HUMILITY AS A LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTE:
UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTS OF
HUMILITY ON MILITARY
LEADERSHIP

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
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JESSE N. KADEL, MAJOR, U.S. ARMY
B.A., Northwest Nazarene University, Nampa, Idaho, 2007

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
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14. ABSTRACT

The concept of humility as a leadership attribute appears in leadership theories and command philosophies throughout the military and is prevalent in many leadership discussions and counseling. But U.S. Army leadership doctrine does not include humility as a necessary characteristic of effective leadership. This study researched the role of humility as an attribute and its effects on military leadership to ascertain the viability of its inclusion in leadership discussions as a vital element of leadership. Four case studies were conducted on prominent military leaders who exhibited humble leader behaviors. George C. Marshall, Oliver P. Smith, Harold G. Moore, and Colin Powell were highly successful and influential leaders whose military careers revealed insight into the effects of humility. Each leader's demonstrated humility enhanced their effectiveness as leaders, enabled them to inspire a higher sense of loyalty and commitment within their respective organizations, and contributed to a higher level of emotional intelligence for each. Additionally, humility enabled leaders to exert long-term influence and contributes to a more positive long-term influence on their organizations.

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Name of Candidate: Major Jesse N. Kadel

Thesis Title: Humility as a Leadership Attribute: Understanding the Effects of Humility on Military Leadership

Approved by:

_____, Thesis Committee Chair
LTC Gregg M. Haley, M.A.

_____, Member
Thomas G. Bradbeer, Ph.D.

_____, Member
Gerald F. Sewell, M.A.

Accepted this 15th day of June 2018 by:

_____, Director, Graduate Degree Programs
Robert F. Baumann, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

HUMILITY AS A LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTE: UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTS
OF HUMILITY ON MILITARY LEADERSHIP by MAJ Jesse N. Kadel, 99 pages.

The concept of humility as a leadership attribute appears in leadership theories and
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

<u>Overview</u>

In the spring of 2015, Major General James Longo presided over the 2nd Cavalry Regiment (2CR) change of command as COL D. A. Sims relinquished command to COL John Meyer. Having served in 2CR as a battery commander recently and at the time of this ceremony served as an aide to MG Longo, I had the rare opportunity to observe these senior leaders at a moment that was somewhat defining of their character. Before the ceremony, I witnessed COL Sims speak privately to MG Longo about his speech. He emphasized his wish that MG Longo not speak about his accomplishments as the regimental commander but to focus on the accomplishments of the soldiers of the regiment.

Soon after this conversation, MG Longo began his speech by immediately recounting this conversation to the vast crowd that was attending the ceremony. He used this conversation as an illustration of what he viewed as the number one attribute that made COL Sims an exceptional commander. He said something to the effect of, "the reason I am so impressed by D.A.'s performance as the 77th Colonel of the Regiment is that he constantly displays what I like to call the eighth Army Value. And that value is humility."

Leaders who exhibit humility are those that consistently promote a team mindset, are willing to share in the hardships of their subordinates and do not emphasize their successes but that of the team. MG Longo is one of the countless military leaders who often promoted the concept of humility as a desirable leadership attribute or essential part

of successful Army leadership. The concept of humility as a leadership attribute appears in leadership theories and command philosophies throughout the military and is prevalent in many leadership discussions. Concurrently, humility is often left out of such discussions or is omitted because of a paradigm that the concept is associated with weakness or a lack of charisma.[1]

The purpose of this study is to research humility as a leadership attribute in the context of military leadership. The scope of the study focuses on the concept of humility, defined as a leader attribute, as it affects leadership styles and the effectiveness thereof.

Primary Research Question

What is the role of humility as a leadership attribute in the context of military leadership?

Secondary Research Questions

1. How has humility affected known military leaders' legacies, and does it enable greater leader effectiveness?

2. What is the function of humility in existing leadership models and what is its effect on different leadership styles?

Regardless of how the military community discusses it, multiple leadership theories list humility as a primary quality or trait, and this study examines the role of humility within the framework of these theories. Humble leadership, Transformational leadership, and servant leadership are the three leadership theories that this study

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[1] Joseph Doty, "Humility as a Leadership Attribute," *Military Review* (September-October 2000): 89.

explores. Humble leadership as a leadership theory was theorized and has been extensively studied and tested primarily by Bradley Owens and David Hekman. This relatively new theory focuses on the leader's demonstrated humble behaviors and how a leader affects subordinate productivity and organizational performance by focusing on subordinate development.

Transformational leadership is another proven leadership model that qualifies humility as a necessary leadership attribute. According to Patterson, transformational leadership inspires subordinates' commitment due to the focus on the organizational objectives. Follower commitment is built on the objectives and followers are empowered to reach those objectives.[2] Humility is a key attribute of transformational leadership and causes the leader to inspire long-term commitment to achieve organizational goals. This research examines these and other leadership models in more detail and the role of humility therein.

First theorized by Robert Greenleaf, servant leadership focuses on the leader as an individual. "The servant-leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead."[3] Other studies on servant leadership, notably by Kathleen Patterson of Regent University, agree with Greenleaf's assertions that servant leadership is made up of a set of virtues, including humility, which enables the servant leader to attain a moral excellence.[4]

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[2] Doty, "Humility as a Leadership Attribute," 89.

[3] Robert Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977).

[4] Kathleen Patterson, "Servant Leadership: A Theoretical Model," Regent University, August 2003, 2, accessed October 14, 2017, http://www.regent.edu/acad/sls

The word "humility" only occurs once in the current version of FM 6-22, *Leader Development*, and the word "humble" only twice. Humility is also not listed as an essential leadership attribute in the Army Leadership Requirements Model. Army leadership doctrine excludes humility as a leadership trait, virtue, or attribute that Army leaders should cultivate. This study will research the function of humility in military leadership and examine whether it should be included in future doctrine as a leadership attribute or whether it should continue to be left out as a non-essential attribute of military leadership.

"Toxic Leadership" is a common discussion topic that seems to prevail current dialogue about Army leaders. There have been numerous articles written about the systemic problem and the negative results of narcissism or egotistical behavior displayed by both military and civilian leaders. This behavior or leadership style can also be defined as careerism or compliance focused leadership. It may also be construed as an effective leadership style because these types of leader are able to get results from their subordinates and organizations. This study examines the long-term effects of this style of leadership and whether it should be viewed as effective or not. Army Doctrine has attempted to address toxic or counterproductive leadership in a variety of ways. ADP 6-22, *Army Leadership,* defines toxic leadership as "a combination of self-centered attitudes, motivations, and behaviors that have adverse effects on subordinates, the

/publications/conference_proceedings/servant_leadership_roundtable/2003pdf/patterson_servant_lead ership.pdf.

organization, and mission performance."[5] This study will not extensively research the

effects of toxic or counterproductive leadership but will examine the effects of humility

in contrast to it.

The quality of leaders in the current operating environment will undoubtedly

make the difference between success or failure on the battlefield. The U.S. Army has a

responsibility to the American people to equip its forces with the most effective leaders

possible to care for the men and women who serve this country. Moreover, it is the

responsibility of Army leaders to practice continuous self-improvement by developing

astute emotional intelligence. Dr. Daniel Goleman, a bestselling author and authority on

emotional intelligence, defines it as, "abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and

persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulse and delay gratification; to regulate

one's moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathize and to

hope."[6] This concept is congruent with the U.S. Army Leadership Requirements Model

and its emphasis on the importance of Army leaders to exercise empathy. This study will

seek to prove whether humility is a characteristic that enables a leader to authentically

cultivate emotional intelligence and how the relationship between humility and emotional

intelligence affects military leadership.

By examining the role of humility in military leadership, this study aims to

contribute to the current literature on how the Army can breed a culture of more

authentic, empathetic, and emotionally intelligent leaders. Leaders who work to improve

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[5] Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 6-22, *Army Leadership* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2012), 3.

[6] Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1995), 34.

the culture of their organizations and the lives of their subordinates rather than focusing on their personal success will undoubtedly improve the quality of leaders that follow them. Consequently, combatting the presence of narcissism and careerist behaviors in military leaders contributes to a more effective organizational climate overall.

There are many examples of senior leaders who cultivated humility as a necessary part of their leadership style and achieved extraordinary outcomes in their organizations as a result. This thesis will explore these examples as case studies and research how humility contributed to their effectiveness as leaders. In these case studies, research will focus on a variety of each case study subjects' leadership experiences over the span of tactical, organizational and strategic levels of command or staff positions to provide greater breadth to the study.

To be sure, leadership discussions often focus on the idea of charisma and its necessity for effective leadership. There is certainly an argument against humility as a necessary leadership attribute because it can be considered the antithesis of charisma or hubris, which are argued to have value to a leader. Just as there are numerous leaders whose humility contributed to their success and effectiveness, there are just as many successful leaders who famously did not display any humility while still achieving successful results. This study examines the function of humility in leader's careers and whether there is a difference in humble leader's overall legacies as opposed to other less humble leaders.

<u>Assumptions</u>

This study assumes that promotion boards and evaluative procedures of Army leaders will continue to become more stringent in selection for command opportunities

and promotion. As the Army develops and evolves its leadership doctrine, standards of effectiveness will likewise increase. Concurrently, an increasing amount of studies and literature on the idea of humble leadership continues to emerge. This study maintains the assumption that the concept of humility as a leadership attribute will not remain at the fringes of leadership doctrine in the future and submits this research to add to the discussion.

Another assumption is that most leaders in the Army view humility as a positive trait or attribute. As previously mentioned, the concept of humility is present during casual conversations, speeches, counseling, and leader development discussions. It would, therefore, be logical to assume that most leaders encourage their subordinates to cultivate humility and regularly include it in their counseling and leader development programs.

This study also assumes that there is a common misconception about the definition of humility. The assumption is that countless military leaders understand that humility as a leadership attribute is defined as this study asserts and work to integrate the concept into leadership discussions. However, many leaders fail to properly define humility and its role in leadership models, thereby creating a stigma surrounding the term.

<div align="center">Definitions</div>

Effective Leadership: To thoroughly examine humility and its role in military leadership, it is important to define what effective leadership is. ADP 6-22 states: "An organization with effective leadership has a clear purpose, common methods, and ordered processes; sustains itself; and accomplishes its missions. Effective organizations rely on

leaders to balance uncertainty, remain flexible, and provide a climate where subordinates have the latitude to explore options."[7]

Therefore, effective leadership can be defined as the method or process of leadership that enables mission accomplishment by providing clear purpose and direction, while fostering a climate of subordinate empowerment. This study will primarily look at how humility may contribute to effective leadership based on this definition.

Empathy: ADRP 6-22 defines empathy as "the ability to see something from another person's point of view, to identify with, and enter into another person's feelings and emotions."[8] It is defined as an essential attribute of a leader's character along with the Army values, warrior ethos and service ethos, and discipline. Empathy is an important leadership attribute and is closely related to humility.

Attribute: ADRP 6-22 states, "attributes describe how an individual behaves and learns within an environment. The leader attributes are character, presence, and intellect. These attributes represent the values and identity of the leader (character) with how the leader is perceived by followers and others (presence), and with the mental and social faculties the leader applies in the act of leading (intellect)."[9] Merriam-Webster defines

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[7] Department of the Army, ADP 6-22, *Army Leadership,* 2.

[8] Department of the Army, Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP). 6-22, *Army Leadership* (Washington, DC, Government Printing Office, 2012), 3-3.

[9] Department of the Army, ADRP 6-22, *Army Leadership*, 1-5.

the word as "a quality, character, or characteristic ascribed to someone or something."[10] This study will research if humility should be included in Army leadership theory as a primary attribute along with character, presence, and intellect as a part of the Army leadership requirements model.[11]

Trait: Merriam-Webster defines the word as a distinguishing quality (as of personal character).[12] Army Leadership doctrine no longer formally defines what a trait is, but FM 22-100, *Military Leadership*, published in 1961 defines leadership traits as "personal qualities of direct value to the leader in gaining the willing obedience, confidence, respect, and loyal cooperation of his men in accomplishing his mission."[13] In a study on trait-based leadership, Stephen J. Zacarro states, "leader traits can be defined as relatively coherent and integrated patterns of personal characteristics, reflecting a range of individual differences, that foster consistent leadership effectiveness across a variety of group and organizational situations."[14] In the same article, Zacarro further defines the term in the context of leadership thus:

> Traits have traditionally referred to personality attributes. However, in line
> with most modern leader trait perspectives, the qualities that differentiate leaders

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[10] Merriam-Webster, "Attribute," accessed October 29, 2017, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/attribute.

[11] Department of the Army, ADRP 6-22, *Army Leadership*, 1-5.

[12] Merriam-Webster, "Trait," accessed October 29, 2017, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/trait.

[13] Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 22-100, *Military Leadership* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1961), 3.

[14] Stephen J. Zacarro, "Leader Traits and Attributes: The Nature of Leadership," *American Psychologist* 62, no. 1 (January 2007): 7, accessed October 29, 2017, doi:10.1037/0003-066X.62.1.6.

from nonleaders are far ranging and include not only personality attributes but also motives, values, cognitive abilities, social and problem-solving skills, and expertise. The emphasis in this definition is on the variety of individual differences that predict leader effectiveness.[15]

By this definition, traits and attributes are often used interchangeably, but for this study, Zacarro's definition of the word will be used. Traits are those individual characteristics that govern an individual's tendencies, behavior, or personality.

Virtue: Virtue has its place in any leadership discussion and is defined as conformity to a standard of right or particular moral excellence.[16] Many religious texts contain various sets of virtues as desirable personal characteristics one should cultivate. This study will examine certain publications that address humility defined as a virtue but will not focus on religious definitions since the scope of this study will remain in the realm of military leadership.

Humility: Various definitions of the word humility certainly exist in the context of leadership. Commonly defined as "lowness, small stature; insignificance; baseness, littleness of mind, or in Church Latin, meekness."[17] Humility in the context of leadership is not synonymous with meekness, docility, or submissiveness. Recent studies on the idea of humble leadership concluded that humility is, "an interpersonal characteristic that emerges in social contexts that connotes a manifested willingness to view oneself

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[15] Zacarro, "Leader Traits and Attributes," 8.

[16] Merriam-Webster, "Virtue," accessed October 29, 2017, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/virtue.

