

Public Administration in the Islamic World: Considering the Importance of Religion, its Values and Culture

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Abstract

A small but growing area of public administration scholarship appreciates the influence of religious values on various aspects of government. This appreciation parallels a growing interest in comparative public administration and indigenized forms of government which recognizes the role of culture in different approaches to government. This article is at the crossroads of these two trends while also considering a very salient region, the Islamic world. The Islamic world is uniquely religious, which makes this discussion even more relevant, as the nations that represent them strive towards legitimacy and stability. The history and core values of Islam need to be considered as they pertain to systems of government that are widely accepted by the people. In essence, this is being done in many countries across the Islamic world, providing fertile grounds for public administration research from a comparative perspective. This paper explores these possibilities for future research on this topic.

Keywords: *Religion; Ethics; Values; Public administration; Islam; Comparative PA*

Introduction

According to research at the Religions and Development program at the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom there have been three tracks in public management research that consider the role of religion in government. These include an indirect reference through an emphasis on values, the influence of culture and context and a specific focus on certain religions (Shah et al. 2007). This article considers these directions with a specific application to the Islamic world.

Religion continues to be an important topic in public administration because "the modern secular state has had difficulty disengaging itself from the embrace of established religion" (Dwivedi 2005, 26). Despite this importance, the academic literature has rarely considered the role of religion in public administration. This is a claim voiced by Lowery (2005), when he noted that "the academic discipline of public administration has paid little attention to the role that religious and spiritual values play in the professional lives of public administrators" (324).

Deontology, which is the study of the duty and moral obligation to others, applies to those public service values that are considered important to be an effective public administrator. This is an interest in the common good with a focus on service to others and social equity values. Many of these public service orientations are deeply rooted in a profound love for others and a communitarian impulse. To them serving is about meeting their own emotional and spiritual needs as well as those of others (Houston et al. 2008; Lowery 2005; Cunningham 2005). These values are rooted heavily in a religious worldview and inform public administration ethics, which Menzel (2015) calls a "values-driven enterprise" (357).

Public administration ethics encompass rights, obligations and principles which, as Rohr (1976) explained, encompass the "regime values". In his interpretation the values of freedom, property and equality are the "regime values" of the United States, for example. These values progenated from Europe, as the United States is the product of European political thought,

with the foundational scholars John Locke, John Stuart Mill and Jean-Jacques Rousseau having profound influence on the ideas in the US Constitution. The modern forms of public administration in the United States evolved under Woodrow Wilson, who was heavily influenced by German political theorists such as Bluntschli and Stein. Rosser (2010) argued that "it hardly seems to be an exaggeration to say that during the closing years of the nineteenth century, the whole of American political science – of which public administration cannot be separated at this time – was under great influence by German political theory" (549).

It is for these reasons that these "regime values" with their roots in religion have ensured some level of interaction between religion and government in Europe and the United States. European political thought following the Enlightenment considered religion a private matter and sought to expunge religion from government. Despite this push, the European nation-states that developed along with their constitutions still recognized a cooperative relationship between church and state. This has typically entailed religion as a source of cultural belonging, but moral issues are also pertinent in some contexts. In the modern-day European Union there has been debate over the role of religion, in particular Christianity, in its constitution. In the United States, where religious salience is much higher than in Europe, this intersectionality is more pronounced between religion and government (Hennig 2015; Schlesinger and Foret 2006).

The inability of Western secular government to escape the pull of religion is evidenced in the need to establish a replacement for it through a civil religion. It represents a need to create a cohesive society based on a nucleus of values in which tension over these values in an increasingly diverse and individualistic world has attenuated divisions. The rising interest in public administration in "value pluralism" indicates the importance of this subject for sound and stable government (Molina 2015; Ferrari 2010; Gedicks 2010; Spicer 2014; and Overeem and Verhoef 2014).

In this context, there is the comparative approach to public administration, which is the study of administrative concepts and/or processes across a wide or narrow range of organizations, nations and cultures. Comparative public administration (CPA) started in the United States during the Cold War, when many former colonies had achieved independence and began to create their own states. This approach has widened the boundaries of public administration scholarship to understand the forms and functions of public administration in different contexts. It has helped in understanding the commonalities and the differences as well as the reasons for these differences (Hou et al. 2011; Jreisat 2011).

In the wake of ensuing differences between nations and cultures and the failure of international development organizations to affect real and sustainable change in non-Western governments a new approach to CPA has emerged that focuses on the indigenization of administration. This approach recognizes the unique aspects of administration that can be found in individual nations or cultures. Although many have applauded this movement as a further expression of a de-ethnocentrism in public administration that focuses on Western public administration, some have also felt that this has led to further fragmentation and a defeat of one of the goals of CPA, which is to find best practices (Samier 2014; Jreisat 2005). Rutgers (2004) called this dichotomy between a local and a global perspective of public administration the problem of sailing between Scylla and Charybdis in Greek mythology or a rock and a hard place.

