

# **Political Leadership in the Transformation of Societies: F. W. de Klerk and Pim Fortuyn in the Multicultural Project**

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If you fail to honor your people,  
They will fail to honor you;  
It is said of a good leader that  
When the work is done, the aim fulfilled,  
The people will say, 'We did this ourselves.'<sup>1</sup>

Lao Tzu, 604–531 B. C., Founder of Taoism, *Tao Te Ching*

## **I. Introduction**

The importance of leadership has been demonstrated repeatedly throughout history. Countless examples of extraordinary leaders, ranging from Mahatma Gandhi to Vladimir Lenin and Mao Tse-tung to Barack Obama, remind us of the effect one or a small group of political leaders can have on a society. These great historical figures are transformational leaders because they were able to spearhead fundamental change within their societies.

While the inspirational and forward moving variant of leadership is well documented, it has also been known to go awry. Leadership positions have been abused by many leaders—what James McGregor Burns would characterize as “power-holders”—in countries throughout the world. This study is an endeavor to understand what goes into the creation of a successful leader, and how those characteristics can be implemented in political leadership today. It is an attempt to demystify the sometimes perplexing leader-follower relationship.

Globalization has brought with it many new challenges and opportunities for societies all around the world. Leaders have had to react to these new developments; their reactions in turn affect the lives of people both within their societies and around the world. These challenges and opportunities vary according to context, yet there are certain threads of similarity. One phenomenon that most societies have had to deal with, albeit to varying degrees, is the creation and/or sustenance of multicultural societies.

This essay examines the way in which leaders in the Netherlands and South Africa have responded to forced societal change brought about by global economic, social, and/or political pressures. It then questions how these leaders contributed to the multicultural project within their respective societies. The case studies will look at two transformational political leaders: F. W. de Klerk in South Africa and Pim Fortuyn in the Netherlands.<sup>2</sup>

These leaders were selected for several reasons. First, under their influence, tangible change occurred within their respective societies, be it legislatively or within popular

discourse. Second, both of these leaders are highly controversial figures. Although de Klerk was heavily involved in the negotiations for the new South Africa and was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts, several different factors have led to a divided perception of him in the South African collective memory.<sup>3</sup> Fortuyn, on the other hand, was central to a major swing in public discourse regarding immigration, tolerance, and “political correctness” in the Netherlands. He provided a voice that was previously taboo in the country, which has proven to have both positive and negative outcomes.

This analysis begins with a presentation of the definitions and broad theoretical framework in which it is situated. It will then delve into the case studies, looking at the societal contexts in which both leaders were operating, personal characteristics of these men, and a discussion of their overall contributions in building a multicultural society. It will provide a comparative analysis of both societies and their leaders. Finally, the conclusion will reflect upon implications of these findings for leadership studies and globalization, and contribute suggestions for further research.

## **II. Multiculturalism and Leadership: A Theoretical Framework**

Multiculturalism is defined here as a theory of societal organization made up of individuals and communities from different backgrounds—such as religion, race, or any other form of social distinction—in which people live side by side harmoniously in a cosmopolitan spirit of respect and mutual growth. The multicultural project, therefore, is the constant endeavor to create this spirit and society.

One of the first attempts to define transformational political leadership was offered by James Burns, who put forth the now famous distinction between transformational and transactional leadership. Transactional leaders, sometimes referred to today as managers, are those that implement what they are assigned. They operate within the status quo and generally do not attempt to alter it. Alternatively, Burns describes transformational leadership as occurring when “leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality.”<sup>4</sup> He places a strong emphasis on morality and higher order values, which will fundamentally transform both the leader and the followers. An example of this type of leader is Mahatma Gandhi.

This theory is extended by Bernard M. Bass, who proposes that, “transformational leaders motivate their followers to commit to and to realize performance outcomes that exceed their expectations.”<sup>5</sup> Unlike Burns, however, Bass sees transformational leadership as amoral and universally applicable.<sup>6</sup> He postulates that transformational leaders use their authority and power to fundamentally reshape, via coercive means, the social and physical environment, thereby destroying the old way of life and making way for a new one.

The dimensionality of charisma in leadership has been highly contested. Max Weber identified three cycles of “pure” leadership that all societies must undergo: the charismatic, the rational-legal, and the traditional.<sup>7</sup> He characterizes charismatic leaders as those distinguished from ordinary people by their heroic and seemingly superhuman qualities. Since Weber, subsequent attempts to study charismatic leadership have resulted in considerable variation. For some scholars, charismatic leadership should be examined as a phenomenon separate from transformational leadership.<sup>8</sup> Others take it as a component of transformational leadership,<sup>9</sup> or consider them as one and the same.<sup>10</sup>

Different authors have treated charisma as a personality trait of the leader, an attribution bestowed upon the leader by the followers, or a combination of the two. Nevertheless, in the debate regarding charisma and leadership, there is a consensus that the relationship between leader and follower is crucial.

