

LEADERSHIP, CHARACTER AND VIRTUES FROM AN ARISTOTELIAN VIEWPOINT

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Introduction

The author proposes aristotelian rhetoric as the model for the art of leadership. True leadership requires professional competence and moral integrity. It is a relationship that results not only in the achievement of noble goals but also in the moral growth of both leaders and followers. For this reason, authentic leadership cannot be based on charisma alone; above all, it calls for a trustworthy character. In essence, trustworthiness is a virtue or a combination of virtues.

We learn from Aristotle that virtue is that specific human excellence found in a person's actions, habits and character. Each of these levels of functioning has its own criteria of moral goodness. Furthermore, a feedback loop or reinforcement mechanism, usually called "learning" or "habituation", exists among them.

Leadership is fundamentally the art of persuasion. Aristotle teaches that basically the means available to the speaker or potential leader are three: his speech or arguments (logos), the emotional disposition of his listeners (pathos) and the character (ethos) that he projects. The speaker's character, as in the case of the leader, is the controlling factor; and he would be convincing only to the extent that he displays practical wisdom (phronesis), good will (eunoia) and virtue (arete). Aristotle thus demands that technical competence in crafting speeches and capturing an audience's benevolence be inseparable from moral excellence in the ideal rhetorician. So, too, with the ideal leader.

I. Leadership: character or charisma?

As we go about our work, in the exercise of our profession, there comes a time in which, either individually or as an organization, we enter into uncharted territory with

no apparent rules, or where the rules we knew no longer apply. Before we could just have gone with the flow, driven by routine, but suddenly, these guides seem to have vanished. We find ourselves at a crossroads and without a clue... We're lost!

This is the time for leadership: when someone has to make a crucial decision, with hardly any guide, and summon strength to carry it out. It would indeed be wonderful if things just went ahead as planned and the call for leadership never arose, given the fearful chance for abuse. Yet this is mere wishful thinking. Leadership necessarily involves discretionary acts or prerogatives; notwithstanding the care to avoid arbitrariness and behaving in a self-serving fashion. A leader fills some very real needs: a need for vision, clear objectives and effective strategies, and a need for drive and energy to put such strategies into practice. The alternative to not having a leader is chaos and paralysis.

Leadership is one of the most observed yet least understood human phenomena (Bennis and Nanus 1978: 4). Practically each generation has come up with its own definition of leadership, with varying points of emphasis. In the 1990s, perhaps the most widely accepted definition was that of Joseph Rost, for whom "Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes" (Rost 1993: 102). Rost's definition hits the mark on two main aspects of leadership. Firstly, in recognizing that leadership is a reciprocal relationship or a partnership between leader and followers. Not only do followers depend on their leader, but so does the leader on his followers, for he cannot accomplish anything without them. Secondly, Rost is also right in that leadership goals have to be agreed upon by leader and followers. Only a voluntary followership is acceptable to true leadership.

Rost's merits aside, the real issue is not how well leadership is defined, but how well it is practiced, as Joanne Ciulla remarked (Ciulla 1998: 13). We should then inquire on how good leadership, in its double sense of morally good and technically effective, is achieved. In the measure that we figure out what sort of person should lead, to that extent we advance in our understanding of leadership. This conjunction between technical competence and moral excellence is what Ciulla refers to when she affirms that "ethics lies at the very heart of leadership" (Ciulla 1998: xv, 18).

Former US President Harry Truman once gave the following litmus test of leadership: “the ability to get other people to do what they don’t want to do, and like it” (Solomon 1998: 91). Earlier we said that the need for leadership is most keenly felt when an organization has to move on, yet finds no rules for proceeding. Because of this puzzlement and inaction, an organization’s members may feel depressed and discouraged. A leader is then needed to provide vision and energy. This task is easy when group members agree with the leader or when they pose little resistance to his initiatives. But this is hardly ever the case. Oftentimes, special leadership skills are needed to get other people to do what they initially disliked, while respecting their freedom. Moreover, leadership lies in getting people to actually like and even enjoy what at first they had not even imagined doing. How can one do this?

