Animation, territoires et pratiques socioculturelles
Sociocultural community development and practices
Animación, territorios y prácticas socioculturales

Trans-Cultural Leadership for Change

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Les dirigeants d'aujourd'hui doivent ajuster leurs stratégies et leur style de management. Les méthodes d'adaptation conventionnelle aux besoins de leur communauté ne sont pas suffisantes. Les dirigeants ont à repenser la structure organisationnelle et les stratégies pour dépasser les situations imprévisibles et inconfortables d'ambiguïté ainsi que les situations de conflits. L'article introduit un concept de leadership pour la transformation et propose une ébauche de réponse à la question : « Est-ce que le leadership transculturel peut être une nouvelle approche pour préparer et guider les personnes au travers des changements organisationnels et le développement dans une ère de grande diversification et de mobilité accrue? »

Mots-clés : culture ; processus de création de sens ; leadership concept transculturel ; dirigeants comme agents de changement ; leadership transculturel pour le changement.

Leaders nowadays are under pressure to adjust their strategies and management styles. Conventional adaptation to their community's requirement is not enough. Leaders have to rethink their organizational structure and the related strategy to go beyond uncomfortable situations of unpredictable ambiguities and conflicts. The article introduces a concept of leadership for transformation and draft the response to the question: "Could transcultural leadership be a "new" approach to preparing and guiding people through organizational changes and developments at a time of global diversification and greater mobility?"

Keywords: culture ; meaning-making process ; leadership ; trans-cultural concept ; leaders as change agents ; trans-cultural leadership for transformation.

Los dirigentes de hoy deben ajustar sus estrategias y su estilo de gestión. Los métodos de adaptación convencional a las necesidades de su comunidad no son suficientes. Los dirigentes tienen que repensar la estructura organizativa y las estrategias para sobrepasar las situaciones imprevisibles e inconfortables de ambigüedad así como las situaciones de conflictos. El artículo introduce un concepto de liderazgo para la transformación y propone un bosquejo de respuesta a la cuestión: « ¿ acaso el liderazgo transcultural puede ser un nuevo enfoque para preparar y guiar a las personas a través de los cambios organizativos y el desarrollo en una era de gran diversificación y de movilidad aumentada? »

Palabras claves : cultura ; proceso de creación de dirección ; liderazgo ; concepto transcultural ; dirigentes como agentes de cambio ; liderazgo transcultural para el cambio.

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ISSN : 1923-8541

Introduction

In an increasingly complex, interdependent, faster moving, and competitively dynamic globalized world leaders at all levels and in all action fields are under pressure to adjust their strategies and management styles; and too often they succumb to the temptation of the simple and quick fix as the efficient solution as the response to their environmental change. Conventional adaptation to their community's requirement is not enough. Leaders have have to rethink their organizational structure and the related socio-cultural and political strategy. Leaders must be prepared for uncomfortable situations with ambiguity. They have no other choice but to find new solutions to cope with unpredictable challenges. Thus, change management relies on leadership bringing in not merely innovative thinking to make sense of the need of organizational transformation. Within this context the hypothetical question of this article is:

"Could trans-cultural leadership be a "new" approach to preparing and guiding people through organizational changes and developments at a time of global diversification and greater mobility?"

The main goal of the article is to present the concept of trans-cultural leadership for organizational change and development in communities. This article is based on the project of trans-cultural leadership for transformation which was conceptualized for an Executive Master of Business Administration in International Management Consulting at the University of Applied Sciences of Northwestern Switzerland in 2009 and is published in text book version at Palgrave Macmillan (www.palgrave.com).

