DRAGON

DRAGON is the SCOS journal,

so that it will deal mainly with the subject of Organisation Symbolism. It will give priority to articles – case-studies or theoretical expositions – which consider the organisation as a human and social group within which we see the development of phenomena outside the precincts of classical systems analysis ; beliefs, myths, rites, heroes, sagas, and so on. These new concepts usually coincide with the introduction to organisation study of disciplines formerly remote from it: linguistics, history, psychoanalysis, anthropology, etc.

DRAGON publishes working papers,

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DRAGON THE SCOS JOURNAL N° 7 SEPTEMBER 1986

CONTENTS

FULL ADDRESSES OF THE AUTHORS AT THE END OF THIS VOLUME, P. 169

DRAGON EST REPRODUIT PAR L'ECOLE POLYTECHNIQUE (FRANCE)
POUR LE CENTRE DE RECHERCHE EN GESTION DE L'ECOLE POLYTECHNIQUE (PARIS)

EDITORIAL

by Vincent Degot

Summer is always a high point on the SCOS production curve, and was particularly so this year. Two international conferences were held, on "Corporate Engineering: the evidence for and against" at Montreal in June, followed by "Towards a Meta-theory of Organisational Symbolism" at Hull in late August.

The contrast between these two themes illustrates the variety and breadth of the field covered by SCOS - at the same time raising the question of whether such diversity might not bear the seeds of conflict and have schismatic undertones.

Both for conferences and for corporate journals, the problem of achieving a proper balance between the broad general subject and the depth of the contributions on specific themes it attracts remains an open one, and attempted compromises rarely gain unanimous approval. Some are annoyed by what they call a "rag-bag" offering, while others welcome a glimpse at what is going on outside their own narrow field of study.

I was fortunate in being able to attend both of the last two conferences, and gained the impression that they reflected, rather than a random dispersion of effort, two distinct tendencies of which one, at least, proclaims itself as such and as attempting to escape from an "imperialistic" North-American school of thought.

My own view tends to be that no true school of thought is ever imperialistic, wherever it is born, and that (firmly rejecting the bourgeois science versus proletarian science polemics of the wild and woolly Fifties), observations and findings made on both sides of the Atlantic can be equally valid and relevant to all. My sole reservation, from the standpoint of a French practitioner, might be that the more constraining economic conditions in Europe have led to the development there of more subtle management techniques. This is not to say (the figures prove the contrary) that these are more efficient, or that the European researchers studying them display greater subtlety than their American counterparts. Otherwise, we

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would also have to maintain that art historians studying the Baroque period are necessarily more qualified than those dealing with the Early Primitives, because their subject matter is more varied and complex. This would clearly be unreasonable.

At all events, the papers published in DRAGON cover all the tendencies concerned, and our pages are open to those who may wish to discuss them in terms of scientific controversy. However, I am afraid that thus far - in line with a well-established French pattern which seems to have been adopted by researchers elsewhere - the birds of each feather prefer to flock together, discussing their common ways of looking at things, rather than being prepared to confront their views with those who hold different ones with regard to a common subject of study - the organisation.

This is why DRAGON must continue to remain open to all opinions (provided they are properly documented) and attempt to encourage debate other than by a mere juxtaposition of papers from all sides. The fact that certain papers are accepted by the organisers of conferences and the editors of journals does not mean they consider them to be of particularly high value in themselves, but regard them as capable of fuelling a debate - if only others are prepared to respond to them.

Before concluding, I would like to thank - on behalf of all, I am sure - Robert Poupart, Pippa Carter, Norman Jackson and all their helpers, for the way they organised the conferences referred to.

Our best wishes and thanks are also due to Rein Nauta, the retiring Chairman of SCOS, together with our congratulations and expressions of support to Kristian Kreiner, his successor.

As DRAGON gradually comes of age, it is appropriate to remind readers of some of the possibilities it offers, and to express some hopes for the future:

- We will welcome all suggestions with a view to publishing special issues, devoted to particular subjects, geographical areas, schools of thought, and so on. An example is provided by P.J. Benghozi's call (page 6) for contributions to an issue on "Art and the Organisation".

- I personally intend to try to improve the layout and general presentation of DRAGON+ (such as by making all papers start on a right-hand page, and so on), and I hope that you will help me by adopting a more standard presentation for your contributions, particularly by putting the title and the author's name on the front page, without giving the parent institution or address, and using paper format A4 (21x29.5 cm).

+In this connection, I must express my regrets to Dick Raspa, whose paper "Creating Fiction in the Committee ..." (DRAGON N°4) was bound with the pages in a random order invented solely by myself - mea culpa.

Request for Contributions

for a Special Issue of DRAGON
on the subject of

ART AND THE ORGANISATION

Pierre-Jean Benghozi

The word "culture" is regularly heard at SCOS meetings, and DRAGON has made it its main focus of interest. In fact, it has come to take on two distinct meanings: it is used to express the idea of a given set of values - as when we talk of "corporate culture"; but it also has its every-day meaning of an area of talents and activities of a particular kind - artistic, literary, and so on. The proposed special issue of DRAGON on "Art and the Organisation" is intended to concentrate on the second of these acceptations.

The two terms of this title are not brought together as an expedient. In combination, they open up a number of lines of approach, of which three are discussed here - not in an attempt to limit the scope of contributors, but merely to suggest a rough framework on which to work. "Art and the Organisation" should enable a review of: the production side of cultural organisations, the relationships between art theory and organisation theory, and the presence of artistic culture in industrial undertakings.

The Production Side of Cultural Organisations

From the standpoint of the inner workings and the management of organisations, analysing the activities of cultural undertakings more particularly (opera companies, publishing houses, art galleries, TV networks, theatre companies, etc) is very much like analysing those of other organised systems (business corporations, public health services, research institutes, and so on).

However, one of the most prominent features of the cultural organisation is the virtually constant confrontation of different, and sometimes conflicting, mental attitudes: the business ethic, the technological mentality, and the creative ethos. The incidence

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of each of these on the creative work finally produced occurs at several levels: the direct effect of budgetary and other material constraints, the indirect constraints imposed by technical feasibility, by project financing procedures and by the particular status of participants from the cultural world, together with the personal cultures of all concerned (artistic, technical or business backgrounds). All of these affect the way in which creative work is organised and the production strategies applied.

The constant interaction between these various attitudinal poles means that the management function is of especial importance in this type of activity. A cultural enterprise is a complex system involving many variable factors of technical, human and other kinds, held together by a web of relationships: procedures, work organisation rules, a control hierarchy, evaluation principles, technical and financial constraints, business objectives, and so on. The management function is what enables these disparate elements to hang together, by providing procedures for coordinated regulation of their activities and a decision-making stage preceded by any necessary arbitration. To some extent, therefore, the final expression of a given artistic "product" is determined by its management and organisational framework.

Artistic Theory versus Organisation Theory

Over and beyond such enterprises designed to produce works of art, the arts and the organisation also meet on other levels.

The aesthetic and historical theories developed regarding the arts, taken in their widest sense, have for long placed the accent on a number of methodological considerations which also confront the practitioners of organisation theory. From the simple idea of identifying the viewer (who is looking at it ? with what motives ? from what place ? from what perspective ?), on to the different levels of decrypting and understanding (e.g. recognition of facts and expressions, relating of artistic motifs and themes, then analysis of intrinsic content), these theories have provided analytical models and a way of looking at things which can be transposed to the study of organisations, to the extent

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that the latter are characterised by particular configurations which evolve, give way to new ones, and reflect changing fashions and styles.

Art theory has also been more directly harnessed to the analysis of organisations, as a means of regarding a whole set of phenomena (graphics, architecture, corporate image, advertising material, etc) which fall within its area of study. Recent issues of DRAGON carry articles that are very directly inspired by this kind of approach. It would be interesting to find out how the analysis of corporate texts or graphics, for example, throws light on some features - and on what features - of the way organisations work, and also of the way in which it can reveal how the business and industrial world more generally is perceived in the outer society, such as through films, advertising and comics.

Art in Industry

Industrial undertakings have always drawn heavily on artistic resources: directly, for production purposes (calling in product designers to style their manufactured goods), for integration in corporate life-style (architects, decorators and artists contributing to the design of factories and office buildings), and by enhancing corporate image through association with creative works, using the age-old practice of patronage or sponsorship.

The frontier between art and industry is thus increasingly tending to disappear. On the one hand, industrial products are gaining increasing recognition as works of art (exhibited, for example, at the New York Metropolitain Museum). Reciprocally, some cultural productions (concerts, exhibitions, restoration operations, etc) find it ever more difficult to see the light without the assistance (whether technical or financial) of business corporations.

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Contributions and requests for information to:

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1, rue Descartes, 75005 Paris - France

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COMING CLEAN: the symbolic use of clinical hygiene in a hospital sterilising unit

BY: Dr. Barbara Rawlings, Manchester Business School, Booth Street West, Manchester, M15 6PB, England.

ABSTRACT: Based on research into hospital sterilising practices, it is argued that sterility is a symbolic rather than an absolute standard in clinical circles. The use of rules for achieving sterility is examined, and some parallels are drawn between the symbolic systems of primitive pollution beliefs and hospital hygiene rules.

1 Introduction

This paper is based on research carried out in a Theatre Sterile Services Unit (TSSU), a service department with responsibility for packing and sterilising surgical instruments for use in hospital operating theatres. I will describe clinical notions of sterility, and argue that whilst these represent objective standards of hygiene in hospital culture, it is more revealing to study how the standards are achieved and maintained than it is to take them for granted as resources for explaining organisational data. It will be shown that whilst sterility is produced and treated as an objective standard of hygiene, the methods members use to accomplish and sustain that display of objectivity are practical rather than scientific ones.

In two respects, this paper discloses the organisational symbolism of notions of clinical sterility:

1.1 Anthropological symbolism

In her book 'Purity and Danger',(1) Mary Douglas points out that it is tempting to see pollution behaviour in primitive societies as superstitious and modern western pollution behaviour as scientific; whilst primitive notions are based on religion, western notions are based on hygiene and are dominated by the knowledge of pathogenic organisms. However, she goes on to say:

> "If we can abstract pathogenicity and hygiene from our notion of dirt, we are left with the old definition of dirt as matter out of place. This is a very suggestive approach. It implies two conditions: a set of ordered relations and a contravention of that order. Dirt then, is never a unique, isolated event. Where there is dirt there is a system. Dirt is the by-product of a systematic ordering and classification of matter, in so far as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements."(2)

Whilst I will not attempt, in this paper at any rate, to establish a thorough going link between primitive and western notions of purification and pollution, I will take Douglas' notion of dirt as matter out of place according to a system a stage further. For the moment I will note the following with respect to the accomplishment of sterility in the TSSU.

1.1.1 That 'matter out of place' will include 'people out of place' (as indeed it would include in an analysis of primitive cultures). Thus for example non-sterile TSSU ancillary workers would be out of place if they should wander into the 'clean corridor' of the theatre block. In being thus out of place, they are treated not so much as trespassers who have no right to be in that area, but as contaminating elements who threaten to destroy the carefully wrought sterility of the area.

1.1.2 That 'dirt' in the TSSU, or at least significant dirt, is of a special kind. This is not dirt anyone can see, but dirt which must be removed through subjection to special technological processes (hot steam) and which can be re-acquired through proximity to non-sterile goods and people. Instruments in the TSSU are thoroughly washed, cleaned and dried before sterilisation: they look perfectly clean before the critical stage of their cleaning cycle. Consequently, the efficacy of this crucial stage is one which must be judged at a distance, via tests and practical measurements rather than by direct observation. Similarly, only practical measures can be used to decide whether goods have become unsterile before the use for which they have been sterilised. The issue of how members decide whether or not surgical instruments have become sterile or unsterile is a major focus in this paper.

There is a clear similarity between the Harvik Brahmin pollution rules outlined by Mary Douglas and the concept of sterility in the TSSU, in that in neither case can the dirt, by and large, be seen. In both cases, dirt, or lack of it, is inferred through the presence or absence of particular events.(3) As I explain, however, the emphasis in this paper is not to list the hygiene rules, as Mary Douglas does, but to examine the ways in which the rules are used in practice.

1.1.3 That the concept of a system requires knowledge of how the system is to be operated. Insofar as any system is based on the differential classification of objects, activities, or people, then there has to be a means of classifying these things according to the system, and of relating the classes, one to another, in ways which are seen to be systematic. Seen in this way the production and maintenance of a system can be seen as a continuing practical accomplishment for the people whose job it is to work with that system (which is the opposite of those system theories which treat systems as existing independently of the people involved with them). If dirt is to be seen as matter out of place according to a system, then continual decisions need to be made by people involved as to whether people, activities and objects belong to the class of clean or the class of dirty things.

1.2 The symbolic relationship between rules and values

The hygiene theories of microbiology and clinical sterility are, at base, complex and scientific. A practical solution to the problem of applying these complex theories to the everyday work of achieving and maintaining sterility, is to translate the underlying theories into rules of good practice, on the grounds that if the relatively simple rules are observed then the far more complicated theories of hygiene will be properly addressed. The relationship between the organisational rules and the underlying values, however, is clearly a symbolic one in that the rules stand for the values, but do not properly or fully describe them. Because of this symbolic rather than direct relationship, members of the organisations involved in producing and maintaining sterility treat the rules as practical features of the setting, to be invoked, suspended or followed with reference to other contextual features, such as who is involved or how urgently some equipment is needed. This is not to make the practical accusation that rules are deliberately flaunted, but to note that the meaning of a rule is a matter for the situated practical judgements of the people concerned and not a stable feature external to their activities.(4)

In summary, this paper will focus on the symbolism of dirt and cleanliness, and on the symbolic use of organisational rules. It will focus on a setting which is specifically and scientifically designed to produce and maintain some of the highest standards of hygiene in modern western society: the Theatre Sterile Services Unit (TSSU) in a large general hospital.

2 The Sterilising and Use Cycle

The TSSU is built into the main theatre block (see fig. 1). Instruments are packed onto trays in the TSSU, sterilised, stored and distributed to theatres when needed. In theatre, trays are unpacked by nurses, used by surgeons, repacked and left outside in the dirty corridor, for collection by TSSU personnel.

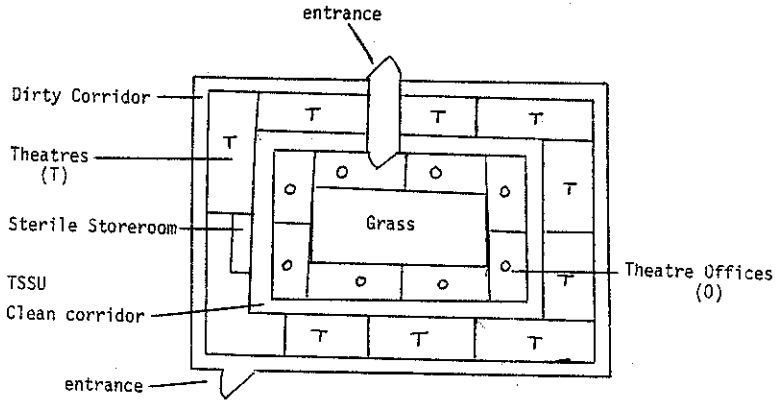

Fig. 1 : Ground plan of main theatre block showing incorporation of TSSU (not drawn to scale)

The dirty trays are collected and stacked on racks outside the TSSU (see fig. 2). From here they are unpacked, and the instruments washed and dried. Instruments are kept together, as each tray relates to specific operations, and is purposely standardised to include all the instruments that will typically be needed. Trays are repacked, fastened with heat sensitive tape, and stacked in an autoclave for sterilisation. The TSSU had three steam autoclaves and one formalin machine at the time of the study. Steam autoclaves take about thirty minutes per cycle, much of this time being spent in building up and losing heat and pressure. The actual sterilising process takes about three minutes at the climax of this thirty minute cycle.

After sterilisation, trays are removed from the autoclaves and stacked in the sterile storeroom ready for use.

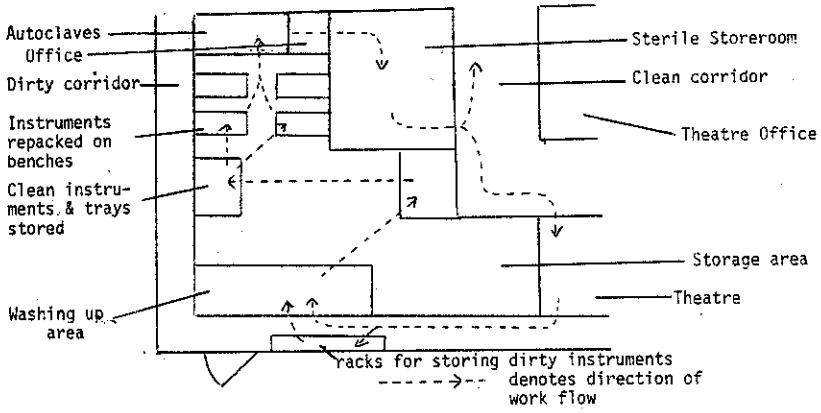

Fig. 2 : Diagram of TSSU showing cycle of sterilisation and use (not drawn to scale)

3 The Research

This research interest developed from a project undertaken in 1984, which focussed on the differing perceptions of the providers and users of the TSSU. Over a period of several weeks, most of the ancillary staff in the TSSU, and many theatre nurses and surgeons, were interviewed, and some observation work was carried out.

The research findings included identification of some specific communication problems between the users and providers of the service, and these in turn seemed to be at least partially related to barriers between the (dirty) TSSU and the (clean) theatres. These barriers were of two kinds:

(i) physical: the two areas were geographically separated by doors, physical space and an intervening storeroom,

(ii) clinical: since one area was sterile, and could become contaminated by the presence of non-sterile people, there was an organisational sanction against TSSU personnel entering the theatre area; similarly, since the TSSU area was non-sterile, there were good clinical reasons for sterile people from the theatre area to keep away from it, since if they entered it they would become contaminated.

Since passage of personnel was difficult between the two areas, opportunities for face to face communication were limited, and in the research report I argued that this limitation exacerbated the poor relationship between the users and providers of the service. In examining the evidence to argue this point, however, it became clear that whilst on the whole the barriers between sterile and non-sterile areas were maintained and distances observed, this was by no means always the case. There seemed to be certain people, or certain kinds of people, who could pass through barriers which others could not.(5) As this did not accord with my original beliefs about the 'special state' of clinical hygiene required to earn the title of 'sterile', I began to look more closely at the concept itself. I should add here that on the whole the communication theory developed in my original report was soundly based, since on the whole theatre personnel and TSSU personnel stayed in their own areas. What I found interesting was the observation that a few people did not. It seemed to me that either my strict notions of clinical hygiene were correct and that these people were breaking the rules and putting patients at risk or that the concepts themselves were more complicated than I had realised. Whilst recognising that members themselves might well be concerned with the former perspective and its implications, it nontheless seemed sociologically more valuable to pursue the matter from the latter perspective, particularly since it seemed likely that an exploration of the concept of 'sterile' would throw light on the former perspective anyway.

4 The Concept of Clinical Sterility

4.1 Clinical notions of hygiene

In first approaching this piece of research, I assumed, as I take it most other ordinarily appreciative members of this culture would assume, that hygiene standards have a kind of scientific life of their own outside of the practical activities of human beings. I assumed that the sterility or non-sterility of an object was not just a matter of how it looked, but was something which could be judged by appeal to objective criteria. That is, I assumed that cleanliness was something visible to scientific instruments rather than to the naked eye, particularly when the standard of cleanliness was as high as to warrant the label 'sterile'. (It would, incidentally, be virtually impossible to see any difference at all between a clean knife and a sterilised knife simply by looking; presumably the

distinction could be made if the appropriate scientific techniques were applied.) Taking this line of argument, the concept of sterile is not seen as a practical one, but a scientific one - an absolute standard against which any object can be judged.

4.2 Cultural authorisation of clinical hygiene

Since clinical notions of hygiene are seemingly imbued with a sense of 'soundness', it is worth noting here how that soundness may be systematically authorised within western culture. Very briefly, there seem to be at least four important ways in which notions of clinical hygiene are warranted:

(i) they are offered as scientific - i.e. they have been developed under the auspices of the most thoroughly accepted reasoning institution in the West,

(ii) they are accepted and defended by doctors - i.e. authorised by the very same people who might be consulted as, and treated as, experts on the matter of clinical hygiene,

(iii) they are institutionalised - i.e. they constitute a central tenet of medical care and practice and provide the raison d'être for the provision and existence of hospital sterilising services,

(iv) they are required and supported by law - i.e. there is a body of written legal requirements which specifies minimum standards of hygiene and which describes the various steps (e.g. autoclave testing) which must be taken in order to achieve these standards in hospitals.

These four types of cultural warrant for clinical hygiene offer a means of authorising the soundness of such hygiene notions in that any or all of them may be invoked to defend, describe, criticise, praise or explain standards of hygiene. These cultural warrants offer a backdrop to the practical rules which will be described in this paper. In effect, members do not question the practical rules, since the rules trade on these cultural warrants. Thus, if people are rebuked for breaking the rules, it is not simply the fact of having broken a rule which is a matter for rebuke, but the inferred fact of having disregarded a serious cultural warrant.

4.3 Sterility as a practical accomplishment

I have drawn attention to these strong cultural warrants in order to break the ground up a little. It is important to point out here, albeit briefly, that theories of clinical hygiene have a cultural truth, not an

absolute truth, and one way of pointing that out is to show how cultural truths are attested. This paper will describe how the organisational practices of people in the TSSU and theatres support and are supported by those cultural truths. This then is not a paper about rule breaking and should not be read as an indictment of the standards and behaviour found in a TSSU. This is a paper about how sterility is accomplished, and it is essential to point out that the concept of sterility has no meaning, in this organisational context, outside of the practices used for its accomplishment. This is not an attempt to evaluate the performance of an organisation, but an attempt to describe how parts of it work.

Part 2

5 Organisational rules and technical underpinnings

In the TSSU and the theatre block, the clinical notions of sterile are translated into prescriptive and proscriptive rules. It is not the case that each sterile object and person needs to be scientifically checked to ascertain whether or not they measure up to pre-specified levels of hygiene; rather people in these organisations are expected to follow hygiene rules, and if they follow them then objects and people are assumed to become and remain sterile.

The rules include the following:-

(i) do not walk from the TSSU to the sterile storeroom without putting on special head and foot gear,

(ii) ensure that autoclaves are operating properly by using and checking heat-sensitive paper regularly.

The rules are treated as standing for the technical hygiene standards and requirements that underpin them; if the rules are followed, then standards of sterility will be maintained, and people will have done all they can do, and all they are expected to do to maintain them.

This issue of rule use raises three matters:

5.1 The relationship between the rules and their underlying values is fairly complicated. Essentially the rules are shorthand ways of remembering and observing the intricacies of the underlying technical values, except that they do not exactly document the underlying values, but gloss them instead. The underlying values, properly understood, have exceptions and qualifications, which the simple prescriptive or proscriptive rules do not take into account. Someone who is well acquainted with the exceptions and qualifications of the underlying values does not need the rules to maintain the required standard of hygiene. (Thus, for example, a knowledgeable person might warrantably disregard the headgear rule on the grounds that it is intended for people with long dirty hair and not people with short clean hair.)

What is required for rules to be acceptably disregarded is an assumption by those who police the rules that certain people or categories of people are in possession of the underlying knowledge to which the rules

relate. If, for example, part of a nurse's job is to ensure the rules are kept, then the nurse also needs to know, or needs to be able to work out, who does not need to stick to the rules. One way of doing this is to assume that certain kinds of people, e.g. doctors, have the technical knowledge to know when to disregard the rules. From this assumption it is not difficult to make the working assumption that a doctor who is seen disregarding the rules is doing so on the basis of his or her technical knowledge; the doctor is assumed to know that the rules do not apply in this case, because the doctor is assumed to possess the relevant technical knowledge.

Similarly, and in line with Sack's description of the duplicative organisation of membership categories,(6) there is no need for the rule-flaunter to be a doctor. The flaunting of a rule may be sufficient indication to an observer that the flaunter "knows what he or she is doing". Thus a junior nurse might stick rigidly to the rules but be happy to let a senior nurse break them. A stranger may be "allowed" to break the rules, on the tacit grounds that his or her behaviour shows them to be 'knowledgeable' or a 'special case'.

