



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Inspirational Leadership: Salah Addin Al Ayyubi, the Victorious Leader

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ABSTRACT

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Upon reflection on the life of Salah Addin Al Ayyubi, it becomes evident that he was a pioneer of his time, embodying elements of modern management science within himself and his organisation. This is particularly noteworthy in the present-day circumstances faced by Arab and Islamic nations, where a pressing need for effective leadership arises to navigate through the current crisis and restore their position as leaders among nations. This article primarily aims to highlight Salah Addin Al Ayyubi's leadership model, examining how the dimensions of inspirational leadership were manifested and achieved in his leadership practices with followers, assistants, and advisors. This analysis aligns with contemporary administrative sciences, shedding light on the inspiring leader Salah Addin Al Ayyubi's qualities, upbringing, characteristics, and personal traits. Utilising an analytical tool, the study seeks to comprehend and interpret Salah Addin Al Ayyubi's personality, with the ultimate goal of guiding and shaping the current leadership landscape and contributing meaningfully to the preparation of the contemporary generation for leadership that draws inspiration from history to forge the future. This endeavour takes place against the backdrop of the intense civilizational conflict surrounding Jerusalem, and aspires to contribute to the prospective liberation of the city, by Allah's will.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership has been a focal point in business literature, embodying a science, an art, and a journey of experience, trial, and learning. The interest in leadership stems from its pivotal significance, as a wise leader has the ability to guide a diverse group of followers, each with varying skills and capabilities. This has led to the emergence of modern leadership styles, such as charismatic and inspirational leadership, previously unseen. One historical figure who continues to command respect is Salah Addin Al Ayyubi. He applied leadership principles long before management scholars formalized the scientific rules of this discipline.

We will employ the case study method as a scientific approach to connect these rules with the historical events that shaped his practical life. Salah Addin Al Ayyubi, a leader who saved the Islamic world from the cruelty of the Crusaders, played a significant role in defending Islam against the Crusaders in the twelfth century. He displayed a unique leadership model, merging strength with mercy. Many Europeans, who were horrified by the brutality of their own leaders, viewed him as an exemplar of virtue that their own leaders failed to embody. His actions caused a significant stir in Europe, particularly when he reclaimed and liberated Jerusalem from the Crusaders in 1187.¹

¹ Lane-Poole Stanley ve David Nicole, "Saladin and the Fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem," translated by Farouk Saad Abu Jabr, 1st edition, Cairo: A Salah Al-Mukhtar, I-Ahram Agency, (USA: Casemate Group, 2016), 137.

Salah Addin Al Ayyubi is not just a legendary figure; he epitomizes inspiring leadership, characterized by a clear and ambitious vision built on scientific foundations. This approach led to numerous achievements and exerted a profound influence on his followers, even prior to his enemies. His positive impact motivated them to work tirelessly to realize his vision. He managed to instil hope and achieve goals, astounding the Western world with his leadership, which embodied strength, compassion, tolerance, justice, and humanity.

1. Inspirational Leadership

Inspirational leadership has played a significant role in human history across various events in specific times and places, amidst the diversity and emergence or decline of civilizations.

By an inspirational leader, we mean an individual who possesses a clear vision and the ability to influence others to achieve this vision willingly.² Although inspirational leaders are charismatic, there is another important element: the encouraging energy they instil in those around them. An inspirational leader represents a form of charismatic leadership.³

Sinek (2010)⁴ explains that inspirational leadership is a relationship of influence between leaders and subordinates who desire to effect changes that reflect their shared goals.

Gotchall defines inspirational leaders as those capable of influencing others or reviving the religious influence on people. In this regard, Gotchall explains that the term "To Animate" refers to those who seek to effect systematic change in an inspirational manner. The word "Animateur" refers to a person who "brings to life" and devises a new way of thinking, vision, or interaction that creates focus and energy. The person who brings to life, much like the inspirational leader, has the ability to infuse vitality into subordinates, potentially leading to beneficial change. They create a radical change through their communications and actions, moving people from abstract to action. As a result, they build a strong sense of purpose among their followers.⁵

As defined by Harris & Barnes, inspirational leadership is a type of leadership through which workforces learn to inspire and motivate others, increase productivity and commitment, and foster a culture of encouragement for innovation. On the other hand, Garret & Frank define inspirational leadership as one that shapes the future through shared vision, clear values, enthusiasm, growth, and appreciation of others, leading to the achievement of desired success.⁶

Furthermore, El Adlouni suggests that inspirational leadership achieves societal and social changes through material and moral conditions, and that inspirational leaders are great men possessing extraordinary talents and abilities.⁷

Joyce defines inspirational leadership as a leadership style that requires the leader to possess the determination that prompts them to prioritize the well-being of their subordinates before themselves, to provide firm guidance, to demonstrate accountability and acknowledgment of mistakes, and to exhibit flexibility for change when necessary.⁸

² Halit Şahin, *İlham Verici Liderlik ve Mesleki Tükenmişlik Etkisi: Türkiye'deki Katılım Bankalarının Üzerine Uygulama Bir Çalışma*, (İstanbul: Sonçağ Yayıncılık Matbaacılık, 2020), 44.