I will agree with Conger and Kanungo in the understanding of charismatic leadership as a *form* of transformational leadership; indeed, it is the most exemplary form that transformational leaders can assume.<sup>11</sup> Not all transformational leaders are charismatic, but a charismatic leader is *de facto* a transformational leader. To place the distinction in more concrete terms, I will briefly utilize the contemporary case of the campaign of the 44th President of the United States, Barack Obama, as an example.

For the purposes of this study, transformational political leadership is defined as any leadership that brings about fundamental change in the political, economic, or social institutions of a polity. It is an amoral force that is utilized for the purpose of a fundamental alteration of the existing status quo. Transformational leaders emphasize higher goals development, and arouse their followers' motivations by means of creating and representing an inspiring vision of the future.<sup>12</sup> In other words, the emphasis is placed on the idealized vision and ultimate attainment of a specified goal. In the case of President Obama's campaign, his message was clear from the slogan "Change We Can Believe In." His consistent reiteration of the message of change is an example of how leaders articulate a radical message. By attaining the goal (which he clearly stated in one line at his victory speech: "Change has come to America") he became a transformational leader.<sup>13</sup>

Charismatic leadership, however, is essentially defined in terms of the followers. It is a form of transformational leadership in which followers *view* their leader as extraordinary and capable of bringing about fundamental change. This form of leadership is also about the articulation and implementation of some higher order goal, but it is more leader-centered. Followers identify with the cause because of the personal characteristics they have attributed to the leader. As Ann Ruth Willner puts it, "It is not what the leader is but what people see the leader as that counts in generating the charismatic relationship."<sup>14</sup> Conger identifies two important factors of this attribution: leaders taking personal risks and exhibiting unconventional behavior.<sup>15</sup> Returning to our example, Obama is a charismatic leader because his followers identified the movement with him personally. They saw him as extraordinary, taking personal risks, and exhibiting unconventional behavior.<sup>16</sup> The following sections will examine the two case studies for this project in detail. The nuances between the charismatic and the transformational leader will be further articulated.

### III. Case Studies

#### A. Apartheid's Last Ringmaster: F. W. de Klerk

From the beginning, F. W. de Klerk seemed destined to enter a life of politics. He was raised in a political family, with his father being a long-standing parliamentarian and his uncle having served as Prime Minister of South Africa. In his autobiography, *The Last Trek: A New Beginning*, he recounts being interested in politics and public affairs from a young age. His upbringing was also strongly rooted in the Dutch Reformed Church and

steeped in conservative religious morality.<sup>17</sup> Like many of his Afrikaner schoolmates, in his youth he was highly supportive of Dr. Verwoerd's creation of the independent "Bantustans."<sup>18</sup>

From his initial appointment to Parliament in 1972, he quickly rose in rank to eventually take a ministerial position. He served in numerous portfolios, including mineral and energy affairs (which exposed him to the issues of labor conditions within the mines) and as Minister of Home Affairs from 1982–1985.<sup>19</sup> He explains how his experiences, particularly in the latter post, began to chip away at his previously held assumptions on the validity of the Bantustan system.

Throughout his rise up the political ladder de Klerk acquired the reputation of being situated in the conservative camp. He refutes this claim in his autobiography, stating that he would often challenge plans at reform that were too hastily proposed, taking on the role of devil's advocate. As he puts it, it was his drive for rationalization that had him labeled as a spoiler of reform and garnered him the conservative (or *verkramptes*) label.<sup>20</sup> A major part of this perception was his strong support of the concept of "Own Affairs," which was the idea that each racial group should be responsible for their designated "own" activities.<sup>21</sup>

In 1989, having served as leader of the National Party (NP) for almost two years, de Klerk took the office of state president after Botha had been forced out of office due to a stroke. Upon becoming president, de Klerk faced a host of problems. The infrastructure of apartheid was crumbling. The country had been under a state of emergency for several years, and the strength of the African National Congress's (ANC) support base was undeniable. The economy was in a fast decline; the political instability in the country had resulted in much capital flight, and normal business activity was being disrupted. Global pressures were also bearing down from outside the country. Economic sanctions and consumer activism were forcing the economy and the political sphere into a crisis. Although South Africa was in fast decline, the country was not on the cusp of abject failure. The state still retained a strong security infrastructure, either through covert or conventional means. The various "securocrats" were a powerful and ominous presence.<sup>22</sup>

De Klerk came into office in September 1989 with the determination to launch a democratic transformation process because, he claims, of the necessity of action on the government's part and also personal conviction.<sup>23</sup> In the first few months of his presidency, he worked to normalize the security forces, lifted the ban on peaceful public protest, and began the systematic release of some high profile political prisoners. An important development was that the beginning of de Klerk's presidency coincided with the fall of the Berlin Wall in November of 1989. The communist threat in southern Africa, specifically the Soviet Union's influence on the ANC and the South African Communist Party, had all but disappeared, allowing space for a more adventurous approach.

