

The Leadership Archetype: A Jungian Analysis of Similarities between Modern Leadership Theory and the Abraham Myth in the Judaic–Christian Tradition

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ABSTRACT. Archetypal psychology suggests the possibility of a leadership archetype representing the unconscious preferences of human beings as a species about the appropriate relationships between leaders and followers. Mythological analysis compared God's leadership in the Abraham myth with modern visionary, ethical and situational leadership to find similarities reflecting continuities in human thinking about leadership over as long as 3600 years. God's leadership behavior is very modern except that God is generally more relationship oriented. The leadership archetype that emerges is of a leader that develops his/her follower by reliably maintaining a vision, behaving according to firm ethical values even when it weakens the leader's authority, accepting suffering when the follower is unreliable, and always forgiving even when the follower behaves with hubris in an attempt to overthrow the leader. If God's leadership principles were mandatory in management, many dysfunctional leaders would be disqualified and many of the negative consequences of poor leadership might be averted.

KEY WORDS: archetypal psychology, archetype, Jung, leadership, visionary ethical situational forgiveness, God, Abraham, myth, narrative analysis, mythological analysis

Introduction

Over the past 75 years, the leadership literature has become a morass of competing theories. Each one has argued its own unique perspective about what makes leaders successful. As newer theories have

developed, older perspectives have continued unabated. There are trait, behavioral, situational, and attribution theories. There are visionary, ethical, charismatic, and transactional versus transformational leaderships. There are more – too many even to name. While a few attempts have been made to combine approaches, visionary with ethical for example, most have been offered as complete explanations that superseded the others. The purpose of this paper was to use archetypal psychology (Hopcke, 1999) to suggest a “ideal form” (Bostock, 1999) of leadership by identifying a set of unifying principles underlying many of the competing descriptions of leadership in the literature. Jung's archetypal psychology (Jung, 1977b) is for collective behavior what personality psychology is for individual behavior. It identifies inherited unconscious patterns of behavior called archetypes that are characteristic of humans as a species and that have developed as a result of human evolution (Campbell, 1991; Stevens, 1993). The concept of archetype seems to have originated with Nietzsche (1986) who spoke of humans reasoning in their dreams by accessing earlier states of human culture and passing through the whole thought of earlier humanity. Jung (1977b) popularized the concept arguing on the basis of dream analysis that the individual human psyche contained a collective unconscious containing behavioral predispositions, similar to the instincts of nonhuman animals, activated on a situational basis. In recent years, archetypal psychology has received empirical support from ethological and sociobiological research showing that humans inherit many of the mental and behavioral patterns that have been considered learned (Satinover, 1995; Stevens, 2003;

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Tresan, 1995). Archetypes are not inherited ideas but are inherited modes of situational functioning (Stevens, 1993). They have been described as “biological imperatives” and “innate releasing mechanisms” (Tinbergen, 1951), “deeply homologous mental structures” (Gardner, 1988), “evolved psychological mechanisms” (Buss, 1999), as well as behavioral dispositions by which humans typically respond to primal life occurrences Jung (1977a,b) characterized the function of archetypes on human behavior as similar to the axial system of crystal that determines the stereometric structure of all the crystals of a particular kind but not the look of each individual crystal.

An archetypal pattern of behavior is assumed to exist when a social phenomenon is found to be characteristic of all human communities regardless of culture, race, or historical epoch (Stevens, 2003). Anthropologists who have independently catalogued common social traits (Brown, 1991; Fox, 1975; Murdock, 1964) have found that no human culture has ever lacked the patterns of behavior related to the organization of cooperative labor on the basis of a hierarchical social structure that constitutes leadership and followership behavior. A leadership archetype would represent an unconscious pattern of behavior characteristic of humans that would predispose the expectations and actions of leaders and followers. Identifying these unconscious expectations would be important. Jung (1977b) warned that when archetypal patterns are violated there are profoundly negative psychological consequences for both leaders and followers that may produce dysfunctional behavior with “hideous catastrophes” for leadership success.

The traditional approach in archetypal psychology has been to identify the characteristics of an archetype by mythological analysis (Campbell, 1973; Neumann, 1974). An archetypal pattern of behavior is deemed to be a universal ideal form if it is manifested in myths representing many cultures in many historical periods. This paper had a much more limited goal which was to compare the recommendations of modern leadership theory – mainly visionary, ethical and situational leadership – with the Abraham myth which is one of the earliest descriptions of leadership and followership interaction in the Judaic-Christian tradition that became the early foundation for much of Western civilization. The underlying assumption of this paper was

that if God led Abraham according to principles of modern leadership theory that this represented continuity between the myth and the modern theory that suggested the leadership archetype. Where God’s leadership behavior deviated from modern recommendations, this might represent where modern leadership theory deviated from the unconscious archetypal expectations that humans have as a species about leadership. Such deviations could have negative consequences if they alienated leaders and/or followers from successfully interacting with each other.

Literature review

Modern leadership theory

Many leadership theories have been developed over the past 75 years (Robbins and Langton, 1999). In the 1930s and 1940s, *trait theories* were developed by psychologists looking for personality, social, physical or intellectual traits that were universally associated with leadership success. Jungian psychologists have continued to develop trait theories based on personality temperament (Keirsey, 1998; Kummerow et al., 1997) that have been applied to explain ongoing cross-cultural leadership conflicts (Abramson, 2006). Freudian psychologists have also developed theories based on the effect of the interaction of personality traits, temperament and personal experience on leadership (Kets de Vries, 2001; Zaleznik, 1977).

Between the 1940s and 1960s, *behavioral theories* emerged. Leaders were found to generally apply either a task orientation (TO) or relationship orientation (RO), or both to achieve results from subordinates. TO involved the initiation of a structure of roles, tasks, goals and supervision intended to facilitate production. RO involved demonstrating consideration for subordinates by building trust, mutual respect, showing regard for feelings, and developing personal relationships. Blake and Mouton (1977) combined the TO and RO dimensions into five leadership styles. They argued that the high TO and high RO style was the superior leadership style that achieved the best results.

