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George R. Goethals, *University of Richmond*

Scott T. Allison, *University of Richmond*



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CHAPTER SEVEN

Kings and Charisma, Lincoln and Leadership: An Evolutionary Perspective

GEORGE R. GOETHALS AND SCOTT T. ALLISON

Three people who dramatically and fundamentally changed American society in the mid-twentieth century were also among the most charismatic. All three were, and still are, heroes to many, in the United States and around the world. Though each one's blend of heroism and charisma was distinct from that of the other two, each one was transforming. They were all leaders, who profoundly moved and changed both individuals and groups. To be sure, they were different kinds of leaders, but all three were, as Howard Gardner (1995) defined leaders, "persons who, by word and/or personal example, markedly influence the behavior, thoughts and/or feelings of a significant number of their fellow human beings." Call them "Three Kings." One was Martin Luther King (1929–1968), a heroic leader who was central in transforming race relations in the United States. His emotionally moving speeches illustrate fundamental aspects of charisma. Another was Elvis Presley (1935–1977), "The King of rock 'n roll," a captivating performer who transformed not only popular music but also young people's sense of how they could live and what they could be. The third is Muhammad Ali (1942–), The Champ, the self-proclaimed "King of the World," whose speed and style changed the sport of boxing and whose uncompromising stances outsider the ring changed African Americans' sense of who they could be and how they could relate to the dominant white culture.

These Three Kings illustrate many of the fundamental aspects of and close interrelationships between charisma, heroism, and transforming leadership that we will develop in this chapter. First, human beings have a need for heroes and respond to strong, charismatic leadership. They attribute exceptional qualities to those they find charismatic, and they feel a strong emotional attachment to those individuals. In attributing exceptional qualities to charismatic leaders, followers construct cognitive

representations that both develop and maintain heroic images (Goethals & Allison, 2012). Furthermore, many charismatic leaders are often active participants in what we might call leadership theater, designed to give follower audiences what they wish for. John Keegan (1986) puts it well. “The theatrical impulse will be strong in the successful politician, teacher, entrepreneur, athlete and divine, and will be both expected and reinforced by the audiences to which they perform . . . The leader of men . . . can show himself to his followers only through a mask, a mask that he must make for himself, but a mask made in such form as will mark him to men of his time and place as the leader they want and need.” We should add to Keegan’s point the implication that followers are co-conspirators in this leadership theater. Both leaders and followers benefit from the latter’s perception that the former are heroic.

Although we will use MLK, Elvis, and The Champ to make part of our argument, we concentrate on Abraham Lincoln to explore further the role of language, particularly language with religious resonance, in creating the deeply moving connections that bind leaders and followers. The chapter proceeds as follows. First, we explore theoretical perspectives on how evolution has prepared human beings for leadership and heroism. How has it predisposed us to attribute charisma and heroic qualities to some leaders, and how does it lead us to experience deep emotional reactions to those we regard as charismatic? One consequence of evolution, we might say, is that leadership happens, charisma happens, and heroism happens. Second, we consider the dynamics of charisma itself. What is it, and how and when is it experienced? Third, we consider the relationship between charisma and what James MacGregor Burns (1978, 2003) calls transforming leadership. Fourth and finally, using the example of Abraham Lincoln, we consider the role of language tinged with religious referents in creating charismatic reactions and connections.

Evolution, Leadership, Charisma, and Heroism

We start with Sigmund Freud’s early essay on leadership. It is explicitly evolutionary. Freud wrote that he “took up a conjecture of Darwin’s to the effect that the primitive form of human society was that of a horde ruled over despotically by a powerful male” (Freud, 1922, p. 122). These men would often “possess the typical qualities of” a group “in a particularly clearly marked and pure form” and would often “give an impression of greater force and of more freedom of libido” (p. 129). That is, they would be highly prototypical, unusually competent and very powerful. These qualities would combine with a “need for a strong chief” to “invest him with a predominance” which otherwise he might not have. And such leaders could awaken from human’s “archaic heritage” the idea of “a paramount and dangerous personality” who best be followed (Freud, p. 127). They would be both loved and feared, with the fear often converted into love.

