



INTRODUCTION

And the mind — may God preserve you — is more prone to deep sleep than the eye. Neediest of sharpening than a sword, poorest to treatment, fastest to change, its illness, the deadliest, its doctors, the rarest, and its cure, the hardest. Whoever got a hold of it, before the spread of the disease, found his sake. Whoever tried to wrestle it after the spread would not find his sake. The greatest purpose of knowledge is the abundance of inspiring thoughts. Then, the ways to go about one's needs are met.

— Al-Jahiz¹

My Involvement in Management

I do not belong to the field of management whatever it may be. My involvement in management occurred as a coincidence. A colleague of mine, himself an authority in the field of “Organization Behavior” invited me to participate in a program he has been in charge of. Apparently he believed that participants in his program who were managers in a large corporation could get “the benefit of my expertise in psychology”. I surrendered to his wish after much attempts to convince him of my irrelevance. In my first encounter with managers, I admitted my ignorance without hesitation or shame. I knew then that recognition of ignorance is a gain of knowledge. Naively, I thought

¹ Al-Jahiz (9th Century Baghdad), *Kitab at-Tarbi' wat-Tadweer* (“Squaring the Circle”), p. 101. Edited by Charles Pellat, Institut Français de Damas, 1955.

that management had much to do with people and dealing with people was my job as a psychologist. Right from the start I decided to approach the problems of the field as a psychologist. I never felt the need to alter my professional identity. After all, people are people. For a psychologist, it does not matter much whether they were patients in a mental hospital or convicts in a prison, teachers or students in a school, leaders or followers, executives or laborers on assembly line. People, I thought, could be producers or consumers, doctors or patients, liberals or conservatives. I dealt with all such classes of people and, I thought, I could deal with managers or leaders. After all, they too are people aren't they?

I was clearly conscious of my being a stranger among businessmen. Naturally, while sharing my experience as a psychologist, I set out to learn about the functions of a banker or a production engineer. I was curious about the life of a sales person, and intrigued by the character of securities traders. I wondered how a bank teller or an accountant could tolerate going through the same routine activities day in and day out. I wondered how the label "leader" could apply equally to a president of a country, a CEO of a corporation, a principal of a school, an army general, a prison warden, a head of a charity organization, and a football coach. Hundreds of questions would explode in my mind from time to time, enough to shake my confidence in my relevance.

Fortunately, I was armed by an early education in philosophy followed by training in the scientific methodology and administration of instruments. These, I believed, should help me cope initially and also learn about the challenges facing professionals in fields so different from mine. I was thrilled that despite being the expert I thought I was in psychology, I had the chance for fresh learning. So I added to my tasks as a qualified psychologist the burden of being a participant observer. What a thrill it has been to be able to learn while teaching!

What I thought was a limitation turned out to be a blessing. I had no other choice than approaching executives with an open mind. I was authentic in sharing my experience with my audience. I had to learn through face-to-face interaction with thousands of executives and in different cultural settings around the world. Furthermore, failing satisfactory answers to nagging questions that kept **popping up** in my mind, I had to conduct my own mini research to find instant answers to such pressing questions.

Fortunately, my early training in Egypt as a psychologist took place within the philosophical tradition. That helped me detect philosophical foundations of management theories thought to be new when in fact they may have originated in Plato or Aristotle. Furthermore I was in the habit of gleaning philosophical and the socio-cultural implications of any theory or technique which I came across in my readings. My stance as observer and enquirer, originally due to my being a stranger, became my greatest asset. I simply observe and ask questions and encourage my audience to express their first-hand experience of the issues they were interested in. My seminars impressed my audience around the world as being provocative, not what they expected, fresh (different from the familiar management seminars) and helpful in self understanding and close to common sense. I would give answers to questions that seemed shockingly simple or even naïve. I would like to share below a vintage of my early experiences.

