

## THE CONCEPT OF *LEADER* AND *LEADERSHIP* IN THE PROTO-STUDIES OF LEADERSHIP. THE EUROPEAN TRADITION

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### Abstract

*The study aims to make a review of the main concepts regarding leadership (especially political leadership) in the period prior to the emergence of the contemporary theories of leadership. The author reveals one of the problematic issues in the above field – this is the full ignoring or neglect of the concepts, theories and studies before the XIX century as a main or significant base of the leadership studies. Nowadays there is only one explanatory concept for the period before the XIX century and this is "The great man theory" (or Heroic theory) which the author sees as highly insufficient and as a flaw in the overall evolution of the leadership theory. This is a flaw that at some point should be rectified.*

**Key words:** leadership theory, great man theory, mirrors for princes, kingship, divine mandate, autocrat

**JEL:** D81, D83, I20, N43, Z12

### Introduction

The development of different leadership theories takes place in many stages, which leads to the existence of a huge number of views on leadership, especially in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The very theorizing of leadership, based generally on empirical evidence, did not occur until the twentieth century. Most of the authors usually use a very narrow concept of the evolution of leadership theory. Even in some of the most famous studies on leadership, the authors acknowledge only a fraction of what the authors in previous epochs achieved of leadership theorization. This is obvious when Nannerl Keohane explains the concept of leadership within western political thought mentioning only Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero from Antiquity and Machiavelli from the Renaissance (Keohane, 2014). Peter Northouse also starts his clarification on leadership theory from the trait theory, e.g. from the XIX century (Northouse, 2015). The researchers from the Center of Leadership Studies at the University of Exeter also start their review of leadership theories from the "great man theory" (Bolden et al, 2003). It is indicative that in his significant research "The Social Scientific Study of Leadership: Quo Vadis?" House and Aditya state that until the early

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1990s almost all of the 3000 leadership studies listed by Bass are "...primarily concerned with the relationships between leaders and their immediate followers, and largely ignores the kind of organization and culture in which leaders function, the relationship between leaders and superiors, external constituencies, peers..", etc. (House & Aditya, 1997, p. 409). They later continue "almost all of the prevailing theories of leadership, and about 98% of the empirical evidence at hand, are rather distinctly American: individualistic rather than collectivistic, stressing follower responsibilities rather than rights, assuming hedonism rather than a commitment to duty or altruistic motivation, assuming centrality of work and democratic value orientation, and emphasizing assumption of rationality rather than asceticism, religion, or superstition. Further, several important topics are largely ignored or only very recently addressed in the leadership literature." (House & Aditya, 1997, 410). This statement is still relevant even after 23 years of development of leadership theory [1] for that reason one of the leading journals in the field, *Journal of Leadership Studies*, regularly holds symposiums where authors can possibly promote radical and innovative concepts on leadership to break the one-way path of studying, understanding and teaching leadership studies [2]. Some authors also try to broaden the field of leadership studies and look deep into the role models, contextual change, and perception on leadership from Antiquity until Modern times, and even offer 16<sup>th</sup> C virtue models comparing the works of Calvin, Erasmus, and Lipsius (Wilson et all, 2017).

It is interesting to note that the Bulgarian leadership studies for some reason adopt the early conceptualization of leadership and never forget to mention, whether in brief or in greater detail, the pre-modern period of leadership studies starting with antiquity, the medieval ages, and the Renaissance. In his book "Leadership", Dimitar Ivanov gives credit to several authors that have an impact on leadership studies such as Confucius, Parmenides, Protagoras, Socrates, Democritus, Plato, Aristotle, Marcus Aurelius, Jesus, al Farabi, Anselm, Per Abelar, Maimonides, Erasmus, Machiavelli, Luther, Monteyne, etc. (Иванов, 2014). It must be noted that the whole pre-modern part of Ivanov's text is much like an introduction to the theory of leadership without making any mention of specific theoretical approaches or carrying out an in-depth analysis of the pre-modern leadership studies. Georgi Manolov also mentions some of the proto studies of leadership citing mostly Confucius, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, and later Machiavelli mainly in terms of the genesis of elites and the theory of elitism (Манолов, 2012).

Given the current level of leadership studies and research, it will not be an overstatement to claim that a vast period of development of leadership theory is more or less neglected. This should not be mistaken with a lack of scientific interest in the philosophy of the Greco-Roman authors or the later medieval texts and scholars, but regarding leadership as a focus of conceptualization, there

is a lot to be done. Such neglect is typical not only of the European texts, but also those in Asia and the Middle East. Distinguished works like "The book of changes" (I Ching), "Panchatantra", "Arthashastra", "Comprehensive Mirror in Aid of Governance" (Zizhi Tongjian), the texts of Han Fei Zi, "The book of Lord Shang", "Hagakure", "The book of five rings", "Bendo", "Shahnama" and the whole Andarz [3] literature, "The Book of Rules" (Ewen-Namag) and "Book of the crown" (Taj-Namag), etc. are not used as sources of theorization and conceptualization.

Following the above assumptions, the current paper makes an attempt to present a more thorough view of the European authors and texts from Antiquity, the Medieval ages, and Renaissance regarding their efforts to understand the nature of leadership and to create some kind of a theoretical framework. The review will be limited to European or European-related texts because of the vast number of sources from Asia, the Middle Middle East, and Africa. It would be impossible to put together all authors and sources in one paper. Nevertheless, the European analytical tradition is sufficient for the author's research tasks.

