A cultural test of transforming leadership using three case studies: W.E.B. DuBois, Leopold Sedar Senghor, and Vaclav Havel

Christie Getman

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarship.richmond.edu/honors-theses

Part of the Leadership Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
https://scholarship.richmond.edu/honors-theses/1114
A Cultural Test of Transforming Leadership Using Three Case Studies:
W.E.B. DuBois, Léopold Sédar Senghor, and Vaclav Havel

by

Christie Getman

Senior Project
Jepson School of Leadership Studies
University of Richmond
Richmond, Virginia

April 1997
I. STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

The overall goal of this research project is to do a comprehensive study that integrates an undergraduate career in leadership studies with a thorough, critical examination of a topic that is of interest to me. Since beginning course work at the Jepson School, I have felt that a majority of the theories and concepts studied have been primarily focused on the leader and the follower, and their relationship. Even in the third basic element of leadership, the situation, courses highlighting a specific context still examine the leader and follower, and only more narrowly within that particular context.

My goal is to examine the theory of transforming leadership through specific case studies of transforming leaders, and test how the element of culture affects this transforming leadership. I will be testing the extent to which the cases specific leaders are consistent with the model of transforming leadership described by James MacGregor Burns. I will attempt to contribute to the question of whether Burns’ theories can be successfully applied across different cultures and value systems, and also to look whether there are patterns of the leader’s cultural background or emergence situation among transforming leaders that support or disprove what Burns describes. There are many historical accounts of transforming leaders, but an additional goal is to place additional case studies into the model of transforming leadership.

It is my intention to insert the variable of culture into this specific leadership theory, a theory that is often conceptualized under a “western” perspective, and to examine how the cultural upbringing, or deep cultural values of the leader contributes to his or her role as a transforming leader. I believe that each case of leadership is individual,
because each case has different contributing factors. Personal values of the leader, spiritual or material motivations of the follower, history, economics, and physical climate are examples of the many factors that can contribute to the how and why of a leadership effort. Yet still we search for universals and generalizations that we can make to connect the leadership factors of each case together. We attempt to theorize and then use our connections to make predictions about future leaders or normative statements about current leaders. I have chose leaders for my case studies from three very different backgrounds and cultural contexts to test whether those backgrounds affect how the leaders prove Burn's theory about transforming leaders. I believe that among those individual and situational factors, there are some commonalties that are universal to each case of leadership. Burns attempts to make a universal statement about transforming leadership with his theory, based on several specific elements of transforming leadership. These elements are used later in the research paper as the "descriptors" of transforming leadership, outlining more specifically what a transforming leader is. No stated theory is universal or even close to it, though, without a process of researching to support it, such as this project will try to do.

The subject of the case studies that I have chosen are leaders of dramatic social change, or the so-called "Great Man" that is viewed by his or her followers, as well as writers and historians, as the man (or woman) that moved and inspired masses of people to create change. It is the personal stories of these revered leaders, chosen from across nationalities and value systems, that will be used to test the theory that Burns describes. I am not interested in autocratic leaders that achieved benevolence through force or an
oppressive social system. I will be highlighting the leaders that were chosen by their followers and inspired real change for them. Yet it is also not necessary that the leader be high-profile and glamorous. While Martin Luther King and Gandhi are remarkable examples for my study, Leopold Sedar Senghor is barely known by most Westerners yet he appears to represent the ideal popular leadership for the nation of Senegal. Much of my personal interest in supporting this theory is my own romantic notion of the great transforming leaders that inspires dramatic positive social change for the masses. Therefore, writings that apply to transforming leadership as well as historical accounts of each leader will be important material for my thesis.

Before beginning, I am already aware of some limitations that I will have for this study. These limitations are, of course, that one could write a doctoral thesis on this topic and I must narrow my focus as much as possible to be able to form some sort of conclusion. This statement of research is already the focused version of several attempts to narrow my own ideas and interests in researching transforming leadership. Therefore, I will focus on a small sampling of three "mythical" leaders and look at their cases exclusively.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The theoretical framework of this study is James MacGregor Burns' book Leadership and his theory of transforming leadership. The idea is to use that data in an almost anthropological manner, focusing on how each leader's culture affected him or her as a leader. James MacGregor Burns is the originator of the concept of transforming leadership, and in his book, Leadership, describes and defines the concept of transforming leadership. His words on the topic of transforming leadership are regarded as having the status of a universal theory, though it is only beginning to be critiqued and examined for
its actual universality. My study will attempt to contribute to the fine-tuning of the universal applications of his theory. Similarly, much research has been done biographically about great leaders, but few historians analyze their leadership style compared to other comparable leaders and current leadership theory. I will be extracting his theory of transforming leadership and his factors, then comparing it to the cases of the leaders I have chosen to see whether these case studies support theory.

From my initial scan of literature, I have found that it is important to examine the theorists and writers themselves along with the use of their literature. This will include the leadership material of James MacGregor Burns, as well as biographers and researchers on the particular leaders that have been working with. How did they carry out their research? What is the purpose of their writing? Historical and descriptive? Analytical? Comparative? What is their own background and how does it influence their research? In addition, it is also important to create a working definition of a social change or mythical leader (for my paper's purpose) to allow a frame of reference as to why each case study leader was chosen. Did all of the followers of the group agree with the leader? Did the existing or former government agree with the perception of the leader? Who, if any, were the opposition to this leader? Has this leader been honored since his lifetime or significant leader actions as a "great leader?" It is important to look at how the peoples' image of the leader is formed. Do the people themselves know the leader and know what he or she stands for? How? Have they met him? Read about him? What role does the media play in the forming of the aura of a leader and how accurate is it? From doing previous research, I have learned that many people often follow a leader for his or her charisma, since especially in more developing countries, the masses are not literate enough to truly understand the leader's opinions.

Testing an existing theory is not an easy task when the theory attempts to make a statement that covers every aspect of the subject involved. James MacGregor Burns wrote a book entitled Leadership, in which he describes a theory called "transforming
leadership.” Since the book was published in 1978, the field of leadership studies has continued to grow and more theorists have written their opinions on leadership, much like Burns. But a significant portion of what has been written is on the subject of transforming leadership, often in response to Burns, so that scholars and students alike have placed Burns’ theory of transforming leadership in a status of universality, almost as if it were a law of science. Students and professors in the Jepson School of Leadership Studies, for example, often use Burns’ theory as a foundational concept to further build and refine additional leadership concepts. But Galileo he is not, yet, at least according to many leadership scholars that serve as his critics. Burns himself, in fact, still works today to write and rewrite his own ideas, attempting to solidify that which he formed almost twenty years ago. This is not to say that transforming leadership is not a strong concept; but in my own opinion, it still needs to be tested and reworked across cultural and geographical boundaries before it reaches a status of true universality, even if that is possible. Therefore the purpose of this study is to provide a contribution to Burns’ theory of transforming leadership in order to strengthen its claim at being universal. This is not to say that there may not ever be exceptions to the theory, but like any other theory that tries to capture behavior, the stronger a statement is the more it can apply to a larger numbers of situations.