The Challenges for Leaders Nowadays

Migration, mobility and globalization have made nations and international companies, globally more interdependent. Workforces have become more international, local environments more multicultural. Media and technology have made a substantial contribution to the acceleration of exchange of different values and lifestyles. Culture is not a new notion. However, since the middle of the 20th century culture has been a buzzword used in daily as well as in scientific, political, public and business discourses. Very often culture is attributed to nation state. People are identified according to groups that are made up of homogeneous communities. But culture, as a concept, is a whole lot more than a simple set of boundaries, defined along the lines of geographical or national divisions. The concept of the culture as a homogeneous entity such as nation state results from the container paradigm or frame. The container frame considers ethnic groups or nation state as closed systems, bound to territories. Culture plays a central role in conflicts of power politics, of ideologies and exclusion. Hence, is it not irritating that one can also find such container frame in the field of international discourse and research? If we agree with Sandkühler's observation, "the staged uniformity of a national culture is today just as unbelievable as the imagined unity of a world culture" (2004, p. 81). Yet the static notion of culture seems to disagree with the global processes which transcend the state-society unit, especially if we take into account the ongoing processes of fragmentation and reconstruction of cultural entities and identities in the past and those evolving throughout the world (Sandkühler, 2004; Welsch, 1999). In the present day context the awareness of the concept of culture is increasingly important, not only because of the expansion of economic activities which produce emerging international enterprises and organizations, thus contributing to additional options of perceiving and defining culture. A plurality of ethical, social, and political orientations is expressed in multiple layers of knowledge and various assumptions. Thus, it is easy to get lost in a labyrinth of concepts about culture when promoted as "the right way(s)" of doing,

being and believing. So leaders have to find a way to comprehend what culture is, what culture is made of, but also how to apply culture in their mission as leaders. Dealing with culture has thus become a significant consideration for leadership for following reasons:

- Rapid change and disorientation: Leaders have to know what to focus on, when it comes to providing orientation.
- Interdependence and various effects: Leaders have to consider the possible effects on the daily lives of their followers/subordinates by understanding and applying the concepts of interdependency in other words, the need for cooperation and cohesion.
- Different ways of life: Leaders are trained to create a sense of "shared knowledge" by making use of diversity as resources for self-improvement and by finding "innovative" solutions. They set up relationship-based communication to support a collective responsibility and to create emotions about a "shared home base" the community and environment. Emotions about shared responsibility are important in order to sustain the organization and to ensure the environment's survival.
- Competition and power: By being aware of the power issue and cultural values leaders develop a sensitivity which helps them to balance symmetric and asymmetric power relationships without losing sight of the double responsibilities between economics and ethics.

Culture and Leadership

Culture can most simply be defined as how we view and do things. Within our community we construct our own world. Thus, culture is a shared set of meanings and interpretations of a collective represented by a group, a community or by an organization. Culture is embedded invisibly in the deep structure, which is called the core or inner layer, and has fundamental impacts on perception and behavior patterns influencing the interactional dynamics of that community. The outer layers are visible. The inner layer consisted of basic assumptions influences the way we cope with daily life, solve problems and meet changes and challenges. Consequently, culture defines our perception of truth and shapes community's identity. In that sense, culture is a social construction based on shared experiences reflected and expressed in history and memory, and representing of the past in multipe ways. Language is the vehicle to construct and deconstruct the meanings of the experiences, and supports the process of attachment or detachment of the members in regard to their community's organization. Within this context, culture has several functions. First it is a system of orientation, second it defines identity, and third it supports internal integration and external adaptation. It is constructed by and refers to the process of defining meaning in which a collective is involved. The 'meaning-'or 'sense-making' process of how to adapt to and cope with the environment "derives from the human need to make our environment as sensible and orderly as we can … Disorder or senselessness makes us anxious, so we will work hard to reduce that anxiety by developing a more consistent and predictable view of how things are and how they should be" (Schein, 2004:15). People struggle to make sense of and cope with their worlds. By interaction among the group members culture is constantly enacted and created. On the one hand culture is the result of functionally effective decisions in the group's past experiences. On the other hand, in spite of its dynamic characteristics, it fulfills the function of providing stability, meaning, and predictability in the present. Within this context of stabilization and creation, leaders are perpetual 'sense makers', as they should relate their mission "directly to what organizations call strategy" (Schein, 2004, p. 91) and guide their followers towards an adaptive future to ensure the survival

and sustainability of their communities and organizations. Whether a culture is adaptive or not depends not on the culture alone, but on the relationship of the culture to the environment in which it exists. According to Schein (2004), if leaders cannot lead their groups or organizations to succeed in adapting to the changing environment, they will be considered to have failed as leaders. To change the culture within an organization towards adaptability, the leaders have to know how to demystify the existing culture and to unveil the dysfunctional aspects of it. In other words, they have to explore the deeper layer, the basic assumptions of a culture by becoming aware of them. To achieve this, they first have to develop a deep insight and cultural awareness, as "the best way to demystify the concept of culture is first of all to become aware of culture in our own experience, to perceive how something comes to be shared and taken for granted, and to observe this particularly in new groups that we enter and belong to" (Schein, 2004, p. 63).

