REFRAMING LEADERSHIP IN A LIQUID AGE

by

STUART MENNIGKE

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The following individuals certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for acceptance, the dissertation entitled:

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Examining Committee:

Samuel D. Rocha, Assistant Professor, Educational Studies, UBC

Supervisor

André Mazawi, Professor, Educational Studies, UBC

Supervisory Committee Member

Larry Green, Adjunct Professor, City University of Seattle, Canada

Supervisory Committee Member

William Pinar, Professor and Canada Research Chair, Network of Centres and Institutes in Education & Curriculum and Pedagogy, UBC

University Examiner

Shauna Butterwick, Professor Emerita, Educational Studies, UBC

University Examiner

Abstract

Among the many shifting beliefs and practices characteristic of an age of liquid modernity, there is no common standard of what leadership is, who gets to be a leader and how they are prepared for the role. Countless books, seminars and academic programmes offer solutions that meet the needs of leaders and groups in ways particular to their organizational culture and preferences. This dissertation uses examples of leaders in the church, organizations informed by historic Christian values, educational institutions, and parts of the business world. It suggests that leaders have inherited and borrowed ways of operating without questioning the account of how they came to be. Many models are no longer effective in the liquid age, as they produce one-dimensional solutions to complex issues, leading to dualistic thinking and an inability to live with contradiction.

The dissertation suggests reframing the culture of leadership in the fluidity of this age so that it is not reducible to a static concept, but always constructing as it responds to its liquid context. To animate this, a curriculum centred on the deliberate awareness of self promotes six qualities that respond to the problem of leadership culture needing refashioning: It embraces inquiry, conversion, embodiment and mystery, contradiction and education as builds on a journey of learning.

The methods of investigation are conceptual reflection and characterization, and by personifying the six aspects of leadership culture, the personalities portray the claims to reframe leadership as new way of being in a shifting age. In this way, the reader experiences the conceptual reflection by engaging in the discourse with the author. The general conclusion of the paper is that the process of reframing the culture of leadership is not an end that establishes new

theories of leadership practice, but instead, a journey of interaction with oneself as a leader and those one leads and follows. While a number of bridges make this journey meaningful, education provides a navigational aid that helps steer the shifting beliefs and practices which leadership meets in these fluid times.

Lay Summary

Liquid modernity means a world where we can no longer take for granted beliefs, practices and previously understood standards for most things. In a time without common understanding of what a leader is, this dissertation suggests key elements for reframing the education of leaders to meet the needs of a fluid world.

This study suggests that a reframed leadership culture is supported through ongoing choice for the deliberate awareness of self. This is shown by persistent inquiry and conversion, working creatively with embodiment and mystery, living constructively with contradiction, and seeing leadership as an educational journey. The author tests this thesis through personifying these six qualities and engaging in dialogue with them.

The dissertation contributes to scholarly work by analysing philosophical concepts through characterization, thereby integrating mystery and personal interaction in demonstrating the theory.

Preface

This dissertation is original, unpublished, independent work by the author, S. Mennigke.

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Acknowledgements

I am grateful to my colleagues in the 2014 Ed. D cohort. We have grown to be a community who still support one another through all the changing scenes of life, in trouble and in joy. Together we have laughed and learned, waited and worried for the one who was slower at any time and seen this bit of education as a journey on the same train we once boarded together.

With them, I acknowledge the contribution of each pair of the Department of Educational Studies staff who taught the program during course work and electives. The wider community of the Ed D Institute, meeting each year under Ed D architect Dr. Garnet Grosjean, keep building the objective of the Ed D program.

I am thankful for Misty Gaudry's patience in editing and setting timelines, and grateful to Dr. Megan Otton for proofreading with encouragement and interest. I acknowledge my family and friends who endured my virtual presence for a long time, and particularly, I acknowledge my son Francis who with scholarly insight advanced my understanding of mystery in characterization and conceptual analysis.

My Supervisors, Doctors Sam Rocha, André Mazawi and Larry Green lived out Jean-Luc Marion's condition of givenness: "*Every thing that shows, offers*." They offered academic supervision and though they may not always have known it, they gave spiritual direction.

Foreword

What a leader is and who gets to be one is not commonly understood. There is also no common understanding of how relationships and leadership are good for each other. Relationships are started for many reasons, some we don't choose. For those we do pick, there are different ways of starting. We can have relationships with almost everything: people, characters in a story, study, writing and art. We can have a relationship with money, gaming, God, Facebook, and the internet. We invest in some relationships more than in others. Often relationships are tactical, and the significant ones include risk. Some invite us in, where we might fall in love and stay a while.

Whatever your reason is for reading this dissertation, it is a potential relationship, and my purpose is to invite you far enough into the text to grasp a research perspective, an academic concept, an educational interpretation, and a view on leadership. I know what this dissertation does not do: It does not provide five steps to successful leadership practice. In addition, it does not let you to use it as a literal question and answer text.

What this dissertation does do is allow you to test my hypotheses on leadership through allowing various notions talking to each other. By this I mean, testing them in a similar way to how, for example, solid hermeneutical practice interprets the bible as a comprehensive text. It allows different parts of scripture to interpret scripture, and does not set it up against itself.[1]

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[1] This is a favourite teaching phrase of Michael Nuttall. Conversation with the author, Pietermaritzburg, September 2003. I mean by this is that too often people use the bible as a kind of empirical book of rules, an idol that is an end itself, instead of an icon pointing to something (see John 5:39). Therefore, it is a collection of works deliberately put together to point to something, as "containing all things necessary to salvation" (The Book of Alternate Services of the Anglican Church of Canada, 1985).

You may be questioning who identifies someone as a leader, and what defines leadership? Answering this could potentially lead down a path which traps most leadership writers into the kind of definite descriptions I wish to avoid, because potentially, they cause us to use the "should, must, ought, but" judgements about what leadership is. However, this dissertation refers to those who are elected, appointed, called, born, pressured or self-selected into the role we call *leader*. This means they perform duties associated with accompanying, managing, guiding, directing, governing or controlling others who may willingly or not, choose to be followers.

The audience for this work are those who occupy the roles I have described here – but mostly, this is an appeal to those already charged with accompanying and teaching leaders-in-training, persons whose job it is to assess the performance of leaders, and as well as those who are identified by existing leaders or communities as potential leaders. So, the primary audience alongside the student, are parents, school teachers and tutors, college and university professors, sports coaches, mentors and guides, spiritual directors, pastors and leaders in organizations.

At various places in the dissertation, I test a premise on leadership by inviting you, the reader, to examine your view and action on it. This means one has to be deliberately vulnerable in interacting with this text. I want to share with you why I have done this. I think that many leaders in a variety of disciplines have inherited a dangerous tendency of providing simplistic solutions to complex issues. Of course, we see this daily among political leaders, but I notice it particularly through my work in the church, the corporate world, and the educational institutions where I have worked. I think some leaders simply do this through inherited example they have not yet questioned. Others do it with intention to maintain a belief system, or because it preserves a power base among their followers. But generally, it seems to be a shallow attempt to do away

with contradiction in life, and often, in religious life. The aim of my dissertation is to convince you that this tendency among leaders produces an increasingly dualistic world, resulting in the kind of dangerous partisan and nationalistic choices we see increasing on a global scale today. It is ironic that dualism offers a hard retort against the softer world of liquidity, which is of course, the surreptitious aim. However, what this does is increase the dualistic polarity rather than providing the conduits for understanding. I would like anyone referencing my work to examine their leadership style and ask whether they contribute to dualistic thinking by providing one-dimensional solutions in their practice or teaching. This kind of leadership limits the natural self-regulating support of which human communities are capable, ignores recognized sustainable development goals,[2] and follows iterations of what Charles Taylor calls *Closed World Systems* (CWS). To our everlasting shame, these kinds of societal systems have roots and development in the Christian Church's story, of which I am a representative. Also, systems like this tend to only serve the wealthy and powerful in society.

I want to make it clear that I do not think I can successfully hold *all* these ideals together in this dissertation. In this text, I may not provide any more than an introductory set of philosophical inquiries to meet the complexities, which I suggest leaders need to meet. But I do hope to succeed in presenting six themes – embodied in my chapter headings – which, if seen as parts of an ongoing life-journey for leaders, will influence the questions that are critical, in my view, to educational leadership. I trust this because of the light that my philosophical inquiry casts onto these themes, as well as how this inquiry tests my reflections over years of engagement in leadership education. Mystics from many faith disciplines over the ages reflect on

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[2] Here I am referring to the 17 sustainable development goals to transform our world. https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/envision2030.html. Accessed 2019-10-04

the risk of journeying into the soul and, generally, their writing reflects the natural contradictions raised through facing our personal complexities, lives, and leadership.

Reflecting on my own journey of leadership, I am hesitant about a number of things in presenting the inquiries of this dissertation. First is the fear of being misinterpreted about the impact that the age of liquid modernity has had on the Church and society. Over the past four decades, I have been a leader in the Church and therefore the larger society. We have faced issues like the remarriage of divorced people, the evil of racism, women's rights in the Church and corporate structures, and the place of the LGBTQ2S+ population. I have been part of facilitating these changes, being aware that I had to own aspects of my own prejudices. Sometimes I have withdrawn and I often led the charge with hesitation. Second, this inquiry spans a very broad group called *leaders.* Even though the context in which I am writing is leadership in the Church, business organisations and the academic institutions, where I have worked in leadership education, they each span different cultures, and may reflect a Western bias. Further, it is possible that my desire for leaders to grasp non-dualistic perspectives could be a projection resulting from the myopia of my childhood experiences, trapped in the one-dimensional education system of the South African apartheid regime. At times, there has been a temptation to think that it is solely my task to hold the tension between the humanities and science-based philosophical cultures. However, I see that my conceptual-reflective analysis simply makes a contribution to informing this creative tension.

However, a few things reassure me. First, this dissertation is a philosophical reflection and philosophers delight in their task to awaken consciousness and disturb sedentary views. Badiou points out that Plato once said that "philosophy is an awakening," and that Plato "knew

perfectly well that awakening implies a difficult break with sleep."[3] Husserl, at the turn of the 19th century, bargained "that the responsibility of the philosopher is the production of crisis, disturbing the slow accumulation of the deadening sediment of tradition in the name of reactivating historical critique, whose horizon would be an emancipated life-world."[4] What a wonderful alliance of awakenings! Badiou and Žižek, transdisciplinary theorists of the current age maintain that "the philosopher intervenes when he finds in the present, the signs that point to the need for a new problem, a new invention."[5]

In most of the more advanced leadership courses I teach, I argue that leaders need to see themselves as philosophers. This means that what is taught about being a leader, and what is encouraged in practicing leadership should be seen as a new problem for a new age. Zygmunt Bauman called this an age of "*liquid modernity.*"[6] His contention is that in the age of liquid modernity, former ways of doing things can no longer be taken for granted. In 2012, he commented on what he now called a time of "interregnum" in the status of the liquid-modern human condition. "Unlike our ancestors, we don't have a clear image of a 'destination' towards which we seem to be moving – which needs to be a model of *global* society, a global economy, global politics, a global jurisdiction…Instead we react to the latest trouble, experimenting, groping in the dark."[7] I believe that Bauman's postulation about society not having a clear image of the destination toward which we are moving, is the issue that today's leaders come up against in their role, whether they are aware of the liquidity of this age or not.

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[3] Alain Badiou, and Slavoj.Žižek, *Philosophy in the Present,* edited by Peter Engelmann, translated by Peter Thomas and A. Toscano. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2009), 15.

[4] Simon Critchley, *Continental Philosophy, A very Short Introduction. (*Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 73.

[5] Badiou and Zizek, 2.

[6] Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*. (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2000).

[7] Ibid., vii.

Neither the way we express relationship contracts, nor what we used to call commitment, is fixed in the current era. What is honest or what is truth cannot be as clearly stated as before. Neither what we believe about God, nor how we should express it, is as clear as it used to be. These are confusing times for some, entirely standard for today's young people, and exciting for those who longed for change. As we crossed into the present millennium, I felt reassured by being part of this dilemma of fluidity, because it meant having to take leadership risks in an entirely fluid period of church history. It is also a new world of work, where changes in work-place culture and talent development are altering the corporate and educational world. I am also reassured by the collective wisdom of my academic supervisors, whose research and teaching show rigor in the combination between scientific conception and existential experience. They have made a journey with me, and have not allowed me to shirk the risk of disclosing who I am in relation to what I write and how I practice as an educator and spiritual leader.

This is really to convince you that there is sufficient reason for the philosophical approach of this dissertation, as an inquiry into reframing leadership education in a liquid age. I invite you trust me on this experiment and I am convinced it has the thoroughness that will work for those readers who are willing to reframe their previously secure concepts about leadership, education, and even writing models.

I now offer an outline of the form and style of the dissertation, and how I imagined it can bring life to academic research. The format is rhythmic and liturgical,[8] and forms part of a tradition of personification and characterization found in descriptive allegory and performative

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[8] By liturgical is meant a form of using words, music and actions in a regular pattern, generally associated with religious worship.

writing. Some explanation of the power of allegory is useful at this point, as I describe at least two in this foreword, which added particular inspiration to the form and style of this work. Allergisation allows the reader to accept the writing on allegory's terms and not that of the real. It permits the reader to find meaning through the symbolic, and in particular allows for fluidity in the conclusions which are illustrating the point the writer wishes to make. The reader will understand that in the context of this dissertation, fluidity is a necessary part of the inquiry for reframing leadership in this age. To arrive at fixed conclusions in any of the dialogues which occur in each chapter will defeat the intention of the various hypotheses offered. Using allegory, it is important that story ends in this way or that way or another way for inquiry to find a home in the reader, and to prevent binary thinking. We cannot pre-empt the kind of change which converts, as it short-circuits the reframing of ideas which are in the process of reformation.

The characters I will introduce in a while are all part of the power of allegory, and each creates a thematic shade in how they stand for a particular meaning. Their story, as with the story of the writer, and you the reader, is built on the premise that there is neither a predictable outcome in a dialogue, nor in an inquiry. This is key to understanding personification and characterization as I use them in this work, and as described in Appendix A. More particularly, the power of allegory allows the process of inquiry to teach in a multi-dimensional way. The strength of allegory is that it broadens the focus when a life example is turned into story. But this contrary to turning stories into examples. In such instances, we run into the danger of functionalizing story which easily leads to dualism.

At various places in the dissertation, I refer to aspects of the religious "sacramental."[9] Sacraments point to the particular site where God is, even though God is everywhere. Like with the sacramental, allegory illustrates the meaning of the symbolic in the particular instance.

Three particularities about the craft of writing emerged for me over some time − *word*, *voice*, and *awareness*. Each one is integral to the form:

Word: Each chapter is divided into three sections with the same main headings. The first section – *before the word* – announces the discourse. The second section – *the word* – is the discourse in the form of an interview with an interlocutor, and the third section – *after the word* – is a summary and comment on the discourse. I debated the value of this repetitive construction for every chapter, and decided to risk its patterned approach for the hermeneutical reasons offered in section 1.2.1. Pattern and ritual are part of my spiritual tradition, but also elements of creation's daily dance. For since creation was spoken into being, the earth and the sun move in a daily predictable ceremonial we call sunrise and sunset. The use of *Word* as an embodied[10] and creating power will be illustrated in section 1.2.1. I confess to an unorthodox and intersectional approach to leadership practice and education. What I hope will become clear through this dissertation's formatting and narration approach, is how these styles add value and depth to the dissertation as a whole.

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[9] By the sacraments I mean things which are outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual grace. They are for many traditional religious people, a means through which they access the divine. For example, in traditional Christian sacramental understanding, the bread of the Eucharist becomes the body of Christ. This divine action allows something external like bread, to become something internal which is able to feed both physically and existentially.

[10] As "embodied" will be used and defined frequently, by it I mean: personify, endue with life and spirit, give *subsistence* to (see Rocha's *subsistence* referenced later), providing with a literal body, incarnate, allow to have erotic energy (see Rocha references later in paper). All in all, I mean: "allow to come to alive in bodily form - having energy, spirit, eros, life."

Voice: I have chosen to use different styles of narration as a way of showing how different voices naturally debate and reflect in written inquiry. A writer at work may see themselves as the self who is writing, the piece of writing, the self-reflecting on the writing, and the meta-observation of these three things. How these find expression, is about writing craft. Meta-reflection reveals these observations by making explicit what was formally implicit.

Awareness: Some authors are not simply authors, but writers who are aware enough of their writing to write about it. Similarly, in leadership, it is not just about being a leader, but a leader with enough awareness about one's leadership to write about being a leader. Cultivating the craft of writing influenced the structural style of this conceptual-reflexive paper. The suggestion is that if a writer can identify who (which person) is writing, if they write (set it down), reflect on their writing and then write about their observation of these three processes, they are engaging in meta-reflection. This concept manifests itself as a cast of live voices and a personalized interaction, as any one of the voices can be characterized and can speak. My experience of accompanying leaders day-to-day reflects that increased personal awareness arising from self-reflection engages one's own complexity[11] and is key to effective leadership.

