THE FUTURE OF RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP

SUMMARY OF ESSAYS AND PROJECT OVERVIEW

Alon Goshen-Gottstein

The essays collected here, prepared by a think tank of the Elijah Interfaith Academy, address the subject of religious leadership. The subject seems a natural topic for reflection for a group of religious leaders, such as the Elijah Board of World Religious Leaders. In fact, the topic was chosen by the steering committee of the Elijah Board of World Religious Leaders precisely because it provides an opportunity for religious leaders to reflect upon their work and its challenges in the company of religious leaders of other traditions. What does it mean to be a religious leader in today's world? To what degree are the challenges that confront religious leadership the perennial challenges that have arrested the attention of the faithful and their leaders for generations and to what degree do we encounter today challenges that are unique to our day and age?

One dimension is surely unique and that is the very ability of religious leaders from different traditions to explore these issues together. Implicit in such discussion is the recognition that what unites us is more, and possibly also more significant, than what divides us. Therefore, we can discuss issues relating to our leadership, its challenges and its future together with leaders of traditions that only yesterday we had little in common with, beyond classical religious polemics. This commonality is fed by two sources. The first

is the recognition that leaders today face a series of challenges and threats. These challenges confront all leaders, and therefore unite them. In fact, they may need to be united in order to face them more effectively, hence the growth in interreligious collaboration that we are witnessing in recent years. A similar understanding informed an earlier project of the Elijah Interfaith Academy, resulting in the collection of essays titled *"The Crisis of the Holy"*. These essays were the focus of discussions at the 2005 meeting of the Elijah Board of World Religious Leaders. While those essays did touch upon various dimensions that are relevant to leadership, they did not focus upon leadership directly. Some of the insights, particularly those relating to changing dynamics between monastics and lay members of certain religious communities and the challenge of incorporating women within our religious institutions, are relevant for the present consideration of religious leadership. Nevertheless, that project left much room for a sustained discussion of religious leadership and its future, which is addressed in the present project.

Our project suggests more than the fact that we all face similar challenges. A common conversation between scholars and leaders of different faiths on the issues of leadership also expresses the recognition, or the possibility, that there is something similar,

perhaps identical, in the vocation of a religious leader, that cuts across religious traditions. The possibility for sharing, common responses and mutual support in facing some of today's challenges is ultimately founded upon a common vocation and fundamental similarity, or at least some strong resemblances, across religious traditions.

Our authors, representing six faith traditions - Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism - offer ample testimony to the common challenges to present day religious leadership. I leave it to my own summary essays to try to draw together the various insights offered by our authors into a composite picture of religious leadership and to suggest that what makes this project possible, as well as fruitful, is the underlying commonality of mission and vocation, that cuts across religious traditions, making all religious leaders members of a larger whole.

Starting with the goal of the tradition allows us to recall its higher purposes and to assess the effectiveness of today's leadership as an agent for realization of a tradition's goals

The papers follow a common format. The first issue that each paper seeks to achieve is to highlight the nature of religious leadership in each tradition, in according with the self understanding and ultimate goal, the *telos* of each tradition. We recall that the issue of *telos* figures already in the earlier work on

"*The Crisis of the Holy*", where the crisis was considered in terms of the loss of *telos* in each tradition and how the various pressures of the Crisis were impeding the ability of religions to effectively lead their adherents towards their stated goals. Starting with the goal of the tradition allows us to recall its higher purposes and to assess the effectiveness of today's leadership as an agent for realization of a tradition's goals. What I find striking is that despite different ways of stating the ultimate *telos* and despite different emphases on how religions are organized and how their values are prioritized, the function and challenges of religious leadership emerge as quite similar across religious traditions. In other words, the challenges of being a religious leader today, possibly always, do not derive from the particularity of the vision of the goal but from the broader situation of the leader within human society and from the challenges arising from our common human nature. It is this situatedness that allows us to share across religious traditions.

Following a discussion of the ultimate goal, we move to a typology of forms of leadership, as these have come to expression in a given religious tradition, throughout its history. This allows us to get a sense of the range of types of religious leadership as well as of how present day religious leadership, in each of our traditions, is to be understood in relation to its own historical precedents.

Following the presentation of religious leadership in its ultimate and in its historical dimensions, the papers move on to a presentation of what are the systemic challenges that our traditions face. By systemic we mean the challenges that have

always been there, and that grow out of the very definition of the goals of the tradition and of the tradition as a spiritual movement that comes into contact with human reality, that is with human psychology, sociology, politics and many of the frailties of human nature. These systemic challenges are not unique to today, even though they may continue to manifest today, perhaps even in new forms. By contrast, contemporary challenges are those challenges to leadership that are specific to today's circumstances, born of the changing socio-politico-economic circumstances of today's world. Some of these were touched upon in the earlier work on "*The Crisis of the Holy*". Even if they play out dynamics that have always been there, they do so in ways that are particular and recognizable as part of contemporary reality. Contemporary challenges are in many cases what unite traditions, that might not have previously been aware of some of the systemic challenges they share. The common challenges presented by contemporary reality provide us with an opportunity to better appreciate some of our fundamental similarities, as well as our perennial common challenges.

As we seek to deal with both systemic and contemporary challenges, we are drawn to imagining religious leadership for the future. Such imagining leads us to reflect on how leadership can reconnect with the ultimate vision of each tradition, as a means of drawing strength for dealing with challenges. It also takes us to the field of education and leadership training and to reflections on how future leaders could be better trained to meet perennial and contemporary challenges. I hasten to add that our greatest contribution lies in the analysis and in presenting the

parallels between different religions. All our authors espouse a vision of well rounded leadership, informed by multiple concerns and aptitudes. Our contribution is, however, more visionary than practical. We are not able to make specific curricular suggestions for each of the religions. The contexts of religion, denomination and country vary too widely to do so. If we are able to inspire to a vision, it will be up to those in charge of educational institutions that train future religious leaders, to translate these ideals into specific curricular and practical recommendations. There are two themes that should, nevertheless, be highlighted in terms of future training of religious leaders. The first is the importance of knowledge of other religious traditions and of interfaith dialogue. All our authors are of the conviction that being a religious leader in today's world is in some way also being an interreligious leader, and that interreligious work is now part of the mandate of the religious leader. Accordingly, all our authors emphasize the importance of contact with other religions as an important element in the future training of religious leaders. The other theme, much indebted to the inspiration of the Fetzer Institute, that has hosted and supported our work, is forgiveness. All our authors reflect on how as religious traditions move on and deal with novel and complex realities, forgiveness is an important tool that must serve them in their evolution and in articulating their future vision.

