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CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP AS TYPE OF ETHICAL LEADERSHIP AND MILITARY LEADERSHIP

Abstract

Natural inequalities in strength and capability had always called for the need of assistance from stronger and more capable members of the community. It was always not only moral act, but also basic function of every leader and every leadership. If someone has a number of characteristics that make him a charismatic leader, then he also has a duty to help, with his actions, all members of the community and even beyond it, in line with the very meaning of the word charisma, the gift of god. God does not give gifts to a man only for that man's sake, but to share them with other people.

This paper considers not only features of charismatic leadership as a type of ethical leadership and military leadership, but also advantages of this type of leadership compared to other types of leadership developed through history.

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Conclusion is that, despite the fact that rational type of leadership is dominates, in both society and military organization, over traditional and charismatic types of leadership, charismatic leadership still remains very important type of military, as ethical, leadership, due to its ability to spread ethical principles and inspire adoption of virtues of military organization and its actions in the easiest and most natural way. Also, charismatic properties of leadership can be important factor in the process of maintaining high military standards as well as prolonged effects of conviction in the value of military virtues.

Keywords: charisma, charismatic leadership, ethical leadership, military leadership, military virtues

INTRODUCTION

People are not equal. The weaker and less capable expect help from the stronger and more capable ones, especially if they are associated with them in any kind of a community. Providing assistance of any kind to the weaker and less capable members of the community was and still is in all societies a basic moral obligation of the stronger and more capable ones, especially at times when they are also military leaders of the community, or if they belong to the military leadership.

If however, someone has a number of characteristics that make him a charismatic leader, he is in all cultures, ethnically speaking, all the more obliged to help the members of his own community and even beyond it by his actions, in accordance with the very meaning of the word charisma, the gift of god. God does not give gifts to a man only for that man's sake, but for a man to share them with other people, as an old Tibetan proverb says, and its counterpart exists in all civilizations.

Even in ancient times much was written of inequalities and those unequal, and certainly even more was deliberated on. Traces of it can equally be found in ancient philosophy and ancient literature, as well as in ancient myth, a phenomenon of its own.

According to them, the gods are to be blamed for the inequality among people. Titan Epimetheus, brother of Prometheus, when given a task of distributing talents to the people, inappropriately gave to certain ones many talents, and to others some or none.

What persists as an important ethical (Thomas, 1989, p. 141)¹ (Mileham, 2015, p. 12) idea since ancient times up until today is that, if the gods are guilty of making people unequal through intermediaries, they have made an effort of making it right by endowing the chosen ones to be the best not only by their features, but also by their conscience of the mission that will be of a great help to many of the lesser people in their walkthrough life.

If that kind of a conscience and moral expression of the better and stronger ones is elevated to the ideals of the community, we can speak of ethical action based on the use of charisma (2015, p.13).

Need for Leadership

Leadership is based on a human need for reaching a goal in as secure, as fast and as easy a way as possible, which is enabled by someone's superior help.

It is the most easy to walk on human roads when we are led by someone who knows the way, or at least guesses it very well, and who is capable of eliminating the obstacles on it. These characteristics of leading remain to this day the characteristics of leadership.

The words leader, leadership, and especially leading and managing clearly reflect the unstable ancient times when the more capable led the less capable ones, usually those who are incapable, by the hand.

¹ 'Ethics differs from morality in that conduct may be described as "moral" when it is maintained or observed as fact but becomes „ethical“ as it rises from fact to ideal.'

Since then until today, leading and leadership have become important parts of the social, and especially political, military and economic domain. Without leadership and leading, the organization of political, economic and military life and system is unimaginable. The problem occurs when politics treats the 'grown' society as juvenile and emphasizes leading it 'by the hand'.

In any case, the community never governs itself, but it is being governed by someone or through someone. Since ancient times it became a common practice that every group had a leader as he was needed, to be exact, they being in need of his abilities in order to achieve the interests of the group members and the interests of the group as a whole.