³ Bobbi Gentry, "Inspirational leadership: Evidence from the Campaign Trail", (the Northeastern Political Science Association Conference, November 15, 2008), 80.

⁴ Simon Sinek. *The inspirational leadership*. (LRN Corporation, 2010), 19.

⁵ Denise A. Gotchall, "The inspirational leadership of social entrepreneur and philanthropist Malcolm Harris", (Doctor of Philosophy, Saybrook College, 2010), 31-32.

⁶ Jill Garret and Jonathan Frank, "Inspirational leadership insight to action the development of the inspired leadership tool", 2005, 17.

⁷ Mohamed Akram Al-Adlouni. *Leadership in the 21st century*. (Riyadh, Cordoba for Artistic Production, 2000), 34.

⁸ Judith Leary Joyce, *Inspirational manager: how to build relationship that deliver results*, (London: Pearson: Prentice Hall Business, 2009), 74.

McEachern suggests that inspirational leadership is "leadership that connects with individuals' positive emotions".⁹ Furthermore, Gotchall indicates that an inspirational leader is someone who has the ability to elevate the lives of others by inspiring them to be who they should be.¹⁰

Throughout history, inspirational leaders have vitalized others by propelling them to extraordinary performance and nearly superhuman achievements. Religious leaders are perhaps the most inspirational leaders, with numerous examples such as the prophets Jesus and Muhammad, peace be upon them. These leaders have instilled life and inspiration in their followers, who not only became willing to follow their teachings, but were also prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice for their leaders.¹¹

The researcher believes that inspirational leadership is a skilful style that depends largely on the personality of the leader and their abilities to persuade, influence, inspire, and encourage others to strive for the best. Additionally, a leader's ability to influence the minds of their subordinates, elevate and motivate them, and inspire them to innovate, brings out their best and showcases their talents, leading to increased productivity and the achievement of organizational goals.

Furthermore, the researcher perceives inspirational leadership as encompassing the art of motivating others, enabling the leader to inspire and encourage individuals to achieve desired goals by influencing and guiding their behaviour towards goal attainment.

1.1. Significance of inspirational leadership

Inspirational leadership plays a crucial and impactful role in influencing others through motivation and inspiration, stemming from aligning the organization's goals (be it an army, a group, or a nation) with the needs, values, and interests of individuals, and through the use of positive persuasion.¹²

Research conducted by Joshi et al revealed a positive ethical link between inspirational leadership and team trust, as well as a positive ethical association between inspirational leadership and organizational commitment.¹³ Furthermore, according to Densten, inspirational motivation impacts key factors such as ethical conduct among workers or followers, volunteerism, and organizational learning.¹⁴

Additionally, a study conducted by McEachern concluded that inspirational leadership positively influences organizational efficiency and employee cohesion.¹⁵ Moreover, Goldsmith et al (2003)¹⁶ identifies numerous reasons why inspiration is a critical and effective element in the leadership process. An organization that embraces inspirational leadership is characterized by:

Enhance Self-Esteem

Individuals strive to achieve their best when they feel confident and valued by the organization. An inspirational leader is capable of instilling a sense of self-worth and self-efficacy in their followers.

Infusing Work with New Meaning

⁹ Murray McEachern. "Understanding inspiration and inspirational leadership in the workplace informs leadership practices and transformational results", (A master dissertation, Canada: Royal Roads University 2005), 122.

¹⁰ Gotchall, "The inspirational leadership", 93.

¹¹ Afshin Shams, "What Competences Should be Fostered to Develop Inspired Leaders", (A master dissertation, Royal Roads University, 2006), 58.

¹² James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner. *The leadership challenges*, 3rd edition, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 176.

¹³ Aparna Joshi, Mila B. Lazarova and Hui Liao "Getting everyone on board: The role of inspirational leadership in geographically dispersed teams", *Organization science*, 20/1, (2009): 249.

¹⁴ Lain I. Densten, "Clarifying inspirational motivation and its relationship to extra effort", *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 23/1, (2002): 40.

¹⁵ Murray McEachern. "Understanding inspiration", 122.

¹⁶ Goldsmith, et al. *Global leadership: The next generation*. (USA: Financial Time Press, 2003).

An inspirational leader can imbue work with new purpose and significance for their followers.

Fostering Increased Cooperation

An inspirational leader fosters a spirit of cooperation among their followers, promoting a culture of communal interest over individual benefit.

Encouraging High Goals

Inspirational leadership encourages individuals by setting high-level goals, instilling a spirit of ambition, determination, and self-assertion.

Increasing Creativity

An inspirational leader encourages their followers to be creative and innovative in performing various tasks.