History has bequeathed us with a variety of pathways to leadership. Machiavelli posed the well-known alternative of leading through love or fear. Fear, like love, is indeed a very strong motivator; but unlike love, fear prevents people from feeling good about their work. Under the influence of fear, they focus more on avoiding punishment than on getting work done and doing it well. Besides love and fear, other routes to leadership are wealth, status, intelligence and skill. These are different forms that power, the capacity to effect change, adopts. At this juncture, the question of whether these qualities are innate or something that the leader has acquired often arises. The best response, perhaps, is that everyone has the potential to become a leader at least in some special circumstance. Very few, unfortunately, ever take the trouble of developing this capacity.

Leadership cannot develop merely as the result of external pressure, coercion or intimidation; it cannot be decreed. Its converse, followership, has to spring naturally from the minds and hearts of people, in response to their having felt recognized, respected and valued. Leadership is “a complex moral relationship between people based on trust, obligation, commitment, emotion, and a shared vision of the good” (Ciulla 1998: xv); it is never a simple mechanical reaction to a superior force.

Above all, leadership consists in exerting moral influence over one’s followers. Others express this influence in terms of moral authority (Casson 2000: 6). That the leader’s moral influence benefits followers is the source of his authority; it legitimizes his power. Moral influence, in turn, could be understood in a double direction. Firstly,

from followers to leaders. Moral attributes such as honesty, integrity, credibility and trustworthiness are the qualities most desired by people in their leaders (Kouzes and Posner 1993: 255). Followers therefore can encourage and demand moral behavior from their leaders. Secondly, from leaders to followers. Since all human decisions have a moral dimension, leaders shape the ethical choices of their followers, enhancing or inhibiting their personal growth. James MacGregor Burns saw this point lucidly: leadership is a two-way transformative and intrinsically moral relationship between leader and followers (Burns 1978). The two parties involved —leaders and followers—morally transform and elevate each other through their interaction. Hence, leadership becomes a major driving force for people and organizations to become ethical. Leadership nurtures personal ethics, allowing it to grow and shape a supportive organizational culture.

Stewardship and servant-leadership stem from the assumption that leadership is a reciprocal, morally uplifting relationship between leaders and followers. Stewardship represents a pivotal shift in leadership thinking, for it acknowledges a leader's deep moral accountability to the organization and its workers (Block 1993). In accordance with stewardship, no leader should behave despotically, going about his tasks as if he were the organization's sole proprietor. A steward-leader recognizes the power of workers to make decisions regarding their own jobs, as well as their capacity to influence the organization's goals, systems and structures. A steward-leader empowers workers instead of controlling them, so that they could become in turn leaders themselves.

Servant-leadership is an even more revolutionary than stewardship, for it turns traditional leadership thinking, with its emphasis on high-profile figures, on its head. A servant-leader should not only acknowledge the interests of others in the organization; he is also duty-bound to serve them, transcending his self-interest (Greenleaf 1977). His obligation is to provide those under his care with a chance to grow and develop as persons, furnishing them with opportunities to enrich themselves, both materially and morally, through their work in the organization. The integral fulfillment of everyone in the organization is the servant-leader's aim and the standard according to which his very self-fulfillment is to be judged.

Many construe ethical leadership as an emotional relationship based on charisma—etymologically, the quality of being “touched by grace”—. Charisma is that mysterious and extraordinary power possessed by people who are successful in influencing others. Being a nonrational characteristic, charisma is extremely difficult to define, lending itself at most to vague descriptions. In general, charisma has to do with a leader’s message, how he says it, and the whole gamut of emotions (e.g., hopes, fears, enthusiasm) he evokes. Charm, intelligence and sincerity also contribute to the overall perception of charisma. Nonetheless, in the words of Robert Solomon, “charisma doesn’t refer to any character trait or ‘quality’ in particular, but is rather a general way of referring to a person who seems to be a dynamic and effective leader. And as a term of analysis in leadership studies, I think that it is more of a distraction than a point of understanding” (Solomon 1998: 98).

