Thinking differently about leadership: a critical history of the form and formation of leadership studies

by

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Chapter Seven: Contingency, change and continuity in the truth about leadership

...this was the proper task of a history of thought, as against a history of behaviours or representations: to define the conditions in which human beings “problematize” what they are, what they do, and the world in which they live (Foucault, 1985, p. 10).

Introduction

The preceding three chapters have been dedicated to examining what Western scholars have claimed to be the truth about leadership in different epistemes, including our own. The focus in these chapters has been on providing detailed answers to the first four of my secondary research questions, namely:

1. What problematizations have informed the development of the leadership discourses examined here?
2. What key themes and assumptions inform these discourses?
3. What subjectivities and relationships are produced by these discourses?
4. What is the social function of these discourses?

In this chapter attention turns to the last of my secondary research questions; what changes and continuities are notable when comparing these discourses? To answer this question the analysis now moves back and forth across the whole gamut of leadership discourses previously examined. Changes in thought which are of particular interest here are those that are unexpected, which run counter to the normal expectation and assumption that what we have today is superior to that of the past. Similarly, the continuities in thought of particular interest here are also those which run counter to the normal expectation that the present is significantly different from the past. Identifying these possibly unexpected changes and continuities extends the scope of my earlier analysis by identifying connections between the present and the past in leadership discourse. This approach is consistent with Foucault’s concept of the “history of the present” (1977, p. 31).

The examination undertaken here offers insight into the historical influences embedded within current understandings. It also enables consideration of past truths no longer
operant for their potential utility in respect of current concerns and values. Cumulatively, surfacing these matters could help provide us with a potential “rallying point for the counterattack” to challenge current norms and understandings (Foucault, 1978, p. 157). This focus on identifying both change and continuity in leadership thought calls into doubt conventional assumptions about the accumulation of knowledge. At the same time it seeks to generate fresh insights into our present condition such that new possibilities may begin to become evident.

In addressing this last secondary question, I retain my focus on the same themes addressed in response to the first four of my secondary questions. I begin by looking at the invention of the truth about leadership as a response to the problematization of some aspect of human life. From there I turn to review how the person of the leader has been understood before turning to examine the person of the follower. Next I consider the leader-follower relationship after which I move to an assessment of the social function which ‘leadership’ has been deployed to serve before finally considering issues of epistemology and methodology which scholars have relied upon in making claims to speak the truth about leadership. As part of my analysis I provide three dispositives, the analytic device Foucault proposed for specifying the key elements of a discursive regime: this is deployed to compare discourses across different epistemes, enabling the identification of changes and continuities (Cummings & Bridgman, 2011; Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983).

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1 For the purposes of this study I adopt the Stephanus pagination regime for in-text citation of specific elements of work by Plato and the Bekker numbers system for Aristotle. For specific elements of work by Xenophon, in-text citation follows the book.chapter.section or chapter.section method as used in both Oxford Classical Texts and Loeb Classical Library publications of Xenophon’s works. In selecting which of the various editions of these texts to draw from, late 20th century translations have been preferred due to their usage of modern English, however earlier translations (e.g. Jowett’s translations of Plato and Aristotle) have been used to cross-check the interpretations. Where original publications dates are known for historical texts these are specified in the in-text citation, along with the publication date of the edition which I have directly sourced as follows: (original date (the source I am quoting from)). This enables the reader to locate the chronological placement of the texts mentioned.
Contingent truths: inventing leadership as a solution

From my foregoing analysis of developments in leadership thought what emerges is that time and time again calls for ‘leadership’ have arisen as a response to moral, social, political and economic trends or events which are problematized. ‘Leadership’, whatever form it may take, has been repeatedly proffered as a solution to matters that are understood as troublesome, threatening and in need of fixing. The particular form of ‘leadership’ proposed to deal with the issues of concern draws on existing values, norms, epistemologies and methodologies, thereby rendering what is said relevant and plausible to its intended audience. Leadership, repeatedly, is thus invented as the solution to the things that trouble us.

Specifically, the Classical Greek scholars examined were concerned with disorder, class conflict, war, moral degeneracy and a loss of respect for tradition and the gods (Cartledge, 1993; Finley, 1963; Morris & Powell, 2006). Linking these to a democratic approach to governance, this problematization gave rise to the articulation of a particular leadership model in which standards of behaviour were to be imposed by a single leader whose only concern was to be community well-being (e.g. Aristotle, 2009; Plato, 1995, 2007; Xenophon, 1997, 2006). Here, it was positioned as “the business of the ruler to give orders and of the ruled to obey” (Xenophon, Mem, 3.9.11). In this model, upholding a specified set of social practices, norms and values, as well as attending to strategic and operational issues affecting the security and stability of the state all formed part of the leadership model that was proposed (e.g. Aristotle, Pols 1326a). Here, leadership in the form of a wise and divinely gifted leader granted unlimited authority was presented as the answer to every problem facing the community (e.g. Plato, St 296e, 309a).

In response to their problematization of political and religious conflict and self-serving or incompetent leader behaviour, the medieval leadership model positioned the king as god’s representative on earth, endowing him with God’s power, authority, divinity and goodness (e.g. Calvin, 2010 (1559); Erasmus, 2010 (1516); James VI, 1950 (1599); Lipsius, 2004 (1589); Luther, 2010 (1523); Machiavelli, 2005 (ca 1516)). The leader here was said to be “more like a divinity than a mortal” upon whom “the happiness of the whole people” depended (Erasmus, 2010, pp. 26–7). This positioning bolstered the leader’s legitimacy, thereby helping to maintain monarchical rule. However, the discourse also set out in extensive
detail a standard of conduct to which leaders were expected to adhere, thereby addressing concerns about poor leader behaviour. The model incorporated specific policy advice on substantive issues of governance, thereby further shaping ‘leadership’ as a solution to issues threatening the stability of the existing social order. All the key components of this model were, thus, designed to provide answers to the problems of the day.

In the modern episteme, Carlyle (1993 (1840)) initially problematized what he saw as the excessive rationalism of Enlightenment thought and the effects of the industrial revolution, factors he believed were damaging the ‘human spirit’, morality, faith and social cohesion. To remedy this he proposed a model of heroic leadership which extolled the value of passion and religious fervour as more powerful and more truly human than reason alone. He also advocated hero worship, through which he claimed we could reconnect ourselves to the best of human nature and to God, as well as tighten the bonds of community. For Carlyle, “there is no act more moral between men than that of rule and obedience (1993 (1840), p. 171). Here again, then, the formulation of the truth about leadership was tightly matched to the issues of present concern.

Next, underpinning the efforts of trait theorists, was the problematization of ensuring that only those ‘fit’ to lead, in a social Darwinian sense, were selected for leadership positions (e.g. Cattell, 1906; Clarke, 1916; Galton, 1892 (1869), 1970 (1875); Lehman, 1966 (1928); Sorokin, 1925; Taussig & Joslyn, 1932; Thorndike, 1936; Visher, 1925). This desire arose from the belief that social problems originate in a mismatch between people’s ‘natural talents’ and their actual role and position in society, a problem which they claimed modern science could now remedy. Here it was claimed that “there can be no question of the fact of inequality” (Lehman, 1966 (1928), p. 7). Leadership research was, thus, focussed on establishing criteria for ‘weeding out’ those not suitable for ‘leadership’ by defining the traits of ‘genuine’ leaders. For some of those assuming that leader traits were inherited, eugenicist policies formed part of the solution, offering a programme for reforming the population through selective breeding practices. The overall aim for these thinkers was to “produce a highly-gifted race of men by judicious marriage during several consecutive generations” (Galton, 1892 (1869), p. 45).
For behavioural theorists, the broader problematization of worker motivation, performance, absenteeism and workplace conflict in managerial discourse of the time was an important source of influence (e.g. Mayo, 1945, 1946 (1933)). All these issues were presumed amenable to resolution by way of leader intervention. The task here was to determine through careful analysis the particular pattern of leader behaviour which would have most effect in addressing these problems (e.g. Blake & Mouton, 1964; Bowers & Seashore, 1966; Fleishman, 1953a, 1953b; Katz et al., 1950; Likert, 1961, 1967; Shartle, 1979). For a period of time this pattern was widely believed to comprise “behaviour indicating friendship, mutual trust, respect, a certain warmth and rapport between the supervisor and his group” (Fleishman, 1973, pp. 7–8) in conjunction with behaviour that “organizes and defines the relationships in the group” and “tends to establish well defined patterns and channels of communication and ways of getting the job done” (Fleishman, 1973, p. 8).

Essentially situational and ‘new leadership’ theorists have pursued this same basic formulation of a combined focus by leaders on both tasks and relationships deriving from the continued problematization of worker performance. However, each has also been informed by other factors being problematized and offered specific formulations of the truth about leadership as a result. With situational theory, bureaucratic inflexibility and enhancing leader responsiveness to contextual factors were problematized (e.g. Capitman, 1973; Cornuelle, 1975; Roos, 1972; Whyte, 1963 (1956)) meaning that leaders were now said to need the skill to diagnose a situation and respond accordingly (e.g. Fiedler, 1967; Hersey & Blanchard, 1974; House, 1971; Tannenbaum & Schmidt, 1958; Vroom & Yetton, 1973). The key was thought to be to “match the leadership situation and the man” (Fiedler, 1967, p. 248) so that leaders “engage in behaviours that complement subordinates’ environments and abilities in a manner that compensates for deficiencies and is instrumental to subordinate satisfaction and individual and work unit performance” (House, 1996, p. 323).

