

Example of research paper on a transformational leader: cleopatra

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



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Abstract

Those who strive for a cause way above their personal self are called leaders. Leaders who work as to bring harmony, to inspire and to create more leaders are named Transformational Leaders. A transformational leader is a must for every organization these days and they seek individuals out who have the potential of becoming one. Many examples of such leaders have filled the pages of history. Some have been highly coveted and some lesser so, but it is transformational leaders who have made a lot of difference in the world.

This project is a study of transformational leaders, taking into account a very powerful world leader of her time Cleopatra. Ruler of Egypt, Cleopatra's life has seen many ups and downs, and challenges that she came through. Her role as a transformational leader will be discussed here in. This study has been helpful in broadening the horizon of thought and knowledge.

A Transformational Leader:

Cleopatra

Transformational leaders are those who transform their followers into becoming leaders themselves. Transformational leadership is an approach defined as leadership that creates valuable and optimistic change in the followers. A transformational leader centers on transforming others to become each other's help, to look out for each other, to be encouraging and harmonious, and to look out for the organization as a whole. In this leadership, the leader enhances the inspiration, morale and performance of his supporting group.

Cleopatra VII Philopator known popularly to history as Cleopatra was considered as the last Pharaoh to rule Ancient Egypt. Cleopatra belonged to the Ptolemaic dynasty, a family of Greek origin, which ruled over Egypt after Alexander the Great's demise during the Hellenistic period. Cleopatra initially ruled together with her father, Ptolemy XII Auletes, and later with her brothers, Ptolemy XIII and Ptolemy XIV, whom she married as per Macedonian and Greek customs, but eventually became sole ruler. As pharaoh, she concluded a connection with Julius Caesar that made her grip on the throne stronger. She later ascended her son with Caesar, Caesarion, to co-ruler in name. After Caesar's assassination in 44 BC, she aligned with Mark Antony opposing Caesar's legal successor, Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus. With Antony, she gave birth to the twins Cleopatra Selene II and Alexander Helios, and another son, Ptolemy Philadelphus. After losing the Battle of Actium to Octavian, Antony committed suicide. Cleopatra too followed suit, by killing herself by means of an asp bite on August 12, 30 BC.

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She was briefly survived by Caesarian, who was stated pharaoh by his followers, but was soon assassinated by Octavian. Egypt then became the part of Roman Empire and was given the name Aegyptus (Burstein, 2007). The focus of the study here is how Cleopatra, during her period of rule, acted as a transformational leader for the betterment of her people, state and children. Even with controversies that shroud Cleopatra's image, there are many instances that have been recorded in her life time, which depict her to be a true inspiration and a form of hope to her subjects, with her subjects ready to give away their life for their pharaoh willingly. Not to forget that she was a powerful woman ruler at a time when women were hardly allowed to have any rights to make decisions of their own, let alone allowed to rule a nation. It will be discussed as how Cleopatra embodies a confident and self-dependent woman, who would inspire women to be themselves in a male dominant society. In other words she was one of the pioneers of women empowerment.

Discussion

The full spectrum of leadership presents four fundamentals of transformational leadership:

- Individualized Contemplation - The extent, to which the leader attends to each individual's needs, acts as a coach to the follower and hears out the follower's concerns. The leader empathizes and supports, keeping communication open and placing challenges before the followers.
- Intellectual Inspiration - The extent, to which the leader challenges norms, takes risks and implores followers' ideas.

- Inspirational Motivation - The extent, to which the leader speaks of a goal that is appealing and inspiring to supporters.
- Idealized Influence - The leader sets an example for high ethical behavior, infuses pride, gains respect and faith.

Cleopatra as a leader

Cleopatra was known to have learnt numerous languages, especially Egyptian to gain the favor and support of the people of Egypt, as the rest of the Ptolemaic rule had seen leaders who strictly adhered to Greek and paid no consideration to the local languages and the sentiments of the people attached to it. Unlike her predecessors, Cleopatra tried to break the role as a foreign ruler, which the Alexandrian rule had always seen, a rule that was greatly resented and rebelled against by the Egyptians.

Cleopatra was ahead of her time, as she tried to create a world empire by aligning with Antony, one of Julius Caesar's supporters, and one of the triumvirs who ruled over Rome after Caesar's assassination. This was a far reaching step in transformational vision in itself. Her team player strategy seemed to have paid off for a span of time which is considerable, as her sons and daughters came into power of various parts of Africa. Men are known to have taken unprecedented dominance over women through the ages. It was reflected in the law in Ancient Egypt that a woman alone could not rule the land (Klenke, 1996); she had to be accompanied by a male co-ruler. This was a fragment of the Macedonian and old Greek royal philosophy that was followed by the Ptolemaic dynasty. Cleopatra was able to nullify the effect of such a rule and brought gender bias down by co-ruling with such young

rulers, who would not have much say into the affairs of the state. She co-ruled with her brothers Ptolemy XIII, Ptolemy XIV and her son from Julius Caesar, Caesarian.

Cleopatra grew her strength through coalitions, upward appeals, even. She was a strong ruler and derived power from being a member of the Ptolemaic dynasty and the control of a very large amount of wealth that belonged to her, passed down to her through ancestry. Cleopatra recognized the need of a certain charisma that would appeal to the people of Egypt and that which would help her gain support of the masses, which otherwise rebelled against the Alexandrian rule.

Conclusion

There is no doubt as to the truth behind the fact that Cleopatra was a transformational leader who thought quite ahead of her time and gained significance to an extent that would be befitting to such a leader. She understood the need of follower support, team play, setting out examples, bringing out the self-dependence in followers and gaining support through numerous tactics.

Till the present day, Cleopatra remains a highly popular feminine figure in Egyptian as well as Western culture. There is no doubt to conclude that Cleopatra had all the traits that could be enumerated in a transformational leader, as she showed exceptional resourcefulness as woman of a time when women were highly oppressed. A lot can be learnt from closely scrutinizing the life such a figure, and the horizon of knowledge expanded, separating the facts from the taboo and broadening the thought.

References

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