1. Startling Experiences

Teaching an Old Horse

One of the earliest memories comes to mind. That was my first encounter with American managers in a residential program at Rutgers University in New Jersey. Participants were seasoned middle managers from a large reputable corporation. Many of them were veterans of WWII or the Korean War. Soon after I started talking, one participant interrupted in a challenging tone, “Doc, you cannot teach an old horse new tricks.” Startled by a self-deprecating remark uttered by an impressive looking executive, I looked around the room as if searching for a proper response. All I could see was a group of executives that seemed equally surprised by the remark. What I saw inspired my response, “I see no horses in this room and I do not play tricks either.” There was unanimous laughter, but that incident got me thinking subsequently about several issues — executive training programs, how much an executive is ready to lead and how corporations prepare executives for participation in training programs. Interestingly, at that time I was using the expression adult education. Further acculturation replaced it by management training, the most unfortunate change which was associated with a parallel change, namely replacing the honorable term educator or teacher by trainer.

Another anecdote comes to mind. I was running a seminar for AT&T executives at the invitation of Rutgers University. Apparently, the director of the program had allowed a Human Resource Director from another corporation to sit in as observer throughout the proceedings. At the end of the session, this guest approached me with much enthusiasm. He asked if I would accept to run a similar session for his corporation. I asked him about the purpose of the proposed program. His answer was: I want you to get these managers to “*tear each other apart*”. That was in the sixties, the era of sensitivity training, self awareness and assertiveness training workshops. “Executives tearing each other” sounded bizarre, even obscene. This is because the gist of my presentation has been clearly humanistic. I was also openly critical of excessive self revelation so popular in training programs of the time. He seemed to have been carried away more by the positive reaction of the audience than by the content of the presentation. In fact the aim of my program was to offer means of conflict detection and various strategies for conflict resolution. I pointed this out to him. To his disappointment and surprise, I turned down his invitation. That was one more deep experience to be stored in the depths of my consciousness for the future emergence of my conceptualization of leadership concept.

How about Maslow?

My mind springs forward to the decade of the eighties and from the US to Malaysia. I see myself in a class of managers lecturing on work motivation. I was stressing the point that we can learn a lot about motivation by soliciting workers’ immediate experience when someone in the audience protested: “How about Maslow’s hierarchy of needs?” Startled by the irrelevance of the remark to what I was talking about, I replied: “How about Maslow’s hierarchy?” “You did not mention Maslow’s theory,” the speaker persisted. To reassure him, I said, “You already know about it. I was talking about the life experience of workers. I was not concerned with theories.” He did not seem satisfied. He could not understand how I could eschew talking about such an important theory. It turned out that the questioner had attended a course where he learnt for the first time that needs are structured in a hierarchy from the most primitive physiological needs to the lofty need

for self realization. To him, a theory describes a real structure such as a building, not a conceptual interpretation of motivational development. I did know about the theory, but the focus of my talk was about the sources of any theory, observations and experiences. I was also aware of some implications of the theory. If we extrapolate from the hierarchy of needs in individuals to cultural groups we get a similar hierarchy of cultures from the most primitive where people are driven almost exclusively by physiological needs to the most civilized who reached the apex of human evolution reflected in self realization. I had my qualms about a theory with such ethnocentric implications that may contradict Professor Maslow's humanistic philosophy. The important issue here is the habit of passive learning that we should guard against, particularly in leadership training programs.

I Am OK You're OK

While being with the issue of passive learning, I would like to report another incident. I had just finished a lecture in Singapore and as I was hurriedly leaving the lecture hall, a Japanese manager who happened to be a participant in another seminar, caught up with me. He bowed and with the usual Japanese courtesy asked, "Professor, are you teaching *'I am OK, you're OK.'*?" He was referring to Eric Burn's technique of Transactional Analysis, quite in vogue at the time in South East Asia. I replied: "No, I don't." Noting his disappointment, I added reassuringly, "It is a very useful approach to human interpersonal communication", and I meant what I said. To this gentleman, leadership training has been reduced to a single approach to communication that in turn has been reduced to a slogan, 'I am OK, You're OK.'

These early incidents indicated clearly that many management seminars seem to revolve around the latest fashionable ideas. The media jump upon these ideas and proceed to popularize them with much sensationalism. Soon afterwards, corporations in their eagerness to innovate and compete follow suit. Being too busy, senior managers usually do not have the time to submit such ideas to careful scrutiny, let alone consider their philosophical and practical implications. They send their people in droves to seminars that promote the innovative ideas. Carried away by enthusiasm, those who had the great fortune to attend these seminars return to their respective organizations eager to

apply the new knowledge. I once overheard a manager talking about his boss who had just returned from a workshop: “here we go again; he will try a new toy.”

