Ideological Texture Analysis of Daniel 1 and Diaspora

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This study utilized ideological texture analysis, specifically postcolonial criticism, to examine Daniel 1. The analysis explored the assimilation attempts by king Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel's response highlighting God's superiority and sovereignty. Daniel and his friends chose to remain loyal to their God of Israel while still serving in a foreign country. God was the ultimate ruler over Nebuchadnezzar. God still has control over all rulers and diaspora. The study informs possible further research in the field of cross-cultural leadership, specifically in-group collectivism, cultural intelligence, and diaspora.

This study of Daniel 1, which is primarily an ideological texture analysis, attempts to determine the significance and implications of Daniel's deportation. Daniel 1:1-21 presents a story of Daniel, a young man, who was captured in his hometown, Jerusalem, and taken into captivity to Babylon. The analysis explores the assimilation attempts by king Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel's response. Finally, the study examines the possible application to the field of cross-cultural leadership, specifically in-group collectivism, cultural intelligence, and diaspora. This study includes the following sections: a) definition of ideological texture analysis; b) description of Daniel 1 pericope; c) the ideological texture analysis on Daniel 1; d) examination of cross-cultural leadership, specifically in-group collectivism, cultural intelligence, and diaspora; and e) implications for further research.

Ideological Texture Analysis

Robbins' (1996) socio-rhetorical model introduces four textures: inner texture, intertexture, social and cultural texture, and ideological texture. The primary concerns of ideological texture are with the alliances and conflicts occurring in the text, the language of the interpretation, and the way those interpreting the text position themselves in relation to groups and individuals (Robbins, 1996). Ideology occurs in four locations: ideology in traditional interpretation, ideology in the text, ideology in intellectual discourse, and ideology in individuals and groups (Robbins, 1996). Robbins (1996) identifies four subtextures of ideological texture: the individual locations, the relation to groups, modes of intellectual discourse, and spheres of ideology. First subtexture, the ideological texture, the individual location of readers and writers, is

explained by a person's type of response to the world and a person's cultural location. A person's type of response to the world includes seven different social topics concerning: reformist, conversionist, revolutionist, introversionist, gnostic-manipulationist, thaumaturgical, and utopian discourse (Robbins, 1996). A person's cultural location focuses on the way people present their arguments and reasons to themselves and others (Robbins, 1996). Robbins (1996), based on these topics, divides people into five final cultural categories: dominant culture, subculture, counterculture, contraculture, and liminal culture. The ideological analysis begins with the recognition of one's individual location (Robbins, 1996). Robbins (1996) argues "only if you have significant insight into the ideological texture of your own presuppositions, dispositions, and values will you be able to analyze the ideological texture both of other people's interpretations of a text and of a text that is the mutual interest of you and another person who has interpreted it" (p. 96).

Increasingly, Biblical scholars, especially those who belong to a minority group, are utilizing ideological study (deSilva, 2004, p. 677). While postcolonial interpretation emphasizes "real-life political and social situations" (deSilva, 2004, p. 677), it "also examines the ways that the oppressed themselves internalize oppressive patterns in resistance to colonizers" (p. 146). The "notion of diaspora" evolved over the years from the term describing physically dispersed Jews to metaphorical explanation of their situation on earth verses their "real home in heaven" (Bauman-Martin, p. 164). Some scholars question whether postcolonial criticism is a proper name considering the diverse topics and interpretations covered (Steenbrink, 1999). Some biblical scholars see Sugirtharajah as a leader in the postcolonial criticism because Sugirtharajah "respects historical criticism for its contribution to the knowledge of the Bible and the world behind the text; however, he insists that biblical scholars must acknowledge that historical criticism emerged in the context of Western colonialism" (Kim, 2006, p. 272).