[17] Online Etymology Dictionary, accessed October 14, 2017, http://www.etymonline.com/.

accurately, a displayed appreciation of others' strengths and contributions, and teachability."[18]

The word humility derives from the Latin word, "humus" meaning "earth"[19] and the Italian word "umilta" which refers to the code of submission of individuals to the group interest.[20] In the context of this study, humility is defined as an individual quality that places the interests of the organization above that of a leader or specific person. Also, based on the definitions of attribute, trait, and virtue, this study will proceed with the definition of humility as an attribute. Humility as a leadership attribute is an evaluative attitude that enables authentic self-awareness and inspires emotional maturity.[21] An authentically humble leader is one that possesses the psychological maturity to understand that egotistical motivations should not be a part of a leader's philosophy. This research will study other definitions of humility and discussion on its role in leadership theories in greater detail in the literature review.

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[18] B. P. Owens and D. R. Hekman, "How Does Leader Humility Influence Team Performance? Exploring the Mechanisms of Contagion and Collective Promotion Focus," *Academy of Management Journal* 59, no. 3 (2015): 1088-111, doi:10.5465/amj.2013.0660.

[19] Online Etymology Dictionary.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Stephen Hare, "The Paradox of Moral Humility," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (April 1996): 235-41, accessed September 7, 2017, http://www.jstor.org/stable/20009861.

Hubris: It is necessary to define hubris since it is the antithesis of humility. Hubris is defined as excessive pride or self-confidence, or arrogance.[22] The word is derived from the Greek word "Hybristikos" meaning "given to wantonness" or "Insolent".[23] In *The Origin of Failure*, Pasquale Massimo Picone states, "The term hubris first appeared in the 1960s and1970s in the field of psychology, where it was conceived of as an excess of confidence about being correct or obtaining a certain outcome combined with excessive pride."[24] It is important to note that this definition of hubris is congruent with ADP 6-22's definition of "toxic leadership."[25]

Emotional Intelligence: As stated earlier in this chapter, Goleman defines emotional intelligence as, "abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulse and delay gratification; to regulate one's moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathize and to hope."[26] Another definition of the term by Peter Salovery and John D. Mayer is, "the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and other's feeling and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking

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[22] Merriam-Webster, "Hubris," accessed October 29, 2017, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hubris.

[23] Online Etymology Dictionary.

[24] P. M. Picone, G. B. Dagnino, and A. Mina, "The Origin of Failure: A Multidisciplinary Appraisal of the Hubris Hypothesis and Proposed Research Agenda," *Academy of Management Perspectives* 28, no. 4 (January): 449, accessed November 22, 2017, http://dx.doi.org/10.5465/amp.2012.0177.

[25] Department of the Army, ADP 6-22, *Army Leadership,* 3.

[26] Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, 34.

and actions."[27] Gerald Sewell defines the term in the context of military leadership in his

book, *Emotional Intelligence for Military Leaders*, stating:

> Emotional intelligence enables the understanding of the social skills necessary to discern and apply the appropriate influence techniques in the variety of situations and contexts leaders must face. Emotional intelligence also facilitates the ability to establish mutually beneficial relationships. This ability, long referred to in the Army as tact and interpersonal skills, is in fact the skills and competencies of emotional intelligence.[28]

Emotional Intelligence is, therefore, according to numerous studies, an important

component of effective leadership because it enables a greater sense of social aptitude

and self-awareness. In the context of this study on humility in military leadership,

emotional intelligence may be summarized as the ability to manage one's emotions and

impulses to adapt one's actions as appropriate to the environment.

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[27] Gerald F. Sewell, *Emotional Intelligence for Military Leaders* (Middletown, DE: n.p., 2014), 1.

[28] Ibid., 5.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter intends to research the presence of humility in existing literary works and to answer the secondary research question, what is the function of humility in existing leadership models and what is its effect on different leadership styles? This chapter will explore relevant literature in which humility is mentioned, studied, or included. Section I will begin with a historical examination of U.S. Army leadership doctrine, research will be conducted to find whether humility has been present in past versions of doctrine, what its role in military leadership has been, and whether it's exclusion from official doctrine has always been the case.

Section II will examine what military leaders have written about the topic of humility. This study assumes that most military leaders view humility as a positive or desirable attribute that should be encouraged in their subordinates, and this section will seek to confirm that section by studying publications by military leaders. Finally, section III of this chapter will study three prominent leadership theories in which humility may be documented as a key aspect or characteristic. As mentioned in chapter 1, the three leadership theories that will be studied are Humble Leadership, Transformational Leadership, and Servant Leadership.

Section I: U.S. Army Leadership Doctrine

This section will examine historical and current U.S. Army leadership doctrine and whether it has ever codified the concept of humility as a necessary aspect of effective

leadership. The U.S. Army began officially releasing publications on military leadership in 1948. The first publication released was Training Circular No. 6, titled *Leadership*. This publication lists certain principles of leadership such as "Know your job, Know your men and look out for their welfare, set the example, and take responsibility for your actions, regardless of their outcome." TC No. 6 also lists major leadership traits such as knowledge, tact, bearing, courage, dependability, integrity, and lastly unselfishness.[29]

FM 22-10 is the first field manual that the Department of the Army published that addresses leadership specifically. In this manual, the leadership traits listed are slightly different and include humility as a necessary leadership trait for military leaders. In this publication, humility is defined as "freedom from arrogance and unjustifiable pride."[30]

FM 22-100, *Command and Leadership for the Small Unit Leader*, published two years later, contains the same list of leadership traits as TC No. 6, including unselfishness, but goes into further detail to define each trait. The manual states:

> The unselfish leader is one who does not take advantage of the situation for personal pleasure, gain, or safety at the expense of the unit. Men want a leader who will see that they have the best he can get for them by honest means under any circumstances. He must put the comfort, pleasures, and recreation of subordinates before his own . . . to be a true leader, the commander must share the danger, hardships, and discomforts that his men are experiencing.[31]

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[29] Department of the Army, Training Circular No. 6, *Leadership* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1948), 2.

[30] Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 22-10, *Leadership* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1951), 17.

[31] Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 22-100, *Command and Leadership for the Small Unit Leader* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1953), 22.

Based on the definitions of humility in leadership stated earlier, unselfishness is an outcome or manifested trait of a humble leader. Leaders who are genuinely humble will undoubtedly exhibit unselfishness in how they treat their subordinates. "If the unit is commended for some outstanding work, the commander should pass along the credit for the achievement to the subordinates who made it possible. No subordinate can respect a superior who only takes the credit for the good work and ideas."[32]

The next three versions of FM 22-100, published in 1961, 1965, and 1973 list "unselfishness" as a leadership trait with the same description of how it applies to a military leader. The next FM 22-100, *Army Leadership* version was published in 1990 and completely re-framed how Army leadership was codified. This publication dropped any mention of unselfishness or leadership traits. Instead, it lists "The Four Elements of the Professional Army Ethics" as Loyalty, Duty, Selfless Service, and Integrity.[33] As a part of selfless service, it states "As a leader, you must be the greatest servant in your unit. Your rank and position are not personal rewards. You earn them so that you can serve your subordinates, your unit, and your nation."[34]

The first mention of the word humility in U.S. Army leadership doctrine since FM 22-10 was first published in 1951 occurs in FM 22-100, *Army Leadership, Be, Know, Do*, published in August 1999. The word only occurs once in a vignette about GEN George

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[32] Department of the Army, FM 22-100, *Command and Leadership for the Small Unit Leader*, 22.

[33] Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 22-100, *Military Leadership* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1990), 29.

[34] Ibid., 30.

C. Marshall. "GA Marshall understood that getting what he wanted meant asking, not demanding. His humble and respectful approach with lawmakers won his troops what they needed; arrogant demands would have never worked. Because he never sought anything for himself (his five-star rank was awarded over his objections), his credibility soared."[35] Again, Army doctrine focuses on the strategic level leadership traits of GEN Marshall, and how his humility at that level contributed to his effectiveness.

FM 6-22, *Army Leadership*, published in 2006 mentions humility only once as well, but in the context of leadership without authority. "Often leadership without authority arises when one must take the initiative to alert superiors of a potential problem or predict consequences if the organization remains on its current course. Informal leaders without formal authority need to exhibit a leader's image, that of self-confidence and humility."[36] This passage is the first mention of humility in Army doctrine that is not at the strategic level of leadership.

Current Army leadership doctrine, FM 6-22 is the first time in doctrinal history that humility, in any context, is stated as a desirable attribute. FM 6-22, *Leader Development* mentions humility as a characteristic of leaders only once, stating:

> Humility is a desired characteristic of organizational and strategic leaders who should recognize that others have specialized expertise indispensable to success. A modest view of one's own importance helps underscore an essential ingredient to foster cooperation across organizational boundaries. Even the most

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[35] Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 22-100, *Military Leadership* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1999), 7-27.

[36] Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 6-22, *Army Leadership* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), 3-11.

humble person needs to guard against an imperceptible inflation of ego when constantly exposed to high levels of attention and opportunities.[37]

This paragraph is written in the context of high-level leadership in the Army, stating that the importance of humility is important at operational and strategic level organizations. There is no mention of the concept of humility as a desirable trait or attribute of leaders below that level.

The current Army leadership doctrine also lists Empathy as a foundation of Army leader character, categorized as an "element internal and central to a leader's core."[38] Empathy was defined in chapter 1 of this study as "the ability to see something from another person's point of view, to identify with, and enter into another person's feelings and emotions", per ADRP 6-22.[39] Empathy is also summarized as, "the desire to care for and take care of Soldiers and others."[40] This publication states that "leaders take care of Soldier and Army Civilians by giving them the training, equipment, and support needed to accomplish the mission. During operations, empathetic Army leaders share hardships to gauge if their plans and decisions are realistic."[41] While this doctrinal guidance may tie closely with the behaviors that a humble leader exhibits, this study asserts that it is not the same.

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[37] Department of The Army, Field Manual (FM) 6-22, *Army Leadership* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2015), 1-9.

[38] Department of the Army, ADRP 6-22, *Army Leadership*, 3-1.

[39] Ibid., 3-3.

[40] Ibid., 3-5.

[41] Ibid., 3-3.

<u>Section II: Publications and Books by Military Leaders</u>

This section will look at various books and articles written by military leaders that focus on humility as a leadership trait. *Small Unit Leadership*, by COL. Dandridge M. Malone is a book that is commonly found in bookstores at Army installations. In this book, Malone outlines sixteen leadership traits on which Army leaders should focus. Among traits such as courage, bearing, decisiveness, integrity, and judgment, he lists humility. "Humility, demonstrated by ensuring your soldiers receive the credit due them when they perform well, emphasizing to your soldiers how important *they* are to the unit, and describing your unit's performance in terms of 'what *we* did' instead of 'what *I* did.'"[42]

Malone emphasizes the importance of humility as a leadership trait for leaders at all levels, from platoon leaders to generals. He highlights the importance of a leader at any level having the ability to view success as an outcome of the team's efforts. Years after *Small Unit Leadership* was published, LTC Joseph Doty and Dan Gerdes underscored Malone in an article titled "Humility as a Leadership Attribute," published in the journal, *Military Review*. In this article, Doty asserts:

> Humility, or the quality of genuine modesty and unpretentiousness, is often disregarded when describing traits of good leaders because it seems to suggest a lack of toughness and resolve essential in an effective leader. However, the humble leader lacks arrogance, not aggressiveness. The will to serve others eclipses any drive to promote self. Humility can even carry a certain spiritual

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[42] Dandridge M. Malone, *Small Unit Leadership, A Commonsense Approach* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1983), 38.

tone, as the leader's activities are free of ego and self-aggrandizement – all in the best interest of the success of many versus the prominence of an individual.[43]

Doty addressed the stigma surrounding the word "humility" in the military and leadership discussions overall. Since there is a tendency to associate humility with submissiveness and that tendency distracts from the importance of humility in military leadership. In another article titled "Add Humility to Leadership Conversation," Doty once again emphasizes the necessity for humble leadership with greater depth. He addresses the problem of narcissism and toxicity in military leadership communities and prescribes humility as the antidote.[44] He makes the case that humility makes for better leaders overall and that humility "gives them a genuine sense of humanity. This means those leaders know, understand and internalize that they aren't perfect—intellectually, socially, physically, spiritually or emotionally."[45] Doty stresses that humility must be included in leadership doctrine to allow the military to produce more effective, less narcissistic leaders.

In terms of implementation, humility should be added to the list of leader attributes in ADP 6-22. More discussion and education on what humility is and how it can improve one's leadership seem necessary and timely. Toxic leadership and narcissism have become common terms within the military for good reason. An antidote

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[43] Joseph Doty and Dan Gerdes, "Humility as a Leadership Attribute," *Military Review* (September 2000): 89.

[44] Joseph Doty, "Add Humility to Leadership Conversation," *Association of the United States Army* (November 18, 2014): 20, accessed November 5, 2017, https://www.ausa.org/articles/add-humility-leadership-conversation.

[45] Ibid., 19.

for this type of abusive leadership is humility, but more importantly, leaders with humility will be more effective at leading themselves, leading others and making their units better.[46]

Doty's original article has been quoted and used in later publications to emphasize the same point. "Humble Leaders, Stimulating Effective Leadership within the Marine Corps" by Capt. Alex J. Ramthun echoes the same argument as Doty and similarly argues that the Marine Corps should include humility in its official doctrine. Ramthun asserts that humility enhances the effectiveness of leaders, and that it is necessary to integrate the concepts of humility as a part of servant leadership and transformational leadership models into military leadership theory.[47] The number of published articles on this topic written by military leaders highlights a few important points. First, it highlights the desire of military people for more authentic and humble leaders. Second, the exasperation of individuals in the military with arrogant or narcissistic leaders is clear, and there is little tolerance for leaders who do not exercise humility as a part of their leadership style.

Major General Tony Cucolo, U.S. Army (Ret.) writes about humility in an article written for junior field grade officers titled In Case You Didn't Know, Things Are Very Different Now: Part 1. He lists humility as "The enabler of Selfless Servant Leadership" and advises, "in word and deed, place your peers before yourself. Always. You may not realize it right now, but the lion's share of your professional reputation from this moment forward is based on how well you care for peers." He emphasizes the importance of

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[46] Doty, "Add Humility to Leadership Conversation," 20.

[47] Alex Ramthun, "Humble Leaders, Stimulating Effective Leadership withing the Marine Corps," *Marine Corps Gazette* 96, no. 2 (February 2012): 25-27.

humility in every interaction an officer encounters and the positive effects of being the one who is "quick to compliment—everyone—but especially your peers, and particularly in public." Cucolo concludes that the cultivation of humility in one's career has the long-term effect of increasing one's influence on a unit's climate and culture.