In primordial groups, someone always stood out by his own strength, bravery, proficiency or yet by old age which represented knowledge, wisdom and experience. Since all members of the group more or less have impact on each other, every individual that stood for something had in certain situations made a greater impact than others did. The one who had the greatest collection of various types of abilities, or yet, who was characterized by the ability which was, at that time, most needed for the group was the most influential and an informal leader (Conger and Kanungo, 1988, p. 179) (Mojčić, 2002, str. 145). When that position of the highest influence in the group was formally acknowledged as leadership, the leader also gained the status which additionally strengthened his power and his position.

Thanks to their greater abilities, as well as the fact that there are fewer of those most capable, leaders first started forcing their will on different occasions in return for the favor of leading. In that way, through the exchange of service personal power was born (Kuljić, 1994).

Leadership is nothing but, as Schlesinger says, a rational exchange of values in which someone's support of us or someone's making decisions that concern us is being exchanged for our acknowledgement (maybe even assurance) of his superiority as an expression of his greater value due to the benefit for

us. Most often, the one striving towards taking power over us is assured - in other words, the one who strives towards domination, by his and our understanding formally, may do so primarily for his own good. If nothing else, the pleasure of domination is often good enough of a stimulant for that kind of *modus operandi*. With social life becoming more and more complex and the needs of the group growing, the features of a leader are changing. The dominant physical features of a leader are more and more ceding primacy to abstract features, or values.

Subjugation to the better one has always been biologically determined, only the meaning of 'being better' has been changing over time. Some features always were, and still are socially highly valued and hence desirable for leaders, such as prudence, rectitude and goodness, so all leaders mark themselves as at least the formal bearer of those features. Which features will, in fact, be the determinants when choosing a leader are still going to depend on the circumstances and situations in which the group most often finds itself. Hence one type of a ruler prevailed in Athens, which was prone to both trade and war, and another type of a ruler prevailed in the extremely warlike-minded Sparta. The need determined a leader.

Incentives for leadership are different. A strong incentive for taking on the role of a leader can be a tendency towards excessive power by which rational goals can be achieved, starting with easing the acquisition of material goods, or even indulgence of the narcissistic urge, all the way to the feeling of the divine, supernatural, certainly in comparison to the ones being led, advancing a unique position. As in any other biological community, a leader also, as in any other human gradation, provides for himself an absolute prestige at every level he wishes that is in the domain of the realization of his power. A proof of power is also the length of ruling, i.e. ruling as long as the leader wishes or wants. The fact that many leaders voluntarily renounced their thrones was usually nothing else but a proof of possessing the most highly positioned will. For, they ruled as long as they wanted.

Every leadership implies asymmetry of power, to be exact, an unequal distribution of power between the ones who lead and the ones being led. We reward the leader with trust and obedience, sometimes even with worship for the acts committed, but most of all, with renouncing our own power, to be exact, with incorporation of our own power into the collective power maintained by the leader, hence in the end, with building our own strength into his, by which we make it even more supernatural and thus mystical.

As long as he is insecure about his own knowledge and abilities, a man is bound to 'always be directed toward something outside of himself' (Marjanović, 2000, str. 147), hence to be led.

Today there are numerous and various classifications of leadership, especially the non-political ones. One of the most important ones come from the difference of using mobilization activities and methods dividing leading into the transactional and transformational. While transformational leadership tends to provoke changes by appealing to great ideals, such as freedom, peace, equality and fraternity, transactional leadership tends to encourage followers by appealing to their interests (Bass, 1990, p. 36) (Mojić, 2002, str. 139-153).

In the realm of social sciences, most classifications of leadership still rely on Weber's classification, according to which, by type of origin and manifestation, charismatic, traditional and rational leadership can be distinguished.

Charismatic Leadership

The word *charisma* comes from the ancient Greek, meaning god given talent, divine gift, holy inspiration, special power gained by god's grace, power to communicate with gods, power to be god's trustee or capacity to pass along god's thoughts and will.

