THE ORIGINS OF SERVANT LEADERSHIP

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ABSTRACT

Of the Dissertation

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The purpose of the research was to examine the ancient and historical origins of servant leadership, as it has been defined in the twentieth century by Robert K.Greenleaf, and identify any other ideas, principles and ideals that flow naturally or concurrently with it. Using an historical, inductive analysis of western civilization, the research found that the origins of this concept can indeed be traced back at least 2500 years ago, starting in ancient Greece and Rome. Ideally, servant leadership flourishes most naturally in democratic institutional environments, and from the inner work, that servant leaders voluntarily choose to take on in their journeys through life. Its source is not egoism but a selfless regard for others. It depends on followers who seek to know the answers to the following questions: servants of what and servants of whom? In many fundamental respects, servant leadership echoes the insights of James MacGregor Burns' transforming leadership. In essence, it is primarily a form of moral leadership. Although there is still room for objective, deductively driven, quantitative, methodological research of servant leadership, other more "interesting" historical troves still exist, as well as biographical accounts of past and present servant leaders among us, and from whom there is much we can learn. As to the future, given current, twenty-first century threats to the survival of humanity, such as nuclear war, over-population, and climatic change, the need for servant leaders has never been greater or more pressing.

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What's past is prologue.

    William Shakespeare (The Tempest)

Introduction

    Since 1970, when Robert Greenleaf wrote <u>The Servant as Leader</u>, there has been a slow though somewhat uneven growth in interest in his ideas and philosophy of servant leadership. Precisely how and why this has happened will not be completely addressed in this study. The purpose here will instead be to look backwards to explain the origins of servant leadership as a set of ideas and principles. Admittedly, the phrase was coined by Robert Greenleaf and it does have a distinct meaning expressed in his writings. But as Don Frick, Greenleaf's biographer has pointed out, "His way of thinking about leadership has triggered fresh ways of thinking about leadership. Ultimately, they pose ancient questions about transcendent meaning, personal shadows, and possible glories." (Frick, 2004, p. 4)

    It will be seen that answers given in the past to these ancient questions formed the foundation and roots of Robert Greenleaf's philosophy. As Isaac Newton once said, "If I can see so far ahead, it is because I stand upon the shoulders of giants." The focus of this paper will be Robert Greenleaf's giants.

    Before dealing with servant leadership's forbearers, it will be necessary and extremely useful to define what exactly is meant by servant leadership. The most commonly cited definition of servant leadership in Greenleaf's writings is the following answer he gave to the question of who is a servant leader:

> The servant-leader *is* servant first….It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve *first*. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions. For such it will be a later choice to serve---after leadership is established. The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature….The difference manifests itself in the

care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. (Greenleaf, 1977, p.13)

Note the order or priority here. It is servant first and leader second, not the reverse. This is a profound distinction.

How do you determine if someone is a servant leader? Greenleaf provided a practical, observable test:

The best test, and difficult to administer, is: do those served grow as persons; do they, *while being served,* become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? *And,* what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will he benefit, or, at least, will he not be further deprived? (Frick, 2004, p.339)

It can be easily argued that these definitions impose some very exacting and difficult to measure standards. Perhaps, in reality, there has never existed a perfect servant leader in mortal form. To make matters even more intriguing, and certainly more challenging, there is the less visible but no less important spiritual side of servant leaders that is suggested in Greenleaf's writings. The following passage from Greenleaf addresses the spiritual dimension of a true servant leader:

In my view of the world there are people whom I would call "spirit carriers." Servants who nurture the human spirit are spirit carriers. They serve to connect those who do the work of the world, or who are being prepared for that role, with vision from both past and contemporary prophets. Those servants find the resources and make the intensive effort to be an effective influence. They don't just make speeches or write books as the prophet does. They are spirit carriers; they connect the prophecy with the people so that it changes their lives. The spirit is power, but only when the spirit carrier, the servant as nurturer of the human spirit, is a powerful and not a casual force. (Frick, 2004, p.l1)

Background of Problem

The first use of the term "servant leader" was by Robert Greenleaf in 1969. He himself at that time attributed his development of servant leadership to three factors: 1) The influence of E.B. White, from whom he learned to "see things whole": 2) The writings of Herman Hesse, especially, <u>Journey to the East</u> (1956); and 3) His relationship with his father and the life long example of his father's life. From his father the life long servant theme seed was planted and later sown in the man he became. For Robert

Greenleaf, servant leadership was a statement of what his life stood for, what he had learned from his own experiences, and what the world needed in order to become a better place for us to live in. He truly believed that it was each person's task in life to leave his or her place in the world a better one after they had departed.

Of course, when one considers all the many consequences and implications of servant leadership, that is, the macro or big picture view, there is far more to its origins than one man's conceptualizations and terminology. In truth, the origins of servant leadership date back thousands of years in both Eastern and Western philosophy. Traces of it can be found in the Bible (Mark 10: "He who would be great among you must be the servant of all."), and the writings of Plato, Aristotle and many other great thinkers through the ages. Greenleaf's contribution here is his recognition of and focus on the connection of the servant theme to that of leadership.

The field of leadership is now such a vast one that its full scope and history cannot possibly be addressed in this research. A serious and intelligent effort can be made, however, to place servant leadership somewhere within its large domain. If one uses Greenleaf's definition, then servant leadership can be seen as falling somewhere within the prescriptive, contingent theories, since it deals with behaviours needed to be most effective, and contingent in that it will readily apply to some situations and not or less so to others.   (Yukl, 1994, p.19). Using John MacGregor Burns' theoretical approach set forth in his definitive work on the subject, Leadership (1978), servant leadership can also be seen as a strong example of transforming leadership. Burns contrasted "transforming leadership" with what he called "transactional leadership." A transactional leader motivated followers by appealing to their self interests. Transforming leaders appeal to the moral values of their followers, and seek to raise their consciousness so that their energy and resources are directed at reforming and improving institutions and society. (Yukl, 1994, p. 291) Since a servant leader seeks first to improve the lot of his or her followers, or at least not harm them, he or she clearly becomes a source for transformation, whether or not he or she is recognized by those followers.

This may be the appropriate place to note that any discussion of the origins of servant leadership will entail some consideration of the ethical framework of this

leadership model. One can arguably say, depending on one's values of course, that an ethical foundation should underlie all true theories of leadership. But this is particularly so for servant leadership. Hence, on a personal level a number of factors can be identified as having played a role in formulating the ethical framework Robert Greenleaf lived by: the part played by his religious upbringing, especially the influence of Quakerism on him, the role model and example his father provided him with, and the prevailing ethical values and attitudes of American society during his life. These influences shaped and transformed Greenleaf's ethical compass. Together they were instrumental in preparing him for his conceptualization of servant leadership in the late 1960's.

Statement of the Problem

Simply put, the problem to be examined in this study is where did the notion of servant leadership come from? What are its historical origins? To answer these questions it will be necessary to look beyond Robert Greenleaf's personal contribution to servant leadership. This will entail a comprehensive examination of servant leadership's history as an approach or philosophy of leadership and ethical behaviour. It is anticipated that there will be common threads running through the answers to this problem that will help confirm and establish servant leadership as one of the foremost ethically based leadership models available today. It is a model that resonates more closely than many others with the needs of humanity in the 21st century. These threads will also help explain why there is now a renewed interest in servant leadership which is only likely to grow in the coming decades as humanity's need for true servant leaders becomes increasingly manifest.

Rationale or Theoretical Framework for the Study

Although much has been written and said about servant leadership to date, there has been no doctoral research done on the origins of servant leadership that the researcher has been able to find. That is, there does not appear to be any serious work of scholarship tracing its history up to Robert Greenleaf and other contemporary leadership scholars. To fill this void, various historical research methodologies, modern transformational and

contingency leadership theories and ethical schools of thought advocating altruistic behaviour, will be relied upon in this study.

Research Questions

The purpose of the research questions is to provide focus and direction to this study. The primary research questions are:

1. What are the ancient and historical origins of servant leadership, as defined by Robert Greenleaf?
2. Through the examination of these origins, can other ideas, principles and ideals that flow naturally or concurrently with servant leadership, be identified?

There are also some secondary research questions that by implication will be worth looking into:

1 Why was there a decline in the influence of servant leadership not long after Robert Greenleaf's death?
2 Why does there now appear to be a resurgence of interest in servant leadership? Could there be a new paradigm developing as to what leadership is all about or supposed to be?
3 What is servant leadership's place, if any, in the field of leadership? Is it more an ethical concept or can it be considered a valid leadership theory?
4 Are there certain antecedents that can be identified from an historical perspective that are crucial and universal for its successful implementation?

The Nature of the Study

The nature of this study will be one of an historical analysis, using recognized and established historical methodologies. It will not rely upon or even attempt to discover, unearthed or hitherto unknown primary historical documents that could give rise to a new interpretation or explanation of servant leadership. Practically all of the documentation

needed is available in various tracts on leadership, ethics and philosophy, and in Robert Greenleaf's writings. What will be unique here will be a serious effort to look at the origins of servant leadership from a new perspective, the 'big picture' point of view, as Greenleaf himself would have put it. In other words, instead of looking at ideas, concepts and theories individually, as others have done, the researcher will move to different angles and positions, so to speak, and see what new and clearer insights can be gained and communicated to others about servant leadership. In short, this will be a look at the servant leadership forest, rather than the individual trees comprising it.

Definition of Terms

Servant Leadership: An approach to leadership, with strong altruistic and ethical overtones that asks and requires leaders to be attentive to the needs of their followers and empathize with them; they should take care of them by making sure they become healthier, wiser, freer and more autonomous, so that they too can become servant leaders. (Northouse, 2004, pp. 308-309).

Transformational Leadership: A process whereby an individual engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the followers. This type of leader is attentive to the needs and motives of followers and tries to help others reach their fullest potential. (Northouse, p.170)

Contingency Theory: A theory of some aspect of leadership that explains why or how behaviour takes place in one situation, but not in another; it suggests a leader's effectiveness depends on how well the leader's style of leadership fits a particular context (Northouse, 2004, p. 109)

Assumptions and Limitations of the Study

There are certain inherent restrictions that need to be stated:

1. Because this study is meant to be first and foremost an historical analysis of a particular leadership model, not all schools of ethical thought can be examined. Instead, only those ethical theories and approaches that will be relevant to servant leadership, or were relevant to its historical development, will be utilized. In other words, this study will not include a history of ethics.

2. The cultural, social, economic, political, and psychological forces and phenomena that had an impact on Robert Greenleaf's thinking in the 1960's and before, are also too vast and indefinable to be addressed here comprehensively or in a conclusive manner. This study can only look at the impact of that turbulent era on Robert Greenleaf's thinking at the time. That is, how did it change him and how did he react to it, especially in ways that differed from his contemporaries?

3. Nor can this study be an analysis of all the various leadership theories and models that exist now as valid and recognizable theories. Only those leadership theories that have a bearing and strong relationship on servant leadership and its development will be reviewed and discussed.

4. It will be assumed that when looking at the past, that certain preconceived notions exist in the mind of the researcher. These are namely those of a 20th and 21st century scholar who is looking backwards at the world of ideas with the benefit of Greenleaf's servant leadership model fully developed. That is, in looking back, the researcher is doing so from the vantage point of today and seeing the past from today's perspective with the benefit of all the knowledge and wisdom that has accumulated since. This can at times distort the past as one sees it, unless one is aware of it. It must also be acknowledged that preconceived notions can sometimes unknowingly or unconsciously shape the outcome of a qualitative research study, which is often less of a problem with an empirically based study relying on the scientific method. The latter is built upon very focused deductive reasoning, using laboratory or statistical approaches.. The former relies more on

inductive reasoning, looking at a variety of situations, ideas, methodologies, and recognizable outcomes for common themes, rationalities, and principles that can also be used in a predictive way. Because this is not a social/psychological study, there is no need to consider any possible Hawthorne effects. Nonetheless, the researcher's own subjective limitations must be acknowledged whenever and wherever they can be identified.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Introduction and Organization

Rationale

The potential advantages of a qualitative research approach are well known, and in the social sciences today we know that it is more common to utilize a quantitative empirically driven research methodology. The pros and cons of which approach is better or more suitable need not be restated here again, as there is an abundance of literature available describing it. In the field of leadership studies, however, there is now some indication that there is a growing and renewed interest in the use of qualitative research (Bryman, Stephens, 1996, p. 353). The research used in this study will rely on a qualitative approach and follow this latter development. One good reason for this decision is that a qualitative approach can provide a better and fuller sensitivity to context. The context of the research conducted here, to put it bluntly, is too broad for a narrow, overly specialized treatment.   Every possible avenue and approach from whatever discipline that makes sense and has relevance to unearthing, discovering, interpreting and analyzing the origins of servant leadership in its totality, needs to be relied upon. If an ancient writer's or philosopher's thoughts on leadership or manner of thinking were not in line with what we now call 'social sciences' today, then it makes little difference to the research here. What matters here is that ancient person's contribution to our subject, the origins of servant leadership. Finally, the historical approach, of which more will be stated later, has been chosen as the most appropriate in terms of feasibility, as well as for the development of a comprehensible line of reasoning. That is, it offers the huge advantage of creating an understanding from the big picture point of view. To be precise, it will look at the thoughts of the more prominent men and women in the past who took the time to express their ideas around leadership, especially the leadership characteristics that Greenleaf believed were implicit and fundamental to servant leadership.

<u>Doctoral Research to date (review of pertinent doctoral research)</u>

A review of unpublished doctoral work on servant leadership has not yielded very much in terms of understanding the origins of servant leadership. While it is true that there have been many dissertations done on servant leadership, the vast majority of them have dealt with servant leadership strictly as a religious or educational concept within the context of religious or educational environments. Most of the doctorates awarded in this area have been doctors of ministry and education by schools of divinity and faculties of education. A few have relied on case studies and interviews and some have even attempted comparative surveys. More will be said about the latter in this research. None have attempted a true historical study of the origins of servant leadership.

<div align="center">Topics Covered</div>

<u>Ancient Writings</u>

It is obviously most valuable to begin, and as we shall see, possibly end, with the furthest period back in time to discover the roots of servant leadership. Starting in the far East, the ancient Taoist masters, such as Lao-tsu and Chuang-tsu, have been often cited as knowing something about the true art of leadership. Lao-tsu was a sixth century B.C. Chinese philosopher who advocated selflessness and non-directive leadership. Chapter 17 of his <u>Tao-te Ching</u> is frequently sited by western scholars and writers as expressing the gist of his thinking. Though there are many slightly differing translations of this passage, one can see if not hear in practically all of them, between the lines, the early concept of servant leadership with the ideals of listening to others, caring for them, and putting their concerns first, and by so acting becoming almost invisible to them:

> A leader is best
> When people barely know that he exists,
> Not so good when people obey and acclaim him,
> Worst when they despise him.
> "Fail to honor people, they fail to honor you":
> But of a good leader, who talks little,
> When his work is done, his aim fulfilled,
> They will all say, "We did this ourselves." (McCollum, in Spears, 1995, p. 242)

Near this time in the West different notions of leadership were emerging. In ancient Greece, Socrates, Plato, Xenophon, Thucydides, and Aristotle were each coming to their own conclusions of what leaders were and what they were supposed to do, and how they related to their followers. Each of these well known men, along with many other remarkable individuals, lived during the great age of ancient Athens, from approximately 480 B.C.(the battle of Marathon) to 323 B.C.(the death of Alexander). In particular, Thucydides uncompleted The Peloponnesian War, and Xenophon's Anabasis, which Alexander the Great read and studied, provide eloquent and penetrating comments on leadership. Xenophon's works show that he clearly understood servant leadership, perhaps better than any of his contemporaries, based on his own extraordinary life experiences. Together these men can be seen as products of their times. It was an age characterized by wars, rebellions, invasions, empire building, anarchy, and the age old struggle between the advocates of democracy and those of oligarchy. It was also an age in which men viewed leadership primarily through the prism of politics and war.

It is remarkable that so few people today have ever heard of Xenophon, or the incredible story he related in the Anabasis. Reading it gave Alexander, a Macedonian, and other Greek warriors the confidence and courage to invade Persia. It tells the tale of 10,000 Greek mercenary soldiers who started out in the employ of Cyrus, a governor of Persia, in a war against the king of Persia. Cyrus is killed in battle, and then all the generals and top leaders of the Greeks are treacherously slaughtered by being lured away from their comrades to a meeting with the Persians to supposedly discuss their predicament and possibly their surrender. Here they were then, at the gates of Babylon, a thousand miles from their Greek homeland, surrounded by tens of thousands of hostile Persians who were likely to kill, capture, torture or enslave them at the first available opportunity. And now they were without leaders, and even more at the mercy of their enemies. Xenothen, an Athenian, was neither a general nor a captain nor common soldier, but had joined the expedition to become friends with Cyrus. The surviving Greek soldiers invited him and any remaining officers who were left alive, about a hundred or so men, to meet and discuss their options. Xenophon had spoken to a few of them

already and given the wise counsel he had offered, he was asked to speak to the others. He then addressed the others as follows (italics mine):

> "We all understand this much, that the King and Tissaphernes have seized as many as they could of our number, and that they are manifestly plotting against the rest of us, to destroy us if they can. It is for us, then, in my opinion, to make every effort that we may never fall into the power of the barbarians, but that, if we can accomplish it, they may rather fall into our power. Be sure, therefore, that you, who have now come together in such numbers, have the grandest of opportunities. For all our soldiers here are looking to you; if they see that you are fainthearted, all of them will be cowards; but if you not only show that you are making preparations yourselves against the enemy, but upon the rest to do likewise, be well assured that they will follow you and will try and imitate you. But perhaps it is really proper that you should somewhat excel them. For you are generals, you are lieutenant generals and captains; while peace lasted, you had the advantage of them alike in pay and in standing; now, therefore when a state of war exists, it is right to expect that you should be superior to the common soldiers, and that *you should plan for them and toil for them whenever there be need.* (Brownson trans., 1998, pp. 229-230)

The soldiers then chose by election and appointment their leaders, one of whom was Xenophon. Together they marched out of Persia and escaped the terrible fate that seemed so close to befalling them. The saving grace here was leadership, which Xenophon provided and knew the importance of: "For without leaders nothing fine or useful can be accomplished in any field, to put it broadly, and certainly not in warfare." What is worth noting, however, is the recognition of this by these Greeks, and the democratic process by which they selected new leaders.

In his Republic Plato (428-347 BC) expressed the view that leadership would be best when "philosophers are kings, or kings and princes of this world have the spirit and power of philosophy, and political greatness and wisdom meet in one." (Burns, 2003, p. 7). This was not his only comment on leadership. It should always be borne in mind that his ideas were shaped in the crucible of the Peloponnesian War, and what he saw happen to his mentor, Socrates. He thus witnessed first hand the excesses of democracy, and came to the conclusion that only an elite class, or cadre, of specially selected and trained men are fit to lead others. The ultimate aim of these "philosopher kings" or "guardians" was the welfare of those they led. This was probably his idealistic view. In a more

realistic tone in the <u>Republic</u> (chapter #1, 342e and 347c), he states a somewhat different viewpoint which is closer to what we would now call servant leadership (italics mine):

> "'Thereafter, Thrasymachus,' I said, 'no one in any other kind of authority either, in his capacity as ruler, considers or enjoins his own advantage, but the advantage of his subject, the person for whom he practices his expertise. Everything he says and everything he does is said and done with this aim in mind and with regard to what is advantageous to and appropriate for this person.'
>
> …..'Well,' I explained, 'that's why neither money nor prestige tempts good people to accept power. You see, if they overtly require money for being in charge, they'll be called hired hands, and if they covertly make money for themselves out of the possession of power, they'll be called thieves; and they don't want either of these alternatives. On the other hand, they won't do it for prestige either, since they aren't ambitious. So one has to pressure them and threaten them with punishment, otherwise they'll never assume power; and this is probably the origin of the conventional view that it's shameful to want to take power on, rather than waiting until one has no choice. The ultimate punishment for being unwilling to assume authority over oneself is to be governed by a worse person, and it is fear of this happening, I think, which prompts good men to assume power occasionally. On these occasions, they don't embark upon government with the expectation of gaining some advantage or benefit from it: their attitude is that they have no choice in the matter, in the sense that they haven't been able to find people better than themselves, or even their equals, to whom they might entrust the task. The chances are that were a community of good men to exist, the competition to avoid power would be just as fierce as the competition for power is under current circumstances. In such a community, it would be glaringly obvious that *any genuine ruler really is incapable of considering his own welfare, rather than that of his subject,* and the consequences would be that anyone with any sense would prefer receiving benefit to all the problems that go with conferring it…." (Waterfield, 1993, pp. 27, 33)

Aristotle (384-322BC), being more of a realist on the other hand, claimed that all men are political animals, and saw his most famous student, Alexander, rise to supreme power through military conquest. It is tempting to speculate that through Alexander and his contemporaries, he most likely saw the devastating results of overbearing and concentrated power, and therefore came to see leadership somewhat differently than Plato. Some have suggested that his ideas around leadership were closely linked to experiencing the "perfect" life of peace and leisure. (Wren, Volume 1, 2004, p. 46). On the other hand, Aristotle's concept of leadership, if he had one per se, was also more of a

non-normative one, linked to his notions of masters, rulers, subjects, political power and excellence. In his Politics he describes the most common political states, being, rule by one person, rule by a few, and rule by the many. Each of these political variations had both good and bad expressions. With the possible exception of democracy, which Aristotle considered less than ideal ("Democracy arose from men thinking that if they are equal in any respect, they are equal in all respects."), one was a leader by virtue of one's position in society, being either a king or an aristocrat, which was largely determined at one's birth, and which established one as a "ruler". This is a much more static or fixed concept of leadership, when compared to our modern understanding of it. Hence, there were good 'rulers' and bad ones, who were distinguishable by the levels of excellence they exhibited.

Turning to ancient Rome one can look to many writers, historians, and philosophers. However, the Commentaries of Julius Caesar and the masterful essays of Marcus Tullius Cicero, clearly take precedence. Both of these men knew one another. They lived in unusually turbulent political times. One excelled in war, the other in law and politics. Both died violent deaths through assassination. And both had very vivid ideas when it came to leadership. Most importantly, both took the time to put their ideas down in writings that have survived and stood the test of time. In his De Officiis Cicero (106-43 BC) expressed his understanding of the concepts of unselfish service and trusteeship, that are imbedded in leadership:

> "Those who propose to take charge of the affairs of government should not fail to remember two of Plato's rules: first, to keep the good of the people so clearly in view that regardless of their own interests they will make their every action conform to that; second, to care for the welfare of the whole body politic and not in serving the interests of some one party to betray the rest. For the administration of the government, like the office of a trustee, must be conducted for the benefit of those entrusted to one's care, not of those to whom it is entrusted…." (Fuller, 2000, p. 29)

Another prominent and famous commentator on the subject of leadership from this period was Plutarch (46-120 AD). Although he lived most of his life in northern Greece, he managed to write a concise but extensive set of biographies of the greatest Roman statesmen, politicians and military commanders of his age, as well as that of the ancient Greeks. Unlike Aristotle though, his ideas of leadership were more closely linked

to the character, abilities and personal traits of each man alone. He might have said or coined the phrase 'character is destiny'. A man's individual characteristics, especially his strengths and weaknesses, were far more important than his position at birth or status in society, important though they might be, in shaping his destiny or determining his success as a leader. His examinations of these common "traits" can best be seen in his Parallel Lives, which described 46 of the great men of his times who shaped the history of ancient Greece and Rome. For example, the life of Julius Caesar would be set next to that of Alexander the Great, and Cicero next to that of Demosthenes, so that the reader could see these famous men living different but comparable lives of remarkable similarity.

Lastly, in this period, one would be remiss if not negligent in not mentioning any notable religious leaders who lived then, the most obvious and closely connected to servant leadership being Jesus. Whether or not one believes that such a person really did live and die in ancient Palestine as described in the New Testament of the Bible, there is no doubt that his teachings became the foundation for a new religion and have had a massive impact on humanity and western civilization. Many (Sendjaya, Sarros, 2002) consider him to be the founder and perfect embodiment of a servant leader. Nevertheless, it is not the purpose of this research to prove or defend that thesis, as so many others have already done. One can simply rely on his own the words in Mark 10:43, that "whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant." When Jesus washed the feet of his disciples (John 13:13-15) his actions spoke louder than his words. Lastly, it is extremely significant that the modes of behaviour of so many Christian leaders and saints, down through the centuries, were servant like in their expression. It is inarguable that they made profound and immeasurable contributions to our 21st century notions of servant leadership.

The Middle Ages, Renaisance and the early Modern World

Any discussion of the subject of leadership in the Middle Ages must include the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), Christine de Pizan (1364-1430), Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527), Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626) and Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679). It must be remembered that during this period, the Moslem world had exceeded

the West in civilization, especially through the leadership of men like Saladin. As history has noted, he and his Saracens behaved far differently when they entered Jerusalem than the Crusading Christians who had preceded them (Reston, 2001, p.85).

The first of this group of writers, Thomas Aquinas, did much to revive the teachings of Aristotle, making them available and acceptable in the West again by combining and reconciling Aristotle's scientific rationalism with the Christian doctrine of faith and revelation. Most importantly, he restored some the ancient world's trust in the innate goodness of man, as opposed to his baser and more mendacious capacities that had burst forth in the Dark Ages following the collapse of Roman civilization. This trust, as will be seen, is part of the bedrock foundation of servant leadership. Aquinas believed all men had a divine spark, and were capable of leading a Christian life. He was also one of the early Church Fathers who nobly proclaimed, "The elevation of means into ends is the essence of sin." (Butler, 1956, p. 26)

One can find a similar positive or uplifting vein in the writings of Christine de Pizan.   In her Book of Three Virtues, written around 1405, there is extensive advice for how a good princess should act and conduct herself. By being humble and selfless, by caring for the poor and the sick through good works and by the distribution of medicines, kind words and her treasure, she will become a good princess and valuable partner to her prince. (Wren, Volume 1, 2004, p. xix) From a 21st century point of view, one can almost hear the female charges of sexism and chauvinism, that de Pizan's approach to life would mean to women today. One can see in her writings an early expression of the traditional, feminine maternal values of nurture and self sacrifice. That is not what a great many women today more commonly prefer to see in the independent, feisty, earthy, full blooded and passionate princesses of modern poems, movies and romance novels. Still, her writings reflect some of the highest Christian values and ideals prevalent at that time, even if rarely or fully practiced by mortal women or men. They were values meant to be practiced by the elite women of that age who were, nonetheless, capable of exercising considerable public influence.

As most know, Niccolo Machiavelli believed nothing of this sort. He is therefore now of far more interest, if not relevance, to modern contemporaries and scholars of leadership, especially in the field of politics. For some, the mere mention of his name

conjures up a prejorative meaning. Some even associate him with the devil incarnate!

After all, wasn't Niccolo Machiavelli the man who said the end justifies the means, that

aggressive wars, even preventative ones, were justifiable, and that lying to people was

acceptable if it furthered your career? Were not all of these advisable, even necessary,

according to Niccolo Machiavelli, if you wished to lead? His classic admonition

contained The Prince is frequently cited: "The fact is that a man who wants to act

virtuously in every way necessarily comes to grief among so many who are not virtuous."

(Bull, 1961, p. 91)

This famous comment, however, is not the only idea that Niccolo Machiavelli had

on the subject of leadership. In his less often read or cited Discourses, he expressed a

different set of ideas on this subject. Some of these included his preference for free

institutions, as opposed to authoritarian ones. His greatest scorn was actually reserved

for tyrants. For him, what mattered was a leader who was actually virtuous in the

traditional sense of valor, worth, merit and moral perfection. A leader was also one who

could transmit these standards to his followers. (Wren, Volume 1, 2004, p. 220)

What is often forgotten is that Niccolo Machiavelli's career had recently been

destroyed in the violent and turbulent age in which he lived in Northern Italy. So he

wrote The Prince as a sort of consultant's report with which he had hoped to obtain

favours, and most hopefully, a job once again as a valued courtier to a certain prince,

such as Lorenzo de Medici. This particular work can thus be described as extremely

tendentious, even if it immortalized him. His subsequently written Discourses offers a

fuller, more complete commentary on what he believed a good leader should resemble.

One can see therefore both a positive and a negative side to Niccolo Machiavelli's views

on leadership. Perhaps this is why he is sometimes cited as the ultimate realist, a man

who understood power and men as they really were. One can take his writings then and

find in them what you want. One can also say that he made a small but significant

contribution to the development of leadership thinking, for if no man or woman can be

completely virtuous, how then can he or she be a servant leader? Does one have to be

that close to perfection to be a true servant leader?   There are indeed different answers to

those questions.

One man with a set of very clear answers to those questions was the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679). Hobbes looked upon mankind as a species of wild animals. His most quoted and celebrated comment was that most men lived lives that were "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short." By nature men oppressed one another and our instinct for self preservation expressed itself in an unquenchable thirst for power. This instinct led to a battle of all against all. The destruction and extinction of practically everything was prevented only by the presence of Kings who made social cohesion possible within a nation. (Fehr, Renniger, 2004, p. 17) Behind Hobbes thinking one can easily see a set of assumptions about human nature that virtually precluded any notion of servant leadership, at least as it is understood today and used in this research paper. A king might care for his people as one's head cares for one's body. But being powerless, a servant could only serve out of fear of losing his or her life, property and security. In other words, there would be very little room in Hobbes' world for the sort of freedom and autonomy that a true servant leader would come to want for his or her followers. One can also see the beginnings of a line of skeptical thinking concerning morality, beginning with Niccolo Machiavelli, and now including Hobbes, that would have a major influence on modern ideas around leadership.

