Servant Leadership in the Bedouin-Arab Culture

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Abstract

This article reviews the Bedouin-Arab cultural context, posits the principles of Servant-Leadership, and offers two examples of this leadership style—one from the beginning of the Islamic period, another from the mid-20th century. The article concludes with a comparison of the Western servant-leader and leadership in the Bedouin-Arab culture.

The Bedouin-Arab Context

Before the birth of Islam, the inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula were categorized into two groups, the *Badw* (Bedouins) who lived a harsh desert life enduring severe environmental conditions with herds of livestock as their primary livelihood, and the *Hadar* (Settled People), who lived in villages and towns, with trade and agriculture as their main source of income (Hitti, 1974).

The Bedouins lived in communal units called *Ashiras* (Clans) and *Qabilas* (Tribes) that were unified by blood relation and ancestry. Bedouin tribes were independent with power vested in the hands of chiefs (*Shaykhs*). The son or an adult male relative of the *shaykh*

would inherit leadership. However, the selection, as well as the ability to maintain the position required validation by the sub-tribal chiefs. The *shaykh's* major responsibilities included arbitration of disputes, location of adequate grazing pastures for his tribe's cattle and camels, and defense of its wells and livestock against plunderers and rivals. He was expected to be generous and to entertain followers, visitors and guests. A reputation for wisdom and generosity brought more power and influence than the accumulation of wealth and animals (Hitti, 1974).

Contrary to Hollywood depictions, the tribal chief was not a sex maniac or a warmonger, but the oldest, wisest and the most courageous person in his tribe. His powers were not absolute, since he had to consult with the council of his tribe's elders on major tribal issues (Hitti, 1974). This is particularly true because desert society tends to be democratic and egalitarian, and a Bedouin tends to treat his chief as an equal rather than a boss who had to be obeyed no matter what (Kennedy, 1986).

When Islam appeared around 650 AD, it assimilated some Bedouin traditions and values, while rejecting others. For example, Islam rejected the tribal *Jahiliyyah asabiyyah*, (Favoring one's kin), emphasizing instead the principles of equity and justice. According to one *Hadith* (a saying of the Prophet) all Muslims are equal, just like the teeth of the comb. According to another *Hadith*, they are like the organs of body, if one of them aches, the whole body aches (The Qur'an: al-Nisa Surah, 4:59). On the other hand, Islam promoted the desert values of simplicity, generosity and protection of the weak. Islam emphasizes the concept of leadership. Sovereignty belongs only to God, and Muslims are ordered to obey the Prophet and those in authority. "Oh, you faithful! Obey God and obey the apostle and those in authority among you" (Nawafleh,

2000: p. 24). Following Quranic teachings, Prophet Mohammed would consult with his followers in the conduct of worldly matters where there was no revelation. The Quran states: "Forgive them, and pray for them, and take counsel with them in all matters of public concern" (The Qur'an: al-Imran Surah, 3:159).

Since the Prophet Mohammed did not appoint anyone to succeed him or to take charge of the young Islamic movement, the concept of the *khilafa* (caliphate, or succession) appeared, which sparked a great deal of discussion. Guided by the Quranic verses that stress consultation, such as "their (the believers') communal business is to be conducted through consultation among themselves" (The Qur'an, 36:38), it was decided that selection of the caliph, his dealings and his decision-making, must be conducted by *shura*. *Shura*, roughly translated as consultation, is seen by some as a development of the pre-Islamic tribal consultative council (Hitti, 1974: p. 237). It became one of the deeply rooted principles in Islam. The *Shura* is defined as the process of extensive discussion of an issue from all its aspects and dimensions, selection of the best given views on that issue, and testing of those views to make sure that the best interests of the community are realized (Abul-Faris, 1980: p. 79). The Prophet Mohammed and his followers practiced *shura* as the mechanism, implemented at all levels, for the selection of political leadership. The first four caliphs, (*Khulafa Rashidoun*, or the Rightly Guided Successors), were elected by the Islamic community through *shura*.