The initial emergence of ‘new leadership’ relied on recent economic, moral, cultural and social trends and events in late 1970s America being problematized as constituting a crisis of leadership (e.g. Ackerman, 1975; Burns, 1978; Heath, 1975; Magaziner & Reich, 1982; Peters & Waterman, 1982). The concerns were said to be caused by this crisis in leadership but also able to be solved by leadership, provided it was re-formulated so as to offer “new
answers to new questions... using a new paradigm or pattern of inquiry” (Bass, 1985a, p. 4). In this new formulation, leadership that produced change became the key requirement and so a leader’s ‘visionary’, ‘charismatic’ and ‘transformational’ capacities came to the fore (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Burns, 1978; Conger, 1989; House, 1977). Here, the achievement of change was overtly positioned as benefitting both followers and organizations, reinforcing the positioning of leadership as a force for the common good.

The discourse has sustained itself over time through a continuous problematization of the modern world and its complex and ever changing nature as so challenging that leadership is said to be vital if we are to have any hope of continuing to progress human society (e.g. Avolio & Luthans, 2003; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Goleman et al., 2002; Kotter, 1996; Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Throughout its history, followers have been continuously problematized as being unable to reach their full potential in the absence of ‘new leadership’ (e.g. Bass & Riggio, 2006; Burns, 1978).

What my case studies reveal, then, is the highly contingent nature of the ‘truth’ about leadership. In response to various problematizations, leadership scholars have repeatedly invented a response that they contend will address the issues of concern, referencing current values, norms, beliefs, epistemologies and methodologies so as to render their ideas relevant and plausible. This is arguably no bad thing; needs, values and norms change, and adapting our ideas about leadership in response to this seems a valid and desirable move.

However, what pre-eminent modern scholars who claim to be offering us an accurate, truthful and scientific account have been telling us is that leadership is a natural, enduring phenomenon and that the truth about leadership is, therefore, a matter for discovery. Recall Bass’s claim that “many leaders of world religions, such as Jesus, Mohammed, and Buddha, were transforming. They created visions, shaped values, and empowered change (Bass, 2008, p. 618). The clear implication is that transformational leadership is both enduring and universal. Recall Bennis & Nanus: “leadership competencies have remained constant, but our understanding of what it is, how it works, and the way in which people learn to apply it has changed” (1985, p. 3). My findings indicate that the essentialist and universalist understandings which inform the work of mainstream scholars today are
problematic. In Chapter Eight, I will explore further the implications of this finding for theorising leadership in the future.

**Continuity and change in the truth about leaders**

As the problematizations to which the solution of ‘leadership’ arose changed, the notion of the true leader also changed. Yet some things have also remained the same. In this section I therefore examine both change and continuity in what has been claimed as the truth about leaders. This includes examining ideas about the person of the leader and the role, responsibilities and rights claimed for leaders.

**Continuities: the person of the leader**

Defining the personal characteristics of the true leader has been the primary focus of the leadership discourses examined here (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Carlyle, 1993 (1840); Fiedler, 1967; Fleishman, 1953a; Galton, 1970 (1875); Lipsius, 2004 (1589); Plato, 1995). With ‘leadership’ repeatedly being understood as something which emanates from leaders, establishing who leaders ‘really’ are has been, and remains today, a key concern for leadership scholars (e.g. Avolio & Luthans, 2003; Zhu et al., 2011). What my analysis has shown is that almost without exception the leader is understood as being a person of superior capability to others: think ‘leader’, think ‘superior being’ is the most fundamental, enduring and dominant equation that prevails.

Illustrative of this, leaders were depicted by the Classical Greeks as “possessed of great natural gifts” that were “not altogether human but divine” (Xenophon, Oec 21.12). Even Aristotle, whom we today understand as a political moderate compared with Plato or Xenophon’s more conservative bent (Annas & Waterfield, 1995; Everson, 2009; Lane, 2007), claimed that “from the hour of their birth, some are marked out for subjection, others for rule” (Aristotle, Pol 1254a:20). In the late medieval discourse, leaders were “a sort of celestial creature” (Erasmus, 2010 (1516), p. 26), made by God to “sitte [sit] on his throne and rule ouer [over] other men” (James VI, 1950 (1599), p. 25, text in brackets [ ] added). Carlyle retained the notion of divine intervention claiming that the “great men”
he studied had been “sent into the world” (1993 (1840), p. 3). Trait theorists drew on social Darwinist notions and typically concluded that natural differences rendered leaders superior (e.g. Cattell, 1906; Galton, 1970 (1875); Taussig & Joslyn, 1932; Thorndike, 1936). Recall here Lehman’s confidence about the “fact of inequality” (1966 (1928), p. 7).

Since WWII, proclaiming the superiority of leaders as an innate quality has been politically tenuous, because of its tension with democratic values and its similarity to the ideas that gave rise to the Holocaust. Instead, it is the leader’s ‘behaviours’, ‘style’, ‘skills’ and ‘attitudes’ which have been the focus with scholars at pains to claim these are learnable (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Fleishman, 1953a; House, 1971; Likert, 1961). However, the growing interest in ‘neuro-leadership’ (see http://www.neuroleadership.org) and other recent trait-focussed studies (e.g. De Neve et al., 2013; Kant et al., 2013) may yet herald a full return to the overt declaration of innate differences being the discursive norm within the field. As noted in Chapter Three, ‘new leadership’ has depicted leadership as a deeply held and embedded set of values, attitudes and behaviours and has, therefore, already brought us closer to once again treating leadership as an innate quality than was the case with behaviourist and contingency/situational discourse (see Model 4.1 from Chapter 4, reproduced in Appendix 1).

In fact, for the last quarter century we have been fed a steady diet of claims that leaders are those who can out-think, out-pace and exceed in quality, quantity, intensity and impact on the efforts of non-leaders. Leaders are presented to us as quite simply a different, and better, class of person. With ‘new leadership’ discourse, leaders are the people who “do the right thing”, in contrast to those who are merely managers who “do things right” (Bennis & Nanus, 1985, p. 8). ‘New leadership’ discourse claims “the secret of transforming leadership” is that “people can be lifted into their better selves” by leaders (Burns, 1978, p. 462, italics in original), suggesting an alchemic art constitutes the secret which only leaders truly understand. With ‘new leadership’, we are told that the leader is one who is capable of bringing about change in “…who rules and by what means; the work-group norms, as well as ultimate beliefs about religion, ideology, morality, ethics, space, time, and human nature” (Bass, 1985, p. 24). No ordinary mortal indeed.

The second factor which has also remained largely constant is that those personal characteristics and ways of living which have been held at various times to be admirable,
exceptional and powerful have been linked to the person of the leader and claimed to be part of their nature (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Carlyle, 1993 (1840); Erasmus, 2010 (1516); House, 1971; Likert, 1967; Thorndike, 1936; Xenophon, 2006). At every point the attributes ascribed to leaders align with, and simultaneously reinforce, then widely accepted values, norms and expectations as to what constitutes an admirable person to whom deference is due by others lacking such gifts. Later, in my analysis of discontinuities in how leaders have been understood, I will focus on what the specific characteristics ascribed to leaders are and how they have changed. For now, what I attend to is that regardless of what the characteristics of leaders were said to be, they were understood at the time of their enunciation as being worthy of admiration and deference, as exceptional and desirable. Think ‘leader’, think ‘the good person/life’ is, thus, the second key enduring equation.

Illustrative of this, in the Classical Greek discourse leaders were expected and said to possess “excellence of character in perfection” (Aristotle, Pol 1260a:15). In the Late Medieval discourse leaders, at their best, were said to be “complete with every single virtue” (Erasmus, 2010, p. 26). Carlyle’s focus was on leader-heroes who took the form of gods, prophets, poets, priests, men of letters and kings, thereby covering off every kind of person he considered worthy of ‘hero worship’ (1993 (1840)). Trait discourse, following Carlyle’s lead, also focussed on examining factors deemed admirable or desirable (see Table 4.2 from Chapter 4 which addresses this linkage, reproduced in Appendix 1). These characteristics of the leader were assumed by trait theorists to be “part and parcel of his original nature” (Thorndike, 1936, p. 339).

In the post-WWII period, with the focus shifting to workplace leadership, factors which are said to enhance worker performance and, hence, organizational and even national success have been directly linked to leaders by behavioural, situational/contingency and new leadership discourses (e.g. Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Fiedler, 1967; Likert, 1961). However, ‘new leadership’ discourse has gone further than its immediate predecessors, connecting leaders with innovation and change, with strategy, vision and the empowerment of others, all factors now deemed admirable, desirable and even essential to sustain the viability of the modern organization (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Kotter, 1988; Peters & Austin, 1985). In a culture where economic success is constantly heralded as desirable and
admirable, leaders have been positioned as potent and vital influencers of this success, ensuring that today when we ‘think leader’ we think ‘the good person/life’.

The third enduring characteristic of ‘the leader’ is his masculinity. In recent decades the explicit discursive exclusion of women from ‘leadership’ has, finally, disappeared. However, the attributes ascribed to leaders across all the cases examined here are those which repeatedly bear a strong connection with attributes ascribed to idealised notions of masculinity then prevailing (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Carlyle, 1993 (1840); Fiedler, 1967; Fleishman, 1953a; Machiavelli, 2005 (ca 1516); Plato, 1995; Visher, 1925). Today, leadership is associated with characteristics such as ‘charisma’, ‘vision’, ‘drive’ and ‘moral strength’, attributes more commonly associated with contemporary masculine ideals (Calás & Smircich, 1991; Fletcher, 2004; Sinclair, 2007). By contrast, leadership today is not often associated with characteristics such as ‘caring’, ‘nurturing’, and ‘supporting’, characteristics associated with contemporary feminine ideals. Think ‘leader’, think ‘male’ is thus the third equation which endures.

