

## Use of Plato's Parable 'Ship of State' in Political Cartoons

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The parable, "Ship of State" was introduced by Plato in Book IV, lines 488a-489d of the Republic to compare a ship to a city state. This parable later became an effective tool in political cartoons to transmit political messages in a playful manner. Such cartoons appear in the political settings of United States of America, European and Asian countries alike. This study uses a qualitative approach to analyse the selected political cartoons on Ship of State, focusing on textual and graphic elements. The study examines why Plato uses the parable, what context is it pertaining to and on the other hand why editorial cartoonists use the parable and what issues do they try to address. The political cartoons which depict Ship of State are analysed under Symbolism, Labeling, Exaggeration, Analogy and Irony to understand, compare and contrast political communication of the day. Political Cartoonists use the parable of Plato to criticize leadership and decisions of the state. This contemporary usage defines that the political setting of Plato's era has not been subjected to major changes. For the three main personnel in the parable, the fake captain, demagogues and the true leaders are apparent throughout the history up until now as the political cartoons attested. Hence, Ship of State derived from the philosophical discourse is used by the editorial cartoonists to break down complex political issues in a simple way for people to understand.

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