Undoubtedly the most important moment of de Klerk's political career came on February 2, 1990, when, in dramatic fashion, de Klerk delivered a speech at the opening of Parliament "unbanning" the ANC and thirty-one other organizations, as well as announcing the unconditional release of famed political prisoner Nelson Mandela.<sup>24</sup> This speech set in motion a process of transferring power to majority vote on the principle of "one-man, one-vote," which brought Mandela to power in 1994.

The actual negotiations were a long and arduous process, consuming nearly four years, with both sides making considerable concessions to meet in the middle. The biggest challenge for both de Klerk and Mandela was maintaining a strong center while controlling the violent factions on both sides.<sup>25</sup>

When examining de Klerk's style of leadership during the transition, he can be categorized as transformational but not charismatic. He was certainly instrumental in bringing about the fundamental change that occurred in South Africa, and is usually acknowledged as an important figure in the nation's history, but he has at no point in time been granted the attribute of charismatic leader. There are at least three important reasons for this eventuality. First is the ambiguity of the circumstances surrounding his decision to begin the entire process heralded by his speech to Parliament. Alex Callinicos suggests three possible reasons why de Klerk undertook the project. Firstly, there were the objective constraints on the regime. The most important of these was South Africa's international political impasse and the deteriorating economic conditions within the country. Secondly, and the one most stressed by de Klerk and his fellow party members, was a change of mind about the validity of the system. To put it succinctly, "they had ceased to believe that apartheid was morally defensible."<sup>26</sup> The third element in his decision was de Klerk's "ruthless strategic calculation." As Ronald Aronson puts it, "de Klerk's brilliant maneuver was to release Mandela, unban the ANC, begin the negotiations, and move to end apartheid *before* he was forced to."<sup>27</sup> By putting himself one step ahead of an obviously sinking ship, he ensured his instrumental position in the creation of the new order and, perhaps unintentionally, secured himself a spot on the "right side of history."

The second reason why de Klerk cannot be characterized as a charismatic leader was the impression he left on the South African public during the negotiations and in the Government of National Unity (GNU), with the ultimate culmination of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Though both de Klerk and Mandela were committed to reaching a negotiated settlement, certain propositions on the part of the NP, such as the notion of "group rights," prompted the image of a party desperately trying to hold on to some vestige of the old ways.<sup>28</sup>

Third, de Klerk was not endearing personality-wise, particularly when compared to the nation's hero, Nelson Mandela. He was certainly intelligent, rational, and a good listener, however none of these attributes contribute to a charismatic public persona. He has been described as "bland" by journalists in South Africa.<sup>29</sup> No matter how the party tried to re-establish itself by opening up membership to all races and other such reforms, the fact remained that this was still the same National Party that was synonymous with apartheid in the eyes of most South Africans. De Klerk represented the old order, the government that had conceded defeat to the ANC. Mandela, on the other hand, was the survivor against all odds, the man who spent over a quarter century of his life behind bars for the purpose of achieving freedom for all South Africans.

Shifting attention away from public perceptions of de Klerk and his leadership, how should one weigh his involvement in the transformation of his society in terms of building "the new South Africa" as a stronger, more multicultural society? From the beginning, de Klerk had been gravely concerned about the protection of Afrikaner rights in an all-inclusive democracy. A central concern of the Afrikaner community was the country's economic conditions, but even more important was anxiety for cultural identity

and personal security.<sup>30</sup> Yet de Klerk is frequently accused by many Afrikaners of not having upheld the promises of his initial referendum and that he granted too many concessions during the negotiations.<sup>31</sup>

A crucial part of locating de Klerk in the political history of South Africa came during the hearings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The TRC was an important endeavor in the reinvention of the nation. De Klerk's testimony was underwhelming in the eyes of the majority. He took no personal blame for any wrongdoing, attributing the atrocities instead to rogue elements in the government. Conger and Kanungo identify unconventional behavior as a character trait of charismatic leaders. This includes exemplary acts of heroism involving personal risks and self-sacrifice.<sup>32</sup> At the TRC, de Klerk conveyed none of these elements. He responded predictably and the public, particularly the black population, was not favorable to his sentiments.

Context is also important in understanding de Klerk's role as a leader. In a recent interview, he claimed that the 1980s were a time of self-analysis within the National Party: "When I became leader, it was my privilege to say, 'We have this new vision, what we must now do is to implement it.'"<sup>33</sup> If indeed the National Party and the Afrikaner elite had come to the gradual realization that apartheid was a morally reprehensible and pragmatically unsustainable system, then de Klerk's personal role seems to be diminished. Coupled with the considerable pressure placed upon the regime from both internal and external sources, his detractors have argued that de Klerk was merely a leader in transformational times—that the actions taken by the government were forced upon them and that their moral about-face conveniently coincided with this development. Yet, he did undertake a considerable amount of initiative, which was not always popular with his constituency. As a study conducted in 1992 illustrates, the Afrikaner community was not ready to accept the changes brought by de Klerk's government.<sup>34</sup> His February 2, 1990, speech and his continued commitment to reach a negotiated settlement did require a considerable amount of political courage. De Klerk's government could have taken the despotic route and continued on with the mass suppression that marked his predecessor. The infrastructure to do so was certainly in place. Instead, he took the path of reform and negotiated himself out of power, thereby laying the groundwork for the future democratic South Africa. Whether one takes the position of critic or admirer is a matter of interpretation, but none can dispute that under his watch, South Africa turned the historical corner and entered into a new era.