2. Case Study

I would like to present a mini case study showing the dilemma of a management consultant in a Third World Country. Government agencies calls on the consultant to solve problems bureaucratic authorities are not equipped to solve or, at least, are too busy to tackle them. The consultant becomes an escape valve as it were. I limit myself to three incidents in which this consultant has been involved. I must add that this consultant is an honorable man with goodwill and has no objection to my presenting his case.

First incident

The government noted that top civil servants in the country are under tremendous pressure from an overly energetic prime minister. Solicitous of the overworked administrators, a high official got this “bright idea”: to form an association of wives of top civil servants. The mission of the association was to provide support to their overworked husbands. Once the organization has been formed, the wives now needed training in leadership, thought the official. The task of training the wives was assigned to my “*management trainer*” friend. As usual, he came to me for informal guidance. He put the problem to me in a very candid and direct manner: “What should I say to the wives?” Surprised by the question, I said: “I really don’t know. I do not see how instructing these wives on leadership would have anything to do with the issue of supporting their overworked husbands.” Nevertheless he persisted in pressuring me, I told him humorously, “I can only approach these ladies as an experienced husband and not as a professional psychologist and you can certainly do likewise. You yourself are an overworked husband. Besides, you have no choice since you got yourself into this hole.”

Second incident

The government decided to launch a campaign to propagate a “culture of cleanliness”. Note the intrusion of the word “culture”, a term derived from a scientific discipline, anthropology. “Culture of cleanliness” sounds more impressive than plain cleanliness. And since we are dealing with culture, the authority thought, we have to call on an “expert” in leadership development. As usual, the assignment fell on my friend, a good soldier who never turns down an assignment. And who would he seek but myself, his primary target. It took me some effort to convince him that my expertise does not extend to cleaning public toilets and bathrooms. However, I decided to offer genuine advice because the issue in this case is cleanliness which concerns environmental protection, an issue I feel strongly about. Here are in brief terms the items of my advice: (a) recruit a group of volunteer students from several universities and get the government to equip them with brooms, decent uniforms and all the necessary equipment. (b) Under your direction, the students would then go from one public place to another demonstrating their zeal. (c) Try to get television networks to publicize the occasion. I added: “This will be a great opportunity for you to put your expertise in leadership to the best use. Stop *talking* about leadership, just *lead*.” The idea did not appeal to my friend. He thought I was kidding when I was dead serious. Obviously, it is much easier to talk about leadership than practising it.

Third incident

“My problem this time is certainly within your expertise and I need your help,” said my friend in anticipation of my usual critical remarks. He had been invited to lecture on communication in a leadership development workshop. I asked him, “Do you have a dictionary of your native language?” He replied, “Yes I do.” I told him: “Look up the following words in the dictionary: talk, listen, ramble, gossip, squeal, spy, insinuate, rumor, secrecy, lie, argue, stammer, stutter, convince, persuade, seduce, negotiate, etc. etc.” I then added, “If you put down on paper the definitions of these words given in your dictionary and arrange them in a meaningful way, a coherent lecture will emerge and in your own mother tongue.” My friend looked intrigued for a moment

but soon afterwards he protested: “but that would be *simplistic*.” I retorted: “*Simple* would be the appropriate word.”

Like many intelligent and educated professionals, my friend was under the impression that science requires the use of terms that have nothing to do with living. According to them knowledge can only be found in books, preferably those written in English, and true knowledge is brought from books to the world not the other way round. In fact it is the aim of science to provide the simplest answers to our questions. There is also a tendency towards romanticizing science. A case in point is the recent rise of the concept of split brain in South East Asia, implying that creativity resides in the right hemisphere of the brain. Millions of dollars were poured into seminars advocating more use of the right brain, a quantum jump from brain research to applications in adult education. Scientists do not share such attitude towards science. Polykarp Kusch, a Nobel Laureate states that there is no ‘scientific method’ and what is called by that name can be outlined for only quite simple problems. Another Nobel Laureate, Percy Bridgman, goes even further than Kusch when he said: “There is no scientific method as such, but the vital feature of the scientist’s procedure has been merely to do his utmost with his mind, *no holds barred*.”²

