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**AN INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVE ON TRANSFORMATIONAL
LEADERSHIP**

by

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**THESIS**

Submitted to the Graduate School

of Wayne State University,

Detroit, Michigan

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

MASTER OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

2010

MAJOR: INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

Approved by:

_____
Advisor                                Date

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## **Introduction**

In the modern world, cultural intelligence and communication have become increasingly vital for all commercial functions. Understanding a culture enables one to understand a client. The handshake in America translates as the bow in the Orient. Toasting a closed business deal with whiskey in America would be a deal killer in Bahrain. Cultures all possess their own special "rules" for how to do everything from celebrate a given event, to first introductions.

There are cultural rules for acceptably expressing human emotions (Tuleja 32-38). People feel joy, pain and happiness in response to tragedy or a big success like a promotion. Human emotions are a constant anywhere. Although universal, each culture has its own unique communicative modes of expressing the panhuman; anger, happiness, joy. Many Americans assume a kiss is universally a sign of affection. Some cultures interpret a kiss as a sign of cannibalism not affection. Considering a business engagement or any other sort of meeting, information of this sort would certainly be important for someone of Mediterranean descent in visiting a country where kissing has an opposite context. Cultural competence in business enterprises demands understanding each other from our respective frames of cultural reference.

Culture is broad and complicated. In today's age of information overload, condensing is king. Condensing is transforming complexity into easily comprehended and concise terms. To achieve this end, let's first assume the basic idea that leaders are the embodiment and best representation of a given nation. The additional assumption can also hold true that by observing and understanding the leaders of a nation one can better

come to understand the people and their culture more quickly. Leaders are for the most part chosen because they represent what the people of that nation consider to be the best expression of all they hold in high esteem. The interdisciplinary perspective of my thesis will be based on intercultural communication, anthropology and transformational leadership. Intercultural communication will examine the cultural differences between high and low context communication. High context referring to a cultural group's assumed understanding of expectations and perceptions. Low context refers to a culture where everything must be clearly verbally explained. The anthropology portion will involve cross-cultural analysis from Business Anthropology. Transformational leadership is the process of leaders transforming followers to a higher moral and ethical standard. By examining the common principles of effective transformational leadership, this thesis will provide a reference point for readers to understand other cultures through their transformational leaders. Three films will be used as case studies of transformational leadership: <u>Black Rain,</u> <u>Gandhi</u>, and <u>The Man Who Would Be King</u>. My approach will be informed by a method of analysis commonly used by Business Anthropologists to describe leadership style and behavior

Business Anthropology involves analyzing management factors of an organization (business) through the anthropological study of culture (shared set of beliefs and traditions of a common group). Business Anthropology accesses a wide range of methods to understanding culture and human behavior. As a sub-discipline of applied cultural anthropology, Business Anthropology employs much of the same methodology involving: participant observation, informant interviewing, focus groups, survey methods

and network analysis. Business Anthropology also acknowledges many of the same cultural variables as applied cultural anthropology such as beliefs, values and social structure. The main distinction between Business Anthropology and other fields of applied cultural anthropology lies in the methodology. Due to the fact that most businesses exist to make a profit, competition runs very high. The time interval from when a product or service enters the market to its demise is usually short. This reason alone allows Business Anthropologists very little time to conduct their work. The short time factor accounts for the brevity of Business Anthropology research and the lower number of informants compared to conventional research.

Business Anthropology attempts to utilize the anthropological method of participant observation. By observing group interactions, Anthropologists are provided a wealth of information about a particular group's values, perceptions, and the relationship between group members. In a cross-cultural environment, for example a Japanese manager in an American company, an Anthropologist would notice specific details about the Japanese that could conflict with the American way of doing business. The high context communication of the Japanese (the shared system of expectations) creates a system of anticipating one another's needs and responsibilities that are already understood between co-workers and managers in Japan. In America low context communication requires every detail of every job to be spelled out and clearly communicated for a successful outcome. So it becomes evident where a Japanese manager would have difficulty relating to his American co-workers. The methodology of close observation will be used in examining the transformational leadership styles showcased in the films Black Rain,

Gandhi, and The Man Who Would Be King, from an organizational standpoint. The Anthropological method that analyzes culture and organizational group dynamics in combination is the perfect tool in analyzing this paper's thesis.

Case studies and cultural analysis are sources of information that can be used to prevent cultural blunders. But published works sometimes utilize very specialized topics that require a background in foundational theory that can limit the audience and in turn the accessibility of the information. To remedy this intellectual hurdle, the use of visually active scenarios, such as film have the power to incorporate communicational mediums such as body language as well as dramatize cultural conflict in action as it's occurring. Images clarify concepts in a way words alone cannot. Particularly in today's visual culture "a picture is worth a thousand words". A movie has the potential to touch an audience deeply because it appeals to both understanding and emotion. When we watch a great film, our feelings can be stirred before we are aware of why we feel as we do. Feature films as case studies will educate those who wish to expand their cultural and communicative knowledge. But only those films that demonstrate transformational leadership will be used.

A common question for any reader would be what exactly transformational leadership is. To answer this question, the works of Bernard Bass, transformational leaderships biggest proponent, and G. Yukl will be used. According to Bernard Bass, the best definition of transformational leadership is a "style of leadership in which the leader identifies the needed change, creates a vision to guide the change through inspiration, and executes the change with the commitment of the members of the group." (Bass & Bass

581). According to Yukl, transformational leaders follow a particular format in how they lead. All transformational leaders begin by developing a challenging but compelling vision tied to a strategy on how to achieve the vision. The vision is developed by the leader and then translated to action. During this part of the process, it is imperative that the transformational leader expresses confidence in both behavior and words (i.e. being decisive and optimistic about accomplishing the vision). In the interest of continued loyalty from followers and continued leadership, a transformational leader must achieve minor victories leading up to the vision.

In all three films, all of the transformational leaders employ these five competencies. Black Rain involves the objective of apprehending the film's villain, Sato and dissolving the counterfeit scheme. The strategy and actions are slightly different between the Americans and Japanese. The Japanese have strict procedures for investigating and working as a team to accomplish these objectives. The Americans Nick and Charlie move ahead acquiring leads with little regard for protocol. Gandhi creates the vision of an independent India, free of British rule. Gandhi achieves this goal by unifying his followers under the strategy of nonviolent protest. The Man Who Would Be King involves a ruler, Danny Dravot, whose unrealistic vision to modernize a third world country under his guise as a god. Danny fails to unify his followers under nothing more than the deception of his false godhood and ultimately, loses everything including his own life. However, the five competencies listed here really function more as guidelines for how transformational leaders enact their goals. Successful achievement for a transformational leader involves more specific principles.

In addition to Yukl's format, there are core principles that are vital to the determination of a transformational leader as authentic, authentic being used here to suggest a leader whose actions and transforming of their followers precludes any self-serving notions in any way. A good, authentic transformational leader garners trust, respect and admiration from followers" (Bass & Bass 619-621). Determining to what extent a leader encompasses these qualities can be measured by a criterion of four rules. Effective transformational leadership involves four basic components (fundamental four) that are further compounded by six universal principles of transformational leadership

Bass & Bass argue for the fundamental four components for transformational leadership:

1. Individualized Consideration – the degree to which the leader attends to each follower's needs, acts as a mentor or coach to the follower and listens to the follower's concerns and needs. The leader gives empathy and support, keeps communication open and places challenges before the followers. This also encompasses the need for respect and celebrates the individual contribution that each follower can make to the team. The followers have a will and aspirations for self development and have intrinsic motivation for their tasks.

2. Intellectual Stimulation – the degree, to which the leader challenges assumptions, takes risks and solicits followers' ideas. Leaders with this style stimulate and encourage creativity in their followers. They nurture and develop people who think independently. For such a leader, learning is a value and unexpected

situations are seen as opportunities to learn. The followers ask questions, think deeply about things and figure out better ways to execute their tasks."

3. Inspirational Motivation – the degree to which the leader articulates a vision that is appealing and inspiring to followers. Leaders with inspirational motivation challenge followers with high standards, communicate optimism about future goals, and provide meaning for the task at hand. Followers need to have a strong sense of purpose if they are to be motivated to act. Purpose and meaning provide the energy that drives a group forward. The visionary aspects of leadership are supported by communication skills that make the vision understandable, precise, powerful and engaging. The followers are willing to invest more effort in their tasks; they are encouraged and optimistic about the future and believe in their abilities.

4. Idealized Influence – Provides a role model for highly ethical behavior, instills pride, gains respect and trust. The degree to which the leader behaves in admirable ways and displays convictions and takes stands that cause followers to identify with the leader who has a clear set of values and acts as a role model for the followers. (619-624)

These fundamental four function as guidelines which, for better or for worse, depending on the leader, can produce a dream result or a nightmare. The Japanese chief inspector from Black Rain is very attentive to hearing the concerns of Nick and his partner Charlie. Nick challenges many of the assumptions that Matsumoto holds about the absolution of authority when he decides to follow Nick in pursuing Sato despite being suspended.

Gandhi is the very picture of individualized consideration. The beatings and imprisonment Gandhi endures to give strength to the nonviolent marches lends power to Gandhi's vision and strategy of winning India's independence. Danny Dravot (<u>The Man Who Would Be King</u>) fails to consider anyone other than himself. Although Danny does have a vision to modernize Kafiristan (modern day Afghanistan) and to accomplish that goal by producing an heir through marriage; Danny's motives are still very much self centered. The deception and causative decay that results is the focus of Danny's failed leadership. The issues of moral and ethical standards are what highlight Danny's case study apart from the first two. The moral and ethical compass the enables the true transformational leader to lead to a constructive result are the six universal principles of transformational leadership.

Bass & Bass argue for six universal ethical principles of transformational leadership (203):

The first principle considers maintaining a balance between freedom and equality. To preserve equality individual freedoms must be kept as widely available for as many people as possible. If a leader begins to reduce liberties or put special restrictions on who has access to particular liberties, equality is lost. The loss of equality is due to the fact that restrictions by nature create a division between those who have and those who do not have access to certain freedoms. Maintaining freedom requires that social values, the values a society considers important, not be adjusted to the point where everyone is included in every freedom. Restrictions within reason and in the interest of keeping balance must be present. The rights of some people must take precedence over others

under certain freedoms. Imagine if everyone, convicts included, had the right to bear arms at any time, anywhere. The personal safety and welfare of many law-abiding citizens would be in jeopardy. In this case, the freedoms of those who have violated the law must be limited for the greater good. The unjust British laws in <u>Gandhi</u> exemplify this principle as well.  The oppressive South African law that prohibits Indians from riding first class is one that has reduced Indian freedoms to a level less than the average White British citizen. Everyone, including Indians, should be able to ride in the first class section of the train. By excluding the Indians from first class, equality was lost. This restriction on Indians was one that was both unfair and very biased. There was no practical, just need to keep Indians out of first class. In the limited context the aforementioned examples provide, it is vital to make clear distinctions in what considerations are made to determine what is fair and unbiased. Sharp, clear and fair distinctions are those that are based on objective facts. The objectivity of the facts used can best be ascertained by demonstrating if a given freedom, social value or group pose a viable and significant threat to the majority. The Indians posed no threat in any way by riding in first class hence the South African law can be considered both biased and unjust. Convicted felons with a history of violence have already proven in their own behavior that limiting their freedom based on the threat they pose to the welfare of the general public is legitimate.