## **B. Pim Fortuyn: Dutch Political Dandy**

By 2001, the Netherlands had a widely admired international reputation as being among the most tolerant and outward-oriented countries in the world. Politically, the country is notable for its historical "Pillarization" model, which necessitated a culture of consensus politics. The self-segregation of different "pillars" based on religious and ideological differences within the society meant that there was no majority, forcing the government to operate on a consensus basis. In everyday society as well, the Dutch were accustomed to living within their own separate but parallel pillars. Due to the increased secularization of society, by the late 1960s the system had collapsed.<sup>35</sup> Politically, however, the legacy of the pillarized system remained largely intact within the established parties, with the country's historic "Purple Coalition" created in 1994.<sup>36</sup>

It was into this political setting that Pim Fortuyn was to make his sensational appearance in 2001. His time in Dutch politics lasted hardly a year (dating from mid-2001 to his assassination on May 6, 2002), yet within that period he acquired a massive following throughout the country and political victory in his hometown of Rotterdam. He shocked the established parties and Dutch society as a whole with a message and political personality new to the Netherlands. He was a populist who played on the fears of the less educated lower and middle classes. Whether one agreed with him or not, his flamboyant dress and lifestyle, coupled with his confrontational manner of debate, rarely failed to captivate anyone watching.

Fortuyn did not, however, come into this role overnight. He began his catapult into Dutch public life as a sociologist and lecturer at the University of Groningen, where he was (like many at this time) an advocate of Marxist socialist philosophy. Fortuyn never fit comfortably into academic life, however, and moved on for a stint in the business world. His brash mannerism and insistence on doing things his own way made it difficult for him to find employment, and he subsequently spent several years without any permanent position. He earned a living writing freelance and taking public speaking engagements. According to political ally and friend Marco Pastors, this was when many of his opinions on issues were formed. Fortuyn came into contact with people all over the Netherlands and spent much time debating and listening to the concerns of “the everyday Dutch person.”<sup>37</sup> This would later provide him a competitive edge in his political career. His emergence from outside of politics and his ability to relate to those people who felt their concerns had been brushed under the rug were a huge part of his attraction. His ideas were different from anything previously expressed in Dutch public life. In a country where cultural sensitivities were acute after World War II, the dramatic statements he made about Islam and integration were shocking to the average Dutch citizen.

Fortuyn was deliberate in his choice of timing to enter formal politics. Economically, the country was doing well, which made his sudden popularity puzzling for most observers. Yet Fortuyn ran on a platform of issues the established parties mostly skirted: criminality, unemployment, and the integration of minorities. All of those issues were deemed politically incorrect.<sup>38</sup> The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, no doubt were an important part of it. Suddenly cultural differences seemed ominous enough to trump all else. Fortuyn vocalized the inner concerns and hesitations of a large part of the population.<sup>39</sup>

Fortuyn’s challenge to and critique of the Dutch political establishment and discourse place him squarely within the realm of transformational leadership. Like many populist politicians, he had a passionate following among the lower and middle classes, but he also attracted a group of *nouveau riche* around him as well, who were seeking social recognition by being associated with the radical leader.<sup>40</sup> The passion and devotion to “Fortuynism” were also witnessed after his murder, which saw an outpouring of emotion on the part of the Dutch public, both from his supporters and otherwise.<sup>41</sup> Though there is no doubt that Fortuyn sent shockwaves through Dutch society with his message, his murder, as the first political assassination since 1672, gained an even more important position in the popular memory. He was now a martyr of freedom of speech and the war against “political correctness,” punished for saying what he believed.<sup>42</sup> Although the statement that Holland “lost its innocence” with the murder of Fortuyn may be an

exaggeration, it certainly alerted Dutch citizens to the problems that existed within their society.<sup>43</sup>

Whether one agrees with his opinions or not, it is indisputable that Fortuyn served Dutch society by broadening the political spectrum in terms of what could and could not be said. As Dick Pels put it, Dutch political discourse was never allowed to go beyond a certain point towards the right. Fortuyn shattered that barrier, in the process shocking all and offending many. What made Fortuyn distinct was that he did not care about respect in the language he used. He had a point to make and he was going to make it, regardless of what people thought or whom he upset along the way. He opened up the space for debate by defying the rules of polite politics, and he gave a large segment of society something they could actually relate to in politics—a person who had his faults and who had an opinion.