Let me move on to offering a brief summary of each of the papers. The papers are ordered according to a thematic unfolding that I perceive in them, and demonstrate once again that there is no fixed order through which to present our traditions. Each

3

opportunity is unique and every choice of sequencing is appropriate to the moment. I begin with Miroslav Volf and Awet Andemicael's presentation on Christian Leadership. Let me acknowledge that starting our discussions with this paper reveals my own theistic tendencies and my own resonance with how centrally God is viewed as the goal and the means of leadership. While Volf and Andemicael's paper makes the point more strongly than any other paper, it may be that (with the obvious exception of Buddhism) others may be able to subscribe to some of the ideals expressed in this paper, even if they chose to frame their own presentations in less explicitly God-centered ways. On the one hand, the choice is significant. It tells us something about a tradition whether it chooses to present itself in consciously God-centered ways or not. On the other hand, if, as I shall argue in my summary essay, fundamental commonalities unite religious leaders across religious traditions, the conscious alignment of the religious leader with God may not only be a way for one religion to present itself but rather a vision that can find an echo in other traditions. Even if the authors of the present collection of papers did not conceptualize their own understanding of the vocation of the religious leader in such an explicitly God-centered way.

Volf and Andemicael focus their attention on what is a Christian leader and what is the specificity of Christian leadership. The starting premise is that Christian leadership is more than the fact that Christians are leading other Christians. This does not yet make the leadership itself "Christian". As a matter of fact, these authors are the only ones to pose the question, with respect to their tradition, in such a stark way, seeking to highlight what is normative and theologically constitutive about Christian leadership, beyond the descriptive dimension of how Christian leadership actually operates. By framing the question in this way, Volf and Andemicael invite us all to reflect upon what makes leadership specific, typical and representative of a religious tradition, other than the fact that it is being carried out within and behalf of members of that particular tradition. Their answer may be framed in terms that are too specifically Christian to be universal, but it does allow us to consider how clear focus on the *telos* and the ultimate aims of the tradition can help define the character of leadership.

Volf and Andemicael's answer is that Christian leadership is modelled after the leadership of Jesus. It is specific because it refers so clearly to the founder of the Christian faith. Jesus is the model of Christian leadership. As we shall see, with one notable exception, all papers will offer equivalent answers, each focusing on their founder as a model religious leader. Of course, in focusing upon a founding personality, one must determine what it is one is focusing upon. In the case of Jesus, his own example is one of a very specific way of leading, through servant ministry. The greatest is also the servant, a fact captured in the celebrated gesture of feet washing, that Jesus performs for his disciples. Service is thus fundamental to a definition of Christian ministry, and along with it comes a surprising reversal of relations of power and authority. Christian leadership thus subverts conventional conceptions of leadership.

Now, recollection of what true Christian leadership consists of is a need of the hour. The authors suggest that much has been lost in the practice of leadership, as managerial models, complete with the requisite toolkit for successful running of communities and organizations, have taken over, leading to a loss of the spiritual core of Christian leadership. The task is thus one of retrieval of authentic Christian leadership.

Because Jesus is the model, leadership is ultimately not a prerogative of "leaders", but a feature of what it means to be Christian. This can be expressed in various ways, one of which is the distinction between "special priesthood" and "general priesthood". All the faithful are required to minister in some way, that is to exercise their special spiritual gifts in the service of the entire community. An important and constructive tension thus ensues between the singularity and uniqueness of the Christian leader and how he or she is simply acting out a broader vocation, shared by all the faithful.

The authors' quest for authentic Christian leadership leads them to declare that for leadership to be authentically Christian, it must grow out of the heart of the Christian faith. God is at the center of Christian faith, and leadership is presented by the authors through the threefold formula, found in the writings of the Apostle Paul - "From him [God] and to Him and through Him are all things". Such presentation yields a series of important statements concerning the nature of Christian leadership and the ways it is related to God.

Christian leaders are from God, that is they are not self appointed, but constituted by God's call. This leads us to an interesting reflection, one that all religions could benefit from. Whom does the leader represent? Does he or she represent the community from which he or she is called or God? And, concommittantly, who is the leader responsible to? While Volf and Andemicael are aware of the positioning of the leader between God and the community, describing the leader as coming from God privileges God as the source and authority for the leader above all other considerations.

Christian leaders derive their calling, experience and authority from God. They also derive their capacities, that is their gifts from God. That gifts come to all members of the community underscores the fundamental sameness of leader and community, who form one whole, in God's presence.

Leadership also takes place through God. This means that leaders are to be translucent in relation to God, seeking to reveal the transcendent God in their created finitude. To do so, leaders must learn to grow more transparent to God. Nevertheless, they must affirm and acknowledge their own created value, integrity and autonomy as "visible", even as they "image God", by becoming a "place" where God becomes manifest. leaders must take themselves out of the way, to make room for God. What is particular in Christian leadership is that the Christian leader seeks to be not simply translucent to God, but more particularly to Christ. The leader is an icon of Christ. In part this means modeling Christ's way of being in the world, his servanthood. But it also means they seek to live as people in whom Christ dwells. Consequently, the ultimate leader is

God Himself, working through His human agent. Finally, Christian leaders lead to God, who is the ultimate goal.

Let us return to the notion of servant leadership, that defines Christian leadership. It is important to recall that the servanthood into which Christ calls leaders is not one of humiliation, but a willing transformation into a posture of joyful humility, in the presence of God, for the good of others. What is clear is that religious leadership does not involve lording over others. At the same time, it does involve religious authority of some sort. Thus, one must negotiate servanthood and power and authority. Herein lies a tension, perhaps a paradox of Christian leadership. The only way to resolve it is through wisdom. Perhaps one might say better, the combination of wisdom and humility are the key to negotiating this complex relationship. Accordingly, servanthood leads to submission as a characteristic of the Christian community, wherein leaders and the broader community form one whole. Within the broader Christian community we find different ways to negotiate the relations of servanthood and authority, as these have been expressed in the different ecclesiological understandings of the diverse Christian denominations.

