

## Organizational Noises in the Modern Paradigm: A Carnavalesqued Reading

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this article is to apply Bakhtin theory of carnivalesque as a device in reading noises of the displaced other during a change program in an organization that rests solely upon the modernist approach. The change divided the organization into two worlds. In the 'first world' noises are centripetalised around monologism, and it can be seen via *sobornost*. In the 'second world', where the displaced other reside, noises are centrifugalised with *play* as its main agent. They play the subversive game of *halus* and *kotor* in the back region in order to create madness over the marginalization. We suggest the displaced other noises be recovered as Serresian noises that live on parasite logic, and authoring the project should be viewed as signed deed without alibi, and it must be managed with Bakhtinian ethics of *otvetsvennost*. This paper attempts to explore Bakhtin's contribution for understanding change dynamics.

**Key words:** Bakhtin, carnivalesque, centripetal, ethics, noises, organizational change, parasites, play, scatology, Serres.

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### INTRODUCTION

The very idea of organizational change is to move into the future with some benefits in mind such as to make an organization beautiful. One of the popular ways of doing that is to 'disturb' the present 'ugly' beliefs, attitudes, values and structures. Almost all organization development theorists and practitioners assume inherent goodness and logic embedded in act of intervention, and perhaps all of that is poetically true (McKendall, M., 1993) as the project also brings unintended and unanticipated changes such as ambiguity, contradiction, confusion and lack of rationality (Alvesson, M., 1993). The above notion of ordering is based upon the modern paradigm. The language used by managers in that paradigm includes control, order, objective, logical, certain, predictable, one best way, structured and planned (Darwin *et al.*, 2002). In metaphorical term, change is about a movement, from one destination (the current present state) for another (the desired future state), from the known to the unknown, from *terra firma* to *terra incognita*. Hopfl noted that doing change is closely related with the act of carrying a burden, an action related with weight (Hopfl, H., 1994). In her observation, participants of change carry different weight with regard to anxieties of living and immortality, order and decay, and togetherness and isolation. Here, heaviness of the weight is seen as a gravitational response or attraction to the change. One way of knowing the above issue is to 'hear' that is by reading noises authored by participants. To hear noise is to hear things, noted (Heidegger, 1971). We refer noises as leitmotif in talks/conversations and narratives that 'organizational creatures' produce for which through them organizational realities are authored, ordered and organized. In *Rabelais and His World* (RW), Bakhtin clearly showed that noises are vestiges of man's creativity with traces of his hands and minds, and they are 'moving form shapes' (Bakhtin, M., 1984). In the context of organizational change, some participants may found that noises authored by the management as euphonical while some others considered them as cacophonical 'irritations' (Serres, M., 1982), cause tensions and madness which consequently tearing apart their internalized map of organizing/sense-making. In this article the former is to be known as PO (prosperous other) while the latter as DO (displaced other).

This paper is based on a quasi-ethnography research at a large Malay-Muslim publishing house in Malaysia, anonymously referred as Lontar. Lontarians love literature. In their conversations, they often cite quotations from various literary works such George Orwell's, *Animal Farm* or even Kundera's easily. The citizen of Lontar revered Al-Gazel, the 12<sup>th</sup> century theologian, psychologist and Sufi, highly. Al-Gazel, (1983)

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is often known as the Proof of Islam. The citizens of Lontar come from various states in Malaysia including Aisyalam, an anonymous name. We are observing ethnographic secrecy as discussions in this paper are considered to be dealing with 'culturally sensitive topics' (Tillman, L.C., (2002). Similarly are characters at Lontar. The above secrecy is also related to the psychological contract made with the respondents. A point to note, this work is prejudicially oriented toward organizational communication perspective.

### ***Theoretical Framework:***

This section concerns with carnivalesque, a device for understanding noises. In understanding noise-shapes, we concocted carnivalesque as a 'device'. It is a work of 'new elaboration' that serves different uses from what which Bakhtin originally made of it. The spirit that carnivalesque as a linguistic and embodied social practice that subverts and liberates the assumptions of the dominant system, however, is being maintained. Our concoction is basically drawn from Bakhtin's, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* PDP (Bakhtin, M., 1984) and *Rabelais and His World* RW. Both texts discussed the notion of carnivalesque extensively.

*Carnavalesque is a 'two worlds' event.* The 'first world' is the world of the officialdom; a 'normal' world with ordered form of life, principles and beliefs that monolithically alive with a single level, absolute consciousness. Here, hierarchy, sacredness, seriousness, formalities, proper ties and decent noises that detest curses and obscenities are appreciated. As such, even play and playfulness are officially choreographed on the stage with footlights, and 'kings are crowned in full of clothing' (PDP 124-125). The second world is a world of second life outside the officialdom. It is a constructed world of 'inside out' based on the logic of 'world upside down' (PDP 133) that opposes serious tone of official culture of the first world. Acts of turning/re-configuring the ordered form of life, principles and beliefs into disordered or chaotic state are common. In a similar vein, revealing/exposing the previously concealed, ambivalent and unofficial life-world is festively celebrated. This is a world of playdom. In understanding the two worlds, one is expected not to be caught in the bipolar model of good and bad as both realms live within the push-pull of the centripetal and centrifugal dynamism of a relationship.