When we study leadership, a strong theory is valuable because it acts as a framework of explanation as to why something happened the way that it did, and a method of prediction for future events. The latter is the real test of a good theory. For example, one could attribute the fact that I went to bed early last night to the fact that I was fulfilling a basic need of sleep. My behavior was altered (in that I went to sleep early instead of normal time) because I had not had enough sleep several of the previous nights. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a theory that helps explain why I put off all other
activities to go to sleep early. Since sleep is a physiological need, lowest on the hierarchy, I had to satisfy that before a higher need, such as belongingness like socializing with friends (Curphy 1993).

In academics, theories are used first to explain and understand behavior and then to predict future behavior and possibly enhance or improve behavior to obtain better outcomes. Using the sleep example, Maslow’s theory would explain why I needed to go to sleep early, but it would also show me that in the future I should get my normal sleep each night as repeating my sleep depriving actions would therefore cause me to again miss other activities. In leadership, theories that help us understand a leader’s behavior could also help us understand how to be a better leader.

**Burns’ Transforming Leader**

Written in 1978, James MacGregor Burns’ book *Leadership* is known as the starting point on the theory of transforming leadership. His theory of transforming leadership is his own suggestion to a remedy for what he calls “the crisis of leadership” and in turn has become a major leadership concept that has even overflowed into other arenas, such as political science or sociology. Burns’ theory is probably the most popular and widely accepted because it offers a better alternative to current examples of ineffective or immoral leadership. The expectation about the positive potential of future leaders is restored in the fact that transforming leaders can also be identified from the past.

Burns’ book does an excellent job analyzing the concept of leadership while attempting to describe it in a concrete, logical manner. It is mostly focused on political or social change leadership, since Burns’ background is in history and political science. The
book is organized so that it first analyzes the structure and origins of leadership, and then
describes his two categories of leadership, transactional and transformational. It is his
discussion of the origins of leadership and transformational leadership that will apply to
this study primarily. Burns' general description of transforming leadership is that it occurs
when "one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leader and followers
raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality" (Burns 20: 1993). This is
the overall definition that was used in determining which leaders would be used for the
case studies. The fulfillment of this definition by leaders is naturally subject to the
interpretation of journalists, historians and scholars, though significant positive change in a
group of people motivated by a certain leader is generally observable. If I personally
interpreted a leader's actions to satisfy this description of what a transforming leader is,
they were considered for the study. This general definition creates an idea of leadership
for the purpose of change and higher moral fulfillment, which is what the three case study
leaders chosen for this study succeeded in doing. Burns also refined his theory to
delineate the leader from the followers, emphasizing the importance of the different
developments of each.

Burns' discussion of leadership then comes closer to dealing with the cultural
context of leaders as he examines the psychological development of a leader. Because a
culture's influence on a member of that culture is related to their psychological being, the
psychological development of a person can be used in the context of a culture and
therefore give indications to the influence that the culture provides. For example, Burns
draws parallels between the childhoods of three "great" leaders, similar to the multiple-
case study method of this study, yet they are three leaders from very different cultural contexts. Here he treats cross-cultural transforming leaders in the same manner, assuming that their psychological characteristics of development are the same. But although Burns looks at leaders from varying geographical locations and cultural backgrounds, including Hitler, Ghandi, Lenin, Mao and the French Philosophes, he deals with their cases of leadership from a historical causation point of view, noting that each leader’s psychological development and the history of their society influenced the leader’s behavior. He does little, however, to discuss the cultural values within leaders’ societies and how each transforming leader differs because of their cultural background. The book Leadership, therefore, serves as the primary resource for the study as well as offering a presumed small opening for further research on the cultural context of transforming leaders.

**Burns’ Factors of a Transforming Leader’s Cultural Background**

Included in the hypothesis of this study that is described in the methodology section of the paper are three premises that the study is based on: one being specific factors that make up a transforming leader’s cultural background and the second being the universally accepted and recognized nature of Burns’ theory of transforming leadership, by scholars and students. The hypothesis itself says that the three case-study leaders will fit into the specific elements that Burns describes, in a similar manner and regardless of their cultural background. Beyond those elements laid out by Burns, I have hypothesized that there may be additional patterns found among the three transforming leaders.
After careful examination of Burns’ book *Leadership* and his description of a transforming leader, it seems that there is very little discussion of the cultural context of a transforming leader. Burns does not articulate at all what factor culture plays in the formation of a transforming leader. What does exist, however, is the psychological basis of which Burns’ theory is formed. In his psychological description of leadership development, he uses psychoanalytical theory to underlie what makes a transforming leader. It is through this psychological basis (mainly found in his section about the “origins of leadership”) that Burns creates universal factors of a leader’s background. Instead of handling the issue of culture and how it affects leadership in different or possibly similar ways, he uses psychology with the premise that all human beings have similar elements of the psyche.

Although Burns does not deal with culture specifically, for the purposes of this study we will use Burns’ psychological factors of leadership as those described in the hypothesis for this study. It is still relevant to look at the psychological factors of leadership and apply the case studies of the three leaders to see if Burns’ theory is confirmed by leaders from diverse cultural backgrounds. In fact, Burns himself is conscious of his own limitations in the area of culture, admitting that an understanding of leadership is “inescapably culture-bound.” This could also indicate that a study of societal and psychological factors could have a direct relationship to cultural factors of leadership. Hopefully, this study will support this idea. Although Burns expands little more on his acknowledgment of culture in creating leadership theory, he also admits that “psychoanalysis is a particularly Western invention and practice...it may ignore or
misperceive certain psychological motives or cultural attitudes that could be the major sources of influence of leadership in other cultures" (50). One of the major motivations for this research is this exact idea that this type of work is culturally determined, with this study attempting to broaden the reach of theory across cultures.

In addition to Western construction of psychoanalysis and the omission of culture, Burns also conditions his discussion of leadership origins by recognizing the fallibility of a single theory of historical causation. Consequently, this also limits the use of one person as a case study of causation of leadership, because of the unknowns of the actual follower interaction and validity of sources. Renowned populist or transforming leaders tend also to be inflated by the press, which makes the accuracy of what the leader actually did blur with the visibility of the leader within the situation.

James MacGregor Burns' core definition of transforming leadership is that it is “a person concerned with values, purposes, and ends that transcend immediate practical needs” (163). This person can unite ideas and data through experience and imagination, as well as values that are linked with political action. Burns also asserts that the transforming leader has at one point experienced a conflict within themselves, as well as a time of social and intellectual conflict around them. Essentially, Burns breaks up the origins of leadership and the psychological factors that affect it more specifically into three categories. It is these elements of origin that most closely correlate with how culture would affect a leader, such as when they are young and forming their sense of self and a world view. The three psychological factor include 1) what we call “self-psychological needs,” 2) family relations, and 3) peer group or outside influence on actual emergence. It
is these three factors of leadership origin that will be used as the universals with which to compare each case-study leader.