Beginning in the 1960s, *situational leadership* developed with the observation that any behavioral

leadership style could be either effective or ineffective depending upon the situation in which it was applied. Fiedler (1967) argued in his *leadership contingency* model that leaders should select their leadership styles based on whether a situation was favorable to the leader. A situation was considered favorable depending on: (1) the personal relationship with the followers; (2) the degree of structure in the task; and (3) the power and authority inherent in the leader's position. Favorableness was defined as the ability of the leader to exert influence to achieve results. Most favorable was when the leader was liked, was directing a well-defined task, and had a powerful position. Leaders were encouraged to consider how to make their situations more favorable by building relationships, structuring tasks and increasing perceived authority. House (1971) developed *path-goal theory* by recommending that leaders flexibly apply the leadership style most effective in a situation. Stinson and Johnson (1975) improved path-goal theory by proposing that high TO was most effective when tasks were unstructured, and followers had weak motivation, low independence, and low task relevant education and/or experience. Low TO was most effective when tasks were unstructured, but followers had strong motivation, high independence and high task relevant education and/or experience. Reddin (1970) and Hersey and Blanchard (1972, 1993) developed similar *situational theories*. Both defined the key responsibility of the leader as effectiveness in achieving output requirements. Both developed four leadership styles. *Dedicated* leaders (high TO & low RO) dominated others by giving many verbal instructions, evaluating performance, and assigning rewards and punishments. *Related* leaders (low TO & high RO) built relationships by accepting followers as they were, having implicit trust and focusing on goal attainment. *Integrated* leaders (high TO & RO) set goals and organized work while providing high levels of socioemotional support. *Separated* leaders (low TO & RO) relied on rules and procedures to guide how work should be conducted and offered little personal or organizational support. Leaders applied these leadership styles situationally to achieve the best output results. Hersey and Blanchard proposed follower maturity as the criterion for choosing the most effective leadership style. This combined their situational theory with both Stinson and

Johnson (1975) and Fiedler (1967). Followers with low maturity (weak motivation, low independence, low task relevant education and/or experience), low wage employees on an assembly line for example, should be managed with a dedicated style. Followers with medium maturity could be managed with either an integrated or related style. Followers with high maturity, professional workers such as professors or lawyers or accountants, could be managed with a separated or related style because they were professionally trained to set effective performance standards for themselves. Situational leadership is still popular in the literature (Mayo and Nobria, 2005; Quin, 2005).

Visionary leadership addressed the concern with situational leadership that the leader was made a servant of the situation rather than the person who defined what the situation should be to achieve the desired outcome. Westley (1989) argued that the primary responsibility of the leader was to formulate the organization's vision and the conditions by which that vision would be achieved. The vision represented a social reality that was the core of effective leadership, and leadership effectiveness could be judged by the leader's success in getting followers to accept the social reality as the leader defined it (Worden, 2005). Worden (2003) suggested that followers more readily accepted the reality defined by the vision when the vision was tied to the strategic plans and goals that followers were specifically responsible for.

Ethical leadership, often combined with visionary leadership, addressed a second concern with situational leadership. If leadership effectiveness depended solely on performance results, then the ends justified the means. Any leadership style, no matter how negative for followers, was deemed to be effective if the leader achieved the output requirements. Grojean et al. (2004) argued that the first task of a leader was to establish, and model through his/her own behavior, a vision of the ethical tone of their organization that specified which actions would be encouraged and rewarded in followers. It was essential for the leader to act as a role model to intentionally direct the ethical tone of the organization because followers would interpret the actions of their leaders as indicators of appropriate behavior. This was especially important in the early stages of a new organization when the personal values of the

founder became embedded in the organization's social fabric as the leader established criteria for rewards, resource allocation, and status. Schein (1992) also observed that especially founders had a profound impact on what constituted acceptable strategies, structures, climates and cultures. Ethically appropriate outcomes needed to be rewarded to ensure they were repeated. Buckingham and Coffman (1999) added that great leaders had to recognize that most followers did not have unlimited potential and most tended not to change much over time. While leaders had to judge followers' performance outcomes, good leaders forgave followers with limited potential and inability to change, perhaps repeatedly, while continuing to insist and motivate those followers to achieve the desired results.

Archetypal theory

Kets de Vries (2001) was very close to an archetypal position when he observed that both humans and animals seemed to have "an actual need for leadership" and cited ethological studies of complex leadership structures existing in great ape societies. He argued that unconscious and invisible psychodynamic processes and structures, analogous to hardwired instinctual behavioral patterns, influenced the individual behavior of leaders and followers. He suggested probing beneath the surface of consciousness to discern the unconscious fears, hopes and motivations that defined the leadership-follower relationship. Kets de Vries also argued that people did not have the complete control they thought they had over their own perceptual processes. Unconscious cognitive distortions affected what people saw and how they interpreted situations. Yet if people did not understand a particular behavior pattern they engaged in, it was difficult to understand its origins because much human behavior was unconsciously motivated. "Many of our wishes and fantasies and fears are unconscious. Even lurking beneath the surface, they can motivate us. The catalyst of much of our behavior lies beneath consciousness," he said (p. 13).

The difference between Kets de Vries' observations, and Jung's theory of archetypes was in Jung's (1977a) analysis of the human psyche. While Freudians like Kets de Vries believed that

human consciousness floats above a deeper unconscious level that contains repressed contents from individual persons' lives, Jung divided the unconscious into two. The personal unconscious represented the repressed contents of a personal life as Freudians believed. The collective unconscious was a deeper level whose contents were conceived as a combination of universally prevalent patterns and forces that Jung called archetypes (Stein, 1998). These archetypes were inborn as part of human genetic make-up and functioned as a universal tendency to form certain kinds of ideas or images, and to behave in certain ways (Sharp, 1998). At the archetypal level, there was no individuality. All humans were born with the same archetypes – in every culture and every historical epoch – and the archetypes generated behavioral patterns characteristic of humans as a species (Jung, 1977b).