Finally, to close out this period, some mention needs to be made of the English statesman and man of letters, Sir Francis Bacon. Educated at Cambridge and trained as a lawyer, he led what can only described as a truly remarkable life. Member of Parliament, Solicitor General, Lord Chancellor were just a few of his memorable achievements. He is known by some today, however, as the father of modern science, even though he never conducted any scientific experiments of great importance. One big reason for this was his revolutionary intellectual stances that challenged the thinking in his time. In his philosophical works he stressed the importance of freeing human thought from "idols" or erroneous thoughts in favor of observation and scientific reasoning. Interestingly, even his comments on leadership demand our attention, if not respect: "Men in great place are thrice *servants: servants* of the sovereign or state, *servants* of fame, and *servants* of business [Italics mine]. So as they have no freedom, neither in their persons, nor in their actions, nor in their times. It is a strange desire to seek power and to lose liberty, or to seek power over others and to lose power over a man's self. The rising unto place is

laborious, and by pains men come to greater pains: and it sometimes base, and by indignities men come to dignities. The standing is slippery, and the regress is either a downfall or at least an eclipse, which is a melancholy thing." (Fuller, 2000, p. 51)

Quakerism

Quakerism, as a new religion or Christian denomination, began in the middle years of the 17th century. The 1600's have sometimes been referred to as the "Century of Dissent." Various individuals and groups, mainly in Western Europe, claimed the right to think for themselves, and were less willing to accept established authority. The invention of the printing press, which made it possible to have a Bible for yourself in your home, as opposed to it belonging to the priesthood alone, had encouraged the growth of literacy, skepticism, and rational enquiry. Men and women started to seek more direct personal experiences, not only in science, but in religion. Some of these people, especially in Holland and England, came to be known as "Seekers." Their leader was George Fox (1624-1691), and it was through his life work and those like him that Quakerism came into existence.

If there is one comment that could be said about the early Quakers, it is that they took the teachings of Jesus seriously, so seriously in fact, that most of the other Christian sects and denominations found them offensive and frightening. Many Quakers suffered terribly for their beliefs. The Puritans, in colonial Boston, for example, considered them heretics and enacted strict and harsh laws against them. Members were often charged with crimes such as "anarchy," "heresy," and "blasphemy." There were numerous cases of imprisonment, a number of sentences of whipping, but in Britain no cases of execution took place, as actually did occur in colonial America.

Of all the distinctive practices of the Society of Friends, as the Quakers came to be known, two stood out, front and center, bringing them widespread renown and enmity:

1. A refusal to take any oath, including the Oath of Allegiance, which was tantamount to treason. (This was based on their belief and practice of telling the truth all the time. Hence, for what purpose was there for an oath?)
2. A refusal to commit any act of violence, which included taking up arms in defence of their country.

In America, the Quakers appeared in practically all the colonies, though more of them tended to live in Pennsylvania, thanks to the efforts of William Penn. Although members of this faith were successful in many walks of life, one notable Quaker of this period, whose writings are still read to this day, was John Woolman (1720- 1772). His literary <u>Journal</u>, was published in 1793, under the title, <u>A Word of Caution and Remembrance to the Rich,</u> and it had an impact on many people. Even Robert Greenleaf, in his seminal essay, <u>The Servant as Leader</u> (1970), noted that Woolman's life and work truely embodied the philosophy of servant leadership. Greenleaf even speculated that had there been more courageous and talented individuals like Woolman, the Civil War might have never happened. Woolman had made it his mission in life to gently but persuasively convince Quakers to renounce slavery. He traveled throughout the colonies preaching his beliefs to his fellow Quakers, so that by 1770, slavery had disappeared among the Society of Friends in America. (Greenleaf, 1970, pp.21-22) Throughout his life Robert Greenleaf maintained a very close relationship with the Society of Friends, and there is little doubt that those experiences made a deep and lasting impression on him.

<u>The Enlightenment Period: Locke, Hume, Smith, Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, Paine, Wollstonecraft</u>

Isaiah Berlin has described the Enlightenment period in the following words: "The intellectual power, honesty, lucidity, courage and disinterested love of the truth of the most gifted thinkers of the eighteenth century remain to this day without parallel. Their age is one of the best and most hopeful episodes in the life of mankind." (Postman, 2002, p. 18) What follows is a summary of the philosophical and theoretical writings of some of the leading English, French, Scotish and American contributors to the Enlightenment. From these individuals sprang anew an insistence on living one's life around the values of rationality, progress, happiness, liberty and equality of opportunity. Each and every one of these ideals and values had an impact on the prevailing perceptions of leadership.

John Locke (1632-1704) was a physician and friend of Sir Isaac Newton. Under the Stuarts in England he did not enjoy much toleration and thus spent some eight years

wandering in Holland and France. With King Jame II's eviction, he returned home and became the theoretical voice of the forces of change in his homeland. He has been hailed as the originator and chief expounder of the principle that all civil and political rights are lodged in the people. This contrasts sharply with the Hobbesian view that such rights, if they exist at all, more properly belong to an absolute ruler and lawgiver, a "divine monarch," or some other form of strong government. Locke maintained that men entered into an agreement with one another to set up an authority to restrain violence and settle disputes, a social contract or compact, and that Hobbesian power, being unlimited, was much too likely to end in tyranny, or rule by tyrants. Past and current events in England had confirmed for him the correctness of this point of view. Thus, for Locke, sovereignty must be vested in the people, and since they cannot conveniently exercise it, it must be done through their chosen representatives. Moreover, the people retained a residual right to act in their own best interests, that is, to change the method or people by which or by whom they are governed. As he put it in <u>An Essay Concerning the True Original, Extent, and End of Civil Government</u> (1690): "The end of government is the good of mankind, and which is best for mankind, that the people should be always exposed to the boundless will of tyranny or that the rulers should be sometimes liable to be opposed? Upon the forfeiture of their rulers, [power] reverts to the society and the people have a right to act as supreme and place it in a new form or new hands, as they think good." (Barzun, 2000, p. 363)

It remains to consider what Locke's thinking might have had to do with our modern concept of servant leadership. We know that he looked upon government as the servant of the people. But if Locke had any notion of service, or what the highest calling of a servant leader should be, it was most likely one that was typical of his age, and that is to a higher power or spiritual realm:

> "The state of nature has a law to govern it, which obliges every one, and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind, who will but consult it, that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty or possessions: for men being all the workmanship of one omnipotent, and infinitely wise maker; all the *servants* [italics mine] of one sovereign master, sent into the world by his order, and about his business; they are his property, whose workmanship they are, made to last during his, not one another's pleasure: and being furnished with like faculties, sharing all in one community of nature, there cannot be

supposed any such subordination among us, that may authorize us to destroy one another, as if we were made for one another's uses, as the inferior ranks of creatures are for ours'. (Singer, 1994, p. 250)

The writings of the English philosopher David Hume (1711-1776), chiefly Essays: Moral and Political (1741), and A Treatise on Human Nature (1739-1740) provide another example of an awakening of a new consciousness. Though he saw 'reason as preferable,' it was passions he realized which more often directed men.   Like many profound thinkers, he could see the duality or contradictions in human behaviour all around him: "It is sufficient for our present purpose, if it be allowed what surely without the greatest absurdity cannot be disputed, that there is some benevolence, however small, infused into our bosom, some spark of friendship for human kind, some particle of the dove kneaded into our frame, along with the elements of the wolf and serpent." (Sommers, 2004, p. 90) Similarly, in his consideration of lawful government, there was room for both an absolute monarchy consistent with a civil society, and a social contract based on the consent of the people. (Wren, Volume 1, 2004, p. 214) The latter may be said to imply some understanding on his part of the need for leaders to be cognizant of the needs of their followers as embodied in the consent of the people.

One cannot leave the British Isles of this period without commenting on Adam Smith (1723-1790) and his intellectual contribution. His Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations (1776) is considered the first real book on economics ever published. Even today, it is supposedly read by all economists in training. Unfortunately, his earlier great work, The Theory of Moral Sentiments (1759) is not so widely read, and is from this latter work that one can get a better glimpse of Smith's views on leadership. In it he speaks of "'illustrious characters' such as society's warriors, statesmen, poets, philosophers and men of letters of all kinds, who make for a superior society. The patriot, the person who lays his life down for the good of others deserves the highest approbation and admiration and wonder. The responsibilities of a good citizen are to promote by every means in his power, the welfare of the whole society of his fellow citizens." (Wren, Volume 1, p. 98) As part of his hatred of mercantilism, Smith was wholeheartedly against the abuses and expansions of the powers of princes and other privileged groups in society. Realistically speaking, he could see the dangers

of letting the latter run wild with their selfish control of the economy. The other significant contribution of Smith, and other leading intellectuals of the Scottish and English Enlightenment, was his advocacy of "social virtues" or "social affections." In his Moral Sentiments he used the words "pity," "compassion," and "sympathy" almost interchangeably, although he did at one point distinguish sympathy from the others. As a moral philosopher Smith was concerned with man's relation to society, and he looked to the social virtues for the basis of a healthy and humane society. (Himmelfarb, pp 19, p. 235)

Moving from the British Isles to France, one saw during this period the emergence of the French *philosophes*. One of the more prominent of them was Denis Diderot (1713-1784).   As an author and editor, he spent twenty-six years of his life, nearly breaking his health and spirit in the process, working on the famous Encyclopedie. For Diderot and other French philosophes the animating ideal of the Enlightenment was clearly man's ability to 'reason'. What distinguishes Diderot though, and ranks him as one of the pivotal figures of the 18th century, was the evolution in his thinking, which passed from critical effort based on reason, to a conception of man and society in which impulse and instinct were seen as stronger than reason. (Barzun, 2000, p. 373) His ideas in many places seem to contradict one another. For example, for government, he could endorse an enlightened despot provided such a leader could translate the dictates of reason into practical politics. His ideal despot, however, resembled Plato's philosopher king and not the divine monarchs of his age. But as for the people, his thoughts were clear: "The good of the people must be the great good of government. By laws of nature and of reason, the governors are invested with power to that end. And the greatest good of the people is liberty. It is to the state what health is to the individual." (Barzun, 2000, p. 373)

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1788) was another one of the philososphes during this period. His books on government, morals, education and social life gave the course of ideas in these areas a significant jolt. As Jacques Barzun has pointed out though, he did not invent or idolize the noble savage, did not urge 'going back to nature,' and did not say that since men are born free, and are now in chains, we must break the chains. Nor did Rousseau base his political conclusions on the social contract. (Barzun, 2000, p. 382)

He was, nevertheless, a gifted writer who educated himself by voracious reading, searching, observation and a varied career that took him from the country village to the nobles' mansions and back again. With him, as with Locke, the people were sovereign. Representatives must therefore act for the people's best interests. When it came to putting his ideas into practice, he did not recommend a series of general propositions, as he did in <u>The Social Contract</u> (1764), but a more parochial approach based on the traditions, customs and present needs of the people in question. One can see, as Barzun and other scholars have suggested, that in more ways than one, Rousseau bears a striking resemblance to Edmund Burke, the practical minded English statesman and counterrevolutionary voice to the French Revolution. (Barzon, 2000, p. 385)

Behind all the minor differences of opinion amongst the Enlightenment thinkers, one can begin to see an effort to understand the true purpose behind the need for rulers, leaders and leadership. This has to do with the question of what is the source of legitimate power and authority over others in the political realm. We need to acknowledge that there was then, as now, differences of opinion voiced in answer to that question. We need to also remember that these individuals lived in a far different era. Locke's idea of a "democratic polity" would not be what we have in mind when we use those words today. Voltaire favoured an enlightened monarch which is almost unimaginable in the 21st century, except in fairy tales. Diderot preferred a "constitutional monarchy" if he could get it. Both Locke and Montesquieu liked the idea of a division of powers, while Rousseau did not. (Postman, 2002, p. 138) Given these seemingly major differences, did these men agree on anything? Well, they all came to the same conclusion that rationality or reason should above all else govern the affairs of men. Using that yardstick, a great many injustices around them could easily be questioned, and justifiably challenged. Men of intellect, ability and talent could now become alternative leaders in the people's eyes, since positional authority, or hereditary title, was no longer so essential for a leader to rule over others. Secondly, they began to realize that leaders govern only with the consent of their followers, and not by some divine right. Hence, leaders could be challenged and even tossed out the door (or given the hangman's noose) by those beneath them. As most know, this happened in both England and France. In other words, regicide might not now be a crime under certain circumstances. Yet this

also caused badly needed and important institutional changes in how those countries would be governed in the future. In the former case, the failure of leadership could also be said to have contributed to the loss of its American colonies. There, many of its leaders chose to follow Locke's principles to their logical conclusion. In France, it opened the door for a 'reign of terror,' and eventually unleashed a Napoleon to restore order.

Europe during this time was not the only ground in which the ideas of the Enlightenment found root. In America too they found fertile soil in which to grow. Many of the Founding Fathers were well versed in the Greek and Roman classics, and some like John Adams, Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson had lived in France or England at some point in their careers during or after the American Revolution. Franklin took the time to rub shoulders and establish friendships with some of the leading thinkers then in France and England. Adams and Jefferson's ideas and values were immortalized in the Declaration of Independence. For these Americans in the New World, the greatest or animating ideal of their times was liberty. Boston had its 'Sons of Liberty' to start a tea party, Patrick Henry proclaimed, "Give me liberty or give me death," and Jefferson put "life, liberty and pursuit of happiness' on every American's agenda.

The man who put the Enlightenment into language better than anyone else for the Americans though was Thomas Paine (1737-1809). Ironically, if not sadly, few Americans today think of him as one of their great Founding Fathers. One reason for this was that Paine also regarded rationality or reason as just as important as liberty, and when it came to religion, America at that time was not prepared to be as rational as Paine would have preferred. For that he paid a heavy price, dying almost broke and buried in an unmarked grave. Yet only a few would say with total confidence that the American Revolution would have succeeded without his inspiring language and intellectual ammunition.

Paine was born and raised a Quaker, oddly enough, considering what he wrote and did in his life. His books and pamphlets such as <u>Common Sense</u> (1776), <u>The Crisis</u> (1776-83), <u>The Rights of Man</u> (1791-92), and <u>The Age of Reason</u> (1794), were a full frontal assault on the establishment of his time. Arguably, <u>Common Sense</u>, rather than the Declaration of Independence, was the real intellectual defence of the American

Revolution. It is estimated that over 500,000 copies of it were published and distributed in the colonies during the course of the revolution. (Postman, 2000, p. 64) Americans still like to recall his opening words to The Crisis, written at Valley Forge: "These are times that try men's souls." Later, while living in France, he wrote his Rights of Man, which was not only a defence of the French Revolution, but a refutation of Edmund Burke's Reflections on the Revolution in France (1790). Reading him today, one can see that Paine had nothing but contempt for the establishment's "leaders," especially those in England. His pamphlets not only attacked the very notion of an absolute monarchy, but every form of hereditary privilege: "The vanity and presumption of governing beyond the grave is the most ridiculous and insolent of all tyrannies. Man has no property in man; neither has any generation a property in the generations which are to follow." (Kramnick, preface to Paine, Common Sense, 1976, p. 36)

As previously noted, it needs to be emphasized here that intellectually Paine was simply carrying the ideas of Locke to their logical and practical conclusion. In his opinion, only a representative democracy led by men who had demonstrated their leadership abilities through merit and hard work, were fit to lead. Where Paine's radicalism expressed itself most powerfully was in answer to the question, "what do we do if we are led by corrupt and incompetent leaders?" His answer was simple: remove them, and, if required, do it by force of arms. This was a tune that did not play very well for many Englishmen, who could still recall their bloody affair a century earlier with the cavaliers and roundheads. It opened the door to levels of chaos and violence that, left unchecked, could overwhelm a civilized society. Perhaps Paine thought it worth the risk, but if so, it was because he thought that such a society would ultimately be based on a foundation of laws. It would be a society in which men would be answerable to laws, and not the other way around.

Paine's sensitivity to the injustices all around him in its various forms included the oppression of women. In August, 1775, he published a plea for women:

> "Even in countries where they may be esteemed the most happy, [women are] constrained in their desires in the disposal of their goods; robbed of freedom and will by the laws; slaves of opinion which rules them with absolute sway and construes the slightest appearances into guilt; surrounded on all sides by judges who are at once tyrants and their seducers….for even with changes in attitudes and laws, deeply engrained

and oppressing social prejudices remain which confront women minute by minute, day by day." (Kramnick, 1976, p. 28)

Paine's views were echoed and amplified by Mary Wollstonecraft in 1792, with the publication of A Vindication of the Rights of Women. Deprived by society of 'reason', or the simple power of improvement, or power of discerning truth, women were degraded, weak and pleasure seeking. Out of such ranks, Wollstonecraft noted, only obsequious slaves or despots could emerge. (Wren, Volume 1, 2004, pp. 230-232) Unfortunately, significant changes for the betterment of women would have to wait until the next century.

What is truly remarkable about Paine, taking all this in, was how far ahead of his time his ideas were. Some of his suggestions as to how to best run a democracy were adopted then, and more later (e.g. an inheritance tax, reducing the public debt by taxing the interest made by the money lenders, paying the poor to educate their children, the abolition of primogeniture, pensions and annuities for the poor and disabled, the abolition of taxes on houses and windows, creating 'asylums' for the poor and homeless where they could be fed, housed, and find work until they got on their feet again). Regrettably, the unfortunate and unheralded end to which he came reminds one of the wisdom contained in the book of Proverbs: "a prophet is not without honour save in his own country."

The Nineteenth century: Thoreau, De Toqueville, Hegel, Emerson and Mill

As night follows day, one might say the writings of Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862) follow Thomas Paine's. But rather than take up arms against the state, Thoreau set out on a very different path, that of civil disobedience. What Thoreau saw, and experienced, was that even a democracy can become a tyranny and disregard its "wiser minority." It could launch an aggressive war of conquest (the Mexican War of 1848), it could enforce and protect an evil institution like slavery, and it could tax citizens to pay for all kinds of immoral and unjust purposes. If an individual refused to pay, he risked going to jail, which, in fact, happened to Thoreau himself. When his friend Emerson came to see him in custody, he is reported to have said to Thoreau, "What are you doing on that side of the bars?" Thoreau's retort supposedly was, "what are you doing on *that*

side of the bars?" Calling upon his fellow citizens to likewise refuse in paying their taxes, he cleverly exposed the vulnerability of all government authority, should a good enough number of them act together similarly through acts of civil disobedience. In his Civil Disobedience (1849), Thoreau saw differently than Paine that the "individual is a 'higher and independent power' from which all it's [the state's] own power and authority are derived." (Thoreau, 1993, p. 25) Hence, every individual was both a ruler and a subject.

Suppose a nation was comprised of apathetic and passive individuals who chose to do nothing about an oppressive and abusive state apparatus? Thoreau's response was one that could be applied even today to almost any organization made up of such a caliber of followers: "Those who, while they disapprove of the character of a government, yield to it their allegiance and support are undoubtedly its most conscientious supporters, and so frequently the most serious obstacles to reform." (Thoreau, 1993, p. viii) There is little doubt that Thoreau sought to challenge his fellow citizens. He reminded them that a democracy is forever on trial, and needs a citizenry who have a healthy sense of distrust in its rulers and leaders.

If one wants to deeply understand leadership in the context of American democracy, there are two major political works that one must ultimately read. One is the Federalist Papers (1787) by Alexander Hamilton, John Jay and James Madison. The other is Alexis de Toqueville's Democracy in America (1835). A Frenchman, De Toqueville (1805-1859) spent a concentrated eighteen months of study, travel and observation in America in the 1830's. The picture he painted of America at this time was a vindication of Rousseau and Jefferson and the spirit of the Enlightenment. (Barzun, 2000, p. 537) The greatest danger de Toqueville saw facing the young republic, was the potential, if not tendency, to degenerate into a "tyranny of the majority." He noted that no protection against it was possible --- or could be, given the principle of one man, one vote. Furthermore, this tyranny was not only legal, but social as well, in the form of pressure from one's neighbors, tacit or expressed.   As for equality, it breeds envy among neighbors and resentment of any sign of superiority. The effect is to bring down the quality of every performance to the average level, and sometimes below it: "I know of no other country in which there is so little independence of mind and real freedom of

discussion as in America. The majority raises formidable barriers around the liberty of opinion; within them an author may write what he pleases, but woe to him if he goes beyond them." (Barzun, 2000, p. 538) This kind of behaviour can have some dire consequences for any aspiring leader who crosses the line. On the other hand, it could also serve as a check on an overly ambitious demagogue. Perhaps this is the reason America, so far, has never had a Napoleon or a De Gaulle, only a Grant and an Eisenhower.

There are several chapters to his great work on democracy that particularly stand out. In "Why There Are So Many Men of Ambition in the United States, But So Few of Lofty Opinions" (1835) he notes that it is very difficult to get rid of the remnants and vestiges of aristocracy, and that a democracy is prone to raise men's ambitions: "Every American is eaten up with longing to rise, but hardly any of them seem to entertain very great hopes or aim very high. All are constantly bent on gaining property, reputation, and power, but few conceive such things on a grand scale." (Fuller, 2000, p. 120) De Toqueville could also see how essential and basic the role of commerce was in America. Ambitious men in America were naturally attracted by their materialism and individualism to lucrative professions and occupations. In "How Aristocracy could issue from industry" (1835) de Toqueville foresaw the possibility of an industrial aristocracy based almost exclusively on intellectual ability. Moreover, he could also see the dark side of this newly emerging class:

> "I have shown how democracy favors development in industry and multiplies the number of industrialists without measure; we are going to see the path by which industry in its turn could well lead men back to aristocracy….The territorial aristocracy of past centuries was obliged by law or believed itself to be obliged by mores to come to the aid of its *servants* and relieve their miseries [italics mine] But the manufacturing aristocracy of our day, after having impoverished and brutalized the men whom it uses, leaves them to be nourished by public charity in times of crisis. This results naturally from what precedes. Between worker and master relations are frequent, but there is no genuine association." (Mansfield, De Toqueville, 2000, pp. 530-532)

But the role played by lawyers in this young republic was special:

> "The government of democracy is favorable to the political power of lawyers. When the rich man, the noble, and the prince are excluded from

the government, the lawyers arrive there so to speak in full right; for they then form the only enlightened and skilled men whom the people can choose outside themselves.

If lawyers are naturally brought by their tastes toward the aristocracy and the prince, they are therefore naturally brought toward the people by their interest.

Thus lawyers like the government of democracy without sharing its penchants and without imitating its weaknesses – a double cause for being powerful through it and over it.

The people in democracy do not distrust lawyers, because they know that their interest is to serve the people's cause; they listen to them without anger, because they do not suppose them to have ulterior motives. In fact, lawyers do not wish to overturn the government that democracy has given itself, but they strive constantly to direct it according to a tendency that is not its own and by means that are foreign to it. The lawyer belongs to the people by his interest and his birth, and to the aristocracy by his habits and his tastes; he is like a natural liaison between the two things, like the link that unites them.

The body of lawyers forms the sole aristocratic element that can be mixed without effort into the natural elements of democracy and be combined in a happy and lasting manner with them. I am not ignorant of the inherent defects of the spirit of lawyers; without this mixture of the spirit of the lawyer with the democratic spirit, however, I doubt that democracy could long govern society, and I cannot believe that in our day a republic could hope to preserve its existence if the influence of lawyers in its affairs did not grow in proportion with the power of the people…..

In America there are neither nobles nor men of letters, and the people distrust the rich. Lawyers therefore form the superior political class and the most intellectual portion of society. Thus, they could only lose by innovating: this adds a conservative interest to the natural taste they have for order.

If one asked me where I place the American aristocracy, I would respond without hesitation that it is not among the rich, who have no common bond that brings them together. The American aristocracy is at the attorney's bar and on the judges' bench.

The more one reflects on what takes place in the United States, the more one feels convinced that the body of lawyers forms the most powerful and so to speak the lone counterweight to democracy in this country. (Mansfield, De Toqueville, 2000, p. 254 - 256)

Had Americans the opportunity to ask De Toqueville how the presidential election of 2000 would be decided he would have predicted, "There is almost no political question in the United States that is not resolved sooner or later into a judicial question." (Mansfield, 2000, p. 257)

Looking broadly at America, De Toqueville saw new forms of leadership emerging from this experiment in republican democracy. Finally, one could see leaders beginning to rise upwards from the whole population, especially if they acquired a legal education, rather than come from a narrow class of aristocrats or warrior kings. Such leaders had a more natural and unending connection to their followers, whom they could no longer blithely ignore or disregard.

When speaking of the ability to see connections, there is another great scholar at this time who is considered by some (Wren, Hicks, and Price) to have contributed to the development of the idea of leader as servant. This is the German philosopher Georg Hegel (1770-1831). Arguably, this is also a matter of debate since Hegel's dense, convoluted, German writing is far from being crystal clear. Perhaps he has never had the translator he deserves. His dialectical reasoning, nevertheless, creates a constant set of contradictions and syntheses which never end, depending on your point of view. In his Phenomenology of Mind (1807) he speaks of the relationship between the Master and the Bondsman, or servant. He uses the word "service" in conjunction with fear and obedience when he speaks of the human phenomena of subordination of oneself to another, which exists in all forms of servitude or voluntary service. Admittedly, this is not the preferred modern meaning of that term.   If there is one thing that may be said about Hegel's writings, though, is that either you see in Hegel progress towards greater levels of freedom, or the beginnings of a darker view later picked up and espoused by Karl Marx, Herbert Spencer and Friedrich Nietzsche. Hegel's contribution, in short, was to help us better recognize, if not understand, the historical paradigm surrounding the relationship of leaders and followers. (Wren, Volume 1, p. xxiii)

On a more positive note, the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) emerged also during this period. Emerson was trained for the Unitarian ministry, perhaps the least demanding and dogmatic of Protestant Christian sects, and lived his life out in

19th century America. He gradually gave up the ministry to ponder, write and earn a living as a public speaker. Greatly influenced by Eastern thought, he helped launch the Transcendental Movement in America. In some of his essays, such as "Self Reliance" (1841), "History" (1841), "Heroism"(1841), and "Character"(1844), one can find a refined understanding of leadership. In his essay History, for example, Emerson showed himself to be a student of Thucydides, Xenophon and Plutarch, and that he knew something of the art of leadership: "….and not far different is the picture Xenophon gives of himself and his compatriots in the Retreat of the Ten Thousand ; 'After the army had crossed the river Teleboas in Armenia, there fell much snow, and the troops lay miserably on the ground, covered with it. But Xenophon arose naked, and taking an axe, began to split wood; whereupon the others rose and did the like.'"(Emerson, 1903, p. 19)

It is likely that only a few people have ever been able to better explain than Emerson the meaning of the word "character." After mentioning a string of great leaders as examples, he noted in his essay by the same name, "The largest part of their power was latent. This is that which we call 'Character'—a reserved force which acts directly by presence, and without means." For Emerson it was a virtue: "Character is this moral order seen through the medium of an individual nature." (Emerson, 1983, p. 498) Yet Emerson's most profound, and possibly least appreciated understanding of leadership, came from his insights into spiritualism. As Robert Greenleaf noted as well, a truly great leader is one who has awakened the divine spark within oneself and actively seeks and longs for divine communication is some way or form. In his essay "Man the Reformer," Emerson puts it as follows:

> "He who would help himself and others, should not be a subject of irregular and interrupted impulses of virtue, but a continent, persistent, immovable person, -- such as we have seen a few scattered up and down in time for the blessing of the world; men who have in the gravity of their nature a quality which answers to the fly-wheel in a mill, which distributes the motion over all the wheels, and hinders it from falling unequally and suddenly in destructive shocks. It is better that joy should be spread over all the day in the form of strength, than that it should be concentrated into ecstasies, full of danger and followed by reactions. There is sublime prudence, which is the very highest we know of in man, which, believing in a vast future, -- sure of more to come than is yet seen, -- postpones always the present hour to the whole life; postpones talent to genius, and special results to character. As the merchant gladly takes money from his

income to add to his capital, so is the great man willing to lose particular powers and talents, so that he gain in the elevation of his life. The opening of the spiritual senses disposes men ever to greater sacrifices, to leave their signal talents, their means and skill of procuring a present success, their power and fame, -- to cast all things behind, in the insatiable thirst for divine communication. A purer frame, a greater power, rewards their sacrifice…." (Wren, Volume 1, 2004, p.262)

One such person who took it upon himself to try to open men's minds was English philosopher John Stuart Mill (1806-1873). He, along with Jeremy Bentham, has long been associated with the principle of utility. Using Bentham's words, utility meant "that property in any object, whereby it tends to produce benefit, advantage, good, or happiness or what comes again to the same thing to prevent the happening of mischief, pain, evil or unhappiness to the party whose interest is considered." (Singer, 1994, p. 307) Mill's very similar thinking found expression in his book Utilitarianism (1863). These men of letters are worth noting since servant leadership has, by definition, a positive utility. That is, it is not a neutral, non-normative concept. Followers of servant leaders are expected to become healthier, wiser, freer and more likely themselves to become servant leaders as a result of the servant leader's leadership. Surely these can only be considered positive outcomes. Another way of putting this is that not just anyone can become a servant leader. A Christ like man can, but not an Adolph Hitler.

