ABSTRACT
                Followers attribute authority to charismatic leaders
through their faith and belief in them and in their mission.
Charismatic authority in organizations involves an interaction of
leader, followers, and moral order; in the eyes of the followers, the
leader personifies that order. Authority must come from below because
the ultimate decision to cooperate rests with the employ?e. True
charismatic leaders are able to place themselves and their mission
beyond the realm of the ordinary and thus extract extraordinary
effort, dedication, and faith from followers. These leaders are
persuasive through the use of a modified enthymeme, one that adapts
the audience to itself rather than adapting itself to the audience.
Charismatic leadership effects its rhetorical appeal as much through
the leader's persona as through the rational force of logical form.
The ancient Roman concept of "vir bonus" or "good man" was extrinsic
to the speaking situation; it was an accumulated perception based on
a record of civil service. The Roman orator appearing to have strong
moral character was able to persuade on the basis of this "good man"
status. Similarly, the charismatic organizational leader embodies the
aspirations and values of the organization, and with his or her
character provides the persuasion that elicits obedience and
commitment. This rhetorical perspective should facilitate critical
analysis of the ethics at work in contemporary organizational
culture. (SRT)

THE GOOD MAN SPEAKS:

A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE CHARISMATIC ORGANIZATIONAL LEADER

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THE GOOD MAN SPEAKS:
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Although traditionally organizational communication has been the subject of empirical study (Redding, 1985), contemporary researchers have begun to focus on the rhetorical dimension of communication in organizations (Putnam and Cheney, 1985). The roots of contemporary rhetorical theory are the theories and concepts developed within the classical Greek and Roman civilizations (Golden, Berquist, and Coleman, 1983). Elements of classical rhetoric offer a heuristic resource for the development of this emergent rhetorical perspective in organizational communication. A recent article by Tompkins and Cheney (1985) draws on Aristotle's concept of the enthymeme to analyze the process of unobtrusive control in the concertive organization. This paper advances the Roman vir bonus image as a similar heuristic device for understanding organizational authority relationships and organizational leadership.

Authority and Charismatic Leadership

There are numerous perspectives on organizational leadership (cf. the review by House and Baetz, 1979). Recent work has drawn a distinction between leadership and management (Burns, 1978), ascribing to leadership an inspirational quality drawing on Weber's notion of charismatic authority as opposed to the managerial performance of administrative functions. Weber developed the concept of charisma in his analysis of authoritative social relations. He identified traditional,

rational-legal and charismatic forms of authority relations

(Pugh, et al., 1985). While traditional authority derives from

historical continuity and the observance of custom, and rational-

legal authority derives from the power of structural form,

charismatic authority is an interactive phenomenon, deriving its

legitimacy from a dynamic interplay of elements.

Charisma entails the embodiment of a certain quality recognized

as extra-ordinariness---the charismatic leader is held to be

endowed with superhuman or supernatural qualities. But

charismatic leadership is inherently unstable in that it depends

on a relationship of faith. Followers attribute charismatic

authority to the leader through their faith and belief in the

leader and her mission while the leader's demands for

unconditional commitment and obedience are validated in the faith

that she is the embodiment of that mission. Charisma has been

popularized to mean a personality attribute or the personal

appeal of a political figure; but it is the imputation of a

quality of character by the followers that is the hallmark of

charismatic leadership (Wrong, 1980).

The legitimacy of charismatic leadership involves a dialec-

tic between the extraordinary and the everyday. Weber

thought that charismatic leaders appear in times of dis-

tress and are agents of social change---often revolutionaries or

prophets. Toth suggested that such charismatic leaders

interject the sacred into the mundane sphere of the everyday.

They ground the imperatives of their revolutionary visions of tran-

scendence in a moral order superimposed on events in the world

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(1981, pp. 154-155). So charismatic authority involves a triadic interaction between leader, follower, and moral order: "The charismatic leader is, in essence, the personification of the very moral order by which the leader is legitimated" (Toth, 1981, p. 32). Merely recognizing a charismatic leader's mission is enough to establish her power.

