# Leadership in the West and the Islamic World: A Comparative Analysis

*Abdul Rashid Moten*

International Islamic University Malaysia, Malaysia

**Abstract:** Leadership, studied by scholars for centuries, has always been a contested terrain. It is a multidisciplinary field concerned as well with ethics and morality. However, leadership is conceived differently in the West and the East and this difference is largely attributed to the differences in culture and their respective world views. The Western perspective of leadership dominates the world of learning to the total neglect of Eastern perspectives. This paper examines leadership from an Islamic perspective which has so far been neglected or misrepresented because it is studied based on European experiences. This necessitates reviewing the Western perspective on leadership as a backdrop for making a case for studying leadership from perspectives other than the West. The paper is less concerned with comparing leadership between the West and the rest. Its emphasis is upon examining roots of why the concept of leadership in Islam is different from those of the West. The final section of the paper presents the features of leadership portrayed by the Heads of State in 47 countries in which Muslims form a majority of the population and examines their congruence with the leadership concept of Islam.

**Key words:** Leadership · Islam · Islamic perspective · Muslim leadership · Western perspective

## INTRODUCTION

The essence of politics, it is argued by many scholars, is to be discerned in the nature and behavior of political leaders. Masses, remaining on the fringes of the political process, play a very minor role in the political system either as voters to be mobilized or as mobs to be swayed. It is within a numerically miniscule percentage of the population that differences over the allocation of values, the policies and the mission of the community are worked out. This fact to Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdudi, was so obvious that it could be seen "even with little insight". He observes that human civilization travels in the direction determined by the people who lead. Mawdudi referred to a *hadith* (sayings of Prophet Muhammad): "There are two classes in my ummah - if they are right the ummah is set right, if they go wrong the ummah goes wrong. They are rulers and scholars" [1]. Leaders, according to Stogdill, play an active role in directing the goals of the organization and in enhancing the efficiency of the group [2]. To Bass, leadership is a critical factor in the success or failure of an institution. As he puts it, "Leaders do make a difference" [3].

Understandably, the study of leadership has a long and respectable history in the West. "The study of leadership is coterminous with the rise of civilization" [3]. Over the years, many theories have been proposed focusing on the external roles and functions of leaders. Of significance, however, is the fact that most of these leadership studies are written, in the language of Saint Exupery, for those interested in "bridge and golf and politics and neckties" [4]. They do occasionally refer to religion and culture but tend to interpret these largely through the lens of Eurocentrism which is defined by Alattas as "values, attitudes, ideas and ideological orientations that are informed by the notion of European uniqueness and superiority" [5]. To Karenga, Eurocentrism is "an ideology and practice of domination and exclusion based on the fundamental assumption that all relevance and value are centered in European culture and peoples and that all other cultures and peoples are at best marginal and at worse irrelevant" [6]. It hardly needs emphasizing that models of leadership developed in one place may not work similarly in another because leadership behavior is influenced, among others, by its religious, moral and human roots. Studying leadership in contexts with which one is not familiar requires acquiring

**Corresponding Author:** Abdul Rashid Moten, International Islamic University Malaysia, Malaysia.

knowledge about that culture and its religious and moral spirits. This applies as well in the case of Muslims for whom Islam is a complete, comprehensive civilization covering every aspect of human life.

This study attempts to explain leadership from an Islamic perspective by first exploring the meaning and nature of leadership from the Western perspective. Following Nisbett, this study juxtaposes the two perspectives to highlight how and why Muslims and Westerners think differently [7]. Unlike Nisbett's emphasis on cognition and psychology, this study focuses on values and norms. Norms and values specify actions that are "right and proper" and identify those that are "wrong and hence undesirable. Values are the beliefs and standards that drive a leader and serve as a guide in decision-making and in conduct and actions" [8]. A commitment to some kind of values is considered essential for leadership effectiveness. Values, it must be noted, acquire significance only if they are translated into action. Values not translated into action only leads to hypocrisy. James Burns identifies three types of leadership values: Ethical values (such as kindness, tolerance and chastity); Modal values (such as honesty, accountability and trustworthiness); and End values (such as liberty, equality and justice) [9]. This classification may seem neat but it is difficult to make distinctions in the definitions of these three leadership values. Norms and values that define the Islamic culture are sanctioned by *shari'ah* which "represents the moral compass of a Muslim's personal and public life" [10]. The Gallup poll data shows that an average of 79 percent of Muslims in ten countries would like to see *shari'ah* as a source of legislation in their countries [11].

This study is significant for several reasons. This study should help global leaders understand that cultural differences do make a difference in terms of leadership attributes and performance. Such an understanding will discourage the temptation of imposing norms and values of one group over the other. Democracy, it must be noted, resists this type of domination. Most importantly, this study will help a better understanding of leadership in the Muslim world. As will be discussed, the leaders in the Muslim world embody both political and moral authority. Yet, even the best-known Western thinkers with lengthy commentaries on Islam have neglected the importance of Muslim leadership. The introduction of Islamic perspective in the West is likely to lead to a broader theorization and ultimately to a better understanding of leadership behavior in the Muslim world. This may, in turn, result in a closer cooperation between the West and the Muslim leaders and thus pool their resources together to ensure a just, humane world order.

**Leadership from Western Perspective:** Despite the crucial role leadership plays in the establishment and maintenance of democratic societies, an agreed upon definition of the concept is yet to emerge. There are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are scholars grappling with the concept. A survey conducted in 1970 found 130 definitions of leadership [12]. They agree, however, in looking at leadership in terms of a relationship, as the reciprocal process of mobilizing, by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, political and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers [12].