The continued focus of recent research in CPA on European or Western countries may be an indication of a subtle realization of these very real differences, especially between cultures. The continued lack of inclusion of culture as a factor in these studies may also be an indication of this realization. Those that have accepted the differences between cultures as a real and important aspect of public administration have increased research on non-Western public administration (Fitzpatrick et al. 2011; Drechsler 2014).

One important area of the world merits more attention, given its inability to construct stable states. The Islamic world has a rich history of public administration, from the city-state of Medina under the Prophet Muhammad to the Caliphs and Sultans of the great world-wide and regional Islamic kingdoms that stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. In many ways

Islamic government simply acquired the governing traditions of the previous non-Muslim administrations, which could range from Roman and Persian to Hindustani. In other ways it added many elements to those traditions, transforming those governments into Islamic governments. These additional elements can be associated with the unique aspect of Islam and its impact on different societies around the world (Lewis 2008; Çaha 2003).

This article is not only focused on the continual relevance of religion in public administration from a general perspective, but on the Islamic world and its continual conflict over the role of religion in the state. The developed world is largely secular, but the literature in public administration finds that religion and the values and culture that inform, and are informed by, it have mostly informal roles. This discussion has relevance for the understanding of the pogroms in the Islamic world, where it has been accepted for some time that religion and the state are not separate even formally and in so-called secular states. This is due to the lack of distinction between the sacred and the secular in Islam. The next section considers the conjoined concepts of religion, the development of a civil religion to supersede it and a discussion of public administration values and ethics.

Religion, civil religion and public administration values and ethics

There has been some research on specific religions, their values and public administration. For example, Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism have been explored as they apply to public administration (DeHaven-Smith 2003; Yanow 2003; Subramanian 1967). There is also a growing literature on Islam (Drechsler 2014). This research considers religion to be an important factor in the function of government while also recognizing that there are important differences between religions.

Casanova (2003) argued that religion is both behavioral and institutional. The behavioral aspect of religion influences individual values and can contribute to a public voice. The institutional aspect of religion is more formal through faith-based initiatives and religious interest groups. These aspects are apparent in democratic and secular societies, such as the United States, where religious beliefs and values can inform support or opposition to a policy. Religious groups have also become involved with policy implementation via government funding for specific programs and projects. In electoral politics religious groups have become important lobby groups for various initiatives.

Dwight Waldo made the case that religion could contribute to the development of an administrative theology (Waldo 1980). This acceptance of the role of religion in public administration is not an acceptance of a theological perspective of government. Instead, it is a contributor to a more secular religion of public service. This recognizes a spirituality of public service in which "its secular dimension is crucial in governance, especially with respect to public service ethics and values" (Dwivedi 2005, 27-28).

Rousseau accepted the important contribution of religion to cohesion in a society. He developed the concept of a civil religion which still relied heavily on theological concepts found in traditional religion. In the United States, where religion has traditionally been seen as fostering republican virtues, religion, culture and political institutions are closely related to each other (Ward 2014; Olehla 2010; and Ferrari 2010). The increasing role of the government in providing public welfare has created a re-delegation of responsibilities from the religious institutions to the government. The "good works" of government increases the salience of the association between religious values and public service. As defined by Moots (2010) a civil religion is a "set of moral imperatives expressed in religious language and intended to frame and motivate public policy" (80). In essence, government has become so large and encompassing that it has naturally overlapped the domain of religion and this has required an impetus to frame public service by those same values that motivated religious institutions to provide those services.

Collective and social decisions are based on explicit and implicit moral values. Even professional ethics in public administration contain abstract values like achieving social justice. Those institutions construct the social environments in which governments operate, and these are defined by social values, norms and realities. Apparently, these values and ethics do not have to be based within a religious orientation, but they are often based within this reality. Public administrators are confronted with a wide range of these social and cultural values. These values are societal insofar as the organizations that operate in these societies must be consistent with these values (Molina 2015).

Molina (2015) defined public service values as having a professional, ethical, democratic and human basis. This includes the values of honesty, integrity, social justice, efficiency, innovativeness, reliability, transparency, lawfulness, benevolence and inclusiveness. The crossover of religious values and some of these values is clear. Secularism and pluralism place emphasis on the need for a secular religion of public service or a civil religion that would allow a consensus on values for societal cohesion.

In contrast, research on value pluralism encourages a lack of unity on these values as an aspect of a healthy democracy. Values conflict not only between systems, but within systems, as well. A choice between values involves difficult decisions. As noted by Overeem and Verhoef (2014), "value pluralists argue that in the course of our lives (and particularly when we are involved in public decision making) we encounter deep conflicts between different values that all appear to have intrinsic moral worth, but cannot all be realized simultaneously" (991). This discussion highlights that values are of intrinsic importance, whether they conflict in public service or not, and that these values inform public administration ethics. Waldo (1984) referred to ethics and their underlying values as criteria for action. It also highlights that understanding different value systems is critical in understanding how others govern and that those same dynamics are at play in those societies. This places importance on approaching public administration from a comparative and global perspective. The next section is on comparative public administration and the importance of understanding local culture and its influence on different approaches to government.