Culture is essential for successful organizational development and change within a community. It may be a necessary condition for organizational success in terms of adaptability to survive (Schein, 2004). However, it is by no means the only condition. An important challenge for leaders and managers is, therefore, to find out what the most effective culture is for their community and organization, and whether it requires radical versus limited change, or change on which levels or in which layers. Hence, a complete paradigm shift may not be the most effective solution. In this regard, I suggest the goal should be not just survival but sustainable survival. And when change is necessary, leaders need not only the ability to induce change but also enough time to involve their followers in the incremental process of change. "Unlearning" the internalized old culture and creating motivation for change requires courage, self-confidence and self-insight as well as a lot of effort from the leaders. They are role models of leadership not merely in the way they lead and manage organizational change of their community, but also in the way they attain sustainable survival, in other words continuous improvement and transformation for their people. It will take them several years to accomplish and to alleviate the numerous uncertainties. Reducing anxiety, providing safety through a positive vision, positive learning climate and processes and through positive group dynamics needs not only management skills but also leadership which is flexible enough to allow for transformation incorporating positive cultural change. The organizational culture requires more than knowledge of rational and technical management; the focus has to be on the qualitative, symbolic aspects of organization and management. Leadership, representing corporate responsibility and integrity and creating a change-oriented culture as well as the urgency to learn and unlearn processes, has been considered increasingly important for success not only in specific action field or on the local level, but also generally when coping with the challenges of the future and how to ensure survival.

The Concept of Trans-Culture

Culture is neither a homogeneous nor a closed static unity such as container paradigm. The concept of "transculture" has been used since the last twenty-five years and assumes that cultures emerge and change through the dynamics and complexity caused by increasing mobility and globalization. It defines culture as an open dynamic system. As a social construct, it is a product as well as the production of the meaning-making process in which the collective defines what is best, normal, aesthetic, ethic, etc. The meaning of a context (culture) is dispersed through spaces and over time lapse and undergoes changes invisibly. It gets transformed from one context into the other. However, when we talk about culture, it seems to be static. For example, the definition of „best" and "right" is in reference to a certain cultural system, generally to the dominant culture

defining the current reference standards. Consequently, leaders have to be aware of their taken-for-granted basic assumptions, especially, when they are from the dominant culture. Belonging to the top of a society, of a nation, or of an organization implies the membership of a reference culture. Managing diversity often leaves out the aspect of asymmetric power issue, which defines what culture is dominant, and what is marginalized. Leaders with multicultural experiences are not always aware of asymmmetric power issues in the discourse of culture. Surely, leaders should make the experiences of being confronted with different, opposite or irritating situations and cultural systems. The confrontation with other systems may help to make the leaders aware of their possible current cultural blind spot, but furthermore awaken them from their dominant taken-for-granted culture. This awareness requires high critical introspection, and the ability to overcome the internalized dominant orientation. Knowing that one might have the preference of authoritarian leadership style, one should be sensitive that an authoritarian leadership style does not always meet the people's need one will work with. Much depends on the people's past experiences and thus on the environment's expectations, in which one interacts as a leader. Some environment might be used to the authoritarian leadership style; however, based on their past experience, they are mistrustful against authoritarian systems. Hence, it is a paradox, to use authoritarian style by not being authoritarian. On the other hand, for certain environment and in certain organization the participative or democratic leadership style might be well accepted. Here also, leaders have to be aware that their leadership style has to be modified relating to the environmental change. Consequently, leaders' behaviors have to get transformed, and not just be adapted according to the environmental experiences.