Dispositif 7.1 summarizes these three key continuities in the discursive construction of leaders.

**Dispositif 7.1: Enduring characteristics of the leader**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equation in the discourse</th>
<th>Status of the equation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>think ‘leader’ think ‘superior being’</td>
<td>enduring, unbroken, dominant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>think ‘leader’ think ‘the good person/life’</td>
<td>dominant but has been broken at times; has been strengthened with new leadership discourse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>think ‘leader’ think ‘male’</td>
<td>enduring but not now explicit; embedded in the characteristics deemed leader-like</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maintaining the equation of ‘leaders’ with ‘superior beings’ and ‘the good’, however understood, is critical for ‘leadership’ as an idea to continue to hold its mystique, promise and appeal: the outpourings of scholars enunciating on this topic have been a critical facilitator of this. Today ‘personal growth’ is widely understood as desirable, admirable and potent. Little wonder then that the intense leader-follower relationship directed toward achieving follower growth as promoted by ‘new leadership’ discourse seems so attractive. What is applauded today is embracing the performativity requirements and
demands for constant change which come with our current economic system. ‘New leadership’ discourse endorses and reinforces this expectation in its account of what constitutes a leader.

As I have shown, this relationship between ‘the good’, ‘the superior’ and ‘the leader’ has a substantial history. At every step in the cases examined here it has been dependent upon an interconnecting suite of factors. This includes truth claims being accepted as valid. Constitutional and organizational arrangements have typically reinforced and sustained its enactment. As best as historians can determine and our own contemporary experience confirms, actual persons have striven and continue to strive to align their actions with whatever was claimed to be the truth about leadership. However, the mere fact of its apparent longevity is no guarantee as to its future, for this arrangement is a human one, not one determined by nature. Diagram 7.1 provides a visual depiction of this dynamic.

*Diagram 7.1 The production of the perfect leader*

On two occasions identified in this study this linkage has broken down. The first was Locke’s (2010 (1690)) attempt to place the ‘natural freedom’ of all at the centre of his understanding of leadership, rendering it an impersonal concept expressed through the constrained exercise of legal authority. Locke’s account placed the person of the leader as
one rightfully and wholly subservient to the higher authority of the law and largely regarded their personal characteristics as irrelevant, so long as they did not impede the proper exercise of legal authority. Locke’s position depended on a basic mistrust of persons in positions of authority. He neither assumed the possibility of human perfection nor did he consider it desirable for society to be held sway to the personal preferences of the leader. With a less favourable view of the nature of leaders, and an emphasis on ensuring freedom from authority as critical to protecting ‘natural rights’, Locke thus broke the equation of ‘leader’, ‘superior being’ and ‘the good’.

The other occasion this linkage was broken was post-WWII when leadership was theorised as constituting behavioural patterns focussed on ‘consideration’ and ‘initiating structure’ (e.g. Fleishman, 1953a; Katz et al., 1950). These patterns were not attached to a broader conception of the leader persona. Because behavioural theory was seeking to distinguish itself from trait theory (Fleishman, 1973; Shartle, 1979) it carried with it no account of the leader as human subject. It also assumed an inherent capacity for reasonableness on the part of followers and a right to self-determination on issues of values (e.g. Blake & Mouton, 1964; Likert, 1961). This in turn meant that it proffered a limited scope for leadership action (e.g. Fleishman, 1973). Developed at a time of heightened sensitivity to the potential dangers leaders could create, its claims were deliberately modest in scope. What it offered was an approach to ‘doing leadership work’ rather than ‘being a leader’. This model was intended to be effective in enhancing workplace performance consistent with the need to respect individual freedoms and rights, thus limiting the scope of action of those in positions of authority.

As a point of historical coincidence both Locke’s approach and behavioural theory emerged at times when extremes of authoritarian, autocratic and quite simply murderous leadership had recently occurred. This likely contributed to their willingness or even desire to limit leadership to something rather modest in scope and impact.

**Discontinuities: the person of the leader**

While the overall characterization of the leader as a ‘superior being’ and a ‘good person’ who lives a ‘good life’ has remained largely constant, the specific characteristics ascribed to, sought after and admired in leaders have been remarkably changeable. Illustrative of
this, for the Classical Greeks leaders were those possessed of “manly virtue” (Xenophon, Ag 11.6) that ensured they were “resolute in times of danger” (Xenophon, Ag 11.10). They “love truth” (Plato, Rep 485c), possess a strong “religious sensibility” (Xenophon, Ag 3.5) and “revel[ed] in hard work and totally avoid[ed] idleness (Xenophon, Ag 5.3). A leader is said to be “quick to learn” and “have a good memory” (Plato, Rep 494b). He possesses “natural gifts” and a “natural bent for reason” which “draw(s) him toward philosophy” (Plato, Rep 494e), this being the highest form of knowledge (e.g. Plato, Rep 494d). The picture that emerges in this discourse is of a warrior-philosopher who lives a devout and ascetic life focussed on ensuring the well-being of the state and the people.

In 16th century Europe, advanced knowledge of statecraft, warfare, and religion were deemed critical for leaders to develop, complementing their divine birth-right, enhancing their innate but tenuous ‘majesty’, enabling them to combine virtue and prudence (e.g. Erasmus, 2010 (1516); James VI, 1950 (1599); Lipsius, 2004 (1589)). Contrary to the Classical Greeks, the accumulation and ostentatious display of wealth and power was now seen both to confirm the leader’s favoured status in God’s eyes and to help instil the fear and respect needed to render followers loyal and obedient. For Lipsius, the specific characteristics emphasized comprised prudence, virtue, majesty, clemency, and modesty, (see Model 5.2, from Chapter 5, for a fuller summary of his account of core princely virtues, reproduced in Appendix 1). Erasmus emphasized “wisdom, a sense of justice, personal restraint, foresight, and concern for the public well-being” (2010 (1516), p. 5). The key attributes of leaders highlighted by Calvin were “integrity, prudence, clemency, moderation and innocence” (2010 (1559), p. 53). Here the picture that emerges is of someone possessed of extensive practical knowledge of all aspects of statecraft, grounded by their faith in God, ‘majestic’ in their demeanour and able to navigate in a complex context. Here the leader is the dignified, masterful practitioner of real-politic whose power commands fear, respect and loyalty.

From Carlyle through to WWII, leaders were understood as possessing innate qualities which rendered them such (e.g. Cattell, 1906; Galton, 1970 (1875); Thorndike, 1936). Qualities such as courage, determination, intelligence and an intensity of feeling were thought to be typical characteristics. Again see Table 4.2 (from Chapter 4, reproduced in Appendix 1), which summarizes Carlyle’s account of Oliver Cromwell and its connection
with later trait studies. Leaders in this discourse were heroes, men of good breeding and usually good manners, well educated, physically and mentally strong, determined and capable, possessing a refined sensibility. They were the perfect Victorian gentlemen.

The characteristics attributed to leaders by behavioural theorists was a mix of behaviours that were focussed on ‘consideration’ and ‘structure’ and which rendered someone able to gain the respect of a group, instil harmonious relations, and secure willing compliance to the instructions issued (e.g. Blake & Mouton, 1964; Fleishman, 1953a; Katz et al., 1950). For situational theorists it was these approaches deployed in a manner suitable to the situation at hand (e.g. Fiedler, 1967; House, 1977; Vroom & Yetton, 1973). Illustrative of these claims, Stogdill’s meta-analysis of 52 studies published since 1945 concluded:

...leadership involves certain skills and capabilities – interpersonal, technical, administrative, and intellectual – enabling the leader to be of value to his group or organization. These skills allow him to maintain satisfactory levels of group cohesiveness, drive, and productivity. He is further assisted in execution of the above functions if he possesses a high degree of task motivation, personal integrity, communicative ability, and the like (1974, p. 96).

The picture of the leader that emerges here is the well-rounded practical man of action, able to get along well with those he directs. This account of a thoroughly good chap seems to suggest a civilianised version of a military unit leader whose troops’ morale was high and who would tackle any assignment with vigour.

With ‘new leadership’ discourse it is the leader’s ability to drive through rapid and dramatic change in organizational performance and ‘culture’ which has become the focus of attention (e.g. Bass & Riggio, 2006; Kotter, 1988; Peters & Austin, 1985). Leaders are here understood as persons who are ‘charismatic’, who intellectually and morally stimulate others, encourage others’ personal growth, who develop and pursue visions for a better future (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Burns, 1978; Conger, 1989). The image here is of the ideal Fortune 500 CEO, admired by employees, shareholders and market analysts alike, transforming the organisation and those who work for it as he pursues his visionary strategy. Leadership scholars have crafted a mirror into which these persons can look and take pleasure in what they see glittering back at them.