The second principle regards the value of solidarity. Teamwork, mutual respect and strength of character all help to create strong group cohesion. To effectively work together, people must know that they can trust and rely on the their team mates. Trust is

best earned when demonstrated in behavior as well as words. The supervisor, who makes promises that never fall through, will quickly lose employee trust and respect. Trust is heavily based on reliability. Those who find such effort in team-based relationships to burdensome will sometimes resort to more self-centered behavior. Relationships are vital and a more practical means of survival in any organizational environment. Thinking only of your own needs leads to manipulate behavior, which eventually destroys trust and respect.

The third principle involves failure. The simple reality of the world sometimes punishes those who do not deserve to be. Failure in a crusade, no matter how just, is a very real possibility. Members of a crusade must be prepared for failure by expecting the possibility from the start. This will help to avoid the pitfall of disappointment that can sabotage motivation. Gandhi's followers were aware that their initial failure to secure India's independence would be met by the British with severe penalties (police brutality and imprisonment).

The fourth principle emphasizes a leader's recognition to lead by informed consent. Followers cannot be forced to comply with a leader-loyalty must be earned. Leaders can generate sustained loyalty by encouraging the generation of ideas and opinions from followers. This principle encompasses a core component in the process of how a transformational leader 'transforms' followers to a higher moral and ethical standard of living. By encouraging followers to create their own ideas, independence is encouraged. Followers are trained to think on their own but along the same line of reasoning as the transformational leader.

The fifth principle states that transformational leaders must appeal to what followers can be rather than what they currently are. Transforming followers to their highest potential involves a leader appealing to them by way of strong logic, emotion and character. Gandhi had very strong reasoning in convincing his followers to rise up against biased and unfair British laws. The brutal enforcement of those laws inspired an even stronger emotional response that motivated Gandhi's followers to willingly comply with his vision for an independent India.

The sixth and final principle stresses accountability. Effective and competent transformational leaders must take responsibility for failure. Accountability acknowledges ones mistakes, and in doing so the very flaws that must be corrected to improve oneself and leadership that much more. Admitting failure also requires a high degree of humility, another hallmark feature of competent leadership. Leaders who demonstrate humility in behavior usually further ingratiate themselves with followers.

These six principles serve aptly in all three films. The Japanese maintain a balance between their group centered social values and individual freedom. The chief inspector meets individual needs by meeting group needs. This is accomplished by every member in the group adhering to the specific responsibilities of their job title. Whereas from Nick's point of view, job responsibilities are somewhat blurred. American police do their job and other duties from other job titles if needed. Danny defies the six principles but still qualifies in their application for the purpose of exploring the severity of deception in transformational leadership, a comparison of what not to do as a transformational leader. Gandhi battled against the tyranny of the British whose laws were built on undermining

Indian freedom in the interest of dominance. Gandhi used the antithesis of British rule, peace and nonviolence. No one was ever forced to follow Gandhi; his followers did so out of a common goal and desire to become more like their leader. Gandhi inspired such devotion from strong logic and the fact that the British were oppressive to Indian rights. The pathos (emotion) that helped to fuel Gandhi's follower's devotion stemmed from a shared sense of accomplishment of enduring British brutality. The severity of the oppression only served to further unify the Indians as hardship gave them a sense of moving closer to their goal.

Each of these six principles must be observed to a reasonable extent, the measurement of which is determined by a transformational leader's daily adherence and mindfulness to the practice of the Universal Six. The Confucian proverb "to begin each day with the end in mind" would serve aptly here to provide the transformational leader with the format of how to best use the Universal Six and Fundamental Four together. Both must be a daily mindset in every interval of a leader's engagement of official responsibilities. In the event that the reader has questioned the use of the words, universal and fundamental, consider first the cultural factor behind transformational leadership.

Cultures may disagree on certain ideas about how people are best governed (Democratic vs. Socialistic) or any subject matter in particular. But in the same way gravity is a hard law that must be recognized, respected and obeyed, so are certain rules of effective transformational leadership. Regardless of the culture, there are rules of the physical world that require certain principles be followed for a desired result to be achieved. In much the same way that precise measurement and careful planning builds a

house that will last, so do leadership principles. People recognize on average that certain principles are timeless and work no matter what day, age or culture applied in. Treating others the way you want to be treated is one universal many would agree on. Leaders who consider the needs of followers ahead of their own are complying with a timeless principle of effective leadership; if you want others to follow you must lead by example, (sacrifice first whether by fasting such as Gandhi or any other means), all to show a strong level of dedication to the proposed vision. Transformational leaders must be able to enact a level of change in followers to help them meet the leader's level of moral and ethical prowess. Transforming followers in this way requires a leader who can stimulate followers by challenging assumptions, taking risks and listening to follower's ideas. The leader also encourages independent thinking, asking questions and developing new creative ways to solve problems. Followers who are nurtured by leaders in this fashion are more willing to commit to a leader's vision. When people are made to feel as if they are sincerely valued, loyalty and informed consent will naturally result. The Fundamental Four and Universal Six are not culturally specific; they apply to any people in any country in any day and age regardless of cultural context. Despite the smoke and mirror effect that culture provides in convincing people of how different they think they are, principles such as the aforementioned help to remind just how similar human beings are.

Transformational leadership, the universal principles of effective leadership and the individual and cultural differences in leaders will be the subject of my thesis. I will be analyzing three films using perspectives from the fields of Business Anthropology and leadership studies. I will explore the films: Black Rain, Gandhi and The Man Who Would

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Be King, each film being a separate chapter. The "leaders" in each of these films will be analyzed relative to their universal and communicative strengths and weaknesses as well as failures and successes in transformational leadership skills. The types of communication relative to the fundamentals of effective leadership each culture has on these fundamentals will be explored. Understanding how transformational leadership principles apply will help to give shape to the previous concepts discussed in each case study. The cultural portions of each case study will create an observational framing of Business Anthropology that will be used to translate, highlight and connect the communicative and leadership portions of each film. The combination of Business Anthropology and transformational leadership studies creates a highly interesting Interdisciplinary synthesis (Repko 3-7). In the beginning of each case study, a brief synopsis of the film's plot and characters will be given to provide the reader with the necessary background. The synopsis will help to provide the reader with enough plot details in the interest of following the analysis with that much more ease. Black Rain will dichotomize the cultural differences in transformational leadership such as the Japanese need for order, rank and proper hierarchy contrasted with a more relaxed American chain of command between superiors and subordinates. Cultural differences in how information is handled communicatively such as high vs. low context communication will help to illustrate the Japanese high context communication method as opposed to the low context, individualist American style. The film, Gandhi, will explain how innovative, skillful transformational leadership and a shrewd understanding of Indian and British societies produces the very model of the Fundamental Four and Universal Ethical

Principles of transformational leadership. <u>The Man Who Would Be King</u> shows the dangers when leadership fails before it even begins. The result of such failed leadership develops from an unbalanced practice of power ascribed from the beginning by dishonest means. The authority that is abused and cultural sensitivity neglected are both fueled by the leader putting his needs ahead of his followers resulting in deceptive and failed leadership.

## Chapter 1

## Black Rain

**Movie Synopsis**:

Black Rain is a film about the conflicts that arise from the cultural differences between Japanese and American people. The characters introduced in the film are Nick Conklin, Charlie Vincent and Matsumoto. Nick is a New York City cop who has worked the streets for years and is also being investigated by Internal Affairs (IA) under suspicion of bribery. Nick's partner Charlie is the opposite of Nick, sophisticated, patient, and far more diplomatic. During a bar scene where Nick and Charlie are having lunch, both witness a Japanese Yakuza (gangsters) killing. Nick and Charlie pursue and apprehend the Yakuza gangsters. The main Yakuza leader, Sato, must be extradited to Japan, escorted by Charlie and Nick. Once in Japan, Charlie and Nick are greeted by what they are deceived into thinking are the Japanese police but are really Yakuza friends of Sato. Shortly after Nick and Charlie realize they have been tricked, the Japanese chief police inspector grants them official status as "observers" in the effort to recapture Sato. To ensure that Nick and Charlie do not interfere, the Japanese chief police inspector assigns Officer Masahiro Matsumoto as a guide and translator. During the investigation Nick breaches protocol several times acting in the most American of ways, as a lone wolf with no sense of teamwork. One such incident of Nick's overly individualistic American way is displayed when he liberates evidence from a Yakuza crime scene without permission. Despite the fact that the evidence Nick took was valuable in proving the counterfeiting scheme Sugai is planning, "acting without permission" no matter what the

discovery, is not justified from a Japanese perspective. Through an American nightclub hostess, Joyce, Nick discovers that Sato is fighting a gang war with a notorious crime boss, Sugai. Sato himself used to be an enforcer for Sugai and now wants his own territory to rule. Sato had traveled to New York to disrupt a counterfeiting scheme run by Sugai involving perfectly crafted printing plates for American currency. Sato had managed to only obtain one of the printing plates in New York.

While walking home after the first few days of investigating Sato's possible whereabouts, Nick and Charlie are attacked by a group of Yakuza on motorcycles, led by Sato. Having stolen Charlie's raincoat, Sato leads him into a trap in a sealed part of a garage. After a brief chase, Nick and Charlie are separated and unable to help one another. Nick must now watch helplessly as Sato beheads Charlie. While grieving for Charlie at Joyce's apartment, Nick is visited by Matsumoto who offers his condolences and Charlie's personal effects. According to Japanese tradition, Nick is allowed to choose one item to keep; Nick decides to take Charlie's gun. After tracking a woman working for Sato, Nick and Matsumoto obtain a sample counterfeit dollar bill printed only on one side. This provides the evidence they need to further their investigation. They then track another of Sato's agents to a steel factory where a secret Yakuza meeting is taking place. Sato is petitioning the Oyabun Sugai (Oyabun is a Japanese Mafia Don equivalent) to rule his own territory as an Oyabun. Sugai agrees but the terms set require Sato to return the printing plates, and atone for the New York incident.  Nick and Matsumoto are discovered, cutting the meeting short, after a short gunfight, Sato escapes again. Upon drawing his gun in public to stop Sato, Nick is jumped by several Japanese police and

arrested. The Japanese chief police inspector tells Nick his interference is intolerable and that he must go back to New York. Matsumoto is suspended, put on leave of absence and also banned from his club for his involvement with Nick. Acting again in a very rebellious and single-minded attitude, Nick leaves the airplane at the last second and visits Matsumoto. The two argue, Nick tells Matsumoto to set higher priorities than wallowing in shame and regret, that finding Sato takes precedence over department policy. Matsumoto refuses, standing firm that he must serve his punishment. Nick leaves disgusted, to visit Sugai, the only person who can find Sato. Sugai explains to Nick that the counterfeiting scheme goes beyond just profit, that it is revenge for the atomic bombs during World War II that "brought the rain, the black rain". Through a moment of strong humility, Nick appeals to Sugai to workout a deal to kill Sato. Nick and Sugai arrive at a remote tea farm somewhere in the country where Nick is given a loaded shotgun. As Nick approaches the hut where the meeting is taking place, Matsumoto arrives now willing to help Nick. Sugai and Sato meet after introductions, the stolen printing plate is returned. After placing himself right next to Sugai, Sato atones for his misdeeds by cutting off one finger, wrapping it in white linen and passing it to Sugai. Unfortunately, the entire act turns out to be a farce as Sato stabs Sugai in the chest with the very knife he used to cut off his finger. A gunfight ensues; Nick chases Sato through the tea fields where the two fight. Although Nick is tempted to kill Sato for Charlie's murder, he opts to bring Sato in and to let the Japanese Police take custody.  Nick and Matsumoto are awarded commendations for their work by the chief inspector. Following a brief lunch at the airport, Nick gives Matsumoto a dress shirt as a gift. Looking underneath, Matsumoto

discovers both counterfeit printing plates, Nick's gift to Matsumoto in honoring their newly established friendship.