According to Weber, charisma is an attribute of a personality, which makes them regarded as exceptional, and being gifted with such attributes that

gives them superhuman qualities for leadership (Weber, 1972, p. 132). People are attracted to charismatic personalities because they think that getting closer to them and attaching themselves makes them closer to something supernatural and sublime, even to god.

It is not necessary for a charismatic personality to be very smart, only smart enough. It is much more necessary for them to have vision and inspiration, as well as a natural skill to influence people. With these features, they will attract people, persuade them in their mission and maintain their fate through a charismatic personality and their project. The charismatic personality must radiate self-confidence and energy, and not average but to excess, especially as pertains to spiritual energy, they have to show passion of conviction and dedication to their project, which all invokes emotions and respect in people. The charismatic personality, precisely because of passion for their vision, strengthens the conviction of others that it is something important and may represent an actual option in politics or some other area, because every passion can be recognized by its urge to be satisfied immediately. If this is not the case, then it cannot be considered due to great personal charisma. Great personal charisma bonds people more than the idea itself.

Charismatic leadership is ethical by itself, because it is natural and therefore more justified and acceptable than any other type of leadership. For the same reason, it is more functional as a type of military leadership, since people more readily obey those who they perceive as more competent in the matters of *bonum commune*.

Charismatic leaders can appear in any time, but they are especially wanted and readily accepted in times of crisis, when it's easier to believe in miracles (Jerotić, 2000, str. 179). Then they are the transmitters of hope for salvation. The existential problem of charismatic leadership occurs due to the fact that, as Machiavelli puts it, people are easily persuaded, but hard to fix in that persuasion.

Machiavelli distinguished between armed and unarmed prophets (Machiavelli, 1995, p. 60). Unarmed prophets, unprotected, perish quickly when adherents

start doubting them. The best weapons for protection of any, including the charismatic, leader, is the possession of political authority. When in possession of authority, the leader does not have to perform miracles, but only to promise them. Armed prophets differ from unarmed ones not only because they have weapons to defend themselves from disappointed adherents and subordinates, but also by their tendency to keep charismatic communication in any way, including threats and use of force as a means to prevent anyone from leaving them. Unlike use of force as a sanction for infidelity to the leader, threats do not always have to be direct. They first emerged in the form of public anathema issued by the leader against all those who strayed from their path – actually, as an expression of their incapability to punish them. Later, with the development of society, leader's threats became ever more sophisticated, turning more into prophecies about losing wars and the downfall of the army and the state if military leadership's orders were not followed. In the modern age, they became most frequently expressed in the form of the prediction of failed futures for the voters, or even the whole nation, if the political leader was not followed. The big role in this, especially in the dissemination of the belief in the permanence of the leader's achievements, is played by the charismatic leader's and military leader's entourage. For these purposes, they do not strive to invoke just respect, but awe as a mixture of feelings, being the most effective.

Those who succeeded in inducing a combination of admiration, fear and love in the people are those who stayed in power for the longest time. It is confirmed by one of the first writings in history of Serbian political thought, from 1216, where king Stefan the 'First Crowned' explained the very long reign of his father Stefan Nemanja by the fact that 'he was both admirable and formidable' (Prvovenčani, 1988, str. 27).

It is very important for the success of charismatic leadership that the leader acts not from personal interest, but to never mentioning his personal gain, more than the project that concerns the common good of the group or community. Precisely those leaders, who value themselves more than the vision

of the common good, are soon asked by the people for evidence, in the shape of supernatural acts of their sublime status.

It is hard for any human being to admit to being inferior, due to both the constant pursuit for personal benefit and natural narcissism. Therefore, claims of those who aspire to leadership that they possess supernatural qualities demands checking, and permanent or at least occasional confirmation of these supernatural or at least exceptional powers worthy of admiration, if the faith in charisma and loyalty to the leader is to be established and maintained. If confirmation of those supernatural qualities is absent, or frequently fails, the leader is in the eyes of the adherents, equalized with other, 'common' members of the community and the charisma disappears.

