Chapter 5

Organising a Buddhist Way

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In the last 30 or 40 years, the field of organisation studies has been marked by discussion of what have variously been called paradigms, discourses of science, thought styles or cultures of inquiry (Alvesson and Deetz, 2000; Bentz & Shapiro, 1998; Chia, 1995; Guba and Lincoln, 1994). These, lets call them 'cultures', differ in their assumptions about what exists, what we humans can know about what exists and how that knowledge can be produced. They also differ in whether they centre an individual inquirer or relational processes, in whether they present inquiry as if it were with or 'without philosophy' (Bentz and Shapiro, 1998) and in whether inquiry is presented as with or without cultural and historical embeddedness (Hosking, 2011).

Bentz and Shapiro described nine 'cultures' and further suggested that just one, which they called 'positivism'[1], dominates both the human sciences and other societal 'beliefs' and related practices.

> Positivism as a general world-view is still alive and well, not only in the
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> philosophy of scientific method but within prevailing orientations to
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> knowledge and its relation to society. (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998 p. 30).

If this is so, then these *positivist beliefs*[2] *are likely to be reflected in discourses of organisation*. The latter would then reflect belief in a rationally structured world that can be known and acted on by independently existing individuals who are capable of rational action and capable of using language to re-present (with varying accuracy) the self-existing, 'real world' (Gergen and Thatchenkery, 1996). Further, organising would be seen as secular and not sacred activity and

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[1] They devoted their text to talking about an alternative that they called 'mindful inquiry', presenting Buddhism as one contributory tradition - together with critical social science, phenomenology and hermeneutics.

[2] Some call them "modernist" see, for example, Gergen and Thatchenkerry, 1996.

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secular, technical rationality would be given a key role in facilitating progressive organisational and societal development (Hosking and Morley, 1991). Insofar that these 'positivist beliefs' assume relatively stable, bounded, and self-existing entities then they also assume 'hard differentiation' (Berman, 1981) exists between self and other who relate in Subject-Object relations (Harding, 1986; 1991).

In the first part of this chapter I outline a very different set of 'beliefs[3]' or rather a different 'culture of inquiry' : one that is not 'positivist' but relational constructionist (Hosking, Dachler and Gergen, 1995). Relational constructionism centres local-cultural, local-historical relational processes as they construct and differentiate persons and worlds. In Part 2 I explore relational constructionism and buddhist teachings in relation to hard self-other differentiation - which positivism assumes is how things really are - whilst post-positivism believes this is how things should be (Hosking, 2006). Both relational constructionism and the buddha dharma present hard differentiation as a *construction* and both open-up the possibility of (more or less) soft differentiation. In Part 3 I draw on Tibetan and Shambhala Buddhism to suggest ways in which soft differentiation is manifested through compassion and basic goodness, openness and letting go and appreciation. Finally, in Part 4, I turn to my primary interest - an exploration of *how soft (rather than hard) self/other differentiations might characterise organising.* I discusses the possibility of enlightened organising using the themes of organising (a) from openness - in dialogue (b) through light structures and (c) from presence**;** in sum, organising a buddhist way?

A Relational Constructionist View of Person, World and Relations
Relational constructionism assumes and centres relational processes and not independently existing persons relating to an independently existing world. Person and world and their relations are theorised, not as entities, but as relational realities, produced and re-reproduced in relational processes (e.g., Hosking, 2006; 2011). This raises the question of how relational

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[3] The term 'belief' is not part of the discourse of relational constructionism. This is because the term is usually used and made sense of in relation to a discourse of science that assumes, for example (a) the separation of person and world - so (relatively) bounded, self existing individuals 'have' beliefs, and (b) the separation of justified true beliefs as generalizable knowledge or 'facts' from other beliefs that (science holds) have no such justification. Relational constructionism speaks of constructions and construction processes, sees constructions as a mixture of what others would call 'fact' and 'value', and sees itself - together with other discourses of science - as local-cultural, local-historical constructions.

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processes are understood. They are theorised, *not* as mind operations and *not* as what happens within and between self-existing entities, but as the always ongoing, multiple and simultaneous relatings of what could be called texts or acts.

This joining of text and act occurs because relational constructionism theorises conceptual language - in the form of a public speech, a written instruction, a live conversation, or the sort of 'internal conversation' commonly called thinking (Billig, 1987) - as relating. This contrasts with the positivist or modernist view of language as a tool for representing independently existing entities (Gergen and Thatchenkerry, 1996). This theorising of language as relating makes all language-based activity live action – language is no longer separated from action – no longer 'just talk' or a 'dead text' that represents other, self-existing objects and events such as people, death and the furniture (Dachler and Hosking, 1995; Gergen, 1995; Stenner and Eccleston, 1994). This means that relational constructionist premises take an even or equal stance towards (what any particular culture might construct as) different relational forms. For example, some cultures sharply distinguish conceptual and non-conceptual forms, science and not science, theory and practice. In the present view, scientific inquiry, theorising, managing or meditating are all treated as ongoing processes constructing particular, local, relational realities. Of course this view also applies to relational constructionism itself - which is a construction - ongoing in language-based relational processes[4].