The noticeable style of this dissertation is the employment of a pedagogical device where a number of interlocutors engage with me as the writer in a discourse on leadership. It is as if the reader is watching a play where the six chapters of the dissertation are the acts. The first chapter introduces all the characters in a brief interchange with the writer. The final chapter is a fictional assembly of all the characters. I have personified the characters as Inquiry, Conversion,

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[11] Complexity here is a reference to the term *adult mental complexity*, which separates the complex issues people deal with, from the ability of a person to sort out and confront their own difficulties using the understanding of their normal mental ability and awareness of their own psychological processes. Chapter 2 picks up the theme of complexity and adult mental complexity as a leadership process referred to by Kegan and Lahey.

Embodiment and Mystery (twins), Contradiction, and Education. Their personalities portray my

claims to reframe leadership, and so may help leaders find new ways of being a leader in a

shifting age. In this way, the reader can experience the conceptual reflection through engaging in

the discourse with the characters and me. While I intend the style to be noticeable, it is not

promotional. Rather it finds its place in the discipline of *performative writing*. Della Pollock

defines it:

> It forms itself in the act of speaking/writing. It reflects in its own forms, in its own
> fulfillment of form, in what amounts to its performance of itself, a particular, historical
> relation (agnostic, dialogic, erotic) between author-subjects, reading subjects, and
> subjects written/read. Performative writing is thus no more or no less formally intelligible
> than a road-sign or a landmark: its styles may be numbered, taught, and reproduced, but
> its meanings are contextual. It takes its value from the context-map in which it is located
> and which it simultaneously marks, determines, transforms." [12]

This engagement also achieves another purpose. It allows writing to *do* something as part

of the conceptual reflection. That is, to make conceptual distinctions and organize ideas through

permitting writing to perform. If we see writing as a creative action, we may not think that it has

restrictions of its own, yet it does, in the same way as any discipline that uses writing has its own

rules and guidelines. Academic writing has its rubrics, as does fiction, journalism and tweeting.

Pollock, arguing from a performing arts discipline, explores ways of making writing perform

through "challenging the boundaries of reflexive textualities; relieving writing of its obligations

under the name of 'textuality'; shaping, shifting, testing language. Practicing language.

Performing writing. Writing performatively."[13]

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[12] Della Pollock, "Performing Writing," in *The Ends of Performance*, ed. Peggy Phelan and Jill Lane (New York University Press, 1998), 78.
[13] Pollock, 75.

Appendix A is an explanation of characterization, explaining the objectives of using a personified character, and the nature of the relationship between a character, the writer, and an audience. The readers are the audience in this case, and the characters, described in Chapter 1, are wisdom figures who engage me as the writer, and you as the audience. In these interviews, they are a like a bridge between the ordinary and the divine, and move us beyond the points of inquiry they pose in the interviews. As the characters speak, listen, interact and challenge, each portrays characteristics of the name they carry. Sometimes they introduce the inquiry, offering a point of departure for analysis.

I have deliberately used other voices in this writing, like the commentator who speaks *before the word* in each chapter. As a writing style, this allows me some preparation time before and after engaging with each interviewer. The voice of an interlocutor *after the word*, is the opportunity to comment on something I may not have realized about myself in the discourse at that point in time. These may also reflect comments by my supervisors that come into focus as I am writing. I suggest that this kind of meta-reflection is what happens in the mind of any academic writer who selects and cites various voices[14] as the opinions they wish to argue. Similarly, in each chapter, the characters who engage me in dialogue are internal voices with a personified character, who suggest a point of view or make an inquiry. Because they are voices within me, potentially they make the discourses a form of self-interview, but which also goes beyond the limitations of self-interview.[15] However, I recognize that reality is a vital element in

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[14] By "voices" here I mean authors, like "Smith recounts that…or Jones maintains that…."

[15] An explanation of this is in Appendix A. I made a lengthy writing journey with the potential dangers of self interview over a few months prior to submission of this dissertation. It involved the recognition of the potential narcissism in self interview, my over-correction of this through excessive explanation, and eventually landed at the realization that thorough research and good writing, together with the kind of conceptual analysis I employed, could guard against the dangers of egotistical approach.

research, and I want to carry my readers along with me. For the reader who is willing to make a

detour, phenomenologist Samuel D. Rocha provides a way of understanding the reality of things

which appear to be abstract. The journey is worthwhile, even if it is for this dissertation alone,

because in chapter 3, I suggest an inquiry into rationality, embodiment, mystery and leadership.

The inquiry is about making leadership real in our time, and my thesis is that mystery is a key

element in this. Rocha explains how even the most real things can be shrouded within mystery

until it is revealed what they are, what their being is. He provides three categories to help

describe a reality through "a conceptual lens, a tool for the imagination, a way to picture the real

and identify real things in a specific conceptual place or situation."[16] I will apply Rocha's model

of the *trinitarian lens* further in chapter 4, but here I draw on the category he calls *subsistence,* to

describe things which "do not necessarily exist but are nonetheless real."[17] Among these, he

includes immaterial realities: concepts, forces and energies.[18]

Voices, and in this case the different voices and characters I use, are a non-material

reality in conversation, as they exist to reflect a reality through an opinion. So, the voices of my

personified characters in the discourse sections are part of a *subsistence* reality, dynamic and

energetic, and speak in the same way as a stage-character does. The style adds value for other

reasons too: using a character-interview style effectively separates the different voices,

emphasizes questions as a point of departure for the inquiry, and encourages the reader to enter

the argument by taking a view with one of the characters in the dialogue. The style is a blend of

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[16] Samuel D Rocha, *Folk Phenomenology: Education, Study, and the Human person*, (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2015), 11

[17] Ibid., 12. Rocha describes *Subsistence* as the vital, energetic, and conceptual, as opposed to perceptual, category of things that are within Being, do not necessarily exist, and are nonetheless real. He is drawing on Alexius Meinong's "Theory of Objects" – see footnote on Rocha's page 12.

[18] Ibid., 12.

The Summa Theologica of Saint Thomas Aquinas,[19] syllogistic argument,[20] and personification of concepts. These styles all recognize there is a spaciousness in doubt.[21]

As part of an elective course on writing in February 2018, I was energized by the writing style of some noteworthy authors,[22] and simultaneously, by a discussion with my thespian son. At the time, he was a master's student in the Dramatic Arts,[23] specializing in physical theatre and puppetry. I also discovered Paul K. Feyerabend's curious presentation of dialogue in *Three Dialogues on Knowledge*.[24] This book, with no explanation apart from a brief scene-setter and character bio, launches straightaway into a dramatic script, and engages characters in academic conversation using three different styles of dramatic script. Feyerabend's only comment on the dialogues is a postscript, explaining: "There exist now areas in which the essay, or the research paper, and especially the textbook, have lost much of their former weight."[25] He comments that:

> Plato thought that the gulf between ideas and life could be bridged by the dialogue – not by a written dialogue which for him was but a superficial account of past events, but by a real, spoken exchange between people of different backgrounds[26]. He says further, that:

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[19] Robert Miner, in his Introduction to *Reading Thomas on Charity in the Summa of Theology*, comments on Thomas Aquinas as an Educator, and says Thomas Aquinas' unfinished masterwork, the *Summa of Theology,* is known for its dispassionate posing of questions, not to mention its considered distinctions and measured judgments. The full work I'm referring to here is: Thomas Aquinas. *The "Summa Theologica" of St. Thomas Aquinas*. (New York; London; Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1922).

[20] By this, I mean argument which follows logical syllogism, containing a major premise (IF something is assumed), a minor premise (IF something else is assumed), and a conclusion (THEN something can be assumed).

[21] By spaciousness of doubt, I mean that doubt motivates inquiry if it moves us to look beyond blaming ourselves for doubting, to the source of the doubt, or, as in the example of Thomas refusing to believe that Christ was risen unless he could put his hands into the wounds in Jesus' wounds caused by the nails of the crucifixion, to an actual embodied response. (John 20:25). For this reason, it can be said "that in science, doubt and scepticism are the foundations of knowledge," as they motivate investigation and research. The words in parenthesis are André Mazawi's, from a conversation in 2017.

[22] This is subjective, I am sure, but Stephen King's non-fiction work, *On Writing, A memoir of the Craft* and Mary Karr's *The Art of Memoir*, and a number of significant writers interviewed in *The Paris Review,* brought a new reality to writing for me.

[23] At the time, Francis Mennigke was a Masters student in Drama*,* at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa. In physical theatre as in puppetry, the actor personifies any number of characters, switching between them by a movement, a voice, an action, or a silence, and portrays their convincing reality.

[24] Paul Feyerabend, *Three Dialogues on Knowledge*. (Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell, 1991).

[25] Ibid., 163.

[26] Ibid., 164.

> Again we are far from away from the battles between thought, perception, emotion, that really shape our lives, 'pure' knowledge included. The Greeks had an institution that produced the confrontations–the drama. Plato rejected the drama and thus made his contribution to the logomania that affects so many parts of our culture.[27]

Feyerabend's work is attractive to me, not because of his renown as a critic of scientific method, but because of his understanding of how the integration of concepts take us on a journey. "But ideas," he said, "like butterflies, do not merely exist; they develop, they enter into relations with other ideas and they have effects."[28]

The legendary and enchanting 12th Century Persian poem, *The Conference of the Birds, A Sufi Allegory*, was a motivation for me choosing a personified character dialogue style for this dissertation. As with Feyerabend's work, it is the development of self-awareness through pilgrimage. Sufi spirituality has a prime focus on self-renunciation in the evolution of self-awareness, and would not want the journey toward self-renunciation to be misunderstood as un-reality, and in keeping with this desire for practical spirituality, the poem is an ongoing discovery of lessons applicable for day-to-day life, and indeed, for this liquid age. R.P. Masani, writing his abridged version in 1923, with the effects of the 1st Great War still lingering, states his reason for a book on Sufism in what he called *stirring times*. "The justification lies in the fact that mysticism like other systems of religious philosophy has an ideal as well as a practical side. If it leads some to passivity, or lures them to realms of fancy, it also quickens others to rise above the plane of common life and come in touch with the reality of things."[29] My desire for leadership education in our age echoes Masani's desire for reality in his. The birds in the allegory, under the

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[27] Ibid., 165.
[28] Ibid., 163.
[29] Farīd al-Dīn's and Rustom Pestonji Masani's *The Conference of the Birds, a Sufi Allegory: Being an Abridged Version of Farid-Ud-Din Attar's Mantiq-Ut-Tayr*.(New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 2003),viii

leadership of the hoopoe on their journey across seven valleys to understand the true nature of God, experience the hardship true of all life and leadership journeys. They are overcome with weaknesses and fears which beset any pilgrim, even to the point of death for some. Masani could have been writing for an audience a century after his time when he says in the 1923 foreword to his abridged version:

> The highest intelligences in all parts of the globe are today striving to gain a clear understanding of the terrible unrest that has unhinged the minds of the people and to devise means for combating the forces of disruption that threaten to overturn the established order of things. The crying need of the hour is virile action, not sterile speculation. We want powerful stimulants to rouse up every individual to do his best for the regeneration of the world, not soothing drafts to induce the slumber of spiritualism and quietism.[30]

The desire then, was action for reality and rootedness in the post- war world. This dissertation will outline a desire for similar action – though for a different audience − leaders seeking education in liquid modernity. However, it's arguable whether the liquidity of post-war 1920's felt any different to the fluidness of liquid modernity, even though history would show it was a very different age.

'Aṭṭār choose quest, love, knowledge, detachment, unity, wonderment, poverty and annihilation for the valley's through which the pilgrims should go to arrive at the realizations which lived inside them all along. My choice for inquiry, conversion, embodiment, mystery, contradiction, complexity and journey as the foundations for understanding leadership in the liquid age achieve the same end as 'Aṭṭār's valleys. Both journeys need a special grace for the pilgrimage, but also emphasize not just the grace, but how the pilgrim allows the grace to move through them along the journey. I shall describe the nature of such grace or *charism* needed for

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[30] Ibid.

leadership journeys in section 1.2.1 following, and like charism, fable acts as a conceptual tool to build significant aspects of the journey. Munir Vellani, a scholar and devout Muslim, calls the poem a sublime work of mystical literature [31] illustrating how the elements of mystery and embodiment can be used in combination with characterization in a leadership story.

This dissertation suggests leadership culture in the liquid age is in need of conversion.[32] Transformation experiences happen on many levels and are subjective, but a mark of their authenticity will be how they inform someone's transformation experience. Through this paper I invite leaders and leadership educators to begin again, to be converted in an age described by Larry Green: "where all previous candidates for ground—religion, ideology, even objectivity — have been problematized. Instead we must learn how to navigate through a dynamic, shifting environment — a fluid or liquid environment."[33]

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[31] Munir Vellani, Email correspondence with the author, June 20th, 2019. Mystery is a well-used concept in this paper. Mostly, when I have used the words mystery, mystical, mystics, myth, mythology, numinous, fable and similar expressions of the world which many people relegate to the "unreal", I have defined the meaning in a footnote. The intention of this paper is not a study on the things of the mystical world. However, because I am suggesting that leadership needs to embrace the mysterious, I'll list some definitions as I intend them here, at the cost of duplication in other footnotes. They do not all mean the same thing, however their root is shared etymologically. By *mystery* I mean a less-than-obvious presence and is hidden from normal view. I use *mystical* as that which has a sense of being hidden and yet wanting to be discovered, and *mysticism* to be linked with mystery and secret. Rakoczy (see references in chap 5) records that "Plotinus and Proclus used the word *muo* to describe a person whose eyes were closed to the world "while the inner eye was open and searching for wisdom." See William Johnston, The Inner Eye of Love: Mysticism and Religion. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978), 31. Mystical experience links mystery, the spiritual, spiritual experience and the transcendent, and finding love and union with the divine. I use *myth* to be that which links story, fable and fairy-tale, and *mythology* to mean the linking of human experience with the gods, animals and nature in stories related to culture. In all cases, my intention is to link that which the functional rational (described in chap 3) mind keeps separate - either for logical clarity, fear of the unknown, or in fundamentalist religious view, fear of supposed "contamination" by the spirit-world which is not understood, or from which it is believed people should flee. In most cases where I use a description of as aspect of mystery or the numinous, I suggest that most Indigenous nations do not share the need to fear the mystical, or the spirit world, but hold these together in a non-dualistic way.

[32] I define conversion as I use it at the beginning of Chapters 1 and 2.

[33] Larry Green, "*Metaphors: Action Frameworks for a Liquid Time."* In: *Challenging Organizations and Society. Reflective Hybrids.* (Vol. 5, issue 2. October, 2016), 1.

1   Introduction

1.1   Before the Word

This study makes four main claims about leadership in a liquid age: Leadership culture needs conversion (Chap 2); Leadership calls for embodiment and mystery (Chap 3); Leadership embraces contradiction and complexity (Chap 4); Leadership education is a journey (Chap 5). In section 1.2.1, *The Word Inquiring*, the four points of inquiry appear together, as a preview for how the subsequent chapters are constructed, introducing the six interlocutors who interview Mennigke. He has chosen to place the contextual section 1.2.2, after the *Word– Inquiring*, so that the reader is introduced to the main claims of the dissertation first. Section 1.3, *After the Word* is a monologue by the interlocutor, intended as a reflection for the author, and may contain suggestions of the points of inquiry for the next chapter.

In each chapter of the dissertation, *The Word*, as the place of discourse, provides the metaphors needed for leaders and leadership educators to question what leadership is, and how it can be lived in today's *liquid age.*[34]

Personal transformation resists prescription. It happens through listening, reflection, admission and analysis, and is often independent of one's expectation. Mennigke argues that words give expression to different voices of thought and argument, achieving an important goal in composition. His passion for integrating self-awareness into the four main claims about leadership in a liquid age form a conceptual-reflexive consideration of his experiences about

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[34] The reference to Green's concept of metaphors is in chapter 4. The concept of *today's liquid age* refers to the era in which we now live. Green uses this concept, as does Zygmunt Bauman in his extensive works on liquid modernity. It will be argued more fully, but is meant to lodge this thesis' points of inquiry in this current time in history.

leadership, among people he has known over the span of his work in leadership education. It offers an additional example of how an Ed. D. dissertation can serve as a space for reflection and simultaneously allow for the development of new ideas, paths, modes of being, and practice, in an incarnational way. This incarnation[35] is spoken through *The Word* as the dialogue of each chapter. Theologically, the Word Incarnate is the leader who "pitches his tent" among other leaders, and invites a dialogue which is inquiring and contextual (Chap 1). This leader is transforming, mindful, negotiating and converting (Chap 2); is discerning, embodied, transforming and mysterious (Chap 3). The leader holds contradiction, is landed, free, adaptive and resting (Chap 4); and offers to partner with and befriend leaders on a journey of leadership (Chap 5).