*Carnavalesque is artistically organized action.* Actions are shaped according to certain pattern of play, underpinned by the culture of marketplace, and they are on the basis of laughter (RHW 7, 8). Bakhtin noted that laughter purifies from dogmatism, from intolerant and the petrified; from fear and intimidation, and from single meaning as it burns away all that is stilted and stiff (RHW 123, 133). The content of the 'played laughter' in this respect is 'inverted images of the normal world' (RHW 128). In that re-positioning, playfulness takes the centre stage. Here, 'turn-about' crowning/decrowning activities, like ridiculing/transforming the 'old authority and truth' into some kind of 'comic monster is ideologically acceptable norm (RHW 213). Cursing, swearing and talking indecent/unprintable words are viewed as action of bringing the officialdom down to earth. As actions of the above type are being played and re-played, noise-makers usually invested them with new valuation or newness of meaning. In playfulness, all normal limitations arising out of the 'established' boundaries related to hierarchical ranks, privileges, norms, prohibitions or orders, albeit temporary, are lifted temporarily. In this state of suspension, pretense and dissemblance, masking of one sort or another are expected to be displayed as power is negotiated and re-negotiated. At this point, playfulness and seriousness transgressed each other in unity and contradictions --- 'the sacred and the profane, the great and significant and the wise and the stupid wed, a situation of messiness that supplants order or officialdom.'

*Carnavalesque is an event that centers on the image of the grotesque body.* Here, the 'clothed kingly' norms, etiquette or decency of the first world are ripped opened, exposed, mortalized and deconsecrated. Bakhtin described the above realism as grotesque realism. The fundamental artistic principle of this realism is debasement (RHW 370-371). Sacred and exalted things are rethought on the level of the material bodily stratum or else combined and mixed with its images. The human body with its food, drink, defecation and sexual life are exaggerated subjects. At the same time the continual shifting of the body topography and its uses, like from top to bottom and from front to rear, are in a very dynamic state. Indeed, in this fluidity that we saw urine and shit as having special roles in debasing and degrading the officialdom.

In sum we concocted carnivalesque as 1) disordered dynamics arising out of collision of two worlds (officialdom/playdom) whereby a 'played laughing' event of 'paired images' is being performed, 2) an idea of overturning reality by making the established order upside down or inside-out within a complex system of meaning that exists alongside and in contradiction to the monological world of the dominant, and 3) a state of ambivalence and duality that celebrate order and chaos where neither feature could only be fully perceived without the other.

To complement the above, a brief explanation about the concept of reading as a textual activity is given here. Here, a text is viewed as any tissue of meaning which is symbolically significant for a reader (Bruner,

J., 1990). Meanwhile human action as 'textwork' (Parker, I., 1999) has long been recognized by scholars who work within the realm of qualitative methodology. As a text is authored from a certain point of view and certain vocabularies, it leaves a trace, a mark. In the above sense, noise is an authored text and not something given. A point to add is that reading a text is very much related to sense-making. Wick writes the following: What sense-making does is address how the text is constructed as well how it is read (Weick, K., 1995).

#### **Case Study:**

At the age of forty Lontar was viewed as ugly (*hodoh*). Lontar adopted Al-Gazel's *saadah* 'eternal bliss' as a remedy; a beautiful (*cantik*) body begins with beautiful spiritual heart as that heart governs the limbs. One officer made the following remarks: "This change is about moving towards the light of *saadah* and away from the darkness of *jahilliah* 'ignorant'. As Goate was very busy, senior director Fishman became the 'real king', the change agent. Fishman's rule of the thumb was very simple: "I am a manager, I am a manager, and I am a manager. Lontar must listen to the manager. If not Lontar is becoming the house of madness". Both Goate and Fishman were coming from the same *suku* (clan) of Aisyalam. The right hand man for Fishman was Thinman, another *suku*, a new graduate from a business school. Fishman was the brain in drawing the new organogram and he was the prime mover for 'changing-room-re-learning' activity -- mass transferring of managers, including chairs, regardless of experiences or qualifications. Soon a pattern emerged; Aisyalam-born managers occupied most key positions. A common statement by non-Aisyalam reads: They are pissing on our head by hiding behind those sacred words. After the 'colonialization', some DO turned 'near-the-mosque-toilet' as the marketplace. In that 'back region', DO authored most of their subversive noises such as scribing curses and insults accompanied by explicit graphical drawing of genitals on toilet walls, pasting serialized one-page-story of *sindir* (sarcasm) on toilet doors, singing loudly about *sengsara* 'emotionally painful, devoid of pleasure' while in the booth. Outside the back region, DO were known to put an excerpt about the fate of a king who is thrown into the hellfire for being a tyrant on the management official notice board. Similarly, releasing stinky farting winds during meetings were widely practiced. The management with the help of PO meanwhile gets busy with 'sacred' activities with the hope to throw the 'madness' away.

