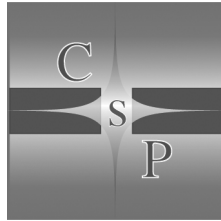


# The Future of Post-Human Organization



The Future of  
Post-Human Organization  
A Preface to a New Theory  
of Communication, Decision-Making, and  
Leadership

By  
Peter Baofu



CAMBRIDGE SCHOLARS  
PUBLISHING

The Future of Post-Human Organization: A Preface to a New Theory of Communication, Decision-Making, and Leadership, by Peter Baofu

This book first published 2009

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data  
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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ISBN (10): 1-4438-1319-2, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-1319-8

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To Those Beyond the Craze for Organizational Performance



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- 1. Volume 2: *The Future of Human Civilization* (2000)



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# CONTENTS

<i>List of Tables</i> .....	<i>xi</i>
<i>Foreword</i> .....	<i>xvii</i>
<i>Acknowledgments</i> .....	<i>ix</i>
<i>List of Abbreviations</i> .....	<i>xxi</i>

## **Part One: Introduction**

Chapter One. Introduction—The Impact of Organization .....	3
The Craze for Organizational Performance .....	3
Three Components of Organization .....	4
The “Big-O” vs. “Big-B” Dispute.....	6
The Theoretical Debate.....	8
The Combinational Theory of Organization .....	13
Theory and Meta-Theory .....	14
The Logic of Existential Dialectics.....	15
Sophisticated Methodological Holism .....	41
Chapter Outline.....	48
Some Clarifications.....	49

## **Part Two: Communication**

Chapter Two. Communication and Its Limits .....	103
The Role of Communication .....	103
Communication and the Mind.....	104
Communication and Nature .....	112
Communication and Society .....	119
Communication and Culture .....	127
The Filtering of Communication.....	136

**Part Three: Decision-Making**

Chapter Three. Decision-Making and Its Constraints .....	143
The Functionality of Decision-Making .....	143
Decision-Making and the Mind .....	143
Decision-Making and Nature .....	151
Decision-Making and Society .....	157
Decision-Making and Culture .....	167
The Dysfunctionality of Decision-Making .....	177

**Part Four: Leadership**

Chapter Four. Leadership and Its Complexes .....	189
The Promise of Leadership .....	189
Leadership and the Mind .....	189
Leadership and Nature .....	199
Leadership and Society .....	206
Leadership and Culture .....	216
The Problem of Leadership .....	225

**Part Five: Conclusion**

Chapter Five. Conclusion—The Future of Organization .....	233
The Fixation on Organizational Performance .....	233
1 <sup>st</sup> Thesis: The Absoluteness-Relativeness Principle .....	242
2 <sup>nd</sup> Thesis: The Predictability-Unpredictability Principle .....	244
3 <sup>rd</sup> Thesis: The Preciseness-Vagueness Principle .....	246
4 <sup>th</sup> Thesis: The Simplesness-Complicatedness Principle .....	248
5 <sup>th</sup> Thesis: The Openness-Hiddenness Principle .....	249
6 <sup>th</sup> Thesis: The Convention-Novelty Principle .....	251
7 <sup>th</sup> Thesis: The Symmetry-Asymmetry Principle .....	253
8 <sup>th</sup> Thesis: The Regression-Progression Principle .....	255
9 <sup>th</sup> Thesis: The Post-Human Contribution .....	257
Beyond Organizational Performance .....	258

<i>Bibliography</i> .....	355
<i>Index</i> .....	369

---

## TABLES

### *Category I: The Theoretical Debate on Organization*

Table 2.1. Communication and Its Limits .....	138
Table 2.2. Three Types of Organizational Design .....	139
Table 2.3. Reasons for and Against the Centralization of Authority .....	140
Table 3.1. Decision-Making and Its Constraints .....	179
Table 3.2. Four Approaches to Decision-Making .....	180
Table 3.3. Different Causes of Group Conflict .....	182
Table 3.4. Five Modes of Conflict Resolution .....	183
Table 3.5. Four Components of Moral Behavior .....	185
Table 4.1. Leadership and Its Complexes .....	226
Table 4.2. Some Rules of Thumbs for Leadership in Different Situations: The Vroom-Jago Leadership Model.....	227
Table 4.3. Different Types of Resistance to Organizational Change .....	228
Table 4.4. Why Some Organizational Transformations Fail.....	229
Table 5.1. The Double Sides of Virtual Organizations .....	261