The existence of a set of rules which is technically based and organisationally administered, gives rise then to the possibility of their differential observation. At the same time, their differential observation gives rise to the possibility of classifying people according to their behaviour. (It should be borne in mind that in any organisation, not just this large general hospital, there are people who know relatively little about the rights and obligations of particular others, and that judgements about who is allowed to do what and why form an important part of the social construction of ordinariness that goes to make up the working day. If people are seen as largely doing what they are meant to be doing, then business continues as usual; if nobody notices anything is amiss, then for all practical purposes, nothing is amiss.)

5.2 The second point about the rules is the question of what they are for. At first glance it appears that the rules are intended to ensure that a standard of sterility is produced and maintained. In practical terms the rules, and the rule following behaviour in which people are presumed to engage, prduces sterility in objects and people. Rule following behaviour is chronologically prior to sterility: the one causes the other.

In practical terms, of course, this is reasonable, since there would be no point in following or policing the rules unless one believed in their real practical effect. However, I have already argued above that the relationship between the rules and their underlying values is a complicated one, and that rules are the simple organisational shorthand for some complex technical values. Seen in this light, the rules acquire a rather more ritualistic significance than they do otherwise: whilst they do not exactly become superstitious touchstones, they can nevertheless be <u>treated</u> almost as if they were. That is, people in these organisations may argue that they have done everything they can do to achieve sterility, i.e. they have followed all the rules.

In one very important sense, this is exactly what people here do, since the existence of the rules provides for the retrospective accountability of the organisation, particularly if things go wrong. For example, in the event of a post-operative infection in a patient, evidence that the rules were all complied with in respect of the production and maintenance of sterility for the operation concerned,could be used to remove blame from hospital personnel involved.

Indeed one of the ways in which rules were discussed in these organisations was in terms of their potential for retrospective accountability. Thus for example the engineers responsible for repairing, maintaining and testing the autoclaves characterised much of their work as being done "in case anything should go wrong". They saw test requirements as not entirely necessary in themselves for the achievement of sterility, but as a vital means of protecting themselves and the hospital against future recriminations in the event of complaint. Interviews with engineers in particular were peppered with apocalyptic anecdotes of things that had gone wrong at other hospitals, and they reviewed the rigour of the testing and maintanance rules as largely a protective device. From their point of view, lower standards were permissible for sterility and general safety needs, but could not be tolerated because of the risk of possible future enquiries.

In this respect then the rules acquire a bureaucratic ritual meaning: they are followed, and <u>recorded as having been followed</u>, not simply because their proper following is essential for the production and maintenance of a particular level of hygiene, but because public embarrassment to the

institution, and to certain of its personnel, might result if the rules are ignored.

The notion of rules being recorded as having been followed brings us to the third point: the achievement of sterility as an accomplished display.

5.3 Demonstrating sterility

In two ways sterility needs to be demonstrated.

5.3.1 Written records

As with any organisational function, the production of records which monitor activity is treated as an important part of the work as a whole. Such records can be used to show when machines were tested, or instruments were bought, or people were on duty. At the time of the study, the manager of this organisation was particularly concerned to rationalise the record keeping system. The problem was to decide, in advance of their usefulness, which records would ever be needed. In effect, she needed to work out what information people would be likely to ask for in the future, which in turn meant working out why they would need the information. Because of the possibility that things might go wrong and that her organisation might be called upon to produce records which would satisfy a commission of enquiry, her problem was not straightforward. In effect, she needed to work out what would be treated as a satisfactory report in advance of the catastrophe for which the report would be needed.

5.3.2 Visual Displays

Part of the routine autoclave testing procedure consisted of the use of heat-sensitive sticky tape, which was used to seal each pre-packed instrument tray. During autoclaving, the diagonally striped paper would change from a dark to a lighter shade. Provided the correct shade was achieved, a constant check could be kept on the performance of the autoclaves.

At the same time, the presence on a sterilised tray of sticky tape of a particular shade provided a means of checking that instruments had indeed been sterilised. Once trays were in store or in theatre, the paper was there for 'anyone to see' and for 'anyone to check'. Moreover, anyone knew that the paper was there for anyone to check. Whilst it would nominally be

the task of particular people to check the colour of the paper (the storeman, for example, or the nurses who unpacked the trays in theatre), the general noticableness of the paper provided for the likelihood that 'someone would have noticed', i.e. that someone would have checked to make sure it was the right colour, or, more importantly if things go wrong: someone would have noticed if it had been the wrong colour. In these terms, the sterile standards of the equipment cannot fail - everybody knows that if the paper turns the wrong colour somebody would have noticed. There is no need to keep a hard record of sterility levels, since the level is an obvious and noticable feature of the working environment. (As a matter of interest, the system also provides for nobody noticing, and for nobody realising nobody has noticed: if the general availability of the evidence is such that anyone could check, it is conceivable that nobody does, or nobody does this time. However, since such an eventuality is organisationally inconceivable: because of the obviousness of the coloured tape, no one would ever know that no one had checked.)

Moreover, the colour of the sticky tapes (and of heat-sensitive paper sheets used for routine autoclave testing) did not provide an objective measure of autoclave performance, although it was generally treated as if it did. One routine matter for competent members to decide was 'does this colour change indicate the autoclave is working or not?' The issue of whether the heat-sensitive paper had changed to the right shade, or of whether the colour had changed uniformly, was ultimately a matter for judgement by experience, and occasionally a matter for debate between TSSU personnel and autoclave engineers. The experience required was not simply that of how any autoclave might change the colour, but of how these particular, familiar and rather old autoclaves generally changed the colour. The issue was not: 'do these autoclaves perform up to a prescribed sterility standard?', but 'are these autoclaves working as well as they usually do?' For these people in this organisation, with this equipment and this job to do, answering the second of these questions was the only practical means they had of addressing the first.

6 Summary and Conclusions

I want to conclude by tying some of the foregoing discussion into the outline of anthropological and organisational symbolism I described in the introduction.

6.1 Anthropological symbolism

May Douglas' notion of dirt as 'matter out of place' does not provide us with a simple rule for working out the distinction between what is clean and what is dirty. A concept like sterility may alert us to the contrast between sterile and non-sterile, but on close examination it does not provide more than practical means for making the distinction. Practical means are based on a variety of reasoning techniques, in which inferences can be drawn from one set of circumstances in order to provide information on another. Thus, for example, members may infer that a person is out of place or not out of place by trading on that they know about, or what they can surmise about, that person's rights to be where they are. I have described one way of establishing such rights above, by showing how an observer might work out when a rule transgressor has the requisite knowledge to transgress a rule without sanction.

Similarly I have shown how the issue of what counts as sterile and what does not is settled by reference to indicators which are treated as objective measures even though the objective measuring devices are ultimately a matter for subjective determination (the colour of the heat-sensitive paper). I have shown how the question of whether or not a piece of equipment is sterile is settled by having the evidence (coloured paper tape) lying around for anyone to see. It is not necessary for each object to be classified as sterile or non-sterile: sterility is an ordinary background feature of this environment because its special indicators are there for anyone to see.

6.2 Rules and values

I have shown how rules may be invoked or suspended and pointed out the important ways in which rules provide for the retrospective accountability of the organisation. I have used the term 'ritualistic' to describe some of the ways in which rules are treated. When it is the fact of whether or not the rule has been observed rather than the fact of whether or not sterility has been achieved that counts, then the term 'ritualistic' seems appropriate. Because of the symbolic rather than direct correspondence between rules and values there can be no absolute certainty that rule following will accomplish and maintain sterility and that rule breaking will result in non-sterility. In the practical world of organisational bureaucracy, however, this argument would not be appreciated since observance of the rules offers the only practical means available of accomplishing sterility.

Notes and References

1. Douglas, M., Purity and Danger - an analysis of the concepts of pollution and taboo, Ark Paperbacks, R.K.P., London, 1984.
2. Douglas, M., ibid. p. 35.
3. Douglas, M., ibid. pp. 32-34.
4. For some detailed discussions of this concept of practical rule use see:

   Weider, D. L., 'Telling the Code', in R. Turner (ed.), Ethnomethodology, Penguin, 1974.

   Zimmerman, D. H., 'The Practicabilities of Rule Use', in J. Douglas (ed.), 'Understanding Everyday Life', Aldine, Chicago, 1971, pp. 221-238.

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5. A similar phenomenon is reported in Roth, J. A., 'Ritual and Magic in the Control of Contagion', in E. G. Jaco (ed.), 'Patients, Physicians and Illness', Free Press, New York, 1958, pp. 229-234.
6. Sacks, H., 'On the Analysability of Stories by Children', in R. Turner (ed.), Ethnomethodology, Penguin, 1974.

TOTALITARIANISM AND CULTURAL ENGINEERING (Part two)

Howard S. SCHWARTZ

ABSTRACT

In Part One, a theory of organizational totalitarianism is developed, based on Freud's concept of narcissism and his theory of the "ego ideal" (1955/1921, 1957/1914), Klein's (1948) theory of "splitting" and Shorris' (1981) thinking concerning the totalitarian aspects of the corporation. The idea of a perfect organization, referred to here as the "organization ideal," is a symbol that represents the return to narcissism -- to being the center of a loving world. Since the return to narcissism is impossible, committed participants in the totalitarian organization maintain a belief in the organization ideal by believing that its attainment is achieved by progress through the organization's hierarchy. This requires commitment to the belief that individuals more advanced in the hierarchy represent the organization ideal. This turns organizational process into the living out of the narcissistic fantasies of those in power. Consequences of this are passivity and slavishness, shamefulness, cynicism, loneliness and the loss of the psychological gains that could otherwise come from socially useful work.

In Part Two, the idea of cultural engineering, or symbolic management, as totalitarian is explored and practical consequences that might be expected to follow from this are considered.

PART TWO

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR CULTURAL ENGINEERING

In this part of the paper I would like to consider the implications of this theory for the practice of cultural engineering, or symbolic management. With regard to our theory, this means that I am interpreting symbolic management as the conscious effort to manage an organization by inculcating an idea of the organization as an ego ideal, a route for the return to narcissism, for participants, and using organizational power to enforce this belief. In other words, I regard symbolic management as a totalitarian project.

I will focus my comments on the description of cultural, or symbolic, management offered in an influential book on the subject by Deal and Kennedy (1982). This is not to say that Deal and Kennedy are totalitarians. This would be a claim which I have no reason to believe and which I have not the slightest interest in making. Indeed, Deal has recently (1985) demonstrated a striking sensitivity to some of the ethical issues of cultural change. Nonetheless, it seems to me that the practices they are describing in this book are totalitarian and that they have not sufficiently understood the implications of what they are recommending. I will suggest that, far from being the hope for the future of American industry, as Deal and Kennedy propose, symbolic management may instead be the source of the problem with

American industry in the first place.

Deal and Kennedy's basic position is relatively simple. We may pu
it in the form of two propositions: (1) There is a correlation betwe
whether a company has a strong culture and whether it is a success,
therefore having a strong culture leads to success; and (2) the way
make a company a success is to strengthen its culture through the
intentional manipulation of its symbols. Let us take these points in
sequence.

As to the first, we may content ourselves with noting that Deal a
Kennedy's correlation makes as much sense if seen in the opposite wa
from which they see it. Freud (1964/1927) held this view with regard
to cultural ideals generally and his view corresponds with present d
thinking concerning the retrospective character of sense-making (Bem
1972; Weick, 1969). Anyone who doubts that this is the direction of
causality may perform the following experiment:

Take a set of competitive groups, such as sports teams, and measu
the groups' "culture strength" (team spirit) at the beginning (S1) a
end (S2) of a suitable period -- a season for example. Correlate the
measures with rankings of the groups' performance during the period
(P2) and during the previous period (P1). My hypothesis is that
culture strength will be better predicted by previous performance th
it will predict future performance. Specifically: (1) the correlatio
of S2 and P2 will be higher than the correlation of S1 and P2; and (2
the correlation of S1 and P1 will be higher than the correlation of S
and P2. Deal and Kennedy's reasoning, which argues that culture

strength should predict performance, while being explained by cultural
management rather than past performance, would lead to the opposite
predictions.

For present purposes, though, the far more interesting proposition
is Deal and Kennedy's second, which asserts that the way to make an
organization successful is to strengthen its culture through
manipulation of its symbols. My contention is that the plausibility of
this notion rests on a conflation between two very different
psychological phenomena. This is the conflation of (1) having an ego
ideal emotionally, and (2) acting as if one had an ego ideal for some
other purpose. Thus, we have no difficulty in distinguishing between
the Iranian woman who wears the chador out of feelings about the
proper dress for a woman in public, and the Western woman who wears
the chador to go out in Iran because she does not want to be reviled
as a prostitute.

Phenomenologically, the distinction lies in the difference between
the feeling of "ought," as a personal imperative, a personal
compulsion, and "ought" as a purely instrumental term, occurring only
within the context of a hypothetical: if you want to X, then you ought
to Y. Here, if there is any feeling of compulsion, it relates to X,
not to Y. In the first case there is an unconscious component. The
behavior represents a prerequisite of the return to narcissism, the
denial of death. In the second case there is no such unconscious
component.

It appears that the latter is what Deal and Kennedy have in mind in

recommending symbolic management. Thus, the symbolic manager, as De
and Kennedy use that term, acts intentionally to inculcate a specif
idea of the organization as an organization ideal among organizatio
participants. But it appears that they themselves do not share this
ideal. Thus, for example:

> By paying attention to the rituals of the culture, [symbolic managers] can make the values of the company coherent and accessible to every employee. [p.78]

But, with regard to themselves:

> managers need to be fully aware of the ritualistic element of the
> own culture and not allow themselves to be captured by the magic
> what they do day to day. [p.83]

And, generally:

> Symbolic managers see themselves as players -- scriptwriters, directors, actors -- in the daily drama of company affairs. Indeed we call them symbolic managers because of their recognition of the importance of the symbolic influence they have on cultural events around them. Each day is a new scenario; each meeting a new setti for dramatic action. No events are too trivial for the great actor as he strides across the stage of the corporate set; no bit player is too trivial to ignore in this great symbolic drama. [p.142]

Now, this is a remarkable admission. Let us consider its

psychodynamics.

If the organization were the organization ideal this manager's actions would be spontaneous. Indeed, the drama consists in behaving as if they were spontaneous. Nonetheless, as Deal and Kennedy make plain, the manager's actions are not spontaneous; they are finely and carefully crafted.

On the other hand, the organization ideal that the manager is trying to promulgate could also be the ego ideal for the manager. In this case action would be based upon a personal imperative. But if this were the case, the actions would have a categorical quality to them, the expression of personal values, done as ends and not as means to something else. But, again, as Deal and Kennedy observe, the actions are done for the sake of something else -- namely for the purpose of having others take them as models of what ought to be done. Their significance for the manager would lie not in the actions themselves, but in the place that the response to the actions has in the manager's own narcissism project.

The result of this is that, if the symbolic manager is successful, a differentiation is created in the relationship of the manager and his or her subordinates to reality. The reality that the subordinate lives in, or takes it as an ideal to live in, is a fiction created by the manager. The reality that the manager lives in is forbidden to the subordinate, since to understand the drama as a drama is, *a fortiori* not to take it as a fact.

Moreover, this differentiation in the relationship to reality becomes a matter for enforcement and, indeed, ultimately a criterio for organizational membership. Thus,

> to a symbolic manager, a firing is a catastrophe. First, it shou never happen. If the employee fits with the culture, lifetime employment should be secure. Second, when a firing is necessary, should not be the end-result of poor performance, but of violati of cultural norms. [p.144]

Ultimately, then, symbolic management must make being in touch w reality a violation of organization norms; and the capacity to live illusion a criterion for organizational membership. Thus, symbolic management places a lie at the very core of the organization and tu the organizational process into a denial of reality.

It cannot help but happen that, in the long run, this denial mus degrade the organization as a functioning entity in a larger world. This eventually might manifest itself in any of a number of ways. I shall discuss a few of them.

Commitment to bad decisions

Staw (1980) has noted that the tendency to justify past actions c be a powerful motivation behind organizational behavior and can oft run counter to rationality. This must be especially the case in the totalitarian organization, in which the idea of the perfection of th organization provides the organization's very motivational base.

Thus, as we have seen, the symbolic manager, the cultural engineer, acts to present the organization as an organization ideal. This turns the tendency to justify past actions from a defensive tendency on the part of individuals to a core organizational process. Under the circumstances previous actions cannot be realistically evaluated as an aid to future decision making. Indeed, given the backward focus of the symbolic manager trying to project the organization's culture, flawed actions, if they are consistent with the organization's culture, must be accepted as providing as much of a basis for replication in future behavior as rational actions.

A former student, a middle manager in a division of a large multi-national corporation, told me that at his organization upper management came to middle management and told them that if a way could not be found to cut $40 million from the budget, fifteen percent of the staff would have to be laid off. My student said that he knew a way to save $10 million very easily. A few years before, a problem had been discovered in the organization that was costing it $3 million per year. A solution was divised, with the participation of top management, and with full fanfare and hoopla it was implemented. The solution worked, in the sense that it saved $3 million. The problem was that the solution itself cost $13 million. So my student suggested that they cut out the solution, go back to losing $3 million, and save $10 million. His recommendation was not adopted, the company continued to lose the $10 million, and fifteen percent of the staff were laid off.

As Staw (1980) notes, the justification process leads to escalati commitment. Mistaken actions, since they are mistakes, may not deal with the problems they were intended to address. These problems must still be addressed and further actions taken. If the original soluti was a mistake that cannot be seen as a mistake, further solutions ar likely to reflect that same mistake and still not deal with the problem.*Under the circumstances, the ratio of mistaken action to adequate action within the system is likely to increase over time an the experiential base for future decision making is likely to become increasingly unreliable.

Commitment to stupid, conformist and cynical participants and destruction of intelligent and reality-oriented participants who are committed to doing good work

Deal and Kennedy have noted, as referred to above, that the evaluation of individuals in symbolically managed organizations must be made on the basis of whether or not they adhere to cultural norms, not on the basis of performance. In our terms, this means that judgement must depend on whether participants appear to accept the organization as the organization ideal. Given the fact that organizations, after all, make mistakes, this means that individuals within the organization will be judged positively if they either do not understand the mistakes as mistakes (i.e. are stupid), or take th illusion that they are supposed to see as more real than reality (i.e

*Note the correspondence to Argyris and Schon's (1974) error-amplifyi Model I.

are conformist), or see the mistakes as mistakes but behave as if they don't out of selfish and venal motivations (i.e. are cynical). Ultimately, such individuals are likely to rise in the organizational hierarchy and their characteristics are likely to increasingly characterize organizational processes.

The corollary of this is that participants who have their eyes on reality, are intelligent enough to understand it, and care to do something worthwhile in the face of it will be downgraded with respect to stupid, conformist and cynical participants, and may be subject to hostile criticism and possibly severance from the organization. Whatever they have to offer will come to be unavailable.

An experienced and competent staff executive, who had been in charge of building plants all over the world, was passed over for the choice assignment of building a plant in a Latin American country. The assignment was given to a man of questionable intelligence and limited interest in reality, but a good "team player" because "It's time we did something for old Jim." Upon Jim's frequent visits home, his conversation consisted principally of descriptions of his shopping trips and his visits to seaside resorts. By the time the passed-over executive quit, the project was way behind schedule, way over budget, and there was some question as to whether it could be completed at all.

In general, the result of experiences like this must be that intelligent, realistic, and concerned persons either increasingly

some sense of the organization as organization ideal and take the blame for their deviant perceptions upon themselves. In the first case, as in the example, they may leave the organization. If they remain, they may lose lose their sense of the importance of work an become opportunists and cynics. Or they may take the organization, as an organization ideal to be defended against "bad" forces, but a itself a "bad" object, to be rebelled against in the interest of th good. In the second case they may lose touch with reality, becoming conformist. Or they may come to adopt highly self-critical attitude toward their spontaneous perceptions, experience shame with regard them, and thereby become functionally stupid. In their own terms, Sennett and Cobb (1972) have described how these dynamics create wh they call "hidden injuries of class."

Two of these categories have been called "failures of socialization" by Schein (1968) who describes them in terms of differential responses to pivotal and peripheral norms during the socialization process. Conformity represents acceptance of both peripheral and pivotal norms. Rebellion involves rejection of both sorts of norms. His preferred response is "creative individualism," which would mean accepting the pivotal norms but rejecting the peripheral norms. But notice that this response would be rejected by the cultural manager, for an organization's culture is seen as an integrated whole, not a set of isolated elements among which one may freely pick and choose. Thus, from the standpoint of Deal and Kennedy conformity must be the preferred reponse. Deal and Kennedy put this explicitly:

> In strong culture companies, <u>nothing is too trivial.</u> Any event that occurs in a work context is an event to be managed. [p.60] (emphasis is in the original)

<u>Elimination of creativity</u>

This is a point that deserves further amplification. Schein (1968) maintains that "the conforming individual curbs his creativity." The point is that creativity involves the invention, the <u>creation,</u> of new interpretations of old events. But culture, after all, is already an interpretation. To insist on the maintenance of a specific culture is essentially to rule out creativity.

A few years ago this story was told to me: in the parking lot of a rural manufacturing facility of a "cash-cow" subsidiary of a major auto company about ten new and very expensive cars could be found, representing the top-of-the-line offerings of that auto maker. My informant, who was temporarily assigned to this facility, was surprised at this, since in his estimation, there was no way that the work being done at this facility could support the sorts of salaries that these individuals were evidently making. Investigation disclosed that these individuals had been assigned to this facility from other divisions of the auto maker, to "write reports," with deadlines in the distant future, about vague matters having nothing to do with the plant where they were located. These individuals had, apparently, been over-socialized to the point where they were useless for anything important but, having done only what they were asked to do, could not be fired. This was not, evidently, a case of individuals being

promoted to the level of their incompetence. Rather it appeared to be a case of individuals becoming incompetent as a result of the requirements of the process of promotion.

Isolation of management and rupture of communications

On a deeper level, the greater the success of the symbolic manager, the more the manager is isolated from his or her subordinates, with all that this implies for problems of communication and unity of purpose. The world that the subordinates live in is the world of the organization ideal as created by the symbolic manager. The world that the symbolic manager lives in is the world of the construction of the image of the organization ideal. These two worlds are incommensurable and it cannot help but happen that communication and trust must break down between them. For communication and trust mean two different things to these groups. Indeed, for symbolic management, communication to subordinates is not communication at all -- it is deception.

Moreover, it is deception that goes right to the core of the message that the manager is attempting to communicate. For at the heart of the symbolic management process is the idea that subordinates will be motivated by the idea of their attainment of the ego ideal -- the return to narcissism, to being the center, the "origin" (DeCharms, 1968) of a loving world. But, for the symbolic manager, the organization ideal is his or her own ego ideal -- the return is to the manager's narcissism. In this world, it is not the subordinate that is the center of the loving world, but the symbolic manager. In this world, the subordinate is not an "origin," but a "pawn." To be sure,

in both cases, the return to narcissism is defined in terms of the organizational participant. But the manager and the subordinate define differently what it means to be an organizational participant. Of course there is always the question of whose definition will prevail. But notice that the symbolic manager's power is precisely the power to prevail in this matter. Indeed, the successful practice of symbolic management is nothing more or less than achieving this definition.

Thus, the organization is stratified in an insider/outsider dimension that has been likened earlier to an "onion," and which serves the same function as party membership in the totalitarian state. This must make a mockery of all attempts to break down status barriers that stand in the way of effective communication -- as appears to be the idea behind various "quality of working life" efforts.

Nor does it appear to be the case that such deception can have a benign result if only it manages to be kept a secret. For, ultimately, keeping it a secret would conflict with the purposes of those who carry it out. Ultimately, that is to say, the chips must be called in if the winner is to win.

Thus, in a recent round of contract negotiations between the United Auto Workers and General Motors, management persuaded the UAW to make deep concessions. "We're all in this together," they said, "and we all have to make sacrifices." Only days after the contract was ratified, GM announced its executive bonus awards. The bonuses would be whopping. The public was outraged, not to mention the UAW. GM chairman

Roger Smith defended the bonuses. They were necessary if the indust
was to maintain its salary position and keep its executives from be
raided by other industries.