Daniel 1:1-21 The Young Top Graduate Pericope

The book of Daniel is comprised of two genres, tales in chapters 1-6, and apocalypses in chapters 7-12 (Collins, 1984). Chapter 1 presents Daniel as a young man who is captured when Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (Daniel 1:6, New International Version) besieged Jerusalem (Daniel 1:1-2) during the third year of Jehoiakim's rule (Pfeiffer, 1973). Jehoiakim, king of Judah, ruled in 608-598 BC, so his third year would be either 606 or 605 BC (Pfeiffer, 1973). Collins (1984) claimed this attack is the first of the three that Nebuchadnezzar makes, ending in the final destruction of Jerusalem. Daniel 1:3-4 describes Daniel as an Israelite from royal family "without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace." Before Nebuchadnezzar's attempt at the religious assimilation, the cultural assimilation involved language and food (Daniel 1:4-5). Daniel was determined not to violate his convictions and asked the

chief official for a food exemption, but the official refused (Daniel 1:8-10). Then, Daniel proposed an experiment to the overseer (Daniel 1:9-14). When the trial proved vegetables and water were better than the rich diet (Daniel 1:15), the guard allowed their diet to be changed, without notifying the superiors. They were allowed not to partake from the king's food (Daniel 1:16). God gave Daniel knowledge and insight into visions and dreams (Daniel 1:17). Daniel and his friends graduated at the top of their class and entered the king's service (Daniel 1:18-19). In fact, Nebuchadnezzar found them "ten times better" than all in his kingdom (Daniel 1:20). Daniel continued to serve until the first year of King Cyrus (Daniel 1:21).

Ideological Texture Analysis of Daniel 1

Merrill Willis (2010) argues "historical resumes at the heart of Daniel's visions and dreams are attempts to adjudicate the incoherencies raised by the experience of foreign rule (especially Seleucid rule) with the community's expectations of God's visible power in history and presence with the community" (p. 4). While it may seem that the sovereignty of God has always been part of analysis of Daniel, Merrill Willis (2010) asserts the topic needs to be analyzed again because of the new approaches to the study of Bible. Merrill Willis (2010) argues ideological criticism discerns gaps in the logic of the text, "especially in the way in which a text attempts to silence or suppress certain voices or views" (p. 33). In contrast, Osborne (2006) asserts hermeneutical study must focus on the core of the text (p. 26).

> In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord delivered Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, along with some of the articles from the temple of God. These he carried off to the temple of his god in Babylonia and put in the treasure house of his god. (Daniel 1:1-2, NIV)

According to Osborne (2006), God has the power to allow kingdoms their rule and their end (p. 919). Therefore, in Daniel 1:1-2, God gave the power to Nebuchadnezzar. Merrill Willis (2010) argued: "the focus of this historical presentation is primarily on God's interaction, not with the community, but with the kings and empires" (p. 58). Osborne (2006) argues apocalyptic literature has a purpose to demonstrate God's control over all history on behalf of His people (p. 279). This language of divine giving can be found throughout chapters 1-6. The deportation described in Daniel 1, was prophesied about in Isaiah 39:7: "and some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood who will be born to you, will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon." Some interpret the Hebrew word saris to be used as literal eunuchs, while others argue the word derives from the phrase "servant of the king," and therefore it wasn't applied to literal eunuchs (Guzik, 2012). 2 Kings 24:14-16 describes this deportation. For Chia (1996), "the colonizer (Nebuchadnezzar) plays right into the hand of the colonized (the narrator) who is mirrored in Adonai's actions

and represented by the character of Adonai in the narrative" and represents "one of the common characteristics of postcolonial criticism" (p. 173). Daniel's story is about a power struggle between the colonized and the colonizer (Chia, 1996). The colonized, Israelites, is able to become superior to the colonizer, Nebuchadnezzar, by appealing to the divine power (Chia, 1996). By taking the best youths of Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar weakened the state of Judah and planned to make Babylon stronger (Pfeiffer, 1973).

