directly proportional to the compatibility of the values of the author and readers.**

The values of the ICA and of the researchers were compatible on various aspects. Both believed in appreciative inquiry, experiential learning, the power of language to create reality, and generative theory building. Neither thought that research is a unilateral process where one party researches the other. On the contrary, an inquiry is a social process where meaning is co-created in a dialogue.

Proposition 7. **The usefulness of a collaborative inquiry effort is directly proportional to the familiarity the client organization will have with the methodology.**

In other words, to the extent the ICA have internalized the dominant research values and norms, they will find value in the research process. Consequently, the probability for generating useful knowledge will be proportionately increase. For example, the ICA has been doing significant work based on a affirmative philosophy for a long time. The AI process was something close to their hearts. They could immediately relate to the research proposal.

Proposition 8. **Commitments of organization members to the inquiry process is built in incremental steps in an evolving rather than in an "all or none" manner.**

Since the research began in April of 1989, a gradual build-up of commitment started. Initially, the objective of the project was to collect just enough data to write up a case study for presentation at the International Conference on Social Innovations.
in Global Management to be held six months later in Cleveland, Ohio. However, after the first phase of the research (preliminary interviews and feedback), the ICA felt comfortable in letting the Case Western Reserve University know that they would be willing to be part of the ten year long project in understanding Global Social Change Organizations. As the AI process continued, the interest of the ICA in the process grew to the extent that a week long "appreciative research carnival" was planned. The AIT team also went the "extra mile" of traveling to several midwestern ICA locations, conducting the 1-2 hour long interviews, audio-tape and even transcribing them spending several long hours. Later they suggested that the researcher travel to Brussels to interview participants at the ICAI gathering. The permission to conduct on-site interviews during that busy international conference (September-October, 1989) was also arranged. Once there, the ICA staff carved-out and negotiated 30-minutes interview slots through out the conference. None of these things were planned at the beginning. On the contrary, the commitment gradually emerged as the research process got underway.

Proposition 9. Generating provocative propositions are acts of affirmation and faith in the organization.

A provocative proposition is a statement that bridges the best of "what is" with one's own intuition of "what might be." It is provocative to the extent that it stretches the realm of the status quo and helps suggest real possibilities that represent potentials for the organization. It is inspiring because it challenges us to
create a new future. A provocative proposition builds on the life giving forces and heightens our attention to it thereby releasing powerful energy to make visions a reality.

This was found to be true in the case of the ICA too. The organizational analysis of the five life giving forces brought out the various organizational factors that facilitated the strengthening of each of these. The provocative propositions were written based on this analysis and other criteria mentioned earlier. In doing that, the focus was on appreciating what has worked so far, and still to make them work better. Viewed from that perspective, writing provocative propositions were acts of affirmations and faith in the capacity of the ICA to meet its challenges. It was also an acknowledgement that organization members were interested in seeing the proposition become a reality.

Proposition 10: The nature of the appreciative organizational inquiry process is a microcosmic representation of the kind of organizational process that are typically in motion in organizations.

The most noteworthy facet of this research was the active involvement of the ICA right from the beginning. They wanted to take charge of the process and modify it in ways that would suit their needs. This was done in a dialogical and reflective manner with an admirable sense of maturity and intellectual calibre. This was no "you tell me what to do" kind of research. The ICA wanted to know at each and every step what was being planned and why. They perceived themselves as part of the process and equal partners. With years of practical training in the "technology of participation" and with a
track record as pioneers in group-empowerment, ICA members naturally saw themselves as partners in research. The researcher lived-in-residence with the community getting useful insights into ICA’s style of living and placing the research in context. Participation comes to them as if naturally when we consider that consensus building is a life giving force for the ICA. The overall culture and values within the ICA encourage a questioning and inquisitive attitude. Ideas are encouraged to be daring and challenging and are usually accepted after careful scrutiny. One of the preferred modes of idea management within the ICA centered around a brainstorming concept that one should not criticize an idea or model; instead, they practice an alternative model: if they don’t agree with the idea under consideration, they have to suggest an alternative. The appreciative inquiry process with its emphasis on creating provocative propositions created an ideal climate of curiosity, seriousness and originality for them. Thus, the research process was capturing a representative flow of organizational experiences in a miniature form.

FURTHER READING BASED ON THE PRIMACY OF THE AUTHOR (ACTOR)

One consequence of using the hermeneutic circle model is that it allows us to see how knowledge generation is a continous loop, each significantly influenced by the previous. In a pragmatic sense, we may hope that each reading is a refinement over the previous one and lead to better understanding. From a process point of view, it is also an act of reflection and affirmation. As actors digest the
understanding gained in a reading, the process sharpens their sensitivities and reflexive capacities and brings out finer details of the learning that they may not have been aware. Secondly, because it is a social process, and uses the appreciative framework, the process tends to bond the participants in a way that facilitates the creation of a shared vision and commitment. For example, the learning from the Appreciative Research Carnival was further deliberated by the ICA in a Philosophy and Mission Retreat held in November, 1989. Three fundamental questions were reflected upon during this important gathering: (1) Why is the ICA in being? (2) What does the ICA do? and (3) How does the ICA implement its mission and what values guide its implementation?

To show how this is a refinement over the previous reading and to highlight the reflexivity and affirmation inherent in the process, some of the brainstorming inputs from the participants at the retreat dealing with these three questions is listed in Appendix 3.

CONTINUATION OF THE HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE: ADDITIONAL READING BASED ON THE PRIMACY OF THE AUTHOR (ACTOR)

The ICA's exploration of its life-giving organizational processes did not end after the 1989 retreat. They revived the process two years later, in July 1991 in another workshop in Chicago. At this time the ICA critically examined what they had learned about themselves. For example, one such issue dealt with an observation the researcher had made about the non-negotiable nature
of the ICA's core values. As an excellent example of the ICA's reflexivity, an analysis of the workshop is provided in Appendix 4.

Conclusion

The intent of narrating these subsequent readings in appendices 3 and 4 was not to state anything that had not been said before, since they were all said in one form or another earlier, but to show how the understanding became more focused through these continuous readings that the ICA engaged in themselves. It also demonstrated the role of core values in shaping organizational transformation. Above all, this reading brought to the surface the difference appreciative inquiry can make both as a co-inquiry based organizational science method and an intervention approach.

Learnings from this chapter also suggest that it is critical to understand the importance of the images out of which we choose to operate, because it is these images that shape our reality perception of organizations. As Weick (1979) argued, "an organization is a body of thought thought by thinking thinkers" (p. 42). Organizations are social constructions (Gergen 1985, Pfeffer, 1982; Sims and Gioia, 1986) existing in our images; we can't touch or feel organizations we only make inferences about their existence and impact on our lives. Once created, paradoxically, they are the creators of our reality (Thomson & Salamon, 1986). Pettigrew (1979) has noted that man is "a creator and manager of meaning" (p. 572). Yet there are constraining effects of culture on interactions within that culture. Thus, "man creates culture and culture creates man"
(Pettigrew, 1979, p. 577). This duality in the social constructionist view that social structures are both human creations and, at the same time, constraints on the process of meaning creation (Giddens, 1976, 1977), was an important one in this reading of the ICA. The ICA is clearly a reality creator based on powerful mythologies and symbols, yet they are not a closed system since they allow themselves to be influenced by forces from the environment.

As Pfeffer (1982, p.10) argues organizations are systems of shared meanings, in which much of the organizational work consists of symbol manipulation and the development of shared organizational paradigms (Weick 1979; Brown, 1978). Action is governed by the systems of meaning that emerge and develop within the social structure to provide understanding of the social world, and through the development of a shared perspective and negotiated order, they provide stability and cohesion to those within the system. The ICA indeed is one of the best examples of sustaining stability as well as moving forward in constant flux. It is this ability to understand and appreciate stability and change as a paradoxical phenomena happening simultaneously that is the focus of the next chapter, the ICA as a hermeneutical organization.
CHAPTER 6

THE ICA AS A HERMENEUTIC ORGANIZATION: THE ROLE OF PARADOXES AND INTENSE REFLEXIVITY IN ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

We stand in turmoil of contradictions without having the faintest idea how to handle them: Law/Freedom; Rich/Poor; Right/Left; Love/Hate- the list seems endless. Paradox lives and moves in this realm; it is the art of balancing the opposites in such a way that they do not cancel each other but shoot sparks of light across their points of polarity. It looks at our desperate either/ors and tells us they are really both/ands- that life is larger than any of our concepts and can, if we let it, embrace our contradictions.

--Mary C. Morrison, in The Episcopalian, January, 1983

In formal logic a contradiction is the sign of defeat; but in the evolution of real knowledge it marks the first step in progress towards victory.

-Whitehead

This reading represents yet another evolution in my understanding of the ICA. This resulted of from the researcher’s visit to Brussels to interview the participants at the ICAI international gathering. After interviewing 35 members from different parts of the world, a considerably different understanding of the ICA emerged. In the hermeneutic circle, this represented going back and forth between the whole and the part of the understanding loop.

THE HERMENEUTIC CIRCLE

These 45-60 minutes interviews offered interesting responses.

A thematic analysis of the data pointed to a paradoxical state of
mind in many ICA members. On the one hand, the data established the presence of what is called "non-negotiable values" among the ICA members worldwide. On the other hand, operationalization of these values resulted in very diverse behaviors. Thus, apparently contradictory practices seemed to stem from the same core value. A case in point is corporateness. In locations such as Chicago and Indianapolis, corporateness found its expression in community living. In many other places, especially in international locations, though corporateness was a core value, each member lived in independent residential facilities. Several such apparent paradoxes surfaced during the interviews. A metaphor that was mentioned by many respondents during these conversations seemed very appropriate to describe this in the ICAs worldwide. It was called "the hero with a thousand faces." An expression coming out of Joseph Campbell's mythology (also the title of one of his books), the thousand faces referred to the paradoxes and multiplicity of roles the ICA was able to engage. In other words, one could see the ICA as an organization having the capacity or flexibility for dealing with paradoxes all the time.

The core values that emerged from analyzing the responses to the interview questions bore close resemblance to the life-giving forces that were identified during the Appreciative Research Carnival. Such a strong value foundation prompted the researcher to say at the ICAI conference in Brussels (in 1989) that the core values of the ICA are non-negotiable. At the same time, most of
these core values have undergone some evolution in terms of how they are expressed now. Let us look at some of these changes.

1. Intra-organizational and extra-organizational affirmation

Earlier in the analysis, it was stated that the ICA discovers self through others. The metaphor used here was aptly called "self as others" which was different from what many have tried to accomplish through meditation, which is discovering self in one's own self. Enriching self through others is accomplished by organizational practices that created mutual affirmation processes in the ICA. In other words, the sources of affirmation came from within the ICA community. Over a period of time, however, the sources of affirmation by and large moved from an intra-organizational base to an extra-organizational one. In the beginning, as an intentional community with a theory driven action focus, members would engage in intense dialogue within their community regarding what they are doing and their impact and relevance based on their theories and propositions. Several of the practises associated with corporateness and spirituality directly reinforced this affirmation of one another.

However, over a period of time, a gradual shift in this dynamics took place with increased transnationalism and prolonged client contact. As the intensity of interaction between the ICA staff and the local people increased, the sources of affirmation partly shifted to outside the organization of ICA. Many of the common rituals reinforcing corporateness had by then ceased to exist
along with a shift from group based rituals to individual experimentation with meditation, formerly known in the community as contemplation. The combined effect of such transitions was that the ICA members were deriving more affirmation and recognition from the people with whom they worked.

Relying on outside sources of affirmation induced cognitive dissonance, as it strained the basic non-negotiable value of corporateness. To reduce this cognitive dissonance, in the absence of its conscious acknowledgement, tacit fulfillment of this basic value would take place through affirming corporateness by consensus building in all procedures. That was what the researcher saw happening. A tremendous amount of time was spent in corporate and consensus building activities during the various proceedings. As one participant characterized it, "it is submission to the judgement of my colleagues. When I came here I submit myself to the judgement of my colleagues which is corporateness, consensus building and reaffirmation of our basic values."

Expansion of the hermeneutic circle regarding the paradoxes in the ICA

Similar paradoxes in other life-giving forces of the ICA began to emerge with a better understanding of the dynamics of the evolution of corporateness in the ICA. Statements by some interviewees reflected these: "The great truths of life are paradoxical" and "We want creative approaches to societal contradictions." One of the communications circulated to
participants before the global gathering that this researcher
participated (in Brussels, 1989) anticipated this "dialectic
tension". It read like this:

"History is created in the dialectic. The dialectic between
the Platonic and the Aristotelian. The dialectic between the
Yin and Yang. The dialectic between the Scattered and the
Gathered; and the No Longer and the Not Yet. To create history
is to embrace the paradox of the mystery of life ...The
question has been asked as to whether some new form needs to
take its (the absence of assigned leadership) place soon or do
we allow this loss to give permission to further openness and
experimentation...the answer is Yes and No...We are going
through a period of scatteredness and autonomy...it needs to
be balanced by a centering, gathering dynamic."

As more attention was paid to such comments, more paradox-like
processes and activities in the ICAI gathering emerged. This is an
example.

Grand narratives (Western perspective) versus indigenization

"(In the past) one village had people from five countries
doing a project. Now it is moving toward each location taking care
of its own needs." Said one interviewee. "In the beginning the ICA
emphasized a strong international presence in each location. An
aspect that facilitated this networking had to do with the common
history. A majority of the people in the ICA had came through a
common socialization route called RS-1 and the academy experience.
However, as the ICA had more practical experiences in a larger
variety of global settings and trained more people in their
methodology, the new recruits did not always have the same
transformational experience as the earlier actors, nor did they
share a similar history or culture. Meanwhile, the ICA members were
profoundly impacted by what they were learning from the local people in new cultures. As more and more local people got trained in the ICA methods and became part of the organizations, a gradual pressure to indigenize arose.

This dynamic may also be categorized as a tension between the Western perspectives and local understanding, or simply the paradox between grand narratives and local narratives (Lyotard, 1984). Grand narratives or grand theories are models that are generalizable to all situations. To that extent they are also called global theories. In the case of the ICA, the models that were developed based on their success stories in the Fifth City, Town Meetings, and Human Development Projects were thought to have direct transferability or application potential in other parts of the world. In action, this saw North American ICA members travelling to other continents to set up "Human Development" and related projects. Though well intended, such efforts often attempted replications of what worked in one setting to a different context. More often than not, it failed to consider the local knowledge. However, over a period of time, as ICA members were exposed to the relevance and value of the local wisdom and understanding, they recognized this as a paradox and learned to balance the local-global knowledge dynamics.

PRIMACY OF THE READER (OBSERVER)

Paradoxes in organizations

All these observation and analysis point toward the need to look at the paradoxes in the ICA. Even before considering that, it
is important to look into questions such as "what are paradoxes?", "Are paradoxes an integral part of organizational life? If so, what are the conceptual ways of understanding paradoxes in organizations?" As we discuss paradoxes, it is important to underscore that the term paradox is used for want of a better term. The idea of "one versus another" is very unlike hermeneutic postulates. Instead, what we are trying to capture here is the range of meaning that is possible between the two polarities in the construction of paradox.

Paradox comes out of the Latin root which denotes "apparent contradiction" (Slaatte, 1968). In philosophy it refers to contradictory, mutually exclusive elements that are present and operate equally at the same time. Paradoxes is different from concepts such as dilemma, irony, inconsistency, dialectic, ambivalence, or conflict (Quinn and Cameron, 1988, p.2) A dilemma is an either-or situation where one alternative must be selected over other attractive alternatives. An irony exists when an unexpected or contradictory outcome arises from a single alternative. An inconsistency is merely an aberration or discontinuity from past patterns. A dialectics is a pattern that always begins with a thesis followed by an antithesis and resolved by a synthesis. Ambivalence is uncertainty over which two or more attractive (or unattractive) alternatives should be chosen. And a conflict is the perpetuation of one alternative at the expense of others. Paradox differs from each of these concepts in that no choice need be made between two or more
contradictions. Both of the contradictory elements in a paradox are accepted and present. Both operate simultaneously. As Quinn and Cameron (1988) stated, "The key characteristic in paradox is the simultaneous presence of contradictory, even mutually exclusive elements."

Hughes and Brecht (1975) define paradox as a statement or set of statements that are self-referential and contradictory and that trigger a vicious circle. For example, consider the famous paradox of the Liar, - "I always lie,"- studied by the Megaric philosophers around 400 B.C. It seems both true and false. Nielsen (1967, p.622) summarizes four different ways that the Liar paradox has been resolved:

(1) that the man's remarks can be called both true and false, but in different respects (Aristotle); (2) that it makes no sense at all (Chrysippus); (3) that in a covert manner it embodies two statements having different levels of reference, and when these are kept separate no paradox arises (Bertrand Russell); and (4) that the offending sentence would normally be used as an outpouring of remorse or self-disgust, not as an occasion for drawing inferences, and its paradoxical aspect troubles us only when we fail to notice its normal use (Wittgenstein).

To give another example, Jourdain (1913) printed on one side of card the words, "The statement on the other side of this card is true" and on the opposite side "The statement on the other side of this card is false". A modern version of Jourdain's paradox is as follows.

The following sentence is false
The preceding sentence is true.
In both, the paradox is located in the relationship between the two sentences. When considered separately, the arguments supporting paradoxical propositions appear sound. However, considered together, the arguments appear contradictory. However, when the second sentence is framed by the first, we suddenly find that the first is framed by the second. In trying to sort out which is true and which is false, we are caught in a loop, a jumbled hierarchy that exists in the area between the two explicit statements (Smith and Berg, 1987).

In other words, a paradox is an observation in which two apparently contradictory elements are seen as present or operating at the same time (Quinn and Cameron, 1988). It is constructed by individuals when oppositional tendencies are brought into recognizable proximity through reflection or interaction (Ford and Backoff, 1988).

Paradox and paradoxical thought have been part of social theory since people began to record their reflections on the human condition. Otto Rank was one of the first who dealt with this paradox of human nature. According to him, each of us is engaged in the struggle of our two selves: our creatureliness, our appetite, our animal nature, on the one hand, and our ingenuity, our insight, or consciousness on the other (Becker, 1975). We have a continuous awareness of our death and life. As we live, we are dying too. "While each of us wants to persevere, we are cursed with the special burden of knowing that our efforts to persevere simply bring us
closer to the extinction (death) of what we cherish the most (life).”

Essentially, paradox is a mental construct that exists only in
the thoughts or interpretations of the individual. Yet, according to
Quinn and Cameron (1988), the capacity to perceive and think about
paradox is important in the scientific discovery process. It has
been found that paradoxical thinking is associated with creative
insights and scientific breakthroughs which involved the
transformation of old ways of thinking about a problem to new ways.

"Janusian thinking" is a term introduced by Rothenburg (1979) while
investigating the creative achievements of individuals such as
Einstein, Mozart, Picasso, and O’Neill, as well as fifty-four highly
creative artists and scientists in the United States and Great
Britain. Janusian thinking happens when two contradictory thoughts
are held to be true simultaneously. The explanation or resolution of
the apparent contradiction is what leads to major breakthroughs. To
quote Rothenburg (1979, p. 55),

In Janusian thinking, two or more opposites or antitheses are
conceived simultaneously, either as existing side by side, or
as equally operative, valid, or true. In an apparent defiance
of logic or of physical possibility, the creative person
consciously formulates the simultaneous operation of
antithetical elements and develops those into integrated
entities and creations. It is a leap that transcends ordinary
logic. What emerges is no mere combination or blending of
elements: the conception does not only contain different
elements, it contains opposing and antagonistic elements,
which are understood as coexistent. As a self-contradictory
structure, the Janusian formulation is surprising when
seriously posited in naked form (in Quinn and Cameron, 1988,
p. 4)
The core of the Janusian formulations is that two opposites can both be valid at the same time. For example, Quinn and Cameron (1988:5) argue that Einstein's conception of the theory of relativity emerged when he conceived of a man jumping off a tall building, and on the way down, taking from his pocket a wallet, placing it in front of himself, and letting go. It occurred to Einstein that relative to the man, the wallet would remain stationary in the air. At that instant, therefore, the wallet (and the man) was simultaneously moving and at rest. That is, two conditions that seem to be mutually exclusive were present at the same time. Einstein's paradox led to a complete revolution in the accepted laws of physics. Rothenburg's study uncovered similar paradoxes in composers who conceived of simultaneous dissonance and harmony in a chord, artists who painted tension and rest in the same scene, and athletes who experienced both exhaustion and exhilaration at a point of peak performance.

Organizational theorists and researchers are not yet very sophisticated in understanding the nature of paradox. Maruyama (1976) pointed out that the traditional ways in which organizational scientists think are inappropriate for analyzing such complex organizational phenomena as paradox. Terms like unidirectional, uniformistic, competitive, hierarchical, quantitative, classificational, and atomistic are used to describe such thinking. What is required to understand organizational paradoxes, according to Maruyama, is mutualistic, heterogentic, symbiotic,
interactionist, qualitative, relational, and contextual thinking. Similarly, Van de Ven (1983) argued that organizational theories do not generally consider the presence of paradoxes. On the contrary, they are based on assumptions of linearity and consistency. The simultaneous presence of contradictory patterns is rarely discussed. Most theories also overlook that organizations are pervaded by a range of emotions, thoughts, and actions that their members experience as contradictory. The more one tries to separate the contradictions so that they don’t appear as one, the more enmeshed they become in the self-referential binds of paradox (Smith and Berg, 1987). What one needs is an understanding that organizations are inherently paradoxical.

According to Poole and Van de Van (1989), organizational and management theories involve a special type of paradox—social paradoxes. They listed many such paradoxes that have been identified by researchers such as Burrell and Morgan (1979), Pfeffer (1982), Quinn and Cameron (1988), Smith and Berg (1987), Van de Ven (1983), and Van de Ven and Poole (1988). These paradoxes include: the difficulty in reconciling the explanation of behavior as a function of structural determination with the equally strong claim that it is the product of purposive action (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Van de Ven & Poole, 1988); good arguments for two incompatible conceptualizations of organizational climate—as an aggregation of individual climate perceptions or as a macro level system property (Glick, 1985, 1988; James, Joyce, & Slocum, 1988); the question of
whether social organizations are fundamentally stable orders or continuously changing emergents (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Pfeffer, 1982; Weick, 1979); and the trade-off between the need to establish individual identity in groups and the collective nature of group action (Smith & Berg, 1987). Each side of these tensions has been advocated or emphasized by different theorists, but together they form a tradition of theoretical discourse which is potentially richer than either theory by itself. The problem is how best to mine this rich vein of insight.

Only a handful of research has been done on dealing with paradoxes in a group or organizational context. And each of them has explored a different aspect of dealing with paradoxes. A summary of most of that work is provided below.

The most convincing support for Smith and Berg’s (1987) notion— that groups face inherent, unresolvable paradoxes and that they must accept, confront and manage them— came from a study of the relationships between the internal dynamics and success of a population of intense work groups, professional string quartets in Great Britain (Murnighan and Conlon, 1991). Quartlets are a unique form of work group in at least two important respects; they are self-governing (Hackman, 1987) and their task is extremely intense, being artistic, immediate, and complete, and reciprocally independent (Thompson, 1967), using each other’s output as their own inputs, and vice versa. Because their work is done only as a unit— they cannot perform a composition without all of the members working
together simultaneously— they must collaborate and devote their concentration to their own and to each other’s playing.

Murnighan and Conlon’s (1991) research determined that the string quartets faced three important paradoxes: the leadership versus democracy paradox, the paradox of the second fiddle, and the conflict paradox of confrontation versus compromise. Their findings indicated that the more successful quartets recognized but did not openly discuss the paradoxes. Instead they managed these inherent paradoxes implicitly without trying to resolve them. They recognized and tolerated them, handled them quietly, rarely raising paradoxical issue for discussion. For example, players enacted both aspects of the leaders versus democracy paradox, subjectively perceiving that they had input (democracy) while objectively giving the first violinists more influence in the group. Their success at managing the paradox of the second fiddle depended on second violinists accepting their secondary status, while their colleagues supported them in their difficult role. As far as conflicts were concerned, they were appreciated to a limit, but the potentially divisive ones were put on hold so that only the most important issues would resurface.