It is easy to see how such evolutionarily based dynamics could have led to people attributing to certain leaders what we now call “charisma.” Max Weber (1924) argued that charisma is “a certain quality of an individual personality, by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities.” The word *charisma*, of course, is from the Greek meaning “divine gift of grace” (Riggio & Riggio, 2008), and in that sense it includes a religious element. In fact, Weber noted that the qualities of charismatic individuals “are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary.” That is, charismatic leaders may seem like god-like figures. Consistent with Weber’s emphasis on the divine or supernatural, Freud noted that primal horde leaders are deified in death. We respond to charismatic leaders with reverence and awe. Therefore leaders who could somehow tap into religious feeling and ideation might be seen to be especially charismatic.

Another closely related human evolutionary outcome, according to Carl Jung (1969; Jung & von Franz, 1964), is our readiness to perceive heroes and be drawn to them. Jung proposed the concept of *archetype*, the idea that due to our common evolutionary past and the experience of our ancestors in evolutionary time, we inherit a *collective unconscious* composed of unconscious or latent images, which Jung called archetypes. These latent images can be made conscious or activated when we encounter something in the world that corresponds to them. For example, there is a *God* archetype which makes people readily believe in supernatural supreme beings and to perceive divine qualities in leaders such as kings, popes, and emperors. Archetypes not only lead us to notice things, they also lead us to respond to them with strong emotions of varying kinds. For example, the emotion elicited by the God archetype may be wholly positive or may contain an element of fear, as when Herman Melville in *Moby Dick* describes Captain Ahab as a “grand, ungodly god-like man.” In short, when a person experiences a person or event that seems to have supernatural properties, he or she responds with intense emotion of awe and wonder. Jung suggested that another important archetype is the *hero*. When we encounter people who resemble the unconscious, archetypal image of *hero* we both think of them as heroes and respond to them with strong positive emotions, some of which are similar to those elicited by certain god-like figures. In many cases, heroes seem charismatic, and we respond emotionally to their charismatic qualities, often, as noted above, with feelings such as reverence and awe.

Recent theory and research on leadership and evolution has developed some of these themes. Mark Van Vugt (2006) argues that leadership happens because it is evolutionarily advantageous. Reproductive success is more likely in groups that can meet challenges and solve problems, and they are more likely to do so if they can coordinate their efforts through a combination of leading and following. Groups that have too many chiefs and not enough Indians, or groups where nobody leads, fare less well than

those which achieve an optimal mix of leading and following. Interestingly, that optimal mix can be achieved by some combination of evolved flexibility in individual group members, so that they can either lead or follow, depending on the situation, and “frequency-dependent selection” which produces a stable ratio of leaders to followers (Maynard-Smith, 1982). That is, optimal mixes of leaders and followers can be reached if there are some people who are leaders, some who are followers, and still others who can lead or follow depending on situational demands and group composition. Evolutionary strategies can result in all three.

More recent evolutionary theory, like Freud, also suggests that the persons who emerged as leaders in early evolutionary time were “Big Men” (Van Vugt, Johnson, Kaiser & O’Gorman, 2008), individuals who were perceived to be the most skilled, intelligent, and effective in achieving the group’s goals. Humans would have evolved to make quick attributions of competence among group members, and to follow those seemed to have it. It is far from clear that these evolutionarily based tendencies still serve us well. Van Vugt et al. suggest that evolutionarily based preferences for Big Men or other charismatic leaders may cause a mismatch between the leaders we are more or less unconsciously drawn to and the leaders who are actually most effective in the modern world. Nevertheless, the appeal of many charismatic leaders is an enduring evolutionary consequence. Malcolm Gladwell’s (2005) description of Americans’ attraction to the handsome, graceful, and impressive but inept Warren Harding in the presidential election of 1920 is one of many illustrations.