In his work Considerations on Representative Government (1861), Mill indicated more of his practical thinking when he considered the subject of leadership. Like many others of his time, he was skeptical of a perfect leader ever existing. The notion of some ideal leader presiding over a society was a fantasy. Even a benevolent despot would be unrealistic because every form of despotism, including a despotic monarch, always quashes the realization of human possibilities which rely on the breath of freedom to take root. The one exception to this would be an extreme emergency, where the assumption of absolute power would occur in the form of a temporary dictatorship until the dangerous situation had passed: "Free nations have, in times of old, conferred such power by their own choice, as a necessary medicine for diseases of the body politic which could not be got rid of by less violent means." Mill saw that what was needed was a government that is grounded in the people, the entire aggregate of the community. And

since direct democracy is unworkable in a modern complicated society, representative government was the means to a just and free society. (Wren, Volume 1, 2004, p. xix)

Wisely, Mill also realized that citizens in this representative democracy would have to be more than passive observers: "Every citizen not only having a voice in the exercise of that ultimate sovereignty, but having at least occasionally, called on to take an actual part in the government, by personal discharge of some public function, local or general." (Wren, Volume 1, 2004, p. 107) It followed then that the best government is the one attended with the greatest amount of beneficial consequences, immediate and prospective. Again, only a completely popular government could hope to achieve this. It is only logical to infer here then that Mill recognized the role of responsible followers, on whose behalf and in whose beneficial interests, the representative government leaders led.

Frederick Winslow Taylor and Scientific Management

Frederick Taylor's ground breaking work, The Principles of Scientific Management, published in 1911, attempted to clearly establish and define the role of managers and workers in the workplace. In some ways Taylor (1856-1915) was a child of the Enlightenment with his heavy emphasis on rationality, practicality and scientific principles. He even claimed to have the workers' best interests at heart with his new management ideas that could increase efficiency and raise productivity. These changes, he believed, would eventually bring higher wages and better working conditions for the workers. Taylor also believed that the proper application of his theories would result in "close, intimate, personal cooperation between management and the men." Naturally, many workers and trade unionists took a different view, given the way they were treated by factory owners and managers at that time. According to his biographer Robert Kanigel, Taylor could never lose his inbred tendency to see a hierarchical, top-down relationship in the workplace: "All his life he made workmen objects of study – human data points from which to tease knowledge. The 'management of the future,' he would say, meant the 'patient, analytical, almost microscopic study of men,' which was best made 'side by side and shoulder to shoulder' with them. You had to become 'intimate

with them, so that they forget you are not one of their *kind*, and genuinely tell you what they think.' Always, 'they' were *they*." (Kanigel, 1997, p. 144) Today one might easily describe his attitude as condescending, and it is little wonder he was never able to make very good friends with the labor movement. Actually, one doesn't have to look further than his own work:

> "The writer asserts as a general principle (and he proposes to give illustrations tending to prove the fact later in this paper) that in almost all of the mechanic arts the science which underlies each act of each workman is so great and amounts to so much that the workman who is best suited to actually doing the work is incapable of fully understanding this science, without the guidance and help of those who are working with him or over him, either through lack of education or through insufficient mental capacity. In order that the work may be done in accordance with scientific laws, it is necessary that there shall be a far more equal division of the responsibility between management and the workmen than exists under any of the ordinary types of management. Those in management whose duty it is to develop this science should also guide and help the workman in working under it, and should assume a much larger share of the responsibility for results than under usual conditions is assumed by the management." (Wren, Volume 2, 2004, p. 256)

While no one can doubt that Taylor's call for management to be more scientific and responsible was correct and timely when he made it, it is debatable whether his management theories had any long term positive contribution or value to leadership studies. The Egyptian managers who oversaw the construction of the Pyramids would have declared him a genius, as did many of the industrial factory managers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, struggling with huge new operations requiring the proper and simultaneous direction of hundreds and even thousand of workers. In his time there was a crying need for management to be more knowledgeable, competent and professional. In the knowledge economy of today, however, his approach must be recognized as being too impersonal, divisive and possibly counterproductive, to be of equal relevance. The one notable exception to that would be those leaders who are still in love with the centralized command and control style of management.

Mary Parker Follett

One person who took a far different approach to management than Taylor was Mary Parker Follett (1863- 1933). Until recently she has been largely unrecognized and unknown, and it is difficult to know why. According to Peter Drucker, it is not because she was a woman.(Graham, 1996, p. 3) The reason might have something to do with her wisdom and insights, conveyed to intelligent audiences on both sides of the Atlantic during the 1920's; they were just too far ahead of their time, and had the misfortune to be overwhelmed by the Great Depression and the Second World War. Remarkably, her comments and observations made 80 years ago are as relevant, robust and practical now as back then. Her views on leadership were hardly old fashioned and must have rankled many of the factory and office administrators of her time.

She was also astute enough to see the importance and value of some of the ideals of servant leadership, as it was later defined by Greenleaf. In Follett's opinion, the best leaders "try to train their followers themselves to become leaders." (Graham, 1996, p. 173) She saw various levels of leadership: the leadership of position, the leadership of personality, and the leadership of function. She noticed that the best run plants tended to be run by leadership of function. She argued that business was becoming a profession and management a science <u>and</u> an art. (Graham, 1996, p. 176) Nor did the concept of "service" escape her thinking: "The best leader does not ask people to serve him, but the common end." (Tonn, 2003, p. 442) As she saw it, a "great leader is he who is able to integrate the experience of all and use it for a common purpose." (Tonn, 2003, p.444) She believed that leadership was capable of analysis, and, in part, can be learned by those who strongly desire to. She was also aware of the "vision thing" that enables some leaders to see beyond the present. The words of her biographer, Joan Tonn, perhaps best capture her ideas on this important function of leadership:

> "…In her view, a business leader must possess 'the most delicate and sensitive perceptions, imagination and insight, and at the same time courage and faith. A business man, the president of a large industry, once told me that I would not make a good business woman because I had not enough faith. He did not, of course, mean religious faith, he meant faith in my own purposes, that I wanted to safeguard myself too much, that I would trust only the present which I could see, not the future which I could not see. This was in regard to some committee work we were doing together. I thought then that he was wrong, not about me necessarily, but

about the course he want to take in the matter under discussion, but I have come to think he was right in the matter, as I have come to understand the fundamental principles underlying what he was saying.' This sort of 'insight into, and faith in, the future' Follett called 'anticipation.' And anticipation, as she saw it, meant 'making' the next situation rather than just coping with what comes." (Tonn, 2003, p.443)

Modern Management Theories and their Contribution to Leadership Studies

As Mary Parker Follett could foresee, management practices and theories were about to enter into a new and expansive phase as the 20th century unfolded. The real cause of this development was the First World War, which left in its wake just about every dynasty in Europe and their supporting elites, not to mention 20 million corpses. It also bankrupted England, and caused a major shift in financial power from London to New York. Most importantly, the war opened the door to widespread political, economic and social upheaval, which had been relatively contained since the Napoleonic Wars, a century earlier. Where once it was a given that leaders emerged from the top, it now became increasingly common and acceptable for them to come from the middle, even bottom of society. During this period, stretching through the Second World War, and after, the great "isms" of fascism, communism, colonialism, imperialism and democracy vied for control of the hearts and minds of humanity all over the globe. As the 20th century closed, it appeared that democracy had won out over all other competing ideologies, which were either obsolete or defeated. The world was now viewed and understood by a much different set of values and assumptions. These changes amounted to one of the greatest paradigm shifts that the humanity has yet experienced. Only one simple example needs citing to make this idea clear. With the discovery of the energy that could be released from a tiny atom, the human race now had the power to extinguish itself in a matter of hours.

Running parallel to all the paradigm shifts taking place was the great expansion of the social sciences, as an independent field of knowledge worthy of study. Social scientists eagerly sought to apply their newly acquired statistical tools to duplicate the great advances and contributions of the natural and physical sciences. This development in turn affected our understanding of leadership, especially in how we would assess it. Examining the social, psychological and educational journals of the 1920's, 1930's, and

1940's, one can see a growing interest and recognition of leadership as a subject worthy of academic study. During this period, for example, the notion of leadership styles, with autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire leaders, was developed by scholars like Kurt Lewin, Ronald Lippet and Ralph White. (1939)

Somewhere around the middle of the 20th century, beginning with Ralph Stogdill's work on trait theory and leadership behaviour (1948), the field of leadership studies began to slowly emerge on its own. The trait theory approach is easy to understand and for people to relate to when they think about leadership, as many of us tend to see leadership ability as just another aspect of one's personality. Looking at the leader in isolation is, however, limiting and one dimensional.   To be a leader, by definition, one has to have followers. What about them and their relationship to the leader, or the organizational context within which a leader operates? Moreover, from a discipline point of view, leadership was still without a home of its own. Some scholars considered it largely as a sub-category of management theory, which was also in the early stages of developing its own autonomy and identity, others as part of social organization, and still others as belonging to psychology (personality theory and development). Historians and philosophers have also considered it as part of their 'turf.'

With the benefit of hindsight it is easy to see now that Stogdill's leadership trait approach was just the tip of the iceberg of this emerging discipline.   Not long after this scholars like Fred Fieldler (1972), Robert J. House (1977) and Terrance R. Mitchell (1974), and Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard (1982), developed revolutionary new concepts and approaches such as contingency based theory, path-goal, charismatic leadership and situational theories. These concepts could be tested empirically and quickly drew much academic attention. Though they not have all achieved total validation, they have been accepted as bona fide contributions to the study of leadership. Ironically, despite this bright beginning with these and others' notable efforts at this time, the field of leadership studies in the late 1970s and early 1980's entered into a period of relative stagnation. According to Joseph Rost and James MacGregor Burns, and despite the efforts of hundreds of scholars, the field of leadership studies lacked a "central concept of leadership" that presented an articulated school of leadership which integrated our understanding of leadership into a holistic framework. (Rost, 1991, p.9). No new

school of leadership emerged in the 1980's, and by 1990, leadership had become a word that meant all things to all people. (Rost, 1991, p.7, 11)

It is submitted in this research that James MacGregor Burns' seminal work, Leadership (1978), is of particular relevance to servant leadership. In it Burns offered a very broad yet penetrating analysis of leadership. Though based largely on a historical analysis of major political figures, like Roosevelt, Wilson, Gandhi, Lenin and Hitler, his breakdown of all leadership behaviour into two broad categories, transactional and transforming leadership, remains to this day a lasting and unchallenged contribution to our thinking. Transactional leadership was originally conceived by Edwin Hollander (1974). He maintained that leadership was a transactional process. There was a social exchange in that the leader fulfills expectations, provides rewards, and helps attain group goals. The followers reciprocate by offering their leader status, esteem and heightened influence. (Wren, Volume 2, 2004, p. 233). For Burns, transactional leadership was a bit narrower concept which "occurs when one person takes the initiative in making contact with others for the purpose of an exchange of valued things…..Each person recognizes the other as a person. Their purposes are related, at least to the extent that the purposes stand within the bargaining process and can be advanced by maintaining that process. But beyond this, relationship does not go… A leadership act took place, but it was not one that binds leaders and followers together in a mutual and continuing pursuit of a higher purpose." (Burns, 1978, pp. 19-20)

In this researcher's view, Burns greatest contribution to leadership studies came with his ideas around transforming leadership: "Such leadership occurs when one or more persons engage in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality. The transforming effect raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leaders and followers. The leader is more skillful in evaluating follower's motives, anticipating their responses to an initiative, and estimating their power bases, than the reverse. Finally, and most important by far, leaders address themselves to followers' wants, needs, and other motivations, as well as their own, and thus serve as an independent force in changing the makeup of the followers' motive base through gratifying their motives." (Burns, 1978, p. 20) The similarity of this explanation of transforming leadership to servant leadership is indeed remarkable. One can see an

acute awareness of followers' needs, service to others, and a higher moral purpose as elements of this kind of leadership, traits that Greenleaf's servant leadership is known to be associated with. Most importantly, and to his credit, Burns saw the need for a moral component or ethical dimension to leadership, for he defined "moral leadership" in terms of the fundamental needs of followers:

> "The last concept, *moral leadership*, concerns me the most. By this term I mean, first that leaders and led have a relationship not only of power but of mutual needs, aspirations and values; second, that in responding to leaders, followers have adequate knowledge of alternative leaders and programs and the capacity to choose among those alternatives; and, third, that leaders take responsibility for their commitments – if they promise certain kinds of economic, social, and political change, they assume leadership in the bringing about of that change. Moral leadership is not mere preaching, or the uttering of pieties, or the insistence on social conformity. Moral leadership emerges from, and always returns to, the fundamental wants and needs, aspirations and values of the followers. I mean the kind of leadership that can produce social change that will satisfy followers' authentic needs. I mean less the Ten Commandments than the Golden Rule. But even the Golden Rule is inadequate, for it measures the wants and needs of others simply by our own. (Wren, 1995, p. 483)

Bernard Bass (1985) also sought to contrast transactional leadership with what he called 'transformational' leadership. Although it is some ways related to Burns transforming leadership, Bass's concept of transformational leadership actually differed substantially: "While transactional leadership is merely an exchange that leads to desired outcomes, transformational leadership 'motivates us to do more than we originally expected to do.' This can be done, according to Bass, by 'raising our level of consciousness about the importance and value of designated outcomes and ways of reaching these outcomes,' by 'getting us to transcend our own self-interests for the sake of the organization,' and by raising the need levels of followers. The transformational leader draws upon inspirational leadership (charisma), individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation to 'induce followers to (attain) much higher levels of productivity." (Wren, Volume 2, 2004, p. xx) It is important to notice here, that followers of "transformational" leaders are to be acted upon, some would say manipulated, and not necessarily for their own benefit but for the positive outcomes desired by the organization.

By re-introducing the 'charisma' factor, Bass helped usher in another wave of scholarly activity in the field of leadership activities. Though it was first described in detail by Max Weber (1947), and later expanded upon by Robert J. House (1976), the term 'charisma,' when linked to the idea of leadership, has come to refer to leaders who generate extremely intense loyalty, passion and devotion on the part of followers, who often give blind obedience to the leader. (Wren, Volume 2, 2004, p. xxi) It bears a lot of similarity to hero worship.   The terrible consequences of this kind of leadership trait can be seen most prominently in three of the most famous leaders of the 20th century: Hitler, Stalin and Mao. Despite this, some scholars see more positives than negatives in allowing charismatic leaders to envision, energize and enable followers to achieve their goals and successfully meet the challenges confronting them. By acting as powerful role models, charismatic leaders can set a standard that others can aspire to and emulate. Naturally, there are obvious risks and limitations with such leadership. According to David Nadler and Michael Tushman (1990), though, these problems can be checked and countered by utilizing 'instrumental leadership.' The latter focuses on the management of teams, structures, and management processes to create individual instrumentalities. Using the right amount of controlling, structuring and rewarding then works to balance and complement the envisioning, energizing and enabling of charismatic leadership. In short, instrumental leadership works to ensure people really do act in a manner consistent with their goals. Both are needed, however, for the achievement of change. (Wren, 1995, p.112) Nonetheless, in spite of Nadler's and Tushman's assurances, the need to be wary and cautious of charismatic leaders remains. As Joane Cuilla has put it, "charismatic leadership can be the best and the worst kind of leadership, depending on whether you are looking at a Mahatma Gandhi or a Charles Manson." (1995, in Wren, 2004, Vol.3, p.318)

In partial answer to that question, some scholars (Gemmill, Oakley, 1992) have gone so far to suggest that leadership is a myth. They maintain that it is merely a 'social construct' which functions to reinforce existing social beliefs and structures. These in turn exist to create the illusion of the necessity of hierarchy and leaders in organizations. Leadership as a 'social construct' is a consequence of personal alienation, massive deskilling, and a widespread, pervasive sense of learned helplessness. The myth functions as a social defense which aims to repress uncomfortable needs, emotions and

wishes that emerge when people attempt to work together. Now, as contrarian, and difficult to accept as this line of reasoning might be, there is actually some empirical research (Pfeffer, 1977) that suggests that leaders have very little real impact on organizational behaviours and outcomes. One fairly obvious conclusion from this is that leaders then are really just figure heads, or symbolic heroes, or mommy and daddy substitutes which human beings cannot yet summon the courage to let go of. For this there is even some theoretical support in the writings of Sigmund Freud, namely in his <u>Moses</u>

<u>and Monotheism</u> (1939). In this work Freud suggested that followers are drawn to certain leader (the 'great' or ideal leader) due to their need for authority, specifically the longing for a father figure. Thus, the great man has traits of a father. His followers admire and trust him but also fear him. Moses is considered the perfect example of such an ideal leader for the Jewish people. (Wren, Volume 1, 2004, p. 124)

During the 1990's several other new areas of leadership thought have emerged: democracy and inclusion, female leadership styles, and ethical leadership. Of these, the last has the closest connection to servant leadership. In this regard, once again, Burns work is particularly relevant, especially his concepts of leaders as 'moral agents.' For Burns, this did not mean bringing in a passive approach. In his estimation, transforming leaders have very strong values that they are not always willing to water down just to reach a consensus, which can work to erode real leadership. Rather, transforming leaders work to elevate people by using conflict to engage followers and to help them reassess their own values and needs. (Wren, Volume 3, 2004, p. 317) In drawing our attention to this indispensable component of leadership, Burns has probably made an even greater and longer lasting contribution to leadership studies than is commonly recognized. Moreover, it is in the context of ethical or moral leadership, that Robert Greenleaf's servant leadership can be most easily understood and valued.

<u>Robert Greenleaf's Servant Leadership</u>

To understand Robert Greenleaf's concept of servant leadership one must first read his major works, which include <u>Servant Leadership</u> (1977), <u>The Servant Leader Within</u> (2003), <u>Seeker and Servant</u> (1996), <u>On Becoming a Servant Leader</u> (1996), and

The Power of Servant Leadership (1998). The most obvious place to start with, though, is with his 1970 essay, "The Servant as Leader." In this essay Greenleaf reveals the identities of significant writers and individuals who helped shaped his beliefs. Greenleaf freely admits that most of these ideas came to him as intuitive insights as opposed to consciously driven logic. The greatest of these was Herman Hesse, whose writings had a deep influence on Greenleaf in the 1960's. Hesse's Journey to the East (1956), which Greenleaf refers to in his 1970 essay, is the story of Leo, the ever cheerful, indefatigable servant of a group of travelers on a journey to a far away monastery where they hope to find spiritual truth and actualization. Along the journey, Leo disappears, and the group gradually disintegrates without anyone making it to their goal. Years later, to the hero's amazement and shock, Leo re-emerges as the actual spiritual leader of the order that they had sought. This simple but radical shift from leaders serving followers to followers serving leaders is a metaphor for servant leadership.

Also in this essay Greenleaf defines servant leadership and reveals many others who contributed to his way of thinking, such as Albert Camus, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Paulo Freire. He gives numerous examples of men who exemplified servant leadership in their lives. They included John Woolman, George Wyeth (Thomas Jefferson's mentor), and Nikoloi Grundtvig. For some reason, Jesus is only mentioned once in connection with the parable of the adulterous woman who was about to be stoned. Another writer, whom Greenleaf acknowledged as having had a large influence on him, was E.B. White. From White he learned to appreciate the art or skill of seeing things whole. Today we might call that whole brain thinking.

In any summary of Greenleaf's writings, one is now obliged to include Don Frick's definitive biography, Robert K. Greenleaf: A Life of Servant Leadership (2004). By reading Frick one can come to an understanding of Greenleaf as a person, and learn about his upbringing, education, family life, marriage and career. Frick details the events and people who shaped his thinking and beliefs with a sensitive, almost loving touch. He describes life in mid western Indiana at the turn of the century, a world that no longer exists, and its formative influence on Greenleaf. He also describes the positive and nurturing relationship Greenleaf had with his father, in spite of growing up in a troubled family. All of Greenleaf's truly remarkable set of friends and contacts are mentioned,

from corporate and university presidents to Eleanor Roosevelt, Peter Drucker, Alfred Korzybski, Thomas J. Watson Jr., Bill Wilson, Will Menninger (Karl's brother), Abraham Joshua Heschel, Ira Progoff, Ken Blanchard and many others. It may sound simplistic, but to truly understand Greenleaf, one must now read Frick's biography. In addition to reading his book, the writer of this dissertation has been able to learn and acquire valuable insights on Greenleaf in a number of private conversations with Don Frick himself.

Unpublished Doctoral Research

Every thorough doctoral research effort should contain an examination of unpublished scholarly dissertations closely related to the subject being studied. For this research the data base library established with UMI in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and the papers maintained at the Robert Greenleaf Center in Indianapolis, Indiana, were relied upon. Through the Center several papers were initially examined, including Antoinette van Kruk's "the Meaning of Servant Leadership" (1998). This paper is a qualitatively researched document based on an in depth set of interviews with four pre-selected "servant leaders" in the ministry and educational fields. Another paper that looked promising was Pearl Richardson Smith's "Creating a New IRS" (2003). It turned out to be an attempt to define the head of the IRS at that time as a servant leader, based on a series of interviews with small number of managers working in the agency then. Given that Smith was an employee of the IRS at that time, the paper is open to a number of questions concerning potential bias and distortion. Unfortunately, the vast majority of the doctoral candidates, whose papers are contained in the large UMI data base are either theological and divinity students, working towards their D.M. degree, or educational students working either on their Ph.D. in education or D.Ed. degree. This is regrettable in some ways, as the tasks and the nature of the work done by clergymen and women, as well as by teachers, compels them to practice some form of servant leadership behaviours. In other words, one should expect to find servant leadership practiced in those occupations. Look at any really outstanding member from those two professions today, and you will likely see someone intuitively practicing servant leadership, possibly without ever having heard of it. One would hope to see research some day done in a

number of fields (e.g. business, sports, the arts, the learned professions, and the military). Only then can we expect to do a thorough assessment of the validity, consistency and reliability of any theories associated with servant leadership.

Of the papers contained in the UMI data base, in this writer's opinion, two in particular stand out as having made notable academic contributions to the study of servant leadership. One is "Assessing the Servant Leadership Organization: Development of the Servant Organizational Leadership Assessment (SOLA) Instrument" (1999), by James Allan Laub. Any future empirical driven research that might be done to prove or disprove servant leadership as a "theory," will likely find this paper, its constructs and instrument, a valuable and useful place from which to start.

The other notable research paper is Debra Ann Beazley's "Spiritual Orientation of a Leader and Perceived Servant Leader Behavior: A Correlational Study" (2002). Beazley used the SOLA instrument together with the Spirituality Assessment Scale (SAS) and surveyed 100 managers and 200 employees at TD Industries in Dallas, Texas. TD Industries has been cited as one of the very few business organizations that has successfully endorsed and applied the servant leadership model. Beazley's findings suggest that there is some evidence of a positive correlation between the spirituality dimension and servant leader behaviour.

Fortunately, for the writer at least, no doctoral papers have been found dealing with the origins of servant leadership. Only one published paper showed up in the literature review that might have dealt with this subject, and that was Sen Sendjaya and James Sarros' article, "Servant Leadership: Its Origin, Development and Application in Organizations" (2002). This paper, however, only makes a cursory attempt at exploring its origins. These two writers have concluded that the individual who first introduced servant leadership to the world was Jesus Christ, some 2000 years ago. Thereafter, it was "echoed in the lives of ancient monarchs for over a 1000 years." One cannot dispute their conclusion that Jesus may have been a true servant leader, but as the foregoing literature review has shown, their interpretation that he was the first is open to serious debate.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The methodology chosen for this study is historical design. An historical design approach to research is often selected when the data already exists and cannot be changed. Nor can the researcher using this design have any control over how and when and with what instruments the data were collected. When these parameters exist, as they do with the subject matter of this study, an historical design approach can be appropriately used. The writer has striven purposively to rely as much as possible on the author's original works, rather than secondary sources or commentaries on the classics of leadership thought. It must be recognized though, that even secondary sources can be distorted and lacking in vital or complete information. Given the vast time frame of this study, several millennia, there is no way to guarantee that some contamination has not entered through corrections, deletions or additions by subsequent readers, translators and re-writers. Consider, for example, the Bible, and how many times it has been translated (from Aramaic to Greek to Latin to English) and rewritten over the centuries.

The main reasons why this method has been utilized, as well as some of its constraints, are as follows:

1. The subject matter deals with the origins of a mental concept or belief system. By necessity, it is a backward looking process examining the mental activity of people long dead who happened to leave some record of what they thought and did. Even Robert Greenleaf, the person who originated the phrase "servant leadership" is now deceased, although he did leave a considerable body of written work. To supplement this however, a number of telephone and email conversations were conducted with his biographer, Don Frick, to learn more about the man and the origin of his ideas.

2. Without the assistance of an H.G. Wells time machine, no one will ever know with absolute certainty what men and women thought and did thousands of years ago. All one can do now is examine artifacts and surviving documents that they created and wrote, and attempt to understand them in the context of the times in which they lived. Sometimes scholars get lucky with the discovery of some

ancient documents not known to ever have existed and never examined before. The discovery of the Dead Sea scrolls is an example of that kind of accidental occurrence that can lead to all sorts of intellectual breakthroughs. Perhaps someone will one day discover long lost scrolls that survived the destruction of great library in ancient Alexandria, or unearth similar works buried for centuries in an ancient Roman villa. But until that kind of fortuitous event takes place, we can only rely on what has survived and is available at this moment in time. Thus, we must have the humility to admit that all of our intellectual efforts, from an historical point of view, are tainted by a degree of conjecture.

3. As alluded to above, even the primary source documents relied upon in this study have possibly been contaminated due to numerous translations, editing, rewritings, not to mention poor preservation and reproduction capabilities in previous centuries. Until the invention of the Gutenberg printing press, literacy in the West was the exception rather than the rule. The Dark Ages were known as 'dark' for a very good reason. Even after the printing presses' widespread adoption and use, some would still argue that true literacy was rare, as it is considered even today in some so-called advanced industrial societies. In the end, then, we are left only with what our libraries and enlightened leaders, educators, and thinkers have preserved for us and future generations.

4. From an intellectual point of view, it is now possible to legitimately advance the argument that the qualitative research approaches, such as historical design, have been discriminated against unfairly in the social sciences. In most North American doctoral programmes the quantitatively driven, empirical methodology techniques have acquired an almost reverential mystique surrounding them. It is as if something magical and permanent happens when a number is assigned to a human thought or experience. It then becomes a fact or piece of data that is measurable, and all that matters to some so-called intellectuals in this age is that which can be measured. But does the assignment of a number to a human characteristic, experience or mental process such as beauty, intelligence, love, faith, charisma, or even leadership, tell us the whole truth or reveal any real knowledge? It is time someone raised the skeptical proposition that this line of

inquiry may not only be futile but absurd when our objective is greater understanding. Lastly, the critical observation can be made that statistically based research should only be done by those who truly understand the faults and limitations of statistical techniques.   Another way of putting it is that it is a lot easier to lie with numbers than words.

Having suggested the foregoing constraints, is it possible to suggest that the research herein conducted is also an exercise in futility? Several answers to that question may be given. One, all research conducted by scholars is open to this question to some degree. What's never been done before is always going to be challenged by others. Had men and women never asked questions, especially ones to which they did not know the answers, our species might still be dwelling in caves. Two, some of the dumbest sounding questions are often the most important and life changing ones we will ever experience and learn from. For example, suppose no one ever asked, "Will mankind ever fly or go to the moon?" Or, do you think the world might not be flat? Three, because of the peculiar limitations and arrogance of the conscious minds of men, we often think that what we know now is all that we will ever know. From that platform we often foolishly project out onto possible futures that will never happen. Four, once we think we have something figured out, it is very difficult for us to change our minds. The more knowledge and status we have, the greater this is often so.   No one has pointed this out better than Thomas Kuhn in his landmark intellectual history, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions: "To reject one paradigm without simultaneously substituting another is to reject science itself. The act reflects not on the paradigm but on the man. Inevitably he will be seen by his colleagues as 'the carpenter who blames his tools.' " (Kuhn, 1996, p. 23) Five, as has been stated previously, the objective of this paper is to further understanding, not provide an explanation.

Though profound discoveries using the historical design methodology are rare, it is always possible for a researcher, after looking at the work that numerous other researchers have already done, to see a pattern or line of thinking or an explanation that was undiscovered or unimagined. Historical scholars in particular will frequently interpret the past the way people do a painting. Consider Burns' overall negative interpretation of the 18th century, in contrast to that of Neil Postman's or Isaiah Berlin's

(previously noted in the literature review): "Man's irrationality, uncontrolled passions, inordinate selfishness, vanity and hypocrisy – all these in varying combinations and degrees made up a dominant theme of the 18th century." (Burns, 1978, p.143) Who is to say with any finality, which of these intellectuals got it right?

With the nature of this study it is useful to recall the wisdom contained in Occam's Razor, that the simplest explanation available is most often the most reliable. An example is what Charles Darwin did with long dead artifacts and the development of his theory of evolution. His interpretation was considered so brilliant by some of his colleagues simply because it was so obvious. Why had we not thought of this before, was the reaction. In The Moral Animal by Ronald Wright, there is a passage that captures this intellectual moment: "The idea of natural selection, while indeed "sweeping in significance" is not really "massive in structure." It is a small and simple theory, and it didn't take a huge intellect to conceive it. Thomas Henry Huxley, Darwin's good friend, staunch defender, and fluent popularizer, supposedly chastised himself upon comprehending the theory, exclaiming, 'How extremely stupid not to have thought of that!'" (Wright, 1994, p. 23)

In this project the reader might well have asked, while the ancient and modern writings were being studied, did this ancient or modern author knowingly or unknowingly understand and advocate servant leadership, as it has been defined by Robert Greenleaf? Did he or she see leadership as an exercise in service to something other than themselves, that is, their own personal gain and gratification? Due to the leader's leadership, were followers better off in terms of being freer, healthier, more autonomous, and more likely to become servant leaders themselves? Were those least powerful or well off hurt because of the leader's leadership? And finally, was the leader aware, or those instructing the leader, of any spiritual domain or existence in their lives from which they could seek guidance and support?