In summary, the concept of charismatic leadership involves a perceived/imputed image, a relationship between leader and follower of demand/obedience, moral vision/faith and a situation marked by exigency and enacted in terms of a particular moral order.

Charismatic Leadership and Organizational Theory

The notion that authority is imparted from below is not a new one in organizational theory. Both Chester Barnard and Mary Parker Follett, theorists writing during the 1920's and 1930's, recognized that organizational authority involves persuasion since the ultimate decision to cooperate rests with the employee (Tompkins, 1984). Barnard (1938/1968) held communication to be one of the essential functions of the executive. He described organizational leadership in terms reminiscent of Weber's concept of charisma: "the power of individuals to inspire cooperative personal decision by creating faith" (1968, p. 259). He also held organizational leadership to be a moral responsibility: the leader must develop an "organizational personality" whose private moral code is derived from and consistently enacts the organizational code and must create and adjudicate a public moral

code guiding the organizational conduct of all members.
Barnard waxed eloquent over executive responsibility: it "is
that capacity of leaders by which, reflecting attitudes, ideals,
hopes, derived largely from without themselves, they are
compelled to bind the wills of men to the accomplishment of
purposes beyond their immediate ends, beyond their times"
(1938/1968, p. 283). His remarks capture a persuasive and
charismatic dimension of leadership, suggesting that the leader's
authority derives in part from his embodiment and enactment of
the organizational code of values and in part from the
transactive communication relationship between the
organization's leader and other employees.

Recent empirical study appears to substantiate the concept
of charismatic organizational leadership (House, 1977). This
line of research suggests that people who display strong
convictions, self-confidence and needs for dominance provide a
model for subordinates that includes value orientations,
expectations about performance-reward outcomes, emotional
responses to work, and attitudes toward work and the
organization. Such leaders communicate ideologically, expressing
abstract goals, articulating high expectations and confidence in
subordinates, arousing motives for accomplishing the
organizational "mission," and defining follower roles in
inspirational and persuasive terms. Subordinates who accept the
definition of followers accept goals, are willing to cooperate
toward the accomplishment of those goals, and exert efforts to
meet specific and challenging performance standards.

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Adopting a different philosophical orientation, Smircich and Morgan (1982) suggested that leadership is not just a style of acting or behaving, a personality trait, or a matter of manipulating rewards. Rather it is a process of creating and enacting social realty that involves power relationships, shared meanings, and rhetorical persuasion. For Smircich and Morgan, organizations are networks of managed meanings, resulting from the interactive processes that members engage in to make sense of the events and contexts of their daily lives. Leadership is both a right and a responsibility to frame and define the reality of others. There are four aspects defining this view of leadership as the creation and enactment of organizational reality:

1. Leadership is a social process that is both intersubjective (it involves reciprocal perceptions of rights, responsibilities, and obligations between leader and follower) and interactive (it involves transactional communicative episodes in which the leader-follower relationship is defined and changed).

2. Leadership is a process of defining a sensible reality (it provides good reasons for what has happened, what presently exists, what ought to be, and what must be done).

3. There is an uneasy balance between dependence and autonomy in the leader-membership relationship. Although leaders define patterns of desired interaction, sense-making, and dependency (power relations), their enactments of reality are always subject to re-interpre-

tation by subordinates and are always vulnerable to alternative accounts. In other words, the seeds of revolt are always latent in the process of meaning management.

4.   Formal leadership roles institutionalize the right and responsibility of leaders to define realities. Leadership roles also formalize expectations that followers will surrender their own perspectives in deference to that of the leader. Finally, formal leadership roles institutionalize the obligation of followers to accept the leader's enacted interpretation of reality and obey the injunctions to action that it might entail.