Relational processes construct what my colleague Ken Gergen referred to as 'the real and the good' (Gergen, 1994). Of course this also means that they simultaneously construct 'the not real' (not factual, falsity or fiction) and 'the not good' (bad, evil, immoral and so on). So, in this view, *all* language-based relational processes are value-laden or normative and simultaneously (re)construct particular pragmatics and ethics. In this view, relational realities are local to the processes that make and re-make them. However, I should emphasise 'local' in this context can be as 'wide' as Western (as, for example, in references to Western philosophy), and 'as long' as 'post-enlightenment.' Most simply put, *relational realities are local* in the

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[4] So, relational constructionism – as it has been outlined until now – has a range or scope limited by what can be expressed in conceptual language. When considered in relation to Tibetan Buddhism, this raises the interesting question of whether or not we can try to say anything about realities outside of language. Of course if we insist upon Aristotelian logic the answer must be no (because it would be inside language). This may be a major point of departure in that Buddhist writings about ordinary reality are always in the context of another reality, outside language and 'ordinary mind'.

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sense of *not* universal, *not* transcendental i.e., not always '(un)real and (not) good' - in all local-cultural practices.

This focus on relational processes as they produce local cultural realities implies many relational realities are simultaneously ongoing. Further, as Latour argued of science and its long networks, cultures are *more or less* local in the range or extent of their inter-textualities (Latour, 1987). However, I also want to emphasise that this talk of 'range or extent' includes the historical aspect of relating. I have said that texts supplement texts in text-con-text relation - so they also have implications for how the process will go on. To use a slightly different form of words, I could also say that the ongoing present re-produces some past inter-textualities as, for example, in the convention of shaking hands, and acts in relation to possible and probable futures for example, that a greeting will be performed successfully. As others have said inter-acts, and particularly regularly repeated ones, 'make history' so to speak (Falzon, 1998; Foucault, 1977, 1980; Ray, 2000) and history is constantly being re-made (Hora, 1992; Vico, 1992).

As I have already implied, these relational premises invite attention to the normative and power-full aspects of processes as they construct and re-construct, stabilise and transform, particular local realities and relations - including constructions of what is real and good here and now – and what is not. To expand this point, many acts go unheard or unseen, acts may be 'born' but may quickly die if, for example, they pass un-supplemented or are discredited as false or 'not good'[5]. In other words, the fate of any act depends on whether it is taken up and used in some way (Latour, 1987); depends on whether and how it is 'socially certified', 'warranted' or supplemented (Gergen, 1994; Hosking & Morley, 1991; Weick, 1979). For the moment, I simply wish to emphasise that, in the relational view, power is always emergent, ongoing and relational; is always implicated in how relational processes 'go on' and is always implicated in the relational realities that are made[6].

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[5] Using more Buddhist language we could also say that some acts 'die' and others remain unborn potential. For example, it is possible to view any particular moment as one in which (a) many possible acts/texts are imminent but unborn whilst (b) others are born but immediately 'die' because they are not supplemented and stabilized and so given life – made 'ongoing' for a while.

[6] So it is possible to theorise (relatively) stable relational realities (and power) without reference to intelligent design or individual intention.

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From these various premises it follows that relational constructionism views self, other and relations as ongoing relational realities, made, sustained and transformed in relational processes. This is very different from the assumption that self and other exist as separate, bounded entities that relate in some sort of subject-object (S-O) relation – variously discussed in the language of 'hard' self-other differentiation (Berman, 1981; Berman, 1990) and the 'egocentric' metaphor of personhood (Sampson, 1993). In the present view, Subject-Object relations are constructed in language-based practices that centre a would-be knower (e.g., a scientist, leader, or manager) as an active agent or subject (S) who relates to 'other' as a knowable object (O) (e.g., an organisation, individual, or market). These are processes in which would-be knowers try to build their own knowledge about other as a knowable object and try to mobilise their knowledge in attempts to achieve 'power over' other (Dachler & Hosking, 1995; Fine, 1994; Gergen, 1995; Harding, 1986). S-O ways of relating turn other into a potential source of instrumentalities for self as subject[7].

Relational constructionism neither assumes that Subject-Object (S-O) relations are really 'real' *nor* does it assume they are necessarily 'good'. Rather, S-O relations become viewed as ways of relating that privilege the culture of the subject (e.g., [post]positivist science and, or corporate management) relative to the culture(s) of the object(s) (e.g., the research object and, or non-managers). In addition, S-O relations privilege a certain type of knowledge which, in the case of (post) positivist science, is commonly discoursed as 'factual' knowledge about the object. Claims to such 'factual' knowledge can then be offered as the rational justification for hierarchical structures and expert-led practices.