On the face of it, this seemed absurd. The management of the aut
industry was held in such low repute at this time that the husband
a colleague had to downplay his managerial experience in the auto
industry in order to get a job. But going further one could detect
bizarre logic in this self-inflation. Auto management was giving
itself increased status for having achieved cost savings from the
union give-backs -- give-backs which management credited itself wi
having engineered by causing the workers to believe that they were
equal status. In this fashion, to use George Orwell's phrase, some
become more equal than others.

Development of hostile orientation toward the environment

If the symbolic manager is successful, as we have seen,
organizational participants take the organization as an organizatio
ideal -- as representing to themselves the possibility of their own
perfection and, therefore, as perfect itself. It must follow that
an organization will be successful in its dealings with the world.
Deal and Kennedy say:

> The ethic in companies with strong cultures is "we'll succeed
> because we're special." Symbolic managers recognize the power of
> this "us against the world" mentality... [p.141]

The problem is, as systems theory makes plain (Katz and Kahn, 1966; Schwartz, 1986), the environment always poses threats to the existence of subsystems such as organizations. These must keep the environment satisfied with their output or the flow of input will be cut off. Thus, the environment places constant demands on the organization. Failure to meet them will result in the organization's death. But from the standpoint of the committed organizational participant who has taken the organization as the organization ideal, this makes no sense at all. It is the organization that is the criterion of worth. The environment exists in order to support the organization. From this standpoint the demands of the environment must be seen as hostile actions on the part of bad external forces -- hostile actions to which a legitimate response is equally hostile action.

The General Motors Corporation, in response to Ralph Nader's (1965) book Unsafe At Any Speed tried to assassinate Mr. Nader's character. Now, it is possible that GM simply could not think of another way of responding to Mr. Nader, but the way they chose seems to imply something more. Sending private detectives to find out the dirty details of his private life suggests that they expected to find something to show that he was a bad person. He had to be a bad person: he had attacked GM, hadn't he?

The unity of the null set and the replacement of the subjective by the objective

Ironically, the more successful the symbolic manager is at the dramatization of the organization's culture, the more the organization

becomes <u>just</u> drama and, therefore, devoid of real cultural content. Thus, the commitment of the symbolic manager comes to be a commitme to an entity which stands for nothing except itself -- which is nothing but its own self-dramatization. Indeed, it appears that the same thing must happen to the sumbolic manager, whose life is consu by acting out the drama of an organization and who comes to stand apart from this drama only as its actor -- a person devoid of personality.

In set theory, a set of three oranges is differentiable from a s of three apples because their content is different, even though the numbers are the same. But for one number, the set of N oranges is identical with the set of N apples. This number is 0. Any set with contents is identical with any other set with 0 contents. They are the null set. Something similar appears to happen in the case of cultural management. Here, the organization becomes empty and the individuals who enact it become empty. Their identities fuse perfec in a unity of emptiness.

This allows us to explain the preoccupation of American managemen with the objective, the quantitative and the measureable -- a preoccupation which some (e.g. Hayes and Abernathy, 1980; Peters and Waterman, 1982) have claimed is responsible for the sorry state of American industry. When the subjective has become empty, only the objective remains.

Indeed, Deal and Kennedy hint at something like this when they suggest that it is important for the symbolic manager to maintain a

fit between the organization's culture and its environment. The question that arises is, if the organization's culture, its values, its modes of interpretation, are not to be used to assess the environment, how will the environment be assessed? Sounds like business-school number-crunching to me.

<u>An overview</u>

Before concluding this discussion of the practical consequences of totalitarian/symbolic management, it is worthwhile to note a characteristic that the consequences mentioned have in common: they are all cumulative and interactive with each other. They all tend to build within the system and, interacting with each other, take over the system bit by bit. Thus, for example, the accumulation of bad decisions taken within the system suggests that those who manifest belief in it as an organization ideal must increasingly be stupid, conformist or cynical, which in turn decreases the retention of realism, intelligence and concern for work, which leads to a further increase in bad decisions, further degradation of the relationship with the environment, and so on.

This cumulative and interactive character suggests an important consideration in evaluating symbolic management. It is that initial gains from the use of symbolic management can not be the final criterion in evaluating its effectiveness. Just as, in revolutionary societies, prodigies of productivity and tremendous increases in social welfare are sometimes achieved, so it may happen that an organization that moves toward totalitarian/ symbolic management may

have temporary success. After all, the old order is dead. Who can s for sure what the new will bring? Hope springs eternal, does it not Who says you can't live forever?

But you can't live forever. And just as operating on the assumpt that you will live forever can lead to shortening your life considerably, so can organizational management built around the enforcement of belief in the organization as narcissism project lea to organizational disaster.

Conclusion

I mentioned before that the present movement toward symbolic management, cultural engineering, may not be the hope of American industry, but may instead be a further stage in the progression of disease. By way of concluding, I would like to pursue this idea.

Barley (1985) has proposed that the problems of American industry in the face of foreign competition, the problems that cultural management is intended to deal with, are the result of morale proble resulting from rationalization. This is not the industry my student see. Their industry is not rationalized, it is crazy. It is waste, is stupidity, it is fraud, it is "Vanity Fair." There is nothing rational about it. To be sure, they feel that this is not somehow t industry that they are supposed to see. They must be getting someth wrong. Their own situation, many of them feel, is somehow abberant.

But what if their perception is accurate? What if the problems w

American industry are the compounding of the problems which grow out of totalitarian/ symbolic management as I have suggested? What if they grow out of management practices which alienate the organization from reality and substitute the narcissistic fantasies of management?

Consider this: what could finding one's organization in trouble mean to the cultural manager? It could either indicate a failure of management in the past or it could mean that management in the past had been successful but that the environment has shifted. Acknowledging past failure means sacrificing the status of hero in the drama that they have caused to be enacted around them. It means giving up the progress on the route to narcissism that their working life has achieved, and for which they have given up their very personalities. On the whole, the alternative would seem more attractive. As in a repertory company, they can change the play but maintain their leading roles. Indeed, in this alternative, the fact that personality has been given up would seem an advantage. As with Fromm's (1947) "marketing orientation," there would be nothing to provide resistance to whatever performance is called for.

But in the face of the massive movement toward cultural engineering as a solution to the problems of American industry, I offer the following caution: Suppose, as I have argued, that the problem with the American industrial corporation is that it has changed from being the organization of work to the dramatization of narcissistic fantasy. Then consider that cultural change may mean essentially that the only thing that remains the same about the organization is the idea of its perfection and of the central role of management in this perfection.

How can any good come from this?

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PARADIGM PLURALITY IN ORGANISATIONS: PART TWO, EMPIRICAL OPPORTUNITIES

John S. HASSARD

Introduction

In Part One we noted how the journals of organization theory have been inundated with assessments of the discipline's paradigmatic status. Several writers have presented models outlining paradigm formations based on either major theory communities or prominent methodological approaches. Frequently, such assessments have taken recourse to an historical outline of theory development, their analyses suggesting that organization theory, like social science in general, is poly-paradigmatic. As Kuhn's (1962, 1970) work is central here, many analysts have also spoken of a 'crisis' in organization theory, several paradigms being pictured in competition following the decline of the orthodox systems-structure approach (see Benson, 1983). Indeed, these developments have been part of a general explosion of Kuhnism within social science, Kuhn's model of the history of science (based on discontinous periods of normal and revolutionary activity) being siezed upon as the framework for explaining changes in social theory. This popularity has stemmed from his claim that science is validated not simply by objective scientific evidence, but by the consensus judgements of community oriented practitioners - a description appealing to social scientists as it appears to undermine the belief of natural science holding superior authority.

Despite this popularity for importing Kuhn, many problems have emerged from the transfer process. Difficulties have arisen because Kuhn's own statements regarding the paradigm concept, and in particular its relation to social science, have remained ambiguous. Definitional problems have resulted in paradigm schemes being located at numerous analytical levels, thus giving the impression of inconsistency and contradiction. In fact,

difficulties in establishing the essence of paradigm have bedevilled not only Kuhn and his colleagues (see especially Kuhn, 1970, 1970b, 1974; Masterman, 1970; Shapere, 1964, 1971; Popper, 1970; Watkins, 1970), but subsequently provided openings for both serious (Eckburg and Hill, 1979; Harvey, 1982; Wells and Picou, 1981) and satirical (Mintzberg, 1978; Eilon, 1981) sociological critiques.

However, whereas many of the problems identified by critics give cause for concern, they are not a sufficient basis for condemning this borrowing process, or the development of paradigm schemes, completely. In contrast to Pinder and Bourgeoise (1982), we argue that the import of ideas from philosophy has had a generally positive effect on social science, especially through increasing our awareness of epistemological issues. Whereas Pinder and Bourgeoise indict organization theorists for their inconsistent use of terms such as 'paradigm' and 'ontology', gradually our understanding of their associated problems has led to more reasoned applications - notably in using social philosophy to highlight particular elements of social science practice (e.g., perceptual selectiveness, community images of the subject matter, sociological influence of classic laws/theories). Several writers have noted the power of paradigm for increasing our awareness of the underlying assumptions we employ in our everyday research activity. The specifying of several distinct theoretical traditions in particular, has signalled an opportunity for greater eclecticism in research enquiry - especially through denoting orientations operating in opposition to those of scientific orthodoxy.

In this paper, then, I wish to consider some research implications arising from recent models of paradigm diversity. The paper outlines a programme which has attempted to harness multiple paradigms as a basis for empirical research. In this study, several theoretical positions have been

used for analysing work behaviour in a large public service (the British Fire Service), the aim being to appreciate an organization from a variety of quasi-exclusive frameworks in order to gain a richer understanding of the life therein. To achieve this, the paradigm scheme provided by Burrell and Morgan (1979) has been employed as the basis for realising 'multiple paradigm research'. Here insight into the organization is provided by using their four sociological paradigms as methodological frames of reference. Results accrue by using a theory and methodology from each paradigm as the basis for analysis.

Burrell and Morgan: The Model and Some Problems

Within the recent literature attempting to define paradigms in social and organization theory, the Burrell and Morgan model has attracted by far the most attention (see Louis, 1983; White, 1983). Burrell and Morgan (1979) outline four paradigms through linking subject-object debates about the 'nature of social science' with consensus-conflict debates in the 'theory of society', the four paradigms subsequently produced, being: 1. functionalist; 2. interpretive; 3. radical humanist; and 4. radical structuralist (see Figure 1). They argue for charting paradigm locations in organizational analysis by use of a framework which also locates major theoretical positions in sociology, social psychology and even areas of experimental psychology.

Burrell and Morgan dissect social science by reference to the philosopher's toolkit of ontology and epistemology. They concentrate upon the meta-theoretical assumptions made by differing schools, and in identifying such assumptions, seek to plot various theoretical positions on their four paradigm model. Here, for analysing the 'nature of social science', it is useful, they argue, to "conceptualise ... four sets of

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Figure 1 about here

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assumptions related to ontology, epistemology, human nature, and methodology" (p.1: see Figure 2). They suggest that all social scientists, implicitly or explicitly, approach their discipline via assumptions about the nature of the social world and how it should be researched, assumptions being made concerning: 'the very essence of the phenomena under investigation' (ontology), 'the grounds of knowledge' (epistemology), 'the relationship between human beings' (human nature), and 'the way in which one attempts to investigate and obtain 'knowledge' about the real world' (methodology).

On the other hand, for assumptions about the 'nature of society', they invoke attempts by social theorists (e.g., Dahrendorf, 1959; Lockwood, 1956) to distinguish between "those approaches to sociology which concentrate upon explaining the nature of social order and equilibrium ... and those ... concerned with the problems of change, conflict and coercion" (p.10). However, instead of the more usual 'order-conflict' or 'consensus-conflict' terms, they talk of the 'sociology of regulation' and the 'sociology of radical change'.

Through the polarisation of consensus and conflict debates, the 'conservative' functionalist and interpretive paradigms are contrasted with the conflict based 'radical' humanist and structuralist paradigms. Conversely, with regard to the nature of social science, radical structuralist and functionalist theories, which accept an objectivist 'scientific' stance, are contrasted with the subjectivist emphases of phenomenological or existentialist/humanist approaches. In presenting the model, the authors argue for the paradigms being "contiguous but separate -

FIGURE 1
FOUR PARADIGM MODEL OF SOCIAL THEORY (BURRELL AND MORGAN, 1979)

THE SOCIOLOGY OF RADICAL CHANGE

SUBJECTIVE	'Radical humanist'	'Radical structuralist'
	'Interpretive'	'Functionalist'

OBJECTIVE

THE SOCIOLOGY OF REGULATION

contiguous because of the shared characteristics, but separate because the differentiation is ... of sufficient importance to warrant treatment of the paradigms as four distinct entities" (p.23). As such, the four paradigms "define fundamentally different perspectives for the analysis of social phenomena. They approach this endeavour from contrasting standpoints and generate quite different concepts and analytical tools" (p.23).

In sum, the functionalist paradigm rests upon the premise that society has a real concrete existence and a systematic character; it is directed to the production of order and regulation. The social science enterprise is believed to be objective and value-free; a process in which the scientist is distanced from the subject of study through the rigour of the scientific method. The paradigm thus possesses a pragmatic orientation - one concerned with understanding society in a way which produces useful, usable knowledge.

In the interpretive paradigm, the social world is seen as having a 'precarious ontological status'; it suggests that social reality should not be accorded the status of external concrete existence, but rather be considered the product of intersubjective experience. Therefore, instead of the social world being comprehended from the standpoint of the observer, it is understood from the position of the participant in action. Here the social theorist seeks to understand the processes through which (multiple) shared realities are created, sustained and changed. Although the interpretive paradigm, like the functionalist, argues for of an underlying regulation and order in human affairs, it suggests that a purely 'objective' social science is specious.

The radical humanist paradigm shares the assumption with the interpretive that reality is socially created and sustained, although for the radical humanist this is tied to the 'pathology of consciousness'

whereby actors are seen as the prisoners of the reality they create. The critique highlights the alienating modes of thought which characterise life in modern industrial societies. Capitalism, in particular, is subject to attack in the humanist's concern to link thought and action as a means of transcending alienation.

The final paradigm, the radical structuralist, also develops a radical critique of society, but one at odds with the humanist in being tied to a materialist conception of the social world. Here, social reality exists independently of the way in which it is constructed. For the radical structuralist the social world is characterised by intrinsic tensions and contradictions which eventually result in radical change in the system as a whole.

Figure 2 about here

Although the Burrell and Morgan model has been widely received within organization theory, and indeed as Louis (1983) notes so much so that it has formed the basis for conferences on both sides of the Atlantic, frequently those borrowing the model (notably to assess theoretical developments within the social sciences e.g. Griffiths, 1983; Hopper and Powell, 1984) have done so with little regard to the model's coherency. As such, certain problems have been overlooked. Pinder and Bourgeoise (1982), for example, note how Burrell and Morgan's application of ontology is misplaced. In their paper on cross-discipline borrowing (organization theory borrowing from philosophy), they suggest that Burrell and Morgan have adopted the 'non-standard' use of ontology that has been popular during the last twenty years, this referring to the set of 'existential presuppositions' of a theory (i.e. the set of assumptions about existence that must be made if one

FIGURE 2
A SCHEME FOR ANALYSING ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THE NATURE OF SOCIAL SCIENCE (BURRELL AND MORGAN, 1979)

The subjective-objective dimension

The subjectivist approach to social science		The objectivist approach to social science
Nominalism	ontology	Realism
Anti-positivism	epistemology	Postivism
Voluntarism	human nature	Determinism
Idiographic	methodology	Nomothetic

is to accept a certain theory). They argue that for the past three centuries ontology has had a relatively stable meaning as, "the study of qua being, i.e., the study of existence in general, independent of any particular existing things". Therefore, in the strictest sense of the term, "it is not a question of ontology to ask whether organizations exist ... whether organizations exist is a matter for science to deal with because it concerns the existence of particular things, not the nature of existence" (p.13). They insist that instead of discussing the 'ontology of organization theory', we must use this more correct phrase 'existential presuppositions' of organization theory.

Another fundamental issue is whether their intra-paradigm schools realistically adhere to the same basic image of the subject matter. As Ritzer (1975) has been criticised for combining conflict theory and structural functionalism within his 'factist' paradigm, one may feel that Burrell and Morgan's placing of the action frame of reference within the same paradigm as Skinnerian behaviourism also makes for unlikely bed fellows. The former, one may feel, would be far more acceptable within an interpretive paradigm, despite the arguments the authors raise for its assumptions being "characteristic of the subjectivist region of the (functionalist) paradigm" (p.190). Also, whereas Burrell and Morgan cite Althusser's 'epistemological break' in separating radical humanism from radical structuralism, the latter thesis is of course by no means unproblematic: for many there is an underlying unity in Marx's work and not a gestalt-switch from idealism to materialism.

Of central importance for us, however, is that as the four paradigms seem self exclusive, then this raises the questions of incommensurability and relativism mentioned earlier (see Part One). As with the majority of neo-Kuhnian assessments, we are given no firm testament as to how progress

is signalled or standards are met. We are left in a relativist vacuum whereby theory communities are pictured in hermetic isolation, capable of only talking past their professional enemies: they are (seemingly) attributed equal status in explaining social and organizational phenomena. For inter-paradigm movement, although examples are given of possible epistemological breaks (e.g. by Karl Marx, or in organization theory David Silverman), change is never developed beyond an acceptance of sporadic conversions in theoretical gestalt. Indeed, in Burrell and Morgan references to inter-paradigm understanding are rather confusing. While initially there is the firm assertion that "the four paradigms are mutually exclusive ... they offer different ways of seeing" (p.25), later there is some oscillation, this starting with Giddens' (1976) view that "some inter-paradigm debate is also possible" (p.36, emphasis in original), but finally moving to the equivocal position that, "relations between paradigms are better described in terms of 'disinterested hostility' rather than 'debate'" (p.36). This position invites Friedheim's (1979) censure about arguing for 'paradigm blindness' and 'paradigm bridgers' simultaneously.

Multiple Paradigm Research

As noted, our empirical work rests on four separate investigations into the work organisation of the British Fire Service, and especially of the Midlands Fire Brigade (pseudonym). Here positions characteristic of the four Burrell and Morgan paradigms have been used to illustrate the richness of data produced from adopting alternative philosophical assumptions as the basis for research. The studies adopt the meta-theoretical guidelines of the model as initial instructions for becoming familiarised with various paradigm cultures. As such, the approach to paradigm assimilation is one whereby metatheories are engaged as an initial basis for immersion into the

literature of a theory community. Familiarisation with a new paradigm is accomplished by seeking to phenomenologically 'bracket' the assumptions of the learned paradigm in order to develop those of the next. This is essentially a social anthropological method, the object being to produce authentic paradigm research accounts.

The research process has adopted three major positions cited as alternatives to the functionalist systems 'orthodoxy': phenomenology, Critical Theory and Marxian structuralism. The investigations commence with a traditional functionalist investigation (a questionnaire survey) and then continue with studies consistent with the latter paradigms. In terms of the Burrell and Morgan scheme, the investigations start in the functionalist paradigm and are then conducted in a clockwise direction.

However, before the actual research studies were embarked upon, one major question remained - that of the choice of paradigm topics. Two possibilities were considered here, to either: a) analyse one specific aspect of work organization from the four paradigm perspectives; or b) analyse differing aspects, with each paradigm focusing on a set issue. While the former seemed, initially, to have merit in allowing easier paradigm comparability, it raised the issue that what may be an admissable problem in one logic may not be so in another. A more pragmatic objection - especially for the host organization - was that such a plan simply did not cover much research ground. While as a methodological exercise it would be interesting (in covering the same topic four times) the results would offer only marginal insight into the organization as a whole. It was decided, therefore, that the paradigms would analyse four separate aspects of the work system, here using their own language for describing the phenomena under study; e.g., 'task accomplishment' - interpretive paradigm; 'labour process' - radical structuralism, etc. The emphasis would be on widening

instead of restricting the research focus, the key metaphor being that of an empirical 'journey'. In sum, four main aspects of work organisation have been researched: job motivation and satisfaction (functionalist); daily work routines (interpretive); promotion and training (radical humanist); development of the labour process (radical structuralist). Here, topics were allocated to paradigms on the basis of best fit between subject matter and mode of investigation (see conclusion).

The Fire Service Research: An Introduction

As individually the four studies are fairly substantial projects, only an introduction will be given for each. Here we describe the reasons for choosing the various perspectives and methodologies, and illustrate some of the contextual factors affecting decisions made in the research process. As such, we offer accounts of how the research setting was encountered, the organizational rules were made sense of, and finally how data was collected and analysed. At present the material will be restricted to outlining examples of the research output; comparison of paradigm contributions, and commentary on the methods employed, will be undertaken in conclusion. Formal details of the research are presented in Hassard (1985).

The Functionalist Paradigm

For the functionalist study the first concern was to choose a theoretical position from which to conduct research. For this paradigm Burrell and Morgan offer four main theoretical streams: Social System Theory and Objectivism; Theories of Bureaucratic Dysfunctions; the Action Frame of Reference; Pluralism. Of these, Social System Theory is found at the heart of the paradigm - work representative of what Silverman (1970) and others term the 'systems orthodoxy'. By far the bulk of work reviewed by Burrell

and Morgan falls under this category, here being material typical of that taught on mainstream organizational behaviour courses: i.e. work that starts with Taylorism and Classical Management Theory, moves on through Hawthorne and neo-Human Relations, through Socio-Technical Systems and Structural-Functionalism, and finally to Contingency Theory. As in negotiating access it was agreed that job motivation, satisfaction and design would form one part of the study, the Social Systems literature was reviewed in order to find current theoretical perspectives and measurement techniques in use. This review suggested the job characteristics approach to be the most prominent development in the job motivation/design field, and especially work by Hackman and Oldham (1975, 1976, 1980) on the Job Diagnostic Survey. The job characteristics approach (Fig.3) was subsequently chosen as the theoretical base for the study, with the Job Diagnostic Survey used as the data collection instrument.

Figure 3 about here

The research process itself was as follows. The initial aim was to assess how full-time firemen evaluate job characteristics in terms of motivational potential. Coupled to this, the host organization requested attitudinal data for three specific groups differentiated by age and length of service. The result was a design in which 110 questionnaires were distributed to firemen (i.e. those below Leading Firemen rank) meeting the following criteria: firstly, men within their probationary period (i.e. with less than two years experience) who were under 25 years old; secondly, 'qualified' firemen of under 30 years of age and who had less than eight years service (subjects from a 5-7 years range were chosen) and, thirdly, firemen over 35 years old and who had at least 15 years service. The

Figure 3: Hackman and Oldham's (1980) Job Characteristics Model of Work Motivation

objective was to obtain information relevant to understanding changing orientations in a fireman's career. As such, the design sought to tap: 1. the attitudes of probationers who were still coming to terms with the organization; 2. of men who had reached 'qualified fireman' status (usually achieved after 3-4 years service) but for whom a second career was possible; and, 3. of firemen who had presumably made the Fire Service their career, but had not secured significant career advancement (i.e. to at least first level supervision). The aim was to find the critical job dimensions upon which groups differed in terms of their perceptions of the job's motivating potential. (A total of 93 questionnaires were returned from the sample - a response rate of 85%).

Research Details

Put briefly, the results found statistically significant group differences for 8 of the 20 J.D.S. dimensions using Kruskal-Wallis One-Way Analysis of Variance (i.e. including a mean score for the two growth need scales: see Table 1). For the sample overall, whereas high core job dimension scores were recorded (in the model's terms) for skill variety and task significance, scores well below the U.S. norms were found for task identity and autonomy; the mean for job feedback was marginally below the U.S. norm. For critical psychological states, the sample recorded a high mean for experienced meaningfulness, but scores for knowledge of results and experienced responsibility which were, respectively, slightly above and slightly below the U.S. average. For affective outcomes - i.e. measures of general satisfaction, growth satisfaction, and internal work motivation - on every factor the sample mean was higher than the U.S. 'All-Jobs' average, the figure for general satisfaction being particularly high. For the moderator variables, the sample reported higher scores on all four 'context

satisfactions' - job security, pay satisfaction, social satisfaction, supervisory satisfaction - than were listed for the U.S. All Jobs norms. Substantially higher scores emerged for job security, social satisfaction and supervisory satisfaction. However, results for growth need strength (G.N.S.) were below the U.S. norms.