The concept of "trans-culture" that I introduce here emphasizes "trans-" in reference to transformation. "Trans-culture" is the passive and active aspects of dispersion and diffusion of culture. It goes beyond cultural borders, without becoming homogenizing on the global level, but still integrates diversity in the sense of recognition of differentiation. In this way trans-culture differs from the concept of the container paradigm defining culture as a closed system. Trans-cultural strategies and solutions are therefore not just simply the adaptation to the environment of diversity, but by being "trans" the process of sharing and shaping the meaning of the environment is created actively so that a "new" culture can evolve. The concept of "trans-culture" requires and enforces the linking of many cultural "pieces" and perspectives to make an integrated web of meanings. This process involves different peoples in the creation of a "new" or "innovative" culture. The holistic approach includes besides the cognitive dimensions, the affective, and the behavioral aspects of creativity. The creation of the common meanings requires from the leaders high sensitivity of the many basic assumptions, and the implicated symmetric and asymmetric power relation in order to handle the process of the synthesis of a common vision based on common attachment. A common language and communication, thus a common understanding must therefore be developed. Trans-cultural action is not focused on the cultural particularities. The quality of team spirit depends on the quality of the relationship between the leader and the subordinates as well as between the subordinates among themselves. Develop solid relationship is challenging, but necessary to enhance trust and a flexible learning environment, which finally encourages stakeholders of different backgrounds in commitment to more social responsibility. As explained above, trans-culture is not fix to a particular culture. To develop trans-cultural spirit for goal achievement, the process is not different from any team building process. The following model applied by Raynolds et al. (2007) in leadership as outward bound way is my suggestion of how to lead people of different background toward a transformation for trans-culture. In the core we have managing self, and the process starts with:

- *Setting direction:* "Every organization needs to have its mission, vision, and values established, and everyone looks to the company leaders to either deliver that vision, and values established, and everyone looks to the company leaders to either deliver that vision or facilitate the process of generating it collectively…"
- *Gaining commitment:* "Leaders don't make people do what the leader wants; they make people want to do what the leader wants, and feel valued for doing it. When people talk about what energizes them about a good company, they generally rave about the company's people and, more specifically, about the values of the people. There has to be a fit between the values of the organization and the individual. That fit is easier to accomplish if the values are clear and the company's actions match the company's words."
- *Delivering results:* "Set incremental goals and meet them. Deliver measurable results. What you measure is what people will put the most effort into, so make sure you're measuring the right things. Vision is necessary, but it's also important to set a plan and manage it. Make sure there's follow-through on commitments, and check in on results. Focus on results, provide feedback, and monitor progress."
- *Building relationships:* "Investing your time and developing an awareness of yourself and others builds relationships and can have tremendous payoff in the form of committed employees, suppliers, and customers. People like to do business with people they trust and will even pay more for a service or product knowing that you are there to take care of them when needed. Build consensus, collaborate effectively, and provide support."
- *Establishing credibility:* "Having a strong moral compass, following through, and being good at what you do – not jut being the expert – are all part of establishing credibility. […] Don't forget that you can also establish credibility if you are quick to acknowledge when you don't have the answer. Bringing in other expertise to assist you isn't an admission of incompetence, […] Gain respect, think innovatively, and develop trust."
- *Encouraging growth:* "Are you taking interest in developing your people? […] Empower others, support learning, and demonstrate appreciation."
- *Managing self:* "Knowing and sharing your own strengths and weaknesses is a precept to leading others. A leader can create a supportive environment by modeling the need for support as well as a self-reliant approach to getting support in a timely and appropriate manner. […] Be persistent and reliable." (Raynolds et al., 2007:233–234)

These steps are necessary to enhance social cohesion and trans-cultural spirit. The collective commitment detaches individuals from their personal point of view and facilitates the process of finding trans-cultural responses in collective agreement. Recognizing the importance of diversity and interdependencies as a resource for finding new solutions for change within and outside themselves, trans-cultural process becomes transformational for the person involved and for the group or community. In this way, the concept of trans-culture differs from the concept of global homogenizing. Trans-Cultural Leadership