#### **Methodology:**

We read noises the way how Bakhtin reads Dostoevsky's (as seen in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Novel PDP*) and Rabelais' (as materialized in *Rabelais and His World RHW*). It is a framed reading where 'one body motion has meaning only in relation to another body', a reading of 'togetherness' (with PO and DO). Bakhtin noted that "I live in a word of other's word". Specifically, it is a search for force-shape that give shifts of meaning within a single line or paragraph (Emerson, C., 1984), and such shape hide behind key words/phrases, a life form of particularity that produce noises of importance. Goddard and Wierzbicka showed that keywords/phrases are repository of social emotions, cultural values, cultural scripts and cultural contexts (Goddard, C., 1996; 1997; 2006; Wierzbicka, A., 1997).

#### **Data collection:**

Raw data for reading noises were collected via several methods, namely deep interviewing, participant observation and reading secondary texts (toilet door stories, toilet scribes, official documents and the poison-pen letters) for a period of nine months. In this quasi-ethnographic of 'being there', the researcher is the instrument of research. Philosophical hermeneutics in the tradition of Gadamer was observed throughout the study (Gadamer, H.G., 1989).

#### **The mechanics of reading:**

1. *Arresting*. Keywords/phrases are intently gazed with special attention given to those with *localitat* (natural setting) significant. Bakhtin observed that Paris as a city could not be understood without *localitat*, 'native' blood of the life form that provides addressivity of the situational noise reality. *Localitat* factor include the notion of indirectness as a rule of making noises among the Malays (Asmah Haji Omar, 1992).

2. *Stitching*. The arrested key words/phrases are chronotopically 'stitched' (Holquist, M., 1986) for a 'wholeness' leitmotif life form which only alive with the spirit of space and time communion. The stitched key words/phrases are the living present life form. They are expected to deliver necessary exchanges of life (Bakhtin, M., 1986), if not they are merely *gespenster* 'ghosts' or foreign bodies.

3. *Interrogation*. A reader then is expected to place all key words/phrases in rich picture (Checkland, P., 1981) cauldron for 'interrogation' in order to bring the germinating and blossoming life form, previously a

invisible while having a concealed active textual life (Iser, W., 1998), to the surface. This implied reading is about resurrection of words and unfolding meaning.

### **Findings:**

#### **The first world:**

In the first world we found that noises were shaped around the centripetal force of monologism. It is a force of standardization, of uniformity, or heterogeneity. For Bakhtin, it is an authoring of a 'frozen' form of desirability, a single form or utterances arising from a central point. Contextually, the change at Lontar is authored in the above managerialist imagination; the managed are highly expected to accept the enacted official noises that promotes homogenous reality, as what seen in 'King Fish man' noises. It is like what Hamlet expected from the travelling players: Let those who play your clowns speak no more than it set down for them. In monological authoring, the realism of the other 'swims in too shallow waters' as such it is often being treated as superficially and unessential, perhaps accidental. Another I is not a subject but another object that remained as a shadow, not an authentic reality (PDP 16). As only a single accent, unified authorial consciousness is allowed to prosper; monologists pretend to possess a ready-made truth (PDP 109). Bakhtin observed that in monologism even when one is dealing with a collective, with multiplicity of creating forces, unity is nevertheless illustrated through the image of single consciousness, be it under the title of 'spirit of nation, the spirit of people, the spirit of history, and so forth'. Thus, the interaction with others is just about inter-relational of ideas, thoughts and attitudes gravitating toward single consciousness (PDP 9). 'Man to man' (PDP 61) realism in this regard is being gazed under the light of the absent presence.

Noises of monologism can be seen clearly through concept of *sobornost*. In Bakhtinian term *sobornost* means community spiritual togetherness based on some integrative knowledge of presumably 'sameness'. *Cantik* (beautiful) is a word of *sobornost*. Lontarians are said to be same in the context of language, religion and culture. With *cantik* as a vehicle for *saadah*, change participants loss or a lack of demand for difference is understandable. Under the previous administration, Lontarians were in the state of *sengsara*, PO and DO alike: 'one's own' suffering is being experienced as suffering of the other. *Cantik* is embedded as 'idea-feeling' that 'to be heard and to be answered'. It is a 'code' word of *localitat*, a word that carries the spirit of *sobytie* 'living event of unity', a 'cooperative' word of signification. In this regard, *cantik* creates context, shapes the mouth and acts as a force that gives birth to sense like a new life (Patterson, D., 1988)

It is safe to say that *cantik* as a word of *sobornost* has taken control position in the 'living noises' of a planned change program, and with that turned Goate into a successful 'high priest' (Barley, S. and Kunda, G., 1992) who managed to 'convert' participants with new languages game of change. The conversion for *saadah* indeed was made possible with 'withness' to Al-Gazel. According to Shotter (Shotter, J., 2010), withness is a form of interaction that involves coming into living contact with another's living being, with their words, utterances and works [read: noises]. By taking 'withness' with the revered ulema, Lontar is body with morality, and as quality (Burns, J., 1978). In this regard, Al-Gazel 'high language' words as 'the God bearing' voices provide the unifying singularity for all parties concerned. Free from criticism, Al-Gazel's became a kind of referred or cited superaddressee. In other words, Al-Gazel's are *avtoritetnoe slovo* (authoritative words) pouring from the well of hidden dialogicality was a crucial factor for overwhelming mood of accepting the monologic noises about *saadah* among participants. In this historical moment "we are all the same and always the same" (Mac Lahlan, G. and Reid, I., 1994) and participants of change were unable to play with words but just 'recite them by heart'.