### **Main exposition**

It is necessary and every researcher has to overcome and to correct if possible, every flaw in the theory of his/her field of study. The authors from the past millennia saw as a huge theoretical and practical issue the question about leadership in society and in times of war. So, they theorize and propose guidelines for the leaders to come. This article holds the assumption that the proto-studies of leadership are not chaotic but instead create a solid theoretical framework based on the dominant philosophical views in the epoch. For the Antiquity this is the kingship leadership, in the Medieval ages this is the divine mandate leadership (of popes and rulers), and in the Renaissance it is the enlightened autocratic leadership.

The above assumption will be tested and verified by performing the following research tasks:

- A review of the leadership concepts in the three different periods.
- Finding similarities and summarizing the views, sufficient for framing a common understanding of leaders and leadership in the respective period.
- Tracing evidence that the above predominant views have been used or taken into consideration in the education and training of the actual leaders.

The used periodization is similar to the one offered by Bertrand Russell in "History of Western Philosophy". The periods for the different reviewed texts and authors are as follows [4]:

- For Antiquity it is from 750 – 550 BC, when the final written version of Homer's "Iliad" is finally concluded, until the end of the III century with the works of Plotinus (Ръсел, 1994).
- For the Medieval ages the starting point is the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> C. and the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> C, when Christianity starts raising not only theological but a lot of political questions (mainly through the debate between Athanasius and Arius) until the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> C with the death of the "morning star of Reformation" John Wycliffe (Ръсел, 1995).
- The Renaissance is from the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> C starting with Machiavelli until the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> C (Ръсел, 1996).

The 18<sup>th</sup> C is the endpoint in the time frame of this piece of research because in the 19<sup>th</sup> C there was a turning point in leadership theory when Bonaparte's leadership ideology emerged and two authors created the theoretical concept later on referred to as the "great man theory". These authors are Thomas Carlyle and Francis Galton – the first one is famous for the book "On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History", and the second for two works strongly impacting the trait theory, "Hereditary Genius" and "Noteworthy Families". Carlyle and Galton mark the evolution of leadership theory dividing it into proto-studies of leadership claimed to be of less scientific value and modern leadership studies that have far more empirical weight, e.g. are science worthy.

Indeed, Carlyle's work is interesting but is not something unheard of even in that period. His book is an attempt to create not a leadership concept or theory, but rather a "History of the Great Men" as creators or the embodiment of the "Universal History" (Carlyle, 2001, p. 5). As a competent historian, Carlyle delivers 6 public lectures about heroes and hero-worship later published as a book in 1841. The grand concept of Carlyle gives his audience a remarkable panorama of hero-worship through the ages but also through different perspectives – the hero as divinity, the hero as a prophet, the hero as a poet, the hero as a priest, the hero as a man of letters and the hero as king (Carlyle, 2001). But according to Carlyle, these all are a form of heroism and indeed heroism is in some cases a very notable leadership trait or manifestation but he does not explain the whole phenomenon or its transformations.

The approach of Francis Galton is even more fascinating. He is a notable scientist from the Victorian era and is also called a proto-geneticist. In "Hereditary Genius" [5] he argues that the critical sets of abilities are hereditary and therefore natural and connected to certain families and this is proof of the existence of preconditions for any specific job (Galton, 2012). It's true that Galton indeed proves a hereditary link among the judges of England between 1660 – 1865, the statesmen of the period, the peerages, and his efforts are less fruitful when he compares poets, musicians, painters, etc. Is also true that specific qualities or

traits are not strictly defined (except reputation as an ultimate measure for quality and success) and the importance of education or nepotism as a precondition to be in a certain position is neglected. Years later he writes "Noteworthy Families" [6] in co-authorship with Edgar Schuster about the prominence of remarkable individuals and how this is hereditary. But again no specific traits or qualities are defined and noteworthy is used as a synonym of having achieved fame.

A relevant question to raise is for what purpose Carlyle and Galton have been used when they are not part of the proto-studies of leadership. The answer is because of their approach. Both authors carefully examine the past and then create a hypothesis, and never neglect nor underestimate the authors from the distant past but use their concepts and avoid their mistakes. Decades later Georges Balandier in his "Political Anthropology" developed a similar scientific philosophy and approach when he defined "power" as the cornerstone of political relations (it should be noted that the same cornerstone is present in political leadership). Balandier also analyzes political power as deriving from kinship, as a result of social stratification and as an attribute of religion (Баландие, 2017).

### ***Antiquity – The Ideal Kingship Leadership***

One of the first treatises on leadership is, of course, Plato's "Statesman", which starts the debate on the kingship leader, his qualities, vices, and virtues. Yet this claim will be inaccurate because Homer's Iliad is one of the first treatises where two terms corresponding to leadership are used – Ἄναξ (Anax, wanax) and βασιλεύς (basileus). This is the beginning of one of the biggest debates on Homer's work and is connected with the kingship theory.

Usually, Ἄναξ is translated as "master of house" or lord, but also when it refers to gods it is used as a protector by the warriors such as Menelaus, Achilles and Odysseus (especially when preying to Zeus) (Yamagata, 1997, 4-5).

Ἄναξ has patriarchal authority and "as patriarch, he is a master or owner, and therefore naturally the protector, of his things and his people. This definition of the (fatherly) protector (in some cases patron), seems to fit many other instances of the word" (Yamagata, 1997, p. 6).

The case with the term basileus is different. Firstly, it is the public nature of βασιλεύς, its status "is objectively determined by certain privileges, mostly the gift from others, and corresponding duties. There are different ranks even among βασιλεύς..., on the ground of birth and hereditary prestige. Those born into the class of βασιλεύς are even supposed to have noble looks distinguishable from others with or without princely attire. Their rank is a result of the patronage of Zeus..." (Yamagata, 1997, p. 10). To summarize what βασιλεύς is: ruler and administrator of the land, dispute resolver and decision-maker, a man of integrity

who upholds law and customs, leads foreign affairs and his most important function is military leadership (Yamagata, 1997).