Mennigke's writing to date is not recorded in predictable places. It is recognised in the hearts of those who hear his unpublished homilies over his years as a priest, and in workshop notes from his courses in educational leadership. The topics range from organizational to behavioural strategy, from how people learn, to how they discern and work with complexity. Not limiting himself to one audience, he has worked in the Church as a full-time pastor, teacher, trainer of trainers, counsellor, and spiritual director. At other times, while teaching in the corporate world, shared profit and organizations with an inherited Christian background, he is an associate priest in a broader team of clergy and socially involved consultants. As an educator,

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[35]I will use *incarnation* often in this paper. Initially, here, I intend it in its general use as the image or the personification of a form that something takes on. It will evolve to the Christian textual use of *incarnation* as described in footnote #83. When I use it here as "spoken through The Word", I am alluding to what Christians understand as God taking on the form of humans, as God's act of identification with humanity. Consequently, my use of *The Word* as a recurring part of each chapter is something recognized in the Judeo-Christian tradition, and I intend it should show incarnation as an action that has living dialogue in its being. Throughout the paper, I intend that incarnation should show *embodiment*- to mean "taking a personalized form, and being real." Incarnation operates as conscious awareness, as it is the personification of an attribute that can be heard, seen, touched, and experienced.(See 1John 1:1-2)

Mennigke's love is in leadership education, and he tries to show that all life journeys are excursions of the psyche. Some call them spiritual pilgrimages, while for others they are psychological or existential crossings.

1.2 The Word

> You are the Body of Christ: that is to say, in you and through you the work of the Incarnation must go forward. You are meant to incarnate in your lives the theme of your adoration - you are to be taken, consecrated, broken and distributed, that you may be the means of grace and vehicles of the Eternal Charity.
> – Augustine of Hippo

1.2.1 Inquiring

In the *Word Inquiring*, the six interlocutors each offer a short insight into the main chapters of the dissertation, as we interact in an abbreviated interview. The snippets of interview offer a thesis, an antithesis and a synthesis, and mostly, the inquiry poses the thesis question as the point of departure. We invite the reader into this dialogue, as if you are watching a live stage play. The first interlocutor – Inquiry – is representative of all six characters who participate in the interchange. Inquiry's particular charism is to pose questions in dialogue in a way that unlocks opportunity. The notion of *charism* introduces the diverse gifts each interlocutor brings to the dialogue, but also serves as part of a conceptual tool which will build parts of what they offer to a reframed culture of leadership. C*harism* also serves to synthesize aspects of my argument as I offer my journey as a leader, as a mentor to other leaders, and is a central concept to the interior world I am inviting leaders to experience.

I use the word *charism* to mean "gift" or "gift of God", and intend that it should embrace different images of who we perceive God to be. Normally, someone said to have a charism of service for example, has this gift in relation to the nature of their being, and having received

something as a consequence of a calling to be in the world in a particular way. In these inquiries wisdom figures display their gifts, sometimes even the power of that charism, but it is always for the good of a person, community or cause. The nature of chrism is both receiving and giving, and through being giving a gift, it also defines an action which the receiver passes on through their being in the world. It implies a spiritual attitude, which, when realized recognises that one has something which is treated with care in the way it is enjoyed, but also pleasure in the way it is given. Often, a religious community, a service group or organization is identified by a particular charism, which is the character of their offering to the world. Its adherents acknowledge that they receive a gift for a particular purpose, but also know they live to pass it on.

In the context of leadership, I intend the character of the interlocutors should exude a particular charism, though I cannot control it. They do not simply speak wise words, but exist in their charism, and as such speak ontologically, as well as with *charisma*, meaning attraction. In the interviews of chapter 3, the reader will see reference to a leadership form called *charismatic*, also open to misuse, and chapter 6 refers to the most ancient fable in the Hebrew Scriptures as a reflection on calling, choosing, commissioning and purpose of leadership and the place of charism in this. Sometimes, I will use the words "ability", or "gift" or "contribution" to mean charism, and my intention is that leaders should both experience and query the nature of how they live out their leadership, as well as experience the pleasure of what it gives.

The reader will have noticed in the chapter outline, that *The Word* is used as a refrain in every chapter. As an entry into the use of these personified characters, Inquiry probes my use of this refrain, and asks questions about the relationship between *word* and *action,* which is integral to the dissertation's argument about leadership's being.

(Inquiry enters)

INQUIRY: (*interested*). Clearly you believe that word and meaningful action are complementary, as it's reflected in your choice for *Word* as a format for the discourse section of every chapter. Are you wanting to demonstrate the archetypal nature of Word, or are you wanting to illustrate that there is a logical argument about how you use word? I'm also asking: do you need to defend your use of it?

MENNIGKE: Well, I do need to defend it, as in some ways, Word expresses a bias for me as a religious person from a liturgical tradition.[36] In my priestly world, Word is the theme around which personal and public worship revolves, it is a name for the scriptures, and also the expression of God incarnate. But quite apart from a religious use, etymologically Word is initially expression, but contains intention. An example in monotheistic creation narratives is how God expresses an intention that is also action: "And God said, let there be…and it was so."[37] Word speaks creation into being. There must be room for the argument that they are not complementary in that, although the word *logos* includes meanings such as word, speech, argument, explanation and doctrine, these offer a more simplistic understanding of logic, whereas it is a much more complex truth.[38] I argue that when Aristotle used the term logic, it

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[36] By this I mean that I am a Christian from an Anglican tradition, which historically forms part of the Anglican, Orthodox and Roman Catholic trio of traditional churches.

[37] In Judaeo-Christian tradition, Gen 1:11. In Islam: Then He turned to the sky, and it was smoke, and said to it and to the earth, "Come, willingly or unwillingly." They said, "We come willingly." (41:11).

[38] Here I am associating *Word* with the origin of Greek Logos as a "word, saying, speech, discourse, or thought," as described in the Dictionary.com definition. (https://www.dictionary.com/browse/logos). I appreciate that understanding the meaning of logos is a vast study in itself. Nevertheless, we need to look at the etymology to explain my associations of *word*. I want to use the etymology to contain my reasoning for the section I call *The Word*, as an arena of discourse, using reason and logic. A balanced view on this issue is contained by John P. Anton in "Aristotle on the nature of Logos." He refers to Kerfer's article on "logos" saying: "to trace a logical progression of meanings in the history of the word" (logos), such attempts "are now generally acknowledged to lack any secure foundation, and even to try to trace out the history of a single 'logos doctrine' in Greek philosophy is to run the risk of searching for a simple pattern when the truth was much more complex." The reason he gives is plain enough: the word logos covers any of the following: word, speech, argument, explanation, doctrine, esteem, numerical computation, measure, proportion, plea, principle and reason."

meant *analytics*.[39] By this he intended engaging in the art of discourse. Hence, I have called *The Word* section of each chapter the place of discourse, where *The Word Inquiring* invites critical engagement with the claims made about leadership. So, in the construction of this paper I contend that if *The Word* is the place where reason and judgement[40] occur, and if it is an appeal to logic, then it is a dance between scientific conception and existential experience.[41] *The Word* then becomes a gathering place[42] for logical analysis and hermeneutics, where hermeneutics[43] wrestles with the meaningful connection between speech and action. Being able to apply both reason and meaning to a view which is presented keeps us true to a phenomenological approach.[44] So the conversion which leadership needs in this regard is from words as mere rational theory to words with applied intention.

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[39] I use the word *logic* here, but Aristotle clarified it as *analytics*. John P. Anton explains: "Clearing the decks, it should be noted first that logos is not "logic," as the term is used today, i.e. the science of reasoning. Aristotle did not use the term "logic" for his "logical" works. His way of labeling, as is known, was "analytics," and he meant by it the art of discourse, which requires for its operations the systematization of information about procedures in handling thinking, connecting statements and checking their claims to knowledge" (*Aristotle on the Nature of Logos*, Philosophical Inquiry, Vol. 40, No 3-4, Summer-Fall 2016), 29.

[40] In Jungian psychology, logos is the principle of reason and judgement, associated with the animus. Jung says: "By Logos I meant discrimination, judgement, insight, and by Eros, I meant the capacity to relate. I regarded both concepts as intuitive ideas which cannot be defined accurately or exhaustively. From the scientific point of view this is regrettable, but from a practical one it has its value, since the two concepts mark out a field of experience which it is equally difficult to define." (Clifford Mayes, An introduction to the Collected Works of C.J. Jung: psyche as Spirit.(Langham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016),15.

[41] Here I am using Simon Critchley's capture of the philosophical dispute between traditions. Critchley summarizes the case of Heidegger's existential concept and Carnap's scientific conceptions of the world in: Simon Critchley, *Continental Philosophy*, *A Very Short Introduction.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001). 90.

[42] Leading up to Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Indigenous Gathering Place–an informal name awaiting traditional validation–boasts a vision of a sacred and spiritual place, where all people can safely practice and learn about Indigenous culture, language, history and traditions that is entirely inclusive and transparent. Here the words are used by Lee Stevens, a member of the Tlingit First Nation, Deisheetaan, http://vibrantcalgary.com/what-an-indigenous-gathering-place-means-to-me/.

[43] I am choosing the Stanford Dictionary of Philosophy to define Hermeneutics "as the methodology of interpretation is concerned with problems that arise when dealing with meaningful human actions and the products of such actions, most importantly texts. As a methodological discipline, it offers a toolbox for efficiently treating problems of the interpretation of human actions, texts and other meaningful material." See https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hermeneutics/#HermCirc> accessed 2019-02-18.

[44] These are Rocha's words, when he pleads:" Phenomenology seeks, again and again, to know things themselves from their being within Being, to their subsistence, existence, or both." (*Folk Phenomenology*, 30).

INQUIRY: The meaningful connection between speech and action is an ancient philosophical debate. Aquinas discusses the empirical question: Whether life is fittingly divided into Active and Contemplative.[45] Is there a legitimate probe into the credibility between a leader's words and actions?

MENNIGKE: As Twitter has become an acceptable way for world leaders to express their opinions and feelings – with no intermediary between the leader and us, the receiving audience – this has become a daily point of inquiry of word and action for the world in this liquid age! The probe into the credibility of world leader's statements may in previous times, have been carefully reformatted by a speechwriter or panel of experts guiding the effect of the words. In the fluidity of the current world, instant judgement of a tweeted statement opens itself immediately to scrutiny. If anything, it stresses the importance of the examined life for leaders. Chapter 2 suggests some frameworks to help leaders negotiate the unknowns of the liquid age, and I argue for self-examination and self-awareness as conduits to forge these unknown places. This is where word and action learn complementarity. In the busyness of our world, there are too few occasions for leaders to replenish the energy lost through work and responsibility. Yet it is energy needed to meet the demands made on them. Suggesting conduits like self-examination and self-awareness provide metaphors, which as Green suggests, should make one feel existentially engaged and make sense of one's implicit experience even before there is time to think critically and reflectively about them. [46] I am aware that for many leaders, introducing conduits like these is in itself a fluid suggestion. However, they provide a framework that in time begins to make sense through practice. Hence, they are metaphors. Of course, I am arguing that

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[45] Thomas Aquinas, The Summa Theologica. (QQ179, A.1)
[46] Green, 1, 6, 7. These are Green's descriptions of the work of metaphors as action frameworks for a liquid time.

metaphors like these need to become a regular framework for how leaders negotiate the world of leadership. It can be argued that in our world of specialization, it is not necessary for all leaders to acquire what many refer to as "soft skills", and that some should focus entirely on design and building the formulas and foundations, and others on applying these in the world. In this respect word and action are separate at times. However, I maintain that words should contain deliberate connections to meaningful action that the world needs in particular instances. May I illustrate this with two living examples?

The first is evident in the ancient text of the Hebrew *Torah*.[47] The book Genesis tells the Hebrew creation story, shared later by Christians as the Judeo-Christian narrative. While only put into writing about one-thousand three-hundred years BCE, the oral tradition of God and the *Word*, records the beginning of the world – perhaps some 4.6 billion years before – as the *Word* of God speaks creation into being.[48] This is the same *Word* used later in the Christian scriptures for the connection between *the Word* and *the world*. In this mystery, the God born into the frenetic and production-orientated world in which leaders operate is named the *Word made flesh*,[49] which we call incarnation. What was historically wrapped-up is opened. Or, metaphorically what in our technological age is first seen as a scanned image showing a life in the womb, is shown to, and connects with, the world at birth.

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[47] In the strictest sense, this refers to the five books of Moses, the Pentateuch: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

[48] "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was a formless void, there was darkness over the deep, with a divine wind sweeping over the waters" (Genesis 1:1). The divine wind is God's word speaking creation into being. "God said, God said, God said" (verses 4, 6, 9, 11, 14, 24, 26).

[49] From John 1:1 and 14: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (1:1) The announcement grows to: "The Word became flesh, he lived among us, and we saw his glory, the glory that he has from the Father as only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth." (1:14).

A further example is how Hannah Arendt – as one of the more influential philosophers of the twentieth century – elevates the meaning of *the word in the world*. She bridges the Jewish and Christian worlds with her philosophy of both traditions. As a "theorist of beginnings,"[50] Arendt argues that our human condition is not truly human if it does not display speech *and* action.[51] Through both, leadership culture is changed. Arendt *says* this with legitimacy, because she *lived* it as an example in many of her significant life friendships. Chapter 5 will further illustrate Arendt's example of transformation through friendship.

The second interlocutor, who is the personified character in chapter 2, is Conversion. The charism[52] Conversion holds, and also wishes for us, is the recognition that the self is always being converted, and is never fully whole.

(*Conversion enters*)

CONVERSION: (*smiling inquisitively*). The claims you make in this dissertation challenge the status quo for leaders who see leadership as simply getting on with the business of leading, and for whom leadership is not a constantly moving destination. So, while we are always motivating

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[50] This is Margaret Canavan's title for Hannah in her introduction to: Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*. 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).vii.

[51] I am referring here to Arendt's words: "A life without speech and without action, on the other hand – and this is the only way of life that in earnest has renounced all appearance and all vanity in the biblical sense of the word – is literally dead to the world; it has ceased to be a human life because it is no longer lived among men. (Ibid, 176).

[52] I use the word *charism* to mean "gift" or "gift of God", and it indicates various things: Normally, someone said to have a charism of service for example, has this gift in relation to the nature of their being, and having received something as a consequence of a calling to be in the world in a particular way. Here, a wisdom figure displays a charism – meaning they always exude that gift, and because they are deity figures, are in a sense part of who imparts the gift and looks to giving it through contact with themselves. The nature of Chrism is both receiving and giving, and through being giving a gift, it also defines an action which the receiver passes on through their being. It implies a spiritual attitude, which, when realized recognises that one has something which is treated with care in the way it is enjoyed, but also pleasure in the way it is given. Often, a religious or lay community or organization is identified by a particular charism, meaning that its adherents acknowledge that they receive a gift for a particular purpose, but also know they live to give that gift to others. In the context of leadership, I intend the character of the interlocutors to 'exude' a particular charism, as they are teachers in their being and their action. They do not simply speak wise words, but exist in their charism, and as such speak ontologically. Sometimes, I will use the words "ability", or "gift" or "contribution" to mean charism, and my intention is that leaders should both experience and query the nature of how they live out their leadership, as well as experience the pleasure of what it gives.

for increased adaptation, a formative point of inquiry is: *whether the culture of leadership in our age actually needs conversion?*

MENNIGKE: Conversion,[53] as I portray it, is about the shift from one state of being or understanding to another. Leadership education is a crucial vehicle for personal transformation, but the journey is about how leaders as embodied[54] humans change – or perhaps – do not. In this paper, I suggest that all leaders *can* experience conversion, some should, none must, and many do not. That is to say, human transformation can only be encouraged, never imposed, as force is contrary to free choice given us. I argue that conversion has no fixed destination, because it is a living process, not a place. It reveals itself along the journey, perhaps it hides until its invitees call, or until their circumstances dictate a need.

But *the beloved is behind the veil.*[55] That is to say, when leadership is seen as a journey, the nature of transformation in a leader may be hidden at first. It may be expected through predictive words, events, and the journey itself, but for many, the various aspects of conversion appear as a surprise. Therefore as leaders experience change, so the culture of leadership also changes. It is like writing a new script for a behaviour needing to be attempted before it can be gradually, and then more fully experienced.

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[53] I use the word *conversion* broadly to mean a state of change or transformation, which causes a shift from one way of being to another. For the receiver this may be life altering, though for those who observe, it may not be as obvious. I choose the word *conversion* at the outset, because I postulate it might arouse reaction in today's world, which is my intention for the change needed in the culture of leadership education. It is said that we are the end of an era of supremacy of the Christian church in the world, and the advent of a fluid era. In the current fluid era, indifference to conventional religious belief is common. In this context, I am suggesting *conversion* be understood in its wider sense.