#### **The second world:**

In the second world the grand shape is centrifugal, a force that abandon and flee from the centre. It is apparently seen as subversive, anti-canonical and a threat to the orderliness language of the first world. Furthermore, centrifugal force concerns with alterations, decentralization, and re-evaluation of everyday life into a new tone. Centrifugal force also celebrates archaic culture, like returning to the past, as an act of difference (Zappen, J.P., 2000). At Lontar the serialized toilet-door-stories were written using archaic grammar. In the context of this article, centrifugal noises are authored in the norm of hidden-transcript of resentment, hostility and alternative conception of the world where the public/official transcript of the dominant are being questioned/contested. In writing hidden transcript, one needs sequestered spaces inaccessible to the powerful or realm not governed by official rules or rituals. At times, 'concealed' noises are expressed through media such as folktales and song. Again such features were common in the back region at Lontar; the moronic trickster Luncai which is famous in Malay culture was a character of must in stories and conversations authored by DO. In relation to the above, a 'well cooked' repressed anger just needs a minor provocation, like

a statement by Fishman about Aisyalam colonization of Lontar, to be the last straw for a 'rebellion'. In short, hidden-transcript comprises of actions that subvert, frustrate or ritually negate the privileged hold on the displaced, and it is kept alive with concealment and invisibility. Scott viewed hidden transcript as a weapon of the weak (Scott, J., 1985; 1990).

We put forward *play* as the main facet of centrifugal force-shape at work. Play is an act of creative creation with fantasy and imagination as its major content (Vygotsky, L.S., 2004). The theory of play posited that in fantasy players ease tensions for not able to gratify their desires as play gives opportunities to act beyond normal orders; in play the player is taller than his/her head. Meanwhile the imagination, often done with exaggeration, provides a dialogue with the future. In this 'transporting' activity something new is created. In that 'climactic moment of birth' the player own 'present' is altered. Here, the act of playing is not natural but an act of creation that has a long history of internal process. At Lontar two types of game are visible, the play of *halus* and the play of *kotor*. Bakhtin noted that anything essential can and should be visible (Bakhtin, M., 1986).

### ***Play of halus:***

The play on change begins as a single play with the 'common fiction of the play word', *cantik*. The play was later disintegrating as not all players received a similar gazing from change masters/directors; one party (PO) was prosperous as it was under pastoral gazing of the management while the other party became the displaced other (DO). The DO then retreated to the margin and performed *halus* 'refined, small, delicate, gentle, soft or beat around the bush' activities. *Halus* is part of Malay rules that fundamentally connected with Malay cultural values of refined, restrained and charming. The most common *halus* action is *tikaman* 'knifing/stabbing/piercing using sharp object' using *bahasa* 'language'. In Malay society, *bahasa* is a life-world.

At Lontar *tikaman* comes in two forms. First, *tikaman* on personalities, that is basically to give *pedih* 'torturous emotional pain/blisters' on the *hati*, the psycho- affective domain of Malays. Here, 'knifing' carries the idea of moral condemnations, and it can give immediate effect like giving *malu* 'shameness', pulling down one's *maruah* 'dignity/honour' or and makes one's losing his/her 'face'. If the 'stabbed' words have religious connotations, the idea of *balasan* 'punishment/retribution' by the God is given. For a tyrant, the *balasan* is the hell-fire. (DO explicitly mentioned about the price of being a tyrant by pasting an excerpt from *Hikayat Abdullah*). By 'knifing' the addressed was down-graded as animals like mice (=pest), monkeys (=clown/moron) or pigs (=dirty). AlGazel noted that a man is a pig when carnal desires over-powered him/her. Becoming a pig was the very point rejected by Goate in making *cantik*. Pig as point of *tikaman* however was numerously mentioned in various stories authored by DO.