Based on all the above, we are ready to consider the challenges to leadership, seen from a Christian viewpoint. If leadership is from God, then the challenges and difficulties arise from the core of the leader's relationship with God. Thinking of one's relationship with God in terms of "ascent" (to the mountain of God) and "return" (to the world with God's transformative message), we may identify "malfunctions" in leadership either at the point of ascent or at the point of return. These include assuming leadership for the wrong reasons, without the necessary calling or contact with God and the loss of connection, if we will: transluceny, perhaps due to the pressures of the ministry. Gradual erosion of the reality of faith leads to a "pretense of ascent". Its worse manifestation is, of course, religious charlatanism, wherein one speaks in God's name only to serve selfish interests.

Grounding leadership in God is the antidote to what the authors consider the gravest challenge facing not only Christian leadership, but our entire culture today. Experiential satisfaction and the pursuit of desires have taken over global consciousness in ways that far exceed the classical concerns of simple selfishness, hedonism or greed. They have become arguably the primary content of a life considered well lived and the common focus of human flourishing. A combination of post modernity and globalizing processes has now created a global way of being, that can be characterized as "the Empire of Desire". This is at direct odds with the religious vision of what a life worth living is. Volf and Andemicael remind us that religions, all religions, are about connecting the self both with an "ultimate reality" larger than the self and with other people. Transcending the self in these two fundamental ways, religions organize and transform human desire, by pointing beyond the human person and her desires. All this is directly at odds with what is increasingly becoming the norm in today's society - organizing life to satisfy the desires of the self, rather than to transcend them.

The way to overpower the "Empire of Desire" is by returning to the depth of faith. Only by resisting in their own person the temptation to live for the sake of experiential satisfaction can Christian leaders point people away from the pursuit of such desire. Along with such personal transformation must come understanding, both understanding of the depth of tradition and understanding of the ailments of today, that religion must address.

Timothy Gianotti offers us a survey of Islamic understandings of Religious Leadership: Past, Present and Future. The title suggests a different balance than the previous paper in relation to detailed engagement with historical precedent. While the Christian presentation sought to focus on the core of Christian leadership, the Muslim presentation presents what leadership is about through a more detailed survey of the historical forms of Muslim leadership.

Leadership is modeled on the notion of the ideal leader

We recognize immediately features that are common to leadership, as we learned about it in the Christian context. The goal is returning to God and the leader's task is ultimately to facilitate the return journey to God for each and every person. Leadership is again modelled on the notion of the ideal leader. For Islam this is the prophet, with special emphasis upon the prophet Muhammad, who in some sense is the model for all future Muslim religious leadership. The prophets are able to comprehend the ultimate purpose for which mankind was created and

to couple this understanding with the practical wisdom manifest in practical revelation, such as concrete laws, by means of which the individual and the community are led to the realization of the supreme goal. Paradise, as the site of reunion with God as well as the just society on earth, along with the gaining of spiritual knowledge and the acquisition of virtues, are all different manifestations of the prophetic vision as it comes into realization.

The model of the prophet Muhammad is one of integrated leadership, including the spiritual, material as well as the political and even martial domains. Such integrated leadership raises the challenge of the boundaries of religious leadership. Should it include the political domain? We may reflect on this question in light of the troubled history of the relations between the religious and the political, as these have come to expressions in most traditions, and in Gianotti's paper particularly in the Muslim tradition. As Gianotti takes us through the various stages and forms of Muslim leadership we realize how complicated the relationship between these domains is and how soon within Muslim history they became separated, leaving only the future hope of their unification in the image of the ideal future Imam, who could reunite the different domains of life, that have now been torn asunder.

As Gianotti walks through the history of religious leadership in Islam, we recognize three types. First are the preservers and protectors of the community and the prophetic legacy. Preservation emerges as an important feature of leadership, both preservation of the community and

preservation of the teaching. Second are those who act as spiritually informed restorers of "authentic" prophetic legacy, and finally we encounter the third type of leader, who works within and through the prophetic legacy to guide the faithful to some experience or vision of the supreme end - God. We note that the frame of reference for all three types is prophecy, and the driving quest is to realize prophecy, both through personal experience and through the historical life of the community.

We note in particular the tensions between the outer aspects of prophetic legacy and the internal drive for spiritual perfection. Al Ghazali in particular condemns the scholars who had all but forgotten their sacred trust of guiding the community to their ultimate realization in God, going instead after wealth, status and public display of brilliance. Thus, the ultimate concern of faith may be clouded over. This dynamic may be a universal dynamic of religion, and in one way or another we encounter it in all the papers of our project. It is important to note that despite the shortfalls of tradition, there will always be the types who continue to point believers towards the real experience of God. For the faithful who hunger and thirst for some kind of "taste" or experience of the ultimate end, the agents of spiritual realization like the Sufi Shaykh, play a role more crucial than any other type of religious leader.

The discussion of Muslim leadership identifies the perennial, systemic challenges in relation to embodying the essence of the faith. The leader is a model who is supposed to embody the faith, inspiring others to follow suit. Again, the true leader is called to go beyond the normal ego self, making himself a mirror to reflect divine attributes. The highest religious challenge is not to do something, but how to be. Humility again emerges as a constitutive feature of the true spiritual leader.

The priority of God means not only that God is the goal of the religious life but that in all decision making God comes first. Accountability is to God before the community, and this becomes apparent especially at moments of potential conflict and competition.

> *Despite the shortfalls of tradition, there will always be the types who continue to point believers towards the real experience of God*

To these perennial challenges may be added some specific contemporary challenges. The first of these is the cultural heritage of patriarchy and how it has defined the Muslim community in ways that are not always commensurate with Islam's ultimate spiritual vision. The second is what Gianotti calls the challenge of anger within the Muslim Ummah (nation). The greatest danger of the anger against accumulated perceived historical injustices and humiliations is the overlooking of our own capacity to do evil, due to exclusive concentration on blame of the other. Finally, we come back to the theme of education, one that is echoed in all the papers. Ill trained imams do not serve tradition well, as they lack the capacity to either lead the community or to question traditional ways of doing things.

In looking to the future Gianotti does more than suggest a return to the root or to the ultimate purpose of tradition, though this is of course also part of his vision for the future of Islam. In view of the recognition of anger's harmful consequences to muslims, Gianotti suggests that much of what has to be corrected in Islam can be done through retrieval and cultivation of the Muslim ideal of forgiveness. This is a prophetic tool for personal and communal transformation. Emphasizing forgiveness, rather than vengeance, goes hand in hand with recalling the ultimate purpose of the tradition. If our goal is entry into Divine presence and living in the divine light, then forgiveness and transformation are our only hope.