The first factor can be described as the individual psychological needs or aspects of self-development. Burns describes certain aspects of the individual psyche that translate into precursors for transforming leadership. Burns describes a transforming leader as having a "static definition of self;" which then correlates to the vital leadership quality which is empathy, or consideration of other people's feelings and perspectives (100). The idea of personal conflict at some point in a leader's life explains how he or she may have sifted through personal issues to find a strong sense of self. True transforming leadership, being highly moral, much have both the elements of strong self-confidence and self-understanding, as well as empathy for others.

In looking at why an individual becomes a transforming leader, Burns generalizes that political motivation, or the translation of an individual recognizing a community need and then organizing to act to "solve it" is the result of unfulfilled esteem needs (113). Burns "generalizes across cultures about fundamental human needs and their implications for leadership in two significant respects, the frustration of needs and their gratification" (69). In other words, those that have specific individual needs, such as self-actualization, and recognize it, are likely to have the ambition for political leadership. Furthermore, if the individual has other "developmental needs and the capacity for social role-taking" (94), he will be more likely to complete his own transforming leader potential. The self-esteem needs that Burns is referring to are derived from Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (xxx citation??), which describe certain levels of fundamental psychological needs. This is
where Burns offers specific distinction between positive transforming leaders and those
that merely serve as symbols for leadership but are only fulfilling their own basic self-
confidence needs. Those that are striving to fulfill lower needs do not fulfill the
functionality of a leader, while those individuals that have already satisfied their own lower
needs can concentrate on fulfilling higher needs. These “higher needs” include a sense of
morality and empathy for helping others to meet their own lower, subsistence needs as
well as rise to a higher level of needs.

Since Burns agrees with Maslow that all humans have the same basic hierarchy of
needs, he is claiming that all transforming leaders, cross-culturally, will have universal
factors of high psychological need with other intervening variables that inspire the actual
leader emergence. Burns does assert, however, that “it is the manifestations of those
various needs that will of course vary from culture to culture” (69). Perhaps what the
global public sees as the transforming leader of different cultural styles is simply different
ways of fulfilling universal psychological needs of the community. An issue for further
study, since Burns relies so heavily on psychological theory, especially Maslow, would be
to test the universality of human psychological needs.

The second psychological factor that Burns cites as essential to the formation of
the transforming leader is family relations and upbringing. Burns describes the most
common experience of anyone in their formative years, across cultures, is “close
association with a parent or parents during the first several years of life.” Within those
familial systems, however, what shapes a child toward leadership is the opportunity to
respond to different roles, reason on their own, act on their own needs, and share family
leadership. These seem to be the factors that separate active leaders from more passive followers (81).

To provide more specific examples to Burns' theory about family relations of transforming leaders, he looks at the case of Ghandi and his childhood and psychological background. He examines it according to the family relations theory of Erik Erikson in that Ghandi had an almost Oedipal complex in his close relationship with his mother and love/hate relationship with his father. Burns theorizes, however, that his parents gave him enough freedom that he learned how to compensate for his feelings of inferiority himself, making himself feel original and superior. In his discussion of family relations of transforming leaders, Burns does a simple multiple-case study as he draws parallels between Ghandi, Stalin, and Hitler by recognizing their close relationships with their fathers and love/hate feelings for their fathers, equating this to their esteem needs of power. Stalin and Hitler would both satisfy Bass' description of pseudotransforming leaders, or as Burns describes, those only acting as a symbol, and not functioning. They were still fulfilling lower psychological needs instead of looking towards the true needs of others. Burns' use of Ghandi, however, is curious since he places him in a parallel sense with the other two leaders based on family relations, yet he does not distinguish here how the family relations connect to positive (true) or negative transforming power of each.

The last psychological factor of transforming leadership is peer group or outside influence on actual emergence. What Burns says complements the individual psyche of the potential transforming leader is peer groups, political schooling, exposure, etc., that "molds social attitudes. The process influences the content of adolescent views on
politics.” Those with a higher sense of political efficacy, where they feel as if they have their own sense of political authority and sense of purpose, coupled with the formed sense of self, become a strong follower and eventually political leader (56). In addition, Burns cites several other activators of political involvement that are the launch pad for a transforming leader to realize his potential. They include: face to face interaction with those already involved, membership in groups or associations, efforts of political parties or popular movements, as well as appeals by public and private communication (130). Burns asserts that it is one of these factors of outside influence that push the transforming leader into the public arena, acting for his cause.

Other Works on Transforming Leadership

After Burns wrote his ideas about moral leadership and social change, or what he called transforming leadership, there have been many authors to comment on his notions, both from the organizational genre and the more traditional political-type leadership field. Most notably, however, has been Bernard M. Bass and his application of transforming leadership to the organization, looking at leaders and managers and their abilities to motivate positive change among a group of people. Bass breaks down transforming leadership into four components with which to judge whether a leaders is truly transformational. His four components include idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass 1993). Bass’ research brings the idea of a positive and influential leader into the working world, closely examine both the leader, and more importantly, the followers, for the role that they play in organizational change. Burns looks at transforming leadership in the political arena as
being highly conditional to the leader and how he or she successfully inspires and transforms the follower. Bass, on the other hand, characterizes the follower also, by analyzing the position of the follower and how the leader can adjust to the follower’s needs to most effectively transform them. Bass still focuses on what the leader does, in contrast to theories that look at what the followers do in the leadership process, but it is a step beyond looking at followers as one transformable mass without individual situations, as Burns tends to do. An additional difference between Burns and Bass’ use of transforming leadership is that when Bass inserts the organization into the concept of transforming leadership, I think he loses the main concept of transforming the people to a higher moral level. Although members of an organization can be transformed in their goals for their own work, perhaps changing them from self-fulfillment to some overall benefit for the company, I disagree with the idea that the leader of a business could morally transform his or her employees in the same manner that Burns’ transforming leader would inspire moral social change.

It is this absence of social change and influence for which Richard Couto also criticizes Bass’ use of the term transforming leadership. In his article, “The Transformation of Transforming Leadership,” Couto explains that Bass has changed the original meaning of the theory as he applied it to organizations. Bass describes transformational leadership as a more one-way process that implies an elevated change of state with more highly motivated followers who work together to materialize the vision presented by the leader. Even if the followers in this organizational scenario create the vision with the leader, it is not the same degree of ethical transformation. In contrast,
Burns' transforming leader engages in a process with the followers where the followers also transform the leader (Couto 1993). This is an important distinction for this particular study in that we will be working with transforming leadership as Burns described it; leadership that inspires positive social change.