Comparative public administration and culture

CPA takes into consideration the role of culture in determining managerial practices; however, only 38 percent of articles written between 2000 and 2009 considered it in their analyses (Jreisat 2005; Fitzpatrick et al. 2011). Fitzpatrick et al. (2011) added that despite this scarcity of research on culture in CPA culture needs to be a significant variable in these analyses, especially since it can impact the implementation of an administrative innovation or intervention. Further, Jreisat (2011) noted that the effects of culture and value systems on managerial practices are largely unknown, especially in public administration.

The importance of understanding the role of culture in public administration is critical to the purpose of research in CPA. One of the goals of this research is to gain knowledge of others for a balanced perspective in which it focuses on the diversity and uniformity of administrative practice across different contexts (Jreisat 2005). Fitzpatrick et al. (2011) stated that "comparative perspectives allow us to move from an ethnocentric, parochial view of public administration in the United States and the goal of identifying the single best approach to a problem to recognizing that theories and solutions must take into account the context and culture in which they are introduced and implemented in order to determine what outcomes will be achieved" (827). In addition, Jreisat (2011) added that "cross-cultural comparative research has had a transforming effect on the field of public administration. Opening up to the experiences of other countries encouraged a transition from a traditional ethnocentric view of the field to a global subject of human learning, teaching and research" (834).

In the field of public administration historically there has been a failure to appreciate non-Western contributions and an under-appreciation of local traditions. This lack of appreciation is embodied by an ethnocentrism in public administration focused on Western forms of government. There has also been a growing realization that forms of public administration in

the United States, for example, may not work outside of that context (Dwivedi 1990; Meacham 1999; Heady 1995; Hood 1989; Riggs 1991; Riggs 1998). Jreisat (2011) also included that "significant attempts to study the rest of the world outside Europe and North America have to evolve if research is to respond to demonstrable needs" (835).

Hou et al. (2011) went a step further and advocated for a Public Administration with a Global Perspective (PAGP) paradigm, in which the current focus on Western forms of government would no longer be adequate. They note that public administration needs to expand to include cultural contexts and acceptance of inter-dependent problems across national boundaries. Despite this call Jreisat (2011) lamented that "regardless of need, however, in the short run, it seems that CPA will persist in concentrating its research on Europe and the United States for some practical considerations related to cost, language, knowledge of culture, and the state of existing data. Regrettably, we cannot rule out consideration of ingrained and subtle biases in the social sciences in general that disfavor certain countries and cultures" (836).

The general lack of focus in CPA research on culture and the developing world has been met with increasing research on indigenous administration, particularly in the developing world. According to Samier (2014), CPA was most dominant in the 1960s and 1970s, when most of this research was focused on the developing world. The goal was the identification and clarification of universals in public administration to compare developed and developing countries (Jun 1976). This has now been followed by internationalization and indigenization. Indigenized public administration is focused on each jurisdiction as an individual and unique entity. This is a step further than traditional CPA, which attempts to understand the role of culture in facilitating or impeding generally accepted global administrative practices. It argues that culture is critical in the managerial development of a country and remains unique outside of global administrative practices (Samier 2014).

In an article on Brazilian public administration, Candler (2002) described scholarship on public administration in Brazil that has emphasized local models. The author found that there were many unique aspects of culture in Brazil that had real implications for public administration. These were not entirely positive, such as the dominance of private interests over the state. Reform efforts in Brazil have mirrored neo-liberal frameworks while still emphasizing the importance of local models of administration. The author argued that despite the importance of local culture in developing the norms of administration there also existed the need for a more empirical assessment of global administrative practice and its application at the local level.

In Europe public sector reforms and the expansion of the European Union have led to a discussion on public values and ethics in individual countries. In Denmark, for example, Vrangbæk (2009) surveyed public sector managers in the country and found that the top five values are innovation, professional standards, accountability, transparency and due process. These values exemplify more hierarchical values, such as rule-following and the politics-administration dichotomy, except for innovation, which is more market-based. These values are not unique to Denmark, but their prioritization is different from other countries. In this case despite the connection of Denmark to the wider Western norms of public administration there is still a local tradition that is important for the structure and function of their government.

The Islamic world provides a unique case in the discussion of comparative public administration. It is quite diverse even within a single country with national identities barely competing with religious and tribal identities. The modern era has seen more successful adaptations in the Muslim world to the concept of a nation-state and complete failures on the other hand. In general, the Islamic world post-colonialism is experiencing an identity crisis that merits new thinking and applications that consider the interconnections of religion, public values, ethics and contextual factors which can all be facilitated through a comparative public administration lens. The next section explores this topic in more detail, particularly as it applies to the application of public ethics and values.

