ABSTRACT. The purpose of this paper is to identify the various dimensions of leadership emerging in Plato's discussions on ideal political governance and then generalize them to fit in with current discussions. The consideration will also cover some areas of organizational ethics, managerial discourses on rhetoric, management of meaning and charismatic leadership are presented. Also the possibility to evaluate the ethically "dark" sides of leadership (like totalitarian and truth-manipulating aspects) is sketched.

1. Introduction

Leadership has been one of the main topics among management writers during the last thirty years. This is understandable, of course, because the area of leadership has traditionally had a central position on management's agendas and it has been studied intensively. However, an evident defect can be found. One area of study has almost totally been neglected by the researchers. This category of leadership study can be called "classical studies" in which some classical (managerial) thinker is analysed and studied thoroughly. But, by which criteria can one choose this kind of influential thinker to study? Plato, the Greek philosopher, can without any doubt be defined as one of the most influential leadership-thinkers of all times in addition to his other merits.

The purpose of the paper is to identify the various dimensions of leadership emerging in Plato's discussions on ideal political governance and then generalize them to fit in with current discussions.

The term leadership has many meanings: it means different things to different people. It is a word taken from the common vocabulary and incorporated into the technical vocabulary of a scientific discipline without being precisely defined. As a consequence, it still carries extraneous connotations which create ambiguity of meaning. Stodgill states (1974) in his comprehensive review of leadership studies that "there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept".1

The term leadership-thinking is also problematic, when the time context is as far away in the past as in the Era of Antiquity. However, it seems to me that it may be fruitful and fresh to look at such a phrase-like concept from quite an ordinary point of view. One might suspect the relevance of searching out and considering the ideas of some ancient philosopher. In spite of that, I think that it is possible to get obvious intellectual benefit from this kind of consideration. Especially when developing the area of leadership thinking. Plato (427–347 BC), the great philosopher, can be seen as a very important source of ideas.

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When one evaluating leadership studies made by earlier researchers, one can notice that the status of classicist studies is minor. However, it can be polemically argued that the whole Western administrative thinking bases on the principles presented in classical antiquity. The task of studying such remote objects, like ancient management thinkers or philosophers, becomes more important if this statement is accepted. But why study Plato? The influence of Plato on Western thought has been enormous. Recent philosophers and philosophy teachers often say that philosophy after Plato has been only remarks on Plato's work. So, the roots of Western administrative thinking go back to Plato's and Aristotle's work. Although part of their work has lost its relevance in the course of years, these two philosophers will always be very important as thinkers and sources of ideas.

2. Leadership - a concept with many meanings

Next, it may be useful to take a glance at the concepts of leadership and management. Everyone who studies administrative sciences knows that these two matters are usually differentiated. To be a leader, to get things done, is the a theme in common to both of them. Then, what differentiates these two concepts from each other? Manager is said to be some kind of an "instructor" who puts pieces together and manages the "things". Managers are concerned with making the organization function as an organization, that is, they evolve routines (source of efficiency), and make these routines relevant to the purposes of the organization (effectiveness). To put it another way, their major job is to facilitate the recombination of elements separated by the division of labour. At the same time, they need to keep on changing these routines, either because persisting internal problems make them unworkable, or because new external threats or opportunities require accommodation.  

Management is seen as an activity which is especially typical of large corporations, but it is said that there is leadership in every organization, not only in business organizations. On the other hand, a leader must be a person who takes care of people and emphasizes in his professional activity the social psychology of an organization. This categorization of management vs. leadership may be artificial, but it is commonly used in management literature. One must, however, note that a person who runs a business or leads a big organization acts situationally in both roles; sometimes as a manager and sometimes as a leader.

The term leadership is a relatively recent addition to the English language. It has been in use only about two hundred years, although the term leader, from which it has been derived, appeared as early as A.D. 1300 (Stodgill, 1974). Most conceptions of leadership imply that at various times one or more group members can be identified as a leader according to some perceived differences between the person(s) and other members, who are referred to as "followers" or "subordinates". The definitions of leadership usually have a common denominator, the assumption that leadership is a group phenomenon involving interaction between two or more persons (Janda, 1960). In addition, most definitions reflect the assumption that leadership involves an influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted by the leader on the followers. The definitions of leadership differ in many respects, including e.g. important differences in who exerts influence, the purpose of the attempts to influence, and the manner in which the influence is exerted.  

As stated above, the concept "leader" is not necessarily related only to business life only, but it is an inevitable functional element in all social organizations. In a way, each of us could be a leader, e.g. the leader of some political, religious or societal organization, or simply the head of the family. In his role the leader makes the norms of action, but he is also more than just a disciplinarian. He aids people to develop and grow up as individuals, he is a human constructor.  

As we can see, these principles describe well the idea of classical paideia: to help people complete themselves as good human beings in a good society (polis) and with the guidance of a good leader.  