Table 1 about here

For comparison of the subject groups themselves, the striking feature was the consistency with which groups scored the differing factors. With the exception of scores for growth need strength, as a rule probationers recorded the highest means, the 15 - 25 years group the lowest, while the 5 - 7 years group scored in the middle range. Overall, for core job characteristics, the probationers and 5 - 7 years group recorded substantially higher norms than the 15 - 25 years group. Here results reached statistical significance for task identity ($p < .05$), autonomy ($p < .05$), feedback from job ($p < .001$), and for an additional feedback scale - feedback from agents ($p < .01$). Scores for the critical psychological states again reflected the same general pattern, with a significant group difference being found for experienced meaningfulness ($p < .05$). The pattern was again visible for affective outcomes, with a significant result emerging for growth satisfaction ($p < .05$). For context satisfactions, the profile remained intact except for job security where the probationers scored lowest: a significant difference was found for pay satisfaction ($p < .05$). Finally, only for growth need strength was the pattern altered markedly, probationers scoring lowest for 'would like' G.N.S. and below the 5-7 years group for 'job choice' G.N.S. Here, all groups scored below the U.S. - All Jobs norm.

Table 1: Kruskal-Wallis One-Way Analysis of Variance

	MEAN RANKS			X^2	Significance
	0-2 YEARS	5-7 YEARS	15-25 YEARS		
Skill Variety	43.4	46.0	36.2	2.977	.2257 (N.S.)
Task Identity	50.8	46.1	33.5	6.483	.399 (.05)
Task Responsibility	46.0	45.3	36.2	2.846	.2410 (N.S.)
Autonomy	37.5	48.5	35.0	5.998	.498 (.05)
Feedback from Job	59.4	46.9	29.4	15.906	.0004 (.001)
Feedback from Agents	52.5	47.0	31.7	9.493	.0087 (.01)
Dealing with Others	50.5	47.0	31.7	9.493	.0087 (N.S.)
Expd. Responsibility	46.5	40.8	42.1	0.485	.7846 (N.S.)
Expd. Meaningfulness	58.4	42.8	35.2	7.582	.0223 (.05)
Knowledge of Results	38.2	42.5	42.7	0.320	.8523 (N.S.)
General Satisfaction	44.5	45.9	35.9	3.120	.2022 (N.S.)
Growth Satisfaction	57.2	42.4	36.0	6.267	.0436 (.05)
Internal Motivation	46.7	43.2	38.8	1.061	.5882 (N.S.)
Pay Satisfaction	59.2	37.4	41.9	7.095	.0288 (.05)
Security Satisfaction	36.7	42.0	43.8	0.704	.7034 (N.S.)
Social Satisfaction	46.2	4.3	37.5	1.794	.4079 (N.S.)
Supervisory Satisfaction	42.9	44.6	38.2	1.267	.5306 (N.S.)
"Would Like" G.N.S.	36.4	46.1	38.6	2.372	.3055 (N.S.)
Job Choice G.N.S.	41.9	49.5	32.3	9.079	.0107 (.05)
Total G.N.S.	39.1	48.4	34.6	5.963	.0507 (N.S.)

While the above represents a brief overview of trends from the J.D.S. data, the research also examined both the intercorrelations between the model's predicted relationships, and the internal consistency reliabilities of the J.D.S. scales. Here intercorrelations were computed using both Pearson Product-Moment and Spearman Rank-Order methods. For the relationship between core job dimensions and their corresponding critical psychological states, no major correlation differences emerged between this research and that of Oldham et al (1979). However, the internal consistency reliabilities revealed that several scales contained questions with low, and some cases negative, correlations with other items measuring the same construct.

The Interpretive Paradigm

Having obtained attitudinal data regarding motivation and satisfaction, the second study focussed on the work process directly. However, in accordance with the research plan, the study would analyse the task system from a perspective representative of Burrell and Morgan's interpretive paradigm, and thus by using a phenemenological methodology.

The work for this paradigm concerned an ethnographic analysis of the work process. It attempted to examine the main activities of the working day, but specifically how firemen take recourse to context-linked typifications in making sense of their activities. Here, the analysis concerned firemen either describing, or explaining, their work, the ethnography being produced from a data base of mainly unstructured conversational material collected during non-participant observation. The research was based on the premise that only through the speech, gestures and actions of competent participants could we understand the essence of their work, the aim being to let participants structure their conversations,

descriptions and analyses themselves. As such, an inductive approach was used in which the knowledge of the subjects was treated as strange to the researcher. Within the observation period, the researcher sought to employ the phenomenological suspension process of 'epoche' in order to temporarily 'bracket' existing personal beliefs, preconceptions and assumptions (Husserl, 1931, p.108ff).

The research, in practice, adopted a methodology suggested by Silverman and Jones (1976) in which subjects were required to explain activities in terms of how they are worked through. The fieldwork thus involved accompanying firemen through the day and asking them to explain activities before, during and after events, the aim being to appreciate the 'stocks of knowledge' (Schutz, 1967) they employ in making sense of their work.

Research Details

As it is difficult to precis ethnographic research, only some initial themes are given below. The material nevertheless gives the feel for the type of output produced.

The ethnography was presented as a description of routine events occurring during a normal working day. Overall, the analysis highlighted how routine tasks are accomplished within a context of uncertainty. An absence of firm personal control over immediate future events, which stems primarily from the threat of fire calls, is accepted within a general frame of instability. While there exists an official task schedule to direct non-operational periods (Standing Order 7/1), its structure is constantly interpreted at the discretion of a Watch's Station Officer. This is done so that events within the shift can be assembled so as to make the day run smoothly without temporal gaps, the work schedule, as laid down in the Standing Order, being rarely congruent with the actual process of

events. Indeed, as much of the routine work is of low priority, Watch members frequently have tasks interrupted in order to be moved to other work better fitted to maintaining a smooth flow of activity.

Fm. Dilley: Well we were supposed to go for a divisional drill this morning and we've got this station efficiency here as well. But the machine I'm on has got this water leak on the radiator so we knocked it off the run. The drill went out the window, the station efficiency for me went out the window. I went and got another machine from another station and brought it back, and everybody knocked off drill then to put it back on the run; and they're still working on it now. Whether we'll carry on with drill after I don't know.

This lack of fixity is accepted, primarily, as an outcome of the strategic relationship between a Station Officer and his Divisional Officer. A major concern for Station Officers is to be able to account for the deployment of watch personnel during periods laid down for routine work (equipment tests, cleaning, building inspections etc.). This is prompted by the uncertainty as to whether a Divisional Officer will visit the station without warning and question the validity of tasks being undertaken. (Divisional Officers are themselves seen as under pressure to account for use of personnel due to Local Authorities wishing to convert quiet full-time stations to day-manning). Therefore, with this constantly in mind, Station Officers attempt to make the day acceptable by either including, or excluding, tasks as necessary. This process of safeguarding is most noticeable in the late afternoon of the day shift, when, although work may be in progress, 'real' work may have finished much earlier. When real has been finished then 'fill-in' work is prescribed in order to keep the day going; fill-in work can take the form of either work of a peripheral nature or the repetition of work completed earlier.

The execution of tasks also serves as an arena for displaying personal authority and identity. In contrast to the lack of control over future

states, in the process of actually accomplishing the routine many firemen attempt to express personal prerogative. Instances of such, predominantly tacit, forms of discretion are seen throughout the day and within the majority of events encountered, many elements of behaviour being indexed, directly, to knowledge of the promotion and advancement systems. Here probationers often enact tasks differently to qualified firemen, while similarly, promotion-minded men adopt different behaviour strategies to non promotion-minded, and commonly older, firemen. The Watch becomes informally stratified in relation to whether tasks are completed according to official procedures or in line with an officer's directions, i.e. to whether they are enacted 'properly' in terms of the context code (see Wieder, 1974).

Fm. Haynes: You make short cuts when you get to know what's expected of you. It comes with experience really. You know a bloke in his probationary period wouldn't dream of doing some of the things you do when you've finished it. He thinks, well I've got to do that properly, you know, I must do that. But when you've done it and you're sort of out of your probation you think well I can relax a bit now.

Fm. Fowler: If you're youngish and still keen on the promotion side, then you're going to put a little more effort, well not effort so much as the way you go about it it is going to be a little bit happier. Because if you're seen to be doing things properly then hopefully this will come out in any report that the boss puts in for you.

(from separate discussions: emphasis added).

For example, the first main task of the shift is to 'check the machine' (checking the fire engine and the equipment stored on it) by consulting an inventory board listing all the 'appliance's' fittings. Although the prescribed method of checking is by reference to the inventory, firemen adopt different strategies. While probationers suggest they do complete the task by checking off the items, and some firemen 'make a show' by carrying the board around with them, other, frequently older, firemen check the fittings by simply lifting up the lockers and noting whether the contents seem intact. Here firemen take recourse to a criterion of 'knowing what's expected of you' in assessing the sort of (proper) actions that need to be employed.

The analysis of the machine check is the first element in the chronological assessment of the daily work routine; this represents the substance of the ethnography. Here, the work process is evaluated in terms of how it is socially constructed by participants, these descriptions adding to our understanding by offering process-oriented explanations. In sum, the research outlines the many discretionary strategies employed by firemen in negotiating and managing uncertainty in the task system. Full details of the analysis are presented in Hassard (1985) chapter 4.

The Radical Humanist Paradigm

The Radical Humanist is the least populated of Burrell and Morgan's four paradigms. For social theory it locates French Existentialism, the Anarchistic Individualism of Max Stirner, and the Critical Theory of Gramsci, Lucacs, and the Frankfurt School. For organizational analysis, some outlines 'towards an Anti-Organization Theory' are offered - here Burrell and Morgan cite works such as Beynon's (1973) 'Working for Ford' and Clegg's (1975) 'Power, Rule and Domination' as being characteristic of a Critical Theory perspective for organizations, given their emphasis on subjectivism, domination, and control.

The third Fire Service study attempted, similarly, to conduct an analysis by reference to Critical Theory. However, in this study, the links were made more explicit than in Beynon or Clegg, with Gramsci's concept of hegemony being used for interpreting mediums of workplace ideology. Here, the research highlighted the role of adminstrative science as a vehicle for cementing organizational 'common-sense' (Gramsci, 1971), and specifically its role in training firemen to cross the 'frontier of control' (Goodrich, 1920).

After examining the concept of hegemony in general terms, the analysis focussed on the role of organisation theory/behaviour as a particularly pervasive medium in the hegemony process. The theoretical input argued that the cohesion Gramsci portrays between administrative science and capitalist ideology (see Americanism and Fordism; and also Adler, 1977) should be seen as a symbiotic relationship, an argument owing much to the works of Fleron and Fleron (1972), Nord (1974), Allen (1975) and Clegg and Dunkerley (1980). These writers all note how in management theory factors such as social class, the unequal distribution of rewards, and competition and private ownership, are all reduced to 'common-sense', with unemployment, redundancy and wage freezes also being accepted as natural forces and, thus, as analytically unproblematic.

In establishing links between theory and method, the research noted how this symbiosis is fostered by the growth of management training in both the public and private sectors. After Marceau et al. (1978), it was argued that as business has become eager to use the educational system, then the image of management teaching as a medium of meritocracy has served as a mystification for the production of ideology. As Clegg and Dunkerley suggest that a crucial function of management education is "reproducing ideology as well as middle class careers" (p.578), and that this ideology is produced through learning 'modern management techniques' at training institutions, the research attempted to illustrate how such processes are accomplished in the Fire Service. The fieldwork therefore analysed management training practices on a course designed to prepare promotion candidates for the important step to first line supervision, i.e. to the rank of Leading Fireman.

In order to document such processes, the researcher enrolled on a 'Cadre Leading Fireman's' (C.L.F.) training course, the objective being to

gain first hand experience of in-house techniques at this crucial level. The research outlined not only the formal methods used, but predominantly the process by which they are presented. Thus, the data was mainly gathered from tape recordings of class sessions, and especially of interactions between instructors (Fire Service Training Officers) and the 'Cadre' Leading Firemen.

Research Details

The analysis outlined how C.L.F.'s are trained to accept an ethos that a Leading Fireman's prime loyalty is to the authority structure and not to the basic rank firemen of the Watch. As Senior Officers feel that - on initial promotion - a major problem facing Leading Firemen is of a sense of ambiguity over the direction of loyalties, then it is important to secure allegiance to the management structure. Indeed, the dominant theme throughout the course was of instructors seeking to settle doubts over this question of loyalties, and to create a context for changing members' constructs from those of the recipients of authority to those of transmitters of authority. Various stages of the course saw differing strategies being used for accomplishing this process, these ranging from considering the logical necessity of the divide between authority and non-authority positions, to more basic appeals to careerism.

The research demonstrated how instructors use administrative science to solve problems which are predetermined by the extant logic of the organization. Notable in this process is the synergism evident between the use of John Adair's (1968, 1973, 1983, 1984) work on leadership and the retaining of established practices in military and para-military organizations (Adair's leadership theories were originally developed for the Armed Forces by a member of the Armed Forces). As Adair's theories have

been so well received in the Army, so his Sandhurst package has in turn become 'the Gospel' for organizations holding authority structures similar to the Army, such as the Fire Service. At the organizational level Adair's material has become a bulwark for sustaining established patterns of hegemony, i.e. it forms a prime justification, legitimized as intellectual, for reproducing the dominant ideology of the workplace (see Boggs, 1976, p.39 ff on 'organic' intellectuals). Indeed, the use of supportive materials within in-house training programmes allows organizations like the Fire Service to keep tight control over both the medium and the message. Although course participants are removed, temporarily, from the work process, in staying within the bounds of organizational influence they remain subject to both its constraints and sanctions. Not only can the organization select materials offering seemingly objective, and thus legitimate, support for its practices, but it can present these within a milieu conditioned by established rules which are taken for granted as common-sense.

Training Officer 2: What is esteem nowadays, what does that word mean? What is status, what does that mean, you know? I mean you can have a dustman driving a Rolls Royce now, and you can have an executive managing director redundant. So where is esteem nowadays, it's such a terrific world, a terrible world in that sort of vein. So we've found a terrific comparison in terms of Maslow's ladder. That (i.e., Maslow's ladder) needs updating. So we do our own.

The Radical Structuralist Paradigm

Having analysed the work organisation using; firstly, functional-behavioural; secondly, phenomenological-ethnographic; and, thirdly, critical-humanist concepts, the final study moved to an historical analysis by way of the radical structuralist paradigm.

For this paradigm, Burrell and Morgan review the Mediterranean Marxism of Althusser and Colletti, the Conflict Theory of Dahrendorf and Rex, and

the Historical Materialism of Bukharin, developing within their analysis a duality of traditions to show the influence of Marx's work on political economy and the more radical implications of Weber on bureaucracy. This duality later forms the basis for assessing contributions to a 'radical organization theory'. Here, for 'Radical Weberian' approaches, are listed works such as Miliband's (1977) 'The State in Capitalist Society', Eldridge and Crombie's (1974) 'A Sociology of Organizations', and Mouzelis's (1975) 'Organization and Bureaucracy'. For 'Marxian Structuralism', we see works drawing upon the exemplar of Marx' Capital for analysing economic structures within capitalism. As such, Baran and Sweezy's (1968) 'Monopoly Capital' is joined by Braverman's (1974) 'Labour and Monopoly Capital' (LMC) in setting the scene for recent developments in labour process theory.

Indeed, in recent years, and specifically following Braverman, the major thrust of research in this paradigm has been the revival of labour process analysis. In the wake of LMC there has emerged a wealth of case study material relevant to Braverman's de-skilling thesis (see Zimbalist, [ed.], 1979; Wood [ed.], 1982; Knights et al. [eds.], 198). However, recently labour process analysis has widened its scope to address issues such as the sexual division of labour, the role of the state, and capital's use of time. Running through much of this work has been a concern for longitudinal accounts and especially craft histories, with, following criticisms that Braverman's analysis emphasizes managerial determinism, researchers stressing the voluntarist initiatives of labour in the control-resistance dialectic (see Storey, 1983). Increasingly, and as witnessed by the recent Gospel and Littler (1983) volume, labour process studies have documented (1) the strategic relations between labour and capital, concerning (2) specific labour process topics, by way of (3) periodized accounts of major events.

The work undertaken for the final paradigm adopted a methodology in line with current work in this area. Here, the focus was placed upon structural parameters of the employment relation, and especially on establishing the duration (and later intensity) of working time - this representing the crucial issue in relations between union, employers and the state in the firefighting labour process.

Research Details

In brief, the research focussed upon changes in working time from the start of full-time firefighting in Britain in 1833, to the last major change in work systems following the Firemen's Strike of 1977-78. The analysis highlighted both the initiatives of organized labour in reducing hours, and the strategies of employers and the state in attempting to offset their demands. Through collation of relevant archives, the research illustrated not only how time became such a major parameter in the employment relation, but moreover how it formed the basis for traditions which were to become deep-seated and enduring.

In explaining such changes, the analysis took recourse to a sectoral assessment by way of the 'fiscal crisis' thesis of O'Connor (1973), i.e. through arguing that the accumulation process serves during periods of inflation to create the potential for industrial conflict in state services. Recent contractual issues were pictured against the backcloth of rapid increases in militant state service sector unionism during the 1970's, here noting how the experiences of firemen were mirrored by workers in other state service sectors (e.g. Cousins', 1984, description of the rise of militancy amongst N.H.S. workers). Research outlined the mechanisms devised for redressing such expressions of conflict, and particularly the development of the 'upper-quartile' agreement which provided a fixed payment

level in relation to workers in other service and manufacturing sectors (i.e. a level at which 75% of all adults male manual workers earn less and 25% more: 1978 National Agreement)

In terms of working time, the analysis illustrated how, with Fire Service hours increasingly approaching the national average, questions of 'productivity' have been brought sharply into focus; that is, despite firefighting being of 'non-C.S.A.', (Capitalist State Apparatus) status (see Carchedi, 1977). In line with the 'porosity' thesis of Clark et al. (1984), we noted how as during the 1970's the length of the working week became no longer a signal characteristic of firefighting, then emphasis was displaced from 'covering' to 'using' time. For example, in suggesting that firemen's pay should be assessed in relation to a normal 40 hour week, the Cunningham Report (1971) pointed to 'the scope for better manpower utilisation' within non-operational sections of the day, this being especially pressing as Cunningham found - in terms of national mean averages - that only 3.3% of available time on whole-time stations was spent on emergency calls. Cunningham followed the guidelines of its precursor the Holroyd Report (1970) in recommending improving productivity by replacing 'unskilled' chore centred work with 'skilled' inspection work. Various unskilled tasks would in future be carried out by auxiliary cleaners/porters on lower incomes.

Indeed, the reduction to 42 hours was contingent upon a move to greater 'professionalism' in which stand-down periods were reduced. Previous systems had allowed not only for statutory evening stand-down from 8.00 pm (with some variations), but also free time on weekend rotas from midday on Saturday and all day Sunday. With the 42 hour week, however, weekend stand-down was officially been pushed back to midnight. Also, during the day itself, not only was inspection work to be increased, but also training schedules made more sophisticated, elaborate (itemised) quota inventories

being devised for daily drills, and a yearly planner mandated for each firefighter. Station officers were now encouraged to cover three hours drill on every day shift, with usually 1-2 hours being allocated for practical training and the remainder for a 'technical' session.

In sum, as firefighting represents a labour-intensive service with no tangible production process, it has been in the fundamental interests of employers to retain long hours in order to offset labour costs. Indeed, it is only during the 1970's, with national duty hours being reduced to a level approximating those for other manual occupations, that questions of productivity have become prominent; that is, through completing more highly skilled work within the time available.

Conclusion

In this second paper we have explored possibilities for achieving multiple paradigm research in organizations. Here the aim has been to conduct an empirical investigation in which results accrue from several quasi-exclusive perspectives. To achieve this, the pluri-paradigm model of Burrell and Morgan (1979) has been used as a framework for accessing images consistent with functionalist, interpretive, radical humanist, and radical structuralist modes of analysis. In so doing, the paper has attempted to outline a new, innovative methodology for organizational research through proposing a break from traditional, and orthodox, mono-paradigm forms of enquiry. The research has shown how organizational life can be interpreted in vastly differing ways depending on the type of philosophical assumptions employed to orient research perceptions. As Burrell and Morgan is founded on the premise that a paradigm's reality is unlocked by metatheory, so we have attempted to enlist a paradigm's assumptions in order to obtain

authentic accounts. The result has been four studies yielding alternative images of organization.

For the functionalist study, the research produced an account which was realist, positivist, determinist and nomothetic. It adopted a perspective in which psychometric techniques and computer analysis are seen as providing a sophisticated understanding of the empirical nature of organization; an approach which attempts to make the role of values separate in the research process. Explanations were couched in a form promising practical success, especially through structuring organization as a practical activity. The study sought generalizable knowledge of a form acceptable as rigorous, valid and reliable. The research process drew inspiration from the scientific method, statistic significance being used to discern relationships considered useful for guiding future organizational actions (e.g. job redesign). In sum, the study epitomised the classical quasi-experimental approach to organizational enquiry.

In the second (interpretive) stage, the form of evaluation changed dramatically. Here we found explanations which were nominalist, anti-positivist, voluntarist and idiographic. Whereas in the functionalist study we pictured an 'organized' world characterized by certainty and self-regulation, in this enquiry we discovered a 'life-world' of social construction. Instead of computing statistical correlations, we described a web of human relationships. The analysis outlined how participants create situated rules for 'bringing-off' the daily work routine, personal actions being indexed to a contextual system of meanings. In sum, the research succeeded in de-concretizing the view of organizational reality created in the first paradigm; it sensitized us to understanding organization as a cultural phenomenon, subject to a continuous process of enactment.

For the radical-humanist study we found a differing form of explanation again. Although the paradigm also viewed the social world from a perspective which was nominalist, anti-positivist, voluntarist and idiographic, it was committed to emphasizing the limitations of existing social arrangements. The central notion underlying the study was that man's consciousness is dominated by ideological superstructures, these serving to drive a wedge of false consciousness between the known self and true self. The research was concerned with understanding how humans construct a world they then experience as alienating, especially in relation to the power dimension underlying the enactment process. We noted how leadership roles are characterized by a process in which specific individuals are perceived to hold a legitimate right (or even obligation) to define the reality of others. The analysis highlighted a 'pattern of dependency' in which administrative scientists are engaged in defining the situations of 'leaders' and 'led'. In sum, we noted how the hegemony of the organization is dependent upon institutionalizing social arrangements which constrain human development.

Finally, for the radical-structuralist study, we returned again to a realist perspective, but one directed at fundamentally different ends to those of functionalism, i.e. by focussing on examples of structural conflict rather than functional integration. The study analysed the strategic relations between capital and labour, and especially regarding the parameters of the employment relation. Research focussed upon crisis points in the firefighting labour process (e.g. Firemen's Strike, 1977-78), here analysing the role of regulative agencies in seeking to mediate contradictory forces and thus restore temporary balance. In sum, instead of examining the sedimenting of hegemony, the study illustrated the concrete actions of labour, capital and the state in the labour process.

The Fire Service research has thus represented a first attempt at using a multiple paradigm framework in organizational analysis. It has explored some of the empirical possibilities of paradigm diversity in order to demonstrate how differing frameworks contribute to our understanding of organization; it has illustrated how contrasting images emerge when we base our investigations upon differing sets of meta-theoretical assumptions.

However, despite the wide range of insights offered by multiple paradigm research, the question of whether this form of analysis will develop in the future remains moot. Although the method appears to offer rich explanations of organizational phenomena, its future prospects may be jeopardized both by problems in operationalising the core concept, and by constraints sanctioned by the academic community - especially here with respect to whether paradigm diversity is seen as a 'threat or opportunity' (see Morgan, 1981).