In place of charisma, Solomon proposes trust as the basis of ethical leadership (Solomon 1998: 101, 105). An ethical leader is one who establishes and sustains a framework of reciprocal trust between himself and his followers and among his followers themselves. Without trust, no dialogue, understanding, cooperation, commerce or community would be possible. That’s why despite the cynicism and suspicion accumulated through negative experiences, human beings still tend to have an open and trusting attitude towards others. Open-mindedness is absolutely necessary for future dealings. The more successful subsequent transactions are, the better the parties involved get to know each other, and the deeper their trust. Trust lowers transaction costs, facilitates entrepreneurial initiatives and boosts economic competitiveness (Casson 2000: 17-18). But what is the source of trust on which ethical leadership is founded? It is none other than virtue.

II. Virtue as excellence of character

Virtue is excellence of character, the possession and practice of habits appropriate for a human being within a particular sociocultural context. Nowadays, its meaning could be expressed by the word “integrity”, suggesting wholeness and stability in a person on whom others can rely. Virtue is a form of capital, moral capital (Sison 2003), because it is a productive capacity that accumulates and develops through

investments of time and effort. Virtue however is unique in that it perfects the human being as a whole and not just in a limited aspect. It is not what makes a person strong, smart or successful, but what makes him good as a human being.

Excellence of character depends on cultivating the right habits. As Aristotle explains in the etymology of the word ethics, “Virtue of character results from habit; hence its name ‘ethical’, slightly varied from ‘ethos’” (Nicomachean Ethics, henceforth, NE, 1103a). Virtuous habits result from the repetition of virtuous actions, and virtuous actions spring from a person's having nurtured suitable inclinations in accordance with his nature.

There is a feed-back mechanism among these different levels of functioning: character, habits and actions. We normally say that actions arise from a person's inclinations, yet actions themselves also weaken or reinforce inclinations. Similarly, habits do not only constitute character, but character likewise predisposes or disengages a person from certain habits. This circularity is as essential to Aristotelian teaching. Let us now consider the three main analogues of virtue: actions, habits and character.

1. Actions

Actions, which arise from a person's inclinations, are the building blocks of moral life. Not all actions, however, are morally significant, nor do they all have the same ethical value.

First, we must distinguish between involuntary and voluntary actions. Involuntary actions do not have moral significance, that is, they are exempt from praise or blame. Aristotle explains that “what comes about by force or because of ignorance seems to be involuntary. What is forced has an external origin, the sort of origin in which the agent or victim contributes nothing” (NE 1110a). Only voluntary acts are morally significant, admitting praise or blame. They proceed from an internal principle (appetite, feeling, desire or will) and are accompanied by the agent's knowledge and consent: “what is voluntary seems to be what has its origin in the agent himself when he knows the particulars that the action consists in” (NE 1111a). These actions are performed intentionally and deliberately, thus fully committing their agents.

Virtue lies in good voluntary actions and its goodness springs from three sources: the object or the action itself, the agent's end or intention, and the circumstances in which the act is carried out. These criteria should be considered in succession when judging a voluntary act.

The first criterion refers to the object or the action itself. It is what the agent does as a humanly meaningful whole and not the mere series of movements he goes through: for example, it's killing a man, and not simply aiming a gun and pulling the trigger. The object principally determines whether an action is good or evil. Certain actions are evil by their very object and are prohibited without exception: lying, theft, murder and so forth. As Aristotle observed, "there are some things we cannot be compelled to do, and rather than do them we should suffer the most terrible consequences and accept death" (NE 1110a).