From a relational constructionist perspective, Subject-Object relations close down possibilities that do not fit *the Subject's local-cultural[8] constructions* (e.g., [post]positivist science, management, western medicine) of the 'real and the good'. S-O relations have been linked to gendered constructions of 'normal science' and scientific methodology, to colonial practices,

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[7] Of course, within science and philosophy 'local cultures' such as post positivism and (various) critical realisms accept that such knowledge' cannot be fully 'objective' and is always constructed from a certain local-cultural standpoint. However, the most common re-construction has been to view S-O relations as an ideal to be striven for - to produce valid and reliable knowledge about other (Hosking, 2011).

[8] Please note: 'local-cultural' constructions - not individual, subjective knowledge.

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and to all kinds of 'world structuring' projects (Harding, 1986, 1991, 1998). A leading figure in Shambhala Buddhism has noted that subject-object ways of relating revolve around the (perhaps unstated) question 'what about me' (Sakyong Mipham, 2005). S-O ways of relating are very 'real' constructions in the case of some local cultures but perhaps they are not universally 'good'. For example, critiques of modernism increasingly link globalisation, increasing inequalities in financial wealth and economic infrastructure, destruction of forests, landscapes and communities, pollution and so on to Subject-Object ways of relating. It is further suggested that 'more of the same' will either leave things unchanged or make them worse (e.g., Bateson, 1972; Reason, 1994; Dachler & Hosking, 1995). In this context, many now argue the value of ways of relating that assume self-other as a relational unity[9] - ways that open-up to other, open-up to possibilities, to multiplicity, and to appreciation – rather than closing down through positive 'aboutness' knowledge and power over[10].

As a 'culture of inquiry', relational constructionism invites exploration of the many ways in which self-other relations are constructed. It invites exploration of 'soft self-other differentiation' (Berman, 1981, 1990; Hosking, 2007) and the kinds of possibility this gives space to. So, for example, inquiry and related 'intervention' practices aim not to 'fix' particular constructions and not to privilege one particular local-cultural reality relative to others [11] (e.g., McNamee and Hosking, 2012). There has been a growing 'profusion of practices' (Gergen, 1999) of this sort in areas such as individual and family therapy, community development, and organisational change-work[12]. Major practice themes include working with ways of relating (including ways of talking) that try to open-up 'power to' go on in appreciation of self and other and in appreciation of multiple local-cultural, local-historical constructions. This may be

[9] By 'unity' I mean inseparable and co-existent... perhaps what Thich Nhat Hanh (1987) calls 'inter-being'.

[10] The theoretical physicist, David Bohm, developed similar arguments over the years - see the conversation 'beyond limits' onYouTube.

[11] Again, this raises interesting connections with Buddhism – which seems to suggest that whilst our ways of relating are 'caught in the prison house of language' they are necessarily S-O. Letting go of discursive thought and its ego-oriented constructions of other – seems to be the necessary path and goal. Perhaps it is not necessary to have the sort of discourse of non-ordinary reality that Buddhism has – a great deal can still be learned from Buddhism about practices that in some sense move towards soft self-other differentiation – and the reasons why this might be a good thing to do. In particular, I am thinking of the many ways in which Buddhism works with our discursiveness and ego-centered constructions. These could be very useful 'practices of the self' … Shambhala training has shown some of the ways this can be done to produce a 'more sane society' (Trungpa Rinpoche, 1999).

[12] He was speaking of the work of Harlene Anderson, Arlene Katz, John Shotter; Sheila McNamee, David Cooperrider and many others.

achieved through the practice of dialogue (in a rather special sense), through non-hierarchical ways of managing, through distributed leadership, appreciation, minimal structures and improvisation, and through approaches that shift emphasis from knowing and knowable entities to 'revolutionary activity' (Newman & Holzman, 1977). I shall have more to say about these shortly.

Constructing Hard Differentiation.

Both relational constructionism and Buddhism view entitative constructions of self and other as constructions rather than as how things 'really' are. Furthermore, both 'cultures' centre language-based processes as the 'ongoing construction site' in which more-or-less entitative constructions of self and other are always in the making. Critiques for example, in philosophy of science, social science and social psychology have spoken of entitative constructions, Subject-Object relations, and related dualisms as 'Western' cultural (e.g., Harding, 1991, 1998; Sampson, 1993). Critical comment is directed to a variety of over-sharp distinctions between body and mind (e.g., Cartesian dualism), language and world (e.g., representationalism), knowledge and action (epistemology; science) and knowledge and power[13]. However Buddhism views entitative thinking and Subject-Object relations not as particularly Western constructions but *as the inevitable product of ordinary mind*[14] which is discursive and discriminating. Buddhism pushes on beyond what it calls 'ordinary mind' to explore a very different concept of 'mind' variously called *rigpa*, 'buddha nature' or basic goodness. Mind in this sense cannot be known or possessed; mind in this sense is the always-existing 'background' of life, death and everything (Sogyal Rinpoche, 2002).