The evolution of leadership theories began at the beginning of this century when the focus was on
the leader's personality. The leader was defined as a Great Man who had some exceptional features of behaviour. He was seen to have some identifiable traits of character which made him a great leader (see e.g. Banner and Blasingame, 1988). The early leadership theories attributed success in leadership to the possession of extraordinary abilities such as boundless energy, deep intuition, uncanny foresight, and irresistible persuasive powers. This massive research effort failed to find any traits which would guarantee success in leadership. Interest turned towards into the behavioural theories, including the studies on leadership styles. The significance of the context, leadership situation, was noticed next. For example, Fiedler (1964) put forth his "contingency model of leadership". But now, it seems to me that a new "syncretism" has emerged. This means that all old elements are included, but in a very "scattered" way. There does not exist any strong mainstream in management or leadership studies which would have the power to overcome other rival trends of research.

The following division can be made if one wants to classify leadership studies from another perspective. The first category of leadership studies is about the managers' personal characteristics or about his professional role in the work community; "Leadership is a personal ability to direct the activities of a group towards a shared goal" (see e.g. Hemphill and Koons, 1957). The second category of studies considers the styles of leadership; e.g. the question which leadership style is effective or which is not (see studies made by Kurt Lewin, Rensis Likert and those applied to by e.g. Hersey and Blanchard). The third group of studies deals with the charisma or hero myths in managerial action, especially in the context of organizational culture. Leadership is often seen to represent some heroic activity. This class also includes studies on organizational symbolism (see e.g. Deal and Kennedy, 1982, Schein, 1985, Hofstede, 1980, Alvesson, 1987, Gahmberg, 1990).

One can, of course formulate several kinds of research categories, but the above categorizing can help us to orient ourselves in the jungle of leadership studies. However I want to stress once again that kind of classicist approach used in this paper is unusual, but yet relevant. And now back into the world of Plato. Although Plato himself nearly always speaks about Polis, in which leadership really exists, we can try to change the term republic to the term (work) community, firm, or corporation. By this means we can get a heuristical tool for redefining the tasks of modern leadership.

Plato sketched out the idea of ideal community. The point is that by following Plato one can try to sketch out those qualities of leadership which belong to modern ideal community. This means that we can try to apply Platonic thinking to modern organizations.

3. Plato, his philosophy and leadership

Background of the consideration

Ancient Greece (400 B.C.) has been regarded as the home of systematic administrative thinking; it has been seen as the place where the Western administrative thinking was born. The city-state (polis) was the administrative unit where pre-democractical experience was started and where it matured. It also ruled the whole societal life of the Greeks. Athens, Sparta, and Thebes were this kind of city-states. But what is important is the intimate relationship between the State and the individual citizen. The relationship was so close that it was not possible to think of a citizen living outside his state. This close relationship leaves its marks on the Grecian leadership thinking, too.

Plato, a Grecian philosopher, was the first thinker who presented a systematic political and administrative model to arrange the life in an ideal state (polis). The purpose (telos) of this kind of state is to educate people to become "good". Thus, the State has mainly a moral function in people's life. According to Plato, the State is like a human body where parts complement each other and act in harmony. Stating this, Plato represents himself as an early pre-modern functionalist, interpreted in the terms of organizational theory. Plato omits the organizational conflict; no conflict should exist between the parts in an ideal situation. This omitting of conflict appears also in the ideal state, where
refined division of work, communism, equality etc. will prevail.

In Polis (Plato's dialogue: in English, the Republic) Plato states that politicians must act as the rulers of the new ideal state, because they have real knowledge (episteme) of what is "the Form of Good", and which are the aims of the state. They also have the skill to rule according to these aims. But, in the later written Politikos (Plato's dialogue), he does not any more speak about the forms according to which the ideal state can be ruled. Instead, he believes that the art of ruling (comp. leadership) can be found and based on scientific principles. This art is like the art of sailing which can be learnt. Political science, which is more than any individual art, takes care of law-making by "weaving these arts as one unity". But a just politician who knows the political science thoroughly and has moral strength, too, is rare. Because of that, it is better that the law stands above the ruler and the ruler must act according to the law.

Plato's life and work - an overview

Plato and his "disciple" Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) were the great figures in Grecian thinking, and their influence on Western thinking and philosophy has been enormous. Both Platonism and Aristotelian, as philosophies, have been the main trends of thinking in the Western world. The significance of these philosophies lies in the fact that they include in a very well formulated form a presentation of those issues which have occupied philosophers' minds through decades. Plato was born in Athens about in 427 B.C. He was the son of an aristocratic family which actively took part in the political life of Athens. It is evident that Plato planned to take part in politics, too, but due to violent and cruel social conditions (The Peloponnesian War was going on) he chose a more contemplative way of life. This decision was dramatic, because after that Plato never again managed to take part in day-to-day politics.

Democracy was the main form of government in Greece in those days. Athens, the forerunner of democracy, was the polis which had the leading position among other city-states. But, Plato's view of democracy was disapproving. He saw that aristocracy would offer a better alternative to rule, because the hegemony of demos would be a disaster to all parties of society. To Plato's mind Socrates' death might be the final step, and one that could release the bad and dysfunctional character of democracy. After this unfortunate event, Plato's literary career began. In his books, written in dialogical form, he set forth his political, ethical and epistemological ideas. From the viewpoint of the leadership theme, Plato presented remarkable considerations in the following: Polis (The Republic), Politikos (The Statesman), and Nomoi (Laws) which remained the last work of Plato.