[54] I introduce the word "embodied" here, to mean to personified and incarnate, presenting with mind, physical body and spirit, and devote chapter 3 to Leadership as an Embodied Rationality.

[55] This expression, used by numerous authors, indicates that the revelation of the self, the truth about love, the mystery of the one in focus, the beloved, the special one, is hidden until revealed along the journey. Hebrew wisdom literature in the Bible boasts the love language of the Song of Songs. James de Mille, Canadian author and academic in the mid-1800 describes another aspect of life's gradual revelation in his poem "Behind the Veil." (James de Mille, *Behind the Veil. A Poem.* (Halifax, NS: T.C. Allen & Co.)

CONVERSION: Are you suggesting that the psyche learns a language that matures through use?

MENNIGKE: Words – as speech and action – form, retain, remember and compile a language, and language is core to a culture.[56] As a teacher in the workplace and the pulpit, I remain restless if there is no meaningful relationship between theories and applied practice, between the words and the meaningful action of leaders that can influence change in leadership ideologies. Changes like this are conversions from one kind of leadership culture to another. I will develop this further in chapter 2.

My third interviewers are Embodiment and Mystery. They are twins, and operate together. Their particular contribution is being comfortable among multiple forms and conditions of life.

As characters, they choose to identify with people in this world as well as in the mystical realm, and even act as personal guides between these two worlds. They teach respect and patience of transitional states in which people find themselves – like stages of life development, rites of passage, preparing for death, new relationships, career changes, sexual identity, or preparing for leadership roles.

(Embodiment enters alone)

EMBODIMENT: (*gently encouraging*). Your dissertation's second point of inquiry is: *whether leadership in this age should call for an engagement with embodiment and mystery.*

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[56] What I mean here is that the death of any nation's culture happens when their language falls into disuse. There are countless examples in colonial enculturation around the world. In Canada it was the Government's sanction of "taking the Indian out of the child' in residential schools, achieved through not allowing Indigenous children to speak their native language, keeping siblings apart in schools, and keeping children away from their parents and families. In South Africa's Apartheid years, it was forcing Black Africans to speak Afrikaans. In church history, it was ensuring the scriptures were in a language only the clergy could read, and maintaining liturgies and scripture translations which enforce medieval language translations. Education has always been, and still is, at the centre of such issues.

We encourage change in people, but have sympathy with those who struggle to get there. We reassure leaders who live as unsure participants in a world of work that they find demanding, exacting and scary. A high percentage of these are millennials[57] in the Canadian work force. They currently form the highest percentage[58] of the Canadian workforce and constantly question their own effectiveness and standards. We notice that many of them are in the teams you teach and prepare for succession. Then there are sceptical enquirer's – perhaps the old-style managers who are leading many of our sojourners – who ask whether it is fitting to introduce words like "embodied" into the world of professional leadership. Is it not enough that leaders should be dealing with the demanding realities of their work roles, without interjecting concepts like human love and relationship into leadership?

MENNIGKE: Sure, it is an argument with some weight, but in my contact with leaders, I offer a non-binary trajectory. I think it is too often about a leader's desire to "keep things simple" for the sake of production. However, this dissertation argues that a purely stoic example of leadership has lost its flavour in an increasingly complex world.[59] Therefore, a necessary part of developing leaders in the current liquid age[60] is creating the space for a personified response toward those in the immediate care and example of leaders. This means a number of things, but most necessary, are the introduction of frameworks that can help as conduits for leaders who have themselves not experienced leadership example that speaks and practices an embodied

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[57] Millennials refer to those born 1981-1996 (22-37 years old). See https://www.workforcedev.ca/index.php/en/225-millennials-are-now-the-biggest-generation-in-the-canadian-workforce for the statistic. Accessed online 06/07/2019.

[58] It is believed to be 37%, but this is an unsubstantiated figure.

[59] By *complex* here, I mean having many different even confusing parts, but chapter 2 below picks up the theme of complexity, as well as introduces the term *adult mental complexity*, which separates the merely complex issues leaders deal with, and the ability of a leader to sort out and confront difficulties using their normal mental ability.

[60] By *liquid age* I mean the era in which we now operate, where previously understood and accepted norms for how things are dealt with are no longer accepted. It is a term which I will open up throughout the dissertation.

language. I argue this throughout this dissertation and notably in my descriptions of a leader in chapters 3 and 5.

EMBODIMENT: Are you suggesting that leaders who are not aware of the concept of "embodiment" are out of touch with the issues of leadership in today's world?

MENNIGKE: Not as much out of touch with the issues, but perhaps not *in* touch with how to meet them! Of course, challenges of leadership need determination, common sense, learning, uprightness, knowledge and integrity, but I think many leaders lack the awareness of how to apply their sensitive, metaphysical side as an option to solving problems.[61] To be more specific, they do not trust engaging that side of themselves. I am suggesting that the task of leadership education is to promote a balance that allows for a personified response alongside the pragmatism needed in complex leadership situations. This means the freedom from criticism when a leader uses empathy to relate with followers. For example, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, for whom affective expression seems normal, comes in for severe criticism for his public expression of empathy about things that in themselves carry emotive content. My observation is this that criticism comes mostly from men.

If for some reason, we choose to be closed in one direction or another, and exclude this or that part of ourselves from embodied expression, then the whole person is biased – being, speech and action. The ancient allegory "the beloved and the veil," quoted above from Hebrew wisdom

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[61] There is a temptation to label men as less inclined to be open to empathic response; however, Leonardo Christov-Moore et al. suggest this may be a more cultural phenomenon. They say: "Stereotypically, females are portrayed as more nurturing and empathetic, while males are portrayed as less emotional and more cognitive. Some authors suggest that observed gender differences might be largely due to cultural expectations about gender roles." See Leonardo Christov-Moore et al., "Empathy: Gender Effects in Brain and Behavior," *Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews* (Elsevier Ltd, October 1, 2014), https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neubiorev.2014.09.001.

literature, is an appropriate metaphor for developing leaders in our age.[62] Conversion of the inner person, spiritually, psychologically, socially and educationally is part of the journey reflected in the true self[63] under transformation. I develop this argument in chapter 2.

MYSTERY: (*enters alongside Embodiment*). I am the other side of *embodiment*, and like my twin, I believe that mystery adds something to life. I'd like to probe what you see as the real task of leadership education, because it seems more than just your current endeavour in writing – you have described it as part of your vocation. Also, you have dared to cross a line of convention, by suggesting that mystery is a necessary part of educating leaders in the liquid age. Are you not simply suggesting that mystery has to be acknowledged rather than denied? *How do you define the work of educating leaders?*

MENNIGKE: I think the task is to get people to be thoughtful enough about leadership, that they pause on the edge of their own Narnia long enough to peer in, and wonder what could happen inside.

MYSTERY: (*Thoughtfully.*) Using a word like *Narnia*, you introduce the mystical without any subtlety. Does this not teeter on an edge that for some is a motivating invitation, yet for others, a safely canned world?

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[62] It is "a collection of songs celebrating the loyal and mutual love that leads to marriage. The Song proclaims the lawfulness and exalts the value of human love"[62]. A commentary on the Song of Songs explains that: "Under the influence of Yahwism, sexual life, which the surrounding Canaanites thought of in terms of fertility-deities, is here demythologised and treated with a wholesome realism." ("Introduction to the Song of Songs." The New Jerusalem Bible. (London: Danton, Longman & Todd. 1985). In using this allegory, I am suggesting that ultimately there is nothing hidden in the process of what I call a leader "coming alive" in the various ways described in this dissertation.

[63] By true self, I mean as it is used by Thomas Merton who defines this self as the part of us that lives in reality and what he calls the interrelationary world. It is opposite of the "false self" which is the part of the self which wants to live outside of reality. (See Robert Craig, "True Self-False Self: The Educational Theory of Thomas Merton." Journal of Thought 29, no. 3 (1994): 51-59.

MENNIGKE: I want to be cautious in trying to save all aspects of leadership education into one folder. But broadly, my thesis is that leaders in western education are heavily programmed by a myopia of what education is. Combined with a kind of entrepreneurial mindset in business practice, many of us in this field automatically think on a one-dimensional plane. You're right when you call the place that leaders enter, or barricade against, a "world." I want people to entertain a leadership narrative that lures them into a multi-dimensional world, so that we can reset the program. I am convinced that a large part of the reset button is in the numinous world, but is hidden, only because leaders have not yet "stolen the key from under their mother's pillow," if I may borrow Robert Bly's expression for the necessary act of maturing pubescent boys.[64]

MYSTERY: Why would leaders operating in a concrete world, requiring solid results, have time to bother with uncharted territory like the mystical? Especially a land that for many belongs safely in the fairy-tale world?

MENNIGKE: In this dissertation, I claim the value of *discovering the mysterious in all things everywhere*.[65] My experience among western adult leaders seems to indicate an advanced disconnection between the use of the mysterious for entertainment, and the possibility of its pervasive presence in life. In my work, I choose to blend the mysterious with the concrete world of leadership, and this suggests a number of points of conversion for many leaders. But indeed the objection is valid, that inasmuch as the supernatural and the natural are antonyms in our modern western understanding, they are not connected. The real issue for me, is if leadership has

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[64] Robert Bly, *Iron John, a book about men* (1st Vintage Books ed., Vintage Books, New York. 1992), 11.
[65] By everywhere, I mean "in all things" as Aquinas argues. I hasten to add that I do not include Indigenous people in the "western world" here.

come to be associated more with production, achievement, material gain and stoicism, then it is immune to intangible things. I argue that such distinctions ignore the culture and history that precede our current secular age,[66] that these have widened the chasm that exists between wisdom and knowledge,[67] and that they have closed us off from the deep value of the sacred and the mysterious. Embodiment is the process of making real, incarnating, giving form to, or personalizing something. Leaders who are able to reach into a 'world' outside of their own lived experience, also provide the metaphors that bridge the gaps needed to be effective in a fluid age. Those unable to reach into intangible or ambiguous experience feed the need to sacramentalize[68] their leadership or ministry, their institution or intellect, the bible or ritual, until it becomes an idol.

Karen Armstrong expands myth as "about the unknown; it is about that for which initially we have no words. Myth therefore looks into the heart of a great silence."[69] Chapter 3 will expand the notion of leaders embracing the mysterious, and link the difficulties many leaders have in pausing on the edge of the great unknown. However, may I pre-empt Chapter 3's discussion, by accentuating the difference between logical discovery and mysterious discovery. One can use the skill of rhetoric to argue a logical discovery, and even convince a disciple to

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[66] Here I am loosely referring to, and agreeing with Charles Taylor, in calling this time a "secular age." Taylor is writing in 2007, and asks: "what does it mean to say we live in a secular age? Almost everyone would agree that we – in the West, at least – largely do. (Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*. (Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), cover front flap).

[67] This may seem like a big chunk to bite off in an introduction, but I will refer to this separation throughout the dissertation. Here, I mean what Charles Taylor says: "and if you go back even father in human history, you come to archaic societies in which the whole set of distinctions we make between the political, economic, social, etc., aspects of our society ceases to make sense. In these earlier societies, religion was 'everywhere', was interwoven with everything else, and in no sense constituted a separate sphere of its own." (*Ibid*, 2). In Canada at this (CE 2019) point in history, we are reminded daily of the folly in ignoring the wisdom of ancient Nations, some of whom have inhabited these lands for between 8,000-10,000 years, and whose spirituality connected the land, their story, relationships, ancestors and daily life. I often say in workshops that this makes the Hebraic/Christian story a young sibling.

[68] What I mean by this word here is to make scared in an excessive way by giving more than ordinary significance to something.

[69] Karen Armstrong, *A Short History of Myth*. (Vintage Canada ed. Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2006), 4.

follow your reasoning. By contrast, mysterious discovery uncovers a different route in an adult. Rowan Williams, a converted sceptic of Lewis' writing, questions whether C.S. Lewis' *Narnia* series is an "escape from adulthood". He points out: "most truly successful children's books are very far from just being comforting. Lewis wrote of *The Lion*, when early sales were slow, that some mothers and schoolteachers 'have decided that it is likely to frighten children, and then added wryly, ' I think it frightens adults, but v. few children.' " [70] My point is, given the history Charles Taylor so expertly outlines a little later in these discussions, is too easy for adults to hide behind only logical discovery as a rationale for being productive. In chapter 3, this analysis will include a comparison of why "in our scientific culture, we often have rather simplistic notions of the divine,"[71] whereas "there was initially no ontological gulf between the world of the gods and the world of men and women."[72]

MYSTERY: The sacred, the numinous, and the mystical are a giant world, all sharing elements of what you are describing. I would want your readers to enter the debate at their level of understanding, as all these descriptions are parallel contributors to the mythical world. It sounds like you have probed this issue, and see its value. I'd want to know if there are areas of the mysterious you have not yet probed? But we will return to other aspects in a later interview, I believe.

MENNIGKE: We shall, Mystery. The fourth interlocutor is Contradiction, who serves to check that the alternative view, or "no" voice is represented. This is to ensure a creative tension exists between opinions. This is important because...

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[70] Rowan Williams, *The Lion's World, A Journey into the Heart of Narnia*.(Oxford: Oxford University Press.2012),13.
[71] Armstrong,5
[72] Ibid.

(*Contradiction abruptly enters, and interrupts*).

CONTRADICTION: People struggle with views on the deep, mysterious kind of leadership about which you are talking! It seems that you're calling for a different kind of capacity in a leader, but I don't think that leaders have the capacity, let alone the interest in trying this out.

MENNIGKE: I think, based on my work experience...

CONTRADICTION: Wait! Are you saying that you cannot be a good leader if you can't live with contradiction and complexity?

MENNIGKE: I am, yes, and...

CONTRADICTION: Can you defend this? In most situations, the world seems to have functional leadership without introducing new, complex forms of teaching.

MENNIGKE: I think I can defend it! However, the existence or even abundance of a functional form of leadership is not proof that a more self-aware and complex style is unnecessary. It is merely that the more embodied, mysterious, complex style I propose is less common. It is entirely possible that many are not aware of alternative views of leadership, especially if they have been taught by someone who themselves has a constricted worldview.

CONTRADICTION: That's only partly true, because there are examples of good leaders everywhere, who have not had the opportunity of formal or progressive instruction.

MENNIGKE: While you may be right, it is the exception not the rule. I encounter many leaders managing old systems in a liquid world, because of a lack of exposure to systems that encourage personal development. I will give you an example: Many teachers in South African rural and township schools in the Apartheid years, suffered at the hands of a government strategy that ensured Black education was inferior to its White counterpart. Black teachers with only a grade ten school-leavers certificate, and a perhaps a teacher's college certificate were employed

to teach in secondary schools up to grade twelve. The odds were stacked against them, and in some cases, life experience, natural wisdom, and determination helped them through it. The system was quite literally set up for failure, and history has shown the casualties of a poor learning system. I argue that it is difficult to embrace a view that was never taught,[73] resulting in a functional kind of leadership, which I will describe in a later chapter. Every new age has experienced some challenges in the intricacy of and adaptation to new circumstances, but the nature of this liquid age introduces complexities that challenge previously accepted norms.

CONTRADICTION: Leaders will rightly argue that previously accepted norms are not necessarily unsuccessful!

MENNIGKE: I think you prove the point that leaders who are not in touch with current trends in the development of people, or who cannot at least explore them, can too easily become part of a resistant statistic. Green explains it as situations where: "where all previous candidates for ground – religion, ideology, even objectivity–have been problematized. Instead we must learn how to navigate through a dynamic, shifting environment--a fluid or liquid environment."[74]

CONTRADICTION: There must be room for successful leaders who find it difficult to navigate change. Yet you're saying that the inability to navigate change and live with contradiction excludes critical engagement, or being able to model leadership successfully?

MENNIGKE: We are using contradiction as an example, but it is the awareness of self that is at stake in this age. I would say leaders unable to live with contradiction for example, are inadequate teachers in the liquid age, because they pass on to the learner their own inability to

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[73] Aquinas allows for this view among many others in his argument of whether ignorance causes involuntariness: "Thus a man may be ignorant of some circumstance of his act which he was not bound to know, the result being that he does that which he would not do if he knew of that circumstance." (Summa Theologica, Ques 6. Art 8). It is of course, only part of his response to the question that 'every sin is voluntary'.

[74] Green, 1.

engage critically. Leaders feel pressured to demonstrate success; and when we fail, we set up an inner contradiction that we do not initially know how to deal with. For example, young leaders enter workplaces with high expectations of themselves, or think they have high targets to achieve because of their school education, qualifications and salaries. Often they set up higher internal targets than the workplace expectation, which causes an internal conflict of interest, or they may believe the answer lies in acquiring more knowledge. But leaders cannot solve the diverse issues facing them by reducing complexity to a set of rational formulae. Instead, the answers lie more simply in their socio-institutional needs, or perhaps just in a personified awareness.[75] But may we continue this conversation again later, as here I had hoped only to introduce you?