The era of the first four caliphs ended in 661 when Moawiyah Ibn Sufyan, from the Umayyad dynasty, took over the caliphate. Dramatic changes took place and the Islamic state was greatly expanded. While the first four caliphs were always available on demand and anyone could

see them directly, now many hurdles stood against access to the Umayyad caliph. Selection of the caliph by *shura* was replaced by family hereditary rule when Moawiyah declared his son, Yazeed, as his successor. Moawiyah kept the consultation principle, but it became a formal ritual whereby supporters would bless his decisions (Hitti, 1974). By appointing his kin to key positions in the Islamic State, Moawiyah brought back *Asabiyyah Qabaliyyah*, favoring one's kin. The simple frugal life of the first caliphs was replaced by a decadent life style in huge palaces, as clearly indicated in the following poem by Hind, Moawiyah's Bedouin wife:

> A tent blown over in all directions by the wind
> Is much more likeable to me than your huge palace (Hitti, 1974: p. 225).

The Umayyad rule ended in 750 when the Abbasids defeated them and took over the Islamic state. The state expanded in all directions, as Persians, Berbers, Turkmen, Uzbeks, Kyrgyz, and Moguls embraced Islam. While the Umayyads entrusted the major positions in the state to Arabs, the Abbasids relied heavily on governors and advisors from other cultures. The distance from the original simple Bedouin/Islamic practices increased.

By the 12th century, the Islamic Empire extended from the Atlantic Ocean in the West to the Indian subcontinent and Indonesia to the East. Even though the Empire achieved great advances in science, literature and the arts, the central government in Baghdad was unable to maintain control over its fragmented most distant reaches. Eventually, the Tartars destroyed Baghdad in 1258 AD, and the Crusader campaigns began attacking from the west.

Both were defeated about 200 years later, whereupon the Mamluks took over, who were followed by the Ottoman Turks and the British.

The various cultures, traditions, and value systems brought unparalleled richness and diversity. The original simple desert Arab/Islamic norms and values were abandoned or given new meaning. For example, obedience to those in authority, which originally was meant to create a law-abiding society, was newly interpreted as complete unquestioned subservience on the part of the ruled to the rulers. *Shura*, the consultation of followers, originally to seek advice from the ruled concerning communal matters, was formalized into flattery. During the rule of the first four caliphs, a simple Bedouin who wanted to see the caliph had only to go directly to greet him with the words "*Salamu Alaikum*" (peace be upon you) and then proceed to a direct face-to-face communication with the caliph. This direct simple democracy was lost in formalities and protocol.

The irresistible flood of present day globalization magnifies the previous trend of estrangement of citizens from their original cultural norms, values and practices. The indigenous culture is bombarded by wave after wave of foreign influence transmitted by computers, the Internet, mobile telephones, and satellites. The historical development of the Islamic state diluted the original Arab/Islamic view of leadership.

Greenleaf's Concept of Servant Leadership

According to Greenleaf, the servant leader is servant first. This begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, and then one's conscience aspires one to lead. The

best test to evaluate the effectiveness of the servant leader is to inquire if those served grow as persons. Do the served become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in a society? Will they benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived?

Larry Spears (2000) distilled Greenleaf's writings into the following ten characteristics of the servant leader:

1. Listening: The servant leader seeks to identify the will of a group and helps to clarify that will. He or she listens receptively to what is being said and unsaid. Listening also encompasses getting in touch with one's inner voice.

2. Empathy: The servant leader strives to understand and empathize with others. People need to be accepted and recognized for their special and unique spirits.

3. Healing: Healing of relationships is a powerful force for transformation and integration.

4. Awareness: General awareness, especially self-awareness strengthens the servant leader and helps him/her understand issues that involve ethics, power, and values.

5. Persuasion: The servant leader seeks to convince, rather than coerce others. He/she is very effective in building consensus within groups.

6. Conceptualization: The servant leader practices the skill of thinking beyond day-to-day realities. Servant leaders are called upon to seek a delicate balance between conceptual thinking and day-to-day operational realities.

7. Foresight: This skill helps the servant leader understand the lessons of the past, the realities of the present and the likely consequences of the future.

8. Stewardship: Servant leaders like stewardship, which is holding something in trust for others, because it assumes first and foremost a commitment to serving the needs of others.

9. Commitment to growth of others: A servant leader is deeply committed to the growth of each and every individual within his/her organization.

10. Building community: The servant leader seeks to identify the means for building community among those who work within a given institution. He/she suggests that true community can be created among those who work in business organizations and other institutions (Spears, 2000).