The development of public administration ethics and values in the Islamic world

The first 13 years of the early Muslim community in Mecca coincided with a period when the Muslims were weak, oppressed and struggling for a base of control from which they could practice their religion freely. After the migration to Medina, which is the basis for the Muslims calendar, the people of Medina instated Muhammad as the head of the city-state, and for the next ten years before the death of the Prophet the interpretations and applications of the Qur'an became more oriented towards the task of maintaining a separate political and administrative entity under near continuous conflict with the neighboring tribes, internal tribes in Medina and eventually the Byzantine and Sasanian empires. The legacy bequeathed by this period does not list injunctions about the theory of political governance, but moral principles about it (Çaha 2003).

In less than a century the Islamic empire spread from China and India in the East to West Africa in the West under the first Caliphs. The Muslims were incredibly adaptable to their new environments, establishing new cities, standardizing soldiers' pay, maintaining initially Byzantine and Persian administrative systems while Islamicizing them 50 years later, incorporating the present tax and public finance systems and developing their own ones based on Islam, implementing free trade across the empire along with a commodities exchange, establishing a merit-based system inside an increasingly developing civil and military bureaucracy, and instituting the concept of personal responsibility on behalf of the ruler for his people (Lewis 2008; and Drechsler 2014).

The Islamic empires developed a bureaucratic system that enforced the law, raised revenues and supported the economy. For example, Mughal administration in India emphasized maintaining a healthy treasury, a strong army and law and order (Kinra 2010). A key aspect of upholding the law was the maintenance of a robust judiciary.

Islamic judges or *qadis* were a critical arm of the state. In the Ottoman Empire the judicial order was headed by the *Shaykh-ul-Islam* (the religious leader of the Islamic world), who was also head of the *ulama*. Beneath him was the head of the judiciary named the *qadaskar*, and beneath the *qadaskar* were the various judges who headed the judicial districts throughout the empire. At its peak these judges also served as mayors and chiefs of police, but primarily they implemented the *sharia* (Islamic law), oversaw marriages, dealt with orphans, maintained records of judgements, resolved local disputes and oversaw contractual relations. The importance of these courts remained in the Ottoman Empire up until the First Constitutional Period, when these *sharia* courts operated alongside regular courts. This dual legal system has been maintained in many modern Islamic countries like Malaysia, although largely relegated to family law (Hanioğlu 2010; Ergene 2004; Akgündüz 2009).

Islamic empires also had a sophisticated system for generating revenues for the government. One of the earliest sources on public finance in Islam is Yahya ibn Adam's *Kitab al-Kharadj*, developed during the Abbasid reign. This book focused mainly on the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions and therefore relied more on political-ethical standards (Kallek 2001; Fritschy 2008; Tomic 2010).

In more concrete terms Cosgel (2005) described output and input taxes in Islam, labeled *muqasama* and *misaha*, respectively. Cosgel (2005) also asserted that there is an enterprise tax in Islam labeled a *maqtu*. A strict interpretation of Islam only allows the *zakat* (Islamic tithe), the *ushr* (10 percent on agrarian revenue) and 2.5 percent on liquid personal property (*zakat-ul-mal*) for Muslims (Fritschy 2008). There was also the *jizya*, which is a non-Muslim poll tax.

The Ottoman Empire, for example, had developed a public financing system with standardized rates. They relied on lump-sum taxes and production taxes on output. They also relied on land taxes. Towards the end of the Ottoman Empire there was a reliance on tax farmers who bid for tax districts to secure the right to collect the taxes called *malikanes*. They began a debt market through the *malikanes* (advances on tax revenue) and *eshams* (percent of tax

revenues) (Hummel 2013; Hummel and Goud 2017).

In addition, the Islamic empires were focused on expanding social welfare and developing the economy. As stated by Oberauer (2013), "for the early Muslim community, one of the most pressing tasks was to mobilize resources for military self-assertion and – later – expansion. With the evolution of the conquest society, other tasks came to the fore, most notably the provision of basic welfare within increasing complex social structures – a task that called for a much more sophisticated allocation of public and charitable funds" (23). One tool developed by the Islamic empires that expanded social welfare and economic development was the *waqf*. The *waqf* developed a little later, possibly 100 years after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. It is essentially a religious endowment in which most public goods provided in the Islamic world were provided through this institution (Joseph 2014; Kuran 2001).

The *waqf* fostered an Islamic civil society that focused on increasing socio-economic equality. These endowments provided education, utilities, charity and healthcare to name a few of their functions. Specifically, in the Ottoman Empire, where a large percentage of land was endowed, the *waqf* were focused on eliminating poverty, financing building projects, caring for the elderly and disabled, promoting urban development, financing public works and spreading Islam (Setia 2014; Joseph 2014; Kuran 2001).