Fortuyn was the first to put forth the image of a “fatherless society.” The Dutch had lost their way and needed to return to the father’s house.<sup>44</sup> This brought about an increased sentiment of Dutch nationalism, or national communitarianism, based on liberal Enlightenment values.<sup>45</sup> Fortuyn also introduced to the established political parties and the Dutch public a new type of politician that offered a “personalized politics.”<sup>46</sup> He showed that to be successful in politics one need not adhere to the traditional means practiced thus far in the Netherlands. His skillful and entertaining debate style, coupled with his flamboyant lifestyle and persona, turned him into a celebrity, creating a distinctly Pim Fortuyn “brand.” He was on television nearly every night, with guaranteed high ratings for whichever station had him appear. It seemed the public simply could not get enough of Pim.

Considering his effect on the multicultural society, Fortuyn and his movement are central to the present day debate taking place on this topic in the Netherlands.<sup>47</sup> The first thing he did was challenge the government by claiming that what had previously been accepted as “right” was “wrong.” Jeroen DeWulf explains that, “He equated more multiculturalism with a steadily less progressive society, whereas before multiculturalism was viewed as part of Dutch progressiveness.”<sup>48</sup> Fortuyn warned about the “Islamization” of Dutch culture, labeling Islam a “backward” religion, and those that adhere strictly to it as a threat to modern Western societies. Since Fortuyn, this idea seems to have slowly permeated Dutch political culture, with politicians such as Geert Wilders regularly making derogatory statements against Islam. Even those people inclined toward the political center have become more attentive to “cultural differences” that deem Islam and Western society irreconcilable.<sup>49</sup>

Pim Fortuyn was the first contemporary public figure to challenge the status quo, but several have followed, including Wilders and Theo Van Gogh.<sup>50</sup> On the immigration and integration front, however, there is a notable difference between Fortuyn and his most important political successor, Wilders. While Fortuyn supported tightening controls on immigration to the Netherlands, he also placed equal emphasis on better integrating the already present populations, even calling for a general amnesty for those already in the country.<sup>51</sup> Fortuyn wanted to invest more money in schools and social infrastructure for immigrants, demanding that they make an effort to integrate in return. In contrast, Wilders’ party proposes spending on deportation back to the countries of origin.<sup>52</sup>

At the time when Fortuyn entered the public eye and began to gain fame and notoriety, the “question of Islam” was mostly confined to the white Dutch population.<sup>53</sup> Since then,



however, and particularly after the dramatic events surrounding Theo van Gogh's murder, minority communities are becoming more and more politicized. In the right environment, this can create an opportunity for fruitful debate. Fortuyn contributed to a new openness in democratic debate by providing an entirely new space into which discourse could venture.

As for the political legacy Fortuyn left behind, he fundamentally questioned the boundaries of freedom of speech in the Netherlands. Some would argue that he brought the Dutch to the realization that this freedom was not really valid, as saying what you believed would ultimately get you punished (murdered like Fortuyn and van Gogh, sued like Wilders).<sup>54</sup> What is clear is that he forced people to question their own political preconceptions of what freedom of speech and respect for minorities meant for them, and ultimately what it meant to *be Dutch*. He was first in beginning to re-essentialize Dutch identity, thereby excluding all those that did not fit into his categorization.<sup>55</sup> Fortuyn's presence fundamentally altered public discourse. His ideas are no longer peripheral but squarely situated in the everyday consciousness of Dutch society. He is not likely to be forgotten any time soon.

#### IV. Comparative Leadership

Comparing F. W. de Klerk and Pim Fortuyn, there are a few stark contrasts between the two styles of leadership. The first, and most apparent, is their personalities. De Klerk is usually soft-spoken and deliberative, and he presents himself in a rather composed manner. He was never a crowd pleaser like Mandela, who took to singing songs and leading chants with his supporters. From the time of his announcement of Mandela's release and the onset of the negotiations, he was constantly compared to—and always outshined by—this great figure. Despite his best attempts, de Klerk was never able to fully disassociate himself from the legacy of the old regime. No doubt his race had much to do with it; the country was just emerging from a long and painful period of white rule. Black South Africans would not be quick to embrace a white man as hero of the country. Yet de Klerk's political opposition to the ANC and his unwillingness to completely denounce apartheid also kept him in that unfavorable light. Watching Fortuyn, on the other hand, was like its own form of entertainment. His manner of dress, his lifestyle, and the way in which he always made his debate opponents seem stuffy and old-fashioned drew in the viewing public. Even if you did not agree with what he was saying, it was difficult to ignore this distinctly "Fortuyn brand."

The second point of comparison is the context in which the two leaders found themselves. As the academic literature on leadership suggests, context can be an important element in the rise of transformational leaders. In and of itself, the existence of a crisis is "neither a necessary nor a sufficient cause."<sup>56</sup> However, crisis situations are conducive to the rise of transformational leadership. De Klerk emerged as a leader at a time when South Africa was in deep conflict. Years of suppression of the majority had led to an unstable system, and a solution to the problem was ultimately unavoidable.