Wertime (2002) applied archetypal theory to marketing and the building of successful brands. He considered archetypes as potent forces in shaping peoples' actions even though they could have no direct experience of them. He described archetypes as universal human hardwired behavioral DNA – a human operating system – that motivated ambitions, desires and wants, and that affected how people interpreted and evaluated situational events. Since archetypes operated below rational consciousness, people were influenced even though they could not pinpoint why they had certain desires and expectations.

Most of Jung's evidence for the existence of archetypes originated with dream analysis and his work with mentally disturbed patients. He found many instances where the dreams of his patients corresponded with mythological stories and motifs from a variety of independent cultural and historical traditions. The demonstration of universal behavioral themes across independent cultural and historical mythological contexts, and the argument that this represented archetypal patterns in a human collective consciousness rather than diffusion has been argued at length by Neumann (1974) in the case of the Mother archetype, and Campbell (1991, 1973) in the case of the Hero archetype. Sociobiologists have also offered considerable support. Tinbergen (1951) argued that every species including humans possessed a repertoire of behaviors that

was built into the central nervous system through evolution and that was primed to become active when an appropriate stimulus was encountered in an individual animal's environment. Waddington (1957) affirmed the relevance of archetypes to biology because there seemed to be only a certain number of basic patterns of behavior that any species was capable of initiating. Lumsden and Wilson (1981) argued as an extension of Waddington's work that all behavior, human and nonhuman, depended upon epigenetic rules similar to archetypes that controlled the psychosocial development of individuals. Stevens (2003) argued that archetypes were meaning-creating imperatives that affected human expectations about appropriate ranges of social behavior.

Jung proposed four archetypes (1977b) that could be construed to have a specific relationship to leadership–followership interaction. If the leader's task is to define a vision, an ethical situation and a performance output expectation, then the leader must develop the follower to maximize his/her abilities to achieve the standards set by the leader. In Jungian terms, the leader must transform the follower from the immature and dependent *Child* archetype who may have potential, to the mature and capable *Hero* archetype who does have actual abilities desired by the leader. The Child image symbolizes future hope and is represented by the image of a seedling full of the potentiality of life (Hopcke, 1999). The Child image is similar to Hersey and Blanchard's (1993) image of the immature subordinate who may have poor motivation, be dependent and have low task-relevant education and/or experience but who could be developed into an effective follower by a successful leader. The Hero image symbolizes the Child who descends into the underworld, struggles with difficult forces, survives temporary setbacks against long odds (and even death), and eventually performs heroic acts through cleverness, help from others, and perseverance (Campbell, 1973; Hopcke, 1999). The Hero image is similar to Hersey and Blanchard's (1993) mature subordinate who is self-motivated, independent and highly educated and/or experienced, and who can achieve at a high level even with minimal input from the leader.

In mythology, the successful Hero has an experienced guide or teacher who points the way and

protects the Child until s/he is able to take care of him/herself (Campbell, 1973). In Greco-Roman mythology this guide is Hermes-Mercury. In Egyptian mythology it is Thoth, and in Christian mythology it is the Holy Spirit. In leadership theory, it is the leader. As in leadership theory, the leader has two sets or patterns of archetypal behavior. S/he may use the *Mother* archetype to build relationship with the follower. S/he may use the *Father* archetype to set tasks, judge results and reward or punish outcomes. The Good Mother image represents a pattern of behavior that loves, supports unconditionally, trusts, builds relationship, and has intuitive rapport (Neumann, 1974; Stevens, 2003). The Mother image is similar to the RO of situational leadership that accepts subordinates as they are and that builds personal work relationships through listening, trusting and encouraging. The Father image is that of the Elder, the King and the Father in Heaven who gives laws, expects subordinates to do their duty, and judges (Stevens, 2003). The Father ratifies and rewards those who succeed. The Father condemns and punishes those who fail but may also forgive and redeem those who ask for forgiveness and make amends. In mythology, the Father is often experienced by the Child primarily as an enemy that intrudes with standards into the unconditional relationship between the Mother and the Child. The Father image is similar to the TO of situational leadership that demands task performance and that plans, organizes, directs and controls, judging outcomes, and rewarding or punishing effort and output.

Classical Greco-Roman myths warn that the hero may attempt to overthrow the Gods in an act of hubris. With overbearing pride and excessive arrogance, the hero assumes that s/he has been transformed into a god and presumes to throw down his/her leader in an act of violence even as Zeus threw down his father Cronos, and Prometheus rebelled against Zeus to give fire to humankind. In the resulting confrontation, either the leader is defeated and replaced by the hero, or he survives and is able to control the hero.

The mythological method

The fact that archetypes are buried in the deepest level of the unconscious and not directly accessible

to human consciousness has complicated their study. Jung (1977b), Campbell (1991, 1973) and Neumann (1974) have demonstrated that archetypes may be inferred through the interpretation of myths. A myth is a story that satisfies certain mythic criteria (Segal, 2004). A myth must be a story about something very significant. In the Abraham myth, analyzed in this paper, the story is about the creation of God's people who are understood to be the foundation of the Judaic and Christian worlds. The main characters in a myth must be gods or near Gods. In the Abraham myth, God is the leader and Abraham is his first follower chosen by God to be the father of many nations. The main characters in a myth must have clear personalities and not be impersonal forces. In the Abraham myth, God and Abraham are both portrayed as individuals who have many interactions between Genesis 11: 26 and the Genesis 25: 11 (Suggs et al., 1992). In a myth, these personalities must either be the agents or the objects of action. In the Abraham myth, God is the agent who develops Abraham from a relatively indifferent and unmotivated follower with dubious ethics, to a hero (Campbell, 1973) and leader by the end of the story. Abraham also acts upon God causing him many difficulties and even genuine suffering. The Abraham story fulfills Segal's (2004) criteria for being a myth.