Interestingly, as society Islamicized, non-Muslims also played a role in these empires. As noted by Sirry (2011), "non-Muslim elements of society have been at the very centre of government administration. Without attention to their role, it is hard to understand the place of non-Muslims in the early development of the Muslim 'state'" (187). Sirry (2011) described a number of non-Muslim viziers and secretariats in the Abbasid and Fatimid empires. In addition, Kinra (2010) described a similar dynamic in the Mughal empire.

Over more than a thousand years of Islamic administration a number of scholars produced well-cited works on government and leadership. Some of these figures include al-Mawardi, al-Ghazali, Ibn Taymiyyah, al-Kindi, Ibn Rushd, al-Farabi, Ibn Zafar, Ibn Adam and al-Mulk. Some of these figures were influenced by Arab-Islamic thought and some were influenced by Hellenic-Islamic thought couched within pre-Islamic administrative and cultural practices in the region. These works focused on the development of government as a religio-socio-political organization that included robust discussions of the Caliph, Islamic legal norms and consensus (*ijma*) in the community (Rizvi 1981; Hillenbrand 1988; Dekmejian and Thabit 2000). In addition, there was a focus on the personality, character and values of leadership. For example, physiognomy was an important practice in Islamic empires. This was a focus on selecting the right people for administrative posts based on the moral qualities of the individual. As noted by Lelić (2017) it was the, "technique for extrapolating concealed truths based on outward hints and prior knowledge of the meaning of those hints" (618). Caliphs were trained in this practice.

Those works that combined Islamic and Hellenistic thought focused on the convergence of Islamic norms and the work of Plato and Aristotle. A prominent example of this type of work is *The Virtuous City* by al-Farabi (Hall 2015; Khalidi 2003). Al-Farabi influenced Ibn Rushd, one of the prominent figures of the Islamic Renaissance, who wrote a commentary on Plato's Republic. He placed emphasis on the importance of the philosopher king who is virtuous and just. He added that the ruling figure must have a deep knowledge of the law (Martin 1996).

These early scholars on Islamic government had a major influence on 20th-century scholars that focused on Islamicizing the modern-day nation-state. These scholars include Rashad Rida and Abul Ala Maududi, to name only a few. Rashad Rida developed the concept of the natural law in Islam, where reason and revelation were complementary much as with Ibn Rushd, and emphasized the concepts of *ijma* and *shura* (consultation). Abul Ala Maududi conceived of Islam and God as having both temporal and ephemeral meanings and consequences (Seferta 1985; Afsaruddin 2006; Ahmad 2009).

Islamic history as well as fundamental concepts in the Qur'an and *sunnah* (traditions of the Prophet Muhammad) assert that religion and government are closely related to each other. This is the case today. Fish (2011) found through various secondary data sources using different quantitative statistical approaches that Muslims are unusually religious, believe that politicians who do not believe in God are not fit for office and are more likely to support religiosity among their political leaders. Despite these affinities for religiosity it cannot be ignored that Muslim countries have issues with corrupt leadership, which is an apparent contradiction.

Potentially as a catalyst for these issues Hamid (2016) added that Islam and its system of laws known as *sharia* bound Muslims together historically, and nothing has replaced it with the same veracity, including anything from the local culture or the colonial legacy. This has left a hollow legacy, where the demand for religious leadership is there, but the law is absent. In Turkey, for example, the founders wanted to disconnect the new state from Islam by secularizing the institutions of the state, education and the law while adopting the symbols of Europe. In addition, it tried to secularize the personal life of its citizens through a new type of religion, the "Cult of Atatürk" (Kucukcan 2010). This has altered the culture in Turkey, but Islam is still a powerful force there, as proven by the fact that an Islamic political party has been in control since the early 2000s. This control is wavering due to accusations of corruption and autocratic behavior.

Samier (2014) noted that public administration is undergoing a process of Islamicization which is cultural, institutional and instrumental. The instrumental changes are most important because they include the norms of practice and the structures and functions of the organization that emerge from them. Samier (2014) further added that these values are based on a continuation of a tradition that is based on the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, along with a robust interpretive and hermeneutic tradition that is also influenced by a cultural and colonial legacy.

According to Cusack (2010) religion is not independent from its social and cultural context. Islam is not different in that "the conquest inaugurated a civilizational process in which Arabs and non-Arabs together reconceptualized and reworked the legacy of the past within the framework of Islam" (Darling 2014, 408). The Prophet Muhammad decentralized many responsibilities to the local community, officially making Islamic governance local with a resistance to centralized control. At this level there were disputes over following the Qur'an and incorporating local culture and customs. The concept of *rukha* (concessions) along with the *madahib* (schools of thought) with different interpretations of the role of human reasoning (*qiyas* and *ijtihad*) allowed an adaptation and flexibility to social circumstances. This created local diversity which simultaneously transformed society i.e. Islamicizing it while accommodating local culture (Hursh 2009).