Several other writers have attempted to lend their own contributions to the concept of transforming leadership, but few have critiqued the validity or coherence of Burns' theory in the way that Michael Keeley does in his article, "The Trouble with Transformational Leadership (1995).” Although Keeley does use the term transformational leadership, it is clear that he is applying his criticism to the overall concept of a leader morally raising the followers to partake in the achievement of a common goal. He asserts that for the followers to buy into the common goal, they are often swept up in charisma and that, in turn, opens the potential for corruption or unethical visions. Keeley believes that governments and organizations need to create institutions to guard against or even prevent the occurrence of tyrannical transforming leadership.

In response to this question of ethics within transforming leadership, Bass responds with his own clause that TRUE transforming leaders, by definition, are ethical and would not take advantage of the power given to them by their follower. He asserts that leadership of this type is necessary and has proven itself necessary so as to confirm the validity of transforming leadership. He explains that it is pseudotransformational leaders whose common goals are really special interests, and who “are more likely to
foment envy, hate, greed, and conflict rather than altruism, harmony and cooperation” (Bass 1996).

What all this discussion about transformational leadership adds to this study is the point that transformational leadership is a concept based in values of what is wrong and what is right. Bass admits that his two distinctions are ideal types of leaders, but as he continues on to pull examples of transformational and pseudotransformational leaders from history, he places each leader in one category or another. And yet this itself proves my point that there is a need for a discussion of transforming leadership in a cultural context, since the construction of culture is based in values. What Burns and Keeley and especially Bass are doing is to allow ethical judgments into the framework of the theory from their own concept of what is ethical. They are assuming a system of absolute morality without a statement of what absolute morality is. It is Bernard Bass’ own sense of what is right or wrong that places the conditions on pseudotransformational leadership. Furthermore, all of this discussion takes place within the confines of a “western” perspective among authors with “western,” or more specifically American, backgrounds. Even among the most respected authors of leadership theory, in my opinion there is an absence of recognition about the cultural perspective with which the work was written.

Inserting Culture into the Leadership Discussion

Needless to say, the amount of research on culture and leadership is limited. Bass et al. do take his “transformed” definition of transformational leadership with its four specific components and apply it to organizations in collectivistic cultures, including Japan, China and Israel. He notes that more collectivistic cultures lend themselves to the
concept of transformational leadership better than American society because it is easier for people that are more group-oriented to buy into the "higher cause" ideas of a transforming leader. Americans, in contrast, tend to be more individualistic and hesitate to give up their own goal to those of a transformed group. Nevertheless, Bass indicates that further research could be done related to both concepts (Jung 1995). This article gives an indication that leadership theory could be founded upon a familiar value framework as other cultures and therefore successfully applied to that culture. However, there are many cultures that embody traditions and values completely opposite to those of a collectivistic nature and in these cases a westernized construction of leadership theory may not successfully translate cross-culturally.

Geert Hofstede seems to be one of the few leadership theorists that aggressively tackles the idea of applying modern leadership theory to other cultures. Although Hofstede works in an organizational setting and applies the concept of management more than the true concept of transforming leadership, his overall applications are important because of how he looks at the question. He examines the issue in a way that looks at the deeper values and traditions of a group of people related to how each group's society is constructed and how it receives western leadership. His example of the French notion of strong class divisions in society that translate into the workplace make perfect sense as to why the western notion of give-and-take manager-worker relationships were not well accepted. Managers were of a higher social class than workers and had no reason to gain the support of workers since it was the worker's cultural responsibility to serve the manager (Hofstede 1993). The implications of this study could include the idea of how a
culture changes or alters itself to support change, such as occurs within transforming leadership, or even how a transforming leader must be able to change his or her styles according to the cultural values of a society.

Hofstede has also performed more scientific research in cross-cultural applications of management theories as cited in his 1980 article, “Motivation, Leadership, and Organizations: Do American Theories Apply Abroad?” Here he placed national culture into four dimensions and compared employee motivation, attitudes, management styles and organizational structure across nations, then analyzing how the deeply-ingrained dimensions of cultural values of the nation affected these aspects of the workplace. Although this deals primarily with the workplace and could be related to Bass’ definition of transformational leadership, it offers a good implication that a parallel study is needed for looking at transforming leadership and political or social change issues.

Case Studies as a Contribution

Geert Hofstede defined culture in 1993 as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes one group or category of people from another.” Anthropologists would extend that definition to include the fundamental values and traditions that shape a way of life for a group of people. Most people today understand the concept, however, because of an increasingly global world that makes interaction with another culture almost inevitable on a daily basis. In the news we read about leaders in other cultures doing things that we disagree with, or about our leaders trying to negotiate or persuade foreign leaders to change their position in some sort of compromise. Nevertheless, it is always evident which leader is considered a transforming leader by the American point of view,
and that leader is almost always portrayed in a favorable light. This study looks at three leaders from this century that were considered great transforming leaders and examines how their cultural backgrounds fit (or don’t fit) into the definition of transforming leadership as Burns originally described it.

All three leaders, Du Bois, Senghor, and Havel were considered transforming leaders by their own people and by international historians as well. They each expressed their visions for a better society that the followers could identify with as well as partake in. An additional commonality between the three leaders is that they clearly expressed their intentions through their writings. Their lives are well documented in biographies and there are numerous authors who serve as expert historians on the lives and cultural backgrounds of each leader. In addition, original works by each of the three leaders are available for consultation and insight into the leader’s values, though the political or social statements of the leaders do not explicitly describe their cultural upbringing in the same way that biographers do.

In general, after searching the material on the subject of cultural applications of leadership theory, some strong initial contributions have been made. However, few theorists have yet to grapple with cultural applications of more complex theories like transforming leadership. What Burns asserted in his monumental book, now twenty years ago, is still impacting and affecting the arena of leadership studies. But with the strong role that the United States plays in foreign affairs and also in exporting concepts of leadership, it still surprises me that more attempts at this research has not yet been made. The window is wide open for experts in leadership, sociology, anthropology, political
science, and international relations to deal with this idea. This study, with its mere three-fold repetition of a hypothesis, is only a drop in the bucket of the larger potential.

III. METHOD

The data for this research came mostly from materials already written, available in our library, through inter library loan, and through the exposure from professors or classes. It was important to use as many primary resources as possible, in order to receive the most unbiased account of a leader. It was also necessary to work closely with all the leadership professors that are familiar with this question, both to obtain written resources and to interview them for their personal insights.

In addition to leadership professors in the leadership school, I am also interested in contacting Dr. Burns and other leadership scholars who have written on transforming leadership, to obtain their opinion on this issue. Dr. Burns will be visiting toward the end of the semester and I am interested in speaking with him about my ideas.