## **Black Rain: Culture, Leadership and the American Way**

Ridley Scott's film, <u>Black Rain</u>, is a story that demonstrates the problems that develop from Japanese and American cultural differences in communication and transformational leadership. In the discussion of this film, the fundamental four and Anthropology will be used to explain the sources of conflict, and unique cultural translation the Japanese and Americans have on leadership and subordinate roles.

<u>Black Rain</u> is a film that demonstrates the issues that arise from different culturally influenced attitudes toward leadership. In the beginning of the film, sharp differences are immediately established. Nick and Charlie, despite differences in rank, are very close friends and have no social boundary to indicate otherwise. While eating in a diner, Nick and Charlie converse and react to one another as close friends, even siblings, frequently addressing each other on a first name basis. This chummy sort of professional relationship is solidified in Nick's relationship with his superior, Captain Oliver. Questioning of leadership and authority is another feature in <u>Black Rain.</u>

During the Internal Affairs (IA) interview, Nick is interrogated regarding an alleged bribe. Despite the fact that the IA agents are obnoxious and insulting, Nick shows little to no regard for the delicacy of the accusations much less any respect to the agents for the authority of the office they represent. Nick's attitude is very singular and reflective of an intensely individualistic way of thinking. These actions in many ways quickly show Nick as someone who is not a team player. The arrival in Japan consolidates all of these

American features on leadership highlighting the Japanese/American differences and hence source of conflict.

Once in Japan, the first obstacle is literally speaking another language. While mediating the prisoner extradition, each side at first seems to assume that the other holds the responsibility to accommodate the linguistic barrier. The forms that Nick and Charlie are given to sign are written entirely in Japanese. In the no nonsense fashion that appears typical of all Americans, Nick and Charlie simply sign the forms without even attempting to make any arrangements to have the document's content translated. This laissez-faire attitude leads to the disaster that is the remainder of the film's plot and also lays the foundation for discerning the differences between the Japanese and American way of leading and following. The clashing concepts on responsibility and leadership held by Japanese and Americans highlight sharp differences in perspective.

In Japan, a prisoner extradition or any task for that matter would have been handled with the utmost precision for two reasons. First, the Japanese have an intense adherence to process and hierarchy. Everything must have a precise method very clearly spelled out and followed exactly. Second, each subordinate is held entirely responsible for the outcome of every task they are given; whether a failed outcome was within the subordinates influence or not does not matter, responsibility must be taken. Therefore, every Japanese subordinate takes every measure to ensure success of every job. Nick and Charlie did not approach their prisoner extradition with the "Japanese attitude". From an American perspective, the Japanese were seen as responsible for accommodating the language barrier and provision of proper security. No matter how you try to weigh the

situation, both sides have equal ground in their respective arguments. Both have justifications that can be traced back to their own cultural perceptions of how the situation should have been handled. This being the case, the best possible scenario would have been for both sides to exercise some initiative. Nick and Charlie should have been more cautious and attentive and the Japanese police should have taken extra precautions given that the Japanese police had a greater knowledge of Yakuza tactics and trickery. The different attitudes based on the different expectations of leadership created the disastrous outcome of Sato's escape.

Particular scenes in <u>Black Rain</u> help to convey real-life examples of cross-cultural attitudes to authority. The following scene selection demonstrates the nature of leadership in America as opposed to the Japanese way. It is important to take note of the friendly attitude and casual use of first names between Nick and Captain Oliver.

Leadership and subordinate relationships take on very different contexts from one culture to another. <u>Black Rain</u> exemplifies the sharp contrast between the American and Japanese attitudes on transformational leadership. The American portion of leadership is demonstrated when Nick's superior, Oliver engages a discussion revolving around the possibility of Nick having taken a bribe. Oliver takes Nick aside and asks him directly, "All crap aside, did you take a bribe or not? If ya did you have to tell me, I can't help you if you're not straight with me Nick". Superior-subordinate relationships in America are sometimes acceptably practiced as near equals (Jordan 46-47). Despite administrative formalities of job title, a superior can, within reason speak, address and engage with a subordinate on a level that can be construed as very casual. There is no procedure, no

symbolic division between rank where Oliver sits behind a desk and Nick on the other side. Nick recognizes and even refers to Oliver as captain, but the mutual expectation between the two is that they are practically equals. Difference in rank is merely part of the American police hierarchy, not a true measure of any superiority (Hall, Understanding 15-20). The relationship between Nick and his partner Charlie functions relatively the same. Although Nick actually have seniority on Charlie, they relate to each other as if they were complete equals, or to some extent brothers. In the face of an Internal Affairs (IA) investigation, Nick speaks and acts to the IA agents as if both were subordinates worthy of only his contempt. The American police department is united on the value of a "brotherhood". Adherence to the core job principle of investigating and convicting criminals and anything else is secondary, even "skimming off the top". The justification for taking a bribe mainly falling under the reasoning of the measly wage police are paid in the face of family stressors and bills; providing that "skimming off the top" doesn't become a regular habit and you only take what you need. Under the rules of the police department's group dynamics, the department would most likely not suffer any real embarrassment especially due to the fact that "the whole damn system is falling apart….what about all the crooks down at city hall?" as Nick complains to the Internal Affairs Agent. The police are only taking what they need and nothing more, in response to the fact that they work a dangerous job, keep society together and should to some extent be allowed to "skim off the top". All of this is reflective of highly individualistic thinking which is very characteristic of American culture. This mentality is also reflective of a strong element of organizational entry, assimilation and exit (Jablin 756). Jablin

states in his article "Organizational entry, assimilation and exit" that within organizations exist even smaller subcultures that each have their own rules for entry into the group. The American Police, have a strict criteria for what binds them together, supporting each other to almost any end. It is also this same criteria that determines who is a legitimate member of the group and who isn't. The rights and needs of the individual should be prized and preserved by those in power (Hofstede 107-108). In part Nick has a point. If the good of the whole group had been respected or individualized consideration from City Hall on down, the police would have their financial needs met more adequately. Yet "skimming off the top" is still theft and illegal but at the same time the irresponsibility and selfishness that comes from the unbalanced nature of individualistic thinking has created the desperate scenario that has caught westerners like Nick between a rock and a hard place. The failure to properly anticipate the needs of those in service is mainly, whether Japanese or American, the responsibility of those in power. The situation between Nick and IA is basically neither side willing to take responsibility for their respective faults. This creates divisions, Nick and the other cops band together with an "us verse them" mentality. The cops blame IA and IA blame the cops, regardless of how good the reasons either side has. This fragmented portion in the chain of command between IA and the police department compounds the loyalty members of both sides have to each other, ergo Nick and Captain Oliver. This divide between IA and the police is also what creates the blame game. What blame amounts to in low context American culture is nothing more than a parochial attempt at pretending that a problem has been

solved through accusations when in fact nothing is ever really accomplished. Blame is the trend that usually passes for problem solving in blame-based cultures such as America.

The result of Sato's escape creates a rift involving accountability between the Japanese and the American police. In much the same scenario between Nick and IA, an equal share in failure falls short of Nick's point of view. Rather, Nick accuses the Japanese for Sato's escape. The Japanese blame Nick for negligent incompetence. Nick's perspective amounts to little more than a weak attempt at avoiding responsibility for the fact that he unreasonably refuses to admit any fault. In the Japanese mind, one takes responsibility for mistakes. The actual problem, the lack of communication between the Japanese and American police, is not recognized at all. There is more emotion than logic revolving around all of the problems between Nick and the Japanese. This outcome is fairly typical, especially when a very high context culture becomes involved with a low context culture like American. As is usually the case, rarely is the issue addressed directly rather than the traditional scapegoat found and assigned. This practice of finding a person or group to blame as the lone cause for a given problem is indicative of several things. First, blame based thinking does not analyze problems based on reality. The basic belief behind a scapegoat is that by punishing those assigned blame, the problem will somehow magically go away. One person or group is basically sacrificed for the sake of everyone else, or in some cases leaders themselves, being exonerated from taking responsibility. Second, the willingness to sacrifice others for responsibility that should be shared jointly is supremely the mark of individual based values severely out of control. There is no regard for functioning as a group, as every person motivated and working for the

betterment of each other, as in Japan. The Japanese address the problem, not the blame.

Problems are engaged, explored and resolved on a group-based effort. The individual is

in service to the greater good of the group, whereas in America the individual is in

service to the group only as long as individual needs are continually met. If individual

needs are somehow threatened, cooperation comes to a stop. The Japanese have an

attitude that is the opposite, group process and teamwork are the norm and only way to

accomplish any task.

In Japan, the Japanese have a tremendous respect and commitment to hierarchy and

the order it provides. There are strict divisions between subordinate and superior (Hall,

Hidden 73-77). The different attitudes to authority are further illustrated when Nick is in

Japan speaking to the Japanese police chief. Nick's Japanese liaison, Assistant Inspector

Masahiro, enters the room with Nick and Charlie. Once seated at the table, the Japanese

police chief, 'pretends' not to be able to speak English, so Masahiro translates. Authority

in Japan is conceptualized differently than in America. Americans would usually have the

most powerful and important figure in a situation enter the rooms first, subordinates

following close behind, and the leader would begin speaking first. In Japan it is just the

opposite and for a very good reason, tactics. The Japanese leader sits back and allows the

subordinate to engage the client. By observing this engagement, the leader is able to

observe and learn without revealing anything about themselves. This practice develops

from a strongly cultural based attitude about business. Business for the Japanese is

engaged with the same mentality that one engages war, assessing and outmaneuvering the

opponent.  By gathering information about the client and revealing nothing about

themselves, the Japanese leader gains a huge advantage by keeping the 'opponent' ignorant. This practice is in its essence even better than the standoffish American approach. The Japanese police chief inspector practices this same tactic traditionally used for business in Japan. In the beginning of the film, Nick and Charlie must communicate to the Japanese police chief through Masahiro translating. By the police chief allowing Masahiro to literally do all talking first, the police chief is free to observe all of the valuable information that Nick and Charlie's behavior reveals about who they are, their values, all the while revealing nothing about himself. This act sets the tone for giving the advantage to the police chief as the flow of information becomes unilateral and is literally controlled by the mechanism created. The most important person or persons in the room are not those you meet upfront but rather those who stand behind in the background observing.