Accentuate the positive in people and situations whenever possible. You will be at the nexus of gossip, innuendo, backbiting and vocalized bias. Do not join in; in fact, counter it thoughtfully. This is a critically important habit for you. As you get more senior, you will directly impact the climate and culture of increasingly larger organizations. Start this habit now, and you will have the reflexive emotional muscle memory to create and sustain positive, "we're in this together" climates wherever you go–and people will want to serve with you.[48]

Colonel Robert Gerard, Ph.D., U.S. Army (Ret.) wrote an article titled "The Role of Character in Effective Leadership" in which he explores what differentiates great leaders from good leaders. He emphasizes key aspects of the character that set great leaders apart, and names humility as a key component. "Great Army leaders are humble soldiers who attribute their success to the men and women who work for them. They step aside while their officers and Soldiers receive the awards and accolades they deserve. Their character enhances their leadership."[49]

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[48] Tony Cucolo, U.S. Army (Ret.), "In Case You Didn't Know It, Things Are Very Different Now: Part 1," *Green Notebook Blog*, March 1, 2018, accessed April 17, 2018, https://fromthegreennotebook.com/2018/03/01/in-case-you-didnt-know-it-things-are-very-different-now-part-1/.

[49] Robert Gerard, "The Role of Character in Effective Leadership," *Military Review* (September-October 2014): 44.

Gerard's article conducts a small case study of retired General Glenn Otis, former

U.S. Army Europe Commander with experience as the 25th Infantry Division Cavalry

Squadron Commander during the Vietnam War. In describing Otis's character, he states,

"Otis did not talk about his accomplishments in the service although they were many.

Instead, he would talk with pride about the great troopers he commanded over the

years."[50] Throughout the case study, Gerard describes Otis as a leader who continually

gave credit to his Soldiers, and exercised mission command by placing his trust in junior

leaders and empowering them to succeed. "His sincerity, humility, and a real caring for

his subordinates were the qualities that set Glen Otis far above his contemporaries. His

example of effective leadership is timeless."[51]

Gerard's main thesis in this article is not only that humility is a characteristic of

leadership that sets leaders above their peers and propels them from good to exceptional

leadership, but that through humility, leaders can establish a higher level of influence

with their subordinates through mutual respect.

> Many leaders are respected. There is a distinction, however, between respect and
> reverence . . . Soldiers show respect by deference, courtesy, and obedience.
> Reverence, on the other hand, is respect earned. Soldiers who come to revere a
> leader show their respect through veneration. Glenn Otis was, and still is, revered
> by his troopers.[52]

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[50] Gerard, "The Role of Character in Effective Leadership," 45.

[51] Ibid., 49.

[52] Ibid.

<u>Section III: Civilian Publications and Leadership Theories</u>

This section will examine civilian leadership philosophies as they relate to the value of humility in leadership. A wide range of publications exists in the civilian sector that addresses humility in civilian organizational leadership. Even though the focus of this paper is to examine the role of humility in military leadership, civilian findings and theories on the subject will contribute much greater perspective and breadth.

There are countless leadership theories and numerous books published on leadership models spanning a wide variety of applications. Military leadership discussions rightly examine these theories regularly, and military professionals can certainly benefit from educating themselves about them. Military leaders who can synthesize various leadership techniques and theories into their leadership style to enhance their effectiveness can benefit from the increased perspective and knowledge from which to draw. This study will examine two widely known leadership theories, transformational leadership and servant leadership, and one that was recently hypothesized, humble leadership. The review of these theories contributes to answering the secondary research question: What is the role of humility in existing leadership models and how does it affect leadership styles?

<u>Humble Leadership</u>

In "Modeling How to Grow: An Inductive Examination of Humble Leader behaviors, Contingencies, and Outcomes," Bradley Owens and David Hekman publish an extensive study on the effects of humble leadership.

> Increasingly, scholars and practitioners have argued the need for today's (and especially tomorrow's) leaders to approach their roles with more humility (Kerfoot, 1998; Morris et al., 2005; Vera and Rodriguez-Lopez, 2004). For

examples, owing to increasing general workplace complexity and requirements for adaptability (Weick, 2001), recent leadership theories have begun to place greater emphasis on the bottom-up aspects of leadership. Some even argue for a need to change "the very idea of leadership—what it is and how it works and even how people even know it when they see it" (Drath, 2001: 124). Researchers have suggested that leaders should move beyond the hero myth or "great man" perspectives on leadership (Murrell, 1997), show their humanness by being open about their limitations in knowledge and experience (Weick, 2001), and focus more on how followers influence the process of leadership.[53]

This study focused qualitative research to collect "real life accounts of what leader humility looks like and the boundary conditions for leader humility."[54] Owens and Heckman focused interviews with leaders and subordinates in a variety of civilian vocations, religious organizations and military units. This research also focused on how each participant defined humble leader characteristics and behaviors and how those behaviors contributed to effectiveness.

The insights of the participants on how leaders display humility are summarized as such, "Though the interview descriptions of humble leadership were full of nuanced differences, these humble leader behaviors meaningfully fit in to three general categories: (1) acknowledging personal limits, faults, and mistakes, (2) spotlighting followers' strengths and contributions, and (3) modeling teachability."[55] Other results of this study yielded a more focused definition of what Owens and Hekman call, "The Core Essence of Leader Humility," which they describe as, "Leader humility at the most basic,

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[53] B. P. Owens and D. R. Hekman, "Modeling How to Grow: An Inductive Examination of Humble Leader Behaviors, Contingencies, and Outcomes *Academy of Management Journal 55*, no. 4 (2011): 788, doi:10.5465/amj.2010.0441.

[54] Ibid., 790.

[55] Ibid., 794.

fundamental level appears to involve leaders catalyzing and reinforcing mutual leader-follower development by eagerly and publicly engaging in the messy process of learning and growing. Even more simply put, humble leaders *model how to grow* to their followers."[56]

Based on the results of their research, Owens and Hekman concluded that humble leader behaviors directly contribute to creating a learning environment and a sense of psychological safety in an organization that fosters subordinate leader development.

> By helping to reduce follower anxiety and evaluation apprehension during the process of development, humble leaders help free up followers' psychological resources to be used toward more productive ends. . . . Leader humility appears to be a specific and effective way to foster this context of leadership development through the process of rendering the *intrapersonal* (internal) states of leaders *interpersonal*, making self- awareness, emotional regulation, social learning, and teachability explicit and salient in the process of leader-follower interactions.[57]

A more recent study by Owens and Hekman titled, "How Does Leader Humility Influence Team Performance? Exploring the Mechanisms of Contagion and Collective Promotion Focus," focused on the impact of leader humility on team processes and the mechanisms that link leader behaviors to team performance.[58] In this article, Owens and Hekman state, "leader humility is manifest by a set of power equalizing behaviors that co-occur and foster each other and that are unified by the theme of growth. Leaders'

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[56] Owens and Hekman, "Modeling How to Grow," 801.

[57] Ibid., 807.

[58] Owens and Hekman, "How Does Leader Humility Influence Team Performance?" 1088-11.

knowledge of their limits and recognition of others' strengths fosters awareness of where they need to grow and of the people around them from whom they can learn to grow."[59]

The authors also propose that leaders are integral in shaping the social environment of an organization and leader behavior influences how members of the organization work together.[60] Owens and Hekman suggest that "when leaders model humble behavior, followers will emulate the behavior, which creates the shared group behavior of collective humility." Based on humble leader behaviors described in their earlier research, the authors theorize that humble leaders instill a sense of humility throughout their organization. This sense fosters a teamwork mindset among subordinates who "acknowledge and appreciate one another's strengths, listen to one another's feedback and new ideas with openness, and acknowledge mistakes and handle them constructively."[61] Additionally, leader humility promotes an organizational focus on team achievement versus individual achievement, or collective promotion focus.[62]

Specifically addressing the issue of how leader humility affects team performance. However, Owens and Hekman hypothesize that

> Humility is thought to enhance individual performance because admitting weaknesses highlights growth opportunities, appreciating others' strengths highlights growth exemplars, and being teachable enables personal growth to

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[59] Owens and Hekman, "How Does Leader Humility Influence Team Performance?," 1089.

[60] Ibid., 1090.

[61] Ibid., 1091.

[62] Ibid., 1092.

occur. On the team level, we propose that collective humility behavior enhances team performance through the mechanism of collective promotion focus.[63]

Overall, the results of this study reveal that leader humility instills an organization with a sense of collective humility. This type of climate contributes to a collective promotion focus whereby team members are less concerned with individual achievements but rather the achievements of the team. Consequently, team performance increases in this type of organizational environment because "humility appears to embolden individuals to aspire to their highest potential and enables them to make the incremental improvements necessary to progress toward that potential."[64]

It is important to note that in this study, Owens and Hekman compare their findings on the theory of humble leadership to that of transformational leadership.

> While transformational leadership was positively associated with team performance, its effect did not manifest through the same path as leader humility. Though . . . transformational leadership influences team performance by fostering cognition-based trust and team potency, leader humility's influence was through contagion of the behaviors themselves, shaping specific teamwork and regulatory-focus aspects of team functioning.[65]

They concluded that humble leadership is less effective in times of extreme challenge, stress, and uncertainty as transformational leadership. However, "leader humility may be more beneficial to team effectiveness relative to transformational

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[63] Owens and Hekman, "How Does Leader Humility Influence Team Performance?" 1093.

[64] Ibid., 1104.

[65] Ibid., 1103.

leadership during everyday challenges (times of low to moderate amounts of challenge, stress, pressure, or threat)."[66]

<div align="center">Transformational Leadership</div>

The theories of transformational leadership and humble leadership are closely related in that both aim to inspire an organization to accomplish objectives through a teamwork mindset and individual initiative. In *Transformational Leadership: Industrial, Military, and Educational Impact*, Bernard Bass states, "The transformational leader moves the follower beyond self-interests and is charismatic, inspirational, intellectually stimulating, and/or individually considerate."[67] According to Bass, transformational leadership is made up of four components which are charismatic leadership, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. He describes them as such:

> Leadership is charismatic such that the follower seeks to identify with the leaders and emulate them. The leadership inspires the follower with challenge and persuasion providing a meaning and understanding. The leadership is intellectually stimulating, expanding the follower's use of their abilities. Finally, the leadership is individually considerate, providing the follower with support, mentoring and coaching.[68]

Bass addresses the importance of leadership and follower self-interests in any leadership model, specifically transformational leadership. He concludes that "going

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[66] Owens and Hekman, "How Does Leader Humility Influence Team Performance?," 1103-1104.

[67] Bernard M. Bass, *Transformational Leadership: Industrial, Military, and Educational Impact* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998), 3.

[68] Ibid., 5-6.

beyond one's self-interests for the good of the organization requires aligning the individual member's interests and values with those of the organization's transformational leadership."[69]

The importance of follower self-interests in leadership development cannot be overlooked within the construct of any leadership model. Bass asserts that this creates a paradox during the transformational process.

One paradox for us may be that as we push the transformational process, particularly focusing on development of followers, we may shortchange the transcending of followers' self-interests. The transformational leader needs to do both by aligning the followers' self-interests in development with the interests of the group, organization, or society.[70]

Authentic transformational leadership requires leaders who possess a moral maturity and emotional intelligence. Bass states, "the immature, self-aggrandizing charismatic is pseudo-transformational. The charismatic may seem uplifting and responsible, but on closer examination is found to be a false Messiah."[71] This conclusion ties closely with the effects of leader humility described by Owens and Hekman.

Peter Northouse defines transformational leadership in *Leadership, Theory and Practice* as "the process whereby a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower. This

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[69] Bass, *Transformational Leadership*, 164.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid., 170.

type of leader is attentive to the needs and motives of followers and tries to help followers reach their fullest potential."[72] In addition to the work conducted by Bass on the transformational leadership theory, Northouse notes the model which includes four common strategies proposed by Bennis and Nanus in 1985.

First, transforming leaders had a clear *vision* of the future state of their organizations. Second, transforming leaders were *social architects* for their organizations. This means they created a shape or form for the shared meanings people maintained within their organizations. Third, transforming leaders created *trust* in their organizations by making their own positions clearly known and then standing by them. Fourth, transforming leaders used *creative deployment of self* through positive self-regard. Leaders knew their strengths and weaknesses, and they emphasized their strengths rather than dwelling on their weaknesses.[73]

A major criticism of transformational leadership, according to Northouse, is that "transformational leadership treats leadership as a personality trait or personal predisposition rather than a behavior that people can learn."[74] Another criticism is that "There is evidence that indicates that transformational leadership is associated with positive outcomes, such as organizational effectiveness; however, studies have not yet clearly established a causal link between transformational leaders and changes in

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[72] Peter Guy Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 7th ed. (Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications, 2015), 162.

[73] Ibid., 173.

[74] Ibid., 178.

followers or organizations."[75] The implication is that transformational leadership can sometimes be viewed as capable of only producing short-term results and that positive effects of this type of leadership revolve solely around the transformational leader.

The final criticism of transformational leadership that Northouse addresses is that "it has the potential to be abused. Transformational leadership is concerned with changing people's values and moving them to a new vision . . . If the values to which the leader is moving his or her followers are not better, and if the set of human values is not more redeeming, then the leadership must be challenged."[76] Transformational leadership is centric to the leaders themselves, therefore it is logical that the addition of humility as a necessary attribute of the transformational leader would only increase their overall effectiveness regardless of contextual or environmental variables. This bridge between humble and transformational theory will be explored further in chapter 4 of this paper.

Servant Leadership

Servant leadership is a widely studied theory, and while Robert Greenleaf is credited with the hypothesis of it, many scholars have since worked to develop and further define the theory in various contexts. Servant leadership as a theory depicts the leader as a servant to those he or she works with and leads through a focus on the followers of the organization. The effectiveness of servant leadership is derived from the

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[75] Northouse, *Leadership*, 179.