Plato's epistemological considerations and his own life were intimately connected with each other. We know that Plato tried to influence the formulation process of the constitution of the state Syracusa. In practice, his attempts met with a lot of misfortune and Syracusa kept the non-platonist model of constitution. Plato himself had no luck and he had to escape from Syracusa. During the voyage he got into trouble when in Aigina buccaneers took him prisoner to sell him as a slave. Annikeris, a friend of Plato, bought him free. Plato continued his voyage to Athens where he devoted himself to literary work and founded his school called Academia.

Forms in Platonic ontology

Plato's view of the ultimate construction of reality can be characterized as idealistic. The ultimate nature of reality is ideal. Plato makes a drastic difference between the material (sense) world and the eternal world of Forms. Material particulars, single "things" (nominalia) are in the endless process of arising, changing and dying. In contrast with them, the Forms, i.e. the models of these changing things, are eternal, constituting the immaterial or ideal reality. For two reasons, the Forms are more real compared with the particular things which exist in the sense world. First, a Form exists in the same form eternally because it is unalterable by its nature. Instead, if a thing exists now, a time may come when it will
vanish and thus it is not as real as the Form of it. Second, the Forms as the original models of all alterable material things are more real than their copies.

But there exists a hierarchy of Forms, as Plato states it. The most elementary is the Form of Good. He seems to think that each of the Forms is in a way part of the Form of Good. It is the most basic element in the cosmos; it is a principle that bears both existence and knowledge, as Plato puts it. He takes an analogy of seeing as an example. The Good (Demiurg) creates the ability to see and the ability to be invisible. But, in addition to these, e.g. in order to see a colour, a third element is needed – light. Light comes from the sun; although the sun does not see, it is a precondition for seeing. We can also apply this reasoning to the process of realizing (knowing); our soul realizes the things when it has been directed to the Truth, i.e. when the Truth gives its light to the realizing process. This element which gives a soul aiming at the Truth the ability to know can according to Plato be named as the Form of Good. It is also the cause of the knowledge and the Truth because it can be reached by intelligence. This concept of the Good lies outside our consciousness. Plato’s Good (to Agathon) involves both knowing and existing, but at the same time it is more than they are. 

In the following we make some comments which may clarify Plato’s arguments. We must remember the teleological nature of the Grecian philosophy and thinking. This means that all existing things, both the actions and intentions of human beings and the life of animals and plants, are directed towards a certain purpose, telos. Thus, a man’s will is always and of necessity directed towards the Form of Good. This ultimate purpose has been thought to be aiming at happiness, because the Greeks thought that happiness was the natural and principal good for a man. This puts forth the teleological eudaimonism prevailing in the Grecian ethics. To aim at happiness is an in-built element in the Grecian model of human action.

According to Karl Popper, an English social philosopher, Plato’s doctrine of Forms has several functions in Plato’s philosophy. first, it has a methodological task. It makes it possible to get pure scientific information about the Forms which can then be applied to in the world of altering and varying things. This is important because we cannot directly get real knowledge, episteme, from that changing world, but only opinions and beliefs, doxa. So, this lays the basis for the founding of political science. Second, it gives us the keys to form a theory of change, a theory of birth and death, and a way to understand our history better than before. Third, it gives a possibility to some kind of social technology. It gives a chance to develop resistance mechanisms against societal change by offering the ideal of the best state. We must remember that from Plato’s point of view change represented a negative process in a societal sphere.

Plato’s ethics involve strongly his ontological and epistemological stance. The thoughts presented above confirm to us that the ethics of Plato has a character of ascetic transcendental eudaimonism. In other words, to love the eternal Forms guarantees the soul the possibility to be with the Forms eternally, and this means that life is a means of reaching the purpose of the Good in the realm of the dead. While believing that the Forms are moral by their nature, Plato at the same time accepts the concept of universal moral. This concept has an existence which is independent of people’s opinions. Another matter important in Plato’s ethics is the doctrine of the immortal soul. It seems to me that he believed that body and soul are separable elements and soul will continue its life after the body’s death.

Like many other Greeks, also Plato conceives that autarkia, self-sufficiency, and the completeness of soul are the criteria for happiness. But he shows in his dialogues that neither of them alone is enough. Reason is necessary, but life also demands pleasure, hedone. Still there is a hierarchy of pleasures. The pleasure reached by knowing and realizing the Form of beauty is one of the highest pleasures.

Next, I will consider in detail some dialogues on the themes of management of leadership in Plato’s thinking.
The GORGIAS – a critique on rhetoric and an early attempt to consider the “management of meaning”

The Gorgias is a dialogue in which Plato treats the main ethical problems of philosophy, e.g. the justification of manipulative action, i.e. the true nature of rhetoric. The Gorgias falls in three sections: in each of them Socrates has a different interlocutor, and each section establishes certain positions once and for all before passing on. The function of the first part is to dispose of the claims of rhetoric being a doctrine in which virtue is taught, and also to make a distinction between the two senses of persuasion. Gorgias, a rhetor, is the upholder of the view that rhetoric, as an art of persuasion, is the means of attaining a man’s supreme good. The supreme good is freedom and by freedom is meant the freedom to have one’s own way in everything.