Manz and Sims (1986) provided a conceptual analysis of the paradox inherent in leading self-managed groups. A paradoxical aspect of self-managed groups is the identification of an appropriate role for external work-group leaders. Why should such a leader be necessary if groups are indeed to be self-managing? They
brought perspectives from socio-technical systems (STS) and social learning theory (SLT) to develop a conceptual framework that suggests a role for this unique type of leader. Interestingly, this was stated in a paradoxical construct: a superleader who leads others to lead themselves. According to the authors, the combining of STS & SLT perspectives enabled an expanded view of the role of self-managed group leaders that emphasized both contextual & motivational needs of the work groups.

In another study on organizational paradoxes, Jablonski, (1988) argued that the movement for women's ordination in the Roman Catholic Church sharpened and intensified perceptions of the paradoxical situation facing Catholic women. Women who are unhappy with the Church's position on women's issues and who continue to identify as Roman Catholics must embrace a paradoxical world-view. At the poles of this world-view are a commitment to viewing women's experience as central to feminine spirituality and a belief in at least some of the core traditions and dogma of Roman Catholicism. Women who oppose the Church's ban on women priests shift back and forth between the poles of the paradox, but tend ultimately to identify more strongly with one polarity than the other. Those who assume a selectively orthodox stance identify primarily as Catholics and secondarily as feminists, while those who take a selectively heterodox stance identify primarily as feminists and secondarily as Catholics. In each, the focus was to reconciliation of their paradoxical situation.
Commenting on the "great paradox: responsibility without empowerment, Werner (1992) argued that in large, bureaucratic organizations, the field of proscribed behavior is infinitely larger than the field of authorized activity. Such an omnipresent paradox is alarming because it is a major source of declining competitiveness. The paradox revolves around the need to fulfill specific goals in the absence of specific instructions while bound by rules and environment that preclude empowered behavior.

In an interesting article on the Icarus Paradox, Miller (1992) discussed how exceptional companies bring about their own downfall. The paradox of the myth of Icarus - whose wings melted, causing him to plunge to his death - is that his greatest asset led to his demise. This paradox can be applied to many outstanding companies. Success can engender overconfidence, carelessness, and other bad habits that produce excesses in strategies, leadership, culture, and structures. The very causes of success may lead to failure when they are extended.

A construct related to paradoxes is organizational impasse which is a development from paradox that results from one polarity in the group attempting to eliminate the other. According to O'Connor (1992) paradox means that within any group there can be found contradictions that are self-referential and that operate in a circular relationship to each other. Using data derived from direct observation, surveys, and interview methods, a research project compared 76 episodes of impasse to a matrix of behaviors that the
literature proposed as indicative of paradox. The results show that organizational impasse occurs when individuals within a group refuse to accept, experience, or appreciate differences, so that those holding contradictory views cannot engage one another's attention and do not make contact. Resolution of impasse results from conscious and deliberate behavioral change that is maintained over time and that is based on an increased understanding of core issues and paradoxical situations unique to each group.

Nooteboom (1989) argued that some philosophical notions may improve people's understanding of the nature of identity and change of organizations and of the paradoxes that emerge from the present management literature. The present paradoxes facing managers are questions concerning the relation between identity and change and between unity and diversity. Systems theory indicates that some paradoxes can be resolved by distinguishing between an operational level and a meta-level of guidance and inspiration. Post-modern and Saussurian philosophy indicate the need for differentiation in action and language (for diversity in unity). This shows that ambiguity in this sense (in the lack of fixation and uniformity) is ineradicable and creative and should be embraced rather than resolved.

Kogut and Zander (1992) identified a paradox where efforts by a firm to grow by the replication of its technology enhances the potential for imitation. The central competitive dimension of firms is the sharing and transfer of the knowledge of individuals and
groups within an organization. This knowledge consists of information and know-how. Central to the argument is that knowledge is held by individuals, but is also embedded in the organizing principles by which people cooperate within organizations.

Cunningham (1989) considered the paradox of confrontation and engagement in organization development interventions. Accepting the challenge to do things differently requires that managers actively confront present products and procedures. To confront is to vigorously invite comparisons and enter into open conflict. The choice of confrontation style is governed by both a paradox and a principle. The paradox is that organizational development should simultaneously generate stress and build group support. The principle to be invoked in resolving the paradox is that people can learn only what they almost already know. Having resolved this stress-security paradox and confronted the group, the leader must engage the organization in facing the issue. The manager who confronts his employees and engages with them in addressing the issue acknowledges a serious situation and a shared concern.

Harvey, Kanter, and Carlisle (1988) considered a paradox called the Abilene Paradox which occurs when members of an organization take an action contrary to what they really want to do and, as a result, defeat the very purposes they are trying to achieve. Organizations caught in the web of the Abilene Paradox lack the ability to manage agreement. This can be expressed by subsymptoms such as the organization members fail to communicate
their desires and beliefs to one another, inaccurate and invalid information is then used to make decisions and everyone is angry, irritated, and frustrated with the results.

Manz and Angle (1986) considered triangulating a paradox with the question "Can group self-management mean a loss of personal control?" To answer this question they examined the introduction of self-managed work groups in a context that traditionally has relied on individual self-management. A property and casualty insurance firm that employed 32 people participated in the study. Under the leadership of a new chief executive officer, the company created 3 teams, a senior team, a junior team, and a small accounts team. They examined factors such as leadership practice, group peer pressure, rigid procedures, and juniors exposure to experienced role models. Results indicated that group-based self-management had the potential for undermining individual discretion, autonomy, and initiative. This depended on the objectives pursued by self-managed groups, the nature of the setting in which they were put in place, and the way that they were implemented and maintained.

Studying colleges and universities Cameron (1986) found that the presence of paradox was central in explaining how institutions overcame decline and improved effectiveness. To quote, "Organizational effectiveness is inherently paradoxical. To be effective, an organization must possess attributes that are simultaneously contradictory, even mutually exclusive" (p.43. Cameron summarized a study of fourteen small colleges in which each
had experienced decline in both revenues and enrollments during the 1970s. Half of these schools successfully recovered; half did not. The following conclusions were drawn in differentiating the successful recoverers from those that continued to decline.

1. Recovering institutions engaged in proactive, entrepreneurial, and innovative actions that were oriented toward long-term recovery.

2. Management strategies were simultaneously oriented toward both enacting and manipulating the external environment and ignoring the environmental constraints by establishing environmental buffers and concentrating on internal human resource and allocation decisions.

3. Institutions engaged in domain defense along with domain offense (Miles and Cameron 1982). That is, energy was spent in defending the institution against the encroachment of external environmental events and stakeholders, while at the same time, aggressive strategies were initiated to influence the external environment and important stakeholders outside the institution's boundaries.

4. The core culture and institutional roots of successful institution were strengthened, but at the same time innovations and creative activity helped change the character of the school. The simultaneous destruction and creation processes typical of successful innovations were typical in these institutions (Cameron 1983, 1984; Chaffee 1984).

Based on the above and similar studies, Quinn and Cameron (1988: pp.13-14) came to the following conclusion.
1. Ignoring the contradictory nature of organizations may be dysfunctional for managers and researchers.

Many effective organizations demonstrate both proactivity and entrepreneurship as well as stability and control. However, too much action and innovation can create a loss of direction, wasted energy, and a disruption of continuity. An overemphasis on control and coordination can produce stagnation, loss of energy, and abolition of trust and morale (Quinn and Kimberly 1984). Most theories do not consider such contradictory elements—they simply assume away one of the competing elements. In so doing they attribute actions to managers that may be dysfunctional. Similarly they lead researchers to see only part of the phenomena that are before them.

2. Theories of congruence have an order bias.

Synthesis is desirable but not required in organizations. It is not necessary that all paradoxes should be resolved. For example, Rothenburg's (1979) study suggested that the ability to stay in or be comfortable with paradox led individuals to produce quantum leaps in insight and creativity. When they were able to reconcile two contradictory elements, breakthroughs happened. Similarly, according to Schumacher (1977), the mere recognition that two opposite elements are simultaneously true and present in a system creates flexibility and freedom that are not present in totally linear systems. The contrary, achieving perfect fit or congruence may lead to a tensionless state in which the system becomes static (Quinn and Cameron, 1988).
Methods of dealing with paradoxes

There has been various attempts to come up with a strategy for dealing with paradoxes. Poole and Van de Van (1989) have summarized most such efforts into four categories.

1. Opposition: Accept the Paradox and Use It Constructively

The first response is to accept the paradox and learn to live with it. To accept a paradox is an enlightened conceptual stance because it acknowledges that things need not be consistent and that seemingly opposed viewpoints can inform one another. Thus, instead of ignoring the paradox, its implications are pursued actively. Poole and Van de Van (1989) believe that a great deal can be teamed from juxtaposing contradictory propositions and assumptions, even if they are incompatible. However, living with paradox is not always easy. It may not be clear just what sort of relationship "tensions between opposing positions" constitute. This ambiguity can result in incomplete understanding. Notwithstanding, to accept a paradox is a positive stance.

The remaining three strategies for dealing with paradoxes attempt to resolve paradox by spelling out the nature of the tensions between contradictory positions.

2. Spatial Separation: Clarify Levels of Analysis

The second approach resolves paradoxes by clarifying levels of reference and the connections among them. Van de Ven and Poole (1988) argue that many of the most powerful insights in social science have resulted from attempts to sort out levels and their
relationships. Ethnomethodology (Garfinkel, 1968; Cicourel, 1971), Parsonian sociology, and exchange theory (Homans, 1961; Blau, 1964) all developed out of their originators’ desires to clarify phenomena by distinguishing levels of analysis.

Level distinctions such as part-whole, micro-macro, or individual-society are useful in this context. This approach assumes that one horn of the paradox operates at one level of analysis (e.g., macro), while the other horn operates at a different level (micro). Similarly, there may be a spatial separation of paradoxical explanations. One horn of the paradox is assumed to rate in one physical or social locus, while the other operates in a different locus. For example, explanation A might hold for the top level of an organization, while explanation B holds for line workers. Similarly, some treatments of motivation, for instance, implicitly assume that top managers must be understood in different terms than employees at the lower levels (Poole and Van de Ven, 1989).

3. Temporal Separation: Take Time into Account

Taking time into consideration is the third way of addressing paradoxes. In this instance, one horn of the paradox is assumed to hold at one time and the other at a different time. The two contradictory assumptions or processes each exert separate influence, and each may influence the other through its prior action. Several types of temporal relationships may exist among these contradictory forces (Poole and Van de Van, 1989, p. 567):
One side of the Paradox may influence the conditions under which the other will operate, as in Reese and Overton's (1973) formulation of cognitive development, in which behavioral learning sets the stage for cognitive acquisitions; one side may create the conditions necessary for the existence of the other, as in Smelser's (1962) theory of collective action, in which individual activities may be the "precipitating event" for collective beliefs to develop; and there may also be mutual influence over time, with swings between one side and the other, as in Buckley's (1968) morphogenetic theory of social systems.

However, tremendous difficulty exists in achieving a clear temporal separation of contrary assumptions, or processes. For example, at what point does individual motivation leave off and collective action begin?

The resolution of paradoxes by level distinctions or temporal analysis leaves each set of assumptions or processes basically intact. Both sides of the paradox are assumed to be fundamentally sound, and the paradox is resolved by separating them and spelling out how one side feeds into or composes the other.

**Synthesis: Introduce New Terms to Resolve the Paradox**

The fourth way of responding to paradoxes is by advancing theories and constructs representing a more encompassing perspective or by suggesting a new set of concepts, as Wittgenstein (1953) did in his solution to the Liar paradox.

Poole and Van de Van (1989) suggest that though conceptually distinct, the four approaches can be combined in practice. In the chapter we see which of these strategies are used by the ICA in dealing with the paradox-like experiences they faced.
Framing, deframing, and reframing in the ICA

Exploring different types of mental frames of reference among employees in a producers’ cooperative in Denmark, Westenholz (1993) concluded that something new happens in organizations whose members apply paradoxical thinking, as opposed to just linear thinking. Linear thinking assumes that problems appear as distinct, precise, quantifiable and logical and thus lend themselves to empirical investigation. Paradoxical thinking is suggested as a fruitful concept for understanding changes in frames of reference. In Ambiguity and Choice in Organizations March and Olsen (1976: 4) discussed "the complete circle of choice" which represents the relationship between four variables: 1. individual 'models of the world'; 2. individual action or participation in situations of choice; 3. organizational action; and 4. environmental response. Within this context, actors are thought to be capable of distinguishing between their ideal world and reality. Discrepancy between these two perceptions is supposed to lead to individual action and, in turn, to organizational action. The environment, in turn, reacts to the organization's response and this, in turn, effects the actors' "model of the world". In this way, the actors learn whether or not they have behaved adequately.

Instead of accepting the notion that individual learning or changes in frames of reference ¹are based on environmental response, ¹Frame of reference describes individual strategies for making sense out of situations. Often, it is also perceived as 'frame', 'schema', or 'world view'. It represents a generalized term for cognitive structure and includes several components, including
Westenholz's (1993) study suggested that the individual stays within his or her existing frame of reference and chooses the environmental responses that confirm this frame of reference. Thus, actors may not be seeking information outside because the existing frame of reference entails a spontaneous self-referential or self-production process. According to Westenholz (1993), this is so because actors in organizations are not normally capable of grasping the truth of how the internal life of organizations functions/can function, or how the interplay between organizations and environments is/can be. All that is available are representations of reality created through self-referential mental processes, rather than objective pictures of reality itself. Thus, the pictures are what we assume they reflect (Jameson 1985). To use a Derridean term, readings of reality are fundamentally "undecidable" (because it is chaotic and unstable) to such an extent that reality cannot be represented by unambiguous pictures.

Westenholz (1993) argued that within the limits of the existing frame of reference, the individual can 'learn' from responses in the environment, but will not be capable of challenging these limits because they are the very means by which these responses are

general knowledge about the domain, specifications of its attributes and the among them, and specific instances, or examples of the domain' (Bartunek 1988, p.138). Learning is often used to characterize a process by which individuals/organizations become wiser, adapting their frames of reference to their experiences.

2 In 1973, Varela and Maturana referred to this phenomenon as a system of autopoesis, which was further developed by Luhman in 1984 (Morgan 1986; Thyssen 1988).
interpreted as meaningful. Argyris and Schon (1978) call this single-loop learning.

Since the limits of the frame of reference are not ordinarily challenged by environmental responses organizations may engage in the same response pattern even though the external environment has changed. However, in some cases, it is possible to change the actors' frames of reference which involve a deframing and then a reframing (double-loop learning, according to Argyris and Schon, 1978). This happens by means of some form of trigger which indicates the inadequacy and erroneousness of previous understanding. In other words, reframing begins with events that signals that the present framework for understanding no longer works. This produces a cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) which is resolved by the present frame "unfreezing" the present understanding and initiating the process of developing a new understanding. The challenge for making this happen may come from internal or external sources. That is, actors themselves may see the inadequacy of frames or may be convinced by others that their frame is inadequate (Bartunek 1988).

However, this deframing is not initiated by the inadequacy of actors' experiences in relation to how the environment responds, but by deframing the previous frame of reference as one sided or incomplete. By deframing the previous frame of reference, the actors experience that 'the world is open' to them because a new frame of reference can now be constructed. According to Westenholtz (1993) this deframing is the result of paradoxical thinking (She makes a
distinction between deframing and reframing: deframing describes a situation in which previous frames of reference are no longer experienced as creating meaning. Reframing describes the situation in which the actors create a new reference which can be used to infuse situations with new meaning. In Westenholz’s (1993) study those who could engage in paradoxical thinking were able to understand and reframe the situation more effectively. According to her,

Paradoxical thinking is a process through which employees establish a new relationship with the situation they are in. To establish a new relationship with the situation means to realize that one does not know in advance what the situation is about. One has no fixed model of the reality and of one’s own identity in this context. Possessing a paradoxical understanding in this situation helps one to recognize that the situation is not what it seems to be. A paradoxical understanding of one’s previous identity leads to the loss of meaning— a deframing— that makes one open to other lines of thought. This opens up the prospect of mutually constructing the social definition necessary to bridge old prejudices in order to handle recurring problems differently. (1993, p. 56)

The paradoxical thinking, as opposed to linear thinking, described above is evident in the different mental frames of reference or interpretive schemes of the ICA members. Unlike the traditional notion that environmental response cause changes in actor’s frames of reference, our analysis of how the ICA’s responded to the transformation it underwent suggest that individual actors in the ICA stuck to their own existing frame of reference and chose the environmental responses that confirmed this frame of reference. However, in the ICA, some deframing and then reframing of the actors’ frame of reference did take place making it a double-loop
learning organization. One of the best examples of this is the transformation from the Ecumenical Institute to the Institute of Cultural Affairs in 1973. This happened by experiences in places where the majority population is non-christian, the word Ecumenical is identified with Christianity. Because the ICA members had from early days seen themselves as an interfaith group, the language (symbolized by "Ecumenical") needed to change to truly reflect ICA’s secular outlook. In reframing to change the language the members picked the word cultural because their research had indicated that the planet was in a massive cultural revolution. As was suggested by Westenholz (1993), the ICA saw the inadequacy of certain frames and became convinced that they needed to change.

By reframing the previous frame of reference (the Church as a vehicle for social experimentation) ICA members experienced that 'the world is open' to them because they constructed a new secular frame of reference that allowed them to relate to people of all colors, races, and cultures. Following Westenholtz's (1993), and based on the earlier discussion on the paradoxes in the ICA, one can say that such reframing was the result of paradoxical thinking which in turn allowed them to understand and reframe the situation more effectively.

PRIMACY OF THE AUTHOR (ACTOR)

As discussed in the first chapter, the primacy of the actors should be evidenced in any reading. In this case, this would imply incorporating the understanding as experienced by the ICA members.
Specifically, the manner in which the ICA dealt with paradoxes including their own definitions of them need to be explored.

Historically, the ICA has always had a very sophisticated understanding of paradoxes. For example, the 1971 Summer Research Assembly corporately produced a one hundred page document titled "Matrices of contradiction" that exclusively dealt with paradoxes. The document identified several forms of contradictions such as "paramount contradiction", "primary contradictions", "secondary contradictions", and "tertiary contradictions". The document begins:

The twentieth century cultural revolution is giving form to a new vision of a globally interrelated society: the revolutionary man consciously struggles to illuminate the contradictions impeding the actualization of the New Earth. Illuminating contradictions gives the possibility of discerning what needs to be done to create the global society. This process is made possible by the articulation of the social dynamics. Exposing the contradictions provides the basis for the formation of practical proposals, giving birth to a new society in which

All the goods belong to all the people,
All the decisions belong to all the people,
All the gifts belong to all the people
and indeed
All the earth belongs to all the people.

The ICA believes in thinking in new paradigms in order to generate enlightened understanding of paradoxes. This is evident in the introduction section of the Matrices of Contradictions:

Because man has always shown up in a particular sociological framework, he finds it difficult to think in terms of the ontological unity of history. He is therefore in danger of developing partial, short-term plans, relative only to his own time. The revolutionary, standing in what he knows to be a dynamic social context, looks beyond his time to distinguish between the healthy and the unhealthy trends, and is then able to discern a contradiction as a block to a creative future trends. Until man holds the vision of society as dynamic
rather than static, he cannot deal with contradictions relative to trends manifest in his time. Contradictions can only be stated relative to the stance defined by ideological principles. A problem is a surface manifestation of a contradiction. A contradiction goes beyond a valuational statement to name that which does not respond authentically to human suffering. It is important, then, to identify contradictions carefully in order to deal with the depth social malfunctions rather than the external symptoms. The method of identifying and ordering contradictions is the articulation of each succeeding intensity level, constituting the matrices of contradiction . . . This approach to organizing the discussion of contradictions has been used to construct an overlay on the current collapse of tension among the foundational, communal, and rational dimensions of human sociality . . . What follows then is an articulation of social contradiction in terms of the hierarchical pattern implicit in the inter-relatedness of the rational throughout the social dynamic analysis.

The one hundred page document is, in fact, a brilliant and sophisticated narrative on the nature of contradictions both from a philosophical and pragmatic point of view.

Five years later, yet another document named "Estimates" described the "qualities of contraditional thinking". According to it, contraditional thinking is an anti-teleological approach to planning. Being "anti-goal" it is difficult to accomplish for most people because they have been taught to think in terms of goals. It is not enough to articulate a vision. It is equally important to understand what is blocking that vision from coming into being. In fact, according to the ICA, identifying the contradiction is the single most important thing in planning for social change. Yet, it is important to remember that a contradiction is not a problem, as clarified in "Estimates."

A contradiction is a coagulation of blocks that paralyze a practical vision at a particular moment in history. Therefore, "contradiction" is not a negative term. In order to create
change, one must first discern the basic contradictions. After
discerning the foundational contradictions, it is possible to
build proposals that come over against them. Contradictions
are concrete; one must look at what people call problems in
order to see a contradiction, but a contradiction is never to
be confused with a problem.

The ICA also believes in the transformative potential of
contradictions. Again, quoting from the Estimates,

Contradictions use the Yin Yang principle of tension. Any
situation from which change is to emerge needs tension. It has
to do with the thin line between the rational and the
irrational. It is the realm of the gap that any sensible' person is aware of, the gap between someone's intention for a
situation and what actually comes to be. In Western
Philosophy, Hegel came closest to describing what a
contradiction is. His whole philosophy was based upon thesis
and anti-thesis out of which emerges synthesis. This was his
understanding of the flow of history, Out of the tension of a
thrust and a counter-thrust comes the "not-yet". Then this
synthesis itself becomes a thrust. Contradictional thinking
deals with the antithesis.

The genesis of contradictions has also been examined in the

Estimates:

Contradictions are sociological, not psychological. "People
are lazy" is never a contradiction. But the sociological
phenomenon that causes their inactivity may well be the
contradiction. Contradictional thinking begins with the
premise that human beings have drive, have propensity... Contradictions deal with deep historical currents. Through a
list of contradictions one can see the great waves of history,
the deep currents that go against the past and carry a
community into the future. In talking about these currents,
there is no discussion of likes and dislikes; it is a
discussion of the great waves that are simply there and
without participating in them, one is, in effect, left out of
the historical process... A contradiction has no center. It
is like a black hole in space, or a whirlpool, in which all
you can see are those objects swirling around them in
emptiness in the center which never finally discloses itself
to you.

ICA's use of the term contradiction is very close to the
notion of paradoxes. It reveals their ability to think in paradoxes,
their appreciation that paradoxes are part of life and the notion
that one needs to transcend them in order to move on. Later in this
chapter we will see how the ICA used paradoxes to transform itself
as a Global Social Change Organization.

The capacity to deal with ambiguity and fuzziness is another
aspect of effective paradox management. A document titled "THE
ORDER'S TRANSFORMATION: REFLECTIONS AND IMPLICATION: Where this
dialogue has brought us?" (1988) demonstrated the capacity of the
ICA for reflexivity as it dealt with its paradoxes. In this case,
the reflection centered around the creation of new structures and
the ambiguity around it. Some highlights from that dialogue are
reproduced here for illustration.

We want to share with you what appear to be the recurring
perspectives in this dialogue. One perspective is to recover
who and what we were, urging us to remember our greatness and
to modify our structures slowly. A second is to trust the
indicative of our local creativity and to avoid placing new or
old structures in the way of our creative maturation, trusting
that new structures will emerge. A third is to embrace the
changes that we are in the midst of but to immediately create
interim structures to fill the void. A fourth is to ponder the
role of the Order in relation to a movement. Is the Order the
center of this emerging movement? Or does this movemental
reality have a new kind of center?

Underlying the Order's dialogue there is a yearning for a
sense of actively belonging to something larger than our
individual and team identities. The phrases "global
connectivity" and "a sense of covenant" were used often. There
is a yearning for movement forward, a readiness to embrace the
future and an awareness that marking time is not our calling.
Also present is a yearning for a grand story of what is
happening to us as individuals and as a group. There is an
affirmation of the last four years of transformation, with its
surge of local creativity, and a new sense of self-sufficiency
and spiritual maturity.