[76] Ibid.

virtues that the servant leader emulates whereby service is the primary motivation to lead.[77]

Kathleen Patterson, Regent University, published a paper titled "Servant Leadership: A Theoretical Model" in 2003 wherein she addresses servant leadership as a paradox and compares the theory to other leadership theories such as Transformational Leadership. "Transformational leadership does not explain certain phenomena such as altruism to followers or humility, which leaves the door open for a new theoretical understanding . . . With the evidence for the need of additional theory, servant leadership offers a viable perspective to the organizational leadership literature."[78]

A study of virtue theory is certainly relevant to servant leadership as a viable leadership model due to its reliance on the leader's inculcation of various virtues by which he or she leads an organization. In servant leadership, the primary idea is that service is the focus, and leadership as a natural consequence of an individual's desire to serve the organization. The leader's virtues and attributes are what qualifies him or her to lead.

According to Patterson, "Servant leadership encompasses seven virtuous constructs, which work in processional pattern. These are (a) agapao love, (b) humility, (c) altruism, (d) vision, (e) trust (f) empowerment, and (g) service. These constructs are virtues and become illuminated within a servant leadership context."[79] Since this study

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[77] Patterson. "Servant Leadership," 2.

[78] Ibid., 1-2.

[79] Ibid., 2.

examines the role of humility in leadership, Patterson quotes multiple studies on

leadership with a view of how humility enables servant leadership to be a successful

leadership model.

> In agreement with Swindoll (1981), who stated a major characteristic of servant leaders is their ability to be vulnerable and humble. Servant leaders do not center attention on their own accomplishments, but rather on other people. Fairholm and Fairholm (2000), concur, with their statement that the servant leader's concentration on service limits the negative effects of self-interest, and humility counteracts that self-interest . . . Servant leaders are not arrogant (Crom, 1998), see things from another's perspective and show appreciation and respect for leadership within the organization. The servant leader is not interested in their image or in being exalted, being more interested in being accountable (Swindoll, 1981). Therefore, serving from an authentic desire to help others and searching for ways to serve others by staying in touch with people.[80]

The studies quoted in Patterson's article are consistent with Owens and Henkel's

research on humble leader behavior categories of acknowledging personal limits, faults,

and mistakes, spotlighting followers' strengths and contributions and modeling

teachability.[81]

In the book, *Leadership, Theory and Practice,* Peter Northouse states, "servant

leadership emphasizes that leaders be attentive to the concerns of their followers,

empathize with them, and nurture them. Servant leaders put followers *first,* empower

them, and help them develop their full personal capacities."[82] Northouse quotes six

prominent theories of servant leadership that have built on Greenleaf's original theory.

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[80] Patterson. "Servant Leadership," 4.

[81] Owens and Hekman, "Modeling How to Grow," 794.)

[82] Northouse, *Leadership*, 225.

Five of these theories list "humility" or "altruistic calling" as a primary virtue, trait, or behavior that is inherent to servant leadership.[83]

Northouse, however, lists a model of servant leadership that defines servant leader behaviors as conceptualizing, emotional healing, putting followers first, helping followers grow and succeed, behaving ethically, empowering, and creating value for the community.[84] He states, "putting others first is the sine qua non of servant leadership – the defining characteristic. It means using actions and words that clearly demonstrate to followers that their concerns are a priority, including placing followers' interests and success ahead of those of the leader."[85] Additionally, helping followers grow and succeed as a servant leader behavior is equally characteristic. "At its core, helping follower grow and succeed is about aiding these individuals to become self-actualized, reaching their fullest human potential."[86]

Northouse lists three outcomes of servant leadership. These outcomes are "follower performance and growth, organizational performance, and societal impact." These are not only the outcomes, but also the goals of servant leadership as it is described in multiple theories on the subject. "The expected outcome for followers is greater self-actualization. That is, followers will realize their full capabilities when leaders nurture

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[83] Northouse, *Leadership*, 230.

[84] Ibid., 232.

[85] Ibid., 234.

[86] Ibid.

them, help them with their personal goals, and give them control." [87] In relation to

organizational performance and in essence, the effectiveness of servant leadership in the

context of this study, Northouse says,

> Several studies have found a positive relationship between servant leadership and organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs), which are follower behaviors that go beyond the basic requirements of their duties and help the overall functioning of the organization. Servant leadership also affects the way organizational teams function. Hu and Liden (2011) found that servant leadership enhanced team effectiveness by increasing the members' shared confidence that they could be effective as a work group. Furthermore, their results showed that servant leadership contributed positively to team potency by enhancing group process and clarity. However, when servant leadership was absent, team potency decreased, despite clearer goals. In essence, it frustrates people to know exactly what the goal is, but not get the support needed to accomplish the goal. [88]

The main counter-arguments or criticisms of servant leadership tend to focus on

the paradoxical nature and utopian perception of it. Northouse addresses these criticisms

as such: "Because the name appears contradictory, servant leadership is prone to be

perceived as fanciful or whimsical. In addition, being a servant leader implies following,

and following is viewed as the opposite of leading." This criticism coincides with the

argument that humility in leadership is somewhat paradoxical as well and will be

addressed further in chapter 4 of this thesis.

<u>Conclusion</u>

This chapter answered the first portion of the secondary research question, what is

the function of humility in existing leadership models and what is its effect on different

leadership styles? The purpose of the review of the literature was to research what has

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[87] Northouse, *Leadership*, 236.

[88] Ibid., 237.

been written about the topic of humility as a leadership attribute and how this particulate study might contribute to the collection of existing research. Additionally, this chapter intended to study historical and current Army leadership doctrine to find what degree humility has been present in official Army publications.

In early U.S. Army leadership doctrine, selflessness or humility was listed as necessary or desirable military leadership traits. As doctrine evolved and was changed over the course of the 20th century, the concept was removed. However, recent versions of FM 6-22 have limited mentions of humility as a desired characteristic, but only at organizational or strategic levels of leadership.

Despite the lack of inclusion of humility in official doctrine, there are several articles and publications written by current and former military leaders who advocate for humility as a leadership attribute. This study focused only on a few of such articles since many of the points stated in these articles are redundant. However, the points stated in these articles are not less sound despite the repetition. They can be summed up by Joseph Doty,

> More discussion and education on what humility is and how it can improve one's leadership seem necessary and timely. Toxic leadership and narcissism have become common terms within the military for good reason. An antidote for this type of abusive leadership is humility, but more importantly, leaders with humility will be more effective at leading themselves, leading others and making their units better.[89]

The third section of this chapter studied the three major leadership theories of Humble Leadership, Transformational Leadership, and Servant Leadership. Humble Leadership as a separate and new leadership theory or model was theorized and has been

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[89] Doty, "Add Humility to Leadership Conversation," 20.

extensively studied by B. P. Owens and D. R. Hekman. Multiple research projects have been published on Humble Leadership as a leadership theory that examined the effects thereof in various environments and types of organizations. Their overall conclusion was that humble leaders "model how to grow" by creating learning environments in their respective organizations by promoting organizational focus on team achievement and "emboldening subordinates to aspire to their highest potential."[90]

Transformational Leadership was studied as Bernard Bass and Peter Northouse published it. Bass theorizes that transformational leadership is made up of the four components of charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Northouse emphasized the presence of emotional intelligence in this theory in addition to Bass's findings. While the publications studied in this chapter do not specifically list humility as a part of Transformational Leadership theory, the concept of placing follower interests above that of the leader and the importance of moral maturity is certainly present.

Servant leadership as first theorized by Robert Greenleaf is congruent with the theory of Humble Leadership. In Servant Leadership, the leader acts as a servant to subordinates and the primary focus of the servant leader is the followers. Patterson's research on the theory specifically lists humility as one of the virtues that servant leaders possess. Additionally, Northouse lists the outcomes of servant leadership as "follower performance and growth, organizational performance, and societal impact."[91]

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[90] Owens and Hekman, "How Does Leader Humility Influence Team Performance?," 1088-11.

[91] Northouse, *Leadership*, 236.

The study of U.S. Army leadership doctrine, publications and books by military leaders, and civilian publications and leadership theories revealed that humility as a leadership attribute has been present in leadership theory as long as any other concept. Ideas on the application of humility in leadership differ slightly, but the common theme is that leaders who develop their subordinates, create psychological safety or a learning environment in their organizations, and cultivate emotional intelligence can build highly effective teams.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The research methodology of this study will be a case study analysis of 20th century U.S. military leaders whose qualities were observed in a variety of leadership roles at tactical, operational and strategic levels of command. The research design is a holistic multiple-case design as described by Robert K. Yin in *Case Study Research: Design and Methods.*[92] This study will focus the case studies on how these leaders developed their leadership styles based on their background, experiences throughout their careers, and their philosophies. This study will examine the presence of humility in each leader's character and whether it contributed to their successes and failures to answer the secondary research question: How has humility affected known military leaders' legacies, and does it enable greater leader effectiveness?

The scope of this study will focus on measurable aspects of humble leadership behaviors as described in the studies cited in chapter 2. Using the definition of humility outlined in chapter 2, defined as an individual quality that places the interests of the organization above that of a leader or specific person and as an evaluative attitude that enables authentic self-awareness and inspires emotional maturity. The research of each case study will seek to identify how each subject exhibited humble behaviors and if so, how their humility affected their leadership style. Each case study will also seek to

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[92] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 5th ed. (Los Angeles, CA: SAGE, 2014), 62.

identify how their humble leadership affected the reputations or legacies of each subject. Additionally, throughout these case studies, emphasis will be applied to each leader's leadership philosophy and how it shaped their perceived behaviors by subordinates, peers, and superiors.

<center>Case Study I: George C. Marshall</center>

The first case study is on General George C. Marshall. A highly influential and respected leader in United States Army history, GEN Marshall garnered a reputation for servant leadership and consistently displayed humility as a key aspect of his leadership style. This research examines how his leadership philosophy contributed to his effectiveness and success as a military and political leader.

A native of Uniontown, Pennsylvania, George Catlin Marshall decided to join the military at a time when military service was not a popular or highly respected career choice. His desire to serve came at an early age, and his motivation to join the Army came from his desire to prove his family wrong. George's early life and Army career were defined by a constant struggle to succeed, and it was only because of his determination and willingness to work harder than his peers that he did. Despite the misgivings of his father and older brother, young George Marshall was accepted into the Virginia Military Institute at 17 years of age.

George Marshall graduated VMI at the top of his class and earned his commission as a Second Lieutenant only after beseeching multiple senior Army leaders and even

President McKinley to allow him to take the qualifying examination.[93] Soon after his commission, he deployed to the Philippines with the Thirteenth Infantry Regiment. His experiences in the Philippines began to shape the humble leadership style for which he became known.

Marshall excelled as a company grade officer while serving in a variety of challenging and competitive assignments. He consistently found himself assigned to somewhat undesirable positions, but his humble approach enabled him to excel above his peers and display his talents. This humble approach was evidenced by his continued commitment to serving the needs of the Army instead of his pursuits or career-minded desires. This led to his eventual selection to attend the newly established general service and staff college at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He excelled there, was selected to attend the War College the following year, and upon graduation was assigned as an instructor.

It was at this time that Marshall's leadership style drew a sharp contrast to his peers. Also assigned to Fort Leavenworth was First Lieutenant Douglas MacArthur. Paul Jeffers contrasts the two young leaders as such:

> Where MacArthur was the confident egotist, Marshall was the humble servant-leader, eager to get ahead in the army but willing to subordinate himself for the greater good of the service. As a son of the celebrated and beloved Lieutenant General Arthur MacArthur, commander of U.S. Forces in the Philippines and a Medal of Honor recipient, Douglas MacArthur felt that he had much to prove, and didn't hesitate to elbow others aside in order to prove it. Marshall, whose reserve came naturally, did his best to keep his distance from MacArthur.[94]

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[93] H. Paul Jeffers, *Marshall: Lessons in Leadership* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 11.

[94] Ibid., 21.

Over the next several years, Marshall displayed his talent as a staff officer and senior Army leadership repeatedly recognized him for it. This expertise as a junior officer landed him as the aide-de-camp to senior Army leaders such as Brigadier General Hunter Liggett and General J. Franklin Bell. At the outbreak of the first World War, Marshall was among the first contingents of the American Expeditionary Force. Throughout the war, he served as a top staff officer responsible for planning many of the American Expeditionary Force's offensives. A fellow officer on General Pershing's staff spoke of Marshall saying, "The troops which maneuvered under his plans always won."[95]

George Marshall's innovative thinking was widely recognized and propelled him to assignment as the assistant commandant of the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia. It was here that Marshall created an inclusive command climate where he "made it clear to the faculty and students that everything was subject to challenge. He told the faculty that any student's solution to a problem that differed markedly from the approved solution, yet made sense, should be published to the class."[96] It was also at Fort Benning that Marshall personally mentored young leaders such as Omar Bradley, Matthew Ridgeway, Terry Allen, and J. Lawton Collins who were all highly influential during and after World War II.

Collins, who later served as the Army Chief of Staff, once wrote about Marshall's influence on the Infantry School at Fort Benning. Collins wrote that he helped create "the spirit at Benning" that "if anybody had any new ideas he was willing to try them instead

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[95] Jeffers, *Marshall*, 53.

[96] Ibid., 66.

of saying, 'why don't you let the thing alone instead of stirring things up'". Omar Bradley who was a tactics instructor under Marshall's leadership at the school wrote that Marshall "really established the standards of instruction as we know them today," and that "a maximum of our training takes place on the ground, not in the classroom." [97] The influence and lasting legacy on professional Army education that Marshall achieved were clearly due to his ability to create a learning environment in the organization. His unique leadership style had a lasting influence on the school and a large number of young officers who went on to become highly influential leaders themselves.

Marshall's appointment as the Chief of Staff of the Army just before the outbreak of World War II was due to the reputation he built as a senior field grade officer. He had become known as a brilliant staff officer and innovative thinker who continually developed his subordinates, peers, and superiors. His approach to organizing the U.S. Army in a short amount of time for the successful conduct of operations against Japan and Germany simultaneously was focused on empowering his subordinate leaders. "Marshall saw the war as an immense multinational enterprise that, whatever else it required, required effective management, management that facilitated rather than impeded the translation of strategy into action."[98]

General Marshall's most well-known successes occurred during his time as the Chief of Staff of the Army. His ability to accurately judge character enabled him to consistently place the right people in the right jobs to ensure effective management at all

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[97] Debi Unger, Irwin Unger, and Stanley P. Hirshson, *George Marshall: A Biography* (New York: Harper, 2014), 59.