How does the servant leadership model described above compare to early Islamic leadership? To address this question, we will describe two case studies of the leadership qualities of Bedoin leaders. First, Omar bin al-Khattab, an early Islamic leader, and second, Shaykh Hajj Ali, a tribal leader in the mid-twentieth century. Can we identify common threads of servant leadership in both the western and Arab/Islamic cultures? And, if so, what are the practical and theoretical implications?

Omar Bin al-Khattab

Abu Bakr, the first truly guided caliph, died in 634 A.D. Before his death, he was afraid of leaving the young

Islamic community without a leader who would keep it together. He consulted with his advisors about the best Muslim to lead the *Ummah* (nation) after his death, and they asked him to nominate a candidate. He nominated his deputy Omar, and sincerely asked his advisors to freely express their views. They all confirmed his choice of Omar as his successor (Nawafleh, 2000).

In exercising his leadership, Omar followed the instructions of the Qur'an and the Prophet Mohammed. Since these were concise and broad, Omar had to give them more precise operational meanings to make them applicable in solving daily problems. For example, he developed the Divan system for the payment of pensions to the soldiers of the Muslim armies that occupied the lands of Syria and Iraq, instead of distributing the occupied land among them as proposed by many of his followers. This creative idea had far-reaching consequences for the political future of the Islamic world (Kennedy, 1986). Because of Omar's impressive organizational and leadership skills, which became precedents for his successors, many Muslim scholars credit Omar as the true founder and organizer of the first Islamic state. According to them, he was the engineer of the state's legislative, executive and administrative powers and the organizer of its record system, filing system, tax administration and personnel system (Hitti, 1974).

The Characteristics of Omar bin al-Khattab

According to Arab specialists who have written extensively on Omar, his characteristics can be categorized into two major groups, personal characteristics and leadership characteristics (Nawafleh, 2000).

Personal Characteristics:

1. Physical characteristics include physical power, courage and endurance.

2. Human characteristics such as mercy, good manners, brotherhood, equality of mankind and freedom.

3. Social characteristics such as generosity, justice, good example, honesty, responsibility and accountability.

4. Personal abstract characteristics such as practical ability, personal austerity, prestige, strength, firmness, roughness, perceptiveness, vision and far sightedness.

5. Religious characteristics including, faithfulness, piety, respect for the Almighty, sternness, incorruptibility, and monotheism.

Leadership Characteristics:

1. Ability to listen and accept criticism: In one of his speeches, Omar suggested 40 dinars as an upper limit for the dowry a man pays to his bride, and said that any amount above that limit would be allotted to the state treasury. A woman from the audience stood up and recited a verse from the Qur'an that contradicted what Omar said. Omar smiled and said a widely quoted saying: "The woman is correct and Omar is mistaken" (Nawafleh, 2000: p. 118).

2. Ability to plan, schedule and organize: Many Muslim thinkers consider Omar as the founder of the Islamic state. He organized the Divan, secretariat of the state, established the financial and tax systems, the army, the court system and external state correspondence with foreign powers.

3. Ability to promote participation of others in decision making through shura: Omar was very well known for enlisting and seeking the views of Muslims on issues that concern the public interest. Thus according to him, "a decision that has been taken without consultation is useless" (Nusair, 1986: p. 189). When the Muslims occupied Iraq, Omar consulted with the community on whether to confiscate the occupied territory or leave with its owners provided they paid state taxes. He listened very carefully to every point of view, and then he leaned with the majority view of leaving the land to its owners provided they paid the required tax.

4. Ability to empathize with others: The following story reflects Omar's ability to employ this skill in order to understand others' points of view. One day he saw an old man begging for charity. When Omar asked him why he was begging, it turned out that the man was Jewish, and that he was begging in order to be able to pay his taxes and cover his other expenses. "Oh, my God!" Omar sighed, "We have taxed you when you were young and we have forgotten you when you got old". Omar took him to his house where he fed him, and then he ordered his financial officer to pay all aged people a sufficient amount of money that would prevent them from begging (Nawafleh, 2000).

5. Ability to effect change and overcome unforeseen problems: This was made obvious through his supervision of crisis management situations such as wars, famines, epidemics of communicable diseases and similar catastrophes.

6. Practicing the skill of incognito enquiry: Concerned that his governors and principals would carry to him only the good news, Omar perfected the skill of conducting

inspection tours in disguise in order to find out what was truly going on in the Islamic state. Omar emphasized the managerial principles of responsibility, accountability and control as exemplified in the following incident. He once asked his confidants: "Assume that I appointed the best of you to govern, and that I urged you to be fair in your dealings, have I assumed my responsibilities in the right manner?" They answered "yes." Omar shook his head and replied: " I disagree. I should watch their actions to make sure that they do what I have asked them to do" (Nawafleh, 2000: p. 29).