I would like to recall why trans-cultural leadership is considered as the new approach of leadership to preparing and guiding people and organizations to and through the challenges in a time of rapid change and disorientation, of interdependence with different effects and consequences due to increasing competition and power asymmetries. The term "trans-culture" takes the effects and consequences of globalization into account. Furthermore, my concept of trans-cultural leadership is associated with the theory of transformational leadership and of path-goal or situational leadership with focused accentuation on learning ability and cultural awareness

(compare, Derungs-Ruhier, 2010). Notions used to qualify traits and beneficial behaviors need explanation or further description. Saying, for example, that leaders from the United States prefer participative leadership style would oversimplify and leave out the contextual dimension that participative leadership style could have many variations depending on the setting, time, goal and the persons involved. In sum, one has to be specific with the application of notions in different situations. Directive implies meanings such as giving clear direction and still involving diversity as a resource for new ideas and solutions. Directive leadership style enables followers to collaborate and cooperate, and due to promoting direction and structure it provides at the same time security. However, involving diversity or applying participative aspect of leadership does not say about the way of participation nor about the decision making process. Respecting diversity does not necessarily lead to reflection about taken-for-granted cultural construction of reality or of "truth" nor about power asymmetries, thus about the instrumentalization or about the sense of meaning-creation with "cultural transformation". For instance, to create common meaning, one shares experiences first. By observing, asking, telling, "selling" and sharing stories, discussing and working together in small tasks, the seed of sharing is created and thus the foundation of trust of soliciting opinions among each other. Here, I would like to summarize the general four components of trans-cultural leadership: 1) Having the profound knowledge (of situation and context) how culture and leadership are interrelated to each other, and how cultures shape organization, the world view and problem-defining and problem-solving habit, trans-cultural leaders gain the ability to step outside of their system to get awaken and increase awareness. 2) Being a model of going beyond one's anxieties and potential they can lead others through learning processes of cognitive, affective and behavioral dimensions to help others to become themselves leaders for trans-cultural transformation. 3) Taking leadership means using and gaining power and defining the culture of survival, thus trans-cultural leaders reflect their influences of their power with, for and over others during the unending journey while leading others toward transformation at the individual, team, and organizational/community levels. 4) In order to make vision come true, leaders need competences and skills to apply different strategies and approaches that encompass transformation in order to impact oneself as leader, but also others as followers, and the environment at large. The concept of trans-cultural leadership integrates various theories and concepts in progress. Trans-cultural leaders are primarily transformational learners of trans-cultural leadership. They are balancing the five Ps on their way of transformation and continual acquisition of competencies differentiated in five ongoing development phases, where the beginning is also the ending (see, figure below). The five Ps are: Person, power, practices, purposes and perspectives.

> Phase 1 – Person: Trans-cultural leaders have high cultural awareness and a profound self-reflective insight allowing them to analyze the context and the environment where they are acting. They are sensitive to power asynmetries and resistance. Their profound knowledge and systems thinking enable them to become active sense and meaning creators. In other words they give the direction of the discursive formation of transformation.

Cultural awareness does not merely embrace the personal reflective insight of the self. It includes also the systemic analytical view of power relations, the hidden hegemony, the difficulty of locating dynamic power asymmetries, and the resulting ethical dilemma. Leaders understand how a system (for example, culture) is composed and decomposed, how different elements are interdependent and interrelated to each other, how challenging it is to distinct causes from consequences. As described in previous chapter, one incidence has different effects on other elements and on the whole, which makes a situation difficult and complex. Above sensing the complexity of a system or of a situation knowing one own abilities and limits makes the leaders aware of the many possibilities of outcomes of one action. Their insight sharpens their vision and foresight. The high self-reflective insight and self-awareness give them inner resilience and

security to accept that they can lose control over the complexity, and that they have to live with the unknown and unpredictable incidences without losing sight of the shores where they are sailing to. Moreover, by knowing where they come from, they can define where they don't want to go, and where they want to be in the future. Only by giving themselves meaning and direction, they are able to lead other in finding their meaning and direction. The ability of self-insight is the basics for conscious competence and the development of "conscientization".