> *All religions covered in our project would concur on the importance of self effacement and transcendence of personal self interest, through service*

Meir Sendor's essay on Jewish religious leadership could have been the first essay, not only because Judaism preceded Christianity and Islam in chronological terms. The notion of servant leadership that we encountered above, in relation to Christianity, emerges from Sendor's paper not only as the heart of Jewish leadership, but actually as the core vision of Judaism. Judaism is presented as service: service of God and service of man, that is itself a way of serving God. From this angle, Judaism and Christianity are identical in their vocation. Sendor notes that this understanding of leadership is subversive, in that it constitutes an alternative vision to that of power and prerogative. Instead, Judaism offers the vision of responsibility actualized through service. What makes such service transformative is the suspension of self interest, ultimately of the self itself. I think it is fair to consider that the three papers, representing the Abrahamic faiths, concur on this point. In fact, I think all religions covered in our project would concur on the importance of self effacement and transcendence of personal self interest, through service. Service, says Sendor following Levinas, allows us to realize our full human potential, opening up simultaneously towards the other and towards the infinite.

We notice again that the leader is part of the community and that he or she shares the value of service with the entire community. The leader simply takes Jewish tradition more seriously, but he does so on behalf of the community and as part of their common vision. While it is worth noting that the notion of "calling", so central to the Christian presentation, is not as central to a Jewish view, in terms of the actual dynamics of individual and community and in terms of service, the two traditions are presented in similar terms. A similar idea is articulated also in relation to God's leadership and how it relates to human leadership. Ultimately, God is the leader. However, while for Volf and Andemicael God's leadership is the core of what the leader must constantly be aware of, in Sendor's presentation the effort at conscious recollection of the divine basis of leadership seems less intensive. That having been said, it would seem that some of the hassidic expressions of leadership, brought in Sendor's paper, would equally espouse a strong awareness of the instrumentality of the

leader, or as Volf and Andemicael put it, his translucency.

Sendor, himself a communal rabbi, opens for us a window onto the range of activities associated with rabbinic life. I would reframe his description with the help of two notions. The first is service, reflected in the sense of responsibility to the welfare of others. A broad range of activities and capacities, relating to life's various challenges, are called forth through this service. The key is care for others and deep empathy. The other characteristic to emerge from Sendor's presentation is the centrality of teaching to the vocation of the religious leader. While teaching of all aspects of the Torah are the vocation of the rabbi, great emphasis is placed upon teaching the *halacha*, the Jewish law.

The position of the rabbi as teacher and the type of teaching he engages in allow us to distinguish between different expressions of the rabbinate, within different Jewish denominations. While *halakha* is the primary subject of teaching for the Orthodox, teaching in the other denominations is less halachically oriented. Teaching also serves as a useful prism for viewing Jewish leadership in relation to leadership in other religions. While teaching is surely one of the ministries of which Volf and Andemicael speak and while Gianotti's presentation features various activities that are teaching related -legal, philosophical and personal spiritual direction, it is only in Sendor's presentation that we realize how central teaching is to the vocation of a religious leader. Looking back to the other traditions, we realize that in fact they too feature teaching as a core activity of the religious leader. It would be rash, based on the

way the individual papers are crafted, to draw the conclusion that teaching is more central in one tradition or another. It is not, however, inappropriate to note that the paper on Jewish religious leadership brought the centrality of teaching to the vocation of the religious leader to our attention.

In the case of Judaism too, we identify an archetypal teacher, who is the basis for emulation. This is Moses. While the role modeling of both Jesus and Muhammad may play a more central role in the respective economies of Christianity and Islam, it is noteworthy that in many ways the actions of a Jewish leader point back to the archetypal leader. The composite nature of Moses' leadership makes him an ideal role model for the various dimensions associated with Jewish leadership. Still, to the extent that one thinks of him primarily as a teacher, as the common designation "Moses our Teacher" (literally: our Rabbi) suggests, teaching emerges as a major constitutive activity, in light of which Moses, and all future leaders, are appreciated.

A Jewish leader is both insider and outsider to the community, standing slightly apart. Theologically, he is part of the community, sharing its values, like everyone else, only more so. In practical terms, he is somewhat removed. This distance allows him to represent God to the community and to be more effective in his work. One important expression of this is the leader's ability to facilitate forgiveness and reconciliation precisely thanks to the measure of distance he brings to communal relations. The dual nature of the leader is problematized in Sendor's presentation when he discusses some contemporary models of leadership. Over and

against the traditional communal rabbi has arisen, particularly under the pressures of modernity and in response to it, a model that is characteristic of the ultra Orthodox world. While the stated task of the rabbi, also according to this model, is to make the community learned and self sufficient, thereby actualizing the potential and charge they share with the rabbi, in fact this model presents the rabbi as so far apart from the community as to engender a response of annihilation and submission to his understanding, in religious, as well as in secular matters. In fact, the prophetic dimension of the rabbinical trade is highlighted, thereby broadening the gap between leader and community and empowering the leader beyond what was traditionally ascribed to the rabbi. Sendor sees this model as one of the contemporary challenges, and notes that it infantilizes the faithful and detracts from their spiritual maturity. Thus, the theoretical reflection on the status of the rabbi as an equal member or as set apart from the community leads to one of the major contemporary challenges in the practice of Jewish leadership and ultimately of Jewish spirituality.

The question of how extensively rabbis should be involved in matters beyond the strictly religious field and to what extent they possess unique wisdom and understanding, owing to their rabbinic standing, touches upon a question already noted in relation to Gianotti's paper. Religious leadership has a drive to integrate other aspects of life within it. In the case of Islam, the tension between the ideal integrated leadership and the real split between religious and political authority has provided the backbone of the narrative of Islamic

leadership. Judaism is in the unique position of having been deprived of political authority for nearly two millennia. This has allowed for the flourishing of a model of leadership that is based on communal accord, non violence, and concentration on religious and communal concerns, at the exclusion of the political, let alone military, dimensions of life. With the founding of the state of Israel, accompanied by the politicization of the rabbinate, the range of rabbinic involvement and the nature of rabbinic activity are changing. These changes are challenging and require careful thought in light of the successful models cultivated in the Diaspora for millennia.