In his early teachings Gautama, the historical Buddha, outlined 'The Four Noble Truths.' These are storied slightly differently in different buddhist traditions. In Tibetan versions of the Buddha's teachings, the first truth is the truth of suffering which he said was the human condition. The second truth, the origins of suffering, he said resulted from our attempts to create and to hold on to a solid and stable concept of self - from seeing self as a potential source of pleasure - and from acting in ways intended to make self happier, better and special. Third, the truth of cessation, deals with the possibility of giving up the struggle to hold on to

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[13] The dualist construction of life and death is less often critiqued.

[14] In Tibetan ordinary mind is called *sem*.

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the solidified self or 'ego.' The fourth truth is 'The Path'. This is the path of practice, learning to let go of the fixed and solid sense of self (ego) and self-centred constructions of other (Ray, 2000).

Buddhist teachings[15] provide various de-constructions of what people conventionally experience as a solid, bounded body and a solid and stable self. For example, the Abhidharma sets out the basic conceptual framework in which the central concept is called a dharma. Dharmas are variously theorised in a number of different frameworks each of which is intended to help the practitioner understand the non-existence of self. One such framework is commonly referred to as The Five Skandas[16]. In this case the Buddha outlined five aggregates (skandas) of momentary experiences and said that these could be thought of as, together, comprising the experience of (an apparently solid) self[17]. Through different sorts of meditation practices, practitioners can learn to slow down and to observe their wild thoughts and passions - their 'mind stream' - the multitude of quickly fleeting dharmas (forms, feelings, perceptions, karmic formations and consciousness) – but will fail to find a solid, permanent self. This opens up the possibility to give up the struggle to sustain a non-existent self ('cessation'). For the Hinayana practitioner who seeks only individual liberation this is 'fruition', this is realization of the 4th Noble Truth.

Another framework, The Twelve Nidanas, also deals with constructions of solidity and permanence but does so in ways that address ongoing processes and relations between past, present and future[18]. Processes are theorised as a stream of momentary and constantly changing dharmas, here storied as Nidanas, and - in the early teachings - as links in a chain of 'conditioned co-production.' Later, their 'critical *relational* dimension' (Ray, 2000 p. 395,

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[15] - Hinayana and Mahayana.

[16] The historical Buddha talked about these when people spoke of their difficulties in understanding his teachings on non-self (Jamgon Mipham Rinpoche, 1999, p.82)

[17] The Skandas can be summarized as follows. (1) Form '…those momentary events that we experience as physical' (Ray, 2000, p.373) - including physical elements, sense organs and their corresponding sense objects. (2) Feeling - the more or less fleeting sensation of positive or negative affect or indifference. (3) Perception – the categorisation of something e.g., as (un)familiar. (4) Karmic formations – a reference to all the extra discursive fragments and narratives that we attach to the experiences of the first three skandas. And (5) consciousness[17] which involves relating to the first four skandas in terms of how they affect 'me.'

[18] Including what goes from lifetime to lifetime.

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emphasis added[19]) was emphasised by stressing that each Nidana exists only in relation to the wider web of relationships[20]; the simultaneity and mutual co-construction of *all* interrelated dharmas also became emphasised. In the Nidanas framework, *self* is not solid and stable (as is made clear in The Five Skandas) *but neither is other*; here it is clear - *neither self nor other has independent existence*. Using the language of the Mahayana, both self and other are empty – empty, that is, of self-nature.

This general line of talk seems very sympathetic with relational constructionist premises about the relationality of self and the ways relational processes construct self and other. In addition, the talk about separating, fixing and holding on to solidifications clearly has something to say about Subject-Object ways of relating and why the practice of letting them go might provide a good 'path' (The fourth Noble Truth). Perhaps connections could be made with the growing 'profusion of practices' in the relational constructionist domain...lets see.

Practise, Soft Differentiation and Opening Up to Non-Ordinary 'Mind'.
In the Buddha dharma, 'ordinary' or 'conventional mind' is said to be always very busy differentiating and solidifying self and other but it is possible to relate in ways that are softer and more open - open to otherness, to ongoingness, to possibilities, to multiplicity and to change. The Buddhist 'path' or way is to work with what we already have, that is, with conventional mind and its concepts - doing so in the same way as did the first Buddha – through meditation.

The experience of meditation[21] is often said to provide the ground of all practice. Through meditation it becomes possible to experience the always-ongoing stream of multiple and constantly changing thoughts, perceptions and passions with which we occupy time and fill space. Through meditation[22], practitioners can become aware of and develop an up-close

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[19] to link with relational constructionism.

[20] a web that can never be 'captured' and put into words

[21] There are many different meditation practices and, at a certain point, it becomes impossible to distinguish between meditation and post-meditation. In other words, it is better not to try to fix and grasp what it (really) is and is not.

[22] Chogyam Trungpa reflects that meditation is not a matter of setting foot on the path but rather realizing that you are already on it – by being fully present (1973 p.203).

