the resultant vilification of a ‘common enemy’? Does the end really justify the means? You doubtless get the point. People start to question whether Hitler was a leader or just a tyrant. Hitler certainly got people to follow him, but there must be more to leadership than just getting people to follow. Hitler is hardly a role model for leadership training courses today. I am aware of no such courses on ‘How to be an Adolf Hitler for your organization’. If Adolf Hitler was a leader, and if Adolf Hitler demonstrated leadership, then ‘anything goes’. We really must look past charisma and delve into the motives of the leader. We must also look past leader behaviours and into the heart of the leader. We really need to have an insight into leadership for a higher purpose. This process has already begun, but it has still a long way to go.

Purpose is so fundamentally tied up with leadership that it is almost invariably subsumed or taken for granted by leadership scholars. Kempster, Jackson and Conroy (in press) argue that there has been too little discussion on the nature of purpose and its relationship with leadership and this has profound implications for practising managers. The fundamental ‘leadership for what?’ question is probably the most important yet also the most difficult question to answer. In this chapter we will examine three leadership theories that directly address the moral potential of leadership and the quest for a higher purpose: ethical leadership, authentic leadership, and spiritual leadership. To varying degrees these theories seek to address some of the limitations and shortcomings of transformational leadership (a primary focus of Chapter 2) that were identified in the previous chapter. In their comparative analysis of these three theories, Brown and Trevino (2006) note that they all share a concern for others that is rooted in altruism, they foreground the integrity of the leader, and they highlight the importance of role modelling. However, they do differ by virtue of their varying disciplinary roots and approaches and what they choose to place right at the heart of effective leadership: ethics, honesty, or spirit. While these three leadership theories share a great deal in common, the last part of the chapter will highlight a growing but disparate group of leadership scholars who privilege the long-suppressed aesthetic experience of leadership and look to the arts, not the social sciences or the humanities, for enlightenment and inspiration in their quest to promote leadership for a higher purpose.

leadership and ethics

The moral goodness of leaders has been a topic of analysis for centuries. Most prominent philosophers have at some point expounded on the ethical and moral obligations of leaders from Plato to Confucius to
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Machiavelli to Carlyle (Grint, 2011). Ciulla and Forsyth (2011) have highlighted the three main moral facets to the ethics of leaders and those philosophers who have written most forcefully about these: the ethics of what a leader does or the ends of a leader's actions (John Stuart Mill); the ethics of how a leaders does things or the process of leadership (Aristotle); and the moral reason of why leaders do things (Immanuel Kant). Ciulla (2005) pithily encapsulates these three moral facets into her definition of an ethical and effective leader as ‘someone who does the right thing, the right way, and for the right reasons’, adding that leaders might be pillars of virtue in one or two of these areas but wrong in one or others. This is definitely a case, to paraphrase Meatloaf, of ‘Two out of three being bad’!

In the past decade, the moral character and the ethical practices of the organizations that they lead have become an increasing concern for leadership researchers in the aftermath of the global financial crisis and earlier well-publicized corporate scandals. Ethics has also become a central preoccupation for leadership educators smarting at accusations that the MBA and other business programmes have been inadequate in instilling a fundamental ethos as well as the basic principles of sound ethical business practice. In fact, the argument goes, business schools are at least partially responsible for these corporate scandals and financial malpractice with their one-dimensional view of the world which promotes financial greed above all else. Responding to these charges business schools have promptly incorporated ethics into their curriculum, usually in conjunction with their leadership courses. They have also funded chairs in ethical leadership and centres that promote ethical, responsible, or integral leadership. Business cases that highlight ethical dilemmas in strategic leadership have also become much more prevalent, most notably in the Harvard Business School case collection.