> *Religious leadership has a drive to integrate other aspects of life within it*

Over-empowerment and politicization of the rabbinate are two contemporary challenges. Others constitute contemporary expressions of systemic challenges. If a system is based on service, one must keep the spirit of proper service and correct motivation alive. Loss of that spirit and false motivation can corrupt leadership. Service, as has been noted, is not simply service to the community, but service to God. Given how central the teaching vocation and communal service are, the concern for God, His service and His knowledge, may easily be eclipsed by other dimensions of the religious life. The Christian paper noted that while "God at the Center" was the central ethos of Christian leadership, one of the major pitfalls of Christian leadership is that God may be replaced by the things of God, God's purposes. Gianotti too

alludes to the dangers of legal fetishism and the need to keep the ultimate goal of the tradition alive. This is also a challenge for Judaism. Hence, one of the main challenges is indeed the challenge of recalling the fuller spiritual meaning of the rabbinic vocation. Sendor expresses this both in terms of the need to keep Jewish spirituality as a major focal point of religious awareness and the practice of leadership and in terms of the challenge to not lose sight of the centrality of theological reflection and teaching as a necessary component of Jewish identity. Most perennial and contemporary challenges thus arise out of the tension associated with maintaining the full sense of the *telos* of Judaism alive.

The next paper in our collection explores Sikh perspectives on leadership. Balwant Dhillon's paper is brought following the Abrahamic papers because from the phenomenological perspective it reads almost as one more expression of Abrahamic faith. The founder of the Sikh faith, Guru Nanak, is presented as a prophet. He is a mouthpiece of God and derives his authority from God. As the fourth Sikh Guru states, there is no difference between Guru Nanak and God, a statement I take as a designation of Guru Nanak's union with God as the source of his authority. As prophet, he gives expression to sayings, *bani*, and in fact is the source of a new Scripture, that ultimately receives the high status of *Guru*. His message is that of social criticism, whereby he criticizes the existing social order in India and the various evils found in society. Guru Nanak thus challenges evil in society in the name of ultimate standards. The two core teachings of Guru Nanak are the unity of God and the brotherhood/sisterhood of mankind. Guru Nanak propounds a set of ideals that are important for any discussion of leadership.

> *Most perennial and contemporary challenges arise out of the tension associated with maintaining the full sense of the telos alive*

Sikh leadership draws on Guru Nanak in various ways. First, the chain of ten Gurus, beginning with him, are said to be expressions of the one and same spirit, manifested in Guru Nanak. Accordingly, later Gurus contribute to Sikh scriptures in the name of Guru Nanak, even though historically their own later utterances are recorded. Guru Nanak remains the ideal model, with all Sikh gurus serving as models for perfection to be emulated by others.

The Sikh Gurus' leadership provides a good example of the kind of integrated leadership that we find with the founders of religions, such as Moses and Muhammad (but significantly not of Jesus). They helped build up their community, even as they provided it with spiritual teaching. They addressed the social and political needs of the day, and when need arose even took up arms in battle. Creating, building and sustaining the community along with development and dissemination of teaching and Scripture once again subsume their various activities.

Sikh leadership provides us with a unique equilibrium of forces that is noteworthy. Perhaps similar equilibria exist in other traditions, but Sikhism has developed

these in particular ways. Guruship gave way to Scripture, as the words of the Sikh Gurus were captured in Scripture, that was proclaimed to be the living Guru. While heterodox sects continue to appoint Gurus, official Sikh teaching does not recognize any additional Gurus beyond the initial ten Sikh Gurus. Scripture is thus uniquely conceived as the personal spiritual teacher and spiritual preceptor, the Guru. Here the prophetic ideal, in light of which Balwant Dhillon presents Sikhism, takes on the characteristics of the Indian spirituality, within which it was born. Scripture is not simply the word of the prophet, but is conceived of as the living Guru. Balwant Dhillon's paper illustrates the various ritual and practical ways through which this spiritual recognition is expressed in the life of the community.

But Sikh leadership draws on another dimension, the community. Already Guru Nanak considered the congregational groups founded by him to be the embodiment of Guru and God. Guru Gobind Singh,the last of the Sikh Gurus, ended the line of personal Guruship. While spiritual authority was entrusted to the Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh Scripture, authority in secular matters was entrusted to the *Khalsa Panth*, the community. The collective body of the Sikhs was made the supreme authority of the Sikhs. Leadership of the community lay in collective wisdom. We note once again how an integrated model of leadership, initially propagated by the Sikh Gurus, gives way to the separation of domains, between the religious and the secular or political. In fact, as Dhillon's paper teaches us, many of the problems in the history of Sikhism, including today, stem from the problematic commingling of religion and politics and the way that such mixture contaminates the purity of Sikh teachings.

To these two aspects of Sikh leadership - Scripture and community - we should add a third, personal religious leadership. While no Sikh leader has the authority or power of the original Sikh Gurus, they continue to inspire leadership and to produce a variety of spiritual types. The history of Sikhism has seen many important charismatic and enlightened Sikhs, who have been in positions of leadership. Thus, we find in Sikhism, following the foundational period of the Sikh Gurus, a particular distribution of power between three dimensions of leadership -Scripture, community and a variety of individual leaders. While in theory the first two are primary, in practice leadership and authority emerge through various, at times complex, configurations of these core elements. This presents an interesting parallel to other religious traditions. We have already noted how the religious leader is part of the community, but also beyond it. The notion of the Guru would suggest being set apart from the community, with the Guru enjoying unique and distinguished status. With the abolition of Guruship, Sikhism seems to take on dynamics that recall the complexities found in other traditions. Power shifts back to the community and any future leader is really an extension of the community. Leaders may emerge as teachers and sources of inspiration, but none of them have the kind of prophetic status associated with the founding Gurus. Scripture is the repository of wisdom, the community is the governing body and religious leadership is found in the fine balancing act between these two dimensions

13

and the spiritual life and example of individual teachers.

The twofold emphasis of continuing leadership is accordingly either the maintenance of the community and its institutions or the propagation of teaching. This twofold emphasis, along with the potential conflict it contains, is significant to understanding the various forms of Sikh leadership and history as well as of contemporary challenges. Much of the history of Sikhism and its forms of leadership is concerned with the management of the community and its institutions. In the process we notice time and again how corruption and politicization enter. Religious purity, on the other hand, is associated with the teachings and their propagation. The two foci of teaching and community all too often become entangled in a problematic relationship, leading to some of the perennial as well as contemporary challenges of Sikhism.