> Then the king ordered Ashpenaz, chief of his court officials, to bring into the king's service some of the Israelites from the royal family and the nobility — young men without any physical defect, handsome, showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king's palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians. The king assigned them a daily amount of food and wine from the king's table. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king's service. Among those who were chosen were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. The chief official gave them new names: to Daniel, the name Belteshazzar; to Hananiah, Shadrach; to Mishael, Meshach; and to Azariah, Abednego. (Daniel 1:3-7)

Daniel 1:3-7 describes the three years of training for the deported youth. Young men were specifically chosen according to specifications of the king. The Babylonian text, as reported by Contenau (1966), explained: "the diviner whose father is impure and who himself has any imperfection of limb or countenance, whose eyes are not sound, who has any teeth missing, who has lost a finger, whose countenance has a sickly look or who is pimpled, cannot be the keeper of the decrees of Shamash and Adad" (p. 281). According to Chia (1996), the purpose was for maximizing efficiency of the Babylonian ruler (p. 175). The purpose of the king's food, new names, and education was a total indoctrination (Guzik, 2012). Nebuchadnezzar's plan for assimilation attempted to impact Daniel's loyalty to God and the people of Israel. The assimilation was incomplete due to Daniel's resistance based on his faithfulness to God. Pfeiffer (1973) describes the treatment as "modern techniques of brain washing" (p. 462). The goal was to make the young men forget their God and culture (Guzik, 2012) and become integrated Babylonians (Pfeiffer, 1973, p. 462). Giving of new names marked the new relationship with the new country. In Genesis 41:45 Pharaoh calls Joseph Zaphnath-paaeah. In both cases, Daniel and Joseph continue to be called by the name marking their relation to God. However, the new names mark the beginning of dual life those in diaspora often must embrace.

> But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. Now God had caused the official to show favor and compassion to Daniel, but the official told Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your food and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your

age? The king would then have my head because of you." Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see." So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days. At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead. (Daniel 1:8-16)

Daniel 1:8-16 shows Daniel's response to the indoctrination. The Hebrew word *defile* means to pollute or stain (Strong, 2010). Daniel's request "implies that he explained the spiritual basis for his request" (Guzik, 2012). Daniel's insistence on Jewish diet "is germane to the diaspora setting and maintain a sharp boundary between Jew and Gentile on such matters as idolatry and prayer" (Collins, 1984, p. 45). Some scholars argue Daniel possibly rejected the royal food because the Israelites considered food from the king's table to be contaminated as it was offered to idols. Others argue Daniel and his friends did not want to be assimilated into the cultural imperialism of Babylon, and refusing the food was one way of assuring that. Either way, the emphasis is that Daniel and his friends are choosing to remain loyal to their God of Israel, while still serving the foreign king, Nebuchadnezzar. Chia (1996) argues "whether for cultural, religious, or nationalistic reasons, Daniel's resistance to the food from the king's table lends a strong support to a postcolonial reading of his act as a resistance to colonial power" (p. 179). In many diaspora communities food and drink serve as points of connection to the homeland. For Chia (1996) food and drink represent culture and religion. Discussion regarding Daniel's diet highlights that at all times God directs events in Daniel's life, in Nebuchadnezzar's, in Babylon, diaspora, and all around the world.

To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. At the end of the time set by the king to bring them into his service, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar. The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service. In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom. And Daniel remained there until the first year of King Cyrus. (Daniel 1:17-21)

Daniel 1:17-21 describes the special intellectual ability Daniel and his friends possessed. Guzik (2012) argues their knowledge was not due to their diet but because of special intervention of the Lord. Similarly, Collins (1984) claims their health is due to "the

favor of God" (p. 44). Here, Chia (1996) argues "confession of superiority of Daniel by the words of Nebuchadnezzar… satisfies the postcolonial mindset of the narrator that Israelites are far more superior and powerful than the Babylonians" (p. 180). Daniel chapter 1 sets the pattern for the rest of the book of Daniel as Daniel's superiority displays the power of his God (Daniel 5:14; 11:33-35; 12:3, 10).