Dispositif 7.2 summarizes this analysis of changes in what has been claimed as the truth about leaders.
### Dispositif 7.2: Key characteristics of the leader in different discourses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classical Greek</th>
<th>16th century Europe</th>
<th>Great man/trait theory (ca 1840–WWII)</th>
<th>Managerial leadership (post WWII)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>divinely gifted; driven to serve others</td>
<td>divinely gifted; duty to serve and lead</td>
<td>driven/enabled by nature to lead others; ‘nurture’ enhances what ‘nature’ gifted</td>
<td>personal attributes plus acquired skills produce the desire and ability to lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loves the gods; morally without fault</td>
<td>loves God; upholds Christian morality</td>
<td>assumed and expected to be good Christians</td>
<td>discourse is silent on issues of faith; leaders assumed and expected to act ethically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>has perfect knowledge of what is right and wise; knowledgeable about all matters that affect community well-being</td>
<td>knows Christ’s teachings; knowledgeable about worldly affairs of statecraft; possesses majesty; acts prudently</td>
<td>sound judgement; foresight; strength of character; ‘can do’; superior intelligence; dependable; educated, courageous, socially active</td>
<td>knows how to motivate/change others to achieve higher levels of performance, commitment and personal growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ascetic lifestyle – restrains eating, sleeping and sexual urges in order to serve better</td>
<td>combines majesty and prudent use of state funds so as to live in a manner consistent with their status and duties</td>
<td>lifestyle expected to be consistent with Christian values</td>
<td>committed to organisational goals; discourse silent on issues of lifestyle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My analysis shows that what has been claimed as the truth about the nature of leaders has changed repeatedly and significantly over time. Leaders have been variously constructed as warrior-philosophers, dignified and masterful practitioners of real-politic, heroic Victorian gentlemen, well-rounded practical men of action and visionary, change-focussed CEOs. This suggests that no stable psychology of ‘the leader’ is likely to be found, for no ‘human nature’ exists in respect of leadership, if such a thing is assumed to be timeless and enduring. It further suggests that these truth claims are more usefully and plausibly understood as inventions designed to address different values and problematizations rather than discoveries about the true nature of leaders.

The alternative interpretation is that we have only just recently, finally, established the ‘real truth’ about leadership and that all that has come before is simply wrong. In this interpretation the constant changes in the conception of the leader as noted in Dispositif
7.2 is simply a record of past failures and errors. To hold to such a view requires a greater degree of confidence in positivist social science than I believe is warranted, as the limitations of this epistemology and its methods are well established (see, for commentary and analysis, Alvesson & Deetz, 2000; Austin, 1962; Russell, 1984). However, the interpretation I favour does not constitute a body blow to leadership scholarship. Rather, it serves as an incitement to begin future theorising with an eye to developing a concept of leaders tailored to present concerns and values, rather than wasting further effort in the search to discover the ‘true nature’ of the ‘true leader’.

A further shift in thought pertains to the place of the leader’s body, knowledge of which has basically disappeared since WWII. As noted in Chapter Six, the Classical Greeks’ interest in leaders’ bodies included, for example, concern about their exercise regime during their youth. An ascetic approach to eating, sleeping and sex was promoted. Illustrative of this, Xenophon tells us that Agesilaus as an exemplary leader “would no more choose drunkenness than madness” (5.1), that “he never used to eat the two portions he was served at feasts” (5.1). We are told Agesilaus “treated sleep as the subject rather than the master of his activities” (5.2) and “where sex was concerned, his self-control was masterful” (5.4). In the 16th century European discourse, as discussed in Chapter Five, the leader’s ‘majesty’ was embodied through their dress, their voice, and their remove from the potentially damaging gaze of the masses. Illustrative of this concern about the body of the leader and how it was seen, Erasmus counselled that it was “of considerable importance” that “artists should represent the prince in the dress and manner that is most worthy of a wise and distinguished prince” (2010 (1516), p. 58).

In the 19th century both Carlyle (1993 (1840)) and Galton (1970 (1875)) were interested in matters such as physical strength, facial characteristics and voice, while various trait theorists explored a range of physical characteristics for their association with leadership in the decades leading up to WWII (Smith & Krueger, 1933; Stogdill, 1948). However, since that time the embodied aspects of leadership have not been part of the mainstream of leadership theorising (Sinclair, 2007).
The leader’s role, responsibilities and rights

The role, responsibilities and rights of leaders has also been a recurrent yet changing theme in the discourses examined here. As we have seen, in Classical Greece and 16th century European thought the leader’s role was that of head of state. As part of this leaders were held to have extensive rights and powers on matters deemed critical to the well-being of the people and the state, as the leader’s primary responsibility was to safeguard these (e.g. Aristotle, 2009; Erasmus, 2010 (1516)). Illustrative of this Plato argued that leaders were devoted to “keeping their subjects safe” and “doing all they can to make them better people than they were before” (St 297a). Lipsius claimed “the common interest has been placed in your lap by God and men; but indeed in your lap, in order that it be cherished” (2004 (1589), p. 229).

In these discourses leaders were expected to attend to issues such as the economy, state security, immigration, inter-state relations, infrastructure, education and moral and religious practices, and extensive advice was offered on these matters (e.g. Lipsius, 2004 (1589); Plato, 1995, 2007). Complete obedience to the leader’s instructions was also strongly endorsed. Aristotle tells us that leaders are those whom “we ought to follow and obey” (Pols 1325b:1). For Lipsius, to maintain society required “a well-defined ordering of commanding and obeying” (2004 (1589) p. 295).

For Carlyle history was made by the gods, prophets, priest, poets, men of letter and kings who constituted the various forms of leadership he analysed (1993 (1840)). Regarding kingship as the highest and most modern form, Carlyle’s expectation was, like the Classical Greek and medieval discourses before him, that these leaders would rule the state, promote religion and foster the development of the human spirit. Their role was to “make what was disorderly, chaotic, into a thing ruled [and] regular” (1993 (1840), p. 175). Later, trait theorists envisaged their Victorian gentlemen leaders as promoting virtuous behaviour and group cohesion through their efforts, advancing human society to a more advanced level (e.g. Cattell, 1906; Clarke, 1916; Thorndike, 1936). Eugenicists’ hope was to “produce a highly-gifted race of men by judicious marriage during several consecutive generations” (Galton, 1892 (1869), p. 45).

However, the break here from earlier discourses was that neither Carlyle nor the trait theorists addressed themselves to the substantive issues of statecraft. Instead of
engaging in the giving of advice on the leader’s substantive role and responsibilities as had Classical Greek and medieval scholars, the focus now was elucidating the character and deeds of exemplary leaders. Carlyle’s work, thus, marks the beginning of what later became the exclusive focus on the psychological domain of leadership, a distinct stepping away from the interest in public policy and statecraft which are such a strong focus of earlier discourses. In modernity, to know what the leader’s role, rights and responsibilities are entails a focus primarily on issues in the psychological domain.

Consistent with this, the role claimed for leaders since WWII initially focussed on the ‘consideration’ of the worker’s needs and ‘structuring’ the organisation of work activities (Fleishman, 1973; Shartle, 1979). With the development of contingency/situational theories, the need to assess situational variables in determining a response was added to the leader’s responsibilities (e.g. Fiedler, 1967; House, 1971; Vroom & Yetton, 1973). Now, with ‘new leadership’ being the dominant discourse, the leader’s role is seen as being the management of meaning (Smircich & Morgan, 1982) and ensuring a fundamental change is wrought upon followers’ sense of self (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Burns, 1978; Conger, 1989). The expectation is that leaders are responsible for lifting follower performance and capability via the transformational process which is deployed in pursuit of the leader’s visionary strategy. Today the focus is placed on leaders’ powers to change the psyche of followers, this being understood as both a potent and legitimate domain of action. Recall Bass’s expectation that leaders produce transformational changes to “the work-group norms, as well as ultimate beliefs about religion, ideology, morality, ethics, space, time, and human nature” (Bass, 1985, p. 24). Contemporary leadership discourse is largely silent as regards leaders’ formal powers as these are matters now understood as being outside the domain of leadership scholarship. Instead, scholars with expertise in politics, law and HRM are left by leadership scholars to determine questions of formal authority.

The psyche of followers, which is now the primary focus expected of leaders, is, meanwhile, one largely unencumbered by the legacy of the Enlightenment with its focus on ensuring a balance of formal power, checks on authority, transparency of process and the right of appeal (Hampson, 2001; Morrow, 2005). Consequently, while the visible, formal aspects of leaders’ rights and powers have been severely constrained by means of formal rules and processes in the modern era (Morrow, 2005; Russell, 1984), in the domain
of followers’ psyche, the role, responsibilities, rights and powers of leaders have expanded and intensified dramatically in the last quarter century. Debate on boundary conditions as to the extent of appropriate leader influence has been marginalised because of the association made between ‘leadership’ and ‘the good’, with the follower’s self treated as terra nullius, open for colonisation.

An unstable ontology

What the foregoing analysis reveals is that leaders have been consistently positioned as superior beings, as good people who live good lives and, mostly, as men. The specific characteristics which define someone as a leader as well as the roles, rights and responsibilities credited to leaders have, meanwhile, undergone extensive change. At the level of basic ontology, while the Classical Greeks and 16th century thinkers argued that leaders were rare (e.g. Aristotle, 2009; Erasmus, 2010 (1516)), today the vast sums committed to leadership development programmes (Jackson & Parry, 2011) rely on the claim that many people possess the potential and ability to lead (e.g. Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Goleman et al., 2002).