[98] Ibid., 96.

levels. He is sometimes credited with the concept of unified command, which he relentlessly advocated for during World War II. Marshall personified the concept of Mission Command by empowering his subordinate commanders to exercise initiative. During the infamous Battle of the Bulge, Marshall restrained himself from interfering with Eisenhower's command stating, "we can't help Eisenhower in any way other than not bothering him. No messages will go from here to the ETO unless approved by me."[99]

As Chief of Staff of the Army, Marshall advocated incessantly for the concept of a unified command structure under which the conduct of the war in each theater would answer to one supreme commander. Eisenhower, of course, was his choice to lead the initial invasion of North Africa and Marshall displayed an incredible amount of self-restraint in promoting the successes of his subordinates and encouraging President Roosevelt to choose other leaders over himself to lead major operations.

Before Operation Overlord, the invasion of Normandy, the president evidently struggled with the decision of whether to appoint Eisenhower or Marshall to the position of Supreme Allied Commander in Europe. This appointment brought with it the potential for unparalleled fame and repute. However, when FDR summoned Marshall to offer him his preference of remaining as Chief of Staff in Washington or take the coveted job of Supreme Allied Commander, Marshall did not give him a straight answer. He simply told the president that he "wanted him to feel free to act in whatever way he felt was to the best interest of the country and to his satisfaction and not in any way to consider my

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[99] Unger, Unger, and Hirshson, *George Marshall: A Biography*, 159.

feelings. I would cheerfully go whatever way he wanted me to go."[100] Eisenhower was chosen to lead Overlord, but at a time when general officers were competing to gain notoriety and out-do one another during the largest war the world had ever seen, Marshall's selflessness and dedication to serving in whatever capacity he could was somewhat unique.

George Marshall had a reputation for his reserved demeanor. This demeanor was in sharp contrast to many of his peers like MacArthur, Patton, Bradley, and Eisenhower. Marshall experienced consistently delayed or long overdue promotions when compared to how quickly many of his peers advanced. He also was repeatedly passed up for the opportunity to command troops and spent most of his career as a staff officer, planning operations or conducting administrative tasks while his peers and even subordinates passed him up in rank. "Marshall would always deplore the use of influence and self-praise in military career advancement . . . he did not want to solicit letters of support from fellow officers since the 'War Department is flooded with them'."[101] It is evident when examining Marshall's career that he made himself indispensable wherever he served, and it is no surprise that his superiors were reluctant to release him to other assignments which also contributed to his slow advancement in rank.

However, looking closely at Marshall's achievements, while his peers enjoyed the prestige of commanding famous operations and receiving accolades for famous victories,

[100] Marshall Interviews, November 1956, Tape 11, 330, quoted in Debi Unger, Irwin Unger, and Stanley P. Hirshson, *George Marshall: A Biography* (New York: Harper, 2014), 295.

[101] Unger, Unger, and. Hirshson, *George Marshall*, 70.

it was Marshall who planned and resourced those operations. It was also Marshall who instructed and mentored the famous generals of World War II as company grade officers and then shaped their careers due to the potential he saw in them. Command of Operation Overlord would have been so significant for Marshall in that it was his last chance to command troops in combat after a career of being passed over for command because he was too valuable as a staff officer. The self-control he exhibited in remaining selfless on this matter was indicative of the humility he had always displayed. "His aide, Col. Frank McCarthy, a man who knew him well, claimed, just following the decision, that he showed no outward sign of a setback."[102]

Marshall's emotional intelligence and humility enabled him to be an incredibly influential leader no matter what leadership position he performed. On occasions when he could and perhaps should have advocated for himself, he consistently chose the selfless option. He exhibited a quiet charisma that throughout his career gained him much greater respect and loyalty from those with whom he served than most other leaders who were famously egotistic.

<div align="center">Case Study II: Oliver P. Smith</div>

Oliver Prince Smith is the only case study subject that this research will cover that is not a U.S. Army officer. Smith may also not be as well-known as the other subjects in this study but was selected because of his service in the Korean War and his reputation as a humble leader. To examine leaders across a variety of conflicts and to seek a greater breadth of research scope in this study, this leader was chosen due to the timeframe in

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[102] Unger, Unger, and. Hirshson, *George Marshall*, 295-296.

which he served in key leadership positions and legacy he left as an effective military leader.

Smith began his career by obtaining a commission in the United States Marine Corps after participating in the Reserve Officer Training Corps at the University of California at Berkeley. Soon after obtaining his commission in 1917, he was deployed to Guam and subsequently, Haiti. As a company grade officer, Smith immediately applied lessons he had learned when he worked in logging camps for meager pay before joining the military. Working in various jobs as a logger, he studied human behavior during hardship and wrote down his observations in a letter to a friend, "one rule for handling men—that is never threaten and don't be sentimental. Showing preferences has spoiled more than one good crew."[103] This insight of how much a leader's treatment of his or her subordinates can affect their performance would inform his development as a leader throughout the remainder of his career.

After attending Infantry School, Smith was assigned as an instructor at the Company Officer's Course in Quantico, Virginia. Two years later, he was nominated to attend the French war college for[104] two years, studying division and corps operations. Upon his return to Quantico at the end of this course, he continued as an instructor where he earned nicknames from his students such as "the professor" or the "student general."

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[103] Gail B. Shisler, *For Country and Corps: The Life of General Oliver P. Smith* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2009), 8.

[104] Clifton La Bree, *The Gentle Warrior: General Oliver Prince Smith, USMC* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2001), 8.

In 1938, Smith was promoted from captain to Lieutenant Colonel, assigned to the newly

formed Sixth Marine Regiment, and was given command of the regiment's first battalion.

As a battalion commander, Smith was described by Clifton La Bree in *The Gentle*

Warrior as such,

> It was his quiet way of doing things that impressed subordinates and superiors alike . . . There was no question that his strength as a military commander originated from his character. He was a man who was at ease with himself and who imposed upon himself a demanding set of standards of performance . . . The men in his command had his respect, and it was reciprocated from the bottom to the top.[105]

He served most of his time as a battalion commander in Iceland, where 2-6

Marines conducted security operations during the events leading up to and during the

beginning years of World War II. According to La Bree, "Smith gained valuable

command experience in Iceland. He was somewhat of a 'mother hen,' and his desire to

seek what was best for the men was apparent to all. He was approachable at any time and

could be depended upon to give commonsense advice." By 1942, Smith was promoted to

Colonel and soon after was relieved by an Army unit and his battalion was redeployed to

San Diego.

Smith was later selected as the Chief of Staff for Tenth Army during the Okinawa

campaign of World War II. During the campaign, his ability to navigate the competitive

dynamic of a newly formed joint command proved to be highly valued by the senior

leaders in the division. Smith was required to exhibit humility not only as an individual

leadership attribute but also as a representative of the Marine Corps. His approach to

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[105] La Bree, *The Gentle Warrior*, 19-20.

balancing "the needs and wants of the Marine Corps and the demands of the Tenth Army" helped to solidify his influence on the organization.[106]

After World War II ended, Smith assumed duties as the commandant of the Marine Corps schools, and assistant commandant of the Marine Corps until 1950, when he eventually took command of the First Marine Division. Soon after he took command, the North Korean People's Army invaded South Korea, and the United States was propelled back into war. Smith's leadership during the Korean War has been the period of his career that has received the most attention. As a division commander, Major General Smith was described as such by one of his aides.

> And under all of the trying situations that the 1st Marine Division faced during the Korean war, General Smith was always in control of his emotions. I never saw him lose control of his emotions, or let his true feelings overwhelm his common sense or reasoning. And there were numerous times when giving vent to his true feelings would have been understood . . . Even under the most adverse circumstances, his decisions were made in a calm, confident and professional manner.[107]

Concerning the management of his staff, La Bree writes,

Smith had a reputation for using his staff to the fullest; he expected and got maximum effort from its members. "I don't want an officer on my staff who never makes an error or a mistake because I will strongly suspect that he isn't doing anything or [that he is] blaming his mistakes on someone else."[108]

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[106] Shisler, *For Country and Corps*, 97.

[107] La Bree, *The Gentle Warrior*, 106.

[108] Ibid.

As Smith's First Marine Division was assigned to Eighth Army at the beginning of the Korean War, Smith reported directly to MG Almond, who served as GEN MacArthur's Chief of Staff and the Tenth Corps Commander. Smith did not get along with Almond from the very beginning of their tumultuous relationship. In their first meeting, Smith's "first impression of Almond was not very favorable. He was supercilious in manner. He discussed the forthcoming operations with me . . . Then he questioned me as to my command experience. He insisted upon calling me 'son.'"[109]

Smith's emotional intelligence and humility can be seen in how he behaved in such a command climate. When dealing with MG Almond, Smith's professionalism and ability to put his personal feelings aside were observed by many.

From the moment that he and Almond first met, they had been uneasy with one another. They were opposites in temperament and style, and they probably could never have been best of friends under any circumstances. However, their differences were settled as those differences arose. There may have been lingering doubts in confidence, but the men were always civil to each other. Smith was not a man to carry a grudge or let his personal feelings interfere with his relationship, as a subordinate, with Almond.[110]

Smith's ability to regulate his emotions and maintain professionalism with Almond despite their differences speaks to his character. His ability to exude confidence and professionalism to a superior with whom he disagreed speaks to his humility because he very clearly left his ego out of the equation. Were Smith to allow his uneasiness and

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[109] La Bree, *The Gentle Warrior*, 107.

[110] Ibid., 123-125.

lack of confidence in Almond spread to his subordinates or even to his peers, the success

of the Corps could have been severely compromised.

Throughout the Korean war, Smith's leadership was nothing short of exemplary.

The Marines he commanded in Korea admired and respected him. "Capt. William B.

Hopkins's tribute is typical: "As one of the survivors, I am forever grateful that Oliver P.

Smith commanded UN Troops at Chosin. He embodied all of the features required by

Sun-Tzu: 'by command I mean the general's qualities of wisdom, sincerity, humanity,

courage, and strictness'."[111] Smith built a reputation for being an emotionally intelligent

leader with a quiet charisma who built highly effective teams. He influenced his

superiors, peers, and subordinates positively and showed genuine care for those he

commanded.

An article published in *The Marine Corps Gazette* about O. P. Smith quotes his

granddaughter, Gail Shisler.

> Smith was of the "old breed" of Marine Corps officer—extensively
> traveled, a veteran campaigner, and a superb military professional . . . Indeed, his
> military record is almost too good to be true, and his purposeful practice of not
> seeking the limelight has perhaps led him to become one of the Marine Corps'
> less appreciated senior combat commanders. But as Shisler frequently pointed
> out, he was "okay" with that. As one of his Chosin survivors noted, "I would
> follow [Smith] to hell because I knew we would get me out." This was all the
> acclaim that Smith really desired.[112]

This observation is consistent with the reputation that Smith established early in his

career and maintained throughout his life. His concern consistently remained with his

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[111] La Bree, *The Gentle Warrior*, 207.

[112] Heather Leahy, "The Life of a Legend," *Marine Corps Gazette* 93, no. 11
(November 2009): 95.

subordinates and rarely, if ever, for himself. Additionally, he did not seek credit for his accomplishments but rather sought to give credit to the members of the organizations which he led.

After the Korean War, MG Smith assumed command of Camp Pendleton, California. He spent most of his time in this position ensuring proper citations and commendations where awarded to veterans of the Korean War and conducting public relations. In contrast to many of the actions of other leaders who served in the war, Smith rarely took credit for the successes of units he commanded. He regularly ensured credit for success was given to the individual Marines and units involved. His last assignment in the Marine Corps was as the commanding general of Fleet Marine Force Atlantic where he earned his third star.

Lt. Gen. Good, who worked as Smith's Chief of Staff at Marine Corps Schools answered accordingly when asked if Smith was a forceful leader:

> If you think of a forceful person as one who beats his chest and shouts loudly and utters tirades, no, he is not that type of person at all. However, he was a very forceful person. But aside from the fact that it was contrary to his personality to shout and scream and make a fuss about things, he didn't have to. The people that I know who worked for him and with him—because he did inspire people to work with him—listened for any expression of opinion that he gave and took it to themselves as a directive. No, he is not the chest beating type at all.[113]

Following Smith's retirement, an article in the *New York Times* stated,

> But the world expects its military leaders to possess physical courage. Much rarer is the quality of moral courage, possessed by Oliver Smith to an unusual degree. It is generally agreed that his leadership saved the First Division at Chosin; it is not generally known that one reason that the division could be saved was that General Smith disobeyed orders. The orders were to continue to

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[113] La Bree, *The Gentle Warrior*, 218.

advance; the general knew the division was sticking its head into a noose; he ignored the order and consolidated his positions.[114]

Oliver P. Smith's reputation as a highly intelligent, caring leader remains to this day. By all accounts studied in this research, he consistently exhibited the behaviors of a leader whose humility enabled a quiet charisma and moral excellence that garnered a high level of respect from all who served with him. According to La Bree, "his calm air reflected confidence in his abilities. He was not a posturer; indeed, he deplored such conduct. But even though he was self-effacing and unassuming, no subordinate of his ever had a problem understanding who was in charge."[115]

Case Study III: Harold G. Moore

LTG Harold "Hal" Moore is often described as the prime example of adaptive leadership. This case study focuses on LTG Moore during the earlier years of his career when he developed his leadership style. His emotional intelligence and application of humility as a battalion commander was key to his ability to build high performing teams. Known best for his role as the battalion commander of 1/7 Cavalry in the battle of the Ia Drang Valley, Moore has maintained a no-nonsense approach to leadership. He states in his book; *We are Soldiers Still*,

Some think that character is the key to leadership, with its implication of strict adherence to a stern code of ethics, integrity, honesty, personal morals, mental strength, and toughness. I disagree. If a leader has good judgment he or she already has the

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[114] La Bree, *The Gentle Warrior*, 219.

[115] Ibid., 221.

character and integrity to choose the harder right over the easier wrong. Yet you can have

character and integrity and still exercise bad judgment.[116]

Despite his opinion that without good judgement, character and integrity are

useless in military leadership, Moore does advocate for a form of humble leadership,

based on the definitions that have been described in this study thus far.

> Love is not a word military leaders throw around easily, but it is the truth as I know it. Especially if you are a military leader, you must love what you are doing, because the rewards are few and the risks and hardships many. You must love the soldiers who serve under you, for you will ask everything of them, up to and including their precious lives. You must put their care and comfort ahead of your own in all matters large and small. As a leader you don't eat until they have eaten; you don't see to your own needs until you have met all theirs. Loyalty must flow downward fist; then it will be returned tenfold when it is needed. I realize there are differences in military and civilian leadership, but in my opinion, these bedrock principles based on love are universal.[117]

Moore's military career started at West Point, where he struggled without success

for two years to get a congressional appointment before finally convincing a member of

Congress from Georgia to give him a chance.[118] As a cadet, Moore struggled

academically and graduated in 1945 in the bottom 20 percent of his class as an Infantry

officer. He reflects on this experience often in his writing, and it was clearly one that

taught some humility and the value of hard work to Moore.