The Tent of Shaykh Ali, a 20th Century Tribal Servant-Leader

The Sarayrah Tribe lived for countless generations in the Mauta plains of the Kerak Region of South Jordan. Although Jordan was repeatedly occupied by major powers of the old world, including the Romans, Byzantines, Muslim Arabs, Crusaders, the Ottomans and the British, the outlying areas of South and East Jordan remained outside control of the conquerors.   Following repeated failed attempts to subdue the desert Bedouin (nomad) tribes, the occupiers realized the enormous difficulty of conquering the nomads of the desert, and opted instead to tax the agrarian regions of the west and north, leaving the desert areas of the South and East to govern themselves according to their customary tribal laws and traditions. Therefore, the tribal laws and traditions of the desert Bedouin passed from generation to generation with almost no external influences.

Shaykh Hajj Ali, was the Shaykh (chief) of the Sarayrahs until late 1970's when he inherited the position from his father, Hajj Yahya. Both were very well known and respected tribal judges in the area, and they were very

often asked to arbitrate and settle tribal squabbles and conflicts in accordance with customary tribal laws and traditions, in which they were well versed. The system of Bedouin tribal law is orally transmitted, and universally accepted and revered in desert society (Abu Hassan, 1987).

Hajj Ali's formal education was limited to *Kuttab* schooling, which was a form of religious education conducted at the mosque, with emphasis on Arabic and Quranic readings. His major source of expertise on tribal law and procedure was his father, who kept him by his side during tribal arbitrations and all tribal gatherings and councils. There is a classic tribal proverb, "*Majalisna madarisna*", meaning, "The wisdom of our elders is our school."

In accordance with tribal tradition, a shaykh determined his successor, preferably a promising boy, who throughout his early childhood and young adultlife received extensive oral experiential training on tribal affairs. Believing in the proverb "tribal councils and gatherings are the best kind of schooling," seating the candidate shaykh next to the ruling shaykh enhanced his status and acceptance by others. Once chosen, the candidate shaykh accompanied his master in a sort of apprenticeship arrangement while he learned the intricacies of tribal tradition and custom. Leadership in traditional Arab society was both hereditary and elective. Usually a ruling chief nominated a candidate, a male son or close kin, to the tribal council, which usually accepted the nomination (Kennedy, 1986).

During the mid 1960s, Hajj Ali was in his prime of life, still strong and powerful. Since there was no accurate documentation of desert birth records, his exact age was not known, but he was probably in his late sixties. His physical

appearance was imposing: very tall and broad, with penetrating eyes that could perceive one's character instantly. Behind this fierce exterior, however, the Hajj kept a very patient and gentle spirit. He knew that it would take a long time to cultivate a wise tribal chief using the old way, and he realized that it was time to pick one of the tribe's promising boys for the process to begin.

Shaykh Hajj Ali always heard good things about Yasin, who was then a young, serious and hard-working boy, and was always the first in his class in the village elementary school. His father was the tribe's poet at a time when the tribal poet played a very significant role in tribal life and had very high tribal status (Abdul-Aziz Salem, 1967). He played the rabab, which is the traditional Bedouin musical instrument consisting of a single string chordophone player. Yasin was a storyteller and a herbal doctor. Thus, Yasin was already socialized in tribal ways and manners. While the other boys of the tribe were fond of playing, he favored reading, story writing and telling, raising cattle and birds, and farming.

Another important consideration in locating a successor was the actual sub-tribe of a potential candidate. The internal social system of a tribe was, and still is, divided into branches, each with its distinct lineage and reputation. Traditionally, the shaykhdom was held by the Hujouj (Those who performed the Moslem pilgrimage to Mecca) branch, of which Yasin was a member. His father was a distant cousin of Hajj Ali. Traditionally, it was preferable to cultivate a successor from this branch, the most predominant of all the Sarayrah branches, which had specialized in governing the tribe for generations.

Realizing Yasin's potential as a successor, Hajj Ali showed clear preference towards him. He always

encouraged him to visit his huge tribal tent, to sit next to him, and briefed him on the settlement of tribal conflicts that he was conducting or had already settled. Hajj Ali listened carefully to the views and feelings that his protégé expressed and encouraged him in discussions on critical issues.