For the core concept (see Part One), although Watkins (1970), Maruyama (1974) and Phillips (1977) offer arguments against the hermetic isolationism of the instant paradigm thesis, in being so 'notoriously elusive', and even so much so that it may 'belie precise definition', the very notion of paradigm may make it difficult to get multiple paradigm research started. Empirical researchers may concede defeat prior to fieldwork when faced with such considerable problems of operational definition. To achieve research in which multiple theoretical perspectives are brought to bear, and especially in terms of those representing quasi-exclusive paradigms, we may be forced to bracket certain problems in exchange for the practical benefits of rich data. Here, we may wish to build on the premises of writers offering alternatives to the incommensurability thesis by being further selective in our adoption of Kuhn. For example, we may wish to retain some of the sociological elements of paradigm associated with Kuhn's later

'disciplinary matrix' (e.g., 'shared models' and 'shared beliefs') while loosening our adherence to, for example, any gestalt-switch/conversion principles of the exclusive-paradigm thesis. As several writers have described qualitative differences between theory-community perspectives, and may have cited metatheoretical debate as the root of such differences, works such as Burrell and Morgan (1979) may offer opportunities to do what many suggest we know to be possible, i.e. to learn the languages and practices of other theory communities, and in time conduct research reflective of their form of life: in other words to develop a systematic approach to obtaining epistemological variety in research. Such a position may, as Eisenstadt (1974) notes, represent an argument for democracy in social science. Openly acknowledging multiple paradigms may signal that the social sciences will never serve one master, this being a state of healthy development rather than one of crisis.

However, although we can identify several benefits from paradigm diversity, the question of whether multiple paradigm research can 'develop' raises issues of the institutional nature of academic communities. Whereas many writers have argued for realising 'multi-paradigm inquiry' (Pondy and Boje, 1980) or 'multi-plane analysis (Steinle, 1983) through, for example, 'theoretical blockage' (Driggers, 1977) or 'transpection' (Maruyama, 1974), until now little research has emerged. Although sociologists have occasionally employed 'triangulation' (cf. Jick, 1979), this only brings together differing forms of methodology; it does not extend into research based on the alternative philosophies of major communities. While Allison's (1971) 'Essence of Decision' was a landmark in adopting alternative frameworks, it has not been capitalised upon in any formal social research.

For large empirical projects, one reason for this reluctance may be that in multiple paradigm research we are not only interested in

designing-in methodological diversity, but are involved at a state prior to this, i.e. in specifying meta-methodological variety in terms of the differing values and beliefs held by theory communities. This may represent a problem in that when it comes to analysis, research teams may feel the need to show theoretical consensus rather than display a range of paradigm orientations and affiliations. Moreover, we could argue that large research projects will, in practice, be conditioned by, for example, the nature of the access agreement, the 'acceptability' of research goals, and especially the need to produce hard, generalizable, and ultimately publishable results. These factors may act as institutional barriers to protect the more orthodox, positivist, and for organizational analysis, predominantly managerialist, positions.

For the individual researcher, the institutional pressures may be even more pronounced. Training in orthodox organizational behaviour may prevent the theoretical eclecticism necessary for transpecting between paradigms. Morgan (1981) highlights the pressures facing researchers considering paradigm exploration, especially in that such diversity may bring about fears over, 'fail(ing) to get published and fail(ing) to get tenured' (p.24). He notes the reluctance of doctoral students to be adventurous, especially when faced with an ethos - widespread in traditional departments - that, 'there are few practical alternatives to orthodoxy' (p.24). This being so, the skills necessary to achieve transpection may be unlikely to develop as, "the control systems developed by journal and university departments alike, exert a confining, if well meaning, hold on the jugular of scholarship" (p.24).

Therefore, at present, institutional pressures may militate against the potential for diversity. Mainstream organizational analysis seems to display a tendency for 'monopolarization' as thus towards, "psychological

dependency on one authority, one right theory, one truth" (Maruyama, 1974, emphasis in original). Although researchers have argued that in organization theory we require, "individuals who are specialists in more than one paradigm" (Pondy and Boje, p.93), institutional constraints serve to reinforce Russell's dictum that,'what men want is certainty not knowledge'. If we argue that paradigm diversity is a desirable objective, then we may need to develop academic networks capable of promoting more eclectic orientations to research.

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ON THE IDEA OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE. Part I: Remarks on Its Popularity.

Mats Alvesson

Introduction

Those orientations or directions in organizational research that draw upon concepts such as culture, symbol, myth, story, ritual and rite has, in a very short time, roused tremendous interest within organization theory. By running computer searches of two large data bases in 1979, Broms & Gahmberg (1983) found 50 business articles with the word 'myth' in the text and two years later ten times as many, i.e. 500. This orientation, here called theory of organizational culture and symbolism, has also rapidly attained the greatest academic respectability. Most of the leading journals within the field have dedicated special issues to the topic of organizational culture/symbolism between 1983 and 1986. As Stablein & Nord say "Probably never before in organizational studies has an innovative area been given such attention so rapidly". (Stablein & Nord, 1985:22) Thus the slowness and resistance to change that the academic world is sometimes accused of does not seem to be valid in this case.

I will not go into detail by explaining the characteristics of the very broad orientation called organizational culture and symbolism research. The idea is that organizational reality is, at least to a large extent, of a cultural or symbolic nature. An advanced understanding of organizations calls for emphasis on their symbols and their cultural systems or, to use another formulation and perspective, by using culture as a metaphor for organization, the characteristics of the latter might be illuminated in a deeper way than when organizations are studied as (basically) formal structures (conceptualized as machines, instruments or systems).

A common view in organizational culture research is to see organizations as comprised by shared norms, values, understandings, beliefs, ideologies etc, and the structures and phenomena characterizing them and the actions being carried out in organizations having a symbolic meaning for the

organizational participants. Important organizational symbols, being part of, expressions of and/or reinforcing mechanisms of the culture, might be rites, rituals, ceremonies, language, jokes, architecture etc.

For an introduction to the literature with this orientation, see for example Administrative Science Quarterly (1983), Journal of Management (1985), Morgan et.al. (1983) Organizational Dynamics (1983) and Organization Studies (1986).

To me, the extremely rapid development of this part of organization theory is a phenomenon, i.e. presents a problem that is important to understand. How is it possible that the varied and ambiguous direction of research that deals with organizational culture and symbolism, has very rapidly attained broad extension and also respectability? I am hopefully not alone in finding this problem as interesting as quite a number of the phenomena that the culture researchers focus upon.

Basic explanations of the extension of theories

Generally, there are two types of explanations to the rise and growth of theories: the internal-scientific and the sociological.

The former claims that knowledge develops autonomously, i.e. through its own, inner logic. The latter suggests that scientific views and theories are socially determined. Between the two extremes are a number of different opinions. There is probably only a consensus about the very imprecise idea that scientific theories have at least some degree of independence, a "relative" autonomy, at the same time as societal conditions influence which problems are to be researched, which paradigms (paradigmatic assumptions) dominate and also which theories fall in such good soil that they are stimulated and expand. (See Brante, 1980, for a detailed overview of the development of science in relation to the theoretical and societal levels).

Roughly speaking, it might be argued that the extension and popularity of a theory or a school (direction of interest) depend partly on its intellectual/theoretical qualities, partly on the degree of correspondence

to the needs of the dominating elite and other important groups of interest and/or a general market for academic knowledge (that could be seen as a function or an aspect of the "Zeitgeist", the spirit of the present time). It is usual that while the representatives of a discipline or an orientation stress how the development goes forwards and upwards, observers whose orientation is the sociology of knowledge and science are often more sceptical and claim that ideological and other societal conditions influence the theoretical content in a way that makes it difficult to speak of a clear-cut development towards "better" theories. (A kind of a middle form proposes that the social scientific theories are developed to include and mediate more and more advanced ideologies, Alvesson, 1986a, Anthony, 1978.)

For a theory to expand rapidly during a certain period, it must be sharper, more elegant or have greater explanation potential than earlier theories, or it must strongly appeal to the "Zeitgeist" or to some of the predominant coalitions in society. To some degree those coalitions might also exist in the academic world. The social factors that stimulate or obstructs the discovery, acceptance and expansion of a particular theory are partly connected to society and culture in its entirety, but the subcultures in the academic world, with its fractional interests and more or less "openness" to society in general (or various elites in it), also have some independence in relationship to society and cultural change in the overall level. (The French cultural sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu, (for example, is of the opinion that an important reason for Sartre's impact was that he functioned as an ideologist for the intellectuals. His theses appealed to their self-image. He said: You are free. You can better than anyone else make your self a representation of your self. You can make representations of all others but no one can make himself a representation of you. Broady & Palme, 1983).

Social determinants behind the expansion of organizational research

How, then, can the rise and rapid expansion of studies or organizational culture be understood? To answer this question several aspects must be taken into account. I will discuss the issue by using an analogy with a market, talking about sellers/producers of theory, i.e. researchers and

consultants, customers, primarily managers and the product, i.e. organizational culture "knowledge (including books, courses and consultancy services on the topic). I will say something on what is characterizing this market and its dynamics. Besides this, the general context on which the particular features of this market during the present time (the 1980's) are being formed, will be discussed.

The product

The general idea of organizational culture and its consequences for people performance in organizations, as it is expressed by many authors in the field, apparently is well-suited to appeal to the interests of the dominating elite in business and other types of organizations. The conceptualization of organizational culture and the way the message of culture as a key dimension in behaviour is formulated makes it appear to be of greatest relevance to people with ambitions and duties of controlling organizational life. There are obvious elements of sales ambitions in the writings and presentations (Alvesson, 1984). The target group for the sales efforts seems to be, hardly surprisingly, primarily the category of managers. Some of the authors (though far from all) within the orientation are obviously looking for success in this market and sales of their consultation services and the bestselling books often proceed in the following way:

A. At first it is claimed that the earlier understanding of organizations is superficial and one-sided. Criticism is directed towards the narrow (positivistic) methodology and the focus on outer, obvious and measurable variables of the predominant approaches.

B. The alternative to these is the orientation in organization theory that focuses on symbols and cultures in organizational contexts. This is noised abroad as a new and radically different orientation. This is confronted by the traditional approaches which are dismissed rather loosely (see for instance Dandridge, Mitroff & Joyce, 1980, Daft, 1983 and for a critical discussion, Alvesson, 1984). Even though "positivistic" organization research was (and still is, although to a minor extent) most common, qualitative approaches have actually had a broad extension

during the 1970's. These are neglected in some of the argumentation for a radically new, approach to organizational analysis. Many of the most influential organization researchers of the past 15 years, for instance Argyris, Benson, March, Perrow, Silverman and Weick, can hardly be seen as targets of this criticism. This is however, not mentioned or quickly dismissed.

C. The research on organizational symbolism and culture promises to give a new and richer understanding of how organizations really work. For the uninitiated observer/actor in symbolism and culture theory, a hidden reality can be exposed through the understanding of the symbolism. Because the symbolic meaning is presented not as marginal phenomenon but even

> The idea of changing homes, jobs, or even families may symbolize a deeper concern to change oneself, to be born again, to fulfill some distant dream or ambition.
> (Morgan, Frost & Pondy, 1983:10)

D. In the absence of an adequate understanding of symbols and the culture of the organization, a manager is on thin ice in his management, it is implied. The symbolic is central to the functioning of the organization and the manager (or whoever) who does not understand myths, rituals, rites, material symbols, stories etc does not know what is going on in the organization. The range of his management is limited, it is suggested. The message that the manager does not know what is going on below "the surface" and that another field of powerful leadership exists (symbolic management) makes the message of the symbolism theorists appealing to managers.

Elements in at least parts of the symbolic and cultural organization theory should be well-suited to appeal to these ambitions, partly by activating uncertainty.

E. In some cases the organization researchers unabashedly meet the interests of management and indicate what services they can provide:

> Within an organization, as within a culture, the myth is believed or the ritual enacted usually without participants' forethought or awareness of the functions being served. It is often through the perspective of an outsider that rational intentionality in the choice and use of symbols is seen. This lack of conscious choice is not inevitable, as organization members do not always have to be victims of myths and rituals, permitting these symbols to continue without awareness of their impact and without preplanning.
> (Dandridge, 1983:114)

Instrumental value for management is also often toned down even if it is clearly evident and might appeal to practioners.

The customers

To understand the impact of the product (i.e. knowledge on organizational culture in some forms) on the market, the features of the target group must be understood. Considered as a group, the managers might be characterized as eager to be

- -modern and up-to-date, enlightened and educated (Bourdieu, 1973)
- -efficient and rational (which, among other things, means that sources of "irrationality" are counteracted and attempts are made to rationalize them as far as possible) (See Gustafsson, 1983, March, 1976)
- -in control over the organization and the subordinates (Laurent, 1978, Argyris, 1982).

Especially sensitive to the message of the culture approach (in its sales-oriented forms) are probably young, professional managers in the field where it is social competence and the impressions that are made rather than strictly technical qualifications which are of key importance for success and career.

A historical trend from the emphasis on inherited fortunes and positions (i.e. background in upper class) and, which is something quite different technical qualifications and competence towards the greater importance of cultural capital as a base for a beneficial behaviour in modern, complex organizations has a clear impact on young, professional managers. The culture approach, and all the peculiar concepts it presents (myths, rites, rituals, artifacts, folklore ...) and their ambigious meanings, is likely to induce tension and interest from this group. The amount of cultural capital

in these terms, with their scholarly connotations but also large area of direct and understandable applications ("this meeting is a ritual"), seems to be great. In other words, the cultural capital of mastering the organizational culture idea or the symbolic values of having knowledge of organizational symbolism, is significant. On a corporate level having a distinctive "culture" of its own, appears to have a symbolic value for corporations eager to appear progressive, modern and having a good public image.

Producers

I imagine that the occurrence of this type of strategy and message in large parts of the organizational literature in the field, has powerfully contributed to the popularity and rapid extension of it. It would, however, be very unjust to characterize the whole direction as primarily sales-oriented. A large part of the research in the area is more shaded and self-critical and downplays the theoretical as well as the practical range and usefulness of the research and knowledge about organizational culture. This holds good for, among others, most of the contributions to the Administrative Science Quarterly's special issue on the subject. Smircich, for instance, writes:

> Some, however, genuinely question whether organization culture is indeed manageable. Much of the literature refers to an organization culture, appearing to lose sight of the great likelihood that there are multiple organization subcultures, or even countercultures, competing to define the nature of situations within organizational boundaries. The talk about corporate culture tends to be optimistic, even messianic, about top managers molding cultures to suit their strategic ends. The notion of "corporate culture" runs the risk of being as disappointing a managerial tool as the more technical and quantitative tools that were faddish in the 1970s. Those of a skeptical nature may also question the extent to which the term corporate culture refers to anything more than an ideology cultivated by management for the purpose of control and legitimation of activity.
>
> (Smircich, 1983:346)

Despite the intellectual orientation of large parts of the research on culture and symbolism and their relative independence from demands for practical use of the results, I believe that even the rapid growth and great popularity of this intellectual orientation in academic circles is related to extra-scientific determinants. This is achieved in two, internally related,

ways. Firstly, the consulting- and slogan-oriented literature within the direction (like Deal & Kennedy, 1982 and Peters & Waterman, 1982), while appealing to the interests of the elite, also brings with it the non-pragmatic, intellectual, more genuinely academic research within the overall direction. The interest and the generating of resources that the "populistic" stream produces also bring benefits to the "intellectualistic" variant. The former has a need or at any rate use of the academic orientation since this gives status and legitimacy to the field of organizational culture and symbolism in its whole. It is, of course, impossible clearly to separate the intellectual and the consulting-oriented variations within the direction - people often have ambitions in both direction - even if the more intellectual culture-researchers try to do this and want to stress their distance from "the 'managementcentric' motivation in corporate culture research" (Gregory, 1983:362). Through the sales-oriented approach, in relation to managers and others a common interest is focused upon symbols, cultures etc and a number of researchers are drawn to these concepts like bees to the honey pot. In other words, one can talk about a snowball-effect where the possibilities of selling the theory to managers brings with it a number of researchers who earlier talked about norm systems, ideologies, organizational climates etc, but who now modify their approaches and use new concepts.

On the dynamics of the field

An interesting aspect of organizational culture theory is that it has captured the interest of both the academic and pragmatic extremes of the management knowledge field (which includes researchers, authors, business journalists, consultants etc). This probably contributes to its great popularity. Quite often, management theory is caught in a contradictory position between, on the one hand, academic criteria and scientific requirements, and, on the other hand, demands of being of practical value and relevance, primarily for managers. These types of claims by no means always coincide. The organizational culture idea, however, at least until it is defined in a precise way, does have academic respectability as well as practical relevance. Ironically, when the concept is defined in a theoretically precise way, based on anthropological thought, the practical relevance and value of the concept is rather small. You can, for example,

hardly create, change or even affect culture in the former meaning. Here it signifies a historically emerged, persistent pattern of beliefs, values and attitudes to social reality, deeply engrained in consciousness.

Through its many meanings and relevance for various contexts and situations, the culture concept is used often and this, of course, fuels the general interest in it. The ambiguity and large numbers of meanings of the concept makes it difficult to grasp and "look through", which stimulates debates and quasi-debates and maintains tensions and energy in the field.

The Context

Above I stressed a sociological explanation of the extension of the symbolism/culture approach in which the interests of groups of managers in the theory are central. These might be seen as the main audience or the group of customers to which the mainstream organizational culture research is directed. To understand the rapid extension of corporate culture and organizational symbolism literature we must go beyond the traits of managers as a group and the way the "sellers" of theory (consultants, writers, researchers) appeal to these and look at the context of management in the 1980's. Here we can identify two main types of contexts of relevance, the first is the business situation, the second is the more general cultural characteristics of the present time.

Important features of the economic situation for large parts of industry in Western countries since the last part of the 1970's are hard competition and productivity problems. Crises are common. This creates a receptiveness to new ideas, indicating new solutions to corporate problems. The increasingly international nature of modern corporations, including the frequent interactions with customers, suppliers and partners from different cultures, the success of Japanese companies (which is viewed as partly a result of their cultural pecularities) and the increased size of corporations, needs for decentralization and the effects of this on the integration of the activities of various parts of the firm and the need for control might affect what type of new ideas and solutions for which receptivity is best.

Within the management area there are rather rapid changes in terms of popularity between different promises of "quick fixes". Various ideas, more or less theoretically grounded, on leadership style, policy making or how to motivate personnel, attain and lose popularity at rapid speed. These ideas normally are evaluated as fads after they have run out of fashion (Business Week, 1985). The field of managers and writers/consultants supporting the former with ideas, proposals, literature and consultancy services might be seen as buyers and sellers on a market where the fashion changes very quickly. This is an important aspect of the rapid rise of corporate culture in organization theory. It does not, however, give the whole explanation for the extension of the culture/symbolism theory. Parts of the latter are, as said above, very academic in their orientation and even so this academically oriented part of the field has been fuelled by all the publicity and public interest on culture as some sort of tool for dealing with corporate problems, this orientation was on its way when the large interests of the market reached their height during the first half of the 1980's.

On a more general, societal level, there are some aspects on the present socio-cultural situation of Western, late-capitalistic/post-industrial society which are of relevance to the extension of organizational culture research. In contemporary society it seems to be a basis for a thinking and a perspective that harmonize with the focus and concepts of the symbolic/-cultural organization theory. To illuminate this, we can start from the research on socialization in the present societal culture that analyses social and psychological conditions from social psychological and psychoanalytic narcissism theory. The need to have one's subjectivity confirmed and to become emotionally involved is considered to be typical of the character type that has become more and more wide-spread over the last decade (Ziehe & Stubenrauch, 1982). In the "Culture of Narcissism" the need to feel rather than to think and the expansion of a "subjectivistic" and emotionally unrestrained way of relating to matters is pronounced in a way completely different from that of earlier epochs and for the social character typical then (Lasch, 1980). The predominant character traits in this societal culture facilitate an interest in theories that are expressed in, for instance, the following way:

> Culture as a root metaphor promotes a view of organizations as expressive forms, manifestations of human consciousness. Organizations are understood and analyzed not mainly in economic or material terms, but in terms of their expressive, ideational, and symbolic aspects. Characterized very broadly, the research agenda stemming from this perspective is to explore the phenomenon of organization as subjective experience...
>
> (Smircich, 1983:347-8)

As this quotation illustrates, in contemporary organizational analysis, as in large parts of social science in general, there is a strong tendency towards more interpretative, subjectivist approaches. This is illustrated by Morgan (1983) who uses chapter titles such as "Research as Engagement: A Personal View" and "In Research, as in Conversation, We Meet Ourselves". Ebers (1985) suggests that the cultural/symbolic perspective shares features with the Romanticism from the 19.th century. The world-view of this movement

> "... was a holistic one, with symbols, myths and metaphors as its counters of meaning ... (rejecting) rationalism - it was also a subjective world-view .. aiming to overcome the split between subject and object, the self and the world." (Ebers, 1985:52-54)

In Alvesson (1986b), it is argued that the present preoccupation with corporate culture and similar subjects can be seen as a result of a general trend towards cultural fragmentation and social disintegration, affecting, among other things, people's work moral and relationship to authorities and their general compliance in organizations. This trend goes hand in hand with the development towards increased emphasis on the "subjectivity" of people's lives producing a background for the intellectual interests on interpretative approaches and cultural studies. (Most authors link the cultural approach to interpretative research styles and a concentration on subjective aspects like meaning, understanding, values, the affective-emotative dimension, etc.)

An interesting paradox is that the development of society that has generated the interest in the culture/symbolism approach has brought with it a decrease in most social connections of the frequency and importance of the phenomena that this approach has focused upon. As Ziehe & Stubenrauch (1982) say, the expansion of goal rational systems and a functional division of labour between different social areas, in other words

an increased technocratization of social life, meant that the specifically symbolic, i.e. ceremonies, rites, rituals, myths etc. have been reduced in scope and importance. In modern life, many rituals have been less common and influencial. A typical example is the religious ones. Other symbolic events, like weddings, Ph.D. disputations and 50th birthdays, seem to have lost some of their former strong symbolic meaning. (Ziehe & Stubenrauch, 1982). (The increased rationalization of the modern life style has not, of course, eliminated all events of a primarily symbolic nature and symbolic meanings can be found in all sorts of phenomena.) There are possibly unsatisfied social needs of the specific symbolic that might account for the popularity of the symbolic features of and events in social life in contemporary thought. It is almost ironic that organizational research puts the symbolism in its theoretical focus at a time when the purely symbolic elements in organizations are probably less salient than ever as an effect of the expanding, technocratization of social life and the domination of instrumental reason over human affairs.

This is not to indicate, however, that a symbolic perspective on organizations lacks value. On the contrary, a number of studies with this orientation have already produced interesting ideas and results (e.g. Dandridge, Mitroff & Joyce, 1980, Feldman & March, 1981).

Conclusion

In this article some social determinants behind the rapid rise and current expansion of organizational culture theory are discussed. In order to understand this phenomenon a number of social factors have been pointed at. These factors and some of their key features are briefly summarized below:

* The product: organizational culture theory. This exists in many variations of which some appear to have very little value on the general market for best-selling books or consultancy jobs. Still, the organizational culture theory is often presented in a way that makes it appear to be of crucial importance for understanding what is going on in organizations and how to get control of it. The broad area of relevance and application of culture in organizations, concepts that are mystical and phantasy-provocing are important features of this

type of knowledge. It is assumed to provide a formula through which the unconscious in organizational life might be turned into the conscious, thereby improving the "rationality" of what is going on in organizations.

* The customers, The message of organizational culture knowledge provides a thrill for the main audience (outside academia): professional managers. The content of organizational culture texts pulls a sensitive string of managers: it appeals in a positive or worrying way to cultural attributes such as modernity, education, cultural managers in positions not primarily determined by technical demands, might be assumed to buy the culture material.

* The producers. Here we have both academically oriented writers and more pragmatically interested knowledge-developers. A large number of persons have both aspirations. The culture concept contains possibilities for both academic respectability and practical relevance. From an academic perspective, the culture approach seems to be a way out of the "intellectual straight-jacket" of positivistic methodology, which to some extent has controlled mainstream organization theory (especially in U.S.A.) the provided little space for qualitative approaches.

* The market place. The market for academic products on management is normally changing rapidly. Various ideas and quick fixes are in vogue and often turn out to be fads. The speed of the market increases the rapid expansion of a product that is "selected" for (temporary) success (in terms of sales). A contradictory characteristic of this market is that its goods should be knowledge that contains both practical relevance (promises for solutions to problems) and academic respectability (some connotations to 'science'). This is not easy to combine, but the culture stuff's contradictions in relationship to these two ideals are not too easy to see through.

