

INTERNAL WORLD OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERS

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ABSTRACT

We know a great deal today about the impact of transformational leaders, their actions, typical behaviors and their ways of influencing others (Bass, 1985, 1999a, b; Bass & Avolio, 1990). However, we know relatively little about the psychological substructure, the internal world of these leaders, namely who they are and how they developed this way. These aspects were raised earlier in Bass's early work (Bass, 1985) but have received little attention so far (Bass, 1998; Judge & Bono, 2000). We argue that the internal world of a transformational leader is characterized by a motivation to lead, leadership self-efficacy, motivation and capacity to relate to others in a pro-social way, optimism and openness to new experiences and viewpoints of others. We further argue that the origins of the ability and motivation to be a transformational leader lie in childhood experiences, and that the development of this ability and motivation can be understood and conceptualized by means of major developmental theories such as attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1977, 1988). On the basis of these theories, we suggest a researchable conceptual framework for characterization of the internal world and the development of transformational leaders.

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INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades, there has been a growing discussion in the leadership literature on the dynamics of leader-follower relationships (Klein & House, 1995; Meindl, 1995; Shamir, 1995), particularly on the emotional relationship labeled by different titles of which the most common are "charismatic" (House, 1977; Lindholm, 1988; Shamir, 1991) and "transformational" (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985). Emotional bonding with a leader can cause the followers to lose their autonomous judgment and merge with the leader's wishes and aspirations, at times even to the point of "self loss" (Kets de Vries, 1989; Lindholm, 1988; Popper, 2001). However, relationships with a leader can be highly positive, bestowing meaning and ideals, empowering the followers and helping them to become autonomous and competent individuals who reach self actualization and high levels of morality (e.g. Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). In this chapter we focus on "transformational leadership", which exemplifies the latter type of emotional bonding between leaders and followers, the bond that is highly benevolent in nature.

Since its inception, the study of transformational leadership has flourished, and we now have a clear picture of what transformational leaders do and how they behave. Transformational leaders' relationships with their followers were found to be characterized by four factors (Bass, 1999b; Bass & Avolio, 1990): idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Idealized influence and inspirational motivation are revealed by a leader who envisions a desirable future, articulates how it can be reached, sets an example to be followed, determines high standards of performance, and shows determination and confidence. Followers want to identify with such leadership, and such identification does not restrict their upward growth potential. Intellectual stimulation finds expression when the leader helps followers to become more innovative and creative. Individualized consideration is manifested by leaders who pay attention to their followers' developmental needs, and support and coach them in their personal development.

We now also have a clearer picture of the kinds of outcomes transformational leaders bring about in their followers, or in their organizations. A large body of research compared transformational and transactional leadership on various outcome variables such as the leader's perceived effectiveness, satisfaction with the leader, and the followers' sense of self-efficacy, and found these variables to be higher among followers whose leaders were transformational (see, for

example, Bycio, Hackett & Allen, 1995; Yammarino & Bass, 1990). Similar findings were reported with regard to measures of behavior and performance (Bass & Avolio, 1993).

In sum, we know a great deal today about the actions, behavior, and influence of transformational leaders (Bass, 1985, 1999a, b; Bass & Avolio, 1990). However, we know very little about the psychological substructure, the internal world of these leaders, namely what "makes them tick", and how they developed this way. This point has been indicated by some prominent scholars of leadership (e.g., Bass, 1998; House & Howell, 1992) and has been highlighted recently by Judge and Bono (2000) claiming that: "Even if one considers transformational leadership to be a behavioral theory, the origins of the behaviors are unclear" (p. 752).

The link between psychological experiences in childhood and manifestations of leadership in adulthood has often been highlighted in leaders' own descriptions of themselves (e.g. Churchill in Gardner, 1995; Franklin Delano Roosevelt in Burns, 1956; Gandhi in Chatha, 1997; Woodrow Wilson in George & George, 1956). The literature addressing this issue includes mostly biographies written by historians (e.g. Bullock, 1991), a few well-known psycho-biographies (e.g. Erikson on Gandhi, 1969), and a few historiometric studies (Mumford et al., 1993; Mumford & Mowry, this volume) that are mainly descriptive. Thus, despite the recognition of the importance of childhood in shaping the character of the adult in general (Freud, 1920; Storr, 1972) and of leaders in particular (Avolio & Gibbons, 1988; Kets de Vries, 1989), we do not possess sufficient systematic knowledge on what was referred to by Kets de Vries (1989) as "leaders' internal theater", that is to say, the intrapsychic factors that shape leaders' internal world, their approach, and their outlook. This fact is not fortuitous: it stems from the absence of models and empirically testable conceptualizations (for a similar argument, see Avolio & Gibbons, 1988; Maysseless & Popper, 2001; Popper, 2000).

The purpose of this chapter is to present a conceptual framework for the description and understanding of the internal world of transformational leaders and its developmental roots. Specifically, we intend:

- (1) to present a conceptualization regarding transformational leaders' internal world, their approach and outlook, their emotions and their basic attitudes towards themselves, towards others, and towards the world around them;
- (2) to describe possible developmental precursors of these characteristics; and
- (3) to demonstrate how these concepts may be translated into empirical research.