In summary, leadership is a form of action that seeks to shape its context. Leaders draw attention to particular aspects of organizational experience; they enact those aspects as sensible, real, and important and in that way, disambiguate the ongoing flow of experience by punctuating it into meaningful segments. Leadership is not just giving orders and directing the work activities of organizational members: it is symbolic as much as instrumental, giving meaning to work activities in a larger context. The symbolic functions of leaders include managing the equivocality of interactive situations, attending to the ways in which subordinates interpret and enact organizational events and contexts, and using appropriate forms of symbolic discourse to create meanings and values that induce desired modes of organizational action.

This interpretive perspective contributes to the concept of charismatic leadership by enriching the dynamic nature of the leader-follower authority relationship and by emphasizing the contextualized nature of charismatic leadership as a process of strategic meaning management. Whereas earlier organizational theorists described organizational leadership in static terms and concretized its relational dynamics, the interpretive perspective describes a transactive and implicitly rhetorical model of organizational leadership. That is, both leadership and rhetoric may be considered to be forms of symbolic action that seek control over their contexts through the strategic manipulation of meaning. In both, the persona of the leader/speaker, the relationship between leader/follower or speaker/audience, the enactment of situation/occasion, and the persuasive appeal to action are essential elements.

In the case of charismatic leadership, the leader persona (that "personage" constructed through the intersubjective expectations held by speaker/audience or leader/follower and modified or reenforced in interaction—as opposed to the "real" personality or the designed and static image of a leader/speaker) involves a quality of transcendence that locates both the leader and her mission beyond the domain of the ordinary. This charismatic transcendence is part of the situational enactment that both frames the rhetorical process and is a product of that process. Hence, an extraordinary situation raises hopes, expectations, and perceptions of an extraordinary leader whose extraordinary mission envisions the possibility of transformative

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change and demands extraordinary effort, dedication, and faith on the part of those who accept and enact the situational interpretation. Barnard's notion that the organizational executive exhibits an "organizational personality" which embodies the organization's value code combined with Smircich and Morgan's interpretive analysis of the intersubjective, transactive nature of organizational leadership are important to a reformulation of the Weberian notion of charismatic authority in the organizational setting. But they do not explain the persuasive force of this process of charismatic leadership. To do so, it is necessary to turn to the classical concepts of the enthymeme and the vir bonus image.

The Enthymeme and the Vir Bonus Image in Organizations

Tompkins and Cheney (1985) advanced a theory of enthymemetic persuasion in the organizational context. They contended that organizational socialization in contemporary forms of bureaucracy involves the inculcation of value premises in organizational members, effecting unobtrusive, internalized control over both behaviors and attitudes. To develop this argument, they modified Aristotle's concept of the enthymeme, the syllogistic form Aristotle held to be the heart of the persuasive force of rhetorical logic. Aristotle's enthymeme draws for its premises on the beliefs, values, and expectations held by the audience. It is often referred to as a truncated syllogism because the audience is called upon to complete the syllogism by filling in either the premises or the conclusion. It's persuasive force becomes compelling in the fulfillment of its

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logical form. Tompkins and Cheney defined their version of the enthymeme--"enthymeme[2]"--as "a syllogistic decision-making process, individual or collective, in which a conclusion is drawn from premises (beliefs, values, expectations) inculcated in the decision maker(s) by the controlling members of the organization" (1985, p. 188).

Unlike Aristotle's enthymeme, the premises for enthymeme[2] are not necessarily held by the organizational member but are derived from the value code of the organization. Rather than adapting syllogistic arguments to the value sets already held by the audience, organizational members are encouraged to iden- tify with the organization, adopting its value premises, goals, and objectives as their own, and giving overriding priority to that value code when choosing between possible courses of action. In this sense, "while [Aristotle's enthymeme] is an adaptation to the 'audience,' enthymeme[2] is an adaptation of the audience." But in each case the member is arriving at conclusions drawn from organizationally preferred premises" (1985, p. 195). Organiza- tional authority and control is exerted through an internalized set of value premises that can be instigated through the participative persuasion of the enthymemetic form.

