Introduction

The difficulty lies not so much in developing new ideas as in escaping
from old ones.
(John Maynard Keynes)

Like the memory of most first experiences, I remember clearly the first conference I attended at the beginning of my academic career. Scholars from all over the world attended the conference but what made it special for me was my meeting with a person who was affectionately called by the participants ‘the wise chief’. He was indeed the oldest of the participants and worthy of the title. It is hard to describe how all the people (usually a highly critical and disputatious audience) hung on his every word. Every time he opened his mouth to speak the room fell silent and there was a rare feeling that his words were not mere displays of erudition but expressed insights beyond what is found in scholarly journals. ‘Words of truth are recognized’, to quote ancient sources.

As we were standing together in line to receive our conference folders, he suggested that we have lunch together. During the meal we discovered several converging lines in our family histories. And on this background of shared associations we found ourselves, an 80-year-old man 15 years after his retirement from the highest peaks of an academic career, and one who was just beginning his academic career, strolling together daily along the beautiful wooded paths and talking for hours like father and son, like mentor and student. This man was a success story in the academic world. His books were considered mandatory reading in his field and his articles were quoted extensively. But the most interesting point in this story, the memory of which came back to me a few years ago, was the fact of what happened after his retirement. A few years after retiring he published a series of articles and lectures attacking the foundations of his own work. ‘How is it that you didn’t see these things for so many years?’ I asked him wonderingly. He spent hours explaining to me that he had been locked in a paradigm, that he lacked reflective ability, adding similar expressions of self-criticism that seemed to me at the time inexplicable and exaggerated. Lacking experience, I could not fathom the meaning that he gave to the process: ‘I was so busy achieving tenure [based on publications] and then on establishing my career, and later defending the theories that had

made me famous, that I was unable to deviate from my chosen path. You simply excel in what you know how to do,' he said.

It was only years after his retirement, when he was free of the 'rules of the game' as he called it, and had begun to read other literature than the kind he had read for scores of years and started 'to listen, not just to hear', especially to listen to people from other disciplines, that he arrived at different conclusions, of which he said, 'I never meant to reach them.'

I cite this story at the beginning of my book because it is only in the last few years that I have begun to comprehend the process that that man underwent and to understand fully the meaning of the expression 'locked in a paradigm'. Many years after those talks we had I now truly understand his words and the feelings that he spoke about.

This book, too, is the outcome of personal maturation, not just at the level of knowledge but mainly growth of the ability, both emotional and intellectual, to diverge from the research path that I have followed for many years. I have published numerous studies and written some books on leadership. Anyone who has read my works will see that in this book I diverge from some of the arguments I have proposed in previous works, but now, in light of the above anecdote, I understand how that can happen.

Leadership is a phenomenon that fascinates many people. Anyone who reads the abundant material written on leadership in various disciplines will easily identify the fundamental issue that was so aptly phrased by Warren Bennis (1997) who has been researching leadership for many years: the question as to 'whether leaders are larger-than-life figures – heroes..., or embodiments of forces greater than themselves' (p. 22).¹ Indeed the question as to the place and weight of personality versus the weight of circumstances is ever-present. A review of the relevant literature indicates that most writers focus on the leader and his or her influence,² a bias that is already found in the Old Testament with its numerous stories of leaders, as well as in the writings of ancient philosophers who attempted to examine the leadership phenomenon more systematically.³ Beyond the specific questions posed by these philosophers, questions such as who is worthy to be a leader, the question that most occupied them was why and how leaders influence people. Over the years I have reached the insight that this is not the cardinal question.