For this purpose, we will draw on the vast literature in personality and developmental psychology. Our arguments are presented as a set of propositions, which together form a testable conceptual framework.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

In order for individuals to express themselves and excel in any field (music, sport, art, science), they have to be both able and willing to engage in that field. This seemingly commonplace statement also applies to the issue of leadership. We propose that in order to reach a position of leadership, an individual must have the desire to influence others, as well as specific abilities. The fact that leaders want to be dominant and influential is self-evident. However, the leadership literature has barely dealt with the psychological antecedents of the desire to lead (Burns, 1987; Popper, 2000). Our argument is that the desire to lead has its roots (like many psychological phenomena) in the conditions of growth and development in early childhood.

Motivation

Several explanations have been offered for the desire to be in a position of leadership most of them ascribe central importance to events in childhood as shaping the development of the motivation to lead (e.g. Avolio & Gibbons, 1988; Burns, 1978; Popper, 2000; Zaleznik, 1992). For example, in the case of negative leaders (those described in the literature as personalized charismatic leaders; see the discussion in House & Howell, 1992; Howell, 1988), the motivation to lead is generally explained by narcissistic deprivations in early childhood.

The assumption of these theories is that parents' demonstration of their adoration for their growing baby is central to the child's developmental process. According to these explanations, the leader's status provides opportunities for admiration and adoration that were lacking in early childhood. See Kohut (1971) for a general discussion of this narcissistic need, and Post (1986), Deluga (1997), as well as Streyer (this volume) for a discussion and examination of this aspect with regard to leaders. Indeed, historical and psychological analyses conducted with regard to distinctly personalized charismatic leaders such as Adolf Hitler (Bullock, 1991), Jim Jones (Lindholm, 1990), and Joseph Stalin (Bullock, 1991) point to narcissistic deprivation as a dominant theme in the persistent desire to acquire leadership position so as to win admiration.

In other conceptualizations, the motivation of socialized charismatic leaders (of which transformational leaders are the most distinct manifestation) is also explained as a way of dealing and coping with feelings aroused and experiences shaped in childhood. Zaleznik (1992), for example, argues that the motivation of many leaders is related to the absence of a significant father figure in the child's consciousness. These children, according to Zaleznik, attempt to turn themselves into fantasized father figures in a compensatory effort. In other words, leadership according to this conceptualization is seen as a type of psychological reparation rooted in the longing for an ideal father.

Burns (1956, 1976, 1978) identified a similar pattern and added an Oedipal interpretation to Zaleznik's explanation while focusing on male leaders. Lacking the clearly felt, supportive presence of a father, the developing child, says Burns, lacks a focus for identification. Namely, the psychological element needed to resolve the Oedipal conflict is missing; hence, according to the psychoanalytical argumentation, the child's motivation to be a "big father" grows increasingly powerful. This kind of motivation can, of course, be especially strong when there is also a deep emotional attachment to the mother. Then, the desire to be the "strong father" who protects the beloved mother, is intensified.

Although these explanations (especially the psychoanalytical ones) are frequently criticized as speculative, there are biographies and statistical evidence that support these directions with a consistency and degree that cannot be dismissed. For instance, while collecting material for biographies of 24 British Prime ministers, from Spencer Percival in 1809 to Chamberlain in 1937, a British researcher, Lucille Iremonger, found that 15 of them (66%) had lost a father in childhood. Examining the population register in the wake of these findings, Iremonger discovered that only about 2% of the general population had been orphaned in childhood. According to Iremonger, these figures may indicate some kind of link between the loss of a father and the longing to be a leader (Iremonger, 1970), and in fact, this motif appears in the biographies of some of the most outstanding leaders in history (e.g. Burns, 1978; Gardner, 1995).

Another explanation is related to the mother's expectations. This explanation, as the one involving the Oedipal conflict, has been applied mostly to sons and not daughters. In the absence of a father, the mother may (even unconsciously) convey expectations that lead the child to perceive himself as a father substitute, and with this come the feelings that are usually related to the father's roles.

The explanations based on expectations can be extended to other situations, not necessarily related to the absence of a father, in which case they are equally

relevant to men and women. For example, children who receive messages that they are expected to take responsibility, to be role models, for example first-born children (e.g. Steinberg, 2001), or children perceived by their parents as more gifted than their siblings (Raz, 2001), may internalize these expectations and grow up with the feeling that taking responsibility and exerting influence are natural roles for them, which then become part of their identity.

These roles are internalized as possible selves (e.g. Markus & Nurius, 1986) – ideas regarding what they might become and what they want to become, provide a link between parental expectation, self cognition and motivation and guide their future behavior. For example, in some cases, childhood role reversal when successful and appreciated may be internalized as a disposition to take responsibility, care for others and lead them (Mayselless, 1996, 1998). Similarly, cultural expectations of people in certain social classes or cultural and familial expectations of children who are heirs of leaders may also operate to socialize children to leadership positions. Aspiring to leadership positions is thus a natural continuation of the socialization these children experienced (Gibbons, 1986).