... Our deeper responses are not just in relation to
the Order's transformation but in relation to the Mystery of
transformation itself. All of us exhibit normal human unskilled behavior in the face of the dying and birthing process of transformation.

... All of us know what it means to seek to control the process of transformation as we cling to our vantage points, refusing ourselves to be transformed. All of us have heard the whispering voice of surrender, calling us to grow and to live out of our higher selves, calling us to deeply remember our own declaration to be "transmitters of life".

This transformation process has gifted us with a new beginning. We have arrived at the threshold of an age of social reconciliation and unitive consciousness. We have arrived at this moment of transformation through our own explorations and innovations. From a historical perspective, we've won on the "Turn to the World."

The above narration strongly suggests that the ICA understands paradoxes as a basic human condition. In the next section, the focus is on to develop an analysis of these using the theoretical framework discussed in the previous section.

FUSION OF HORIZON

What kind of an understanding (reading) can we come up with if we combine the primacy of the actor and the observer? This is a unique situation where both the observer and the actor use the same interpretive scheme of paradoxes to understand organizational change and transformation. Both are sensitive to paradoxes as a basic human condition. Continuing conceptualization (developed in the primacy of the actor section) and the thematic analysis of the data (gathered from the Brussels interviews), it is possible to list the following paradox-like experiences reported by the ICA.

Core paradoxes of the ICA

The paradoxes ICA faced as they became transnational may be outlined as a tension between two polarities, with one end of the continuum loosely representing the past and the other end more or
less depicting the current situation. The paradox is felt between wanting to retain their roots and simultaneously wanting to be different in response to the changing environment. Temporaly, we can construct it as time 1 and time 2 (Table 6.1). Time 1 is roughly what the ICA used to do in the past. Time 2 is what they are doing now in order to accomplish similar results to time 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time 1 (the past)</th>
<th>Time 2 (the present)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global Networking</td>
<td>Local Networking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand narratives/</td>
<td>Local narratives/</td>
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<tr>
<td>Western perspective</td>
<td>Indigenization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unity in Diversity</td>
<td>Diversity in Unity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theory driven action</td>
<td>Method driven action</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inspirational, heroic and</td>
<td>Cautious, pragmatic, and mature</td>
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<tr>
<td>chivalrous</td>
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<td>Holistic and</td>
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<td>comprehensive</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Imperative&quot; driven</td>
<td>&quot;Indicative&quot; driven</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 6.1: Core paradoxes of the ICA

Earlier in the chapter two of these paradoxes (Grand narratives & Local narratives and Intra-organizational affirmation
and Extra-organizational affirmation) were discussed. The remaining are briefly considered here.

1. **Global networking -- local networking**

As a global social change organization, historically, the ICA has always emphasized global networking. The focus was on creating structures that would connect the ICAs worldwide into a single corporate entity. However, as a result of the phenomenal growth during the 70s, those ICAs dispersed in distant locations from the United States began networking locally. This local focus was very much encouraged by the ICA as they recognized this as a paradox. "You cannot be global unless you are local," said one ICA interviewee who witnessed this transition. As documented in the *Panchayat* deliberations, the purpose behind this was to create and maintain a "Planetary Spirit Association" based on an "**evolutionary planetary ethic**:"

Through this ethic the "sensitive and responsive" are called to the evolutionary task of co-creating the planetary stage of earth history. This ethic seeks the embodiment of individual creativity in partnership modes which permeate society with images, methods and models for a more sustainable future. It fosters the emergence of a healthy ecology of cultures and styles where divergent perceptions and activities can find alignment within a common grasp of a planetary future . . . In the midst of countless numbers of the sensitive and responsive who live out of this ethic, there is a self-conscious movemental body embodying its care for the planet. We have been using the metaphor "Planetary Spirit Association" to functionally describe the identity of this emerging movemental body until the right name appears. It is planetary in the sense that it embraces the potential of peoplehood as wide as the planet. It is spiritual in the sense that at the center it is based on a spirit of integration and unification, guided by a consciousness that we are inextricably linked to all that is. It is an association in the sense that it is an
interactive network of diverse individuals and groupings focussed on care for the planet.

Yet, the ICA recognized that the center of all this will be the local and not the global. It was based on the realization that to be global one has to act locally. Another quote from the Panchayat document (1988) shows this transition in their own words.

The core or nucleus of our emerging form is based on the energy of individuals and local units. These centers of energy are where the wellsprings of creativity and initiative are bubbling forth. Individuals and units are the source from which futuristic planetary patterns are emerging. A sense of ownership for this planetary future is acted out at the local level through people-to-people bonding and experimentation with economic, political and cultural patterns.

At the same time, this did not mean that each ICA would merely engage in local networking. As a "planetary association" or global organization, they still had to stay connected, make policies together, and make an impact in this world based on their missional focus. In their view, the need of the moment is to be local and global at the same time. This is seen possible only when actors in individual ICAs and ICA like organizations recognize and value the interdependence that is required of all in order to make the "planetary connection."

There is an increasing awareness of the interdependence of the planet and a deep desire by individuals and groups to create patterns of relationship that express this consciousness. This desire is being experienced in our midst as innovative forms of connectivity are created between individuals and units. These new forms encourage multiple modes of participation in co-creating the planet’s future. Networking allows and calls for each unit to take responsibility for being interrelated and linked to the whole. We are trusting that networking is the medium by which transformation is permeating every level of society. We have experienced the presence of various networks, both formal and informal, taking responsibility for the information flow and our connectedness.
2. **Unity in diversity -- diversity in the unity.**

Another parallel shift in approach took place in terms of dealing with diversity and unity. In the beginning, corporateness and spirituality tended to focus on maintaining unity while respecting differences. It was relatively easy to tolerate differences out of a basic faith that everyone belonged to one community. However, the scenario changed with transnational growth. Members who did not necessarily share a common heritage of the ICA experiences had different notions of development. Yet the basic dedication to the ICA did not suffer despite this difference. But the shift was evident; the focus now is diversity in unity or "how to acknowledge our differences and yet be one."

As we look across the Order, we discover that all of us are living out of the new. Our sense of community and its membership has expanded to include people from beyond the residential Order. In some countries and locations our presence is confined to the ICA and non-residential Order only. Quite a few locations use ICA as the organization which holds the expanding membership. Many Order houses today include ICA members, Order personnel and people with no relationship to the Order or ICA. While in some other locations Order members live in their own separate apartments, either in the same building or in geographic dispersion. Most of the Primary Unit/locations have reorganized themselves to operate out of an economic understanding based on individual/unit self-sufficiency.

3. **Theory driven action -- method driven action**

A simultaneous move from theory driven actions to action oriented pragmatism took place by this time. Historically, the ICA had operated from a strong theory base where member commitments to
ideas and postulates determined the power of their actions. The most striking instances were the RS-1 and the Academy teachings. As a reflective community, the ICA would start by the theory, initiate actions, study their impact and then revise the theory if necessary, based on the outcomes of the actions. Such a reflective focus kept the theory driven nature of action alive as long as the academy and RS-1 continued to exist. Once it became evident that they were not meeting the needs of the people across the planet, they were discontinued. The pressing call of pragmatism influenced the actions to assume a method driven character. That was the beginning of a phase popularizing the "methods of the ICA" irrespective of the nature of the relation between the "imperative" and the "indicative". ICA's most recent publication, "Winning through Participation", is a striking example of the action/method orientation. So are the emergence of ICA related organizational forms such as the Training Inc., ICA Associates, LENS International, and so forth.

The need for a new theory to support the actions are beginning to be felt in the ICA again. Serious efforts were made to introduce an "Earthwise Curriculum", dealing with global issues from a holistic perspective incorporating the strengths of the Academy programs along with the learning from the field experiences of the past 25 years.

Interestingly, a theory is kept alive by being method driven. When the method works, the theory is proved to be right. At the same
time, the success of the method may stifle new theory development. Further, as the focus on what works gets more accentuated, technologies for further improving them develop. An example may be found in the ICA’s move from grass roots development to training for trainers in many locations.

Overall, the ICA seemed to have changed from grass roots development to training others for grass roots development. The consulting status with the United Nations is probably the best example of this shift. Some interviewees mentioned that the ICA has moved from "training village leaders" to "training organizations in transformation." During interviews efforts were made to see why some people would think like that. Looking historically, Human Development Projects were every exciting and challenging. It was continuously interpreted as having the most significant meaning and worth in one’s life. Yet, the ICA is hardly doing any Human Development Projects now.

Most likely, the "method" focus has contributed to this. The emergence of different affiliates of the ICA’s, such as the ICA Associates, Lens International, Training Inc, and so forth also point to this direction. All the emergent forms share a clear pragmatic focus oriented toward consulting and training with large corporations and government organizations in addition to the nonprofit sector. Several members of the ICA see this move from village training to organizational training as a step made to intensify the ICA’s impact. To quote one of them "the challenge of
reaching the masses called us to think bigger than a single village.
Our conversations with leaders in India told us that one village meant nothing to them when they had so many to be concerned about. Therefore, once the village methods were tested over and over, refined and improved, we felt we were ready to train many others in our methods."

The above quote demonstrate how the focus on doing thing better can move one away from the original task, in this case village development. As the ICA developed good methods for village participation, and tested them again and again, a gradual new focus took place in order to train people in the method, rather than the original task. As a result, the methods got more sophisticated.

4. Inspirational, heroic and chivalrous — cautious, pragmatic, and mature

Historically, ICA's missions had an inspirational quality about them. The call for working on the human factor in global development, and to be challenged beyond the limits of one's possibilities had an inspiring power whereby many would join the ICA to undertake mission work. The ICA members, most in their 20s, 30s, and 40s, showed little concern about financial incentives, job security, standard of living, or retirement benefits. As time unfolded, the inspirational aspect has become more cautious where the heroism and chivalry has given way to pragmatism, measured risk taking and maturity.

We have changed as a body of people and there is no going back. We carry gifts from the past with us but the new that is
being created may bear no easy resemblance to the past we have known. It is in the midst of these irreversible changes that we find ourselves asking the following questions. How do I/we move forward? How am I/we empowering the foundations of our future? How do I/we give form to the breakloose of spirit?
It is in this context that the Panchayat recommended the set of empowering acts in the trek reflections dated May 1988. These included discontinuing the existing structures of the Panchayat, priory, commissions, assignments and global budget; continuing experimentation with new staffing modes, economic relationships, membership symbols and interchange dynamics; and restructuring Order funds and investments.

5. Holistic and comprehensive development orientation -- specific and tangible development orientation

From a holistic and comprehensive development orientation ICA has moved to a specific and tangible development focus. This to some extent reflects a "market driven" adaptation to the existing realities of the nature of volunteer recruitment. The 60s were a time when a holistic and comprehensive mission statements (of ICA) such as "concerned with the human factor in global development" could arouse a powerful reference in young people to commit themselves to that cause. The 80s demonstrate a different volunteer commitment to specific, narrow and tangible impact orientation where a young volunteer making a commitment to work for an organization wants to see the impact s/he can create in the shortest possible time in the most tangible way. Thus, when a Greenpeace volunteer dares to venture into an organized whale hunting expedition and stops it, s/he gets to see the impact s/he has created in concrete terms within a limited time frame. During the course of its evolution, the ICA too has been influenced by this volunteer preference and is moving partly in that direction. Environment,
education, low cost housing etc., are some of such specific focus ICA has been developing recently.

6. "Imperative" -- "Indicative" driven

The term "indicative," as used by the ICA refers to "what is" there out in the world that demands the ICA’s attention. Examples are poverty, illiteracy, injustice, and isolation. They are "givens" to start with; that is what "is." "Imperative" denotes what can be or should be done to alleviate these "indicatives." Examples are methods of ICA and their work in communities of all sorts. Historically, the indicatives dictated the nature of the imperatives. Thus, after assessing the conditions in a community, the ICA would respond by creating alternatives to those conditions of suffering. However, the overall move to a "method driven" character has been placing more focus on the imperatives rather than on the indicatives.

This paradox-like experience also reveals the tension between local knowledge and grand narratives. The "indicative" driven character highlights the focus on the local conditions. The nature of the immediate situation is supposed to dictate what action to pursue. The opposite is true in the case "imperative" driven action. It is a grandnarrative because no matter what the situation is, there is a repertoire of techniques to be tried out.

The paradox-like experience between indicatives and imperatives may be explained by the cyclical nature of knowledge creation, description and application (Manning and Thachankary,
1989). Activities related to Organization Development, like those in other applied behavioral sciences, follow a pattern with four discernible stages: Creation, description, application, and evaluation. During the creation stage, a new theory, method or technology is generated, normally out of pragmatic concerns. During the description phase, the focus is on understanding the creation, and thereby to comprehend its potential. Once this is partly achieved, a period of intense application begins with several adaptations and imitations of the original creations which after a period of time tend to get saturated and start yielding diminishing returns.

A similar cycle seems to be true with respect to the methods of the ICA. RS-1, and the Academy are creations comparable to the T-group in organization development. There were intense description phases in the early 70s when the large gathering of Research Assemblies would talk about them in an effort for refinement. The application phase began very soon with the Town Meetings and Human Development Projects. This was at its peak when they did one Town Meeting in every county in the United States. New forms of applications emerged with the popularization of the Methods of ICA and the establishment of ICA affiliates such as ICA Associates, Training Inc., LENS International etc. Currently this is a stage of intense application and pragmatism.

Just as in the field of organizations development, within the ICA too, a stage of dissatisfaction with the extensive application
focus has already set in. Currently, there is a growing awareness in
the ICA about the lack of a new theory to guide their actions. This
supports our hypothesis that the knowledge creation, description and
application stages are cyclical and therefore a creation phase will
begin after a period of intense application. The new creation phase
for the ICA is most likely the theories that may emerge from the
introduction and continuation of the "earthwise curriculum." The
curriculum has been expanded and used in "learning labs" for
teachers in Chicago and in the "leadership options" programs for
those seeking to discover a new vocational calling.

To conclude, such shifts are not non-reversible, complete and
precise but indicative of a paradoxical tension that is consciously
sustained and nurtured in the ICA culture. Thriving on ambiguity and
tentativeness, these paradoxes are mechanisms to maintain a
continual interchange of ideas from each polarity. Certainly, ICA's
position within this continuum has changed over a period of time,
yet they are most unlikely to assume an extreme position in any of
the paradoxes. For the ICA, it is not one or the other, but both. In
other words, in order to accomplish what they were doing in time 1,
they now have to do time 2 too. This is so, because the basic values
of the ICA are non-negotiable. Despite all the differences of what
should be done and could be done, there is something about ICA that
seem to bind everyone together against the evolutionary pressures of
transnational expansion. That is the non-negotiability of the basic
values of ICA expressed across time 1 and 2. They surface as the
most important personal values of all the people interviewed in Brussels ICA International General Assembly and United States locations. Thus, despite all the differences in terms of how different ICA locations worldwide were, or of how uniquely they want to fulfill their missional objectives or how they would like to relate to other ICAs across the globe, there is a core set of basic values expressed by everyone irrespective of their affiliations which make them stay committed to the ICA. Such a powerful impact of values on the ICA members identification with all other ICAs prompted this researcher to call them "non-negotiable" because they did not undergo any change despite the pressures of transnationalism and indigenization. This made one member say "Once an ICA man, always one" and another "You can take me out of ICA, but you cannot take ICA out of me".

This non-negotiability can best be appreciated by analyzing what the ICA has been doing in time 1 (the past) and 2 (present). At a fundamental level, activities central to both the past and the present portray the same set of core values bearing close resemblance to the life-giving forces discussed in chapter 4. A consideration of each of the paradox-like experiences discussed above will reveal this. For example, global networking of the past has evolved into local networking of the present. Both essentially signify the core "globality" value of the ICA. In the past, the global mind set was best accomplished through centralized structures like Panchayat and the Centrum. Now they have given way to each ICA
becoming independent and autonomous. Yet, the global focus is very much there. It is a globality that is locally expressed, more like in the dictum, "think globally, act locally". It is seeing the global interconnectedness of what is locally done.

A further analysis of the paradox-like experiences in the ICA: The plurivocity of core values

The above observed paradoxes, on further analysis, seem to have transformational potential. Each of them some way or other provided the energy necessary for the ICA to evolve from the past to the present against big obstacles. The interesting question is what is it about these paradox-like experiences that provided the members of the ICA with this resilience for transformation? The answer lies in the "plurivocity" (Packer, 1985) of the constructs embedded across the two polarities of a paradoxical construction. According to Packer (1985), plurivocity is a central concept in hermeneutics which, by it's reference to the "perspectival" nature of action, and polysemic nature of linguistic construction, implies "openness to several interpretations" (1086). In other words, it is the capacity or potential inherent in a construct for multiple interpretations. In the hermeneutics methodology chaper, it was discussed how factors such as temporality, context, prejudice etc., allow readers to interpret actions in many ways. The same applies to any linguistic construct. In this case, the bipolar nature of the paradoxical construction generated the possibility for a multitude of interpretations within those polarities. For the ICA, the important
thing was not to get stuck at any of the polarities in a "one versus the other" mode, but to appreciate and make use of the tremendous potential for creative constructions that exist within the range. From a rationalist point of view, two possibilities arise out of the plurivocity of constructs. One is "epistemic relativism" whereby the potential for indeterminate number of interpretations may give rise to a "crisis in interpretations" (Marcus and Fisher, 1986) resulting in lack of focus and confusion. The second is the notion that the plurivocity harbors creative possibilities for generative meaning making. It allows organizational participants to look at experiences with openness, flexibility, and reflection so that constructive reframing becomes possible. In the case of the ICA, the latter happened at each stage in their transition. The following section is a description of how the paradoxical constructions around mission, spatiality, value, power and temporality generated possibilities for generative interpretations in the ICA.

1. **Mission plurivocity**

   The ICA's espoused missions evoke a universal, trans-cultural agreement as being just and compassionate. From justice and compassion arise the espoused missions of the ICA such as enhancing human potential, alleviating human misery, seeking peace, and valuing basic human dignity. Yet, there is a plurivocity here between the espoused and enacted organizational missions. Espoused missions are stated missions of an organization; enacted missions are the ones that are in actual use. Argyris and Schon (1982) would
call this the paradox between espoused theories and theories in use. For many business organizations, the difference between the two are minimal; there is little tension between the espoused value of making profits and the operating value of generating more revenue than expenses. However, this does not hold good for the ICA because the espoused mission of promoting the "human factor in development" means different things in different parts of the world. For that reason, they needed to have the flexibility to interpret the missions in a way that would be useful in each locations. Because the mission construct was seen as a paradox existing between two polarities, a range of interpretations became available to the ICA to deal with the diversity in its expression.

2. The spatial plurivocity

The ICA mobilizes people all across the world from diverse geographical, economic, social and cultural backgrounds in large numbers, with minimum material resources. This calls for high managerial and leadership competencies such as resource optimization, managing trans-cultural differences, and drawing deep commitment from actors (Young, 1986; Drucker, 1989). As a result, members of the ICA experience a tension between (1) local knowledge (Geertz, 1983) versus global knowledge and (2) centralization versus dispersion. As they become dispersed, the local knowledge or wisdom begins to question the veracity of several of their prior generalizations (global knowledge). For example, during their work in Indian villages, ICA members were greatly influenced by the local
people's notion of development and progress which were not always congruent with Western views.

Staying dispersed and centralized at the same time is another paradox. The ICA is dispersed, yet they need to have cohesion. The higher the dispersion, the greater the centrifugal forces on the actors to get immersed in local issues, and the lesser the centripetal forces to stay connected to the symbolic center (Louis & Sieber, 1979). Dealing with such paradoxes is an integral part of the strategies of the ICA. Again, as in missions, the potential to construct a multitude of interpretations tolerated a wide range of behaviors and policies in ICA locations worldwide. This became evident as participants at the ICA International gathering at Brussels were interviewed. It appeared that each ICA was developing their own locally based strategies for defining themselves as a global organization. The generative potential to see the global implications or outcomes of local actions came out of the spatial plurivocity inherent in centralization versus decentralization and local versus grand narratives paradoxical constructions.

3. The value plurivocity

In Weberian terms, the rationale for organizing in the ICA is based on the notion of value rationality rather than on purposive/instrumental rationality (e.g., Weber, 1964). Purposive rationality involves an orientation to a set of distinct, but not absolute ends. It differs from value rationality in that means and ends are both open to change if the secondary consequences of either are
unacceptable to the actor (Weber, 1964). Value rationality is oriented towards the realization of an absolute goal (Weber, 1964). The actor has a conscious belief in an absolute value (Satow, 1975) or a "faith in the absolute value of a rationalized set of norms" (Willer, 1967, p. 235).

As mentioned earlier, organizations usually exist on a purposive, instrumental or economic rationality basis (Etzioni, 1988) which is based on a neoclassical paradigm of a society that is "mainly market place, in which self serving utilitarian individuals compete with one another" (p.IX). Alternatively, it is possible to conceive of organizations where utility maximizing is balanced by values, emotions, morality and notions of ethics and integrity (Srivastva, 1987; Etzioni, 1988). In contrast to the neoclassical assumption that people seek to maximize one utility, e.g., pleasure or profit, they may pursue at least two utilities: Pleasure and Morality (Etzioni, 1988). The latter is a value rational (Weber, 1964), normative, ideological attribute and has important implications for understanding organizational governance (Scott, Mitchell, Peery, 1981).

The ICA represents organizations where utility maximizing is balanced by values, emotions, morality and notions of ethics and integrity. However, the moral, normative, and value bases of organizing may not always be congruent with the instrumental/purposive notion of having the resources to sustain an organization. Again, the bipolarity of the constructs allows the ICA to engage in
activities that can be interpreted as responding to both the value and instrumental rationality. An example is the creation of parallel structures such as Training Inc., The ICA Associates, and LENS International. These are essentially training and consultancy organizations that use the methods developed by the ICA over the years. ICA members may spend part of their time working for client organizations through these sister organizations. This way, they are able to use their own methods that were successfully developed during the Human Development Projects in working with both profit and nonprofit organizations.

4. The empowerment plurivocality

Empowerment is truly a plurivocal term in management literature. When one is able to empower another, (a person, group, community), it presupposes that the target is without power to begin with. It also places the empowering person higher in a hierarchy of power and authority. Yet, it is not implied that one should shy away from an empowering act, because it begins with power differences. This issue is particularly important for the ICA, because they have always had a distaste for bureaucratic, hierarchy-based authority structure and a predisposition for developing an egalitarian culture (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987). For example, corporate leadership in the ICA actively encourages the process of eliciting participation and consensus building. As a result, authority in the ICA is diffused so that hierarchy and bureaucracy can be substituted with egalitarian structures. The ICA tries to create similar
structures in organizations or communities with which they work. Yet the ICA realizes that some structures and formalizations are inevitable. Consensus building and participation are consciously encouraged, but some decisions may have to be taken without them for various reasons. Finally, even with the best efforts, sometimes they realize that the process of empowering may indeed be one of disempowering. This could happen when the target (group, organizations) becomes too dependent on the empowering agency. Thus, a delicate balance needs to be kept between being too detached for fear of creating dependency and too much direction that may indeed create the dependency.

5. The temporal plurivocity

For organizations like the ICA, there are exigencies to continuously deal with which cut into their ability for planning for the future. For example, Amnesty International is engaged in generating world opinion against human rights violations and at the same time helping to create a global awareness about the significance of human rights so that the incidences of violations will tend to reduce in the future. Another example of having to integrate the crisis management and strategic management aspects is Greenpeace. Climbing smoke stacks to dramatize the effect of air pollution, facing the French nuclear ships in life boats to stop them from underwater nuclear testing, and going out into the high seas to physically prevent whale hunting are instances of how they have to deal with the present. On the other hand, Greenpeace wants
to engage in educating and training people in environmentally safe living habits, lobbying for legislation to prevent dumping and pollution and creating a blue print for ecological harmony.