Chapter 4

Presentation of Findings

Overall General Description of Findings

The primary research questions considered in this study were:

    i)   What are the origins of servant leadership, as defined by Robert Greenleaf in 1970?

    ii)   Through the examination of these origins, can other ideas, principles and ideals that flow naturally or concurrently with servant leadership, be identified?

The research findings are summarized as follows:

1) The origins of servant leadership can be traced back to nearly 2500 years ago, indicating that it is a timeless, universal aspect of leadership.

2) Servant leadership and Burns' concept of moral leadership express many of the same concepts and values. Servant leadership can therefore be classified as a specific form of moral leadership.

3) Servant leadership flows most naturally from the inner work that leaders voluntarily take on in their journey through life. It cannot be created from the top down (head to heart), or from the outside in (obedience to outside authority). That is, its source is not egoism but a selfless regard for others.

4) Ideally, servant leaders need a democratic institutional environment in which to take root, continue, survive and flourish.

5) True servant leadership depends on the existence of servant followers who need to know the answers to the following questions: servants of what and servants of whom?

6) A relative decline of interest in servant leadership, in the late 1980's, followed by Robert Greenleaf's death in 1990, was paralleled by a similar lull in the general field of leadership studies. Recent and renewed interest in servant leadership indicates that it evokes continuing attraction and maintains a high degree of relevance as a model of leadership for humanity.

An Analysis and Interpretation of the Findings

The origins of servant leadership can be traced back at least 2500 years, centuries before the emergence of Christianity in the West.

       The research done here clearly shows that the concept of servant leadership has been part of human consciousness, either wholly or in part, for at least 2500 years. Consequently, servant leadership is not a totally new concept, or an idea that began with the Christian religion. Numerous ancient writers, philosophers, historians, poets and playwrights were also aware of the values, ideas and truths imbedded in Greenleaf's concept of servant leadership: Plato, Sophocles, Xenophon, Cicero, to name a few, in the time before Christ. Most of these individuals were very direct in expressing themselves. Some like Sophocles and Euripides, had to be clever and more discreet when suggesting a ruler ruled first and foremost on behalf on his followers, given that their plays were put on for anyone in the public to see. To so openly criticize or disparage a king or tyrant could cost them their lives. The following heated exchange in Sophocles' play Antigone between Creon, the ruler, and Haemen, his son, illustrates this point:

Creon: So you think the people should tell what orders to give?

Haemen: Now who's talking like he's wet behind the ears?

Creon: So I should rule this country for someone other than myself?

Haemen: A place for one man alone is not a city.

Creon: A city belongs to its master. Isn't that the rule?

Haemen: Then go be ruler of the desert, all alone. You'd do it well. (1. Woodroff, 2005, p147)

       Later in his Anabasis Xenophon reminded readers and listeners that it was the work of leaders and superiors to plan for their followers and "toil for them whenever there be need." (Brownson, 1998, p.231) As mentioned, Plato noted early on in his Republic that a truly moral man must step forward and lead when it is possible so that

that lesser, inferior or corrupt individuals might not take over and destroy the entire polis or community.

In the centuries following the fall of the Roman Empire, many other writers and philosophers came to a similar conclusion: the early Christian theologians, Christine de Pezan, Aquinas, Erasmus, the Enlightenment philosophers, Adam Smith, Jefferson, Madison, Emerson, Thoreau, Mill, and Follet, to name a few. All were aware of the need of rulers and leaders to consider and fulfill the needs of their followers. As the age of divinely appointed warrior kings receded, new forms of legitimate authority began to emerge. Yet, even at this stage of western civilization, almost all of humanity lived in an uncivilized Hobbesian world. Human life then was about survival for the overwhelming mass of humanity. At what level and where you were born in society was where you stayed or dropped below on the food chain. The idea of upward mobility and rising in life materially and socially, so common in 20th century North America, was foreign and extremely rare to the human race. It was the Renaissance and the Enlightenment periods, with a little help from Gutenberg's printing press, that opened men's minds to greater possibilities. Freedom and democracy, long dead, became describable and possible to think of once more. The American and French Revolutions showed that they were even achievable now. The nation state was emerging as the most viable political unit. For the first time since ancient Greece and Republican Rome, leaders began to sense that they could not govern for very long successfully without the support, even consent, of those they governed. The ancient truth, put forth by the Greeks, that every man could accurately measure the truth, was expressed again. In such an environment, servant leadership could once again find a home and become viable.

Some scholars like Bass (1981) and Rost (1991) have attempted to approach leadership by looking at the definition of "leadership". According to the former, the word did not appear until the first half of the nineteenth century in writings concerning political influence and control in the British Parliament. (Bass, 1990, p.7) Other sources claim it can be traced from Anglo-Saxon and Latin roots going back to at least 1300 AD. Rost in his exhaustive research on leadership definitions, found 221 different definitions in some 587 books, book chapters and journal articles. One of his rather unusual and striking conclusions is that our modern concept of leadership, whatever that term might

precisely mean, is unconnected to ancient writings: "The many writers on leadership who assume that the modern concept of leadership has been in use since Greek and Roman antiquity, are in error. Leadership, as we know it, is a 20th century concept, and to trace our understanding of it to previous eras in Western civilization (must less other civilizations) is as wrong as to suggest that the people of earlier civilizations knew what for instance, computerization meant." (Rost, 1991, pp 76-77)

With all due respect, the researcher adamantly disagrees. There are at least five problems with Rost's conclusion. Firstly, any concept that can generate 221 different definitions may be well be beyond defining. It is too large and complex to be crammed into a few sentences. Hence, it may even be relevant to ask, does anyone know what they are talking about here? Some scholars like Joanne Ciulla and Robert Soloman have argued that leadership is not a singular concept, but a complex set of emotional and moral relationships. (Ciulla, 2005, p.2) But even if it is a concept or singular notion, then it is far more comparable to words like truth, beauty, or integrity, rather than a 20th century technological invention like computerization. Such a comparison is not only misleading but absurd. An ancient Roman or Greek might never be able to understand what a computer is, even if it were explained to him, but that does not mean, ergo, that he would not be able to understand what an archon, centurion or quaestor was required to do as part of his job in those positions. The latter would be clearly showing us what we would now call leadership.

Secondly, their argument that leadership is strictly a 20th century concept does not meet the test of common sense. One has to ask, does this notion, that only we moderns know what leadership is, make any sense? It does not take a genius to realistically imagine primitive, pre-agricultural and pre-written language societies. In such hunter gatherer, tribal groupings, it was most often the males who did the fighting, foraging and hunting. We know that those men did their hunting and foraging in groups for strength and protection. Did these groups act without leaders? If so, how? The most likely and logical answer to that question is that the biggest, strongest, cleverest, and most courageous athletic male naturally emerged most often as the leader. His "leadership" status depended on his men 'bringing home the bacon." So, how could any reasonably intelligent person possibly conclude that these tribal humans did not have

some grasp of what a leader was, even at this primitive level? Their tribe's very survival depended on someone leading these groups. One might even suggest that a tribe without leaders, or good leadership, would eventually face starvation, conquest or be forced to join another more vigorous, aggressive or successful tribe that was capable of looking after its members. Perhaps someday scientists will someday discover a leadership gene that started here.

It is also useful to put oneself in the shoes of a pre-historic, tribal "leader." One would have to be extremely arrogant and dismissive to think that the leader of a tribe was not aware of what he had to do. His leadership status and role, which undoubtedly carried certain perks and rewards, depended on his success, and his success depended on his taking care of his tribe's needs. One has to think at some stage, he would have realized that he really was a "servant" of his tribe, with grave responsibilities that came with his special powers and prerogatives. His tribe may not even have had a word to express his relationship to them, but they knew what it was when it was there. Most importantly, if he failed in providing it, he knew what the tribe would sooner or later do with him.

Thirdly, and another way of refuting this, is to say that Rost's and Bass's conclusion on this point displays an intellectual blind spot. It is illustrative of the decline of Classical education, and an historical and culture illiteracy that so many post modern scholars display today with respect to the ideas that created and still sustain Western Civilization. One has to ask, how many of them have bothered to read, or re-read, and consider deeply the writings of Plato, Aristotle, Thucydides, Xenophon, Plutarch or Cicero? There is an educational and cultural void here in North America, and it has been powerfully described by Allan Bloom (1987), Victor Davis Hansen, John Heath and many others. In their Who Killed Homer? The Demise of Classical Education and the Recovery of Greek Wisdom (2001), the latter two writers make the following cogent observation:

> If you want to learn why our nation's elite now have no morals, why our lawyers, doctors, politicians, journalists, and corporate magnates equate the accumulation of data with knowledge, frankness with truth, inherited power with justice, titles and suits with dignity, and capital with talent ---- why they all know nothing of Greek wisdom --- you must look to the mentors who trained and degreed them. (Hanson & Heath, 2001, p.153)

These two classical scholars also pointed out, unknowingly perhaps, how the ancient Greeks even knew something of servant leadership:

> Even business, where we might think the Greeks had the least value and relevance, could have learned from a glance at the past. The bitter experiences of buyouts, golden parachutes, takeovers, layoffs, downsizings, closures, individual short-term success at the expense of the company and the community – the entire miasma of the present --- could have been predicted by investing some energy in Western culture, had leading Classicists stepped forth in public and in print and in the classroom with the necessary lessons. The Greeks made the first and ultimate critique of the present philistinism, the most persuasive cry for moderation and the reign of *to meson* (the middle). The Greeks had already mapped the paths to individual success and the creation of a stable society: joint decision-making, no astronomical payoffs for an undeserving elite, constant audit and accountability, duties to the community, *noblesse oblige* towards the less fortunate --- what the Greeks call *charis.* (Hanson & Heath, 2001, p. 154-155)

Fourthly, it is easy for someone to confuse the word "leadership" with "leader." Leadership is actually what a leader does, or demonstrates to others in words and actions. In reading the ancient writings, most of which were done in the context of slave based, non-democratic societies, by men who actually had little faith in democracy, it might well be more accurate to use the term "ruler" for leader and headship for leadership. But regardless of whether you call the leader a king, monarch, lord or head, what that person did, and was judged by others as demonstrating, is what we now commonly refer to as "leadership." Any further quibbling here is really semantic hair splitting that reflects a lack of understanding of ancient societies, and attributes to them a very low state of social evolution, as well as a level of ignorance that is historically inaccurate.

Fifthly, and much more will be said about this later in this work, it is extremely difficult to separate the concept of servant leadership from that of democracy or democratic forms of social and political organization. As anyone who has studied ancient recorded history will tell you, the roots of democracy are found in ancient Greece and Republican Rome. Where democracy flourishes, so also does servant leadership. Finally, and most tellingly, Rost offers no historical proof or evidence for his conclusions, other than an extremely superficial etymological investigation. To make

such a broad and categorical leap across twenty-five centuries, without an historical record and accounting in support, borders quite frankly on simplemindedness.

Servant Leadership is a specific form of moral leadership

Robert Greenleaf's concept of servant leadership includes a moral component, both explicitly and by implication. What is "moral" here refers to not only what is permissible, but what needs and what ought to be done by a specific type of truly effective and virtuous leader. Looking after the needs of one's followers automatically suggests a deontological element. That is, a servant leader has a duty to look after and *serve* his or her followers first. He does this by helping them become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely themselves to become servants. You cannot help but note the specific values expressed in Greenleaf's chosen words. He did not say wealthier, fatter, more powerful or more secure. Connect the dots in Greenleaf's words and you can clearly see a particular set of values, and different kind of behaviour that a servant leader must demonstrate. Greenleaf's values may not be what many consider in these times to be the normal expressions of what a leader should do. But the issue Greenleaf raised is that they should be. As such, Greenleaf was introducing a moral dimension that he, and others before him, saw as necessary in the conduct of proper leadership. It is useful also to note that the needs he cites are not lower level ones that must be fulfilled for basic survival. In fact, were Maslow (1965) or Alderfer (1969) to consider them, they would most likely classify them as higher order needs. They are ones that are not very easily satisfied or achieved in most people's lives in any age, meaning that servant leaders have a tall order to fill.

The other ethical aspect of servant leadership arises from the responsibility of a servant leader to respond to the second condition Greenleaf set down in his groundbreaking 1970 essay, The Servant as Leader: "And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will he benefit, or, at least, will he not be further deprived?" (Greenleaf, 1970, p.7). A decade later, in another essay titled Servant: Retrospect and Prospect (1998) Greenleaf went even further and added this requirement: "No one will knowingly be hurt by the action of the servant leader, *directly or indirectly.*" (Greenleaf, 1998, p.43) This suggests that a servant leader must take into account all members of a

society or community, including the weakest, and not just his followers. And to harm others is therefore unethical, even if your followers have benefited. To the writer, this sounds very much like a moral imperative. Using this yardstick, a great many of our leaders in business, even ones like Jack Welch, would be subject to criticism on moral grounds. Every corporate executive or politician who looks the other way when environmental damage is caused by their acts or omissions has failed this test. An executive taking advantage of a million dollar stock option and bonus, while thousands of his employees were being laid off, or the company losing money, would be first in line to be condemned. (Wren, Vol. 3, p.275) They too would surely fail Greenleaf's test of servant leadership. Perhaps because of that, and the fact that this test runs counter to the American values of free enterprise, laissez faire, Horatio Alger and self reliance, not many Greenleaf commentators have cared to look at this part of his test, and investigate its relevance and importance to leadership. This area has primarily been left to the moral philosophers, some of whom have argued persuasively for the need for greater levels of moral leadership.

One of the surprising and unintended discoveries unearthed in the literature review was the realization that nearly all of the authors of the classic works of leadership, from the 20th century back in time, were also among the leading ethical philosophers and writers in their day, and they were now being cited in the leading ethics' anthologies. (Sommers, 2004, Singer, 1994) Is this a coincidence? Did the ancients see something, a connection here, though it may be an obvious one, which a number of recent scholars (Bennis, 1998, Ciulla, 1998, Burns, 2003, Wren, 2004) have begun to acknowledge and revisit? Why do we now look to the great ethical thinkers of the past for insights on leadership? Though it may be possible to think of ethics as a distinct area of philosophical study, without any association to leadership, it is not that easy now to think of leadership without reference to moral and ethical considerations. Can we have a leader without a moral compass? We undoubtedly can, given some of the political leaders of the 20th century such as Hitler, Stalin, or Mao. But it is not possible to do so with servant leaders.

Burns also believed that at the highest stage of moral development people are guided by near universal ethical principles of justice, equality of human rights, and

respect for individual dignity. This kind of elevated leadership naturally operates at need and values levels higher than those of many potential followers (but not so high as to lose contact with followers). Secondly, it is the kind of leadership that can exploit conflict and tension with peoples' value structures. (Burns, 1998, p.42) This may appear incongruent, but it must be noted that Burns recognized that transforming leaders, regardless of their professed preference for harmony, do not shun conflict; they confront it, exploit it and ultimately embody it.

Are there then any similarities between Burns higher level, moral leadership and Greenleaf's servant leadership? In Burns own opinion, servant leadership did not have anything to add to the study of leadership. (Comment by Burns in a private discussion with Don Frick) One can only speculate as to what he meant when he made that comment. One plausible explanation is that his version of moral leadership encompassed every notable facet of servant leadership in terms of morality. Indeed, it is fair to say, by way of definition, that Burns' explanation is far more detailed, rational and explicit. It is also possible to argue that Burns' higher values, which he associated with self actualization, would include all of Greenleaf's: becoming healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely themselves to become servants. Abraham Maslow, the man who developed the concept of self actualization, used it in reference to people whose work becomes part of their definition of themselves. Admittedly, these people, if unhealthy or unbalanced, can also be workaholics who eventually burn out at great cost to themselves and those close to them. But for Maslow, it referred to the person who can achieve a kind of loss of self-awareness and of self consciousness that the easterners, the Japanese and Chinese keep on trying to attain." (Maslow, 1965, p.7) It is a form of selflessness through which an individual finds his or her expression of their real self. The dichotomy between selfish and unselfish in the person finds resolution here by becoming one or whole. (Maslow, 1965, p.7) Thus, commitment to worthwhile work or an important job, could become a path to human happiness as the selfish and unselfish blend into one another. For Greenleaf, it was a lot simpler. One reaches this state by being a servant, and leaving behind one's ego that is connected to the leadership apparel.

Although there is no definitive evidence the writer is aware of that Robert Greenleaf read Maslow, especially Maslow's later works, we do know, according to Don

Frick, Greenleaf's biographer, that Greenleaf was heavily influenced by the human potential movements of the 1960's. We also know that Maslow was a key contributor to the paradigm shifts going on then. With just about every individual example of a servant leader that Greenleaf gives in his founding essay (Jefferson, Grundtvig, Woolman) we can find a person who experienced, in all likelihood, some form of self actualization. Finally, it needs emphasizing that Greenleaf never used the term servant to mean servility. He understood implicitly, from his own life that a servant is someone who by serving others, experiences self healing. This is very similar, if not the same, as Maslow's dichotomy of selfish and unselfish expression, that disappears and finds resolution in the self actualization stage.

Now admittedly, it is open to any clever person at this point to raise the argument that a lot of so-called unselfish behaviour is a sham. This argument states that people who are "other centered," or who lead to serve their followers, are really pursuing their own carefully disguised selfish goals. Their selfish motivations are hidden behind a cloak of unselfish appearances and statements. Using biological determinism (Richard Dawking's selfish gene), economics' rational man, and psychological egoism, as proof, they maintain that men and women always act, in the final analysis, to benefit themselves. That is, we can't help it, it is in our genes and we are "programmed" to behave like that. Hence, even friendship can best be understood as a "social-exchange system in which altruistic action is one of the goods exchanged." (Kohn, 1990, p.187) Reciprocity is simply a way of "mobilizing egoistic motivations and channeling them into the maintenance of the social system." (Kohn, 1990, p.188) Even at the individual level, acts of spontaneous helpfulness and generosity can be accounted by the quest for "self rewards," the psychic gratification one gets from being the "good Samaritan." As has been suggested repeatedly herein, this was not the view of Robert Greenleaf, or numerous other wise counselors down through the ages. They reflect, nonetheless, the kind of attitudes that are so popular in our current self-absorbed society, which Greenleaf also once described as "cold, low-caring, highly competitive, and violence-prone " (Greenleaf,1998, p54)

<u>True servant leadership flows from the inner spiritual awareness, or presence, that servant leaders acquire in their journeys through this world.</u>

Robert Greenleaf believed that the outer work that a leader performs begins on the inside.   In his founding essay, Greenleaf uses a story to convey this concept: "A king once asked Confucius' advice on what to do about the large number of thieves. Confucius answered, 'If you, sir, were not covetous, although you should reward them to do it, they would not steal.' This places an enormous burden on those who are favored by the rules, and it establishes how old is the notion that the servant views any problem in the world as *in here*, inside himself, and not *out there*. And if a flaw in the world is to be remedied, to the servant the process starts *in here*, in the servant, not *out there*. This is a difficult concept for that busybody, modern man." (Greenleaf, 1970, p.34) It is the quality of the inner life of leaders, manifested in their very presence, which lifts the followers up so that they can find the courage and fortitude to complete the journey. By "spirit" Greenleaf meant the vital principle and animating force that disposed one to be a servant of others. (Greenleaf, 1982, p. 4-5)

E.F. Schumacher (1977) put it even more forcefully: "World issues multiply and everybody deplores the shortage or even total lack of 'wise' men or women, unselfish leaders, trustworthy counselors, etc. It is hardly rational to expect such high qualities from people who have never done any <u>inner work</u> and would not even understand what is meant by the words." (Palmer, 1993, p.36) What does inner spiritual awareness refer to, since spirituality, like leadership, is a very hard word to pin down with precision? It's been said that these are probably two of the vaguest words you can find in our language, and when you put them together you get something even vaguer. (Palmer, 1990, p.3)

It might be best then to start with leadership, and ask what it is that Confucius, Greenleaf and Schumacher and many other philosophers and historians are telling us about leadership? Firstly, it is arguable they are suggesting that serving and leading are, as Greenleaf put it, intuition based concepts linked to one another. The process of leading, going out ahead to show the way, comes from an unusual openness to inspiration, and not just rational, logical, linear thought processing. Why would anybody accept leadership of another unless that other sees more clearly where it is best to go?

(Greenleaf, 1970, p.8) Secondly, those who follow a leader do so ultimately because they *trust* that leader. Thus, anyone who states a goal worth pursuing by him or others, must elicit *trust*, especially if it is a high risk or visionary goal, because those who follow will be asked to accept the risk along with the leader. Followers will trust the leader who conveys the feeling, the empathy that he or she will take care of them and not let them down. Therefore, a leader cannot elicit trust unless followers have confidence in his values, his competence, and unless he has a sustaining spirit (entheos) that will support the tenacious pursuit of a worthy goal. (Greenleaf, 1970, p.9)

It is useful here to draw upon Xenophon's Anabasis once more. Much of this work contains the speeches he gave to the ten thousand soldiers, laying out his ideas, decisions, the reasoning behind them, why it would be best to go this way and not that way, etc. This work may well have been written after the journey, with the benefit of hindsight when every thing could be explained in a rational manner. But in all likelihood, there was probably a lot of emotion and passion conveyed in his speeches to those men. They were hardened veterans, and mercenaries. They were over three thousand kilometers from home, outnumbered and surrounded by hostile enemies and marching out along a path no Greek army had ever done before. They had lost all their leaders and had no supplies, provisions or reinforcements to come to their aid. They followed Xenophon not only because he pointed out the only possible way to get home alive, which may have appeared impossible at that moment, but because they *trusted* him. What he did then was *inspire* them to do what many thought was beyond their reach, even miraculous.

It is remarkable how often the need to do this "inner work" is overlooked in our instant gratification, materialistic, scientific and technologically driven modern world. Yet many still realize, and more would realize it if they thought about it, that we do not choose our leaders by completely rational or logical means. We often go with our "gut feeling" about a person, and later justify it with rationalizations, selective facts, and a cloak of objectivity. Recent brain imaging research has shown that our political predictions are products of confirmation bias and an unconscious driven by emotion. Confirmation bias occurs when we seek and find confirmatory evidence in support of already existing beliefs and ignore or reinterpret disconfirmatory evidence. Moreover,

those parts of the brain most associated with reasoning were found to be the most quiescent. (Shermer, 2006, p36) Yet, it is here, filling this gap, that the "inner work" done by a leader can make a world of difference in terms of attaining and achieving a truly worthy and positive objective desired by his or her followers. Unfortunately, it can also be exploited by cynical and power hungry individuals for almost any kind of mendacious goal.

This is perhaps a good place to introduce the 'dark side' of this process in leaders. There is story, pertaining to this point, told about Alexander the Great when he had gotten to India. Upon arriving at a certain village, Alexander's pages went ahead to clear the road. A group of yogi's were sitting, taking in the sun in the public lane, and a dispute arose as to who should have the right of way. One of Alexander's pages addressed the eldest of the wise men, "This man has conquered the world! What have you done?" The philosopher replied without hesitation, "And I have conquered the need to conquer the world." (Pressfield, 2004 p 306) The timeless dilemma posed by this story, is who is the greater, the one who has conquered the outer world, or the one who has mastered his inner world? What is always overlooked, until too late, is the cost of conquering the outer world. In Alexander's case, over a million were to die in his march to the Indus. (Hanson, 2001, p. 21) Everything he accomplished was undone by his inability to control his alcohol consumption. This story also points to the age old dilemma of who is best qualified to rule or lead, the warrior king or the philosopher? What did the ancients expect of philosophers? Even Plato did not want his philosophers to retire from the world. Like the Confucians, he believed that a sage should be a man of action and influence public policy. Like the Buddha, Plato insisted that after achieving enlightenment, the sage must return to the agora and work there for the betterment of humanity. (Armstrong, 2006, p.314) There is little doubt that he was wary, like his mentor Socrates, as to how far in that direction a philosopher ought to go. The point here is that it is fair to say again that Plato, and many other ancients, had an intuitive understanding of servant leadership without explicitly saying so.

The real question here is whether the leader understands and cares about what he or she is motivated by. Has he or she ever even taken the time to ask and answer that question truthfully? Has she or he been compelled through his or her life experiences to

ask the tough questions that an inner journey requires? How motivated are we to look at our inner demons? One has only to observe the profound changes that human tragedy can have on one's outlook on life and one's behaviour. Take for example, Robert Kennedy's life, which was profoundly changed by the tragic death of his brother. For strength, he turned to the ancient Greek poets and playwrights (Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides), and found in them the inspiration to move forward in his life. (Thomas, 2000, p. 286) For him at least, this was not an accident.

Unfortunately, it is simplistic and unrealistic to assume that every self actualizing person will be leadership material. The desire for power, status and recognition is what attracts most men and women to strive for leadership positions. These motivators are not what drive one to become a servant leader. Also, in this endeavor, human appetites can vary greatly. Another way of looking at this, is to ask whether the motivation driving the ambition for power over others is healthy or unhealthy. In Burns' opinion, the real problem for these particular individuals is unfulfilled esteem needs. It is often recognized that people with a need for esteem have moved a considerable way up Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the highest of which is self actualization. Thus, they are likely to be highly active in their social and political environments, and found seeking leadership positions in them. (Burns, 1978, p.113) Most importantly, Burns notes, the decisive and risky steps taken to obtain a leadership position will most likely be taken by two kinds of people: those who have such high self-esteem that they can manage relatively easily the threats and strains and anxieties involved in this change; and those who such low self-esteem that they are ready to attempt this extraordinary thing to raise it. (Burns, 1978, p.113)

As one can imagine, it is frequently in this second group of putative leaders that leadership problems originate. In a not so well known study by a Canadian scholar, Bernadotte Schell, Management in the Mirror, the behaviour of "unbalanced" toxic corporate leaders was examined in detail. Using extensive surveys of 400 corporate officers in Canada, Schell was able to categorize the respondents into the following groups and percentages: Only 9% of present day corporate leaders could be classified as pure "self healers" or trustworthy leaders; 41% would be classified as "somewhat balanced" transitional leaders (ones who are narcissistic and quite self absorbed rather

than other or company absorbed); the remaining 50% could be classified as "unbalanced" toxic leaders, to varying degrees. (Schell, 1999, pp.234-235) These numbers should be viewed with alarm. Sadly, many of the third group are self destructive individuals who often like to think of themselves as martyrs or magicians, determined to make something positive out of the negative. What they experience themselves, however, is overwhelming stress and "inner experience" discomfort. (Schell, 1999, pp.234-235) They are clearly men and women who are not comfortable in their skins. Worse, they are a major contributor to the toxic environments that so many people today have to work in.

As noted, the number of individuals in the third group is both staggering and troublesome. It is certainly not reflective or indicative of the image most Canadians have of their corporate leaders, men and women usually viewed as successful and positive role models. Yet the numbers are congruent with a lot of anecdotal comments frequently made by those working in toxic environments, or for these kinds of bosses. Most worrisome is the low number of "self-healers." From this group one would expect to find the self actualizers, and hopefully a certain number of servant leaders. It is submitted that what distinguishes the servant leaders from the self actualizers would be the methods chosen for self healing. Servant leaders, by definition, would be those who have chosen an inner spiritual journey, of some form, to heal themselves as opposed to other avenues available. And from that healing and inner growth will sometimes come a sense of the unknowable, and an ability to foresee the unforeseeable when it really matters.

Today the connection between spiritual and psychological well-being is often passed over by psychologists and psychiatrists, who consider their work a branch of secular medicine and science.(Shenk, 2006 p.66) This was not always so. From an historical point of view, these two branches of knowledge, psychology and psychiatry, have only recently emerged. They have clearly taken over the field of mental health and psychological well-being in most modern western societies. When once it was common for men and women to consult a priest, reverend or rabbi for personal advice to deal with life's troubles, uncertainties, struggles and tragedies, many now turn to doctors of psychiatry and Ph.D.'s in psychology. And judging by the results, it is at least arguable that humanity is not much better off, and may well be paying a huge price for our current spiritual emptiness, anomie, isolation and denial. Although religions have their dark

sides, the acceptance of religions' basic truths often opens men and women's minds to a whole new field of possible cognition from which a search for truth can be attempted. Parallel to our self knowledge, we also develop an ability to understand other people, thanks largely to the acceptance of the existence of an analogous reality within our neighbor. (Lobaczewski, p.268) We think less and less of others in terms of competition ("them"), and more and more in terms of compassion and understanding ("us").

It is may be easiest to explain this development with an example from history. The life of Abraham Lincoln stands apart from not only his contemporaries, but even from the times in which he lived.   Very few people today know of his mood swings and at least two major mental breakdowns that he experienced. He suffered major depression in his twenties, and chronic depression later on. In our modern world with that kind of track record one can only imagine how many career doors would be closed to him in the professions, politics or even business. But in his time scientists assumed there was a connection between one's mental and spiritual life. And in Lincoln's case, among those who knew him best, there was an almost unchallenged consensus that his depression was rooted in his uncanny ability to see human reality, and all its suffering, in "precise shape and color." (Shenk, 2006, p.66) This was Lincoln's cross to bear. What he learned from it, though, in terms of improving himself, developing discipline, self understanding, and strategies for solace, would become the foundation of his character.(Shenk, 2006, p.56). The personal clarity, humility and determination he developed within himself enabled him to forge the leadership skills and stamina that helped him lead his nation through some of its darkest hours. His never ending melancholy thus became the fuel for the fire of his great work. One of his closest friends, Joshua Speed, recorded that Lincoln had an "irrepressible desire" to accomplish something while he lived. He wanted to connect his name with the great events of his generation, and so "impress himself upon them as to link his name with something that would rebound to the interests of his fellow man." (Shenk, 2006, p.56) By consciously shifting his goal away from personal contentment, which he realized he could not attain, towards universal justice in the struggle against slavery, he gained the insight and strength to lead and transcend his profound personal darkness. His life thereafter became a transformation of an ambitious lawyer politician to one of the most extraordinary servant leaders of all time.