As a rule, if that happens, the leader is in danger. Charismatic leaders are more likely to fall victims to their disappointed followers than to their opponents. Riker even thinks that that is the very reason why charismatic leaders are the most disadvantaged among leaders. When a leader who does not stir deep emotions, positive or negative, leaves the scene, he is usually unnoticed and free of consequences, while for the leader 'who used the magical currency of love, being dethroned means being destroyed' (Riker, 1962, p. 204). Charismatic leaders, being used to admiration and love, cannot live without signs of idolatry, nor make peace with living as common people.

Proof that charisma exists is awakened enthusiasm, infatuation of the people by a person and their vision, frequently not only as a manner of recognition of superior abilities but as an expression of a sort of laziness, uncritical thinking due to projecting the need for help onto someone else rather than ourselves. To inebriate others by his ideas, a charismatic leader must also be inebriated by them. A charismatic leader, as a rule, combines capability with the skill of prophesying ideas. He is, therefore, not only a prophet, but also the master of marketing, even a mage.

Charisma and Military Leadership

Charisma makes one a natural leader, independent of customs and laws. Every charismatic leader can easily become a military leader, should they so desire. If they are also rulers, it belongs to them by natural right.

Features of charismatic leadership that can be useful for military leadership are relatively numerous:

- Absolute self-confidence. Every instance of wavering indicates that the person is not able to help, and its absence and absolute self-confidence breeds and maintains faith in the leader and in success;
- Personal autonomy. Independence from others confirms not only exceptionalism but also strength of character;
- Personal authenticity. The charismatic person represents something special, radiating attraction by their appearance, speech or posture. Charisma is the magic of radiation;
- Having a vision. Vision is an idealized goal related to the future of the military group, not the leader;
- Fervent loyalty to the vision inspiring others to accept it with enthusiasm;
- Having strong emotions and ability to spread them to others. The charismatic military leader is emotionally contagious. A strong experience of someone can make us ready to follow them even at the expense of our own lives;
- Skill of expression, which substantially contributes to faster and easier acceptance of attitudes by subordinates and adherents;
- A distinctive style of public performance with a personal stamp, which makes an impression and allows adherents to easily imitate, and thus support, the leader;

- An orientation towards radically positive change in the position of the group. Every vision announces change. The more radical the change, the more attention it attracts, and inspires deeper hope in a positive outcome, especially when times are hard for the collective;
- The skill of ‘unobtrusively’ imposing oneself upon others and the skill of invisible but absolute domination over them. Charismatic persons are offensive even when they don’t look that way. They are always the first to send the signal to the environment;
- The skill of choosing the right place and time for an appearance as, well as the right subordinates and adherents.

The effects of ethical military charismatic leadership are mostly the following:

- Deep mutual trust, respect and affection between the military leader and their adherents. The usual use of force, in the form of coercion or pressure as instruments to secure enforcement of orders by the followers, is lacking. The very absence of violence, as principle of communication with the subordinates, makes charismatic military leadership an ethical relation. The orders of a charismatic leader are executed out of love. This effect has a pronouncedly ethical dimension and sometimes makes many institutional solutions in management unnecessary and nonfunctional due to the established direct relation between the military leader and the masses of subordinates;
- An emotional relationship with the military leader. He is more beloved as a person than as an institution;
- An increased readiness of adherents to execute tasks put before them by an ethical leadership. Based on love and trust, charismatic leadership expedites the execution of orders – it is more probable that one shall do something for the person they love and respect than otherwise;
- A more pronounced acceptance of the vision by the members of the army as an institutionalized community or an armed group built on ad hoc basis;

- The submission to military leadership as a distinctly voluntary act;
- A commitment to the military leader and readiness to follow him in everything manifests as fidelity, devotion and unconditional loyalty to the military leader and his entourage;
- A consent of the subordinates in the army builds on the commitment to the military leader and the need to actualize the vision;
- The psychological empowerment of the military due to transfer of confidence from the leader to the subordinates;
- The production of models and leadership. By emulating the military leader as a model, a system of military management can be built based on a single model;