For the ICA, the temporal paradox was one that they had to deal with from the beginning. Going to a village to do development work, the first impulse was to do something to fix the immediate deprivation. Yet, they were aware that would not solve anything in the long run unless the villagers themselves were empowered and trained to deal with the problems. Since the ICA historically started with the "indicatives" (givens), they did have to deal with the immediate situation in a comprehensive way. In fact, they believed in handling all the problems of all ages all at the same time. Yet, the process of doing that should be so participatory that once a project was completed, the local populace typically would have become quite good at doing that themselves next time. Accomplishing this required constructing appropriate interpretations of what were the right things to do. The paradoxical construction allowed great flexibility in making judgements about specific situations.

**Paradoxes, plurivocality and organizational transformation**

A key learning from this reading is that fundamental attributes of the ICA such as missions and values are products of paradox-like social constructions that are fundamentally plurivocal. At a pragmatic level, they function both like a facilitator and inhibitor of change. Due to the flexibility of interpretations
possible across the range of the polarities of the paradoxes, the ICA has been able to change as well as stay stable. As we have seen, the ICA has shown remarkable adaptability and resilience in creating social change while at the same time allowing itself to be influenced by the changes it created. It has been able to evolve into diverse organizational forms world wide and yet remain as a "single corporate body of globally interconnected people". Such paradoxes have existed in the evolution of the ICA since its beginning. Each time, the organization dealt with them by creating values that helped it make "choice points". For example, going back to its beginning, in 1952, when a group of faculty and students at the University of Texas, Austin formed a group called "Christian Faith and Life Community" (CFLC) to experiment with a life-style of research and study, these were initially designed to awaken the university community, and later the church, to the fundamental issues people faced in their lives. The program brought to the surface the paradoxes and the accompanying plurivocity they faced with respect to their religious beliefs and desire for local church action. As described in chapter 2, when most of this community moved to Evanston in 1961 in order for Dr. Joe Mathews to take over as the Dean of the Institute of Ecumenical Studies, several members of the community worked outside and pooled their salaries with the Dean's salary to live as a single community. The tension they faced at this point was how to preserve one's individual identity and at
the same time promote human contact. The response was community living based on the principle of "corporateness."

Again, in 1963, when the Institute and its 7 staff families moved from Evanston to the Chicago inner city (the 5th City) and began working with the local residents to discern the community's problems and design practical, locally based solutions, they faced the paradox of maintaining a balance of dependence and counter-dependence between the residents and the organization. A variety of options based on different interpretations were available at this point. The resolution came in the creation of a new value called "participation." It meant that for communities to change, they must first feel an ownership of what is being changed. Four years later, the ghetto was completely transformed. The 5th city had community gathering places, a health center, preschool, stores, churches and parks along with new business and industries.

By 1968, the organization wanted to expand by starting an experiment called the 'Global Odyssey' where members traveled to a dozen countries in Africa, Latin America, Middle East and Asia to do research on the core theme of "global development". This shift from local development to global development was also paradoxical. Their religious tenets taught them that the whole world is one place and its people are all of equal worth. This was in opposition to their commitment to work through local churches to deal with local issues. The paradox was resolved by the creation of a value of "planetary inter-connectedness". Inspired by this mission, its members
dispersed all across the world in an effort to replicate their 5th city community participation model.

As the work of the Ecumenical Institute expanded beyond the confines of the church, and became international in its operations, its members got exposed to different cultures, religions (like Buddhism and Hinduism), and customs creating another paradox to adapt the organization in more secular ways. This resulted in the formation of a new organization called the Institute of Cultural Affairs in 1973. By the mid-70’s, the ICA had expanded from its base in Chicago to 100 offices in 30 countries.

The creation of the ICA marked yet another changes in its interpretive scheme as a result of responding to the plurivocity inherent in the paradox. One of the basic paradoxical stance of this organization had been a "in but not of the world" notion. The creation of the ICA represented the generation of a new paradox which was described as a "turn to the world". The change from a Christian faith and mission to a secular one was extremely painful for many people. They had to continuously reinterpret their philosophical basis of existence so that it made sense to stay in the ICA and continue the work. However, the tension of the new paradox generated renewed energy resulting in major expansion of the organization world-wide. This also supports the notion of Argyris and Schon (1978) and Sheldon (1980) that when the changes in interpretive schemes are very fundamental, it results in radical second order changes where organizational paradigms are reframed,
norms and world views are changed. Similarly, Bartunek (1984) showed in her case study of a religious order that second order changes can be understood dialectically, with the original interpretive schemas as the thesis, other ways of understanding as the antithesis, and what will emerge from the interaction as a synthesis.

The next major change was in 1985 when the consensus of the international gathering decided to let every ICA worldwide become autonomous. They had to let go of the centralization in Chicago that had existed for a long time. For several local ICAs, it meant finding new ways of survival and dealing with autonomy and freedom. The organization continues to undergo structural changes. ICAs in different places have developed different 'forms'. The differences among ICAs across the globe are striking, yet they are all ICAs in the most fundamental sense. This is yet another instance of the generative capacity of multiple interpretations in the ICA.

In terms of the four ways of responding to the paradoxes that were discussed earlier (Poole & Van de Van, 1989), the ICA seems to have used two - accept the paradox and use it constructively, and introduce new terms to deal with the paradoxes - more frequently than the others. The above analysis also shows that structural changes in the ICA were more directly linked to action that results from changes in interpretive schemes than to the changing interpretive schemes themselves. Structural features are in a reciprocal relationship with individuals' actions and understanding (Giddens, 1979). Organizational structural properties both legitimize and
constrain action. When interpretive schemes and their expression in action change, then, the structure will also undergo change, which in turn will legitimize and constrain later action and interpretive schemes. When second order change takes place, the original integrative schemas have to be unlearned so new ones can come into existence. Such changes involve substantial organizational uncertainty and chaos (Bartunek, 1984) and often are disorienting and paralyzing and likely to be experienced by organization members as a series of deaths and rebirths (Hedberg, 1981) and is inherently painful and threatening (Schein, 1980). In that context, shared interpretive schemes not only legitimize particular organizational structures, but also serve as a source of stability in the midst of change (Ranson, Hinings and Greenwood, 1980).

TOWARD A MODEL OF THE ICA AS A HERMENEUTIC ORGANIZATION

What happens to an organization caught up in the plurivocity of a paradoxical dialogue? In the case of the ICA, it gave rise to peculiar organizational processes, the most prominent being the presence of multiple interpretive schemes. Several writers have analyzed such interpretive processes in organizations (Daft and Weick, 1984; Pondy, Frost, Morgan & Dandridge, 1983; Pondy and Mitroff, 1979; Ranson, Hinings, and Greenwood, 1980; Pfeffer, 1981, De Vries and Miller, 1987; and Bartunek, 1984). For example, Ranson, Hinings and Greenwood (1980) proposed that one of the factors that most affects an organization's structure is powerful organization members' "interpretive schemes" (cognitive schemata that map our
experience of the world) and the expression of these in "provinces of meaning" which in turn represent the organization's values (desired ends and preferences) and interests. They argued that "there will be a change in structuring if organizational members revise the provinces of meaning, the interpretive schemes, which underpin their constitutive structuring of organizations" (p. 12). Others have suggested that organizations differ in their use of interpretive schemes; some are highly interpretive while in others there are narrow definition of work and organizational roles. The notion of "Hermeneutic Organizations" aptly captures the qualities of those organizations where interpretive activities of a high intensity are prevalent in dealing with the plurivocity of the organizational constructs.

The term hermeneutic comes from the classical Greek verb Hermeneuein, to interpret. In ancient Greece the priest at the Delphi oracle was called Hermeneios. The Greek God Hermes, the messenger of Zeus, was credited with "transmitting what is beyond human understanding into a form that human intelligence can grasp" (Palmer, 1969, p.13).

Constructs in the ICA like the mission, spatiality, temporality, value, and authority are subject to an indeterminate number of interpretations by different stakeholders. One consequence of this is that meaning is simultaneously constructed and destroyed (Gray et al, 1985) in the ICA. This is so because organizational members are continuously engaged in sense making activities of
several key aspects such as mission, environment, procedures, membership, and events. This process of meaning creation and destruction is essentially a hermeneutic process.

For example, the plurivocity inherent between the espoused and enacted missions is one of the most active sources of hermeneutic activities in the ICA. Similarly, hermeneutic processes are likely to be higher in the ICA, because they are dispersed. Dispersed organizations present themselves issues not typically dealt with in "concentrated" organizations (Louis and Sieger, 1979). As the dispersed actors get intensely involved and influenced by the local situation, the centrifugal tendency to pull out increases against a centripetal tendency to be controlled by the central organization. Several break-away small local social change organizations have been formed by activists who worked in remote areas far away from the parent organizations. The dispersion also permits more hermeneutic possibilities regarding the meaning of the organizational missions, task, and their fulfillment.

To give another example, the moral value rational stance of the ICA clearly provides immense opportunities for multiple interpretations. Moral and ethical values are highly subjective and convey different meanings to people whereas instrumental or purposive rationality has relatively narrow definitions (for e.g., profit). Lastly, considering the empowerment issues, participative practices that are claimed to be helping communities
may be disputed as nothing more than a "pseudo participation" by some stakeholders.

To summarize, the plurivocity of paradoxical constructions of the reality in the organizational life of the ICA results in highly interpretive acts making it highly hermeneutic in nature. Hermeneutic processes are present in all types of organizations; only their degree vary. A military set up in combat situation provide little hermeneutic possibilities because the nature of the contingency requires that all actors understand and interpret the task in a relatively homogenous way. On the other hand, the mission of the ICA, creating a paradigm shift in the way people think about the human factor in development, are open for fulfillment in indeterminate ways which in turn give rise to intense hermeneutic activities in the organization.

The hermeneutic aspect of the interpretive dimension in organizations is gathering momentum in both theoretical and practitioner-oriented works (e.g., Ford & Baccus, 1987; Milliken, 1990) as a complement to the study of the issues brought out by traditional approaches (Isabella, 1990). However, the term 'hermeneutic' has not yet been used by any of these authors.

Conclusion

Several propositions may be generated out of analyzing the hermeneutic processes in the ICA.

1. Diversity of organization members, their actions and external events create multiple interpretive schemes in the organization. The
multiplicity of interpretations is a direct outcome of the hermeneutic nature of the IGA.

2. The multiple interpretive schemes generate plurivocity of core organizational constructs.

3. When faced with the experience of multiple meanings, actors in organizations adopt constructs that help them reduce the "cognitive dissonance" (Festinger, 1957). These are differently called missions, values, driving forces or goals. The tension reduction is essentially a hermeneutic process of reflection and understanding. This ability for reflection is of strategic value in organizational survival.

4. Adoption of these values and missions in turn generates new (paradoxical) constructs as choice points for action.

5. Paradoxical constructions and the accompanying plurivocity will be functional for those organizations which have the capacity for reflection about the dynamics that underlie their organizational experiences.

6. As organization members come to recognize the paradoxes, the paradoxes tend to transform.

7. Creation of new paradoxes out of the hermeneutic processes results in fundamental organization changes (Obviously, new paradoxes will emerge at this point).

9. A thematic connection between the old and new paradoxes is necessary if the organization wants to survive the change
(eg., "going back to our roots" and the "non-negotiability" of the core values)

To summarize, values and missions in organizations are created to respond to the plurivocity of paradoxical constructs to which they are exposed. Therefore, if we have to understand organizations, we first have to understand the paradoxes and the multitude of interpretations they generate. What is generally understood as organizational culture typically depicts the pattern and history of dealing with this plurivocity in organizations. Culture changes when organizations are exposed to new interpretations. The overall schema is dynamic and continuously evolving and represent an excellent example of a hermeneutic circle.
A CONCLUDING READING?

How does one conclude textual readings, especially of a study exploring the uncontrollability of meaning? Yet, the question—Can one find a common thread facilitative of the transformations of the ICA?—is challenging.

In hermeneutic methodology attempts to discover "deeper layers of meaning" are not considered indefinite. When "saturation" is experienced in a new reading, it is probably a good place to stop. This is so, because subsequent readings may not add anything new to our previous understanding. Having provided three exhaustive readings this is a point of saturation of meaning. Therefore, the intent in this chapter is to offer a concluding reading of the ICA trying to make sense of the previous readings. Two constructs emerge as central to this reading: (1) the privileging, deprivileging and reprivileging of discourses and (2) intense reflexivity. The two concepts provide a thread that explains the transformations that the ICA has undergone.

The privileging, deprivileging, and reprivileging of discourses in the ICA

The concept of discourses

The concept of discourse is most closely identified with the writings of Foucault (e.g., 1975). In general terms, a discourse may be conceived of as "a set of ideas and practices which condition our
ways of relating to, and acting upon, particular phenomena. Because a discourse is always embedded in social practice, it cannot be reduced to its ideational content any more than be seen as devoid of theory" (Knights and Morgan, 1991: 253). For example, in Foucault’s analysis of madness, the concept is constructed in particular social contexts. Once they are recognizable as such, i.e. when actors come to understand the world in these terms, then social practices develop which reproduce this perception as "truth". This occurs not least as a result of a combination of the power-knowledge relations represented by political activists and "experts" generating a convincing discourse that entails physically segregating the mad and the insane from "normal" society through a system of institutional incarceration. Such an exercise of power clearly institutionalizes the knowledge that sustains and reproduces these dividing practices and the "truth" of the distinction between the subjectivity of normality and insanity. The discourse, in this sense, produces its own truth effects through elaborating a view of the world in which problems are defined that the discourse can "solve". "A discourse is not then simply a way of seeing; It is always embedded in social practices which reproduce that way of seeing as the truth of discourse" (Knights and Morgan, 199, p. 253).

According to Woolgar (1986), the notion of discourse employed by Foucault entails a special theoretical stance and an associated epistemological commitment both of which differ markedly from that of Anglo-Saxon empiricism. Foucault’s use of discourse signifies a
whole concatenation of activities, events, circumstances, and objects which together make up a particular world-view. It is skeptical of any connection between signifier and signified, but is equally skeptical of the primacy accorded to human actors in the management of these connections. "Hence, entities such as objects, machines, and circumstances can all be treated as texts in that they too manifest a discourse" (Woolgar, 1986, p. 312). This view of discourse is consistent with the idealist wing of ethnomethodology that there is no reality independent of the words (texts, signs, documents, and so on) used to apprehend it. In other words, reality is constituted in and through discourse.

By contrast, Anglo-Saxon empiricism uses 'discourse' as a label for a narrow set of empirically observable linguistic activities. In this view, scientific discourse is the speech and writing of scientists. In line with the Anglo-Saxon empiricist commitment to a realist epistemology, discourse is a specific body of representational activities. Speech and writing yield materials amenable to empirical study, and these materials are taken as the outcome of activities which exist independently of the ideas, objects, facts and actions to which they are oriented. On the one hand, there is discourse and, on the other, is a separate body of entities to which discourse is addressed and upon which it reports. The structuralist vision of entities as texts is replaced by the Anglo-Saxon concern with actor's accounts. In this study, discourse is used in the Foucauldian sense only. It refers not only to the
written discourses of the ICA, but also to all other kinds of entities.

Discourses are changeable. In this postmodern world, there is a plurality of discourse which actors can draw upon. According to Foucault, the power effects of discourses are always subject to resistance, making discourse a very dynamic concept. Social order is typically achieved through the skilled actions of actors who coordinate their relationships with others through various tactics which establish or confirm the grounds of the communicative exchange. Discourse changes as actors adapt and change conditions of the process of reproduction. If that was not the case, we would not have talked about the emergence of new discourses, which are the emergence of new ways of accomplishing social relations. At the same time, discourses are internal to the subject, creating the foundation on which subjectivity itself is constructed. Thus, in order to understand actors and social relations, one needs to comprehend the discourses within which they routinely embed their own self-understandings (Knights and Morgan, 1991).

In summary, discourse may be a "shorthand for a whole set of power/knowledge relations which are written, spoken, communicated and embedded in social practices. These relations have power and truth effects. The consequences that follow from these relationships are a major concern of a discourse analysis" (Foucault, 1975, p. 255).
What kind of discourses are prevalent in the ICA? The contention is that it is a discourse of intense reflexivity. To summarize the argument that will follow, the ICA was born as a result of a privileged discourse of intense reflexivity. The *Christian Life and Faith Community* (CFC) of 1950s was concerned with the issue of how to be good Christians in a socially relevant manner. To answer this question, the CFC engaged in a process of intense reflexivity and the *Ecumenical Institute* was born. This discourse of intense reflexivity was nourished through the *Summer Research Assemblies* and other forms of writings and organizational practices until 1973 when the Institute became secular. From 1973 to 1984, the intense reflexivity became a deprivileged discourse partly because the ICA was in a stage of phenomenal growth and expansion. There was very little time for intense reflection partly because the focus was on performativity—to do as many projects as possible in the most efficient and quickest manner." However, beginning 1984 and culminating in 1986, a process of decentralization began where each ICA unit become autonomous and the whole organization evolved into a network structure. This was a difficult transition for the ICA. The new focus has been to make sense of the chain of transitionary events that have been unfolding since 1984 and at the same time articulate a vision for the future. This has resulted in reprivileging intense reflexivity as a discourse in the ICA.

Luhmann (1986, p. 4-5) states that the dominant semantics of a given period becomes plausible only by virtue of its compatibility
with the social structure. Assuming that he is using the term "dominant semantics" in a way similar to the concept of "privileged discourses" used in this chapter, This statement suggests that a given discourse becomes privileged only when its message and value stance are congruent with existing social structure, values and norms. Therefore, the privileging, deprivilegd, and repriiple of intense reflexivity might have been influenced by comparable changes in the social norms, values and attitudes of the times with which these changes are associated. This is a proposition that needs to be examined in greater detail. However, before doing that it is necessary to describe the concept of "intense reflexivity."

Intense reflexivity is a descriptor for the conscious and simultaneous acts of analysis and meta analysis (analysis of the analysis). It is the simultaneity of the act and the reflecting on the act. For example, the simultaneous differentiation from and identification with the thought and its object. To link this to Bateson's (1972) notions of single loop and double loop learning, intense reflexivity is the simultaneous act of single and double loop learning. Thus, it is not just the analytic act, or the reflection on the analysis, but the simultaneous engagement in both that characterizes intense reflexivity. We will look through the nature of the analytic act, its relationship with the meta-analytic processes, the transformative potential of the meta-analytic processes and thus explore intense reflexivity's potential to both
enhance a sense of self and to transform the self (both in organizational contexts).

The analytic act is imaginal because it is only a semblance of what one is reflecting about. In other words, it is always an incomplete mimesis of the object of reflection. Following Derrida (1981), it is the likelihood of imperfection in mimesis that makes the potentially infinite reflections possible. For example, while the ICA was reflecting on the decentralization that happened in 1985, each of those reflections were an imaginary construction of the actual events. Each reflection had some aspects which coincided with other's reflections and some that did not. The aspects that coincided with the reflections of others help in the process of self-adequation (Schutz, 1972). Those points that did not coincide are undecidable by the person who is reflecting, thus preventing reflection from solely being an act of self-adequation, and opening the possibility for transformation. A closure is possible at this juncture only by joining with others who too experience incomplete mimesis and dialoguing about the discrepancies.

To clarify, incomplete mimesis is the realization that any analytic reflective act is undecidable, because any representation, while approaching the 'Other', will simultaneously be different from the 'Other'. This 'differance' (Derrida, 1981) creates undecidability. Why does this 'differance' create undecidability? Chaos theory (Gleick, 1987) has described how small changes in initial conditions can lead to large differences in outcomes. Thus,
a small difference in the mimetic process can lead to a significant difference in the outcome of the analytic reflective act. An awareness of this undecidability can lead to the desire for simultaneously understanding the processes of the analytic act itself (meta-analysis), making this a recursive network. A recursive network is one in which distinctions of level can be made on the basis of repeated, but nevertheless more or less complex, self-referencing operations. This enlarges the arena of engagement from only the need for self-adequation to include the potential for transformation, through meta-analysis.

Why does meta-analysis have a potential for transformation? This is located in the wide range of undecidables that accompany incomplete mimesis. The idea that mimesis and repetition breed difference as well as likeness is called the recursive process (Platt, 1989). This is emphasized by Derrida's notion of the fold that the play of mimesis involves repetition and that repetition is potentially limitless. "What announces itself here is an internal division within mimesis, a self duplication of repetition itself; add infinitum, since this movement feeds its own proliferation" (Derrida, 1981:191). This dissemination of folds creates a polysemic universe which breaches the creation of self-relating totality and opens up an infinite expanse of constructs and texts. Many of the undecidables will obviously generate paradoxes and plurivocity that existing systems of theory or order cannot deal with. Following Luhmann (1985), this leads to reformulation or transformation in
existing social systems to respond to the paradox. However, this effort generates the condition in which new uncertainties arise creating new paradoxes. Thus, the act of creating order initiates the process of disorder.

The above argument shows that the processes of self-adequation and transformation are both infinite. A plausible explanation for this is that "the consistent application of any theory, or of any interpretation, includes claims that the theory's 'axiomatic formulations' cannot be used to decide. Expressed differently, theories generate propositions which are not definable in their own terms" (Platt, 1989, p.653). An example of this is Kuhn's (1966) description of the anomalies that come up in normal science by following the existing paradigm of the normal science, but cannot be explained by those theories. These anomalies accumulate to a point where it can precipitate a paradigm shift. As we have seen, reflecting on organizational experiences leads to potentially infinite processes of self-adequation and transformation. The importance of intense reflexivity is that it offers a way to respond to and "play" (in the Derridean sense) with the infinite range of interpretations.

To summarize and return to our original definition of intense reflexivity, a reflective analysis essentially generates self adequacy through an engagement with the "Other" that confirms existing notions of who one is. Given incomplete mimesis, 'differance' in analysis leads to further analysis of the process of
the analysis. This self-reflection is called meta analysis and is
the source of the "paradoxicalization" in which order becomes
problematic. This leads to the potential for transformation- which
is the new context for analysis. This is a process that can
theoretically proliferate infinitely and is only bound by socio-
-economic and psycho-spiritual contingencies. Thus, the discourse of
intense reflexivity in the ICA is the simultaneous discovery of
identity (analysis) and the creation of meaning (meta-analysis).

INTENSE REFLEXIVITY AS A PRIVILEGED DISCOURSE IN THE ICA: 1952-1973

In 1952 when the Christian Faith and Life Community (CFC) was
formed by a group of faculty and students at the University of
Texas, the focus was on "experimenting with a life-style of research
and study". The choice of words- experimenting, research and study-
clearly signify a sense of reflection. The goal of the community at
that time was to create a curriculum of social and religious
studies, again an intensely reflective practice. Finally, the
expected outcome of the project too reveals a strongly reflective
mission: "to awaken the university community, and later the church,
to the fundamental issues people faced in their lives".

Earlier in the chapter it was mentioned Luhmann's (1986, p. 4-
5) contention that the dominant semantics of a given period become
plausible only by virtue of its compatibility with the social
structure. In other words, a given discourse becomes privileged only
when it is congruent with existing or emerging values and norms.
Therefore, the privileging of intense reflexivity in the ICA should
have been influenced by the post-world war years which were a period of intense reflection for the churches in general. Fundamental issues facing the Church were being reviewed both by Vatican II and by the Second General Assembly of the World Council of Churches. Both gatherings brought scholars, theologians, and religious leaders together to deliberate and reflect on the role of church in the post-war, post-industrial society.

The creation of Religious Studies-I in 1959 was yet another product of long reflection and deliberations. Through these courses, the ICA continued to probe the meaning of contemporary life. Starting in 1965, the reflective processes in the ICA were gradually institutionalized through an annual reflective event called Summer Research Assemblies.

The intent of reflexivity is a search for meaning. A quote from the Image, the Journal of the Ecumenical Institute, (No 7, 1969, p. 3-4) demonstrate this:

The need to make sense out of our suffering and action is deeply human . . . In the language of the poet, every man quests after some light, way, truth, door . . . He dwells in hope that some tomorrow will bring a delivering power, an illuminating story, some saving event, a final blessedness. When the day comes, so he dreams, then surely in some way the essence of life and the living of it will be different . . . Watch him, as he is thrown up against his finitude, become a seeker after some truth which will overcome the unbearable incomprensibles of life. Watch him search, however subtly, for the justification which will alleviate his sense of insignificance. Watch him relentlessly strive for a peace which will somehow blot out his lucid awareness of the tragic dimension of life.
Yet another product of the intense reflexivity was the "research colloquy" which "presupposes at the end of 10 to 14 days (that) a diverse group ... should have been formed into a self-conscious, disciplined corporate people with a context of the global movement." It dealt with topics such as the "20th century cultural revolution" and the "depth leadership laboratory."