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familiarity with the patterns they continually re-create and with what Chogyam Trungpa calls their 'neuroses.' Practitioners learn *not* to get involved. They learn not to apply concepts to label some things as 'positive' and others as 'negative' - with the intention of grasping more of the former and rejecting the latter and giving ego a nice time. It is not that concepts are 'bad'. As Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche put it with his usual earthiness: '…concepts are very good, like wonderful manure' (Chogyam Trungpa, 1996, p.22). Concepts are the tools of ordinary reality and not tools for representing ultimate truths. Buddhism addresses the ways discursive mind grasps and solidifies space, how it produces 'manure' for us to work with (rather than individual subjective or objective knowledge)[23]. In meditation:

> [t]he whole point is to cultivate the acceptance of everything, so one
>
> should not discriminate or become involved in any kind of struggle.
>
> (Chogyam Trungpa, 1996, p.78).

Practice of this kind seems to open-up particular ways of being in the world which have been put into words in many different, more or less technical ways. Shambhala Buddhism in general and the writings of Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche and Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche in particular, provide some of the most accessible accounts (Mipham, 2005; Trungpa, 1973, 1995, 1996, 2002) and what follows is largely based on those writings together with other practitioner writings on Tibetan Buddhism (e.g., Ray, 2000).

Compassion and basic goodness. Letting go of hard self-other differentiation through meditation and related practices is experienced as a growing softness and feeling of basic warmth towards one's self and others. One way of putting this into words is to say that practitioners open up to their own basic goodness or 'Buddha nature'[24] *and* to the basic goodness of others. So this is tuning in to 'the pattern that connects' (Bateson, 1972) - rather than separating and evaluating. 'Compassion becomes a bridge to the world outside' (Trungpa, 1973). Trungpa Rinpoche further describes it as: 'environmental generosity, without direction, without 'for me' and without 'for them'.'' (Trungpa, 1973, p.99). Compassion invites the practitioner to relate with people; it is key to appreciation and to being with 'what is'; it is the key to openness and the Mahayana path.

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[23] This seems to be one major difference between western psychology, much of Anglo-American analytic philosophy, and Buddhism.

[24] The concept of Buddha Nature is a reference to the view that all sentient beings (not just humans) have (or are) 'basic goodness' which includes wisdom, compassion and power.

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Openness and letting go.   Chogyam Trungpa described the path of practice as a 'widening and expanding outward' (Trungpa, 1996, p.63), a process of developing openness. According to Reggie Ray, a student of Trungpa's, this is another way of talking about letting go of fixed reference points (Ray, 2000, p.417): letting go of graspable objects; letting go of a stable, knowable self (other), letting go of 'aboutness knowledge' and opening up to non-ordinary mind or 'Buddha nature.' Important to note here is that 'widening and expanding outward' includes letting go of ways of relating that are 'already knowing' – that mobilise some already available story of what is and what is good or bad[25]. Acting in a *not knowing* way is part of being free from discursive thought and is related to the experience of 'emptiness' (Ray, 2000, p.413-414). Chogyam Trungpa, for example, speaks of 'open space' - without the 'this-and-that dichotomy' (Trungpa, 1973 p.197) – having 'completely transcended' the subject-object division (1973 p.205). This is being completely present and 'on the spot' so to speak.

Appreciation.   As I outlined earlier, practice makes it possible to slow down and observe without adding 'I like this/I don't like this', 'I think that's good/that's bad' - in relation to one's own ego and ego-related interests (remember, 'what about me?'). Chogyam Trungpa often used the term 'appreciation' in ways that seem to me to gesture towards this kind of orientation. You could say appreciation is not adding (e)valuation; it involves not adding our (Me-related) concepts but rather staying open and accepting 'empty forms'[26]. Appreciation is total awareness but without a knowing subject; appreciation is experience without the distortions added by ego-related evaluations; appreciation lets go of 'the watcher' who takes up so much space (Trungpa, 1973, p.73)[27].

The path of practice in which one can experience basic goodness, openness, compassion and emptiness collapses dualist constructions and their related orders of value including self and other. Buddhism is not an individual practice for achieving individual liberation - how could it

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[25] Here I think we can see important connections with constructionism and with related practices that aim to avoid (re)constructing Subject-Object relations as, for example, when the therapist or change-worker claims to know better than the client and attempts to achieve power over the client (see e.g., Anderson, 1997; Hosking, 2005).

[26] In this context, form is that which is – before we project our concepts onto it – so it's just emptiness…and emptiness is form – they are indivisible (e.g., Chogyam Trungpa, 1973 pp. 1888-189). Words are not the same as the experience (so eating the menu is somewhat pointless) and reality is ineffable.

[27] Chogyam Trungpa (1973) links appreciation with the path by which one becomes able to 'step out of the bureaucracy of ego'.

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be - given the Four Noble Truths and the frameworks I outlined earlier. Rather Buddhism could be described as a way of doing our lives together[28] - at home, at work and on or off the meditation cushion[29]. For example, the Mahayana path[30] in Tibetan Buddhism especially emphasises the path commitment to becoming more open and responsive to the wider world - without expecting anything in return. According to the Mahayana teachings it is 'ineffable reality, the very nature of emptiness that…alone provides a sound basis for ethical conduct' (Ray, 2000 p.413). So 'ethical conduct' becomes key to how we 'go on' with one another.