The main limitation on the use of historians' accounts of leaders is that a leader who is held up to a mythical standard is more likely to be portrayed that way in any sort of a biography or historical account. More critical analysis or opposition may be phased out as the leader takes on more and more of a "mythical" aura. The only way to handle this bias is to also report in the study the type of research done by the author and what biases he or she individually could hold.

The goal of my method is to test the theory of transforming leadership as described by James MacGregor Burns, and apply them to three individual case studies. The objective is to test, by supporting or disproving, the elements of Burns’ theory about transforming leaders for their applicability across different cultural contexts. There are
many historical accounts of transformational leaders, but my goal is to use leadership theory to test whether there are similar elements among each transforming leader.

In order to test some small aspects of Burns’ theory of transforming leaders, I have used three leaders who come from different cultural orientations, the culture of each leader assumed to be different from Burns’ more “Americanized” background of a transforming leadership framework. The leaders include Vaclav Havel, W.E.B. Du Bois (sub-culture of the Harlem Renaissance), and Leopold Senghor. These leaders were selected specifically by myself from three very different cultural backgrounds. They all satisfy my interpretation of Burns’ general description of a transforming leader, since they all transformed a group of people to a higher moral level. Each leader is considered a “populist leader” by their followers, and have practically the same high degree of reverence among their followers. They were, however, also chosen for their diversity of culture and geography, each being from a different part of the world. In addition, each leader made his emergence through the arts, by writing his ideas about current leadership in a more creative format before being recognized as a popular leader. This aspect of each leader was chosen to be a control variable, to create some initial commonality.

I have attempted to prove Burns’ theory through deductive reasoning, which says that “if the premises are correct, then the conclusion is automatically correct (McMillan 1993).” I have created a hypothesis for my study and according to the hypothetic-deductive approach of research, which, assuming that the premises are correct, will support or disprove my hypothesis using the data from historical accounts of the three case studies.
HYPOTHESIS

Premise #1: Transforming leadership, as described by James MacGregor Burns, includes certain specific factors of the leader's cultural background.

Premise #2: Burns' theory of transforming leadership is used as a universal theory, applying all elements of transforming leadership to all transforming leaders.

Premise #3: All leaders who are transforming should have all of the elements that Burns describes.

Hypothesis:
A.) The three chosen case studies, identified as "transforming leaders" by the general definition, will fit into the elements/descriptors of transforming leaders as described by Burns, regardless of their cultural context.

B.) There may be other patterns among the three leaders that could be related to cultural background, beyond what Burns describes.

The use of the three leaders will be in the form of a multiple-case study, which follows the logic of a literal replication, meaning that "the same results are predicted for each of the three cases, thereby producing evidence that the three cases did indeed involve the same syndrome." What this means is that the three cases will be used as if they were multiple experiments, not a sample of a larger group that would contribute to a universal statement (Yin 1989). The results of this paper will attempt to contribute more material and substance to Burns' theory, not make a new general theory or proof. Most likely, it will simply provide implications for further research.

In order to have a frame of reference in critiquing or proving an aspect of Burns' theory, I have researched transforming leadership, looking for studies or statements that also attempt to refine transforming leadership. In addition, writers that examine leadership
within a cultural context aid in defining how cultural variables affect leadership overall and how the conditions and values within a society changes the demands and perceptions of a leader. The concept of charismatic leadership is also often equated with similar situations as transforming leadership, especially in cases of leaders of tremendous social change. There is extensive work being done on leadership theories, so it is also be necessary to work closely with leadership professors that are familiar with this question, both to obtain written resources and to interview them for their personal insights and recommendations for research materials. The computer networks, however, have an excellent database of psychological research as well as dissertation abstracts, which will contribute material to support or refute my hypothesis.

My overall hypothesis includes the conclusion that these great leaders of social change, or transforming leaders, will have certain things in common with one another, regardless of their cultural background. The end result of their actions, being a transcendance of the leader and the follower to a higher moral place may be similar from case to case. However, I would speculate that beyond Burns’ theory, one may find elements of a leader’s background and culture that affect how he or she leads and accomplishes this transformation. In my previous leadership research experiences I have found that the context of the situation plays a large role in why or how that particular leader is able to grasp the trust and loyalty of the masses and inspire social change.
IV. PRESENTATION OF DATA

After a thorough, critical examination of Burns’ theory of transforming leadership as well as three well known and highly regarded “populist leaders,” it is now possible to have a clearer view as to the theory’s cross-cultural application. This section will contain three sections, each describing the early life of the case-study leader and the cultural influence that did or did not contribute to his leadership style. Each description will be based on the explication of Burns’ transforming leadership theory as described in the literature review section of this paper entitled, “Burns’ Factors of a Transforming Leader’s Cultural Background.” Lastly will be a synthesis of the two sections, with an analysis of the findings and further implications for study.

Transforming Leader Case Studies

At this point, the study looks at the three leaders that were chosen to serve as case-study leaders to confirm or disprove the cultural aspect of Burns’ transforming leader theory. Since Burns does not articulate or barely recognize cultural factors, his psychological factors, mainly the three general areas that were listed previously along with the one main definition, will be used instead. Each leaders’ life will be looked at from a general historical perspective, focusing on their early years until the point in which they emerge into public leadership. Beyond placing the leaders’ lives into the context of the existing theory, we will then examine any other similarities or differences among the three leaders that may serve as cultural factors.
W.E.B DuBois

W.E.B. DuBois was a leader of the American black community in the early 20th century. His accomplishments stretched far beyond his role as a professor, author, and organizer of several national and international organizations such as the NAACP. His message and his overall vision are what made him appear to be a transforming leader to his followers and to many of the biographers that have chosen to recount his life story.

According to the general description that Burns provides for the transforming leader, Du Bois does qualify since his overall concerns stretch way beyond everyday basic needs for himself. His personal mission in life was to have the task of removing all color bars to the progress of his people as he sought to appeal to advance American self-interest and an enlightened world public opinion as levers to raise the cause of Black freedom to the level of national and world politics. (Clarke x)

In this sense, Du Bois seems to have worked only for the sincere betterment of a people, to help teach them how to live under and higher concept of morality. His loyalty was with a cause, and although he communicated much of his message through his writing, he still found the loyalty of many followers by way of his words, thereby ensuring that he was not a “pseudotransforming leader” merely acting as a symbol.

Getting into more of the detail of Burns’ description of the elements of a transforming leader, Du Bois’ life seems to confirm what Burns would expect from a true transforming leader. The historical evidence about his life, in particular during his younger years, indicates that he grew up with a strong family network, although he was responsible for much of he and his mother’s life, that instilled self-confidence and a strong sense of self
within him. This, in turn, allowed DuBois to focus his energy to a higher cause that he empathized with, and worked to transform people for the good of the society.