* The context of this market in 1980's: The business situation. Of importance here are economic problems of many Western corporations which provides a ground for a willingness to find something new. The success of the Japenese, often interpreted to have something to do with cultural features, stimulates a sensitity to "culture" among executives in the West.

* The cultural context of organizations in the 1980's: The general social situation. Social psychologists and cultural theorists describe a broad trend towards increasingly felt needs for involvement, subjectivity, expressiveness, meaning and social togetherness. In former historical periods strong socialisation agencies, e.g. the family and the church, have lost ground and the space for new socialisation agencies has increased. The corporation's role in this regard then comes into focus.

These factors and aspects contributes to provide a rough explanation for the discussed phenomena from a sociological point of view. In a second part of this article, I will treat some theoretical aspects on the expansion of the organizational culture theory and also discuss some of its shortcomings, thereby indicating some support the type of a sociological explanation of this expansion that has being proposed above.

ON THE IDEA OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE, Part II: Remarks on Its Limitations and an Idea for an Alternative Conceptualization

On the novelty of research on organizational culture

In Part One of this article I pointed at some sociological aspects that contribute to the understanding of the explosive extension of studies on organizational culture and symbolism. What is, then, the relationship between these aspects and the theoretical reasons for the popularity of the direction? A possible thought is that this approach is so interesting, illuminating and brilliant according to some internal academic/scientific criteria that the potential for the understanding or explanation that is incorporated in the direction provides a sufficient base for its success. A rather extreme opinion would be that the theory in itself is sufficient to have penetrative power and that the context surrounding the extension of the theory is insignificant. It makes sense to assume that a theory that arises, develops and extends very rapidly must have support in the current social conditions. As we have learned from the debates on paradigms in science, the pure intellectual elements of a theory do not guarantee its success or failure, especially not in the short period. The theory of organizational symbolism/culture is a good illustration of this. The sociological explanation of the extension is, of course, not necessarily contradictory to the internal theoretical. The latter must be discussed in itself. I will now proceed with this.

It is hard and perhaps not fruitful to try to produce a definitive opinion of the theoretical range of this orientation since there are diverse directions that have not so far produced many final results and even fewer critical analyses of these. To summarize, one can say that this orientation has not really found its form yet and that evaluations of its potentialities can hardly be made yet. In spite of this, I will present two cautious evaluation comments. The first is about the degree of theoretical readjustment, where some inconsistencies in central texts can be noted. The second expresses some basic scepticism towards the idea of looking at organizations as cultures.

It is not clear to what degree the orientation discussed here really stands for something radically new. The novelty is often strongly emphasized in

the texts of the proponents but might also more or less explicitly be revoked in the very same texts. In an introduction to ASQ's special issue on organizational culture, Jelinek, Smiricich & Hirsch (1983) emphasize the need for new ideas in relation to "commonly accepted paradigms" and continue:

> Culture as a root metaphor for organization studies is one such idea, redirecting our attention away from some of the commonly accepted "important things" (such as structure or technology) and toward the (until now) less-frequently examined elements raised to importance by the new metaphor (such as shared understandings, norms, or values). Especially in conjunction with other approaches, culture may provide the critical tension that can lead to new insight.
> (Jelinek et al p 331)

Then follows a headline. After this the authors immediately continue:

> Culture per se is hardly a new idea. "Cultural anthropology" has been a speciality for years, and even in organization studies a related notion, "organization climate", dates back well over two decades. But there is something new here: this time around, researchers seem to be striving for some way to address the interactive, ongoing, recreative aspects of organizations, beyond the merely rational or economic.
> (p. 331)

Shortly afterwards Jelinek et al mention Berger & Luckman's classic "The social construction of reality" (1967) and say that culture is "another word for social reality".

Consequently, at the same time Jelinek et al claim that it is about radically new ideas and that similar approaches have existed for a long time within organization theory. The subject of organizational climate has attracted considerable interest for a long time and Berger & Luckman (1967) have been a central source of inspiration for a great deal of organizational research for quite some time. The degree of novelty within the orientation is thus, from a reading of Jelinek et al, not clear. This confusing picture is a result of a large variety of approaches within the field. No homogenity is to be found about the theoretical innovativeness of the field.

Within research on organizational culture and symbolism there is, as said, a broad collection of variations, some of which can hopefully bring about some basic theoretical renewal, while much of the material incorporated under titles and analyses with culture and symbol as the keywords are old views presented under new concepts. The variations within the orientation and the marketing efforts to use culture as a label for various forms of theory, literature and consulting contribute to some of the inconsistencies in the literature concerning the novelty of the orientation.

A part of the confusing picture is that large parts of the antipositivistic, interpretative organization research during the 1980's have been linked with the culture approach. Almost everyone who talks about meanings, understandings, the unconscious, emotional processes and other aspects on organizations that are not "objective" but focus on the deeper, subjective reality of organizational participants have come to be seen as dealing with culture. Almost everything within the very broad "subjectivistic" orientation in organizational analysis that Burrell & Morgan (1979) refer to as the interpretative paradigm is often labelled organizational culture studies. This is hardly of theoretical reasons, because many of the studies in special issues of journals or readers with titles as "Organizational culture" do not explicitly refer to culture. A large number of the texts discussed by Smircich (1983) and Allaire & Firsirotu (1984) in review articles on organizational culture studies do not talk about culture.

The fact that organizational culture is (con-)fused with a broader interpretative orientation to organization studies makes it difficult to evaluate the fruitfulness of the former. For reasons of clarity, it would be beneficial if a distinction could be established and maintained between organizational culture and interpretative studies and the former seen as a subgroup of the latter. At the present time, there is a tendency that everything in organizational analysis becomes subgroups to of the culture approach (cf. Allaire & Firsirotu, 1984). This might be understood as a result of the state of the market for academic products in management rather than motivated by theoretical reasons. The latter would call for a more restricted use of the culture concept in organizational analysis than is often the case at present.

Nevertheless, it is clear that parts of the culture research do not contain anything radically different when compared with the interests of the traditional organization theory:

> The current corporate culture studies are not substantially different from earlier Human Relations research, in that the goal is still to illustrate the impact of "irrational" human factors on "rational" corporate objectives. "Rational" corporate objectives correspond to management's goals for the organization. Researchers in both areas sought to provide managers with tools to assess and control the organizational culture of their subordinates. This "management-centric" motivation in corporate culture research probably contributes to the tendency in these studies to evaluate the effectiveness of the culture with respect to management goals.
> (Gregory, 1983:362)

For an illustration of how "culture" serves as a new label for old ideas on human relations, see Denison (1984).

The concept of ideology, that is frequently used within organization theory (Hartley, 1983) is usually defined in a way very similar to the definition used by the culture researchers to represent their key concept (basic metaphor):

> The essential characteristics of ideology are, first, that it consists of values and beliefs or ideas about the state of the world and what it should be. Second, these cognitive and affective elements form a framework. In other words, ideology is not simply a summation of a set of attitudes, but consists of some kind of relatively systematic structuring (though the structuring may be psychological rather than logical). Third, ideologies concern social groups and social arrangements - in other words, politics in its widest sense of being concerned with the distribution and ordering of resources. Fourth, an ideology is developed and maintained by social groups, and thus is a socially derived link between the individual and the group (in contrast to the concept of attitude, which is generally seen as an individual attribute). Fifth, ideology provides a justification for behavior.
> (Hartley, 1983:26-27)

It seems that a large part of the present research on cultures and symbols can be just as well or even better summarized under such concepts as ideology, organization climate, style of leadership (type theory X or Y), values or norms systems. These concepts, however, have been abandoned, at least as key concepts, to the advantage of the head words saleable today. At the same time, real innovations and progresses within the field of

organizational analysis, are undoubtedly being made by parts of the interpretative, but not necessarily by those explicitly talking about "culture".

I believe that the concept of organizational culture can be seen as an organizing principle for theorists within the field. Through modifications of the more or less traditional approaches, the organization researchers with an interest in the "software" (human, immaterial) rather than the "hardware" (technological, material) side of organizations are grouped around the concept of culture (symbols). By relating to the modern concepts, these approaches are provided with an aura of modernity, progressiveness, novelty and increased market value. At a very concrete level there are benefits in the form of special conferences and networks as well as good opportunities for publishing in the large number of journals with special issues on "organizational culture" or "symbolic management" that motivate connection with the "organizational culture movement".

To summarize: Within the organizational culture/symbolism field it might be beneficial to identify categories, which are often hard to separate from each other, but for the sake of clarification of the current rise of the culture/symbolic field' it is important to identify all four. They are

1) Writers with a practical orientation, sometimes promising "quick fixes",
2) Writers earlier working in research areas similiar to what today is known as organizational culture (e.g. Climate, OD), which have changed or modified orientations, added some new concepts etc to match the culture vogue
3) Researchers with a more genuine interest in the cultural/symbolic approach to organizations which on a theoretical level more or less substantially differs from earlier approaches.
4) Researchers working within an interpretative approach which has some similarities with the organizational culture studies, but not primarily stressing organizations as cultures, but using other metaphors, e.g. organizations as texts, language games, cognitive structures etc. (cf. Morgan, 1980).

While the interest of the last two groups is primarily of an academic nature, the orientations and the size of that group are not unaffected by the general context in business and society, and the economic, social and cultural changes during the last decades provide a sociological dimension behind the cultural/symbolic approaches to organizations. The interest in interpretation and subjectivity cannot be seen as a result of a pure academic development, completely autonomous in relationship to its societal context.

Some sceptical views on research on organizational culture

The views presented above strive to understand the almost explosive rise of interest in the direction discussed here. When it comes to the theoretical points of the direction, I would like to present some sceptical comments about the idea of stressing the culture of the **organization** as the principal aspect. This is true when the culture is seen as a variable in the organization (among others, as size, technology etc) as well as when the culture is seen as a root metaphor for the conceptualization of the organization (that is, if culture is viewed upon as something that an organization **has**, or something an organization **is**). (See Smiricich, 1983.)

My scepticism to the basic idea in organizational culture research is grounded in my belief that the organization as a social entity, concept or level of analysis does not particularly well correspond to the concept of culture. It might be that it is the exception rather than the rule that (an) organization corresponds to (a) culture in such a manner that it is theoretically fruitful to talk of organizational culture. Of course, it is always possible to talk about organizational culture in a superficial way, where concerning culture, or imprecisely, where concerning the concept of organization. By superficial I mean a lack of basic dimensions in culture (as for instance, language, ethnical affiliation, basic view and definition of social reality, opinions about gender, generations, equality, class relations and other basic elements within a certain population that are culturally specific like a nation or a tribe) (Alvesson, 1985). By an imprecise concept of organization, I mean one that really does not include the whole organization but rather the predominant stratum (coalition, techno-structure) within it.

Because organizations are not normally so well-integrated nor are work organizations, tasks and personel within different subunits of the organization so homogenous, no precise characteristics of the inner conditions of the organization (including the cultural ones) can be made on a general, undifferentiated level. To see organizations as social organisms or to describe them, for example as theory X or Y organizations (in their totality) is normally misleading. Even if organizations on an aggregated and imprecise level can be seen as chiefly dominated by theory X ideas, it is not likely that managers and production personnel, specialists and clerks are managed according to the same overall principles. The variations must be substantial, at least, (Alvesson, 1982). Concerning the concept of culture,it is hard to imagine that one and the same organizational culture would be valid both for one and the same company's young, well-educated and well-paid managers on middle management level with great aspirations for advancement and the alienated foreign workers involved in severly routinized and degraded production work in the same company.

This aspect has also been considered in some research in the area where one is opposed to the idea of viewing "the whole organization as a robust unit for cultural analysis" (Gregory, 1983;365). In this context, the need to pay attention to subcultures and adopt a multi-cultural view is argued.

Another form of criticism of the idea of organizational cultures questions whether organizations are such "well-defined communities" that they really can produce an organization-specific culture. Wilkins & Ouchi (1983) deal with this aspect and express the opinion that when used by anthropologists, the concept of culture means a well-defined community that has existed for some period of time and has employed relatively stable enculturation mechanisms. This point is also raised by Morey & Luthans (1985). In this sense it must be considered that organizations that have or are cultures of their own are uncommon. Wilkins & Ouchi (1983) suggest that the culture of an organization can be developed if the organization is characterized by a long history and a stable membership, absence of institutional alternative (which means that social institutions contradictory to the present ones are absent or discounted) and frequent interaction among members from different parts of the organization (social knowledge shared through the whole organization). Wilkins & Ouchi describe a company, called a clan

organization, that has these characteristics and, consequently, a culture of its own. Another good example of an organization with a specific culture (or where it is fruitful to view the organization as a culture with its own characteristics) is the "total organization" (Goffman, 1961).

Yet another form of criticism, related to the one mentioned above, starts from a recognition of the cultural determinants beyond the organizational level. The cultural conditions from which people act are normally dependent and an aspect of entities superior to the organization, such as the society, the nation, the technological-capitalist society, the education system and the social classes. Compared with the very divergent cultures outside the industrialized world that the social anthropologists have studied, the cultural differences between different companies in our society must be in many cases considered quite small. When describing organizational cultures, it is often hard to avoid either of the following mistakes. To describe the present culture in terms of its significant aspects (i.e. without only stressing the organizations particularities), which should be a description of the general cultural traits in **the existing society** that are made visible in a certain context (i.e. in the organization). Or that the specific cultural elements of the organization are described, which must be considered as a highly selective descriptive account while the most basic elements in the culture, that are common for the societal culture in its totality, must be taken for granted.

According to this view, a conceptualization of organizations as expressions of cultures of focal points for the overall cultural and subcultural patterns in society, might be an appropriate one. This formulation does not indicate that the organizational conditions are just a reflection of these cultures.

An organization more or less strongly affects and gives its own characteristics to the cultural patterns that are expressed in it. In recent studies on organizations, informed by a cultural/symbolic perspective, there seems to be a certain tendency to avoid talking about organizational culture. Or raising doubts about the possibility of seeing organizations as primitive societies. See for example Alvesson (1986c), Alvesson & Sandkull (1986) Gray, Bougon & Donnellon, (1985), Morey & Luthans (1985) and Van Maanen & Barley (1984). Instead, focus is suggested to be on ideologies in

organizations, organizations as a background for various processes constructing or destructing meaning or on the cultural characteristics of the occupational groups existing in organizations. I will touch upon the last point later on in this article.

An alternative approach: The cultural sociology of Pierre Bourdieu

The stated criticism implies that the idea of organizations seen as a totality does not provide a very good beginning or point of departure for studies of cultural aspects on organizational life - at least not when it is about organizations lacking cultural peculiarities (i.e. differing from the societal culture in its totality) that are full of nuances and differentiated with respect to the social characteristics of its members and/or may be seen as "loosely coupled systems" (Weick, 1976, 1982). Only for organizations that are original, homogenous and "tightly coupled" does this point of departure seem appropriate.

In other and - I believe - most cases, the fruitfulness and precision increase if you start from the differentiations of various social categories in the organization when approaching its cultural phenomena and aspects. An exciting direction within cultural sociology that constitutes such a differentiated approach is the one represented by the French social anthropologist and cultural sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. It is not possible in this context to do more than hint at his direction and mention some important concepts and far less so to make any attempt to synthesize his cultural sociology with organization theory. For presentations of his works, see for instance, Bourdieu (1973, 1977), Broady (1985) and Sulkunen (1982).

The cultural sociology of Bourdieu has many roots. One of these is the classical French anthropology and sociology (Durkheim, Mauss etc). Others are the studies conducted by Bourdieu in the 1960's of Berber tribes in North Africa. During these studies he discovered the Kabyle's very complicated system for the giving and receiving of gifts. The appropriate gift (which could be a thing, a woman, a feast or a blood revenge) to the right person at the right moment signifies honourable relations and also regulates the economic exchange between families. The latter aspect - the system of gifts as hidden economy - was not recognized as economy by the

Kabyles. An external observer, like Bourdieu, was, however, capable of analyzing this. To be able to practice this game, one must have grown up in the tribe. An outsider continually makes mistakes and misses the nuances that the maintainance of the social relationships constantly demands. What is needed is, to use one of Bourdieus key concepts, the right **habitus**. By habitus is meant those dispositions deeply embedded in mind and body that are harmonized and homologized in accordance with the culture and the specific living conditions. Habitus is the set of capabilities that makes it possible to play the game with its endless variations.

> The structures constitutive of a particular type of environment (e.g. the material conditions of existence characteristic of a class condition) produce **habitus**, systems of durable, transposable **dispositions**, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively "regulated" and "regular" without in any way being the product of obedience to rules, objectively adapted to their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them and, being all this, collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating action of a conductor.
> (Bourdieu, 1977:72)

Bourdieu then used his anthropological perspective in studying the social life in various areas, especially the cultural, in France. He sees life and society as conglomerations of "fields". Examples of fields are leisure, family style, consumption and work, but also, to look at a partly different level, social fields such as the governmental bureacracy, management, journalism, art or universities. Within each field exists different forms of cultural competence. Bourdieu speaks of cultural capital. This capital is comprised by knowledge (in its widest sense) and their symbolic assets determining the individual to master career and social relations. The cultural capital is partly specific to each field, partly of a universal nature (within the context of a given society). It is partly given by social heritage, partly it must be acquired. It takes a lot of effort and a long time to acquire it so that full mastery of the field is possible.

Social success demands an acquisition of enough capital that must also be deposited in the body, i.e. experiences, knowledge, values and forms of action must be deeply integrated in the body. It must also correspond to the demands of the social field. In other words, social success demands a

habitus that harmonizes with the field you are in and invest in. Habitus stands for a deeper determination that indicates the boundaries of social cultural success. The entire life history is incorporated in this. To change from one social field to a radically different one is a very difficult project. Thus, representatives of the noble arts do not fit into the business world, civil servants do not feel at home in the field of the legitimate culture and the new rich often make fools of themselves when they try to act as upper class.

Bourdieu has conducted research on the cultural orientations of different classes and among other things found interesting differences primarily between urban working-class and the well-educated upper classes. The styles of the former are predominantly "functional". It does not, for example pay much attention to the formal aspects on food and its culture embodies a functional aestethic taste. In his study of photography Bourdieu noticed that working class respondants always referred to the use that could be made of photographs (for information, memory etc) and the context in which they could be shown (i.e. for their children when they have grown up or at family gatherings). For the polar opposite of the working class, individuals in highly educated liberal professions, the aesthetic has meaning and significance as such, in its own function. The aestethic is separated from the rest of social.

I have now navigated away from the focus of this article and it is time to relate these ideas to the field of organizational culture.

It is well-documented that, for instance, workers and managers in their work (organizations) are characterized by different social and cultural orientations, which can be partly antagonistic, (see, for instance, Burawoy, 1979, Lysgaard, 1976).

Bourdieu's research results and the general cultural patterns he points at, indicates the superficial in talking about shared norms, values, beliefs, understandings, meanings, perceptions etc. in most organizations, at least those with some social differentiation. The "strongest" version of the corporate culture idea talks about "shared values, norms and beliefs": A more careful version, according to which it is questionable if most people

in most organizations do have "shared values" only in a very trivial sense and that researchers should assume that organizations are bound together by common perceptions rather than shared preferences (see, for example, Pfeffer, 1981). Bourdieu's result would suggest that neither this second assumption would hold good, unless the class and occupational differences between the organizational participants are small and their social background similar.

The cultural sociology of Bourdieu stresses the differences in the cultural practices within different classes and fields. By using concepts such as cultural capital, social fields and habitus, points of departure for differentiated analyses of the cultural conditions on a deeper and more precise level in different social circumstances. From this, we can draw the conclusion that the very idea of talking about organizational cultures might be the wrong one, except on a rather superficial level. A better approach to understand organizational life from a cultural perspective would be to investigate cultural variations and different patterns of meanings held by different organizational participants, rather than looking for similiarities and putting emphasis on what is shared on a broad basis.

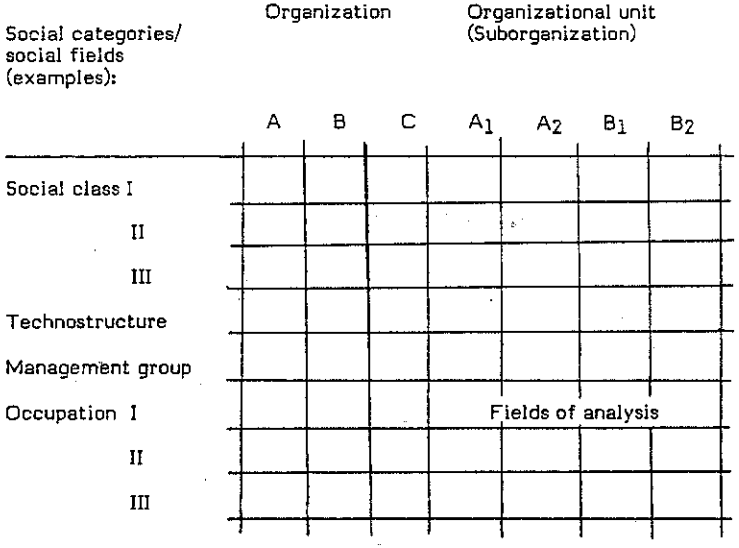
In organization theory, some similarity with this position is the idea of proceeding from occupational communities in the cultural study of organizations (Van Maanen & Barley, 1984). The importance of paying attention to the background and former socialization of organizational members, when they are studied in a specific organization is illustrated by Filby & Willmott (1986). In a P.R. department in a government organization, they found two partly different cultural orientations (in terms of ideals, values, skills possessed etc.) depending on whether if the background was in journalism or in private sector P.R.

Bourdieu's approach lies quite far from the mainstream of on organizational culture but should still be possible to use as a source of inspiration for the latter. To start from the different social fields existing within an organization and the deeper cultural dispositions for social action that the organizations members bring with them to their working place seems to be a reasonable approach when studying organizational cultures. (Some examples of possible fields are given in the figure below.)

A possible point of departure for research on organizational culture

I do not mean that the organizational dimension should be neglected. There are perhaps some risks of this if one starts by making those differentiations that Bourdieu laborates with (and that are not bound to organizations). Thus, the problem is how the organizational analyses can be stimulated through thinking that does not focus so strongly on the organizational aspect. A basis for the analyses of the inner or "soft" characteristics of organizations (such as values, view of man, styles of leadership, relations between subordinates and superiors, social reproduction, symbol systems, definitions of ideals and reality and other cultural aspects) is to start from a matrix where the organizational conditions constitute one variable while the other is comprised of different social categories according to those criteria that are indicated by the criticism mentioned above. (See figure.)

Organizational dimension:



By considering both dimensions in the choice of research problems and in the analysis of this, another and more advanced understanding can be reached, compared to an approach where the point of departure is the idea

of an organizational culture, in which case it is presumed that an organization has a culture (or could be seen as a culture) and where the different individuals who are carriers of this culture are homogenized and included in the organization concept.

Examples of possible research projects or focuses for research that are pointed out by the matrix are case studies of management culture in company A, multi-cultural analyses of the characteristics of the technostructure in an organization by comparative studies of some subunits in the organization and (comparative) studies of a certain professional/occupational culture in different firms or institutions.

The ambition of studies considering both the organizational aspects and the deeper cultural orientations connected with social class and field affiliations (and that largely exist across the organizational boundaries) is to achieve a deeper and a more precise understanding of the cultural aspects in (of) the functioning of organizations. The outline proposed here suggests that organizations should be seen as social arrangements that modulate the cultural determinants and attributes that are more or less universal for each social category (like, for instance, working class people, members of the technostructure and researchers in organization theory). In relationship to mainstream organizational culture theory, this means that the history of people and the context of organizations in terms of culture are not neglected in the understanding of organizations from a cultural perspective.