The duties of a tribal Shaykh were considerable and demanding. Most of his time was spent in thinking about how to care for his tribe, how to increase the tribe's affluence, how to reduce internal conflicts, and to enhance their position among other tribes (Abdul-Aziz Salem, 1967). These duties made Hajj Ali sleepless and anxious because contrary to the conventional perception of the role of a tribal leader, the position of a Shaykh is not an honorary position, it is a position of work, as expressed in the often citied proverb of Hajj Ali, "*Shaykha taklief wa laisa tashrief.*"

The concept of servant leadership may best be captured in this tribal proverb, "*Sagheer alcum khadimha, wa kabir alcum khadimha*" that means "The youngest is the servant and the one who rules is likewise the servant." This phrase describes the two people most responsible for receiving guests hospitably: the young boy, who brings tea and coffee to guests and makes them feel comfortable; and the Shaykh, who is always there to help and is accessible at all times. The Shaykh's duty is to welcome his guests and to listen graciously to their complaints and problems. His key characteristic is generosity. Visitors must be received warmly, offered food and drink, and guaranteed protection and security.

A visitor has the right to stay as a guest for three days without declaring his reason for coming. As a guest he is provided with all the comforts of home and thus treated

royally. After three days if he has not declared his intentions, the Shaykh can ask him about the nature of his visit. The Shaykh assures him of assistance irrespective of the position of the petitioner.

Being accessible and available all the time, day and night, and being ready and willing to help is a quest. When done correctly, the tribal chief captures the respect and obedience of the tribe members. A chief's tent is always open for those who need him. "Do your best, son, and leave the rest to God," Hajj Ali used to say. Citing the Arabic proverb of "*Ridha Kull ennas hajatun la tudrak*", meaning, "It is impossible to please them all," Hajj Ali advised the young protage not to worry about those who became angry and disappointed. He mentioned the names of some people whom he had tried hard to help, including personally bearing the cost of settling an issue, but who were dissatisfied no matter what the outcome. Whether a petitioner is an aggressor or the aggrieved, they enjoyed protection, respect and full attention once they entered the tent (Abu Hassan, 1987).

The proverb *"Onsur akhak dhaliman ou mathlouman"* means, "You must support your kin whether he is the wrong-doer or the victim" (Salem, 1967). Therefore, according to Hajj Ali, one must help wayward kin by advising them how to avoid further trouble, convincing them to admit their wrong-doing and to bear the responsibility of the act. If the seeker is the victim, assurances must be given to consult with the tribe in order to enlist support for the offended until justice can be obtained.

Anyone can come to the tent, even a killer of the Shaykh's son. Such a murderer would be required to declare immediately his crime and beg for forgiveness. The

petitioner must be assured of safety once protection is requested as a *dakheel* (one who seeks refuge) (Abu Hassan, 1987). If the Shaykh responded with violence, his reputation would be compromised. Confession of such a crime is an important value for the wrongdoer, and it is the duty of the Shaykh to help that person. Voluntarily submitting to the authority of the Shaykh and to paying material compensation helps the wrongdoer. The logic behind forgiveness is, what has happened is irreversible, that an attempt at restitution in good faith is made and that the Shaykh himself is benevolent and just.

One of the most important skills a Shaykh must cultivate is the ability to listen impartially without reacting or appearing judgmental. Full attention must be paid to the individual petitioner so that trust can be established. The petitioner must be encouraged to reveal all and be gently guided to recognize the optimal solution to the problem without interference. If a problem involves several parties, the procedure must include consultation with Shaykhs of other tribal branches.

Sitting patiently in his dignified attire in his tent for long hours, day and night, Hajj Ali was an accomplished listener. He listened very carefully to every word a plaintiff said, and whenever the plaintiff stopped, expecting a reaction from him, he would order more Arabic coffee to comfort him, saying "take a breath and enjoy your coffee now, everything will be fine. I promise to do my best." He would not respond to a plaintiff before that plaintiff had said everything he wanted to say.

Inter-tribal conflict resolution takes the form of *jaha*. A *jaha* is a group of notables who mediate between conflicting parties in order to settle a dispute. If another tribe is offended, the aggrieved tribe expects the offender

and notables of his tribe to appear within three days to offer restitution. If the offender does not appear, it is considered an insult, and the offended tribe has the right to seek revenge (Abu Hassan, 1987).