1) Individual Psychological Needs:

- **"Static Definition of Self:"** In my opinion, Du Bois seems to be extremely secure in his sense of self considering that he did extremely well in school for being a poor child in deep New England, an area virtually without any other blacks. His early youth seems almost picture perfect until he grew a little older and dealt with the idea that the color of his skin made him different (Hamilton 12). Working through the issue of race and his role in it, this experience, as well as his trip to Germany in 1892, Du Bois may have had these “personal conflicts” that helped him to gain a more static understanding of himself.

- **Empathy:** Du Bois did not develop his own empathy or sense of a higher cause above his own until 1885 when he studied at Fisk College in Tennessee, where he experienced “first hand the southern prejudice and discrimination.” He met people living in extreme poverty as well as being victims of racial violence. “Between 1885 and 1895, 1,700 blacks were lynched in the U.S. “ (Hamilton 25). His personal writings describe how witnessing the situation every day gave him empathy for the people around him.

- **Satisfaction of Needs:** It is difficult to tell from historical accounts the psychological state that Du Bois was in. Logically, he seems to have been working towards fulfilling a higher need of a moral contribution to the world, since his own sustenance needs had been met by his close family network as a child and his educational opportunities.
2) Family Relations:

- **Close family Network:** Burns cites family relations as being a factor in leadership development and Du Bois' biographers relate how he also had a close relationship with his mother and a strong resentment yet basic love type of relationship with his father. When his father left him and his mother, Du Bois was brought up by the rest of his extended family as well as his mother. In addition to having a close, supporting network, Du Bois also seems to have the ability to do things on his own and share leadership of the family.

3) Peer Groups or Other Influences:

- **Peer groups and Other Emergence Factors:** Burns essentially looks at other influences on a potential leader's life to be the thing which pushes the individual into the leadership arena, therefore acting on their own self-confidence and empathy for the social issue. After receiving degrees from Fisk University and Harvard, as well as teaching at several prominent universities, Du Bois describes how he had experienced empathy for oppressed southern blacks yet also understood the issue and had formulated ideas to solve it. It was after Du Bois joined political organizations such as the Pan-African Congress and the NAACP, that he became active in strongly expressing his opinion for change.

- **Sense of Political Efficacy:** Even though he or she may be involved in associations or popular movements, Burns asserts that a leader must also have a sense that he or she is
capable of turning ideas and political associations into successful action before the leader will step into that leadership role. He became known for his political and social statements in his NAACP publication *The Crisis* as well as speeches he made around the world, as well as participated in the organization of several international conferences. In this sense, although Du Bois had various political memberships and associations which may have equated to a strong sense of political efficacy, his political efficacy did not equate into as much actual mobilization of followers as it did a facilitation of discussion about racial issues.

Léopold Sédar Senghor

Léopold Sédar Senghor was a leader from Senegal who, through his writings of poetry and prose, was the leader of a movement of large-scale social and political change in Senegal and much of Africa, called Negritude. This movement, an affirmation of black culture in the face of French colonialism, eventually resulted in Senegal’s independence in 1960. It was Senghor who turned his talent as a poet into a way of expressing his views about the world and inspiring the people of Senegal and Africa to insist on freedom.

Placing Senghor into the context of a transforming leader, such as Burns describes in his overall definition, Senghor’s life seems to me in every way concerned with a higher moral purpose as his concerns for his own life mission lie within the status of his fellow black people and the legitimization of African culture. In the general sense of a transforming leader, Senghor serves as an ideal example of someone who led a group of followers to a higher moral ground, and has since been raised to an almost legendary or
mythical status for the work that he did for Senegalese independence. In leading the movement for African affirmation and independence of French colonies, he also showed millions of Africans their own worth and capability to govern their own nation. Growing up in a tribal culture in a rural area of Africa, the cultural context of this leader would seem to play a large role in the formation of Senghor as a transformational leader, but according to some of the elements that Burns describes, Senghor’s psychological background does not satisfy one hundred percent of what Burns would expect.

1) Individual Psychological Needs:

- "Static Definition of Self:" Having grown up in the Serer tribal culture of Senegal, community and understanding were described by historians as the main values that Senghor was introduced to as a child. He was a smart student and offered many educational opportunities through the colonial school system, yet his Catholic baptism and Western name (Leopold) caused him to be immersed within the system of the French despite his traditional tribal heritage (Spleth 1). Senghor did, however, have a period which Burns would describe as a “personal conflict” where he faced a very difficult experience and it forced him to grow emotionally as he worked through it. Arriving in Paris as a young adult, Senghor realized that it was not enough to be educated like a Frenchman in colonial schools in order for him to be treated like a Frenchman. His skin color, for example, was not white. It is interesting that although much of Senghor’s work is characterized as being symbolic and mythical for the
people of Western Africa, Senghor at least began his work writing about himself and
his own struggles and frustrations, not
necessarily that of his fellow man in Africa.

**Empathy:** Senghor did certainly create poetry and ideas about the affirmation of
African culture based upon his perspective of the oppression of African culture under a
system of French colonialism. During his twenties, he studied in Paris and then taught
and began writing his poetry. While there, he met with other Africans and shared
stories of Africa and the Caribbean islands and created the Association of West
African Students. They published commentaries about French colonialism, and this
may have been where Senghor developed much of his empathy for the African
situation (Ibid. 10). Other than some campaigning for a political office he would later
hold as representative of Senegal to France, Senghor did not seem to have much daily
contact with the people of Senegal in order to truly empathize with their life situation.

**Satisfaction of Needs:** Throughout his life, Senghor seems caught between the idea
of an elite French world with assimilated Africans, and independent, self-determining
Africans. One could question whether in his leadership role in Senegal, Senghor was
looking for a personal legitimization that he may have not had as a Catholic black in a
colonial school system or later, teaching in Paris, as an African in the European world
of academia. There is little biographical insight into Senghor’s psychological security,
but his strong ideas and vision are consistent with the fact that he was working
towards higher needs.
2) Family Relations:

- **Close Family Network:** As described above, Senghor came from a rural town in Senegal with a strong sense of community. His family has been described as large and loving, and under the matrilineal system of the Serer tribe to which Senghor belonged, he lived with his mother and her family. All of the friends and family took part in raising the children, and in teaching Senghor the beauty and value of his heritage. Senghor also had a close relationship with his mother. His father, having several other wives and a prosperous groundnut business, was not present in Senghor’s life much except to dictate his educational path.

3) Peer Groups or Other Influences:

- **Peer Groups or Other Emergence Factors:** Senghor’s work in Paris with other African and Caribbean students was a large part of the motivating factor that led to Senghor becoming involved in the political action and commentary of black affirmation. He was at the same time introduced to other leaders and their ideas, such as Karl Marx, as well as black African leaders in France at the time, which may have contributed to Senghor’s role in making his ideas become a political objective.