Given these existential realities regarding the role of culture in Islamic society the Muslim countries naturally represent a diversity of approaches to public administration in the Islamic world. Still, Islam is the most salient factor that unites these incredibly diverse populations even within a single nation-state. A fact that initially was quite inclusive of everyone within the state including non-Muslims. This is a foundational concept, as the "Constitution of Medina" during the time of the Prophet Muhammad initially defined the *ummah* (community) as Muslims and non-Muslims living together under mutual protection (Arjomand 2009).

The conundrum is that there is no blueprint for an Islamic government. Afsaruddin (2006) noted that the Qur'an contains concerns over the proper ordering of human affairs, but not specific legal rulings on the topic. There are only moral principles and guidelines. There appears to be a large amount of freedom to determine the structure and function of government in the Islamic world so long as that structure and function considers the objectives of Islam (Popa 2012). Popa (2012) argued that Islamic government is theoretically not a theocracy where the leaders are divine or invested with some spiritual authority. It is more of a nomocracy in which a state is subsumed under religious laws and morals.

There is still an active discussion in the Islamic world and beyond on whether government can be purely secular along Western lines. It is likely that the context determines the vociferousness of these arguments. Traditionally, Islamic government is very limited (Ahmad 2009; Popa 2012). In his discussions of Maududi, Ahmad (2009) added that, "given the radically interventionist role of the modern state and the manner in which it shaped the daily lives of Muslims, he equated Islam with the state" (155). The point made earlier regarding the increasing role of the state and its intersection with the traditional role of the church is particularly relevant here.

This point is interesting because it is assumed that Islamists would accept a secular government if that government remained aloof from the personal lives of its people. The experimentations with secularism in the Islamic world so far have been quite interventionist, thus increasing frictions in those societies. A liberal form of secularism could work in these countries. The fact that most Islamic political parties in the Islamic world today are moving away from the idea of establishing an Islamic state and imposing Islamic law is a testament to the fact that it is not an enshrined ideology. Increasingly, Islamic political parties support the notion of citizenship and the will of the people over the concept of the sovereignty of God. They have progressively moved away from the notion of the Islamic utopian state (Gerges 2013). This is not discounting the model promoted by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), which represents a fringe movement in the Islamic world.

This has become apparent in the rise of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in Turkey. This party has refocused on emphasizing individual rights, including religious freedom, over establishing an Islamic state. This has created a dynamic where moderate secularists and moderate Islamists have found common ground (Kanra and Ercan 2012). The point is that some limited form of government that embodies those values and ethics considered Islamic is more tenable in the Islamic world than the current form which is heavily centralized and considered aloof from these values and ethics. The question is, what are these values and ethics?

The core values and ethics in Islam are best understood through a discussion of the *maqasid al-shariah*. This approach to understanding Islamic law emphasizes a rigorous interpretation and application of the Qur'an with a focus on public interest, which is known as *maslaha*. As explained by Rane (2012), "the *maqasid* approach emphasizes public interest and well-being (*maslaha*), rejects literal readings of sacred texts, and gives priority to the spirit of the message of the Qur'an and Prophetic traditions" (497). The purpose of this approach is to engage in *ijtihad*, which is legal reasoning in Islamic law, allowing jurists to solve issues in society creatively while obeying the Will of God. This relies on an application of the value system of Islamic law and its deeper meanings.

The classical Islamic scholar al-Ghazali developed this concept by deriving the five general protections in Islamic law from the Qur'an and *sunnah*. These are the protection of religion, life, intellect, family lineage and wealth. An additional protection of dignity and honor was later added to these core protections. These have since been expanded on to include the protection of life and property, general equality, the social contract, the preservation of the rights to reason, procreation and religion. If anything, these represent the generally accepted regime values in the Islamic world that would form the basis for an Islamic public ethic.

Al-Shatibi, another classical Islamic scholar, created a theory of *maqasid* by focusing on *maslaha*. He created three levels of *maslaha* starting with these core protections and expanding outward to include the needs and luxuries of society. This relied on an inductive reading of the Qur'an to understand the objective of the verses. This also challenged the *usul al-fiqh* approach, which is Islamic jurisprudence based on the Qur'an and *sunnah*. *Usul al-fiqh* is a study and understanding of the texts of Islam and its legal rulings largely based on 12th-century legal theory (Johnston 2007; Auda 2011; and Rane 2012).

His theory was based on the concept that every ruling had an objective or legal aim which in general was to achieve good and prevent harm. The rulings in the Qur'an focused on worship, customs, interpersonal relations, transactions and punishments. The jurist was expected

to differentiate worship from the rest of these areas to determine the level of flexibility in interpretation. As noted by Johnston (2007), "the crucial step made by al-Shatibi is to be able to concede that humans, by virtue of their intellectual endowment by the Creator, can tell good from bad and know what is to the interest of humanity (*maslaha*) and what detracts from it (*mafsada*)" (161).