In the 20th century, the accepted methodological view has become that scientific, historical and mythological analyses are separate methods independent of each other (Segal, 2004). Mythological analysis is understood to be a form of narrative discourse analysis (Hall, 1999) in which the myth is understood to have "a certain claim of truth," but not in the sense of history or science because the reader understands that the myth as a story is at the same time both true and unreal. It is understood to be true in the sense that it is a manifestation of processes of interpretation and patterns of behavior in the collective unconscious (Jung, 1977b). It is unreal because mythic characters in stories must take action to reveal their nature and attitudes (Wertime, 2002) – the hero becomes a hero through heroic deeds – and there is no evidence that the mythic character ever actually lived nor was CNN on hand to report his/her deeds. The myth exists outside history, and is self-referential rather than consequential for some larger story

(Hall, 1999). An historical or scientific approach to narrative discourse does not displace mythological analysis. According to Derrida (1978), the search for a universal epistemological foundation for discourse analysis – an historical or scientific foundation for example – should be renounced in favor of allowing a discourse to "have the form of which it speaks." Discourse on myth should itself be "mythomorphic."

Narrative and mythological analysis has recently become a relatively more common method for analyzing the characteristics of leadership. Stein (2005) used Shakespeare's Othello to explore the effects of emotion on leader performance. Winstanley (2004) used Ovid's story of Phaethon to interpret questions of power and ambition. Corrigan (1999) also used Shakespeare to address leadership and commitment. Sievers (1996) used the story of Zeus and Athena to explore questions of leadership succession. Kets de Vries (1995) used Shakespeare's King Lear to discuss how leaders could use humor to give negative feedback to followers. Tangentially related to leadership, Wertime (2002) defined popular culture as mythological and explored marketing archetypes that could build brand leadership.

Propositions

A comprehensive analysis of leadership as an archetype would require the comparative analysis of many myths from many culturally and historically independent traditions and the production of documentation well beyond the scope of a single article. The aim of this paper was much more modest. It was assumed that if God generally led Abraham according to the recommendations of modern leadership theory, then the continuities between the ancient myth and the modern theories represented a Leadership archetype first documented in Judaic-Christian traditions as long as 3600 years ago. While Abraham is considered a mythic figure, some historians have estimated that "he" may have lived around 1600 BC and the first written versions were produced approximately 3000 years ago. Since religion had declined as a social force throughout the 20th century in the Western world, it also seemed reasonable to assume that most modern leadership theory had been produced independently of bible

stories. Assuming also the validity of archetypal theory and the expression of archetypes in myths, one proposition that illuminated this study was that:

P1: Parallels between the behavior of God as leader in the Abraham myth, and the recommendations of modern leadership theory, demonstrate a continuity that represents an archetypal pattern of leadership behavior.

Given the complexity of the leadership literature, the comparisons between the archetypal God-as-leader and leadership theory were limited to visionary, ethical and situational leadership.

A second proposition was derived from Jung's warnings (1977b) about the psychological consequences to individual leaders and followers when archetypal patterns of interpretation or behavior were interrupted or discarded. Deviation from the laws and roots of being as represented by archetypes were "transgressions" against human behavioral instincts and would be punished with negative outcomes. In Jung's words (1977b, pp. 163–164), "Our progressiveness, though it may result in a great many delightful wish fulfillments, piles up an equally gigantic Promethean debt which has to be paid off from time to time in the form of hideous catastrophes." Kets de Vries (1989) has described the many dysfunctional leadership styles that have been produced in modern organizations – aggressive, paranoid, histrionic, detached, controlling, passive-aggressive, dependent, masochistic – all of which become isolated from reality and project their inadequacies onto their followers driving them dysfunctionally "mad." Kets de Vries reported that narcissistic leaders were very common, and that aggressive, paranoid and controlling leaders were fairly common. None of these leadership patterns augured well for the performance outcomes achieved by their organizations. It was provisionally assumed that these negative patterns of leadership might emerge when the underlying and unconscious human expectations about the nature of leadership were violated. God might, in the Abraham myth, offer some insight into the efficacy of modern leadership theory in the context of archetypal expectations about leadership that humans have as a

species. In this context, a second proposition illuminated this study.

P2: Variance between the archetypal pattern of leadership and leadership theory could suggest ways in which the latter could be made more effective by being brought into line with the ideal form of leadership existing within the human collective unconscious.

The Abraham myth

The Abraham myth is presented in both the Hebrew Bible and the Old Testament of the Christian Bible (Suggs et al., 1992). In the Bible, the story follows a chronological order from God's first contact with Abraham when he is a young man to Abraham's death as an old man. The story is presented sequentially. References to Genesis (Gen.) are from Suggs et al. (1992).

In Genesis 11: 26–31, Abram (later Abraham) is introduced. Terah is Abram's father. Lot is the son of one of Abram's brothers, Haran. Abram's wife is Sarai (later Sarah) who is barren. Terah took Abram, Sarai and Lot from Ur intending to travel to Canaan but they settled at Harran.

In Genesis 12: 1–6, God speaks to Abram telling him to leave Harran and his family to go to a country God will show him. God promises to make Abram into a great nation, to bless him and make his name so great that it will be used in blessings. God promises to be Abram's friend and ally, blessing those who bless Abram and cursing those who curse Abram. Abram obeys, taking Sarai, Lot and all his possessions and sets out for Canaan. God seems to be using visionary leadership. The promise to bless Abram, make his name great and to make him into a great nation is the beginning of the vision that Abram will be the father of the Judaic, Christian and Islamic peoples. God also seems to be using an integrated leadership style. The order to leave everything behind and go is TO. The promise to be Abram's friend and ally and bless Abram's friends and curse Abram's enemies is RO. God promises friendship and a high level of personal support.

In Genesis 12: 7–9, Abram has arrived at Shechem in Canaan. God comes in a dream and promises that Canaan will be given to Abram's descendents – the

ones who will become a great nation. Abram builds an altar to God at Shechem and another at Bethel. At the second altar he invokes God by name, and then travels toward the Negev. God must be pleased. There are cooperation and mutual benefits on both sides. Abram has a protector who has promised much. God gets an obedient and loyal follower, altars and worship.