In my recent books I argued that the leadership phenomenon cannot be understood by focusing only on leaders and their personality. On the other hand, focusing on the circumstances while ignoring the leaders themselves, as reflected in the works of philosophers and sociologists like Karl Marx, is no less misleading. Instead of a dichotomous solution, I argued, we can visualize leadership as fire – a metaphor borrowed from the researchers Katherine Klein and Robert House,⁴ fire that is fed by three components: fuel (the followers), oxygen (the environmental context) and the spark (the leader). The combina-

tion of these three components can explain the leadership pattern. I am still convinced of this. But like most scholars, I used to begin the analysis with the spark – the leader. In this sense I was locked in the biases typical of most people, including leadership scholars – the bias of exaggerating the weight of the leader's influence, particularly in the case of political leaders. Although all the components of leadership were included in the analysis (leader, followers and circumstances), the angle of vision created a different composition of the scenery, just as a valley viewed from the top of a cliff and the same cliff viewed from deep inside the valley create two different landscapes although the area is exactly the same. What became clear to me in the course of time was the recognition that the analysis should begin with the followers (especially when it comes to political leadership). In other words, many of the questions that I address in this book and have dealt with in the past appear to be similar and yield similar answers. I even cite a few examples of leaders whom I have discussed in previous books, but the analysis is different. In this sense I return more emphatically to the point of departure of the German sociologist Max Weber, who claimed that charisma is not a trait possessed by a leader but a characteristic perceived by the viewer.⁵ Accordingly, as will be widely discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, a leader may be charismatic to one group of people and totally lacking in charisma to another group. He or she can be admired at a certain point in time and later on be forgotten.⁶

Weber's statement is important in that it illustrates a major social phenomenon, but he did not address the psychological question as to why people wrap a certain person in the robe of charisma and why they divest him or her of it. We can point to such examples, but the psychological laws underlying these questions have yet to be probed in depth.

These questions are addressed in the book, which is both a psychological and a historical work in the sense that it identifies (in the first part) myths concerning political leaders and analyses the process of their mythicization. The basic assumption is that myths do not appear by chance; there is a psychological law underlying their creation.⁷ This book seeks to identify the psychological laws concerning a specific type of myth – leadership myths. In this context the book deals with aspects that were not examined by Max Weber and his followers, namely characterization and analysis of the psychological processes by which leadership myths are created.

Almost every discussion on leaders involves expressions like charisma, vision, trust, hope, faith, values and commitment, keywords that are often voiced at graduation ceremonies of officers' courses, leadership courses in schools of management, and also in descriptions of historical leaders. On the face of it we may infer that 'leadership is leadership is leadership'. Its characteristics are universal and are not confined to situational, cultural or task-related contexts. Political leadership and leadership in everyday life, in commercial, military and

social organizations, sports teams and social groups, all are similar in essence. Is this really so? Can the admired commander of a military unit be the successful leader of a nation? Can a person who attains political leadership through elections also succeed in the task of political leader? Will a political leader who has proven successful in the test of history necessarily be perceived as charismatic? These questions are clouded by the bias of focusing on leaders (the psychological source of which will be discussed later), but the fact is that we use similar adjectives to describe leaders in all contexts. Looking at these issues from the followers' angle of vision may sharpen the distinction between leadership emergence (e.g., success in elections) and the leader's successful functioning in this role, and also highlight the differences between political leadership and leadership in everyday life – in organizations and communities. In these senses an understanding of the psychology of the followers may lead to clearer insights than those yielded by theories and research on leaders.

Furthermore, analysis of leadership from the point of departure of the followers is more promising in terms of research. With regard to quantitative studies this claim requires no explanation. Samples of followers are always larger than samples of leaders; hence the ability to generalize is greater. But studies of a more qualitative character can also be more firmly grounded. There are, indeed, many definitions of leadership, but as the famous leadership scholar Bernard Bass⁸ remarked, there is no disputing the fact that a leader is a person who has followers. Therefore, it is only natural to seek to identify the psychological characteristics of a certain population that is influenced exclusively by one particular leader, or to ask why communities are influenced by a specific leader during a certain period and reject that same leader during a different period. The cardinal question, then, is not why leaders influence people but why followers are influenced by them.