Misuse of the Term Style

I noticed in my contacts with managers that once a person ascend to a leadership position people view everything he says or does as a leadership act. In one of my seminars I was talking about leadership styles. One participant, a middle level official in the government of a Third World country reported the following incident: his boss, a top civil servant summoned him into his office. As soon as he entered the boss’ office, the boss went on reprimanding him for a variety of things. Standing erect in front of the boss, the manager tried to defend himself. Instead of listening, the boss interrupted him, “Go, go, I don’t like your face.” Feeling morally indignant, the manager calmly but

²William S. Beck. *Modern Science and the Nature of Life*, New York: Harcourt Brace, 1957.

forcefully retorted: "Sir, if you don't like my face, there is nothing I can do about it. If you don't like my work, I would be glad to receive your instructions. Good day sir." And he left with a sense of vindication. The most interesting thing is that upon hearing what the manager said to his boss, the entire class applauded. Why would they applaud? I asked myself. They too, I guessed, must have been through a similar experience and that the action of their colleague represented a model that they did not dare to live by.

But the main point I wanted to make about this incident is that the manager referred to the behavior of his boss as an example of what is meant by autocratic style of leadership, so prevalent in the civil service in many countries. That gave me the opportunity to point out a serious misunderstanding of the term "style". Leadership style presupposes a consistent pattern of *leadership* behavior. I had to point out that the behavior of this boss had nothing to do with leadership. The boss in this situation stepped out of the leadership role altogether behaving instead as a thug. Meanwhile, he completely ignored the formal role of his subordinate as a leader in his own right, let alone being a grown-up and honorable citizen.

Manager or Leader?

There is a question I always expect to get in the course of teaching whether in university classes or in management seminars. This question is, "what is the difference between a manager and a leader?" I usually throw the question back to the questioner and invite the audience to offer an answer. Invariably, vehement debate ensues without ever culminating by consensus. Arguments and counter-arguments reach a high pitch necessitating my intervention. It became clear to many others in the audience that the same words mean different things to different people. I usually put an end to the arguments by referring the audience to the dictionary to look up the verbs, "to lead" and "to manage" and not the nouns "leader" and "manager". Only then, I thought, would they realize that the habit of using the nouns fixes one's mind on particular persons while the verbs refer to the actions a given person performs. Using the verb or the verbal noun we come to realize that the two sets of activities under the headings "leading" and "managing" overlap a great deal. In other words, the activities

determine what label best fits the activities. Later, I required individual participants of any of my seminars on the subject to record their own definitions of both terms and decide whether they think of them as the same thing or two different concepts. Thus, I accumulated a large number of responses the results of which I will discuss later in this book.

Corporate Culture

Corporate culture is one of the topics that comes up frequently in the course of my teaching to graduate students, executives, or educators. The word culture is used so often that people, me included, have assumed that the concept has the same connotation in the minds of different people. This has been the case until a memorable incident took place. I was conducting a workshop to top leaders of a striving corporation and, I must add, a very successful one. Frequent references to “our culture” seemed to irritate one of the participants. He blurted, “hey guys, you keep saying *our culture*. I do not really know what *our culture* is.” Most participants were surprised by their colleague’s public admission of ‘ignorance’. His statement ushered a barrage of definitions. Almost every participant volunteered his own definition or rather, definitions, with great confidence. Fascinated by the controversy I let the discussion go on. It lasted no less than one hour and yet the group failed to reach consensus. I put an end to the discussion by a comment: “There may be a culture there, but we never really cared to share the definition of the term *culture*.” Next meeting, I came to the class equipped with a list of nine definitions of the word ‘culture’ from the Random House Dictionary. I projected the list on a screen. I then invited participants to choose one or more of the list that “best describes the definition of the term ‘culture’ as you actually use it” which they did. A smooth discussion ensued culminating in agreement on the following two definitions:

- ❖ The sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings and transmitted from one generation to another.
- ❖ The behaviors and beliefs characteristic of a particular social, ethnic, or age group.

Interestingly, one participant added one more definition — “*the raising of plants or animals, especially with the view to their improvement.*” This participant, it turned out, was originally trained as a botanist. His reason for favoring this definition without refuting the other two was, “it emphasizes the role of the corporation as environment that should enable employees to blossom and grow.” That incident and many others cemented my belief that controversy that rages around leadership or any other issue could never be settled unless we share the definition of the words we use. This prompted me to explore the cross-cultural vocabulary pertaining to the concept of leadership. I devoted one of the chapters in this book to leadership semantics.