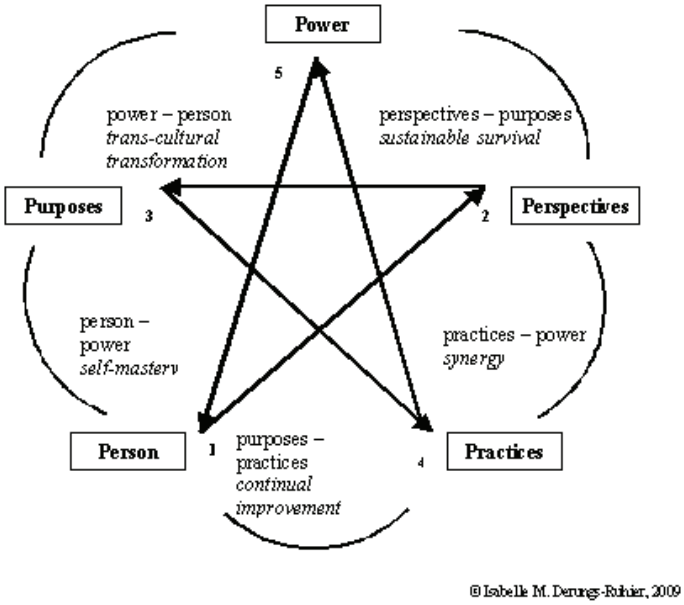

Figure 1: Trans-cultural Leadership for Transformation

Phase 2 - Perspectives: Achieving deep self-insight, leaders recognize that it is not merely a question of courage nor of overcoming anxieties, but more a question of social responsibility for a meaningful life quality. In this sense they open up their minds to go through the experiences of "unlearning", while being a sensitive interactor with different realities and interest groups. This experience permits them to develop new competences and abilities to provide their followers and communities new perspectives in the search for sustainable survival.

Understanding people why they behave as they do, their learning abilities and disabilities should not remain on the cognitive level. An organization in transition is always in a delicate situation: uncertainty and anxiety let people cling to their old internalized patterns. Behaviors can only change when there are some motivations and hopes. An organization is basically a web of relationships. In transition leaders take care of the web of relationships that does not fall apart due to disorientation, disagreement, and thus conflict. Considering the maintenance of the web, leaders enhance at the same time continuous weaving of a new design, by providing feelings of attachment and bonding among the followers. Based on their experiences of going through transformation, leaders know what are relevant in these situations, and are somehow prepared: they give hopes and meanings in achievable steps. Being transformational is more than just being flexible or acting adaptively to the new or changing situations. Being transformational includes the awareness of the need of change and the willingness to leave behind patterns that are dysfunctional or prevent from growing and improving. The chance of change is the turning point of survival. This process is painful for everybody involved. Leaders convey feelings of safety by admitting that being not in full

control is not a sign of weakness nor of failure but of inner safety to be able to take on an unending challenging journey as long as people do not lose trust, confidence and faith. Not knowing the answer in advance they accept trial-and-error as a challenge of the process of growth. This ability is the quality of resilience. Being consistent in their self-confidence, leaders can therefore be supportive of the learning efforts of others in the process of unlearning, while ensuring them hope on different perspectives. Unlearning is frustrating, when the reason or motivation is not related to the realization of visible vision. Giving clear, consistent and intense meaning and direction in the turbulent process of unlearning is essential. Accordingly, trans-cultural leaders give among possible orientations still one core vision and one core orientation that come from the deepest need and persuasion.

> ***Phase 3 - Purpose:*** The sensitivity of mental and emotional strength to manage one's own transformational process prepares themselves with skills and abilities to involve, motivate and support others, individuals, groups, organizations and communities in the process of "unlearning and learning" to join and balance the pain and risks of the challenges of change. In other words, the purpose is to break frames in order to go beyond boundaries, while still being rooted and attached. So the learning outcome is not the product or service, which the organization or the community is committed to producing, but the learning outcome is continual improvement of life quality. The way is the goal, within this context leaders are modeling the way..

