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CULTURAL DYNAMICS AND LEADERSHIP

An Interpretive Approach

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Cultural Dynamics and Leadership

An Interpretive Approach

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Abstract: The intersection of leadership and culture is undertheorized. This Element looks behind familiar titles in leadership at materials from anthropology, sociology, and history to gain a more nuanced understanding of culture. Of particular relevance is an interpretive approach, elaborated in the works of Simmel, Cassirer, Ortega y Gasset, and Gadamer. A five-part schema examines permutations pertaining to the relationship between culture and leadership – as separate, conflicting, derivative, or engaged – with the most attractive being the possibility that leadership and culture are mutually constituting. To explain cultural change, Ortega y Gasset suggested as a unit of analysis the idea of a generation, illustrated in a historical account of translating the Bible. Archer proposed as a mechanism for cultural change the idea of social morphogenesis, which this Element applies to evolving issues of race in the civic order. This process is illustrated in the thinking of pundit William F. Buckley, Jr.

Keywords: Leadership, culture, hermeneutics, social morphogenesis, William F. Buckley Jr.

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