CONTRADICTION: I look forward to it!

(*Contradiction exits.*)

The last interlocutor is *Education, w*hose charism contributes steadiness in the face of misunderstanding and poor judgment and who will offer just one example of an inquiry here, before we hand the interviewer's role back to Inquiry.

(*Education enters.*)

EDUCATION: Earlier, you mentioned a fourth point needing conversion in leadership culture. Are you inquiring whether leadership is educational in its being, and best described as a journey connecting intention speech and action?

MENNIGKE: This is the mire of defining educational purpose! I think we must allow for changing times, and that education systems advance slowly. Leadership is not educational in learning institutions governed by repressive political agendas. This is brutally true where

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[75] By *personified awareness* I am describing a level of awareness which connects all aspects of one's being and will. In chapter 3, I develop and define this concept to be an 'embodied rationality', to set it against what I call an instrumental rationality.

colonial rule has subjugated and interrupted Indigenous learning. If education is as a system for a ruling government's ideology in which the teacher knows all and the student is always the learner, and where education is built on authoritarian models of subjugation, then leadership will not have been experienced as constructive and educational. Chapters 2–5 pick up on education as a journey of inquiry, conversion, embodiment, mystery and contradiction.

1.2.2   Contextual[76]

(*Inquiry enters again.*)

INQUIRY: *(interested.)* In a past interview, I have heard you hint at your early life education as negative. As a Western teacher and leader, do you think your experience was the exception or the rule?

MENNIGKE: Well, this is a question of context is it not? I'm convinced that my early experience of classroom education could not quell something deep in my psyche. But I don't think I am an exception! Is it not that the way some teachers understood teaching was generally myopic, because of the way they were trained, and because of what they did not understand about education back in the 60's? There must be teachers who were the exception, but who were their teachers, and how did they inherit what they know about leadership and education? I suspect the closed world of the classroom is what developed in me a preference for seeing the world through eyes of possibility I was not experiencing there. The repetitive comment on my

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[76] If the logic for the style of this section requires an explanation in the mind of the reader, it is this: The writing style and the identity of a writer grow in the same womb. I have chosen to illustrate this contextual section in chapter 1 with the same interview-style narrative as section 1.2.2. This is meant to place the writer in context, hold to the interview style of *The Word* section as discourse throughout this paper, and set a context of self-awareness for the main claims of the dissertation. In this section, Inquiry's questions are treated as points of inquiry, mostly answered with an antithetical reply, but the synthesis in each case is justified mainly with the writer's response. It is also a segue to the more rigorous discourse sections of the next chapter, 2.2.1 on Transformation.

elementary school report cards: "Stuart must pay attention in class," was really an indictment on the teacher and the system. If the teachers had the insight to ask *what* I was dreaming about, I may have told them about my inner world, which was far more exciting than what I was experiencing in the classroom. Had they asked, I doubt their view of education and class discipline would have leaned towards getting creative about teaching!

INQUIRY: What you're saying is your experience back then was unimaginative, but was it true of all early education in Western education school systems? Were there some examples of educators who encouraged your leadership ability, and was it not also contextual to your country?

MENNIGKE: There were exceptions, I'm sure, as I can remember one or two teachers being more interested in what I was learning. They were ones who added a more imaginative aspect to lessons through story, because they shared themselves as people, or because for some reason there was an attraction between us. In chapter 5, I refer to embodiment in leadership education, and it brings into focus the subject of energy and attraction between teacher and student. Socrates theorizes about these boundaries in the culture of his age,[77] Sharon Todd faces head-on into the topic as a modern-day educator, addressing the boundaries of classroom etiquette,[78] and Rocha, in the current liquid age, demythologizes it when he talks about the eros of study.[79] So, yes, there have been a few educators who saw my yearning for approaching the learning differently, or maybe they saw leadership potential in me, and developed it – but it was never an overt conversation. As to your question about education in the context of my country South Africa:

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[77] Michael C Stokes, *Plato's Socratic Conversations: Drama and Dialectic in Three Dialogues*. (London: Athlone Press, 1986.)

[78] See section 5.2.4 below.

[79] Rocha, *Folk Phenomenology*, 73.

Well, I was part of the minority white privileged group. Despite this, the authoritarian atmosphere imposed by government, and the fear it engendered, injected itself into most aspects of life, and could not have been kept out of the education system. Teachers were trained in that segregated atmosphere, and while it all appeared quite normal, nothing about it was normal. The detailed, ordered, closure-orientated, Nazi-like system on which Apartheid was built pervaded both the privileged and the segregated worlds. I am a product of this system, and lived a closeted liberal hope, until I was liberated from it through leaders and teachers like Desmond Tutu.

INQUIRY: So, despite your negative experiences of earlier school, somehow education has been a salvific journey for you. How do you translate this conversion into leadership education as you experience it now?

MENNIGKE: Maybe a combination of leadership example by significant mentors who trusted my ideas for education, and gave me the freedom to create adult learning systems. I worked for many years in church-based training settings, focussing on clergy education. For a number of years, I was an ombudsman and consultant accompanying leadership teams in the corporate world. This moulded my experience of adult leadership education and development in a widespread way. This dissertation focuses mainly, though not wholly, on leaders who operate in religious, shared-profit, and work settings informed by Christian values.[80] Common to the leaders I have worked with these sectors is that they see their leadership roles as having spiritual and educational responsibility. At different times over the past two decades, and now as full-time, I am a priest exercising the pastoral and pedagogic function of my vocation in an everyday

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[80] By this I mean that although they may not themselves practice Christian faith, they have been influenced by values from an inherited Christian background.

workplace. The sacramental[81] part of my work happens in a city cathedral alongside a team of

full-time clergy, and about ten honorary assistant clergy like me who work in what people call "a

regular job."[82] As not all people understand the work of clergy in the same way, in workplaces

outside church settings, they often remark: "I believe you *were* a priest?" Mostly, I respond: "I

am a priest,[83] and what I *do* is help leaders grow in their particular work settings." Over time, this

remark has inadvertently developed to become a curriculum I use in leadership education

programs. In a phenomenological way, it is an embodiment of the concept of my vocation.[84] But

substantively, what I *do*, is what St Ambrose, who was St Augustine's teacher, outlines in *De*

Officiis Ministrorum Libri Tres (On the Duties of the Clergy), that the clergy of his diocese

should "be good and profitable examples to the people. Consequently he undertook the following

treatise, setting forth the duties of the clergy, and taking as a model the treatise of Cicero, De

Officiis."[85] This treatise, in three books, sets out what is becoming and honorable (first book),

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[81] In my tradition, presbyters are ordained into the function of priest pastor (mission and caring role) and teacher (homiletic and pedagogic). A sacramental role represents Christ in the mystery of the Eucharist and other sacramental functions. 'Sacrament' is a term meaning 'outward signs of inward and spiritual grace.' There are seven sacraments in the rituals of the traditional church, and all contain aspects of mystery, which enable connection with God as transcendent.

[82] By a "regular job," people often mean what others, who are not clergy in holy orders, do each day to earn a living. In my tradition, clergy do not earn a salary, but receive a stipend and benefits to support living. Although becoming more commonplace, it is still unusual for priests to be in regular jobs, instead of full-time pastoral settings in a church. Despite this, some professions, like university and college lecturers for example, have always boasted clergy in full time academic employ. To a lesser extent, medical doctors in holy orders are becoming more commonplace. It is, however, usual for some distinctive deacons to be in regular jobs as a sign of their ministry of representing the church in the world, and in liturgical settings they represent the world to the church.

[83] In Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Anglican churches, ordination as a deacon, presbyter or bishop is a life-long vocation that represents an offering of someone's life to God. In a mysterious way this shifts what is known as their "canonical status" from being a lay person, to being a clerk in holy orders. Hence, what someone *is* through the process of what is called "Apostolic succession" by the laying on of hands of a bishop, is not altered by what they do, or whether or not they exercise their vocation in a historically-typical religious way.

[84] Rocha maintains: "What is properly 'phenomenological' then, is the practical approach, how phenomena are known through reduction." *Folk Phenomenology: Education, Study, and the Human person*. (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2015): 31. Here, the expression of who I am as priest, how I exist in my work, and the energy which motivates me come together as the curriculum for writing leadership education programs. Perhaps I should not be surprised, as I am sometimes, by the measure of congruence in the results of my work, as it 'de-essentializes' both who I am, as well as what I do as a leader. It also extends to allowing mystical method in the sense where the spiritual and mystical merge. But I have to remind myself to disengage the rational as the 'right' way of achieving the solution.

[85] Ambrose, Saint, Bishop of Milan, d. 397. De Officiis Ministrorum Libri III. Cum Paulini Libello De Vita S. Ambrosii. Tubingae: Henry Laupp, 1857. Downloaded from http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf210.html.

what is expedient (second book), and their conjunction (third book) for clergy – who were

noticed and influential leaders in his Milan but also Roman society Circa 400. These balanced

yet detailed duties are interpreted into the ordination vows still taken by clergy in the traditional

churches.[86] For me, the priest/leader means negotiating the impulsive, uncertain and ambiguous

issues faced by people with an engaged care, diligence and study. St Ambrose, a consular

magistrate at the time of his election to the episcopate, placed the importance of learning and

teaching as the first chapter of book 1 of his Treatise. A primary role in my work as a teacher

means ensuring I offer views that are current and applicable in an unpredictable world, seeking

to stretch myself and students to face into the complexity of problems rather than providing

quick answers. As a minister of the sacraments in a historical church, there is an added function

of making the mysterious accessible and comforting in a changing world. In short, in a

considered way[87], making the divine accessible in a fluid world that threatens to eject what was

previously common ground. As a leader it means taking a stand for change from within the

church as an institution that affects the morals and ethics of society, while not knowing what the

outcome will be once change is effected. So, in one way, I notice a contradiction in my roles as

priest, teacher and mentor in the workplace,[88] but I see this ambiguity as a model for coaching

leaders.

INQUIRY:(*interrupting*) Let's return later to how you use this peculiarity in your work, but I

don't want to lose this moment to pick up what is a vital aspect about *being* while we are

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[86] There are slight differences according to Anglican, Orthodox and Roman rites, but they are basically similar.

[87] In spiritual terms, this is considered as "prayerful".

[88] Some of this contradiction comes from the concept different Christians hold of ordination. In the Reformed and Pentecostal view, ordination is linked to a current pastoral charge. In Lutheran, Roman Catholic, Anglican and Orthodox traditions, ordination is something that happened once, accompanied by examination of fitness for the office, and vows which accompany the gravity of the role. See footnotes 78-80 and 84.

discussing your context. Who you *are* in time is an important aspect of being, and affects how you relate and how you teach. Martin Heidegger's understanding of the kind of distinctive being which humans have – he called it *Dasein* – "always understands itself in terms of its existence – in terms of a possibility of itself: to be itself or not itself. Dasein has either chosen these possibilities itself, or got itself into them, or grown up in them already."[89] Alongside temporality, this, at least in part, emphasizes that who you are in the present is not confining, but is projecting towards the future, and also a fact of your having been in the past. You can take hold of it or neglect it. This is important for your work because what you do by working in the world as a priest is not a random series of actions you have to work at in order to have authenticity. Instead, the fact of your *being* as a priest has legitimacy and you are able to make the work your own because of who you are before and after ordination. The affirmation of what you are in the moment is an authentic representation of your humanness. A while ago, you designed an *events model* to help leaders find meaning of experiences at the point of intersection in chronological and phenomenological time. Perhaps you should return to Heidegger's notion of temporality[90] in a discussion on this model. Temporality also collects the design and intention of your *events model* and highlights the awareness of self. It seems to me that Heidegger's understanding of temporality is an important adjunct to the reflection on *your* being in the workplace. I would be surprised if the leaders you mentor do not sense this aspect of *being* at the heart of your leadership program, in both the pedagogical and the counselling roles. So, it's worth exploring

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[89] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*.(New York: Harper and Row. 1962), 33

[90] Critchley describes *temporality* as "a process with three dimensions which form a unity." This is by no means a complete description, but suffices here for my context of describing being in time. (Critchley, S., 2009, July 27). Heidegger's Being and Time, part 8: Temporality. *The Guardian, International edition*. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2009/jul/27/heidegger-being-time-philosophy

further. But for now, let's return to why you see the potential contradiction of your role having value in your leadership programs?

MENNIGKE: Where it exists, I think the contradiction originates in what others believe about the *being* of the minister, and how the individual deals with this through an understanding of temporality and time. It is like feeling at home in the place where you are, yet not really ever belonging until the misconceptions are broken down. These can be one's own, as well as others' misunderstandings – as you have hinted at through Heidegger's thesis on temporality. For many people it takes time to grasp the idea of the minister outside of the church service, the marriage and funeral officiant, the super-spiritual one, or the one who hears confessions. There is a tension inherent in this clarification of *being*, which I am sure all leaders have to grasp as part of their journey in leadership. It is : Being part of the team, yet somehow never fully belonging; representing the mystical amongst the natural; and advocating for self-awareness among leaders who value what Green calls "old forms and institutions"[91] in their workplaces. I see these tensions representing something of how leaders are called to an incarnational[92] role in reframing "stable, valued, recurring patterns of behavior"[93] in an age of liquidity. In this way, I like Richard Rohr's suggestion that leaders are potentially "the saviours of the world. They are potentially

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[91] Green, Metaphors: Action Frameworks for a Liquid Time, 1. Also see here that Green defines institutions as "structures or mechanisms of social order, that (they) govern the behavior of individuals within a given community." Ibid.

[92] By "incarnational" I mean as it is used by the writer of John's gospel (John 1:14) in the Christian scriptures: "Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν. (And the Word became flesh, and moved his tent in among us.) To dwell among us, 'to move one's tent in among us,' is to introduce someone's presence into the ordinary, everyday setting of how humans go about their lives. Introducing 'spiritual' concepts into life is not an oddity, it is merely adding a vocabulary, a colour. In a similar way, the age of liquid modernity uses the vocabulary of the spiritual and 'non-spiritual,' the realistic and the transcendent interchangeably. Our challenge is merging these worlds using the ethics and morals acceptable to us.

[93] Green, 1.

agents of transformation, reconciliation and newness."[94] By implication, that also means many leaders are potentially agents of inertia and tyranny. Then, there are leaders who cannot be understood either as saviour or demon, like philosopher Simon May explains about U.S. President Trump "That Trump's fans delight in his unpindownability, in his protean mutability and inconsistency, in his power to inspire the demonic as well as to subdue it, does not entail that they aren't also frightened and even alarmed by him ..."[95]

INQUIRY: Focussing on you for a moment, who you are in relation to yourself in the work context, as well as being a student and writer in your current academic environment, involves you in time. I have heard you refer to yourself as an immigrant from a previously colonized country, and again now a settler in colonized Canada. Then, you represent the church through your vocation, and you are also a writer in an academic program. Which of these roles is most the author of this dissertation?

MENNIGKE: I suspect your question is about whether a writer can be anyone other than their authentic self. May I quote a piece I wrote after reading an interview Stephen Kurtz did with the Mexican writer Elena Poniatowska, which I called "Writing on Style, Being and Identity". It is about the direct link between self-discovery and writing. Kurtz asks Poniatowska: "How did you arrive at your style of being a journalist?"[96] She replies, "I don't think there is much method in my imaginative writing." She goes on:

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[94] Here, I reflect with the Franciscan author Richard Rohr, whose way of writing is an inspiration for many religious and secular leaders in their daily work. He says: "Jesus agreed to carry the mystery of suffering and not to demand perfection of creation. He taught, in effect, that it is the "only" way to be saved. We are indeed saved by the cross—more than we realize. The people who hold the contradictions—and resolve them in themselves—are the saviors of the world. They are agents of transformation, reconciliation, and newness. These are the people, as Ken Wilber says, who "transcend and include." (Ken Wilber, *The Essential Ken Wilber: An Introductory Reader*. 1st ed. (Boston: Shambhala, 1998)

[95] Simon May, *The Power of Cute.* (US: Princeton University Press, 2019), 134.

[96] Elena Poniatowska, "The Art of Fiction No 238, Interview by Stephen Kurtz*." The Paris Review*, ed. Lorin Stein. (New York, NY. Paris Review Foundation. Issue 224. Spring 2018), 53.