> Like any other ideas, like science, economics and politics, Madhyamaka
> philosophy[31] is trying to create a better society, very simply speaking. In
> fact, if possible, the Madhyamaka *aims to create an enlightened society.*
> (Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche, 1996, ch 6, pp. 70-71, emphasis added).

Ray speaks of Tibetan Buddhism as 'essentially *a method* to release the wisdom and compassion of the Buddha-nature within' (Ray, 2000 p.311 emphasis added). Chogyam Trungpa and his successor, Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, are very clear that Shambhala Buddhism is about *creating 'enlightened society.'* So perhaps what I have been saying could now be developed into some explorations of *enlightened organising* (Hosking and Kleisterlee, 2009).

Some Possibilities for Enlightened Organizing

In this chapter I am proposing that Tibetan Buddhism and relational constructionism be thought of as *ways of orienting to practice*, as ways of orienting to ongoing relational processes and how they (re)construct particular relational realities. The objects of these orientations are the very processes themselves - as they co-ordinate or (re)organize activities; as they make identities and relations; as they constitute and live out a certain 'form of life' (Wittgenstein 1953); and as they construct different but equal, or different and unequal orderings of power and value (Hosking 2007).

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[28] Relational responsibility (McNamee and Gergen, 1998) can be viewed as a related construction emerging from a relational constructionist sensibility… contrasting with the individualist construction of individual responsibilities (and rights!).

[29] As the more the practitioner meditates the less distinction there is between meditation and non-meditation.

[30] Which builds on and further refines the earlier (Hinayana) teachings.

31 Described by Ray as the 'commentarial tradition on the second turning' - founded by Nagarjuna (Ray, 2000).

Organising from openness: dialogue.

What I want to say about dialogue follows directly from my earlier remarks on relational processes, the construction of relational realities, knowledge and power. The relational constructionist view I have outlined implies that, not one, but many selves are ongoing and 'situated' in particular networks of relations with particular others. One individual can perform many *I* positions in many simultaneously ongoing self/other relations and several '*I* positions' could enter into relation with one another and might for example conflict with one another. It should be added that such dialogues are both unspoken (where someone imagines a future and reconstructs a past) and spoken. In other words, rather than assuming a singular, mono-logical self who engages in subject-object relations, *relational constructionism assumes a multi-voiced, dialogical self* who can perform many different 'I' positions. The dialogical self is fundamentally relational in that some particular 'other' is intimately connected (related) to, or we could say 'co-arises' with, a particular construction of self.

The relational constructionist view suggests that dialogical practices offer an alternative to practices that attempt to separate, unify, bound and fix constructions of what is real and good, constructions of whom I am, who you are, how the world is... In dialogue, emphasis shifts to ways of relating that make space for multiplicity, ongoing emergence and improvisation. In the relational constructionist view, *power* is understood as an aspect of how self and other 'go on' together. The apparent presence or relative absence of multiplicity now is seen as evidence of power relations. For example, when one local rationality dominates this might be seen as evidence of '*power over*' (Dachler and Hosking, 1995; Gergen, 1995; Sampson, 1993). In contrast, dialogical processes, by facilitating the voicing of many different relational selves in different but equal relations could be said to construct 'power to' 'go on' in *eco*logical (rather than *ego*logical) processes (Hosking, 2000).

Similar arguments have been expressed in slightly different terms using the language of participation to refer to a relational way of being and *knowing* (Reason, 1994). One well known example is provided by Gregory Bateson's 'Steps to an Ecology of Mind' (Bateson, 1972). He argued that a proper understanding of mind would see it as extended or 'immanent' - not only in the human body - but throughout the living world. He argued that humankind's 'fall from grace' was achieved through the construction of many dis-

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engagements or separations - separating self from other, separating thought from emotion, separating sacred from secular and so on. A 'return to grace' (Bateson, 1972) or perhaps to what Shambhala Buddhism calls 'sacred world', requires that conventional mind be re-viewed as part of what Bateson called 'larger mind' - which is 'comparable to God and is perhaps what some people mean by 'God'' (Bateson, 1972, p.461). For Bateson, re-engagement requires re-connecting with *participative ways of knowing,* reconnecting with ways that re-join the many levels of mind, including what he called 'computations of the heart' (Bateson, 1972, p.464; see also Reason, 1994; Reason and Bradbury, 2001; Hosking, 2000). In similar vein, the physicist David Bohm spoke of '*participatory thought,'* argued that it is essential for the fundamental interrelatedness of thoughts, bodies, cultures, nature and the cosmos to be understood[32], and proposed the practice of dialogue[33] as a way to promote such thought and understanding (Bohm, 2004).