Fortuyn is a good example of a transformational leader who rose to power in a time of little to no perceived crisis. Economically, the Netherlands was doing relatively well. Significant minority communities had been present in the country since the time of the guest worker system in the 1970s, and Dutch policy and discourse were always in line

with the celebrated value of Dutch tolerance. Fortuyn concerned himself with the issues that were “politically incorrect.” In doing so, he effectively created a crisis in the minds of the Dutch public. He identified a problem and was able to convince people that it was an urgent issue that needed to be addressed.

In terms of context, then, the central difference between the two leaders is that de Klerk operated within an already established crisis situation, which is conducive to the emergence of transformational leaders, although not necessarily sufficient for their rise. Fortuyn, on the other hand, awakened the public to a novel idea and discourse that had previously not existed in Dutch public life. He created a new conflict-type situation that challenged people to define “Dutch identity,” which ultimately also meant excluding those that did not fit into the category.

The third point of comparison is the means by which both leaders inspired and motivated their followers. Fortuyn was, at the end of the day, a populist. He used rhetoric defining “us” against “them,” arousing sentiments of Dutch nationalism. His message fueled the fears of the “everyday Dutch person” against the political elite as well as the ominous “Other.”<sup>57</sup>

When de Klerk made his speech on that February 2, he knew that he could not expect a positive response from the entire country. The ANC and their supporters were quick to claim victory over apartheid while the white far-right was enraged. For de Klerk, his relationship with the South African public seemed to be an almost entirely uphill battle. His biggest victory in terms of support was arguably his 1992 referendum, in which the white population voted in support of continuing negotiations. De Klerk may not have been the most popular of leaders at the time, but he did prove to be committed to finding a solution to the country’s instability. As his political allies point out, riding with the popular tide was not enough in this case; he had to be one step ahead of his constituency.

An interesting question to investigate here is the source of legitimacy of each of these leaders. Who, and what institutions, provided them with the legitimacy that they carried in each of their societies? For Fortuyn, it was undoubtedly the Dutch public that supported him. Although his party won decisively at the city level in Rotterdam, it had yet to gain any form of national elected seat in Parliament at the time of his murder. Yet the reactions to his murder, the resonance of his ideas with Dutch public and political life, and his party’s victory in the parliamentary elections are resounding proof of his place and significance in the modern history of the country.

De Klerk’s legitimacy was also granted by the people, in that his party was “democratically” elected, but it was only the white populations that partook in this decision. Legitimacy was not accorded to him by the entire country, however, and even the support he initially received from the white voters’ referendum seemed to quickly wane once the actual process of negotiations had begun. The difference in legitimacy of de Klerk and Fortuyn is one of the central distinguishing factors between transformational and charismatic leadership.

A fourth point of comparison between Fortuyn and de Klerk is the legacy they left to the creation of a multicultural society. De Klerk obviously paved the way on behalf of the National Party for negotiations to take place. However, after the negotiations, the GNU, and the TRC, it seems that de Klerk was mostly ignored in the eyes of the people. He had served his purpose, but now he no longer had much of a place in South African memory. Mixed reactions to his being awarded the Nobel Prize along with Mandela indicate this

ambiguous status, but history will probably be kind to de Klerk and remember him most for his February 2 speech.<sup>58</sup>

Pim Fortuyn was also central to the transformation of discourse and policy surrounding multiculturalism. His open and frank criticism of Islam has seemingly been transferred into mainstream political discourse, and policies such as the creation of examinations for those seeking Dutch citizenship have reflected this change. The idea of forcing, or at least strongly urging, immigrants to integrate into Dutch society has become increasingly accepted.<sup>59</sup> Yet by challenging some of the basic assumptions of Dutch political life (for example, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, protection from verbal or physical abuse), he opened up a discursive space in which discussion and debate can occur on sensitive yet important issues.

## V. Lessons

In our increasingly globalized societies, the need to understand leadership in all its forms and variants is imperative. We have seen how certain leaders are successful in drawing in followers and fundamentally altering societies. New questions of leadership will no doubt arise in the future, and the existing ones may become more confusing, as societies grapple with the fast-paced changes brought about by globalization.

Yet there are a few lessons to be taken from this exercise. First, transformational leadership is or will soon become necessary for all societies in the face of globalization. As people seek ways to address the challenges and opportunities brought by this phenomenon, leaders, too, will have to adapt to the changing times. Transactional leadership will not prove adequate.

Second, transformational and charismatic leaders interact with their societies differently. While transformational leaders can garner support around their vision and are usually instrumental in the attainment of that goal, leaders that are also charismatic possess the added factor of having the movement linked with them personally. This can come as either a blessing or a curse. It garners a strong and loyal support base, but it also makes the leader nearly irreplaceable, as witnessed by the disintegration of the LPF after Fortuyn's death and its entry in Parliament.

An interesting future research topic would be to examine how transformational leaders operate alongside each other. Looking at the case of South Africa, the transformational de Klerk was not a charismatic leader, yet he was operating alongside the very charismatic Nelson Mandela. Judging from this case, the question of whether a transformational leader can operate successfully without a charismatic leader working together with him/her could prove revealing.