At the same time it must be said, style, as I see it, is not an adornment added to a work. It is more. As Buffon said, that 'le style c'est l'homme même' — style is the man himself. That famous line is actually the conclusion of a longer thought – 'Writing well consists of thinking, feeling and expressing well, of clarity of mind, soul and taste'. In my own words, I would say that style is a manifestation of the writer's being, which, of course, changes over time but retains something essential of who he is. I can look back at things I wrote years ago, and still recognise myself in them, in the way sentences are constructed, the vocabulary, all of that and more. One does not develop a style, one develops oneself, or, perhaps more accurately, one is born with a certain character, and life shapes it. And then, if you write, or paint or sculpt, you do these things with the person you have become. And that is style. And of course, there is a certain development ….[97]

Many things touch me in reading Ponistowska's interview. Initially it was her empathy and action among the under-represented people of Mexican society. Next, how this clearly devout woman balances the arduous writing task with her busy life and daily service of the voiceless in society. Then, as I was still captivated when reading this at two-thirty one morning, her emphasis on the *being* of the writer struck me! She said that *style is the manifestation of the writer's being*. Searching for what a writing style was, and what it develops into, intrigues me. Poniatowska answers my inquisitiveness with her stabbing honesty, which clearly aims at looking into *who* the writer is. It is not about developing a style, but about developing yourself. This strikes at the heart of the issue for me – leadership education is primarily about developing the person. I am as passionate about developing leaders through the awareness of self, as Poniatowska is about serving the marginalized.

INQUIRY: You are someone who is in the second half of life,[98] writing with a passion for developing leaders through self-awareness. In your writing, you question in different ways

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[97] Ibid. My periods, and the quote truncated by me.

[98] This term is used by writers who reflect on our stages of personal development through life's journey. Among others, are Carl Jung, James Hollis, and Richard Rohr.

whether self-awareness is everybody's interest in leadership education. Is this a vain hope of yours, or do you think it is a reality for developing leaders in this age?

MENNIGKE: Well, I am still on the journey myself. When I doubt or am despairing about the human desire for self-development, I conclude it is a vain hope, because humans who *can* choose often choose comfort against their greater good. But I also question with Aquinas whether choice is only the choice of possible things? He claims: "For choice is an act of the will, as stated above. Now 'there is a willing of possibilities and impossibilities', therefore there is also a choice of impossibilities."[99] I think it is a difficult venture if you do not believe in the inherent good of humans. Sometimes I go through stages of despair about the work of developing leaders, but at other times I'm totally excited and motivated about it. James Hollis maintains, "There is a value fabric which underlies our daily lives,"[100] which, if taken on through our consciousness, "as difficult as this project may be, is the central work of the second half of life. Consider Jung's cogent remark: 'the reason why consciousness exists, and why there is an urge to widen and deepen it, is very simple: without consciousness, things go less well.' "[101] I find this a hopeful way of expressing the rationale for development. Jung's use of *consciousness* here, is a more erudite synonym for *deliberate development* and *increased awareness of self*. I consider consciousness as defining a deliberate state of self-awareness.

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[99] Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica* (Q XII, A.5, Obj. 1)
[100] James Hollis, *On this Journey we Call our Life: Living the Questions.* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 2003), 56. Hollis' quote from Jung, is from *Analytical Psychology and 'Weltanschauung'. The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche, CW 8, par.695*.
[101] Ibid

1.3   After the Word

INQUIRY: (*addresses Mennigke*) I'd like to reflect on this initial dialogue in our engagement, and may add a challenge or maybe an invitation: In this introductory chapter, you laid out the stylistic structure of the chapters to follow, emphasizing the centrality of the section called *The Word* as the place of dialogue. I see this chapter demonstrating how the Ed. D. dissertation can serve as an opportunity for bringing originality into leadership education. In some ways, I was the novelty! I saw you argue for your use of *The Word* etymologically and also spiritually. It provides a liturgical structure,[102] with which you are familiar in your spiritual tradition, but also a neat practical arrangement for your chapter layout, and a creative place for research dialogue. I think I get it that you intend the repetition of the three sections in each chapter to follow, as a sign for us to see something important – like you're building up to the inquiry.

What you haven't said, but I will point out, is I think you choose a background role in effecting change, and you understate your involvement in helping the church and leadership education to land in this age of liquidity. This is evident in the title of your dissertation, which I understand has not changed since your coursework in this program. Choosing this writing structure speaks of your determination for reframing things you regard as important in education. You entangle us in a conceptual reflection with which we have to engage, or pull out. I suspect you do the same in the way you teach and get leaders to cooperate with your programs.

No doubt you have been egged-on by your academic supervisors in this Ed. D, some of whom had traditional Church catechism backgrounds in their early years, and one of whom holds

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[102] Liturgical - by which we mean *having a rhythm and pattern* that points to engagement and participation.

a *Mandatum* to teach theology in higher education institutions[103]. Built on traditional

backgrounds, today they are leaders in their fields for expansive thinking, challenging writing,

and artistic flair. You invited them into your world at a particular time and place, and they

accepted to work with you. Clearly, you have a firm belief that the church and the world of work

must be relevant in the liquid age. The leadership style you've employed in your church work

over some decades of its transformation through difficult societal issues, seems similar to how

you've worked for change in general. So, you would do well to meditate on some deeper aspects

of time and *temporality* which you introduced in the dialogue we've just had. I suspect it will

allow you to own two things you possibly shrink back from at times: That "in this time and

place"[104] – whenever it is in time and wherever it is in place – where you are helping people

reframe old concepts, the significant events of your and other's lives are part of a whole. As

such, as well as being an agent, you are a facilitator of *a* Καιρος in their lives.[105] The second is

about the ambiguity between being in *charge*, and being in *control.* This is an important

distinction for leaders, and speaks into how we assume the regency[106] inherent in all moral

leadership roles. Certainly in your role as an ordained person in your tradition, where priesthood

is the incarnation of God's ministry exercised in the name of Christ, and the power of the Holy

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[103] A *Mandatum* is the mandate from the competent ecclesiastical authority in the Roman Catholic Church, required to teach theology in higher education institutions, as per Canon 812 of the C.I.C./83.

[104] This is one of the actual definitions of the Kairos (Greek –Καιρος) referred to later in this paragraph. See section 2.2.2

[105] Καιρος is the Greek word meaning the time and place which is appropriate, the opportune time. In the Christian New Testament meaning, it refers to the time that is appointed by God for God's purpose, or the time when God sovereignly acts Being a facilitator of a *Kairos* in their lives means being part of a right time for God acting in other's lives. It will refer later in the paper to *event* in people's lives – *event* as happening at a time in life's journey that they now see as significant, and potentially having consequences that they may or not be aware of. This in turn emphasises the *Kairos* moment.

[106] Claude St Denis, conversation with the author 13th October 2019. "The regent seen as someone who is governing in the name of and exercising the authority of the actual sovereign while the sovereign is somehow incapable of fully doing it themself. (For a priest, as for someone exercising the authority delegated by a moral person, it is the need have an actual physical person embodying this authority)." But let me offer some explanation here, as this concept belongs to traditional Christian church doctrine, as a part of ordination when understood as a sacrament, and where *sacrament* means the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.

Spirit, it is the delicate balance between taking charge, taking control, and temporality that exists in time.[107] I overheard a conversation between you and a friend discussing the weighty matter relating to church life and ministry. Concepts peculiar to the liquid age like volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity – which combine as an acronym VUCA –are known as concepts for navigating through a fluid world, or a *VUCA world* [108]. They are of prime importance when "considering the intrinsic conservatism (to say the least) of *any* Church. This conservative nature must not be considered as moral (though it can be one of its expressions), but should be understood as this tendency to generally refuse, often condemn and sometimes fight against any reconsideration or change of its current order of things."[109]

This chapter familiarized the reader with the interview style you want to use in each chapter to follow, and you have introduced your readers to me and five other personified characters. I understand that you will explain how you have "brought us to life" in an Appendix.[110] You've used us as purposefully selected characters to introduce your claims about leadership, and we've given a taste to some of the arguments to be developed more fully in your chapters.

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[107] Again, as in the footnote above, Claude's words explain the understanding of regency: Claude St Denis, Email conversation with the author 19th October 2019: "As time went by and for training purposes, I somehow developed a *Russian doll Theology*, especially regarding the structure of the Church, its ministry and its authority. In this understanding, we can see the Church as a community of communities one within the other, from the One Church (Militant, Penitent and Triumphant with Jesus Christ as its head) to the family as a unique though colorful scaled model. Similarly, the ministry of the humblest servant remains a scale model (and usually an extension) of the ministry (or part of the ministry) of his superior, up to Christ. As St. Ignatius of Antioch kindly reminds his priests: *nihil sine episcopo*. They are nothing without the bishop of whom they share in the ministry and authority while he, himself, share in the authority and ministry of Jesus Christ."

[108] Among many book titles in this range of literature are Oliver Mack, Anshuman Khare, Andreas Krämer, and SpringerLINK e-books - *Business and Management. Managing in a VUCA World*. 2016th ed. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2016; 2015; doi:10.1007/978-3-319-16889-0

[109] Claude St Denis. Conversation and Email correspondence with the author, October 13th – 20th, 2019

[110] This appears as Appendix A.

May I say what I found motivating in this chapter? It is how you place yourself in the context of this conceptual-reflexive conversation, which you've done in the first person. You have also made space for some comment about you in a meta-reflective way, But then, central to the challenges of these inquiries is your suggestion that the Word Incarnate is a metaphor for leadership in this liquid age.[111] You have done this through the direct yet indirect suggestion of repetitively using *The Word* as a place of dialogue, knowing what this means to you, yet drawing attention to it for those who are not part of your spiritual tradition. This is an example of what I meant earlier, when commenting on your leadership style. You take a risk in this, as it offers the inquirers who will attend your defence of this dissertation some ready-made inquiries. But then, I imagine you have practiced it a lot, and it is purposeful! I wonder if it does not also reflect the naivety about yourself that I've heard you refer to, and whether this constellates the voices of challenge you might encounter.

This hypothesis about leadership as a journey is an invitation in this time and place for the conversion of leadership culture, because we do not know what roles we will hold in the future. So, when testing these suppositions, examine them not only through what the theoreticians say about leadership and transformation; Rather, as Augustine directs in the epigraph of this chapter, consider how *you* allow yourself to be taken, set apart, broken and given out, so that you become the means though which the gift of leadership is given.

(*Exit Inquiry*)

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[111] By this I mean that in Christian theology, Christ is *The Word* incarnate, and provides a relatable and adequate example of personable leadership for any modern leader, even when seen from different religious perspectives.

2   Leadership, a Culture Needing Conversion.

2.1   Before the Word

In chapter 1, Mennigke inquired whether the culture of leadership in our age needs

conversion. He suggested the use of "conversion" as a term for the wide-ranging transformation

he sees as necessary in the culture of leadership, and hinted that the change begins with the

personal journey of a leader. He advocated that all leaders *can* experience conversion, some

should, none must, and many do not. The suggestion is that human transformation can only be

encouraged, not imposed, as force is contrary to free choice given us. He argued further that

conversion has no prescribed destination because it is a living process. Rather, it reveals itself

along the journey, is often hidden until its invitees call, and the conversion he refers to often

appears as a surprise. With the emphasis on personal transformation, Mennigke maintains that

the culture of leadership as a whole changes as individual leaders undergo change in themselves.

Further, he emphasizes how words – as speech and action – create, retain, remember and compile

a language, and that language is core to the formation and maintenance of a culture. Influential

change in leadership ideologies come from a meaningful relationship between theories and

applied practice, resulting in a meaningful association between what leaders say and do.

In chapter 2, Mennigke argues that the language of leadership writes new narratives

through the conversion of individual leaders on their personal journeys. The focus on personal

leadership transformation steers leaders toward a world awakened to greater accountability and

action in social transformation, which is dealt with in chapter 5. In chapter 2, Mennigke looks at

the impending consequences of liquid modernity[112] and defines it with the work of Zygmund

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[112] "Liquid Modernity" is the term used by Zygmunt Bauman.

Bauman. Using Green's development of Bauman's work, he defines liminality, emergent conditions and metaphors as tools that help leaders understand the relationship between the call to transformation in the unsure age of liquid modernity. The chapter focuses on how self-awareness in leadership education provides bridges to negotiate the difficulties of leadership in this age. Mennigke is unapologetic in stressing the primary focus of personal transformation is to enable leaders to change the culture of leadership as we have known it.

In section 2.2.2 – on transforming events – Mennigke discusses a tool he has devised to help leaders reflect on significant events in their journey. He introduces a model of chronological and phenomenological time, and, using the work of contemporary phenomenologist Rocha, explains how phenomenology enlivens the description of significant life events. The section goes on to suggest how this enables leaders to deal with the challenges of being in a liminal space and to negotiate new ways of seeing things that are emerging, yet can be relied upon. The chapter argues for how a different leadership culture in the age of liquid modernity breeds increased mindfulness (section 2.2.3) in negotiating the as-yet-unknown challenges that are different for each leader.

The brief interviews with the six interlocutors introduced in chapter 1 continue in the dialogue section of this chapter. The interview with *Conversion* resumes. A reminder for the reader is that *Conversion's* biography is recognizing that the true self is always in the process of conversion.

2.2   The Word

If you are what you should be, you will set the whole world on fire!
— St. Catherine of Siena

2.2.1   Transforming

(*Mennigke visits Conversion*)

CONVERSION: We were talking earlier about the personal psyche re-learning a narrative which linked words and action, and that you have a vision for new theories and new action which resets the culture of the leadership psyche over time. For many if not most leaders, this is fairly complex stuff. Our primary inquiry is still whether the culture of leadership in our age actually needs conversion? How do you get leaders under significant work pressure to participate in such a program? Is it only advocating for the journey with self, and the call to deliberate vulnerability, or can you motivate for a change in organisational culture as an anthropological concept?

MENNIGKE: I think it is neither only the personal call and response, nor the anthropological concept. I suggest that a conversion in the *culture* of leadership is like the scientific laboratory practice of growing bacteria in a solution or medium. This means just like a bacteria culture needs a medium to grow, so leadership requires the medium of deliberate educational support, personal desire for development, embodied example from others, and a desire for surprise. This solution promotes the "bacteria" in which the "multiple living leader organisms" grow and change the larger culture of leadership. Gerard Weiss postulates: "One argument presented by those who would prefer that the nature of culture not be explored, is that 'culture' is the analog of 'life', for which there has never been a satisfactory definition. This may be true, but 'a culture' or a 'cultural system' is the analog of 'an organism' or a 'living entity.'"[113]

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[113] Gerald Weiss, *A Scientific Concept of Culture*. American Anthropologist 75, no. 5 (1973): 1376.

CONVERSION: (*Inquisitively.*) It sounds like you are proposing culture as something that is always under construction as it responds to its liquid context.

MENNIGKE: I am, as leadership is not so much a thing you do, as it is a journey with yourself, those you lead, and your context. Responding to the invitation in a leadership journey is not about power or influence for acquisition, knowledge or wealth. It is about hesitating at the edge of the leader's unknowns, daring to go in, facing the ghosts, living the experiment and doing whatever it takes to embark on the next stage of the journey. Our psyche knows the path it needs to take us on and if we learn to watch closely, we will recognize the signs it gives. They are offered as urges, dreams, relationships, and the broader processes that life puts in our path as warnings and invitations, whether we notice them or not. Broadly, it's transformation.

CONVERSION: (*Pressing*.) Are you saying this is like a mathematical formula? Signs + response = success?

MENNIGKE: That would be reassuring, but will defy the nature of transformation. More often than not it seems to be a process of unlearning and learning, which is not at our command.

CONVERSION: (*pushing*) Are you saying that the psyche does not respond to immediate and dramatic change?