Notwithstanding the centrality of childhood experiences, the importance of temperament should not be overlooked. For example, shy and inhibited children (Arcus, 2001; Rubin, Hastings, Stewart & Henderson, 1997) would probably be less inclined to develop a motivation to influence others even in a context of familial expectations or narcissistic deprivation.

Capacity

The fact that certain children develop the wish to influence others and lead them is not, as stated, sufficient in itself. These children have to feel they are capable of doing that and succeeding. This point was mentioned by Bass (1985), arguing that leaders are characterized by self-confidence, attributed to successful resolution of internal conflicts (p. 47). This argument was not developed conceptually, and has never been a central theme in the psychological research on leadership (Popper, 2000).

The concept of “self-efficacy”, introduced and studied by Bandura (1977, 1986, 1995), provides a theoretical framework that can link the wish to lead with the sense that one is capable of being a leader. Self-efficacy is described as a self-perception that is formed in the context of behavior in specific areas (Bandura, 1977, 1986). This perception develops in a gradual learning process whereby the individual receives information from various sources regarding his/her abilities in a specific area of functioning. This accumulation of feedback indicating success or failure in the given area naturally affects the perception of

one's ability, creating a high level of self-efficacy in the case of positive messages, and an opposite effect in the case of messages of failure (Bandura, 1977). The self perception formed as a result of these experiences influences aspects such as stability and persistence in certain behaviors, patterns of thinking and emotional response, decisions concerning course of action, and occupational choices (for a comprehensive discussion, see Bandura, 1986, 1995).

There are scholars who see self-efficacy as a generalized characteristic involving the individual's general belief in his/her ability in a broad range of achievement situations (Hackett & Betz, 1995). Our contention as well as others' (e.g. Maddux, 1995) is that besides a generalized level of self-efficacy, people have particular self-efficacy beliefs in specific domains depending on the general experiences in these areas. Thus, people also develop specific self-efficacy beliefs with regard to their ability to lead whose sources lie in experiences of success (or failure) in influencing people. We suggest that in order to become a leader, one must have developed a high level of self-efficacy as a leader, which may be defined as a generalized self-perception in the domain of leadership.

In support of this line of argumentation, Smith and Foti (1998) reported that the most important variable affecting group members' preferences of leaders was the degree of self-efficacy the followers attributed to the leader. Similarly, Chemers, Watson, and May (2000) reported that self-rated leadership efficacy was associated with leadership potential of military cadets as rated by their military science professors.

Interestingly, this self-rated specific sense of efficacy (leadership efficacy) was even more strongly related with the cadets' performance evaluations (reported by objective observers of a leadership simulation), and with leadership ratings by peers and supervisors during a summer leadership training program. Finally, examining Chinese high-school students in Hong Kong, Chan (2000) reported that the students who were identified as leaders based on observed behavioral characteristics were characterized by higher aspirations to leadership and achievement and by higher levels of energy and leadership self-efficacy. Together, these findings present some preliminary support for our proposition.

It should be noted that the experiences (successes or failures) may originate in various contexts such as the family, the peer group, and the community, and we propose that the more consistent these experiences are across contexts, the more coherent and strong the sense of efficacy (high or low) with regard to leadership. Similarly, Avolio and Gibbons (1988) highlight the accumulative effects of life experiences in different leadership positions. Though these two

characteristics (capacity and motivation) are to some extent independent, in some cases outstanding capacity may also motivate a person to use it. This may also be due to the cues they receive from others, as noted above, that they have the capacity to make a difference. Similarly, high motivation may drive a person to invest a lot in this area and not to withdraw when meeting obstacles, hence eventually leading to more successes and a higher perceived level of efficacy.

Although the wish to exert influence along with the belief in one's ability to be a leader are important variables, they are not conceived as a sufficient condition for a person to become a transformational leader. These aspects are conceptualized as a necessary condition (Burns, 1978). Metaphorically, these variables cannot be seen as the foundations of a building; without them the building cannot be constructed. In most cases, these foundations are laid down in early childhood, and constitute the infrastructure for the possible leadership position and, of course, for the individual's typical behaviors as a leader.

The arguments thus far can be summarized in the following proposition:

Proposition 1. The wish to be influential, and self-efficacy with regard to leadership, are essential characteristics for becoming any kind of leader (including a transformational one).

On Becoming a Transformational Leader

In the previous paragraphs, we discussed the basic and necessary psychological prerequisites needed to become a leader. However, we contend that to become a transformational leader, additional characteristics must be developed. In what follows, we discuss three characteristics that we consider as fundamental to become a transformational leader.

Care for Others

One of the salient differences, if not the most salient, between charismatic leaders such as Jim Jones or Hitler and transformational leaders such as Gandhi or Nelson Mandela are in the way they treat others. The former are characterized by an attitude towards others that springs from narcissism (House & Howell, 1992; Popper, 2000, 2001). That is to say, they use others as a source of self-aggrandizement. In contrast, those who are classified as transformational leaders are characterized by the way they treat others, which is oriented by moral values such as justice or integrity (see Burns, 1978; Kohberg, 1963) and which encourages personal development of their followers. Already, in 1985, Bass had suggested that for the transformational bond to endure, the

leader must be empathic; in many respects is also a mentor, and must take a developmental orientation toward the followers.