The third lesson from this research is how, for the multicultural project, leaders can have progressive or detrimental effects on their societies. De Klerk was central in helping achieve the current "miracle" that is South African society. The violence was such that at certain points during the transformation, most observers expected the country to descend into a race-based civil war. The fact that this did not happen and that the country has now rebranded itself as "the Rainbow Nation" is a monumental accomplishment. Fortuyn is often thought of, and thought of himself, as anti-multiculturalism, and was in many ways detrimental to the goal, mostly by further alienating immigrant populations from Dutch society. Yet by starting a debate, he began the necessary steps toward the ultimate

inclusion of minorities in mainstream society. The Netherlands, and Europe generally, has never had anything akin to the Civil Rights movement of the United States, which defined modern-day race relations in that country. It seems that something of that stature is necessary to peacefully negotiate the place of the ever-increasing minority populations in Europe. Beginning a debate is the only way to achieve it.

The challenges of globalization are many, but with every new challenge comes opportunity. Leaders in our current age must come to realize this two-sided nature of globalization, and learn from each other by positive example. Fear of the unknown is a natural human behavior that we all grapple with at some point in our lives; it is up to our leaders to take initiative and help calm some of those societal fears. Just as no man is an island, no leader operates in isolation. The followers play an imperative role in the relationship. It is a relationship central to the success of healthy, globalized societies and merits further attention.

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### **Notes**

1. Online at [legacee.com/Info/Leadership/Quotes.html](http://legacee.com/Info/Leadership/Quotes.html).
2. The term *transformational political leadership* will be used throughout this work interchangeably with *transformational leadership*; the same applies for *charismatic political leadership* and *charismatic leadership*.
3. Additionally, de Klerk was selected because he is an often-overlooked figure in South African history. As one recalls leaders at the end of the apartheid regime, the immediate thought is usually Nelson Mandela. I was interested to discover why exactly de Klerk, who played an imperative role in the transformation alongside Mandela, was consistently undermined in popular memory.
4. James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), p. 20.
5. Jay A. Conger, "Charismatic and Transformational Leadership in Organizations: An Insider's Perspective on these Developing Streams of Research," *The Leadership Quarterly* 10 (1999): 152.

6. Burns (1979) recognized the importance and influence of authoritarian rulers, such as Hitler. Yet he chose not to identify them as “leaders,” calling them instead “power-wielders” (p. 27). As he puts it, “Naked power wielding can neither be transformational nor transactional, only leadership can be.”

7. Ibid., p. 243; Jay A. Conger and Rabindra N. Kanungo, “Toward a Behavioral Theory of Charismatic Leadership in Organizational Settings,” *The Academy of Management Review* 12 (1987): 638; and Jane A. Halpert, “The Dimensionality of Charisma,” *Journal of Business Psychology* 4, no. 4 (1990): 399.

8. B.M. Bass, cited in Halpert 1990, p. 400.

9. Conger and Kanungo 1987.

10. Shamir Boas, Robert J. House, and Michael B. Arthur, “The Motivational Effects of Charismatic Leadership: A Self-Concept Based Theory,” *Organization Science* 4 (November 1993): 577–94.

11. Conger 1999, p. 150.

12. B.M. Bass, cited in Jens Rowold and Kathrin Heinitz, “Transformational and Charismatic Leadership: Assessing the Convergent, Divergent and Criterion Validity of the MLQ and the CKS,” *The Leadership Quarterly* (April 2007).

13. If a leader has a message and articulates a goal, but is unsuccessful in achieving any part of that goal, then he or she cannot be characterized as transformational. The attainment of an articulated goal that brings about fundamental change is crucial.

14. Cited in Conger and Kanungo 1987, p. 638.

15. Ibid.

16. Obama’s decision to run in the first place was considered highly unconventional behavior. On top of being an African American, he was a junior Senator with little experience in Washington. Once his popularity began to grow and it was clear he stood a real chance of winning, consistent threats on his life necessitated a drastic rise in security measures. This was surely a great personal risk.

17. Betty Glad, “Passing the Baton: Transformational Political Leadership from Gorbachev to Yeltsin; From de Klerk to Mandela,” *Political Psychology* 17 (1996): 18.

18. F. W. de Klerk, *The Last Trek—A New Beginning* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Trans-Atlantic Publications, 2000), p. 30.