The book of Daniel's overall theme is God's sovereignty over history (Collins, 1984). Chapters 1-6 show a theme that God is sovereign over all kings. Chapter 1 gives insight into how God can continue to intervene in history and at the same time how God can be present with diaspora while subject to foreign power. Collins (1984) argues the intention of the book of Daniel is to "exhort and console the faithful Jews in the face of persecution" (p. 38). At the same time, "throughout the book the kingdom of God provides the frame for human history" (Collins, 1984, p. 38).

Chia (2006) portrays God as the ultimate ruler over Nebuchadnezzar, as the one who gave Israel's land to Nebuchadnezzar, and as the one who has control over all colonized people. Chia (2006) analyzes Daniel 1 and compares the colonization process of Daniel by the Babylonian empire with the colonization of Hong Kong by the British. For Chia (2006), segregation, language, education, and naming are strategies used by the Babylonian empire in Daniel, and are replayed in the situation in colonial Hong Kong. Sugirtharajah (2006) argues Chia (2006) offers a practical example of "how postcolonial criticism can be applied to biblical studies and how in the process such an exegesis not only disrupts the nicely finessed Western readings and undermines their claim to universality, but also uncovers the tacit colonial biases within such readings" (p. 8).

Safran (1991) defined diasporas in modern societies and assigned the following characteristics: 1) they, or their ancestors, have been dispersed from their homeland; 2) they hold a collective memory about their homeland—its physical location; 3) they are not fully accepted by their host society; 4) they consider their homeland an ideal home; 5) they believe collectively they should restore or maintain their homeland; 6) they relate to the homeland and have solidarity (p. 3). For Safran (1991), the Jewish diaspora is the "ideal type" (p. 4), however, Safran (1991) uses the characteristics of diaspora to identify and compare numerous modern diasporas.

Baker (2006) argued identity formation is influenced by three dimensions of social identity: "1) cognitive—recognition of belonging to the group, 2) evaluative—recognition of the value attached to the group, and 3) emotional—attitudes group members hold toward insiders and outsiders" (p. 5). The focus is on intergroup relations, how group members understand themselves and therefore view themselves different from others. Baker (2006) asserts the insistence on certain food laws is what social identity defines as "that which belongs in the system and that which must be excluded" (p. 8). Baker (2006) further argues this in-group differentiation allows for leaders to demonstrate in-group qualities and act as prototypes in identity of the group.

These leaders serve as examples to those who follow in the future and provide guidance on who they are, what they should believe and who they should become (Baker, 2006). Therefore, these leaders provide a sense of collective identity (Eisen, 1990).

Eisen's (1990) work focuses on Jews in America, their pride, historical awareness, customs, and religious practices (p. 59). Eisen (1990) argues ideology of mission and election, when examining Jewish identity, focuses on chosenness by God (p. 54). This election, Eisen (1990) asserts, "is such a useful rhetorical aid to the fabrication of identity precisely because it seems to confer ultimate meaning, and impose a regimen of conduct, upon each and every individual who enjoys (ascriptive) membership in the elect group" (p. 58).

Cross-cultural Leadership and In-group Collectivism

This portion of the study explores how studies on diasporas might inform cross-cultural leadership, specifically in-group collectivism, and cultural intelligence. The Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) project significantly contributes to the cross-cultural research on leadership in different regions of the world (Yukl, 2013, p. 363). Yukl (2013) lists common biases, limitations, and methodological challenges of such cross-cultural studies and also encourages the view of leadership as a determinant and interpreter of the culture (p. 370). Even with identified difficulties in conducting cross-cultural studies on leadership, the research is important and increasing (Yukl, p. 378).

Recently, researchers have used the subsets of the GLOBE data to test hypothesis that specific aspects of the transformational theory are accepted across cultures (House et al., 2004, p. 59). At the same time, preferences for leadership style and preferred leadership behavior vary across cultures (House et al., p. 59). According to Bass (1990) numerous types of evaluations confirm people of the same culture share similar beliefs about desirable leadership qualities (p. 22). GLOBE's detailed study tests four hypothesis related to the societal culture influencing leadership attributes (House et al., pp. 673-674).