Empowerment Is the Solution

A decade ago, I noticed the rise of the word “empowerment” in management circles, both in governments and corporations. Faced with acute problems, central among these were the so-called *dead wood*, lowered productivity and turnover of the better employees, organizations seem to have found a *cure* for these problems. The cure is called *empowerment*. What empowerment means in concrete terms, I do not really know. The term is too abstract to suggest specific operational changes. Generally speaking what the promoters of the new movement had in mind was to *grant* subordinates the right to make more decisions. This is a subject that troubled me a great deal. It raised in my mind many questions: how to define empowerment in operational terms? How could empowerment granted from the top down alter the current authority structure? I thought at the time that the real issue lies in something more serious than power differential, namely the philosophy underlying such differential. That set me thinking about the meaning of organizational *membership* and the roles of each member relative to the organization’s global mission, or purpose. A lot of thinking and readings I went through yielded a discussion of this topic in this book.

I Want to Be a Great Leader

Frequent encounters with young managers around the world provided me with ample opportunities to unravel considerable number of

untested assumptions that underlie their behavior and career aspirations. A case in point: a young manager approached me to find out if he had “all it takes to make a great leader”. I asked him, “What for?” “I just want to be a great leader.” “What sort of people would you like to lead?”, I asked. “It doesn’t matter, any people,” he replied. I posed another question, “And what would you like to do then?” “Just run a big operation, a corporation or something,” he replied. Evidently, leadership in this manager’s mind has no content. It is just a compelling vision of him somewhere at the top of a mass of people, an egocentric ambition or indeterminate fantasy. The word “leader” invokes in his mind images of world leaders, historical figures or heroes. Social reformers or activists in non-political domains may also come to mind but less often. Obviously, I thought, false assumptions about leadership contaminate the thinking of young aspirants for leadership positions. Unhealthy leadership practices derive directly from such assumptions, often associated with passionate shallow ambition. Egocentric aspirations have to be dealt with in the selection and training of future leaders. This became paramount in my teaching. I hope that this book will shed some light on this issue.

Recruitment Blunders

Untested assumptions about leadership intrude into recruitment practices. A former student of mine, a human resource specialist, invited me to sit as observer in an employment interview she was about to conduct. Right from the very start of the interview, she assumed an adversary attitude towards the young candidate, challenging him in an unduly aggressive manner. This came as a shock to me because her attitude was at variance with her usual solicitous attitude towards her immediate subordinates. After the interview, I asked her why she was so aggressive. “I was trying to find out if the candidate had leadership potential.”

Three assumptions seem to underlie the interviewer’s conduct: first, that leadership is somehow related to the ability to aggress, confront, compete or dominate; second that if the candidate fails to manifest these traits in the interview situation, they would not be part of his personality. This would justify turning him down. Third, a bellicose approach by the interviewer is the best *tactic* to elicit leadership

potential. Carried away by these assumptions, the interviewer ignored the value implications of her conduct. She ignored that the candidate is already a socialized adult. It would be perfectly natural that he presents himself in a socially desirable manner. Even if he were aggressive *by nature*, he would do his utmost to control his belligerence. That would be a sign of self-control, an attribute that I think would be an asset in a leader. Fourth, the interviewing showed little interest in the ability of the candidate to fit in the organization as an ordinary member, an attribute that should be considered. After all, I thought, *membership precedes leadership*.

While we are on the subject of employment interviews, I would like to relate another situation in which I have been involved, not as an observer, but as a reference for a candidate. The candidate had applied to a middle level position in one of the major banks in the US. Naively, I believed that by recommending the candidate, I was doing a great service to the organization, gratis mind you. The candidate was a former student of mine. He happened to be one of the best graduate students I have ever encountered. To my surprise, the candidate's application was turned down. The reason why the interviewer turned him down was that the candidate still lived with his father. Living with the father at such mature age, thought the interviewer, is a sign of dependency and passivity. Evidently, the interviewer concluded without further enquiry that the candidate could not compete or lead. Had the interviewer enquired a little further than he did, he would have found out that the candidate's father was a widower. As a son, the candidate felt responsible for taking care of him. Furthermore, living with his father did not prevent him from going about his activities in the most productive way. His activities ranged from mountain climbing, skiing trips, travels around the world besides being an art collector and highly cultured individual. Equally surprising, the interviewer ignored the fact that in his previous job, the candidate was responsible for managing a budget of four billion US dollars. This is a case of filial piety taken as impediment without placing a single fact within a broader context. By the way, the interviewer was in charge of Human Resources. He got his job because he was a marine that had mastered the art of killing Asians. No wonder he rejected a candidate as "a soft specimen of renaissance man", to use the interviewer's words.