The second criterion examines the agent's intention, whether it is oriented towards his final end. At times, an action choiceworthy in its object becomes ethically flawed due to the agent's intention. To be virtuous an action has to be performed with a noble end. For instance, it is not enough to give alms; one should also wish to help the poor rather than do it merely for show.

Finally we have the circumstances surrounding actions. Seemingly "favorable" circumstances cannot change the moral quality of an action from evil to good. For example, no act of torture could be justified even if the fate of a hundred people depended on it. Circumstances affect the degree to which actions are good or evil, making them better or worse.

The moral excellence or virtue of actions requires the integral goodness of object, intention, and circumstances. Any defect would render a voluntary human act evil, debasing its agent.

2. Habits

Every voluntary act leaves a trace or mark that remains in the agent. This by-product is called “habit”: a stable disposition or manner of being and doing acquired by a subject. Habits vest human nature with a new, improved and reinforced tendency, a “second nature”. After good actions, good habits are the next analogue of virtue.

How do habits arise and take root? Following Aristotle, we start with a contrast between habits and nature: “if something arises in us by nature, we first have the capacity for it, and later display the activity. [...] Virtues, by contrast, we acquire, just as we acquire crafts, by having previously activated them. For we learn a craft by producing the same product that we must produce when we have learned it, become builders, e.g., by building and harpists by playing the harp; so also, then, we become just by doing just actions, temperate by doing temperate actions, brave by doing brave actions” (NE 1103a-b).

A purely sequential mode of thinking is inappropriate for understanding how habits develop. Unlike in nature, where the capacity precedes the activity, in habits, the activity itself creates the capacity. The creation of the capacity and the exercise of the activity occur simultaneously and are mutually reinforcing. Habits comprise an integrated feed-back loop in human beings.

An analogy with crafts is useful in explaining the acquisition and growth of habits. To play the guitar one needs, aside from the instrument, certain faculties like arms, hands, fingers, an ear for music, a capacity to read a musical score, and so forth. Yet all these would be useless if one did not want to learn; the decision to learn is indispensable. The first time one picks up the guitar and strums a few chords, foreseeably, he would produce horrific noise. The tips of his fingers, his whole hand would get sore, pressing on the strings, reaching for the chords and strumming. The experience would not be enjoyable.

However, with perseverance and practice, the notes come out each time with less pain and effort. That's when the music begins. Later he could try more complicated scores and even improvise, leaving a personal mark. He would really be enjoying himself for the pleasant sounds now come out naturally. A little while longer and he could turn into a virtuoso. Not only would he have acquired the craft of guitar playing but he would have also perfected it. The dynamics of guitar playing is similar to the development of any other moral virtue or good habit. These enable us to do more things with greater perfection.

As habits, craft expertise, virtues and vices arise from the repetition of actions. This is what the phrase "just as in the case of a craft, the sources and means that develop each virtue also ruin it" (NE 1103b) means. For crafts and virtues not any sort of action will do, "for building well makes good builders, building badly, bad ones" (NE 1103b). Only the right sort of actions produces craft expertise; good actions alone produce virtues. For example, when faced with the same terrifying situation, those who have the habit of courage react bravely and confidently, those who have the habit of cowardice, fearfully. "The same is true of situations involving appetites and anger; for one or another sort of conduct in these situations makes some people temperate and gentle, others intemperate and irascible" (NE 1103b). The right sort of habituation produces virtues, the wrong sort, vices. How do we distinguish virtues from vices?