Gorgias himself does not seem to have claimed that he were a teacher of virtue: he taught the skills of rhetoric, developing in his students the ability to persuade and convince the audience, and encouraging them to acquire the capability to respond to the audience’s questions with confidence and self-possession. The rhetor, the sophist, and the tyrant emerge in the Gorgias as the three icons of an antiphilosopher.

Socrates questions whether an orator needs the knowledge of right and wrong any more than he needs the knowledge of engineering. Gorgias is not entirely consistent at this point; he appears to argue that an orator on occasion needs to be a just man, but is vague about how he can become one. He presents rhetoric as such as a morally neutral technique which can be used for either the right or the wrong purposes: to put the blame on a teacher of rhetoric for its misuse by his pupils would be as silly as to accuse a teacher of boxing for the ways in which his pupils may use their craft afterwards.

The idea that the techniques of persuasion are morally neutral is a recurrent one in the human society. But if the idea is to hold true that such techniques are neutral, it is also necessary to stick to it that it is morally irrelevant whether a man comes to a given belief by reasoning or in some irrational way.

The real sphere of rhetoric is the just and the unjust, the noble and the shameful, the good and the bad; its aim is not just to make an audience convinced, but to instruct them about matters where the question is about right and wrong; or about the policy which will prove beneficial. The orator will be ignorant of these subjects, for, as in Georgias case, it is partly because of his profession that he is capable of being more convincing in any sphere, even without any knowledge, than a man with the knowledge. Existing orators, then, are concerned only with appearances, not with reality; they deal with what appears to be good to their audience, because it is for the moment attractive and pleasant, not with what really is good. The teaching of rhetoric leads by an easy road to vice. If so, it is the very reverse what education should be.

To conclude, we can state that Plato reveals in this dialogue his conviction of the persuading nature of rhetoric as an antithesis of the real truth-seeking philosophy. A rhetoric action directed at manipulative goals is doomed. It is not real true-loving but only a technē, a means, to become more famous and wealthy.

The REPUBLIC; the ideal state and the ruling of it versus reality – leadership as an educational catalyst in an ideal state

What is the main issue in the dialogue of the Republic? There are several issues which Plato wants to consider. In this paper it is not possible to handle all his topics but some choices have to be made. Perhaps the most important issues from my point of view are the following:

- What the term “justice” really means
- The nature of leadership in an ideal state

The Republic opens with a request for a definition of “justice”. After a long discussion Plato comes to the conclusion that it is not a matter of justice for the stronger to abuse his power over the weaker. Plato implements the Republic as a dialogue on the nature of justice: the ideal state is presented as social embodiment of justice. The division of functions in the State is the principle which indicates the nature of
justice. A just social order is one where order and harmony are maintained by each class of citizens carrying out the tasks for which they are suited and not interfering with the work of others. In this context I do not, however, consider it relevant to handle this matter more deeply. According to Popper, behind the sociological points presented by Plato, there is the view that a state must be stable and in equilibrium. As long as these terms are put into practice, the power and the unity of the ruling class are guaranteed. To educate this class must be the first and foremost task of the leader of the State.

Next, we examine more closely the tasks of the leader in an ideal state. At least two tasks can be assumed to rest with the leader. The first of them is to control the implementation of education, and the second to control the propagation of thoughts. The function of the controllers in the State is considered important and therefore the controllers must be philosophers. The Popperian view is that Plato must have had political ambitions to think in that way. The main objective should be to raise the power of the Guardians as much as possible and in that way make it possible to get more and more Defenders in the State. But excellent military facilities are not enough to execute persistent power in the State. To lay basis for stable power in a state calls for supernatural or transcendental abilities from a leader, and mystical skills must be developed, to be used by the leader when ruling the state. Plato’s leaders are not like human beings, they belong to the world of gods. In this way the philosopher-king can be seen to be descending from the ancient priest-kings of the earliest tribes. So, Platonic education may have a political basis. It leaves its mark on leaders, and on the other hand, sets up a borderline between the rulers and the ruled subjects. By this means Platonic wisdom gives mystical skills to leaders; they resemble ancient magicians.

And further, it is not allowed to give schooling to all citizens, but only to two upper classes, to the Rulers and the Defenders. Plato wants to train Defenders like dogs: a good dog is tender to his master and fierce to strangers, and in the same way the fury of the Defenders must be focused in the right way. The Defenders are citizens with the potential to grow and develop in the social hierarchy. Some of them can rise in the hierarchy and achieve as philosophers in ruling positions. But education is not enough because people are weak creatures tempted by many passions. What is needed is an ascetic way of life defined by the ruler-philosophers. Also children ought to be educated to become proper citizens of the State. The children of the Guardian class follow a curriculum with three elements, mousike, gymnastike, and mathematics. The successful development of a child’s character depends on the balance maintained amongst these three sectors of education elements.