Embracing Risk-Taking

An inspirational leader encourages their followers to take risks and seek available opportunities to capitalize on and achieve maximum benefits for the organization.

Boosting Productivity

Inspirational leadership works to enhance productivity rates by instilling a strong work ethic, challenging difficulties, and overcoming obstacles faced by employees.

Strengthening Organizational Identification

Inspirational leadership is fundamentally about linking the emotions and feelings of the leader with those of their followers. This leads to increased communication and harmony between the organization and its employees. An inspirational leader plays a crucial role in achieving communication and alignment between the organization's goals and those of its employees.¹⁷

Waldman et al. indicates that an inspirational leader has the ability to form a shared vision between themselves and their workers, serving as the link between the organization and its employees. Through this shared vision, they can motivate the employees and instil a spirit of energy and vitality in them, which positively impacts the organization.¹⁸

Kouzes and Posner emphasize that an inspirational leader does not impose a specific vision, but rather seeks to clarify how this vision can fulfil the aspirations and desires of their followers, encouraging them to adopt it (Kouzes and Posner, 2002: 176).

The researcher believes that the significance of inspirational leadership lies in its modern leadership style, keeping pace with developments and changes in the work environment. The psychological impact and inspiration of the leader have the ability to unleash the potential of individuals and create a creative work environment within organizations, where individuals strive to achieve the best through a shared vision that connects the inspirational leader with their followers.

In the present time, we find that organizations are in great need of this kind of leadership, especially considering the various challenges and fierce competition among organizations. An organization that possesses an inspirational leader represents a pivotal strength, enabling it to effectively harness the available opportunities.

1.2. Inspirational leader characteristics

¹⁷ Marshall Goldsmith "Changing leadership behaviour", *The Journal for Quality and Participation*, 27/4, (2004): 28.

¹⁸ David A., Waldman, Pierre A. Balthazard, and Suzanne J. Peterson, "Leadership neuroscience: we can revolutionize the inspirational leaders are identified and developed?", *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 25/1, (2011): 63.

An inspirational leader possesses the unique ability to transform vision into tangible reality. Such individuals strive to inspire and influence others through their distinct vision and charismatic personal skills. Consequently, an inspirational leader can utilize their vision to motivate individuals towards achieving organizational objectives. They understand the essence of their colleagues and recognize their exceptional abilities. In essence, they are individuals who harbour vision, think strategically and innovatively, and possess the capacity to influence others through their personal attributes rather than external authority.

Given that this type of leadership demands a leader to be pioneering, social, and adaptable to change, it presents a challenge in discovering and harnessing the best qualities of each team member while aligning them towards a shared vision and a greater goal that serves the interests of all.

Secretan (2006)¹⁹ has introduced a list, termed the CASTLE list, containing the essential qualities that anyone aspiring to become an inspirational leader should focus on these characteristics as follows.²⁰

Courage: A leader must embody sufficient courage, enabling them to transcend conventional boundaries.

Authenticity: A leader should be committed, serving as a paragon in all areas of life or resonating throughout others' spheres.

Service: Emphasizing the needs of others and continuously striving for their prosperity and contentment.

Truthfulness: A leader must prioritize honesty in all their thoughts, words, and deeds to establish trust among their followers.

Love: The leader should foster unity and accord through mutual affection.

Effectiveness: A leader should possess the capacity to realize the material, intellectual, and emotional objectives they set for themselves.

Baker observed that a strong vision, leadership through example, and storytelling are crucial traits that inspirational leaders should embody.

Kerfoot²¹ notes that inspirational leaders genuinely adore their work and empathize with those they lead. They have the ability to ignite the passions of others through inspiration.

1.3. Inspirational leadership dimensions

The dimensions of inspirational leadership are manifested through a set of actions in which the leader influences their followers using non-coercive methods to achieve the organization's goals. Leadership is a process based on inspiration rather than domination, and collaboration instead of intimidation. It is crucial to evolve the leadership process to make a lasting impact, and development has risen to the top of the priority list for inspirational leadership within organizations.

In a study conducted by McEachern (2005)²², the dimensions constituting inspirational leadership are as follows:

- Genuine Interest in Others
- Trust and Trustworthiness
- Ability to Empower

¹⁹ Lance. H. K. Secretan, *One: The art and practice of conscious leadership*. (Caledon, Ont.: Secretan Center Incorporated, 2006).

²⁰ Mohamed Ahmed Awad Amr, "The Impact of Inspirational Leadership on Counterproductive Behaviors: A Field Study", *Scientific Journal of Economics and Trade, Egypt*, Issue 3, (2015): 234.

²¹ Karlene Kerfoot, "From motivation to inspiration leadership", *Nursing Economic* 19/5, (2001): 242.

²² Murray McEachern. "Understanding inspiration".