Thankfully, there is more to leadership selection than evolved tendencies to follow powerful individuals with “paramount and dangerous” personalities. A range of proximal factors affect the extent to which we slavishly fall under the influence of strong, charismatic leaders. First, both Freud and Van Vugt et al. point out resistances to pure despotism and dominance. “Leveling mechanisms” such as gossip and ridicule would have evolved to pave the way for “a more consensual leader-follower decision structure” (Van Vugt et al., p. 270). Weber’s work is also relevant here. When Weber first discussed charisma, he argued that charismatic leaders would be most likely to emerge in times of crisis. That idea can be generalized to the notion that leadership, like heroism, is need-based and consequently different kinds of leaders will appeal in different situations, depending on salient needs (again see Allison & Goethals, this volume).

Evolutionary theory nicely accommodates this notion. While powerful, charismatic leaders may often be preferred, the precise form of leadership we are most drawn to will depend on specific situational demands. Experiments on terror management theory, for example, show that the fear of death increases the relative appeal of charismatic leaders (Solomon, Cohen, Greenberg, & Pyszczynski, 2008). That fear produces a need for reassurance that we are significant, that we are an important part of something great. Similarly, Van Vugt, and Spisak (2008) show that male leaders are preferred at times of intergroup competition but that female leaders are

preferred at times of intragroup competition. The authors claim that evolution teaches us that men are better war-making leaders but women are better peace-keepers. Other research derived directly from evolutionary theory suggests that our preference for attractive leaders is greater when people are concerned about disease threats (White, Kenrick, & Neuberg, 2013). Thus the literature generally supports the idea that while evolution may frequently draw us to strong, charismatic leaders, other specific qualities such as intelligence, generosity, and fairness are also important to followers, depending on the situation.

We see then that Freud, Jung, Weber, and modern evolutionary theory in social psychology all suggest a readiness to be drawn to, to follow, and to attribute exceptional heroic qualities to certain impressive individuals. More or less explicit in their approaches is the additional idea that such individuals become at least quasi-religious figures. The term “hero-worship” suggests as much. We essentially apotheosize many heroes and charismatic leaders.

As we consider Abraham Lincoln later, it will be useful to keep in mind that Freud went further in suggesting what it is about charismatic leaders that makes them so compelling. He argued that people in groups crave leadership but that those who would be leaders must not only be powerful and charismatic, they must themselves “be held in fascination by a strong faith (in an idea) in order to awaken the group’s faith.” He expanded on Gustave LeBon’s crowd theory and suggested that “leaders make themselves felt by means of the ideas in which they themselves are fanatical believers” and that through “the truly magical power of words” leaders acquire a “mysterious and irresistible power” which acts as “sort of domination exercised over us.” This domination can be exerted “by an individual, a work or an idea.” Crucially then, leaders exercise influence through their ideas and their words as well as through their personal magnetism. Both can have motivating force. In the terminology of persuasion research, leadership happens through aspects of both the communicator and the communication. Or, as Howard Gardner frames it, leaders have an impact through both the stories they relate and their embodiment of those stories, that is, through both their words and their personal example.

Three Kings and the Elements of Charisma

How do the Three Kings illustrate the concept of charisma and the elements of charismatic leadership? Martin Luther King was an unusually compelling and arousing orator. Both the “words and music” of his speeches were stirring. His voice, his pacing, and the way he stimulated his audiences to respond, and the way he responded to them in return, all made his words electrifying. His audiences were deeply moved by the charismatic qualities of his speaking style. His voice was powerful, his phrases rhythmic, thus making his speeches, in a word, beautiful. Furthermore,

his speeches employed deeply resonant metaphors that touched on both religious themes and enduring American ideals and images. In his last speech in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1968, King used biblical metaphors such as “I’ve been to the mountain top, and I’ve seen the promised land.” Also, he quoted the quasi-biblical anthem of Union soldiers in the Civil War, the Battle Hymn of the Republic, concluding his speech with the words “Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.” King used his rhetorical skills to push white America to deliver on promises of equality and “justice for all.” His persona, his compelling voice, his ideas, and his passionate attachment to those ideas lent him what Freud called “some magnetic magic.” He related a compelling story compellingly and he embodied it fully. Gardner added that King’s story was one that was “in the air” and resonated with salient needs in the America of the 1960s.