Yet what is different in the concept of leadership seen as kingship in antiquity? – поне така го виждам в по-ранните си варианти). First of all, in the world of Homer, there is no such thing as monarchy as perceived it in the Medieval ages. Also in the poems, there is a community of kings (not only one) and, as aforementioned, there are ranks among them (Cairns, 2015). Also, βασιλεύς are held to certain standards "obtain in other social relationships, and not merely between βασιλεύς and βασιλεύς, basileus and subject, a further value supervenes: leaders are held to the same standards as everyone else. Their position does not exempt them from the ordinary expectations of Homeric ethics and etiquette: and they should lead by example" (Cairns, 2015, p. 52 – 53).

Iliad and Odyssey are so important for the antiquity kingship theory because the in-depth analysis of texts shows that the poems are a complete review of different trait sets, tested in a different situation where certain outcomes are expected or not. In that way, Odysseus is a kind of perfect leader – "the ideal king" (Cairns, 2015, p. 60) as an opposition of Agamemnon who is a failure in terms of strategy, command, trust, nobility, etc. Thanks to Douglas Cairns and Naoko Yamagata, after a careful review of the Iliad and Odyssey, is it possible to create an idea of what a kingship leader should be. Such a leader should perform primarily four roles: those of the good diplomat and the successful negotiator, who is able to be a counselor (both to give and to receive counsel), and of the capable commander. The performance of these roles requires that a certain trait set is of crucial importance: intelligence (intellect), care (concern for the community), mediation, stick to good tradition (both in political matters, behavior, and customs), impartiality or equity "to resist the temptation to abuse power" (Cairns, 2015, p. 61), and also good physical shape (according to age).

The above roles and traits are extremely important because in most of the Greek city-states, especially in Athens after Pisistratus, the Homeric poems are mandatory reading for the urban youth (Ръсел, 1994, p. 40). That is why a lot of writings about leadership found in Plato, Hesiod, Philodemus, and many others refer to this initial image of the ideal king of antiquity or the arete of kingship [7].

There are a lot of references to this particular kind of leadership in several of the most prominent ancient philosophers from the Greco-Roman period. Plato's "Statesman" is one of the first examples of how deep the ancient Greeks interpret the debate about leadership and particularly about kingship. Even Plato refers to statesman as a king, master, and householder, as is stated in the Homeric poems (Plato, 1921, p. 258e). Yet in "Statesman" the debate is not about the specific traits but rather about the kingly knowledge (the art of rule) and about who owns it and can apply it. Later Aristotle also makes an interesting review of Athens' political history in "Athenian Constitution", but what is a matter of interest in

this paper is where he gives exact information about the role and the image of the ancient king and other kingship related positions such as tyrant, the archons, the polemarch, etc. The leadership qualities of the ideal king are integrated within the complex political landscape of ancient Athens becoming a common base for the whole category of political leadership (Аристотел, 1993).

Nevertheless, in the spirit of the good tradition, lots of writings continuously refer to the principles of kingship leadership. Such an author is Xenophon and his work "Education of Cyrus" (*Cyropaedia*) [8]. In this book, Xenophon gives his interpretation of the ideal king which is also very close to the model set in the Homeric poems. The "Education of Cyrus" is a guideline and is considered to be one of the first works of the genre "Mirrors for princess" because Xenophon not only proclaims the virtues of kingship leadership but also argues that they can be learned, and that the good ruler can be trained to earn all that is needed for his household and himself (Xenophon, 1890, p. 34). The king must have the skill and the science if he wants to be the guide and governor of other men (Xenophon, p. 34). To be a kingship leader the candidate must walk the path to wisdom and achieve the wisdom, which is possible through education and experience (Xenophon, p. 40). The book VIII of "Education of Cyrus" is about the final image of Cyrus as a king and his understandings about the monarchic rule where he is the embodiment of the true ruler as a diplomat, as a commander, as a wise administrator, etc. At this point was impossible to find out what the historical truth behind the writings of Xenophon is, but for sure this is his understanding of leadership.

The same approach is applied when reviewing the works of Isocrates. His orations are indeed a remarkable source of information and an example of how to interpret the issues of practical ethics. But in terms of leadership most useful are the "To Nicocles", "Nicocles or The Cyprians" and "Evagoras". As in "Education of Cyrus" these writings are about kingship, the ideal leader, and how to create such. Almost at the beginning of "To Nicocles" Isocrates states that "kings... more than other men should be thoroughly trained" (Isocrates, 1928, p. 43) [9]. These three orations may be constructed as a connected view on what are the duties of a king, what are the duties of a king to his subjects and vice versa, and finally what deeds make one king great. (Isocrates, 1945, p. 2 – 5). The work of Isocrates is another proof of what was mentioned above, he is sticking to the concept of the ideal king – a wise leader, not abusing power, having honor, with the ambition "to seek laws that are altogether just" (Isocrates, 1928, p. 51), "to have virtue of his friends, loyalty of his citizens and his own wisdom" (Isocrates, 1928, p. 55). Again his writings are a variation yet pretty similar to the works of the previous authors because as good Athenian he also incorporates in the concept of the kingship leadership some principles inherited from Solon such as freedom of speech or the proper conduct to all subjects, for example.

Philodemus is another author who raises yet again the concept of the ideal king. In the "Good King according to Homer" where Homer is used "as a moral guide for the political ruler" (тук няма казуемо?) (Asmis, 1991, p. 2). Even then and besides that he is Epicurean, Philodemus give credit to Homer for a depiction of the correct use of power, the proper behavior of kings, etc. He also argues that in the poems there is instruction and even special pedagogical paragraphs that can provide the know-how for being a good king (Asmis, p. 23). One could readily embrace the assumption that "Homer's ethics was considered especially useful, particularly for rulers (Asmis, 1991, p. 20).