- Focused Listening
- Commitment to Developing a Shared Vision

1.4. Traits of inspirational leadership

A leader should dedicate their efforts and time to develop their intelligence that encourages inspiring others to inspire inspirational leadership. What is meant by being an inspirational leader? It is characterized by having a high vision and goals, an inspirational leader earns the respect of his subordinates by encouraging their active participation, and inspirational leadership provides meaning to the needs and plans of the organization, as an inspirational leader is characterized by his ability to see what his subordinates need and what they perceive as a challenge. An inspirational leader often uses dialogue, transparency, positive energy, and his knowledge of the characteristics and dimensions of human behavior, which makes him show respect, appreciation, and fair behavior to followers, but also provides positive energy and motivation.²³ In the next section, the trait of inspirational leadership will be briefly examined.

- Genuine Interest in Others:

A leader's authentic concern for others is essential as it reflects their ability to cultivate strong relationships with their subordinates. An inspirational leader seeks to advance the interests of others driven by a selfless concern for their well-being, rather than selfish motives.²⁴

- Trust and Trustworthiness:

Mutual trust between the leader and their subordinates is vital for inspirational leadership. They must be sincere and highly credible, capable of anticipating their subordinates' actions. An effective leader places trust in their subordinates and is relied upon by them.

- Ability to Empower:

This refers to the leader's capacity to rely on and trust their subordinates, delegating tasks to them. Empowerment encourages information sharing and creates opportunities for self-directed guidance, fostering a sense of independence among employees.²⁵

- Focused Listening:

The researchers, Mckenna and Maister, highlighted the significance of active listening, noting that everyone desires to be heard, and some believe that effective listening involves active participation rather than merely hearing. The researchers explored the correlation between successful listening and the degree to which individuals engage positively with one another. They emphasized that active listening entails perceiving auditory and visual cues attentively, utilizing multiple senses such as sight and hearing.²⁶

According to the researchers, active listening involves accurately capturing, identifying, and responding to the emotions expressed by the other party in a dialogue. They suggested that this approach reduces defensive reactions, diffuses potential conflicts, and stimulates open dialogue. By engaging in positive listening, individuals feel understood, enabling them to express their thoughts freely without resorting to defensive postures.

In the context of leadership, the researchers suggested that positive listening has the potential to significantly enhance the capacity of inspirational leaders. They referenced Carnegie's argument about the importance of listening, indicating that people, recognizing the value of listening, are likely to engage in it within their relationships. Embracing active listening implies an implicit interest and a willingness to dedicate the necessary time to benefit from the ideas expressed.

²³ Jal Mistry and Abha Hule. "Inspirational Leadership", *Prin. LN Welingkar Institute of Management Development & Research*, 19/2, (2015): 14.

²⁴ Sara Abdel Hafiz, "The Impact of Inspirational Leadership on Organizational Commitment: An Applied Study on the Industrial Control Authority", (A master dissertation, Egypt: Ain Shams University, 2021), 36.

²⁵ Sara Abdel Hafiz, "The Impact of Inspirational", 36.

²⁶ Patrick J. Mckenna and David H. Maister, *First Among Equals: How to Manage a Group of Professionals*. (USA: The Free Press, 2002), 100.

Conversely, leaders who do not value active listening may struggle to understand others' motivations and consequently fail to inspire and build relationships effectively.²⁷

- **Commitment to Developing a Shared Vision:**

A shared vision, embraced by both the leader and their subordinates, is essential. An inspirational leader can educate and persuade their followers about the vision they aspire to achieve.²⁸

2. CASE OF SALAH ADDIN AL AYYUBI

A case study is an intensive research methodology that examines a single unit, such as an individual, group, or event, in depth in order to generalise findings across a broader set of units.²⁹ It entails a methodical examination of a multitude of variables within the selected unit.³⁰ Case studies are a common methodology in the social sciences, offering a comprehensive view of a programme or situation, and providing context to other data.³¹ Although often perceived as singular, case studies inherently require a comparative approach.³² Researchers must consider three key questions: what the case represents, its composition, and its potential implications.³³ The selection of case studies can be based on their effectiveness, representativeness, or unique characteristics.³⁴ Despite some ambiguities and methodological trade-offs, case studies complement other research designs and offer valuable insights into complex phenomena³⁵.

In this section of the research, we will delve into the characteristics, attributes, and personal qualities of Salah Addin Al Ayyubi. We will identify points of convergence and similarities in each paragraph, drawing from the previously mentioned dimensions and features of inspirational leadership and the traits of an inspirational leader. Our aim is to explore how he exemplified these qualities through his leadership practice with his followers, assistants, and advisors, aligning with modern management sciences.