### *Category II: Visions on Nature*

Table 1.1. The Theoretical Debate on Space-Time .....	54
Table 1.2. Main Reasons for Altering Space-Time .....	56
Table 1.3. The Technological Frontiers of the Micro-World.....	57
Table 1.4. Finitude, Transfinitude, and Infinity.....	58
Table 1.5. Theoretical Speculations of Multiverses .....	60
Table 1.6. The Confusion Between “Many Worlds” and “Multiverse” .....	61
Table 1.7. Hyperspace and Its Challenge .....	63
Table 1.8. The Problems of Time Travel into the Future .....	65
Table 1.9. The Problems of Time Travel into the Past.....	67

*Category III: Visions on the Mind*

Table 1.10. The Conceptual Dimensions of Consciousness (and Other Mental States) .....	70
Table 1.11. The Theoretical Levels of Consciousness (and Other Mental States) .....	71
Table 1.12. The Thematic Issues of Consciousness (and Other Mental States) .....	74
Table 1.13. Having, Belonging, and Being in Consciousness (and Other Mental States) .....	75
Table 1.14. The Having-Ness of Consciousness (and Other Mental States) .....	76
Table 1.15. The Belonging-Ness of Consciousness (and Other Mental States) .....	77
Table 1.16. The Being-Ness of Consciousness (and Other Mental States) .....	78
Table 1.17. Cognitive Partiality in Different Mental States .....	80
Table 1.18. Emotional Non-Neutrality and Behavioral Alteration in Different Mental States .....	81
Table 1.19. The Limits of Intuition in Unconsciousness.....	82
Table 1.20. The Wealth/Poverty Dialectics in Different Mental States: The Case of Cognition.....	83
Table 1.21. The Wealth/Poverty Dialectics in Different Mental States: The Case of Emotion and Behavior .....	84
Table 1.22. The Theoretical Debate on Nature and Nurture .....	85
Table 1.23. Physical Challenges to Hyper-Spatial Consciousness.....	87
Table 1.24. The Theory of Floating Consciousness .....	88
Table 1.25. The Potential of Unfolding Unconsciousness .....	90
Table 1.26. The Future Exploration of Unfolding Unconsciousness .....	91
Table 1.27. Creative Techniques and Traits.....	92
Table 1.28. The Desirability of Creativity, and Its Dark Sides .....	93
Table 1.29. Posthuman-IsM, Post-Humanism, and Trans-Humanism .....	95

*Category IV: Visions on History*

Table 1.30. The Trinity of Pre-Modernity.....	96
Table 1.31. The Trinity of Modernity .....	97
Table 1.32. The Trinity of Post-Modernity .....	99
Table 1.33. The Trinity of After-Postmodernity .....	100

*Category V: Visions on Methodology*

Table 5.2. Sophisticated Methodological Holism. ....	263
Table 5.3. On Reductionism and Reverse-Reductionism. ....	267

*Category VI: Visions on Ontology*

Table 5.4. The Conception of Existential Dialectics. ....	270
Table 5.5. The Syntax of Existential Dialectics I: The Principles. ....	273
Table 5.6. The Syntax of Existential Dialectics II: The Principles as Short Cuts. ....	286
Table 5.7. The Syntax of Existential Dialectics III: The Principles as Family Resemblances. ....	288
Table 5.8. The Syntax of Existential Dialectics IV: The Dialectic Constraints Imposed by the Principles. ....	289
Table 5.9. The Syntax of Existential Dialectics V: Further Clarifications. ....	292
Table 5.10. The Syntax of Existential Dialectics VI: The Dilemma of Specific vs. General Ontology. ....	294
Table 5.11. The Semantics of Existential Dialectics. ....	296
Table 5.12. The Pragmatics of Existential Dialectics. ....	297
Table 5.13. The Freedom/Unfreedom Dialectics. ....	299
Table 5.14. The Equality/Inequality Dialectics. ....	302
Table 5.15. The Duality of Oppression in Existential Dialectics: Oppression and Self-Oppression. ....	304
Table 5.16. The Structure of Existential Dialectics I: The Freedom/Unfreedom and Equality/Inequality Dialectics. ....	306
Table 5.17. The Structure of Existential Dialectics II: The Wealth/Poverty Dialectics. ....	307
Table 5.18. The Structure of Existential Dialectics III: The Civilization/Barbarity Dialectics. ....	308