In Genesis 12: 10–20, Abram demonstrates a questionable character. Abram and Sarai take refuge in Egypt because of a famine. Abram gets Sarai to lie to Pharaoh – to tell him that Sarai is Abram’s sister – because Abram is afraid that Pharaoh will have him killed so Pharaoh may marry the beautiful Sarai. Pharaoh believes that Sarai is single and takes her into his household. He compensates Abram with wealth. When God hears what has happened, he punishes Pharaoh with plagues. Pharaoh is angry with Abram for lying. He expels Abram and Sarai from Egypt with their acquired wealth. God seems to be using a related leadership style. He accepts Abram as he is and builds his relationship with Abram by honoring his promise to curse Abram’s enemies without question and even though Abram has caused the situation with a lie. Abram lied because he was afraid that Pharaoh would do him harm showing that he did not believe God’s promise to protect him. There is no indication that God rebuked Abram for his lie or his lack of confidence in God’s protection. God must, however, be wondering about Abram’s loyalty and ethical character since he disbelieved God and lied.

In Genesis 13: 1–18, Abram and Lot divide the land. Abram gets Canaan, already promised by God to his descendants. God speaks to Abram promising that Abram’s descendants will be as numerous as the specks of dust that form the ground. Abram builds another altar at Hebron in gratitude to God. God orders Abram to walk through the land his descendants will receive. God returns to the visionary and integrated leadership style of Genesis 12: 1–6. The vision of Abram founding a great nation is repeated. God shows trust (RO) in Abram by not rebuking Abram’s own lie and lack of trust. God shows TO by ordering Abram to walk through the land, and visionary leadership by repeating the vision of Abram founding a nation. God must believe that the problem in Egypt was an exception and that it is

better left unmentioned. Abram is apparently forgiven even though he has not repented.

In Genesis 14: 21–24, there is a war and Lot is taken hostage. Abram fights a battle freeing Lot and capturing much booty. He meets King Melchizedek of Salem who is a priest of God and who blesses Abram. He meets King Bera of Sodom who offers that Abram may keep the captured booty. Abram declines, saying that he has made an oath to God not to accept any reward. Abram says, “I have sworn to the Lord God, most high, maker of heaven and earth.” Abram says, “I lift my hand and swear by the Lord God Most High.” When Abram says that God supported him in the war and when God’s priest blesses Abram the implication is that God is using a related leadership style building his relationship with Abram by keeping his promise to curse Abram’s enemies and publicly acknowledging the relationship through the blessing. God must be pleased that Abram publicly acknowledges that God is his leader by swearing in God’s name and honoring his own promise to God despite temptation. God must feel justified in treating the problem in Egypt as a temporary aberration.

In Genesis 15: 1–5, God comes to Abram to say that he is Abram’s shield. God is building relationship by affirming his promise of protection. Abram complains that God’s rewards are meaningless because Sarai is barren and Abram is childless. He will have to adopt to fulfill God’s command to be fruitful and father a great nation. God promises that he will ensure that Abram’s heir will be a child of Abram’s own body, and that Abram’s direct descendants will be as many as the stars. This is the second time that Abram shows that he does not trust God’s promises. It is the first negotiation. God must be surprised and hurt that his loyal follower is not as loyal as he seemed especially since God saved Abram in Egypt and supported him in the war. God manages to stay positive but switches leadership styles in this crisis from related (“I am your shield”) to visionary and integrated. God will ensure that Abram will accomplish the command to be fruitful and will have direct descendants who will be numerous and a nation. In Genesis 15: 6, the rift is healed. Abram believes God and is faithful. God counts the faithfulness as righteousness. A human leader might start to watch Abram a bit more closely but God forgives Abram again.

In Genesis 15: 7–21, Abram questions God's reliability for the third time asking how he can be sure that he, Abram, will occupy the land. God's response is to direct Abram to conduct a ceremony that causes him to have a dream that shows the future. Abram will live in peace to a ripe old age. Abram's descendants will live in another land as slaves for 400 years. Eventually, God will punish the enslavers and Abram's descendants will return to occupy Canaan with great wealth from the enslaver nation. Canaan will belong to the Amorite nation until that time. God trusts Abram and allows Abram to know that the land is for distant descendants and not for Abram. If it is true that a leader's situation depends on his/her personal relationship with his/her follower, the degree of structure in the task, and the leader's authority (Fiedler, 1967), God has weakened his position by trusting. It is unclear that Abram likes God since he repeatedly questions God's promises. Abram's task is highly unstructured because the task will not be completed until 400 years after Abram's death. God's authority has been based on his promises but Abram has learned that he will not personally possess the land and his descendants will be slaves. God must realize that the vision will make it more difficult to lead Abram, but God chooses to be completely honest and give full information. This looks like ethical leadership.

God is the founder of this organization and he is trying to establish an ethical tone of honesty, acting as a role model for an Abram who has not been so honest. God must see that his position has weakened for he makes a covenant or contract with Abram that Abram's descendants will receive the land. Most covenants have conditions on both sides but in this covenant God asks for nothing from Abram. God also adds extra land. Originally, God had promised Amorite Canaan but he now adds the land of nine more peoples, an area that stretches from the Nile to the Euphrates Rivers.

In Genesis 16: 1–16, God attempts to fulfill his promise of an heir. Sarai arranges for Abram to have sex with her slave girl Hagar who produces a son named Ishmael. Sarai complains to Abram about Hagar's attitude and Abram gives Sarai full authority over Hagar. Sarai mistreats her and Hagar runs away. God's angel finds Hagar and tells her to return and submit. The angel informs Hagar that her son will father many descendants. God uses a related lead-

ership style fulfilling his promise of an heir to Abram (high RO) and asking for nothing in return (low TO). Abram appears to reject the heir because Sarai is not the mother, placing his loyalty to Sarai ahead of his loyalty to God who must be wondering what more he can do.