A substantial function of charisma, and at the same time its frequent consequence is the production of models and leadership. The charismatic leader through his sayings and actions calls the community he dominates to think and act alike. Charismatic military leaders had frequently throughout history turned their will and providence into military rules, but also into customs, law, even into religion. In that way, they made order, and a system of the rules of behavior, which were transferred by upbringing to younger members of the army as a specific and closed social group. By the constant repeating of thoughts and actions and behaving within their boundaries, military tradition was born as customary order based on the transfer of values and rules of thinking and behavior from generation to generation. Thus the charismatic military leader, by creating something radically new, such as new ways of thinking and acting, due to the unquestioning nature of their requests to followers for preserving and continuous adherence to newly formed values, created important assumptions for the formation of the old, transforming new values into something old and valuable, in other words, into tradition.

Unlike charismatic leadership, rational leadership as military leadership was created by the systemic election of the best, as the most functional, leader.

Such elections call for firm electoral rules, guaranteed by law. Electing military leadership with a limited duration was a rational choice, as is rational regulation of change of power, since it spares the society from violence and shocks that followed illegal and violent changes in state, and therefore also military, power, for centuries. In the rationalization of politics everything including the military, the leader and leadership became a fixed term job.

Rational leadership also has an ethical dimension. It implies not only that leaders will act for the common good, but also that they will accept responsibility for possible failures of leadership, in advance, in the very moment of election. The rational leader offers solutions which are not, as in the case of charismatic leader, 'sent by god', and, also, in case he is relieved of power, does not ask for god to decide upon it.

Unlike charismatic leaders, rational leaders are usually pragmatic, focused on practice and the specific problems of the community.

However, a rational leader can also possess charisma. It is a fact that even today people would rather follow the person who has both a good program and charisma. What has changed are the social circumstances in which charisma is used. In the nuclear age the keeping the peace is more a moral than political imperative. 'While pursuing peace incessantly, it is also necessary to limit the use of force in a world comprised of nation states, faced with common problems but devoid of one adequate political authority' (Donaldson, 1986, p. 462) and the responsibility of both the political and military leadership is even greater than before.

Mystical qualities of personal charisma are by institutionalization of political procedure, and above all by rational choice, transferred to institutions, more precisely to top positions within them, and by occupying those positions one becomes important, powerful, protected from ordinariness, even formally wise and honest. In a way, that is the victory of bureaucratic type of management. Managing is done from the offices, not, as it used to be, by direct address at the town square or battlefield. Rare public appearances of military leadership at

appropriate celebrations are still needed only to create the illusion of charismatic properties of the Army as an institution, in some important moments, and even such appearances are planned and organized by politics and the state. Adherents are no longer gathered only by a military leader, using the force of charismatic magnetism. Management is done mainly in a sitting position, while once the military, as well as political leaders, showed their elevated status and underlined importance of the moment by standing while presenting their vision. Therefore, in military and political jargon, 'armchairs' came to signify non-charismatic and, often, unethical leadership and rule.

Due to the manner of elections, rule and change of leadership, individuals in charge of something have become less important than the function they serve. Today, we do not admire and bow to personalities of military leaders and leadership as much as to their function. It could be said that charisma passed from persons to positions. Holiness became the property of election procedures and the methods of leadership as well. This is reflected in the fact that it is inviolable, and elevated beyond any individual.

Still, those leaders presumed to have personal charisma are most highly ethically valued. By becoming a supreme leader, the individual is presented with the chance to show or develop charisma.

Although the modern age does not call for charisma as an obligatory feature of a military leader, rational leaders who do not show charisma before their enthronement rarely resisted the temptation to self-produce formal charisma. They are assisted in such endeavors by the fact that respect for formal charisma is easily secured by state authority, and the downside are the fact that such respect is also formal, and that formal charisma is also subject to some sort of verification. Supernatural miracles are no longer requested from the leaders, but, nevertheless, pseudo-charisma is often discovered as formal charisma.