The initial Roman period of the kingship theory is marked not only with the work of Philodemus but also by the treatises of Cicero. Marcus Tullius Cicero is a true Roman and faithful guardian of the Roman Republic but drawing on the Hellenistic concept of the ideal king he creates the roman view about the republican statesman. In that regard most important are "De Officiis" (On Duties) and "De Oratore" (On the Orator"). In "On Duties" Cicero gives a profound understanding of what he thinks as a necessity for the young mind (his son Marcus) to achieve as education and moral values if he wants to succeed in public life and politics. The honorable man and politician must to adhere and stay faithful to the truth, justice, to have fortitude and decorum (polite and good behavior), to gain popularity trough generosity, courtesy and eloquence (Dunlop, 2011) [10]. But "On Duties" is more or less a reflection of the death of Caesar and the collapse of the Republic. In "On the Orator" Cicero gives a more detailed image of the Roman statesman. Such claim is supported by Isak Pasi (in the foreword to the Bulgarian edition of "On the Orator) and he rightly notes that for the Roman public figure "... the orator is a thinker, and a moralist, and a politician (...), that the orator is and must be both a philosopher and a participant in state affairs." (Цицерон, 1992). Through the image of his orator, Cicero also gave us an idea of the good statesman, pointing out the key to understanding the requirements and expectations of him. In the analyzed text interesting considerations in this regard can be found. As Cicero himself acknowledges, too much is expected of the statesman-orator – the ingenuity (reason) of a dialectician, the thought of a philosopher, the speech of a poet, the memory of a lawyer, the voice of a tragedian, the gesture of a great actor. These are increasingly rare talents, rarely possessed by the common politician. Above all, however, is the need to be able to feel the pulse of public attitudes, to feel the desires and needs of citizens, to anticipate trends in the development of the state. All this means that the statesman, unlike the common politician, must be the bearer of "comprehensive" wisdom (Цицерон, 1992).

After Cicero, the transformation of the ideal king into ideal republican statesman undergoes a counter restoration, that there is a return to the monarchical past. In Imperial Rome, the kingship theory rises to new heights. Dio Chrysostom

writes a vast number of discourses (or orations) on politics, and several of them are about kingship. There are four "Discourses on kingship" addressed to emperor Trajan and few more like "On tyranny", "On Virtue", "Concerning peace and war", "Agamemnon or on kingship", "On kingship and tyranny", "On personal appearance" and others that support or supplement the main statements on kingship. Dio Chrysostom's work favors the conception of the true or ideal king and is greatly influenced by Homer and later on by Plato, Isocrates, etc. And according to this notion, the ideal king respects and fears the gods, is a guardian and caretaker to his subjects, not a tyrant, addresses in Homeric style the practical affairs of life, the qualities of mind and characters prevail these of military power and domination, the ideal king can resist the temptation to power abuse and counteract the spirits of avarice, pleasure and blind ambition (Dio Chrysostom, 2017).

Another important source from the genre of Advice literature (later Mirrors for Princes) is Seneca's "De Clementia" (On Clemency) where he advises how Emperor Nero to be a great ruler and how to be an arbiter between death and life for his subjects (like the gods to humankind), how important is clemency for the rulers with such concentration of power and so on (Seneca, 1889) [11].

Other proofs for the importance of the kingship leadership in antiquity are the later works of Plutarch's "Parallel lives" and Eusebius of Caesarea "Life of Constantine". These works are not just a story about heroes or poems for the glorious past. These are (Especially "Parallel lives") profound pieces of research exploring the character, motivation, skills, vices and virtues, deeds, etc. in a comparative manner of 50 legendary and historical figures, all of them kings or military commanders of the highest rank.

All of the proposed works and authors resemble very specific theory which is dominant in the Greco-Roman antiquity – the kingship leadership. They study it, conceptualize it, and create practical guidelines for it. It is about "great man theory", in particular on how to educate and create such a great man (the ideal king). In that respect perhaps the most illustrative example is the work of the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius "Meditations" (or Things to one's self). His notes or essays are a robust reflection of what is to be administrator, emperor, and commander in the natural course of life. His writings are a manifestation on hundreds of years Homeric ideal for a king – to control emotions, to act with a clear mind, to have knowledge and wisdom at his side, to be decisive and to avoid the false perceptions for good and bad (Марк Аврелий, 1997).

### ***Medieval age – The divine mandate leadership***

The end of Antiquity at some point is predicted by the emerging Christianity and by the fall of the Roman Empire a few centuries later. With these two major

events, the dominant leadership theory also changes. The religious activity of the early Christians and the deeds of the Holy apostles are indeed revolutionary, and the newly professed cosmology of Christianity attracts more and more people from the lower classes and at some point starts to influence the elites. The mass Christianization after IV c. radically changed some leadership premises in line with the new paradigm: "For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore, whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment" (Holy Bible, 2020, Romans 13:1 – 2).

The sanction of the gods is not a new concept to those who rule over people and lands but for the Middle ages it is imperative. It is a dogma that professes the divine mandate for anyone who wants to be king or ruler of any kind. This rule is to some extent problematic because it does not prescribe the subordination between religious authorities and secular authorities. That is why the two concepts in terms of the exercise of universal power exist – Papal Supremacy and Caesaropapism. The current paper does not address this topic because in terms of leadership theory the divine right of kings (or divine mandate) as a concept remains uncovered.