Firstly, to acquire proper habits, "actions should express correct reason" (NE 1103b). Not in theory or in the abstract, but in each particular case, as expert doctors or navigators know in practice. Secondly, right habituation equally shuns excess and defect: "Too much or too little eating or drinking ruins health, while the proportionate amount produces, increases and preserves it. The same is true, then, of temperance, bravery and the other virtues. For if, e.g., someone avoids and is afraid of everything, standing firm against nothing, he becomes cowardly, but if he is afraid of nothing at all and goes to face everything, he becomes rash. Similarly, if he gratifies himself with every pleasure and refrains from none, he becomes intemperate, but if he avoids them

all, as boors do, he becomes some sort of insensible person. Temperance and bravery, then are ruined by excess and deficiency but preserved by the mean” (NE 1104a). Thirdly, proper habits come from experiencing appropriate pleasure or pain. “For if someone who abstains from bodily pleasures enjoys the abstinence itself, then he is temperate, but if he is grieved by it, he is intemperate. Again, if he stands firm against terrifying situations and enjoys it, or at least does not find it painful, then he is brave, and if he finds it painful, he is cowardly” (NE 1104b).

An apparent contradiction now surfaces. Perhaps virtue is a natural state impossible to acquire, for in order to become just, one must first do just actions. Yet just actions could only be done by one who is already just! Either one is already just, and thus performs just actions, or one is not, and being incapable of just actions, no amount of habituation would do.

Aristotle offers clarifications which, apart from undoing this paradox, serve to establish the limits of the craft analogy. In the crafts, one may produce an object that conforms to expertise only in appearance. It could have been produced “by chance or by following someone else’s instructions” (NE 1105a); that is, without accompanying knowledge. Furthermore, “the products of a craft determine by their own character whether they have been produced well” (NE 1105b). In craft products there is an objective goodness without reference to the craftsman.

This is not the case with virtues: “for actions expressing virtue to be done temperately or justly [and hence well] it does not suffice that they are themselves in the right state. Rather, the agent must also be in the right state when he does them. First he must know [that he is doing virtuous actions]; second, he must decide on them, and decide on them for themselves; and third, he must also do them from a firm and unchanging state” (NE 1105a). There is no objectively virtuous action independent of the person. A virtuous act could not be separated from the virtuous habit that it emerges,

nor from the virtuous person who possesses the habit. For an action to be virtuous it has to be performed as a virtuous person would.

(Insert Figure 1 here.)

3. Character

Character describes an individual's personality or moral type. It results from the combination of different habits that a person develops. Initially, there may be some confusion whether virtue of character is a feeling, a capacity or a state of the soul. Indeed virtue of character allows us to experience certain feelings, positive or negative, regarding particular objects or actions. Yet we don't know if virtue of character lies in the feeling itself, in the capacity for such feeling, or in the acquired state from which that capacity derives.

By feelings Aristotle understands "appetite, anger, fear, confidence, envy, joy, love, hate, longing, jealousy, pity, in general, whatever implies pleasure or pain" (NE 1105a). He quickly disqualifies feelings, though, because they arise without our consent and we are neither praised nor blamed for merely experiencing them. With feelings we play a passive role, while virtues require that we be active. Aristotle's reasons for precluding capacities as virtues of character are similar: "the virtues are not capacities either; for we are neither called good nor bad in so far as we are simply capable of feelings. Further, while we have capacities by nature, we do not become good or bad by nature" (NE 1106a). Virtue of character is acquired, not innate; it cannot be a natural capacity for feelings or actions. Character states emerge, then, as the proper condition for virtue by elimination (NE 1106a).

An individual's character is like a fabric composed of several strands. Firstly we have the physiological elements, referring to bodily traits that influence one's manner of being and acting. Next come a person's feelings, affections and emotions, representing

the psychological component. These elements are unstable and do not strictly follow reason. Lastly, sociocultural factors such as a person's family, work, economic and political backgrounds also contribute to character. Aside from nature nurture too plays an important role in moulding personality. A person's character could then be described as a unique mix of physiological, psychological and sociocultural elements.

We may also differentiate a person's natural temperament or pathos from his acquired character or ethos. Pathos refers to an innate, spontaneous and pre-moral personality. Ethos results from deliberate and intentional acts, and is the object of moral responsibility. The transformation from pathos to ethos occurs through a lifelong process of learning. A person could deliberately change his character through the cultivation of appropriate habits.