Elvis Presley’s charisma was longer on emotion and shorter on ideas than Martin Luther King’s, at least on the surface. The young Elvis was extremely attractive and his sneering, gyrating, and playful performances led young women to scream in what resembled mass hysteria and young men to rock and roll. His looks, his motion, and his voice combined to make his performances electric. But was there a story that his charisma related and that he embodied? There was in fact a message, that though implicit was as profound as King’s. It was that people could cut loose at least for a time, and embrace and experience their passions, and dress and sing the way they wanted to, and more generally be what they truly were. Superficially, they could have long hair and sideburns. More deeply, they could express their individuality. One element of this was noted by the photographer Alfred Wertheimer, who remarked to the effect that Elvis’ performances reminded young women that they had a body below the waist, and that they could move it. A more profound element of Elvis’s story was his racial crossover, the idea that a white man could move beyond conventional norms and sing songs by black artists and dress in stereotypically black clothes. Black and white audiences could enjoy the same music, whether written by or performed by blacks or whites. It may not have been Elvis’ intention to relate this story, but he told it through his total embrace of black gospel and rhythm and blues and his comfort with himself in embracing it. Like King’s story, Elvis’ resonated with a need in the culture to break loose from outdated and stultifying mores. As Elvis’ contemporary Chuck Berry expressed it: “Hail, hail rock and roll, deliver me from the days of old.”

Muhammad Ali’s charisma combines compelling physical and athletic artistry, wit and rhetoric that is both silly and profound, and an embodiment of religious commitment that is extraordinary. Like King, he spoke up for African Americans, but he went beyond asking white Americans to accept them. He argued that blacks should live their own lives, take their own names, marry their own women, and be exactly who they wanted to be. His humorous poems and biting repartee early in his career led him

to be labeled the “Louisville Lip.” He used his celebrity as a boxer and composer of clever doggerel to speak seriously about justice. By refusing to be drafted into the US Army in 1967, he showed that he was willing to sacrifice his career for his religious beliefs. To the end, he never gave up combining the serious with the ridiculous. He said of his legacy, “I guess I’d settle for being remembered only as a great boxing champion who became a preacher and a champion of his people. And I wouldn’t even mind if folks forgot how pretty I was” (Remnick, 1998, p. 306). Slowly, an initially hostile white America accepted his message that black people could live as they wanted in American society. Maybe they even acknowledged that there was something to his boast, “I am the greatest.”

In short, the Three Kings together illustrate fundamental aspects of charismatic and heroic leadership. All three had exceptional personas. All three made an emotional connection with their audiences. All three related and embodied compelling stories. All three enacted theatrical leadership that gave people what they wanted and needed. Finally, two of them, King and Ali, used words, delivered in riveting styles, often touching on religious precepts, to influence their fellow human beings’ thoughts, feelings, and behavior.

Charisma, Heroism, and Transforming Leadership

As impressed as we are by the charisma and heroic leadership of the Three Kings, characterizing them as transforming, as we did at the outset, requires some explanation. We do in fact think of them as transforming leaders. The term “transforming leadership” was introduced and contrasted with “transactional leadership” by James MacGregor Burns in his seminal 1978 book, *Leadership*. A somewhat different distinction between transformational and transactional leadership was later detailed in research by Bernard Bass and his colleagues (e.g., Bass & Avolio, 1993). Burns preferred the initial conceptualization and developed it further in his 2003 book, *Transforming Leadership*. Transforming, or transcendent, leadership involves (1) moving followers to higher levels of motivation and morality, (2) empowering followers so much so that they might become leaders themselves, and (3) producing “radical” change that “cuts . . . profoundly,” and that causes “a metamorphosis in form or structure, a change in the very condition or nature of a thing” (Burns, 2003, p. 24). Do the Three Kings meet this high standard? We think they do. We believe all three contributed to fundamental changes in society, especially with regard to how black and white people could both be themselves and respect each other. In the 1950s and 1960s, all three empowered people to think and move beyond the conforming and often racist pressures of America at mid-century. They all had charisma, and all used it to transform, through both their words and their example.