Homer, a Greek poet, has taught that the gods are a badly behaving bunch of creatures, but Plato wants to oppose this. He states that the gods are totally good and unchanging by their nature and to be obeyed. They are the symbols of law. Therefore, stories are an important means of education. In Plato’s days, the Athenian children are brought up on an abundant diet of myths and legends, consisting especially of the stories embedded in the poems of Homer and Hesiod. The educational system proposed for the Guardians involves that virtually all the tales created by homer and Hesiod are rejected: lies about the gods are unsuitable as educational material. Plato insists that stories about the gods and heroes must be truthful; a god is perfect, immutable, utterly truthful. The stories of divine immorality, of the gods who are shape-changing deceivers, thieves, liars, and adulterers have no place in education. In thus arguing, Plato is following the footsteps of Xenophanes and Heraclitus, both of whom were harshly critical of the foolish stories told about the gods. The interpreters of the myths had attempted to meet such criticism by producing elaborate allegorical interpretations of the myths which gave them an acceptable meaning. Plato refuses to accept that the existence of such interpretations would justify the use of the myths and legends he condemns. A story itself has the power to influence a child apart from the interpretations given to it. The stories used in the education of children must have an appropriate moral content. However, what is important, Plato states that telling lies is allowed to the Rulers for the sake of the State’s best. Therefore, Rulers can serve a bunch of lies
like a doctor doses a medicine for the sick. The benefit of the State comes first. Lying is not allowed to an individual citizen, only to the Rulers.\textsuperscript{18}

**Philosopher-king. Leadership as the duty of a philosopher**

Plato is sure that there exists one and only one model of the ideal state. The most evident reason for the uselessness of the existing states is the lack of competent leaders. Those men who know what is best for the State and also have the strength to act according to that knowledge are philosophers. So, the philosophers have to be Rulers, philosopher-kings. Plato defines a philosopher by setting out an account of knowledge and belief and then contrasting the philosopher who has knowledge with the non-philosophical man who at his best has only a true belief or opinion.

Plato is at the core disappointed in the existing states because their leaders do not have any knowledge about the ultimate purposes of the state, neither do they have moral strength to act according to common good. Their objects are merely in individual gains and losses, and in their will to rule. A good leader is beneficial to his subjects in the same way as a good doctor to his patients. People cause only harm to themselves if they are so stupid that they do not want to be ruled by a philosopher-king.\textsuperscript{19}

One of the most important tasks on the leader's agenda is to take care of the education of the different classes. The means used in the ruling of a state can be rude and, from our perspective, also quite questionable. Plato accepts the method, which I shall call "management by lying". He states: "The Rulers of the State, if anybody, must be able to tell lies, if necessary, betraying both enemies and their own citizens. But no one else should do this."

The ideal state, according to Plato, shall have four main virtues. They are (1) prudence (2) courage (3) temperance and (4) justice. Prudence can be understood as the highest and best ability to give advice concerning the issues of governing the State as one unity. It is not a technical ability of or skill, but a virtue of ultimate purpose. This kind of knowledge is conserving. It helps to retain the stability in the State, and the Rulers with this knowledge are the most competent. Prudence is a gift typical of very rare people – philosophers, it is the understanding of the ultimate nature of the Forms. As Plato notices, the State can avoid disaster by choosing philosophers as rulers. This can happen by two means: either existing rulers become philosophers or philosophers become rulers. And rulers must be true philosophers who want to search out the ultimate truth instead of being egoists and motivated only by the gaining of power.

But it is very difficult to connect prudence and political power for two reasons. First, although a true philosopher would be available, people are blind and not ready to use their talents. Plato knows that politicians win their power by mutual fights and by courting the voters' favour. Therefore, an ideal leader needs an ideal public with the ability to choose the right leader. Second, connecting prudence and power is difficult because only a few people are true philosophers, and the most just pretend to be that. A true philosopher wants to rise into the spheres of esoteric meditation and is forced to accept rulership against his will.

It becomes apparent from the Republic that Plato's political idea was that the State should be governed by philosophers who would know with certainty the moral principles which should be the basis of the social order. Unfortunately, the one serious opportunity Plato had to make a ruler a philosopher failed utterly. The ideal remained, and Plato's Academia continued to disseminate the sort of education a philosopher-ruler would need, but Plato came to the point where he had to accept that the philosopher-ruler might prove to be an unattainable ideal.\textsuperscript{20}

**STATESMAN – governing as a special skill**

In his later dialogue, the Statesman, Plato does not any more consider ideas according to which the ideal state has to be organized. Instead, he believes that ruling is a special skill like the art of sailing or art of carrying on one's trade. Plato's
**Plato on Leadership**

Method to analyse things in the Statesman represents a definitive technique. It is based on the dialectical process of outseparating. In the Statesman the Eleatic stranger uses this technique to demonstrate that the art of governing is indeed a form of knowledge. A Ruler who possesses that knowledge will be able to decide political questions with wisdom and understanding. In the absence of such a ruler, the State should be governed by law.21

As we can see above, Plato makes a distinction between the rule by someone who possesses the “art of ruling”, and the rule by law. The rule by law only be the second best: laws are necessarily imperfect, because they always use the same description, even if the circumstances are different. On the other hand, laws have positive value: they are largely based on experience, and have the right kinds of advocates for them, such as general descriptions. Provided, then, that they are based on the prevailing law, the existing forms of institution will offer some kind of framework for living in the absence of the true statesman. While Plato evidently considers it possible that true statesmen will turn up, he now asks whether it is likely that they will. In the Republic he was preoccupied with urging the need for a philosophical rule; in the Statesman, he views that ideal from the perspective of the conditions of ordinary life, and recognizes just how difficult it will be to achieve that philosophical rule.22