A universal characteristic that often serves as a psychological explanation for the attraction to leaders who are perceived as strong and giving a sense of security, particularly in crisis situations,⁹ is the craving for security. But beyond this, the psychology of followers in respect to choice of leaders and compliance with leaders in quiet times when there is no urgent sense of existential crisis is culturally biased.¹⁰ That is a major assumption underlying this book, but it is not a simple assumption. It calls for explanation because *culture*, and particularly *intercultural differences*, is among the most discussed and researched subject in all the social sciences.¹¹ Global conflicts are explained by the 'clash of civilizations'.¹² International corporations attempt to decipher the psychological meanings involved in multicultural management.¹³ Failure in wars or military campaigns such as the war in Vietnam are analysed in terms of (in)ability to understand the local culture.¹⁴ The same issue occupies captains and field commanders patrolling towns and villages in countries that are culturally alien to them.

Dealing with the psychology of leadership, this book cannot avoid addressing the cultural aspect, particularly when elaborating on the leadership phenomenon from the viewpoint of the followers. The American culture scholar Harry Triandis cites an example in which an American manager serving in a managerial role in a branch of his company in Greece asks a Greek employee how long he thinks it will take to complete a task that he has been assigned. The employee wonders at the question. 'He's the boss. Why doesn't he tell me how long I have to perform the task?'¹⁵ In fact, many intercultural comparative studies have shown that without understanding of the cultural context, namely the mentality of the followers in a certain culture, it is impossible to understand the leaders' influence. There is abundant evidence of this in the sphere of leadership in organizations. Comparative studies dealing with the connection between leadership, job satisfaction and worker productivity showed that French employees were more satisfied and more productive when they perceived their manager as a paternalistic, authoritarian leader who gave clear instructions. On the other hand, British and German employees were at their best when their superiors' approach was democratic and consultative. Indian employees were at their best with a manager who was a kind of 'big brother', while Peruvian employees preferred managers who closely followed every detail.¹⁶

A simple proof of the existence of culture-bound leadership concepts was presented by the Swedish scholar Ingrid Tollgerdt-Andersson, who analysed 1400 job offers of leadership roles advertised in newspapers. She found that the requirements – ability to cooperate, social skills and interpersonal abilities – appeared in 80 per cent of the advertisements in Sweden, Denmark and Norway, while these requirements were mentioned much less (less than 50 per cent) in Italy and Spain.¹⁷ As the Dutch scholar Geert Hofstede remarked:

Beliefs regarding leaders represent a dominant cultural part of a society or a given country. Asking people's opinions regarding the qualities of good leaders is like describing their culture. The leader is a culture hero in the sense that he constitutes a role model.¹⁸

The reader of such comparative studies may indeed wonder whether there are universal elements in leadership. It appears that culture is a kind of genetic code that is universally recognized as important but it lacks the substantiality that permits biologists, for example, to study it.

The result of this is a confusing variety of definitions, methods, articles and studies on culture. I was aware of the danger that I might 'succeed' in adding some more interesting questions and perhaps even a new classification, but that, I felt, would be just 'more of the same'.

Generally speaking, returning later to questions that one addressed when younger, now more equipped with academic knowledge and experience, and

especially with less defensive criticism and more integrative ability, may do more than improve one's analytic ability. It also provides a better prospect of minimizing the danger referred to by the British philosopher Isaiah Berlin, the sometimes-obsessive tendency of academics to want above all to say things that are interesting in themselves. It seems to me that experience can help to moderate the sometimes hasty tendency to familiarize oneself only with the patterns and regularity of phenomena. No less important, in my opinion, is clarity – a criterion that is not always in the forefront of academic writing and therefore tends to be discussed in closed clubs of academics who specialize in very narrow and specific corners of a phenomenon, when in fact a broader view is vital for understanding its nature.