According to Schein (2004), "leadership requires not only insight into the dynamics of the culture but also the motivation and skill to intervene in one's own cultural process. To change any elements of the culture, leaders must be willing to unfreeze their own organization. Unfreezing requires disconfirmation, a process that is inevitably painful for many." (p. 415). Going beyond self-interest leaders show high commitment and dedication to the group and organization. By doing so, they are modeling the way of facing the risk as a chance to move on, to grow and to develop in a future that they still have to shape. Not only having high self-confidence, but also developing a strategy of stabilization they can transmit to their members the feelings of certainty in situations of uncertainty. According to Schein (2004) and from chapter 4.3, when the anxiety of unlearning is less than the anxiety of survival the motivation for change is aroused. Under these circumstances the risk seems less threatening, as the focus in discontinuous change is less on discontinuous, but more on change. Using metaphor we may start with Saint-Exupéry's famous advice of selling vision: "If you want to build a ship, don't drum up the men to gather wood, divide the work and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea". People have to change their perspective to perceive risk as a chance. John Shedd said "a ship in harbor is safe – but that is not what ships are built for." When taking the risk to go to sea makes sense, we need a ship, and above all a courageous captain knowing the direction even in tempests. Leaders have always been constantly weighing the risks associated with any particular course of action. The difference is that in time of high volatility and mobility the course of actions is getting more short-term. Still Raynolds et al. (2007) suggested, "Sometimes taking a risk is less about assessing the objective hazards of the risk and more about simply being willing to fail. (…) If you find that you're rationalizing a lot with yourself and coming up with many, many reasons why you shouldn't take a particular risk, ask yourself whether you're simply trying to avoid missing a shot. And if this is the only real risk, you might instead put your energy into gathering up your courage to take the shot." (p. 101) Taking risk is accepting the chance of evolution, and trans-cultural leaders are "masters" of overcoming differences, ambiguities, uncertainties, anxieties and risks. Without the ability of confrontation self and others with challenges, there is no perception and acceptance of turning point. Moreover, in tempest of change leaders need skills to plan, divert, and implement resources of their team to interlock energies and processes in order to focus on common goal's achievement for the success. They design vision and purpose, assure conversion and progression, promote maintenance and cohesion, and enhance joint efforts of trust in pursuing journey.

> ***Phase 4 - Practices:*** Having the focus on vision and goal's achievement, leaders know how to overcome resistance. They create a supportive environment through synergizing and binding those people and stakeholders who are embracing transformation into collective practices of trans-cultural change. The application of practices requires the ability of leading, managing and balancing internal and external learning processes between and among the members as well as between the organization's members and the environment to enhance reciprocal change. Enabling others for the common goal is synergizing and empowering.

Leaders understand the principle of interdependence and the influence of power and ethics on the process of development and change. Thus, they embody an inclusive culture showing respect for different cultural identities and the needs of those who have been marginalized by then. They support processes creating organizational structures and practices that promote the power with and for. Power sharing is empowering, when synergizing different forces for unifying sense giving and meaning making. Identifying the sources of tensions, conflicts and resistance, they pay attention to ways how they can embrace contradictions and anticipate unhealthy forms of competition and distrust. Establishing an environment of cooperation and collaboration leverages diversity for the common good, which lays the foundation of collective consciousness of practices. Above all, leaders in an environment of complexity of economics, political and social interests, have to know how to balance different power's effects and consequences. Finance and marketing strategies, production efficiency and services cannot be detached from human resources, communication, culture, and learning ability of the organization. Leaders are able to bridge not only the gap between the diversity of the people, the different interest groups within and outside of the organization, but also between the gap between dominant culture and subcultures, or between the ethnocentric and the geocentric orientations, the gap between hard and soft factors. Trans-cultural leaders are good synthesists and interactionists between the different expectations. Feedback loops must be appropriate to revise priorities, correct the strategies and directions, at the same time they can serve to ensure routines as well as trust.

> ***Phase 5 - Power:*** Trans-cultural transformation is stepping out of the current discursive frame and evolves from new discursive formation synergizing new perspectives and prospectives in order to create trans-cultural leadership. A learning culture for change and development needs common orientation and vision. This requires the ability to go beyond the context-sensitivity and multiple perspectives, while initiating and creating shared meanings and experiences for the same mission and direction.