In many aspects, transformational leadership can be metaphorically compared with good parenthood. Indeed, Popper and Maysless (2001) reviewed studies dealing with parenting, and compared them with studies on transformational leadership. This comparison reveals a strong similarity between the developmental effects of good parents and those of transformational leaders. The resemblance between transformational leaders and good parents is expressed in the following main aspects:

- (1) Both are sensitive and responsive, showing individual consideration to their "protégée" (Bass, 1985; De-Wolff & van IJzendoorn, 1997; Howell, 1988);
- (2) both reinforce the protégée's autonomy (Bass, 1985; George & Solomon, 1989; Maccoby & Martin, 1983);
- (3) in a supportive, non-judgmental way (Bass, 1985; Baumrind, 1978; Shamir, House & Arthur, 1993; Stroufe, 1983);
- (4) and by actively providing opportunities, promoting relevant experiences, giving explanations, etc. (Bass, 1985; Baumrind, 1978; Howell, 1988; Matas, Arend & Stroufe, 1978);
- (5) and both are positive examples to identify with and look up to (Conger & Kanungo, 1987; Howell, 1988; Main, 1983).

Some recent studies do point to characteristics of nurturing parents that were found to a greater extent in transformational leaders as compared with others. For example, a study by Clover (1990) reported transformational leaders to be higher than other types of leaders in measures such as nurturance, and lower in measures such as aggression and criticism. Ross and Offerman (1997) reported negative correlations between measures of critical parenting, aggression and criticism and transformational leadership. Roush and Atwater (1992) reported that transformational leaders ranked higher as sensing and feeling types than as thinking types, that is, they ranked high as people who place more emphasis on human relations, on the importance of others' attitudes, on concern for their welfare, and on promoting an atmosphere of openness compared with those who emphasize logical, analytical, and impersonal thinking. Recently, Judge and Bono (2000) reported that among the Big Five traits, agreeableness defined as being kind, gentle, trusting, altruistic, and warm was found as the strongest and most consistent predictor of transformational leadership.

We argue that transformational leaders who are both role models and oriented towards the development and encouragement of their followers have a strong motivation to give (a pro-social orientation) and are capable of giving in

an emphatic and sensitive way similar to that of good parents (Popper & Maysless, 2001). Research in the domain of developmental psychology has examined for quite some time the precursors of such altruistic and pro-social orientations with children and adolescents (Van-Lange, De-Bruin, Otten & Joireman, 1997; Zahn-Waxler, Cummings, & Iannotti, 1986). Generally, the capacity to give is based on many aspects, some genetic (Zahn-Waxler et al., 2001) and some environmental.

In general, parents who are warm, sensitive, and attentive to their children's needs, who employ positive internal attributions to pro-social deeds, are not coercive in their disciplinary actions, and who themselves model emphatic and pro-social behavior towards their offspring and towards others raise children who are more emphatic, concerned with others' welfare, and have both the motivation and the capacity to help others (see a review by Grusec & Dix, 1986).

In sum, among the environmental factors, a significant weight is ascribed to the internalization of good parental models in early childhood (Cassidy, 1999). In particular, internalization of a secure attachment pattern described below, was found to be the basis for the development of social motivation and skills (Eberly & Montmayor, 1998; Thompson, 1999). The arguments and findings discussed in this part can be summarized in the following proposition:

Proposition 2. Transformational leaders are individuals with a wish and a capacity to give.

Optimism

One of the major characteristics attributed to transformational leaders is their ability to present a vision, a future goal, or a new direction, to demonstrate their enthusiasm about their vision and to inspire others to share the vision (see a discussion of various types of vision by Mumford & Mowry, this volume). This has been described at length in most of the biographies and studies on outstanding leaders (e.g. Burns, 1978; Chadha, 1997; Gardner, 1995; Simonton, 1986) and also measured, using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), by the factors: "inspirational motivation" and "idealized influence" (Bass & Avolio, 1996).

In order to demonstrate a consistent future orientation and formulate it in terms of a vision that people can pursue with faith and enthusiasm, a person must be optimistic in terms of positive expectations for the self, for others, and

for society at large. In other words, the leader must have a positive outlook on life. Hence, studies on optimism are relevant to understanding the approach taken and behavior of transformational leaders. Dispositional optimism was construed as a generalized inclination to expect favorable life outcomes and hold positive expectations for the future (Scheier & Carver, 1985). A large body of research pertains to the association between an optimistic outlook and the capacity to present a vision and to be enthusiastic about it (see two major edited books by Chang, 2001 and by Gillham, 2000).

For example, a comparative study of optimists and pessimists conducted by Scheier and Carver (1985), which examined their approach and behavior in connection with the achievement of desired aims, reported that optimists make much greater efforts to achieve their aims than do pessimists, who tend to display a higher degree of relinquishment and avoidance. Moreover, optimists reported a higher degree of interest in life, of satisfaction with their fields of occupation, and of well-being (Scheier & Carver, 1993). In particular Chemers, Watson and May (2000) reported a positive association between optimism and leadership potential of cadets as rated by their military science professors.