I hope that my analyses will stimulate interest and thought among broad circles (and not because they are provocative). Therefore it is important to me at this early stage to explain the rationale and the boundaries of concepts such as culture and identity, which I use in some parts of the book. Despite the extensive literature on these concepts it seems to me that there is still a need for conceptual 'cleaning'. This is important for our purposes here because these concepts are essential for the discussion of what lies at the heart of this book – the psychology of leadership.

Here I should add a few words in connection with my reference to the issues of culture and identity: my entrance into the cultural arena was determined after I had dived deeply into the literature on intercultural research and arrived at the conclusion that the important questions were formulated by the pioneers in this field. The thousands of articles and research reports written in their wake show how we cannot see the forest for the trees. For example, the American scholar Florence Kluckhohn¹⁹ claimed that the basic questions concerning the evolution of certain cultures concern people's attitudes to each other, to nature, to the supernatural, to activity and to time. Such questions, phrased somewhat differently, were posed by the giants in whose footsteps, to repeat a famous cliché, followed many dwarfs.

I return to this point of departure in order to clarify that the book deals mainly with leadership as a psychological phenomenon and therefore the discussion in it addresses a specific component within the broad discourse on culture. This component is people's relations with others, and more specifically, how they relate to the person who represents authority. Leadership is a certain kind of authority but, as I will show, perceptions of authority are also grounded in cultural patterns; some of these are visible and some are concealed and have to be scrutinized and revealed.²⁰ In this respect any curious and explorative tourist is a 'naive anthropologist' in the sense that he or she can identify external manifestations of cultural phenomena. This does not mean that they always fully understand the sources of the various ways of relating to aspects of life such as work, time, manner of speech

and performance of rituals. But if they are observant and spend enough time in a certain place they can comprehend the law underlying people's behavioural and symbolic expressions in spheres with which they come into contact.

The tension between the view that ascribes universality to human nature and human development (e.g., psychoanalytic thinking), and the more contextual culture-bound view has occupied many prominent researchers.²¹ According to my experience and observations there is no simple solution to this tension, and when it comes to analysing specific cultural phenomena a process of elimination and well-grounded choice of variables is required. How is this elimination achieved and by what methodology?

In a book that I wrote a few years ago²² I presented a simulation developed by a colleague of mine and used in the IDF (Israel Defense Forces) Staff and Command College. The simulation demonstrated aspects that affect evaluation of decisions.²³ The subjects, officers participating in a course at the level of major and lieutenant colonel, were given a written description of an incident, beginning as follows: 'You are a battalion commander in the area of the border fence in the north of the country. In a briefing with the brigade commander you were told not to move from your post or deploy forces in case of any incident without the permission of the brigade commander.' This was the background. Then the incident was described, along with four different possible decisions, which the officers were asked to evaluate:

1. You received an alert from the border fence that the fence had been breached and a terrorist cell had apparently infiltrated. You tried to contact the brigade commander but could not find him, so you decided to take the soldiers and you went out with them to the border fence. You did not encounter any terrorists. After a few hours you returned to the outpost and nothing happened.
2. You received an alert from the border fence that the fence had been breached and a terrorist cell had apparently infiltrated. You called the brigade commander but could not find him, so you decided in these circumstances to search for the terrorists, and you went out, taking some of the soldiers with you. During your absence a terrorist cell attacked the outpost and some soldiers were wounded.
3. You received an alert from the border fence that the fence had been breached and a terrorist cell had apparently infiltrated. You called the brigade commander, could not find him, and decided to look for the terrorists with some of the soldiers. After a while you encountered the terrorists and killed them.
4. You received an alert from the border fence that the fence had been breached and a terrorist cell had apparently infiltrated. You called the brigade commander and could not find him. You decided to stay in the outpost, according to the instructions of the commander.

The participants were instructed to act as a committee that had to rate each of the four decisions in the circumstances described. The highest score was given to decision 3, where the commander left the outpost, contravening his superior's orders, but succeeded in killing the terrorists. The lowest score was given to decision 2, where the commander went out to search for the terrorists, but while he was away the terrorists attacked the outpost.