In essence, 'knifing' on PO personalities revolves around crowning/de-crowning to injure the heart. Keywords/phrases of crowning were "King, savior, pious man, half-saint, man of God, Al-Gazel's reader". Meanwhile de-crowning keywords/phrases were "clown, joker, hen-pecked type of man, mice, pest, dirty heart patients, pretender, untouchable Brahmins, contagious people, pig, shit-brain man, carnal desirer, Luncai (moronic trickster), tyrant and Napoleon (the corrupted pig). Knifing also concerns with 'stabbing on ideas'. At Lontar, DO pull the *energia* words like *cantik* and *saadah* from the 'authoritative monologue' linguistic system into their own 'language of truth' (Patterson, D., 1988). *Energia* words are those words that give life (Von Humboldt, W., 1988) to the whole change program. In this knifing *energia* words are wounded from becoming a living word that produces idea/noise of conversation, and are expected to be weak in charging their life in. Weak and wounded *energia* words have no 'life before the other', and with time they 'lost contact with the word of the other' (Zappen, J.P., 2000). Since 'the life of a word is contained in its transfer from one mouth to another, from one context to another context', the logic of the knifing is to 'make those words forget their own path and be free from the power of concrete contexts into which they have entered' (PDP 202). Ideas lives not in one person's isolated individual consciousness; ideas live when they enter in a genuine relationship with other consciousness (PDP 87-88); words/ideas that not 'vibrating in between-ness' loses themselves, and appears as a dead thing (PDP 253). Generally, 'knifing' is an action of 'disturbing and counter-posing' established official word, which pretends to possess a ready-made truth (PDP 110). DO in this regard shift the 'normative' word inside out, and turns it into a threatening alien word. In that parasitic movement the alien word is 'waiting to be said' to 'reveal newer ways of means', which at the same time deposing the 'official-the-one-who-knows' words (Zappen, J.P., 2000).

### ***Play of kotor:***

*Kotor* is a Malay word for dirty. Dirt is usually being understood as a matter out of place, and it implies two conditions, a set of ordered relation and a contravention of that order. Thus dirt is a by-product of a

systematic ordering and a classification of matter. In that philosophical argument, dirt is inappropriately rejected element in an ordered system. Toilet in this regard is a place of dirt and a place that emits negative energy. King Fish man to some point believed in that sort of *feng-shui* understanding. Moreover, parasites thrive in toilets. Toilet is the most private 'territorial space' in organizations even though it is semi-public in ownership. At Lontar, DO, were (ab)using toilet as their marketplace. It was their convenient message board for 'underground messages' (Ferem, M., 2007).

One of the popular authoring actions in toilet was doing latrinina, scratching and scribing on toilet walls (Dundes, A., 1966). Latrinina is said to be one of the last bastions of truly free speech, a honest and 'pure' communication that attest to the blatant absence of profundity or 'state-censorships'. The most common latrinina were about officialdom poor sexual adventures. In 'injuring genitals', DO presented graphics on 'officialdom's private parts' as an open text. In RHW, Morris (Morris, P., 1994) observed that a great number of expressions related to 'abuse and mockery' are associated with lower stratum parts like genital organs, anus and the buttocks comparatively to other parts of the body like arms and legs. In general urination and defecation are fluids that challenges normal sense of order and orderliness, noted Turner (Turner, B., 2003). Carnivalistic obscenity in this regard is an act of subversive pleasure as obscenity that narrowly sexual has no place in the official system and imagery of officialdom (RHW 109).

### Discussions:

Organizational planned change is an authored attempt to create a new life-world with some beautiful desirable benefits [whose desire? whose benefits?] for the organizational members [which members?] At Lontar the change was authored and organized within a modern paradigm that supports functionalist-managerialist mindset. This ideology supports 'essential surplus authors' ---- persons that venture 'too far in the direction of the centripetal' so much so able or brave enough to have an inequality in relationship with the other (PDP 72-73). We suspect in that realm, masquerading is not an alienated action. We wonder whether authoring in that ideological world take the following mood: It is customary to speak about authorial mask. Bakhtin (Bakhtin, M., 1986) notes, "But in which speech acts is there a face and not a mask, that is no authorship? (p.152).

At Lontar, going 'beautiful' was the impetus point for change. The management viewed that ugliness had something to do with 'un-blessing', a kind of *balasan* 'punishment' from the God. As 'liver governs the limbs' being the acceptable life-warrants for Malays, authors of change (ab)used Al-Gazel's *saadah* as their 'sacred' play word. It fits nicely with *cantik*, a profane desirable noise that acts as point of departure of the program. As a concept, *saadah* brought a sense of unified consciousness about the whole desire for change; a significant factor for 'unity of the place'.

Since Al-Gazel 'authoritative words' were positively accepted as 'the God bearing noises' by almost all Lontarian, authors of change turned the ulema into some kind of super-addressee for their monologia. Consequently, the state of monological unity looms over participants' heads, and with that authors of change preserved themselves from accepting the fluidity and variety of noises. In that existence, another consciousness with equal right, another I, outside themselves was denied. Here, monologist says I am I, not I am the other. At Lontar another I was pictured as a threat and being labeled as the 'rebellious, madness or stubborn' other. In that state of monologia, authors of change cast a mantle of objectivity over every noise they do not share, 'turning it to one another, into a thing' (PDP 68); noises are finalized and deaf to the *other* responses. As noises authored by the management pretend to be the ultimate truth, a ready-made truth (PDP 109). This monologic whole ignored the fundamental plurality of unmerged consciousnesses as it is a world that corresponds with a single and unified authorial consciousness (PDP 9). So, no more 'loopholes or sideward glances' (PDP 233) but finalizability that creates 'closure' of relationship between I and another I. Simply, as monologia noises perceived to be euphonic, noises of others 'slip past their ears and become foreign to their lips' (PDP 201).