2.1. Salah Addin al Ayyubi's upbringing

Salah Addin Al Ayyubi was born in 532 Hijri / 1137 CE in the fortress of Tikrit. His father was the governor of the region. The upbringing of the leader Salah Addin Al Ayyubi was well-balanced in all aspects of his integrated personality. It encompassed his spirit, intellect, heart, and body in a complete and unified manner, without division, exception, or neglect of any part. The personality of Salah Addin Al Ayyubi is one that embodies harmony, inner peace, and balance in all matters. He was moderate in both his private and public affairs, displaying neither extravagance nor negligence, neither excess nor deficiency.

The English orientalist Hamilton Gibb elaborates on Salah Addin's accomplishment, stating, "This achievement was not attained through his exemplary courage and steadfast determination, both of which are undeniable traits. Rather, it was achieved through his selflessness, humility, generosity, and spiritual defence of Islam against its enemies, whether apparent or otherwise. Salah Addin was not a simple man; however, he was remarkably straightforward and honest to

²⁷ Russ S. Moxley, *Leadership and spirit: breathing new validity and energy into individuals and organizations*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 65.

²⁸ Sara Abdel Hafiz, "The Impact of Inspirational", 36.

²⁹ Gerring, John. "What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good for?" *American Political Science Review* 98 (2004): 341 - 354

³⁰ Heale, Roberta and Alison Twycross. "What is a case study?" *Evidence Based Journals* 21 (2017): 7 - 8.

³¹ Neale, Pauline, Sankar Thapa and C. Boyce. "Preparing A Case Study: A Guide for Designing and Conducting a Case Study for Evaluation Input." (2006).

³² Dumez, Hervé. "What Is a Case, and What Is a Case Study?" *Bulletin de Méthodologie Sociologique* 127 (2015): 43 - 57

³³ Dumez, Hervé. "What Is a Case, and What Is a Case Study?" *Bulletin de Méthodologie Sociologique* 127 (2015): 43 - 57

³⁴ Neale, Pauline, Sankar Thapa and C. Boyce. "Preparing A Case Study: A Guide for Designing and Conducting a Case Study for Evaluation Input." (2006).

³⁵ Gerring, John. "What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good for?" *American Political Science Review* 98 (2004): 341 - 354

the point of transparency. He confounded his enemies, both internal and external, as they expected to find motives that moved him, akin to their own. They presumed he would play the political game their way. He was innocent to the utmost degree.³⁶

Salah Addin was a military man in the medieval era, yet he abhorred the sight of blood. This was evident in the advice he gave to one of his sons: "Beware of shedding blood, for blood does not sleep." This is clear evidence that we are dealing with a person described as compassionate and civilized in an era characterized by brutality. Despite Salah Addin's strength, authority, and triumphs, which earned him a prominent place among world leaders and history-makers, his conduct was always refined. He despised coarseness, harshness, and cruelty, and was calm and humble by nature. This quality impressed his contemporaries, both Muslims and Crusaders alike. He did not distance himself from his men, engaging in battles alongside them and carrying stones and sand to erect ramparts to protect Jerusalem, both he and his sons.³⁷

The British orientalist, Stanley Lane-Poole, described him as "undoubtedly, a paragon of purity, courage, kindness, and compassion, detached from worldly possessions, a dedicated combatant, simple in nature, and humble to the point of transparency."³⁸

Salah Addin Al Ayyubi was a figure who exuded a sense of admiration during the Crusades, which enabled him to conquer the hearts and minds of his adversaries. This was an achievement not attributed to any other Crusader leader, revealing the superiority of Muslims, especially in the image of Salah Addin Al Ayyubi, who became the only Muslim figure of the Crusades, if not the entire Middle Ages, to have been the subject of a legend that endured in the collective consciousness of Europe. He was admired by Muslims before the Crusaders and was depicted as a chivalrous nobleman. The primary reason for the formation of this legend was the humanistic nature of his character and his ability to conquer the hearts of his enemies.³⁹

Salah Addin Al Ayyubi was deeply devout in his spiritual practices, regularly attending congregational prayers and observing the daily sunnah prayers. He was known for his dedication to Islamic jurisprudence, having studied Shafi'i jurisprudence and learned Hadith from Abu Taher al-Silafi and others. Several individuals, such as Yunus bin Muhammad al-Qarqi and Al-Imad al-Katib, narrated hadiths from him. Concerning Zakat, Salah Addin Al Ayyubi passed away without paying the Zakat in the preceding year, as all of his wealth had been stolen through voluntary charity. When he died, he left behind only forty-seven Naseri dirhams and one gram of gold in his treasury. He was known for his devout fasting and reverence for Islamic rituals. He was known for his devout fasting and reverence for Islamic rituals. He particularly cherished listening to the Quran and would become emotional, shedding tears as he listened. He was skilled in reciting the Quran and emphasized that his imam be well-versed in the Quranic sciences, proficient in recitation, and knowledgeable in its teachings. He would listen to more than one part guarding him at night from his tower, excelling in Quranic recitation from a young age. His father appreciated his recitation and drew him closer as a result. This was his conduct towards his men and soldiers, particularly those in his inner circle.