Being a member of the Institute was never easy. Many reported that it was a struggle between worldly temptations (nice car, big home) and missional commitment. Again, it was reflexivity that helped the Institute members to deal with the ambiguity, as is demonstrated in the following dialogue.

Lastly this raises the question in a brand new way. First the para vocational question gets you: "Is this what I am supposed to do? My skills, and gifts mean I am needed in a different situation where I have an opportunity to express myself!" I have got to marry a wife, huh? Family problems- I have to bury my father, or I have to buy a field. Then, secondly, under the vocational question, the raw edge of the front lines gets you. I shouldn’t be out of there too long; get someone else! I’m suffering from battle fatigue. Thirdly, under the vocational question, wanting to be somebody gets you. Because you want to walk with the kings, you find yourself saying, "I want to be where the great big decisions are made". I’ve been here too long anyway, and I ought to leave. It is a deep struggle.

One aspect of this struggle was the task of creating "profound human awakenment." The members felt that ultimately their mission in life was to raise the consciousness of humankind. Only through reflexivity could they engage in a dialogue for that purpose. For example, a sophisticated reflection took into account the notion of "self as others," as evidenced below.

In the course of a life-time, one experiences many "awakenments", the traveller discovering an alien culture, the
discovery of the opposite sex. Each of these encounters with other person or environment irrevocably alters one’s consciousness. Profound awakemement, though, has to do with none of one’s particular relationships. Instead it deals with their transparency - the dimension of meaning and significance that shines through particular relationships. This transparency is the discovery within life’s concrete experiences of a dimension of meaning that colors all mundane experiences.

As Kierkegaard observed, the self is a relationship that relates itself to its relationships, and in willing to be itself grounds itself transparently to the power that posits it . . . The human experience of the ultimate dimension of reality is first of an experience of mystery. One encounters a radical unknownness at the heart of the ordinary. The routine is without basis, the comfortable is inexplicable, the ordinary is questionable . . . the experience of the ultimate is an experience of care, an aroused passion to use one’s single lifetime creatively on behalf of the needs of the world . . . the experience of humaness is an experience of tranquility. In the midst of all the tension and struggles that are part of ordinary experience, one sometimes encounters an extraordinary satisfaction or fulfillment.

The reflective turn to secularism

During the early 70s, the Institute gradually started grappling with the issue of secularism. The exposure to different cultures catalyzed this re-examination of their secular roots. As always, the Institute debated the issue in depth, tracing the discourse to a need for new myths.

As man’s consciousness jerks him out of the past and throws him into the relativity of the new and the unknown of the future he finds himself in gap with no myths, symbols, or rites which enable him to stand as the one he is and to dialogue with the depths of life. This experience of the gap is thrusting man into creation of new myths that will sustain him and give him the possibility of creating a meaningful destiny as he stands before the final reality of life.

Every man who hears the cry of the 20th century is the man whom history calls to embody the new consciousness that is articulated in the revolutionary principles. The decade of the 70’s is the crucial decade of the century in which form must
be given to man's radical mutation of consciousness. . . . The only authentic reply to this cry is: THESE ARE THE TIMES, WE ARE THE PEOPLE" (Capitals in original).

Yet another document called Whistle Points: Post-modern Secular Myth (1973, 2, pp. 16-18) described the intense dialogue the Institute had engaged itself in reflecting on the various "cultural shifts occurring in various continents and at different points in history". There were several examples of the postmodern secular myth:

Imagine the billboards along the wagon trails saying, "go west young man, go west." The phrase, "life is just a bowl of cherries" arose during the depression of the 30s enabling man to affirm life and give meaning to that moment in history as one full of possibility for recreating life in the midst of total collapse. "All is relative" is an example of a post-modern secular myth which articulates the experience of man and gives him the possibility of creating his own screen, returning meaning to the external, internal, and existential events of life.

Yet another dialogue titled Reflections on a Trek expressed this "turn to the world" (secularism) more clearly. Arising out of intense reflexivity, it showed a remarkable appreciation for other cultures and their Gods. Above all, they showed a willingness to let go of the past and look ahead:

It is clear that more and more colleagues are needed. The work is becoming too much for so few. Where do you send potential colleagues? One suggestion might be to send them to ITIs. That raises the question of sending Hindus and Muslims and others to an ITI. The ITI construct presupposes an understanding of the Christian symbol system before the participant arrives. I worry a little about the Christian triumphism of taking our symbol system and cramming it down over top of somebody else's head, particularly at this time in history when our system is at the very least, brittle with weakness. I hardly know how to say that, because I believe two things. One, once the symbol get into history they remain in history. Thus, the Christ, the Holy Spirit, and Virgin Birth, are forever in history just as Shiva and Vishnu. They are forever in history and there will
be no getting rid of them. The truth of the matter is that the
religions called Protestantanism, Roman Catholicism, Judaism,
Hinduism and Islam, in their present form are all passing from
the scene. Probably the reason why they have not disappeared
entirely is that there is no good option . . . . The new
religious mode is really coming into being. It is new and it
is present in the ITI and the Academy. It is sneaking up in
all our programs. So when we ask somebody to be the spirit
movement, we are really asking them to be a part of the new
religious mode. We are asking them to participate in the new
spirit and in the new attempts being made to give form to the
"wind" in life. It is a tremendous burden because if the
poetry is written incorrectly the wind will come back and blow
that form to smithereens. (Reflections on a trek, 1986, p.5)

Summary

The Institute of Ecumenical Studies and later the ICA was born
out of dialogues that were intensely reflective in nature. During
the period from 1952 to roughly 1973, intense reflexivity was the
privileged discourse in the ICA. This was achieved mostly by
institutionalizing practices and structures that were facilitative
of organizational dialogue.

INTENSE REFLEXIVITY AS A DEPRIVILEGED DISCOURSE IN ICA:1973-1984

The process of deprivileging intense reflexivity began
somewhere in the early 70's. By deprivileging, it is not implied
that reflexivity became abruptly absent in the ICA. On the contrary,
the ICA has always been a reflective organization. Deprivileging of
the discourse merely signifies that the amount of time and energy
the ICA spent in the intense reflexivity mode decreased as it
engaged in a project mode of accomplishing tasks. The focus was more
on putting in to practice what has been learned rather than on
learning more. Learnings from the successes of the Fifth City, Town
Meetings, and Human Development Projects were so powerful for the
Institute that they felt a strong need to replicate them. A document titled *Social Demonstration: toward Mass Replication* (April 11, 1976) clearly articulated this modernistic focus on the grand narrative of replication. And, as enthusiasm and commitment grew, the strategy became one of accomplishing the maximum in the most efficient manner. An internal document written at that time (1971) revealed this new mind-set.

What are the practical implications of all this (our programs)? One is that the new reality is all we are doing . . . Our role in history is disclosing the new reality that we didn't invent. Everything else is a gimmick— a helpful tool for doing it effectively . . . You are just conscious that there is something present worthy of disclosing . . . It's not saying, "look, wake up and see how terrible this situation is or you can change it." Awakenment instead, is calling attention to the greatness already present. The purpose of engagement is to shape the new reality that is already present, not to criticize the old." (1971, T 503, p. 6)

The formation of the Institute of Cultural Affairs in 1973 intensified the move to the application phase. Its stated purpose was to further the application of methods of human development to communities and organizations all around the world based on a secular philosophy. Further, symbolizing a gradual focus on working with corporations the *Leadership Effectiveness and New Strategies* (LENS) was redesigned and used with many companies. One of ICA's basic models, the *Social Process Triangles* was adopted for use in business and was called the *Corporate Process Triangles*.

Amidst all these there was a focus on "retooling" and "fine tooling" methods in order to be more efficient and productive. For example, the *Summer Research Assembly* of 1983 focused on the "Role
of Technology in the Release of Human Potential." A document called the Battle Planning Lab (July 29, 1975) demonstrates this focus on tools and techniques.

This evening and tomorrow evening we will be having what we are calling a revolutionary lab. Tonight we will deal with battle planning or tactical thinking . . . this evening we are dealing with the question: what is it that you do that makes you effective? The answer is methods, and regardless of the response that is the right answer . . . Our job is to find out . . . what of that (methods) is reduplicable? For if we are to do mass awakenment . . . in the world, it will be done by communicating these methods by having people use them, and by spreading that communication massively across the globe. Therefore, for the sake of the task, . . . we must get said to ourselves very rationally how we, in fact, act effectively. . . . Our most recent effort has been the work on LENS and on the social methods school. This work is held in the chart called METHODS OF EFFECTIVITY. (Capitals in original)

All these activities demonstrate the application-action focus of the ICA as it expanded globally. The imagery was one of warfare and accomplishing goals most efficiently as shown in documents such as Indicative Battle Planning Methods.

The deprivilegging of intense reflexivity was also expressed in the form of distancing from bookish knowledge. "We don't have to be bound by what we did yesterday nor by what the manual said. The reason I hate manuals is that I am afraid that I will take seriously what the manual said yesterday . . . May be if you read a manual and then tear it up- there would be some creativity," said the author in another document called Generalship.

The intensity of the application phase peaked in 1984, at the International Exposition of Rural Development (IERD), the three-year program (1982-1984) in sharing successful rural development
approaches. Held in New Delhi, India, the IERD brought global publicity to more than 300 successful, locally managed projects from 55 countries. In a way, the event depicted the ultimate in grand narratives (Lyotard, 1984) because in one stroke the ICA wanted to demonstrate all the principles and techniques in development work that were painstakingly developed over 30 years. It was a well intended effort to demonstrate what worked and how they could be replicated. At a fundamental level, the IERD was organized on the modernist assumption that there were generalizable models and tools bearing validity at a global level.

Paradoxically, it was the IERD that signalled the ICA's transition to reprivileging the discourse of intense reflexivity. The shift coincided with the gradual decentralization of the organization worldwide. This resulted in each ICA location ultimately becoming autonomous and independent. At the same time, the transformation did not weaken the ICA as an organization. The re-engagement in intense reflexivity was one significant factor in this adaptability of the ICA, as we will see in next section.

**INTENSE REFLEXIVITY AS A REPRIVILEGED DISCOURSE IN ICA: 1984-1993**

The IERD of 1984 was a turning point for the ICA. The event, though a success in terms of the objectives set forth for the event, drained the resources of the ICA in a significant way. In addition, disillusionment with the performativity mode of the organization became apparent through the questioning of the methods of the ICA by participants at the IERD. The task of being corporate at a global
level was becoming very demanding and burdensome. The consensus was that "we need to talk" regarding where the organization was heading.

The reprivilege of intense reflexivity could be seen in the Institute's research effort that began in 1985 in exploring the "trends, values, ideas and approaches that will help people face the future." An outcome of this dialogue was the creation of a "research vision," in 1986, to explore the depths of the economic community, development community, planetary unity community, and education community. The "two year bottom line" in their "research tasks" were formation of an active global research advisory board, creation of a research feedback system, retooling the ICA in "new age research", and formulation of an eight-year research model. To accomplish this, the ICA embarked on a "systems approach to research" as outlined in a document called "1986 reflections".

There was a heavy focus on reflection at the ICA International meeting in Spain in August 1986. "What does it mean to be corporate and a community?", "Who are we?," and "What business are we in?," etc., were the questions for reflection. The reflective dialogue was rich in personal sharing and insights. For example, one member wrote (August 1986):

Each of us is in a journey- the journey of life . . . just as they are steps to cross in human life, so are these steps in the life of communities. And crossing these also demands preparation, education and a degree of suffering . . . there is the time of ageing. . . . Community is always in a state of growth. It is no easier to live in a community after twenty years than it was at the start. On the contrary, in fact. People are always a little naive when they enter community; they have many illusions and they also have a need to pull them away from an individual and egotistical life. People who
have been travelling for twenty years in community know that it isn't easy. They are very conscious of their own limitations and those of others. They know the full weight of their own egoism. (Jean Vanier, 1986, in Reflections, pp. 103-105)

Reflections such as the above helped members deal with the transition they were experiencing during the ICAI Spain gathering in 1986. The reflexivity at this "meeting of spirits" was so high that sharings such as the above were plentiful. A tool the ICA used to facilitate reflections was studying books of philosophical and cultural significance. An intensely discussed book at that time was The White Hole in Time by Peter Russell (1992, San Francisco: Harper). According to the ICA, the book is a "revolutionary new perspective on humanity's place in the universe. Exploring the patterns behind our long revolutionary journey, as well as the nature of time itself, Russell shows that our future may culminate in a profound and startlingly positive and creative evolutionary zenith towards which the universe has been building for millions of years . . . an evolutionary climax more profound than even the most optimistic futurists have dared to imagine" (The ICA Highlights, Fall, 1992, p. 2).

Panchayat trek reflections

One of the best examples of the reprivileging of the discourses of intense reflexivity in the ICA is found in a key document called Panchayat Trek Reflections (May 31, 1988). From mid-November 1987 to May 1988, the Global Panchayat travelled to 7 continents and visited 35 locations. A significant outcome of this intense reflexivity was the creation of 280 specific "values." The
Panchayat then identified several trends that are "informed by overall reflections representing a description of the living reality that the values point to." (The Global Panchayat Report, May 31, 1988, p. 3). On further reflection on these trends, the ICA decided to give up its "Global Order" identity in favor of a new one called "Planetary Spirit Association." This represented a significant transformation for the ICA. An analysis of the deliberation precesses captured in a section called "what we are becoming," demonstrate the intensity of ICA's reflexivity.

The evolutionary task of these times is to co-create the healthy emergence of the planetary stage of earth history. This requires the embodiment of a breadth and depth of the planetary ethic that is being birthed. This ethic nurtures a healthy ecology of cultures and styles, fosters a partnership mode with life forces, and embraces the assumption that reality is alive.

A repercussion of spirit is taking place, that is guided by a consciousness that we are inextricably linked - ecologically, psychologically and sociologically - to all that is. We participate in this sacred dance with the wisdom of ancestors and the genius of the modern age. This spirit of unification and integration, calls us to continue to grow in depth as a human species.

A significant correlate of the intense reflexivity that the Panchayat Trek engaged in is demonstrated in the "underlying assumptions" statement produced in the Trek document of 1988. They reflected a renewed focus on feminine values, spirituality and global inter-connectedness. Some of them are listed below.

Our body is part of a growing movement of people across the planet who are catalyzing a global scale re-examination of the dominating influences of modern society, such as scientific empiricism, economic determinism and militarization, and who are inventing new options for the planet.
There is a re-empowerment of previously undervalued "feminine" aspects such as trust, co-creativity, intuition, altruism and mutual support, that are part of a planetary shift from a "masculine" dominated historical past to a more balanced partnership future.

The edge of our present state of organizational transformation is in the nurturing of the creative spiritual, vocational and economic capacities of its individuals.

For the ICA, reflexivity was always meant to result in concrete proposals. For example, the six month period between the Panchayat Trek report and the Mexico Conference was visualized as a "time for reflection." "It is a time of telling the new story about who we are, exploring the new metaphor of the organization we are becoming and celebrating where we are on the transformation journey," advised the Panchayat.

One of the tools used for facilitating this reflexivity was poetry as plenty of examples from the Panchayat documents illustrate. A select sample of them is reproduced to show the intensity of their reflection.

The Moon threw off her dark cloak and shimmered in the inner sky of each self.
The Sun no longer grasped the soul of man but formed new growth . . . verdant, rich.
Now dancing together,
The Moon and the Sun were in balance.
One enriching the global community with knowledge and organization of curiosity, the other gifting with compassion and intuition.
Such a community!
Who could decline such a dance?
Shall we?
How can we not?
The Spark
Out of matter, atoms, molecules, stuff
Life as organism formed
A cell
Simple, singular
But with the complexity of all within in,
Higher,
Cell merging with cell
Creating society, society of organism
And organisms in society

From Sinai to Benares
From Ahmedabad to Montgomery
From Fifth City and Mowanjum
To countless thousands
The park
From hovel to boardroom
Giving form to a new planet, a new universe

THE REASON FOR BEING

Crystal pebbles-shining on the ground
the sun- playing on them
and the stream- the ever-moving
water- breaking the reflections
sending beams of light into the world--

The pebbles have been there, always
the sun is shining on them, forever.

It’s the stream that’s different
not the pebbles
The reflections have changed
not the sun
And the light breaks through
in ways we couldn’t know before.

If only we could let it be
let it shine
and be created
through us.

Whatever we think it is- it is not
Whatever we think it will do- it will not
Whatever we think will happen- it will not
Wherever we think it will go- it will not.

It is more, farther, greater, longer
than our wildest dreams
yet dream on . . . . . .
The process of intense reflection acknowledged the normal anxiety and fears an individual might experience in coping with the sweeping transformations the ICA was undergoing. The ICA members recognized that it is important to address such concerns rather than avoiding them.

All of us exhibit normal human unskilled behavior in the face of the dying and birthing process of transformation. All of us catch ourselves seeking to find fault or to place blame on someone or something even if only ourselves are responsible for this situation. All of us experience living out of the perception of things as broken and the motivation of seeking a way to fix what appears to be broken among us. All of us know what it means to seek to control the process of transformation as we cling to our vantage points, refusing ourselves to be transformed. All of us have heard the whispering voice of surrender, calling us to grow and to live out of our higher selves, calling us to deeply remember our own declaration to be "transmitters of life".

This transformation process has gifted us with a new beginning. We have arrived at the threshold of an age of social reconciliation and unitive consciousness. We have arrived at this moment of transformation through our own explorations and innovations. From a historical perspective, we've won the "turn to the world."

After "much reflection and brooding over the diverse perspectives" the ICA wanted to allow experimentation with the new to grow and keep themselves aligned with the transformational process. This meant acknowledging that these structures (commissions, assignments, priory) were no longer functioning for them. The reflexivity helped the ICA see that these structures (Panchayat, global budget) were not in alignment with the decentralized and diverse group of units the ICA had become. Thus the Panchayat did the unusual; it recommended its own dissolution along with the priory, commissions, assignment process and global
budget structures. At the same time, encouragement was given for continuing experimentation with new staffing modes, economic relationships, membership symbols and interchange dynamics.

**Reflexivity and new images of learning**

ICA's reprivileging of intense reflexivity is also reflected in its new focus on "new images of learning." Since 1988, the ICA has been experimenting with an "Earthwise Learning Series" which is a reprivileging of the imaginal education thrust of the ICA in the 60s. Thus, beginning in 1988, one could see plenty of references to "learning organizations," "new age learning," "new images of learning" etc., *The ICA Highlights*, Spring 1988 issue discussed a ICA Seattle conference on "new horizons for learning." ICA Guatemala co-sponsored a conference on "learning how to learn" in Guatemala in October, 1987. A new magazine called *Edges* began publication from Toronto, Canada focusing exclusively on ICA's learnings regarding new planetary patterns and organizational transformation. Another publication from ICA India, *Image*, dedicated itself as an "action research journal on personal and organizational transformation."

This learning and reflective orientation was evident in the most recent ICA International gathering called *Praha' 92* held in Prague, Czechoslovakia in October 1992. The theme of the gathering was "Making the great transition: Our new world". A quote used in the brochure illustrates this learning focus: "Many pieces make up the mosaic of our world. The challenge is finding ways to bring those pieces together to create a picture of our world and the
transition. The conference will focus on approaching worldwide issues from differing fields and backgrounds."

**Conclusion**

The reprivileging of intense reflexivity has already produced tangible results in the ICA. The organization world-wide is experiencing a clear resurgence and growth. The reprivileging of ICA's most favored discourses has turned out to be a process of rediscovery of the ICA's core values. There is a growing awareness that because of the repriviledged discourse of intense reflexivity the ICA is a learning organization always willing to be flexible and experiment with new structures and practices. The reflectivity has enabled them to reinterpret many events and developments as indicative of positive transformations rather than decline.

**IMPLICATIONS**

What are the implications of using the hermeneutic approach? To begin with, a reader realizes that the process of reading a text often results in discovering many of its unknown sides. One sees a circle of continually emerging information and interpretation that results in an ever broadening understanding of the phenomena of inquiry. In other words, as a reader discovers different layers of meaning of key constructs of the organization, it changes because of the new understanding. The process of reading a text is a gradual and continuous one and will go on well after the reader (researcher) has left the field. The textual interpretation that is created
(fusion of horizon) itself becomes another text to be read by other readers in and outside of the organization.

From an organizational change perspective, the re-reading of a text is a significant step. As outlined in chapter 2, the whole process can be conceptualized as steps in a hermeneutic circle. The first reading of the text becomes the text for the second reading which in turn becomes the text for the third reading. Each reading is a "return with a difference" to the previous reading and results in at least incremental new understanding. The process of re-reading is not necessarily a planned one in organizations and takes place in an overall context of ongoing human sense making processes.

If the textual interpretation invariably leads to new layers of meaning, the new understanding is obviously expressed in new linguistic constructs. For example, the textual inquiry of the ICA in chapter 4 resulted in the development of a core construct called Global Social Change Organizations. In chapter 5, the result was life giving forces which the ICA found most useful in its strategic planning processes. It was also learned that the reading of the text with the construct of life giving forces facilitated the emergence of a new understanding for the ICA. The new language of life giving forces had a transformational effect on the organization. Members reported that the new language of affirmation started "healing old wounds" and brought together a dispersed group of people who were spread across 35 nations in over 100 locations. During the interviews at the ICAI global gathering in Brussels, the researcher
saw the impact of the new language on members from all across the world. Corporateness, consensus, service mission, and spirituality were symbolized as "non-negotiable values" during their deliberations and the organization affirmed its pledge to expand the scope of its core mission inspired by these values.

The language of life giving forces provided a new lens to members of ICA to view their experiences. It stood in marked contrast to their old lens which amplified the "holes" in their collectivity. The new lens of life giving forces, on the other hand, amplified the "glue" or "connective tissue" that bound their community together. In a way, members of ICA acquired a linguistic sophistication (Habermas, 1975) that helped them weave together a new social construction (Berger and Luckman, 1966) of their organization.

Similar conclusions may be drawn of other readings as well. Hermeneutic inquiry thus opens up immense possibilities for both authors and readers. If one interpretation (reading) does not seem to work or make sense, one may try another. The logic of this rather obvious suggestion is based on the concept of fusion of horizon. The interpretation or intervention that did not work effectively was based on one fusion of horizon. Even if the author's (actor's) horizon of meaning remains the same, the reader (interpreter) could apply another conceptual frame to create another fusion. As was explicated earlier, once we use a different horizon, we tend to see different realities or, to use Gadamer's word, different "truths."
The metaphor of the text too is a very useful tool with several potential utility in consulting and research. The model of the text is a less threatening framework to people in organizations than traditional ones for various reasons. By defining the data collected as a text, the researcher or the practitioner is conveying an idea that consulting or research work is something like a series of readings. The notion of plurivocity, that there are multiple meanings in the text, is very empowering, because, it gives organizational participants considerable flexibility to create their own interpretation of what is going on. This is particularly significant when we realize that one of the most basic reasons for "resistance to change" in organization change efforts is the affected parties' belief that interpretations arrived at by researchers or practitioners do not appear credible. From a hermeneutical point of view this is not surprising since such interpretations are mostly unilateral having achieved no fusion of horizon. A textual analysis that involves both the reader and the read appears to elicit more commitment from people who are key to implementing changes.

The process of capturing the distanciation of event into meaning is normally an exciting one. Recognizing the potential of events or actions in organizations to acquire meaning far beyond what the author had anticipated is usually quite provocative. It also opens up a framework to explain the innumerable "miscommunications" that happen in organizations. Readers begin to
realize that they were all looking at different texts or reading the same text differently. Such an awareness may prompt dissenting parties to co-create a "consensus reading" so that their efforts and energies are synchronized for the accomplishment of common goals.

In the ultimate analysis, using hermeneutic inquiry is like looking through a kaleidoscope wearing glasses of different colors. Though what the viewer is seeing is the different combinations and configurations that form within the scope, each time the viewer uses a different color glass, the resulting view changes.