This concept of enthymemetic persuasion and organizational control accounts for the logical force of the rhetoric of organi- zational leadership. But charismatic leadership effects its rhetorical appeal as much through the leader's persona as it does through the rational force of logical form. Aristotle's concept

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of ethos involves the audience's perception of the speaker's

goodwill, intelligence, and character. In this sense, it is

similar to the attributional nature of charisma. But the intrin-

sic nature of ethos as a perception effected in the immediate

speaking situation does not capture the expansiveness or trans-

cendence that contributes to the persuasive power of charismatic

leadership. In contrast, the Roman concept of vir bonus

"broadened ethical proof to include the thrust and image of the

speaker's life as a whole" (Golden, et al., 1983, p. 77).

While the Romans recognized the importance of rational argu-

ment, their major historical contributions to the development of

rhetorical invention involve the extra-rational dimensions of

pathos and ethos. Enos and McClaran (1978) observed that the

Greek concept of ethos was replaced by the Roman concept of vir

bonus both grammatically and conceptually:

> Quintilian believed that ethos not only had no
> word equivalent but also no concept equivalent, and
> considered ethos most similar to the Latin
> concept mores, or the moral make-up of an
> individual. Cicero himself never used the term
> "ethos" in his rhetorical treatises. . . .
> (1978, p. 102).

Instead of the intrinsically-bound concept of rhetorical

ethos, Cicero and Quintilian advanced the extrinsic concept of

the orator as "a good man." Cicero described certain character

traits of this "good man" such as dignitas (referring to good

breeding, virtuous conduct, and pristine values) and auctoritas

(referring to a sustained reputation for distinguished public

service). Hence, the "good man" image was extrinsic to the

speaking situation itself; it was an accumulated perception based

on a record of civic service. Quintilian uncategorically asserted, "No man can be an orator unless he is a good man" (Meador, 1972, p. 171).

Based on their investigation of the vir bonus concept, Enos and McClaran claimed that the Roman orator of good moral character, or the Roman orator appearing to have good moral character, was able to develop a rhetorical argument on the basis of his vir bonus image: "[A]cceptance of the morality and credibility of the orator was a force in argumentation: he was the actual starting point for his argument, the symbolized axiom of his logic" (1978, p. 106). In this view, the speaker's moral character as ethical proof played an important role in the development of his argument, and provided a source for argumentative premises.

Notably, the vir bonus image could provide both argumentative form and substance: form through its use as argumentative premise and substance through the speaker's own character presented as the vir bonus image. Enos and McClaran stated:

> Speakers who successfully portrayed or created the
> appearance of a vir bonus image strove for
> unequivocal acquiescence to their arguments,
> similar to the acceptance of analytical proposi-
> tions, with the tacit notion that their arguments
> were predicated upon a character of unquestionable
> virtue. In this sense, the vir bonus image
> became the unobtrusive premise for the proper
> course of action, which was then 'demonstrated'
> through argumentation (1978. p. 106).

The Roman vir bonus and the charismatic leader may be regarded as analogous rhetorical constructs. Like the Roman "good man" persona, the charismatic leader is held to personify a quality of character that places her beyond the ordinary. As the suppressed premise in an argument advocating a course of action commensurate with the organizational "mission," the charismatic persona itself "demonstrates" the level of dedication and commitment expected of the faithful.

In classical Roman rhetoric, the creation and argumentative impact of the vir bonus image relied to a large extent on the Roman audience. The existence of the orator's image as a "good man" was determined by audience recognition and acceptance, while the effective use of the vir bonus image as argumentative premise depended on the audience's "tacit" agreement. In this sense, the audience supplied the "unobtrusive premise," that is, the speaker's publicly acknowledged vir bonus image, in much the same manner that it was called upon to supply the understood premise in Aristotle's enthymemetic scheme. In this way, the speaker's vir bonus image provided a source of argumentative premises for both speaker and audience.