With regard to the antecedents of optimism as a personality trait, there are several indications that it is related both to a genetic origin and to experiences in childhood (e.g. Chang, 2001). For example Plomin et al. (1992) provided evidence that individual differences in dispositional optimism are partly inherited. They examined a sample of some 500 same-sex identical and fraternal middle-aged twins, half of whom were reared together and half adopted and raised separately early in life. Their analyses yielded significant heritability estimates of about 25%, as well as a significant shared rearing effect owing to environmental influences with respect to optimistic tendencies. Similar findings were also presented by Zuckerman (2001). In terms of the specific rearing environment that promotes optimism, little is as yet known with regard to longitudinal research. However, several studies have addressed this question with samples of adults.

For example, Peterson and Bossio (1991) present several studies that show that optimists are more likely than pessimists to recall their parents as happy, as being socially active, as having a positive self-image, and encouraging them to hope for the best. In addition, optimists described their parents as granting them autonomy, conveying trust, and stressing the importance of exploring the social world. Similarly, Hjelle, Busch, and Warren (1996) showed that dispositional optimism in adults was positively correlated with reported maternal and paternal warmth/acceptance and negatively associated with parental hostility, neglect, or rejection. Thus, again, a secure parenting style

seems to be one of the precursors of an optimistic outlook in adulthood. These arguments and findings can be summarized in the following proposition:

Proposition 3. Transformational leaders are optimistic individuals.

Openness

One of the characteristics of transformational leaders is their ability to help their followers "think differently" and be creative and original. As mentioned above, "intellectual stimulation" is one of the factors of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985). Underlying the ability to promote intellectual stimulation is the assumption that the transformational leader is a person who is himself/herself creative or, perhaps more likely, is open and encourages others to express their creativity and originality. Transformational leaders are also confident in their abilities and willingness to explore the unknown. In either case, such a leader must be a person who is curious, cognitively flexible, and open. In line with this contention, adolescent Chinese students in Hong Kong, who were identified as leaders based on observed behavioral characteristics, were characterized by higher ratings of openness to novel experiences and different perspectives, which the author identified as a major aspect and termed leadership flexibility (Chan, 2000).

Openness to new experiences has been identified within the personality psychology literature as one of the Big Five dimensions of personality (Costa, & McCrae, 1992). Openness to Experience is strongly correlated with divergent thinking (McCrae, 1987), with personality-based measures of creativity (McCrae & Costa, 1997), as well as with behavioral measures of creativity (Feist, 1998). As summarized in a review by McCrae and Costa (1997), open people actively seek out experience and are apt to be particularly reflective and thoughtful about ideas they encounter. They are not only able to grasp new ideas, but enjoy doing so. Need for variety, tolerance of ambiguity, and preference for complexity all represent motivational aspects of open people. In addition, open people can be characterized by their non-traditional attitudes, their rich and complex emotional lives, and their behavioral flexibility. Indeed, Judge and Bono (2000) have recently found an association between transformational leadership and openness to experiences, as measured using the NEO personality inventory as part of the Big Five personality constructs (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

What might be the antecedents of this openness and curiosity in the leader's personality? Most of the writing on this subject, particularly in the literature on parenthood, indicates that proper stimulation and encouragement of curiosity

and exploration in early childhood are the basis for developing this tendency (Baumrind, 1996). Specifically more positive, stimulating, autonomy- and communication-enhancing child-rearing environments contribute to the development of curious children who show an open and more flexible cognitive style (e.g. McCrae & Costa, 1988). In particular, the formation of a secure attachment pattern was distinguished as an antecedent to a sense of psychological freedom to explore and cognitive openness (Thompson, 1999).

Several studies conducted with adults point to the association between secure attachment and openness. For example, Mikulincer and Arad (1999) reported that secure attachment was related to higher cognitive openness and better recall of expectation-congruent information. Similarly, Green-Hennessy and Reis (1998) reported that secure individuals were more open to new information and showed a higher differentiation of their representations of others than individuals who were avoidant, one of two categories of insecure attachment described later on in this chapter. Finally, Mikulincer (1997) found that secure persons described themselves as more open and curious compared with avoidant people. In addition, they reported less preference for cognitive closure and were more likely to rely on new information in making social judgments than the two insecure categories.

Besides experiences in childhood, genetic contribution was also highlighted in the development of openness to experience. Employing a large sample of identical and fraternal twins reared apart and together, Bergeman, Chipuer, Plomin and Pedersen (1993) reported substantial genetic effects for this trait with about 40% of the variance explained by additive genetic contribution. This section can be summarized in the following proposition:

Proposition 4. Transformational leaders are characterized by a high level of curiosity and openness.

DEVELOPMENTAL CONCEPTUALIZATION

To summarize, we argue that the internal world of transformational leaders involves:

- (1) a disposition for social dominance;
- (2) a belief in the ability to influence others;
- (3) a motivation and a capacity to treat others in a positive and encouraging way while serving as role models;
- (4) optimistic orientation towards the self, and others; and
- (5) intellectual openness, curiosity and flexibility.

How and when are these tendencies and abilities formed in life?