The hermeneutic approach also questions the normally assumed distinction between text and context. It is now widely appreciated in organizational change literature that context free descriptions of change techniques are of little value. The new orthodoxy is to concentrate on understanding the content, context and process of organizational change (Pettigrew, 1987).

In the present study we also saw that the text "locates" meaning rather than "discovering" it. In the process, the hermeneutic approach also redefines the role of the author (refers to either researcher or subject). It is important to note that the concept of the author is not a natural idea. On the contrary, it appeared in some fields at certain point in history (Barthes, 1977). Foucault (1979) examined the ancestry of the author and found that the concept did not exist among primitive people. Primitive narratives entirely depended on the oral tradition. According to Foucault, authorship is a creation of the modern bourgeoisie and
science in order to control meaning. In fact, authorship first emerged in the sciences during the middle ages.

Barthes (1977, p. 148) once declared that "the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author." Eco (1983, p. 7) echoed a similar radicality when he wished that "the author should die once he had finished writing, so as not to trouble the path of the text." Milorad Pavić (quoted in Bruckner 1988, p. 15) was more conciliatory when he wrote: "We have always talked of talented or gifted writers; we should talk of gifted and talented readers." The textual analysis in this study has tried to avoid this polarization of who is more or less important (or who should die or live!). Instead, it argues that both the reader and the author are required for a meaningful reading.

The study also brings out the distinction between "readerly" text and "writerly" text. The text in this study was a writerly text (scriptible) because it was rewritten with every reading. This is different from the "readerly" (lisible) text which is destined for a passive reader and read for a specific meaning. The ultimate intent of the readerly text is control of meaning, which we saw is problematic, because every text is related to every other text creating "intertextuality" (Kristeva 1980, p. 36). As Rosenau (1992, p. 36) wrote, "effects radiate out from a text and have an impact on all other texts." For Bakhtin (1973), the intertextuality reveals a "global mixing", a simultaneous connection similar to the medieval carnival where every element refers to every other element. For that
reason, "every text, being itself the intertext of another text, belong to the intertextual" (Barthes, 1979, p. 77). Core ideas of chaos theory also brings out this inter-relationship. As Gleick (1987, p. 8) mentioned, "A butterfly stirring the air today in Peking can transform storm systems next month in New York."

Hermeneutics also reminds that not only does human behavior and its contexts change, but so do investigators and their contexts. As Piaget (1960, p. 9) argued, "(the researcher) must unite two often incompatible qualities, he must know how to observe, that is to say, to let the child talk freely, without ever checking or side tracking his utterance, and at the same item he must constantly be alert for something definitive, at every moment he must have some working hypothesis, some theory, true or false, which he is seeking to check." Piaget's definition suggests that the interview develops through the interplay between a belief in and skepticism towards the child's speech. It is this dual program that characterizes hermeneutic as well. On the one hand Hermeneutics aims at restoration of meaning, which is "animated by faith, by a willingness to listen, and is characterized by a respect for the symbol (Thomson, 1981, p. 6). On the other hand, Hermeneutics attempts to uncover or decipher meanings that are presented in the form of disguise. Here Hermeneutics is "animated by suspicion, by a skepticism towards a given, and is characterized by a distrust of the symbol of dissimulation of the real" (Thomson 1981, p. 6)
In the course of various readings we also saw that one of the qualities of texts is its vulnerability for deconstruction and that when the organizational text is deconstructed, they (organizations) change. We also discussed the question, "Why do texts change" and discussed factors such as reflectivity, the polysemy of language, the emergence of different interpretive schemes as possible reasons. Above all, we realized, as articulated by Steier (1991, p. 1) that "as inquirers and researchers we create worlds through the questions that we ask coupled with what we and others regard as reasonable responses to our questions." That we as researchers construct that which we claim to 'find' is a theme present all through in this study. It is tempting to agree with Steier (1991, p. 1-2) that

If researchers and scholars are to take seriously principles of constructionism, these very principles must be applied by researchers to themselves and to their research. That is, the research process itself must be seen as socially constructing a world of worlds, with the researcher included in, rather than outside, the body of their own research . . . We come to 'know' that which we claim to know, as a model that comes to us through other similarly constructed models, and refers not to an independent world 'out there', but to our own constructing processes."

Thus, this study showed that if researchers' begin to examine how they as inquirers are reflexively part of the systems they study, they can also develop an awareness of how reflexivity becomes a useful way to understand what others are doing.
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Appendix 1

ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS OF MISSION AND SERVICE LIFE-GIVING FORCE

Beliefs and Values

1. Meaningful Living

Having a meaning in life is of utmost importance to the ICA members. They wanted to live for a purpose, something that has a personal sense of relevance for them. This meaning provided the energy and drive to go the "extra mile."

The symbol of the wedgeblade represents our standing between the 'no longer' and the 'not yet' on behalf of all those who will not or cannot or have not and offering experiences or life work for the sake of the unknown future.

I think the mission is to give people a sense of and demonstration of their own possibility and capacity to live a fulfilled life in every way.

We have to live with spirit pulled through us, we have to stay healthy, we have to let God talk to us and tomorrow will happen if we just keep on . . . We have to plan for tomorrow and have our visions. But I'm not worried about tomorrow. If I worried about tomorrow, I wouldn't be here today.

2. Globality - actions that heal

A deeply rooted value of the ICA centers around their faith in the global mind set. The whole planet is a single entity. Nation-states are artificial separations. Yet most people are caught up by the limited thinking of race and geographic boundaries. So the real challenge is to experience and appreciate the inter-connectedness of that bond that binds us all together. The best strategy to accomplish any attitudinal change in this direction is through actions that stand out as good examples.
The ICA mission in its simplest form is to provide hope for the planet and beyond. It is an attempt to improve the quality of life on the planet for all its citizens. Trying to find ways to make the world work for everyone. And to involve everyone in making the world work. Our mission has always been a vision of a better world, a world of peace and justice, and health and deep spirit. In one strategy or another it has been to pick up on the energy of society, the friends, the resources and bind them together to move the civilizing venture in that direction. It has something to do with healing the planet. Transformation. 20/20 vision. Networking. Globality. The world is fresh.

I can close my eyes and I can see all kinds of pictures of what it means to be Chinese. But when I see that picture of the earth from space, there all the land looks like my land.

I had a vision of the New Earth in that experience as I saw the First World reaching out to the Third World with no strings attached, no counter demands, and simply sharing the technology, sharing what we had, and meeting that with people's dreams in such a way that we could build a vehicle that would make those dreams come true.

3. Honoring the Diversity of the Human

ICA firmly believes that diversity is a strength. Yet, it’s potential utility is not what attracts the ICA. Diversity is the beauty of the human condition. It is the marvel of existence that people are different. Thus, it is the aesthetics rather than the instrumentality of diversity that the ICA likes to honor.

We have an innate sense about globality that is related to a deep belief that all people are human. All people have skills and they have uniqueness. And we can learn from each other. All religions have uniqueness and gifts and we can learn from each other.

To accept all people and allow them to participate.

I would say that the mission of the ICA is to enable . . . all the wisdom to belong to everybody and this can be achieved through participation with each other through decision-making models.
4. Full Participation - Depth Ownership of Task

Anything and everything that the ICA does bring out their fundamental belief in participation. Again and again they have shown that when people participate they also assume ownership of the task.

I don’t think that the statement "Concerned with the Human Factor in World Development" has changed. I think that our skill has been in participation and working out ways for people to participate. I think that is still true - with individuals, organizations, and communities.

Getting people to participate wherever they are. Getting people to know that they can make a difference.

5. Pragmatism

The people of the ICA are unique in the sense that they are both thinkers and doers at the same time. Like Kurt Lewin, they believe that there is nothing as practical as a good theory. Moreover, the vision or the mission should also have a generative (Gergen, 1982) capacity that can evoke excitement and commitment in people so that something concrete is accomplished.

One of our gifts is that we don’t separate theory and practice. We don’t really care about standards like how many people we had, and how nice we felt about it. The point was: Did the village get revitalized?

"We value birthing new community relationships. We believe local people have wisdom."

"The vision and mission have to be so exciting that if we were to articulate it to you in words and pictures, being the kind of human you are, a person who cares, you would say I want to do something about that. I am so excited about that, it is worth giving part of my life for, or all of my life."

6. Transformation Guiding

The ICA members are not simply change agents. In fact, change is not their object; transformation is. They believe that it is
possible to fundamentally alter the way people think and act. Over the years they have mastered the skills to facilitate or guide this transformation.

Our role is to hear the trend makers of today, wherever they may show up. To radically hear and appreciate what they are doing and to share THE ICA's learnings and to allow new understandings from those groups to be networked around the globe.

We've always been about standing between the no-longer and not-yet and creating the new.

Structural revolutionaries - not as bomb throwing, violent revolutionaries, but as people who enable change in structures so that positive change can take place. That has been a major contribution.

7. Belief in life long learning or New Education Forms

One of the core values of the ICA is their beliefs in life long learning. As they are fond of saying, adults need to learn more than children. Learning should not stop because one has grown up. A readiness for life-long learning should be evident in one's readiness or openness for change and new experiences. For the same reason, the ICA staff are actively involved in experiential learning and its applications in various settings. In this arena, the ICA has set excellent examples of creating new educational forms such as "imaginal education," and myth analysis.

My personal goal, given my experiment in the world, is to live a life that is sacred and cooperative in a more direct and conscious role with a beauty that has not been put on the table before. Schumacher's book, "Small is Beautiful," has become a great influence on me.

The idea is that sharing approaches is what makes things happen. No one needs to hold their "little bag of goodies" and help just their own little group. The ICA has been enabling
cultures to share back and forth and demonstrating that learning can be designed and carried out by everybody.

Change is not easy for anybody anywhere because there is no way of knowing to what one is changing. You have to look backwards in order to understand what happened. Because life has to be lived forward there has to be a bit of letting go of the familiar in order to move into the new.

We asked what we could do that would be new and different and still be effective. We could all do something new or different. The issue was being different and effective.

Strategy and task

The ICA employs a variety of strategies so that they can "walk the talk". Yet, for them, the means are as important as the end. The end does not justify the means, though the ICA considers themselves as structural revolutionaries. The following quotes are meant to provide a representative view of the wide variety of methods and values that are inherent in the ICA's pragmatism.

I think we are still structural revolutionaries. We are dealing with the educational structures of this country. They are dead, not teaching people how to live. We are dealing with very concrete structures. Much of our work is in the educational. We have done it for years; it is not new.

We've continued to contribute in terms of applying social methods to organizations dealing with change. I think particularly about those who have done tremendous work in taking us into transformational methods and applying them to our work and availing them and making them make sense to people who might never experienced that in other ways.

To turn around the irreversible death of planet earth, ICA's core strategy is to connect sensitive and responsive social groupings with practical human development methods that bring about a planetary mind shift.
Organizational Structures

1. Enabling others

The structural configuration of the ICA helps in furthering the values and beliefs inherent in their service mission. For example, local autonomy facilitates the empowering or enabling of others.

Another time we were able in a period of about 30 hours to physically move the whole training site from one location to another.

One of the real gifts the ICA has brought is its structure and educational constructs that have allowed people to deal with their lives and information about life.

We washed the windows on the main street of the community and decorated them. There was just a lot of life. One of the neatest things about it was that it wasn't something that the ICA was doing—it was what the people were doing; and we helped it to happen, but they wouldn't even have known that it was something that had come out of Town Meeting. To them, it was something that they could do in the community that made sense. It was quite difficult—water pipes had frozen—and even water was hard to get to wash the windows. The people really pitched in and later things started to change.

2. Accountability

Another aspect of the structure is accountability. The individual ICA units were held responsible for making sure that things were done the way they were supposed to.

The accountability was high because everybody was doing the same thing nationally. So other people were watching.

3. Global networks

Being an international organization, right from the beginning the ICA developed global networks to stay connected as is evident in the following quote.
Opportunity to be globally connected with other colleagues around the world. As a planet we are going to be more and more united and it’s an exciting opportunity to develop some structure around which we can relate to each other.

Organizational Practices

A variety of organizational practices originate out of the structures set up to foster the service mission. They range from daily office, spirit practices to living together as a community.

I am impressed with the staffing and the organization, but clearly the ICA has superior methods. That is where it has been showing up for me. I have more of an appreciation for the methods.

We'd get in there and we'd get the village leaders and the people to talk by themselves, with themselves, together with us and have the work force to say, "O.K., this is what you've said and this is what it'll take. We can help you to do what you want done.

The Daily Office is a very depth, powerful symbol. It just constantly stirs me. The year there were just two of us, we did the Daily Office every morning to hold ourselves together. The other thing that was meaningful was the canonical hours. I really took to that; the rhythm and the chanting was so phenomenal.

Decision Making

No matter what the conditions are, there is something special about the ICA’s decision making style. All decisions are made in consensus. One could also see team work and participation in the delivery of the service mission.

Even though the facilitators and the participants didn’t speak the same language, it bridged that gap and could still take them through a process that ended up with their own consensus and their own input into it.

We've always had a way of creating a story together about what we were doing and how it was in fact creating the future. So, when we were doing RS-1, I thought we were re-creating the Church and it was the most history bending thing I could be about.
Our polity structures are about as chaotic as every
governments’. And I do not anticipate it to be solved any time
soon. Therefore, local autonomy and decentralization is safer.
When you are not sure what the corporate body is, it’s safer
to just have local autonomy.

There’s teamwork and consensus building all wrapped up in one
thing. We did have a time when you felt related all the way up
to the global level. Every quarter you had regional councils
and after that you had continental councils and then there was
a priors council. You felt like you had input.

Leadership

In a way, leadership is an oxymoron for the ICA. If taking all
decisions by consensus is a core value, leadership becomes a
collective experience as opposed to an individual one. Yet, the ICA
thrive in its formative years under the charismatic leadership of
its founder Joseph Mathews. This ambiguity is revealed in the
following quotes.

The Spirit movement in a generic sense right now is desperate
for leadership and afraid of leadership all at the same time.

And I always considered myself to be a good spirit
conversation leader, but we were never set up to just lead
things ourselves. We were always interested in getting local
people up to lead things.

I think our gifts are that we see hope and that we feel that
we can find ways to bring groups of people together to figure
out how we get to the next step of our transformation of an
organization.

While we’re doing all the tasks and working on them I think
that there are some things like spirit life that are needed to
sustain everyone in the tasks that go beyond the norm. When
one is defeated a number of times it’s easy to throw in the
towel and say I quit. Maybe where we’re at is in this arena
of how to develop spirit so we can enable the mission to save
the planet.
Communication

The ICA pays little attention to the so-called techniques of "effective communication". The focus instead, is on the inspirational quality of the message in the communication. The core question is: Can one dialogue with communities in a manner that is impactful and facilitative for transformation?

What I saw in RS-I was a new way of teaching that was not the kind of pedantic style that I had seen in school, or the sloppy style that I had seen in local communities often, but was a disciplined, thoughtful human interactive way of teaching.

It makes us different people. The sharing of methods with lots of kinds of groups -- the methods that are transparent and that do illuminate for people something about themselves beyond just the utilitarian nature of what they're dealing with.

Interpersonal Relations

Plenty of camaraderie, strong social support, team spirit, and intense group experience are most often the ingredients of the interpersonal relationships that exist in the ICA community. No one is left alone. Help is readily available. Yet, you are held accountable for delivering what is promised in terms of services to the target community.

I can sit with executives or I can sit with peasants. That same sharing experience of getting people around the table to participate in their own future with their ideas in helping to facilitate that. I think that comes back from being a facilitator.

Wherever I showed up I was supposed to enable new life in that particular situation . . . wherever I showed up whether that was in my family or on my job, so it was like I had been totally engaged and fulfilled in each position.
I was always proud of living in Fifth City. It was very unique, very care-filled and it really made a difference in people’s lives.

ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS OF CORPORATENESS LIFE-GIVING FORCE

Beliefs and values

1. Global Diversity

Though corporateness refers to some sort of physical togetherness and living in a community in a local sense, the ICA has been able to maintain their global mind-set even there. As is evident in the following quotes, they wanted to feel corporate with people in India and the rest of the world.

I experience corporateness through friends from India who are concerned about things in the world the same as we are. I experience people all over the world concerned about the same things. The Planet. I think this corporateness is unique and our hope for the planet is this corporate, global, colleague care that exists . . . I believe the ICA is so important because of the corporate, global colleagues.

Our children have been exposed to great people and ideas. They’ve been in the Student House. They have been to other nations. They know how to take care of themselves. They are global persons. They are self-reliant. It has worked real well for our family.

The intention of the ICA through our history and self training has been a rigorous, extensive series of seminars and common experiences including international experience. Almost everyone of us has traveled over the world or parts of the world. We have a deep kinship in spirit, philosophy, world view and outlook.

2. Standing In The Tension

Maintaining corporateness is often a delicate and paradoxical task. Ensuring that everyone irrespective of gender, age, or race is included in the corporate body is a balancing act. The important thing here was making sure that all efforts have been made to create
a truly corporate community. It was okay to fail in the process so long as one was trying genuinely.

"It best spells out the ICA's mythology. The word "charism" basically means, "the deep bliss that fires you". Somewhere along the line in my soul was put this boundless compassion, this deep covenantal approach to life, this approach being structural. It's like I came into this group because this seed was already germinating in my soul."

"The key to corporateness is that if you have conflict you can always focus on a common task and therefore begin to resolve tension."

"A clear commitment to a task. I don't mean the specifics of town meetings or village development or the local church experiment. Those were the manifestations of the task."

"It wasn't that we won all the time, but that we fought all the time. It wasn't that we never succumbed to our own prejudices and our own chauvinism and our own blindness but that we were always fighting against them. When we woke up to one we'd fight against it. We'd never accept it. We never just knuckled under to it. Everybody was always raising hell that there were not enough women assigned. And we'd wake up and say, "Well, by God, there are not enough women assigned to leadership positions." The fact that we were willing to bring it up and fight over it - that value - was a unique contribution we made to the process of people living together."

3. Grounded In Action / Doing

Corporateness is not merely an idealistic concept. The key is practising it. It is easy to talk about the importance of corporateness; grounding it in action is yet another thing. Plenty of communities have dealt with corporateness as an "espoused" but not as the "operating" value (Arghiris, 1973) level. It is in this implementation or practising of corporateness that the ICA has excelled.

One of the parts of our charism is that we never believe that there is a problem. We always believe that there is something
that's going on in the situation that is blocking your vision of who you want to be.

We said the essential thing was to face the true reality, as it is, and decide what to do. That is reflectiveness. That value is part of the Third Wave, part of the future. But I don't see people doing it yet. If they are serious about some of these futuristic thinkers that they love and talk about and say they have the answers, let's see some action.

4. Grounded in your life

One way of implementing corporateness is to ground it firmly in your life, like another virtue like integrity or truth. Once it becomes part of your life's core values, it is easier to practice it wherever you are.

I think that's why all these methods had power. That had power when we were clear that it's in your LIFE! Going to the bathroom, riding on the bus LIFE! That always has power.

It's where people work together. That's corporateness. Where a group of people has a common goal, a common task. Where they are willing to do the impossible.

Corporateness is a very useful way to use everyone and create the best possible use of time and effort.

I have experienced corporateness at its best when the strengths of individuals are emphasized in the make-up of a team.

5. Corporateness Expands the Individual

Corporateness is one of the most effective personal growth tools one can have. It expands your self, thinking, and total worldview. It makes you think like a truly global person and gives you plenty of flexibility to appreciate diversity of all kinds.

The more I accepted myself and accepted other people in a corporate setting, the more essential work got done. That's why active experimentation with the ICA has been a great gift.

I don't experience people not trying to think through from their perspective what is best for the group. For me that is
one element of what corporateness is. An individual puts him/herself second to the well-being of the group. To that degree I think that corporateness is alive and well. I rarely question the motives of any of my colleagues. I have a profound trust that they always are trying to think through what is best for the group. I may disagree with their decisions but corporateness means putting yourself second to the welfare of the group.

It takes a strong self to be humble enough not to have his or her way all the time.

Some people think we don't think of ourselves but honestly we find ourselves nurtured by thinking so big. It makes us bigger people. It makes us a different kind of people. It releases potential and creativity in a whole different way than if we were trying to protect ourselves. We put ourselves in an impossible situation and a different thing happens to one's life than if one stays comfortable.

Strategy and task

1. Common Models

One way of making sure corporateness works was to use common models which in turn brought about a common understanding of what corporateness is all about.

We were all doing the same thing in many different villages in small teams. You knew everybody was out giving themselves and that way you felt corporate. We had common models but none of them ever were done exactly the same way. They had to be done quite differently in different places. All of it was out of the same understanding and the same approach and getting those related.

2. Experimentation and Adapting Methods

Over the years, the ICA has perfected the practice of corporateness through bold experimentation and adaptation. They used themselves as guinea pigs, they took risk, failed, and yet continue to learn.

We used ourselves as "guinea pigs". We felt free to risk. We experimented with things and later on said, "Oh, this doesn't seem to be working. We'll stop this and try another way."
I learned the ORID method through imaginal education which all the Emerging Generation and Student House had to go through. If you do the ORID method, you have to get Objective data, Reflective data and then Interpretative and Decisional.

3. Being on The Edge

As they experimented and took risks in creating corporate structures, the ICA also discovered that they are at the cutting edge of knowledge creation in community and spiritual living.

High moments for me have been when the staff was able to work corporately and get a task done. I don’t mean by task just a human development project or a town meeting but also intellectual tasks. The work we did on the Other World, trying to demythologize some of traditional spirituality themes, the work we did on studying the Catholic Orders. The very tough intellectual questions we worked on corporately.

Organizational Structure

1. Task Determines Structure

In regard to the old controversy as to whether task determines structure or structure determines task, the ICA always had a clear choice: the task determines the structure.

Corporateness seems to come out of two arenas. One is a common agreement as to what a mission is. Not necessarily with particulars but at least agreeing what field we are going to play on and what the game and rules are going to be.

Commonality of the task, having some real thing that you actually do together, makes corporateness real.

The key to our corporateness was the task.

Organizational Practices

Over the years, the ICA had either developed or perfected a variety of organizational practices that constantly facilitate the strengthening of corporateness. Some of them are listed below.
1. Study

We developed a study methodology that enabled us to put on the board a chart of the book. A book like Radical Alternatives by Jean Jacques Servan Schreiber, the French philosopher. We studied that book to its depths in a way that I couldn't sit down and do. But as we did it corporately, we saw the implications in a passage or a phrase together...one that might elude me individually. The study was much richer.

2. Time / Space / Task Disciplines

We had a very disciplined community: economically, intellectually, spiritually. We did Daily Office in every house every morning... It sounds like a very small thing. But it was a big thing for us.

Our energy base has expanded. Our self-conscious commitment has expanded. To be whoever we are...you see, the symbolic order and then the extended order such as those people in Cincinnati and then there is what we call the movemental order which is a mass of faces we didn't even know, whose care was there.

On the elevator it makes you feel like you are part of an organization. Running a switchboard, as mundane as those jobs are, makes you feel like you are part of it all.

3. Team Work

And also in order to make that come to reality is always ready to step in to help any other member of the team who is having trouble or isn't coming up to standard. It's great when people recognize that the fundamental thing in a team is to get the job done.

Teamwork is the ability to put your utmost into something and then hand it over for the corporate body to improve. Knowing it's the best you can do and trusting the group to do one better than you can do.

That's right. The continuous and discontinuous times in your life need to be decided and redecided by everybody in the team or family or organization. That's the only way to allow true participation and true individuality...to work as a team.

I think our great contribution to teamwork is the statement which I first heard when I came here to the Academy. "You can accomplish anything if you don't care who gets the credit."
4. Celebrations

We brought everything to the table and celebrated everything.

It has been important for us to have the gatherings here and across the Midwest where we’ve had not only to share our missional doings but to do study which I think is important as well as just to inform ourselves and reminding and being face to face with each other.

5. Shared Experience

Our daily activities began at 4:30 a.m. We’d wake up and do our Daily Office and go until 10 or 11 p.m. at night. We did that for years. That was a normal routine for us. Not too many organizations would do something like that. We did it because of a common mission. You can do almost anything if you have a common mission.