Implied in the above definition is a relationship which involves power, influence and authority. In fact, Political Science literature is replete with definitions illustrating the significance of power, influence, authority, command and control in a leader-follower relationship. Thus, Kenneth Janda views leadership as "a particular type of power relationship" [13]. Considering that leadership and politics (defined as power) are inextricably linked, Richard Neustadt subtitled his *Presidential Power* as "The politics of leadership" [14]. Similarly, MacGregor Bums insists that an understanding of "the nature of leadership requires understanding of the essence of power, for leadership is a special form of power" [12].

Power in its various forms (coercive, legitimate, reward and expert or Weberian traditional, bureaucratic and charismatic power) is present to some degree in any leader-follower relationship [15]. Power, however, is the ever-present inescapable common feature of Western and other secular political systems and has been criticized by the Western scholars themselves. Criticism has, for instance, focused upon the process of party competition and the entire system of liberal democracy. It is observed that the democratic process encourages politicians to outbid one another by making vote-winning promises to the electorate and encourages electors to vote according to short-term self-interest rather than the long-term interest of the individual and the community. It has also been argued that behind the facade of liberal democracy there lies the permanent power of a "ruling elite". Classical thinkers like Gaetano Mosca, Wilfred Pareto and Robert Michels have argued that political power always lies in

the hands of a small group and those egalitarian ideas, such as socialism and democracy, are a myth. Similarly Joseph Schumpeter described democracy as "that institutional arrangement for arriving at public decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of competitive struggle for the people's vote" [16]. The electorate can decide which elite rules, but cannot change the fact that the power is always exercised by an elite whose sole aim is to augment power for their own benefit. The power-driven behavior of the leaders has given a bad name to politics itself. Most people have come to believe that politics is the art of governing by deceiving mankind. They conceive of politics as a dirty business better to be shunned, that power is a worldly thing not to be sought and that the pious, saintly people should eschew politics altogether. Hence, the oft-heard phrase: keep religion out of politics.

Islam obligates Muslims to proclaim the unity and sovereignty of God and to unequivocally repudiate *taghut*, i.e., those who claim absolute right and power and, therefore, to banish *zulm* (oppression and injustice) from the face of the earth. The Qur'an enjoins the believers to shatter the absolutism of demi-gods and false deities; to divest them of any leadership roles; to wrest power for the righteous; and to reinstate good in place of evil. Islam puts power in an active moral framework. It is not an end but a means to serve God and thus a source of mercy and justice for humanity. A leader, in the words of the Qur'an, is to guide "men by Our command … to do good deeds, to establish regular prayers and to practice regular charity…." (Qur'an 21:73). Such a conceptualization of leadership totally transforms the nature, scope and purpose of power as conceived in Western theory and practice.

**Theories of Leadership in the West:** The variety of definition cited above is an indication that the study of leadership has a long and respectable history in the West. However, it is only in the twentieth century, since early 1930s, that it has become a topic for sustained formal analysis by scholars and researchers. Early studies of leadership were preoccupied with power and influence and these date back to Sun Tzu, Plato and Niccolo Machiavelli. In its early phase, the great man theory received popularity. This is evident from numerous writings on Roman emperors and charismatic leaders such as Napoleon Bonaparte, M.K. Gandhi, Winston Churchill and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, among others. This great man theory is associated with the works of Thomas

Carlyle and Francis Galton who concluded that great leaders were born with innate qualities. In other words, great leaders were born and not made [17]. These works lent support to trait-based perspective that became popular in the 1940s and the 1950s.

According to trait theories, certain individuals possess innate qualities that enable them to lead. Northouse identifies intelligence, self-confidence determination, integrity and sociability as the five traits associated with effective leadership and that it is these traits that distinguish leaders from followers [18]. Subsequent studies failed to discover universal traits for leadership success. Ralph Stogdill, for instance, reviewing over 120 trait studies in 1984 found no understandable pattern [19]. He suggested instead integrating personal and social characteristics. Though the traits perspective continued, there emerged various theoretical orientations (behavioral (1950s-1960s), situational (1960s-1970s) and in the 1980s, transactional, transformational) aimed at studying and/or enhancing leadership.

Scholars in the behavioral school, especially in Harvard, Ohio and Michigan, conducted research in the laboratory setting or through field studies observing the behavior of leaders [20]. Behavior theories, as the name implies, focus on the activities of leaders, rather than on their distinguishing traits. House and Mitchell identify directive, supportive, participative and achievement oriented leadership behaviors which are often categorised as leadership styles [21]. From this perspective, scholars identified person-oriented, task-oriented and individual prominence behaviors as related to leadership effectiveness. However, no pattern of leader behavior was found to be associated with leader effectiveness [22].

One corrective suggested was the situational approach that emerged around the 1970s emphasizing contextual factors influencing leadership processes. It is argued quite persuasively that there exists no one best way to lead. A style may succeed in one situation but may be ineffective in another. The basic argument of this approach is that different situations warrant different kinds of leadership [18]. Leadership effectiveness is enhanced only when leaders pick up cues in the environment and adopt their policies, behaviors and actions accordingly. The leaders must adjust their leadership style (delegative, supportive, directive, coaching) to match the varying level of religious, personal and psychological maturity of their followers. To be able to shape events, the leaders must recognize the situation and the needs of the employees. This theory, however,

was found to be unable to account for substantial variance in group performance [23]. This gave rise to considerations about factors that help a leader transform the behavior of followers.