The analysis of the simulation demonstrated some important principles; the main one is known in army slang as *either a medal or corporal* (meaning [not literally] commendation or demotion). In other words, the final result determines the quality of the decision. The 'best' decision, the one that received the highest score, was the decision to go out and kill the terrorists. It was the best because it succeeded. The 'worst' decision was to leave the outpost, which was then attacked and soldiers were wounded. But it was exactly *the same decision*. The only difference between the two was the result, success or failure. And in this case, success or failure was almost certainly a matter of luck, nothing else. The main points that arose in the discussion concerned different aspects of judgement and evaluation of decisions, the tendency to ignore inputs and processes, the halo effect of the 'bottom line', and other implications relevant to processes of inference and learning.

The interesting and important point for the present discussion, the point that led me to repeat this story here, arose by chance at a conference in the USA attended by American army officers. In one of the sessions I told this story. To my surprise, the officers, highly intelligent and serious people, completely failed to understand the outpost commander's dilemma. 'Why did he hesitate?', they wondered. 'What, don't you see that there is a serious operational dilemma here?', I asked. 'No,' said the officers decisively. 'The officer received an order not to leave the post. Orders are orders, none of us would hesitate.'

This incident demonstrated two points to me: (1) that intercultural differences are manifested in relation to specific subjects. The attitude to authority is one of the features that most clearly reflect intercultural differences (as supported by research findings),²⁴ and (2) that situations of dilemma have great focusing power. They accentuate salient dimensions of people's identity.

Identity is a term widely used by anthropologists, psychologists, historians and social scientists. All of them understand that it is important and essential but, as Erik Erikson, a psychologist who is strongly associated with the study of identities, remarked, this concept is all-pervasive.²⁵ In situations that call for decision-making it is necessary for people to determine priorities in their hierarchy of identities. In this way identity becomes a concept that is more dynamic and at the same time more operative, and even provides an empirical response to the tension between the universal and the context-bound. The American anthropologist Melford Spiro, who has dealt extensively with these

subjects, demonstrates in a series of articles and studies how it is possible to give a conceptual and empirical response to this theoretical tension.²⁶ In a study that he conducted among Israeli kibbutz children in the 1950s²⁷ he investigated the tension between what he considered to be universal human tendencies such as achievement orientation, and cultural influences based on the kibbutz ideology, such as the welfare of the collective as a primary concern, cooperation and sharing. Success in internalizing these values can, of course, counteract the tendencies that Spiro referred to as universal, and can also reveal the dominant weight of the cultural environment in shaping identities. However, even at the point in time when the research was conducted, during a period when the ideology of partnership was politically correct, Spiro did not find great success in their internalization of cooperative values. Nevertheless he balanced the tension with the argument that although children tend to be competitive and possessive, kibbutz children, whose socialization includes internalization of cooperative values, when faced with conflicting choices will decide in favour of the values they have absorbed from their culture. Self-concept and self-worth are concepts used by social psychologists for predicting people's decisions in such situations. After all, some will argue, people want to see themselves in a positive light, and this positive light is influenced by the sociocultural environment.²⁸ Therefore the approach that I have adopted here is conceptually clear and also has methodological advantages, the approach according to which identity has a *hierarchy of salience*.²⁹

Samuel Huntington, a historian from Harvard, in the introduction to his book on identities,³⁰ demonstrates this simply with the story of Rachel Newman, which was published in *Newsweek* after the collapse of the Twin Towers on 11 September 2001. She reported:

When I was 19 I moved to New York City. If you asked me to describe myself then, I would have told you I was a musician, a poet, an artist, and, on some political level, a woman, a lesbian, and a Jew. Being an American wouldn't have made my list. In my college class my girlfriend and I were so frustrated by inequality in America that we discussed moving to another country. On September 11 all that changed. I realized that I had been taking the freedom I have here for granted. Now I have an American flag on my backpack, I cheer at the fighter jets as they pass overhead and I am calling myself a patriot.³¹