He was known for his keenness to hear the noble Hadith, and if he came across a Hadith that carried a lesson, it would soften his heart and bring tears to his eyes. He would even instruct people to sit while listening to Hadith as a mark of respect. This was one of Salah Addin Al Ayyubi's objectives in nurturing his followers, teaching them to honour Allah's rituals and instilling love for Allah and His Messenger in their hearts. He always held a positive outlook towards Allah, relying greatly on Allah and frequently turning to Allah in repentance.⁴⁰

³⁶ Hamilton Gibb, *Salahuddin Al Ayyubi*, edited by Youssef Ibshe, 2nd edition, (Beirut: Bisan Publishing and Distribution, 1996), 191-192.

³⁷ Salah Al-Mukhtar, *The Struggle of National Identities: Arabs, Persians, Turks*. (England: e-Kutub Ltd, 2020), 160.

³⁸ Lane-Poole Stanley ve David Nicole, "Saladin and the Fall", 277.

³⁹ Ashraf Saleh, "Salahuddin Al Ayyubi and the Legend of the Savior in History" *Al Jazeera Net*, June 17, 2019.

⁴⁰ Abu Al-Mahasen Bahaa Al-Din Ibn Shaddad, *The Biography of Salahuddin Al Ayyubi: Al-Nawader Al-Sultaniyah and Al-Mahasen Al-Yusufiyah*, (England: Hindawi Foundation for Education and Culture, 2015), 11.

Salah Addin Al Ayyubi was brought up in the environment of the Zengid state, which attracted Islamic reformist ideologies. It became a centre for migration, drawing sincere individuals desiring to work in the path of Allah. The state's policies during the reign of Nur ad-Din Zengi were distinguished by numerous aspects, including the Islamic preparation of the people, the purification of religious and cultural life from deviant ideological currents such as esotericism, the influences of Greek philosophy, and the Fatimid practices of worship and rituals. The administration was imbued with Islamic principles, promoting justice and social solidarity. Salah Addin Al Ayyubi's upbringing was steeped in Islamic principles, and he raised his followers in the same vein. He engaged scholars and preachers to serve this upbringing. After the conquest of Jerusalem, he arranged for a pulpit to be set up for sermons. Zain al-Din Abu al-Hasan Ali bin Naja narrated a sermon, admonishing those who feared and those who escaped, delivering a stern message to the enemies of Allah. The listeners were moved, the hesitant were stirred, and the disputers were silenced, hearts softened, and worries alleviated. On the second Friday, Salah Addin Al Ayyubi asked Ibn Naja to deliver a sermon in the mosque, and he did so.⁴¹

In this manner, Salah Addin Al Ayyubi grew up with a balanced upbringing that encompassed psychological harmony and concord in all aspects of his life. He was moderate in both his personal and public affairs, without any excesses or deficiencies, and he managed to instil in his followers the same ideology that was formed and shaped through the balanced upbringing in his personality. He successfully communicated his thoughts and his vision for the liberation of Jerusalem to them. The dimensions of inspirational leadership he embodied were based on the sense of belonging and the shared vision he imparted to his followers, rooted in Islamic reformist ideologies. The Islamic state under the rule of Nur ad-Din Zengi attracted individuals from various regions and opened its doors to anyone devoted and willing to work for the sake of Allah. Consequently, Salah Addin Al Ayyubi became an inspirational leader who could inspire his followers and persuade them to embrace the vision he dreamed of and aspired to achieve. This vision eventually became their own, and they worked towards its realization.⁴²

On the other hand, even his enemies were affected by him. He managed to conquer the hearts and minds of his adversaries, a feat unrivalled by any other Crusader leader, revealing the superiority of Muslims, especially in the image of Salah Addin Al Ayyubi. He became the only Muslim figure of the Crusades, if not of the entire Middle Ages, to have been the subject of a legend that endured in the collective consciousness of Europe. The primary reason for the formation of this legend was the humanistic nature of his character and his balanced upbringing, encompassing spiritual, psychological, and physical facets of education. Thus, he succeeded in conquering the hearts of his enemies.

2.2. Attributes and characteristics of Salah Addin al Ayyubi

A true leader needs a strong intellect to apply knowledge, control his mind and organise his work and time. A strong intellect gives the leader comprehensive and practical knowledge that helps him improve his performance and achieve better results, and guide his team effectively, through his humility, the vision and strategy he seeks to achieve, and his justice, generosity and courage among his followers. Powerful thinking also helps a leader avoid attachment to wealth, fame or power, and encourages them to focus on long-term benefits rather than short-term and quick results.⁴³ (Mistry and Hule, 2015: 17). In the next section, attributes and characteristics of Salah Addin Al Ayyubi will be briefly examined.

- Humility

⁴¹ Arsan Al-Kilani. *This is How the Generation of Salahuddin Emerged and This is How Jerusalem Returned*, (Darul-Al-kalam, 1994), 277.