Modern Islamic scholars like Ibn Ashur and Jasser Auda have developed this concept further in which there is a realization that rules had general principles and purposes. This emphasized the concept of the public good and the flexible relationship between law and society (Safi 2010). For example, two modern Muslim scholars (al-Alwami and al-Qaradawi) developed the concept of *fiqh al-aqalliyyat*, which is the jurisprudence of Muslim minorities based on the *maqasid al-shariah*, to reconcile Islamic law with Western law and values. As explained by Parray (2012), "*fiqh al-aqalliyyat*, which deals with the daily problems that arise for millions of Muslim individuals living in the West, tries to reconcile conflicting practices with the culture and values of the host societies from within the framework of Islamic jurisprudence" (89).

This ongoing discussion has historical roots in the Islamic world in the conflicts between the Ash'arites and the Mu'tazilites. The Mu'tazilites believed in the concept of ethical objectivism in which human reason could discern right from wrong and these ethical values were above the divine law. Reason, in this case, was given privilege to make legal rulings according to the values in Islamic law. This approach clearly separated worship from civil life. The Ash'arites believed that human reason could only discover the rulings in divine law in which ethical values were defined by the revealed text, which is known as theistic subjectivism (Johnston 2004; 2007).

The approach of al-Shatibi and his predecessor al-Ghazali as well as their modern descendants like Muhammad Abduh is a mix of Ash'arite and Mu'tazilite conceptions. The *maslaha* is grounded in the texts of Islam and scholarly consensus which is considered immutable while legal reasoning and analogy are still possible and allow a certain level of flexibility. Utility is still important, while Islam focuses the community towards the afterlife. The division between the moral and legal in Islamic law is not clear, and the traditional approach is that all aspects of life are defined by religion (Setia 2016; Safi 2010).

This area of scholarship is highly contentious and is at the center of reform movements in the Islamic world. For example, Setia (2016) is a critic of the modern development of *maqasid al-shariah* by declaring "in effect, we are witnessing a steady march towards the systemic and structural secularization, fasad-ization, disintegration, and dissolution of the *maqasid* ..." (128). The term *fasad* means corruption. This statement more than any other indicates that there are core values and ethics contained within the texts of Islam that clearly separate it from other systems and that these are important to preserve in Islamic society. In addition, to the extent that the governments in Muslim countries drift from these ethics and values, the population will increasingly become disillusioned by them.

The core values established by al-Ghazali and further developed by later Muslim scholars are general, but each Muslim country relying upon that foundation can add to these values within the framework of the *maqasid al-shariah* approach. In addition, through these values and an appreciation of the public interest and well-being (*maslaha*) public ethics can be established and inculcated within these governments, not only based within Islam, but global best practices as well. An appreciation of this along with a deliberative process for establishing the constitutions in these countries and continual engagement as these countries govern will be a more sustainable course. In addition, this will require a smaller central government with considerable autonomy and power given to local governments and governing networks.

The long history of Islamic governance along with its intellectual history merit attention by scholars and practitioners. As previously mentioned, surveys confirm that the Islamic world is uniquely religious and accepting of the mixing of religion and government. The secular regimes that have filled the void left by outgoing colonial governments have little legitimacy in the eyes of the people. This is a problem and one that is not easily addressed by Islam, which does not have a solid blueprint for an "Islamic" government. The *maqasid al-shariah*

approach is the most promising to taking a local and global perspective that would have more legitimacy among the people in these countries. The next section explores the implications for this shift in approach in the Islamic world. It also considers future directions of research for scholars in CPA, in particular considering the importance of culture and religion in determining legitimate forms of government, especially as it pertains to the Islamic world.

Discussion and Future Research

CPA scholars have an appreciation of culture in understanding administrative systems of government. There are reservations on accepting cultural peculiarities without some international standard and best practice for government. Many would criticize public administration from an Islamic perspective for its many gaps and pitfalls; however, those scholars that approach public administration from an indigenized and global perspective do not negate the importance of international best practice. This is particularly true for the assessment of goal achievements. The one-size-fits-all paradigm of public administration in the early stages of the development of public administration theory embodied by the "science of administration" movement has largely been replaced by more nuanced understandings of the field.

The de-ethnocentrism of public administration is another realization of this nuanced understanding of the field. The continual problems of instability in the Islamic world while applying purely Western standards of government merit a fresh perspective. The religion of Islam is not easily dismissed within this context. As noted by Hamid (2016), "the only long-term solution is to find a place for Islam, in its varied political forms, within the democratic process" (257). The concern is whether democracy has a place at all within this worldview. Samuel Huntington famously wrote that Islam does not encourage democracy; however, recent research indicates that religiousness and democracy are not opposites in the Islamic world (Huntington 1984; Ciftci 2010; Tessler 2002; Rahman 2013).

The decentralization of power in the Islamic world seems more in line with the history of the region (Hamid 2016). Despite this being considered best practice globally, there are concerns about the local application of law and the provision of services. Many of these concerns mirror general concerns with polycentric forms of government all over the world, but some of these challenges are unique to the Islamic world. For example, *zakat* (Islamic charity) administration in places like Pakistan and the control of social welfare by privately managed and communal organizations like the *waqf* (foundations) and the *mahalla* (neighborhood) systems also introduce problems of inequality in service provision (Urinboyev 2014; Kuran 2001; Clark 2001). These are problems that need to be retooled to fit modern expectations for government.