Elitist View of Leadership

Writers and laymen alike focus predominantly on leaders occupying high authority positions in a nation or in a firm. They are mostly interested in people who have been able to acquire power and have reached the highest offices. There is scarcity of writing about effective leadership among ordinary people in various spheres of social life. There are great leaders nobody hear about nor will ever hear about: school headmasters; head nurses; mother superiors; first line supervisors; school teachers that shun promotions preferring to remain in the classroom; restaurant chefs that run their kitchens like commanders in the heat of battle, dealing with emergencies under tremendous pressure from demanding clients and harassed waiters; student leaders; social service workers in neighborhoods plagued by crime, drug abusers and drug dealers; ex-convicts that succeed where the prison system has failed in either rehabilitation of offenders or in crime prevention.

3. Writing This Book*William James*

As I set out to write this book, I found myself under the spell of my early experience lecturing to managers or graduate students of management. As William James once said, “Facts have coercive power.” But the above anecdotes, mundane as they may appear to some, constituted an insidious program of education for me. I grew up and received my education in Egypt and later in England. I worked first in Egypt and later in the US, but since the seventies I lead a nomadic life around the world with frequent and long sojourns in South East Asia, particularly Singapore. So naturally the influence of various cultures must have penetrated deeply into my psyche. I would naturally approach problems from various angles — primarily as a psychologist, albeit critical of his own discipline, often as anthropologist with much interest in cultural differences and commonalities, but also the philosopher in me watching over to ponder the wider implications of my observations and assertions. When faced by a puzzling issue for which I found no ready answer in the literature, I would resort to simple research. In my research I simply pursued my “chronic”

experiential approach which dominated my early work in the study of mental disorders. The central position in this work has been the emphasis on immediate experience. After all, leadership is not only behavior to observe but is also an intimate living experience that envelops the leaders and followers alike.

Information Overload

In the course of this insidious education, I found out that the field of management suffers from congestion and informational overload. Difficult problems of terminology, method, and theoretical formulations beset it from all its sides. I came to the conclusion that the pressing need is not for more facts or more data but for conceptual schemes and systematic theories into which we may fit the facts we have, and the facts we shall gather in the future. The incidents I cited above got me thinking that the problem with leadership does not reside in lack of leadership skills or leadership potential but in the way we think about leadership. So it was natural that the current book revolves around thinking. But how can we think about leadership without considering the language in which we put our thoughts. How could we divorce management literature from consideration of language and form? So, two chapters on semantics seemed necessary. One chapter derives from empirical studies of the meanings which managers assign to the words *leader* and *manager*. The other explores the semantics of leadership in different languages and different cultures. Interestingly, the latter was the first chapter that I felt constrained to conclude before I could venture into the other chapters in the book. I must also add that tackling the semantics of leadership regulated my thinking throughout this entire project.

I was also confronted by another question: how can we think about leadership without thinking about where leadership takes place? It takes place within and between social groups and organizations. Therefore, I had to devote considerable space to the meanings we assign to organizations both as environment and process, to forces of construction and decay in organizations, to a typology of situations that demand different leadership approaches and to individual differences in the perception of, and attitude towards organizations.

Conceptualization of Leadership

Most of the work that has been done on leadership approached the subject from outside. I chose to look at leadership as a mode of existence in relation to other human individuals. Leadership as I saw it is a human endeavor, a relationship that we experience as we engage in it. We cannot talk about leadership in the abstract. For example, if we want to know the criteria of effective leadership, we simply go to people and ask them. They and they alone are able to tell how they think, feel and act when they assume the role of leading others, or when they are required to follow the dictates of another person or when they find themselves in such position that requires them to shift back and forth between the reciprocal roles of leading and following.