19. Ibid., p. 73.

20. Ibid., p. 101.
21. Ibid., p. 108.
22. Alex Callinicos, "South Africa: End of Apartheid and After," *Economic and Political Weekly* 29 (1994).
23. De Klerk 2000, p. 159.
24. Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom* (New York: Back Bay Books, 1994), p. 556; and Allistar Sparks, *Tomorrow is Another Country* (London: Heinemann, 1995), p. 107.
25. For accounts of the negotiations, see David Welsh, "FW de Klerk and Constitutional Change," *A Journal of Opinion* 18 (1990): 6–10; and Daniel J. O'Flaherty, "Holding Together South Africa," *Foreign Affairs* 72 (1993): 126–36.
26. Callinicos 1994, p. 2358.
27. Ronald Aronson, cited in Callinicos 1994, p. 2358.
28. Mandela explains how the NP created this concept of groups' rights to mean that no racial or ethnic group could take precedence over any other. Yet he, as well as the entire country—including the NP's mouthpiece newspaper *Die Burger*—interpreted it as a means to retain white privilege. See Mandela 1995, p. 555.
29. Welsh 1990.
30. Kate Manzo and Pat McGowan, "Afrikaner Fears and the Politics of Despair: Understanding Change in South Africa," *International Studies Quarterly* 36 (1992): 22.
31. De Klerk 2000, p. 387.
32. Conger and Kanungo 1987, p. 643.
33. "FW de Klerk, Former President of South Africa," Interview with Andrea Sankes, accessed online at *YouTube.com*. *France 24* (17 December 2008).
34. Manzo and McGowan 1992.
35. Paul M. Sniderman and Louk Hagendoorn, *When Ways of Life Collide: Multiculturalism and its Discontents in the Netherlands* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2007), p. 14.
36. Historical opponents, the Social Democrats and the Conservatives, joined together to exclude the Christian Democrats from the majority. It was called "purple" because it

reflected the merger of the red of social democracy and the blue of liberal conservatism. See Sniderman and Hagendoorn 2007, pp. 18–19.

37. Marco Pastors, interview by author, Rotterdam, 27 May 2009.

38. Rinus Pennix, “After the Fortuyn and Van Gogh Murders: Is the Dutch Integration Model in Disarray?” Lecture in the International Seminar for Experts Integrating Migrants in Europe—Comparing the Different National Approaches. Cicero Foundation Series of Great Debates, Paris (9 June 2005): 8.

39. For analyses of the victory of the Lijst Pim Fortuyn Party (LPF) in the parliamentary elections, see Ian Bruff, “The Netherlands, the Challenge of Lijst Pim Fortuyn, and the Third Way,” *Politics* 23 (2003): 156–62; and Joop Van Holsteyn, Josje M. Den Ridder, and Galen A. Irwin, “In the Eye of the Beholder: The Perception of the Lijst Pim Fortuyn and the Parliamentary Elections of May 2002,” *Acta Politica* 38 (2003): 69–87.

40. Dick Pels, interview by author, Amsterdam, 26 May 2009.

41. For an account of demonstrations of public emotion after Fortuyn’s assassination, see Peter Jan Margry, “The Murder of Pim Fortuyn and Collective Emotions. Hype, Hysteria, and Holiness in the Netherlands?,” *Etnofoor: antropologisch tijdschrift*\_16 (2003): 106–31.

42. Rod Dreher, “Murder in Holland,” *National Review Online* (7 May 2002). Retrieved online on 26 March 2009 at [nationalreview.com/dreher/dreher050702.asp](http://nationalreview.com/dreher/dreher050702.asp).

43. Pels interview.

44. Fortuyn published a book in 1995, entitled *The Orphaned Society*, on this topic. See Bart Jan Spruyt, “‘Can’t We Discuss This?’ Liberalism and the Challenge of Islam in the Netherlands,” *Orbis* (Spring 2007): 327.

45. Pels interview.

46. Dick Pels, “Aesthetic Representation and Political Style. Re-Balancing Identity and Difference in Media Democracy,” in *Media and the Restyling of Politics. Consumerism, Celebrity, and Cynicism*, edited by John Corner and Dick Pels (London: Sage, 2003).

47. For an overview of Dutch policy towards multiculturalism prior to Fortuyn, see Jeroen Doomernik, “The State of Multiculturalism in the Netherlands,” *Canadian Diversity* 4 (2005): 32–35.

48. Jeroen DeWulf, “In the Jungle of Amsterdam: On the Re-Invention of Dutch Identity,” *Morrison Library Inaugural Address*, Series 25 (2008): 15.

49. *Ibid.*, p., 18.

50. Theo van Gogh was a Dutch filmmaker who was brutally murdered in 2004 after co-creating a short film entitled *Submission*, which was critical of the treatment of women in Islam. He was stabbed to death by a Muslim immigrant in Amsterdam.

51. Pastors interview.

52. "Geert is not Pim," *Dagblad De Pers* (5 May 2009).

53. Pels interview.

54. Pastors interview.

55. Dewulf 2008, p. 17.

56. Cited in Conger and Kanungo 1987, p. 638.

57. Tjiske Akkerman, "Anti-Immigration Parties and the Defense of Liberal Values: The Exceptional Case of the Lijst Pim Fortuyn," *Journal of Political Ideologies* 10 (2005): 337–54.

58. Mamphela Ramphela, *Laying Ghosts to Rest: Dilemmas of the Transformation in South Africa* (Cape Town: Tafelberg, 2008), p. 63.

59. Pastors interview.

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