The prevalence of a phenomenon is a key ontological characteristic requiring explanation if we are to claim a scientific grasp of that phenomenon, so the shift in understanding demands our attention. Why has leadership changed from something rare amongst the population to something now widely distributed? Perhaps it may be argued that certain aspects of modern society are more suited to releasing the leadership potential that otherwise lies dormant. This possibility warrants further research as it is not something leadership scholars have attended to thus far. Alternatively, the conflict could be dissolved by dismissing the Greek and medieval accounts altogether and arguing that “true” knowledge commenced in 1978 or some other date when positivist social science achieved a firm grip on leadership. However, pending further research which can explain why leadership may have changed so markedly, this finding further demonstrates that leadership is an unstable, contingent invention.
Continuity and change in the truth about followers

The ‘follower’, or more often ‘followers’ as a largely undifferentiated mass, appear as the necessary but typically problematic ‘other’ in the leadership discourses examined here (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Carlyle, 1993 (1840); Fiedler, 1967; Fleishman, 1953a; Galton, 1970 (1875); Lipsius, 2004 (1589); Plato, 1995). Their existence is repeatedly invoked in justifying the necessity of leadership. The problems which followers are said to cause are a common focus of attention, be it lack of obedience and immoral behaviour in ancient and medieval times (e.g. Machiavelli, 2005 (ca 1516); Plato, 1995, 2007) or inadequate motivation, and task and moral ‘immaturity’ in modern times (e.g. Burns, 1978; Fiedler, 1967; Hersey & Blanchard, 1974). The nature of attention directed toward followers has, thus, largely been negative: followers are a problem to which leadership is the answer.

Followers have morphed over time from their ancient Greek and medieval European status as inherently and irremediably flawed beings (e.g. Aristotle, 2009; Erasmus, 2010 (1516)) to their contemporary position as persons-of-unrealised-potential (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Burns, 1978). However, despite this, the follower’s enduring position is as a fundamentally deficient being who requires the leader’s intervention. It is arguably merely a change in social norms of what constitutes an acceptable way to speak of others rather than a fundamental change in the status of followers that has occurred.

So long as the equation of ‘leader’ with ‘superior being’ prevails in how leadership is understood, it is simultaneously a ‘logical’ necessity that followers be understood as lacking in some way deemed important: the leader cannot be rendered superior by definition unless the follower is also rendered inferior. Thus, this positioning of followers is used to prop up the necessity of leadership, the desirability of leadership and the rights and powers claimed for leaders.

Illustrative of this, Aristotle tells us that “the lower sort are by nature slaves, and it is better for them as for all inferiors that they should be under the role of a master” (Pols 1254b:20). Erasmus speaks of “the low concerns and sordid emotions of the common people” (2010 (1516), p. 24). For Carlyle, “the subjects without king can do nothing” (1993 (1840), p. 197). For situational/contingency theorists, recall that followers varied in their ability and willingness to perform. They might be enthusiastic, diligent and committed, but they could
also be reluctant, hostile, suspicious or merely compliant (e.g. Fiedler, 1967; House, 1971; Tannenbaum & Schmidt, 1958). With the development of ‘new leadership’ discourse an apparently benevolent, empowering approach to followers was adopted. Here we are told that “leaders see and act on their own and their followers’ values and motivations” (Burns, 1978, p. 19). Yet this discourse also relies on the understanding that “followers’ attitudes, beliefs, motives and confidence need to be transformed from a lower to a higher plane of arousal and maturity” (Bass, 1985, p. 3).

A fundamental lack on the part of the follower thus continues even now to hold a dominant place in today’s leadership discourse. This inequality is so embedded into the conventional way of understanding leaders and leadership that even now it can hide in plain sight and yet not attract comment, other than from non-conventional perspectives such as is being advanced here. So entranced have we become by the promise that the leader shall transform us into something better than we believed possible, that this Faustian pact which demands the subjugation of the follower in the name of their very salvation goes largely unrecognised.

Repeatedly, leadership discourse has relied on a belittling, patronising account of followers to sustain its claims. However, here again Locke and the behavioural theorists of the post-WWII period offer variations that move us away from this norm. Locke (2010 (1690)) reversed the prevailing assumptions by adopting a suspicious, even hostile attitude to leaders, seeking to limit their scope of action. For him this was absolutely vital to safeguard the ‘natural freedom’ he saw as being the birth-right of all humanity. For Locke, leadership was more a danger than a solution, meaning the rights and powers of leaders ought to be clearly prescribed so as to protect from their interference the more important rights and powers of everybody else.

More recently, behavioural theorists understood followers as persons in possession of both rights and needs, assuming they possessed a natural inclination toward rational thought and action (e.g. Fleishman, 1953a; Katz et al., 1950). They were also highly sensitised toward limiting the scope for authoritarian leadership and disinclined toward any account of leadership as an innate capacity (e.g. Fleishman, 1973; Shartle, 1979), intent as they were on distancing themselves from trait theory and all that that potentially implied in a post-holocaust world. Taking these factors into account, behavioural theorists
promoted patterns of behaviour for those in supervisory positions which took for granted managerial rights in decision-making, but did not go that extra step of assuming followers were by definition deficient and leaders were by definition superior. Instead the focus was on behaviours, separated from any wider account of the human subject.

In ancient and medieval texts the inadequacy of followers is thought to be overcome through demanding follower obedience to the leader’s commands and warranting the use of force should such compliance not be forthcoming (e.g. Lipsius, 2010 (1589); Plato, 1995, 2007). In contemporary texts the approach to addressing followers’ inadequacies has shifted to that of ‘motivating the follower’ through appeals to their values, to group goals, and, as part of ‘new leadership’, offering inspiring visions, support for personal growth and using ‘corrective’ actions such as variable rewards dependent on follower performance (e.g. Bass, 1952; Bass & Riggio, 2016; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Burns, 1978). The aim has been to capture the hearts and the minds of followers and engage these in pursuit of the leader’s vision. The techniques are designed to persuade rather than coerce the follower to adopt the course of action sought by the leader.

The abolition of physical coercion reflects the modern boundaries on formal authority arising from the Enlightenment emphasis on the rule of the law (Hampson, 2001; Morrow, 2005; Russell, 1984). This in turn has informed the widespread use of formalised procedures and rules in organizational life so as to limit the scope for personal whim. However, while the means of influence today exclude the use of force, the ends that are being sought remain essentially the same, namely follower compliance to the leader’s will. The focus of attention has shifted over time from followers’ obedient bodies and devout souls in ancient and medieval times to the productivity of their bodies in the post-war period and on to the commitment of their psyche to corporate interests in recent decades. This is the progress we have achieved in our understanding of leadership.

Followers’ alleged practical, intellectual or moral inadequacy has also rendered them dangerous at times. Both Classical Greek and 16th century texts see followers en masse as potentially disruptive of social order and emphasize the need for constant leader vigilance. Illustrative of this, Aristotle claimed “a very great multitude cannot be orderly” but that order was what “holds together the universe” and the “divine power” that produced this result was the role of leaders (Pols 1326a:30). Recall Machiavelli argued that:
the following may be said generally about men: that they are ungrateful, changeable, pretenders and dissemblers, avoiders of danger and desirous of gain, and while you do them good they are wholly yours, offering you their blood, their property, their life and their children ... when the need is far off, but when it comes close to you they revolt (2005 (ca 1516), p. 91).

More recently, Fiedler’s (1967) contingency model explicitly assesses leader and follower power as key variables in determining what type of leadership style is best suited to a given situation. However, by and large the danger posed by followers which can be found in ancient and medieval texts has today been reduced to a potential for disruption or frustration of the leader’s wishes.

The fact that followers have not been problematized as dangerous in recent decades may reflect the extent to which ‘new leadership’ discourse has been successfully positioned as positive, empowering and legitimate, rendering the idea of follower resistance as a potential danger to the leader’s continued authority largely unthinkable as a problem. However, recent mass ‘follower’ resistance, be it to the austerity measures adopted by EU governments, to talks aimed at advancing globalisation or as part of the ‘Arab Spring’, constitute potent real world examples of what can happen when leaders today lose their legitimacy in the eyes of followers. The growing scholarly focus on ‘authentic leaders’ (e.g. Avolio & Luthans, 2003; Gardner et al., 2011; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008) and on ‘followership’, in which it is positioned a lá Carlyle as a laudatory act (e.g. Kellerman, 2012; Riggio, Chaleff, & Lipman-Blumen, 2008), can usefully be understood as responses to the increasing fragility of our faith in leaders.

Dispositif 7.3 offers a summary of the basis on which followers have either been praised or critiqued in the different discourses examined here.
### Dispositif 7.3: Followers’ merits and demerits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourse</th>
<th>Followers are criticised for:</th>
<th>Followers are praised for:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classical Greek texts</td>
<td>being immoral; unruly; lacking understanding of what is right and true; self-interested</td>
<td>complete obedience to the leader and adherence to religious and social norms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16th century texts</td>
<td>being unruly; immoral; ignorant; unreliable in their love and loyalty for the leader</td>
<td>love and loyalty to the leader; adherence to religious and social norms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locke’s model</td>
<td>not actively defending their liberty from interference by leaders and others in positions of authority</td>
<td>seeking as much independence as possible from the influence of leaders in how they think and act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlyle’s model</td>
<td>being unruly; immoral; ignorant; not appreciating the excellence of the true leader</td>
<td>worshipping leaders, which improves the followers’ morality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trait theory</td>
<td>not subject to criticism per se as not a topic of interest; attributes described in order to distinguish leaders from non-leaders</td>
<td>not subject to praise per se as not a topic of interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural theory</td>
<td>lack of motivation, absenteeism and poor productivity are positioned as problems but not located in the person of the follower; acknowledged but not criticised for having needs for ‘structure’ and ‘consideration’</td>
<td>not subject to praise per se; actions are presumed as typically being reasonable and legitimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingency/situational theory</td>
<td>lack of motivation; absenteeism; poor productivity; possible threat to leader power (Fiedler)</td>
<td>responding positively to the leader in terms of perceived motivation to perform, reduced absenteeism, and increased productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘New leadership’</td>
<td>being self-interested; moral immaturity; lacking vision and sense of higher purpose</td>
<td>sacrificing self-interest for the corporate interests of the group; enthusiastically supporting the leader and accepting their guidance; becoming more like a leader and less like a follower</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What this demonstrates is that the specific characteristics and expectations placed on followers have varied over time, in the same way that the specific characteristics ascribed to leaders have varied (see Dispositif 7.2 earlier and associated commentary). Despite this, barring Locke and the behavioural theorists, followers are generally positioned as problematic and troublesome. Follower compliance to, or support for, the leader’s
requests also constitutes a recurrent source of praise against which only Locke and the behavioural theorists offer alternatives.