⁴² Aya Al-Shaqaqi, "Jurisprudence in Bilad al-Sham during the reign of Nur al-Din Zengi", *Journal of Islamic Jerusalem Studies*, 18/3 (2018): 154.

⁴³ Mistry and Hule. "Inspirational Leadership", 17.

One of his most notable attributes was his humility, coupled with vision. This trait is rare among leaders and reformers throughout history and is typically only found in prophets. Those with vision tend to be proud and self-admiring. However, Salah Addin Al Ayyubi embodied the qualities of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, in possessing both vision and humility. An example of his humility is that he did not pay attention to titles such as "Commander of the Faithful" or "Sultan." He did not adopt a title during his lifetime, and it was only after his death that his companions and admirers bestowed upon him the title "Sultan."⁴⁴ Salah Addin Al Ayyubi's humility towards his followers aligns with inspirational leadership, linking the emotions and feelings of the leader with those of his followers, leading to increased communication and harmony. Here, the inspirational leader plays a crucial role in achieving communication and harmony between the organization's (the army's) goals and the goals of the workers (the soldiers) through his humility and his willingness to connect with them.

- **Visionary**

Salah Addin Al Ayyubi was a visionary with ambitious aspirations. His vision led to a civil liberation project aimed at expelling the Franks and liberating Jerusalem. His vision was not limited to that; he had a "universal vision" and sought to unite with the ruler of the Almohad State in the Maghreb, although the request was declined.⁴⁵

These qualities illustrate key aspects of inspirational leadership in Salah Addin. It represents a shared and ambitious strategic vision that the leader and his followers hold. Leadership scholars and researchers emphasize the necessity of a shared and ambitious strategic vision that the leader and his followers embrace. An inspirational leader can teach and persuade his followers to embrace the vision he dreams of and aspires to achieve.

- **Justice, Compassion, and Generosity**

Salah Addin Al Ayyubi epitomized justice, compassion, and benevolence, supporting the weak against the strong. He was known for his generosity, exemplary conduct, and pure character. Nothing negative was ever associated with him; his words, deeds, and writings were consistently pure, never intending harm towards any Muslim.⁴⁶

This illustrates his alignment with a crucial aspect of inspirational leadership, reflecting a genuine commitment to the well-being of others. It underscores the leader's capacity to forge deep connections with their followers. An inspirational leader must ardently pursue the welfare of others, motivated not by self-interest but by a selfless concern for the well-being of their followers. This involves upholding justice, showing compassion, and extending benevolence to all within the fold.

- **Courage and Strength**

Salah Addin Al Ayyubi was renowned for his unwavering courage, fortitude, and dedication to jihad. Once, near Acre, he expressed, "I feel that if Allah grants victory in the remaining coastal areas, I will distribute the territories. I will bid farewell and embark on this sea to their islands, pursuing them until there is no one left on the face of the earth who disbelieves in Allah or until I die".⁴⁷

This attribute of an inspirational leader (courage) necessitates that the leader possesses sufficient courage to surpass traditional boundaries in achievements, surpassing previous leaders in goals, actions, and words. Throughout his life, Salah Addin consistently demonstrated courage and strength.

⁴⁴ Arsan Al-Kilani. *"This is How"*, 277.

⁴⁵ Shakir Mustafa, *Salahuddin: The Valiant Persian Warrior and Pious King*, (Damascus: Dar Al-Qalam, 2014), 287.

⁴⁶ Mohammad Saleh Mohsen, *"The Road to Jerusalem"*, 123.

⁴⁷ Mohammad Saleh Mohsen, *"The Road to Jerusalem"*, 123.

- Consultative Leader

Salah Addin Al Ayyubi embraced the practice of consultation in his inspirational leadership and management, aiming to realize his ambitious vision of liberating Jerusalem, reinstating the caliphate's influence, and shaping the global landscape. He convened esteemed advisors and leaders, including figures like judge Ibn Shaddad and Al-Imad Al-Isfahani Al-Katib, individuals renowned for their sagacity, to deliberate on the matter of Acre. In a compelling address, Salah Addin Al Ayyubi sought to motivate and rally their support.⁴⁸

Through this approach, Salah Addin Al Ayyubi sought to instil in his followers a sense of dedication and alignment with a shared vision, a fundamental aspect of inspirational leadership. Emphasizing consultation ensures the collective adoption of a shared vision, fostering strong leadership and followership. An inspirational leader can effectively educate and persuade their followers to embrace a vision as their own, a strategy exemplified by Salah Addin's successful leadership.

- Strategic Visionary

Salah Addin Al Ayyubi was a strategic visionary, known for formulating clear and definitive strategies built on four key principles:

Firstly, he laid the foundation for a strong and secure base, focusing on reuniting and fortifying the Muslim community. This involved cultivating resilient and well-rounded Muslim individuals through comprehensive education covering spiritual, physical, psychological, and intellectual aspects—values instilled in Salah Addin from an early age. He also bolstered military strength by establishing war industries, including shipbuilding, fortification, and siege preparations.