For some of these attributes, a genetic origin might be assumed (i.e. optimism), and its magnitude is not negligible. In addition, we argue that the roots of these attributes lie in childhood experiences and that therefore their formation can be understood and conceptualized by employing major developmental theories and research. As highlighted throughout our discussion, one of the most relevant of these theories is attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1977, 1988), which in recent years has become a very influential theory in explaining emotional development (Ainsworth, 1992; Rutter, 1996). (Just to illustrate the centrality of attachment theory: 662 entries appear only in 1999 *PsycINFO* search.) In what follows, we will present how attachment theory can be relevant to understanding leadership development. However, this application does not necessarily mean that we see attachment theory as the only psychological theory relevant to the development of transformational leadership.

Overview of Attachment Theory

Based on ethnological, evolutionary, and control systems concepts, attachment theory postulates an innate, bio-social behavioral system in the infant, the purpose of which is to maintain proximity between the infant and his or her primary caregiver. The evolutionary purpose of this behavioral system is to promote the child's survival by receiving protection from a "stronger and wiser" figure, given that the newborn infant cannot survive on its own. Thus, in the course of evolution, only those infants who were motivationally and behaviorally equipped to obtain proximity to, and protection from, a stronger and wiser figure survived. The infant is assumed to be motivated to remain close to the caregiver and has numerous ways, some inborn and some learned (e.g. following, talking), of securing the desired proximity and protection.

These behaviors, termed attachment behaviors, arouse complementary behavior in the caregiver. According to attachment theory, adults have a complementary behavioral system whose main function is the protection of the infant (or the person whose well-being is sought), which is activated when there are signs of threat to that person's well-being. Both the infant and the caregiver maintain a certain desired range of proximity to each other, a range that may change depending on circumstances. If there is no perceived danger or threat, the infant may be content and feel secure even at a large distance from the caregiver. But when danger or a threat is perceived (e.g. hunger, loud noise), the infant will actively seek proximity and protection and will only terminate attachment behaviors when the desired protection has been achieved, and the feeling of security has been restored.

Internal World of Transformational Leaders

Thus, attachment behaviors may only be witnessed when the infant perceives some threat, and their intensity reflects the intensity of the threat. In safe circumstances, the level of activation of the attachment behavioral system can remain low for long periods of time while other behavioral systems, such as exploration, may come into play. The child uses the caregiver as a "secure base" from which to explore and only periodically checks for availability of the attachment figure. However, when threat arises, the attachment system is activated, and the child will seek protection from the caregiver, which then serves as a haven of safety. Hence, the person maintains a balance between attachment and exploration. When experiencing a sense of security, the person is free to pursue other desires and to explore the environment and other relationships. However, when threatened or anxious, attachment behavior is activated, and exploration is halted.

Differences in the ability to signal the need and desire for closeness, and especially differences in the caregiver's responsiveness, generate variations in a baby's attachment styles. It is assumed that from infancy onward, children form an internal working model, which includes internalization and representations of major aspects of their attachment relationships with their caregivers (Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1977, 1988; Bretherton, 1985). These aspects include perception of the self as (un)willing and (un)able to attend to the attachment needs when they arise. The internal working model guides the interpretation and planning of interpersonal transactions with the caregiver and later with other important figures. At first, it involves a representation of the specific relationship with a specific caregiver. Later, following repeated experiences, the model increasingly becomes a part of the child's developing personality and turns into a more abstract, generalized representation of the self and others (Bretherton, 1985; Collins & Read, 1994).

On the basis of Bowlby's theory, Ainsworth, Blehar, Wares and Wall (1978) identified three styles of infant attachment, one secure and two insecure: ambivalent and avoidant. These styles were later also identified in childhood and adulthood (see reviews by Solomon & George, 1999). As summarized in a review chapter by Cassidy (1999), the internal working model of secure individuals includes a basic trust in their caregiver and confidence that their caregiver will be available, responsive, and helpful when needed. With this assurance, they are bold in their explorations of the world and able both to rely on themselves and to turn to others when in need. This pattern is promoted by a caregiver, usually a parent, who is readily available, sensitive to the child's signals, and lovingly responsive when the child seeks protection and/or comfort.

The internal working model of the anxious/ambivalent pattern is characterized by uncertainty as to whether the parent or caregiver will be available, responsive, or helpful when called upon. Because of this uncertainty, the ambivalent individual is always prone to separation anxiety and tends to be clinging even while manifesting unresolved anger directed at the caregiver. This behavior is seen as an attempt to coerce an otherwise unresponsive caregiver to pay attention. This pattern, in which conflict is evident, is promoted by such conditions as a parent being available and helpful on some occasions but not on others (Cassidy & Berlin, 1994).

Avoidant attachment is a pattern in which individuals have no confidence they will receive care when they seek it. On the contrary, they expect to be rebuffed. In the extreme, these individuals attempt to become emotionally self-sufficient and live their life without the support of others. They tend to devalue the importance of attachment for their lives, using a strategy of minimizing attachment behavior and feelings (Cassidy, 1999; Main, 1990). They may, however, exhibit hostility and anti-social behavior toward others (Kobak & Sceery, 1988). This pattern is the result of the caregivers constantly rebuffing the child when he/she approaches them for comfort or protection (Cassidy, 1994).