Conclusion

An organization can be seen as an institution entailing similiar and diversified cultural patterns. An organization includes mechanisms (interactions, institutionalized beliefs etc.) that bring about a more or less strong resocialization of the streams of people (from various classes, occupations, sexes, ages, with different prior experiences, values and ways of understanding things) entering (and leaving) the organization. But the organization is also affected by and changes as a consequence of new people (with new skills and cultural attributes being employed in it). There is an interplay between the cultural orientations produced by the organizational members background and the culture-affecting mechanism of the

organization. An organization is much less stable and weak in cultural terms than for example a nation, whose culture most of its members belong to from birth to death. The flows of people entering and leaving an organization brings about constant redirections of the cultural patterns in the organization as well cultural patterns in the organization as well as resocializations of organizational members. How these redirections and resocializations do take place, and what types of understandings, norms and meanings that are persistent over time, constructed and destroyed and what consensual/conflictual processes accomplishing the cultural outcomes in organizations (which are of a more or less temporary nature and subject to further processes), is a result of the cultural background and prior socialization patterns of people entering and acting in the organizations at least as much as the cultural characteristics of the organizations. It is likely that the cultural studies of organizations would benefit from broadening the focus and include also the cultural aspects of the history of its members and narrowing it to look at the more precise cultural characteristics of groups homogenous differences between various professions, classes, generations, sexes etc.

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THE CORPORATION SEEN AS AN ARENA OF DEBATE AND A SHRINE OF BELIEF

Vincent DEGOT

I N T R O D U C T I O N

In an earlier series of papers, I presented a model explaining the transformation of relationships between corporations and their social environment, and drawing attention to the consequences of those transformations with respect to various management areas:

- structural modifications through which the corporate departments best equipped to manipulate the corporate discourse (Communications, Personnel, External Relations, and the like) have acquired a more central position;

- reappraisal of the language of legitimacy, with the tenets of economic rationalism leaving more room for what I called "symbolistic" arguments whose components are more in line with less overall points of view;

- appearance of new forms of management policy and action based on stage-managed presentations of gratifying examples and pilot results, using symbolic rather than rationalistic devices, designed to motivate the work force.

It can be said that these internal corporate developments have as their common denominator a revised "model of the individual" which the corporation feels compelled - as we shall see later - to bring into its management concept. The existence of rival models, and the need to be competitive with these, are the natural corollaries of such new developments in corporate thinking.

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In the following pages, I shall be concerned to give a more precise description of the content of the term "model of the individual", and to show how it can be defined on different levels. On one of those levels, for instance, there may be several different models, each related to different institutional viewpoints and corresponding to the respective strategies of these, so that they come into competition with each other. The dominant (or "legitimate") representation of the individual obtaining in a given corporation at a given time (the meaning of this formulation will be explained in due course) is thus to some extent derived from that competition and can be said to be contingent upon it.

Next, I will focus on one of the characteristics which are common to all these competing models: they are the result of a compromise between the evolution of external socio-economic circumstances and the functional imperatives internal to the corporation proper. For the main part, corporate management must be able to refer to a relatively simple model of the individual, consonant with broad standards of appreciation and enabling timely operational decisions; but this structural requirement for simplicity is increasingly coming into conflict with a more exacting demand from individuals that they be recognised, by the corporation, as the complex personalities they really are. Consequently, it is necessary to apply a reconciliation factor which is both consistent with efficient management and acceptable to most of the employees The acceptance of a corporate ethic, or belief obtained by manipulating a set of symbols, with appropriate rhetorical accompaniment, can be seen as a means of achieving this result.

We will then try to give more substance to this notion of a belief - something which focuses facettes of complexity into a broad but common beam and thus makes it possible to design a simplified model of the individual without entirely losing the element of differentiation cherished by each separate individual concerned. The function of the belief is to suspend - at least

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for some time - attempts to impose alternative values. The principle of discontinuity it introduces is akin to the one we will come across when discussing the symbols which are associated with the belief itself(1).

The formulation and propagation of this belief, involving the new elements and criteria referred to collectively as "symbols", implies a new frame of argumentation in which these are presented using a new system of rhetoric. This system is both an instrument of the competitive struggle mentioned earlier, to the extent that it seeks to persuade, and a factor of compromise insofar as it creates and assembles a set of plausible assumptions (unlike the "truths" proclaimed by the old rationalist ethic). This system of rhetoric will be analysed in the fourth part of this paper.

A final part, we take a look at the status of the people who employ the new rhetoric in which the belief is formulated, such as by setting out its structure of symbols. This leads us to draw up a typology of these activists, very similar in form to that described by Weber in his Sociology of Religions (1) and based on their power to influence belief formation: on the one hand, we have the "priests" whose qualification for manipulating symbols derives from their membership of an ordered institution (the Church), and on the other the "prophets" and "magicians" whose charismatic personalities impose a right to conjure up or interpret signs from above.

My conclusion consists in an examination of the way in which the worker model which is implicit in classical organisation theory tends to become increasingly explicit, as different departments of a corporation compete to establish their decisive importance in its effective operation, which partly depends on

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their ability to shape that model. I also consider the hypothesis which suggests that the decline being observed in the power of the rationalist ethic may be due to the fact that the consumer model developed by the Marketing Departments is "rubbing off" on the worker model.

1 - The Worker Model and its Different Levels

We might copy the mathematicians by starting from the question as to whether such a model exists. Our reply would consider the most obvious and firmly established features of the corporation: those relating to its tools of management, its organisational structure, its procedures, and so on. The application of these implicitly assumes the image of an "average", "theoretical", or "ideal", worker (Weber's fond distinctions between these epithets, although of interest in themselves, are irrelevant to our present purposes), leading to further assumptions concerning norms of his activity, the factors which "motivate" him, and the like.

1.1 - The basic level

The above remarks represent the first level of the worker model; it is often merely implicit, given that few corporations are concerned, when drawing up systems or procedures, to give a clear depiction of the prototype individual they have in mind, whether as the object or the user of those procedures. In this case, we mean by "models of the individual" those characteristics which the individual must possess if the organisational structures

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and tools are to perform as intended. This model, although imprecise (possibly the reason for its remaining implicit), is also relatively objective to the extent that it can be identified from its application in connection with the factors (organisational structures, procedures and tools) which remain stable over the medium term. Generally speaking, when the corporation is not subjected to rapid transformations, or does not become the scene of serious conflict concerning these basic elements, it can be considered that this model is unique - at least within homogeneous subdivisions of a corporation (Department, Service, etc). By reference to a "basic" model, variations may be developed for different types of workers in relation to the tools or functions which characterise these. For example, from the "activity" angle, we might draw the following pattern:

basic worker model	cadre technician	engineer sales	mechanic chemist	production design	etc

As clearly described in an earlier case study (2), some disruptions may result from lags between models governed by different management techniques (short and long response times) or from undue discrepancies between the models and the outside "real world": the qualification "undue" marks the fact that some degree of discrepancy is inevitable owing to the impossibility of adapting the corporation strictly in step with outside changes, as well as to the corporate culture factor which partly glosses over some discrepancies (3).

1.2 - The second level

Here, the model is more explicit but, at the same time,

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less generally supported. This is because it intervenes at a point where rival departments of the corporation advocate rival theses concerning such things as the corporate environment, work force, and strategy. In the next part of this paper we shall be seeing how these interpretations of relations between the corporation and its environment are based on compromises - and thus wide open to controversy. For the moment, and as concerns the worker model which is our main issue at present, suffice it to note that they correspond to competitive standpoints, so that I propose to stick to the common trunk which they share - the factors relevant only to the internal corporate structure.

This type of worker model, which is often put forward explicitly, is relevant to our purpose whenever it is sponsored by a close-knit and identifiable pressure group. This applies most particularly when the surrounding argument constitutes the strategic position of a whole department or other corporate unit whose members are united in a common purpose based on its salient propositions. I myself have described this kind of situation in the case of Personnel Departments (4), and others have considered the cases of Buying (5) and Production (6) departments. The type of argument developed in these instances has the advantage of being functional, meaning that it demonstrates the benefits of specific measures in the light of various assumptions that can be justified from a given point of view, within the meaning of this last term as proposed by Girin (7).

The most valid of these assumptions consist in interpretations of the economic rationale, whereas conventional theory lays down that the latter must be uniform throughout the corporation. Such interpretations are not necessarily in conflict with the rationalist convention, even when they compete with, and partly contradict,

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each other. They result from the process of making the rationale operational, involving allowance for additional assumptions of only local relevancy (causing them to be often known as "limited rationalism" (8) or "local logic" (9) as the case may be), with the further necessity of splitting up objectives (over time and in space) and of recognising that structures and procedures cannot be adapted simultaneously with events. This reference to the business rationale, explicit or otherwise, contributes largely to the plausibility which is an essential feature of effective argument. I showed earlier that, contradictory as it may seem, the business rationale itself underlies the concept of corporate symbolism (9b).

However, since these arguments are linked with particular points of view, their impact and effectiveness depend on the capacities of the people (individuals or groups) who advocate them: ability to make up the package, including elements that are plausible in terms of the business ethic, of the corporate culture, or of plain common sense. The qualifications needed can be summed up in two words: legitimacy and competence (recognised as competent because skilled in gaining that recognition). In connection with the ideas I expressed in earlier papers, and with those contained in the following pages, particular significance can be awarded to two elements of this symbolistic argument: they owe their significance to the fact that they are those most fully expressing the diversity of points of view, and the most revealing. I described them on another occasion in a different form (10), and they can be summarised as follows:

- the model of the corporation as a whole. It is based on consideration of the internal workings of the corporation together with its relationships with its environment.

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In terms of action, this model aims to identify optimum corporate strategy options and the people (whole operational units and departments rather than individuals) best fitted to implement these. The discourse is thus related to the community and seeks to advance the collective interest. The corporate model deployed can thus be very explicit, built up with the help of outside specialists; it can be reinforced by the latest theoretical findings and fashions (C. Midler (10b) discusses the notion of business fashions); and it lies close to the micro-economic theory which addresses such matters and claims to provide solutions at a fairly general level.

- the worker model, which also considers relationships between internal and external factors. It seeks not so much to define strategies as to determine whether the strategies deployed are compatible with/characteristics of the work force, or can be made so by providing appropriate motivations to remodel the latter's attitudes. Two points must be considered: one of them, already explored in an earlier study (11), is that - unlike for the corporate model - there is no dominant "scientific" theory to which the discourse can be related. This means that it is an open-ended model with non-standard options that can be taken up by different pressure groups within the corporate structure. The second point, which will be more fully discussed in the next part of this paper, concerns the diverging trends of evolution in the social environment and in corporate management techniques respectively. The alternative models put forward have as their common factor that they are compromises between

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the "complexities of real life" and the simplification necessary to management efficiency. When assessing the different supporting arguments put forward, it must also be borne in mind that the pressure groups sponsoring them will tend to emphasise the factors which each can influence the most (working conditions, communication, safety, productivity, and so on).

Up to quite a short time ago, all these compromising voices were, so to speak, reduced to silence, overridden by a dominant technical discourse which incarnated the rational business ethic. Then, for reasons examined elsewhere (12), they grew and multiplied, finally achieving credibility. Yet, despite the increasing pressure of alternatives, it can be considered that, at any given time, a single legitimate ethic dominates the corporation.

Looking at things the other way round, it is as though the corporation presents itself to the outside observer with a show of uniformity, expressed by a single legitimate voice. It is only when we study the changing inflections of that voice over a period of time, or engage on a localised investigation within a particular department of the corporation, that we are able to observe the theses developed by specific and identifiable subdivisions of the whole. Usually, the latter come to the attention of outsiders only briefly, when they become participants in the legitimate discourse through which the corporation describes itself. For, in contrast with the situation discussed in the next part of this paper, where each local thesis is seen to result from a compromise, the legitimate discourse emerging at any given time

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is the outcome of a contest by which the winner temporarily pushes its rivals into the background. If the top management, when issuing decisions in its field of sole responsibility - such as new corporate programmes and policies, adopts the positions advocated by a particular department, this means that it regards those positions, and the arguments supporting them, as the most effective means of showing that the programmes and policies it seeks to enforce are in the best interests of the corporation at that juncture.

In connection with the development of this paper's argument, the important point arising out of this notion of intra-corporate rivalry (as well as that of compromise which we will be discussing later) is that the corporation has become a kind of debating society whose members are competing for a say in the formulation of corporate policy statements, mainly by playing on the two themes represented by the worker model and the corporate model.

This second level of construction of the worker image is the most relevant to our general argument, as will have been gathered from what has been said up to now - with special reference to two points:

- the most effective means of reaching perception of the "underground" ways of reasoning is by studying the variations in the "official" statement of attitudes. This also applies to the "worker model" component of the respective attitudes, whether explicitly framed or not;

- pressure groups of an identifiable kind sponsor rival models in the course of their attempts to secure a place in the "legitimate" formulation of corporate policies.

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1.3 - The third level

As we will see later, this third level is mostly implicit and has to be reconstructed through the research process.

What can be inferred (systematic observation being here a difficult proposition) concerning individual attitudes tends to give enhanced importance to the more aggregated positions just described. Individual concepts of the "average" worker are likely to be extremely varied. However, there are a few typical attitudes which are particularly relevant to our purposes. For a proper understanding of the significance of the observations I am about to make, it must be realised that they refer to groups of individuals within a functional entity and whose collective action should thus theoretically be based on some common tenets:

- in the first place, there are the people whose concept is closely related to that of their functional group as a whole. This alignment may be purely opportunist, based on personal conviction, or due to lack of imagination (the actual origin in each case can be established only by direct interviewing). They follow suit, possibly out of sheer lack of interest or resistance to change;

- next, we have the person (or small group) who has succeeded in imposing the currently accepted model - whereas those mentioned above were just passive spectators. These active participants are capable of producing arguments to support their convictions;

- finally, there are those who openly deviate from the concensus line and are ready to say so - whether out of ambition or of conviction. Some may be biding their time, and others persistently critical or outrightly challenging for recognition.

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If we are to remain within the possibilities of concrete action, we can hardly go beyond the above very simplified typology, except by trying to correlate particular attitudes (deviation) or concepts (unorthodox worker models) with the characteristics of groups possessing corporate unity but "horizontal" in terms of functional posts (graduate executives, Trade Union appointees, etc) (13). The idea I am trying to put over is that, at the level of operational subdivisions (department, service, workshop, etc), the prevailing wisdom does not usually result from a process of negotiation, but rather from the convictions of a particular individual or group which the latter has succeeded in imposing on all the others. At this level, we find the debating society atmosphere already mentioned, with all the deployment of persuasion and conviction it implies. The difference arises in that, on the second level, the rivalry is between people or groups of comparable status in the hierarchy but divided by their functions (production, marketing, personnel, etc), whereas at the third level the contest lies between functional partners from different parts of the hierarchy.

1.4 - Rivalry and rhetoric

The relationships between the three levels on which models of the individual can be drawn up may be set out as follows:

Level I (structure, procedures, instruments)	implied model, usually unique within the corporation, evolving only slowly
Level II (functional units)	alternative models, subject to medium-term changes, generally explicit, and culminating after competition in a "legitimate" model also subject to change.
Level III (individuals)	very numerous models (possibly classifiable in groups), implicit only, unorthodox in relation to dominant local model.

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The interactions between these three levels have already been discussed in a different context (14) and need not be brought up here. For the present, our main concern is with the rhetorical situation arising in connection with the contest for representation in the legitimate corporate discourse, between different functional units. As we shall see, this contest is made possible due to the compromise inherent in the models and supporting arguments put forward by the respective units concerned. This compromise draws attention to what can be called subsidiary points of view.

2 - The Worker Model: a Compromise between the Corporation Proper and its Social Environment

In the first part of this paper, we saw how the "legitimate" worker model devised on the second level, based on arguments put forward by different pressure groups within the corporation (so that it may differ from the model portrayed in the corporate management manual and organisational structure), is the outcome of a contest between those groups. We now turn to the way in which the groups (or sometimes merely individuals) concerned proceed to build up their models by balancing the constraints exerted on them.

The main argument is based on the idea that each of the rival models is itself a compromise involving, among other things, the specific position of its sponsor in relation to the corporation and to its social and business environment.

2.1 - The notion of compromise

We can identify at least three types of different forces (driving or inertial) between which a designer of a worker model

must find a balance which is sufficiently plausible to attract the other members of his group and sound enough to withstand confrontation with rival arguments:

- the first factor is related to the shifting of ground between the corporation and the outer society. It is not necessary to go into details of these movements, which are amply dealt with elsewhere (15). Suffice it to recall some of the conclusions reached concerning them:

  - the corporation is gradually penetrated by socio-cultural ways of seeing things which, by their very nature, are foreign to the business ethic on which it was originally based;
  - one of the reasons behind this penetration is that corporate workers increasingly aspire to recognition within the corporation in terms of the complex personalities awarded to them outside it;
  - pressure from the outside is becoming increasingly strong, leading to more examples of malfunctioning which turn around two poles:
    - a widening gap between the workers who have "interesting" jobs and the others (executives versus manual workers, technicians versus office staff, etc),
    - a slackening of motivation, whereby more and more people are transferring their interest and energy to outside occupations;

- however, the second constraint resides in the fact that the corporation (especially if it is a large one), if it is to perform well, requires a fairly simple worker model, which applies throughout its precincts and enables implementation

of standard procedures along predetermined lines and using preconceived instruments and methods.

To a great extent, therefore, the way that corporate decision-makers take on board this outside pressure will depend on their ability to reconcile it with efficient management, which in turn depends on the kind of variable factors those deciders have under their control. The assimilation process also depends, in some areas of management, on the availability of special techniques designed to reduce the risk factor involved by the introduction of a more complex dimension to the worker model.

One example illustrating a way in which these considerations can be taken into account is provided by what are called Quality Circles. These bodies are designed to enable the workers to express themselves - meaning to express their individuality - inside the workplace, without radically challenging established production processes. It so happens - for reasons we need not explain here - that in most of the corporations where this "social engineering" device has been adopted it was initiated by the Personnel Department (16).

This brings us to a fairly general principle, valid in many corporate areas (and possibly in other fields of activity), by which the corporation will bow to certain outside pressures (which some of its members may foresee before their colleagues - the "prophets" we will be discussing later) only if they can be smoothly assimilated and are seen to promise positive effects.

- the third constraint stems from the fact that a given

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worker model is inherent in the existing organisational structures, systems and procedures. It thus constitutes a force of inertia. The model concerned, being merely implicit and often of a very general nature, it may or may not preclude some kinds of organisational amendments, and vice versa. For example, the assembly-line system of production implies a Taylorist worker stereotype; but it may be "enhanced" by Quality Circles which bring out a less one-dimensional image of the workers. In another area, a budgetary accounting system may leave room for quite a number of different staff profiles.

The resistance encountered in connection with this third factor may therefore be due less to the current structures, systems and procedures at work in the corporation than to the attitudes of the people responsible for implementing these, who choose to interpret them in a way most conducive to bolstering their own status in management. Thus, for example, the Production Systems departments responsible for assembly-line layouts often work to a more restrictive model of the shopfloor operative than is really required by that particular production process.

This set of diverging forces means that every new worker model inherent in an innovative argument developed within a corporation is bound to be the result of a compromise, in that it will be acceptable only to the extent that it passes the test of the internal criteria which filter the external pressures applied. We now go on to examine the way in which such compromises are affected by internal corporate rivalries.

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2.2 - Compromise and Competition

These two dimensions, both involved in the development of the corporation's dominant worker model, combine to make the corporation a veritable arena of debate. Each inventor of this kind of model is in the position of having to interpret the nature of the relationships between the corporation and its social environment, with a view to producing a supporting argument which is:

- applicable, as described on an earlier page,
- plausible, in the light of the opinions concerning those relationships formed by one and all,
- credible, being backed by the status and personality of its sponsor (insofar as the latter is perceived), and by the degree of pertinent authority (or competence) bestowed by these.

Furthermore, each model put forward enters into competition with rival formulations and is subjected to the assessment of a variety of "judges". The chances of a given model in that competition thus depend essentially on its element of compromise: if it were seen as being too definitively framed, it would appear as likely to remain in place for a long time (as actually happened with the Taylorist model). This does not prevent each model from claiming such perennity when it is originally put forward, but only rarely will it be considered as representing more than an opportune device due to be replaced in due course.

In several case studies handled by the author in the past, under the auspices of the top management echelon (but usually with the paradigms formulated by the Personnel Department), and directed to such schemes as "Improved Working Conditions" or

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"The Corporate Plan", and so on, the discourse relied heavily on criticism of the earlier practices and models (concerning such points as management/worker relations, workplace atmosphere, etc). Consequently, much was made of the relativism of corporate intercourse and the need to be in closer harmony with certain external developments (higher living standards and levels of education, for example), the latter often being represented as the symptoms of deeper evolutionary trends, so that the internal discrepancies could be interpreted as merely the effects of a time lag.

The idea that the models and their underlying policies are of a transitory kind can thus be detected behind the management discourse. When the mental outlook takes in the fact that policies and models can come and go without inconvenience, there arise within the corporation two processes already observed in society as a whole. This gives justification - if such were needed - for studying the interplay between the body corporate and the academic researchers who focus on it (17), as analysed (rather superficially, it might be said) by those of our colleagues who take an interest in "business fashions", thus:

- in the first place, increasing numbers of the corporation's members are becoming accustomed to the idea of trends in fashion, so that a policy change has a less traumatic effect. A scheme is tried out, possibly on a very local basis at first, and then either extended or dropped for something else. In a way, the change begins in what the physical scientists call experimental conditions;
- secondly, and this is an extension of the above idea,

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> the notion of a continuous process becomes established. The compromise continues to exist, of course, but there is an endeavour to move ever closer to a "real-life" model of the worker, in such a way as to avoid disrupting the corporate scheme of things by sudden departures from it. We are back with the idea of gradual but steady progress, again reminiscent of the physical scientists when they work towards a complete definition of, for example, the structure of the atom.

The competition taking place between rival pressure groups within the corporation is thus not a gratuitous kind of game: the outcome may be unfavourable. Or it may be said that a "good" model is only good for the corporation if the action to which it leads does not encounter any unexpected obstacles. As we have already emphasised, the idea of gradual progress is present here in the same way as applies to developing strategies, improving quality, and so on.

2.3 - Rhetoric and Belief

We come to the question of what, as a general rule, makes a given model a good one ? A suitable answer could be that it is its power to motivate the work force towards common goals of action. This is a new dimension of management thought, impelling it to promote a particular model rather than others: management not only expects that this model will generate good administrative applications, it also considers that its supporting arguments are presentable; that they are based on grounds which will be found convincing by most of the people whose opinions count when it comes

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to taking action.

Consequently, a successful sponsor of a model is one who combines plausible assumptions with convincing rhetoric. As we have already seen, the notion of plausibility-credibility is related to the corporate status and the personality of the sponsor in question. It furthermore depends on the subject dealt with, not from the standpoint of the sponsor's competence (e.g. Sales Manager not credible in production matters), but in relation to the common perception and to the special form in which this constitutes the corporate culture.

It is from this angle that compromise comes back into view: the sponsor of a new worker model, if his brain-child is to prevail, must seek to establish it on grounds that are likely to prove acceptable. This is not to say on platitudes and stark truisms: many of his interlocutors may be attracted by skilful reformulations and rearrangements throwing fresh light on things they already know. Unlike the rationalistic argument which relies on an assembly of verifiable and factual propositions, the worker model justification, necessarily a compromise, is a package presentation whose components must be taken as a single whole. In strict fact, however, those components are dismantled when it comes to crticism of a given model (such as by disputing the proposition that there is a threshold of remuneration beyond which individuals become more sensitive to other satisfactions). This underlines the fact that, in a successful presentation, the power of rhetoric has been such as to blur the outlines: the interlocutor no longer distinguishes fact from mere probability or, even, outright subjective opinion.

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There is also another way of looking at this blurring effect on which the rhetorical impact partly depends, which is to equate it with what, in other areas, are known as beliefs. Under the next heading of this paper, we will find that the blind assumption of a factor peculiar to the corporation under cover of a universal concept opens the way for some interesting hypotheses. Here again, if we find that espousing of the belief implies a personal trust in the expounder, the question of the latter's rhetorical skill and credibility status then arises.

In the following pages, we will be exploring some consequences of defining the corporation as an arena of debate in connection with the dual - compromise/competition - characteristic of the worker model:

- firstly, by taking a close view of this notion of "belief", examining its links with the meaning given to this term in other fields, and asking how they can be relevant to our purposes;

- next, studying the rhetorical forms capable of inspiring this kind of belief, independently of the status and personality of given sponsors;

- finally, by discussing the notion of rhetorical competence which can make some sponsors qualified to claim attention, while still neglecting external sociological factors that may in some cases enhance their personal charisma.