During the Korean War, he was assigned as a heavy mortar company commander.

As a young captain, Moore took over from a previous commander who he described as

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[116] Harold G. Moore and Joseph L. Galloway, *We Are Soldiers Still: A Journey Back to the Battlefields of Vietnam* (New York: Harper, 2008), 170.

[117] Ibid., 168-169.

[118] Ibid., 160.

somewhat toxic. "The present company commander is an obscene, loud, rabbit-faced person who is interested only in getting back to the USA . . . Apparently, all that he is interested in is cheating on his wife as he is continually boasting of his affairs in the past."[119] Moore immediately set about changing the command climate. He did this by exhibiting those traits that are inherent to that of a humble leader.

One of my first acts as CO was to move six men out of the worst "boar's nest" in the place. I moved them into the officer's bunkers, and I moved us down there [into the mortarmen's old bunker]. I had some Korean support troops clean it first, though, and it is very adequate for my Gunnery Officer, Recon Officer, Warrant Officer, and myself.

By placing the needs and comfort of his subordinates above his own and those of his officers, Moore was able to successfully and quickly transform the climate of his company. His mortar company went on to perform exceptionally under his selfless leadership.

Moore's performance as a company commander earned him the appointment as the Regimental S3, where he served during several battles including the first Battle of Pork Chop Hill. Years later, after completing CGSC, he reported to the Air Mobility Division in the Officer of the Chief of Research and Development at the Pentagon. It was here that he had a first-hand role in the development of the Air Assault concept that he would later test in combat in the Ia Drang Valley as a battalion commander. After attending a NATO assignment to Norway, Moore was handpicked to be the battalion

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[119] Mike Guardia, *Hal Moore: A Soldier Once--and Always* (Havertown: CASEMATE, 2013), 756.

commander of 2-23 Infantry, a newly formed air assault unit which was later re-designated as 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment.

After approximately a year of training in the newly formed air mobile doctrine, Moore's battalion deployed to Vietnam as part of the 125,000-troop buildup ordered by President Johnson in 1965.[120] Moore's leadership was fully put to the test during the battle that took place at LZ X-Ray, in the Ia Drang Valley of Vietnam. The team that he had built and the decentralized command climate that he created paid off during one of the most intense battles of the Vietnam War. Moore continually emphasized a climate of two-way trust in his battalion, and there are countless stories of his troopers taking the initiative to lead on the battlefield during this firefight.

Moore's legacy is best known for his battalion leadership and his performance on LZ X-Ray, which led to 79 U.S. troops killed in action and 121 wounded. As he had promised his troopers, he was the last person in his unit to leave the battlefield. [121] In the weeks following the battle, Moore relinquished command of the battalion, was promoted to Colonel, and one month later, took command of the division's 3rd Brigade.[122] As a brigade commander, his style of leading from the front, on the ground with his troopers without regard for his personal comfort or safety earned him several nicknames and the loyalty of his subordinates.[123]

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[120] Guardia, *Hal Moore*, 1329.

[121] Ibid., 1853.

[122] Ibid., 1877.

[123] Ibid., 2011.

After his service in Vietnam, Moore's reputation as a leader contributed to his rapid promotion and selection for command at various levels. When he was notified of his selection for command of the 7th Infantry Division and eventual promotion to Major General, it was because the Corps commander had relieved the previous commander amid multiple incidents of extreme racial tension and drug usage in the division.[124] MG Moore was able to turn the 7th Infantry Division around by focusing on lower level leadership. After personally visiting the units within the division and talking to Soldiers at all levels, he set up an "Officer Leadership School for company-grade officers and an NCO Leadership School for staff sergeants and below."[125] Through engaged and caring leadership, Moore transformed the 7th Infantry Division by placing emphasis on leader development. He commanded the division until 1971 and moved to Fort Ord, California to assume garrison command. As garrison commander, he implemented training revisions to the Army's Basic Training program which were adopted across the Army.[126]

Moore's leadership philosophy focused on developing subordinate leaders and enabling commanders to make decisions. He writes, "as you push power and decision-making authority down you must also push subsequent praise and recognition for outstanding unit performance down as well. Don't hog the glory for yourself if you want to build a superb team."[127] Hal Moore realized and lived the principles of humble

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[124] Guardia, *Hal Moore*, 2208.

[125] Ibid., 2221.

[126] Ibid., 2330.

[127] Moore and Galloway, *We Are Soldiers Still*, 167.

leadership throughout his career as evidenced by his constant love of Soldiers and the care with which he led them. "Above all [leadership] demands that you care deeply about those you are leading. You must care about their training, the quality of their lives, about their todays and their tomorrows. Without this love of the people who stand with you in pursuit of success, leadership is doomed to failure sooner or later."[128]

<div align="center">Case Study IV: Colin Powell</div>

Jeffrey J. Matthews writes in *The Art of Command* about Colin Powell, stating, "Powell's entire military career, in fact, illustrates the all-important role of exemplary followership in the leadership process."[129] Powell's career displays the effectiveness of followership as a leadership approach. This case study focuses on his cultivation of humility throughout his career and how his emphasis on followership influenced his effectiveness at various levels of command.

Powell earned a reputation for quiet charisma and authentically humble leadership across the span of his long career in the Army and as a statesman. In his biography of Powell, Howard Means describes him as such,

He often seems to be a man with virtually no vanity at all. "It's a trait that serves him so well," says Fred Malek, manager of the 1992 Bush-Quayle campaign and Powell's boss in 1973 when he was on loan from the Army to the Office of Management and Budget. "Colin Powell doesn't have an ego. He's not burdened with an ego. He's

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[128] Moore and Galloway, *We Are Soldiers Still*, 168.

[129] Harry S. Laver, ed., *The Art of Command: Military Leadership from George Washington to Colin Powell* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2010), 233.

comfortable with himself, secure in who he is and what his abilities are, and he doesn't let his ego get in the way of doing his job. It's part of the reason he can work so well with people."[130]

Colin Powell was born in the Bronx, New York City, to parents who emigrated to the United States from Jamaica in the early 1920s. In 1954, as an indecisive college student, he enrolled in Reserve Officer Training Corps at City College of New York and thus began a long, storied career in the Army.

In his autobiography, *My American Journey,* Powell states,

For years, I have told young officers that most of what I know about military life I learned in my first eight weeks at Fort Benning. I can sum up those lessons in a few maxims:[131]

- "Take charge of this post and all government property in view" – the Army's first general order.

- The mission is primary, followed by taking care of your soldiers.

- Don't stand there. Do something!

- Lead by example.

- "No excuse, sir."

- Officers always eat last.

- Never forget, you are an American infantryman, the best.

- And never be without a watch, a pencil, and a notepad.[131]

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[130] Howard B. Means, *Colin Powell: Soldier/Statesman—Statesman/Soldier* (New York: D.I. Fine, 1992), 11.

[131] Colin L. Powell and Joseph E. Persico, *My American Journey* (New York: Random House, 1995), 41.

These lessons would shape Powell's leadership philosophy for the rest of his career. This philosophy was shaped by an emphasis on leading by example and care for subordinates. The preceding lessons that emphasized many humble leader behaviors impacted Powell to the point that he was able to apply them in every leadership position to which he was assigned. During his service in the Vietnam War as an advisor, an instructor at Ft. Benning and even as a White House Fellow, he applied these leadership principles with positive results.

As a newly promoted Brigadier General in 1979, Powell became the Assistant Division commander of 4th ID at Fort Carson, Colorado. The Division Commander of 4th ID at the time was Major General John W. Hudachek, and this was the first time that BG Powell encountered a major leadership challenge in his career. Powell says this of MG Hudachek: "General Hudachek's leadership style was that of a tough overseer. The job got done, but by coercion, not motivation. Staff conferences turned into harangues. Inspections became inquisitions. The endless negative pressure exhausted the unit commanders and staff."[132] After a year working as a deputy commanding general, Hudachek gave Powell a sub-par performance report. Worried that this would effectively end his career, he experienced a humbling moment that seems to have forced a period of serious reflection and self-evaluation.

In Powell's own words, "I had done what I thought was right. Hudachek had done what he thought was right and graded me accordingly. I was not going to whine or

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[132] Powell and Persico, *My American Journey*, 264.

appeal, get mad at Hudachek, or go into a funk. I would live with the consequences."[133]

At a moment when it seemed that a commander he did not respect had unfairly sealed his

fate, Powell's display of humility and emotional intelligence allowed him to reflect and

assess himself in a way that few leaders do. In this instance, Powell epitomized the

statement: "the servant leader's concentration on service limits the negative effects of

self-interest, and humility counteracts that self-interest."[134]

Powell was nominated as the Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense.

During this time, Powell had already established a reputation as a reliable and effective

leader. The senior military leadership present in Washington, DC brings an inherent

presence of egos. Powell displayed a high level of emotional intelligence and humility as

a senior aide to Secretary of Defense Weinberger. Regarding his performance in this

position, he was described as such. "He's just regular. He's normal in a town where

people aren't. There's no second agenda. What he tells you is what he means to tell

you . . . There is no second agenda, no calculating. And there is in this building [the

Pentagon] and in every other building in Washington. Colin doesn't deal with people that

way."[135]

This reputation of being a "straight shooter" is a key indicator of humility. Powell

wasn't a leader that was concerned with careerism or furthering his own agenda in an

environment that was evidently ripe with such behavior. Instead, Powell was a very

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[133] Ibid., 271.

[134] Patterson, "Servant Leadership," 4.

[135] Means, *Colin Powell: Soldier/Statesman—Statesman/Soldier*, 207.

approachable leader who dedicated his energy to agendas and recommendations that served the improvement of the entire organization. "He's direct and honest, he has humor, and he doesn't waste time . . . He doesn't understand when someone says, 'Well, they told me to check with that guy and that guy and that guy.' He says, 'Why the hell didn't you check with me?' He doesn't stand on ceremony."[136] Powell's pragmatism and balanced leadership style were undoubtedly due to his emotional intelligence which enabled him to remove his ego from his thinking. It also enabled him to enhance his situational awareness of important matters because subordinates were comfortable approaching him with problems. In short, his humility and emotional intelligence provided a sense of psychological safety among those who worked for him which created a more productive environment in the organization.

Powell eventually became the National Security Advisor during the Reagan administration and in 1989, was appointed as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff by President George H. W. Bush. He served in this role during the invasion of Panama and Gulf War and in 1993, retired from active duty service. After retirement, however, Powell continued to publish many of the leadership lessons and philosophies he learned during this military career.

One way to examine Powell as a leader and the effects of humility on his leadership is by looking at his leadership philosophy. After retirement, Powell published the philosophy that informed his approach to leadership in the book *It Worked for Me, In*

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[136] Means, *Colin Powell: Soldier/Statesman—Statesman/Soldier*, 206-207.

Life and Leadership. His "thirteen rules"[137] have been widely published and in his words, "PowerPointed and flashed around the world on the Internet."[138] Powell developed these rules over the course of his military career based on various lessons he learned. He described them as "a couple dozen snippets of paper shoved under the glass cover on my desktop—quotes and aphorisms that I had collected or made up over the years."[139] Number three on this list is, "avoid having your ego so close to your position that when your position falls, your ego goes with it."[140] In explaining this rule of leadership, Powell quotes the guidance he gave to all his subordinate commanders and staffs.

> Disagree with me, do it with feeling, try to convince me you are right and I am about to go down the wrong path. You owe that to me; that's why you are here. But don't be intimidated when I argue back. A moment will come when I have heard enough, and I make a decision. At that very instant, I expect all of you to execute my decision as if it were your idea. Don't damn the decision with faint praise, don't mumble under your breath—we now all move out together to get the job done. And don't argue with me anymore unless you have new information, or I realize I goofed and come back to you. Loyalty is disagreeing strongly, and loyalty is executing faithfully. The decision is not about you or your ego; it is

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[137] Powell's "thirteen rules" are listed in his book, *It Worked for Me* as well as many other publications. Although this study only focuses on a specific few that illustrate his emphasis on humility in leadership, the complete list is as follows: 1. It ain't as bad as you think. It will look better in the morning. 2. Get mad, then get over it. 3. Avoid having your ego so close to your position that when your position falls, your ego goes with it. 4. It can be done. 5.Be careful what you choose: you may get it. 6. Don't let adverse facts stand in the way of a good decision. 7. You can't make someone else's choices. You shouldn't let someone else make yours. 8. Check small things. 9. Share credit. 10. Remain calm. Be kind. 11.Have a vision. Be demanding. 12. Don't take counsel of your fears or naysayers. 13. Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier.

[138] Colin L. Powell and Tony Koltz, *It Worked for Me: In Life and Leadership* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2012), 4.

[139] Ibid.

[140] Ibid., 9.

about gathering all the information, analyzing it, and trying to get the right answer. I still love you, so get mad and get over it.[141]

Powell's leadership philosophy indicates a strong emphasis on self-evaluation and consistent checking of one's ego. "Honest, brutal self-examination is especially difficult, but even more vital after a mess, a screw-up, or a failing performance."[142] Powell's perspective on the importance of self-evaluation was undoubtedly garnered after his experience working for MG Hudachek. This perspective enabled Powell to surpass superiors such as Hudachek and to maintain a reputation for great leadership still to this day. His perspective on how leaders can apply this concept is stated thus, "Every organization needs to be introspective, transparent, and honest with itself. This only works if everyone is unified on the goals and purpose of the organization and there is trust within the team. High-performing, successful organizations build cultures of introspection and trust and never lose sight of their purpose."[143]

Conclusion

The four case studies above have focused on leaders who served in multiple global conflicts throughout their military careers. While each leader examined in this chapter has undoubtedly accomplished much after their retirement from the military and exhibited humble behaviors during second careers, the case studies have focused only on the behaviors observed before retirement from military service. Since the scope of this

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[141] Ibid., 10.

[142] Powell and Koltz, *It Worked for Me*, 168.

[143] Ibid., 173.

research focused on military leadership, each case study has specifically addressed only the subjects' military careers.