As the mesmerized *saadah* fog gave away, 'primitivism' showed its ugly head in officialdom. Primitives, as seen in PDP, emphasize the centrality/unitary of characters that preoccupied in establishing their place in the dominance hierarchy that is imposing their noises on other people; 'primitives think there is only one language' [to produce noise] and I-for-myself consciousness (Bakhtin, M., 1986) It is reminiscent of the 'Empire of the Selfsame' (Cixous, H. and Clement, C., 1975). With that rationalism of single consciousness and a single point of view of EN, the officialdom gives 'burdens to the otherness' that begets *sengsara* 'miseries' to DO. With *sengsara*, the DO actively produced noises of madness. We refer madness as cacophonous noises of reversal and inversion of the dominant system (Hoy, M., 1992), as seen in Bakhtin's carnivalesque, with aim to throw King Order in seeking a new order (Morin, E., 1992). In this madness,

mouths are always open, most of all by laughter, upon subverting the official authority. These noises are basically about the slippery movement of relationship which previously often fixed in a serious, official and authoritarian culture. As the King Order is still the ruler, noises of madness is just a kind of authoring fiction, a temporary re-textualizing of the social formation that exposes its fixative foundation (Eagleton, T., 1981). Indeed, this madness is not a prescription of or a realization of utopian ideals as its artistic response is usually aimed at transforming ways of thinking of the hearers (Elliot, S., 1999).

One peculiar place of authoring noises of madness was the toilet. In this back region individual can engage, temporarily, in a variety of discrediting acts with impunity (Goffman, E., 1959). The essential part of the place reality was the material bodily lower stratum like the bowels, genitals and buttocks. The lower stratum parts are related to defecation and excrement. In toilets the DO pulled down, metaphorically, the officialdom sarongs in order to 'expose and injure their genitals', an action of debasing the expected conventions of *aurat* 'covering up bodies' and *adat* 'customs' among Malay-Muslims of Lontar. In 'stripping clothed bodies' of officialdom personalities, the DO used the logic of 'inside-out'. In this crime of 'making private life into involuntary public', those 'official' genitals were 'mutilated' by various 'foul' narratives as scribed on the toilet walls. The de-grading the 'classical body' is about shifting from top to bottom, from front to the rear, from the head to the buttocks (PDP 10-11), and it is an act of hurling the officialdom down to the lower stratum aka the earth (RHW 21). Here, 'the buttocks persistently trying to take the place of the head' (RHW 317). The DO also believed that they manage to give their excesses for officialdom's 'brain'. This fantasy is related to papers used to write toilet-door-stories. "We believe those papers were exposed those papers to the odor of faeces and urine before being pasted on the door. They give us urines but we give them our shit". Interestingly, these 'contaminated' papers were part of materials collected for the officialdom intelligence repository. The displaced other also 'authored' their farting winds during meetings for the similar purpose of giving pollution or miasmatic effect on the officialdom. Outside toilets, officialdom other body parts, especially the 'liver and the head, were also subjected to attacks by the other as seen in the stitched-stories. The officialdom was also given stigmatized labels. Ironically all these noises were *hodoh*, the very ugly thing that the management wanted to get rid of. Simply, if we read Lehnhof (Lenhoff, K., 2007) discussion on scatology, the above profanities were just a way for DO of (ab) using 'obscenity to disparage devil and humiliation is part of punishment for the sinner'.

In subverting/de-crowning King Order associated with the management, the DO engaged with knifing on words that can give personalities torturous pain to *hati*, the psycho-affective domain of the Malays. Knifing is also done on words that give life to the change program. It is an action of denying *energia* words from having active relationship with the environment. Without that vibrant, the DO expect those words will be being forgotten or contested from what they meant upon entering the change program. As knifing is about giving pain to officialdom, who is the ruler, the DO played it by stratagem of *halus*. A good example can be seen in the King and Power Rangers toilet-door stories. They were works of anachronism; the story was written in archaic Malay and the setting was in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. In Malay society that celebrates indirectness as their way of life doing *halus* is not a sign of weakness but as a mark of maturity and unknown strength, at least to your opponent. It is one of Malay tradition of languaging into one open-ended process. Here, DO play around with their *bahasa* 'language' and turn it into a powerful 'weapon of the weak'. In this relation the DO utilized *localitat* materials taken from popular folk tales and classics as a way to invoke 'simple high imagination' for the addressed, another other or officialdom alike. As such half-forgotten idiom on the literature of the fools' was taken seriously by DO; Lunchai, the famous moronic trickster/comical fool of the Malay world, was the common character throughout the toilet-series series. Such fictional character which was deeply embedded in the collective remembering of the Malays was indeed a ready-made source of laughter. A point to note, in language 'knifing' there is always the idea of giving punishment to the addressed. At the societal level, it could be *malu* 'shameness'. If the 'stabbed words' are related to religion, the punishment could be associated with *balasan* (God retribution) after death like the hell-fire.