As stated, adult attachment research is based on the premise that internal working models shape the self-image and the image of the other, and consequently affect feelings and cognition that govern behavior in relationships. Over the past decade, many studies have been conducted to examine the impact of the internal working models in various domains, such as: parenting (Main, Kaplan & Cassidy, 1985), romantic relationships (Hazan & Shaver, 1987), marital satisfaction and stability (Feeney, 1999), work-related behavior and affect (Hazan & Shaver, 1990), and friendship (Mayseless, Sharabany & Sagi 1997), and currently has also been applied to understand leadership relationships (Popper, Mayseless & Castelnuovo, 2000).

We argue that attachment theory can be used not only in the analysis of relational processes, but also in analyzing intra-psychic processes. In fact, some studies have already been conducted in this field, for example, a study on self-schema and social cognition (Mikulincer & Orbach, 1995), studies on emotion regulation (Cassidy, 1999), and a study on mental health (Cicchetti, Toth & Lynch, 1995). In particular, attachment theory can also be useful in examining the internal emotional world of leaders in general, and of transformational leaders in particular. Examination of the processes that generate the various attachment patterns, together with an understanding of the psychological significance of each of these patterns, gives rise to the argument that the secure pattern – and the conditions that promoted it – are partly the basis of the

internal world of transformational leaders and are at the root of the behaviors that characterize these leaders.

Attachment and Transformational Leadership

Recall our argument that besides the wish to influence others, a necessary (though not sufficient) condition to become a leader is the degree of the individual's confidence in his/her ability to lead. In other words, a person characterized by a high level of anxiety and feelings of incompetence would probably not seek out leadership roles (Judge & Bono, 2000; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991).

We argue that secure individuals and, to some extent, avoidant individuals (in the case of personalized charismatic leaders) have the ego resources required for taking on a leadership role, whereas anxious/ambivalent personality types lack such a base; hence, they will not tend to seek out leadership positions. Empirical support for this claim was presented by Mikulincer and Florian (1995) who reported that those who were "anxious ambivalent" were not perceived by their peers as leaders in an army basic training course. Similarly Englund, Levy, Hyson and Stroufe (2000) reported a noteworthy association between secure attachment as assessed in infancy and leadership ratings given by observers in a weekend camp organized in adolescence, some 15 years later.

Internalization of the secure pattern means, among other things, internalization of supportive parental models (Popper & Mayseless, 2001) and hence internalization of the ability to be a role model, which is the basis for the idealized influence exhibited by transformational leaders. In line with this contention, a recent study (Shields, Ryan & Cicchetti, 2001) reported that 8- to 12-year-old children who were nominated as leaders by their peers were characterized by a positive representation of their parents, as depicted in a narrative the children constructed following a presentation of story stems. The positive representation was conspicuous in the perception of their parents as responsive and as providing and supporting autonomy.

Thus, an internalization of a benevolent and secure parental model (or even a secure model of other significant caregivers) may serve as an antecedent of becoming a leader. Furthermore, the basic trust and sense of general confidence that a secure person internalizes contribute as well to a general sense of optimism and positive expectations, which, as argued above, are part of the internal theater of transformational leaders.

One of the most conspicuous outcomes of growing up as a secure child is the capacity to regulate one's emotion and hence to be capable of taking more risks

with regard to new experiences. A person who is secure can afford to explore the environment and new experiences because of the general sense of a secure base, a haven of safety, and a high sense of efficacy (Cassidy, 1999). This was mostly described within attachment theory as the capacity to explore (Ainsworth, 1992), an aspect that contributes to the development of inherent curiosity, which is the basis necessary for intellectual stimulation, one of the characteristics of transformational leaders (Bass, 1985).

Finally, people with a secure attachment pattern see themselves and others in a positive and optimistic manner. They trust others, trust the world, and internalize a parental role model of a sensitive and considerate parent. This might be the basis of the ability – both of good parents and of transformational leaders – to give and care for others (Popper, Maysseless & Castelnovo, 2000), and this is a unique behavioral manifestation of transformational leaders (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Howell & Avolio, 1992; Popper, Maysseless & Castelnovo, 2000).

In sum, attachment security seems to be associated with many aspects, which we described above as characterizing the transformational leader. In fact, besides the motivation to lead, which may not be directly related to attachment security, all other components of the hypothesized internal world of transformational leaders – self-efficacy, capacity and motivation to give in a pro-social way, optimism, and openness – might have developmental roots in secure attachment. Thus, it appears that attachment theory can provide a conceptual framework for describing intra-psychic processes relevant to the characterization of transformational leaders. The advantages of this theory are not only in the conceptual domain, but also in terms of helping to define and measure psycho-dynamic variables that could not hitherto be examined empirically (e.g. Cassidy, 1999; Solomon & George, 1999).

Theoretical, Empirical, and Practical Implications

We indicated at the beginning of this article that most of the efforts in leadership research have focused on examining relations between leaders' behaviors (i.e. leadership styles) and outcome variables such as performance and satisfaction (Bass, 1990). We pointed out that there is less systematic and empirical work in so far as the understanding of the inner world and development of leaders is concerned, particularly with regard to those leaders who are not historical leaders, but leaders at different levels of the hierarchy in organizations, individuals who might be labeled "leaders in everyday life."