One of the cultural dimensions, in-group collectivism, is "the degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families" (House, et. all, 2004, p. 30). In-group collectivism has been prominent in the literature as a way of characterizing cultures (Hofstede, 1980; House, et. all, 2004), and has been connected to economic growth (Hofstede, 1980; House, et. all, 2004).

Daniel's adjustment to the culture of Babylon could be explained by cultural intelligence. Earley, Ang, and Tan (2006) define "cultural intelligence as a person's capability for successful adaptation to new cultural settings, that is, for unfamiliar settings attributable to cultural context" (p. 5). According to Earley, Ang, and Tan

(2006), cultural intelligence consists of cultural strategic thinking, motivation, and behavior. Daniel demonstrated cultural strategic thinking by the general thinking skills and understanding of Babylonian beliefs, values, and norms of behavior. He utilized specific strategies to acquire knowledge and succeed in the new environment. Furthermore, Daniel demonstrated motivation to not only understand the new culture, but to also confidently act in that new situation. He drew that confidence and motivation from his prayer to the Lord. Lastly, Daniel demonstrated by his behavior and specifically his knowledge that he not only understood the new culture, but excelled in it.

Daniel serves as a prototype in the diaspora in Babylon. Other prototypes exist in other diasporas. The studies on diasporas and the prototypes could inform the cross cultural leadership theorist on possible traits that should be included in the cross cultural leadership programs. These prototypes and diasporas often serve as special agents of change. The possibility of replicating those prototypes might increase the possibility of positive change in communities, and therefore organizations. Daniel's success is associated with his knowledge. Cross cultural leadership could research possible correlation between education and success in a new cross cultural environment. Chia's (2006) work could possibly serve as a model to examine Daniel 1 in relationship to diaspora. This vantage point could possibly portray God's sovereignty over diaspora communities around the world.

Implications for Further Research

Some people in the dominant culture expect displaced people to assimilate into the dominant culture in the society, and are often commended for doing so. Some people in diaspora also downplay their own culture and tradition in order to be a part of a dominant culture. Some of these cultural adjustments are expected and are not considered negative. However, cultural assimilation does not always conform to the purpose of God. As in the case of Daniel and his friends, God intended to use them with their distinctive culture in the culture they joined for God's purpose.

This ideological study of Daniel 1 explored the diaspora phenomenon, in-group collectivism in cross-cultural leadership, and sovereignty of God. However, thorough postcolonial examination is beyond the scope of this essay. Further research should consider examining:

1)   The book of Daniel's overall theme of God's sovereignty over history and individuals (Merrill Willis, 2010; Chia, 2006)
2)   Cultural dimensions (House, et. all, 2004), specifically in-group collectivism (Yukl, 2013), focusing on attributes of the individuals and groups
3)   Assimilation to new cultures through food, names, language and religious beliefs (Chia, 2006)

4)   Jewish diaspora (deSilva, 2004), Daniel 1, Genesis 41, Hellenization, and implications on modern diasporas (Safran, 1991)
5)   Identity and chosenness of those who excel in the diaspora (Eisen, 1990).
6)   Research on cross-cultural leadership, similar to GLOBE studies, and diaspora communities.
7)   Diaspora communities for prototypes, much like Daniel was for the diaspora in Babylon, to create successful models of behavior traits for the individuals in those communities.
8)   Possibilities of hiring individuals from diasporas to aid in understanding homeland culture and leadership principles.

Baker (2006) suggests "reading biblical texts as identity-forming documents within their historical and cultural context" (p. 17). Future research might explore this model of study on Daniel.

If God has chosen individuals and groups to live as diaspora, then He will be faithful to fulfill His plan for their lives and His purposes. For those of us belonging to diaspora, Daniel 1 and the postcolonial writings could confirm our notion that we are always foreigners and while we have a longing for the image of home, "real diaspora identity challenges the forces of uniformity and conventional ideas of belonging and fixity" and we could possibly claim to belong to "a universal community chosen by God" (Bauman-Martin, 2006, p. 165).

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