Correspondingly, the intersubjective, transactional nature of organizational leadership entails the social construction of the charismatic persona through the expectations and perceptions of the organizational members. The context of expectations, that is, the organizational value set, is integral to this intersub-jective construction. As Barnard suggested, organizational leaders are held to embody the aspirations and values of the

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organization. In this sense, the character of the leader, her attributed charismatic nature, provides the suppressed premise underwriting the demand for obedience and commitment.

Smircich and Morgan argued that the organizational leader enacts an interpretation of organizational reality that entails particular actions by the members. The definitions of reality framed by a charismatic leader incorporate the mutual expectations of transcendence that entail faith and action. Tompkins and Cheney (1985, pp. 183-185) noted that in contemporary, "neo-bureaucratic" organizations, a sense of common mission, a shared organizational value set, an implicit social "contract" entailing rules of conduct and morality, and identification of self interests with organizational interests establish a "concertive" form of control over organizational members that is more encompassing and intensive than traditional and more explicit forms of inducement through reward, organizational propaganda or coercion. Charismatic leadership is an important element in such organizations for the leader persona herself provides the persuasive premise of service to the organization as the over-riding decisional premise.

For the Romans, the _vir_ _bonus_ image not only personified those moral virtues definitionally related but also prevalent ethical and cultural norms. Enos and McClaran pointed out that through the _vir_ _bonus_ image, speakers could "establish themselves as symbols or personifications of the normative ethics of their culture: a standard dictated by their listeners" (1978, p. 106).

The Roman concept of "good" corresponded to civic duty; so
the speaker's _vir bonus_ image as a servant of the state served as
a persuasive model through the audience's enculturated sense of
the ultimate "good" as duty. Unlike the Greek hierarchy of
absolute goods culminating in individual happiness, the Roman
concept of _vir bonus_ entailed a situational ethic---any means
necessary to realize the best interests of the state were
justified. Unfortunately, such license often resulted in the
appearance of a _vir bonus_ image rather than the moral behavior it
supposedly represented (Enos and McClaran, 1978, pp. 101-102).

This dimension of _vir bonus_ may be useful in examining the
darker side of organizational life. The "good man" concept
points to the moral foundations of Roman rhetoric; Meador
suggested that Quintilian's development of the "good man" concept
was a response to the decay of political liberty and the
depravity of the moral climate marking the end of the classical
Roman civilization (1972, p. 157)--a last attempt to shore up
the vestiges of virtuous character and the possibilities for
politically effective individual action. Analogously, the moral
depravity and conditions of domination and alienation inherent to
the bureaucratic form have been the focus of human relations
perspectives since the 1920's (Perrow, 1979). Critical
organizational theorists contend that a technocratic ideology
mandating the principle of rational efficiency and holding the
interests of the organization above concerns for individual or
social interests underwrites the prevailing moral order in
today's organizations; so that, similar to Roman culture,

contemporary organizational culture is characterized by a
situational ethic (Scott and Hart, 1976).

The implications of the vir bonus image
foster some sobering speculations about the moral
character of contemporary charismatic figures. More importantly,
the rhetorical perspective provides the basis for critical
analysis of the organizational ethic and its embodiment in
charismatic leaders. If the authority of a such a leader to
define situations and mandate actions is legitimated in his
personification of a moral order prioritizing organizational
efficiency, then analysis of the rhetorical dimension of
charismatic leadership draws into the foreground the legitimating
process itself and the social reality that both contextualizes
and is constituted in the interplay of leader, follower, and
moral order.

Conclusion

This paper has advanced the Roman concept of a rhetor's vir
bonus image as a heuristic analogy for examining the nature of
charismatic organizational leadership. The function of the vir
bonus image as an unobtrusive value premise warranting an
advocated course of action is useful in explaining the persuasive
nature of charismatic authority. It has been suggested that
this rhetorical perspective facilitates a critical analysis of
the contemporary organizational ethic as legitimated through the
interactional dynamic of charismatic authority.

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