Analysis, Findings and Conclusions

Servant leadership is deeply rooted in the Arab/Islamic culture. Many similarities can be found between the pre-Islamic and early Islamic leadership style and practices and those of servant leadership.

Review of available literature on the pre-Islamic era, interviews with Bedouin tribal leaders in the desert of Jordan and the case studies of Omar bin al-Khattab and Shaykh Hajj Ali indicate that the main elements of servant leadership were present in early Arab culture. Omar bin al-Khattab's personal characteristics of power, courage, mercy, generosity, equality and honesty earned him an honored place in history as a great and kind leader. Shaykh Hajj Ali maintained a simple, frugal life-style. His personal traits of generosity, humility, modesty, humbleness, generosity, patience and forgiveness reflect those of a servant leader. Like the servant leader, Hajj Ali was a caring and loving person who believed in others and attempted everything he could to awaken a wrongdoer's conscience. In his dealings with tribal issues and settlement of tribal conflicts, he followed a simple, spontaneous and democratic style of leadership.

Although most of the components of the Arab Pre-Islamic value system comply with the elements of servant leadership, some do not. These include *asabiyyah qabaliyyah*, which is the willingness and readiness of a Bedouin to die for the cause of his tribe; and *wasta*, which

is intercession on behalf of somebody, and blind support of one's kin, irrespective of whether he was the aggressor or the aggrieved party. These negative values were moderated by Islam, which counsels leaders to treat all people on equal footing, irrespective of race or class.

By testing servant-leadership characteristics against both Omar bin al-Khattab and Haj Ali, one can notice the similarities. Both served for a cause, whether it was in the interest of an organization, or the nation. Omar struggled to organize a new nation—establishing an army, a tax system, a personnel system. Haj Ali struggled to lead his tribe through the societal changes, easing them into 20th century life. In the following *hadith*, Prophet Mohammed urges Muslim leaders to be servant leaders: "Verily, each of you is a shepherd, and each of you is responsible for the well being of his flock" (Nusair, 1986: p. 90). The servant leader must have the sense of loving to lead, then to lead. Omar and Haj Ali both exemplified that kind of leader.

Servant leadership puts a great deal of emphasis on listening. Review of the literature on Omar revealed how he excelled in utilizing the skill of careful listening in letting his subjects vent their steam, express all they had to say in order to direct their remaining energy towards finding solutions to their problems. In brain storming sessions with his close friends, Omar utilized this skill to obtain all their ideas concerning possible alternative solutions to the problems he faced. Although he was very strict and uncompromising, Omar welcomed all points of view, including those that opposed his, and he changed his mind when he had to.

Both a servant leader and Omar use persuasion as an effective tool in decision-making. Omar effectively used *shura* as a tool to give others the opportunity to participate

in decision-making and to obtain their ideas.

One characteristic of Omar that might appear to contradict the profile of servant leader is that he was strict, stern and uncompromising, once an agreement had been reached, concerning the compliance of all parties involved. This was perhaps a result of the fact that he was establishing a nation on the heels of a long history of tribal conflicts.

Original Arab leadership style and practices were diluted by foreign influences resulting from the spread of Islam throughout the world and the incorporation of other nations' practices. This process of dilution is being pushed even further by globalization. Currently, unpopular bureaucratic procedures and practices have alienated leadership in the Middle East. As a result, elements of servant leadership practices, such as occasional caring and attention to people's needs and hospitality, are not obvious. These practices are cherished by the people, but only momentarily due to the negative reputation of the bureaucracy.

The reputation of the current public bureaucracy is negative. Popular criticism includes inefficiency, inaccessibility, corruption, *wasta* (favoritism), lack of transparency, and lack of skills, lack of proper control, abuse of power, arrogance and scornfulness. Bureaucracy is viewed as a public master rather than a public servant. This negative image of the public bureaucracy frustrates and hinders sincere attempts at administrative reform.

Since servant leadership truly complies with the Arab value system and tradition, the job of administrative reform, which often faces resistance and is viewed as alien, could be greatly facilitated by the idea of servant

leadership, which could be invoked to facilitate training procedures. Resistance to new procedures could possibly be minimized when they are coupled with illustrations and anecdotes from the glorious past.

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