*Category VII. Visions on Society (Socio-Political)*

Table 5.19. Beyond the World of Titans, and the Remaking of World Order.....	309
Table 5.20. The Origins of Authoritarian Liberal Democracy .....	310
Table 5.21. The Theory of Post-Democracy I: The Priority of Freedom over Equality .....	311
Table 5.22. The Theory of Post-Democracy II: The Priority of Equality over Freedom .....	313
Table 5.23. The Theory of Post-Democracy III: The Transcendence of Freedom and Equality .....	314
Table 5.24. Democracy, Non-Democracy, and Post-Democracy.....	316
Table 5.25. Multiple Causes of the Emergence of Post-Democracy .....	319
Table 5.26. Some Clarifications on Post-Capitalism and Post-Democracy .....	321

*Category VIII. Visions on Society (Socio-Economic)*

Table 5.27. The Theory of Post-Capitalism I.1: By Group— Ex: Spiritual/Communal in the Trans-Feminine Calling.....	325
Table 5.28. The Theory of Post-Capitalism I.2: By Nation-State— Ex: Spiritual/Communal in the Trans-Sinitic Calling .....	326
Table 5.29. The Theory of Post-Capitalism I.3: By Region— Ex: Spiritual/Communal in the Trans-Islamic Calling .....	327
Table 5.30. The Theory of Post-Capitalism I.4: By Universe— Ex: Spiritual/Communal in the Trans-Outerspace Calling .....	328
Table 5.31. The Theory of Post-Capitalism II: Spiritual/ Individualistic in the Post-Human Elitist Calling .....	329
Table 5.32. Capitalism, Non-Capitalism, and Post-Capitalism .....	331
Table 5.33. Multiple Causes of the Emergence of Post-Capitalism.....	334

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*Category IX: Visions on Culture*

Table 5.34. The Theoretical Debate on Civilization .....	336
Table 5.35. No Freedom Without Unfreedom in the Civilizing Processes .....	337
Table 5.36. No Equality Without Inequality in the Civilizing Processes .....	339
Table 5.37. Five Theses on Post-Civilization .....	341
Table 5.38. Barbarity, Civilization, and Post-Civilization .....	342
Table 5.39. Types of Super Civilization in the Cosmos .....	343
Table 5.40. The Civilizational Project from Pre-Modernity to After-Postmodernity .....	345
Table 5.41. Civilizational Holism .....	347
Table 5.42. Theories on Civilizational Holism .....	350





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## FOREWORD

The organizational literature has been replete with studies over the years examining a plethora of issues about people in groups. Dr. Peter Baofu's perspective here lends a clarifying influence by ordering the data in a systematic way. His focus on three aspects of what happens in organizations (i.e., communicating, decision making, and leadership) allows the reader to get a workable handle on the literature by categorizing related issues and topics.

Dr. Baofu next surveys the contributions of leading researchers in three schools of thought—natural, rational and open systems—before suggesting a new way to best transcend their thinking.

The outcome is a lucid approach to making sense of a mind-boggling array of research that may now prompt future researchers to taking some giant steps in this field.

*Sylvan Von Burg*  
*School of Business*  
*George Washington University*



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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book is written to question conventional wisdom and, in the process, to offer a new way to understand reality—as this is something that I have done in all my previous books.

Because of this political incorrectness, this book receives no external funding nor help from any formal organization or institution.

My only joy is that wonderful feeling to discover something new which has not been thought by others before.

I also greatly appreciate the foreword by Sylvan von Burg at George Washington University School of Business.

In any event, and as always, I bear the sole responsibility for the ideas presented in this book.