It was also the intention of this chapter to pick case studies that spanned the 20th century to increase the breadth of study. Beginning with George C. Marshall, who served in the Army in the Philippines and during both World Wars, his military career could be studied in a variety of circumstances and contexts in the first three major conflicts of the century. Smith served during the Second World War and the Korean War, where his leadership could be observed during major combat operations and in garrison environments, which provides an additional variety of circumstances for study. Hal Moore's career began at the end of World War II and led Army units at the tactical level during the Korean War and Vietnam War. His leadership could also be observed in a variety of garrison command positions. Finally, Powell's leadership was primarily analyzed as he served in the Vietnam War, the first Gulf War, and in multiple positions of leadership in the Pentagon as an organizational leader.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

In this chapter, each case study subject will be compared with the definition of humility as described by Owens and Hekman, which is "an interpersonal characteristic that emerges in social contexts that connotes a manifested willingness to view oneself accurately, a displayed appreciation of others' strengths and contributions, and teachability."[144] Further, as units of analysis, each subject's leadership style will be compared to the humble leadership, servant leadership, or transformational leadership styles described in the theories and studies cited in chapter 2 of this study. This portion of the analysis will seek to answer the secondary research question: what is the function of humility in existing leadership models and what is its effect on different leadership styles?

Additionally, the analysis will focus on how the observable behaviors of each leader contributed to their legacy or reputation. One unit of analysis will be the effect of a leader's humility on whether their legacy or reputation remained in high regard even after their death, or retirement. To be sure, there are countless military leaders this study did not examine who exhibited highly narcissistic behaviors and were still highly effective leaders. However, this analysis will seek to discover whether the application of humility

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[144] Owens and Hekman, "How Does Leader Humility Influence Team Performance?," 1.

can make a difference in the level of effectiveness of a leader. Also, this analysis will seek to define how humility affects a leader's legacy or reputation long term.

Finally, this analysis will examine the effects of humility as a leadership attribute and how it affects subordinate productivity and team building. In this context, the analysis will measure the ability of a leader to create long-term influence on an organization as opposed to short-term effects. These criteria will be measured by examining each case study subject's influence on the military, their respective branch of the military, and the organizations they led or commanded.

Analysis

According to the definition of humility described at the beginning of this chapter, George Marshall best exemplifies the model of Humble Leadership as proposed by Owens and Hekman. Marshall was a mentor or coach to many leaders such as Eisenhower and Bradley, who then took Marshall's leadership philosophy and became highly respected and successful leaders during World War II. This effect of creating a shared group behavior of collective humility in an organization is one of the key effects of humble leadership described by Owens and Hekman.[145]

Marshall's constant focus on developing subordinate leaders to enable organizational success and exhibiting less regard for his own success had measurable effects. His leadership style closely resembles the effects that Owens and Hekman describe where "humility appears to embolden individuals to aspire to their highest

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[145] Owens and Hekman, "How Does Leader Humility Influence Team Performance?," 1091.

potential and enables them to make the incremental improvements necessary to progress toward that potential."[146] This effect is certainly observable throughout Marshall's career and the effects his leadership had on his subordinates who fully realized their potential.

According to many accounts of Smith, he exhibited the behaviors of humble leadership as observed during the studies conducted by Owens and Hekman. His quiet charisma and confidence was an example of authentically humble leadership, whereby humility contributed to his self-confidence, emotional intelligence, and self-awareness. This, in turn, contributed to a learning environment and supportive command climate wherever he commanded. His emotional intelligence and self-awareness thus enabled him to remain effective as a leader and maintain his professionalism during times of high-stress and when he was subjected to narcissistic leadership by superiors such as MG Almond.

When studying LTG Moore's legacy, the leadership he displayed most closely fits the definition of transformational leadership. He truly exhibited humility throughout his career in his philosophy of decentralized leadership. "As you push power and decision-making down, you must also push subsequent praise and recognition for outstanding unit performance down as well. Don't hog the glory for yourself if you want to build a superb team."[147] Just as Northouse states, "the process whereby a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower. This type of leader is attentive to the needs and motives of followers

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[146] Owens and Hekman, "How Does Leader Humility Influence Team Performance?," 1103.

[147] Moore and Galloway, *We Are Soldiers Still*, 167.

and tries to help followers reach their fullest potential."[148] Moore epitomized this type of transformational leadership in the units he led at every level as evidenced by the increased performance of each of those units.

Powell's leadership style fits many of the definitions of servant leadership. As Northouse stated, the primary outcomes of servant leadership are "follower performance and growth, organizational performance, and societal impact."[149] Powell's influence on civil rights and equal opportunity policies in the military clearly exhibit the servant leadership construct. Additionally, his ability to influence superiors, peers, and subordinates to reach the self-actualization of individual potential defines his leadership style as servant leadership.

Powell's philosophy has been published extensively and reveals his emphasis on humility and the importance of checking one's ego. But the effectiveness thereof is seen in his success after applying this principle in his career. After his career almost ended as a Brigadier General working for a narcissistic leader, his ability to check his ego and continue in a service mindset contributed to his high reputation and subsequent promotion. Had he not already cultivated a reputation as a servant leader and exhibited the characteristics of a humble leader, it is doubtful that his career could have withstood the setback. This example shows how humility as a leadership attribute can increase a leader's potential and long-term influence on an organization.

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[148] Northouse, *Leadership*, 162.

[149] Ibid., 236.

There is no doubt that each of the case study subjects has maintained a highly respectable reputation throughout their military careers, after retirement, and even after death. But to examine the effects of humility on their legacies, it is necessary to study their successes and failures. For example, GEN Marshall's successes are abundant, but his success is often written about within a certain context in which the successes of the U.S. Army and the organizations which he led are often attributed to his efforts, although he never personally took credit. This behavior is congruent with the humble leadership model where leaders continuously seek to give credit to their subordinates. Marshall's legacy was untainted not only because of the respectable and professional demeanor which he displayed throughout his life but also because of his resolve to live a life of true service instead of focusing his efforts toward building such a reputation.

Smith's reputation as a scholar or "professor" served him well throughout his career, but his legacy in the Marine Corps is somewhat different than that of GEN Marshall. Marshall was known as a leader who famously turned down the command of Europe to better serve the Army and his country and who expertly navigated the intricacies of Washington, DC. Smith is well-known for his disagreements with superiors throughout the Second World War and the Korean War. But Smith's reputation remained high while the superiors with whom he had conflicts have not stood through time. What contributed to Smith's legacy was his emphasis on his subordinates. While Marshall may have been a General that many politicians and superiors loved to have as a subordinate, Smith was the opposite. It was his subordinates who enjoyed the quality leadership that he provided as recorded in numerous interviews with Soldiers who served under his command.

Smith's continual insistence that credit was to be given to his subordinates rather than to himself demonstrates authentic humility. Smith could build highly effective teams without any self-promotion or narcissistic behavior. In fact, he is credited with inspiring a deeper sense of loyalty and respect and therefore, close-knit teams by showing the authentically humble confidence or the quite charisma for which he became well-known.

Moore's legacy is associated with his performance as a battalion commander during the battle of Ia Drang Valley. However, his continual focus on subordinates throughout his career cemented his legacy as a selfless leader. Even after retirement, Moore's involvement with veteran's communities and efforts to ensure recognition for the actions of Soldiers who served in Vietnam only served to continue that legacy. This focus on subordinates is a key behavior of humble leadership and was inculcated into Moore's leadership style. His books that outline this philosophy, his experiences and the lessons he learned as a military leader have all been international best-selling books. Even after death, he maintains a high reputation as an exemplary leader.

Powell's reputation as a military leader earned him acclaim not only within the military but also in the political community of Washington, DC. His appointment as the Chief of Staff of the Army was in no small part due to his reputation as a servant leader. Powell had a unique and very effective ability to keep his personal opinions and political leanings private to be able to maintain an emphasis on the non-partisanship of the military. He took extra care to serve the needs of the Army versus that of any political party or member of Congress though there was much speculation in Washington about his personal political views. This reputation of political neutrality allowed Powell to influence a far greater population of lawmakers and provide exemplary service to various

administrations of both political parties. Since as he was described by many who worked

with and for him, he displayed no ego, Powell's influence increased and his ability to

effectively lead the Army was amplified.

The long-term effects of humility as a leadership attribute can be seen in the

legacy that each leader in this study left on the military. But perhaps a more accurate

measure of effectiveness can be found in how their subordinates performance was

affected by their leadership. As Owen's and Hekman discovered that leader humility

contributes to creating a learning environment and a sense of psychological safety in an

organization which fosters subordinate leader development, the observed behaviors of

each case study seemed to illustrate this as well.

In an article developed for the U.S. Army Department of Leadership and

Command of CGSC, Dr. Gene Klann addresses the concept of compliance versus

commitment as outcomes of leader behavior. Dr. Klann uses Dr. Gary Yukl's definitions

of each concept in this article.

> Commitment as an outcome in which the target person agrees with a request or decision from the agent and makes a strong effort to carry out the request or execute the decision with efficiency. Compliance, on the other hand, describes an outcome in which the target is willing to do what the agent asks but is indifferent rather than passionate about it and will make only a token effort.[150]

These two outcomes of a leader's influence are a key concept in analyzing the

effects of humility in each case study. Marshall's career was largely spent as an instructor

and the effects of his influence on subordinate leaders during this time instructing are

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[150] Gary Yukl, *Leadership in Organizations,* 6th ed. (2002), 147, quoted in Gene Klann, PhD, "The Application of Power and Influence in Organizational Leadership" (US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2017), 1.

widely written about, including within this study. His expertise enabled not only his repeated selection for instructor positions but also his influence on subordinate leaders who eventually became highly influential leaders themselves. The number of his students who rose to lead large divisions as successful leaders are evidence of the commitment and buy-in that he instilled in those individuals. His humility enabled him to foster a learning environment in each organization he led thereby creating subordinate buy-in and commitment to his vision. This effect stands in stark contrast to many of his peers who were effective leaders in other ways but did not inspire the level of commitment from subordinates that Marshall achieved.

Smith's exceptional influence on subordinates is well documented and evidenced in the case study. His approachability and his constant motivation to seek what was best for his subordinates are seen throughout his career. Smith's approach to managing his staff by viewing mistakes as learning experiences were clear evidence of his effectiveness in creating psychological safety for his subordinates and a learning environment in the organization. His ability to inspire commitment versus compliance among his subordinates was best described in the quote by Lt. General Good. "The people that I know who worked for him and with him—because he did inspire people to work with him—listened for any expression of opinion he gave and took it to themselves as a directive."[151] Smith's effect on subordinates illustrates Klann's statement that "committed followers make a decision to take personal ownership of mission tasks, have

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[151] La Bree, *The Gentle Warrior*, 218.

internal buy-in to the leader's decisions and orders, and proactively dedicate themselves to mission accomplishment."[152]

Moore earned a reputation for investing in subordinate leader development throughout his career. He distinctly made it a point to focus on inspiring trust and commitment in his organizations by "pushing the power down"[153] and enabling subordinate leaders. His creation of a leadership school while in command of the 7th Infantry Division quickly fixed the numerous discipline problems in the unit by inspiring buy-in from lower-level leadership. Previous methods of extreme punishments for wrongdoing had clearly not been effective and may have only induced short-term compliance by some but did not address the problem. Moore's approach to leader development created a learning environment in the division and increased the effectiveness of the organization. His entire philosophy that evidently was transformational stemmed from the leadership attributes he had cultivated throughout his career and chief among them, humility.

Powell's humble behavior inspired commitment from his subordinates in a slightly different manner than that of the other case study subjects. While he was extremely approachable and pragmatic like Smith, Powell's emphasis on checking his ego allowed him to inspire commitment not only within the organizations he led, but also to extend his influence outside of those organizations. His convictions about effective

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[152] Gene Klann, PhD, "The Application of Power and Influence in Organizational Leadership" (US Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2017), 2.

[153] Moore and Galloway, *We Are Soldiers Still*, 167.

leadership and inspiring commitment are illustrated in his quote, "Every organization needs to be introspective, transparent, and honest with itself. This only works if everyone is unified on the goals and purpose of the organization and there is trust within the team. High-performing, successful organizations build cultures of introspection and trust and never lose sight of their purpose." Building trust and inspiring commitment were important aspects of Powell's leadership, and his emphasis on these aspects enabled his influence on the Army to extend beyond his tenure in any leadership position.

It is important to note that all four case study subjects in this study are also the subjects of extensive analysis in many Army schools, including the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. The legacy that each of these leaders left after their careers ended and even after death shows their lasting influence. As discussed in Chapter 3 of this study, these leaders were described in biographical works and second-hand accounts by superiors, peers, and subordinates as selfless, exemplary in followership, without ego, servant leaders, and humble. All these attributes or traits are precisely the displayed qualities and behaviors of humble leaders.

This study has researched humility as an attribute which is defined as "how an individual behaves and learns within an environment"[154] by ADRP 6-22 and as "a quality, character, or characteristic ascribed to someone or something."[155] by *Merriam-Webster*. By these definitions, an attribute is a characteristic that can be learned and is not an unalterable quality that is inherent to an individual. Therefore, if humility is a learned

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[154] Department of the Army, ADRP 6-22, *Army Leadership*, 1-5.

[155] Merriam-Webster, "Attribute," accessed April 4, 2018, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/attribute.

behavior and can be learned within a certain environment, each of these case study subjects learned how to be humble leaders because of the environments in which they lived.

Two of the case study subjects learned humility and the importance of cultivating it because of observing the negative effects of narcissism on military organizations in either their peers or superiors. The other two subjects seem to have learned humility by observing good leadership examples early in their careers. All four, however, learned humility early in their careers and were able to apply the principles of humble leadership from that point on. This seems to have contributed cumulatively to each subject's reputation and leadership effectiveness.

Marshall learned early in his career as a young company grade officer as he observed the behaviors of egotistical peers such as Douglas MacArthur. Throughout his career, Marshall was careful to keep his distance from narcissistic leaders. His care in who he chose as associates and who he chose as mentors contributed to his overall success and effectiveness as a leader. Smith learned humility early in life by observing the effects of different leadership styles on the logging crews with whom he worked and then how that applied to military leadership during his time as a company grade officer. His insights on human behavior and how it is affected by a humble approach shaped his personal leadership style which served to his benefit throughout the rest of his career. Never more so than when he was a division commander during the Korean war and had cultivated the humility and emotional intelligence necessary to remain professional in his interactions with leaders such as MG Almond.