The Charisma of Abraham Lincoln

Perhaps the most heroic, transforming leader in American history was Abraham Lincoln. Through words and actions, he moved followers to higher levels of motivation and morality, he empowered them, and he led profound transformations in American society. Lincoln brought the country through the Civil War and thereby produced a result, the ending of slavery in the United States, which was, he said in his second Inaugural Address, more “fundamental and astounding” than either North or South had initially anticipated. Was Lincoln charismatic? We believe that not all heroes or transforming leaders are. Harry Truman comes to mind as a noncharismatic transforming leader. In Lincoln’s case we have in the end, we believe—given human beings’ capacity to construct charismatic images, to attribute exceptional qualities where they may not initially be obvious, and to be attached to and moved by those who seem to have those qualities—a surprisingly robust instance of charisma, deeply rooted in his words, and especially their religious resonance.

Consider first Lincoln’s persona. Did it, or he, have anything like “magnetic magic” as an individual in his own time? It is useful to remember that Lincoln was a very canny politician, and certainly understood John Keegan’s principles noted earlier. He was an exceptionally active participant in leadership theater, giving, as best he could, follower audiences what they needed and wished for. First, Lincoln contrived to show himself. He simply wanted to be seen. He gambled that reaction to the view would be positive, given people’s tendency to view leaders through a lens of heroism. In his trilogy of Civil War narrative histories, Shelby Foote (1958, pp. 802–803) argues that Lincoln made himself unusually available to the public. As more and more people saw him, or heard from others who had, they liked what they saw or heard. Foote explains “. . . he received all comers, and for the most part received them with a sympathy which, by their own admission, equaled or exceeded their deserving. He shook their hands at frequent public receptions in the White House. . . ; he attended the theater, a form of relaxation which kept him still within their view; he drove or rode, almost daily, through the spokelike streets of the hive-dense city, returning the looks and salutes of men and women and children along the way. Thousands touched him, heard him, saw him at close range, and scarcely one in all those thousands ever forgot the sight of that tall figure, made still taller by the stovepipe hat, and the homely drape of the shawl across the shoulders. Never forgotten, because it was unforgettable, the impression remained, incredible and enduring, imperishable in its singularity—and finally, dear.” Similarly, in Richmond, on April 4, 1865, a formerly enslaved African American woman touched the president as he toured the largely abandoned, burning city and rejoiced “I know that I am free. I have seen father Abraham and felt him.” In short, Lincoln’s odd appearance and gracious manner became enduringly compelling. His persona became charismatic. That was as much as Lincoln could wish for.

Many people got a closer look through his widely distributed (often by Lincoln) photograph. Foote notes that his countenance became “the most familiar face in American history.” Maybe this was not advantageous. “The Paris correspondent of *The New York Times*” said he looked like a condemned murderer of servant girls, and that “such a face is enough to ruin the best of causes.” However, people’s needs for a charismatic hero led many to convince themselves that his face revealed inspiring heroic qualities. Foote wrote “you saw it not so much for what it was, as for what it held. Suffering was in it; so were understanding, kindness, and determination.” A young soldier wrote after a Lincoln visit to the front: “None of us to our dying today can forget that countenance . . . Concentrated in that one great, strong yet tender face, the agony of the life and death struggle of the hour was revealed as we had never seen it before. With a new understanding, we knew why we were soldiers.” Thus Lincoln’s appearance, at a distance and close up, had an inspiring, empowering effect. It made charisma happen. A final point regarding Lincoln’s appearance and persona, especially as it is described by Shelby Foote and others, is that Lincoln may have activated Jung’s *wise old man* archetype. That archetypal figure is seen in fictional characters such as Obi-Wan “Ben” Kenobi from the *Star Wars* films and Dumbledore in the Harry Potter novels. Resonating with such an archetype would have heightened Lincoln’s emotional impact.

Lincoln worked hardest to make an emotional connection with his words, spoken and written. Then and even more now, his impact comes through those words. They may have more impact today when read by a Sam Waterston or enacted by a Daniel Day-Lewis. Or, people reading them may imagine the weary Lincoln writing or speaking them, or call to mind Daniel Chester French’s iconic sculpture in Washington, DC’s Lincoln Memorial, thereby adding to their emotional and intellectual impact. Still, it is the words themselves that most move people. What is it about them that gives them such power? As with Martin Luther King, one important element is Lincoln’s use of religious imagery and biblical allusion. Sometimes Lincoln uses biblical language quite directly, sometimes he simply alludes to religious themes or content. Biblical language allowed Lincoln to use rhythms and phrases that would have been familiar to large and diverse audiences. The Second Great Awakening of Christian fervor in America in the nineteenth century would have made such language highly resonant as people pondered Lincoln’s meanings.