This example shows how a dramatic event brought to the surface a certain identity and made it most salient in the hierarchy of identities. This is also what certain leaders, most noticeably political leaders, can do to followers. But the example points to a latent aspect; there is no creation here of a new identity. The elements that connect socialization, culture and values – the prototypical schemas – are the concepts that lie concealed in a 'heap'. Dramatic events, dilemmas or leaders are the catalysts that can raise to the surface and

accentuate identities from the heap. Analysis from the followers' angle of vision may pinpoint not only these raw materials but also the psychological processes occurring in the followers when such catalyzation is created. Only from the followers' angle of vision is it possible to analyse questions such as how it came about that Abraham Lincoln, who barely won the presidential election and was a source of contention and disliked by wide circles during his presidency, became the most revered president in American history, or why Winston Churchill, Britain's great leader during World War II, was not elected prime minister after the war. How is it that Andrew Jackson, who was seen as the embodiment of charisma, became in the course of years relatively marginal in the collective memory? These are examples of the questions that will be discussed and analysed on the theoretical level relating to the psychological processes that are more relevant to the choice of political leaders. But is the psychology of followers that is relevant to the choice of political leaders equally relevant or similar to the followers' response to military or business leaders, or to leaders in social organizations? Does meteoric success in managing an industrial corporation increase the probability of success in political leadership, or is there perhaps no connection between the different types of demands? There have been many cases when leaders who moved to politics from various organizations were less than successful due to their internalization of operational norms, which obstructed their ability to see ideological visions and abstract aspects that require a philosophical and historical view. And vice versa, perhaps for this reason Winston Churchill's military leadership is held in question, especially his functioning as a regimental commander in the interval between his political roles, while his leadership as a statesman is revered.³² Or could it be that different predispositions and a different psychological profile distinguish between managers and leaders? These are some of the questions that will be addressed in this book, questions that have not hitherto been examined in depth from the point of view of the followers.

The title of the book was chosen after some reflection. The phrase 'fact and fantasy' carries a hint of elusiveness, a characteristic that is mentioned in many articles and books on leadership. Charles Lindholm likened leadership to love – two phenomena much observed and discussed although we do not succeed in understanding them fully.³³ 'Leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth,' wrote James MacGregor Burns.³⁴ As for me, I would not have spent days and nights in the attempt to write a book that arrived at the same familiar conclusion, first because it has been said many times before, and second because it is worthwhile trying to advance our understanding of this important phenomenon. The attempt to characterize fact and fantasy with regard to leadership, and to analyse this from the followers' point of view at different angles can help to lessen the elusiveness of the phenomenon. True, the need (and the potential) for analysing followership was

already highlighted more than 30 years ago by James MacGregor Burns, one of the most influential leadership scholars, who wrote that 'one of the most serious failures in the study of leadership has been the bifurcation between the literature on leadership and the literature on followership'.³⁵ Since then, some work has been done on followership,³⁶ but most writings have discussed followership either as an independent subject, such as studies on obedience,³⁷ or as a subject to be explored in organizational settings. These works have dealt with aspects such as 'followership styles' or 'effective followership',³⁸ rather than with conceptual and psychological issues relating followership to leadership. In that respect, this book is a delayed attempt to address the imperative raised by Burns 30 years ago.

In this context, I want to make it clear that the word *fantasy* here is not used in the sense of illusion, but rather in the sense of imaginative conceptualization. I originally considered using the word *myth* in the title, but that word appears frequently in the context of shattering myths, and this book is not concerned with shattering myths about leadership. On the contrary, the basic assumption is that myths, and certainly myths about leadership, do not spring from nowhere. In this book I attempt to deal with what the myths scholar Robert Segal defined as the most important questions to be asked regarding myths, stories and fantasies: how they are created, why they survive and how they survive.³⁹

Moreover some myths, fantasies and stories survive and some disappear. Some survive for generations and fill a need that is more fundamental or more powerful. This is an interesting point with regard to leaders, a point that can only be examined in terms of collective memory. Such an analysis naturally deflects the discussion from the leaders themselves to those who remember them directly – generational memory. But, as we know, there are leaders who become myths for generations; they become objects of intergenerational memory. So which myths survive beyond one generation and which are forgotten, and why?