Transformational theories focus on how leaders motivate followers to pursue goals that transcend their immediate self interest. The transformational leader "shapes and shares a vision which provides direction, focus, meaning and inspiration to the work of others" [24]. They promote desirable attitudes, values and beliefs which affect the culture. They attach considerable importance to such values as relative equality of power between leaders and the led, high tolerance of ambiguity, high levels of trust and openness and a desire to share feelings and emotions. They also emphasize values such as trust, teamwork, rationality, delegation, productivity and customer service, among others. Transformational leaders mobilize their followers through "idealised influence" (charisma), "inspirational motivation", intellectual stimulation, high-performance expectations and effective articulation of a vision [25]. From a transformational perspective, leadership is a shared process which results in the empowerment of the people in the organization, higher level of motivation and improved productivity [18]. Transformational leadership is invariably contrasted with transactional leadership which argues for contingent reinforcement. There is an interaction between leaders and followers. Leaders motivate the followers through promises, praise and rewards. In this approach, there is an exchange of one thing for another such as jobs in return for votes or subsidies for campaign contributions. The transactional leaders emphasize such values as honesty, consistency and responsible behavior to achieve their goals. It has, however, been argued that followers need not be motivated through tangible rewards.

According to B.M. Bass, there is universality in the transactional-transformational leadership paradigm [25]. In other words, the operation and the relationships identified in this paradigm can be observed in a wide range of organizations and cultures. However, it is hard to find many leaders who could "articulate a vision, redefine organizational problems, suggest solutions, transform and energize followers and be an example and mentor to followers" [26]. Furthermore, several studies found aspiring leaders unwilling to be burdened with such a huge expectation. Research also found that many "good-to-great leaders" to be "self-effacing, quiet, reserved, even shy," exactly the opposite of the type portrayed in the transformational leadership theory [27].

Many scholars have highlighted varying approaches to leadership across societal cultures. Some similarities notwithstanding, many of the values deemed essential for leadership effectiveness is at variance with those found in many different countries. As will be discussed subsequently, they certainly do not tally with the values espoused by people in the majority of the Muslim countries many of whose cultures have not yet fully been explored in the literature on leadership emanating from the West. One exception, however, is the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) program which undertook a cross-cultural longitudinal and multi-method research project in 62 countries investigating the impact of culture on leadership effectiveness [28]. Using nine cultural dimensions (uncertainty avoidance, power distance, institutional collectivism, in-group collectivism, gender egalitarianism, assertiveness, future orientation, performance orientation and humane orientation), the GLOBE researchers divided the 62 countries into 10 clusters each unique in its own way. Despite its theoretical and methodological limitations, the GLOBE study shows the linkages between culture and leadership providing evidence that leadership is different across cultures in various ways. It identifies cultural values influencing leadership practices. Yet, it must be emphasized that GLOBE project was designed by Western trained researchers and were largely influenced by Western perspectives. Additionally, the GLOBE project identifies leadership patterns within cultures facilitating cross-cultural comparisons. It refrains from uncovering the underlying roots of why leadership in different cultures differs from each other.

**Leadership in Islam:** The concept of leadership originating and deriving significance from the contribution it makes to the understanding of Western, secular societies may not be of much value in understanding the leadership phenomenon from an Islamic perspective for several reasons. Firstly, Islam makes no distinction between the spiritual and temporal affairs. It lays down the rules of human conduct encompassing all spheres of human life. Religion as Iqbal points out, "is not a departmental affair, it is neither mere thought, nor mere feeling, nor mere action; it is an expression of the whole man" [29]. The comprehensiveness of Islam does not allow politics to be out of its fold, nor would it permit politics to become a dirty business. Secondly, the central concept of Islam, i.e., *tawhid* (unity and sovereignty of Allah), denies the power of control and command to anyone but Allah, the Creator

and Nourisher of the universe. To proclaim, as the Qur'an does frequently, that "the command rests with none but Allah" (3:189; 6:57) is to repudiate anyone who claims absolute right and power over anything. Thirdly, Islam perceives of a believer as one who does every individual and social activity for the sake of Allah. His relation to his fellow beings and other creatures is built upon his distinctive relation to Allah. Thus, an apparent dyadic relationship between the two believers is, in effect, a triadic relationship in that each is relating to the other through Allah as the intermediary. This creates a symmetric, as opposed to asymmetric relationships, one of equality rather than of control and domination as in the power-based theory. Finally, Islam rejects all worldly superiority and cautions the believers against using spiritual values and moral superiority for personal advantage. Islam demands a life in conformity with the law, the *shari'ah*, the implementation of which should eliminate injustice and abolish *zulm* (oppression) from society. In Islam, the leader and the led both submit to the same *shari'ah*.

From an Islamic perspective, then, to lead is to assume the initiative in a relationship with others (followers) toward the pursuit of some goal, the goal being the actualization of *tawhid* in space-time context. *Tawhid* requires, inter alia, enforcing *shari'ah* by dispensing socio-political justice. Leadership in Islam is a moral activity and a process of communication between the equals directed towards the achievement of a goal. The leaders are primarily distinguished from the followers by their knowledge, their commitment to the Islamic principles and possession of superior moral values. Thus conceived, Islamic leadership establishes depth of purpose linking leaders and followers in activities that satisfy their need for an enduring sense of community and meaning. Neither party uses power to influence and to gain advantage over the other. They are rather involved in a process in which the attainment of the common purpose is paramount. The leader and the followers both understand the goal and agree to strive jointly for the attainment of that goal. Since the goal is divine, striving for the achievement of that goal assumes the form of worship or '*ibadah*. Hence, the leadership in Islam may be conceived of as '*ibadah*. The foregoing discussion on the nature of leadership in Islam makes it possible to delineate some of its essential features.