MENNIGKE: I am not suggesting that there is no such a thing as immediate conversion –for that would deny the power of God and the psyche – but even with dramatic spiritual change I have witnessed in people, somehow the psyche needs to catch up with something inside itself. Hollis uses the term "remembering psyche," and suggests it is a healing process: "Certainly, in

our sundered state, we intuit that remembering psyche has something to do with our personal

healing, and with the healing of the world, the *Tikkum Olam*."[114] He quotes Carl Jung:

> The psyche is far from being a homogenous unit – on the contrary, it is a boiling cauldron
> of contradictory impulses, inhibition, and affects, and for many people the conflict
> between them is so insupportable that they even wish for the deliverance preached by
> theologians.[115]

This leads me to suggest that most transformation is a process. In my experience of

accompanying leaders, even when I've witnessed a deep realization in someone, accompanied by

tears and remorse, more often than not it is a result of a long journey of semi-realization, failure,

success, hope, reaction, and then release. Sometimes transformation seems to happen after a

journey like this, I have also seen it at the beginning of an intended journey, but mostly it is

somewhere along the passage. In line with Jung's view of the psyche as a boiling cauldron of

contradictory impulses, we have to acknowledge that not all our transformations begin from a

grounded desire for change. In this vein, from a position of following our longings and hopes

that may fail us, cultural theorist Lauren Berlant claims: "But our Sisyphean pursuit of the good

life has higher stakes, and its amalgam of fantasy and futility is something that we process as

experience before we rationalize it in thought. These feelings, Berlant says, are the 'body's

response to the world, something you're always catching up to.' "[116]

Back to your question of success earlier, I would postulate there are more examples of

leadership failures resulting in human casualties than there are successes. I have not met many

people who reject invitations to leadership positions because they know they are not ready for

the journey! Like with other worthy desires for influence, the craving for leading is strong if we

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[114] Hollis, *On This Journey We Call Our Life*, 133.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Lauren Berlant, *Affect Theory and the New Age of Anxiety.* The New Yorker, accessed December 2, 2019,
https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/03/25/affect-theory-and-the-new-age-of-anxiety.

never embark on a transformational journey, which examines why. We have to ask why this is so when many positively influential leaders of history often end up being hurt, hated, despised, and martyred. I would like to use Stephen King's warning about how writers come to their writing as a more-than-applicable restraint for how leaders approach the desire for leadership. King intercepts the supposed good desire for writing with a warning about the seriousness of writing. Some significant sentences from his chapter "what writing is"[117] explain his caution:

> All the arts depend on telepathy to some degree, but I believe that writing offers the purest distillation. For me, writing has always been best when it is intimate, as sexy as skin on skin.[118] You can approach the act of writing with nervousness, excitement, hopefulness, or even despair — the sense that you can never completely put on the page what's in your mind and heart. You can come to the act with your fists clenched and your eyes narrowed, ready to kick ass and take down names. You can come to it because you want a girl to marry you or you want to change the world. Come to it anyway but lightly. Let me say it again, you must not come lightly to the blank page.[119]

A similar caution needs to be issued about taking on leadership: "come to it anyway, but lightly!" This is a caution for the potential leader, as well as those responsible for talent management and succession planning.

CONVERSION: (*Leading.*) You are suggesting caution in the connection between the stages of our personal development and the personas we take on, or maybe the pressure of our more driven desires.

MENNIGKE: There is a view claiming that the imprinted childhood patterns of behaviour are never really overcome, that the early scripts which are imprinted on the psyche are part of our wiring for life. A contrary belief is that the negative life narratives we develop early on in life can be healed. This kind of "healing" is based on the belief that as we are made in God's image,

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[117] Stephen King, *On Writing. A memoir of the Craft* (Scribner. New York. N.Y 2010).103
[118] Ibid, 103.
[119] Ibid, 106.

any deviations from the "perfect" are not from God and should be corrected. Then there are the genuine accounts in Christian scriptures which carry stories of Jesus reaching into the depths of the psyche, and changing both physical and emotional states.[120] My view is that the masks I have discarded indicate the ways in which I have developed. Do I want to list my currently-used masks? Probably not, but however reluctant we are to name these negative patterns, the people we lead or teach are not. They think about what we are, hold us in praise or contempt, maybe they challenge or encourage us, even flatter us, and even lie to us about our masks. Leadership style is both a manifestation of who I am and of who I am becoming. Like many of us do, at times I find it more difficult than I think to recognize what I have become. Identifying my behavioural rackets[121] is a clue, but it takes time and honesty to accept my own personal growth even though in my work, I expect others to display this kind of rectitude all the time.

CONVERSION: Can you give an example of such a pattern from your story?

MENNIGKE: I grew up in South Africa during the Apartheid years, in what was a police state. As a child I had a fear that "the police were watching everything, and you could be next." I guess my parents must have fed that fear in some way – certainly they didn't counter it. Over some years I have been able to write a new life narrative around the destructive use of authority, partly re-written through the manner and attitude of notable leaders with whom I worked. In my work, I have accompanied church leaders, bishops, corporate executives, and a variety of other

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[120] For example: Mark 7:31, John 9:1. I support this view, have been involved in many such interventions, and seen the power of God at work in the same way as in the scriptural accounts. This is different however, from the preceding view that God wants everything to be healed and to be perfect. It is a matter of discernment, the desire of the person seeking wholeness, and the faith of others involved too. This does not mean God wants everyone to look and be perfect.

[121] I use "rackets" here in the transactional analysis sense. A racket is a cycle of behaviour which is driven by early life scripts, wherein the negative self tries to convince you that you are unable to do something. The circumstances of the situation, driven by some negativity, help you buy into believing you are unable, and you then play out a cycle of being triggered, a resultant feeling, followed by a predictable action and a reinforcing behaviour by others. This cycle can hold us in the grip of a negative pattern until we see the issue, or it is pointed out by another, and we make a choice to change the predictable action.

leaders on retreats, heard their confessions,[122] and shared their journeys. With my fear of negative authority figures, this was a risk whose weight I felt keenly, but it has been a healing journey that helps my understanding of leaders I accompany, and helps my insight into issues that leaders experience, as not only being resistant to affective growth, but grappling with real issues which caution them against emotional involvement.

CONVERSION: (*Compassionately.*) Clearly this is a story of personal conversion which has a lasting effect. Have there been leaders in your journey who have given exceptional guidance in this transformation?

MENNIGKE: One in particular. Desmond Tutu. He was the bishop of Johannesburg in my early years of ordained life, and consistently supportive. Always the example of a vulnerable leader, he would enquire, challenge, and care, unafraid to share his own strengths and weaknesses. More than twenty years after working together in Johannesburg, we met again in Canada's Northern Alberta oil fields, where he came to encourage a First Nations group in their struggles of being discriminated against. We shared memories, and laughed about the tough history of South Africa. I recall his words to me, which have taken some years to absorb: "Back in the madness and confusion of those apartheid years, you stood up for me when many would not."[123] This was a surprizing reflection from a significant mentor, mostly because I did not see myself as more than a devoted follower and a priest trusting his bishop. As a leader, Tutu was a major influence in channeling my release from a pattern of fear, which was initially hidden from

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[122] In my spiritual tradition, "hearing confession" is an expression used for the sacramental act of an individual confessing their sin to a priest, and asking for penance, counsel, and absolution. Today we more aptly call it the *Rite of Reconciliation*, which means finding oneness with God, creation and others.

[123] From a personal conversation with Desmond Tutu, Fort McMurray, February 2014.

myself at least, by being in a position of leadership. Poniatowska[124] said *who a person is, and who they have become* is what makes a writer. Being and becoming are equal parts of a leader's transformation.

CONVERSION: Are there multiple ways of achieving transformation in your view, or do all kinds of conversion have their root in personal transformation?

MENNIGKE: I am purposefully focussing on personal transformation here. Initially, I am examining the exposure of leaders to places of inner vulnerability, which I propose is what empowers them to seek out and encourage similar self-discovery in others. This is not to the exclusion of transformation as the motivator to social action, as I argue that what this age requires of leaders is the capacity for both personal transformation as well as how personal conversion means an immersion in the public/private discourse.

CONVERSION: In the framework of word and action you discussed with *Inquiry* in chapter 1, there is no doubt, a need to guard against the attraction of narcissistic gazing around transformation.

MENNIGKE: Indeed there is. One of the guards against this is understanding transformation in the context of transformative learning, and its focus on critical theory.[125] Stephen Brookfield, writing on transformative learning, clarifies the issue when he says:

> Throughout, I argue that critical theory's focus on how adults learn to challenge dominant ideology, uncover power, and contest hegemony is crucial for scholars of transformative learning to consider if transformative learning is to avoid sliding into an unproblematized focus on the self. Understanding the self to be socially and politically created, and

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[124] See chapter 1 above for the context. Elena Poniatowska, "The Art of Fiction No 238, Interview by Stephen Kurtz." *The Paris Review*, ed. Lorin Stein. (New York, NY. Paris Review Foundation. Issue 224. Spring 2018), 53.

[125] Simply defined, Critical Theory focusses on the transformation of society and invites critique of these interventions.

understanding common-sense choices and actions as therefore ideologically manipulated, are central elements of critical theory.[126]

I will explore transformative learning further in chapter 5, but in chapter 2, I still wish to outline the progression of personal transformation, focus on how leaders in our age are affected by the liquidity of this age as something outside of their control, and comment on the effects of liminality and emergent conditions[127] in this liquid age.

CONVERSION: Would you clarify the concepts of *liquidity, liminality and emergent conditions*, and then apply personal transformation to them?

MENNIGKE: About liquidity, in the foreword to *Liquid Modernity,* Zygmunt Bauman proposes:

> I have not thus far come anywhere near to a resolution of that quandary,[128] but I am increasingly inclined to surmise that we presently find ourselves in a time of 'interregnum' – when the old ways of doing things no longer work, the old learned or inherited modes of life are no longer suitable for the current *conditio humana*; but when the new ways of tackling the challenges and new modes of life better suited to the new conditions have not yet been invented, put in place, and set in operation. We don't yet know which of the extant forms and settings will need to be 'liquidized' and replaced.[129]

Defining a liquid age requires a deconstruction of previous ground for societal stability. Green has reviewed Bauman's work in a paper relating leadership and learning to liquidity, and he emphasizes, "Throughout this paper I attempt to build an argument that claims that formal knowledge is dependent upon a stable, enduring context. That stable context is the structure that

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[126] Stephen D. Brookfield, "Critical theory and Transformative Learning," in *The Handbook of Transformative Learning: Theory, Research, and Practice*, edited by E.W. Taylor, P.(Cranton, & Associates, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass).131. ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral.proqin Chap 3uest.com/lib/ubc/detail.action?docID=821727. Accessed 2019-07-17.
[127] I describe these in the text to follow.
[128] Bauman is referring here to the quandary of unpacking the meaning of the metaphor of 'liquidity.'
[129] Bauman, vii.

produces 'objectivity'. However, once that ground disappears then the abstractions or codified

knowledge that were derived from it lose their utility."[130]

To describe *liminality*, Green develops the concept of liquid modernity with a related

concept of liminality. Borrowing from the field of anthropology to define individuals in

transition, he says:

> In that context, the term refers to the disorientation that occurs in the middle stage of
> rituals—when participants no longer hold their pre-ritual status but have not yet
> completed the transition to their new one. In some ways they are formless. I wish to apply
> this anthropological concept to our age—a liminal age, the age of liquid modernity. The
> old forms and institutions seem to be dissolving or disintegrating and the new ones have
> yet to be recognized and named. Here I'm defining institutions as stable, valued,
> recurring patterns of behavior. As structures or mechanisms of social order, they govern
> the behavior of individuals within a given community. Bauman (2000) points out that
> institutions are increasingly unable to perform that function because they don't have time
> to solidify.[131]

When outlining *emergent conditions*, it follows that in an age where there is no longer

security about the norms that defined life and practice before, and where the new norms have not

yet been established, there will be ways of going about things that are as yet emerging. They are

by Green's definition, conditions that: "haven't endured long enough to develop formal systems

of knowledge."[132] These are ways of seeing things still out of focus in a liquid world. Green's

description of emergent conditions provides new realities that help form the unformed, so the

unformed can be relied upon in the future, as previously relied-upon structures were supported

by the emergence of their objectivity in previous times. Green uses a third description that is

helpful in making the connection between liquid age, liminal states of being, and emergent

conditions. He calls them *metaphors*, and defines them as follows: "Metaphor provides a

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[130] Green, 1.
[131] Ibid, 2.
[132] Ibid, 4.

temporary framework that allows us to make enough sense of our situation so that we can respond more or less adequately to it."[133] I use a similar concept – *bridges* – which help us negotiate the unknown, and like the metaphor, are tools that enable us to walk across what still feels like a gap in knowledge, experience and practice. All transitions need a bridge of some kind to help us move *from* something *to* something else, as I described conversion in chapter 1. Change can be hard on the psyche making a transition, and metaphors help soften the impact. Green makes the point that metaphors are an understandable support for the mind, but that the heart also benefits from support, and this can come in the form of courage, confidence, will and faith. All are good candidates for support.[134]

CONVERSION: Would you agree that one of the difficulties confronting leaders in the fluidity of this age is that change is something outside of their control?

MENNIGKE: I would agree, yet it is not possible to pre-empt all the scenarios of uncertainty in life, quite aside from ambiguity in liquid times. Another view, examined in chapter 3, is if we simply keep the emotion out of issues, and apply rationality, all issues will be solvable. I suggest that the current age poses a uniquely complex challenge arising from a combination of the imminent presence of liquid modernity, a world more awakened to accountability, and an emergent sense of vulnerability that looks to be a norm for leaders in our age. These challenges are not in our control. Kegan and Lahey propose that:

> When we experience the world as 'too complex', we are not just experiencing the complexity of the world. We are experiencing a mismatch between the world's complexity *and our own at this moment.* There are two logical ways to mend this mismatch – reduce the world's complexity, or increase our own. The first is not going to happen. The second has long seemed an impossibility in adulthood.[135]

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[133] Ibid, 5.

[134] Green, written conversation with the author, November, 2019.

[135] Kegan and Lahey, 12.

An important objective in my work among leaders is building an educational foundation in such a way that leaders are made aware of how they can increase their own complexity to meet the challenges they face. This does not happen simply through being wise. It is a commitment to a journey of transformation. I encourage those in leadership programs to commit to regular mentoring, both in a managerial relationship as well as with a trained mentor or counsellor. The purpose in this is to teach basic as well as more advanced understanding of behaviour. Many uncertainties begin external to oneself, and we do not have control over them. However, potentially at least, we have control over our responses to the things that trigger us and cause emotional reactions, and this is where more careful guidance is needed to help monitor and change responses to uncertainty. This is the meaning of "increasing one's own complexity" – learning to make choices about our responses.

CONVERSION: It seems that this is a good objective, and can be used as a tool to help leaders face into difficulties if they understand the two kinds of complexity being referred to! Are you assuming that the mere introduction of these concepts means that leaders get them and apply them?

MENNIGKE: My experience is they do not, which introduces a difficulty peculiar to today's liquid times: Many organisations try to solve issues using ideas and practices that worked for them in previous times. Green's terminology reminds us that working in the liquid age means we cannot simply rebrand what worked before. Leaders and organizations need to see leadership education as a journey. Too often, they want quick answers, yet getting to the place where we are willing to increase our own complexity rather than provide the solutions is mostly a long and uncomfortable and journey.

CONVERSION: (*Interrupting*) I want to discuss what the real difficulty is here, because I don't think it is a simple as telling, realizing and changing. But first, may I attempt an explanation? *Increasing our own complexity,* as Kegan and Lahey describe it, is the process of understanding yourself, facing into your difficulties, your emotional world and patterns of behaviour. It's about learning to examine these patterns, understanding what causes them, testing which of them may impact the complexity of a situation, and only then applying the solutions in the way you have come to understand them. It is not as much about fixing the issue, as it is about fixing oneself. This argument is part of the ontological and epistemological debate between *knowing* personal transformation and *knowing about* it, and seldom comes without some kind of risk on a leadership journey. I say this because even though I realize we're arguing the same point here, I think that leadership educators often forget the pain and length of their own journeys of conversion from one understanding to another. Part of the problem is arguing what the priorities are – changing or staying afloat emotionally and financially – and many leaders are nervous about devoting time and resources to emotional skills training while business continues to happen and employees need to be paid. How do you allow for this?

MENNIGKE: With difficulty! I hear your caution against assumptions, but I think this kind of conversion is about improving human performance that is defensible in the long term. The difficulty is selling the concept to leaders. We live in an age where business and people systems cannot be separated, and conversion requires making choices. There is a cost, and many leaders do not choose it. I caution enquirers that organisational transformation is not able to produce instant results, and I do not take on short-term assignments to change strategy involving human capital. Despite this, there are always people who want to "complete the course and get on with the job."

2.2.2   Transforming Events

CONVERSION: Is there a *constellation of prior events* that contributes to meaningful change in leaders? It would seem that many ponder this question, but few unpack it. What is missing? Is it for lack of information, or because people think it is chance, or is it not talked about in the workplace? Does transformative change build up slowly, or does it happen suddenly if it happens?

MENNIGKE: One view is that all personal transformation is a gift and therefore is not anticipated. It could be explained that as the anticipator is the *existant ego*, as such it cannot change itself, and needs something from outside itself to prompt it. Another view is that change is not the norm, and, as with life narratives, once they are set, any change is cosmetic.[136] My contention is that transformation of different kinds is the inclination of the human psyche. It lies as a dormant desire in our surroundings, and speaks – sometimes dramatically – and at other times gently, suggesting and cajoling. Likewise, God breaks into people's lives, as with Saul of Tarsus recorded in Acts of the Apostles chapter 9. Transformative experiences generate questions in circumstances that were previously thought to be concrete and known. I propose discussing this in chapter 3 on rationality and embodiment. Often, this causes a retreat to the inner world[137] of thought and pondering. My experience is there are certain situations that trigger change: Prolonged physical or mental illness, the death of a loved one, job loss, failure, and

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[136] Before Penfield and Berne's advent of *transactional analysis* in the 1960's, this view was more widely held.