In an extensive review of leadership definitions Ciulla (1998) noted the strong normative element that permeates how leadership is conceptualized. In America in particular, leadership is a ‘morally laden social construction’ and the leader is someone who reflects what people in a certain place and time think they should be like. Of course, leaders’ ethics are no different from those of the broader populace: although Price (2000) notes that leadership, by virtue of its peculiar cognitive challenges, can induce and maintain a leader’s belief that he or she is somehow excepted from the moral requirements of the rest of us. However, as leaders quickly find out when their ethical transgressions are discovered, because of the public nature of their work, because of the level of trust that is bestowed upon them, and because their actions impact upon so many more people, they are often held to account for a higher level of ethical and moral standard than followers.
In recognition of these higher levels of expectation, a number of scholars have sought to distinguish ‘ethical leadership’ as a higher form of leadership. In seeking to bolster the moral foundation for transformational leadership, Bass and Steidlmeier noted that the ethics of leadership rests upon three pillars: (1) the moral character of the leader; (2) the ethical legitimacy of the values embedded in the leader’s vision, articulation and program which followers either embrace or reject; and (3) the morality of the processes of social ethical choice and action that leaders and followers engage in and collectively pursue’ (1999: 182).

Brown, Trevino and Harrison highlight the moral management dimension of the leader’s work, which is aimed at influencing followers’ ethical and unethical behaviour. They note that:

Moral managers make ethics an explicit part of their leadership agenda by communicating an ethics and values message, by visibly and intentionally role modelling ethical behavior, by using the reward system (rewards and discipline) to hold followers accountable for ethical conduct, by the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relations, and by the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement and decision-making. (Brown et al., 2005: 120)

The salience of the role modelling of ethical leadership draws on social learning theory (Bandura, 1997) to emphasize the ‘trickle-down’ effects of both ethical and unethical leadership behaviours upon the ethical behaviour evinced by groups and individuals lower down the organizational hierarchy (Mayer et al., 2009). These modelling effects are by no means irreversible, however. An intriguing qualitative study of the City and County of Denver, Colorado, showed how, through various interventions, including making ethics visibly stand out from the everyday business and introducing a formal ethics programme, leaders were able to emerge from a major ethical scandal to become hailed as a model of organizational ethics (O’Connell and Bligh, 2009).

In parallel with this recent interest in the ethics of leadership has been the emergence of the field of leadership and fairness, which draws upon organizational justice research. In a special issue of the *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, the co-editors noted that ‘most research in leadership and fairness is about the main effects of leader distributive, procedural and especially interactional fairness and supports the conclusion that leader fairness is associated with more desirable follower affective/evaluative responses and behaviour’ (Van Knippenberg and De Cremer, 2008: 174). Similarly, we have witnessed a growing
interest in the relationship between trust and effective leadership between leaders and followers (Burke et al., 2007); the practice of ‘responsible leadership’ by senior leaders in order to build social capital among diverse and often competing stakeholders in organizations by identifying and promoting the common good (Maak, 2007); and the role of leadership in either promoting or constraining corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Waldman, Siegal and Javidan, 2006).

It is clear that, in addition to the field of philosophy, ethical leadership has, in the past decade, received increasing attention from leadership scholars trained in psychology. Terry Price and Joanne Ciulla, at the Jepson School of Leadership Studies, have brought their philosophical training to bear on the ethics of leadership to significant effect. They note that psychologists generally provide rich descriptions of leader behaviour but tend to rest these on narrow and somewhat simplistic characterizations of ethical concepts. Philosophers will have a more sophisticated understanding of ethical concepts but will have generally not grounded these in a thorough empirical analysis of how leaders actually behave in practice. Moreover, psychologists tend to focus upon explaining leadership while philosophers are more generally concerned with understanding it (Ciulla, 1995). As in Chapter 4, when we examined the relationship between culture and leadership, one can readily appreciate the benefits of a similar interdisciplinary effort being deployed to tackle the question of what constitutes ethical leadership practice. The same argument could be applied to the field of authentic leadership, to which we now turn.

### authentic leadership

Authentic leadership has assumed an important position among strength-based leadership approaches as a potential solution to the challenges of modern leadership. While authentic leadership research only developed a coherent focus in 2003, it has since attracted considerable theoretical attention and continues to figure prominently in practitioners’ treatment of leadership. Ladkin and Taylor (2010) note that it has provided the focus for three special issues of academic journals: Leadership Quarterly (2005/1), the Journal of Management Studies (2005/5) and the European Management Journal (2007/2). Authentic leadership has also provided the inspiration for numerous popular books and articles (e.g. George, 2003; Goffee and Jones, 2005). The following is an abridged account of an extensive review of authentic leadership conducted by Caza and Jackson (2011).

Luthans and Avolio’s (2003) chapter on authentic leadership development is generally credited with being the starting point of the research