In Genesis 17: 1–27, God responds. He switches to an integrated leadership style by revising the covenant to attach conditions (TO). Abram is to live always in God's presence, to be blameless, to change his name to Abraham, and to circumcise himself and all males in his household, as signs of obedience. God also punishes Abram by reducing the amount of land promised to the descendants back to the original area of Canaan. The covenant is applied to Sarai since she is required to change her name to Sarah. In return, God elaborates his vision and recommitment to the relationship (RO). He will make Abraham fruitful. Kings will come from his line. God will maintain his covenant with Abraham and his descendants for all time. God also reveals that Ishmael will found a nation and have many descendants. Sarah will have a son to be named Isaac and become the mother of nations. God's conditions to live always in his presence and to be blameless address some of the recurring difficulties he has had with Abram's unethical and distrustful behavior. Abram's response is to immediately change his name and have all the males including himself circumcised. At the same time, he violates the condition of living in God's presence by laughing behind God's back at the promise of a son saying to himself that it is a joke that a man as old as he could father a child. Does God know that Abraham is ridiculing his promises again?

In Genesis 18: 1–15, God appears before Abraham as three men. They tell Abraham that Sarah will have a son within the year. Sarah hears them and laughs because she thinks it is absurd that such an old woman and such an old husband could have a newborn. God says to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh?" Sarah is afraid and denies that she laughed but God says, "Yes, you did laugh." God has switched back to a related leadership style accepting Abraham and Sarah as they are and building relationship by working on his promises even though both of them are ridiculing him behind his back. Perhaps God does not know. Or perhaps part of the leadership role being taught in the myth is that the

leader has to remain positive and faithful to his followers even when they cause him suffering by laughing at him and not honoring their commitments. God seems to forgive them. At least he lets it go.

In Genesis 18: 16–35, God asks himself whether he should reveal to Abraham that he is about to destroy Sodom (where Lot lives) for its wickedness. God is an ethical leader and chooses to role model honesty. God reveals his plan “for I have chosen him.” Abraham shows his lack of trust questioning whether God is going to act justly. He bargains a second time with God asking whether God would destroy Sodom if there are 50 innocent people. God says “no.” Abraham asks if God will destroy the city if there are only 45 innocents, or 40, or 30, or 20 or even 10. Each time, God says “no.” In the end, only Lot is worthy and God saves him. God also saves Lot’s two daughters, Abraham’s nieces, who are later revealed to be wicked. God has apparently saved them as a surprise favor for Abraham. There is no suggestion in the text that God receives thanks. This story suggests that not only does Abraham not trust God – he does not seem to like God either. Why does God keep accepting Abraham the way he is, and focusing on helping Abraham? Perhaps the myth is teaching that followers do not trust or like leaders, and behave unreliably. Leaders are required, however, to accept that they are not trusted or liked, and are still expected to forgive followers’ transgressions while continuing to behave reliably themselves. It is interesting that God has not gotten angry yet. A human leader surely would have by now.

In Genesis 20: 1–18, Abraham and Sarah journey to the land of Abimelech who is the Amorite king of Canaan. Abraham is up to his old tricks and tells Abimelech that Sarah is his sister, not his wife. The King is attracted to Sarah and has her brought into his household as did Pharaoh some years before. Biblical scholars (Brueggemann, 1982) regard this story as a doublet – the same story as Pharaoh told by a different author and amalgamated into Genesis. This seems unlikely because God’s reaction is very different. God has switched to an integrated leadership style. On the one hand, God supports his relationship with Abraham (RO) by cursing Abimelech’s women with infertility. On the other hand, it seems God is monitoring Abraham’s behavior (TO) and comes to warn Abimelech in a dream that

he is about to commit a sin with a married woman. Abimelech protests to God that he has acted in good faith. Both Abraham and Sarah have told him that they are brother and sister. God says, “Yes, I know that you acted in good faith” implying that he knows that it is Abraham and Sarah who have acted in bad faith. Abimelech returns Sarah. God punishes Abraham by making him intercede on Abimelech’s behalf to remove the infertility curse. God has changed between Pharaoh and Abimelech. He no longer trusts Abraham as much even though he continues to honor his promise to curse Abraham’s enemies. And how does God feel? Does God feel like a fool for forgiving when Abraham repeats the same negative behaviors? It is hard for God to be an ethical leader while supporting his relationship with a dishonest follower against honorable Abimelech.

In Genesis 21: 1–21, Sarah gives birth to Isaac and wants to finally eliminate Hagar and Ishmael after 13 years. She wants to cast them into the desert with only a bag of water. They may die. Abraham is initially upset by the plan but consults with God who says that he will take care of Ishmael and make his descendents a nation. God is being honest about what he will do, but is he really giving Abraham permission? Endangering people blessed by God is hardly blameless. Both Abraham and Sarah seem to intend to violate the covenant with this action. With Isaac’s birth, God loses much of his authority and power over Abraham (and Sarah) because there is nothing more that they want. God’s leadership situation (Fiedler, 1967) has become very weak. It is clear that Abraham and Sarah do not like or respect God despite God’s efforts to build relationship. They have fulfilled as much of God’s task as was required of them. God’s authority over them has weakened because they personally hope for no more. God saves Hagar and Ishmael as they are about to die of thirst. There is no mention of God discussing all this with Abraham.