Culturally, respect has different forms of expression. In Japan, bowing and tone of voice used in different ways give context to a situation. Masahiro continually bowing and speaking to the Japanese police chief in a constant civil tone of voice reveals the Japanese attitude of respect for rank. The main reason being that to the Japanese, every interval of respect for one's superiors must be practiced in the interest. Preserving the respect helps to maintain the structure that is best for group cohesion. Maintaining order gives function to every job for the purpose of preserving the order that gives the best possible result for everything the group does. Whether making TV's or investigating a crime scene, each job with a particular responsibility has a series of expectations that are to be obliged. The group as a whole relies that every member fulfills the responsibilities

assigned. Failure in one's job puts the rest of the group at risk for failure as well as losing face. The humiliation is doubly augmented by the knowledge that the group member who did not fulfill the expectations of their job also failed to function as a productive and meaningful member of the group. Losing face also could mean that by failing, you may have actually become a possible danger to the productivity of the group, which as in Masahiro's case in being demoted and thrown out of his social club. Failure can sometimes result in being expelled from the group or like Masahiro, a social club. The key to Japanese social dynamics can be found in learning how to think in-group terms. When Masahiro begins to fall away from this portion of his cultural programming, this is the point when he is rejected socially and humiliated professionally through demotion. The obvious conflicts that can arise from high context values against low context become more apparent during Nick's very American rationale for removing evidence from a Yakuza crime scene.

The scene where Nick "liberates" several forged American dollar bills from a Yakuza crime scene creates other culture clash incidents. The Japanese need for proper communication through the right channels spirals around situations that may seem ridiculous or even a waste of time to the American mind. In this scene, Masahiro observes Nick taking dollar bills from a Yakuza crime scene. Recall that the Japanese have a fondness for rank, which in turn demands a strong adherence to rules and protocol. Rules and protocol help preserve those all-important divisions of rank that keeps everything organized. This means that any behavior that reflects independent thinking requires formatting to the Japanese way. The fact that Nick takes the money, despite his

good intentions to investigate the money, leads Masahiro to assume only what his Japanese cultural frame of reference allows him to think, that Nick is stealing the money. Nick acts independently, not even aware that acting without requesting permission to remove evidence contrasts with Japanese group values. By skipping Japanese protocol Nick is violating the shared Japanese group expectations that demand rules be followed. Cooperating with Japanese procedure produces the additional benefit of shared communication in the group (Dong and Yammarino 12). Since Japanese communication flows through multiple channels of several people, every act is communicated and handled and determined by the whole group. So Nick taking the 'initiative' to simply take the money is not about getting the job done or lack of recognition for the forgery discovery, but ignoring what should be a group process.

The conflict from the incidents discussed thus far all can be traced back to differences in types of communication. Primarily the main two categories of communication utilized in the film are high context communication and low context. The basic idea behind low and high context cultures reveals communicative means other than words. High context communication is most prevalent in eastern countries, like Japan. This type of communication relies on less verbal cues, usually more body language based on culturally shared expectations. For instance, there is more internalized understanding of what is communicated which results only from long term, well-established relationships (Hall, Hidden 7-11). For example, periods of silence have meaning for the Japanese during conversation (anger, disappointment). Relationships in high context also depend on trust, which can only develop stably over a slow period of time. The use of these

relationships also affects the quality of the work done. The quality of work depends on the relationships the people of a high context group have with one another. The identity of the individual is rooted in the group itself whether in family or at work. When Nick asks for permission to observe and take part in the investigation, out of courteous hospitality, the Japanese police chief grants the request. Once Nick becomes too active or violates the Japanese expectation of an observer, the Japanese police chief, then has Nick and Charlie removed from the crime scene. Nick and Charlie valued the goal of trying to solve the crime over group process. To the Japanese mind, an observer would literally only do that, just stand by and watch with no physical involvement. Nick, operating from a very individualistic frame of thinking, sees "bending the rules" as not only necessary but also justifiable if the result is productive and grand enough, behavior that is very individualistic. To the American mind reaching the goal is the main objective. To the Japanese, being a team player and following the proper chain of command is the only thing that matters. Yes meeting goals is important, but group process must be followed and maintained as well. The compliance is what is best for the group, and that is the expectation of the individual; to sacrifice personal wants and "hunches" to preserve the organizational structure that keeps the group operating at peak efficiency. Low Context communication, most prevalent in America, relies on very clear and direct verbal cues to explain practically everything. There are very few, shared expectations that members of a low context group understand of one another. Relationships are brief due to the fact that there can be many people in one's inner circle (Hall, Hidden 8-9). These relationships function for the purpose of getting things done, accomplishing the goal. The social

structure is decentralized with responsibility being scattered rather than centralized at the top. Nick does not take any steps at all to cultivate a relationship with Masahiro. During their time at a bar, Nick and Masahiro spend the entire scene fighting, whereas Charlie, being more diplomatic, offers Masahiro his tie as a gift. This act is significant for one reason, gift giving has unique cultural context for the Japanese.  In Japan, gift giving carries the context of opening the door to the beginning of a relationship. By partaking in the contextual ritual of gift giving, Charlie observes and indirectly communicates his respect and willingness to at least attempt to try and respect Japanese group process.

Group process and high context communication among Japanese, are both very interesting, and complex. However, both still beg the question of why do the Japanese have such a strong adherence to rules? The main reason being that Japanese society functionally is organized based on military principles (Hall, Hidden 42-43). Military traits such as strong, well defined hierarchal structure where emphasis on following the proper chain of command, always acknowledging differences in rank between individuals creates "an obsession with loyalty, deep personal attachments, emphasis on the performance of the group, willingness to make both individual and group sacrifices to reach a major objective, strong feelings of identity with and loyalty to those within the group in contrast to those who do not belong (clear cut lines between insiders and outsiders)" (Hall, Hidden 43). Recalling Masahiro's report of Nick's alleged "theft" of money from the crime scene applies to giving some context to the Japanese obsession with protocol compliance and chain of command. These different attitudes to authority and command structure create additional issues on leadership quality.

Leadership entails the quality of organizing, directing and effectively monitoring groups toward a common goal. Textually, leadership sounds simple enough, but reality destroys this illusion of the complex as deceptively simple. Transformational leadership is a process in which "leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation" (Bass & Bass 642). Both the American and Japanese characters in <u>Black Rain</u> possess transformational leadership elements that are pan cultural and culture specific to each.

The pan cultural side of transformational leadership requires that one basic proposition be fulfilled; that the transformational leader drives the process of 'transforming' all members of a common group for the purpose of working together to maintain the organization as a whole. A good transformational leader accomplishes this by:

- Connecting the followers sense of identity to their self, the group and the function of group process for the purpose of achieving the tasks at hand

- Leading by example. A leader cannot expect others to comply with requests the leader themselves would not be willing to do

- Being able to recognize the individual talents of each group member and assign them to the jobs where they will be of most use

The Japanese are already connected by a shared sense of identity through a common ethnic link. This group oriented thinking leads to a sharp distinction between those who lead and those who follow. Therefore questioning authority is not an option. Questioning

authority cannot be tolerated from a Japanese point of view as this introduces a far too individualistic influence that threatens respect for command structure, which threatens group process. Therefore authority must be obeyed with unwavering compliance. The boundary between leader and follower is not always so clear for Americans. Leaders for both American and Japanese share the common expectation of being in service to the public. American leaders are usually placed on an equal level with followers; an official title is just a technicality out of formal tradition. The Japanese hold titles or 'honorifics' (President, Police Officer, Teacher, Professor), as a means of contexting situations (Hall, Hidden 9-10). Reaffirming formal titles reminds each person of the expectations they must meet according to their job title. Masahiro continually introduces himself as "Assistant Inspector" and constantly referring to the police chief as "chief inspector" keeps the division between leader and subordinate clear. There is no deluding the boundaries with first name basis or casual social etiquette. Nick speaks to his Captain Oliver face-to-face, eye level, leaning against a wall, no effort to demonstrate that Nick views Oliver as his superior in any way. Masahiro always holds his arms at his sides, posture straight, bows to the chief inspector when entering the room and again with another sharp, deep bow when the chief inspector leaves. Followers in Japan are expected to show the necessary humility and servitude the title in itself implies. However in America, this attitude has noticeable differences.

Americans do comply and recognize that authority figures must be obeyed and respected. Compliance to authority does provide the vital requirement of structure for any organization to succeed. However, followers in America are allotted more freedom

toward their superiors.   In America, there is a high context expectation that authority must be questioned. Democracy itself was founded on that supposition and can only be maintained accordingly. Followers in America view it as their responsibility to question authority.  Nick aggressively argues with not just the IA agents during the interrogation, but also intensely criticizes "city hall". Nick feels very comfortable not only showing his anger to the IA agents but to his Captain Oliver. Although the IA agents do not respond favorably to Nick's attitude, they are hardly fazed by it. Nick's anger is expected, and in part tolerated by Oliver and the IA agents, based on the mutual understanding that all American's function from the shared expectation of individuality, which in this case directs Nick's open questioning of authority. However, when Nick openly shows his raw anger and dissatisfaction with the Japanese police chief, tension abounds. The Japanese police chief is the leader, Nick is the follower, by Japanese terms Masahiro's example is the one Nick should have followed.  Understanding teamwork is the key to understanding the Japanese way.

Masahiro's chiding statement to Nick that he should "think of what is best for your group and not just yourself" draws on an important distinction between Japanese transformational leadership vs. American style. In Japan no matter what the task, the golden rule is not to sacrifice the group process value for the sake of accomplishing the goal. Group oriented vs. task oriented; the Japanese are group oriented whereas in America task oriented. Meeting goals are vital in each culture, but for the Japanese, the group is the means of accomplishing the goal, compromise the group for the goal stems from individualistic thinking. So anything that attaches too much individuality is

inherently from the Japanese mind, a big problem. Individuality though is the defining quality of Americans, the common, shared element of national identity that surprisingly unites rather than divides. Americans are united also by a shared sense of agreement in democracy, common freedoms that are believed to be the right of all people. Although America lacks the ethnic uniformity of Japan, they are mainly united. Leaders in America often draw on the shared sense of patriotic pride to unite a constituency. The Japanese unite on a basis of shared history, ancestry and traditions. But these are not the best or the only two means of effectively uniting. There are universal, timeless leaders whose understanding of transformational leadership principles, whether innate or learned, has set a new standard of leadership. Leaders such as Gandhi possessed a rare combination of not only adhering to the fundamental four, but also displaying flawless incorporation of the universal six.

## Chapter 2:

## Gandhi

In further examination of culture and transformational leadership, the film Ghandi, exemplifies a very solid example of the importance of highly skilled communication for transformational leadership. The previous study shows particular universals, fundamentals of transformational leadership that must be followed for effective leadership to result. Ghandi not only understood these fundamentals, he was able to apply them with a very coherent tone that retained the message for both Indians and British. These particular demonstrations, their communicative value and the communicative dichotomy relative to their western counterparts will be reviewed. The ability to culturally bridge communicative differences is another feature that should be noted by the reader. Such ability is not merely to be admired, but emulated for both leaders and followers. The topic of this chapter will explore the intercultural communication differences between British and Indians and Gandhi's uniquely gifted practice of transformational leadership principles.

### Movie Synopsis:

Gandhi begins with the tragic assassination of a very elderly Gandhi on January 30, 1948 by Nathuram Godse. The next scene cuts to a huge funeral procession, narrated by radio journalists listing the details of Gandhi's life. The movie then backtracks about fifty-five years to 1893, when a young, vibrant Gandhi, now a certified lawyer, is thrown off a train due to South African law prohibits "coolies" from sitting in first class. After a brief conversation with fellow Indians, Gandhi learns of how unjust and inhumane South

African law is against Indians. Gandhi's solution inspired by the Biblical teachings of Jesus, decides to mount a similar nonviolent effort to petition for Indian's equal rights. This is Gandhi's first protest, which begins with the burning of special passes all Indians must carry. Gandhi is beaten and arrested, as are all his new followers for "destruction of government property". After another short protest involving a march against a labor camp, the South African government relents and recognizes the sovereignty of Indians but not for the native black Africans.