First, leadership must be established on the basis of consent of the people through free and fair election. In the enormous expositions written by Muslim scholars about leadership, the elective nature of this institution is stressed. They have relied unswervingly on the "divine guidance of the community and the infallibility of its *ijma'*. AI-Mawardi argued for an elective process for the choice of the *khalifah* who, according to Sayyid Qutb, derives his authority from one source, the will of the governed. This can take place, explains Mawdudi, only if three principles are observed:

The election of the leader depends entirely on the will of the general public with no one having the right to impose himself forcibly as the leader, no clan or class shall have a monopoly of leadership; and the election shall be free of all coercion [30].

Such principles of self-government are deduced from the scriptural principle of *shura* and from the injunctions to order the good and forbid the evil and were indeed spontaneously operative during the period of the first four rightly guided caliphs. Their realization under the medieval caliphate was unthinkable and hence earlier jurists did not insist on the right of every individual to participate in the election of the *khalifah*. They, however, never upheld the principle of hereditary government even when vested in republican garb by the practice of *bay'ah* (pledge of obedience). They considered election as a collective duty which would be performed by those who are best qualified to evaluate the capability of the candidate for the office. It is essential to note that Islam does not specify any particular method of election. The translation of this principle of election into a workable scheme of government is left to be determined by other considerations. Furthermore, the nomination and succession to the office of the leader need not entail any particular procedure such as consecration or co-ordination.

The simplicity of the procedure, however, should not be mistaken for a laxity in the qualifications of a prospective candidate. Muslim scholars and theologians of different schools (*madhahibs*), with minor variations, have concurred in their views that the candidate for leadership must be a Muslim, male, adult and sane. These merely mark out the formal legal bounds to eligibility for the headship of the Islamic society; far more important are the qualities of:

- Commitment to Islam, *wara'*.
- Knowledge of and ability to understand the demands of the Islamic system, '*ilm*.
- Capacity and competence to carry out the administrative duties, *kafa'ah* and,
- A strong resolution to uphold justice, '*adalah*.

In any case, leadership in an Islamic system is constituted by the general will of the Muslims according to certain prescribed qualifications and criteria. The ummah also has the right to dislodge the leader should he forfeit any of the qualifications or try to accede to power by force or trickery. The companions of the Prophet resolved the succession crisis resulting from his death. They resorted to a two-stage process of instituting a successor: (1) consultation, nomination and selection by the representatives of the ummah (*bay'at al-khassah*), (2) and, subsequent confirmation by the public through general acclamation or *bay'at al-'ammah*. The first Caliph, Abu Bakr Siddiq (RA), was selected by the notables and confirmed by the general *bay'ah* in the year 1 1 A.H/632 C.E. The second Caliph, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, was nominated by the incumbent in consultation with the leaders of the Ummah and was then referred to the general public for confirmation in 13 A.H/634 C.E. The third Caliph, 'Uthman ibn 'Affan, was nominated by an electoral college and subsequently ratified by the Ummah in the year 23 A.H/644 C.E. On the assassination of the third caliph and the ensuing chaos, the representatives of the Ummah approached 'Ali ibn Abi Talib to assume the leadership position. Ali, however, insisted on the approval of the masses and was elected the *khalifah* accordingly in the year 35 A.H/656 C.E [30]. These modes of succession were inspired by the Qur'anic principle of *shura*. These have acquired a special significance and remained a basic principle of the constitutional theory of an Islamic political order.

Second, the basis of the leadership is the ummah, the Islamic social order. The legitimacy of the leader requires the consent and approval of the people as well as the sovereignty of the *shari'ah*. Islamic political thought conceives of Islam as prescribing that the leader manages through consultation. In this respect, the Qur'an prescribes that "the Muslims should manage their affairs by mutual consultation" (42:38) "and when you have resolved, put your trust in Allah" (3: 159). Throughout the whole range of Muslim political thought, there is hardly any write-up that does not invoke the two verses cited above. They differ, however, in terms of the scope of consultation. Some would restrict it to the representatives of the people; others would include every Muslim who is capable and qualified to give a sound opinion on matters of Islamic law. To most of the thinkers, a decision by consensus does not mean necessarily unanimity but simply the agreement of the majority of those present. As for the specific method of consultation, it is left for the Muslims to determine. What is important, however, is that the command for consultation can neither be flouted

altogether nor can it be assigned a form that would violate its substance by rendering it ineffective. For as Umar 1 declared, "There can be no *khalifah* except by consultation".

The system of *shura*, explains AbdulHarnid AbuSulayman,

> provides the procedure whereby Muslims sit together and deliberate upon important matters to arrive at and bound by conclusions in the light of the philosophical concept of justice. If the issue under consideration does not concern justice but a case of preferring one to the other, there is no harm in adopting measures such as voting, abiding by the point of view of the minority, etc. The same measure could be resorted to if the discussion reached a deadlock in the absence of an authentic analogy. But even here, no decision should be taken until everybody has had the chance to express [his or her] opinion and cite relevant evidence [31].

The Qur'an mentions *shura* on the same footing as establishing prayer and paying *zakah*. According to the text and context of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, *shura* means a decisive participation of the people in governing themselves. It is based on the conviction that matters of fundamental importance are best left to the collective intelligence of the people provided they are guided by the Shari'ah. The assumption being that, given the freedom of every man to exert himself to understand the spirit of the law and form his opinion accordingly, all considered opinions will eventually gravitate towards the truth. *Shura* ensures not merely the participation of the people in public affairs, but it acts as a check against tyrannical rule as well. *Shura* can be operationalized only if there prevails two fundamental principles of freedom and equality.