The Statesman offers a solution to the problem of the origin of the world. It contains a lengthy mythological account of the divine government of the world. The cyclical motion of the heavens is due to God's periodic action, infusing new vitality into the cycles. The myth's emphasis on the world's need for God's vitalizing influence is significant: the world is more than a mere matter.23

Best of all will be the rule of an expert individual, the true king, who is able to govern on the basis of knowledge of eternal verities as well as of practical skill, though it is the latter on which great stress is laid in this context. But men with requisite intellect, and moral qualities do not accede to the rulership naturally in the way the queen bee does in a hive. Therefore, men have to come together and draw up codes of law, pursuing the traces of the most rightful constitution; and as a result are the inferior types of rule. They are all difficult to live under, but they can be put in order of preference.24

To conclude, one can say that in the Statesman Plato wants to emphasize the Ruler's personal abilities to take good care of the State. He can have an inherent talent for this, but he can also learn the skill to rule by his own personal vision, notwithstanding the rules and laws binding the common citizen. A True Leader must have this charismatic trait, and also be able to apply it in practice, on his own agenda.

**The LAWS — Laws as a paradigmatic basis for ruling a state**

In his old age Plato remained intellectually active. His later dialogues show a mind still flexible and fertile. No doubt his contacts with the younger thinkers at the Academia helped him to retain his own intellectual vitality. The later dialogues may lack the sparkling humour and the vivid manner of expression which make the earlier dialogues so readable, but they present new ideas, new forms of argument, and new techniques of dialectical reasoning; they address new questions, and approach familiar questions in new ways. The Laws is Plato's last work. It is a substantial work, as large as the Republic. It suffers from faults in style and certain dryness: it is the work of an old man determined to write down and publish the ideas he believes to be important. Plato is racing with the calendar as he writes the Laws, the style is a little a concern to him. And the things he has to say are new.25

The Laws is a work which also reminds us that Plato has an impartial interest in political philosophy. The Laws concerns the nature of a society in which virtue is universally inculcated. In the first parts of this very comprehensive work the emphasis is upon the nature of the inculcation; in the later parts, there are discussions on practical proposals for legislation to be enacted in the imaginary about-to-be-founded Cretan city of Magnesia. As with the society of the Republic, there is to be a hierarchical order of the rulers and the ruled in the city. As with the
society of the Republic, true virtue is only possible for those who belong to the clearly confined class of rulers. But in the Republic the whole emphasis lies upon the education of the rulers. In the Laws, nothing like this can be found. In the Republic the education of the rulers is put forth as further-going and more exact than that of the mass of the citizens, whereas in the Laws the positive development of desirable habits and traits takes the place of restrictions. The citizens are encouraged to live in accordance with virtue, and both education and laws are to nurture them in this way of life. But when they live in this way, it is because they have been conditioned and habituated to such a way of life, and not because they would understand the point of it. That understanding is still the privilege of the rulers. This opinion emerges most clearly in the discussion about the gods. In the Laws the existence of the Divine has become the cornerstone of morals and politics. "The greatest question . . . is whether we do or do not think rightly about the gods and so live well". The Divine is important in the Laws because it is identified with the law: to be obedient before the law is to be obedient before the gods. The Divine also seems to represent the general primacy of spirit over matter, soul over body. Ordinary people are induced to believe in the gods, because it is important that all men who attend to human affairs and who are not subject to human weakness in that respect should believe in the gods. But the rulers are to be men who have toiled their way to acquire the complete confidence in the existence of the gods by intellectual effort. What others regard as a result of conditioning and tradition they have grasped by using rational proof. Plato’s determination to uphold paternalistic and totalitarian politics is clearly independent of any particular version of the theory of the Forms.

The Laws, like the Republic, pays a great deal of attention to education. Education is regarded as the cornerstone of the State – that is, education in virtue which is in essence understood in terms of educating our desires. Full virtue which is in essence understood in terms of educating our desires. Full virtue, no doubt, would still include wisdom, but the basic requirement is that we should desire the right things. Once again, it is asserted that virtuous life is the happiest; it is the best and most pleasant for us: if it were not, the task of persuading people to choose it would be difficult.

The conclusion may be drawn that the Laws puts forth such a concept of leadership that stresses the meaning of laws and common rules in addition to the leader’s personal power. He must obey and act according to the laws made by some common government organ. This practice will prevent the abuse of the leader’s personal power.

4. Implications for modern leadership-thinking

We can find several areas in Plato’s discourse which come close to modern leadership debate. These issues are, for example,:

- debates on charisma in leadership
- symbols and leadership; leadership as heroic action
- debate on the nature of managerial work, and especially, the possibility to be a statesman-leader in business, expressed by the words of Richard Norman
- justice in managerial work: in many managerial routines is it possible to be a just leader of the organization
- in the field of organizational theory: the organizational equilibrium versus conflict
- the management of meaning
- truth-manipulating and totalitarian aspects of leadership

Of course, several other issues can be identified, but in my opinion those mentioned above are the most important topics. Next I will take some of them under closer scrutiny.