If followers were to be understood as capable, either individually or collectively, of making decisions, motivating themselves, developing and executing visions, building their own moral compass, or whatever it is that various theorists argue ‘leaders’ with their special abilities bring to the table, then the requirement for leadership would very quickly come into question, as would the rights and powers claimed for leaders. While some scholars have explored ‘substitutes for leadership’ (e.g. Kerr & Jermier, 1978; Pfeffer, 1977), perhaps not surprisingly this has not been an approach embraced by leadership scholars more generally. However, what this analysis reveals is that the whole intellectual edifice of the dominant understanding of leadership is tenuous: as soon as we concede that ‘followers’ possess the capacity to act as rational, reasonable adults, the necessity and desirability of ‘leadership’ as conventionally theorised suddenly seems much less certain while the authority and scope of influence now granted to leaders suddenly seems far too extensive and intrusive.

**The leader-follower relationship**

Today the leader-follower relationship is understood as being one of respect, trust and even intimacy in terms of the leader’s expected understanding of the follower (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Burns, 1978). The close connection which leaders are now expected to have with their followers carries with it the impression of egalitarian values where all persons mingle freely and equally in the same social space. This warmth and closeness is a quite recent occurrence and is generally understood as a progressive move away from old hierarchical models where leaders were much more remote.

As we have seen, Classical Greek thinking positioned the leader as head of state at a considerable remove from those he led (e.g. Aristotle, 2009; Plato, 1995; 2007). The leader’s focus here was understood as being the welfare of the state overall, with the concerns of individual followers being of very limited interest. The understanding the
leader was expected to have of the follower was thus rather abstract and impersonal and their interaction was limited.

Sixteenth century texts were at pains to ensure that the leader’s ‘majesty’ was not damaged by being overly visible to the polluting gaze of the masses (e.g. Erasmus, 2010 (1516); James VI, 1950 (1599); Lipsius, 2004 (1589)). The relationship here was also distant and the leader was not expected to ‘lower’ themselves to attend to the mundane concerns of ordinary followers. The leader’s immediate advisors were also regarded with some caution, as possibly prone to flattery or unsound advice until their loyalty and competence was proven (e.g. Erasmus, 2010 (1516); Lipsius, 2004 (1589); Machiavelli, 2005 (ca 1516)). Even then, the leader’s divine status rendered him existentially distinctive and separate from all others.

For Carlyle and trait theorists alike, the value of ‘hero-worship’ or, later, learning from one’s betters, meant that the leader constituted a role model for the follower, someone whom they should seek to copy (e.g. Carlyle, 1993 (1840); Taussig & Joslyn, 1932; Visher, 1925). At a group level the leader served as guide and decision-maker. The distance between leader and follower here was in terms of ability, but regular interaction was now assumed both necessary and desirable. Leaders were now to be looked at in order that followers might learn from them.

Post-WWII, with the move to managerial leadership as the focus, the relationship between leader and follower has been understood as demanding regular, friendly interaction and a depth of leader understanding of both the individual follower and the group (e.g. Fleishman, 1973; Katz et al., 1950; House, 1971). This understanding is expected to assist the leader in encouraging the follower’s better performance and, more recently, personal and moral growth (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Burns, 1978; Hersey & Blanchard, 1974). This understanding of the leader-follower relationship rejects the earlier fears that the leader might be polluted or distracted through close contact with followers. It replaces it with the expectation that the greater the contact between leader and follower the more the leader’s qualities will ‘rub off’ onto followers (e.g Bass, 1985a; Burns, 1978). Thus, rather than being isolated so as to enact leadership through strategy and policy decisions, leaders should now be ever present, enacting leadership through working directly on the person of the follower. This development relies on the re-positioning of the follower noted
earlier from fundamentally-flawed-being to person-of-unrealised-potential. It also relies on the shift of the leader from the divine and the rare to the extraordinary yet prevalent mortal, offering every employee the potential to benefit from exposure to a leader.

Consequently, the leader-follower relationship is now one which requires followers to expose their innermost self to the greatest degree possible so as to maximise the beneficial effects of the leader’s influence (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Burns, 1978). This process of continuous revelation of the follower self in order that it may be reshaped to better fulfil the leader’s vision renders followers both vulnerable and dependent. Thus, not only egalitarian concerns inform this greater closeness between leader and follower: governmentality, the intensive controlling, monitoring and measuring of the self of another by those in positions of authority (Foucault, 1977; 2008a) is also a key driver. This intensive, never-ending surveillance extends to the self-monitoring in which leaders are expected to engage (e.g. Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Goleman et al., 2002; Kouzes & Posner, 2007) so as to meet the formulaic requirements of ‘new leadership’.

The developmental focus of ‘new leadership’ discourse, based on an understanding of the follower as possessing hitherto un realised potential, is central to the positioning of leadership today as a progressive, humanistic endeavour (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Burns, 1978). This unleashing of the follower’s true abilities which the leader is expected to facilitate is critical to leadership being said to function for the good of the follower. Its entwinement with a focus on lifting follower performance arises from the simultaneous unitarist expectation that leaders and followers both serve organizational interests and in so doing benefit themselves (e.g. Bass & Riggio, 2006; Kotter, 1996; Kouzes & Posner, 2007). The conflict inherent in a dual focus on developing followers for their own sake and on lifting follower performance to better serve the needs of the organization is rendered invisible through appeal to the humanistic elements of this relationship.

While a move toward greater closeness in the leader-follower relationship has occurred, the reciprocity previously emphasized has become less of a feature in the discourse. For the Classical Greeks, the complete obedience due to the leader was matched by the leader’s complete devotion to the well-being of the state, irrespective of how demanding that might be for the leader (e.g. Plato, 1995; 2007; Xenophon, 1997; 2006). In the medieval
discourse, the love, loyalty and obedience toward the leader was to be reciprocated by his unceasing diligence in safeguarding the well-being of the people and the state (e.g. Erasmus, 2010 (1516); James VI, 1950 (1599); Lipsius, 2004 (1589). By the time we reach the trait theorists the sense of the duty the leader previously owed to the led has disappeared, leaving only the respect and admiration of the leader which the follower was expected to have (e.g. Clarke, 1916; Thorndike, 1936; Sorokin, 1925).

While followers are now expected to reveal themselves to the leader and then change that self in accordance with the leader’s advice, the leader now seems to owe less and less to the follower by way of duty, obligation or self-sacrifice. Now, simply through expressing their leadership, leaders are thought to serve others, as leadership per se is presumed as a good, as inherently positive, irrespective of the specific goal it acts in aid of (e.g. Avolio & Luthans, 2003; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Kotter, 1996). Moreover, while follower self-interest is held automatically to be problematic and wrongly directed until it comes under the leader’s influence (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Burns, 1978), leader self-interest is presumed benign unless proven otherwise; in such case the individual leader’s status as such is then rendered doubtful, inauthentic, false, yet all the while ‘leadership’ as an ideal remains intact (e.g. Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999).

If we directly contrast Classical Greek with ‘new leadership’, then the shift is from a relationship of obedience, subservience, and distance but with clear leader obligations for follower well-being to one of intimacy in order to bring about a change in the self of the follower resulting in enhanced performance. The change is from a reciprocal relationship between unequal parties to one where the follower is now both end and a means to an end, human and human resource, and where the duty of all is the achievement of enhanced performance. What seems lost is the sense of what the leader might owe to the follower by way of duty or obligation. What is instead emphasized is what the leader is able to bestow upon the follower, the process and experience of being transformed to become more like the leader (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Burns, 1978). This now is the service which leaders are expected to offer.

The parental nature of the leader-follower relationship that we saw in Classical Greek discourse has meanwhile become something much more ambiguous in the ‘new leadership’ discourse. This is because of the dependency leaders have in this discourse to
express their very selves through achieving change in followers (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Burns, 1978). This requirement entwines leaders and followers in a dynamic where ‘success’ implies the possibility of mutual psychic extinction: if leaders succeed in transforming followers into leaders, as is promoted here, then their raison d’etre is extinguished while followers cease to exist as such. This discourse demands that followers pass over their selves and their lives to leaders, to exist in a state in which leader self-expression is realised through follower self-denial.

The results sought and expected from the leader-follower relationship in Classical Greek and 16th century thought were nothing short of the maintenance of social order and the saving of souls (e.g. Aristotle, 2009; Plato, 1995; 2007; Erasmus, 2010 (1516); Lipsius, 2004 (1589)). Locke’s interest was in freedom in the earthly realm in order that we might determine our own conscience and course in life (2010 (1690)). To achieve this he sought to limit the leader-follower relationship, but Carlyle (1993 (1840)) then resurrected the earlier concern with saving society and souls via the potency of leadership. Today that focus has moved to the maintenance of the economic order through the realisation of continuous improvements in performance (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bennis & Nanus, 1985). This is said to occur through the unleashing of follower potential in pursuit of the leader’s vision. This process is depicted in terms acceptable to the norms of modern social science. Yet inherent to the very notion of ‘transformation’ is that of a fundamental change in the very nature of a thing. Like the miracle in which water becomes wine, ‘new leadership’ carries with it an appeal to supernatural forces that will relieve us of our worries and bless us with their divinity.