<u>In order for servant leadership to flourish democratic institutions must exist and democratic principles and practices need to be respected and followed in our organizational lives.</u>

The recorded history of humanity shows that democratic societies have been short lived and difficult to sustain. Democracy in ancient Athens, which some consider the birthplace of modern democracy, only lasted a little over a century. In the Roman Republic magistrates, tribunes and praetors were elected, while the Senate was largely made up of patricians who were appointed for life. Interestingly, the Senate did not put forth legislation but stood by as an advisory body in this oligarchic or aristocratic republic.(Fagan, 1999, Part 2, p.63). By 82 BC, however, Rome had degenerated into a tyranny with Sulla's dictatorship. Within thirty years a civil war erupted which inaugurated the Roman Empire, which for all intents and purposes ended the Roman Republic, which had survived for nearly 500 years. The American Republic is only 230 years old, and the Canadian parliamentary form of democracy is approaching a mere 150 years. The British form of parliamentary democracy is not that much older, if one dates it from the time when the right to vote was extended to a majority of the adult male population, or the time from which the monarchy became a symbolic and ceremonial institution lacking any real political power.

The question being raised here is what has democracy to do with servant leadership? Paul Woodruff has made the following insight into why leadership and democracy are linked: "I think I know why the ancient writers found leadership hard to explain: democratic leadership requires democratic followers. Leaders of a given kind will not surface in a society without the appropriate kind of followers. You cannot describe a form of leadership without describing the entire form of community that allows for it." (Ciulla, 2005, pp.36-37) If what Woodruff says about democratic leaders is true, then, a priori, it is even more so of servant leaders. That is, for servant leaders to emerge there must also be democratic institutions that permit them to surface. To understand that proposition fully, one must appreciate why that is so.

It should be noted firstly that the proposition being advanced here does not imply its converse. That is, if servant leadership flourishes in a democratic environment, it does not mean that it cannot arise in non-democratic or oligarchic, or even a dictatorial

regime. On occasion in history, "enlightened despots" or "benevolent dictators" have emerged. They are, however, the exception and extremely rare. Moreover, those individuals around despotic leaders, with servant leadership abilities, usually prefer to operate covertly and not draw attention to themselves, either out of an instinct for survival or a sense of genuine humility. For example, in the corporate world, no one would ever suggest that ATT, where Robert Greenleaf worked for 40 years, was a democratically run business. Yet Greenleaf, and others like him, survived and prospered during their careers there. Had he not taken the time to put his ideas down in writing in his retirement, no one might ever have been reminded of the importance of the concept of servant leadership.

It has been argued here that even in prehistoric societies, and not just ancient ones, there must have been some form of leadership roles for individuals to fill. The next question is how did they choose people to fill them? Without written records there is no way of ever knowing for sure how prehistoric societies did this. This is not the case, however, with ancient societies that did leave written records, especially the Greeks and Romans. From the poetry of Homer and Solon to the philosophical treatises of Plato and Aristotle, we have a pretty good idea how those people twenty-five centuries ago thought about the important things in life, especially government, power, relationships, virtue and ethical behaviour. In other words, we can deduce how they understood "leadership' from what they thought of all the components of our modern concept of leadership.

We also know that the ancient city of Athens, some time between 500 and 300 BC, embarked on an experiment in a new form of government for its time, that being democracy. Historians are generally united today in their view that Athens was the freest and most gloriously successful city of its age, and that it produced an intellectual flowering that was not equaled for nearly 2000 years. Because of its demise and relatively short life, it was also considered a spectacular failure, especially when compared to the triumph of Roman imperialism not long after it. Even as a democracy, it was far from perfect, as only non-slave, adult males with property, who were born of native parentage, were given citizenship, and voice in the city's political life. In spite of its faults though, Athenian democracy evolved during its short time in history, and the

Athenians did learn from their mistakes, adjusting their democratic institutions as time went on.

The historian, general and philosopher Xenothon was an Athenian, as were Pericles, Socrates, Thucydides, and Plato. That is, many of the authors cited in this research, as contributors to the origins of the concept of servant leadership, were men who intuitively understood what this kind of leadership entailed and meant, having grown up and been educated under Athenian democracy. They would find it loathsome to be considered an "idiot" by their fellow citizens. Today that word has a particularly pejorative connotation, quite a bit different from what it meant in ancient Athens. Back then it was equally insulting, but was used to refer to people so absorbed with themselves that they made no contribution and did nothing for their city. (Parker, 2005, p. 1) Living in a democracy meant that you had responsibilities for what went on around you in your community. The wealthier you became, the greater were your responsibilities to your "polis." Life was not just about getting and having, but giving and contribution too. As Pericles put it in his famous funeral Oration, "We consider anyone who does not share in the life of a citizen not as minding his own business but as useless." (M.I.Finley, 1971, p.30) It is therefore reasonable to assume that the leaders of this democratic culture were bound by the same rules and code of conduct that everyone else was, and if they were ultimately answerable to the people of the polis, they had very little choice in the matter. In a certain sense, everyone was a "servant" of one another in this ancient democracy.

What this meant in practice was shown to the world by Xenophon and the march of the ten thousand. Here is Victor Davis Hanson's description of the incredible "democratic" feats that Xenophon wrote about in his <u>Anabasis</u>:

> Where else in the Mediterranean would philosophers and students of rhetoric march in file alongside cutthroats to crash headlong into enemy flesh? Where else would every man under arms feel equal to anyone else in the army—or at least see himself as free and in control of his own destiny? What other army of the ancient world elected its own leader? And how could such a small force by elected committee navigate its way thousands of miles home amid thousands of hostile enemies.

> Once the Ten Thousand, as much a "marching democracy" as a hired army, left the battlefield of Cunaxa, the soldiers routinely held assemblies in which they voted on the proposals of their elected leaders. In times of crises, they formed ad hoc boards to ensure that there were sufficient

archers, cavalry, and medical corpsmen. When faced with a variety of unexpected challenges, both natural and human—impassable rivers, a dearth of food, and unfamiliar tribal enemies--councils were held to debate and discuss new tactics, craft new weapons, and adopt modifications in organization. The elected generals marched and fought alongside their men—and were careful to provide a fiscal account of their expenditures. (Hanson, 2002, p.3)

There is an aspect of leadership here that Xenophon points to without really ever explicitly saying it. What distinguishes military leadership in war from the kind of leadership one sees in everyday civilian life, especially in corporate and governmental bureaucracies, is that bad leadership will be exposed very quickly. If you cannot lead in battle, your superiors will find out far more quickly than in a civilian bureaucracy.   It may take years for an organization in the latter sphere to get rid of a poor leader. In war, the soldiers beneath and around a bad leader will discover it very quickly, sometimes within a matter of minutes or hours.   If nothing is done about it from above, the soldiers themselves would eventually take care of it themselves. This can be seen most easily when an army is defeated or is in retreat.   In the First World War, the Russian Revolution and in even Vietnam, incompetent officers were sometimes shot by their own men, who were left with no other alternative if they wanted to survive. So, what Xenophon is showing here is that in the military situation that the ten thousand Greek soldiers found themselves in, the rank and file soldiers took the task of finding the right leaders very seriously. They demanded a voice in the choice of new leaders. There was too much at stake and no time for game playing or "office politics." So they not only wanted someone competent and trustworthy enough to lead them, but someone who would listen to them.

It is submitted here also that it is again no accident that the Enlightenment thinkers of the 18th and early 19th centuries, especially those cited in the literature review, picked up on this concept of the unique value of democracy, in part from their classical education, and brought it back to life. With their renewed faith and belief in democracy, and influenced in particular by the writings of John Locke and Montesquieu, they reasoned that it was possible for men to govern themselves successfully. In his Spirit of the Laws (1750) Montesquieu argued that the prime ingredient necessary for a successful democracy was "virtue." By this he meant love of country. (Cohler, Miller, & Stone,

1989, p.22) He suggested that the passions that could be invested in one's well being in a virtuous democracy are actually directed towards society as a whole. (Cohler, Miller, & Stone. p. xxiv) This may not be even a vague reference to servant leadership, but there is nonetheless a confluence here of similar ideas.

Servant leaders tend to appear most prominently in the early emerging days of democracies that have existed in history (Solon, Publicola, Pericles, Jefferson, et. al.). Whether this is an accident, a mere correlation or a causal occurrence may never be known for sure. But what we do know is that the founding fathers of the United States were also students of the ancient Athenians and Republican Romans. James Madison, for example, learned Greek and Latin well enough to read many classical works in those languages as a teenager.   According to his biographer Irving Brant, "by the time he was ready to go to college, he was better educated than many a present-day holder of a baccalaureate degree."(Brant, 1970 p.9) These men were also greatly influenced by the Enlightenment thinkers noted here, especially Montesquieu.

The brilliant, but far less formally educated, Tom Paine, may have understood this also. Prior to his time, leadership did not emerge as a worthy subject matter of study because it was a given, being so closely wound up with the social order, that is, rulers and subjects. Paine totally rejected this notion, and advanced the democratic values and ideas that fired the American Revolution. A leader was not just a ruler, but someone who came from amongst the people, and owed his existence and loyalty to them.   It is therefore not unreasonable to conclude that there is a connection between democracy and the existence of servant leaders, even if it has not been noticed before by other scholars. As historian Gordon Wood has noted, being a gentleman was a perquisite to becoming a political leader during this period, especially in the slave based southern colonies.   A gentleman at this time was someone exempted from lower or less honorable forms of employment. He was obliged therefore to pursue an active life in some service to mankind, and this service was something upon which the public had a claim. (Wood, pp.15-17) One might say that they were obliged by their upbringing to think of leadership in terms of service to the public. The current literary interest in the founding fathers of the United States, witnessed by the great number of first rate biographies of them being published in recent years, may well reflect a desire perhaps to see leaders with "character" again. (Wood,

pp7-9) The American people may be yearning see leaders who put the people's interests first, ahead of their own selfish needs, and have the character traits that the founding fathers demonstrated. It may also point to the vacuum present in our business and political elites that only true servant leaders can fill.

Those writers, historians, political scientists and classical scholars, past and present, who have studied the origins of democracy have cited a number of characteristics that all successful all democracies require. They must have:

1. A set of sound and viable institutions that support and respect democracy, and utilize democratic principles in their governance and management.

2. An educated citizenry who possess a good understanding of the principles of democracy, or who at least have developed a character consistent with the democratic way of life.

3. A high quality of leadership, and at the very least, have it at critical moments. (Kagan, 1991, p.3)

In addition to these, there are certain other important characteristics that a successful democracy must have. It requires a free press, or media that is capable and willing to find and express the truth, especially when it pertains to malfeasance and corruption in public institutions. Transparency and accountability must also be present. The lack of some or all of these characteristics may have played a large role in the demise of the ancient democracies we know of. According to Donald Kagan, the third factor, leadership, is the most significant. It is so important that it can at times compensate for the weaknesses of the other two. (Kagan, 1991, p.3). Suppose Pericles had not died in the first years of the Peloponnesian War, but lived long enough to guide Athens safely through it? Had there been no Lincoln, would the United States have survived or broken apart during or because of the civil war? Had Washington not lived, or crowned himself King George and not returned to Mount Vernon, like Cincinnatus or Scipio Africanus in ancient Rome, would America have become a republic? Had Franklin Roosevelt not lived would democracy in America have survived the Great Depression?

History also shows that democracy is far from perfect. Even with strong institutions and men like Cato and Cicero, the Roman Republic was vulnerable to demagogues and tyrants, such as Sulla, Pompey and Caesar. Those men truly believed

they knew better how to run an empire than the Roman Senate or Rome's elected tribunes and magistrates. The freedom given to men and women in a democracy requires a willingness to make sacrifices and hard choices. A people grown soft and apathetic can find it hard to resist even a hated tyranny, if it promises them deliverance from war or economic hardship. Mob rule and government by thugs and gangsters can easily create a situation where a general on a white horse, who promises to restore peace, order and prosperity, is irresistible. Without leadership and institutional safeguards, even successful democracies can become susceptible to degrading abuse, especially when its elites become self absorbed and unaccountable.

An unanswerable elite that would use its powers to subjugate those less powerful, was an ever present danger, even in a democracy. Hence, it was logical that the subject of leadership and oppression of minorities was recognized not only by de Tocqueville, but by James Madison, the "father of the U.S. Constitution." (Ruscio, 2004, p3) It was Madison who wrote, "the aim of every political institution is, or ought to be, first to obtain for rulers men who possess most wisdom to discern, and most virtue to pursue, the common good of society." (Ruscio, 2004, p.5) It was Madison who commented that "if men were angels no government would be necessary." (Federalist No. 51). But as other scholars like Michael Keeley and J. Thomas Wren have pointed out, after extensively reviewing Madison's writings, Madison's views on the public good and the rights of the people were complex and highly nuanced. (Ciulla, 1998, p.152) Madison was fully aware of the dangers posed by overly ambitious leaders, and the mischief caused by factions, whose selfish interests could undermine the common good. Balancing this was Madison's faith in the people or popular sovereignty. "Ultimate authority," he agued, "wherever the derivative may be found, resides in the people alone." All governments are "but agents and trustees of the people" and derive their powers "directly or indirectly from the great body of the people." (Ciulla, 1998, pp152-153) Madison obviously recognized then the important role of followers. Yet he also recognized early on that it would be unrealistic to expect the people as a whole to completely understand the overarching interests of the general population, while respecting the interests of minorities: "The public mind is neither sufficiently cool nor sufficiently informed for so delicate an operation." (Ciulla, 1998, p.153). Despite this

critical and rather pessimistic expression, Madison also maintained an underlying faith in republican democracy, which was not, it must be stressed, direct democracy. In the former, the representatives of the people would make the important decisions, not the people. He expressed this rather balanced view as follows: "As there is a degree of depravity in mankind which requires a certain degree of circumspection and distrust, so there are other qualities in human nature which justify a certain portion of esteem and confidence. Republican government presupposes the existence of those qualities in a higher degree than any other form." (Ciulla, 1998, p.154). Having carefully studied Montesquieu (for example, as noted in Federalist Papers, Number 47), Madison put his trust in an institutional system of checks and balances, a large democracy within which any one faction would find difficult to control, and an enlightened and awakened people. Though he never abandoned his core belief that the people needed to be directed by those who knew better, he clearly saw the need for virtuous leaders who retained and abided by their sense of the common good. (Ciulla, 1998, p.156)

Towards the end of his life it was said that Madison despaired of ever finding a lasting solution to the problem of securing the good for all while facing the threats of faction and self interest on the one hand, and the dangers of overweening leaders on the other. (Ciulla, 1998, p.161). To put it succinctly, how could leaders secure the common good when their followers so often misunderstood its nature? One is compelled to agree with Thomas Wren's conclusion that Madison's thinking was a legitimate precursor to today's conceptions of transformational and transforming leadership, because each of these forms of leadership seeks to express itself through the achievement of the common good. One can even agree with Wren that James MacGregor Burns surpassed Madison's thinking with his proposal for a type of leadership that has the potential to resolve a problem that Madison gave up on: that of creating a nexus between the desires of followers and conceptions of the common good. (Ciulla,1998, p.165)

It must also be emphasized that Madison, like John Jay, Alexander Hamilton and John Adams, did not believe in the equality of the rich and the poor, and so made sure that the rich would have greater power. To become a voter you would have to show a certain level of wealth. (Woodruff, 2005, p. 234,) And as already noted, Madison looked to the Roman republican model, rather than the classical Athenian model of

democracy: "Had every Athenian citizen been a Socrates, every Athenian assembly would still have been a mob." (Hamilton, Madison, & Jay, 1997, no. 55, p.401) Furthermore, the citizen of a sound democracy needed to maintain a healthy distrust of those in leadership positions. Leaders who were not accountable and removable were always capable of becoming tyrants. By 1791, Madison even came to see the dangers posed by a "financial aristocracy, led and encouraged by an officer of the executive department, who had acquired a dominant influence." (Ciulla, 1998, p155) He was undoubtedly referring to Alexander Hamilton. Though he and Jefferson saw the eventual dissipation of Hamilton's maneuvering, the forces and powers Hamilton represented did not disappear in the young republic, and in fact grew more and more powerful as time went on.

Looking beyond and after Madison, there have been many commentators and writers who have spoken out on the problems, needs, and limitations of ancient and modern forms of democracy. Probably the most famous of them, de Tocqueville, was mentioned in the Literature Review. It has not however been the purpose of this research to focus on the subject of democracy, but to trace the origins of servant leadership, and along the way identify any antecedents that may be required for its successful appearance and implementation. What the research has clearly shown is that the great and famous servant leaders have emerged most frequently and easily in democratic societies, particularly in their formative days. Perhaps this is because this is the safest time for them to do so. It is not unreasonable therefore to conclude that democracy and servant leadership are somehow closely linked. Indeed, it is submitted that true servant leadership coexists best with democratic social and political institutions. When they do, servant leader followers feel safe enough to step up to the plate. The *raison d'etre* of every democracy is to serve the people's needs first. This too is a fundamental value of servant leadership, though in a more refined way. It is also a value that is always under attack by those who benefit most from the status quo, those being most often the rich and powerful. The dangers posed by genuine servant leaders to them are all too obvious, and history shows that there are very serious risks to them when they step forward at the wrong time, and express the truth or speak out against those with power. The tragic

endings to the lives of Socrates, Jesus, Lincoln, Gandhi and King all attest to that. Except for Jesus, each of those men was assassinated in a democracy.

In his later writings, Robert Greenleaf recognized and espoused the leadership principle of "*primus inter pares"* which in Latin means 'first among equals." Greenleaf believed that many of our modern organizational problems could be eliminated if this kind of leadership were allowed to express itself.   He believed that having leaders operate on this ancient Roman principle would motivate people to treat others with greater respect and consideration. It would serve to decentralize and distribute power more equitably rather than concentrating it in fewer hands. In practice, though, he discovered that most organizations, especially business ones, were reluctant even to try it. Perhaps only in professional firms does it stand a chance of working, where partners are by law equal to one another, and it becomes the de facto principle of leadership through the office of managing partner. Most other organizational models, especially those in business, have too many structural and systematic impediments built into them for it to work effectively. As a leadership principle though it has a strong democratizing influence, something that hierarchical, top-down, centralized organizational models have resisted. This too speaks to the rarity of servant leaders today. In short then, without more democratically run organizations, which are run on openness and accountability to followers, the concept of servant leadership, will lack the organizational foundation upon which it can function in a sustained manner.

The dark side of Servant Leadership: Servant of what and for whom?

James MacGregor Burns has made the interesting but honest observation that "leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth." (Lipman-Blumen, 2005, p.14) This is certainly true when one considers the dark side of leaders and leadership. Perhaps only our great poets, playwrights and fiction writers have made a serious attempt at this. Indeed, very few leadership scholars have really tried to speak about it, and with good reason. It is a task that asks people to look at the 500 pound gorilla in the room which everyone is trying to ignore or pretend doesn't exist. To put it another way, how many have the courage to tell the emperor he has no clothes? The purpose of the penultimate section is to relate this "dark" phenomena to servant

leadership, firstly in the macro-context of organizations (dealing with the "what"), and secondly, in the context of individual leadership (the "for whom")

From the Organizational Perspective:

It is often an unrecognized truism that all individuals, when they join an organization, give up something in order to gain admission and get access to the fruits or benefits of being a member of the organization. Psychologists also claim that the psychic rewards are immense and include the repression of our anxiety evoking ideas of our finitude, vulnerability, aloneness and mortality. To get along in life, people tend to go along, redefining their individual wants and selves, to doing what the organization needs done. In many organizations an idealized self transforms and redefines itself in terms of the organizational ideal:

> The picture of the organizational ideal will be familiar to all teachers of organizational behavior. This is an organization in which everyone knows what he or she is doing, in which there is no conflict or coercion, in which communication is open and direct, in which people want to do what needs to be done, in which every member is solely concerned with and works diligently to promote the common good….the picture is of an organization that has never existed and never will. But somehow it is of the utmost importance for students to believe in it. (Schwartz, 1990, p.21)

Naturally, it is important for many organizational members to believe this also. Occasionally this ideal can and will be challenged by strong minded and critical thinking individuals. They will recognize and know that, in reality, borrowing the approach of Karl Weick, the organizational ideal does not exist, only the process of organizing does. (Schwartz, 1990, p.42). Most members of the organization, however, will lack the intellectual objectivity of a Karl Weick; for them, giving something forty or more hours of your week, plus multiple years of your life is more than an abstraction. But as the organization's true nature runs into the organizational ideal, various reactions will be triggered. Varying levels of cynicism and cognitive dissonance will be utilized by adults as coping mechanisms to avoid confronting the painful truths concerning what is really going on in the organization. A few will vie and compete, hoping to become members of the corporate plutocracy. Some will quit and find a different organization to work for, if they have that option. Many others will stay and either resign themselves to the

organizational exigencies, or work quietly to change and redirect the organization towards its ideal or possibly a more realistic and attainable ideal. Only a very tiny few will choose the arduous and dangerous path of a whistleblower. The lonely and isolated path of such individuals is rarely a happy one:

> Moreover, there is no cause for optimism in the idea that the solitary individual may be able to withstand the organization's blandishments and maintain a strong moral sense. For, while some rare individuals will do so, many will not. It is, of course, the organization that selects those individuals upon whom it will shower resources and who it will raise to positions of power, expecting commitment in return. Then the solitary individual becomes a deviant, and there is no necessity in this work to repeat what we know about how groups deal with deviants. Look at what happened to Karen Silkwood. (Schwartz, 1990, pp.44-45)

Another word to describe people like Karen Silkwood is 'truth teller.' Truth tellers are always outnumbered by the herd, which does as its told most of the time, especially within an organizational context. One reason for this may be an instinctual fear in humans of the consequences of ostracism that goes back thousands of years, and may even be genetic. Deserving more censure are the numerous followers who accept no higher allegiance than their own personal security and promotion, and who will throw away just about anything, including their friends and even their integrity, for the sake of their career advancement. Some of these people are "true believers" who actually believe that the perfect organization is achievable. Unfortunately, the organizational ideal is a fantasy, and the only real question for these people is who gets to be the narcissist. (Schwartz, 1990, p.29)

Before discussing the narcissist at the top, it might be helpful to look at how and why a narcissist can get there. In actuality, the process is not that difficult given the large number of toxic environments in organizations today. In a study done in the late 1980's of General Motors, M. Keller noted the following of the then current chairman Roger Smith:

> For thirty-one years, Smith moved up through the ranks of GM as the consummate corporate player – the GM culture coursed in his veins. Admiration for and loyalty to the organization was at the core of his being. He was one of a new breed of corporate politicians whose success depended on their ease in wearing the corporate mantle. Translated, that

meant, "Above all, be loyal to your superior's agenda." (Schwartz, 1990, p.56)

Howard Schwartz also commented on this type of leadership selection process and noted that those who get to the top are often the very ones living most in the delusion:

> One result of this kind of collusion is that individuals who are retained and promoted are those who know very well how things are *supposed to look*, according to the ideology of the dominant coalition, but who know less and less about reality insofar as it conflicts with or simply is independent of this ideology. The problem is, of course, that since no organization is, or can be, the organization ideal, individuals who are retained and promoted are those who can cut themselves loose from discrepant reality.

> Another result of this sort of selection must be that realistic and concerned persons must lose the belief that the organization's real purpose is productive work and come to the conclusion that its real purpose is self-promotion. They then are likely to see their work as being alien to the purposes of the organization and must find doing work increasingly depressing and useless. (Schwartz, 1990, p.56)

Several outcomes often result from the aforementioned organizational occurrence. One, there are often clashes between the incompetent who have been promoted and their competent but discouraged subordinates. Two, higher management is slowly but effectively isolated from criticism, or even serious discussion, of its plans, thoughts and actions. In fact, suppression of criticism becomes part of the organizational culture. (Schwartz, 1990, pp.56-57) The emergence of a totalitarian culture and management style becomes more apparent. The next development then in this process is usually an accumulation of bad decisions. The senior managers who believe most in the organizational ideal must increasingly be self deceptive or cynical, which in turn decreases the retention of realism and concern for work. (Schwartz, 1990, p.71) Thus, for organizations with a very thin margin of error in terms of how far their perceptions of reality can become a fantasy, and the costs of living in that fantasy world more and more costly, the inevitable result is not only organizational decay but quite possibly catastrophic disaster. According to Schwartz, the roots of this problem are deep:

> What this suggests is that organizational totalitarianism and organizational decay, which might appear to by systemic problems that concern the organization, are at their root existential, moral, even spiritual, problems

that concern the individual, and that these problems at the individual level become systemic problems for the organization when organizational power is used to effect their transformation.

Putting the matter this way suggests a connection between this analysis of organizational decay, on the one hand, and the Greek conception of tragedy, on the other. What is evident in both cases is the horror that comes from the claims of powerful mortals to be more than mortal. The Greeks called this *hubris* and they knew that the gods, whom we might refer to as reality, do not stand for it. They demand humility. (Schwartz, 1990, p.72)

If all organizations matched the foregoing profile of a dysfunctional narcissistic organization, then logic, common sense and experience all indicate that a servant leader would never make it to a leadership position. If one did, he or she would be a consummate actor, or a very hollow hypocritical person. Is it any wonder then that Joel Bakin, author of The Corporation, depicts the personality of the modern corporation as that of a psychopath, or psychopathic entity designed to "valorize self interest and invalidate moral concern." (Bakin, 2004, p.28) In the age of Enron, Tyco, World.com, and Holllinger Inc., it might be easy to just write off all business organizations as corrupt, mendacious, decaying monstrosities. In reality though there are many sound, ethically run businesses out there. The best could well be the ones cited in Jim Collins' Good to Great (2001). Collins and his staff of twenty-one researchers, however, could only find a handful of "great organizations," eleven in all out of the Fortune 500 companies that performed extraordinarily and consistently well from 1965 to 1995. What came as an unexpected shock to Collins and his researchers, however, was that each and every one of the eleven had what he termed Level 5 Leadership:

We were surprised, shocked really, to discover the type of leadership required for turning a good company into a great one. Compared to high-profile leaders with big personalities who make headlines and become celebrities, the good-to-great leaders seem to have come from Mars. Self-effacing, quiet, reserved, even shy – these leaders are paradoxical blend of personal humility, and professional will. They are more like Lincoln and Socrates, than Patton or Caesar. (Collins, 2001, pp.13-14)

One can expect that the same pattern is even more pronounced in the public and non-profit sectors. One confirmation of this is the great number of doctoral dissertations done in those areas using field based studies which identified servant leaders. (Boyer,

1999, Marinoble, 1990, Van Kuik, 1998, Walker, 1997) It should be noted here the mission of organizations in these areas dovetails nicely with the need for servant leadership. That is, the organizational raison d'etre is usually to serve others in non-pecuniary ways: to help others spiritually, physically, psychologically, medically or otherwise, without exploitation or for the purposes of obtaining some reward in return. In such organizations it is often possible for the competent and moral individuals to stay on, even when the organization is poorly or selfishly led by its managers and executives. The focus of such individuals is more on what the organization is accomplishing and what it stands for, not on advancement of their personal careers or an attraction to a charismatic or dynamic leader. Perhaps that is why so many potential servant leaders choose to work in the healing or care giving areas, especially if they can do their leading quietly behind the scenes without harassment or interference.

On the other hand, there is always the possibility that even a noble minded caring institution can become dysfunctional, toxic or destructive. The history of the Catholic Church is littered with examples of this kind of development. The 20th century has seen more than its share of corrupt politicians, priests, professionals and public servants who have abused their positions and authority, almost with impunity. Although it may be dangerous to generalize here, it is reasonable to assume that many of them were products of toxic organizations. They had obviously become the kind of organization or environment that would not allow or tolerate a genuine servant leader, unless he or she was the kind of person who is easily duped and manipulated. Worst yet, some organizations in this area were comprised of followers who allowed themselves to be taken over by a charismatic narcissist. Think of Jim Jones or David Koresh and the horrific results that these men produced. In their aftermath, it beggars the imagination to try and explain how grown men and women could allow such a person to lead them.

From the Leader's Perspective:

It may come as a great surprise to some people that so many of our leaders display some very serious forms of mental illness. At best, the leader may be suffering from some form of personality disorder. At worst, he or she could be a highly successful psychopath. If it is any comfort, and if history is any guide to us, there is nothing really

new here. Historians have cited many historical figures for personality disorders, including severe neurosis (Bismarck, Churchill, Goring, A. Hamilton, R.E. Lee, Luther, Napoleon, Nixon, T. Roosevelt, W. Wilson, M. Wollstonecraft), substance abuse (Alexander the Great, U.S. Grant, Henry VIII), suicide (Mark Anthony, Brutus, Cassius, Hannibal, Cato the Younger, Demosthenes the orator, Boudicca, J.V. Forrestal, Isocrates, Castlereagh), and affective disorders, depression, mania or bipolar disorder (C. Borgia, O. Cromwell, A. Lincoln, W.T. Sherman). The frequency had led some historians to even question whether psychopathology is the price of greatness. (Simonton, 1994, pp.287-301)

It has even been argued by some social scientists (J. Pfeffer, 1977, A.B. Thomas, 1988) that leaders do not matter really, and, by some historians and philosophers that history is nothing more than the product of vast and powerful economic, political, social and technological forces (Hegel, 1821, Marx, 1857, Polyani, 1944). To paraphrase Napoleon, the individual counts for nothing in this immense and complicated epic. Yet, on the other hand, in the age of totalitarianism, the personal hatreds, vanities and complexes of a couple of dictators have meant misery, slavery and death for countless millions of dehumanized men and women. (Beevor, 2006, p. D3) It appears that the desires, whims and actions of some individuals still matter a great deal more than those of their fellow human beings.