Discussion on statesman leadership

In his book “Creative leadership” (orig. publ. 1975), Richard Norman puts forth the concept of statesman leadership. He states that the function of a statesman leader (STL) is to balance the totality formed by several business branches.
The main task of the STL is to take care that the political system of many businesses is functioning well. To handle and relax tensions existing between the various parts of an organization is one of the main tasks of the STL. But, contrary to Plato, Norman sees those tensions as creative and fruitful tools for making a better organization. The STL must be a person who is able to restrain these tensions, but he must also create new tensions in order to renew the organization.

Discussion on charisma

Charisma, in terms used by Max Weber, means literally “the gift of grace”. It is used by Weber to characterize self-appointed leaders followed by people who are in distress and who need to follow the leader because they believe him to be extraordinarily qualified. The charismatic leaders' actions are enthusiastic, and in such extraordinary enthusiasm, class and status barriers sometimes give way to fraternization and exuberant community sentiments. For this reason, charismatic heroes and prophets are viewed as truly revolutionary forces in history. Weber emphasizes that the charismatic leader is self-ordained and self-styled. The background for this self-styling is the charismatic leader's “mission”. This causes that his action is his destiny. The role of a follower is to acknowledge this destiny, and the authority of genuine charisma is derived from the duty of the followers to recognize the leader. The very nature of charismatic authority is unstable; this is because the source of charisma is continuously “moving on”. It will never be stable and unchanging.

Charismatic leadership usually arises in times of crisis when the basic values, the institutions, and the legitimacy of the organization are brought into question. Genuine charisma is connected with something “new”. And in extraordinary situations this “new” calls forth a charismatic authoritarian structure so that charisma, at least temporarily, leads to actions, movements, and events which are extraordinary, not routine, and outside the sphere of everyday life. The evocation of pure charisma and charismatic leadership always leads, at least temporarily, away from the world of everyday life; it rejects or transcends routine life. Just because pure charisma and charismatic leadership conflict with the existing, the self-evident, the established order, they work like a catalyst in an organization. But charisma is the specifically creative force in an organization only briefly before being unavoidably transformed or routinized into some more solid form.

The legitimacy of charisma and charismatic leadership is sociologically and psychologically an attribute of the belief of the followers and not so much the quality of the leader. The leader is in this respect important because he can “charismatically” evoke this sense of belief and can thereby demand obedience. Weber thought that the unavoidable fate of charisma is routinization and institutionalization. Pure charisma is personal, direct, radical, extraordinary, and the authority of charisma is based on belief, after which the charismatic leadership as a movement is successful, then charisma becomes ordinary; charismatic leadership becomes routinized, depersonalized, and deradicalized. Therefore, the nature of belief may also be transformed. Considering the features of the Weberian pure charisma it seems that this type of authoritarian structure describes more a pre-modern (like ancient Grecian) society and form of organization. Especially pure charisma and charismatic leadership as an anti-economic force, characterized by great pathos; followers constituting genuine discipleship; and charismatic leadership pointing in a revolutionary and anti-routine way to something transcendent, hint rather to the premodern direction.

Charisma is foreign to economic and efficiency-based considerations. Hence, in modern business organizations, a tight reign has to be kept on charisma. Too much counting on charisma, and the economic survival of the firm may be threatened. More appropriate to a muddled organization is the notion that charisma can move from one person to another who makes different decisions. Charisma can provide a vital driving force to decision making viewed through the eyes of e.g. the “garbage can” describing of organizational action. In it the participants are coming to the can and leaving it, carrying along
T. Takala

their solution; an impulse to participants, the problems, and the solutions how to merge them together and make a choice that could be of use. But different solutions will bring different individuals together. When the relation between the goal and the means is unclear and there are uncertainties over the goals to be reached, inspirational decision-making seems to be the only way for decision-makers to cause action. Charisma would offer a solution to this problem but there is no reason why charisma should permanently reside in one and the same person.

Plato's view of leadership, as a normative standpoint, was that a leader must be a man of power with a sincerely truth-seeking vision. This point of view comes close to the Weberian concept of charisma discussed above. Plato sees that a leader must have charisma, the gift of grace, to be successful in his actions. Without it a leader is not able to do his job, to be the head of an organization. And this charisma is something mystical which cannot be obtained by force or by training. It is of divine origin.

Discussion on the management of meaning

Discussion about management's "new" imperatives, like management by objectives, management by results etc., have been evolving. One of them is the discussion called the management of meaning. It has many roots, e.g. Bennis (1984) would suggest a view of strategic management as "the management of meaning". This concept is later elaborated, with more conceptual depth, by Smircich and Morgan (1982) and Smircich and Stubbart (1985).

In the background is the idea that organizations are socially constructed systems of shared meanings. So, the task of management, especially strategic management, is to create symbolic reality and to facilitate action. Smircich and Stubbart refer to recent studies, where "the management of meaning" has been shown to be accomplished through values and their symbolic expressions, dramas and language. Broms and Gahmberg have found some examples of classical myths used in situational applications. Such are, for instance, the myth of rebirth, or the story of the Phoenix bird, in occasions of crisis and turnaround operations, or the myth of the Argonauts in biographies of famous leaders.