The conception of the divine mandate is based on some assumptions that are important from a leadership perspective. It is true that even in Antiquity the figure of basileus is in most cases sacred, but the Christian ruler justifies his rule on different grounds, so he needs different formula of legitimizing his power. These fundamentals are laid down by some of the fathers of the church which incorporate the Neoplatonism of Plotinus, Porphyry, Ammonius, and others into the Christian philosophy (Hill and Rauser, 2006). Nevertheless, is worth mentioning that in this period a mixed approach (between the ideal king and divine mandate) is also present, for example, Eusebius in "De Regno" (On imperial rule) uses different narratives to explain the duties and behavior of the monarch. He rejects the extravagancies and the luxury (which are so typical for the roman dignitaries), he appeals to the "Zeus decree" that gives the right to rule but also argues that the emperor is a civil ruler and must to be philosophically minded and so on (Synesius, 2020). But this is one of the last such works because the Christian era has begun.

Firstly Origen in his "On the First Principles" and afterward Athanasius in "Incarnation of the word of God", Gregory of Nazianus in his orations, Jerome in his Hagioraphs and Gregory of Nyssa defend the pacifist nature of Christianity, its universalism and the Apophatic nature of God (Chapman, 1909). These principles are mandatory for every Christian ruler, whether this is the Byzantine emperor, the Holy Roman Emperor, any king, tzar or prince, or the Roman Pontiff. In that manner, the "man strives to be a reflection of Christ" as the holy apostles do because "man is material creation, and thus limited, but infinite in that his

immortal soul has an indefinite capacity to grow closer to the divine" (Gregory of Nyssa, 1893). The roots of the divine mandate are also universal but later on when they are implemented in the strict paternalistic and subordinate medieval societies, the rulers receive a universal right over all subject which is ordained by God. A most obvious example for this transformation is Pope's Boniface VIII bull "Unam Sanctam" – "This authority, however, (though it has been given to man and is exercised by man), is not human but rather divine, granted to Peter by a divine word and reaffirmed to him (Peter) and his successors by the One Whom Peter confessed, the Lord saying to Peter himself, "Whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound also in Heaven" etc.. Therefore, whoever resists this power thus ordained by God, resists the ordinance of God (Boniface VIII, 1302).

The divine mandate is a crucial feature of the concept of leadership in the Middle ages since IV c. For that reason, some of the brightest minds in Europe work to extend this type of leadership and to fill it with content even further. There are more than 55 known authors and hundreds of texts (books, letters, orations, poems, treatises, etc.). In the current paper is presented only a selection of most notorious and influential authors. They fall into two groups, the first one is mainly focusing on the image of the king and its qualities and duties, the other one is about how to rule an empire or kingdom. Of course, every work has elements from both groups.

In book V of "City of God" Augustine of Hippo writes a lot about the Christian ruler (or emperor) as a new type of monarch (from Ch. 19 to Ch. 24). This new Christian leader must to be familiar with what "true glory" and honor means and how to resist the desire of domination and power; the virtues must not to be slaves of glory for bodily pleasures, given that there is no use of such virtues and that, "prudence shall provide nothing, Justice distribute nothing, Temperance moderate nothing, except to the end that men may be pleased and vain glory served"; "... they are happy if they rule justly; if they are not lifted amid the praises of those who pay them sublime honors, and the obsequiousness of those who salute them with an excessive humility, but remember that they are men; if they make their power the handmaid of His majesty by using it for the greatest possible extension of His worship; if they fear, love, worship God..." (Augustine of Hippo, 1887). Augustine of Hippo has such an influence among the scholars after him that a lot of future works emerge after "City of God", especially regarding the nature of the Christian monarch and how he should rule over his subjects.

Such an author is Smaragdus of Saint Mihiel whose works "Via regia" (The royal way) and "Diadema monachorum" (The crown of monks) reflect the ideas from patristic literature. For Smaragdus most important for the Christian monarchs are "the love of God and one's neighbor (dilectio), wisdom (sapientia), and simplicity (simplicitas)" (Bovendeert, 2006, p. 240). Some researchers argue that Smaragdus tries to turn "the general Christian virtues and specific monastic

virtues into royal virtues ... without proper consideration of the difference between general Christian virtues, monastic ethics, and royal ethics (Bovendeert, 2006, p. 240). Nevertheless, *Via regia* is focused on the practical side of the Christian king's duties and tries to identify the set of virtues for every future or actual monarch. These virtues are as follows: charity; observance of the Ten Commandments; fear of God; wisdom (but royal wisdom); simplicity in royal duties; patience which leads the royal deeds to perfection; the king must be a fair judge to defend the poor and protect the weak; the king needs to distinguish between good and bad and avoid bad treasures such as pride, anger, rapacity, cruelty, and ambition; a ruler also should listen to his advisors and not rely solely on his judgement; peace (Bovendeert, 2006).

Such royal behaviour ultimately should bring to the king an "eternal reward, but also a felicitous reign and long life, also fertility, peace, well-being, and fair judgments...". "The 'sun of justice' (Christ) will enlighten the mind of the king, and therefore wisdom and *discretio* (carefulness) will be his, and he will gain victory over his enemies and defend the realm of faith" (Bovendeert, 2006, p. 243).

Similar to the above recommendations is the content of patriarch Photios I addressed to Prince Boris I. In the text can be found a certain set of virtues defining the royal behavior of Christian monarchs. According to Photios, "virtues must be related to faith" because virtues and faith together make the good man. In that regard, he explains to Boris in 15 theses what "the pure and immaculate confession of our Christian faith" means. After that, the patriarch can proceed to more practical pieces of advice: "Stand firm on the stone of faith, on which you are well established by God; A ruler is obliged to take care not only of his save but also to honor the people entrusted to him with the same care"; the ruler is "Doer of good deeds"; the good ruler has "speed of mind and prudence", prays regularly and perceives "good order in customs, manners and body movements, as well as decent posture"; "moderation is key to everything". Also, the good Christian monarch must trust and respect friends. The superiority in power obliges the ruler to be the first in virtue and not to rely on tyranny, but to rule in the favor of those governed (e.g. to have reasonable and fair rule) (Дуйчев, 1961).