In Genesis 21: 22–34, Abimelech asks Abraham to swear to him in the name of God that “you will not break faith with me or with my children and my descendants. As I have kept faith with you, so you must keep faith with me and with the country where you are living.” Abraham replies, “I swear it.” This is the second passage where Abraham swears and again biblical scholars regard it as a doublet assuming that Abimelech and Bera of Sodom (Gen. 14: 21–24)

represent the same story by two different writers. Again, this seems unlikely because of the striking differences. Earlier, when Bera asks Abram to swear, he does so in the name of the “Lord God Most High.” He swears as a loyal follower of his leader, God. Now, when Abimelech asks that Abraham swear as God’s follower, he swears in his own name signifying that he is not God’s follower. In addition, the content of his oath is contrary to promises made by God. Abimelech, the Amorite king, is asking for a guarantee that he and his descendents will always rule Canaan without trouble from Abraham or his descendants. God has promised the Amorite land to Abraham’s descendants. Both of Abraham’s actions seem to be acts of hubris. Abraham presumes to swear as his own master and against God’s vision. Abraham is rebelling against his leader’s authority and seeks to replace God as leader. This puts God in a difficult situation. He must defeat Abraham to remain God but he must rehabilitate Abraham to achieve his vision, or start again. Thanks to Abraham, God also has an ethical dilemma being trapped between his own promises. God has sworn to bless those who bless Abraham suggesting he should bless Abimelech and his descendants. He has also sworn to take Canaan from Abimelech’s descendants to give to Abraham’s.

In Genesis 22: 1–19, God puts Abraham to the test. He tells Abraham to take his son Isaac to Mount Moriah and offer him as a human sacrifice at a location to be revealed later. Abraham obeys God’s instructions without question. At the appointed spot, Abraham builds an altar, binds Isaac and raises the knife to kill him. At this moment, an angel arrives from God to stop Abraham. The angel says, “now I know that you are a God fearing man.” God reaffirms through the angel his vision and covenanted promises to Abraham because he sees that Abraham would not withhold his son from God. God swears to bless Abraham abundantly and make his descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky or the sands on the seashore. Abraham’s descendants will possess the cities of their enemies, and all nations will wish to be blessed as Abraham’s descendants will be blessed. Faced with Abraham’s hubris, God has switched to a dedicated leadership style. Without regard for the relationship he has tried to nurture or the vision that Isaac will found a nation, God orders the death of Isaac to finally test whether Abraham’s

loyalty to his family is greater than his loyalty to God. God also signals that he has demoted Abraham by speaking to him through an angel whereas Abraham had direct access to God in the past. When God reaffirms his promises to Abraham, he swears them as an oath which he did not do before. This suggests that the promises had been revoked because of Abraham’s violations of the covenant.

Interestingly, the myth teaches that as soon as the follower demonstrates his/her obedience, the leader switches back to the relationship building related leadership style, canceling the punishment and forgiving without extracting any revenge even for hubris. Why does Abraham surrender to God’s will? Kierkegaard (1985) analyzed this question by asking what Abraham was thinking as he obeyed. What God was thinking? In a sense, God as an ethical leader is trapped by Abraham’s apparent obedience. God genuinely does not know what Abraham will do and when Abraham raises the knife, God says “now I know” but does he really? If God forces Abraham to destroy God’s vision and commit an act of murder for the simple self-satisfaction of knowing that Abraham was loyal, then God is not an ethical leader. At the same time, as long as Abraham is not forced to murder Isaac, God does not really know what is in Abraham’s heart and there is little evidence in the myth that Abraham is actually a loyal follower. If Abraham knows these things, then he may raise the knife knowing that God must intercede. Perhaps, that is why God stopped talking directly with Abraham even though he forgave him one more time.

What kind of a leader is god?

It was proposed (P1) that strong parallels between the Abraham myth and modern leadership theory could be considered as evidence of long-term continuities in human leadership behavior over 3600 years that would be evidence of a leadership archetype. God behaves very much as a modern visionary, ethical and situational leader. It seems that these forms of modern leadership are based on very ancient leadership ideals.

God is a visionary leader who honors his commitments to Abraham. God states the vision that Abraham will found a great nation that will be

blessed in his first interaction with Abraham (Gen. 12: 1–6). The land of Canaan is added as the place where this nation will live (Gen. 12: 7–9). The vision is repeated (Gen. 13: 1–18; Gen. 15: 1–5; Gen. 15: 7–21). God offers a covenant (Gen. 15: 18), revised when Abraham rejects Ishmael (Gen. 17: 4–8). At the end, God swears reaffirming his promises (Gen. 22: 16–18). Throughout the myth, God takes action to honor his commitments to Abraham. He sends Abraham to Canaan (Gen. 12: 5) and then promises Canaan to Abraham's descendants (Gen. 12: 7; Gen. 13: 14–15). He supports Abraham against Pharaoh (Gen. 12: 17) and in a war (Gen. 14: 14–17). He arranges for Abraham to have a son named Ishmael whose mother is Hagar (Gen. 16: 2–15). God gives Abraham and Sarah a son named Isaac (Gen. 21: 2–3) and allows them to drive out Ishmael even though God had also blessed Hagar's son (Gen. 21: 10–21). God saves Isaac just as Abraham is about to sacrifice him (Gen. 22: 12). When Sarah dies, Abraham fathers six more sons with another wife (Gen. 25: 1).

God is an ethical leader who chooses honesty, trust and forgiveness even when it makes God's leadership situation more difficult. God chooses honesty when he allows Abraham a vision of the future (Gen. 15: 7–21) to demonstrate his good faith. Abraham finds out that God's promises will be kept but not as Abraham was hoping. He will not personally receive the land. He will have direct descendents but they will be slaves for 400 years. God's position is weakened. Abraham sees that the task is unstructured and that he cannot complete it and achieve the rewards in his lifetime. Later, God chooses honesty in revealing his Sodom plan even though it causes Abraham to question God's moral authority again and again (Gen. 18: 16–35). This also weakens God's leadership by reducing God's authority in Abraham's eyes.