Many social science approaches explicitly centre dialogical practices. Such approaches include the Public Conversations Project (Chasin, Herzig, Roth, Chasin and Becker, 1996), work using the language of 'transformative dialogues' (Gergen, McNamee, and Barrett, 2001),'dialogue conferences' (Toulmin and Gustavsen, 1996) and the MIT Dialogue project (e.g., Isaacs, 1993, 1996). The former draw most heavily from research and theory in communication studies, social psychology, family therapy and cybernetic systems theory, and action science e.g., using the work of Bakhtin (e.g., Wertsch, 1991), Gregory and Catherine Bateson (Bateson and Bateson, 1987) and Watzlawick (Watzlawick, Weakland & Fisch, 1974; Watzlawick, 1978); the MIT dialogue project draws more heavily on David Bohm's writings. However, whatever their particular lineage, these approaches define dialogue as a special kind of conversation.

In its 'purest' form, dialogue is free from selfish attempts to know and control other (Bateson, 1972; Bateson and Bateson, 1987) and, for Bohm, is best achieved in conversations that have no agenda (Bohm, 2004). Dialogue, as a special kind of conversation goes on in slow, open and curious ways of relating characterized: (a) by a very

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[32] Bohm spoke of dialogue as process that can enabling 'coherence' i.e., recognizing (something like) fundamental interrelatedness, ongoingness and multiplicity... which is also a recognition of wholeness (which also resonates with the buddha dharma).

[33] Note: dialogue is much more than 'just words' and is not necessarily conducted in conceptual language.

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special sort of listening, questioning, and being present; (b) by willingness to suspend one's assumptions and certainties; (c) by reflexive attention to the ongoing process and one's own part in it. Rather than constructing separate, fixed or closed realities e.g., of self (other) and one's own (other's) position, dialogical practices open up to relationality and to possibilities and open-up space for self and other to co-emerge - which Bohm called 'flow.'

Dialogical practices seem to offer an alternative to dis-engaged, dis-heartening, dis-enchanted, *ego*logical ways of being in relation. Dialoging can provide a way out of stuckness, a way out of being some seemingly solid, stable and singular entity who builds individual knowledge about and seeks control over other. Dialoging can help to bring forth and support appreciation (rather than judgement and critique), discussion of what can be done (rather than what cannot) and a sense of relational responsibility (rather than blaming others). Dialoging makes space for ongoing emergence, for improvisation. Practicing dialogue as a 'discipline of collective inquiry' (Isaacs, 1996) participants can learn how to learn, can learn to open-up to possibilities – to other constructions of what is real and good. I shall have more to say more about dialogue in the sections that follow

Organising from confidence: dialogue and light structures.   I want to use the term 'light structuring' to make a contrast with forms and practices that could be described as already knowing and already fixed. What I am calling light structuring gives more space for emergence and improvisation (see, for example, Barrett, 2006; Clegg, Kornberger and Rhodes, 2005; Weick, 1998) or unfolding. One might say that light structuring makes space for 'being in the now' rather than 'in the know'. I see light structuring, in this sense, as an important aspect of dialoging and participatory ways of knowing. Light structuring might mean that participants are invited to try to follow certain guidelines that help them to learn whilst practicing what Isaacs called the 'collective discipline' (Isaacs, 1993) of dialogue. These usually include guidelines such as: do not interrupt, do not attempt to persuade others, use respectful language, ask questions only for clarification, listen to your listening and so on (e.g., Chasin, Herzig, Roth, Chasin, Becker and Stains, 1996). Such 'minimal' or 'light' structures help to block or interrupt already solidified patterns and, in this way, can help to open up new possibilities and what I have called 'soft' self-other relations. The idea is to provide enough but not too much structure: to provide a container, so to speak, that invites and supports the

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gradual emergence of slow, open, coherent, in-the-present-moment performances. In this way it becomes possible to be 'relationally responsive' (McNamee, Gergen and associates, 1999) to whatever comes up in any particular moment and possible to make space and be open for multiple, ongoing, local realities.

As I indicated above, light structuring means '*being on the spot'* and *improvising'* - which requires its own discipline - whilst also contributing to the wider 'collective discipline' of dialogue. In my experience, consultants and trainers are increasingly using improv theatre and improvisational jazz to illustrate and develop skillful practice (e.g., www.performanceofalifetime.com). Whilst improvising, participants could be said to discover the future that their actions invite, as it unfolds, by being ready to connect with what cannot be seen or heard ahead of the moment. Improvising in the context of light structuring means being *open* to whatever is presented. You could say that it means relating to whatever comes up as 'workable.' This could also be called an *appreciative* orientation in which there is no good or bad, no mistake, no bum note. Relating in these ways involves being ready to dare, to leap into the unknown, perhaps, as Picasso said of his work, 'refusing to appeal to the familiar' by repeating some already established pattern or form. I love the way my colleague Frank Barrett, himself a very talented jazz pianist, speaks of improvisation - as 'cultivating surrender' (Barrett, 2006; see also Berendt, 1985). In my view, all of these themes are present in Shambhala Buddhism and all are seen as critical to the development of enlightened society.