Reflexively, we need to realize that organizational change is a messy business. The case study highlighted that organizations are full of unplanned consequences. In an organization system that works with equilibrium framework, noises of the displaced other are unwanted element that needs to be eliminated. Organizations must take the advantage of serendipity of such noise as its occurrence is not merely an accident, and requires cultivating creative approach. Noise in the above perspective is both a signifier and the signified. Goldstein (Goldstein, J., 1994) noted that a successful change agent needs to encourage creative organizational responses by taking advantage of the unpredictable when it inevitably occurs. "This is not to suggest that planning has no use as every organizational intervention needs a design but the design is simply a place to get started, not a hard and fast procrustean bed" (p. 162). Simply, one needs to look beyond planning and prediction if doing change is about establishing a rose garden, not a snake pit organization.

### **Concluding Remarks:**

Burrell and Morgan (Burrell, G. and Morgan, G., 1979) decades ago posited that there is more than one way of looking and understanding organizational life-world. In light of the snake-pit phenomena arising out of change at Lontar, we believe Bakhtin and Serres have much to offer as an alternative to the modernist approach. Specifically it is about the need to recover noises as parasites and the need for authors of change to take *otvetsvennost* (answerability) in framing organizational change.

### **Noise as parasite:**

Traditionally a communicative act is about passing a signal or a message between two persons. Nowadays, it is more about a sender and a receiver, and specifically it is about 'she who speaks and she who listens' (Brown, S., 2004). Analogically, it is about two stations that operate in both modes whereby the mediation with the messages take place. In channel there must be noises, and noise is the presence of the medium through which the message must pass through (Zembylas, M., 2002). In simple term, the noise is in the background, and it is the 'always-there- third-man' as long as the sender and the receiver are not identical any communicative circuit of senders and receivers. It has been argued that if both parties were entirely identical at the moment of the communicative act there would be no message, no signal, no relations, and no 'stations'. Actually, we human is being circled and surrounded by noises. Paradoxically we are noises of the world. Serres pointed that in the beginning is noise and the real seems to be stochastically regular. Thus, we cannot close our door to noises reception, he added.

Upon taking his French experiences, Serres suggested that noise is related to parasites. In French, *parasite* can mean one of three things: an organism or a life form that lives off a host, a loafer who takes meal and gives nothing in turn, or a static noise in a communication circuit. There is a common thread between the three meanings, the parasitic relationship, one that is unbalanced such as in social relationship (Zembylas, M., 2002). For Serres, a relationship is something learned. The moment you acknowledge otherness, learning has its modifying effect, and a third person is being produced. Thus a relationship is not merely secondness (connection between two stations) but more of thirdness (a series of potential places). Thus, what is external to the system of relationship can quickly become internalized (via ideas like perturbation and invitation). Simply, noise and parasite are having 'a relation to relations' (Crocker, S. 2007). For Serres, any relation between two beings is itself part of the larger whole (assemblage) composed of many interrelations among many beings. He further noted that every relation demands a route; what is already there on this route either facilitates or impedes the relation. Similarly, what is internal to a system can quickly be externalized. It is a question how the same agent may be framed as one or the other (Kockleman, P., 2010). Therefore, noise can be an obstruction, but it may have informational value. In the above sense of dynamics, the parasite constitutes the condition of possibility of the system. The parasitic order then can be a source of invention to produce something new within the complex system. By the way of disorder or living outside the determined categories of rational order, both in terms of content and form, the parasite is able to invent something new and produces a more complex order (Harari, J.V. and Bell, D.F., 1982), or at the very least generates new understandings. On that similar ground, the parasite simultaneously can subverts those possibilities and absorb life and thought. Thus we can say the issue with parasite is about how it should take its residence in a system without just being merely a term (Kockleman, P., 2010). Serresian noise is not an element of binary sign but a real process of development that connects with particularities of everyday life. The process works within parasite logic of operation. Brown summarizes,

The parasite stand apart from the stations, it intercepts their relations. This is the traditional analytic move --- stand apart from your subjects, observe but do not be observed. Take but do not give. This operation induces an interruption, a kind of mini-catastrophe in the system. Its functions are disturbed, its relation are taken away in a different direction. Temporary paralysis. But this soon gives way to a different level of functioning, to a new kind of relationship. It works because it does not work. The parasite acts as a catalyst for complexity. This latter complexification comes not merely from the different forms of communication that the parasite makes possible, but also from the active attempts by the stations to expel the parasite. The diners collude together to expel the uninvited guest. The farmer wakes in the middle of the night hearing rats' voices. The host interrupts the parasite and it all starts over again, but not exactly in the same way. (Brown, S., 2004).