Gandhi then returns to India where he agrees to begin the crusade for India's independence from the British Empire. March after march and many campaigns later, Gandhi's effort proves successful, but not without cost. Many Indians including Gandhi are beaten and imprisoned. The peaceful, nonviolent efforts receive International attention, and Gandhi becomes a media sensation. Depleted from World War II, Britain grants India its' independence. However the victory is short lived as religious turmoil between Muslim and Hindus threatens to tear India literally into two separate countries, India and what was then the emerging country of Pakistan. During the Muslim/Hindu riots, Gandhi goes on a long fast until the violence abates. Eventually the people respond and stop fighting. After eating his first meal from the hunger strike, Gandhi, still weak, is assisted out to the courtyard to greet all the Indians waiting to meet him. The final scene of Godse shooting Gandhi in the chest repeats as the same scene seen earlier in the beginning of the movie. Gandhi is heard yelling "Oh God" and the movie ends.

## <u>Gandhi and Transformational Leadership</u>

The first and most obvious of communicative differences between East India and the West lies in high context vs. low context. Indians, much like the Japanese, are very high context. However, the high context mediums that Indians use slightly differ from those used by the Japanese discussed in chapter 1. In Japan high context communication is based on mutually shared expectations. Many Indians demonstrate unique non-verbal cues that hold particular high context meaning. Examples of Indian body language include: hand motions, open palm and wide armed waving gestures are among a few used by the Indians to stress, particularly sensitive points in discussion. The use of Indian body language is exemplified in Gandhi's South African meeting with the resident Indian population. Every speaker emphasizes their point in speaking with not just tone of voice but with very similar body language, anger indicated by stiffen of the whole body and/or further emphasized with abrupt and sharp one arm gestures. Indians also seem to have a clear understanding of their social and professional roles. This is an expectation that has developed from India's very strict caste system, Brahmin at the top and the "untouchables" at the bottom. Very seldom if ever, do the social boundaries of the caste overlap with another. Much like the Japanese, the Indians have their respective jobs relative to their caste status and accept the assigned role. Each job has its expectations with most importantly how one level responds to another. Brahmin for example are at the top, so any lower level would be expected to behave, speak and demonstrate the proper respect to Brahmin. An attitude of servitude such as pouring tea, serving food, even smiling are seen as hospitable acts required not just out of respect but an obliged duty of

the subordinate. Once again, everyone doing his or her job and duty is doing so to preserve and maintain the group process. The good of the group prevails over the needs or wants of the individual.

Gandhi's use of inverting some of these high context mediums is significant for a few reasons. The first, it should be noted that Gandhi was not an untouchable, but rather came from a fairly wealthy family and was a successful, talented lawyer who had a sterling future ahead of him. Gandhi's aristocratic status alone helped him gain acceptance from the lower classes. Traditionally, upper caste Indians did not associate with lower caste. From a cross-cultural point of view, for someone like Gandhi to literally take a step down to fight for all of India was an act of supreme humility strongly demonstrating transformational leadership. Through these actions, Gandhi is challenging cultural assumptions about caste and in doing so taking a risk (intellectual stimulation, idealized influence). The consequences of his actions could have easily resulted in failure, banishment or even death. Yet Gandhi escaped such a grim fate unscathed. The reason for his success stems from the universal leadership value of humility. Transformational leadership strongly emphasizes humility because of the unique effect servile behavior produces in leadership positions. When a leader who is strong, intelligent, competent and charismatic clearly demonstrates humility, the behavior itself expresses a profoundly sincere desire for the leader to connect with the followers. Gandhi was the essence of the ideal Indian: intellectually, spiritually and emotionally strong, educated and born to a noble family. Yet he chose to step away from all the promise his birth rite had to afford him. Gandhi accepted the price of poverty all for the purpose of being the

transformational leader India needed at that time. Gandhi effectively began his transformational leadership by first transforming himself. Gandhi, whether by accident or deliberately, began his leadership in one of the best possible means by accessing this rule.

There are additional principles to the transformational leadership model with an Indian interpretation. Gandhi's political philosophy revolved around three key concepts: satyagraha (non-violence), sawaraj (home rule), and sarvodaya (welfare of all) (Dalton 30-45). Whereas satyagraha was essentially a tactic of achieving political ends by non-violent means, sawaraj and sarvodaya sought to encourage, through social work, spinning of cotton, rural uplift, and social welfare, ideas of individual and collective improvement and regeneration (Dalton 47). Such regeneration was vital for India to throw off British rule. Non-violence, welfare for all and home rule (or in America, government by the people), are prized values that many cultures relate to. These three principles give people a feeling of acknowledgment, that their voices and opinions are being heard, and an influence in a leader's final decision. Transformational leadership among all things stresses that leaders must make those they lead feel important in the work they do and in the concerns expressed (Schein 50-53). Leaders must be effective listeners. Failure to do so will always be made apparent in a leader and mutate into what would more resemble a dictatorship. Gandhi's entire leadership is built on understanding and responding to meeting the entire Indian community's need to be recognized as "equal citizens of the empire" (Gandhi movie quote).

Gandhi's leadership entwined a very exceptional blend of understanding the universal leadership values of empathy and humility. Empathy, the ability to comprehend

experiences from another's point of view, is most definitely a hallmark feature of an effective leader, regardless of cultural origin. A leader cannot engage the issues that are of most concern in a society if they cannot relate to the people. To accomplish this understanding, Gandhi literally embarks on a crusade of constant humility. Gandhi abandons all worldly luxury, makes his own clothing, lives in the same commune as the people he is fighting for, eats the same food in the same portions, and even travels atop the train, on the roof as only the poorest of the poor do. The majority of which, being the untouchables, people who are literally at the lowest point in East Indian social class. All lower caste roles are servitude based, mainly involving hard, unsanitary labor. In one scene, Gandhi is invited to the mansion of a dignitary. Rather than take the offered car ride, Gandhi walks and once arrives, pours the tea rather than allowing the butler. All of these actions reassign Gandhi in a context as a transformational leader the people can relate to, feel something in common with. These actions by Gandhi almost function along the same lines of the working class hero. Humble origins appeal to people as it creates a sense that one of their own is leading them, someone who suffered the same struggles and because of that will be motivated and determined to resolve the causes. Gandhi's voluntary poverty functions in this exact manner. By demonstrating his willingness to live as one of the untouchables, Gandhi, in so many words, physically communicates the latter and other several concepts.

**Gandhi, Power and Transformational Leadership**

Power can change leaders by usually distancing them from the people. There are a few solutions that can enable leaders to avoid this pitfall. First, understanding the nature of power helps to understand that the division between follower and leader is a fine line that can easily sway. A careful balance between servitude and authority is a great challenge for many leaders. Too much emphasis on authority undermines a leader's sense of servitude. The absence of the humility that follows a sense of servitude will transform a transformational leader into more of a dictator. Not enough emphasis on authority creates too servile of an image for a leader and undermines the people's willingness to follow. Living as closely as possible to those being led in lifestyle, speech, dress and mannerisms usually is the best way to narrow the distance between leader and follower. By living as one of the untouchables, Gandhi is not only transcending the cultural boundaries of India's strict caste system, but also narrowing the distance between the people and himself (McGee 110). In narrowing the distance, a leader is then free to serve in what is the primary purpose of a leader more than any other function, to unite. Which is exactly what Gandhi is doing, uniting India through the common interest of equality and freedom from not just the British but among the Indian caste. Gandhi argues with his wife in one scene regarding cleaning the latrine. Gandhi's wife exclaims "why should I clean the latrine? That is the work of untouchables!" Gandhi's heated answer is that all will share equally in every job or not at all. Truly effective leadership practices whatever the campaigned change may be starting literally right at home. Leaders who fail to

practice what they preach rarely last. Leading by example seems to be the most effective and time-tested quality of communicating strong leadership.

Effective leaders must have an acute understanding of what divides and unites those under leadership. Cultural or social, whatever the differences may be, leaders must possess the proper understanding to be able to identify those who possess the needed talents to understand and advise them leader accordingly or at least choose those who can provide competent support and judgment. Culturally, Gandhi needs no advisors. Gandhi already understands the cultural bias of the Indian caste system in a very clever way, he makes a connection between British superiority and Indian caste superiority (Thomas 10-15, Livermore 23-42). The British consider themselves superior to Indians, upper caste Indians believe they are superior to lower caste. Both Indians and British share one big, cultural flaw in common, bias. Gandhi understands the hypocrisy he and his fellow Indians harbor. If India is to be free of its British masters, then Indians must first free themselves from their own bias first. Any thinking that enables one person to think they are better than another in any way must be abolished, regardless of cultural origins. Gandhi seeks to do just that, unite all of India not just against the British, but from its own class bias. Uniting in this sense is an additional quality that illustrates Gandhi's unique knowledge of not just Indian or British culture, but on what is so panhuman that cultural thinking is completely removed from complicating the message at all. Gandhi is equating the British mistreatment of Indians to the Indian mistreatment of one caste level to another. If British oppression is to be defeated then the Indians must first defeat the imaginary barriers they have created to divide themselves from one another. Although

Gandhi never had the chance to expand this effect to all of India, it did prove successful among his own followers. Abolishing these caste barriers creates significant unity among Gandhi's followers, which in turn creates a stronger resolve for each to willingly endure all hardships in the common interest of crusading for an independent India. Successful unity is very strongly based on how effective a transformational leader's communication skills are. This may seem like overstating the obvious to some degree, but when put to the test, such communicative expertise is easier said than done. But the truly fantastic element of Gandhi's transformational leadership comes from the rare combination of skillful communicator coupled with strong judgment. Toward the end of Gandhi's movement, he makes a very shrewd choice in staging a protest involving a boycott on salt also known as the satyagraha march or salt march (Dalton 46). The economic and symbolic meaning behind this protest is jointly significant for the enormous challenge to British authority it displayed. Economically, salt was harvested and taxed by the British making any other means of acquiring salt illegal. Gandhi's salt march encouraged all Indians to harvest their own salt, thus foregoing the British tax. Gandhi is essentially hitting the British in their pocket book, he's making a clear statement that he cannot force the British out by force of arms, but he can nearly bankrupt them. The salt march was the final blow that expelled the British presence from India.