**Sense of Political Efficacy:** After being drafted by France into World War II in 1939, Senghor, like all black soldiers, found themselves fighting equally with Frenchmen, and for the first time, a marked sense of capability came out of the African colonies. Senghor was invited to serve as the Deputy of Senegal to the French National
Assembly in 1946 by DeGualle himself, and thus the African voice came to be heard by France (Markovitz 13)

Vaclav Havel

As a playwright, Vaclav Havel became a leader in the Czech Republic by being an instrumental organizer and writer leading up to and during the Velvet Revolution which began in 1989. His high profile leadership role and “consistent and unflinching opposition” to the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia has earned him the description of a transforming leader (Kavan 224). According to what Burns would again describe as a transforming leader, Havel, both during his leadership in the Velvet Revolution as well as afterwards as President of the Czech Republic, seems to have been concerned with higher ideas that affected his fellow countrymen, helping everyone to reach a transcendent state of moral development for themselves as members of their nation. Havel’s political philosophy of living life through truth seems almost Kantian in nature as he prescribes a life of moral virtue that equates into virtuous political leadership. His moral development and psychological upbringing indicate some factors that may be contrary to Burns’s description of a transforming leader, and he most likely would not qualify as a transforming leader, though his leadership seems to be that of an ideal transforming leader.

1) Individual Psychological Needs:

- “Static Definition of Self.” Havel seems to be the one leader that had little self-security as a result of being the child of a bourgeois family in a working class school
In describing his own feelings of “Growing up ‘Outside,’” Havel was “ashamed of [his] advantages” and consequently felt and was made felt by his peers, to be “alone, inferior, lost and ridiculed” (Havel 5). His experiences affected him throughout his life, he admits, and are reflected in his own “class struggle” opinions about the world.

- **Empathy:** In 1968, at the age of 32, Havel was working on a book about political exiles and traveled throughout American and Western Europe talking to people exiled from Czechoslovakia since 1948, discussing with them the political situation and obtaining opinions about the potential conditions in which they would voluntarily return. This venture seems to be an experience of Havel’s that gave him first hand exposure to the oppressions of the political system, thereby creating empathy for his countrymen as he became involved with the cause.

- **Satisfaction of Needs:** In looking at Havel’s youth and lifetime feelings of insecurity and “outsideness” it does seem to me, based on historian and his own accounts, that Havel is working to fulfill his own need of affirmation and inclusion within something important and influential. In Maslow’s hierarchy, this would be a lower or middle level need of security, belongingness or esteem, and not self-actualization needs that Burns implies a transforming leader works for. An interesting question, however, is whether Havel could serve as an effective transforming leader while still meeting his own psychological needs.

2) Family Relations:
• **Close Family Network:** There is little indication by literature as to Havel’s family relationships when he was young. His father was present in the family, working as an advisor to a national administrator. In 1948, Havel’s family was forced to move out of Prague to a small border town, as part of a campaign by the government to drive out all of the bourgeois. Through this, his family must have become a close knit unit, though there is little mention of Havel’s relationship to his mother or father.

3) **Peer Groups or Other Influences:**

• **Peer Groups or Other Emergence Factors:** Throughout the years, Havel has been involved with a considerable number of people in political or philosophic groups, especially considering that the Velvet Revolution grew out of an underground network of revolutionaries like Havel. At the age of fifteen, Havel was a leader of an intellectual discussion group that called themselves the “Thirty-Sixers,” made up of his friends from primary school, secondary school and other associations. The group did a lot of writing to express opinions, and this is where Havel cultivated his skill for writing poetry and other expressive works.

• **Sense of Political Efficacy:** One could speculate that it was a result of Havel’s youth of feeling excluded because of his higher class background that enabled him to express himself without any concerns for the consequences for what he said. He certainly had a sense of political authority and purpose, yet it is unknown at what point he felt that his opinions would affect society and the actions society implemented. What is clear, however, is that Havel did not want or attempt to create the solutions for the problems
he identified, suggesting that that was the job of a politician and he was not interested in politics. He served as "an observer and a critic" (Havel 8).

IV. ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

After looking at the case studies of W.E.B. DuBois, Leopold Senghor, and Vaclav Havel based on their psychological developments as children, it is now possible to assess how this relates to their individual cultures. Although this project relies heavily on the assumption that an individual's psychological upbringing contributes to the values and behaviors of a person, it can also be assumed that culture affects an individual in a similar way. Therefore, the first conclusions will be made based on the case study leaders and their support of Burns' theory. The second conclusion will be made based on how culture relates to these leaders' support of the theory of transforming leadership.

The first conclusion is that not all leaders satisfied all the elements of transforming leadership that Burns described. What this means is that either the leaders chosen were not transforming leaders to begin with, or else Burns' theory, and the factors that make up the theory, are not applicable to every case of transforming leadership. Because each leader fit into Burn's general description of transforming leadership, each should also satisfy the more specific elements that Burns describes. What the research showed, however, is that each leader, though seemingly transforming in the contribution he made to the society, did not necessarily fit into each descriptor of a transforming leader.

W.E.B. DuBois, from the historical data about his life, seems to have most all of the elements that Burns describes about transforming leaders. His individual psychological
needs seem to be at a rather high level, he had a close family relationship where he shared leadership roles as he was growing up, and he had some strong outside influences that gave him the opportunity to step forward as a leader. Leopold Senghor, the second leader chosen for a case study, also satisfied what Burns would describe as a transforming leader in his efforts to raise the moral standards and lives of his countrymen. Senghor's life seems to fit Burns's descriptors also, except for the issue of the satisfaction of his personal needs. The idea that Senghor spent a majority of his young life attempting to be legitimately French, yet works for the affirmation of an African culture, brings forth the question of whether Senghor had his intentions in also furthering his own status in French society. This might indicate a psychological insecurity, such as the need for Senghor to feel accepted by the French in the French society. The strong ideas that are expressed through his writing also show, however, that even if he was concerned with his own social position, he also worked for the higher needs of his nation. Lastly, Vaclav Havel is a good example of a leader that appears to be transforming yet may have some significant psychological issues that could, according to the leadership factors extrapolated from Burns, undermine the sincerity of Havel's leadership. One could say that Havel is not a transforming leader according to Burns or else disproves Burns's description of what transforming leadership requires. His overall psychological needs do not seem to have been met as he is leading the country through a revolution. He has severe issues of security that seem to stem from when he was a child and viewed as an outsider by schoolmates for years. In addition, there was no extensive information about Havel's
family life, which may indicate that he did not have a family life, especially with notable relationships, worth mentioning.

What this conclusion indicates, however, is that although the factors of a transforming leader may be a good way to identify a strong transforming leader, it seems that some leaders may fulfill only some of the factors, or may fulfill a factor in more than one way, and still be a strong transforming leader. An additional implication of this conclusion, however, is the clearer ability to identify and analyze those transforming leaders that become corrupt. Severe deviation from a set of elements that Burns describes could also predict that a leader appears to be transforming yet has other personal issues to satisfy. This is a likely point for the integrity of the leader to break down.