In the corporate world it has been hypothesized that similar conditions exist with leaders. Unfortunately, there has not been a lot of meaningful research in this area. One of the most interesting and thorough, however, has been Bernadette Schell's Management in the Mirror (1999). Using a fourteen page questionnaire, Schell surveyed some 400 corporate leaders. Part of her research included personality predisposition identification based on six personality profiles which ranged from positive "self-healing" types (autonomous, assertive, task-and-emotion balanced) to various kinds of "disease prone" types. (Schell, 1999, p. 202). Her conclusions were that only 13% reported themselves as truly "self-healing," with 83% reporting mixed results, that is, strong self-healing tendencies and some disease prone tendencies. Only 2% reported themselves having complex disease-prone combinations. (Schell, 1999, p.210) Of more concern was her finding that the "trustworthy" way of leading organizations seems to be practiced by

only 9% of Canadian corporate leaders, with 50% reporting an "unbalanced toxic way" of leading their organizations. Most alarming of all was her finding that a significant segment of the respondents (32%) reported that they experienced pronounced and episodic bipolar tendencies and another 7% reported experiencing overlapping bipolar and manic tendencies. (Schell, 1999, p. 228) If these numbers accurately reflect the state of corporate Canada, then it is no surprise as to why so many highly intelligent, positive minded adults distrust and shun the world of large corporations.

Even though it appears Schell's research was based on self-administered tests, which can be problematic and have reliability issues, there was one section of her work that struck this researcher as particularly significant. This was her discussion of the prevalence of antisocial personality disorders and psychopathology in working adults and corporate leaders. An "anti-social personality disorder" is displayed by an enduring pattern of disregard for and violation of the rights of others. (Schell, 1999, p.141) How many of these people are there? Out of the general population, some experts have estimated it at 1% (Hare, Babiak, 2006), another at 4% (Stout, 2005), and another even as high as 8% (Lobaczewski, 2006) of the general population. In certain segments of the population though, the percentages can be expected to be notably higher. Psychopathic individuals are described as remorseless predators who lack consciences and the ability to feel empathy. They often use lies, charm, manipulation, intimidation and even cold blooded violence on the rare occasion to attain their ends. (Schell, 1999, p.141) As improbable as it may seem, many of the high functioning or successful psychopaths are drawn to the corridors of power in our society, and especially to certain professions like law, politics and psychiatry. Any place where they can have access to power over people is an irresistible lure:

> *Psychopathy and Leadership: When to Expect Them.* Many successful businesspeople have large egos, cool demeanors, and an uncanny knack for office politics. But psychopaths have much deeper problems, say the experts. They feel no true allegiances, even in their personal lives – no loyalty, no guilt for dirty deeds done, no remorse. They lie easily and frequently but can be charming when they want to be. So how many psychopaths are roaming the halls of large industry today? Though no study has been completed thus far to give us an accurate reading on this one, if Hare's assertions are right, the prevalence rate in the population

could be as high as 3 percent, depending on the degree of "psychopath purity."

Dr.Babiak, who says he has identified at least six psychopaths in various companies in the course of his organizational work, describes a common workplace trait when a psychopath is present that he calls "discrepant views." Says Dr.Babiak (MacDonald,1996): "It occurs when a large portion of an organization really likes this individual and thinks he [or she] has high potential and they feel they're really close buddies; while there's another half of the organization that thinks [he's/she's] the devil or evil. A "snake" is a word that is commonly used." These snakes get hired because they do well in interviews, where they can turn on the charm. Often their credentials are exaggerated or fabricated, but no one checks carefully. (Schell, 1999, p.144)

Looked at from another perspective, one would think that conning, manipulating, bullying and other psychopathic traits would be so obvious to employers that such people would never be hired for important jobs, especially those requiring a high degree of emotional intelligence and the ability to get along with others. Dr. Babiak noted from his work that the psychopathic personality does not typically succeed well in traditional, bureaucratic organizations with well-established controls, rules, and operating systems. Instead they more often exploit organizations that are going through restructuring or downsizing or merging. "There is chaos, or breakdowns of norms and values in the culture, and in that chaotic milieu, the psychopath can move in and do very well," says Dr. Babiak. (Schell, 1999, p. 144) Not all experts in this area would agree with this. Dr. Lobaczewski, whose experiences were drawn almost entirely from communist Poland, would be one such person. He would likely argue that in a one party communist state run by giant bureaucracies, high functioning psychopaths would find even more room to maneuver. To be more precise, they are clever enough to figure out that in all bureaucracies there are really two bureaucracies, the official one and the unofficial one. And they are Machiavellian enough to use the latter to the maximum.

One would also think that such people would have self destructed long before this could happen, and that their abusive, deceitful behaviour toward coworkers would have led to disciplinary action or termination. (Babiak & Hare, 2006, pp. x-xi) According to Hare and Babiak, there are at least four reasons why this is not the case:

1. Some core psychopathic traits – one could even call them talents – may seem attractive in job applicants, and contributed to their success at being hired. This type of psychopath is very skilled at social manipulation, and the job interview is the perfect place to for them to display their talents.

2. Some companies quite innocently recruit individuals with psychopathic tendencies because some hiring managers may mistakenly attribute "leadership" labels to what are, in actuality, psychopathic behaviours. Management concepts like taking charge, making decisions, and getting others to do what you want are classic features of leadership and management, yet they can also be well-packaged forms of coercion, domination and manipulation

3. The changing nature of the business world itself, starting with the "organizational wars" of the 70's and 80's. The large number of corporate takeovers, acquisitions, mergers and breakups has been a contributing factor to the increase in psychopathic persons being hired. Technological change and the information revolution have produced the lean, mean, efficient, 24/7, global model for business and organizational success. Thus, the organizational men and women who once maintained the status quo are gone now. In vogue are individuals who can shake the tree, rattle cages and get things done quickly, no matter what it takes in terms of treatment of people, provided of course that its legal.

4. Psychopathic individuals, known for ignoring rules and regulations, coupled with a talent for conning and manipulation, have found these new, more efficient organizational structures inviting. The temptation for someone with this type of personality is too great to ignore. (Babiak & Hare, 2006, pp. xi-xii)

Several important points need to be stressed here. Firstly, non-criminal psychopaths, sometimes referred to as successful or high functioning psychopaths, that is, ones who do not display criminal deviance, are likely to display certain highly developed psychopathic behaviour traits (glibness, charm, fearlessness, guiltlessness, lack of loyalty to anyone but themselves) that might serve as valuable personal assets in some activities

in our society, such as in law, politics, business, and even the military. (Hall & Benning, 2006, p. 459) Secondly, the vast majority of the research on psychopaths has focused on samples of incarcerated male offenders. This is problematic for a number of reasons. The behaviour and personality disorders of incarcerated male criminals may not generalize to the non-criminal psychopaths residing in the community. In fact, the non-criminal, successful psychopath has proven to be an elusive target for researchers. A number of methodological obstacles, such as identification and recruitment of such psychopaths from the general population, impede any significant investigation. Discerning truth from dissembling with these individuals can be extremely difficult. Even the best of psychiatrists have been fooled on occasion. Up until recently there has been a dearth of well-validated instruments for assessing psychopathic tendencies outside of prison populations. (Hall and Benning, 2006, p. 460) One of the most reliable, valid, and widely used assessment instruments for testing the degree of psyhopathy is Dr. Hare's Psychopathy Checklist – Revised (PCL-R). The PCL-R is a clinical rating scale not a self-report test, which could obviously be extremely biased. The person being evaluated does not answer questions, as is the case with other psychological tests. Rather, a qualified psychologist or psychiatrist familiar with the evaluation process completes the assessment based on an in-depth interview and a review of information contained on the person's records. For each trait the interviewer makes a judgement and a number is assigned and added to the total score, which must reach a certain level for psychopathic recognition. (Babiak & Hare, 2006, p.25)

A slightly modified test developed by Dr. Hare and his colleagues, Psychopathy Checklist: Screening Version (PCL:SV) has now been developed for the non-criminal general population. Using this test while working with almost 200 high-potential executives, 3.5% were found to fit the profile of a psychopath. While this may not seem like a large percentage, it is significantly higher than what Hare has so far found in the general population (1 percent), and perhaps more than most organizations would like to have on their payrolls, since they were on the road to becoming leaders in their organizations, and considering the amount of damage these individuals could cause. Of those individuals, all displayed the traits of the manipulative psychopath: superficial, grandiose, deceitful, impulsive, irresponsible, not taking responsibility for their own

actions, and lacking goals, remorse, and empathy. Of those persons, two also exhibited bullying behaviour. In their opinion, "from cases we have reviewed from others in the field, as well as from readers, this level of incidence seems correct." (Babiak & Hare, 2006, p.193) As our jail cells become more and more crowded with ex-Enron, Tyco, and World.com executives, it might be possible some day to find a statistically relevant sample size of (formerly) successful psychopaths with which to do some in depth research. In the meantime, it may be advisable for personnel departments to add Dr. Hare's screening test to their repertoire of assessment tools. Given the high cost of a decision error at this level, the relatively small expense of a using a reliable testing instrument would be more than justified.

One final question remains. What could this possibly have to do with servant leadership? As Robert Greenleaf once pointed out, it is also the responsibility of followers to "freely respond only to individuals who are chosen as leaders because they are proven and trusted as servants." (Greenleaf, 1970, p.4) One of their responsibilities then will be to distinguish the true servant leader from the false one. Moreover, there is always a risk that a manipulative, covert aggressive person might "play the servant role" to impress people by making use of their highly developed manipulative and conceptual skills to disguise their self-serving agenda in the form of service to a higher cause. This is a common tactic used by politicians and members of the ministry to conceal their ambition, desire for power, and quest for dominance over others. Even though it is a common tactic, it can be difficult to recognize. (Simon, 1996, p.90) According to Dr. Hare, psychopaths are really good at knowing when to come into people's lives and into organizations. They are good at reading "empathy" and "weakness" in others. So certain individuals can actually be enticing "marks" for a psychopath. How would you know such people? Again, Dr. Hare has an opinion: "People who believe in the inherent goodness of humanity, people who want to go out and help. There are all sorts of groups that are trying to help other people. They're genuine, they're honest in their intentions, and so on. They're ideal 'marks' for the psychopath." (Schell, 1999, p.144) The message then to servant leader followers is beware, and be very careful in deciding who to follow. Moreover, it is entirely possible that servant leaders and followers could end up at the top of the psychopath's hit list, given the values they espouse and live by.

This danger to followers dovetails with another inherent human weakness. As the Milgram experiments showed (1963-1964), individuals will inflict unbelievable levels of harm on others when told to do so by someone, even a fictitious person, in a position of authority over them. (Schermerhorn, 2005, pp.305-306) Without strong individualists, whose values are rooted in a genuine moral concern for others, no society or organization, in the long run, can ever hope to escape the road to tyranny and oppression. It is all too easy to be seduced by the principles enunciated in Machiavelli's "handbook for gangsters" (The Prince), even by those who are worldly, experienced and highly educated. Yet too few of the latter group have ever likely read (or re-read) Plato or Erasmus (The Education of a Christian Prince), or considered deeply the question, does the good in this person outweigh the bad? At the end of the day, without the results of our most sophisticated psychological tests, humanity will have to trust the former and not the latter, and to distinguish the two by relying on that simple age old Biblical test: by their fruits you shall know them. It will have to make a serious effort to seek out and find those individuals in whom the good vastly outweighs the bad, by whatever means they have at hand. Somehow those individuals must be persuaded to assume leadership positions, rather than letting it fall into the hands of the most ambitious, narcissistic or ego driven.

This point brings this study back to where the Literature Review started, with a study of the ancient Greeks and Romans, who were the first people we know of who wrote down extensively their thoughts on what was the best society, and the good and moral life. Imbedded in their thinking was a natural understanding of the principles of servant leadership. Socrates and his pupil Plato both espoused the principles of "know thyself," and "unexamined life is not worth living." If one seeks wisdom and the good life, start within, they argued using logical reasoning and moral judgment. Since their time humanity has made magnificent strides in terms of our ability to look outside ourselves and understand the physical universe all around us. But the inward journey seeking peace and balance, which the Eastern mystics have told us about, and what Greenleaf himself commenced, remains far from complete for the vast majority of humanity, and especially for its current crop of leaders in practically every field of endeavor. So very few of them have had the good fortune to find the "better angels of

our nature," as Abraham Lincoln once put it. Still, if we have learned anything since ancient times, which is debatable when it comes to moral advancement, it is that we are now wise enough to know that each and every one of us, to varying degrees, has both admirable and undesirable qualities. So the sad irony, which Greenleaf was shrewd enough to note, is even if we are able to get rid of all the evil on the planet, we would not for long be farther ahead: "Liquidate the offending people, radically alter or destroy the system, and in less than a generation they will all be back."(Greenleaf, 1970, pp.34-35) One of his most crucial insights was that our strongest and most intelligent people, whose internal health building forces are in the best shape, and out of whose ranks our leaders should most naturally emerge, must come to terms with their failure to be part of the solution and not part of the problem:

> The real enemy is fuzzy thinking on the part of good, intelligent, vital people, and their failure to lead, and to follow servants as leaders. Too many settle for being critics and experts. There is too much intellectual wheel spinning, too much retreating into "research," too little preparation for and willingness to undertake the hard and high risk tasks of building better institutions in an imperfect world, too little disposition to see "the problem" as residing *in here* and not *out there*.
>
> *In short, the enemy is strong natural servants who have the potential to lead but do not lead, or who choose to follow a non-servant.* They suffer. Society suffers. And so it may be in the future. (Greenleaf, 1970, p.35)

Is there any explanation that can now be offered for the decline in interest in servant leadership since its introduction, and its recent resurgence and renewed attention?

In some respects, the varying levels of interest in servant leadership have paralleled the ups and downs of the entire field of leadership studies. When first introduced by Robert Greenleaf in 1970, it slowly gathered more attention, mostly as a result of the quiet work of its author. At that time, leadership was considered to be in a state of crisis in the United States, in the wake of the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, Martin Luther King, the Vietnam War, Watergate and the ineffective Carter presidency. Trust in public leaders had declined drastically and no one seemed to be there who could fill the shoes of a Churchill, Roosevelt, Truman, or Eisenhower, or

those recently assassinated leaders in America, to whom many in the West looked to for leadership. Hence, the leadership field once again began to attract renewed academic attention. Into this void, Burns' definitive study of leadership and his articulation of transforming leadership, emerged in 1978. It has been argued here that Greenleaf's contribution dovetails very closely with Burns' ideas on moral and transforming leadership, in more than just timing. There are really only minor differences in emphasis between the two. All of the elements of servant leadership are contained or expressed through Burns concept of transforming leadership. If one substituted Burns' views on self actualization for Greenleaf's spiritual awareness, and Greenleaf's caveat, that a leader should not harm, burden or take from those who are "least privileged" in a society, then there are really not much more here than a few semantic distinctions. What the two have greatest in common, though, is their location of ethical behaviour at the centre of good leadership. (Ciulla, 1998, p. 7) This was a break from the idea, circulating most commonly in the business world then and now, that leadership is just "good management." (Ciulla, 1998, p.7) Truly great leadership is much more than that. It was also a call for a return to the values first enunciated by the ancients mentioned in this paper, and which servant leadership has brought to life again

It can also be pointed out here that by the late 1970's and early 1980's a different issue was beginning to emerge in the leadership field and began to attract attention at conferences: the plethora of new leadership theories that had found expression in the establishment research literature were beginning to be researched to death. The opaqueness and uselessness of more self administered surveys was beginning to yield less and less real knowledge and understanding. (Rost, 1991, p. 20) Notwithstanding this methodological problem, the pursuit of rigor and precision in the field was ironically leading to an over emphasis on techniques at the expense of knowing what was going on in a direct human way. One result was "masses" of findings that no one seemed able to pull together and make sense of. (Hunt, 1982, p.1) In short, scholars were becoming lost in the trees and could no longer see the forest.

One leading management scholar, whose writings still attract respect, and who did not fall into this trap is Henry Mintzberg. For him leadership has always had to do with values like judgment, commitment, humility, generosity, and legitimacy:

"Leadership is not about making clever decisions and doing bigger deals, least of all for personal gain. It is about energizing other people to make good decisions and do better things. In other words, it is about helping release the positive energy that exists naturally within people. Effective leadership inspires more than controls; it demonstrates more than decides. It does all this by *engaging* – itself above all, and consequently others." (Mintzberg, 2004, p. 143) It is worth noting the language Mintzberg uses: "energizing other people," "helping release the positive energy within people," "engaging others." These are recent comments made by him in 2004, and they reveal, as the action verbs indicate, a number of close similarities to the tenets of servant leadership. In the early 1980's, nearly twenty-five years before he reached the foregoing conclusions, Mintzberg bluntly criticized mainstream leadership studies in an essay, "If You Are Not Serving Bill and Barbara, Then You're Not Serving Leadership."(Hunt, 1982) One has to note here the use of the word 'serve.' The most telling part of this essay dealt with the "state of leadership literature." From the early 1960's to then (1982), Mintzberg decried the so-called "establishment" research contribution to the field, which to him had fallen with a dull thud: plodding, detached, lacking elegance or esthetic value, the research has been a steady convergence on the peripheral at best, and all too often on the trivial and the irrelevant. (Mintzberg, in Hunt, 1982, p. 280) Nevertheless, according to Mintzberg, the literature on leadership has actually flourished in this period. How could that be? One explanation offered is because practitioner literature, especially from biographers, professionals, and academics in other fields (e.g Weick, 1969, Sayles,1979, Senge, 1990, Kotter, 1990, Peters, 1987, McCall, 1978) has picked up the slack.(Mintzberg, in Hunt, 1982, p. 251)

Mintzberg has also frequently raised concerns, amongst academics in this field, with our current over reliance on quantitative research. The fact that leadership researchers have had almost a century to sort things out, and have only come up with a lot of jargon laced empty findings, is something that should concern us greatly. Glaringly absent are startling insights that change our perceptions. Since leadership, like greatness or beauty, is so difficult to unequivocally define, can it ever be truly measured? Yet we seem to "know" it when we see it. There are things we know formally, or abstractly or analytically – by definitions and measurements – and those things we know informally,

"intuitively," deep in our brains although we do not know why. (Mintzberg, in Hunt, 1982, p. 252) If one is forbidden to discuss what cannot be defined or measured precisely, then how can one ever hope to understand it? Mintzberg's point is that leadership can only be known informally because of its brevity, variety, fragmentation, oral characteristics, lack of patterning, and its organic, unprogrammed decision making nature. If it is so unstructured, he asks, how can research based on so much structure capture it? To be more precise, with leadership being so intuitive in nature, how can research that precludes the use of intuition ever truly explain it. (Mintzberg, in Hunt, 1982, p.253)

Another obvious flaw Mintzberg noted is that current academic research keeps researchers perpetually too far removed from the rich reality of their subject matter. In 1982, he called for research methods that were unconventional, that could study leadership simply, directly and imaginatively. He even proposed getting rid of constructs (before collecting data), instruments, measurements, variables (especially the notion of dependence and independence), possibly even definitions, and any methodology that gets in the way. (Mintzberg, in Hunt, 1982, p.253) His recent comments on leadership in Managers Not MBA's (2004), echoes his concerns that too many so called "leaders" in our organizations lack true legitimacy with the top tier increasingly coming from an academic elite who are unconnected to those they lead. (Mintzberg, 2004, pp.143-144) Our business leaders are thus increasingly made up of men and women who lead without democratic, sapiential or experiential authority and credibility. It is therefore not surprising that a leadership crisis exists today in so many North American organizations.

Even today Mintzberg still agues for less quantitative, less deductive approaches for organizational research. Criticizing current research, he points out that rigorous scholarship does not mean just methodological rigor that produces replicable work from which conclusions may be drawn:

> In the *Strategic Management Journal* some years ago, its editor wrote an editorial that "if our field is to continue its growth, and develop important linkages between research and practice, as it must, then we need to improve our research and understand that relevance comes from rigor." (Schendel 1995:1) This claim itself is not so rigorous, since no evidence was presented in support of it. As usual, it was taken as an article of faith.

Read the "rigorous" literature, and you come to the opposite conclusion: that this kind of rigor – methodological rigor – gets in the way of relevance. People too concerned about doing their research correctly often fail to do it insightfully.

Of course, intellectual rigor – namely, clear thinking – does not get in the way of relevance. The editor referred to this too in his editorial (as "careful logic"), but what he meant was the following: "Research in this field should not be speculation, opinion, or clever journalism; it should be about producing replicable work from which conclusions can be drawn independently of whoever does the work or applies the work results" (1).

I think of this as bureaucratic research, because it seeks to factor out the human dimension – imagination, insight, and discovery. If I study a phenomenon and come up with an interesting theory, is that not rigorous because someone else would not have come up with the same theory? Accept that and you must reject every theory that has ever been developed, every discovery that has been made, from physics to philosophy, because all were idiosyncratic efforts, the inventions of creative minds. ("I'm sorry, Mr. Einstein, but your theory of relativity is speculative, not proven, so we cannot publish it.") (Mintzberg, 2004, p.399)

In response to Mintzberg's arguments, one has to admit that very little definitive or even revolutionary work has emerged since Burns' monumental work on leadership. Some scholars such as Bass (1985) and Conger (1989) have tried to make "charisma" a worthy element of leadership consideration. That too has failed as a meaningful insight or explanatory factor of successful leadership in most situations. Because charisma is so inherently dangerous, it runs into the ethical component that has more recently captured the attention of scholars: Burns (1978), Gardner (1990), Rost (1991), and Ciulla (1995, 2005). This relatively new interest has not flagged in the post Enron era, and quite possibly has reignited some interest in servant leadership, with its moral requirement that a leader exists to take of and serve his or her followers. As many have said of Greenleaf's language, it's the "servant" part that irritates them and which they find so hard to swallow. In reality, though, this just points to the massive work ahead in finding and keeping leaders who do not use leadership roles as an excuse to launch and perpetuate their ego trips.

It must be acknowledged that there also remains a strong utilitarian point of view, imbedded in so much of current academic research, and it insists on empirical

evidence and non-normative rational analysis for any subject that falls within the social sciences' domain. This too has crept into the field of leadership studies, which traditionally has been an inclusive field made up of many disciplines (history, classical studies, literature, psychology, sociology, social psychology, philosophy, organizational behaviour, management studies, etc.). An example of this has been provided by Joanna Ciulla. In her opinion, in the 1980's and 1990's, the word "leadership" began to replace the word "management" in business and management literature. (Ciulla, 1998, p.72) This is more than just a semantic change. Managers are now expected to not only manage the process of production or service provision, but inspire, motivate and empower people to work for the overall organizational goals. This is really a leadership responsibility. So one might fairly ask, is this not just another management job handed down from the top? Is it any wonder why so many now ask, what are those guys upstairs doing to earn all their perks and gargantuan salaries? In a similar vein, Joseph Rost had argued that in the old industrial paradigm, leadership was nothing more than good management. (Ciulla, 1998, p.72) If you were managing well then you were doing your job as a leader. Unfortunately, that view has come to be regarded as short sighted and deficient. Leadership requires something more now.   So the real question then is whose responsibility is it? And if our managers are doing it, then what need do we have for those overpaid, high priced people upstairs?

Although he may not be correct on all points, Rost's analysis of leadership theories has made a significant contribution in helping one see the big picture. As he himself has admitted though, he could not have done his work without the assistance of Burns. Even Rost's concise but cogent definition of leadership reflects the influence of Burns on his thinking: "Leadership is a power-and value-laden relationship between leaders and followers/constituents who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes and goals." Moreover, Rost was able to point out perhaps the single most important thesis development in leadership studies during the last twenty years. It was actually an idea that Greenleaf had brought to our attention in 1970. This is the evolution and now universal consensus regarding the role of followers in the leadership process. (Ciulla, 1998, p.35). Subsequent to arriving at that conclusion, Rost came to make an even greater distinction, in 1993, when he decided to make a change in his use of the

word *follower* : "I now use the word *followers* when I write about leadership in the industrial paradigm. I use the word *collaborators* when I write about leadership in the post industrial paradigm…After trying several alternative words, I settled on the word *collaborators* because it seemed to have the right denotative and connotative meanings. In other words, *collaborator,* as a concept, fits the language and values of the post industrial paradigm and so its usage should not be a problem to those who want to articulate a new paradigm of leadership." (Ciulla, 1998, p. 44) Hopefully, Rost's vision of the future will be prescient, but to most people living today it is far from ever becoming a reality. Our social, political and business organizations, and those who lead them, are far too comfortable treating people as subordinates and underlings rather than partners or collaborators. This may explain in part the resistance of so many to the use of the word "servant" in servant leadership. Ironically, this term may in fact be the requisite and most appropriate term needed for our leaders today. As has been suggested, first by Greenleaf and others since, the failure of so many leaders to understand that they are there to serve others first, and not themselves first, is at the root of our leadership crisis. To put it succinctly, so many of our modern leaders lack a dimension of humility that all true servant leaders have.

As so many contemporary scholars, writers, social and business commentators (Drucker, Senge, Peters, Mintzberg, et.al.) have noted, one of the fundamental tenets of the post industrial age is that the old top down, hierarchical, command and control models of managing and leading, are no longer workable or effective in a knowledge society. If knowledge is power, and if knowledge is ubiquitous in the information age, then these models of organizational structure are not only dysfunctional but potentially destructive to the needs of humanity. In the post Enron era, when so many people have finally recognized the business emperor with no clothes, the public has found another source of cynicism and despair with our current crop of amoral leaders. One can only ask, how long can this continue?

Yet, as common sense might tell us, we are only at the beginning of this new age, and have a long way to go before the new post industrial values become universally adopted and practiced. Old habits do not die easily or overnight. Those with power and its perquisites will not give them up without a battle of some sort. On the bright side, this

helps explains a renewed interest in servant leadership, and its potentially wider acceptance than has so far been the case. Its focus on meeting people's highest priority needs, serving others so that they become healthier, wiser, freer and more autonomous, is undoubtedly a set of values that will find an easy and comfortable home in the post industrial age, as it has been envisioned by our most enlightened thinkers. Most importantly, servant leadership in a very real way offers a third path to follow, other than the ones of submission or resistance to the status quo. Finally, perhaps even Greenleaf's hope that organizational leaders would practice leadership along the lines of "primus inter pares" (first among equals), which was rejected by so many in his time, may also come to pass in our organizational lives. One can at least hope so.

CHAPTER 5

**Conclusions and Recommendations
And
Commentary on the Future of Servant Leadership**

Conclusions:

One of the few academic luxuries of this research has been the benefit of dispensing with need to define "leader" and "leadership." The meaning given to those terms by Robert Greenleaf is all that has been needed. Even so, a good portion of the intellectual ground work of defining leadership has already been largely completed by Bass (1981) and Rost (1991). In his research, which included some 500 books on leadership, Rost found over 200 different definitions. His and Bass's conclusion, based mostly on an etymological investigation, is that the word "leader" first appeared in the English language around 1300, and that the word "leadership" did not appear until the first half of the 19th century in writings about political influence and control of the British Parliament. Bass, however, was careful to make the following distinction: "a preoccupation with leadership as opposed to headship based on inheritance, usurpation, or appointment occurs predominately in countries with an Anglo-Saxon heritage." (Bass, 1990, p.11) This distinction is crucial. Without it, there is an implied suggestion that men and women had no idea what a leader was before 1300. For reasons already given, this conclusion has been categorically rejected. Moreover, the Anglo-Saxon allusion points to early stirrings of the birth of democratic notions which historically developed or reappeared in the Anglo-Saxon races in this period. The Magna Carta was signed in 1215, and England was the first nation in Europe to experience a revolution challenging its monarchical authority several centuries later.

This raises a serious question. What is left after headship based on inheritance, usurpation, and appointment? There may be many things, but the most obvious to us in our time is democratic leadership, or the type of leadership that arises in democratic societies and organizations. Though Robert Greenleaf rarely used the word "democratic" to describe servant leadership, he clearly understood the need for it. He believed, for example, that followers must have some say in choosing whether or not to follow a non-

servant leader. His ideal institution would be one that practiced the leadership principle of "primus inter pares." If ever truly implemented this principle would cause a significant shift away from the hierarchical organizational model to a "trustee attitude" and a sharing of power that one sees in democratic forms of governance. Lastly, the heroes he cites in his writings (Jefferson, Wythe, Grundtvig) were all champions of democracy in their days.