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## ABBREVIATIONS

- ALD = Peter Baofu. 2007. *The Rise of Authoritarian Liberal Democracy: A Preface to a New Theory of Comparative Political Systems*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Ltd.
- BCIV = Peter Baofu. 2006. *Beyond Civilization to Post-Civilization: Conceiving a Better Model of Life Settlement to Supersede Civilization*. NY: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.
- BCPC = Peter Baofu. 2005. *Beyond Capitalism to Post-Capitalism: Conceiving a Better Model of Wealth Acquisition to Supersede Capitalism*. NY: The Edwin Mellen Press.
- BDPD1 = Peter Baofu. 2004. Volume 1. *Beyond Democracy to Post-Democracy: Conceiving a Better Model of Governance to Supersede Democracy*. NY: The Edwin Mellen Press.
- BDPD2 = Peter Baofu. 2004. Volume 2. *Beyond Democracy to Post-Democracy: Conceiving a Better Model of Governance to Supersede Democracy*. NY: The Edwin Mellen Press.
- BNN = Peter Baofu. 2006. *Beyond Nature and Nurture: Conceiving a Better Way to Understand Genes and Memes*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Ltd.
- BWT = Peter Baofu. 2007. *Beyond the World of Titans, and the Renaking of World Order: A Preface to a New Logic of Empire-Building*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Ltd.
- FAE = Peter Baofu. 2007. *The Future of Aesthetic Experience: Conceiving a Better Way to Understand Beauty, Ugliness and the Rest*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Ltd.
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- FPHMM = Peter Baofu. 2009. *The Future of Post-Human Mass Media: A Preface to a New Theory of Technology*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Ltd.
- FPHO = Peter Baofu. 2009. *The Future of Post-Human Organization: A Preface to a New Theory of Communication, Decision-Making, and Leadership*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Ltd.
- FPHST = Peter Baofu. 2006. *The Future of Post-Human Space-Time: Conceiving a Better Way to Understand Space and Time*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.

FPHU = Peter Baofu. 2008. *The Future of Post-Human Unconsciousness: A Preface to a New Theory of Anomalous Experience*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Ltd.

FPHUP = Peter Baofu. 2009. *The Future of Post-Human Urban Planning: A Preface to a New Theory of Density, Void, and Sustainability*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Ltd.





• PART ONE •

---

*Introduction*



# CHAPTER 1

## *INTRODUCTION—THE IMPACT OF ORGANIZATION*

---

The purpose of organizations is to get results “outside,” that is, to achieve performance....

—P. Drucker (M. Goldsmith 2009)

### **The Craze for Organizational Performance**

What exactly makes the nature of organizations so miraculous that their very purpose is “to achieve performance” and that it is now regarded, in this capitalist age of ours, as the central aim to be both possible and desirable for any organization?

After all, there is simply no lack of organizations which “achieve performance” with questionable means and goals—be they about “greed” and “excess” in the corporate world, or “evil” and “injustice” in the public sphere, just to cite two main examples (although there are others too, of course).

Contrary to the conventional wisdom preciously accepted by many contemporaries, this obsessive craze for organizational performance is fast becoming a seductive trend, such that the dark sides of organizational performance have yet to be systematically understood and that its very purpose is neither possible nor desirable to the extent that its proponents would like us to believe.

Needless to say, this is not to suggest that the purpose of organizations is to reject performance, or that the literature in organizational studies (and other related fields like political science, media studies, and business management, for example) hitherto existing in history are full of scholarly worthlessness.

The aim of this book, however, is to provide an alternative (better) way to understand the nature of organization, in special relation to

communication, decision-making, and leadership—while learning from different views in the literature, without favoring any one of them (nor integrating them), and, in the end, transcending them in a new direction not thought before.

This seminal project, if successful, will radically change the way that we think about the nature of organization, from the combined perspectives of the mind, nature, society, and culture, with enormous implications for the human future and what I originally called its “post-human” fate.

## **Three Components of Organization**

To start, the term “organization” derives from “the Greek word *ὄργανον* [organon]” to mean “tool,” which in turn comes “from the better-known word *ἔργον* [ergon]” to mean “work,” “deed,” etc. (WK 2009)

Thus, in a formal definition, an “organization” is defined as “a social arrangement which pursues collective goals, which controls its own performance, and which has a boundary separating it from its environment.” (WK 2009) This “social arrangement” as embedded in organization can be analyzed in different ways, of course.