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3 - The Corporation and the Belief Factor

This is of course no place in which to indulge in an abstract dissertation on the notion of belief; I will merely try to interpret those phenomena which, within the corporation, can be considered relevant to it. Or rather, in a more economical approach, to see how the sociological concept of belief (in line with Weber's "Sociology of Religion" and similar works) can be applied to the study of corporations.

First of all, we must consider the hypothesis according to which the statement "the individual is motivated by belief" comes as a consequence of the process leading up to the dominant worker model based on compromise/competition described above. In an increasingly large number of fields, the deciders and managers are seeking to secure the acquiescence of the work force through arguments which are no longer rational demonstrations of fact, but imply the recognition of dogmatic values or ways of seeing things. This approach is not adopted by all the parties competing, and the pseudo-rationalistic, techno-economic line continues to dominate, with the following reservations:

- on the one hand, this old line itself often relies, though not openly (its exponents would never admit to the use of non-rationalistic assumptions), on factors of an unverifiable kind;

- on the other, whenever certain influential departments (Personnel, Communications, etc) resort to employing belief as an instrument, the competitive situation forces all the others to join in.

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Under the next heading, I will describe the links between belief and the worker model, go on to explain what I mean by the "dynamic" aspects of beliefs, and then look at some ways by which belief can fostered.

3.1 - A particular concept of belief

First of all, beliefs are a very generalised feature of society, and the importance being attached to them by the corporation is merely one of the signs of interference occurring between the latter and its environment. This is if we define a belief as something which makes us give up further investigation of a question when we reach a point where an axiomatic conclusion has been reached, as did the early physicists by proclaiming the atom as the smallest form of matter. From this point of view, we all act in accordance with beliefs, insofar as no definition of the Universe can be totally scientific.

A distinguishing feature of the corporation's attitude might be what we can call an economic approach to belief: for many purposes, it is best to stop at a few simple affirmations which, on the one hand, save time and thought and, on the other hand, can gain acceptance by a broad consensus in the work force. Belief is thus a "federating" agent in connection with collective effort. As we will see later, it is also a source of energy and requires energy to be established or modified.

The adoption of belief as a management tool signifies not merely the recognition of the intrinsic qualities of the work force (i.e. those applying both inside and outside the corporation), which would be rather a passive attitude, but is also the new

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proclamation of the idea that it may be more efficient and thus worthwhile to consider the worker-individual in this light. To put it another way, the former dominant worker models, devised by economists then incorporated in classical management theory, postulated that the worker could be persuaded by rationalistic demonstration. More recently, increasing numbers of managers and their advisers are prepared to admit that their motivation schemes - in appearance just as logically based as ever - in fact rely fundamentally on affirmations whose real value is that they are widely believed. It is thus appropriate to try to discover the few basic hypotheses which generate different consequences, rather as in an axiomatic construction. But we must bear in mind that such series of hypotheses are likely to evolve over time, under the effect of particular strategies.

3.2 - The dynamic aspects of belief

Once the members of a work force have assimilated certain beliefs (i.e. consider them to be valid or useful exemplifications of truth), they expend a certain amount of energy on putting them into practice, and also into defending them. This defence of beliefs calls up all the more energy in that the latter are:

- basic axioms which, if proved false or denied, would bring down with them a whole edifice of concepts;
- not being logical deductions, comprise no positions of withdrawal.

Given that a belief is a source of energy, it follows that energy must also be expended to build up and sustain it. As will be seen under our next heading, there are techniques for

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harnessing this type of energy, collectively known as "rhetoric". Manipulating belief can bring good results, but also involves an element of risk and therefore requires careful and skilful handling, in the same way as a charged condenser.

3.3 - Two approaches to harnessing belief

We see from the above that belief as a management tool has two sides to it (both at the level of the individual and at that of the collective beliefs sometimes known as corporate culture):

- when a strong belief is fostered, this can bring a high degree of worker motivation,
- but, if for any reason (internal or external) the corporation finds it necessary to modify that belief, this will be all the more difficult in that the belief is strongly entrenched.

There are two main approaches to achieving the desired results:

- the first is what might be called the "religious" approach, since it employs the same attitude to belief as that of the churches. The aim is to present tenets concerning the worker, the corporation, or whatever, as being definitive truths which will endure for ever. This approach was that of the early management theories, supported by the effective empirical efficiency of the basic models underlying them (Taylor and Ford). But we all know of the problems which arose when the gap

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between those tenets and real experience increasingly and obviously widened;

- the second is more of a "scientific" paradigm approach, saying that all truths are incomplete and valid only in relation to the then state of knowledge, so they are permanently liable to change. The only restriction to this (within the range of possibilities affecting the worker model) is that the signalling of change must proceed with some degree of continuity. This has been observed, for example , in the "human relations" area of management science, with its gradual probing and refining of the psychological component of the worker model (19).

In my view, the succession of worker models proposed in recent times shows less continuity and less exclusiveness than formerly (they do not lay claim to be of universal application, as did those of the psychology-based human relations school), being influenced by what some people refer to as "management fashions" (20). At all events, it seems natural that, in this new context, attempts should be made to develop techniques and skills able to keep up with the accelerated rate of change: these new developments correspond to what I mean by the term "rhetoric".

4 - The New Rhetoric*

Here again, we will not go into an academic and detailed definition referring back to Aristotle and Fontanier. For our purposes, the word rhetoric is used as a convenient way of

* Even if not in contradiction with their arguments, our use of that notion has little to do with the "New Rethoric" mouvement as it is exposed for instance in Ch. Perelman & L. Olbrechts, "The New Rhetoric", Tyteca, University of Notre-Dame Press, 1969.

designating a type of management discourse designed to motivate the work force by a skilful presentation of facts and ideas which are already regarded by most of its members as plausible or credible.

Rhetoric is thus the "technique" for channelling the energy needed to instill a belief or beliefs in the minds of the workers, using the fact that the latter already accept the arguments making up the package presentation. One way of proceeding is to throw a fresh light on the generally agreed facts and opinions, convincingly enough for new meanings to be seen in them. This is the basic principle of management rhetoric: to deploy a fund of beliefs common to a large number of workers in such a way as to impose to the latter conclusions which support the line which the management, or some part of it, is anxious to promote. It is an approach which requires continuity and consistency, so that those who practice it must make skilful use of their thorough knowledge of what constitutes the common fund of beliefs, and be sensitive to what is acceptable to the other members of the corporation. Our next heading will go further into the types of skills that can be deployed.

Rhetoric is also the practical means by which various sections of the corporation achieve a compromise between outside social developments (tending towards greater complexity) and the internal requirements of the corporation (simplification). For an understanding of the way in which several different, rival, rhetorics may coexist, we can employ a model explaining how this reconciliation is brought about. The complexity of perceived

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reality takes the form of a continuum in which each object and each event is intrinsically different from all others. To manipulate or, even, apprehend, it, we have to think in terms of synthetised categories grouping under a single label whole sets of facts or objects which, in theory, are not identical. This is the first principle of scientific conceptualisation, and also that of the symbolic constructions that are the basis of our rhetoric, elsewhere referred to as "symbolic argumentation" for reasons I explain later.

Rhetoric (and its practitioners) can extract from reality certain notions and put them together to form aggregates which are dispersed in terms of space and time. The quality of the rhetoric is judged by its effectiveness in bringing conviction. The presentation it gives is significant to the extent that it colours the perspective of large numbers of people, who enhance it by drawing on their own personal experience and come to feel that its arguments are giving form to, but not deforming, ideas which they already had, and throwing a new and more relevant light on the issues involved. In this way, the rhetoric feeds on the energy from its audience, giving people the satisfying impression that they now hold the keys to understanding certain matters. A "good" rhetoric is thus one which identifies the plane on which it joins up with the experience of the greatest number of people; the latter can then take it up as their own, applying it with the addition of a measure of personal input, but without adulterating it, and prepared to defend what has come to be their belief, essential to their outlook on life (whereas, as Bachelard and Weber teach us, mere Science is emotionally unsatisfying - not "natural").

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Let us take a longer look at these notions which rhetoric singles out from the perceived reality, and whose common feature is that they can be accepted as credible by large numbers. In earlier papers, I described them as symbols, with what might be called their metaphorical effect in transforming and giving new weight and meaning to certain words, events, or objects. The symbol draws these elements into its orbit and seems to convert them from their literal to their figurative signification, which is the true function of a metaphor (21) (22). It thus acts rather like an electrical condenser, constantly picking up significations as they come within its range and, at the same time, replenishing its energy by drawing on the beliefs of its audience.

One of the functions of rhetoric is thus to channel this transfer from reality/continuum to symbolic/discrete, and the relative power of different rhetorics depends on the number of individuals they can sway in this manner. The process is not wholly irrational, being guided partly by the powers of the rhetorician and partly by the credibility of the formulation of his message. But, while the former may vary quite considerably (a typology is suggested on a later page), the basic formulation remains much the same and, in the corporation context at least, has many of the appearances of ordinary logic. The specific feature of a rhetoric, distinguishing it from all the others, therefore depends mainly on the notions it chooses to extract from the perceived reality, as follows:

- in the first place, on the extent to which those notions follow a line which many people are prepared to accept, being consonant with their cultural environment, their common background, or whatever. Management theories are often reformulations of types of rhetoric

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which have previously held sway (been successful) in areas outside the corporate world. To this extent, they clearly display many of the signs of, for example, the psychosociological approach (as opposed to that of the determinist school) which started to predominate several decades ago. For this reason, it is thought it would be difficult to introduce into the corporation a more realistic, strictly sociological, point of view, which would be seen as depriving the individual of his acquired freedom of choice - unless it could be shown that the sociological categories do not necessarily represent a predetermined and immutable prospect (23).

- secondly, on the extent to which the notions have a practical application. This is not to say that they can be tested experimentally, but that the individual accepting the rhetorical argument feels he can legitimately found his acts on principles he believes to be right. In this light, the rhetoric is not far away from the reality,* even if the link may be obscure: a rhetorical line which is particularly apt at a given time, such as because it has a long tradition, may conceal the discrepancies for quite a long time. But there comes a time when ever-increasing numbers of hard facts fail to coincide with the prevailing notions or symbols, and the cracks in the rhetoric start to appear.

To some extent, as has already been suggested, it can be considered that there are similarities between the rhetorical

* If we refer to a conception of Rhetoric such as the exposed in P. Ricoeur "La métaphore vive", Paris, ed du Seuil, 1975

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approach (artful presentation) and that of the scientist (logical fact), insofar as the latter openly admits that his findings are transitional and the rhetorician, although not making that admission in public, knows that his symbols are no more definitive.

But, in the long term (not necessarily in the short term), science is based on confirmation tests other than the sole personal conviction of the scientist, and proceeds by way of a continual probing of its concepts, dividing these into ever-smaller fragments. It is also true that, over certain periods of time, the corporate rhetoric advances within its paradigm by refining some of its basic factors. I earlier attempted to demonstrate this in relation to the psychological worker model, which went through a long period of evolution (24). But, eventually rhetoric comes up against notions which its practitioners can no longer use, being either too subtle or too general, and it then makes a fresh start using an entirely different basis. Most of the time, the notions and symbols deployed by the rhetorician are presented as axiomatic, meaning that they can be used as they stand, without need - especially at practitioner level, to look any further. It is here that the notion of belief comes into play, banishing reflection and perspective which, in any event, are not compatible with operational requirements.

Any rhetorical approach therefore has an element of violence * towards the "real world" and this corresponds, so to speak, to the energy needed to power the notions which that approach manipulates. It also makes violence to the work force, to the extent that it seeks to impose on individuals a forceful way of seeing things. Under the next heading, we will see how, for sociological, institutional or psychological reasons, certain individuals within the corporation possess special competence, legitimacy or opportunity, for the purposes of generating symbols and deploying rhetoric.

* On the notion of "symbolical violence" see P. Bourdieu, "Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique", Genève Droz, 1972

5 - The Corporate Rhetoricians : A Typology Transfer

Here, we will not go back over what has already been said elsewhere concerning the notion of legitimacy, particularly as concerns its sociological component, or the connection between class origin and career prospects. In a way, we will be looking at the problem from the opposite end, from the corporation standpoint, by identifying different types of authors of rhetorical discourse and then going from there to see what characteristics tend to fit them for one type rather than another.

The purpose being to classify individuals who, using specific techniques, attempt to persuade other members of the corporation to believe in their particular presentations of facts and ideas, it was thought appropriate to transfer to the corporate context the categories developed by Weber in respect of the manipulators of religious beliefs. As always, this kind of transposition requires caution and must find justification in sound principles. I feel able to claim that justification by the fact of having pointed to the parallels between the two kinds of beliefs concerned. There remains the question as to whether we can safely transpose notions relevant to spiritual matters and life after death to a much more profanely material and short-term plane. In fact, however, Weber's approach to the religious field involves little mysticism, being rather of a socio-organisational kind and neglecting, at all events, what might be called the intra-subjective aspect of belief.

5.1 - The Weberian categories

The basic differentiation made by Weber - basic to both his own purposes and ours - is between those individuals who

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owe their qualification to the fact that they belong to a hierarchy set up within a formally structured religion (the priests), and those who derive it from more personal qualities (who we call the "prophets" and the "magicians"). As Weber points out, the priest is a kind of functionary in the service both of an "organised corporation" and a "coherent and stable doctrine", and these give him a "professional qualification".

By contrast, the magician indulges in "personal and occasional interventions", practicing a kind of "liberal profession" and claiming personal powers exemplified by miracles and "personal revelations". (The terms in quotes are taken directly from Weber's "Sociology of Religions").

In this respect, the prophet has something in common with the magician: he is also the "bearer of a purely personal charisma". He is different from the priest in that he "claims uthority on the grounds of a personal revelation". Again like the magician, even if his revelation may lead to the formation of a whole sect, he acts alone and claims to bring new revelations which are "not magic, but doctrine or commandments".

As concerns the activities of these three types of messengers, they are all concerned to instil or sustain beliefs. But the magician seeks to arouse a belief in his personal powers, in his ability to influence the Gods, without trying to put over any significant body of doctrine concerning them; whereas the prophet aims to create faith, over and above his own person, in

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a doctrine promising salvation, and belief in himself as an individual is necessary only insofar as he is the instrument of revelation of that doctrine; while the priest intervenes merely because he is invested by belonging to a clergy charged with implementing a doctrine, so that he is almost a nonentity and at best an auxiliary or cog in the machine.

The means of action of the three types are also different:

- the magician performs spectacular feats in order to establish his authority, bringing on the rain, healing the sick, ensuring victory in battle, and so on;

- the prophet brings tidings of an after-life for which the faithful must prepare by sacrifices or privations to appease the Supreme Being;

- the priest is a kind of middle-man who organices prayer and administers the holy rites prescribed by an established ritual.

5.2 - Relevance of the above categories to study of the corporation

The three categories just described provide a basis for identifying three types of corporate rhetoricians whose functions and means of action are clearly defined:

- the management cadres of the "priest" type are those who, working in a sub-division of the corporation, become

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active exponents of the management's line and its implications for the worker model, for the corporation's image, and for attitudes to the environment. They are usually administrative officers or senior executives in operational divisions, concerned to spread and enforce an official doctrine;

- the "prophet" type are those who seek to introduce new doctrines based on their interpretations of signs observed either within or outside the corporation. They formulate these doctrines, sometimes by reference to existing theories transmitted by one or more of the various intermediaries who move around in the business world: consultants, researchers, and so on. As a general rule, they are either senior management executives or members of study groups responsible for reviewing strategic planning, social policy, and similar matters;

- the "magicians" are the ones who "bring off coups", as it is sometimes described, meaning that they manage to introduce ventures which depart from the local custom. They succeed in mounting usually small-scale schemes (pilot experiments) which earn them a reputation for personal qualities and skills rising above the normal limits of their functions. This refers not only to the skills required to implement the schemes concerned, but also to those deployed in securing recognition of their value to the corporation.

All these three categories thus play a part, in their various ways, in the manipulation of signs and symbols within the corporation. They are usually few in number in terms of

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the total work force, whose other members correspond to what Weber calls a "Lay Community".

In terms of the debating arena and scene of pragmatic developments which correspond to our present view of the corporation, it is thus the prophets who are the real rhetoricians, creating symbols which put the corporation and its relationships with its environment in a fresh light and give rise to new beliefs. If these new beliefs are to take hold, they must in most cases carry the conviction of particular groups within the corporation whose strategic aims are consistent with the proposed doctrine. There is therefore a twin movement which tends to give added substance to the beliefs and to propagate them throughout the corporation, in a manner reminiscent of that in which religious sects grow up.

The magicians have a more personal, more career-oriented, approach, in that the success of their schemes must be seen as due to their personal qualities, with the suggestion that anybody else would have met with failure. This is the idea which their presentation of events attempts to put over, together with the corollary that the only way for the corporation to take full advantage of their skills is to give them more scope and thus wider responsibilities. They in this way build up a kind of capital of belief associated directly with themselves and, if they are particularly adroit, will conserve this in the same way as the magician described by Mauss (25): once they have attained a wider responsibility, any smaller degree of success can always be attributed to external factors: inadequate support given by colleagues, responsibilities still not wide enough, etc.

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The priests are most prominent in routine situations (Kuhn's "normal" periods), when certain beliefs are clearly established in a corporate area and there is a need for sound administration of the capital of symbols they represent. The priestly function is not only to maintain belief among the lay community, but also to report, or even punish, the wayward and the heretic. This often brings them face-to-face with emergent prophets.

Whereas the priest is the servant of a traditional doctrine, consecrated by its past successes and established reputation, and charged with guiding the lay community in the "right" direction, the magician stands alone to display the signs which confirm his powers, and the prophet sits composing a new "vision of the world" which, having first gained acceptance on the intellectual plane, subsequently translates into operational terms.

The first category can thus be seen as administering a fund of symbols with the help of a ready-made rhetoric, the second as creating signs pragmatically (as defined in (26) by Ducrot and Todorov), and the third as a creator both of symbols and of rhetoric.

5.3 - Identifying the priests, magicians and prophets

Under this heading, we have to consider two dimensions:

- the first concerns the individual characteristics which may impel some people to join one or other of these three categories. At this level, we may encounter the sociological or educational assets which confer

the self-confidence (sometimes amounting to audacity) and competence needed to undertake activities of the kind described;

- the other concerns the opportunities arising within the corporation at different stages of its development. Even if the candidates as determined by the above dimension come to an awareness of what is both profitable and feasible (for themselves) at a given time, they can do nothing unless they are in a position to give proper expression to that awareness. Very often, these people - especially the magicians and the prophets - operate by sponsoring the introduction to the corporation of findings or ideas that are gaining ground elsewhere. The opportunity for doing so implies not only having knowledge of these, but also holding the rank (or function) required, and being in the right climate, for ensuring that they have a good chance of getting a hearing in time and then becoming recognised as credible and operationally valuable.

The way in which a corporate executive becomes one of our three types of rhetorician depends on many factors which cannot be discussed in the abstract; especially since some likely prospects may clearly realise the possibility of acting in such a way, but dismiss it in favour of a more conventional behaviour which they regard as better suited to their career strategy.

6 - Conclusions

I am conscious of having very imperfectly assembled in this

article many elements which were either extracted from earlier papers or are the logical consequences of these. It may thus help the reader if I summarise some of the conclusions I intended to convey, as follows:

(a) In the wake of a series of changes in the relationships between the corporation and its social context, the single and ideal worker model of earlier theory has started to lose its credibility, with individuals claiming recognition of more complex identities than such a model could accommodate. Increasing numbers of increasingly complex models have thus come to the fore, in step with increasingly diversified corporate structures.

(b) The external impact and internal workings of the corporation depend on conventional images, implied or explicit, of the corporation itself, of the individuals making it up, of its social and business environment, and so on. The past history of the corporation, partly seen through successive organisation theories (reflecting to some extent its true nature), teaches us that there long prevailed a rationalistic model of it, based on a worker model representing a cog in the machine and on procedures and structures designed with an eye to optimum output performance.

(c) When the notion of optimum output started to become less meaningful, the corporation gradually turned into a debating arena in which the various corporate departments

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compete, each seeking to impose an official type of representation corresponding to its own particular position and interests. The resulting models are by their very nature simplified presentations of the perceived reality, and are invariably regarded as more or less efficient compromises between an increasingly recognised complexity of the individual, of general society and of the internal workings of the corporation, and the counter-weight of simplification needed for the corporation to remain manageable.

(d) This multiplication of presentations of the worker, the corporation and the outside world, has drawn attention to the importance of internal debate and persuasion, and of securing the acceptance of the work force of appropriate beliefs. In other words, the workers are no longer regarded as simply rational beings who react to factual demonstrations only, but as people open to the influence of arguments they find credible.

(e) The prominence newly awarded to belief and persuasion has contributed to giving an increasingly important role to those corporate executives who seek to show their competence and legitimate status by deploying convincing rhetoric which translates into effective performance. This paper attempts to establish a parallel between various categories of corporate staff and Weber's typology of the manipulators of belief in the field of religion.

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All of the above can be illustrated by examples taken from extremely varied areas of corporate activity: from marketing to the production line, taking in staff relations on the way. This puts me in mind of another hypothesis (not in any way conflicting) concerning internal corporate evolution and developed from observation of the changes in the way consumer habits are represented since the marketing function became so prominent. Recog nition of the complexity (not to say the irrationality) of consumer behaviour, and the development of specific methods for influencing it, led to a much-enhanced role for what had hitherto been called the "Sales Office". This greater importance awarded to what then became the "Marketing Division" may well have become reflected in a new image of the corporate employee (also a consumer) and of the social environment. The article by Laufer (27) makes rewarding reading in this connection, showing how the idea of "selling a theme, a campaign, or a product" inside the corporation has become a standard attitude, under the influence of the marketing staff whose function was formerly directed only to the outside customer.

The fact remains that we have a present situation where, despite some new attitudes of the type just described, the trend of corporate structural and procedural change is still far from coinciding with the fundamental changes taking place inside most corporations. To my mind, this discrepancy is due (over and above the traditional "engineer cult" still prevalent in French industry) to two factors:

- firstly, it is no easy matter to work out structures and procedures in keeping with the new ideological framework without sliding into "anarchical" situations;

- secondly, most corporate staffers continue to be accepting

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the new trend - which I have elsewhere depicted as a profound and irreversible movement - somewhat reluctantly, looking on it as an unwelcome development which will have to be counteracted rather than exploited.

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(1) The notions of belief and religion are at the origin of both the Sociology of Religion and Anthropology (even though there seems to have been few contacts between the two disciplines in question). Without going into the academic speculations that are all too typical of the French school of Sociology, which have often made this discipline one of classification (not to say Manichean as in Bourdieu's "Génèse et Structure du Champ Réligieux", in Revue française de sociologie, XII, 1971), rather than of identification, this paper takes Weber's sociological approach in preference to the psycho-philosophical one employed by Durkheim. In scientific as in artistic matters, only posterity can often judge what was at one point the avant-garde and what the academic. Concerning some points of method, Durkheim may have made decisive breakthroughs (I incline to follow Nietzsche and Feyerabend in considering that methodology is Science's worst enemy), but these now appear as so obvious that they interest only the History student. But by general contrast, Weber's position appears to be more of a modern one; Bourdieu summarises it better that I could hope to do - "... Max Weber refuses to see the religious message as the product of intellectual processes. But simultaneously, he adopts the means connecting the content of the religious discourse (down to its syntax) with the interests of its authors" (p.295 of the French edition). The "moralisation" and "rationalisation" of religion is seen from Weber to be the deliberate work of "a corps of specialists administering the resources of Salvation" (p. 302). By contrast with the

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basic designs of Durkheim, who hoped to discover the true meaning of the "complex religions" by investigating the "elementary religions" ... neglecting the questions of the form and degree of differentiation of productive activity, more directly as concerns the production of symbols, etc ... As Weber so pertinently observes, the vision of things proposed by the major universal religions is the work of well-defined groups ... (pp. 307-308). It can be said that Durkheim seems to remain entangled in a fundamentalist concept of religion and rite, whereas Weber, in more modern a fashion, is concerned with the ways in which belief is propagated and revised. Durkheim's approach is comparable to that of Rousseau when he sought the origins of languages.

My above extensive use of extracts from Bourdieu is to be attributed to laziness on my part, rather than to an attempt to shelter behind his authority; the reader of Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse can find more and different meanings there.

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