In some cases of transformational leaders, some leaders were skillful communicators but required the supplemental judgment of advisors. Gandhi appears to already be his own best advisor on many issues, usually securing the position of leading even in the particular regard of any social understanding. Those who accompany Gandhi from the

beginning serve as political and moral support. Jinnah and the others secure the financial and other organizing details that would otherwise detract Gandhi from securing the intended goal of freedom and equality from Britain. Whether vital, specialized knowledge or just division of labor, any effective leader emphasizes the need for a team of competent and able-bodied persons with reliable judgment and loyalty. However, for the team to function properly, a leader must consistently be the strongest personality, viewed as reliable and able to accomplish the given task. In this regard, a leader functions more as a symbol. Strength as both a symbolic and active quality is essential and required for effective leadership. Culturally, there are different mediums for expressing strength. Gandhi exemplified strength in his seventeen fasts all ranging in purpose from: expressing a deep sense of sorrow at the way those he loved had disappointed him; atoning symbollicaly as a leader for their misdeeds; stirring deep spiritual feelings in others, appealing to their moral sense; bringing the quarreling parties together (the Muslims and the Hindus) to avoid further riots. (Dalton 45-57)

Strength, unyielding and uncompromising consistency in pursuing a goal is most definitely one of the most noticeable and prized traits in leadership. People must have a feeling that the person representing their interests and needs will do so without faltering. Leaders cannot and should not topple at the first sign of stress or difficulty. Leaders must endure no matter what the hardship may be, even time itself. Gandhi endured British oppression and political hardships in and out of British courts for literally decades. What made Gandhi successful here exemplifies another trait of effective leadership, confidence. Strength relies on a stable sense of confidence in one's abilities and in the

targeted goal. That same strength and confidence must be projected from the leader to the followers through speeches and shared hardship. A great leader must also display and rejuvenate the followers with a renewed sense of confidence the leader appears to have in endless supply of. The most renowned leaders are almost always remembered for the manner and degree that they could reassure people with a sense of absolution that a particular goal would be reached regardless of what current difficulties may indicate. President Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill were almost legendary for their ability to inspire and prevail in the face of fear. Gandhi most definitely earned his place in the pantheon of transformational leaders who tolerated numerous trials with strong composure. What helps to give shape to a leader's strength can be found in their principles, what they will and will not do regardless of the cost. These principles guide the people as a whole by setting boundaries of exactly how followers will work and struggle together to achieve the stated goal.

Principles set limits that, in turn, set boundaries that become what defines a leader's particular quality. Principles must be clearly communicated to followers in both words and actions. There is a profound power in leading by strict principles that can be used or abused depending on the leader. Dictators often set principles and boundaries that secure the goal of constant power by intimidating the governed by threat of force or worse. Principles can be a double-edged sword depending on the goals. To ensure strong moral and ethical latitude, leaders must be closely examined by the people for both the stated principles, and the direction those principles will lead to. Gandhi's principles fortunately

were based on the selfless and egalitarian. Gandhi's main guiding principle was peaceful protest with no violent action at all under any circumstances.

In his first stand in South Africa, while burning a box of the passes all Indians must carry, Gandhi is brutally beaten by an Officer while continuing to declare protest to the unjust Pass law, a law that states all Indians must carry passes stating their limited status as British citizens. Gandhi even states in the movie very clearly to his supporters in South Africa "that there is no cause for which I am prepared to kill". Gandhi not only clearly states the main guiding principle of his leadership (his campaign slogan of sorts) but also leads by example when he is beaten without physically retaliating. Gandhi's leadership principles are not simply his own. Rather, the principles he followed and led his crusade by are established on what are simply basic universal principles for effective transformational leadership. These universal leadership principles are the four fundamentals of transformational leadership. Each "rule" functions as more of a guideline thus allowing the leader flexibility to incorporate the principles to his or her unique style and cultural interpretation on leadership. In further consideration of the transformational leadership model, it is interesting to note exactly how Gandhi encompasses and perfectly executes the four fundamentals of transformational leadership (individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation and idealized influence). But there are six other ethical principles to supplement the fundamental four in order to further clarify responsible transformational leadership. These six additional principles act as "homing beacons" which basically ensure the fundamental four are not used for selfish or

misguided means by a leader. It is the presence of high ethical and moral standards that identify any transformational leader as authentic.

The synthesis of the fundamental four with the six universal ethical principles creates a more precise frame that constructs an understanding of what made Gandhi such an effective transformational leader. Gandhi's use of the first principle, individualized consideration, is plainly established in his first protest for Indian equality in South Africa. The protest itself was Gandhi's challenge not to just the British Empire, but challenging all Indians to follow his example who felt the same about what was an obvious social injustice. Under this challenge, Gandhi united his mass of Indian supporters and created his freedom movement. Gandhi accomplished this as a very articulate, clear and skilled public speaker. Truly effective leaders are able to recognize the factors that are the cause of particular issues. Gandhi recognized that for India to grow and flourish, India had to be free of social and economic oppression. Forcing the British out so a free and independent India can develop was the only solution. This understanding creates the groundwork for which effective, lasting solutions can be built on. Crusading is often even more effective when leaders are associated with ideals, something that is timeless and undefeatable. Gandhi's assuming the look of a Brahmin priest created such an effect. To many Indians, the Brahmin are not just a revered and respected, highest-of-all caste, but a source of wisdom and relief for virtually any problem.  Gandhi's ability to project a father-like image as Brahmin is in large part, the reason for his appeal to not just Indians but nearly everyone who knew him or of him (so much to the point that Gandhi's nickname was "Bapu" meaning father). Gandhi's leadership came as not just a political crusade against

injustice but a spiritual one. In this regard Gandhi combines the supernatural with city hall politics covering grounds that made his leadership doubly effective, to not just represent a political leader but a spiritual one as well.

Gandhi's employment of the second principle, intellectual stimulation, lands on some of the more interesting aspects of his leadership. As previously stated, Gandhi initially began his crusade simply for equal treatment for Indian citizens this then evolved into driving the British out completely. During the evolution of Gandhi's leadership, he masterfully uses the crusade to dichotomize the mission statement against the cultural persecution that Indians inflict on one another through the caste system. In this regard, Gandhi is reasserting himself to challenge his own society's cultural norms, the rigid, uncompromising roles of Indian caste. The latrine scenario between Gandhi and his wife was the exact presumptuousness of "the work of untouchables" that Gandhi sought to abolish. People as Gandhi stated are all equal in the eyes of God. It is not the work that degrades one to a lower quality, only the perceptions that people place on one another. This particular aspect of Gandhi's leadership is doubly interesting for the main reason that such a conclusion stems from very independent thinking in what was a very communal and interdependent society. But once again, this is the exact thing that all effective leaders do, challenge ideas and to do so means entertaining a certain degree of independent thinking even if the given society condemns.

The fourth and final principle is emphasized and used by Gandhi in several scenarios. In the film, Gandhi transforms from a lawyer donning the image of wealth via expensive suits and shoes, to the image of a pauper. But Gandhi's goal was not to appear simply as

a hobo but rather closer to Brahmin, a reflection of his years of devout study of Hinduism. Those same traits he was so well recognized for; simple robes, a thin physique from fasting and a shaved head most popularly characterized the likeness Gandhi had to the Brahmin image. The use of a Brahmin image helped Gandhi to not just win further trust but to demonstrate a high standard of ethical and moral behavior as a transformational leader who quite literally transformed himself as well as his followers. The incorporation of pride in culture or in achieving a goal through noble ideals in followers marks a universal practice in leadership. Gandhi managed to instill a sense of pride in Indian culture in the use of the image of Brahmin. Brahmin as a caste and leadership role in itself, so uniquely Indian, became Gandhi's trademark look. This could reasonably be assumed as the reason that Gandhi went from sporting the traditional suit of British gentlemen in South Africa, to the shaved head, draping white robe and walking stick transition he made once back in India. The use of Brahmin was almost a means of advertisement for promoting a positive perception of Indian culture. However the exercise of the fundamental four is meaningless unless given direction and boundaries by incorporating the six universal ethical principles. The universal six, when combined with the fundamental four, are what help give shape and discipline to a leader's actions. The fundamental four are those principles that must be observed for a leader to qualify as an authentic transformational leader. The universal six are the moral and ethical compass that allows a transformational leader to stay the course and avoid falling into the trap of greed and self-serving motives.

The first of the universal ethics warns against overweighing the goal of equality for social values. If governments continue to place more and more laws to accommodate the interests of one class or group against another, equality is lost. Hindu Caste sought to give higher rights and privileges to certain caste members over others (latrine example). The British gave higher right and privileges to Whites over Indians as seen when Gandhi is thrown off the train for riding in first class. The situation comes down to those who are in power and those who are not. When this happens, freedom is sacrificed. A safe assumption can be made then that according to the first universal ethic freedom and equality are separate concepts. Freedom in itself is created and reliant on a balance between social values and equality. The tools that help to preserve this balance are the fundamental four and universal six principles, the boundaries that leaders draw on how they will or will not react in the face of a given situation. Leaders who crusade without principle (things that they will not do to attain a stated goal) will quickly mutate into tyrants or dictators. Leadership above all things is the quality to guide not force. Gandhi's one main rule that he does not break through the whole movie is not to kill or react violently no matter what. In South Africa, while protesting against the government, Gandhi and the protestors are beaten and even trampled by horses. Despite this brutal response by authorities, Gandhi and his followers remain completely peaceful and nonviolent. On this principle value alone, Gandhi's leadership establishes itself. One additional proposition stemming from this same line of reasoning is the principle of solidarity. Solidarity is a vital component to the success of a group's adherence to one

another. Gandhi devotes himself to the principle of solidarity with others out of sincerity and to maintain the unity that is necessary to the success of advancing Indian rights.

Gandhi demonstrates a skillful grasp of solidarity and failure. Gandhi always maintains a strong sense of connectedness and unity with his followers. During every victory and plight, Gandhi shares the outcome of both with his followers as if he was one of them. This sharing in the work product creates and even fuels the social power of unity through a common goal the attainment of which is achieved by Gandhi's strict social principle of nonviolence, humility and a constant mentality of servitude to those he leads (or rather guides). Gandhi serves in many ways, living in the same poverty as his followers, eating the same food in the same sparse portions, making his own clothes and sometimes literally serving tea to untouchables. This attitude of servitude is also what solidifies Gandhi's leadership, as it becomes the value of the goal (breaking away from Britain) and not the command of Gandhi himself that the people are serving. Group process here amounts to everyone following Gandhi and working to attain the stated goal through Gandhi, not by him. No one is following Gandhi because he commands it or that he can force the desired outcome through military might or any other forced means. Rather, Gandhi is merely the figure who comes to represent ideals, the symbols that cannot be destroyed. In this regard alone Gandhi becomes more than just a mortal, but the conduit for something far greater, peace. However as a leader Gandhi is responsible for every outcome, not all of which is always his direct responsibility. Yet no one ever really criticizes Gandhi for the trials and tribulations that befall them. There is one basic reason for this; Gandhi leads by ultimate example by suffering along with everyone else. He

clearly communicates the level of affliction is a measure of the value of the goal. The British would not lash out so violently if the nonviolent protesting was not having an impact. In leading by example of living in extreme poverty and oppression, Gandhi communicates another principle of transformational leadership; do not ask others to do what you yourself are not willing to give. Gandhi did not just live in poverty he lived in extreme poverty. In addition to minimal sustenance, Gandhi abstained from every traditional indulgence. He drank no alcohol ever, ate simple food, made his own clothing, slept in a mud house, lived in one of the poorest regions of India and followed a strict vow of celibacy. By creating such a high moral standard in his behavior, Gandhi further inspired his followers to better themselves by focusing on what they could be individually and as a people collectively rather than what they currently were. This echoes universal principle number five, persuading people to what they might become by means of logic, emotion and the leader's character.