In the making of the true Christian king are worth mentioning Sedulius Scottus and his "*De rectoribus christianis*" (On Christian rulers). There is no doubt that this is yet another practical and philosophical guide for princes and rulers as are the above-reviewed works. In summary, Seduliu's work encompasses several important topics. The Christian king is a godly ruler with royal power granted to him for his dedication to God and the Church. He is an orthodox king who can in the first place rule himself and, in the second, who knows how to govern. He is not in search of riches and strength but rather of the wisdom and worship of godliness. The true king embraces the good counsel and counselors, as well as

good friends. The peaceful and clement king is an opposition of ungodly kings and rulers who defile Christ and God. He is just king and his zeal is a combination of reason and piety. As every Christian commander, he trusts in Lord and is fond of peace (Sedulius Scottus, 2010).

In such manner goes another notable example concerning the divine mandate and the royal behaviour of Christian kings as "Paideia Basilike" (The education of kings or A word to the crimson-born Constantine) of Theophilakt of Ohrid. It is a treatise prepared for his student Constantine Duca, the future emperor Constantine VII. There he explains the imperial dignity, human virtues, and inherited nobility – qualities that elevate emperors and give brilliance to their actions. (Займова, 2013).

The review of different authors and texts ends with Thomas Aquinas as one of the most influential theologians of the later Middle ages and overall in all his works he writes about political rule. The "De Regno ad regem Cypri" (On Kingship to the king of Cyprus) is mostly about the division between righteous Christian monarchy in opposition to Tyranny and how to prevent a king from becoming a tyrant or the aristocracy from falling into corruption. Aquinas gives us a lot of examples how the heavenly beatitude can be achieved, the importance of good friendship and fair counsel, what means for the good king the wisdom of God, and how the Heaven kingdom can be a model to the earthly realm of men (Aquinas, 1949).

It is important to be noted that other authors and their works such as Hincmar "De regis persona" (The Person of the King), Jonas of Orleans "De institutione regia", Nikephoros "Andrias Basilikos" (Statue of a King), William Peraldus "De Eruditione Principum" (On the Education of Princes), Ptolemy de Luca "De Regimine Principum", Giles of Rome "De regimine Principum", Alvarus "Speculum regum" and Godfrey de Viterbo "Speculum regum" (Mirror for kings) are also taken into consideration and are in full synchrony with the already reviewed texts. It is further worth noting that, together with works that mainly focus on how to be a true Christian king, there are also treatises as "Strategikon" of Kekaumenos, "De administrando imperio" of Constantine VII and "Policraticus" of John of Solisbury that explain the proper organization of ruled realm, the nature, and role of the monarch and his relationship to law, to soldiers and their generals, to his subjects and the principle of justice, the foreign policy, and the neighbors, etc.

The authors from the Middle ages tend to theorize strongly on the true nature of the divine mandate and achieve significant distinction compared to the Ideal king from Antiquity. The legitimization of kingship is based on strong theological concept deriving from the principle of the divine mandate ordained by the true and one God. The hierarchy of virtues is completely different although some values are present in both periods. Also, the understanding of some virtues differs

such as wisdom, justice, fear of God, among others. In such a way, the divine mandate guarantees the authority of the monarch, and if he remains righteous and without sins, his rule will remain intact. Of course, if the monarch is ungodly and sinful, he will be deprived by the grace of God and his rule should fall.

This check and balances rule of the Middle ages remains valid and almost undisputed until the Age of Heresies (end of High Middle ages and Late Middle ages). But in the early Renaissance and later on, the Divine mandate loses ground and is not powerful enough to reassure the subjects in the ordained order. The bright-minded counselors and scholars from the Renaissance period specialize his efforts to broaden the horizon of the future monarchs and to focus not only on the virtues of the true Christian king or only on limited aspects of kingship such as military and foreign policy, or administration, or law and justice. The theorists of leadership during the Renaissance are trying to create as multifunctional as possible guidelines for ruling a kingdom.

### **Renaissance – The enlightened autocrat**

In this part of the study, the reviewed authors are given in chronological order because their works build up upon each other and the analysis is far better this way. The authors of the period try to give a comprehensive understanding of the art of rule and for that purpose use a wide variety of authors from Antiquity to the Late Middle ages. The new formula is supposed to enhance the old concept of the divine mandate to ensure more knowledge of the past and present world and to give the rulers far more possible ways to understand this realm and to act accordingly. The person of the monarch remains sacred, but the importance of knowledge exceeds the importance of divine blessing.

In its beginning the so-called renaissance school of leadership is marked by the deeds and the works of four scholars whose treatises are famous and read in Europe almost simultaneously (or in a very close period between 1502 – 1532). These are John Skelton (1463 – 1529), Erasmus (1466 – 1536), Machiavelli (1469 – 1527), and Antonio de Guevara (1481 – 1545). The other thing they have in common is that they are written for some of the most notorious monarchs of the Renaissance era – Henry VIII, Charles V, and Lorenzo di Medici.