**The social function of leadership discourse: the promotion of order, inequality and the extraordinary**

In terms of its social function, three recurrent features of leadership discourse are evident. The first is that ‘leadership’ is associated with the upholding of order as a vital social good. For the Classical Greeks leadership was seen as an ordering force which was so fundamental and so powerful that it ‘holds together the universe’ (Aristotle, Pols 1320a:30). Here, leadership stood between civilised society and a slide into anarchy,
degeneracy, licentiousness, disrespect of the gods and social customs, immorality and a war of all against all. Similarly in the medieval discourse, leadership was positioned as crucial to the maintenance of social order and public morality (e.g. Erasmus, 2010 (1516); James VI, 1950 (1599); Luther, 2010 (1523)). Carlyle argued that worship of leaders enhanced the morality of followers, and created bonds of affection which maintained social order (1993 (1840)). He saw leaders as shaping and directing human history, creating order and progress where otherwise chaos and a lack of progress would prevail. Trait theorists, in assuming leadership was an innate personal quality, positioned leaders as responsible for ensuring social order (e.g. Galton, 1970 (1875); Lehmen, 1966 (1928); Thorndike, 1936). Since WWII, with the shift to a workplace focus, the order that is now the centre of attention is ensuring the efficient production of goods and services in conjunction with worker/follower satisfaction and, more recently, transformational change (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Fleishman, 1953a; House, 1971). This in turn is understood as contributing in important ways to the maintenance of social order more broadly (e.g. Bass & Riggio, 2006; Kotter, 1988; Peters & Austin, 1985). Implicit to all these accounts is the belief that without the leader’s steadying, guiding hand, disorder will prevail.

At various times leadership discourses, whilst still promoting the upholding of social order generally, have sought to reform the existing social system, to critique the status quo and challenge accepted norms. As we saw, the Classical Greek leadership discourse constituted an alternative model to that of the Athenian democracy, arguing for the superiority of a single, wise, appointed leader and against what it saw as the unstable, unreasoning, unwise nature of collective, democratic governance (e.g. Plato, 1995; 2007; Xenophon, 1997; 2006). Carlyle (1993 (1840)) also had a reforming agenda, seeking to counter what he perceived as the problematic legacy of enlightenment ideas which promoted reason and collective participation. Some trait theorists such as Galton (1892 (1869), 1970 (1875)), Cattell (1906) and Ellis (1904), through their association with the eugenics movement (Cowan, 1970; Gillham, 2001; Godin, 2007), also pursued a reformist endeavour built upon their conception of leadership as an inherited quality and their belief in the potential value of selective breeding practices.

In contrast, the leadership discourse of the 16th century was fully integrated into, aligned with, and reinforced the existing social system (Allen, 1951; Craigie, 1950; Jardine, 2010).
Since World War II, leadership discourse has also played a similar role, taking as a given the requirements of capitalist economics (Trethewey & Goodall Jnr, 2007; Western, 2007). It has promoted and supported the ceaseless search for enhanced productivity and performance as being something which is natural, normal and inevitable (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Peters & Austin, 1985). Contemporary leadership discourse has also been a key player in the broader shift in management discourse from a focus on producing compliant bodies to a focus on producing compliant minds (Alvesson, 2001; Ford & Harding, 2007; Parker, 2002). To do this it has appealed to widely accepted beliefs about human potential and to the tradition of the leader as exceptional being. These are linked to an acceptance of the demand for a constant improvement in performance. Consequently, leadership discourse currently functions to uphold order in the workplace and to uphold the existing economic system more broadly. It thus serves to reinforce the current order of things, just as 16th century texts served to reinforce Christian monarchy.

The second recurrent feature of the social function of leadership discourse is that it has continuously, barring Locke, offered a justification for the unequal distribution of rights, power and authority between leaders and followers (e.g. Aristotle, 2009; Bass, 1985a; Erasmus, 2010 (1516); House, 1971). Mostly this arises from the positioning of followers as deficient while leaders are rendered superior. Behavioural theorists offer the exception to this because they base the differentiation of rights, power and authority solely on positional authority rather than on the superiority/inferiority thesis. However, that thesis at all other points provides a critical building block from which the advocacy of unequal rights, power and authority can readily be advanced. As we saw, both the Classical Greeks and medieval scholars regarded the majority of people as unruly and typically lacking in the capacity for right action, absent the leader’s direction. Today the deficiency in followers is recast into the language of ‘unrealised potential’ which only the leader can release, but the overall effect remains a justification for the unequal distribution of rights, power and authority.

Associated with the positioning of leaders as superior comes the third recurring social function of leadership discourse, the promotion of leadership as something extraordinary, something supernatural. The divinity of the leader was clear cut and overtly stated in both Classical Greek and 16th century texts. Carlyle also saw leaders as having been sent by God...
Thus, for much of the Western tradition leaders have been connected with the divine, essential, immortal and supernatural realm, separated from and superior to the mundane, prosaic and ordinary. From Galton onwards the discourse became overtly secular and scientific in tone. Yet despite this shift, again barring behavioural theory, there remains a reverential, admiring tone to the mainstream of leadership discourse which positions leaders at a remove from the mundane and ordinary (e.g. Bass, 1985a; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Conger, 1989). ‘New leadership’ discourse has intensified and heightened this long-standing trend.

In the Western tradition, then, to speak of leadership is to speak about the maintenance of social order, the deficient nature of most people and the exceptional, super-natural leader. The direct link made between a fear of chaos, direct access to the extraordinary and leadership likely accounts for its enduring appeal. This linkage simultaneously presents us with the problem and the solution to the problem. It simultaneously takes us down to contemplate the worst of all scenarios, the breakdown of society, and lifts us up, so that we may see the spark of the divine made accessible to us in human form. Today the seductive appeal (Calás & Smircich, 1991) of this has been intensified, because it is now claimed that everyone has within them the potential to lead. Moreover, with existential fears growing about the survival of the planet, terrorism and the on-going economic crisis, the necessity for leadership is readily presented to us as being greater than ever. My question is, must we persist with a model of leadership which relies on the assumption that most people are inadequate?

Whether leadership discourse has functioned to support or reform the existing social system, with the exception of Locke it has repeatedly offered an account which serves elite, anti-democratic interests. The combination of a positioning of order as a critical social good with followers rendered deficient and leaders as superior beings constitutes the three key enduring elements of the Western tradition. Changing any of these elements thus constitutes a potentially potent basis for reconceptualising leadership; I will return to explore this further in the next chapter.
Producing the truth about leadership: what have we gained and lost along the way?

The epistemological and methodological basis on which claims to speak the truth about leadership are made has changed dramatically over time. These changes largely mirror major developments in the Western intellectual tradition (Morrow, 2005; Russell, 1984) reflecting the influence those developments have had on leadership scholars. Hence we find a shift from an analytic philosophy reliant on both reasoning and myth in Classical Greece (Cartledge, 1993; Grant, 1991) to a renaissance philosophy in the 16th century, this being a blend of ancient Greek and Roman traditions and medieval Christian thought (Allen, 1951; Cameron, 2001; Skinner, 2002). Over the course of the last century the trend has been toward an increasingly empirical, quantitative and scientistic mode of reasoning and inquiry (Bass, 2008; Morrow, 2005; Russell, 1984).

We would normally understand these developments to mean that our knowledge today is superior to that of the past because it is grounded on more robust, reliable premises and methods of discovery. However, as I showed in Chapter Four, the major theoretical developments in modern leadership knowledge have not arisen from scientific discoveries but, rather, as inventive responses to varying problematizations. The modern account of leadership is also much closer in nature to those developed in both the Classical Greek and medieval epistemes than is normally understood. I have, therefore, already argued that the ‘progress’ made may not be as great as we might have expected. Having done that, here I am interested in focussing on what we might have lost as a result of these developments, further challenging the normal expectation that what we have achieved today is a superior access to the truth.

The truth about leadership in both Classical Greek and renaissance Europe literature was, as detailed in Chapters Five and Six, multi-dimensional. As we have seen, this meant that the leader’s childhood experiences constituted an important topic about which leadership scholars considered they ought to know and comment upon (e.g. Erasmus, 2010 (1516); Plato, 1995, 2007). As identified earlier, the leader’s private life, including his eating, sleeping and sexual habits, his clothing and housing arrangements, his friends and his use of money, all these matters have in earlier times demanded attention in establishing the
truth about leadership. As noted, the care and use of the leader’s body were issues of interest in the past. Spiritual and religious aspects of life were also previously matters of considerable importance in understanding leadership.

These dimensions of life which used to constitute important aspects of knowledge about leadership in the past are today largely excluded and ignored. Generally, this is not because these matters have been scientifically proven as being irrelevant. Rather, current social norms place leadership in the public domain and treat the private domain as irrelevant to leadership knowledge. I am not advocating here that such matters ought to be resurrected as domains of inquiry for leadership scholars, but I do think we ought to be debating the boundaries we operate within and not simply taking them for granted. Our knowledge of leadership is narrower today than in the past and this is not what we would expect to be the case.