Aristotle enumerates five main groups in classifying virtues of character. The first concerns virtues related with feelings: bravery governs fear and confidence, temperance, pleasures and pains (NE 1107b). The second group refers to virtues describing our relationship with external goods. Generosity or magnificence is the desirable character trait in the giving and taking of money, magnanimity, in honor and dishonor (NE 1107b). The social life requires its own set of virtues of character: mildness, between an excess and a deficiency of anger; truthfulness, between boastfulness and self-deprecation; wit, between buffoonery and boorishness; and friendliness, between being ingratiating and quarrelsome (NE 1108a). Next comes a group of desirable intermediate states which are not exactly virtues: having the right dose of shame, without being ashamed about everything or having no sense of disgrace; or proper indignation, between envy and spite (NE 1108a-b). Lastly comes justice, which is highly complex and demands a fuller explanation in its dimensions of lawfulness (general or universal justice) and fairness (particular justice) (NE 1129b).

How are we to acquire virtue of character? Since it lies in the mean, Aristotle admonishes us to avoid the more opposed extreme: "For since one extreme is more in

error, the other less, and since it is hard to hit the intermediate extremely accurately, the second-best tack, as they say, is to take the lesser of the evils” (NE 1109a). Regarding courage, for example, it would be better to err on the side of rashness than on cowardice, the more contrary extreme. Secondly, one should avoid the easier extreme depending on his natural drift. “For different people have different natural tendencies towards different goals, and we shall come to know our own tendencies from the pleasure or pain that arises in us. We must drag ourselves off in the contrary direction” (NE 1109b). Aristotle also warns that we be careful with pleasures, “for we are already biased in its favor when we come to judge it” (NE 1109b). Finally, Aristotle tells us that the rules do not, however, give exact and detailed guidance for action. Virtues of character deal with concrete, contingent actions and feelings beyond the scope of general, theoretical accounts: “for nothing perceptible is easily defined, and [since] these [circumstances of virtuous and vicious action] are particulars, the judgment about them depends on perception” (NE 1109b). We are remitted, in the end, to the perception of an already virtuous person who alone is the competent judge in concrete situations.

III. Rhetoric as the Art of Leadership

All along, as we examined the art of leadership, we have been looking at what was known in the classical world as rhetoric. In the words of Aristotle, “Let rhetoric be an ability, in each case, to see the available means of persuasion” (Rhetoric, henceforth, Rh, 1355b). Having excluded force as a legitimate means of influence, the only instrument available to the potential leader is reason. Words are nothing more than vehicles for reason. A leader has to persuade his audience to act through words. Yet words only move listeners once they have been understood; they are effective tools of persuasion exclusively among free and rational agents. However, words alone do not move; they require the complicity of feelings and emotions. That is why Aristotle directed his treatise on rhetoric or civic discourse to the citizens of the fledgling Athenian democracy who discuss the public good. It would not have made sense to teach rhetoric to slaves or irrational animals. Unlike citizens, they do not participate in deliberations about the public good or in government.

Today, as in Aristotle's time, there are people with a gift for communication and persuasion. Others, however, seem bereft of it. Nevertheless, both types of people stand to gain by studying the principles of speech and composition, observing and imitating successful speakers and writers, and constant practice. Aristotle was well aware of the controversy surrounding rhetoric and its teaching. Socrates, first, and Plato, like him, both thought that rhetoric as practiced by the Sophists amounted to mere flattery, the use of empty words and misleading arguments to one's advantage, a brazen appeal to emotions without regard for truth. By contrast, Plato described his ideal rhetorician in the *Phaedrus* as a virtuous person with firm knowledge of the subject matter; one who has mastered the logical techniques of exposition and understands his audience well, leading them to the truth. For Plato, the only valid form of rhetoric was one that wedded persuasive skills with personal virtue and love of truth.