People learned a sense of care. They learned to live in many different situations and relate to many different kinds of people. To think for themselves, to be obedient and creative. Many have gone out and done very well using the ICA Methods.

Up until now, I’ve always sort of felt like a camaraderie with all of the kids I spent that time with because they were all in the same boat as I was. Maybe we didn’t know what was going on but we knew that we weren’t normal.

We’ve shared experiences. The discussion method permeates everything we do. It has had a lot to do with the decisions of people who’ve decided to be here.

6. Assignments

When adults were put on Emerging Generation duty, it was a duty.

The assignments structure and the kind of dialogue that went on in that process continuously was very important.

Without some structure, it is easy to withdraw on a very personal, particular level away from willingness to risk. It is easy to withdraw.

When I live in a corporate setting I am more than I am when I live alone. It is as simple as that. I know myself to have more energy. I believe deeply that two minds are better than one; that team effort is the way to go. I absolutely believe that it is possible to do more quality work, more quality
thinking, better quality service as a team than as a single. And that is so deeply a part of me that it is probably one of the two greatest gifts that I have gotten from the Institute.

7. Residential Community Component

At least one part of the corporate thrust has to do with a continued residential experiment.

Corporateness, as we know it in the Residential Community, is being tested and questioned. The experience of corporate living is important because part of corporateness is in trusting that the product of the experiment or the ongoing wisdom in that experiment will be helpful.

People have to decide how to live together. Being willing to create the new is a very intimate and painful, sensitive area. A lot of pathos is here. You can hide from it or pretend it's not there. That's not the solution.

I am marked by being in this community. Even those who leave understand that it is still a very foundational event for them. I think it is wonderful.

Decision making processes

1. High Participation

One of the key characteristics of the ICA's decision making processes is participation. All decisions are taken in consensus making sure that everyone is involved in one way or another.

I have been in so many meetings where there have been knock down drag out fights where the principle is 'either stay at that table until one person convinces the rest of the group to try this approach or the rest of the group has to convince that one person'. To me that is still a valid way to make decisions.

You come to a meeting with a model. Put in your positive input to the model that is being built. Guard against "rabbits". Something extraneous to the issue at hand. We say, "shoot any rabbits that show up." The intellectual and corporate life enabled all this.

You advance your input as a way of advancing the model that's on the table, that everybody is working toward. You don't
criticize unless you have something to substitute in its place.

2. Discerning the Common Good

The ultimate object of all decisions is the common good for everyone. The extra-ordinary efforts put in consensus making is meant to achieve this common ground.

I think it is based on what we call trust and respect for one another. We assume that everyone wants the best for the total community first. We trust that individuals are not trying to get power for themselves. We have different personalities, different capacities and therefore disagreements. We are free to raise these within a context of fundamental trust and appreciation and respect for one another.

In making decisions we share a willingness to surrender personal desires so as to serve the whole group.

Part of our corporateness comes from common ways we do things. We write it down. Then we say, How could we have done it differently? We change it and then we give it to everybody. And everybody works on it. It's all out of our life experience. We come together, we listen to each other. We say, "We tried it this way." Somebody else has tried it that way. So, we say in this situation let's try it this way.

Leadership

1. Corporate Leadership

Leadership is never a individual notion in the ICA. It is diffused among its members such that everyone is a leader as well as a follower. They have also experimented with a concept of corporate leadership called "Punchayat."

There was nobody who was the boss. Nobody was a peon. Everybody carried their little pans of dirt. I felt that we had lots of things we called work days.
2. Strengthen the Individual

The intent behind the ICA's leadership practices is to honor everyone. It seeks the personal development of all, not just of stars.

This form of living together as a body politick is the most humane form of group living. There's no star. It honors everyone.

By forcing the structure you elicited the creativity that none of you knew was there. By matching up different gifts with different situations.

Part of our corporateness is that one person will be up front for the first hour and then we switch and somebody else becomes the leader. What that does to a group? It is one thing when you listen to one person all day no matter how charismatic they are and what methods they've developed. But it is another when one person comes at it this way and another comes at it another. It enables the creativity of the group.

3. Cultural Appreciation

The ICA strives to retain their remarkable sense of honoring all cultures in their corporate leadership philosophy and practices.

I think the ICA has provided a body of people a mechanism through which persons from around the world can live together in relative harmony. We often look around a session and there will be as many as 14 different nationalities present. It has been a place where women can rise to levels of leadership often not offered elsewhere.

Communications

1. Trust Colleagues

One thing the ICA does very well is trusting others to do a good job just as anyone else. All are capable of superior performance.

That makes you aware that you have a sense of beliefs or purposes or sharing. You could be wrong. So the first thing you have to do is to check with another colleague or two.
"Now, let me make sure I heard what I heard that other person say." They may have heard something entirely different and I was wrong in the first place.

Remember the image Joe used about wiring your minds together. That has to happen because it is the only way we can deal with the complexities. I am so tired of experts and so tired of not being asked because the richness of my own life experience is so vast.

2. Common Vision / Common Mind

The ICA practices very well a principle that has been part of the organizational communication literature: develop a common vision to send your message effectively.

A sense of a common understanding of why you are doing it. A common vision and common understanding of life and purpose that is something that needs to happen.

For me the corporateness is as much a feeling of you've gotten a common mind around things. If you look at what we went through as a body to come up with the financial model we are now living under, that was really a year long consensus building effort. It was a very difficult time.

A common understanding of life itself and a common missional purpose.

Interpersonal relationships

1. Support

One of the most distinguishing aspect of the interpersonal relationship in the ICA is their ability to support one another.

I think in our senses I am most proud of THE ICA when I see it doing something that is caring for individuals or caring in an individual situation and not ignoring individuals for the sake of some bigger vision or mission. I think we do have tendencies to ignore the individual for the sake of something that is supposedly bigger. But real care is best handled by trying to look after those who are immediately with you.

Having other people around you working together allows you to attempt things that you never would attempt otherwise.
There’s the support also. I’ve experienced the support of the fellowship. I want to go this way and do this particular thing. I’ve found that there are a lot of people right there saying, "I’ll open the door for you.

2. Openness to Relate

The high support and care that are integral parts of the ICA’s corporateness is best experienced in the openness with which members relate to one another.

Nobody’s a stranger. Two of us shaved together this morning. We didn’t say a word to each other. But just the fact that you are always in the gaze of the neighbor, you are always in relationship to your colleagues.

The hugs when we get back. There were three of us in India together. I haven’t talked to either of the others in two years but if they showed up here tomorrow we would start our conversation from a place that was out of those years of growth. You just leap into the current edges.

ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS OF SPIRIT LIFE-GIVING FORCE

Beliefs and values

1. The depth of spirituality

For the ICA, nothing is more important than having a deep and meaningful spirit life. It is a core value. It defines what they will and will not do. It also shapes the mission of the organization in a way more impactful than any other life giving force.

Belief in the potential of every human being, being able to make a contribution to the world. And that the ideas, the structures, the forces, everything that we are is a part of that spirit life which we transfer, exemplify. Our best hope is to exemplify that in ourselves.

I suppose the ability to draw out of people how they feel, what their problems are and the strategies that can be developed or overcome so they can work toward their future. Spirit life that enables you to keep going no matter what’s happening.
I think the faith stance is that we care about the world, we care about the future and while we don't know what the next steps are, we are willing to go ahead and take those steps and have faith that we will find the way.

2. Common Direction

The spiritual depth and faith stance of the ICA provide members with a common direction and purpose. A foundational course called Religious Studies-I (RS-I) generated a uniform structure and meaning system in interpreting spirituality and its relevance.

What is significant about "faith stance" isn't where you stand, but perhaps the direction you face. To clarify, just to say that which our primary faith or basic religious understanding is only an ingredient in faith stance. As a corporate body, our faith stance is to move in a common direction.

My wife took RS-I first and I resisted for two or three months. She was transformed first with RS-I. Finally, a year later she got me to take this weekend seminar. And that's when I became transformed.

A lot of our conversations "turn matter into spirit". I think RS-I was making awe out of it.

I think my faith stance basically is related to an optimistic attitude toward the major issues which all of us face. This organization lives out of what is possible. There's a "Yes" first.

3. Methods

Like in other life-giving forces, methods are what actualizes spirituality. As an abstract concept, it has little significance for the ICA. Only through systematic methods can one experience and appreciate spirituality.

If you can believe that methods can be spirit, I would say absolutely. If you believe consensus is spirit, I say Yes. If you believe that everyone around the table has an idea or can add a piece to it, that is spirit. If you believe you can get a group to sing that have never sung before, something happens in the spirit, all that is true. That is the ICA.
utilizes methods -- methods so sound, so rational, so medicinal, so compartmentalized, but these tools allow happening to the spirit to occur.

Helping of others, the needy in a structural way. For me that is spiritual life. We do exercises, meditation and worship - but for me it's all geared toward helping... Ours wasn't a handout program... We called ourselves "structural revolutionaries.

The ICA spirit is the creation of poetic ways to look reality that allows a person to experience life fully. Those will be the conversation method, the charting, the song creation. All they did really was help you face life as it is. When we made the turn to the world, we did the same thing through the ICA.

4. Intentional Experimental Stance

One of the methods used to realize spirituality is an intentional experimental approach. The easiest way to kill spirituality is to stagnate and stop experimenting.

It's a very curious community. There are people, colleagues, who are very curious and very eager to read, to explore the spirit realms, the new, to ask the questions and make the books and the perspectives available.

We have always been doing a lot of experimentation with the new modes of spirit.

One of the most compelling reasons for staying within the framework of this organization is related to the freedom and encouragement to search for fresh stories and myths and symbols that make sense out of life as we experience it.

**Strategy, task and technology**

A variety of strategies are deployed by the ICA to foster spirituality. Historically, courses like the RS-I stand out as the most impactful. Of late, short courses also have become popular.

It's all in the short courses - "There's more than one way to chart a paper.

The illustration was of a lotus plant which is rooted in the ooze and mud of a swampy place but which turns those unattractive resources into a lovely blossom. The ICA's
strength has come from its identification with the common ordinary people and its effort to enable the deep spirit resources of life to move through them into forms that have startling, enduring, useful beauty. The Order Ecumenical, the Ecumenical Institute, and ICA are self-conscious channels through which the transforming energy continues to flow.

Organizational Structures

A small yet highly relevant set of structures facilitate the continuity of the spirit life. For example, in Seattle, the ICA runs a facility called "emerging generation" for the benefit of youngsters.

Emerging generation structures which are currently going on.

I can remember back when all these conversations and lectures and whatever we used to do was very corporate and there was a lot of dialogue about it. It was like what we were doing was pointing to the Mystery inside of ourselves and giving it a name.

We are in a whole new period of life which fundamentally is without past structures which gave form to our days.

I do believe that our practices and structures have been a part of our spirit life. Living and working in the villages have broadened our perspective and allowed us to look further.

Organizational Practices

As in service mission, for spirituality too, the ICA has perfected a couple of sound organizational practices such as the following.

1. Global Illuminating Symbols

The new mythology is a new global mythology that is being birthed. This global mythology has roots in every culture. A great illustration of this is that there are not any political systems that work.

The Global Odyssey, for instance, allowed us to experience, in a symbolic way, the whole globe. It was just not a trip but a spiritual experience.
There was one symbol that used to be used - the wedgeblade. We were saying that if this is today and this is the cutting edge of history that you are between the no longer and the not yet which is out here. The other symbols were the Other World in the midst of This World. That is why in my home here we have those four pictures to help us be in touch with the dialogue of the world. Then the earthrise that we have here.

2. Life Affirming Corporate Methods

The group singing has been very critical I think for me. The morning office is important. Being in on the creation of the canonical hours and the use of those I've found profoundly sustaining.

We have lots of celebrations. We celebrate birthdays, anniversaries. Those kind of special days are built into our calendar. Our weekly Sunday evening we called our Common Meal always included a time to celebrate major events in life.

Art form conversation - the objective, the subjective and then the application to your own life.

3. Individual Meditation

Solitary offices for individuals exploring the new religious mode.

But my meditation is just beginning to see myself and the connection with God and the world and myself and where the creativeness is, where the native people were.

My spirit life is deepening. I am spending more time in meditation. More time in reading the kinds of books and things that are suggesting spiritual exercises and alternative ways of looking at the world.

ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS OF CONSENSUS DECISION MAKING LIFE-GIVING FORC

Beliefs and values

1. Honoring

Ultimately the intent behind consensus decision making is to honor everyone. It also sends out a clear message that members have
a responsibility to participate in or contribute to decisions that affect them.

One thing Joseph Matthews taught us was to honor deeply whoever was up front.

We honor everyone's insight, and want everyone to speak. Methods particularly helped people not to confront each other but to honor each other. To me, it comes back to honoring the local wisdom and to get all sides of the issue.

It's one of the greatest gifts of this organization—how we make decisions and how everybody's input is honored.

2. Common values

Clearly, the common value here is the need to take decisions in consensus wherever appropriate.

Consensus is the collective will.

We are trying to have some continuity with our past and have tried to maintain a value of keeping ourselves linked globally.

It's a general attitude that one does not have to be here a hundred years to be able to be someone who can give ideas to the group.

3. Everybody is committed and participates

Partly because of the honoring, everyone in the ICA is highly motivated to contribute.

Our mission was so completely dependent upon the individual's willingness to back up his idea or insight with his life and one of the strengths was calling forth the depths in every person. This released creativity.

If one is willing to bet one's life in the most practical and concrete way possible with one's own toil and hours and existence—if one was willing to do that, one could change the direction of this organization.

Everything the ICA does is based on a planning model that involves everybody that wants to participate.
Strategy, task, and technology

The strategy the ICA uses to elicit consensus is to depend on time tested methods of group facilitation. Writing things down, encouraging, charting, inviting comments, they all play a part in generating true consensus.

The way we work when we are working with clients in facilitation decision making is that we keep objectifying things, putting it on the board, making lists, getting out values. That’s how we deal with it with groups. Groups experience this as absolutely life filling because we don’t let the most talkative people talk most and we don’t let the silent ones never say anything. It’s hard to use ones own methods on oneself. Even Jesus had trouble as a prophet in his own village.

By allowing a team of people to analyze their own community and drew out their "yes" to the format of the next day allowed them to immediately become a part of the leadership team.

When we ran into obstacles we would try to find a person who would be the good news within the community. That was fun and challenging. We’d find who it was who would bring the community together. We worked and tried to find out how to visit five communities a day, and how much ground we could cover.

Organizational structure

A balanced mix of democratic processes and formal procedures strives to maintain the quality of the decisions made, as shown below.

We’ve had a strong democratic function. We also had a fairly strong bureaucratic, operational, detailed, administrative function for carrying out of the consensus, and the administrative work. Our third polity element was the symbolic function. Certain people were designated to be the symbolic leaders.
Organizational practices

A good number of "consensing" techniques were created during the summer councils. This included stating the consensus, and the practice of "see the need, do the deed." Some others such as the assignment process evolved over a period of time.

1. Summer councils

Methods were created in summer programs where the whole body would gather to listen to reports and then make recommendations--speak back to those recommendations and refine what came out of them.

Most participation was built around events. There was reporting, celebrative activity, singing, feasting, and worship or spirit activities.

2. Stating the consensus

Consensus does not mean total agreement with everything. Consensus can be arrived at through disagreeing and agreement dialogue. Finally someone has to say which way we need to go, or this is a way we can go by looking at all the options.

If it is not the consensus the group will let you know. If you listen well, and you hear where the group is, you can fairly clearly state what the consensus of the group is at that moment. That is life-giving.

3. The practice of "see the need, do the deed"

If you saw the need, you did the deed. If you had the eye to see a particular need or a particular response that's needed, then you have the power to be the response. That goes for everything from the dirty bathroom to developing a rural village strategy to include a 1,000 villages across the nation of Kenya. It's little things to big things.

Getting out ideas, pushing them and going back and shoving them around, which happens in discussions, promotes ownership in the decision making.
4. Assignment process

There was no one who could say "no". Every assignment depended upon the individual's willingness to take on to himself that assignment, and to act it out in full.

Until finally I realized that this was exactly where I should be. Somehow the rest of the consult just went beautifully because I relaxed and did what I did. It was not an accomplishment. It was a change of spirit, a change of attitude.

Decision making

There was a tremendous amount of individual responsibility for corporate consensus. For example,

The consensus method usually starts with someone's idea that they have worked through and present it to the group. Usually what is finally decided may be completely different than the original idea but the original idea served as a springboard.

Consensus was a way of allowing people to participate in an individual destiny and a corporate destiny.

The consensus method drew on everyone's input:

Our whole technology is participation and we use the cards and the board to achieve this goal.

The description of decision making as "the power in the center of the table" is true, period, anywhere.

I still think getting around the table and getting everybody's input is what makes it healthy. I don't ever want to see us lose that.

At the same time, there was a sense that consensus building is a continually evolving process based on learnings and experimentations.

We held a lot of conversations and things just kind of grew and was one of those things that took time.

We did a lot of research interviews, questionnaires asking people at all levels, government people, corporations, churches, village people what were the major issues in India that needed to be dealt with and that a demonstration project should address.
We looked in the middle of the table to see the corporate accomplishments, then looked at current issues and concerns, sorted out the immediate needs and used the process of bracketing to hold the data.

Leadership

Leadership within the context of the consensus style meant primarily initiative and taking responsibility to make things happen.

There was leadership by people who were on the edge or people who wanted a particular thing to happen.

I always appreciated the leadership—we used to call them priors. They really allowed us to be what we were and this was partly due to their availability.

One of the functions of leadership was to assume responsibility for the whole, whatever niche you happened to be assigned to and care for the well being of my colleagues and the well being of our mission. These were direct responsibilities.

Consensus decision also had a paradoxical side to it, where by an individual would simply volunteer to do something, and that itself was a consensus. In the ICA, it was called, the "decisional" mentality. For example:

The question was, "Who is going to do it?" One person volunteered who could have stayed where she was in the program. She decided she would make a sacrifice, grab this wheel and see where it goes. And it's growing. We're very proud of that. We hope that all goes well.

One person make a radical decision. She was in, what many people would have considered to be, a fairly prestigious role. She was teaching in our permanent training construct called the academy. One day she simply decided that what she wanted to do was to go to the print shop and transform the shop from being a place where people felt like their life was on an endless treadmill of assignment to get things printed. Actually it sort of turned that into a spirit experience.
Communication

Again, the ICA resorts to methods to ensure that communication is open and authentic. Examples include the social process triangle, conversation methods, and story telling.

One real strength was the Social Process Triangles for they were a way of looking at all of life. They acted as a lens that could be held up to see all of life.

Conversation methods and LENS pulled a lot of thing together for us.

Common methods were all the things that everyone talks about.

The very idea that anybody is free to give out information, give out ideas, is a very useful thing that I've learned here. I think having people say that their ideas are affirmed and can say "yes.

Interpersonal relationships

In taking decisions by consensus, the ICA draws its strengths from the strong interpersonal relationships that exist among its members. For example, they wanted to make sure "every voice is heard:"

The different nature of the way people arrive at decision or have input. Some people are quick at decision and are extroverts. They think on their feet. Others are more introverted and spend more time in reflective means of analysis.

Some of our methods draw out people. Whenever we start with any group we go around and have everybody speak, because if you've said something you're more likely to say something else later. So everybody speaks. And we watch-if someone is doing all the talking, we ask to hear from someone else or ask for someone who hasn't spoken. This encourages broad participation and gains many perspectives.

Further, the interpersonal relationships were based on trust among one another.
I always felt I could trust the people in the Order. And trust them to be about on the bottom line with this business of building the New Earth.

The point of consensus is that every decision strengthens the identity of the group rather than continuing to split the group into warring factions which constantly seek realignment and power which is what goes on in our political life.

Part of the trust was that you acknowledged that everybody was about the mission.

We never really handed out medals or praised people openly. I was a workhorse and I intended to do more than I intended to get praised.

ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS OF TEACHING/LEARNING LIFE-GIVING FORCE

Beliefs and values

One of the most explicit life-giving forces of the ICA is their learning and teaching life style. They believe that learning is a life-long process that should never stop. Not only does the ICA state this as a core value, they have become a model community in practicing what they preach. In terms of the number of comments elicited per item in the interview schedule, this category topped the list, as can be seen from the following quotes.

Outside of structures I experienced myself as the teacher; in the structures I experienced myself as the learner.

The ICA as a learning community is open to the new, that sees life as not wrapped up.

You are constantly a learner. There are always a new edge to the mission. There is always more to teach than you could master. It has always been that kind of community.

Constant research and demonstration, shifting images and enabling new life "from womb to tomb."

We learn through what we are doing and what we are trying to create. All of our experiences in training and programs and seminars, everything we do with other people, the processes,
the methods -- all of this is really teaching and training and shaping the life stance that we are trying to live out of.

**Strategy, task and technology**

1. **The Research mentality**

   Surprisingly, what the ICA has here as a strategy is not a concrete method, or a technology, but a mindset called research mentality. They see themselves as inquirers or explorers in a lifelong pursuit for meaning in life.

   I don't talk about developing the whistle points as learning but I suppose in retrospect you have learned. It is creating, building models and theorizing. That research is a learning process.

   As a teacher I learned enough that I could sit down for months and think about new ways to do my classroom that were really effective ways for high school students to learn.

   ICA is a research and demonstration group, basic to them is constant research, actively involved in the search for truth.

2. **Training**

   Training is what the ICA knows to do the best. That is also one of the most often used method in teaching others.

   We have moved from living in particular villages to becoming trainers in community development, teaching other NGOs the skills we have learned.

   I teach a home ownership training class where we try to incorporate some of the new innovative learnings and approaches.

   I have been pleased with our training programs and the kind of awakening that came to people as we taught theology and cultural courses across the U.S and then gradually to other countries. Individual people has something new happen to them through these programs both in their thinking, the way they care for their family, community, church or whatever was their vocation.
3. Methods

Methods are what the ICA uses in training, teaching and even in learning. Over the years, they have perfected so many of them that recently they were offered to the general public in a book form titled "the Technology of Participation."

A lot of things that I learned from the ICA over the years have such wisdom that I have learned to take for granted. Things about how groups operate, how to build consensus, getting everybody's voice out. I have found ways to share those in quite a different context with people who knew nothing about us.

A lot of the learning we do is not through our work. We have seminars, conversations and study books on different cultures. We go other places to learn and bring it back to the community and share it.

Doing the human development projects, we make it up as we go. That is another kind of learning, learning by doing.

Organizational structures

1. Summer

The summer programs may be seen as some kind of a structure since it used to happen every year in a rigorous manner. A lot of learning happened during those two weeks.

I've mentioned the summer programs where we do the consensus building. A lot of the consensus building is doing an analysis of the world, the times, the city.

The other one happened about two years ago when I was in Chicago for a summer program and we had a video tape of Thomas Barry.

2. Training Programs

The training programs of the ICA may also be seen as part of the structure as is evident from comments below.
I think one of the most effective is Training, Inc., which is now spreading out getting more successful because of Imaginal Education.

One place I have visited in Washington they have a youth center for the ICA youth and they use Imaginal Education in grades 7-12 and I would call that a very creative learning and a way to teach youth.

Particular events ... one of the most exciting for me personally was when we began the eight week academy. We had an 8-week academy that started in 1968.

3. Internal Learning Structures

In addition to the summer councils and training programs, there are internal structures such as collegiums and ecclesiolas.

We used to do things like collegiums. Every morning before or after breakfast the whole group would meet. We'd either study a paper or someone would make a presentation. We'd study the news of the day. We'd try to talk about it's meaning and implications. We would always be reflecting on what's going on. An hour a day every morning. ... Then one night a week would be related to a more in-depth study and maybe one or two weekends a quarter. We've studied whole books on a Saturday.

We used to have ecclesiolas three nights a week. You did college one night, seminary another and sodality the third night.

We've conducted regional conferences where we'd invite outsiders to come and speak to us. The weekend you (Tojo) were here we had a man named Dick Simpson come in. We try to listen to the world and reflect on the world. We've designed study and learning methods and we continually use them on ourselves.

The learning environment of the ICA is also closely intertwined to its community life structures as evidenced by the following quotes.