John Skelton is one of these rare figures that clearly sets the line of demarcation between the Middle ages and Renaissance. He is a scholar, a priest and above all a master poet. Even his work "Speculum principis" is written as a poem, and is an adaption of a Latin version of the "Historical Library" of Diodorus Siculus. The book aims to promote certain behavior, as was the case with the authors of the previous period, yet without such a strong theological influence. The poem argues for the importance and necessity of virtue and learning among princes (Lloyd, 1978). Also, it is full of, or rather is a collection of Latin proverbs for his

pupil the young Henry VIII. Having in mind "Speculum principis" together with his poems "The Bowge of Courte", "Magnyfycence" and "Against Venomous Tongues" (describing the royal court and intrigues during Henry VII rule) it can be argued that Skelton is a good and insightful tutor, familiar with the context of leadership (Feenstra, Kuiper, Kuipers, 2020). It is no coincidence that Skelton and Erasmus much in common where the two scholars discuss the education and mentorship of the royalties alongside other topics.

Erasmus also makes a serious contribution to the new understanding of leadership. He writes two treatises in that regard – "The handbook of a Christian soldier" and later "The education of a Christian Prince", both based on the concept of *philosophia Christi*. To a certain extent, Erasmus reflects the conceptualization achieved in the Middle ages and does Skelton. But also he looks back in the Antiquity looking for answers from Plato, Xenophon, Diogenes, Cicero. His synthesis between old philosophers, the holy scripture, and the context of the new times is quite remarkable. Nearly half of "The Education..." is dedicated to the qualities, education and significance of a Christian prince. It is a significant part of the book with a huge emphasis on education and learning. This is not just counseling, or kind of paternalistic advice rather it is close to real political practice on hand. Erasmus assumes that there are 4 groups of traits typical of the prince. The prince should be good and essential and have wisdom, justice, moderation, foresight, and zeal for the public welfare. The prince should further be bad and noxious and have ambition, wrath, cupidity, flattery; Secondary and non-essential qualities of the prince: physical appearance (stature, height, beauty, etc.); Meaningless qualities: the ability to dance gracefully, dice expertly, drink with gusto, swell with pride, plunder the people with kingly grandeur, etc. (Desiderius Erasmus, 1963). According to Erasmus, the good qualities must be enhanced with education as much as possible. The well-prepared prince does not need general information because he already has skills, qualities, and good education, but for in-depth knowledge and understanding of his purpose. The prince is a navigator [12] of state. His education must be an analytical, contextual, and most important task because "the princes are born for the state and being educated for the state (Desiderius Erasmus, 1963). The Renaissance Christian prince must rule beneficently, with knowledge and expediency, because most of all he "owes to the powers of heaven a kingdom untainted with blood", if possible (Desiderius Erasmus, 1963). Erasmus's treatise continues with short and practical notes, advices and explanations for some important features of the ruling: peace, taxes and tributes, laws, magistrates, treaties, diplomacy, foreign relations, marriage alliances, and on war.

The third of the "big four" is Antonio de Guevara who is maybe one of the first specialists in leadership studies because most of his work is connected to leadership: "Libro áureo de Marco Aurelio" (Golden Book of Marcus Aurelius),

"Reloj de Principes" (Dial of Princes), *Una década de Césares, es a saber: Las vidas de diez emperadores romanos que imperaron en los tiempos del buen Marco Aurelio* (A decade of Caesars, namely: The lives of ten Roman emperors who reigned in the times of the good Marcus Aurelius), also write doctrine for courtiers and others.

In "Dial of Princes" Guevara wants to give the nobility of Castilla and all of the realm of Charles V a book with knowledge from all ages. As the author says in the beginning "The state of princes is greater than anyone, it can more than anyone, it is worth more than anyone, it supports more than anyone, it has more than anyone and in the end the government of all comes from it, it is necessary that the house, and the person, and even the life of the prince is ordered and corrected more than that of all, because just as the merchant measures all his clothes with a stick, so with the life of the prince the whole republic is measured" (Guevara, 1994). And he continues "A woman has a lot of fatigue in raising a child, a teacher has a lot of annoyance in teaching a disciple, a lot of work is done to a governor to govern a town; but to greater work and danger I offer myself to order the state and life of him on whose life depends all the good of the republic" (Guevara, 1994). This is a profound treatise where Antonio de Guevara is in constant dialogue with all famous philosophers and authors from Homer and Thales till Thomas Aquinas and all of that to deliver knowledge and wisdom to the all-powerful Charles V and all his successors. It is indeed remarkable work and reflects the new dynamics of the world. The new empires are even larger than the previous ones, is evident that theological knowledge alone is not enough, and the societies are with more complex nature than before. This explains the popularity of the work and its translation in several European languages.

Finally comes the "Il Principe" of Niccolò Machiavelli. A lot is written about his work already mostly because of his popularity. But, regarding the royal rule, education of monarchs, and the knowledge needed "The prince" must be viewed as the first part of a series of treatises together with "Discourses on the First Ten of Titus Livy" and "The Art of War". In fact "The prince" is for sure a how-to-do handbook for rulers, its short, very clear, practical, and again close as possible to real politics but far less philosophical compared to Erasmus's or Guevara's work. It is composed of 26 chapters where the practical duties of the ruler are put into the context of the historical situation in Italy. As Machiavelli show to his patron, Lorenzo di Medici the ruler of the Renaissance era must understand a lot of topics – forms of states, nature of monarchy, the government of newly acquired realms, states or towns, usurpers and coups, the power of the state in peace and war, troops and own military resources, the traits of the prince (good and bad), the integrity of the prince, fortification and defense, counselors and flatterers, the fortune and off-course important history lessons (Макиавели, 1991). Again, the practical discourse is what makes an impression. But this is

not surprising because Erasmus, Guevara, and Machiavelli use a similar style of common three-step approach. As Machiavelli Erasmus write "The handbook of a Christian soldier" (theological and related to Christianity), "The Education of Christian Prince" (practical, a handbook for rulers) and "Bellum" (treatise on war, but against war). Guevara also constructs the "Dial of Princes" by three books. The four authors set a standard that is different compared with the Middle ages. The huge emphasis on education and knowledge, the complex understanding of politics, the backstage presence of religion, and the limited set of important traits are very distinguished characteristics for the period.