Leaders outweigh resistance against change with motivation for "survival" by creating a learning organization and cultural values perceiving challenges as chances of continuous improvement. Communication is the means of keeping followers and communities aligned with the values and goals of an organization. Leaders create a positive environment where people can contribute to the collective success and where they experience their value, together with concomitant benefits. Through sharing positive experiences they support each other and enhance acceptance of diversity as resources for common solution and for one common survival's goal. Trust and common spirit give the needed stabilization. By sharing successes, leaders facilitate the feelings of ownership of goal's achievement and empower members to act for common improvement. A culture based on collaboration, shared continuous learning, and developing solidarity comforts people with feelings of safety and trust throughout difficult times. In sum, trans-cultural leadership goes beyond the ability of adapting behavior to the existing cultural context. Trans-cultural leadership is interventional in the sense that it is characterized by open-endedness and high performance of transformation. In small steps trans-cultural leaders lead their organization and members through ambiguities and uncertainties by adjusting safety, and means of giving meaning and drawing attention to perceive little wins as sense-providing. In time of crisis, of multiple options of values and orientations, trans-cultural leaders must show full presence to be able to give orientation and anchor. Trans-cultural leadership begins with personality and self management, which is

the precondition for situational awareness and management of sensitive circumstances such as conflict and transition.

Assuming that leaders are subjected to economic neo-liberalism and political power play, we would draw the conclusion they play passive roles. In the light of this assumption many international companies develop their international strategies and provide programs and arrangements for international managers in order to teach them how to adapt to the cultural frameworks of the places they are sent to in order to ensure the economic survival on the countries in which they build their trade systems.

Summary

Trans-cultural leadership is suggested as the new leadership concept, which uses different aspects of transformational leadership and the redefinition of the concept of trans-culture. Transformational leadership provides vision for the future in turbulent times, when people are desperate for hopeful destination. Transformational leaders are able to attract people for a common vision and to create a mission statement from a vision. They can get people signed on to the mission. They can plan management process and frame the problem in order to generate and to mobilize commitment for change. The concept of trans-culture goes beyond the flexible adaptation to different cultural standards and systems. Trans-cultural leadership is transformational and acts in the "out-of-awareness" of the current existing and validated culture. Trans-cultural leaders are able to deconstruct their own cultural pattern; and in interactive processes and communication with others they reconstruct and reorganize a new cultural structure. They take the pain of unlearning dysfunctional old pattern and the risk of the confrontation with cultural uncertainty to make the cultural paradigm shift in their organization reality. Trans-cultural leaders are not just the soft leaders of sense making. They know how to face resistance by engaging the people in disengaging from the past for a "rebirth" with the perspective of new beginnings. Being soft in the sense of endurance, patience, of strong self-confidence they creatively break open taken-for-granted assumptions. They mobilize others to trans-cultural commitment in the reweaving of a new web of meaning which goes into the "heart"; because the new vision pays contribution for substantial ethical and aesthetical survival. In short, we can conclude the following assumptions:

- Leaders are bearers of a cultural system affecting the way of life of an organization and a community. Culture is more than just nationally or locally defined characteristics. Culture is produced in - and producing dynamic processes in the search for meaning. When leaders are part of the culture and the other side of the coin, leaders are not only in the process of meaning making, but they are leading the meaning-making process. Consequently, leaders are not just a product of the culture they come from. Nor are they simply passive learners of how to adapt to global and local needs. Far more leaders are active producers of processes, which search for meaning inside and outside of their organization and community. As leaders of their community they have a strong impact on the implementation of visions and strategies on the community and interpersonal relationships, on decision-making - and communication processes. This goes far beyond governing organizational structures, natural and human resource practices, or cultural and ethical development. As bearers of responsibilities towards their organizations and communities, as well as towards the environment at large they are interacting with, they strive for an active search to find

meaning in a style of leadership that balances economics and ethics, that actively shapes sensitive processes and creates a sustainable, organizational culture.

- By sustainable organizational culture I mean the development and the cultivation of learning to provide viable responses to challenges and changes, which finally make a meaningful contribution to the environment as a whole.
- However, as a trans-cultural leaders they are in a continual improvement process. It means while they are leading others as role models, they are learning and improving at the same time. Self-mastery is an ongoing process as transformation is an neverending journey.

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