Light structuring seems to be a matter of as-light-a-structure-as-possible. This doesn't mean always light - which would become heavy - by becoming another design principle, by becoming unresponsive to the particular moment. Structuring can be thought of as 'light' for example, when achieved in multiple, temporary and variable forms rather than fixed in some singular and stable hierarchy. For example, temporary groups might emerge to perform particular projects and, like a sand or flower mandala, be allowed to dissolve as the project is completed. Structuring also can be thought of as 'light' when 'empty' of pre-specified content. Perhaps this is a reason why Bohm proposed that dialogue meetings should be held in which there is no pre-set agenda (Bohm, 2004). There are now a good many relatively 'empty' methodologies such as, for example, 'appreciative inquiry' (Cooperrider & Shrivastva, 1987) which are intended to facilitate and support a certain kind of process. Furthermore, when it

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comes to light structuring and leadership, the latter is not provided by one individual and does not fix and separate. Rather it is a relational practice ongoing in and supportive of dialogues, emergent processes, relational responsiveness, multiplicity and appreciation (Hosking and Kleisterlee, 2009).

Organising from presence: being in the now and heart-felt listening. Implicit in our discussion of dialogue and light structuring were two important themes that now need repetition and slower development. One is the theme of being in the present and 'being in the now rather than the know,' the other, inter-related theme, is listening. There are important connections to be made between nowness, listening, and what some call compassionate action. Pema Chodrun speaks of the latter as not shutting down on self or others, being open and non-judgmental (appreciative), letting go of fixed views, being fully present 'on the spot' and practicing 'deep listening' (e.g., Chodrun, 1995, 2001). So talk of compassionate action is another way of talking about going beyond 'conventional mind' - opening up to basic goodness and is related to what I am here calling 'soft self-other differentiation.'

Talk of deep listening and compassion can seem seriously 'flaky' and irrational when understood in relation to (probably tacit) assumptions of hard self-other differentiation. When hard self-other differentiation is assumed, listening is storied in a self-centered way: as something that the knowing and influencing subject does - for their own instrumental purposes - in order to 'grasp' something or, indeed, someone (Heidegger, 1975; Corradi Fiumara, 1990). In the context of hard self-other differentiation, listening is dis-heartened[34] by being understood in relation to 'conventional mind' and what I earlier called 'aboutness knowledge'. The knowing and influencing subject who listens is relatively closed to other possible selves, to other as body and not mind, to other as other people and, most generally, to other as the world which is not me.

When considered in the context of soft self-other differentiation, listening becomes understood as embodied participation in relational processes. In soft self/other differentiation listening is no longer reaching out 'for' some-thing In other words it is no

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[34] Disconnected from what Bateson called 'the computations of the heart', disconnected from what Shambhala Buddhism calls basic goodness...

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longer theorized as the means to produce 'aboutness knowledge' or 'knowledge that'. Rather, *listening becomes understood as an aspect of what I earlier called participatory thought* - a practice of sensing and feeling or 'being with' the phenomenal world in ways that are heart-felt and empty rather than full of our conventional mind concepts This kind of listening is performed in allowing rather than grasping; it *allows* sounds, overtones, multiple voices…to be heard (Berendt, 1985; Corradi Fiumara, 1990; Hosking, 2007a; Ong, 1967). Indeed, Heidegger (from whose work Corradi Fiumara drew extensively) spoke of 'hearkening and heeding' and connected listening with being - understood as a particular local manifestation of a singular, unifying whole (Heidegger, 1975). This brings us back to dialogue and opening up to *logos* - or rather *legein*[35] (Corradi Fiumara, 1990). This kind of listening allows space for what is (outside of concept) rather than moulding or structuring; listening allows *both* multiplicity *and* wholeness or, as Trungpa said 'not two, not one' (Chogyam Trungpa, 2002).

To Conclude

When speaking about light structures I observed that I did not want to be heard to propose that this meant *always* light - because this 'would become heavy - by becoming another design principle, by becoming unresponsive to the particular moment.' Of course this applies to what I said about enlightened organizing more generally: it applies to what I said about all three orientations - organizing from openness, from confidence and from presence. This is a reminder and an invitation to pay attention to what you bring to this text when you read it - pay attention to what 'mind stuff' you mobilize to make this meaning rather than that. I am guessing that, like me, you have probably swum a great deal in the sea of what Bentz and Shapiro called 'positivism.'[36] If so, then you might be inclined to over solidify and fix my line of talk. I have deliberately chosen to speak of 'orientations' and not techniques. These 'orientations' are not simple states (either present or absent), they are not separable (they have no independent existence) and their appearances will be many and varied - they are not graspable.

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[35] the verb form of logos, see Corradi Fiumara,

[36] It is useful to note that they used the term in a particular way, in a particular context, for particular purposes - which is why I say 'what Bentz and Shapiro called positivism'; others - and myself in other contexts - might use a different summary term.

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Clearly organising in these ways is not something any of us can just do 'as and when' we will. My line of talk about relational processes implies that we can only learn - as we 'go along' - 'in the now' - practising these 'collective disciplines' of organising from openness, confidence and presence - organising a buddhist way?

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