It is also worth stating that just because the word "leader" does not translate exactly into another language, it does not always follow automatically that the other language has no idea or concept of it. That is, there is more than just an Anglo-Saxon version of democratic leadership. The English language may have only two or three terms to express the idea of snow. The Eskimos have over forty. Does that mean that people who speak English have no idea what snow is? If "snow" can be an imprecise term, imagine how many meanings could be attributed to "democratic leadership." Pick up any translation of Homer's Iliad and you will find the word "lead" and "commander" frequently used. Some classical scholars claim that in the context of the Greek polis, a leader was defined as "one who knows" or as the "shepherd of the flock." On the other hand, many Greek city states never got beyond a monarchy. Sparta in fact had two kings throughout most of its history, perhaps so that one could serve as a check or balance against the other, or because the city would never be without a king if one died in battle. Succession problems would be minimized. Socrates, Plato, Xenophon and Aristotle were clearly not advocates of democracy. The writer Irving F. Stone and others have contended that what really cost Socrates his life was not the charges of corrupting the youth of Athens, but his anti-democratic views which he freely expressed everywhere and anytime, especially after the fall of the 30 Tyrants in 403 BC. (Stone, 1988, p. 67) One of the tyrants, Critias, was a former student of his, and his fate was perhaps an early warning to other teachers. Yet Socrates' trial and death left an indelible mark on the face and reputation of democracy, and was often cited centuries later by scholars resistant to democratic notions. It may have been one of the intellectual arguments used by the founding fathers of America, to keep their new republic in check, so that the country would be spared the dangers of "mob rule". It may come as a surprise to many contemporary Americans that many of these same men, who were well educated in the

classics, looked to the Roman Republic, and not Athens, as a democratic model to emulate. The latter, as Thucydides reminds us, was considered to be a short lived experiment and a tragic failure, given its potential for greatness.

So, if servant leadership requires a democratic foundation to take root and flourish, what examples are there to show its practice in a democratic setting? As cited here, the earliest one recorded is that of Xenophon in his Anabasis. What is remarkable today is how little attention this story has attracted, outside of classical scholars, when looked at from a political theory perspective. Equally remarkable, and largely forgotten, were the mercenary soldiers portrayed in his story. Cut off from their homeland thousands of miles away, bereft of their commanders who were lured into a trap and murdered en masse, they turned to democratic practices and principles to choose new leaders from amongst themselves. What is remarkable here is that they *elected* new leaders and did not degenerate into a mob or a "lord of the flies" gang. Equally important to note, their choice of Xenophon as one of the new leaders, proved to be an excellent and wise decision. In many odd ways, Xenophon's tale and his role in the story is that of a servant leader, who unlike Leo in Herman Hesse's Journey to the East, does not leave his followers. Given Robert Greenleaf's Quaker pacifism, it is unlikely he would approve of Xenophon or any military general being a servant leader, but that judgment may be open to debate. What is significant and crucial here is the role Xenophon played. Ironically, Xenophon was an Athenian and friend of Socrates. He was an admirer of Sparta for most of his life, and not a strong advocate of democracy, as were many of the well educated, wealthier Athenians of his day. One might also say that the 10,000 only resorted to democracy by default in an emergency. In hindsight, nevertheless, it proved to be the best decision. Lastly, if you read the Anabasis closely, you will notice that Xenophon almost passes over this occurrence, without commenting on its significance, or offering an explanation as to how and why it happened that way, other than to include his powerful and persuasive speeches to the men. Admittedly, Xenophon's descriptive and almost journalist style of writing is partly responsible, especially when it is compared to Thucydides richer more analytical commentary in his History of the Peloponnesian War. The latter's unfinished work was eventually completed by Xenophon, and together they could easily have been renamed "The Fall of Athenian Democracy." Technically,

democracy did not end in Athens until the battle of Chaeronea in 338 BC, at the hands of Philip of Macedon. Nonetheless, the seeds of its destruction, as Thucydides so eloquently tells us, were planted in Athens' disastrous war with Sparta. The terrible cost of this war to Athenians cannot be understated, and has been eloquently described by Edith Hamilton:

> In the end, more than they wanted freedom, they wanted security. They wanted a comfortable life and they lost it all—security, comfort and freedom. When the Athenians finally wanted not to give to society, but for society to give to them, when the freedom they wished for most was the freedom from responsibility, then Athenians ceased to be free. (O'Toole, 2005, p.264)

Although it is far from unique, one of the researcher's insights, gained from the literary research is how important it still is to study the great classics of Western Civilization. This is particularly the case if one wishes to understand leadership. One might say that it is a necessity in order to see the "big picture," using Greenleaf's language in My Debt to E.B Wright.(Greenleaf, 1987) If one were capable of looking at today from the past, one might easily conclude that we had deliberately entered a state of cultural amnesia, by omitting and forgetting the contributions of the ancient Greeks and Romans in our educational institutions.   The superficial and ignorant criticism that our children are better off now without learning the prejudices of "old white males," which are reflected in the classics, needs a serious reconsideration. We have risked losing far more than what we have gained by neglecting it. Take for example, the concept of "idiotes." To the Athenians it was a disparaging term for a citizen who took no part in public affairs: *idios*, which meant private, separate, self-centered, selfish. (Parker, 2005, p.344) In Pericles famous funeral speech it has been translated to mean, "good for nothing." (Stone, 1988, p.100) Every citizen in ancient Athens was expected to do something for the polis, and the richer you were, the more that was expected of you. Today the term refers to a state of mental incapacity, which is quite a change in connotation. Ironically, in our current age of glorified selfishness, simplification and instant gratification, the very notion of "service to the public" sounds "idiotic" to most people, unless it refers to something one is paid for when a meal is ordered. It is now permissible to openly ask, except in a job interview of course, what's in it for me, here

and now, but not what's in it for our society, our children or future generations. One hears far less often the question being asked of young people, what contribution are you going to make to society? People who ask the latter type of question seem odd to us, and appear almost naively idealistic. Yet those are obvious questions everyone needs to ask, and fortunately some still do. But if our leaders do not, then who will? It may be indeed true that these modern attitudes demonstrate, as Hansen and Heath have suggested, that there is no longer a functioning and effective "polis" in America, and probably Canada as well. It is also fair to ask whether these questions can only be asked from the top down, or can they also come from the bottom up? Either way, they can and must come from a leader.

This leads one irrevocably back to the importance of morality and ethics in any proper study of leadership. Here again, the ancients have given us some valuable insights. In Book Two of the Republic Plato recounts the "Ring of Gyges" to illustrate the idea that men only behave morally when they lack the ability to do wrong. Immoral behaviour is too rewarding to resist. Plato tells the story here of a shepherd who acquires a ring that renders him invisible. With his ring he enters the king's palace, seduces the king's wife, and with her help kills the king and then takes possession of the throne. The obvious question raised is who could resist acting immorally with such power at your finger tips. Yet this is ultimately the question that all leaders are confronted with. Will they act like King David when they see Bathsheba? Will they have the inner strength, the moral sense and virtuous character to resist misusing their power? Unfortunately, once power is given, especially to an immoral person, it is not easily or cheaply returned.

There is also another equally dangerous dilemma here. There have always been those who would praise the leader who acts immorally, arguing that leaders must be judged by a totally different set of rules and moral standards. Foremost among those is Machiavelli. He believed that men are "simple and governed by their present needs." Though people may desire ethical leaders, Machiavelli thought it was very easy to fool them into believing a leader had good moral qualities, when in fact he did not. For him, a leader should focus his attention on acquiring and maintaining his power. Justice and morality must be used to serve the leader's self interest. (Ciulla, 2003, p.2) It is worth comparing and contrasting these ideas with those of Erasmus, and even asking why do

people still read Niccolo Machiavelli, and not Erasmus (<u>The Education of a Christian Prince</u>)? It may be simply due to the fact that finding the wise, virtuous and moral king that Erasmus sought, is comparable to finding a needle in a haystack. Humanity gave this search up centuries ago. Yet we have not given up the accoutrements of authoritarian and monarchical leadership in so many parts of our society. These practices are far more suited to the "prince," as opposed to the leader of an elected party in a democratic society. More importantly, they are a set of beliefs that run completely contrary to servant leadership, as well as other forms moral leadership. Without cooperation, selflessness, and altruism, which form the bedrock of morality, life would quickly descend to a Hobbesian jungle. Perhaps this is why Machiavelli never truly believed in democracy, preferring instead a republican form of government made up of a mixture of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy. Some of his thinking in this area was later picked up and expressed by Montesquieu who so heavily influenced the founding fathers of America.

As James MacGregor Burns has put it, leadership assumes competition and conflict, and brute force denies it. Conflict, he said, is the stepchild of political thought. Machiavelli, Hobbes, Hegel, Marx and Freud all recognized the vital role of conflict in the relations among people. (Ciulla, 2003, p.220) However, despite the obviousness of conflict all around and within us, there have always been many who have sought to deny its existence. Some have done so in the name of religion, others wanting peace at any cost, and still others in the forlorn hope that a conflict free existence is truly possible for human beings. For a servant leader, or for any leader actually, the supreme test of their leadership abilities, is how well they handle conflict. Pretending that it does not exist is not an option, but an illusion that will eventually lead to even greater misery for a leader's followers. It is submitted here that leaders, especially those with great power, must have a moral compass that guides when they face the test of conflict. Why? The simple answer is because for them, the quicker and easier path of brute force is always an option that is too tempting to ignore.

A servant leader, by definition, already has this moral quality implanted or imbedded in his or her psyche. What of the other kinds of leaders, the non-servant ones? What kind of moral compass do they have? Here the psychological work of Jean Piaget,

The Moral Judgment of the Child (1948) and Lawrence Kohlberg (1958) are extremely helpful with their recognition that morality is a dimension of human, social and psychological development. Particularly relevant is Kohlberg's stages of morality, differentiated by three levels and two moral types within each level. His Level Three, the autonomous level, is arguably the closest to the concept of servant leadership. At this level, value resides in conformity of the leader's self to some shared or shareable standards of judgment. Duties are defined by the general rights of others. Morality at this level is expressed by democratic legalism, and conscience or a principle orientation. (Puka, 1994, p.390). Respecting individuals, taking positions, avoiding deception, sustaining personal trust and concern for the welfare of others are some of the expressions of this level of morality. At its highest potential it seeks expression of universal ethical principles, and will choose to act in accord with those principles even when laws violate them. (Puka, 1994, p.341)

The other highly relevant psychological work that has contributed to any discussion of moral development and servant leadership, has been provided by Carol Gilligan, with the publication of her book, In a Different Voice (1982). In contrast to Kohlberg's "ethics of abstract universal principle," Gilligan advanced the hypothesis that men and women reason differently when it came to moral questions. Her argument was that women's moral judgments provide an alternative conception of maturity, distinctive in its greater orientation towards relationships and interdependence. (Gilligan, 1982, p.22) The responsible caring for others is implicit in a woman's moral life, each of which is linked to a unique, highly personal context-specific set of relationships. (Waluchow, 2003, pp. 234-235) Leaving aside the dangers of situational and relativistic practices in this approach to morality, the implication here is that female servant leaders may at times demonstrate a different moral approach in their decision making. Remarkably, however, research of male and female business managers, as well as medical students, have found no significant difference between the genders. When differences have been found, females have generally scored higher than men in justice-based reasoning. (Trevino, Nelson, 2007, p.129)

While both Kohlberg's and Gilligan's research has been criticized, there is sufficient commonality in their motivational directions and prescribed ends to reason

through to some conclusions regarding servant leadership. To start with, it must be emphasized that moralistic assumptions are implicit and inherent in servant leadership, primarily through its emphasis on taking care of and serving one's followers first. The difficulty here is that one cannot assume that every servant leader will behave morally or operate with a moral compass. Something more is required. The leader of a gang robbing a bank can teach his gang to be better robbers and share his ill gotten gains with them. Is he not then also a servant leader? Obviously, only if we totally discarded all our moral values could he be.

It is also important here to point out that the concept of morality is subject to a variety of interpretations. If we inject the term "morality" into servant leadership, we should not be surprised if we come up with more than one meaning. Fortunately, Greenleaf's simple definition and clear thinking shed enough light on this issue to provide some answers. The work of a leader, he emphasized, cannot harm or deprive the very least in society. Though this may not satisfy a strict interpretation of moral leadership, it provides a bottom line and certainly falls under the umbrella of the golden rule, or doing unto others as you would have them do unto you. It compels us to examine the results of the work of the servant leader, which can most easily be measured and held accountable in a democratic setting. For this reason servant leadership is contingent upon the work of the servant leader, and what he or she produces in his or her followers. At that point we can then apply the even more appropriate Biblical test: "by their fruits ye shall know them." For Greenleaf the test was whether the servant leader's work had the effect on his followers of making them "healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous and more likely themselves to become servant leaders." Notice that these are not ephemeral, instantly attainable, or even solid material end results that can be easily measured. They are more like timeless values that take a great deal of wisdom to cherish and respect. That may explain why so many servant leaders, like Herman Hesse's Leo, are not fully appreciated until they are no longer with us.

At this point it is worth recalling that Robert Greenleaf himself was a deeply moral person by all accounts. His upbringing in Mid-western America shortly after the turn of the century, the lasting influence of the Quaker religion on him, and his life long contemplative, spiritual search for truth and meaning, all contributed profoundly to his

own moral code of behaviour. Remarkably, he never adopted the practice of imposing his morals and thinking on others. He instead chose to follow the path of gentle but firm persuasion, like his Quaker hero, John Woolman. His views on the problem of finding the moral leader, expressed in his pioneering essay, are worth noting. He poignantly said then that determining whether one is a servant leader or not, is the same as trying to distinguish a true prophet from a false one:

> So it is with the servant issue. If there were a dependable way that would tell us, 'This man (*person*) enriches by his presence, his is neutral, or he takes away,' life would be without challenge. Yet it is terribly important that one *know*, both about himself and about others, whether or not the effect of one's influence on others enriches, is neutral, or diminishes and depletes. (Greenleaf, 1970, p.33)

Greenleaf's expression here, that there is no one certain way to know this, is, with all due respect, not exactly what he may have known or might have concluded had he added a time frame or dimension to his language. That is, Greenleaf's conclusion here is logically most true *before* one becomes a leader. His or her followers will be able thereafter to judge the leader by his or her actions and the results thereof. Practically speaking, this can only be done in a democratic setting where the followers' needs and concerns can be properly taken into account. That is, where they would have a true voice in any assessment of or decision making by the leader.

Since discovering the true servant leader is, and perhaps always has been, such a serious problem, one must ask if there is any way that followers can find a servant leader from among themselves. One way, suggested by Greenleaf himself, was to discern whether or not the leader has any creative insight. Another was to determine whether the leader has a sense for the unknowable and is able to see the unknowable. (Greenleaf, 1970, p.14) Can he or she see beyond the here and now to the infinite number of future possibilities, and describe how his or her followers can best get there or avoid getting somewhere else? Most importantly, there is the question of whether or not the leader is an inner or outer directed person:

> A king once asked Confucius' advice on what to do about the large number of thieves. Confucius answered, 'If you, sir, were not covetous, although you should reward them to do it, they would not steal.' This advice places an enormous burden on those who are favored by the rules, and it establishes how old is the notion that the servant views any problem

in the world as *in here*, inside himself, not *out there*. And if a flaw in the world is to be remedied, to the servant the process of change starts *in here*, in the servant, not *out there*. This is a difficult concept for that busybody, modern man. (Greenleaf, 1970, p.34)

Since he first wrote those words, the problem he alludes to may well have gotten worse for men and women in the West. That is, in terms of rushing around, coping with never ending changes in our commercial lives, and being busier and busier, 24/7, the old adage that to truly know others, one must first know oneself, has become a much more difficult task. Life in the advanced industrial societies may have changed a lot on the surface, but there are no new or quicker ways yet found to reach spiritual wisdom, deeper meaning and profound understanding in one's life. Instant enlightenment is still an illusion. Too many have forgotten that the inner work precedes the outer. That this truism has been ignored, or done so infrequently, or poorly, explains to a large extent why there are so few servant leaders today. Another more obvious reason is that servant leadership requires long and arduous work on the part of those courageous enough to undertake it. Learning to genuinely serve others first is not an attraction for many would be leaders in this age. This may in fact be a blessing in disguise, if we use it as a criterion to weed out the non-servant leaders among us. Realistically speaking though, it appears that only a small number of spiritually driven men and women have made a decision to walk this path. A few have found it in their intellectual work. Abraham Maslow refers to it at the highest level of his hierarchy of needs. Kohlberg's Level Three of moral development presupposes some awareness of it. Even organizational behaviorists like Jean Lipman-Blumen, in her intensive research of toxic leaders, have recognized it:

Yet when we direct at least some substantial portion of our efforts toward autonomy and freedom – our own and others – we create more enduring benefits and opportunities for the many. Autonomy and freedom liberate us from dependency on tyrants as well as authoritarian and incompetent leaders. Freedom and autonomy, frequently braced by recognized anxiety, gives us the courage to act, even in the face of death. It is then that we reach our true heroic potential. Our yearning for self esteem is satiated. We are calling forth the leader within. Finding the leader within and winning those "victories for humanity" take us beyond our physical, creaturely selves to the expression of our noblest being.

Under these circumstances, we may also freely and fearlessly draft reluctant leaders, who have little need to enslave us. We can support and

collaborate with these leaders to meet complex challenges in business, in politics, and in global enterprises. With autonomy and freedom, we can also insist intrepidly that toxic leaders purge themselves of their toxic ways. We can assist them in this task. Or, if necessary, we can join forces with others to oust incorrigible toxic leaders. Those, too, are acts of heroism. (Jean Lipman-Blumen, 2005, p. 255)

Looking back in time, one can see that the task of finding the best leaders from amongst us is not new. Once again, a sense of realism, which comes from an appreciation of history, can be of tremendous value. Starting with Plato, for example, we can ask how many "philosopher kings" have there been over time. Even if we expand Plato's definition of "king" to include political leaders or heads of state, we are still left with only a handful of such gifted men: Lycurgus, Solon, Pericles, Marcus Aurelius, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison come to mind. Perhaps there are just too few of them amongst "the crooked timber of humanity," to borrow Immanuel Kant's expressive words. Ominously, out of this timber also comes, on occasion, the apparently perfect leader with the charm, charisma, energy, intellectual brilliance, bravery and physical attractiveness that dazzles and lures men and women into following them: an Alcibiades, Alexander, Hannibal, Julius Caesar, or Napoleon. For humanity, it is always a sad, regrettable and belated revelation that their leader was an unscrupulous tyrant in disguise. It is worth noting that Hervey Cleckly, in his classic work on psychopathic behavior, The Mask of Sanity, cited Alcibiades as a spectacular example of a psychopath who used his gifts to rise to a supreme leadership position. The fact that Alcibiades was a friend and student of Socrates, who may have been sincerely trying to re-direct him towards a more virtuous life, had no small impact on Socrates' fate when he was put on trial for corrupting the youth of Athens.(Cleckly, 1988, pp.326-336) America's recent presidential experience with Bill Clinton provides a more recent example of this hard to believe phenomena.

Finally, there are several conclusions that can be made concerning the choice of the best leader. Firstly, everyone needs to become much better versed in recognizing the behaviour traits of the narcissistic, charismatic, or psychopathic leader. It would be convenient if we could submit all future would be leaders to Dr. Hare's screening test, and identify the highly effective or successful psychopaths, but that is not only

impractical but unlikely at this time. We can, however, be more vigilant in spotting the tell tale signs that these individuals give off, and which we often tend to ignore or find an excuse for: an inordinate or excessive level of ambition, untruthful words, deceptive actions, the use of Machiavellian tactics, superficial charm and "good" intelligence, unreliability, lack of conscience or remorse and shame, poor judgment and the failure to learn from experience, pathological egocentricity, an incapacity for love, and unresponsiveness in general interpersonal relations. (Cleckley, 1988, pp. 337-338) We know that once these individuals become ensconced in powerful positions they can be very difficult to remove, and often not without great cost to those around them. Unfortunately, it often reaches the point where the cost of letting them stay is far greater than that of getting rid of them, before normal people will take concerted and corrective action. Most importantly, since psychopathic disorders are so difficult to cure, we must be very clear that servant leaders will never emerge from this unhealthy part of the human race.

Secondly, if we truly wish to benefit from servant leadership, we must work much harder to maintain, rebuild and expand the democratic practices within our modern institutions. It is only within institutions that are run along democratic lines and principles that the dangers above can be reduced, and servant leaders permitted to emerge. As history and modern experience has shown, trusting autocratic or authoritarian leaders is not a viable option or a reliable solution, especially for a democracy. Democracy undoubtedly has many faults. It is messy, inefficient, slow and cumbersome. It demands unrelenting hard work and never ending efforts and sacrifices on the part of ordinary men and women in order to survive. It is, as Winston Churchill once put it, the worst form of governance, except for all the rest. Some will always and inevitably say that democratic institutions and governance are too onerous and imperfect to put up with or sustain. To this we must courageously ask ourselves, what choice do we have, unless we wish to live as slaves? Lastly, in closing, we might benefit by recalling how James Madison described this dilemma:

> But what is government itself but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controuls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by

men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: You must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place, oblige it to control itself. A dependence on the people is no doubt the primary controul on the government; but experience has taught mankind the necessity of auxiliary precautions. (Hamilton, Madison, Jay, 1997, Paper #51, p.374)

Recommendations for Further Research

Servant Leadership: Theory or Concept?

One important question, raised primarily by social scientists, and which needs work on is whether there is any quantitative or empirical data that can be gathered in order to prove or disprove servant leadership as a valid theory of leadership. As is stands now, from a social science perspective, it can only be considered a concept. The position taken in this research is that, even so, it is a powerful enough concept to be worthy of further study.

It is also important to note that some of the issues connected with this problem are ones that have and still plague the entire field of leadership studies. As early as 1977, at one leadership symposium, the criticism was expressed that "we are in grave danger of transforming the study of leadership into a study of self reporting questionnaire behavior, if indeed, the transformation has not already occurred. The method is too quick, too cheap, and too easy, and there are now many such questionnaire measures that possess no construct validity whatever. It would be advantageous for the field if a much greater emphasis were given simple to defining, describing, and measuring leadership phenomena. We need much more discussion and argument about what we are trying to explain, not whether a particular theory has been supported or not supported. We need many more descriptive studies that attempt to develop reasonable taxonomies of what leaders and followers actually do when they interact, not more correlations among self-report questionnaires." (Rost, 1991, p.20)

In reality, this astute observation points to a number of significant problems that still persist. How do you get data that is relevant, meaningful and most of all truthful and accurate? You can hardly expect to get it by asking the leaders themselves. How many followers, in your typical business, military or political organization, knowing that their livelihoods, pay, promotions, careers, pensions, in short their very survival, depend so

much on what the "higher ups" think of them and do with them, will freely volunteer their true thoughts, feelings and opinions? Why should they risk anything so valuable for the sake of filling out a questionnaire? Human nature being what it is, this is not only likely true in toxic, competitive, authoritarian, and coercively run organizations but also in more democratically run ones as well, as few as there are in the private sector. If individuals work for a government department or agency, they may be bound by oaths of secrecy which prevent them from speaking freely. In professional organizations there may be codes of conduct and legal concerns that tether their consciences and restrain them from telling you the whole story. It is a sad commentary that in many poorly run, highly toxic organizations the only person who is likely to tell you anything meaningful (i.e., the whole truth and nothing but the truth) is an honest whistleblower.

Other than lonely truth tellers, there may yet be one other group of commentators that might be able to give us reliable, accurate and meaningful information on our leaders. These are the people who have left or retired from an organization and who thus feel freer to express themselves without having to live in fear of reprisals.   In some cases, but not all, finding these individuals, and enough of them to form a representative sample, may be very problematic, impractical and expensive.

There is also the dilemma of testing a concept that no one in the organization has any awareness of. You could liken this to asking someone about God when they have no idea what God is. Unlike doing research on something like total quality management, there are only a small handful of organizations in the private sector that have seriously or systematically tried to implement servant leadership practices.   On the other hand, using factor analysis it may be possible to avoid this problem.   If enough people in an organization are practicing the values imbedded in servant leadership, it may indicate its presence even if those people do not identify themselves or others as servant leaders.

Another potential restraint is that some of the respondents may feel bound by sense of loyalty, or suffer from hero worship and other forms of bias. Hence, the data collected may still be contaminated and inaccurate. Ironically, and as it has been said for centuries, it may be that only the historians can do the job properly. They are the ones who can do a full 360 degree, ex post facto performance assessment, see things whole and in their proper context, and be there when the results ("fruits") are in for a particular

leader or leadership style. Consider Alfred Sloan, the former chairman of General Motors in it's hey day. At that time he was regarded as a managerial genius. Today he is largely a forgotten figure whose management practices would now likely destroy an organization. Perhaps management thinkers will say the same of Jack Welch fifty years from now. The passage of time sometimes increases our wisdom and understanding of what is now actually going on around us. Hindsight is still sometimes the only real 20/20 vision we can count on.

It may also be that for those who wish to study leaders and leadership, the reading of great historical biographies will yield more treasures than the trivial, dry, abstract, intellectually arrogant, but academically "rigorous," journal articles now produced in the social sciences. Why? Well, oddly enough, the practical advice given by Niccolo Machiavelli five hundred years ago, may answer that question: "As for intellectual training, the prince must read history, studying the actions of eminent men to see how they conducted themselves during war and to discover the reasons for their victories or defeats, so that he can avoid the latter and imitate the former. Above all, he must read history so that he can do what eminent men have done before him: taken as their model some historical figure who has been praised and honoured; and always kept his deeds and actions before them. In this way, it is said, Alexander imitated Achilles; Caesar imitated Alexander; and Scipio Cyrus. And anyone who reads the life of Cyrus, written by Xenophon, will then see how much of the glory won by Scipio can be attributed to his emulation of Cyrus, and how much, in his chastity, courtesy, humanity, and generosity, Scipio conformed to the picture which Xenophon drew of Cyrus." (Bull, 1961, pp.89-90) The only drawback to this advice, of course, is that so few of our leaders, not to mention people in general, read so little history.

A reading of history also can provide one with an appreciation of what is *not* said or on the record, if one is sagacious and critical minded enough. Walk into any library and you will find hundreds of biographies of Alexander, Hannibal, Caesar and Napoleon, the great military leaders of the past that educated or well read people usually think of. Everyone one of them, however, could also be labeled an evil man, possibly psychopathic, who left hundreds of thousands, and in several cases, millions of corpses in their ego driven quests for power, glory and conquest. Yet, on the other hand, how many

biographies will you find of Epamonindas, the Theban general who led a democratic Theban army into the Peloponnesus and freed thousands of slaves by destroying Sparta and its hegemony over Greece?   How many have heard of above mentioned Scipio Africanus, the republican Roman general and consul who defeated Hannibal? Other than Victor Davis Hanson's work The Soul of Battle (1999), there is only one biography in print, in French, of the former, and only one still in print in English, of Scipio by Liddell Hart. The title of Hart's book is A Greater Than Napoleon (1927), which says a great deal about its subject matter. Hart considered Scipio to be one of the greatest generals to ever have lived, a genius at tactics, strategy, grand strategy and magnanimous peace making.   Even more remarkable was Scipio's mastery of himself. After receiving his triumph in Rome after the battle of Zama, and still in his mid thirties, he was in a position to crown himself king or dictator for life given Rome's adulation and gratitude. And unlike Sulla or Caesar, he returned to private life but continued to work for the Republic as a soldier, statesman and diplomat when needed. It is believed that Plutarch had completed a comparative biography of him and Epaminondas, but it has been lost. Was that an accident or tragic loss, or an example of someone making sure that history is always written by the victors? Could that someone have been someone making sure that posterity does not learn that two of our greatest leaders emerged in a democracy and a republic, and that therefore we can have faith and trust in this form of social and political organization?

It might also be valuable here to mention the insights and criticisms expressed by Henry Mintzberg, which were leveled at business school researchers but are equally applicable to leadership study researchers:

> The problem is the prevalent belief among many of the researchers who dominate the academic journals that "quantitative" research is proper research, while "qualitative" research is something, at most, to be indulged occasionally. Using these other labels, however, makes clear that deductive research cannot happen without inductive research. In other words, we can only test what we have invented. Therefore, no induction, no new ideas. As Karl Weick (1969) quoted Somerset Maugham, "She plunged into a sea of platitudes, and with the powerful breast stroke of a channel swimmer made her confident way toward the white cliff of the obvious."   Sure, theories should be tested. But only when they are interesting.

This dysfunctional prejudice manifests itself most destructively in doctoral courses that teach quantitative methods (mostly statistics) as rites of passage. Those who cannot handle them simply cannot get doctoral degrees, even though there are all kinds of wonderful research with no numbers. Why not preclude from doctoral program students incapable of coming up with interesting ideas? (Mintzberg, 2004, p.400)

As a final caveat then, if something truly interesting can be learned by studying servant leadership using quantitative data and statistical methodologies, then it should indeed be done. If not, then it may not be worth the expense and trouble. From an academic perspective, the critical observation of John MacGregor Burns, that servant leadership as a concept or theory of leadership, did not really have anything new to add to the study of leadership, is worth remembering (made to Don Frick in a private conversation). This is an admonition that cannot be easily dismissed, given Burns stature in the field, not to mention his intellectual contribution to it.