The notions of *fantasy* and *myth* are quite closely related, but *fantasy* emphasizes the story element more. Leadership is discussed in this book from various psychological angles, one of which is the view of the leader as a story. The story may be entirely true, or partly true, but in the end it acquires a life of its own and becomes what the French sociologist Emile Durkheim called a 'social fact',⁴⁰ meaning knowledge that influences the manner of thinking and modes of behaviour of many people.

Looking at leadership as a story emphasizes the sociopsychological aspect, because a story by its very nature is either narrated in social settings or written for wider audiences. In this respect the book also deals with the more specific question: are there leadership stories that are unique to a certain public (namely, a public with shared characteristics such as ethnic groups or nations)?

Is Ataturk a leadership story that speaks only to the Turkish nation? Is John Kennedy a typical American story? Is Lee Kuan Yew the story of Singapore? And if so, is it important to understand why? Clearly, this arouses further speculation. Are there leadership stories that cross borders (and generations)? If there are, what distinguishes them from 'local stories'? The book includes examples of leaders who are perceived as distinctly local stories and of leaders who are universal stories, while attempting to clarify in psychological terms what distinguishes between the two types.

Fantasies are not created in a vacuum but emerge from diverse psychological sources. In the case of direct leaders in the workplace, in military units or in social systems, where the followers can see and meet the leader, they can form impressions of him or her directly, leaving less scope for the imagination to create fantasies. In many cases however, certainly in cases of political leadership, the leader is a person whom one hears about from others or reads about in newspapers or books, or sees on television, mostly in predetermined or selective settings. This is a process of *mediation*. The different kinds of 'story-tellers' about leaders include journalists, historians, researchers, educators, teachers or publicity agents in various social networks (including electronic networks). Thus many people may be involved in the creation of fantasies, all of them with their own biases, agendas, beliefs and perhaps interests to promote.

The book touches on this aspect of the creation of a fantasy, using examples of outstanding images of leaders created by prominent scholars, journalists and shapers of public opinion. The foundations and characteristics of this process are also analysed in the book. However, I want to emphasize that despite the extension of the analysis in these directions, it is not a postmodern analysis of the kind that assumes, to put it simplistically, that there is no truth and everything is relative. The discussion and analysis of leaders, contexts and fantasies is followed by an attempt to understand the 'big picture', which might be likened to a map. The book ventures to provide what is metaphorically needed for identification of the coordination lines that can help to understand the map and navigate by it. In this specific area – the psychology of followership – such reading is of the utmost importance, because followers are those who choose the leader, followers can decide how far to comply with the leader. Followers in many cases also determine the success of the leader. In fact, as previously mentioned, the most basic definition of leadership is that a leader is someone who has followers. The theoretical meaning of this is that the real leadership theory is simply followership theory. As a believer in Kurt Lewin's well-known saying⁴¹ that nothing is more practical than a good theory, I believe that development of a good theory on followership can bring about the improvement of leadership in the basic sense of improving the ability to make more educated decisions in the space between choice of leaders

and obedience to them. Thus, beyond the deep-seated desire shared by most researchers to arouse interest and thought, my motivation for writing this book was spurred by the wish to create a type of knowledge that is also meaningful for decision-making and action. I would also like to think that understanding the psychology of followership may help to reduce our tendency to overlook the power of ourselves as followers.

NOTES

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2. Bass, Bernard M. (2008), *The Bass Handbook of Leadership* (4th edition), New York: Free Press. Bass's book is considered the most comprehensive encyclopaedic survey of leadership research, particularly of psychological studies on leadership.
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