The key challenge for a leader is to manage meaning in such a way that individuals orient themselves to the achievement of desirable end. In this endeavor the use of language, ritual, drama, stories, myths, and symbolic construction of all kinds play an important role. They constitute important tools for the management of meaning. Through words and images, symbolic actions, and gestures, leaders can structure attention and evoke patterns of meaning which give them considerable control over the situation being managed. Leadership rests as much in these symbolic modes of action as in those instrumental modes of management, direction, and control which define the substance of the leader's formal organizational role.

So, it is said in the modern leadership studies that the task of strategic management is to rule the new and continuously changing situation by creating and using myths, symbols, metaphors etc. As we have seen previously, Plato sees the myths, metaphors and "stories" as inevitable forces in societal life. In the same way, he considers that it belongs to a leader's normative agenda to develop such means of symbolical leading.

The connections to the charisma-debate are also clear, if a leader wants to be charismatic, he must develop his skill of using symbols, metaphors etc. in his managerial work. So, the management of meaning discussion and the charisma discussion are heavily interwoven.

Ethical evaluation of the truth-manipulating and totalitarian aspects of leadership

The problem with the stability in charismatic leadership has to be acknowledged. This question is also connected with the truth-manipulating and totalitarian aspects of leadership. As it has been said, the tendency of charisma to be routinized is an in-built feature of this phenomenon. Max Weber recognized that a certain degree of routinization is bound to occur almost as soon as the initial charisma of the leader is acknowl-
Plato on Leadership

edged by others and the next stage of charisma is developing. This means that pure charisma is stable by its nature. It means that a leader who wants to possess charisma must resist this tendency towards routinilization because it may lead to a totalitarian system or truth-manipulating operations.

To evaluate the totalitarian or truth-manipulating aspects of leadership is not an easy task. In this evaluation we must rest on some traditional ethical theories, like deontologism and utilitarianism. A utilitarian charismatic leader may argue that he uses truth-manipulating means if the outcome of these kinds of actions will achieve the maximum good to a maximum number of people. This logic involves several problems, e.g. how to determine the measure of “good” and define the number of people whose happiness has to be maximized. Deontological ethical theories, like Kantianism, offer a better solution for a charismatic leader to evaluate his behaviour in complex ethical decision-making situations. The duty to obey moral law or human rights obliges the leader not to misuse his charisma for “bad” practices. The leader’s own conscience can also show the way to ethically good decisions and actions. Often charismatic leaders fail in this task. Like Hitler or Stalin, they use their power for unhuman deeds. However, some leaders, like Jesus or Gandhi are good examples of ethically good leaders. They have the power but they use it for well-meaning purposes.

Plato is a question mark in this respect. He is said to be the forefather of the totalitarian constitution (Popper). However, as it has been put forth in this paper, Plato is seen more as a speaker on behalf of good leadership with truth-seeking visions.

5. Final comments

An excursion has been made in Plato’s world of ideas. This consideration consists of many different areas. We have seen that Plato has been one of the most influential organizational thinkers through the ages. A long time ago he has presented many themes which have been thought to be “modern”, and during the 20th century his ideas have been further developed by the leadership theoreticians of our time. First, Plato has put forth the theory of an organization as a harmony-seeking entity, and in this way given a benchmark for modern organizational theoreticians stressing the unitary and well-balanced nature of modern complex organizations. Second, the concept of the management of meaning, or leadership as the management of meaning, has been evolved. Putting focus on the way the meaning is created, sustained, and changed in organizational settings provides us with powerful means to understand the fundamental nature of leadership as a social process. This social process includes all those means by which management creates new meanings by rituals, symbolizing and “naming”. As we have seen, all these elements are included in Plato’s leadership philosophy. Third, the debate on the attributes of a powerful leader is also in the focus of Plato’s thinking. This notion leads us to the present debate on charisma, and to its role in today’s management practices. A leader must possess charisma, the gift of grace, in order to be successful in his actions. Without it the leader is not able to do his job, to be the head of some complex organization. Max Weber, the forefather of the modern charisma debate, may agree with us: Plato is an ancient, but still fresh and actual developer of the leadership theory. And it is a theory that is always needed.

Notes

1. See Yukl, p. 2.
2. See Sayles, p. 29.
5. See Yukl, pp. 3-4.
6. Knuutila, p. 34.
7. See Kanerva, p. 18.
8. See Kanerva, p. 19.
9. See Asmus, p. 27.
10. See Asmus, p. 63.
12. See Tenkku, p. 58.
13. See Melling, pp. 46, 51.
15. E.g. see Melling, p. 84.
See Melling, p. 86.
See Melling, p. 86. Kanerva, p. 23.
See Tenkku, p. 78.
See Melling, p. 158.
Melling, p. 158.
Rowe, p. 157.
See Melling, p. 151.
See Rowe, p. 138.
See Melling, p. 158.
See Hamlyn, p. 54.
See Rowe, p. 141.
See Norman, pp. 150–.
See Gerth and Mills, p. 52 (op. cit. Pekonen).
See Pekonen, p. 13.
See Pekonen, p. 15.
See Butler, p. 244.
See Gahmberg, p. 152.
See Smircich and Morgan.

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