Other "interesting" Historical Troves

Due to the vastness and the long historical time frame utilized in this research, certain periods and contributors to servant leadership thought may not have received their proper level of assessment, and may be worthy of further and closer research. Four such periods or contributors come to mind. One, there is the origins of Confucianism and Daoism in China, and Hinduism and Buddhism in India in what Karen Armstrong calls the Axial Age. (Armstrong, 2006). From a leadership studies perspective, the East remains an undiscovered country, especially to those living here in the West, and notwithstanding the popularity of Sun Tzu's The Art of War among western military officers and business managers. Two, it may be possible to find other ancient Greek and Roman writers, historians and philosophers who had a hand in the moral and intellectual development of Western Civilization, and thereby contributed to the early phases of servant leadership thought. Only the really well known ones from that era have been researched here. Thirdly, there are the founders and practitioners of the Quaker religion, whose values and thinking had such a profound influence on Robert Greenleaf personally. Individuals like George Fox in England and John Woolman in colonial America are two that stand out. Fourthly, the philosophers of the English Enlightenment,

that is, the English and Scottish moral philosophers, may have more to say about this than previously thought. This would include not only David Hume and Adam Smith, but such men as Joseph Butler, Francis Hutcheson, Adam Ferguson, Thomas Reid, Edward Gibbon and Anthony Ashley Cooper. What is appealing about these "moral philosophers" is that they appear to have understood intuitively that there is a healthy form of selfishness, but also an unhealthy one driven by greed and love of power that leads people to abdicate and disregard their responsibilities to those people sharing the planet with them. How civilized can one be if he or she cares only for himself and not a whit for the welfare of other people, including those not yet born? In the research done the only other leaders, who seemed to have had a similar healthy, balanced understanding of this wisdom were some of the ancient Athenians in the age of Pericles (prior to the Peloponnesian War), and the early republican Romans, particularly the patrician law-givers.

Democratic Leadership

The research completed has led to the conclusion that the democratic organizational model has proven itself historically to be the one best suited for the germination and successful emergence of servant leaders. Outside of the public arena, labour organizations, the non-profit sector, and our political institutions in the West, it remains to be seen whether the democratic model is a viable alternative to existing models in other spheres of our lives. For example, can it be used in the market place very well? Can it be used to run a business organization? Is there even such a thing as democratic capitalism? The founding fathers of America were able to create a republican model that permitted democratic principles to flourish in the public arena. They left the private and religious ones alone. We know now that there are other political models that can achieve similar results. The Swiss, British, French, Canadian, Australian and other western European political models have in some ways eclipsed the American one in putting democratic principles into practice along different lines in the public arena, and with different institutional structures and practices. For example, the Anglo-American and Canadian democratic models are the only ones now that have not adopted some form of proportional representation. The role of political campaign contributions outside of

the United States is much more tightly regulated. On the other hand, there is much that could be done to democratize our private, hierarchical, autocratically run institutions, should more of our leaders study and apply the principles enunciated in the <u>Federalist Papers</u>. The political institutional mechanisms that the founding fathers of America developed to serve as *checks* on development and use of coercive powers of one person or groups of people over other people, are worth emulating in many other areas of our modern lives, including business.

The point here is that it is truly an open question whether there are yet other untried, un-invented or unknown organizational and cultural models that will permit servant leaders to emerge. Who can tell what human ingenuity might someday invent. If there are other ways, then they too must be able to withstand the test of time which democracy has barely done. As pointed out, history shows that most forms of and attempts at democratic government have proven vulnerable to the exigencies of geography, the frailties and mendacity of human nature, never ending conflict and the march of history. Indeed, one could argue that the jury is still out on whether it will survive this new century of ours. In the final analysis, the question remains unanswered at to whether there are other more suitable institutional environments where servant leaders may emerge or find a more secure home.

<u>The Spiritual Side of Servant Leaders</u>

One area that needs further elucidation and research, is that of describing, expressing and explaining the "inner path" work that a servant leader must go through before qualifying for the difficult work of a servant leader. Admittedly, this may appear to be a very soft, subjective and theoretical exercise to many, especially when one attempts to define and explain "spirituality." It will require an ability to explore and express a high degree of creativity, personal insight and openness to other dimensions of human experience that the academic and scientific worlds are historically unaccustomed to doing. Without proper construct definitions and some hard thinking as to what exactly is being studied here, the research could easily degenerate into another futile, empty exercise in vagueness. Nevertheless, the leadership studies field urgently needs a serious consideration of this largely unexamined dimension of leadership, and which Robert

Greenleaf referred to in his writings. What it does not need, however, is another theological or religious tract that does not move the field ahead in finding and comprehending servant leaders and their proper role in society. Nor does it need a study of messianic leaders. The language and expressions used in such an exercise should strive to be inclusive, rather than exclusive, so that a variety of spiritual pathways can be identified for future servant leaders. There is still a real danger in this area, which even Greenleaf himself recognized late in his life according to his biographer Don Frick, that one or more religions, or school of thought, will attempt to seize servant leadership as its own, to the exclusion of all others. That would indeed be a tragedy, and a disservice to his work and memory.

Sign of the Times

One of the underlying problems with servant leadership is the often heard complaint, "I like the concept except for the word 'servant'. Do I have to be a "servant?" If Greenleaf were still here he would likely answer that question affirmatively, given his spiritual values, and because that term in his cultural milieu did not have a pejorative meaning. Yet to this researcher, the question sounds adolescent and almost childish. It is as if one were asking, "Do I ever have to behave unselfishly in this society?" or, "Why can't I do what I want all the time?" Nevertheless, there are some very strong cultural behaviours happening in contemporary society that support and approve a level of selfishness and unethical behaviour that appalls many of the older and wiser folks amongst us. The notion of citizenship, for example, and the responsibilities that it entails has been increasingly degraded. We have seen "yuppies" and the "Me" generation, and the fascination of so many young people with sports stars and celebrities. It could even be argued that the resurgence of fundamentalist religious beliefs is one of the cultural reactions to and rejections of this phenomenon. The philosophical support for this approach to life was powerfully enunciated by Ayn Rand, and much of her thinking, perhaps originally intended primarily for the business world, has now become unquestioningly and widely accepted in North America for many other areas of modern life. The question of whether a civilized society can be built and maintained on such a set of unbalanced and highly individualized values remains to be seen. If history is any

predictor, it cannot be done for long. What would be helpful here is an examination of the virtues of altruism in the leadership context, whether it can survive in a culture of selfishness, and what are the long term implications of its absence for leadership. Can a more balanced and healthier set of values be developed as once were apparent in ancient Athens? Also, it may be worth asking, what has been the role of our leaders in supporting this new set of self centered cultural values?

Other Research Methodologies

One of the more positive developments in recent decades is the emergence of new forms of qualitative research in the social sciences, some of which may be appropriate for the study of servant leadership. To date, various types of qualitative research, using interviews and case studies, have been used by a number of doctoral candidates, mostly in the educational and theological fields. There may be other, newer methods now that merit examination and trial.   In recent years, slow but steady progress has been made in generating better results from quantitative, statistical models also, with movement away from so much reliance on regression models. Most importantly, the expanding world of the internet has opened up huge areas and new avenues to generate knowledge, both qualitative and quantitative.

Keeping in mind what Henry Mintzberg has said, it may be useful for someone to attempt to study leadership in the same manner Mintzberg first studied management. That is, by attaching oneself to a leader like a piece of Velcro, following the leader around night and day and doing a sort of time and motion study, recording everything a leader does, but purely from a leadership perspective. Combine that with a personal diary of the leader, to understand his or her subjective observations, and the feedback of people close to the leader, and it may be possible to describe some aspects of leadership that have hitherto gone unnoticed or undiscovered. Naturally, permission of the leader would be required and the exercise would have to be done repeatedly using a number of leaders and variety of leadership types.   Some Hawthorne effect is sure to take place, but in the absence of any alternative to such an up close observation of leadership, it could well tell us as much about leadership as Mintzberg's work did about management. At the very

least, we are sure to come up with answers to some of the questions and concerns that Mintzberg has raised.

Finally, if possible, it may be of some use to examine the private papers and letters of Robert Greenleaf, still preserved, to see if there is something there that Don Frick and others might have missed, in exploring the origins of servant leadership.

Comments on the Future of Servant Leadership

Introduction

Although it is only now at the beginning of the 21st century, it is fair to say that humanity will be very fortunate in this century to avoid the same level of carnage and destruction that the 20th century experienced. There are some very dark clouds on humanity's horizon that all prudent men and women will to have to reckon with. They are ominous enough to challenge the unwritten assumption, at least in the West since the Enlightenment, that humanity's future is one that will steadily improve thanks to our scientific and technological advances. The question is whether the steady upward progression line for the quality of life and material prosperity of mankind, is about to flatline or even decline. Not since the Dark Ages followed the fall of the Roman Empire has this sequence of events been so likely and predictable. Interestingly, in the East, the metaphor is not a line but a circle, reflecting a very different set of beliefs in the cyclical nature of life. For sure, we may be about to see a significant paradigm shift in our thinking.

If there are indeed dark days ahead, it would surely behoove us and our leaders to act now and prepare for our future in ways that will minimize the coming destruction, pain and suffering. The work here of our leaders, especially if they are servant leaders, was best expressed five centuries ago by Niccolo Machiavelli when he spoke about fortune:

> I compare fortune to one of those violent rivers which, when they are enraged, flood the plains, tear down trees and buildings, wash soil from one place to deposit it in another. Everyone flees before them, everybody yields to their impetus, there is no possibility of resistance. Yet although such is their nature, it does not follow that when they are flowing quietly one cannot take precautions, constructing dykes and embankments so that

> when the river is in flood they would keep to one channel or their impetus would be less wild and dangerous. So it is with fortune. She shows her potency where there is no well regulated power to resist her, and her impetus is felt where she knows there are no embankments and dykes to restrain her. (Bull, 1961, pp. 130-131)

Background

Looking back over the last five thousand years or so of recorded history, it is difficult to see a more dangerous time period facing humanity than the present. On the other hand, it is also possible to see a century of immense promise and progress potentially awaiting us. While predicting the future is very much a fool's game, it would be equally foolish to not examine and prepare for the coming "floods". Therefore, it is necessary to consider the worst possible scenarios. One can easily imagine a perfect storm of the modern version of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse (war, famine, pestilence and death) unfolding gradually, or suddenly overwhelming the human race leading to its extinction, or for those unlucky enough to survive, a dystopian nightmare: nuclear wars, overpopulation, environmental degradation and ecological catastrophe, and the consequent political, economic and social anarchy attending such occurrences.

The specter of nuclear war is by far the most worrisome shadow hanging now over humanity. As more and more countries develop and deploy nuclear weapons, the likelihood increases daily of a lunatic from some rogue state inadvertently or insanely unleashing nuclear bombs on his or her nation's real or imagined enemies. The danger of a terrorist group getting possession of one and using it is also now a real possibility that cannot any longer be ignored. To prevent any one of these menacing threats will take far more than the simple renunciation of war and armed violence. That may never be possible. The massive levels of international cooperation and diplomacy required to stop one of these from happening also appear to be beyond our current capabilities, given our 20th century track record. Nothing seems to be seriously obstructing a nuclear nightmare world from unfolding, leaving us in a much more precarious situation than we were in during the Cold War. At that time mutual assured destruction was the ultimate restraint on the button. Will that restriction continue to work in a world in which so many countries have their fingers on the bomb? In the coming years we will learn the answer to that question.

The next great calamity facing humanity is that of overpopulation. Ironically, this concern is probably far less intractable than the others. The bad news is at least twofold. One, for the next fifty years or so, the number of people on the planet will likely increase to upwards of nine billion no matter what efforts are made now to control our birthrates. There are just too many people now in the human pipeline, especially in lesser developed countries whose average age is significantly below that of the developed countries. If your country's average age is 45, your future population will be much smaller than if your country's average age is 19. Taken altogether, there are just too many young people in the pipeline now to stop what is going to take place, baring massive plagues or world wars. After 50 years or so, the planet's population base can be expected to start shrinking, largely in response to current efforts in China to reduce the average family size, and the dropping birthrates now in most Western countries below replacement levels. The country most ahead of this curve is Japan, with its population as of 2005, already beginning to shrink. Unfortunately, offsetting this positive news is the explosive population growth rates (average family sizes) in many third world countries, especially Moslem ones. The other bad news is that all these new humans will continue to put enormous stress on the planet's environment and the supply of scarce resources. The economic, ecological, environmental, social and political costs of the latter are so staggering as to be incalculable.

The third great threat to humanity's survival is climatic change. The scientific community has reached almost universal consensus that recent climate changes have man made origins, primarily our dependence on fossil fuels which are necessary to keep our modern industrial and post industrial economies running. Fortunately, through the efforts of environmentalists, in publishing their findings and speaking out publicly, this issue is now on the public's radar. Our political leaders know that some action must be taken or they will eventually risk losing their jobs at the ballot box. Doing nothing is no longer an option. According to Professor Peter Ward from the University of Washington biology department and earth sciences division, carbon dioxide today stands at 385 parts per million (ppm) and is project to climb by 2 to 3 ppm annually. If this trend continues, by the end of the next century atmospheric carbon dioxide would approach 900 ppm – just

below levels during the Paleocene thermal extinction 54 million years ago. (Peter Ward, 2006, p.71)

Figuring out what the correct course of action`, however, is dependent on an accurate assessment of how bad the situation really is at this point in time. For James Lovelock, one of the leading giants of the environmental movement, the real debate is whether we have passed a "tipping point" and are now on an irreversible path towards deadly and catastrophic change. (Lovelock, 2006, p. 51) In his opinion, rapidly rising sea levels and higher surface temperatures will render huge tracts of the earth's surface uninhabitable, unless rapid changes are made to slow or stop our pollution of the atmosphere and destruction of natural habitats. Another danger according to Lovelock is the harmful effects of unscheduled or unforeseeable methane gas releases from the ocean floors or from previously frozen muskeg in the northern hemisphere. He is not only concerned that humanity has passed a tipping point into irreversible breakdown but also that our currently proposed solutions might create even greater problems. One idea he has made to slow environmental destruction caused by global warming is to use huge space mounted sunshades to cool the planet. While valuable, however, it is only a stop gap measure comparable to a paramedic's work keeping a heart attack patient alive until they reach the full services of a hospital:

> By itself this fix will do no more than by us time to change our damaging way of life, because if we continue to burn fossil fuels and let the carbon dioxide rise in abundance, ocean life, essential to the life of Gaia, will be further damaged. But we may risk it because time is needed to install equipment for carbon sequestration and for nuclear fusion and whatever forms of economically sensible renewable energy become available. In the longer term we have to understand that however benign a technological solution may seem it has the potential to set humanity on a path to the ultimate form of slavery. The more we meddle with the Earth's composition and try and fix its climate, the more we take on the responsibility for keeping the Earth a fit place to life, until eventually our whole lives may be spent in drudgery doing the tasks that previously Gaia had freely done for over three billion years. This would be the worst of fates for us and reduce us to a truly miserable state, where we were forever wondering whether anyone, any nation, or any international body could be trusted to regulate the climate and the atmospheric composition. The ideas that humans are yet intelligent enough to serve as stewards of the Earth is among the most hubristic ever. (Lovelock, 2006, p 152)

On a personal level Lovelock's predictions are scary enough, but when considered from a social, political or economic level, there is even more that is frightening. At one point he envisions humanity on the environment level re-enacting the tragedy of Napoleon's retreat from Moscow in 1812, with too many mouths to feed and resources that diminish daily while we make up our minds what to do. Only an orderly and sustainable economic withdrawal to a world where we try to live in harmony with Gaia will save us. (Lovelock, 2006, p.150) The ripple effects of environmental breakdown, at the levels Lovelock foresees, combined with the earth's human population simultaneously peaking at its highest level ever, create the possibility of a "perfect storm" of destruction. Similar to the aftermath of a nuclear winter, the few impoverished survivors will end up living a Hobbesian existence, controlled by warlords on a hostile and disabled planet. (Lovelock, 2006, p. 151) Those still living may well end up envying the dead. Moving a whole planet's six billion people away from this form of collective suicide, towards a sustainable retreat from our energy intensive, fossil fuel powered civilization, without crashing, may be wishful thinking indeed. Lovelock may be quite right in arguing that this planet can only really sustain a half to one billion human souls on it, and that his Gaia principle, which he first enunciated in 1972, will trump any technological fix humans are able to devise. This remains to be seen.

Implications for Servant Leaders

Though there may be much to disagree with in Machiavelli's amoral thinking, humanity would be irresponsible in ignoring his advice concerning fortune, and preparing for the coming floods. The important question being addressed here is what kind of leaders will we require and ultimately get. Will we get servant leaders or warlords? The choice may be that stark and simple some day. In other words, the hope that somehow we will muddle through this coming period with something in between these extremes may well be naïve and forlorn. If history is any help to us, in desperate times people have rarely acted with the calmness, rationality, and inspiration that were needed. The collapse of democracy in ancient Athens at the close of the Peloponnesian war, and the breakdown of the Roman Republic in the first century B.C., serve as grim reminders of what may be awaiting the West if it fails to deal with these threats successfully.

Another disturbing parallel with the ancient Greeks and Romans is that in both cases, behind the façade, was an internal economic collapse created by massive, irresponsible, usury and greed driven debt that destroyed the ability of those societies to correct and rebuild themselves from within (Adams, Armstrong, de Mare, Mark, Robertson, Rowbottom). As one historian has put it, the rise and fall of civilizations are but episodes in the history of usury. (Mark, 1934, p. vi) On the other hand, much earlier in their histories, more farsighted men like Solon and Cleisthenes were able to preserve democracy with reforms that allowed the yeoman farmers and middle class peoples to get out from under the destructive debt slavery systems that threatened to end those civilizations. Today, with so much of the money flowing through our economic systems being debt created bank loans, a similar crisis faces the West again. A Himilayan mountain of unpaid paper has accumulated, and in many cases the interest on it can only be repaid now by the creation of new debt. Oddly enough, the vast majority of the general population has no inkling of this house of financial sand, based on fiat money, upon which their current livelihoods depend. Only a few "wolf criers" have spoken out about it. Next to hardly anyone has come forward with any visionary or equitable solutions to a problem that so many in the West are in denial about and has eerie parallels to other financial collapses in the past.

At this juncture, it might is useful to consider some of the thoughts on the future which Greenleaf left us. In a short essay titled, "The Collapse of Civilization," found in his private papers, he foretells in a fantasy story what historians, archaeologists and theologians a thousand years hence (3200 AD), are likely to say about the times we are now living through. They looked back and saw the collapse of civilization in 2200, and wondered how it could have been prevented, and what restorative forces they needed to put into motion in 3200, so that history would not repeat itself. They noted many signs of deterioration long before the ultimate collapse into disorder and chaos. And, like now, there were many signs of the imminence of that collapse that were ignored. They concluded that there was an ultimate cause, which served as a lesson from which they could profit: "What doomed the civilization that ended in 2200 was the long term absence of caring concern among the faithful that nurtures leaders in every generation, those whose sustained disposition to care forms the 'glue' that holds a civilization together, in

opposition to the destructive forces that were ever present then, and are still present in the year 3200." (Greenleaf, Seeker and Servant, 1996, p.114)

Greenleaf's future historians, archaeologists and theologians also noted a common causal factor, the decline in "religious leadership." It is worth emphasizing that Greenleaf's particular understanding and use of the term "religious" is not the same as it commonly understood today, especially by fundamentalists. To him the real issue was one of morality and he preferred the meaning of "religious" in its original sense. That is, he used that term with its Latin root in mind, re ligio, which meant to rebind. And in this short essay it meant for Greenleaf, "to renew the glue that holds a civilization together." Unfortunately, in Greenleaf's future 21st century, as in centuries past, the term had been appropriated by the faithful, whose primary concern was for persons and not so much for society and its institutions. (Greenleaf, Seeker and Servant, 1996, p. 115) Another sad and ominous aspect that Greenleaf foretold in his story was that the "point of irreversibility" had been approached sometime near the end of the 20th century. (Greenleaf, Seeker and Servant, 1996, p.116).

In another essay written in 1980, "Servant: Retrospect and Prospect," Greenleaf let slip some of his other predictions for the future. He also critically characterized America then as "a cold, low caring, highly competitive, violence prone society." (Greenleaf, 1998, p. 54) For the older generation then in control of America's institutions, he had this to say: "After ten years of circulation of these writings and considerable interaction about them with people who have their hands on the levers of power and influence, I am not persuaded that much movement toward our society becoming more caring is likely to be initiated by those who are now established as leaders." (Greenleaf, 1998, p.53) Thus, not surprisingly, as a teacher Greenleaf looked to the younger generations to start and lead the movement towards a more caring society: "But if enough of today's able youngsters catch the vision of servant-leadership and incorporate it into their lifestyles early, the day may come, when these people are in their prime years, that they will label, categorically, the current commonly accepted power striving of some successful people as *pathological* – because it makes for a sick society. Those who embrace the spirit of servant-leadership early in their lives are likely to take a similar view of competition – and come to see it as an aberration, not a normal human

trait. And when enough able people take that view, it will make a different world. But that will take some time." (Greenleaf, 1998, p. 49)

Greenleaf was also very specific of the kind of path a servant leader must follow. Heavily influenced by the Quakers he eschewed any form of confrontation. The approach he advocated for servant leaders was one of gradualism. Gradualism for him was more a disposition rather than a method or ideology. One basis for his commitment to gradualism was his belief in "reconstructability" of our many institutions. A gradualist is someone comfortable with a slow pace and accepts opportunities when they come, rather than batter down offending walls that are not ready to give. (Greenleaf, 1998, p. 68) He believed, perhaps naively, that effective change would occur if enough strong people demonstrated an "ethic" that prevents them from going for the "quick fix." (Greenleaf, 1998, p.70)

Some of the historical examples that Greenleaf used to support his line of thinking were Luther, Erasmus, Gandhi and Grundtwig. He thought of Luther and Gandhi as too confrontational and the approaches they used ineffective, since in the long term the vision of both men were never realized. Gandhi, in his view, ended up being used and manipulated by the politicians of his time, and died a tragic figure. Even the American political system, largely the creation of its founding fathers, was flawed in this area, according to Greenleaf. He thought that the British Parliamentary approach, where the key leader is responsible to his or her peers, would be superior. However, to a critically minded Englishman or Canadian, knowledgeable of the faults and limitations of parliamentary forms of representative democracy, this point of view would sound simplistic. Prime Ministers are actually far more powerful than Presidents, for every minister of the government, and every superior judge is appointed by him. Unless he presides over a minority government, he does not have to bargain with other members of the legislature to get what he wants passed into law since he sits in Parliament as the leader of the governing majority party. Any bill he really wants could be passed almost overnight, if he does not mind by-passing a few long respected rules of parliamentary procedure. To challenge or remove such a political figure is far from easy. Ultimately, only his political party can do that, not even the party's representatives in Parliament. Also, opinions as to what constitutes a non-confidence motion vary greatly in political

parties. It is possible for a few parliamentarians to cross the floor and vote against the government and their party, and force an election. Only a few, principled and brave individuals occasionally do this since it is almost always an act of career suicide for them. And, as a government minister, it is easy to get attached to the perks, power, recognition, and greater salary that go with pleasing the man or woman who appointed you. To oppose the prime minister means risking your job and all that goes with it.

One of the substantive issues here is that all leaders, servant ones or not, must confront the use and abuse of the power given to them. When Greenleaf addressed this issue, he clearly recognized the problem as the destructive or non-spirit nurturing activity within our institutions. He urged governance by a governing group of equals with a designated *primus inter pares,* first among equals, as the leader. As to how exactly they would be appointed or designated, he was little vague, and more importantly, and regrettably, our economic and political institutions have been very reluctant to adopt this practice. Fear of accountability, lack of trust and the desire to hold onto power by those enjoying it, have made this social transformation nearly impossible. Greenleaf, in 1987 and in one of his last writings, indicated he was acutely aware of this:

> It seems an unrealistic pipe dream even to think about organized human activity without giving power to some people to push other people around. Heavy-handed or benign, I suspect that both holding and using power as it is commonly accepted are destructive of human spirit in both the power holder and the subject. If we are to move toward a more servant-led society, it is imperative that we find a better way to assign power (if we have to assign it at all) than we have traditionally done and are doing. Otherwise, these institutions of ours will continue to grind down human spirit on a mammoth scale. We will not have many servants, and we will have a weaker society. (Greenleaf, Seeker and Servant, 1996, p.83)

What Greenleaf predicted appears to already come to pass at the time this research was conducted. So what then will be the future for servant leaders? Clearly one conclusion is that Greenleaf's conception of the true servant leader is still out of sync in our current age and in the vast majority of our institutions. Humanity, as he would say, is still wedded to "power-centered control with a hierarchy and somebody as king." We have lived so long with this social practice that despite its obvious destructiveness to the human spirit, we are incapable of devising a better, more reliable and more spirit nurturing way for our institutions to function. (Greenleaf, Seeker and Servant, 1996, p.

82) Echoing this, over fifty years ago, Peter Drucker listed forty-one major responsibilities of the chief executive and declared that "90% of the trouble we are having with the chief executive's job is rooted in our superstition of the one-man chief." (Bennis & Slater, 1998, p.76)

Aggravating this debilitating situation are the stark realities now facing humanity on the horizon. We may no longer have the luxury of waiting for gradualism to slowly solve our problems. Greenleaf liked to quote John Milton's advice, "they also serve who only stand and wait." (Greenleaf, 1977, p.35) The meaning of this phrase is likely spiritual. Nothing, it suggests, will ever be gained by pushing events to happen ahead of their natural timetable. In the East this is reflected in the ancient truism that when the student is ready, the teacher will appear. Perhaps the same is true for societies, or paraphrasing the Book of Ecclesiastes, for everything there is a time, a place and a season.

There is another interpretation of the past and present that has been suggested by a number of writers and thinkers such as Riane Eisler (1987), Philip Slater and Warren Bennis (1998). Taking a different view of archeological data, they theorize that at one time before recorded history started, there existed in the Mediterranean world highly civilized, matriarchal structured societies that were more peaceful and egalitarian, and less hierarchical than the authoritarian, and more belligerent ones that emerged later. These partnership societies were eventually transformed or replaced by dominator ones. Some theorists such as Julian Jaynes even suggest that accompanying these changes was a transformation of human consciousness. Humanity may now be entering another such transformation period. What is on the other side may be something brighter than what appears ahead of us now. In order to accomplish a break through, to a more democratic, egalitarian, non-hierarchical decentralized world, it may be necessary to experience a breakdown of the social structures or "systems" currently in place. This will not be an easy period for many people to live through. The most likely school of philosophy that will have relevance during it may be stoicism. Yet, it may, however, usher in a new age in which servant leaders are finally recognized as the only true leaders worth following.

There is still yet another possible scenario that could take place. We may as a species come to realize that lack of patience or pushing events to happen, are not our

greatest problems. Rather, it is submitted, people sitting on their rear ends and doing nothing is. In the coming days, unless one deliberately chooses to become a hermit or join a monastery, not taking a stand will no longer be an option. The aforementioned world threats can be compared to a fire breaking out on the first floor of a multistory building that we are all in and cannot escape. Waiting for rain or the wind to blow it out will surely lead to the destruction of the entire structure (our planet) and our untimely deaths. Our fire fighters amongst us will have to get into action and get out the hoses. Some of them will have to risk their lives to save lives. There is no valid reason why those brave individuals willing to fight the fire cannot also be called servant leaders. Another way of saying this is that it is time to redefine Greenleaf's concept of servant leader to include those brave and vigorous individuals who have the will power to step forward and take action, even if it means a confrontation. Standing idle and waiting are no longer options for us. If enough muscular servant leaders emerge then there is the possibility that a far different future may await us. It will be one in which everyone takes his and her democratic responsibilities as seriously as the citizens of ancient Athens did their's at their city's zenith. This will mean however that people will have to give up the primal instinct to seek the line of least resistance, and the easy way out by finding a "King" who fights their battles, makes the tough decisions for them, and takes the responsibility when things do not turn out so well. It might again then be possible to believe that humanity's greatest days are still ahead of us. If they are, then the human race must somehow rise to a higher level of moral conduct, and place in leadership its most virtuous men and women. Here again the ancient Greek philosophers who equated happiness with virtue and the pursuit of excellence, have profound and valuable insights that still speak to all of us.   Human qualities like loyalty, honesty, true friendship, moderation, compassion, and trust must once again be more highly valued than economic or material success. We need to ask ourselves, can we have a market economy without a market society? Perhaps a former chaplain of Yale University, William Sloane Coffin, put it best in terms of what this research paper has similarly concluded:

> All our early American leaders had read Montesquieu, who differentiated despotism from monarchy from democracy. In each of these forms of society he found a governing principle: for despotism it was fear, for monarchy it was honor, and for democracy it was virtue.   Because

freedom was almost synonymous with virtue, we turned out a generation of politicians named Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, Hamilton.

Today with a population eighty times the three million who were Americans in 1776, we don't produce many leaders like that anymore, and the reason is clear; as Plato said, "What is honored in a country will be cultivated there." We have wonderful athletes and generally inferior politicians, and we deserve them both. Because we have so cruelly separated freedom from virtue, because we define freedom in a morally inferior way, we have entered what Herman Melville called the "Dark Ages of Democracy," a time when, as he predicted, the New Jerusalem would turn into Babylon, and Americans would experience what he called "the arrest of hope's advance." (Coffin, 2004, p 67)

To conclude, the need for servant leaders has never been greater than this moment in history. They are the only ones who can stir the innumerable, passive, selfish, short term thinking people out of their slumber, without using a whip. They are the only ones moreover who can save democracy. If they don't appear, and as recorded history has shown, there will always be more than enough morally malignant leaders, who will do whatever they can get away with, to satisfy their lust for power over others. This will likely be the greatest challenge facing those servant leaders amongst us in the coming years. The ultimate question is whether we will find enough of them who have the, courage, strength and fortitude to take on the authoritarian, dominator, power driven types, and those who truly believe that the end justifies the means. The outcome of this largely hidden but titanic struggle may well determine not just whether democracy survives, but humanity itself.

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