The validity of consensus depends on it being based on the *shari'ah*. The shari'ah dominated the mind and conscience of successive generations of Muslims and has been considered the source and highest form of law embodying moral, ethical and religious values. It is "the epitome of the true Islamic spirit, the most decisive expression of Islamic thought, the essential kernel of Islam" [32]. They are unanimous that *shari'ah* be the law of the land; since it is absolute and permits no compromise. The caliph or the *amir* rules as *primus inter pares* and acts according to the *shari'ah* and the will of the community. He is elected to establish the ordinance of the law, to secure its sanctions and to ensure compliance

with all matters contained in it. The community backs him to translate the law from the sphere of potentiality into actuality. It deposes him and replaces him by another, if he commits any act that would justify his removal from office. The leader, known in the early literature as *khalifah. imam, arnir* etc., is not a sovereign but a *primus interpares*,, first among the equals. Within the Ummah, the leader and the follower are on an equal footing. There is no distinction of rank but of role and no basis of ranking save that of *taqwa* (love and fear of Allah). The *imam* must lead according to the *shari'ah*, the violation of which absolves the ummah of its obligation to render obedience to him.

Third, the leader must also be endowed with qualities which would enable him to fulfil his responsibilities. Consequently, it is difficult to find a single Muslim scholar of note who has not dwelt at length on the virtues of the *imam* or the leader. AI-Mawardi, for instance, lays down seven conditions beginning with justice (*'adalah*) followed by knowledge (*'ilm*), physical and mental fitness (*salamah*), sound judgement (*ra'y*), courage and determination (*shaja'ah wa najdah*) and descent from the Quraish (*nasab*). Ibn Khaldun reduces them to five: *'ilm, 'adalah, kifayah, salamah* and *nasab*. AI-Ghazali enumerates similar qualifications with some modifications. In the list of qualities, the predominant role of justice and its ethical sanctions are quite clear. This vision is diametrically opposed to the one espoused by political realists like Niccolo Machiavelli who had a great impact upon the development of Western political theory. The just *imam* is described by some jurists as the shadow of God upon earth. He implements the *shari'ah*, preserves equality among the people, promotes their welfare and redresses the grievances of the oppressed. In short, a just *imam* would establish conditions in which the right religion and Islamic virtues will be practiced. Obedience to the just leader is therefore mandatory and is equated with obedience to Allah and His prophet.

Finally, the leader is held accountable for all his decisions and actions. The concept of accountability in Islam is rather wide and includes accountability to God, the Almighty and accountability to fellow beings. The Islamic value system is categorical in holding leaders accountable to God in this world as well as in the hereafter. The leader, according to a saying of the Prophet, is a shepherd over the people and will be questioned about his subjects as to how he conducted their affairs. The leaders are also under obligation to explain and to justify their conduct to the community. The early caliphs reminded the ummah to obey them as long as they obeyed God and His prophet and to correct them if they went wrong. Accountability is applicable to both tasks and results. The leader in performing his responsibilities must take into consideration his relationships with his Creator and his fellow human beings. In performing his responsibilities, the leaders must not be condescending, nor patronizing in nature.

The leadership in Islam is not a right but a function to be performed on behalf of the community. The Shari'ah rules out usurpation and hereditary succession as grounds of political legitimacy. It abhors personal authority which, according to lqbal, is "inimical to human individuality" [33]. The *amirs* forfeit their right to lead if there occurs a change in their moral status, if they become slaves to their passions and flouts the injunctions of *shari'ah*, if there occurs a change in their physical nature which incapacitates them from performing the leadership function. The best exposition of the people's right to deal with an unjust leader is provided by Muadh b. Jabal, one of the companions of the Prophet:

Our leader is one of us; if he implements among us the teachings ... of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, we shall have him over us. If he goes against it, we shall depose him. If he commits theft, we shall amputate his hand; if he commits adultery, we shall flog him … He will not hide himself from us, nor will he be self-conceited ... He is a person as good as we are [34].

**Obedience to Rule:** The authority of leaders and the responsibility of the followers are conveyed in Surah 4, ayah 59 of the Qur'an which enjoins the believers to "Obey Allah and Obey the Messenger and those in authority among you". (*wa uli al-amr minkum*) [35]. By meaningfully omitting the verb "obey" only in case of those having "authority", the verse makes obedience to them conditional and subservient to Allah and His Prophet. This condition or requirement is met by "right belief' and assiduous performance of the prescribed rites and rituals. Additionally, the leaders are under obligation to seek the advice of the community and to administer firmly once a policy decision has been made (AI-Qur'an, 3:159). Declaring the leadership as a trust, the Qur'an enjoins the leaders to govern with justice (4:58), to avoid cruelty (3:159), to promote public interest, to take care of the needy and not to benefit the rich at the expense of the community (59:7).

By issuing commands which run contrary to the Qur'an and the Sunnah, explains Zamakhshari, the leader forfeits his claim to obedience from the people [36]. There are several passages in the Qur'an which categorically forbid obedience to him who follows "the dictates of his

own desires" (18:28) and "who oversteps the limits set by Allah" (26:15). Indeed, the Qur'an makes it obligatory upon the believers to rebel against injustice; to defend themselves whenever tyranny afflicts them (1 3:39) and "to fight in the cause of. Allah and of the utterly helpless men, women and children who are oppressed (4:75).