Within the same period but more than a half-century later other authors stepping on the works of the "big four" continue the leadership tradition of the enlightened autocrats, tradition that as consequence will transform itself in the Enlightened Absolutism two centuries later. Such authors are Johann Damgaard and his work "Alithia" as a continuation of a long tradition of "mirror for princes" texts within the Danish monarchy (in that particular case written for the young Christian IV); George Buchanan and his work "De iure Regni apud Scotos Dialogus" (A Dialogue on the Law of Kingship among the Scots), a guide dedicated to James VI; Juan de Mariana and his "De rege et regis institutione" (The king and the Education of the king) is another profound and visionary work regarding the proper education of monarchs and rulers in the new Renaissance period. The above three authors Damgaard, Buchanan, and Mariana, and their work are yet to be studied in the future especially in the field of leadership studies but also in political science in general.

## Conclusion

In the current paper nearly 20 authors and some of their works dedicated to leadership, creation, and education of leaders, etc. were reviewed. The main focus remains within the field of politics and for that reason, most of the texts are part of the "mirrors for princes" genre or are guidelines for rulers (usually a gift from actual monarch to his son). Treatises regarding warfare (as "Strategicon"), navigation (as "Arte de Marear"), public speech (as "Institutio Oratoria" or "Dialectique") or education of clergy (as "Diadema Monachorum") as well as their authors (Quintilian, Petrus Ramus, etc.) have been either briefly mentioned or intentionally not discussed in the study. Such an approach allows us to remain in the field of political leadership so that all leadership concepts within the three study periods be successfully reviewed.

The Antiquity, the Medieval age, and the Renaissance provide a huge exploratory field to carry out leadership studies and sufficient evidence to theorize for every particular period. The treatises and the complete work of the examined authors clearly show that the concept of leadership differs in the different time

periods. The kingship leadership theory from Antiquity is not the same as the divine mandate leadership from the Medieval age. The two leadership models differ in terms of legitimization, relationship with the divine and relationship with the subjects of the realm.

The findings give a clear picture of the importance of leadership literature. The political leadership in the past is hugely biased by political practice. Most of the authors address political affairs and their writings reflect not only abstract models but also good examples in politics. For example, Dio Chrysostom's professional life is connected with the reign of four emperors (Vespasian, Domitian, Nerva, and Trajan) some of them are neutral to him, some of them enemies, friends or admirers. So, he surely has what to say on leadership as was shown in the main exposition above. Sedulius Scottus lives 20 years among the French kings and aristocrats and precisely knows the relationships within the royal court. So "On Christian rulers" is not just another theological text, it's a political guidebook suitable for the period and the political context. When patriarch Photios answer with a letter (long enough to be a journal article) to Boris I usually nobody gives credit to the fact that in his time Photios I is considered to be among the brightest minds in the world.

As final remarks need to be said that the leadership theory is a vast field. It does not start with the XIX or the XVIII century. Just as the theorem of Archimedes is accepted so the work of Philodemus, Teophilakt, or Guevara must be accepted as part of leadership theory. So, a lot of work needs to be done to revive the forgotten concepts and to extend the knowledge for leadership from a contemporary perspective.

## Notes

- [1] A supporting evidence for that direction of development of the leadership theory is the book series "HBR's 10 must reads On Leadership" from 2011 and "HBR's 10 must reads On Leadership" (vol. 2) from 2020.
- [2] In the last 3 years the special issues trying to revise in some way the theoretical approach are: 2018, *Envisioning Future Leadership: Utopia, Dystopia, or More of the Same?*; 2019, *Creating a National Leadership Education Research Agenda 2020 – 2024: Providing Strategic Direction for the Field of Leadership Education*; 2020, *Leadership and Followership in the Infinite Game*.
- [3] "Andarz" is a term denoting the Persian literature of the genre "mirrors for princes".
- [4] The proposed periodization doesn't argue about the possible starting and endpoint for Antiquity, the Medieval ages and Renaissance, but follows the lifespan of the reviewed authors and the influence of their work.
- [5] Here by "genius" Galton understands indigenous mastery (mastery), artistry or workmanship

- [6] In the paper is used the phototype edition of 1904 "Noteworthy Families (Modern Science). An Index to Kinship in Near Degrees between Persons whose Achievements are Honorable and have been Publicly Recorded".
- [7] Arete here is perceived as excellence of any kind, manly qualities, but according to Liddel and Scot also can be translated as a moral virtue (Liddel & Scot, 1940)
- [8] In the paper is used the phototype edition from 1890 with the translation of Henry Graham Dakyns.
- [9] In the paper are used the prototype editions from 1928 with the translation of George Norlin and from 1945 with the translation of Larue van Hook. Kingship leadership
- [10] In the paper are used the phototype editions of "De Officiis" (reprinted 1934) with the translation of Walter Miller and "History of Roman literature from its earliest period to Augustan's age" of John Dunlop (1827)
- [11] In the paper is used the phototype edition of "Minor dialogues together with the dialog On Clemency" (1889) with the translation of Aubrey Stewart.
- [12] This may be a reference to the use of the word Apostolos (apostle, a person sent) in Antiquity, a title given to the head navigator and leader of a new expedition in his role of the founder of a new colony. Broadly understand as a herald of civilization (Dimitrov, 2017).

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