Gandhi employs the fifth principle in one additional matter, protesting. The salt strike as well as the numerous demonstrations, always nonviolent, furthered the resolve of Gandhi's followers. The process of protesting becomes a trial for Gandhi's followers enduring the impulse to strike back. Gandhi understands the territory of human nature; if one person strikes another, a vicious cycle is created until a bloody conflict evolves. Essentially, you cannot fight fire with fire but rather one must fight fire with water. The rage that heats the conflict must be extinguished or as Gandhi states, hate must be fought with love and peace. Gandhi is able to proficiently lead his followers here as well. Gandhi's own example having become a higher and idealized Brahmin standard of moral

and ethical authority fuels his follower's commitment to endure the violent British. Gandhi's extreme example of selflessness creates a simple answer to what initially seemed like a complicated situation. A very perfect solution in its simplicity as the basic idea being to forsake one's own needs and wants for the purpose of living for others. A greater sense of community is promoted and achieved as well as a much stronger resolve in moving toward nonviolently overthrowing the British. Selflessness is the key here, an example that Gandhi becomes another model of. The crusade the Indians are leading against British oppression can only succeed from a nonviolent response. The nonviolence can only be successfully executed if all of Gandhi's followers understand the value of wanting more for others than one's self. The success will not be immediate but is inevitable. This is the hope that Gandhi constantly nurtures in himself and his followers. This aspect of Gandhi's leadership demonstrates another key to successful transformational leadership, sincerity. Gandhi's sincerity is always the key to his convincing everyone and anyone to adopt his principles. A basic factual component of leadership stipulates that you cannot convince others of what you yourself do not believe. None of the first five universal principles means anything unless the last and most important is maintained, accountability. Transformational leaders must take responsibility in the sense of corrected behavior. Recognizing and learning from mistakes is another way that transformational leaders, 'transform' themselves as well as followers.

Leaders, especially transformational leaders, must always be accountable for everything, in not just verbal admissions but in corrected behavior as well. The most crucial maxim never to be thrown by the wayside is accountability for mistakes made in

an authority position. Authority, whether by title of office or moral and ethical authority, a genuine transformational leader must never use "the position as a shield against responsibility for ones actions". Unofficially awarded the status of Brahmin during life, Gandhi could have easily used the reverence many Indians had for the priestly caste to avoid responsibility for his mistakes. Gandhi's position as an honorary Brahmin was never abused for any form of personal gain or manipulation. Because regardless of whatever faults in himself or in the harsh realities of the crusade itself, Gandhi never violated the fundamental principle his leadership was built on, nonviolence. He also never violated his secondary commitments to refraining from alcohol, luxury and celibacy. The strength on Gandhi's conviction in peace and living for others were far more powerful allies against the military might of an empire that at the time seemed unstoppable. What intuitively seemed like a battle that should have been fought by means of military force was won by means of compassion and understanding. If it is true that humans make up in violence what they lack in reasoning, then it can be safely stated that Mohandas Gandhi was a man of great intellect and inequitable compassion whose leadership has set a new hard to meet standard for centuries to come. But to every rule there is an exception, a leader who although failed, occupies a somewhat gray area between the authentic transformational leader and the charlatan. This leader, though a half wrought form of transformational leader, is valuable for their failures, which serve as equally valuable in the model of what not to do as a transformational leader. The Man Who Would Be King is a film that imparts the embodiment of a leader whose rise to power ultimately fails due to the weak foundation deception ascribes.

## Chapter 3:

## The Man Who Would Be King

The foundation on which any institution is built can reasonably indicate the longevity. A well-known and common example is the story of the man who literally builds his house on sand. The end result most obviously being the end of the house after the first mild storm passes. In many ways, leadership is comparable. Those leaders who begin their campaign on deception or promises that cannot be kept are most often orchestrating their own fall. One of the most prized and essential elements people look for in a leader is one who can honor the basic social contract of full disclosure. Leaders must be careful not to give the impression of being more than they actually are. In the case of the film The Man Who Would Be King this is the exact mistake the movies main character, Danny Dravot, falls into. The film does not contain any measurable value of high and low context cultures but redeemably, there are more significant plot elements that illustrates the dark side of hasty, self-centered leadership. The multiple scenes regarding the lure of hastily acquired power and the rationale for nuances like deception make this film ideal for portraying issues of failed leadership. Large-scale deceptions foremost will end any reign shortly before its' even begun, especially when as a leader you are literally viewed as a god like Danny. The issues of transformational leadership's authenticity and integrity will be reviewed in the context of analyzing the film The Man Who Would Be King.

**Movie Synopsis:**

Based on the short story by Rudyard Kipling, The Man Who Would Be King is a story about two friends, Peachy Carnehan and Danny Dravot, who travel to Kafiristan (modern day Afghanistan). By pure accident the two literally become gods, amass incredible wealth and power and in the face of their exploitive deception lose everything. The film begins with Danny and Peachy setting out to find their fortune. After trekking through the Khyber Pass, fending off bandits and other domestic dangers, Peachy and Danny fall into the acquaintance of a Gurkha soldier by the name of Billy Fish. Through him, Danny and Peachy develop a scheme to employ themselves to the local villages as military advisors, trainers and war leaders.

One such village is the victim of frequent raids and plundering. After helping the village develop an army, Danny and Peachy, along with Billy (who speaks English and the native language), launch a battle. During the fight, Danny is mistaken to be a god when an arrow strikes him and he does not bleed. What the natives did not know was that the arrow had struck Danny's bandolier (a pocketed belt for holding ammunition) that was hidden beneath his jacket. The enemy villagers are slaughtered and in honor of the victory, Danny and Peachy are admitted entrance into the holy city of Sikandergul. One of the holy men retells the story of the battle and Danny's godhood. However the lead holy man is not convinced and demands proof, which can only be offered by stabbing Danny in the heart. The lead holy man is prevented from stabbing Danny, as the sight of his Masonic medal resembles Alexander the Great (or Sikander) who had arrived centuries earlier and promised to return. This second event galvanizes the idea to all the

holy men that Danny is the reincarnation of Sikander who has returned to reclaim the treasure left.

In the face of his newfound godhood, Danny quickly descends to arrogant, deluded fantasies of modernizing Kafiristan. Months pass as Danny falls deeper and deeper into his role as a god. Peachy emphasizes the need to leave with the treasure before the locals discover the mistake they have made. Danny of course relents, and even suggests that Peachy show proper respect by bowing, just to maintain the image of his godhood. Peachy then decides to leave while he can, and does so with Danny's consent. At this point, Danny is under the notion of furthering his deluded vision for the country by taking a wife so the locals will always have a direct heir to rule. However, Danny's wife to be is terrified by a local superstition that she will die if she marries a god. While trying to escape during the wedding, she bites Danny in everyone, drawing blood and proving he is human. Danny is pursued and caught by the locals despite Billy's heroic effort to stifle the mob. Danny is beaten and forced to walk a rope bridge over a huge canyon. Before the cords to the bridge are severed, Danny apologizes to Peachy. The movie then cuts back to Peachy's meeting with Kipling at a newspaper office, where he presents Kipling with Danny's head, proving the whole story true.

## Transformational Leadership: Integrity, Authenticity and Deception

Determining authenticity of anything is nearly always crucial. Determining authenticity precludes the imitation from the genuine article. Antiques, for example are appraised and examined by dealers to determine how genuine a given object is. In the

case of a transformational leader, the level of integrity can largely verify authenticity. integrity, by definition, is basically the quality of a leader who:

- Keeps promises.

- Admits his or her mistakes.

- Follows through on his or her commitments. (Bass & Bass 222)

The attributes of integrity must be synchronized with a leader's behavior. Only then can credibility and trustworthiness be firmly established. All of the aforementioned attributes also naturally incline the authentic transformational leader, who practices these qualities, to be honest. Honesty is the most basic and fundamental of all leadership values. If the governed cannot rely on the validity of what a leader says, loyalty breaks down, anger takes over and that in so many words is how monarchies and governments are overthrown. It is a foregone conclusion though that some leaders may create their own personal constructions of the truth. One example of this involves "half truths", telling only the parts of a story for the sake of giving an orchestrated impression. In the film, Danny does not directly say he is a god. He simply lets the assumptions of the Afghani's hold without correction by continuing to play a role that he cannot possibly maintain. The real danger with this particular scenario of leadership is that the concept of the divine becomes involved. Posing as a deity, Danny places himself in a role of expectations that demand the impossible, like not bleeding for example.

Half a truth is still a whole lie especially in Danny's case. Leaders who allow themselves to be built up by the governed enjoy the process as its occurring; the positive

affirmations, showering of gifts. Common sense would assume that even a moderate amount of foresight would go a very long way. Economically, it is just a bad investment for a leader to allow themselves to fall into the trap of agreeing to set goals that aren't realistic. The explanation for this can be found right at the front door of the human ego. Good old fashioned arrogance, the common enemy of many an individual and institution. The main appeal of arrogance is that it helps provide a scaffold for supporting insecurity. By our very nature it appeals to people to be told that they matter, have a grand purpose and they alone can enact incredible lasting change. Unfortunately, nothing could be farther from the truth, which is the very proverbial wake up call many leaders face once elected. Truth of leadership very quickly relays one unrelenting fact; what you can actually do based on what you have to work with versus what you thought you could do. Danny assumed a role he initially thought he could live up to, being a god. Act regal, make sure everyone bows down and hope no one sees him bleed should he cut himself. This is a fairly large deception to maintain one that to some extent unfairly exploits the faith of the Afghani's. This inconsideration in itself is neglectful by putting the leader's needs ahead of the followers.

Authentic transformational leaders must not only hold high ethical and moral standards on themselves but must in turn raise the moral consciousness of their followers as following the universal six enable a true transformational leader to do. Gandhi of course would fit the criteria for the authentic transformational leader perfectly. Danny however is a far cry from meeting any of the three. At most Danny is effective also in regards to his charisma. He's exciting, and as a military officer, daring and bold. Traits

that most people anywhere tend to find desirable. These qualities would also serve to help compound the notion in the Afghani's perception of him as a god. However it is Danny's gross violation of one of if not the most vital principle of the fundamental four that make for Danny's failure as an authentic transformational leader, individualized consideration.

Reconsidering the fundamental four competencies of Transformational leadership (individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation and idealized influence) the degree of Danny's leadership as truly transformational can be assessed. The principle that serves as the acid test of sorts to determine a leaders' transformational authenticity is individualized consideration. Danny vaguely enforces individualized consideration. In one scene, several Afghanis' are brought before Danny to settle disputes. Danny proves to be quite a natural in resolving local disputes and conflict, so much to the point that Peachy comments "Danny dealt out justice as though he wrote the book on it". This scene is very true to demonstrating Danny's leadership skills in distributing justice fairly and intelligently. However per individualized consideration, heeding follower's needs for achievement and growth, Danny literally only succeeds in the one single scene. Excellence for a leader cannot be a single act but must be a continuous habit (Aristotle). In terms of the other principles of the fundamental four such as intellectual stimulation, Danny additionally falls short.

Intellectual stimulation hardly applies to Danny, as challenging assumptions would not be in his best interest. It is the default of the Afghani's assumption of him being a god is what leads to his downfall and execution. It is his failure to fully understand the people

he rules over that allows causes him to make ill-advised and faulty assumptions about the compatibility of modernizing a country such as Afghanistan. However, as a leader empowered with the divine reverence of a god, Danny does embody the third and fourth principles, Inspirational motivation and Idealized Influence. Danny does have a vision, to modernize the country and as a god, Danny serves as a role model. But the means by which Danny has earned the respect, trust and credit for high ethical behavior that leaders derive from Idealized influence, is false. The foundation of the respect, trust and honor Danny is awarded is based again entirely on the notion that he is something he is not, a god. Although leaders need not encompass all fundamental four, violating the most important one is an entirely different proposition as seen in Danny's case. Authentic transformational leadership must be primarily characterized by high moral and ethical standards in each of the fundamental four (Bass and Steidlmeier 2-4). Simply stated, honesty, for the sake of authentic transformational leadership, is the best and only policy. Yet acting only in his narcissistic interests, Danny maintains the deception.