No matter where we go, we will find ourselves face to face in a situation where people are giving directions or receiving directions; exerting influence or receiving influence. We will witness someone exercising authority, abdicating authority or abusing it. We will witness a person tyrannizing others or a person that people follow, sometimes blindly and happily. I have always been aware that leadership begins when two parties meet, whether individuals or groups. And when the parties meet, there is life with all its complexity and ambiguity. In short there is more to leadership than a person bossing around someone else. There is more to leadership than just a style or criteria of effectiveness. My conceptualization of leadership challenges much of the traditional notions of leadership. I question, for example, the universality of intelligence, dominance, aggressiveness and extraversion as absolute criteria of leadership effectiveness. Instead of imposing an *ideal* model of leadership, I lay the philosophical foundations that will allow institutions to make their own choice of the model (or models) in the light of their own cultural values and unique historical circumstances. For this reason, this book can best be described as interdisciplinary and a cross-cultural guide for policy making, particularly with regard to the selection, training, and counseling of leaders.

The content of this book is a mix of my first-hand experience, empirical research and readings. In my readings I did not limit myself to what is written in the field of management or even psychology. I sought insight from any source that I thought might shed light on the

subject — anthropology, thermodynamics, mysticism, and literature. The book offers various conceptual models that are likely to enhance our ability to diagnose leaders' effectiveness and assess the outcome of leaders' efforts on the performance of the groups or the institutions they lead. Two among the models are worth highlighting. The first, "LFF" explains the dynamic interaction that takes place in the life of a leader among three distinct but interdependent attitudes: *Leadership*, *Followership*, and *Fellowship*. Each of these attitudes constitutes a vital resource for any leader. According to this model, the effectiveness of a leader does not depend exclusively on the will and skill in leading, but on the ability of the leader to shift back and forth among the three attitudes according to the demands of the situations. The second model, "*Leadership Prerequisites*" proposes five major conditions without which leadership potential could not be realized.

Purpose of the Book

I believe that this book will equip readers with the conceptual tools that will enable them to counteract the onslaught of information. It will serve as a guide for thinking about leadership: reveal the underlying assumptions that drive our decisions, policy making and interactions with other fellow human beings. I must admit that I could not in good faith offer a definition of leadership *in itself* for the simple reason that leadership is not *something* that exists *in itself*. I could only conceive leadership as *actions* or *processes* undertaken by individuals and groups in different cultural settings and in different time contexts. Besides, people have different definitions and different criteria for what they consider effective leadership. Furthermore, leadership is more than just a scientific subject of enquiry. It is an integral part of the life of individuals and societies. The scientist is welcome to throw light on its manifestations but it is not the scientist's business to tell people how to conduct their lives.

Finishing the Book

I was learning about the subject from books, from endless dialogues with thousands of participants in my seminars around the world, and from many others that generously accepted to participate as subjects

in my various research projects. It took me some time before I could extricate myself from my academic involvement to spell out my thoughts and feelings with as much authenticity as is humanly possible. Finally I must admit that there remain a lot of things that I haven't completely worked out. I hope I will live long enough to pursue what I missed.

Title of the Book

The reader may wonder what I meant by the word "mind" in the title of the book. I do not feel obligated to provide a technical definition. I can only say that I am not talking here about the mind of the philosophers or biologists or psychologists. I hold on to the colloquial usage of the word "mind" in day-to-day encounters: for example, "I mind my own business," "you have been on my mind lately," "I speak my mind," "meeting of the minds," or "you're out of your mind." I mean the mind that I experience directly and that enables me to direct my senses and make sense out of the barrage of sense impressions that I keep getting from the world around me. My mind is what projects me into the unknown through reasoning, fantasy and dreams. It is that force that connects me to the past through memory, to the future through imagination, and to the unknown through intuition. In fact the book could very well be called "Thinking about Leadership".

I have no claim to add something strikingly novel. Writing, or rather trying to write this book has been a decade of learning and trying to understand the issues related to leadership as a universal human phenomenon. In the meantime it was a humbling experience, the experience of a man who wants to understand, to reconcile conflicting views or observations none of which could be denied and to deal with an avalanche of information. In this I adopt David Hume's definition of his role as a philosopher: *"to be employed as an under-labourer in clearing the ground a little, and removing some of the rubbish that lies in the way of knowledge."*