A good way is to have a systematic analysis of organization which breaks it down into three different related but distinct components, namely, (a) communication, (b) decision-making, and (c) leadership, as introduced below, in that order.

This conception of the three components of organization will be used for the rest of this book and will be analyzed at multiple levels, be they *micro* (about individuals in organization), *meso* (about groups in organization), or *macro* (about an organization as a whole, in relation to the larger external environment).

### **Communication**

With this clarification about the multiple levels of analyzing the three components of organization in mind—the first component, that is, “communication,” in a formal definition, refers to “a process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior .” (MWD 2009)

In the context of organizational studies, communication means something more precise, in that it is “the glue that holds organizations together.” (M. Matteson 2005: 421)

For instance, communication “assists organizational members to accomplish both individual and organizational goals, implement and respond to organizational change, coordinate organizational activities, and engage in virtually all organizationally relevant behaviors.” (M. Matteson 2005:421)

Yet, communication cannot be taken for granted, since “breakdowns in communication are pervasive.” (M. Matteson 2005: 421)

## **Decision-Making**

Besides communication—another component of organization concerns decision-making.

The term “decision making,” in a formal definition, “can be regarded as an outcome of mental processes (cognitive process) leading to the selection of a course of action among several alternatives....The output can be an action or an opinion of choice.” (WK 2009a)

In the context of organizational studies, decision-making is a process which involves, for instance, as in the case of management, both “managers” and “non-managers,” or simply, “a *people* process,” in which “people make decisions based on their understanding of individual, group, and organizational goals and objectives.” (M. Matteson 2005: 458)

However, just as there can be bad forms of communication, there are likewise bad kinds of decision-making, to the extent that “just one or two...exceptionally poor decisions can have significant effects on...an organization’s success.” (M. Matteson 2005: 458)

## **Leadership**

Besides communication and decision-making—an organization also requires leadership.

The term “leadership,” in a formal definition, is understood as the “process of social influence in which one person can enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task.” (WK 2009b; M. Chemers 2002)

In the context of organizational studies, leadership makes a major difference and “is a critical variable in shaping organizational effectiveness.” (M. Matteson 2005: 491)

After all, “it has been suggested that when groups, teams, or organizations are successful their leadership receives too much of the credit, and when they fail their leadership gets too much of the blame.” (M. Matteson 2005: 491)

Thus, a good question to follow up is, “Who are the best leaders? What are the attributes of the best leaders?” (M. Matteson 2005:491) Unfortunately, there is no consensus on the answers to these questions.

However, the following two main issues have become the center of attention for researchers in organizational studies, namely, (a) “why some organizational members become leaders while others do not,” and (b) “why some leaders are successful while others are not.” (M. Matteson 2005:491)

## **The “Big-O” vs. “Big-B” Dispute**

These three components of organization thus constitute the core concerns in the field of organizational studies—and will fall into the jurisdiction of the next three chapters of this book.

Yet, as if to make the analysis of the components of organization more complicated, there has been a heated dispute in the literature of organizational studies, namely, about the focus on the “big-B” vs. the focus on the “big-O.” (C. Heath 2001)

Let’s consider them, one by one, hereafter, in that order.

### **The “Big-B” Focus and Its Limitation**

Chip Heath (2001) and Sim Sitkin used the term “big-B” to refer to a way of studying organizational behavior (in the literature) with its focus on the “behavioral” or B (rather than the “organizational” or O) aspects of an organization.

Some scholars, however, like Steven Hartman (1997), would like to treat the “big-B” focus as part of “organizational behavior” and the “big-O” focus as part of “organizational theory”—but this distinction is rather idiosyncratic.

In any event, there are two versions of the “big-B” here, namely, (a) non-contextualized and (b) contextualized.

(a) The first version (that is, the non-contextualized “big-B”) approach to organizational studies is “to emphasize interesting behavior,” which can be about, for example, the “research on stress/strain, goal-setting, or decision-making because these topics represent interesting behavior that is relevant for organizations.” (C. Heath 2001: 49)

The problem with the non-contextualized “big-B” approach, however, is that, when carried far enough, the researchers run “the risk” of “missing what is essential to O [organization]”; therefore, although “topics like these may...represent interesting B [behavior] but they do not tell us much