One of the concerns is that a focus on the local context would lead to a rejection of an idea simply because it is "Western". Candler (2002) noted in his study of Brazil that administrative particularism led to a rejection of universal lessons in preference of local practices. However, in the past the Islamic world was able to successfully co-opt other systems as exemplified by most successful movements. Its push into Europe from Islamic Spain in the West and the Ottoman Empire in the East created lasting exchanges that impacted those societies. As expressed by Schlesinger and Foret (2006), "from the point of view of religions, European history can hardly be written without acknowledging the centuries-long interplay between Christianity, Judaism and Islam" (60). Given this history and the reality of globalization it is unlikely that the Islamic world would embrace a strict particularism that would cause them to reject universal lessons in public administration.

It also needs to be recognized that the Muslim world is unique in the world. At the heart of this uniqueness is the religiosity of Muslims and their focus on the religion of Islam as a way of life. At its core is the lack of separation between the sacred and the secular. The past few decades have seen more exploration of Islamic models of government, and most recently it has garnered more academic attention as the field of public administration begins to appreciate indigenized forms of administration. The combination of indigenized

administration and more globalized/international administration is probably best suited to the Muslim world, as it continues to develop these governmental institutions. In this regard the Muslim world will continue to exhibit both administrative concepts that are familiar to the West and ones that are entirely unique to it. This is considered critical to the stability in the region, as Hamid (2016) explained, "... the postcaliphate order will have only truly begun when something inclusive, legitimate, and lasting takes root" (267).

Research in CPA can contribute to this understanding. As this develops, future CPA research needs to include comparisons between Muslim and non-Muslim countries, either country-to-country or region-to-region, to understand the similarities and differences with regard to governmental institutions. Many times these comparisons are not within the frame of public administration. A public-administration focus for these comparisons is necessary in the CPA literature.

Research in this area also needs to fully understand the failure of many Muslim countries to embrace some of the ideals of Islam. For example, Kalantari (1998) noted that, "Islamic society builds a comprehensive system of social justice, economics, legislation, jurisprudence, administration, and international relations within its domain which are closely related and support each other through the meta-values of Islam" (1827). However, it can be confidently stated that most Muslim countries have failed to embrace these ideas. A critical research question is, why have these values failed to effect these changes?

Abu-Nimer and Kadayifci-Orellana (2008) argued that the failure of Muslim states to find peace which may inhibit these other values from coming to fruition is due to a colonial legacy, problems with education and problems with organizational development and sustainability. In addition, Hüsseyin (2008) noted that this may be due to Muslims thinking their religion is the problem, but nothing has replaced it that has had as big an effect on the Muslim population as Islam. Either way, some scholars have concluded that Muslim societies that are starting to reconnect with these Islamic values in a progressive fashion have seen some success, such as argued by Drechsler (2014), who stated that the Turkish economy has only flourished after its society began to reconnect with Islam. Still these relationships need to be understood further, such as the recent study on the potentials of Islamic banking to increase financial inclusion in the Islamic world by Naceur et al. (2015).

The continual relevance of religion in government not only in the Islamic world indicates that more research needs to be devoted to understanding how religion affects how people govern themselves. A good starting point is understanding how those values inform public ethics. A comparative perspective enriches this discussion. In particular, the Islamic world needs more research devoted to this topic. The next section focuses on this point as a concluding statement for this paper.

Conclusion

This paper maps the connections between religion and values with public ethics and the continual relationship between religion and public administration. It is not an argument for a pre-Enlightenment return to church-state relations, but a post-Enlightenment understanding of its continual relevance in how people think individually and collectively, especially as it pertains to public decision-making and behavior. In particular, this perspective is expanded to include a comparative public administration approach that focuses specifically on the Islamic world.

The conception of government in the Islamic world is unique in some aspects. It is argued in this paper that a thorough understanding of the values that derive from Islam and their relevance for government is needed to develop a broad theory of Islamic government. The *maqasid al-shariah* and its accompanying *maslaha* is a good starting point for this development. A comparative public-administration approach along with an indigenized and global perspective of public administration could help further define Islamic government. This discussion would appreciate local variety and diversity even within the Islamic world while

also considering globally accepted best practices and goals. Ultimately, the establishment of a legitimate form (or forms) of government in the Islamic world is not merely of academic interest, but of geo-political interest, as well.

Academically and otherwise, knowledge of the Islamic world is desperately needed, whether in public administration or in other fields. Jreisat (2011) observed that there is the possibility of bias in disfavoring research on certain cultures and countries in CPA research, and the Islamic world is likely one of those cultures. Hopefully future research addresses these issues and helps to expand knowledge in this critical area.

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