The challenges facing Sikh leadership revolve, accordingly, around these two foci - the preservation of doctrinal originality or purity and the maintenance of social unity within the Sikh community. The breakdown of comprehensive leadership and the challenge of maintaining the proper relationship with both the political and the military dimensions remain ongoing challenges for Sikh religious leadership. The contemporary manifestations of these challenges are particularly problematic due to changed circumstances of the Sikh community internationally. Knowledge and understanding are on the decline, raising serious challenges that Sikh teachers must confront. From the communal side one

encounters challenges of preservation of Sikh identity, challenges relating to women and lower castes and other challenges that affect the body of the community and that require the attention of religious leaders.

The future of Sikh leadership, suggests Dhillon, is closely related to education, knowledge and training. But above all, religious leadership needs to be an expression of the vision of the Gurus. Guru Nanak chose his successor on the basis of spiritual aptitude. For Sikh leadership to flourish, one must return to an aptitude based system, and help develop, in educational terms, those who possess such aptitudes. A return to the spirit of service is the foundation of successful leadership and must provide the basis for the future of Sikh religious leadership.

The discussion of Sikh leadership leads us to Anant Rambachan's presentation of Religious Leadership in Hinduism. The notion of the Guru grows out of the Indian religious context that highlights the role of the teacher, the Guru. As Rambachan teaches us, the core responsibility of the Guru is to remove the ignorance that blinds us all. What we discover when this ignorance is removed is the unity of all being. Rambachan's presentation develops the notion of teacher as the primary mode of Hindu religious leadership, complemented by another kind of leadership, the leadership in ritual matters provided by the priest, the *purohita*. While the priest provides for the ongoing ritual needs of the family and of society, it emerges from Rambachan's presentation that the truly important leader, and hence the focus of his own presentation, is the religious leader, the Guru.

Starting with the Guru and with the quest for wisdom provides an important starting point, that stands in stark contrast to how the other religions understand themselves. To begin, the teacher is not a prophet, nor does the tradition point back to some prophetic ideal. In fact, the tradition points back to no ideal at all, lacking, as it does, a founder figure. Thus, of all religions under discussion in our project, Hinduism is the only religion that does not follow the pattern of imitation of an originary founding figure. It is a wisdom tradition, rather than a prophetic tradition, as are the four traditions discussed above. Perhaps related to this is also the lack of concern with community as a major focus of the activity of the religious leader. As we have seen in all papers thus far, the activity of the religious leader is divided between care for the community and propagation and dissemination of the teaching. The emphases may vary from tradition to tradition, but overall it seems appropriate to identify such commonality in the four traditions discussed above. To the extent that these four traditions point back to a founding figure, the founding figure both establishes the community and offers the teaching that is particular to it. The prophets, if we may also include Jesus in this description, are thus more than teachers, and part of what makes them more than teachers is their activity in founding religious communities, that are founded around and in conjunction with their teachings. While this may not be logically necessary, it seems that the Hindu model that starts with teaching, rather than with prophetic activity, does not show the same concern for community building and maintenance. Needless to say,

Hindus too have religious communities. Some of the great teachers were the founders of religious orders or communities that propagate their teaching. We note several references to contemporary Hindu communities, particularly in the Diaspora and to the changes and challenges that are typical of these communities. But the factor that is the strongest in controlling Hindu community life is the focus of criticism, based on religious doctrine, rather than the expression or vehicle for that teaching. I refer to the caste system, that is the fundamental social structuring element in classical Hindu society. When Rambachan explores the systemic challenges that Hinduism faces, dealing with the injustices of the caste system and bringing the caste system to tow the line with the theological teachings of Hinduism is probably his most significant challenge. While it might be too much to claim that Hindu religious teaching is irrelevant to the life of the community, it seems to be the case that the relations between the teaching and the communal dimensions, as expressed in other religions, are more problematic and perhaps significantly different in the case of Hinduism. Thus, the presentation of Hinduism as a wisdom tradition and its grounding in the personal master-disciple relation, present this tradition in a very different light from seen in the case of other traditions, making it largely unique within our present project.

The goal of the tradition, obtained within the proper teaching relationship with the Guru, is the knowledge of God and the removal of ignorance that is the fundamental human condition. Overcoming ignorance, awakening to God and living a life centered in God constitute the fundamental purpose of

human existence. All this is attained in relation to the teacher, who is Hinduism's primary religious leader.

The tremendous import attached to the Guru make the choice of Guru and his attributes matters of urgent concern. Much more is involved in the making of the ideal teacher than the mere acquisition of knowledge, or familiarity with the tradition and its canon of teaching and behavior. The ideal teacher has integrated knowing and being, a fact described as being established in *brahman*, the divine absolute, and living from that center. This way of being is characterized by contentment, freedom from greed, compassion and service. These attributes are important for any reflection on leadership. We note, once again, the strong emphasis on service. Here service comes together with compassion, that provides the motivation for sharing teaching with others. The personal qualities of the teacher are important both for his relationship with others and for the broader testimony he offers. Teacher-disciple relations are easily corruptible, if the weaknesses of human nature get in the way. In order to offset dangers of abuse and control, the teacher must be free from greed and derive his contentment from the absolute, from the spiritual life that he leads.

The qualities of the teacher make him a role model. It is worth noting in particular the description of the teacher as free from greed. Volf and Andemicael explore the problematics of desire in contemporary society and see in it the major challenge to religion and to religious leadership today. Putting their concerns in dialogue with Rambachan's description of the religious leader we may confirm their own suggestion that the ultimate response to the challenges of the "Empire of Desire" lies in the spiritual personality of the leader. The leader's, or teacher's, spiritual qualities are the testimony that can be offered as an alternative to contemporary threats. These threats are, in fact, longstanding threats, born of human nature, since time immemorial. The emphasis on certain qualities as characteristics of the Hindu teacher suggest that this tradition has important lessons to teach us as we deal with a contemporary challenge that cuts across our different religious traditions.

Rambachan devotes significant attention to the tension between the Hindu teaching of the unity and equality of all beings as expressions of the divine and the discriminatory practices of the caste system. He sees in the caste system a systemic problem that Hinduism needs to overcome. Indeed, throughout the generations have arisen religious leaders who were able to go beyond the limitations of the caste system and to open the ranks of the religious life to all. However, such leaders were limited in their effect by regional and linguistic considerations, as well as by their own self understanding as religious figures. For the most part, Hindu religious leaders saw themselves as operating on the religious plane and did not consider the application of insights gained spiritually to the social field an important part of their mandate as religious leaders. This is precisely where Rambachan challenges many conventional notions and where he considers there is room for Hinduism to grow. A further expression of the same call to apply the spiritual insights of Hindu theology to the social realm is the call

for overcoming the constraints of Patriarchy in all that concerns Hindu religious life and leadership. We recall the same call raised independently by Gianotti. The Sikh and Jewish papers also raised similar concerns. It seems that the integration and accommodation of women within contemporary religious leadership is a concern that is universal to all religions. Indeed, this was one of the facts to emerge from our earlier project on "*The Crisis of the Holy*".