Meanwhile Bakhtin in *Rabelais and His World* mentioned that the noisy destruction in carnivals also prepared a new knowledge; it drew closer to man, to his body, permitted him to examine it from all sides.

Summarily, Serresian noise as parasite is to be meant as unwanted noises of communication, uninvited guest, and a surplus that work within parasite logic, that is via three parasitic operations, analysis, paralysis, catalysis. In the context of organization, Serresian noise is neither a subject nor the object although it has a

relation between subjects and objects. It is a device, an operator that prompts a system to reorganize in more complex form that incorporates the disturbance (Crocker, S. 2007). The action of parasite is to go to, not cancelling, the system as the means to achieve something else. Contextually, at Lontar Serresian noises indeed must be included so as not to create hyper-order/hyper rationality, a perquisite towards information death type organization (Stevenson, F.W., 2004). In a similar vein, Serres noted that perfectness is an ante-chamber to death; order becomes frozen into redundant and it functions behind the living. A point to remember, noises are displays of opposing interpretative possibilities; noises of the displaced other as textual-difference make the picture of things could more easily be explained (Stevenson, F.W., 2004). After all noises is a transport or a passage to a fertile avenue of reflection that lives on the logic of interruption, a joker necessary to the system. The key point in recovering noises as Serresian noise is simple: From noises, emerge voices, and one voice is able to unmask the other. Serres says: Either I am submerged in [noises] or I observe the exchanges; noises as enemy or as part of greater dance. Metaphorically speaking, noises as Serresian noise is making organizational change as science of Venus, a sweet and a fluid nature of action (Mindell, D.A., 1990).

### ***Novelistic authoring of otvetsvennost:***

Authoring organization is an act. For Bakhtin, acts are not about moving or leaping in and out from everyday reality into provinces of meaning but a movement into participative thinking and answerability. Here, content of an act and the actor responsibility of the act are equally important; acts are deeds, not mere happenings. Bakhtin refers the thoughts and actions of the human subject as the event of Being. Bakhtin noted that the event of Being that uphold *otvetsvennost* (answerability) must have signatures (Bakhtin, M., 1993). Since *otvetsvennost* invokes the necessity of a dialogue between peoples in an event, the self as the author must lived through, not passively comprehended their acts from afar (Gardiner, M., 1998). For Bakhtin, “we can only exist through the borrowed axiological light of otherness (Bakhtin, M. 1990), and self in this regard comprises three relational parts --- I, the other and I-for-the-other. Metaphorically, the interactional self consciousness in this view is wrapped around another (Bakhtin, M., 1986). Bakhtin postulated that individuals are unique in ‘everyday-life-events’ to the point that they must be responsible without resorting to alibis in performing their acts; only pretenders speak [read: making noises] with alibis. Pretenders are said to act with void and empty pretense that gives rise to nothing but a monologue (PDP 26). “Every time I perform a particular act I perform my life history and every particular act and lived experience is a constituent moment of my life --- of the continuous performing of acts”.

In everyday life events, authors of act that strive for *otvetsvennost* must get engaged in a situated and embodied participation, it must be done with a mastery of understanding one’s own relationship to others and relationship to self (Bender, C., 1998). The most possible ways of such authoring is via novelistic authoring of living dialogically with the second and the Third. Patterson, (1988), observed that an individual who fails to live dialogically would see good and evil as equally attractive. A ‘great’ living authors in this regard take the Third voice seriously, not merely as a strategy of demanding unconditional allegiance by virtue of the power of authoritative words (Bakhtin, M., 1981). Bakhtin argued that two voices are just the minimum for life and existence (PDP 252). The Third represents the position of truth which is yet to be uttered and it vibrates in the silence of the passion that moves us to speak can be heard between whenever two are gathered. Bakhtin suggested that authors in disarray must put their artistic will of various noises as a will to combine many wills (of speakers), that is a will to the ‘event’ (Bakhtin, PDP 21), and be novelistic. ‘In the novel the activity is a spiritual activity of the production and selection of sense, of connections, of axiological relations’. In this perspective, a novelistic invitation with full characters, as expected by participants of change, means one consciousness does not make any other consciousness into a second-hand position or even intend to transform them into one and all members are given opportunities to answer and act in encounters that attend otherness of the *other* (PDP 67-68).

As endnote we say the following: Organizational life is another social life, and it is like waltzing porcupine, a constant struggle, a potpourri of non-sequiturs cosmetically resurfaced to seem well-organised, everything is negotiated (Wasabaugh, W., 2008). Bakhtin noted that when we retreat from our authentic relationship to things and to the world, the specificity of the object confront us as something alien and independent; it begins to decompose, and we ourselves succumb to the power of the random, we lose ourselves, and we lose as well the stable definitiveness of the world (Emerson, C., 1984). In the above sense of relationship closure, not open-endedness, the scenario of about noisy characters in search of a theatre is indeed not something unreal, but highly possible. Perhaps, reading Luigi Pirandello’s play ‘Six Characters in Search of an Author’ is a good starting point in understanding noises as an attempt toward the philosophy of answerability.

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