In his famous house divided speech delivered in Springfield, Illinois, upon accepting the Republican Party nomination for the US Senate in 1858, Lincoln memorably argued “A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure, permanently, half slave and half free.” The house metaphor might have had impact by itself, but surely its biblical origins gave it additional power. Lincoln was speaking to an audience composed of people who would have varied widely in their education. Of course he himself had very little formal instruction. He attended “blab schools,” he said, “by littles,” not having much more than

one full year in total of schooling. But Lincoln had read all and absorbed much of the King James edition of the Bible. His audiences would also likely be familiar with its ideas and cadences, whether they were literate or not. The house divided metaphor derived from language attributed to Jesus in Matthew 3:25: “And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.” By using language from a familiar, revered text with soothing rhythms and inspirational imagery, Lincoln was more likely to move his listeners.

Similarly, Lincoln’s presidential speeches and writings frequently mention or appeal to God. In doing so, he often implied that God was on his (the Union) side. At the end of his December 1862 message to Congress, a speech some of whose last words are set to music in Aaron Copland’s *Lincoln Portrait*, the president concludes his appeal for Congressional support for emancipation using balanced phrasing, alliteration, and appeals to honor and eternity. And ultimately he asserts divine support for this position. “In *giving* freedom to the *slave*, we *assure* freedom to the *free*—honorable like in what we give, and what we preserve. We shall nobly save, or meanly lose, the last, best hope to earth. Other means may succeed; this could not fail. The way is plain, peaceful, generous, just—a way which, if followed, the world will forever applaud, and God must forever bless” (italics in original).

Another example comes from the Emancipation Proclamation, signed a month after Lincoln’s 1862 message to Congress, on January 1, 1863. Lincoln concludes a dry, legalistic document full of “Whereas,” “Now, therefore I . . .” and “by virtue of the power, and for the purpose aforesaid . . .” with appeals to important values and divine approval. The document is often criticized for its legalistic, stilted wording, and also for aspects of its substance. However, given the assertion of Constitutional prerogative in the Proclamation, that tone is appropriate. Still, Lincoln was happy to add toward the conclusion “And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God.”

Sometimes Lincoln’s use of biblical imagery and appeals to the divine are slightly more subtle. In his First Inaugural address, a lengthy discourse on the unconstitutionality and impracticality of secession, Lincoln suggests that passions that “may have strained” and threaten to “break our bonds of affection” may be eased when “the mystic chords of memory” are touched “by the better angels of our nature.” In his famous Gettysburg Address, delivered in November, 1863, Lincoln’s uses religious terminology without a direct appeal for God’s assistance. The speech touches on themes of birth and death, nation and people, and dedication and honor. It famously begins poetically: “Four score . . .” That short phrase both contains a rhyme and uses a word, “score,” more familiar from the Bible than anywhere else. Somewhat later Lincoln uses the words “consecrate,” “hallow,” and “consecrated”: “But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate—we

can not consecrate—we can not hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or subtract.” Toward the end, in a more explicit religious phrasing, Lincoln states that included in the “unfinished work” and “great task remaining before us” is to ensure “that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom.” The speech, then, is laced with religious, quasi-religious, and biblical wording. Such wording struck a familiar chord, creating a positive association, and which added to the charismatic appeal of the speech. It helped produce a charismatic emotional reaction, or as we have framed it earlier, make charisma happen.