God is reliable, choosing to forgive Abraham's unreliability, ethical foibles and even his hubris over and over, building and supporting his relationship with Abraham, and rarely punishing Abraham's many failures. When Abraham lies to Pharaoh, God curses Pharaoh and forgives Abraham without question (Gen 12: 17). When Abraham questions God's honesty (Gen. 15: 3), God gives him a vision of the future and a covenant guarantee. When Abraham allows Sarah to mistreat Hagar (Gen. 16: 6), God takes care of Hagar. God is, however,

provoked to punish Abraham. He puts conditions in the covenant, and reduces the amount of land promised. Abraham immediately violates the covenant by privately ridiculing God's promise (Gen. 17: 17). God lets it go. God comes and predicts that Sarah will give birth within the year (Gen. 18: 9–15). Sarah also ridicules God's promise and God lets it go. Abraham questions God's ethics over Sodom (Gen. 18: 23–32) and God's response is to save Lot who is righteous and Lot's two daughters who are wicked. When Abraham repeats his earlier mistake with Pharaoh, lying to Abimelech about Sarah (Gen. 20: 1–18), it seems that God has started monitoring Abraham because God warns Abimelech, but God still supports Abraham by cursing Abimelech's women. God punishes Abraham this time by making him remove the curse. When Sarah and Abraham drive out Hagar and Ishmael (Gen. 21: 9–21), and then Abraham swears in his own name and against God's vision (Gen. 21: 22–24), God gets angry and demands that Abraham sacrifice Isaac as proof of his loyalty (Gen. 22: 1–10), but as soon as God has evidence that Abraham has submitted, he forgives him and reinstates his promises. It seems that being an ethical leader requires God to suffer. God is also placed in ethical dilemmas when his promises to support Abraham force him to punish blameless ones (Pharaoh and Abimelech) Abraham has misled.

God is also a situational leader whose leadership style changes from situation to situation, and even in the middle of a situation if required. God starts with an integrated style in Genesis 12: 1–6. He switches to a related style in Genesis 12: 10–20, accepting Abram as he is in his dealings with Pharaoh. God switches back to an integrated style in Genesis 13: 1–18 when the land is divided. After the war (Genesis 14: 21–24), God is back to a related style having his priest bless Abram. In Genesis 15: 1–5 and 7–21, God starts with a related style and switches to an integrated style when Abraham initiates a crisis by questioning God's honesty. In Genesis 16: 1–16, God switches back to a related style even though Sarah is persecuting Hagar with Abram's consent. In Genesis 17: 1–27, God switches to an integrated style to correct Abram by revising the covenant. When Abraham, and later Sarah (Genesis 18: 1–15) both ridicule God's promises, God accepts them as they are from a related style. This style continues even when Abraham questions God's ethics over

Sodom (Genesis 18: 16–35). At this point, it seems clear that Abraham does not like God but God keeps building relationship saving Abraham's wicked nieces. In Genesis 20: 1–18, God switches to an integrated style when Abraham (and Sarah) repeat the same lies to Abimelech that they had previously told Pharaoh. In Genesis 21: 1–21, God switches to a related style allowing Hagar and Ishmael to be driven out and taking care of them himself. In Genesis 22: 1–19, God punishes Abraham for his hubris using a dedicated style but switches to a related style to cancel the punishment and reaffirm the relationship.

What is the leadership archetype?

It was also proposed (P2) that variances between God's leadership and that of modern leadership theory could suggest ways to make the latter more effective by bringing it in line with the ideal form of leadership existing within the collective unconscious of the human species. There are variances. Although God's leadership may be described as visionary, ethical and situational, God does not always follow the recommendations of these theories. Yet God is successful. He transforms Abraham from an immature and unreliable follower who only has the potential typified by the Child archetype, into a Hero figure. He survives and defeats the impulsive hubris of the Hero trying to overthrow the God. Abraham appears to become loyal to God's will and becomes the father leader of the Judaic (Genesis 25) and Christian (Romans 4) peoples.

Using Jung's archetypes, the remarkable aspect of God's leadership is that he generally relies on the Mother archetype to build relationship through trust and unconditional support, and models these values even when it is clear that Abraham does not return the trust and support. God uses a combination of Mother and Father archetypes to express his vision, set tasks and correct through imposing conditions or even punishments. Generally, even when God judges Abraham as deficient and imposes punishment, he also affirms his unconditional support of his relationship with Abraham and forgives him. As a final resort when faced with hubristic rebellion, God faces Abraham with the undiluted Father archetype condemning him to murder his own son and terminate the vision. When Abraham makes to obey,

God immediately reverts to the Mother, saving Isaac and unconditionally affirming both relationship and vision. In terms of leadership theory, the myth teaches that the leader must maintain his/her vision and ethics in an utterly reliable way even though the follower is unreliable. When the follower is unreliable, dishonest or disloyal, the leader suffers but must him/herself remain reliable and forgive the follower any transgression. The follower may show signs of improvement or not, but the myth teaches that the reliable leader who is willing to accept suffering from the follower and forgive, will eventually create a competent hero from an incompetent child who starts only with potential. The frustrated leader may eventually begin to monitor the follower's behavior, attach conditions, and impose punishments, but these steps must always be accompanied with signs that the leader supports the relationship. The myth also teaches that, contrary to situational theory, not all leadership styles are appropriate on a situational basis. God moves between the related and the integrated styles. The dedicated style is used in desperation and withdrawn as soon as the follower acquiesces. The separated style – low task and relationship – is never used. Even when God no longer wants to talk with Abraham, he sends an angel to affirm the unconditionality of the relationship.

God exhibits a more ethical and humanitarian leadership style than generally found in the recommendations of leadership theory. As an archetype, God's behavior suggests that human beings as a species prefer leaders who sincerely care about them and give them as many chances as they need. Leaders should be consistent, reliable and trustworthy in building generally unconditionally supportive relationships with followers. Leaders may monitor, and correct, and even punish but these are strategies that are only applied eventually in more extreme cases. Followers are not expected to be consistent or reliable. They often make mistakes or do things that leaders find disloyal. Leaders must accept that to be a leader is to accept that they will suffer at the hands of their followers, and to be willing to forgive and even forget. Eventually followers will increase in maturity and some will even struggle hard enough with themselves and their leaders to become heroic leaders themselves. If these principles were required of leaders, then perhaps the "hideous consequences"

(Jung, 1977b) of narcissistic, aggressive, paranoid and controlling leaders driving their followers “mad” (Kets de Vries, 1989, 2001) would be averted as these individuals would be disqualified from leadership positions.

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