The above Qur'anic attitude is reinforced by several prophetic traditions (*ahadith*) which urge upon the Muslim to obey those in authority except if he "orders him to do a sinful act" [37]. In such a case, the obligation lapses automatically, for "there is no obedience to a creature, if it involves disobedience to the Creator" [38]. Obedience "is obligatory only in virtue". In fact, the Prophet has warned of dire consequences if the Muslims refuse to resist a wrongdoer:

Nay, by Allah, you must enjoin right and forbid wrong and you must stay the hand of the wrongdoer, bend hint to conformity with justice (*al-haqq*) and force him to do justice or. else Allah will set the hearts of you all against one another [39].

The leadership in Islam is, thus, based upon a framework of values which include: *tawhid* (the unity and sovereignty of Allah), *khilafah* (vicegerency), *'amanah* (trust)*, shari'ah* (the Islamic legal system)*, shura* (participatory decision-making)*, 'ilm* (knowledge), *'adl* (justice) and *'ibadah* (continuous worship). The entire career of the last Prophet of Islam is characterized by a struggle against misery, tyranny and oppression of one against another and of translating these values into action. His career presents an ideal role model (*uswah hasanah*) which Muslims are required to emulate.

**Muslim Leadership: past and Present:** There is general consensus among the Sunni Muslim jurists and thinkers that the *Khulafa al-Rashidun* did adhere strictly to the normative standard found in the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Legitimacy and justice characterized this era of "righteous excellence". None laid the foundation of a hereditary government nor assumed power by force or trickery [40]. They acceded to the caliphal office by lawful means, i.e., through elections and they governed through consultation and in accordance with the *shari'ah*. Obedience was made conditional upon their observance of the *shari'ah* provisions as is evidenced from the key-note speech of the first caliph, Abu Bakr:

People, I have been entrusted with your affairs, although I am not the best among you. Help me if I do well and straighten me if I do wrong ... Obey me as long a I obey Allah and His Prophet. In case I contravene the injunction of Allah and His Prophet, you owe no obedience [41].

Similarly, his successor 'Umar declared: "Verily, I am one among you, I do not desire that you should follow anything out of my caprice"[42]. The third caliph 'Uthman not merely followed the Qur'an and the Sunnah, but Muslims bound him further to follow the footsteps of his two illustrious predecessors. He too believed in rule by consultation and upheld *shari'ah*. As for the fourth caliph Ali, he refused to become the *khalifah* in secret or without the approval of the masses. None of the caliphs believed in the Divine Right of Kings and none solicited unconditional obedience from the masses.

The period of the *Khulafa'al-rashidun* (rightly guided caliphs) formed an ideal source from which thinkers could draw the blue-print of an Islamic political leadership. This ideal appears in the writings of Muslim jurists and thinkers from al-Mawardi to al-Mawdudi. In considering the writings of prominent thinkers on the subject of government and authority from al-Mawardi down to present day, one is struck by the fact that they held on tenaciously to the fundamental principles outlined above, even though they knew that these were fully realized in practice only during the period of the *Khulafa' al-rashidun*.

The Muslims expanded the boundaries of Muslim polities and spread Islam from the Arabian Peninsula to Spain in the West and to China in the East. They had evolved and were famous for their high and sophisticated civilization. They mastered various fields of knowledge and were effective in the area of administration, development, science, technology, ethics and morality. They endeavoured to create a civilization balanced between spiritual attainment and material development.

In the course of time, internal stresses and external challenges resulted in the gradual decaying of Muslim civilization and they became prey to the European colonial empire. The major victim of the colonial domination was the Muslim's self-image and cultural identity. This was due to the colonial policy of progress and enlightenment through education planted in the colonies by the Victorian Savant Lord Thomas Babington MaCaulay. The educational policy was geared at transmitting the European cultural values to the natives and to make available to the colonizers a group of clerks, collaborators and cronies to continue the cultural onslaught of the West. From the beginning, a number of people were selected for higher studies and were educated in the colonial legal system. They were then entrusted with the task of running the educational institutions set up in

the colonies to develop a new class of Western educated elite. The traditional leadership was systematically destroyed. The *'ulama'* that had a virtual monopoly of the legal profession were routed out in favor of those who studied Western law and education. A foreign oriented local leadership was imposed upon the people who became the heir to the imperial powers. It is this class which became voluntary or involuntary instruments of intermediate domination for the pauperization and the Westernization of Muslim societies.

The elites in Muslim societies are trapped in the conceptual framework of the West and cannot free themselves from this spider's web. They feel a sense of shame about their cultural heritage, embrace the values of an alien Western culture, emulate specific aspects of their life-style and attempt to shape the society on the model of the Western intruders. They are secular in outlook and adhere to nationalism, capitalism, or socialism. These elites nevertheless feel the need to assert their identities and personalities by identifying themselves as Muslims and by asserting the supremacy of Islam. They are what colonial education intended them to be: Muslim in faith but English in taste, opinions and morals. They practice secularism but rationalize it in the name of Islam. Instead of banishing religion, they talk of religious neutrality of the state, i.e., giving equal protection and patronage to all religions prevailing in the state. They simply acquiesce socially, politically and economically tagging along behind the West.

 Once in power, these leaders expand the functions and powers of the nation-state: its monolithic power; its desire to centralize, corrupt and control its security apparatus characterized by unlimited power and limited imagination. True to their education and training, they make Islam the handmaiden of the parochial nation-state, manipulate the sociopolitical institutions to the detriment of their own people and serve to undermine the values, beliefs and attitudes of Muslims.