It is only recently that we see indications of a growing interest in tackling issues of capacity and motivation to lead. For instance, Schneider et al. (1999) described the first stage of a longitudinal research program concerned with the

prediction, understanding, and durability of early displays of leadership behavior. This research is being conducted at high schools and is based on the predictability of teachers' ratings of leadership behavior with respect to predictors such as interests, motivation, and academic ability.

Our analysis and the propositions presented in this chapter together form a conceptualization, which is research oriented and can be empirically tested. Most of the concepts we discussed have valid and reliable measures that can be used in future research projects on the developmental antecedents to transformational leadership. For example, optimism has been measured using paper and pencil questionnaires, which are widely used (Scheier & Carver, 1985). Similarly, the openness to new experiences construct may be assessed with the NEO Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1992). As for attachment security, Hazan and Shaver's conceptual work and the attachment questionnaire they constructed (1987, 1990) indicate that the internal model formed in the course of attachment processes in infancy has ramifications for the development of the individual's adult personality. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, the notions of attachment theory, which have been applied to examine a wide range of developmental processes, can now be applied to investigating the development of leadership (for such an application, see Mikulincer & Florian, 1995; Popper, Maysseless & Castelnovo, 2000).

In addition to Hazan and Shaver's measurements of attachment styles, there is another instrument developed by Main, Kaplan and Cassidy (1985), known as the Adult Attachment Interview, which has also been used to identify adult internal working models. Both instruments have shown strong concurrent and predictive validity (Crowell, Fraley & Shaver, 1999) and can be used in research designed to examine leaders' internal working models, namely the provision and existence of a secure base and its effects. Thus, our conceptualization provides an opportunity for an empirical examination of the internal world of transformational leaders and their developmental roots.

The directions discussed here, if validated in research also have practical implications, particularly with regard to methodical selection and development of leaders – issues that are of special concern to large organizations. For example, the ability to assess and measure attachment patterns and motivation to lead may mean the ability to improve the assessment of the probability of a person's being a transformational leader. Characterization of individuals in terms of their capacity to become transformational leaders may be of significance also in leadership training and development. Investing in those who have high capacity and high motivation to lead seems to be the most beneficial approach in terms of instrumental cost-benefit considerations. This assumption does not necessarily mean that those individuals who do not have

high capacity (e.g. do not have a secure pattern or are not open to experiences) cannot be transformational leaders. Although Bowlby (1969, 1973, 1988) believed that there is a tendency for continuity in attachment patterns, certain changes may occur in the course of life.

At any point in time, the individual may be vulnerable to negative experiences or derive benefit from positive experiences (Bowlby, 1988). Insecure models of self and others may be revised or replaced when the individual has a corrective experience such as a supportive and sensitive relationship, be it with a significant other, a friend, or a psychotherapist (Bowlby, 1988; Lieberman, Weston & Pawl, 1991; van Izenodoorn, Juffer & Duyvesteyn, 1995). Internal models may also undergo revision because of a supportive manager at the workplace or when the individual is able to utilize his or her ability for reflection to examine contradictions in internal models, or to initiate and experience new relationships (Ainsworth, 1989).

For a large part of this chapter, we have focused on attachment theory and applied its notions to highlight various attributes of transformational leadership. As mentioned, the presentation of attachment theory was used here as an example using early developmental theories to explain the development of leaders at later points in life. Obviously, there are other developmental conceptualizations, such as that dealing with the development of "theory of mind" and self-reflection, or the conceptualization offered by Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development that may be highly relevant as well.

Similarly, throughout most of our discussion, we referred to developmental processes in childhood, and in particular in one's family of origin. However, we have noted in our discussion that many of the attributes of the internal world of the transformational leader have genetic origins, some quite high in magnitude. The study of leadership may therefore benefit from the investigation of these effects as well. It should also be noted that the focus on childhood and on the family of origin in the present discussion should not lead researchers to overlook other major arenas, such as the peer group in which important developmental processes occur as well as what occurs in other significant periods of development, such as adolescence. For example, in adolescence as compared with childhood, more spontaneous groups of youngsters (unsupervised by adults) are formed, where adolescents can practice their leadership skills and develop leadership self-efficacy. Exploring how these experiences shape development is essential to building a life-span theory of leadership development.

In sum, this chapter is an attempt to address questions already raised in Bass's early work (Bass, 1985), namely: who are the transformational leaders, and how do they develop? Although there is a remarkable progress in

understanding transformational leaders' impact, the internal world of these leaders remained to a great extent unstudied. The suggested directions and concepts discussed here and their expansion can broaden our perspective on the less visible and less observed aspects underlying many of the behaviors and outcome variables—so frequently investigated, measured, and discussed in leadership literature. By borrowing from developmental and personality psychology research, as exemplified in the case of attachment theory, the leadership domain may gain a better understanding of psychodynamic processes that have not been the focus of research so far. These angles might also add practical contribution relevant to the selection of leaders, placement in leadership roles, and the development of transformational leaders.

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