A second conclusion of this study is the fact that close family roles and the opportunity to share leadership within the family seems consistent in its contribution to a psychologically developed transforming leader that satisfies Burns’ factors. Both DuBois and Senghor, who had very marked cases of close family relations, including extended family, seem to also fit into all the other areas of transforming leadership. Havel, in contrast, had little noted relations with his family and as he grew up in a bourgeois family in a private school, also had little opportunities to serve small leadership roles himself. In his case, therefore, he may have been more likely to pursue leadership roles for self-satisfying needs than those of his country. Havel was also the one leader who appeared to have a lower degree of psychological development compared to the other two cases. The element of high psychological development, therefore, could be similar to family relations in its consistency among the three leaders. Furthermore, from this piece of
knowledge we can also insert our own future predictions about transforming leadership, also a purpose of testing a theory such as Burns'. It might be generalized that children who are closely nurtured by their family and extended family, yet are also allowed to partake in leadership roles within the family are more likely to partake in leadership roles later on in life. This proves one of the initial research goals for analyzing this theory by providing a prediction for future leadership cases.

The last conclusion that can be made about this data is that of culture and how it relates to these psychological issues that Burns describes. For this study, it seems that cultural values are most evident and create the most discrepancies among the three leaders in the areas of outside influences, including peer groups and political efficacy. What this means is that the place where each leader seemed the most affected by his cultural context is in his associations with other people like himself. Senghor, for example, when living in Paris and associating with other Africans there, realized his own leadership potential and the need for the society to be transformed through his own immersion in African culture with the other students. The African culture seems to have affected Senghor in a way that inspired him to lead, more so when experiencing it with his peers than when he was living it in Senegal. Senghor’s feeling of political efficacy may have been derived from a heritage of slavery and oppression that finally weighed too heavy on the Africans, such as Senghor, and inspired him with the inspiration to take a piece of control back into the hands of the Africans.

The only problem with claiming that Senghor’s culture was evident in his outside influences and feeling of political efficacy is that there is no way to determine the
difference between cultural values, and the context of the situation as an additional variable of the cultural values. Senghor's role as a leader of African students in Paris and his later role as a transforming leader of Senegal could have been influenced by the historical context of colonialism and World War II instead of what could be considered traditional cultural values. The one secure answer to that concern is the fact that a group of people or a country's cultural values are often shaped by historical occurrences.

V. RESEARCH LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER STUDIES

After understanding the nature of the research problem and the results of the data, there are several research limitations that need to be noted. Many of these limitations can also be assumed to be recommendations for further studies, those overcoming the limitations of this project so as to make a stronger contribution to the theory. In addition, there are several recommendations that I have for further research.

One of the major research limitations of this project is the biased nature of the historical sources. Naturally, any biographer or historian is interested in telling the story of the leader's life in a way that is interesting and yet factual to a reader. Many leaders, at the point that they have a biography written about them, have already reached a level of high esteem by the society. It is difficult to decipher whether the biographer's portraying an accurate picture of the leader's life or a picture that has been colored by his fame and popularity. However, in this research, many authors did not discuss some of the issues that seem to have important implications for leadership studies, such as the leader's
“definition of self.” While especially a problem for this project, this is a common and unavoidable flaw in historical accounts of leaders.

This study was also limited by the fact that the descriptors of transforming leadership that were used for each leader was my own interpretation of the material that Burns wrote. In essence, I went through his book and extrapolated the parts of his discussion on transforming leadership that were the most specifically outlined as necessary aspects of transforming leadership. It was according to my personal interpretation of what Burns describes in his book that determined the three elements of a transforming leader and their subheadings each. It must be understood that Burns, or even another researcher, could read through his text and interpret it differently in relation to the specific factors that define transforming leadership. Furthermore, there may be more elements in the text that I did not come across or did not interpret Burns as deeming other factors as being present in all transforming leaders.

Besides the interpretation of Burns’ text, the interpretation of the case study leader’s lives was also a limitation to the study. The support of Burns’ theory depended on whether each leader fit into his framework, yet again I interpreted the material of each biographer and historian to interpret whether or not that factor of transforming leadership fit into the one described by Burns. It was up to me to examine the description of a leader’s family life, for example, to determine whether it could be considered a “close family network.” It is important to keep in mind that without knowing the leader’s personally or having sources that focus merely on documenting leadership characteristics of a person, this limitation is almost unavoidable.
Lastly, one of the limitations of this study was the strong inclination toward the field of psychology. The objective of the study was to look at how culture relates to leadership. Using Burns, who relies heavily on psychological theory, the paper became more focused on how psychological development affected transforming leadership. I drifted from the main topic of culture, until I worked on the conclusions of the paper and realized how culture relates to all kinds of situations, most specifically the psychological development. In fact, one of the further studies that I recommend is to delve further into the concept of culture and psychology and how one affects the other. Much of Burns’ theory about transforming leadership is based in the idea of Maslow’s hierarchy, which was also constructed under “western” perspectives. One way to further validate the findings of this study as well as make an additional contribution to leadership studies would be to examine how culture affects the psychological development of transforming leaders. I also recommend studies on additional cases, so that there might be more evidence to support or disprove Burns’ theory.

Finally, it is important to look at whether this paper serves its purpose to support or disprove Burns’ theory of transforming leader by looking at leaders from across cultural backgrounds. Although the research presented here does serve to make a contribution and provide insight to the idea of transforming leadership, I do not feel confident in asserting the fact that it disproves the theory. The hypothesis does not prove to be exactly true, since many of the leaders’ cases did not fulfill the outline of a transforming leader as the study claimed it should. However, I hesitate to conclude that the data disproved the
theory either, since many of the leaders that appeared to have cases deviating from the transforming leadership description could still be considered to be transforming leaders. For example, the issue of fulfillment of psychological needs poses a problem since leaders like Havel, who appear to have personal motives in their leadership roles, also had motives for raising the level of the society. Therefore, this leader does not satisfy every element of Burns’ description yet could still be considered a transforming leader according to the same definition.

So, then, what does this research contribute? Mostly it serves to contribute to the second purpose of a theory, in that the research of this study offers insight for future predictions about transforming leaders and what makes more effective and more ethical transforming leaders. Ideally, a transforming leader would not be working to satisfy his own personal needs when working to satisfy the needs of the masses for which he is working. In addition, it provides small insight as to what cultural constructions may be more conducive to transforming leadership, such as cultures that value close family networks, possibly those with traditions of large extended families, such as matrilineal societies. The best way to be sure of the relationship of these issues is to further study one or several of the aspects of this paper. For my personal experience, however, this study does provide a small contribution to leadership theory, as well as offering insights into culture and transforming leadership that quench some of my own thirst for knowledge in my academic leadership career.
Works Cited


Valliant, Janet G. Black, French, and African: A Life of Leopold Sedar Senghor

I pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance during the completion of this work.

Christine Setman