Their nation-building policies have failed to yield results. On the contrary, there prevails a rising incidence of urban crime, prostitution, abuse and misuse of power and other aspects of decadence. Problems of political legitimacy and authoritarianism continue. A grievous socioeconomic disparity, the breakdown of traditional life patterns and a spiritual malaise, characterized by widespread corruption, is the identifying feature of a Muslim society. In this society, order, obedience and sycophancy get preference over justice, responsibility and a critical outlook. Opposition that disturbs the status quo is suppressed through denial of opportunities, detention without trial, or in extreme cases, summary execution. Muslims have been the victim of state terrorism for decades. Many thousands have been displaced, bombed and dispossessed. In Algeria, over 50,000 have been killed during the 1990s; Kurds have been persecuted by several Muslim states; Iran and Iraq waged a bloody ten-year war killing millions. Ethnic violence is common in Karachi as in Cairo and in many other Muslim states.

To make matters worse, the elites in Muslim states enjoy support from Western powers. The superpowers covertly and overtly support Westernized elites to suit their own geo-political ends, while acting against Islamically oriented, mass-based leaders. Massive external support reduced the need for Westernized elites receiving such support to enter into social compacts with their population. The mass response to their rule is the denial of legitimacy, which the ruling elite so fervently desire. Consequently, there emerged new Muslim movements and a new kind of populist, aggressive and literalist Muslim leadership hoping to destroy the ruling elite as a legacy of the West and then re-create it in an Islamic mold. This perhaps perpetuates the conflict between the West and the Muslim world.

## CONCLUSION

The leadership literature, as sketched above, is based upon assumptions reflecting Western culture. Most of the prevalent leadership theories and the empirical evidence supporting them are distinctly American or European in character. They emphasize values that are individualistic, hedonistic and rational as against collectivist, altruistic and religion. Values that are emphasized in other cultures, particularly those derived from religion, are ignored or are given scant recognition. The major component of the Western leadership theories is that they separate individual and professional life. The key attributes of leadership are experience, expertise and decision-making skills needed to accomplish tasks, achieve goals and ensure self interest. Not much attention is paid to values and ethics for the character formation of the leader which is considered by many to be at the root of contemporary leadership crisis.

The leadership in Islam is a trust (*amanah*) and is rooted in the Qur'an, literally the word of God and the Sunnah, sayings and doings of Prophet Muhammad. The leadership values emphasized in Islam can be expressed in one word, *tawhid*. A leader (*khalifah*) who subscribes to *tawhid* means that he/she truly believes in the unity and sovereignty of God. So aligned, the leaders will always be mindful of vertical accountability to God and

horizontal accountability to fellow beings for all deeds and actions. So attuned, the leaders will always seek to enjoin good and forbid evil. The leader will be guided by the *shari'ah* and will take decision on the basis of mutual consultation (*shura)* thus creating a high level of trust and support among the followers needed to enhance their commitment to the cause of pleasing Allah and serving the humanity. Leadership in Islam is a trust (*amanah*) which requires a leader to guide, protect and treat the followers fairly with justice (*'adl*).

Muslims all over the world desire a type of leadership rooted in the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Such leaders are denied the opportunity to serve their community. The ruling elites in the Muslim world are very much Westernized and hence do not enjoy mass support. Massive supports they receive from the West make them doubly suspect. In response, the ruling elites unleash state terrorism which drives the Muslims to look for an alternative leadership and demand purity in an impure world. The leadership crisis which Muslim world faces affects not merely Muslims but the relationships between Muslims, the West and the rest.

## REFERENCES

1.  Mawdudi, Sayyld Abul A'la, 1984. The Islamic Movement: Dynamics of Values, Power and Change (Khurram Murad ed.) Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 77: 84.
2.  Stogdill, Ralph M., 1974. Handbook of Leadership. New York: The Free Press.
3.  Bass, B.M. and Ruth Bass, 2008. The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research and Managerial Applications. New York: Free Press, pp: 10.
4.  De *Saint*-Exupéry, Antoine, 1998. The Little Prince (K. Woods, Trans.). New York: Harcourt Brace, pp: 4.
5.  Alatas, S.F., 2002. Eurocentrism and the Role of the Human Sciences in the Dialogue Among Civilizations. The European Legacy, 7(6): 761.
6.  Karenga, M., 2002. Introduction to Black Studies. Los Angeles, CA: University of Sankore Press, pp: 46-47.
7.  Nisbett, Richard, 2003. The Geography of Thought: How Asians and Westerners Think Differently and Why. New York: The Free Press.
8.  Kouzes, James M. and Barry Z. Posner, 2003. The Leadership Challenge. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, L. Pierce Jon and W. Newstrom John, 2006. Leaders and the Leadership Process: Readings, Self -Assessments and Applications. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill Irwin.
9.  Burns, J.M., 1998. Foreword in Ciulla, B. Joanne, ed., Ethics, the Heart of Leadership. Westport, CT: Quorum Books.
10. Esposito, John L. and Dalia Mogahed, 2007. Who Speaks for Islam? What a Billion Muslims Really Think? New York: Gallup Press, 35.
11. Gallup World Poll, 2006. Special Report: Muslim World by Dalia Mogahed. Princeton: The Gallup Organisation, pp: 3.
12. Bums, James MacGregor, 1978. Leadership. New York: Harper and Row, 2: 247.
13. Janda, Kennetlh F., 1972. Towards the Explication of the Concept of Leadership in terms of the Concept of Power. In Paige, Glenn ed., Political Leadership. New York: Free Press, pp: 45.
14. Neustadt, Richard E., 1960. Presidential Power: The Politics of Leadership. New York: John Wiley.
15. For Types of Power and Authority, See French, J.R.P. Jr. and B. Raven, 1959. The Bases of Social Power. In Darwin Cartwright ed., Studies in Social Power. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan; Gerth, H.A. and C. Wright Mills eds. 1958. From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology. New York: Oxford University Press.
16. Schumpter, J., 1976. Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy. London: Allen and Unwin, pp: 269.
17. See Carlyle, Thomas, 1966. On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press; Galton, F. 1999. Hereditary Genius: An Inquiry into Its Laws and Consequences. Bristol: Thoemmes Press.
18. Northouse, P.G., 2004. Leadership: Theory and Practice. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
19. Cited by Wren, J.T., 1995. The leader's Companion: Insights on Leadership Through the Ages. New York: Free Press.
20. See Bales, R.F., 1954. In Conference, Harvard Business Review 32(2): 44-50. R.M. Stogdill and A.E. Coons, 1957. Leader Behavior: Its Description and Measurement. Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press; and R.L. Kahn and D. Katz. 1953. Leadership Practices in relation to Productivity and Morale. In: D. Cartwright and A. Zender, eds., Group Dynamics. New York: Harper and Row.
21. House, R.J. and R.R. Mitchell, 1974. Path- goal Theory of Leadership, J. Contemporary Business, 3(2): 81-97.