> *Leaders need a broader training in the humanities and social sciences that will facilitate better understanding of contemporary issues and make for more meaningful responses*

If the Hindu tradition is based upon wisdom, it seems obvious that the solution to its ills lies in proper education and training. This is a major emphasis of Rambachan's paper, as he reflects upon where the tradition needs to go. Leadership training is a major concern for the future of the tradition. Returning to the ritual leader, the *purohita*, we note that traditionally he is completely lacking in religious knowledge, beyond the knowledge of the rituals he is to perform and the mantras he is to recite. However, ritual specialists are increasingly expected to take on broader leadership roles, especially in the context of Diaspora Hinduism. This requires training and education.

Proper training is also needed for the traditional wisdom-based teacher. Retaining all the strengths of traditional Hindu formation, especially the learning that occurs within teacher-disciple relations, Hindu leaders need a broader training in the humanities and social sciences that will facilitate better understanding of contemporary issues and make for more meaningful responses from a Hindu perspective. I note that this claim is made by almost all participants in our project and constitutes part of its common ground. Part of the training must include training in understanding other religion and in interfaith relations. This too seems to be a consensus of our scholars.

The context of Diaspora raises novel challenges. One of those takes us from the teaching to the community. Unity within the community is a concern that is raised time and again in our papers. In the Hindu context new realities are coming to light as Hinduism moves beyond the boundaries of its native India. Placement of communities of diverse ethnic and religious origins alongside one another creates the challenge of identifying the Hindu common ground and of helping the community find its unity in terms of identity, teaching and community life. This novel context also challenges leaders to broaden their task and to take charge of the communal dimensions of the religion, within a new social and geographic context.

Ultimately what is at stake here is the transmission of the tradition and its survival in a new context. Indian culture is no longer the guarantor of Hindu religion, because the new generation is no longer growing up within the all pervasive Hindu way of life, characteristic of Hinduism as practiced in its homeland. The

propagation and continuation of Hindu identity can therefore no longer be taken for granted. Indeed, we have heard similar things from Sikhs and Muslins, suggesting this is a problem for all immigrant cultures. Judaism may have a longer history of wrestling with this problem but it too continues to struggle with the maintenance of tradition and its continued propagation. The character of the religious leader is key to the successful attempt to transmit tradition on to the next generation. To this end, religious leaders must be equipped to both understand contemporary culture and to present the religion in a way that avoids the cultural divide of which Gianotti speaks and that is the focus of Rambachan's presentation. Adequate teaching and teacher training are thus the foundation for the future of Hinduism.

> *The character of the religious leader is key to the successful attempt to transmit tradition on to the next generation*

We come now to the final paper in our collection, Maria Reis-Habito's presentation of leadership in Buddhism. In some ways we are at the opposite point on the spectrum, considering our starting point was the Christian view of leadership. If Christian leadership is grounded in God, Buddhist leadership does not relate to the notion. If all other forms of leadership appealed, to a greater or lesser degree, to God as the ultimate leader, either working through the religious leader or as the ultimate reference point for the religious leader, Buddhism presents us with another conceptualization. And yet, in many ways we have come full circle. Notwithstanding the fundamental theological differences, in many significant ways the Buddhist notion of leadership is similar in type and function to what we find in the theistic traditions.

Let us note, first of all, that like all other traditions, with the exception of Hinduism, Buddhism views its leadership as following the role model of the founder of the religion, the Buddha. The ultimate goal of the Buddhist leader is nothing other than to follow in the footsteps of the Buddha. How one follows the model of the ideal leader and what relationship such following establishes is likely a subject for divergent understandings both within the traditions and between them. We started with a strong sense of imitation and participation, as found in the Christian ideal of imitating Christ, an imitation that involves communion and partaking of Christ's reality, as the leader undertakes his or her duties. The Muslim sense of following the beautiful role model seems to be weaker, and does not assume the same kind of sharing in the being of the messenger. This is true for most forms of Judaism as well, where Moses is an ideal figure, but not necessarily an abiding presence. Still, there are traditions, particularly the kabbalistic and hassidic traditions, that view Moses as an enduring presence, manifesting through the teachers of every generation. Following Moses would, according to such views, be a case of participating in his life and being, not simply of following his example. The identification of all Sikh Gurus with Guru Nanak certainly strikes a similar note, and one wonders to what extent the Sikh leadership of following

generations merely follows the model set by previous generations or also participates in the spiritual reality established by Guru Nanak. One suspects the latter. While Reis-Habito does not enter a detailed discussion of the meaning of following in the footsteps of the Buddha, it is likely that it is understood in similar ways to how Moses serves as a role model in Judaism. For most it is by way of example, while for some schools a stronger understanding of participation in the Buddha's being may be implied.

> *Successful leadership almost makes the leader obsolete, inasmuch as the community comes to achieve or embody the very ideals that make the leader what he or she is*

How Buddhism understands its ultimate purpose affects its view of the nature and purpose of leadership. The ultimate end of Buddhism as a religion can be described as the realization of the liberating Wisdom of seeing things as they are, that is, as interconnected, thereby generating the compassion that flows from this wisdom. Wisdom and compassion thus emerge as the keywords for understanding Buddhism. They are also the keywords for understanding Buddhist leadership. Following in the Buddha's footsteps involves a twofold movement. First is a movement away from the world in seeking, and arriving at the wisdom of awakening, whereby one sees "things as they are," that is, as mutually interconnected. This leads to the outflow of

boundless compassion, a movement which brings one back to the world in order to liberate sentient beings from suffering. We note how we have come full circle to Miroslav and Andemicael's presentation, where the life of any religious leader is defined by the two moments of ascent and descent. The twofold movement of movement away from and return to may indeed be significant for the vocation of every religious leader, regardless of her tradition, even if it is not always conceptualized in such theoretical terms.