Deception among many things violates the individual as much as the person deceived. Trust does not just establish credibility but allows people to know where they stand with a leader. This reason alone demands that, again in the interest of honesty that all authentic transformational leaders are true to themselves first and foremost before they can be honest with their followers. Danny's deception in maintaining his false godhood violates this cornerstone of authentic transformational leadership. Because of his deception, Danny never truly qualifies as an authentic transformational leader. His reign begins on a very large deception that cannot be ignored. Being that people are ruled according to their

own consent and that authority of a leader's title is built to some degree on the respect afforded by popular consensus, the legitimacy of Danny's leadership was ascertained from the people on false grounds. The granted loyalty, riches, and an exalted lifestyle were given to Danny by the people with the expectation that he could rule in a way only a god could. Danny was not and could not meet this expectation but continued his ruse for what were largely selfish, even delusional reasons. The deception was discovered, the people rightfully felt betrayed and in response to overly emotional thinking, killed Danny. Although a leader's use of deception may not always result in such a grisly end, the consequences on how a leader's character and rule are negatively impacted should be observed (Kotlyar & Karakowsky 42-45).

Deception brings the natural inclination for a leader to become self-serving which in itself causes a leader to disregard the rights, values and feelings of their followers. Such narcissistic behavior will cause a leader to spiral in to a vortex that employs results that are in many ways the antithesis of the fundamental four and universal six. These results are:

- Interpreting moral principles for their own benefit.

- Relying heavily on manipulation.

- Unlikely to inhibit use of power.

- Detaching themselves from however they are perceived by followers.

- Acting in whatever way is of most benefit to themselves, ignoring the expense to others. (Bass & Bass 230)

Reflecting for a few moments and comparing reputable leaders with non-reputable, it can become apparent how leaders who display these behaviors as opposed to authentic transformational leaders differ. Danny very much unfortunately spirals into each of the self-serving traps listed above. Despite the fact that Danny is not a devious or evil leader, the compromising of his integrity, violating the authority and expectations on a god like leader, all amount to his underestimating the impact of his employment of deception. To avoid such devastating results, there is one way for followers to further determine the authenticity of a transformational leader. The following three questions are suggested by Bass to help address the legitimacy of a transformational leader's ethics. These three questions are:

- Is it legal or legitimate? Will it violate standards on cultural or community norms?

- Is it just and fair? Is everyone involved being treated equitably? Will some people be treated unfairly at the expense of others?

- How would you (the leader) feel after making the decision? If friends and family knew of the decisions you made, would you feel embarrassed, ashamed or proud? (Bass & Bass 236)

Danny's choice in continuing his ruse obviously violates the first question. By exploiting the faith of the Afghani's, Danny's greed for wealth, compounded by a strong sense of entitlement, violated cultural as well as communal norms. This sort of violation would also extend to many communities, not just the Afghani's. To some

extent, Danny does rule very justly and fairly with everyone. Beyond his false godhood, Danny does not mistreat any of his followers. Rather, a strong sense of justice in all matters is extended. In this very competent regard of Danny's leadership, he displays a very clear and strong sense of pride in his leadership. However, Danny's good points are not weighed in balance of the dangers of his deception. The success he enjoys as a just leader causes him to deny or shield himself from responsibility for his actions. Even in the format of a fictional story, Danny's actions are not nearly as far-fetched from reality. There are many modern leaders to list who would serve as equally compelling examples, each with the same reason for violating the simple terms of the fundamental for and universal six, ego. Ego begets a sense of entitlement, which gives way to greed in any of its many forms. Once these destructive elements have set in, honesty, the pillar of true authentic leadership, is lost.

In considering the importance of honesty in authentic transformational leadership, perhaps the small example this case study provides can lend readers some insight into the pitfalls of many modern leaders. Although many politicians deceive to some extent, it seems to be the significant deceptions that anger people to the extreme. Bill Clinton was known to chronically lie, even on small issues, hence the name "slick willy". Whereas Ronald Reagan and again Gandhi were reputably know for their honesty and engagement as 'straight shooters'. Followers know that leaders cannot always tells the truth on every single matter, whether for National Security or whatever the reason. In such a situation, rather than deception, no comment at all might be a better recourse than risking damaging the equity in the leader-follower

relationship. But deception is not limited to just damaging the leader-follower relationship, deception mars the integrity of the office or title on which a good deal of a leader's authority is built on.

Deception further abuses the egalitarian practice of charismatic leadership. Charisma in an authentic transformational leader is to only be used in the interest of improving the needs and growth of followers. Charisma also serves to increase the attractiveness of an individual to followers. It is a natural fact of human nature that people do tend to elect leaders who are exciting, bold and in these qualities alone, project an image of strength. These qualities are additionally vital for a leader to effectively transform. But beyond these two points, charisma should never be used. A solid rule of conduct for leaders to live by and help in avoiding the temptation of abusing their charismatic powers involves the practice of servitude. Authentic transformational leadership must be practiced from a servile use of power. In so many words it is appropriate to further support the previous statement (incorporating a little Star Trek here) that the "the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few or the one". If this became the mantra of more leaders, maybe there would be less scandal, less neglect and more followers at least having their basic needs met. Suggesting this level of change may seem naively oversimplifying a complicated issue. But according to Ford's article, "Transformational Leadership and Community Policing", enacting transformational change is really a matter of proper motivation and organizing the necessary priorities. From a personal standpoint, it seems that maybe something as simple as honesty is often overly complicated. Maybe the real danger lies in the power

of a leader's position, abusing or using authority for the sake of simply using power or deceiving for the sake of deceiving. Power for powers sake precludes individualized consideration as well as idealized influence. Leaders must be morally and ethically responsible for their actions and as stated in the universal six "must not use their position to shield themselves from responsibility".

## <u>Conclusion</u>

By way of hearsay alone, many people in today's world feel as if it has been decades since any Western country has had any real leadership. In the case of the World War II generation, many agree that the last great and true President was Truman. A few might agree that perhaps Gerald Ford and even Ronald Reagan exemplify effective transformational leaders. Whatever the opinion of the reader or the general public, let it be clearly understood that a leader who attributes election to their own devices and not the will of the people is already in danger of misguided governing. Above all it has been the purpose of this thesis to synthesize transformational leadership with the practice of the fundamental four and universal six principles. Transformational leadership principles are not just to assess and condemn current leaders or past rather to gauge the shortcomings in how we lead ourselves. Transformational leaders were not leaders simply because they fell into a just cause to lead or were elected to an office. They were leaders because they first understood how to manage themselves.

The fundamental four and universal six are those rules that empower a leader with the knowledge of how to best manage themselves. The fundamental four are the starting point for any potential transformational leader, the how-to get started guide. The universal six provide the acid test to divide the authentic transformational leader from the imposters. True transformational leaders must be tempered with the fortitude of strong ethical and moral character. Such leaders inevitably will lead their followers to a desirable place with lasting change and in the process literally transform the followers to fit the model of the leader. The Japanese in <u>Black Rain</u> function so much higher than the

Americans because they understand who they are, what the specific responsibilities expected of them are and that every job, no matter how trivial, contributes to the good of the group. Gandhi arguably was able to manage himself on a level much higher than most people would care to admit. Mohandas was a man who exercised, disciplined and developed the ability to manage himself through meditation, fasting, abstinence-all in the interest of becoming the best transformational leader he could be for his followers, not for ego or any other offset of vanity. Danny understood what he wanted out of life, but ultimately fell prey to arrogance to blind seeing himself for who he was, just a man. There was nothing godlike about Danny, nothing spectacular except that by pure accident he fell into what appeared to be a bonanza. Underestimating the religious zeal of his followers and prioritizing his own greed above all else, Danny failed as a leader in regard to individualized consideration, inspirational motivation and idealized influence. There never was save for one scene, any real concern from Danny about what was best for the people, only securing and enhancing his own power. The vision that he had for the city, modernizing, was pathetic and nearly delusional. The means by which Danny "earned" the trust and respect of his followers was not hard won by demonstrating a high standard of ethical and moral behavior but a fluke in assuming godhood whose power was built on impossible expectations from followers. The sharp contrast between Danny and the other authentic transformational leaders should serve to help contrast the Gandhis from the Dannys in our own character reminding ourselves that living for others is the most lucrative and maybe the only proposition any of us would profit in following.

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**ABSTRACT**

**AN INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVE ON TRANSFORMATIONAL
LEADERSHIP**

**by**

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**December 2010**

**Advisor:** Dr. Richard Raspa

**Major:** Interdisciplinary Studies

**Degree:** Masters of Arts

Many people in today's world often submit to broad assumptions, generalizations and faulty reasoning in determining what constitutes a competent leader. Qualities such as high energy, positive attitude and charisma are unfortunately the sole traits that elect leaders. While positive thinking does help to produce compelling visions to inspire people, high energy is necessary for leadership given the workload and charisma needed to win people over. These are components for election not successful leadership.

Such narrow sighted values for leadership have repeatedly produced a less than desirable quality of chosen leaders. The lack of proper knowledge that identifies rational and effective standards for leadership can empower the likelihood of producing real leaders. Culture also plays a significant role in leadership. In order to empower as many people as possible with a basic yet well-rounded understanding of both, leadership and culture, Interdisciplinary Studies becomes essential.

Interdisciplinary Studies is the use of two or more subjects to produce a more dynamic, multi-angular understanding of a particular topic. The subjects used for the

Interdisciplinary perspective will be intercultural communication, Anthropology and transformational leadership. The communication portion will cover high and low context communication. To comprehend the cultural portion of leadership, Business Anthropology will be used. Through Business Anthropology's merge between organizational studies and intercultural communication, the cross-cultural components effecting leadership will be more thoroughly understood. Transformational leadership defined is the process of leaders transforming followers to higher moral and ethical standards. This unique form of leadership will be discussed relative to the previously mentioned subjects of communication and Anthropology use films as case studies. The goal of this thesis is to condense the mass of information surrounding leadership and culture into a level of understanding that is as accessible to as many people as possible. To accomplish this, movies will be used as case studies. By exploring the aforementioned subjects in the active scenarios displayed in the movies <u>Black Rain,</u> <u>Gandhi</u> and <u>The Man Who Would Be King</u>, the analysis will be made in a more accessible format.

## AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

My name is Joseph David. I graduated from Wayne State University with a Bachelor of Arts in English in 2005. The work presented here, "An Interdisciplinary Perspective on Transformational Leadership," is the culmination of personal interests and accumulated knowledge from both observations and relayed experiences of many immigrants I had the pleasure to encounter over the years. It is out of my own personal concern for the hardships that many refugees endured that the topic of this paper was born: a basic and comprehensive presentation of those rules for lasting, moral, ethical and responsible leadership to transcend any social or cultural barriers. Much in the same way that laws of physics function the same anywhere at any time, so should the rules of competent leadership.