Secondly, he fostered a society prepared for war by promoting justice, mitigating animosities among Muslim emirates, and unifying their ranks. This led to a unified opposition against a common enemy—the Crusaders.

Thirdly, he maintained a clear objective, inspiring his followers and society as a whole, ensuring that the goal was unequivocal for his soldiers and the community. This clarity in purpose enhanced the efficiency and preparedness of Salah Addin and his soldiers, enabling them to achieve their objectives with the required quality, efficiency, and timeliness, and at minimal material and human cost. Their primary objective in military operations was the “liberation of Jerusalem”.

Lastly, he was vigilant in safeguarding the interests of Muslims, ensuring that war served to preserve their well-being. His approach included surprise attacks, indirect assaults, diversionary tactics to relieve pressure from one side by attacking another, dispersal strategies, exploiting political conflicts, and neutralizing adversaries. Moreover, he employed pre-emptive attacks to weaken the enemy's combat capability before an assault or in readiness completion.⁴⁹

In reviewing the strategy devised by Salah Addin Al Ayyubi for the liberation of Jerusalem, it becomes evident that it was a long-term strategy. Following his appointment as a minister in Egypt in 1169 and subsequently as a sultan in 1171⁵⁰, Salah Addin, upon Nur ad-Din Zengi's passing on May 15, 1174, directed his energies not towards combating the occupying Crusaders but towards engaging with Muslim princes, particularly those who had aligned with the Crusaders and the Hashashins in the Levant for a period of eleven and a half years (1174-1186), specifically from October 29, 1174, to the first week of March 1186. In contrast, his conflicts with

⁴⁸ Muhammed bin Salem bin Wasil Jamel Al-Din. *Mufarrij Al-Kurub fi Akhbar Bani Ayyub*, (Labenon: Dar Al-Maarifa, 1957), 589.

⁴⁹ Mohammad Saleh Mohsen, *The Road to Jerusalem: A Historical Study of the Islamic Experience in Palestine from the Times of the Prophets to the Twenty-First Century*. (Beirut: Al-Zaytouna Centre for Studies & Consultations, 2023), 123.

⁵⁰ Faris Clubb, "Jerusalem: The Central Point in the Life of Salahuddin", *Journal of Islamic Studies of Jerusalem*, 2/2 (1999): 17.

the Crusaders, after achieving unity within the Islamic geographical regions, lasted only five and a half years. These wars began in April 1187 and concluded in September 1192, just before the actual liberation of Jerusalem and the conclusion of the Third Crusade.

This illustrates that Salah Addin primarily focused on stabilizing and consolidating the internal front for 16 and a half years: five years in Egypt (1169-1174) and eleven and a half years in the Levant (1174-1186), before engaging in warfare with the Crusaders, which lasted for only five and a half years (1187-1192).⁵¹

This demonstrates that the leader Salah Addin Al Ayyubi consistently crafts a clear strategy through which he achieves his long-term objectives, as outlined in his strategic plan. At present, he focuses on the future by analysing the internal and external environment, regional power dynamics, and trends. This analysis aids in his understanding and interpretation of the present, allowing him to anticipate the future to influence the course of ideas and events related to the liberation of Jerusalem. Consequently, he crafts a balanced and cohesive vision to efficiently and effectively lead his army towards the desired goals.

CONCLUSION

Despite the vast temporal gap between the era of Salah Addin Al Ayyubi and our present time, characterized by the flourishing of humanities, particularly leadership sciences, the life of this remarkable leader provides a practical model through his life experiences. These experiences significantly influenced not only his followers and community, but also his adversaries, showcasing the leadership brilliance that embodies the pillars and dimensions of inspirational leadership. Indeed, his character embodied the traits of an inspirational leader, enabling him to formulate a clear, balanced, and ambitious vision based on scientific foundations, leading to numerous achievements. He was able to instil hope, achieve goals, and astonish the Western world with his leadership, which blended strength with compassion, tolerance, justice, and humanity.

One of the ironies of this inspirational leader's persona is that the orientalist of his time praised and described him as a legendary leader, writing extensively about him in their literature. This aligns with the writings by western scholars in the modern era on the concept of "Inspirational Leadership," considered one of the most recent writings in the field of management sciences.

In conclusion, it is hoped that this research has shed light on the inspirational leadership aspects of Salah Addin Al Ayyubi, in order to instil these values in the forthcoming generation, by the will of Allah, for the victory and liberation of the blessed Al-Aqsa Mosque. Allah is the source of all intentions and the guide to the right path.

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⁵¹ Abdul Fattah Mohammed Al-Owaisi, "The Cognitive Model of Salahuddin Al Ayyubi", *Journal of Islamic Studies of Jerusalem*, 20/3 (2020), 8.

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