For the first 10 years I did everything in this organization from cleaning the toilets and teaching in the preschool, to being in the national office setting up teams of people to go out and teach courses, teaching courses, to training parents in the preschool from the community.
It was a teaching and learning community in the sense that everybody was encouraged and invited to share their experiences. So my own life experiences became part of the teaching and learning to each other.

I most always experience my relationships in the community as informal teaching. Either from the priorship perspective of trying to always draw bigger perspectives for people to think out of, which I think is a teaching role like in many of the leadership team.

**Organizational practices**

1. **Being reflective in my life**

   As a learning organization, reflection or introspection comes naturally to the ICA. Though very focused on action, the ICA takes the time to slow down, think through, and conceptualize the rationale behind whatever they are doing.

   I think at the end of the courses and programs where we’ve said what happened, that needs to happen, how should it be changed ... the reflective process that we’ve guarded so much in our corporate work makes us a learning community. At the end of the audit when people come back the first thing we did was "What have we learned? What shall we do differently next time?" Which makes life the teacher. The experience becomes learning. It's almost in our genes.

   You know, at the end of our weekend with these guys, we said to someone, "Do a reflection." The other team (CWRU) was amazed. That was the capstone of the weekend process.

   The learning community has been one of the most live demonstrations of thinking and reflective community and we are constantly creating theories and models for meaning in our lives and society.

2. **Practical**

   Paradoxical it may seem, the reflective side of the ICA goes hand in hand with pragmatism. What they are striving for is effective social action based on sound theory and values.

   I think the reason that was fulfilling was that it gave me a way to use my life experience as the grounding. So, no matter
what life experiences or variety of experiences that you've
had, you had a way to put it in.

Some of the major examples are a lot of the little ones;
running mechanics of the House, pulling together a
celebration, things like that. And the big celebrations, we
were talking the other day about the parties that were planned
and prepared in an hour or two, major extravaganzas. What
strikes me is the absence of corporateness in most
organizations today.

The most recent was the study we did on what it means to be a
supervisor. Another one that I enjoyed relates to the
strategic planning that we frequently facilitate for our
clients ... We generate a chart form so they brainstorm and
we facilitate their consensus.

3. Social Methods and events

As mentioned earlier, methods are what give the ultimate power
to the ICA. The following quotes just give a glimpse of some of
those that have been in existence for a long time.

One time we did this with a group of neighborhood development
groups about 3 years ago. We analyzed many of the
contradictions. The root cause of one of the clusters was
named "The Dilemma of Coalition Building" pointing to the fear
of giving themselves away while they are in partnership or
collaboration.

We were immediately groomed and trained to be pedagogues and
leaders of seminars and educational experiences and thrust
into situations where we had to learn to be teachers even
before we were ready in lots of cases.

The Odyssey, the Voyage, the Vocational Journey Lab, the
vision Quest, as the kind of events where in my experience
nothing happened through me that did not also happen to me in
terms of expanding my horizon.

And some of these include Intellectual Methods such as the
following:

One of the things that makes us a learning community is that
we do not vegetate and live in our past. We are constantly
reading new books. We are studying new books. We are studying
new theories from different authors. We take part in seminars.
And we help teach seminars. "The Road Less Traveled", is a book that comes to mind that we have studied.

And the second thing that comes to mind is that every gathering I came to, the learning has soaked in, the exploring, cheerful exploration of the mind, with a built-in process of gestalting and brainstorming that is constantly used.

When a new book comes out that somebody someplace in the ICA universe finds to be useful, then study groups happen around in the different geographic locations to explore this book.

**Decision making**

One of the best example of organizational learning is seen in the ICA's decision to stay in the Kemper building. It was a difficult decision, many doubted the wisdom of staying in an old building like that, etc. finally the decision was taken in consensus, and they learned how to convert an office building into a residential unit cum office building. The challenge was to make the building pay for itself. Finally they were able to do just exactly that.

Where ICA most creative? I will tell you the most creative one that I can think of right now is maintaining this building by a few people who decided that it was important enough at great cost to stay right here and to exist, not move away into someplace else and try to create something else.

So 30 families, 40 adults, to live in a two and a half million dollar building with essentially zero assets outside this building and deciding that we are going to stay here and continue to do programs, continue to work and do all these things, run a conference center as a separate business, do our own accounting, like we did before -- to stay here and to make this work and to make it economically feasible for everyone to participate and live here and to have a life and still be able to create whatever the mission is for the future, but living and staying here, that is being creative.

**Communication**

*Internal Interchange/ Interchange with Others*
A major source of learning in the ICA come from interchange of ideas from within and outside. In most cases, the internal resource persons are extremely talented and competent. Yet, the ICA also believes in bringing people from outside who have established a name for themselves in spirit and organizational transformation work.

It's like multiplying yourself 30 times. I've noticed in all these newsletters that go around from people who are engaged elsewhere at this time or are still in the community.

Certainly in Program Enterprise, in our Monday morning meetings we do a lot of interchanging and then every now and then we take on a particular issue and hash it through.

To me that kind of interchange is one way we are a learning organization.

Again, in recent years we have exposed ourselves to people like Jean Houston as one example where we have expanded a considerable amount of energy and money in availing ourselves of her methods and insights. At the same time she has availed herself with our methods and our insights and our contacts with local people around the world.

Wrap-up

To recapitulate, what we have done in this section is to present, using an "in-house" model of organizational analysis, an abbreviated (the original list would have been longer!) thematic analysis of the data that came out of the over one hundred interviews that were conducted in the United States. As mentioned in chapter 5, after the organizational analysis was finished, participants of the Appreciative Research Carnival went on to the task of creating what we call "provocative propositions" using the procedure discussed earlier in that chapter.
Appendix 2: Provocative propositions written for each LGFs.

MISSION AND SERVICE LIFE-GIVING FORCE

Beliefs and Values

1. We value awakening people to the sacredness of who they are.

2. We value demonstration actions that offer new possibilities for relating effectively with all the universe.

3. We believe our actions and thinking bridge gaps between diverse perspectives.

4. We believe every missional task is a learning opportunity.

5. We believe we are called to be catalysts in individual lives and societal structures.

6. We believe every human is driven by a personal mythology.

7. We believe in expanding our methods and skills to enable full participation in a flexible fashion for an ever widening network of global citizens.

8. We believe in a transnational approach that involves diverse groupings of local citizens in assuring an equitable use of the world’s resources that enables the survivability of the planet’s future generations.

Strategy, task and technology

9. To turn around the death trend of planet Earth, ICA’s core strategy is to connect sensitive and responsive social groupings with practical human development methods that bring about a planetary mind shift and commitment to planetary are.
Organizational structure

10. We organize ourselves as local autonomous units with flexibility to interchange staff and hold meetings for reflection, interchange, skills expansion, and building constructs applicable to new situations and opportunities.

11. We organize ourselves to study, reflect, and meet local challenges toward creation of a sustainable planetary life style.

12. We organize ourselves to work in collaboration with appropriate cross-national organizations in order to expand our energy base for effective social change.

13. We organize ourselves to design, facilitate, guide and train groups with multitude of perspectives.

14. We organize ourselves to structure into our programs and our staff journeys the continual uncovering of the emergent global yth.

Organizational practices

15. Our organizational practice is to create songs, stories and symbols that rehearse missional focus and globality enlivening and motivating those we encounter and ourselves.

16. Our organizational practice is for every unit to be self-sufficient individually with responsibility for its personal needs.

17. Our organizational practice is to be sensitive to the merging spirit revelation by on-going trends analysis.
18. Our organizational practice provides a context of expectation for appropriate spirit practices for its membership.

Decision making process

19. We manifest our ethical understanding in the group consensus method that honors individual creativity and energizes group action.

20. Mission re-empowers its decision-making structures locally by setting in place a global interchange and councilory node.

21. ICA's revolutionary passion to transform the planet is rooted in the ethical understanding that all the decisions of the ICA belong to all the people.

Leadership

22. ICA's leadership style is characterized by big picture thinking, team building prowess and sustained commitment. We have learned ways to swiftly transfer the "commitment actor" o a broad spectrum of emerging organization leaders.

Communication

23. As an effective communicator, the ICA thinks globally and acts locally. This is facilitated by the ICA interchange networks, interactive conferences and face-to-face meetings.

Interpersonal Relationships

24. We maintain a base of diverse relationships.

25. The concept of "global collegiality" is the basis of our personal relationships.

26. We have fun with our colleagues.
27. Our personal relations constantly deepen our spiritual, mental, physical and psychological capacity.

SPIRIT LIFE-GIVING FORCE

Beliefs and values

28. Basic values of the ICA are held in and shared via a Universal Human Community Story whose revelatory power is grounded in the Universe, the Solar System and the Planet Earth!

29. Commitment to expanding consciousness is alive and well and continually affirmed corporately. Budgets, time designs, communications, and corporate spirit life reflect this value as we give ourselves cosmic permission to continue the spirit life experiment.

30. We release our spirit energy to the world through our common story that All is Good, We are Accepted, The Past is Approved, and The Future is Open. This enables all of us to live in any situation with a stance of possibility.

Strategy, task, and technology

31. Our strategies, tasks and technologies are infused with a richly diverse spirit life connecting the ICA associates with one another and with others in collaborative work toward global transformation.

Organizational structures

32. Life sustaining and community bonding spirit generation practices are built into all gatherings of the ICA.
Organizational practices

33. We breathe spirit into situations and our personal lives through singing, intentional conversations, witnessing, deep listening, reflection, and affirmation of one another, constantly balancing the corporate well-being and the individual need.

34. The ICA engages in a diverse yet common mission that calls forth our deepest passions for justice and charity.

35. The ICA risks creating daily and quarterly spirit life forms and contemporary symbolic expressions of total life affirmation and constant transformation potential.

Decision making

36. Consensus happens within a decision-making context where differing values are freely discussed, differences are worked through "in the gaze of one’s neighbor" and mutual appreciation for one’s colleagues marks the proceedings.

Leadership

37. Spirit life leadership emerges in an environment of mutual trust.

Interpersonal relations

38. Personal spirit life is encouraged, nurtured and challenged in a rich corporate dialogue that pushes the wonder, glory, and depths of what it means to be human.

CORPORATENESS LIFE-GIVING FORCE

Beliefs and values
39. We believe our scared trust is to act as models of a globally sustainable life style.

40. All the ICA associates in a given geographical area are living and fully participating in structures that they themselves invent and are constantly re-creating. These structures focus on their intellectual and symbolic life and their financial and economic needs for their identified common mission locally, continentally and globally.

41. We stand on a covenant with Planet Earth which requires that we honor all diversity of the planet.

42. We cherish an ever expanding network of global colleagues.

**Strategy, task, and technology**

43. The strategy and task of corporateness is for the sake of delivering participatory methods and programs that release human energy and creativity throughout society.

**Organizational structures**

44. The structure of corporateness reflects a consistent rhythm of movemental events including colloquiums that are convened globally and bio-regionally (on alternate years), (Tri-annual) Bio-regional symposiums, integrated with local (monthly) convocations for the sake of empowering and sustaining people to be in service to the globe.

**Organizational practices**

45. The practices of corporateness allow catalytic change agents to experience opportunities to proclaim and celebrate our
commitments, rehearse our common purpose, and share our learnings, while learning from and being empowered by, the experience of others.

46. We practice shared symbols and rituals which enhance and enliven the interchange of perspectives, energizes our actions and celebrate our interconnectedness.

Decision making

47. Maximum individual participation in decision-making empowers unbelievable tasks for the common good to be achieved.

Leadership

48. Visionary leadership rises up in the community. This leadership is skilled in technologies of participation. This leadership perpetually rotates.

Communication

49. The life experience of all is drawn into conversations and everyone, the novice and the experienced, feel equal.

TEACHING AND LEARNING LIFE-GIVING FORCE

Beliefs and values

50. We are high profile by standing on the credibility we earned in the development and academic communities through publications and video/media.

51. Our research process are open to many people from many walks of life. The field research is done at the local in relation to what people want to know and act on.
52. We master spirit practices and demonstrate their functional usefulness to people in communities and societies around them.

53. We function as team builders in corporations, in development organizations, in government agencies and in service organizations.

54. The learning community puts together, writes, enacts and presents the cosmic mythology for the planet. We explored the edge of human consciousness by doing workshops, exercises, and retreats that open up the major cultures of the world as treasure houses of human wisdom.

**Strategy, task, and technology**

55. The strategy of the ICA as a teaching and learning community is focused on transformation of organizations, communities and individuals. Our contacts with organizations are holistic and long range. Our facilitation staff is skilled in our traditional methods and in the use of recent research in innovative methods. Ads in training magazines result in multiple programs. A 3-year training program is offered to private and government bodies. Universities contact expand and offer regular credit courses.

**Organizational structures**

56. Structures of the learning community are built on the ongoing reading of the trends and resulting sense of urgency
for new learning opportunities. Structure for study events are motivated by those who are passionate for the topic. A training school is operating for public school teachers. The Earthwise curriculum is innovative in its capacity to release mythic patterns.

**Organizational practices**

57. We entered the work place as a way to take our intellectual, social, and spirit methods into every corner of our society. And in so doing we dance the big picture wherever we go.

58. We master the individual spirit practices available from the past and create practices that are appropriate to us as individual persons and in each unit, be it a house, a region or any other groupings.

59. We take the edge practices being proposed in our society and train people to apply them in work and community settings. Illustrations of this are the use of computers, supervisors training, attention management, facilitators management, parent care for children, group celebrations, extension of human capacities and consensus building.

60. We release learning styles (visual, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, kinesthetic, analytical and verbal) in our programs and in ourselves.

61. As a learning community we establish edge education research in every state of our Primary Unit in order to demonstrate our methods and form partnerships with local education units,
releasing the potential of peoples of various cultures with the opportunity to re-relate themselves to their own future destiny.

**Decision making**

62. The ICA is transferring to other people and organizations its ability to make effective decisions in responding to current social trends as a social organization. It does this by holding raining sessions on group trend analysis, developing a common mind, organizational restructuring and setting up on-going total group research processes.

63. The ICA is known as conference facilitators for organizations in the planning and implementing phases of conferences. People learn to run a meeting.

64. The ICA’s own polity mode is a highly refined, exemplary model of the way an organization functions effectively. Its units operate autonomously, but interconnected with each other. The units demonstrate a common mind that is rich in its diversity and creativity, but interdependent with each other and their local environment for the sake of influencing the future on behalf of the whole planet. A unit is a family, a house, a region or a continent.

**Leadership**

65. Leadership in the learning community is developed through shared responsibility and hands-on-training. Leadership style
reveals a commitment to life-long learning and consistency between personal story and management networks that relate us to the private and public sectors.

Communication

66. The ICA practices assessments in all factors of its units and trains other organizations in appraising the performance of working units.

67. We interchange our methods, wisdom, internal life practices, edge studies and social and organizational learnings through the use of telecommunications technology and the networking of networks in organizational development and consciousness-raising.

Interpersonal relations

68. Interpersonal relationships are built upon the understanding of the unique gifts of every person. A positive motivating atmosphere is maintained through honoring, encouraging and affirming each other and enabling accountability structures. We are a demonstration community remembering that our actions and attitudes reveal our beliefs and values. The affirmative inquiry method is integrated into our learning community life.

CONSENSUS DECISION MAKING LIFE-GIVING FORCE

Beliefs and Values
69. For the ICA "the power is in the middle of the table" for those who are willing to put their lives on the line. It always has been and always will be. It belongs to everyone, and to no one. This gives us our foundational flexibility. Therefore, we are encouraging more people more frequently to take full responsibility for the whole group to guide/influence our future.

**Strategy, task, and technology**

70. The technology of the ICA's decision making sets the stage with nonchalant meticulousness, uses all wisdom to create a kaleidoscope of options, and empowers the victory of doing the impossible dream through its corporate network.

**Organizational structure**

71. The ICA's organizational system is based on the premise that commitment is more important than length of experience. The ICA system supports a leadership that is committed to the value. Task forces and teams that include new leadership promote this system.

72. The organization of the ICA is a dynamic system more than a structure. This system is fluid and flexible where each person, novice or experienced, impacts the entire system. It values each person's talents and facilitates her/his networking. Personnel interchanges with "journey masters" and "mentors" fosters this system.

**Organizational practices**
73. The organizational practices of the ICA's decision making are seen as a polity demonstration on behalf of society and rests upon the principle of "relational autonomy" wherein each local unit functions representationally on behalf of the whole. Periodic councils are used to foster the development of the larger perspectives after which the "team" becomes key.

Decision making process

74. The process of the ICA's decision-making happens most effectively within the largest perspective, allows for individual initiative and requires those individuals to also be willing to assume responsibility for the group decision, which desires, honors and treasures everyone's input and usually takes times to allow for consensus to be "built" or developed to include all the perspectives, inputs and values desired. This means we employ global/local interchange mechanisms.

Leadership

75. The leadership of the ICA are superb story-tellers, who weave the past, present and future of the planet in an exciting launch pad to the unknown. This is illustrated by the appreciative inquiry interviews, global and regional treks, and mythic opportunities such as Campbell nights.

Communication
76. The communication component within decision making is based on common perspectives, uses inclusive methods that explode the database, and pushes the deepening/linking of both experience and perspectives. Regular house, regional collegiums enhances the dialogue.

Interpersonal relations

77. The interpersonal relations are based on respect of each individual and trust in the shared vision. Personal responsibility for each decision is vital as the "we is me". Forms of accountability are created to ensure this respect and trust.
Appendix 3: Philosophy and Mission Retreat Responses (sample, with original ranking retained)

Why is the ICA in being?

1. To be enablers for the new cosmological frame of reference.
2. As a response to an objective unfinished task.
3. Reinforce each other in carrying out our non-negotiable values.
4. ICA is a family of which there are still members who see it as a vehicle through which they can serve.
5. Task is manifesting responsibility for global village can be taken.
6. To be a healing force in the evolution of human society; to provide a platform for people to come together to build the future and make things happen.
7. Perpetuating spirituality and compassion.
8. Create environment within which effective participation and performance relating to global well-being becomes a reality.
9. Task of demonstrating a "Yes to all of Life" life style and spreading that style to others.
10. To network/empower/blend and focus the spirit-of-care people in their common purpose of overcoming the "dark side" directions of history and enabling a healthier future for all creation.
11. The ICA stands as an ark of calm - of hope - of survival in the chaotic waters of all encompassing global transformation.
24. To facilitate for a group a way to move forward along their "Yes to life" mentality and name their consensus.

27. A loose association of like minded people who share a common commitment and values.

28. The ICA holds a vision of a planetary society which allows all individuals to participate fully in creating the future they choose.

33. To be a learning community of those who "Think Globally and Act Locally".

36. Creates, discovers and supports the Affirmation of Life.

37. To be of service: to those who have fallen out of structures; to the future; and to the last "fat" man who is unconscious.

From the above sample responses one can see that to the question "why is the ICA in being?", both new and old answers have been given. The simultaneous focus on the new and the old is an example of the paradoxical thinking the ICA is comfortable in engaging itself. It also shows the impact of the provocative propositions exercise: most of the statements are written in the provocative proposition format of as if they have already happened.

What does the ICA do?

The next question that was reflected upon was "what does the ICA do?". Again, some sample responses are listed with the original ranking intact.

1. Research, training and demonstration relative to social contradictions.
2. Facilitate the transformation processes within people, organizations, institutions, communities and the planet as a whole.

6. Cares for the human spirit.

7. Transfers methods of participation.

8. To demonstrate the value and sacredness of all people; to act on behalf of all.

12. The ICA restores vision, releases human energy and unites those who care in cooperative action.

14. The ICA enables humanity to face the painful task of changing individualistic life styles to corporate styles.

16. To be radically inclusive; to demonstrate a team approach; to expand the context people live out of.

17. The ICA acts out its assumptions, values, and expectation of life through its everyday interactions, various programmatic initiatives, the development of businesses, writing of books, and through public interactions.

18. The ICA acts as a vehicle for educational innovation and networking, multi-cultural leadership training and quality human service and connections.

19. Develops and introduces new perspectives and participatory methods into situation of need and opportunity through marketing, partnerships, infiltration of social structures.

Again, as in the previous instance, one can readily see the careful balancing of core values and future visions in the above
sample statements. The third issue discussed was "How does the ICA implement its mission and what values guide it". As in the last two, some sample responses are listed.

How does the ICA implement its mission? What values guide its implementation?

1. Broadens and nurtures new insights into a problem through facilitation and infiltration; catalytic and supportive partnerships.

5. Analyzing social trends.

7. Education of the disenfranchised.


10. In an evolving, diverse mixture of old and some new forms; independently, yet in partnerships and collaboration and in associated ventures.

12. We utilize the Aristotelian method more so than the Platonic, though we recognize its gift as well. But basically, we're practical, "what works" type of a group. We're constantly finding ourselves being "grounded" in real situation whether villages, schools, businesses, organizations, with real people struggling to make a difference with their lives. This grounding sustains us.

15. We believe in the power of images that affect how a person perceives the world and themselves within it. We believe that if those images are altered one way or another, then that person's life is changed.
Appendix 4: Analysis of the 1992 Chicago workshop.

The Seven Non-Negotiable Values of the ICA

There has been an objection to the phrase "non-negotiable" largely in part because it conveys a degree of inflexibility. The term was coined for us by Tojo Thachankery in his talk to the General Assembly of the ICA International. He noticed such a high degree of commonality amongst all those he interviewed, including those from a non-Western background, that he concluded that our core values were so strong, they were "non-negotiable." Tojo likes to repeat a portion of an interview from one of our former staff members to illustrate this point: "You can take the person out of the ICA, but you can't take the ICA out of the person.

The ICA did not stop there:

In the July workshop . . . we examined the 35 values that Tojo had identified, added some of our own, and gestalted them into 7 basic categories. Then, we organized ourselves into subgroups, each one taking one of the seven and attempted to describe the core meaning of each value.

What follows is the original draft of those values.

1. Grounded learning for change in the global context

We are capable of living in the global context. We seek to learn from experience and study and from one another. We have a sense of open eagerness and expectation to change. We experience individual alignment with organizational form/function. We intensify the global-local tension in order to accelerate the need for and the result of learning.

2. Open inclusive missional style

Our missional style is characterized by openness - to the comprehensive, to the future and to change, to paradox, ambiguity and vulnerability. It is focused "on behalf of" action; it takes risks, enacts the possible future. It presumes and demonstrates that excellence can be achieved with the resources at hand.

3. Personal fulfillment

There is a recognition on the part of the ICA and its members that personal fulfillment is both an input and a result of organizational participation. Whereas there have been periods of collapse of the individual into a dependency on the
corporate mind, there is a growing recognition as a result of
the organization's structural dissipation that the
organization's strength is critically dependent on the
strength of its individuals input and the organization's
capacity to challenge that strength in all its diversity. This
has required extensive interchange and interaction across the
network in personal and structural modes. Life fulfillment of
the individual is created by viewing the human as a person-
in-community, strongly related to others, experiencing
diversity and the unity created by challenge, common values,
mission and spirit.

4. **Unique service function**

The ICA focuses its service on empowering people by enlivening
consciousness and offering methods and tools that strengthen
capacities to enable organizational and community change.
These services are intended to participate in catalyzing and
aligning with the evolutionary development of the planet.

5. **Face to face to participation**

We value face-to-face participative processes because no one
of us is as good as all of us. We believe everyone has a voice
and everyone should be heard. We trust what is going on in a
group. We believe that the something that is going on
(especially conflict and change) is good and beneficial to a
group.

6. **Grounded spirit depth**

We have always perceived spirit depth - grounded in the
brokenness that life is - as the basis of our lives as
individuals and corporate body. This has been manifested in
the sensitivity, warmth and acceptance that we perceive in
each other. In the midst of diversity the concept of the blue
marble in the cosmos has become a unifying mode and has
expanded our sense of community.

7. **The yes (life/faith) stance**

The most important basic value of the ICA is a faith stance
based on a sense of affirmation. This life affirmation stance
still sustains us and is rehearsed in our methods. The
challenge is discerning the word and deed needed for this new
time. The leap is to create a futuristic curriculum that
delivers this life stance to society for the 21st century.