22. Bowers D.G. and S.E. Seashore, 1966. Predicting Organizational Effectiveness with Four-factor Theory of Leadership, Administrative Science Quarterly, 11(2): 238-63.

23. Ashour, A.S., 1973. Further Discussion Of Fiedler's Contingency Model Of Leadership Effectiveness: An Evaluation, Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 9(3): 339-355.

24. Blunt, P., 1991. Organizational Culture and Development, International Journal of Human Resource Management, 2(1): 65.

25. Bass, B.M., 1997. Does the Transactional - Transformational Leadership Paradigm Transcend Organizational and National Boundaries? American Psychologist, 52(2): 130-139.

26. Evers, C.W., 2000. Leading and Learning in Organizational Contexts: A Contribution from the New Cognitive Science, International J. Leadership in Education, 3(3): 224.

27. Collins, J., 2001. Good to Great. London: Random House Business Books, pp: 12-13.

28. House, R.J., P.J. Hanges, M. Javidan, P.W. Dorfman and V. Gupta, (Eds.), 2004. Culture, Leadership and Organizations: The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

29. Iqbal, Muhammad, 1962. The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam. Lahore: Sheikh Muhammad Ashraf, pp: 2.

30. Mawdudi, S. Abul A'Ia, 1980. The Islamic Law and Constitution (Khurshid Ahmad tr. & ed.) Lahore: Islamic Publications Ltd, pp: 249-252.

31. Abu Sulayman, Abdul Hamid, 1985. Islamization of Knowledge with Special Reference to Political Science, American J. Islamic Social Sci., 2(2): 285.

32. Smith, W.C., 1965. The Concept of Shari'a Among Some Mutakkallimun in George Makdisi ed., Arabic and Islamic Studies in the Honour of H.A.R. Gibb. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pp: 581.

33. Ahmad, Jamil-ul-Din. N.d. Iqbal's Concept of Islamic Polity. Karachi, Pakistan Publications, pp: 21.

34. Hassan, Ahmad, 1969. The Political Role of ljma, Islamic Studies, 8(2): 138.

35. There are two references to the term "ulu al-amr" in the Qur'an in 4:59 and 4:83. According to Ibn Manzur, the term refers to chiefs as well as to the knowledgeable. See Ibn Manzur, n.d. Lisan al-Arab. Beirut: Dar al-Sadr, 4: 31. AI-Tabari, al-Qurtubi, Ibn Kathir and others agree that the term refers to rulers, commanders as well as to knowledgeables. However, al-Qurtubi's inclination is to use the tenn "al-umara" for rulers and commanders reserving the term "al-'ulama" for knowledgeables in religion. He points out that "to consult al-ulama is a duty and complying with their counsel is an obligation." Al-Qurtubi, Abu Abd Allah Muhammad Ahmad. N.d. AI-Jami' lil-ahkam al-Qur'an, 3(5): 260.

36. Zamakhshari, Abu al-Qasim Mahmud ibn Umar. N.d. Al-Kashshaf. Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah, 1: 290.

37. Abdul Hamid Siddiqi tr, 1971. Sahih Muslim. Beirut: Dar al-Arabia, 3(4533): 1022.

38. Mishkat AI-Masabih cited in Mawdudi, S.A.A Islamic Law and Constitution, pp: 257.

39. Asad, Muhammad, 1981. The Principles of State and Government in Islam. Gibralter: Dar al-Andalus, pp: 88-82.

40. Mawdudi, Abul A'la, 1963. Political Thought in Early Islam in Shariff, M.M. ed. History of Musllin Philosophy. Weisbaden: Otto Harrasowitz, 1: 659.

41. Ibn Hisham, Abu Muhammad Abd al-Malik, 1955. AI-Sirah al-Nabawiyah, eds., M. al-Saqqa, I. al-Ahyari and Abd al-Hafiz Shalabi. Cairo: Mustafa al-Babi al-Halabi, 2: 661.

42. Yaqub bin Ibrahim Abu Yusuf, 1352. Kitab al-Kharaj. Cairo: Salafiyah Press, pp: 14.