The text of two short speeches adorn the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC. The Gettysburg Address is one. The other is the Second Inaugural Address, often regarded as Lincoln’s greatest speech. The first part of the latter refers to the “reasonably satisfactory and encouraging” “progress of our arms” and discusses the political fractures which brought war, even though “all dreaded it.” Then Lincoln asserts that slavery was the cause of the war and notes that neither side “anticipated that the *cause* of the war might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease.” In the latter portions of the address, Lincoln turns to the Bible and to God, and considers the role of the divine in both starting and potentially ending the war. He includes both direct biblical quotations and allusions to biblical passages. His audience would be familiar with both. Referring to Union and Confederate sides, Lincoln said “Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God’s assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men’s faces; but let us judge not that we be not judged.” Here Lincoln refers to both old and new testaments. “Bread from the sweat of other men’s faces” touches base with Genesis 3:19 “in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,” while “let us judge not that we be not judged” is Matthew 7:1. Lincoln then goes on to say “The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes.” This passage may call to mind Job Chapter 42, where Job speaks to God, “I know you can do all things, no purpose of yours can be thwarted . . . surely I spoke of things that I do not understand . . .” Here Lincoln’s words reflect his immersion in the Bible though they do not quote directly. Again, to the extent that his audience has been immersed in the same text, Lincoln’s words can connect with them. Later Lincoln quotes the Bible directly: “Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!” (Matthew 18:7) and “the judgments of the Lord, are true and righteous altogether” (Psalms 19:9).

Interestingly in this address Lincoln doesn’t claim as much knowledge of God’s will as in earlier speeches. In his December, 1862 message to Congress Lincoln talks about his way being “plain, peaceful, generous, just . . .” and says that it is a way that “God must forever bless.” In contrast, in the Second Inaugural, Lincoln, like Job, does not claim to understand

God's purposes. He argues that it is not illogical to think that God gave "both North and South this terrible war" but he doesn't assert that he knows God's purposes. God may or may not will "that it continue." Lincoln's uncertainty about God's will and purpose also comes into focus in the first phrases of the climatic last paragraph of the Second Inaugural: "With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right *as God gives us to see the right*, let us strive on to finish the work we are in..." (italics added).

Regardless of the gloss Lincoln gives to his understanding of the Almighty's purpose, he adorns his views with his own sense that he is doing God's will, as best he can divine it. His characterization of himself as doing God's bidding, expressed in language either taken directly from scripture, or using scriptural forms and words, likely went far in creating a charismatic reaction in his audiences. At the time Lincoln's appearance, voice, and demeanor may have added to that reaction. Now, only the words, the photographs, and the interpretations of numerous readers and actors shape our response. For many, the response is emotional in a way that is consistent with the way Freud, Weber, and others have described the impact of charismatic leadership.

Conclusion

In considering ideas from Freud, Weber, Jung, and Burns, and the cases of our Three Kings and Abraham Lincoln, we see that elements of leadership, charisma, and heroism are closely entwined. Elsewhere we (Allison & Goethals, 2011, 2013; Goethals & Allison, 2012) have argued that all heroes are leaders. We think that many, perhaps most, heroes are also charismatic, although we pointed to Harry Truman as a heroic leader who was not charismatic. Furthermore, although many charismatic leaders and charismatic heroes are transforming, Burns and others have argued persuasively that charisma can lead to villainy as well as transforming leadership. We need look no further than Hitler or Jim Jones. Still, examples where charisma, heroism, and transforming leadership go together are legion. These elements are clearly tightly linked.

The four individuals we have discussed here illustrate the way important leaders combine the elements of charisma. Elvis Presley's music and especially his riveting performances illustrate the charismatic qualities of a magnetic physical presence. His mostly implicit message about living in ways that were not constrained by conventional standards of dress, music, and interracial interaction makes him transforming. Muhammad Ali added wit and a serious consideration of how African Americans can live freely and proudly in the United States to his physical magnetism to become a transforming, charismatic leader. Martin Luther King and Abraham Lincoln used eloquent language with religious resonance to become transforming leaders. The impact of King's words and ideas was

heightened by his compelling speaking style. In Lincoln's case, there are indications that his manner and appearance made more moving the message he so eloquently expressed in his words. We hope that our consideration of these charismatic and transforming heroes will help foster a fuller understanding of the dynamics of leadership.

Note

Portions of this chapter were based on material in G. R. Goethals (2013). Charismatic reactions to individuals and ideas: Looks, language and Lincoln. *Religions*, 4, 209–215.

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