But even genuine charisma is not always equally great or lasting. Moreover, as it can be maintained or reduced, charisma can be increased, mostly by

artificial efforts and illusionist means and effects. Careers of actors and singers, but also politicians, testify to that. It is different in the military. The functionality of military organization requires, as its credo that everything be true to the greatest possible measure. If charisma does not exist, then it does not exist, and that its military rules enter to make a person of at least average quality an authority for everyone below them in the military organization. Since there are not too many charismatic persons (or at least those sufficiently charismatic) in any society, nor are they present in every age, every military type of organization regularly produces and favors manufactured authority over natural authority, given that authorities of various levels are permanently needed in the army due to the nature of its organization, so it cannot wait for the gifts from heaven in this respect. The answer to the question 'How to develop charisma for military purposes?' could be that experiences and principles of charisma development from the worlds of politics and show business should certainly be used, but constantly insisting on those elements that provide military charisma with ethics, or at least don't deprive it of ethics. Military leadership does not have to be charismatic, but it has to be ethical.

Contemporary military leadership is characterized by total professionalization and limited terms for leading a growingly complex military organization. It is understandable that today most of the military, as well as political, leaders in the world fall into the category of rational, and not charismatic leaders. Possession of personal charisma is desirable, because it contributes to the success of the military, as well as any other leadership. The desirability is so strong that, along with rational military leaders, there are charismatic military leaders, although they are in a minority. What connects them all is the necessity of ethical leadership in the context of a democratic society. The ethics of their leadership in democratic conditions becomes the *sine qua non* principle of subsistence in a leading position. All of them are, also, in a permanent invisible struggle with their opponents, since institutions as well as masses constantly doubt the validity of their choice and search for a better,

meaning also more ethical leader. The human right to doubt is not only one of the oldest natural rights, but the one that is most rationally based, since only by doubt one can achieve better results in war and peace, as well as in politics.

CONCLUSION

Although today in society as well as in the military organization the rational type of leadership is dominant over other types, such as traditional and charismatic leadership, charismatic leadership still remains a very important type of military leadership as ethical, due to its capacity to easily and most naturally, without any coercion, to disseminate ethical principles and helps in the adoption of virtues in the military organization and its leadership. Also, charismatic features of military leaders could significantly contribute to more successful achievement of desired results, to the process of maintaining military ds at the highest level, as well as to prolonging the effects of convincing not only members of the Army, but society as a whole of the value of military virtues.

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HARIZMATSKO VOĐSTVO KAO TIP ETIČKOG I VOJNOG VOĐSTVA

Sažetak

Prirodne nejednakosti u snazi i sposobnosti oduvek su zahtevale pomoć jačih i sposobnijih članova zajednice. To je uvek bio ne samo moralni čin, već i osnovna funkcija svakog vođe i svakog rukovodstva. Ako neko ima niz osobina koje ga čine harizmatičnim vođom, onda je dužan da svojim postupcima pomaže svim članovima zajednice, pa čak i izvan nje, u skladu sa samim značenjem reči harizma, dar od boga. Bog ne daje darove čoveku samo radi tog čoveka, već da bi ih podelio sa drugim ljudima.

Ovaj rad razmatra ne samo karakteristike harizmatičnog liderstva kao tipa etičkog i vojnog vođstva, već i prednosti ovog tipa liderstva u odnosu na druge tipove liderstva koji su se razvijali kroz istoriju.

Zaključak je da, uprkos činjenici da racionalni tip vođstva dominira, kako u društvu, tako i u vojnoj organizaciji, nad tradicionalnim i harizmatičnim tipovima vođstva, harizmatско vođstvo i dalje ostaje veoma važan tip vojnog, kao etičko, vođstvo, zbog svoje sposobnosti širenja etičkih principa i inspiriše usvajanje vrlina vojne organizacije i njenog delovanja na najlakši i najprirodniji način. Takođe, harizmatična svojstva vođstva mogu biti važan faktor u procesu održavanja visokih vojnih standarda kao i produženih efekata ubeđenja u vrednost vojnih vrlina.

Ključne reči: *harizma, harizmatско vođstvo, etičko vođstvo, vojno vođstvo, vojne vrline*