Moore learned the devastating effects of narcissistic leadership as a young captain when he arrived in Korea to assume his first command. When he took over from the previous commander of the unit he was to command, he observed the lack of motivation, discipline, and loyalty in the unit, which he attributed to the previous commander's behavior. While the unit may have achieved results, the command climate in the unit was extremely low, and Moore's humble leadership style that focused on the welfare of his subordinates quickly turned the unit into a highly effective and motivated unit.

Powell's humble leadership style was shaped early in his career as well, during his first weeks of training at Fort Benning as an infantry officer. The lessons he learned about leading by example and the importance of caring for subordinates enabled him to cultivate an authentically humble leadership style for the entirety of his career. Later in his career, when confronted with a narcissistic superior such as MG Hudachek, humility was so ingrained in Powell as an attribute and enabled him to keep his ego out of the equation and maintain professionalism so that the experience did not negatively affect his career or reputation.

Based on the observation that each case study learned humility as a leadership attribute early in their lives and military careers, it is logical to assume that to apply humility in an authentic, effective manner in one's military career, it must be taught as a part of a leader's initial military instruction. As stated in chapter 1 of this study, humility is observed as "an evaluative attitude that enables authentic self-awareness and inspires emotional maturity."[156] Because each research subject learned this early in their lives,

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[156] Hare, "The Paradox of Moral Humility," 6.

authentic self-awareness and emotional maturity enhanced their effectiveness as leaders with a cumulative effect throughout their careers.

Findings

The primary research question of this study is: What is the role of humility as a leadership attribute in the context of military leadership? The answer to this question was obtained by analyzing the behaviors of four military leaders who exhibited humble behaviors as defined in chapter 1. This study revealed that humility is an influence multiplier in military leadership. The ability of military leaders to not only influence their organizations but also to extend their influence outside their organizations increases when humility is present as an attribute of their leadership. Likewise, military leaders who exhibit humility can inspire more commitment to their vision by their followers. It is without a doubt that narcissistic leaders may inspire compliance and may be effective in producing results in a military organization, but humble leaders can achieve similar results while establishing a higher level of trust and loyalty among their subordinates. Humble leadership, in turn, achieves more long-term results and helps to establish a more positive legacy on the organization. Therefore, while humility may not be proven to be a necessary component by which military leaders are able to accomplish missions, it verifiably enhances a military leader's overall effectiveness in accomplishing missions while developing subordinates. This effectiveness also seems to increase throughout a leader's career and even after retirement.

This study also concludes that humility as a leadership trait must be cultivated early in one's career or life. Each of the case study subjects' observed humble behaviors began because of an important lesson learned or influence of a role model. These lessons

early in life established a pattern of behavior whereby each leader increasingly applied humility and maintained their focus on their subordinates and their organizations rather than their own interests or benefit. Learning how to apply humility to their leadership style early in life set their careers up for success because of the good reputation they earned and trust they built with their respective superiors, peers, and subordinates. In turn, the application of humility enabled them to maintain that trust and reputation throughout their careers.

Humility also seems to have contributed to a higher sense of emotional intelligence in each case. Emotional intelligence was defined in this study as, "abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulse and delay gratification; to regulate one's moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathize and to hope."[157] The ability to control one's emotions, regulate moods and maintain military bearing, especially in the face of narcissistic or toxic leadership, was evident in each case study. The leaders studied in this research all exhibited a high level of empathy as an effect of high emotional intelligence, and their humility seems to be the primary contributing factor.

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[157] Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, 34.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study was conducted to address the problem that the concept of humility is often promoted as a desirable or necessary leadership attribute in many discussions, leader development programs, and counseling, but is excluded from Army leadership doctrine. The purpose of this study was to research humility in the context of military leadership and to study the concept of humility as it affects or relates to different leadership styles. The primary research question of this study was stated thus. What is the role of humility as a leadership attribute in the context of military leadership? There were also two secondary research questions. How has humility affected known military leaders' legacies, and does it enable greater leader effectiveness? What is the function of humility in existing leadership models and what is its effect on different leadership styles?

The review of literature focused on answering the secondary research question of what is the function of humility in existing leadership models and what is its effect on different leadership styles? The other focus of the chapter was to discover how current and historical U.S. Army leadership doctrine, publications by military leaders, and civilian publications and leadership theories have addressed the topic of humility. This chapter discovered that humility has been present in previous versions of Army doctrine which have even listed "unselfishness" as a necessary leadership trait. But the specific mention of humility was not included in doctrine until 1999, where it was mentioned only once referring to GEN Marshall. Current Army leadership doctrine still only mentions

humility once, but only as a desirable characteristic of organizational and strategic leaders.

Humility as a leadership attribute is much more prevalent in publications by current and former military leaders. There were numerous articles written by current and former military leaders who advocate for humility to take a larger role in leadership doctrine to address the problem of narcissistic leaders in the military. The concept of humility is addressed in these publications as a highly desirable and necessary component of successful leaders in the past. The authors also advocated for humility to be included more prominently in military leadership doctrine or further codified to address the problem of narcissistic leadership in the military.

Chapter 2 of this study examined three prominent leadership theories to study the function of humility in each. This portion of the chapter focused on multiple published studies and papers on humble leadership, transformational leadership, and servant leadership. Owens and Hekman's studies on humble leadership as a leadership model of its own revealed many insights into how leaders display humility and the effects of humble leader behaviors on their organizations. They concluded that humble leader behaviors fit into three general categories: acknowledging personal limits, faults and mistakes, spotlighting followers' strengths and contributions, and modeling teachability. They found that the results of these behaviors were a greater sense of psychological safety in subordinates and a learning environment in the organization.

They also found that leader humility instills an organization with a sense of collective humility that fosters a teamwork mindset and organizational focus which they call collective promotion focus. Finally, Owens and Hekman concluded that humble

leadership as a model is closely related to transformational leadership and that humble leadership may be more beneficial in times of moderate amounts of stress, but less effective in times of extreme challenge, where transformational leadership excels.

The studies examined on transformational leadership did not specifically mention humility as a part of the leadership theory but referred to many aspects of humility as integral parts. The attention to the leader and follower self-interests and the importance of those interests with the interests of the organization was present in each study that was examined. The transformational leader's need to be self-aware and emotionally intelligent and to display authentic charisma, individual consideration, and moral excellence are key aspects of this leadership model. Transformational leadership centers around the process by which leaders inspire their followers to reach their fullest potential through intellectual stimulation, mentorship, and coaching.

Servant leadership was the third leadership model studied and is based on the original theories of Robert Greenleaf who posited that leaders and servant influence their organizations through a focus on the followers themselves. Several studies that have been published since have specifically listed humility as a key virtue or trait of servant leadership. Servant leader behaviors include a focus on helping followers grow and succeed, empowering subordinates, a lack of arrogance, and authentic altruism. The outcomes of these behaviors were seen to be an increase in organizational performance and individual follower self-actualization, whereby followers realized their fullest potential because of a servant leader's nurturing.

The research methodology used in this study was a case study analysis in the holistic multiple-case research design. There were four case studies of twentieth-century

military leaders and included Marshall, Smith, Moore, and Powell. Each of these leaders' philosophies, leadership styles, and legacies were studied through the lens of humility as a leadership attribute. Various biographical works and articles and personal accounts of their peers, subordinates, and superiors contributed to these case studies to answer the secondary research question, how has humility affected known military leaders' legacies, and does it enable greater leader effectiveness?

The analysis of the four case studies sought to find the effects of humility on the leadership styles of each case study subject, to discover whether humility contributed to the long-term influence and legacy of each leader, and to examine the effects of humility on subordinate productivity. These metrics of analysis were used because organizational and subordinate productivity, and increased influence were primary outcomes of humble leader behaviors as described by many of the published studies that were introduced in the review of the literature.

The leadership styles of Marshall and Smith most closely resembled the humble leadership construct. Both leaders exhibited a quiet charisma and emotional intelligence that resulted in their ability to influence positive change in their respective organizations. Both leaders had lasting effects on subordinates who reached their fullest potential and later gave credit to the mentorship of Marshall or Smith.

Moore's leadership philosophy and practice primarily resembled transformational leadership. He exhibited humility as an attribute that led to an authentic charisma and inspirational leadership style. He excelled in times of extreme stress by continually focusing on empowering his subordinates. Powell's leadership style, however, epitomized servant leadership. His focus on service eclipsed his personal ambitions and

enabled him to achieve a lasting societal impact on the U.S. Army. This focus, coupled with a desire to continually grow as an individual, cultivated a learning environment in each organization he led, with the effect of psychological safety empowerment in his subordinates.

Each of the case studies' reputations or legacies were found to be unblemished and had a lasting positive effect on the organizations in which they served. All four of the leaders studied avoided taking credit for the successes of their careers and instead insisted that credit be given to their subordinates or peers. Additionally, many subordinates who worked for each of the leaders studied went on to distinguished careers with lasting legacies of their own. Each leader was able to inspire a high level of commitment, trust, and loyalty in their organizations because of their leadership styles that focused on subordinate and organizational success. Additionally, each of the case study subjects seems to have learned humility early in their careers. This had a cumulative effect on their leadership effectiveness, ability to practice authentic empathy, and cultivation of high emotional intelligence.

Conclusion

This study answered the following research questions. What is the role of humility as a leadership attribute in the context of military leadership? How has humility affected known military leaders' legacies, and does it enable greater leader effectiveness? What is the function of humility in existing leadership models and what is its effect on different leadership styles? Chapter 4 of this study revealed that humility has multiple roles in the context of military leadership. Humility seems to act as an enhancing mechanism for leaders who can learn and cultivate it as an attribute, which is a learned

behavior, early in their careers or lives. By learning humility and applying it to their leadership styles early, military leaders can be more effective at inspiring commitment to their vision for their organization and induce a greater level of loyalty and trust among their subordinates. Effective military leadership was defined in chapter 1 as the method or process of leadership that enables mission accomplishment by providing clear purpose and direction while fostering a climate of subordinate empowerment. Humility seems to enhance a leader's ability to be a more effective leader with a cumulative effect over time.

Humility as a leadership attribute helps military leaders exert more long-term influence on their subordinates and organizations by enabling leaders to be more authentic. Consequently, this authenticity helps a leader to focus his or her efforts more thoroughly on the development of subordinates without being distracted by a sense of careerism or egotism. Humility also seems to enable a greater sense of empathy for leaders, by allowing them to identify more closely with their subordinates, peers, and superiors. A higher sense of empathy also seems to be the result of higher emotional intelligence that humble leaders tend to exhibit.

It is, therefore, the conclusion of this research that future U.S. Army leadership doctrine should include more discussion about humility. While there is ample discussion and instruction on the topic of empathy in current doctrine, this study revealed that leaders who exhibit humility could more effectively practice empathy, along with higher emotional intelligence, moral excellence, and commitment-based leadership. Humility also enables more authentic empathy as a long-term result. The problem of toxic or counterproductive leadership was addressed in chapter 1 of this study as a systemic

problem among military leaders and based on the effects of humility on military leadership, humble leaders are much less likely to exhibit toxic behaviors.

Additionally, humility should be included in leadership doctrine because of the need to teach young military leaders humility early in their careers. As young leaders study doctrine during initial military education, lessons about importance of humility will serve to shape a more authentic and grounded leadership philosophy for each. The findings of this study revealed that each of the case study subjects learned humility early in life and the benefits propelled them to be more effective and influential leaders throughout their careers. However, future doctrine should be careful to define humility properly as an evaluative attitude that enables authentic self-awareness and inspires emotional maturity. Humility should be defined as a leadership attribute of character as part of the leader requirement model because it enables military leaders to be more effective at influencing the Army to accomplish its missions while creating a more productive, team-oriented climate in the organization.

<u>Recommendations</u>

This study's scope did not fully explore the problem of toxic or counterproductive leadership and the effects thereof. While there was a slight comparison between the effects of humility as a leadership attribute and egotistical or narcissistic behaviors as exhibited by leaders, there was no extensive research done on toxic or counterproductive leadership. Future research is recommended on this topic and whether the inclusion of humility in professional education, leadership development strategies and leadership doctrine can affect the presence of toxic or counterproductive leadership in the military.

This study focused primarily on military leaders and the effects of humility on their respective leadership styles and philosophies across the span of their careers. Future research on this topic should expand the scope of study and examine the effects of humility on specific levels of leadership and whether there is a difference in the application of humility at each level. For example, humility as a leadership attribute may apply differently in tactical or organizational leadership versus the strategic level of leadership. After all, U.S. Army leadership doctrine currently only mentions humility as applicable to the strategic level of leadership or to large organizations.

One specific question that this study did not cover is: why is humility not included in military leadership doctrine? Future research is encouraged to answer whether a stigma exists around the term or if doctrine writers have purposefully left it out of current doctrine. The assumption that if a stigma exists about the usage of humility in Army doctrine, it is because of an improper definition of the term in the context of leadership. Additional research is needed to verify or disprove this assumption. This researcher also recommends that future studies examine the relationship between empathy and humility and whether humility should replace empathy in the Army leader requirements model.
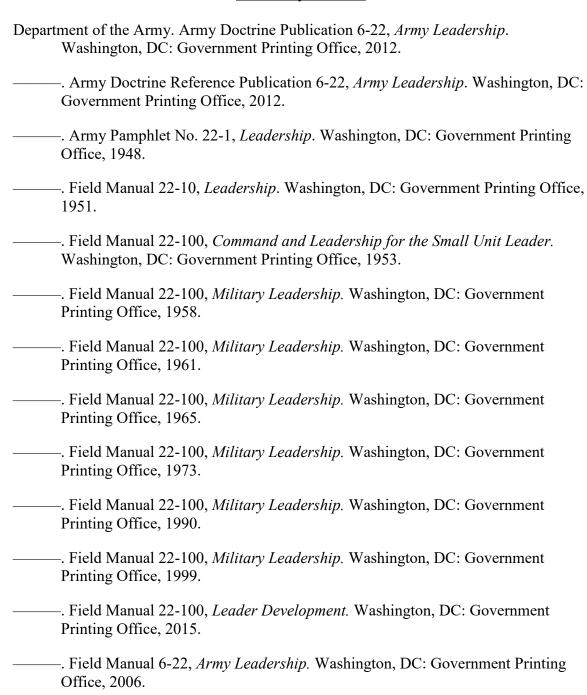
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