The similarity in spiritual dynamics, notwithstanding fundamental differences in spiritual and theological understanding, leads one to consideration of other dynamics that we have seen operating in relation to religious leadership in other traditions. When the actual dynamics of religious leadership in Buddhism are considered, these are strikingly similar, perhaps even identical, to those encountered in other religions.

Let us begin by noting the question of the leader's relation to the community. We have noted that the leader is in some ways removed from the community, as a means of accomplishing his or her work. Nevertheless, on the conceptual plane, in most cases the leader is a part of the community. Successful leadership almost makes the leader obsolete, inasmuch as the community comes to achieve or embody the very ideals that make the leader what he or she is. We notice similar dynamics in the case of Buddhism. In fact, Buddhism is characterized by deep ambivalence towards religious leadership, as we learn from the Buddha's words. Recalling the Sikh investiture of Scripture as the ultimate teacher, we find some similarity in

the claim that the universal and particular law, the *dhamma*, is the monk's ruler, supervisor and master. While Buddhism has had to come to terms with leadership as part of the reality of the world as well as with the need to organize the Buddhist community, ultimately there is nothing that distinguishes leadership from the broader community. The goals and the means for their attainment are the same for leaders and for the community and much that is said in relation to Buddhist leaders is, in fact, simply an extension of the teaching aimed at the entire community. This also provides the background for the rise of lay movements and of lay leadership, that emerge as dominant features in the modern Buddhist landscape.

Because Buddhist leadership categories are secondary to the tradition's core teaching and grow out of historical need, we find a variety of forms of leadership emerging in the different political and cultural situations in which Buddhism has taken root. Reis-Habito surveys this variety, in an attempt to offer us a comprehensive view of the varieties of Buddhist leadership, as practiced in different Buddhist cultures. We have already noted the complex relationships between political and religious leadership in some of the religious cultures surveyed above. In the cases of both Islam and Sikhism, an integrated model of leadership gives way to a split, or a serious tension, between religious and political dimensions of leadership. Judaism emerges from a long period of in which religious leadership is almost the exclusive form of leadership known to the present day complexities that confront and at times confound it. Against this background, it is interesting to note the complex ways in which

Buddhist religious leadership interacts with political forces, in different Buddhist societies. While Reis-Habito does not explicitly opine on the value of such interactions, the general thrust of her presentation suggests that overall the mixture of forces is not beneficial. Indeed, the analysis of the major systemic challenges to Buddhism, as listed in classical texts, indicates how problematic state involvement in matters related to the spiritual life can be. Some cases of fusion of political and religious leadership, such as the Tibetan Dalai Lamas, do not come across as problematic. But overall, David Loy's claim regarding the need for Buddhism to learn from western modernity the value of separation of church and state seems to be the recommended course for the future of Buddhist leadership.

Looking at the range of activities associated with leadership we notice once again the prominence of teaching as a fundamental activity of the religious leader. Given that the Buddha was primarily a teacher, this should come as no surprise. Teaching is juxtaposed with various other offices. In one classical typology, teachers are contrasted with ascetic recluses. From another angle, teachers provide one kind of leadership while various other functionaries are responsible for the life of the community and its institutions.

How primary teaching is as an activity we note from the emphasis on master-disciple relations. We have already noticed those in Rambachan's presentation of Hindu leadership. Indeed, wisdom based traditions would naturally highlight not only the role of the teacher but also master-disciple relations. It seems that "teacher " may be thought of in

different settings. One may think of teaching in relation to a community, or more specifically within master-disciple relations. As already suggested, it is interesting that the prophetic model presents the contribution of teachers to the community, while the wisdom model presents the teachers' impact within the matrix of master-disciple relations. While each also has room for the other, it may be that wisdom traditions will conceive of teaching more readily within a personal teaching context than the prophetic model that reaches out to an entire community, as the recipient and carrier of the prophetic message and its continued teaching and dissemination.

Moving on to challenges to Buddhism, we notice that most of the challenges that contemporary Buddhists face are the same as the age old threats to the integrity of the tradition. They concern to a large extent difficulties associated with teaching and practice, as well as imbalances stemming from the relations between Buddhism and political powers. As a consequence, the most burning issues that require addressing by thoughtful leaders, as they reflect upon the future of Buddhist leadership relate to education. The educational challenges are first and foremost within, where the need is identified to place equal emphasis on textual study and on meditative practices. Teaching and its proper dissemination also loom large in the analysis of one contemporary problem, the transfer of Buddhist teachings methods to the West and the dangers attendant upon the cultural relocation of these practices. The centrality and authority associated with the teacher make sense in a native Buddhist society, especially when they are supported by the various strictures that accompany Buddhist

life and teaching. When transplanted into a different cultural context, various abuses can enter the teacher-disciple relations. These too need to be addressed as part of the formation and training of future teachers, equipping them with a broader understanding and set of skills, that will better equip them to deal with challenges and temptations arising from the western cultural setting.

Finally, Reis Habito draws on the work of Otto Sharmer, titled *Theory U,* which she considers a helpful way for all religious leaders to think of the future. This method is based on learning processes and listening skills similar to those developed through Buddhist practice. Application of this method might allow leaders to learn how to operate from the highest possible future, rather than being stuck in patterns of past experiences. This recommendation complements Gianotti's suggestion of featuring forgiveness as a tool to help his own religion, but actually all religions, move forward. It also recalls Gianotti's own call for deep listening as a mark of future leadership. It thus suggests that in thinking of the future we need to think not only of the substance and content of our teaching and training of future religious leaders but also to pay careful attention to the processes of thought that inform our thinking and learning and which constitute, as it were, the attitudinal or conscious foundation within which our teaching and reflection take place.

It is fitting to conclude this survey of our papers with a recommendation that is brought forth in the spirit of one religion as an inspiration to all others. While most of our attention has focused on each tradition and its particular challenges and processes, we are

also called to consider how the different traditions might deal collectively with the challenges at hand and what they might learn from one another. The suggestion that there is something we might all learn together and that there might be teachings, concerns or processes in one religion that are of relevance to others is itself an important acknowledgement of the commonalities that religious leaders share in their vocation, maybe even of the common spiritual ground they share. This leads me to reflect on how the different papers cohere and whether we might identify a broader common image of religious leadership that emerges from the accumulated wisdom of our authors. I think it best to leave such reflection for the conclusion of our collection of essays. I will therefore return to these reflections as part of my summary analysis, after the reader has had the opportunity to explore the papers, each in its own right, in greater detail.