One consequence of our current boundaries is that the private lives of business leaders (the focus of the contemporary literature considered here) remain largely unexamined by scholarly researchers. This space has been instead dominated by autobiographers and biographers offering us hagiographic accounts (e.g. Branson, 2002; Welch & Byrne, 2001). Depending on whether privacy is considered more important than a broader understanding of the lived experience of leaders, or followers for that matter, this limitation may not be seen by some as a problem. Politically, of course, independent scholarly research which examined the lifestyles and benefits some leaders achieve might be considered inconvenient, especially if compared with that of followers. However, this is not a valid reason for ignoring these issues.

Another consequence of current boundaries is that both leaders and followers appear in our contemporary discourse as disembodied beings. Only rarely do leadership scholars seek to examine the embodied experience of leadership (although, see Sinclair, 2007), yet effective interpersonal communication, a key element of mainstream models, entails the use of voice, gaze and bodily stance. Why bodies have become largely off-limits for leadership knowledge warrants further investigation. To reiterate, the claim here is not that these matters are definitively important to our understanding of leadership: that remains to be established. Rather, the concern is that the domains of leadership knowledge have narrowed and the field is not today debating its boundaries.
Classical Greek and 16th century knowledge was also profoundly substantive in its orientation while current knowledge is essentially processual and behavioural. As we have seen, knowledge of issues as diverse as town planning, crop management, trade policy, warfare and statecraft comprise central features of Classical Greek and 16th century leadership knowledge (e.g. Aristotle, 2009; James VI, 1950 (1599)). To establish their credibility as experts in leadership demanded that these scholars understood and could provide advice on the substantive issues with which leaders had to contend. Today, because of the orientation toward producing knowledge which is claimed to be universally applicable, along with the specialization expected of scholars, the emphasis has moved completely away from an understanding of what all this leading and following is actually for. Instead the emphasis has switched to the processes and behaviours of leading that are said to be transferable to any context, relevant to any issue.

As part of this move, questions of philosophy and politics are now placed into separate domains of knowledge from leadership knowledge. Barring those scholars which are advocating for a central place for ethics in leadership knowledge (e.g. Ciulla, 2004; Ladkin, 2010; Sinclair, 2007), the actual issues that leaders and followers come together to work on are not a matter of active debate within the mainstream of the leadership literature. Today we have the ‘how’, but our texts are typically absent the ‘of what’, ‘where’, ‘who for’ and the ‘why’ of leadership (although, for an exception to this, see Kempster et al, 2011).

Important political and contestable choices and consequences are ignored when what leadership scholars offer up is a recipe for changing others without any assessment as to who actually benefits from that change. What is largely being produced is knowledge whose political effects are hidden, in which leadership is portrayed as a matter of technique whose aim is enhancing human potential. This apparently benign account ignores the micro and macro political and ethical issues that are inevitably associated with a relationship based on inequality. It assumes that the actual issues that leader and followers contend with are amenable to a global approach. It is hard to see that this narrowing of the debate constitutes an overall advancement of knowledge.

Despite these profound changes in the foundation, nature and scope of leadership knowledge, what has remained constant is the optimistic tenor of the discourse vis a vis
the positive effects of leadership. Always the belief that a person of outstanding ability can have a positive impact on others lies at the core of the discourse (e.g. Aristotle, 2009; Bass, 1985a; Erasmus, 2010 (1516); House, 1996; Likert, 1961). At every point the aim has been to articulate an account of leadership that will achieve beneficial results for followers. The specific results that are sought varies, but always the desired outcome is to benefit followers. Consistently, what we see in the archive is the production of a disciplinary regime which seeks to govern and inform the actions of leaders, ensuring their conduct and decisions are conducive to what is said to be in the best interests of followers. Consistently, leadership as a topic of inquiry creates for scholars the sense of labouring for the betterment of all, a worthy aim without doubt. However, insofar as the discourse remains reliant on the belittling of the follower its effects likely remain problematic.

**Conclusion**

This and the preceding three chapters now cumulatively constitute the detailed answers I offer to the research questions informing this research. As this chapter has shown, our present understanding of leadership is just the latest variant in a long process of both change and continuity, but one where the overall distance travelled is much shorter than we might have expected. Plato might not recognise our contemporary methods of searching for the truth, but he would likely applaud the attention now being given over to the transformational visionary to whom all others should defer judgement. Where this leaves us is alarmingly close in our supposedly scientific, modern and progressive thinking to Plato’s defence of totalitarian rule.

Positioning leadership as the answer to every question as we have done (yet again) over the last quarter century is not only destined to result in disappointment as actual, real human beings fail to meet such grandiose and naïve expectations (e.g. Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c; Ford et al, 2008). It also encourages a dangerous passivity from the great majority of people. As ‘followers’, they are positioned as limited creatures who are to rely on leaders, in most case managers, let us not forget, for guidance and motivation on who to be, how to act and what to think. To position leaders as we now do as ideal persons without fault is both to ask the impossible of them and to incite them
to developing a distorted, narcissistic sense of their own capabilities. To position followers as we now do as merely latent, unrealised potential is to absolve the majority of adults from self-responsibility. With this the motivation (and freedom!) to be had from pursuing one’s own goals, thoughts and dreams along with the requirement to grow up are removed, rendering followers perpetual adolescents. In the ideal world as implied by ‘new leadership’ theory, the important decisions and the constant monitoring needed to keep these immature followers on track is to be left in the hands of a small, non-elected group of manager-leaders: Plato’s Republic is just down the road from here.

The basic facts and chronology of the developments documented in the foregoing case studies are readily accessible in the archive for those who care to look. The interpretation I have placed on those basic facts and chronology is, of course, my own and open to challenge. However, for most of the last 150 years leadership scholars have shown remarkably little interest in this history. Lacking the broader perspective an appreciation of our history can bring, the field has assumed it possesses a modern worldview and is producing new knowledge. Yet in many ways it is reworking old ground. Absent a concern with the problematic of power it has also naively assumed its outputs will have progressive political effects.

What my incursions into past truths demonstrate is that leadership theory can readily be entwined with substantive knowledge of a diverse range of matters. The effect of this has, in other times, been to produce leadership knowledge that is not merely processual in orientation, but is also concerned with both substantive issues and with questions about the ends and not simply the means of leadership. If we were today to turn our minds to these matters, leadership studies could be radically reinvented. If we were to focus attention onto the actual challenges facing leaders and followers, on the outcomes being sought and the ends we seek as well as the means deployed to achieve them, then we could seek to build a new approach to theorising leadership. In the latter part of Chapter Eight I will explore where this way of thinking could take us.
Appendix 1:  
Models and tables from other chapters referred to in Chapter 7

Model 4.1: Basic assumptions in leadership science

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait theory</th>
<th>New Leadership</th>
<th>Behavioural theory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership is innate</td>
<td>Leadership is learned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Leadership</th>
<th>Behavioural theory</th>
<th>Trait theory</th>
<th>Contingency/situational theory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One best way to lead</td>
<td></td>
<td>Many ways to lead</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2: Similarities between Carlyle’s Cromwell and 20th C trait studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carlyle’s assessment of Oliver Cromwell as ideal modern leader</th>
<th>Some trait studies mentioned in Stogdill’s literature review (1948)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘rugged stubborn strength’ (p. 182)</td>
<td>physique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘a clear determinate man’s-energy’ (p. 187)</td>
<td>energy/activity levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘with his savage depth, with his wild sincerity ...he looked so strange among the elegant...dainty...diplomatic’ (p. 187)</td>
<td>dominance, ambition, self-confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“did not speak with glib regularity’ (p. 180)</td>
<td>appearance and dress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘an impressive speaker...who, from the first,  had weight’ (p. 188)</td>
<td>fluency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘rude, passionate voice’ (p. 188)</td>
<td>tone of voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘decisive, practical eye’,</td>
<td>practical ideas to solve problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘has a genuine insight into what is fact’ (p. 184)</td>
<td>sound judgement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘nervous melancholic temperament indicates seriousness’ (p. 182)</td>
<td>adaptability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘excitable, deep feeling nature’ (p. 182)</td>
<td>Depressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘sorrow-stricken’</td>
<td>unhappy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘almost semi-madness’ (p. 187)</td>
<td>excitable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘sharp power of vision’ (p. 187)</td>
<td>active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘a man with his whole soul seeing and struggling to see’ (p. 187)</td>
<td>restless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘courage and the faculty to do’ (p. 187)</td>
<td>Foresight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grappled like a giant, face to face, with the naked truth of things’ (p. 180)</td>
<td>insight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>intelligence</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>originality</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Persistence</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>initiative</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fortitude</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Model 5.2: Justus Lipsius’ model of core princely virtues

virtue
- modesty
  - dignity of behaviour
  - gifts of nature (size, impressive voice)
  - skill
- majesty
  - majesty of dignity of behaviour
  - gifts of nature (size, impressive voice)
  - skill
- ensure justice
  - ensure justice of dignity of behaviour
  - gifts of nature (size, impressive voice)
  - skill
- prefer clemency
  - prefer clemency of dignity of behaviour
  - gifts of nature (size, impressive voice)
  - skill

Prudence (force + virtue)
- military prudence
  - waging only just wars
    - choice of military strategies
    - how to act in victory and defeat
    - avoiding rashness in starting a war
    - equipment ($, supplies, arms)
    - types of solders, their training & recruitment
      - Military commanders – role & characteristics
        - receiving counsel
        - selecting advisors & officials
        - avoiding flattery
        - punishing public dissent
        - promoting love and fear of god
- civil prudence
  - prudence in worldly affairs
  - prudence in religious affairs
References

(Chapter 7 only)