Aristotle, for his part, held that rhetoric as a communication art was morally neutral. It could be used for good or for evil; it was independent of both truth and virtue. With this spirit he wrote his treatise. He was careful, however, not to separate rhetoric from ethics; rather, he insisted on its subordination to the architectonic discipline of politics (NE 1094b). Aristotle argues that the study of rhetoric is useful for three main reasons (Rh 1355a-b). Firstly, because without rhetoric, the truth can be easily defeated in debate, for true knowledge alone may not be enough to persuade certain audiences who rely on uncontrasted feelings and opinions. Secondly, rhetoric helps the speaker understand the real state of an issue by giving him a chance to consider both sides, enabling him to refute an opponent with more ease. And thirdly, rhetoric permits one to defend himself without recourse to violence, as in cases of false accusation.

(Insert Table 1 here.)

According to Aristotle, three instruments are available to the speaker or potential leader to persuade his public: the speech or argument itself (*logos*), the character (*ethos*) of the speaker and the emotional disposition (*pathos*) of the listeners (Rh 1356a).

Speech or argument plainly persuades in the measure that it shows the truth in a particular case. The truth however may prove insufficient in convincing others who are unable to follow complicated reasonings and are dependent on hearsay. This does not mean that true reasoning has to be abandoned; one should simply realize its limitations.

Persuasion also occurs when the public is led by speech to experience appropriate emotions. These emotions, in turn, become the triggers of action. Those who hold a purely technical view of rhetoric focus exclusively on listeners' emotions. Yet it is also relevant to consider to whom a particular emotion is directed and for what purpose. Aristotle strikes a balance recognizing, on one hand, the role of emotions in human judgment and making it clear, on the other, that emotions are not the deciding factor in persuasion. Insofar as human judgment is affected by emotions, it is not an entirely rational act, but neither should the influence of emotions be exaggerated.

The character of the speaker is what Aristotle considers the controlling factor in persuasion: "we believe fair-minded people to a greater extent and more quickly on all subjects in general and completely so in cases where there is not exact knowledge but room for doubt" (Rh 1356a). Listeners are convinced mainly by the image of trustworthiness that a speaker or potential leader projects. And what better way to assure an image of trustworthiness than by being trustworthy in fact?

Aristotle lists three personal qualities that an aspiring leader should possess to be credible before an audience: practical wisdom (*phronesis*), virtue (*arete*) and good will (*eunoia*) (Rh 1378a). A leader's trustworthiness results from the confluence of these traits. Practical wisdom permits one to form correct opinions over concrete, contingent issues; virtue prods him to express his views justly and fairly; and good will ensures that he give the best advice to his listeners. A person who displays these characteristics necessarily becomes persuasive. Most likely, he'll be a successful and effective leader as well.

These qualities of a persuasive speaker —identical to those of a good leader— could then be employed for any of the following purposes (Rh 1358b). Firstly, in a deliberative mode, to exhort or to dissuade from future action, by showing its potential advantage or harm. Secondly, in a judicial mode, to approve what is just or to condemn

what is unjust in past actions. And thirdly, in a demonstrative mode, simply to indicate what is honorable or shameful in a thing or a person, without calling for any action.

Whatever be a leader's purpose, it would indeed be helpful that he learn to present his arguments well and that he elicit sympathetic feelings from the audience. For this he must turn to rhetoric. But by themselves, these techniques would not work if he lacked virtue, and in this regard there is no substitute for ethics.

Reflection questions

1. Why is charisma insufficient for true leadership? Why wouldn't coercion or manipulation qualify as means for authentic leadership?
2. Explain the reinforcement mechanism among actions, habits and character with regard to virtue.
3. What are the criteria for goodness or virtue in actions?, in habits?, in character?
4. In what way is craft expertise similar to moral virtue?, how do they differ?
5. How are technical competence and moral integrity related in the aristotelian leadership model?

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