[137] By "inner world" I mean our personal internal thoughts, emotions, ponderings, and the "place" we retreat to for the time and space to work out responses. It might be what Jung calls the "personal unconscious" state which exists in the less conscious state of our heart, mind and soul. For people who choose introversion as a preference, it may be their ordinary "go to" state of how they live in the outer (interactive/extraverted) world. Equally, by the "outer world" I mean the world in which we interact with the things and people around us, the active and "out there" world. For extroverted people, it is the "normal" place of interaction and existence; for introverted people, it is the opposite world from the one in which they prefer to exist.

near-death experience. A close ally is almost certainly midcareer or midlife process. These life changes may take us by surprize, particularly if we have not had guidance in how these changes might appear. We often lose confidence to trust change when what previously seemed like the norm for one's life is no longer satisfying, if life becomes restless and unfulfilling, or when exercising our strengths and abilities no longer achieves its predicted result. Phrased in psychological and spiritual language, the true and false selves[138] within us continually negotiate who is in control of our life. The ego, taking on various persona's it may need to retain control in us, dislikes change, while the soul loves it and is pre-disposed to the flexibility and possibility of change. Phrased in another way, the false self does all it can to retain control of the world it has monopolized thus far, thereby resisting our movement into the unknown. Occurrences like these explain why many leaders and organizations instinctively do not choose thoughtful discovery or self-awareness as a medium for leadership education programs. It feels too risky, and needs careful introduction to find resonance among participants.

To help leaders develop the practice of self-awareness, I have developed an "events model" exercise[139] to help leaders describe the synergy between their inner and outer worlds. For example, a person becomes aware of their external world changing from modernism, through postmodernism, to liquid modernity. If simultaneously a life journey is in flux from early to mid-career, or mid- to later career, and unexpected life circumstances force a reconsideration of the meaning of life, it can be useful to provide a guided reflection to support the change process. By using a diagram to map out their leadership journey over time, participants reflect on the more

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[138] I use the psychological concept "true and false self" or the spiritual concept "new self and old self" as the two selves within us which would tend to lead us in opposite directions depending on how they are "fed." It is also referred to as the "positive and negative" self, or the self that tends toward or away from God, self and others. It is a term I use regularly in teaching, as well as in private mentoring or counselling situations, equally with people who have a spiritual base, or not.

[139] See my leadership course titled: "What Kind of Community?" November, 2015.

significant events that have marked their lives in a leadership role. By recording significant

events in personal and work life, and plotting these events on a graph of chronological against

phenomenological time (see below), they can be helped to process[140] the changes at hand through

listening and discussion in a group context. This is an example of Heidegger's *temporality and*

time referred to in the previous interview with INQUIRY.

CONVERSION: It would seem that there are a number of "processes" occurring at once here.

Can you explain further?

MENNIGKE: I describe the logic as follows: Green applies the concept of *liminality*[141] to the

exterior chronological time called *liquid modernity*. He maintains that "as we move through our

postmodern age of disorientation, we manage somehow – but often we don't quite know how we

manage."[142] Despite the unsureness of having to "navigate through a dynamic, shifting

environment – a fluid or liquid environment,"[143] it is nevertheless a linear time in history. If

linear or chronological (χρόνος*)* time describes moments of change where we can ask *what* and

when something significant happened, phenomenological or Kairos (*Καιρός)* time asks *who* was

involved, and can I know *who this is*? Unpacking the event on both axes gives meaning to a

potentially transformative event in sequential time. It is potentially transformative because in the

whole, we are part of the *Καιρός* of others' lives, and can explore who we are in the present, the

implications of what that may mean for the future we've not yet experienced, and how our being

in the present is a product of our past experience.

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[140] By *process*, I mean to work with or explore. I'm using this word in the Process Orientated Psychology sense – meaning to work with, and search both what is obvious and less obvious to the conscious state.

[141] Green describes "liminality" referring to "experiences that are being registered but not recognized consciously" in: Green, 2.
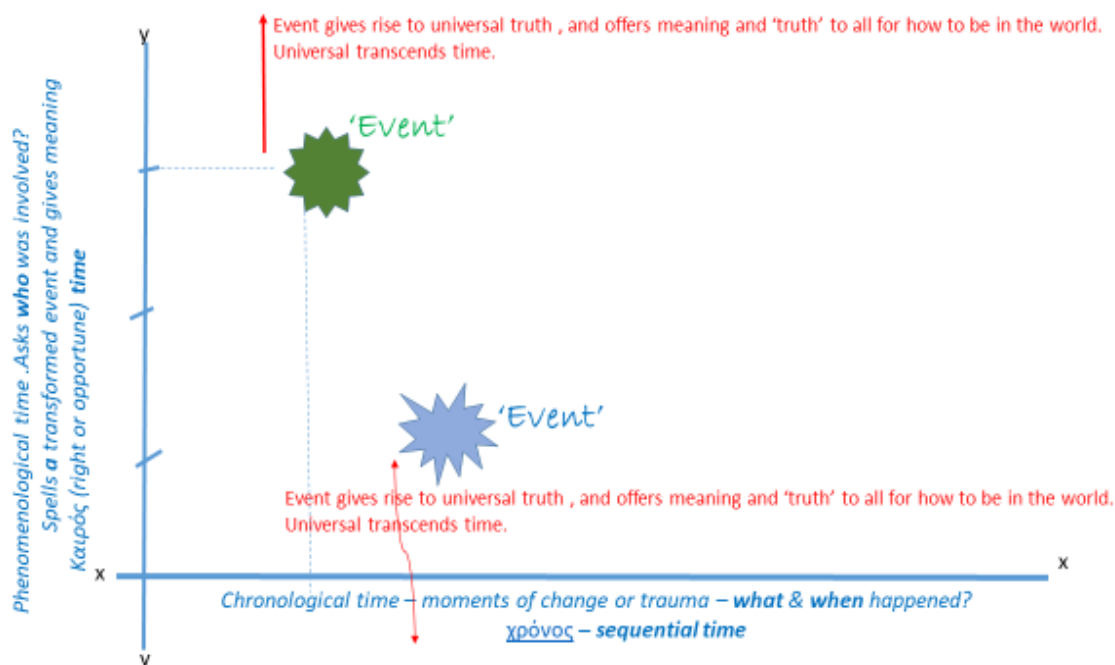
[142] Ibid.

[143] Ibid., 1.

Fig 1.   3 events at various chronological times

I postulate that it is the reframing of significant events in life into a meeting of chronological and phenomenological time that helps us negotiate many unknowns in the liquidity of our experience. Looking at a life event as only a linear event in time, reveals only part of its worth. Adding a phenomenological element to it – like putting on the 3-D glasses in a movie--enables me to begin reflecting on the event with an energy to imagine the real in a new way.[144] Rocha defines phenomenology as "nothing more or less than a way to imagine the real."[145] The *events* I refer to here are conduits that help forge the unknown places of the inner world, each particular to the person, and some perhaps very private for the individual. These inner world

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[144] Here, I am bordering on Samuel Rocha's inspiration called the trinitarian lens. I will describe the component parts of this tool in another place, but it gives us a three dimensional lens through which we can see "events" in a phenomenological way. Rocha's lens gives us a view of a thing through three elements which he calls Being, Subsistence, and Existence, which do the *phenomenological thing* (my words) – which is a way to imagine the real.

[145] Samuel D. Rocha, *Folk Phenomenology. Education, Study, and the Human Person*. (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2015), 15.

events also help us to negotiate the outer liquid world that I may only be learning to negotiate.

Seen in terms of Green's earlier definitions of liminality and emergent conditions, describing a

previously linear event in time with an added dimension, helps us see things that may have

previously been out of focus, and provides a new reality that helps give form to the as-yet-

unformed.

CONVERSION: Will you remind the reader again of the value of phenomenological insight?

MENNIGKE: Of course, but let Rocha highlight it. He says it's the difference between:

"Knowing about things" and "knowing things," and then explains "so too with any

phenomenological approach: Phenomenology seeks, again and again, to know things themselves

from their being within Being, to their substance, existence, or both."[146] By taking time to ponder

significant events, I submit that adding phenomenological time to a chronological event means

we can experience our life events in their *liquid existence.* By this I mean we can experience life

events deconstructed from any previous associations and begin to see their significance because

we are examining them as something in themselves, in the present. There is a sense in which

negotiating our way in daily life causes a familiarity with how we understand and deal with

issues. We can be frustrated with the changes brought about by liquidity, but one of the gifts the

liquid age offers, is slowing down enough to re-examine what is no longer understandable in the

same way. This creates opportunity to get past the way we automatically filter and interpret

current events. Being available to something, and eager to know it, puts us in touch with its

potential, and we "remain restless for knowing and understanding, gazing again and again into

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[146] Ibid, 30.

the lens[147] to find the impossible things we seek, sense and see."[148] From a longstanding spiritual perspective,[149] St Augustine of Hippo's famed confession expresses the same sentiment: "Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee."[150] I suggest this is a poignant expression of the combination of chronological and phenomenological time, and submit it is analogous to Buber's meeting of the "*I* and *Thou*"[151] at a converting time in one's story. As transformative events, they carry all the potential to change our frames of reference, especially when guided by a mentor who understands personal transformation.

CONVERSION: Are you suggesting that the capacity to perceive the "real" is a transcendental one, which hinges on being able to pierce through the various lenses? If so, is this capacity humanly realizable, and if so, what does it imply for leaders and leadership and meta-reflection you referred to earlier?

MENNIGKE: I do not think that breaking through to the "real" is necessarily a transcendental experience which is determined only by how hard one works to pierce the various lenses of "seeing through a glass darkly" to quote the writer to the Corinthians.[152] My experience is seeing people pierce through these lenses as both the pure *gift of transcendental experience,* as well as through *determined effort* to shift into a more reflective space in life. That is, often there is a constellation of the psyche and a particular time, which surprizes the receiver, and is received as gift precisely because it was not expected. At other times a leader's

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[147] Ibid, 13. Rocha means his trinitarian lens referred to here.

[148] Ibid, 30.

[149] I'm saying a *more* ancient spiritual perspective, not to compare Rocha with another spirituality, but recognizing he is drawing on his own spiritual (Christian) perspective, as well as that of his phenomenologist mentors and predecessors. It is to make the point that Augustine's reflection is from the 4th and 5th Century BCE.

[150] Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo. *The Confessions of Saint Augustine.* (New York: Modern Library, 1949). Lib 1,1-2,2.5,5: CSEL 33, 1-5)

[151] I am referring here to Martin Buber's concept of the meeting of *I-Thou*, the unity with the divine. I suggest the significant "events" in the meeting of these two time scales often carry the same poignancy as Buber's intimacy of the *I-Thou*.

[152] 1Cor 13:12

determination to work at increased awareness results in a similar surprize. I'd see this more

because they are increasingly orientated towards regular reflection and sensitivity about their

life.

CONVERSION: The *event* experiences you are suggesting seem to be defined by spiritual

and philosophical experience. Is this their identifying category, because many people's stories

may not network in this way?

MENNIGKE: They do hold spiritual and philosophical characteristics, and for some perhaps

different vocabularies for the same phenomena. But I submit that the events are also educational

experiences. Certainly, that is the launch-pad for me in leadership education workshops. Jack

Mezirow's *Transformation Theory* adds an educational perspective to events experienced in this

way. His argument, which I will revisit in an interview with Education (see chapter 5),

maintains: "transformation theory's focus is on how we learn to negotiate and act on our own

purposes, values, feelings and meanings, rather than those we have uncritically assimilated from

others — to gain greater control over our lives as socially responsible, clear-thinking decision

makers."[153]

CONVERSION: It seems that the *events* in your model are a tool to practice framing life

experiences and to reconfigure them as creative.

MENNIGKE: I've used my *events model* here in a phenomenological way, as a metaphor or

bridge to negotiate one's way through liquid situations, and form ways of accessing reality in a

new way.

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[153] Jack Mezirow, "Learning to think like an adult: core concepts of transformation learning." In: *The Handbook of Transformative Learning: Theory, Research, and Practice*, edited by E.W. Taylor, Patricia Cranton, and Ebooks Corporation (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2012).76. ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ubc/detail.action?docID=821727

CONVERSION: What do you mean by accessing reality in a new way?

MENNIGKE: The reality we create in life is both a subjective and objective thing. Subjective, in that we all create a way of existing in the world that suits our ability to cope with it. We do this in order to survive – which is the strongest instinct in a young child. No matter how ideal our particular world is, we still take on ways of behaving in it to serve the survival instinct. While our reality may not be the next person's reality, we exist in it until it is broken and reformed due to our life's circumstances. Reality is also objective if seen through the collective lens of others around us. For example, I might live a protected reality through the way my family tried to shield me from the difficulties of the world around me. However, when I go to kindergarten and school, I may be confronted by a different reality in the society outside of my protected reality. I may not like the unprotected reality, nevertheless, it may still be the objective reality, and I need to allow my safe reality to be broken and reformed. Most white people in South Africa lived in a false reality through apartheid's protection of their privilege, until the objective reality broke through. It shattered the lie many privileged people believed because of the reality they created for their self- protection. In a similar way, a new reality is accessed when we realize something we previously held dear can no longer continue as a reality, either through surprize or because of deliberate action. These are transformative events that happen in different ways for different people. They are phenomenological because they describe a reality – something that is, which was not seen before. The events model described previously is a metaphor in that it helps provide a new reality – when because of the liquid age – a transformation comes about that helps someone understand a situation in a new way, because it can no longer operate as before. Part of the inspiration for this comes from watching leaders I accompany reframe their reality through trusting the personal transformations they experience in

their leadership journeys. Another incentive has been discovering the synchronicity in my

leadership work with philosopher Alain Badiou's theory on *event.* I will refer to Badiou's *event*

again in chapter 3 on embodiment, with particular reference to the converting nature of events in

spiritual and psychological accompaniment of leaders. Not least is also Badiou's understanding

of *universal truth,* and the link between *universal* and the overflow from graced events to action

in the world. I will make reference to this in chapter 5. It is part of the incentive for my

repetitive use of *word*, and the relationship between *word* and *action* as a theme in this paper.

2.2.3   Mindful

CONVERSION: (*Suggesting.)* Mindfulness as a movement is a well-adopted practice for

leadership development in the business world, quite apart from being a mystical practice in its

own right. Is it not possible to simplify all the self- awareness and conversion ideas you have into

a kind of *mindfulness* that covers all the options*?*

MENNIGKE: Mindfulness is a quality as ancient as wisdom. Practicing mindfulness enables

us to hold together the complexity of a task, subject expertise, context, oneself and others. Too

often leadership focusses only on the first three. Hollis says: "There is a paradox at the heart of

all relationships. We cannot know ourselves without the dialectical encounter with others, an

encounter which obliges us to define who we are, and then to grow by incorporating our

experience of the other."[154] I suggest that leadership education begins with self-awareness, but

this awareness is what helps the leader be a leader among others. Mindfulness is the quality that

propels the leader to keep looking inward at their own growth, while simultaneously looking

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[154] Hollis, *On This Journey We Call Our Life.* 86.

outward to develop the community, society, in short – the other. In leadership education, I work

in one-on-one relationships with team leaders, and then with the leader and their team. The one

kind of intervention does not wait for the other; they happen in parallel, as part of the "paradox at

the heart of relationships."[155]

Mindfulness is simply an awareness tool which, when taught correctly, applies various

meditative techniques to make a transformative impact on the ability to focus, manage stress, and

improve relationships. Like many tools, it employs strategies for developing self-awareness,

which enable us to cope better when our inner and outer worlds collide. Mindfulness is an

encouragement to practice self-awareness, and is not an end itself.

2.2.4   Negotiating the Unknown

CONVERSION: (*Reflectively.)* I am aware that in this interview, we have spanned a few

decades in time. We've crossed the margin from one century to another in describing some of the

personalities who influenced you as a leader. Which era are you really writing for, in your plea to

reframe leadership education?

MENNIGKE: I don't think we have an option. As Bauman does, I call our current era *liquid*

modernity.[156] It already operates as a present reality in the minds of young people and potential

young leaders in this era on all fronts. I think young people operate naturally in an embodied

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[155] Ibid, 86.

[156] This is Bauman's term for the current age. I will refer to it at length in this study.

mode of being[157] in relation to sexuality, gender and sexual inclusivity, art and music, and to the technological world. They navigate the cordless world of communication devices with such personification, that even the loneliness that social media dependence tricks them into, is hidden. Green suggests that in this liquid age "all previous candidates for ground—religion, ideology, even objectivity—have been problematized. Instead we must learn how to navigate through a dynamic, shifting environment—a fluid or liquid environment."[158]

CONVERSION: Where do you suggest is the greatest challenge in Bauman and Green's navigation of this environment?

MENNIGKE: I don't think the liquid age is as much a challenge for its own generation, as it is for those who have known another age, and struggle to adapt. Worse, in my opinion, are those who influence the current generation of leaders through teaching a style which is one-dimensional in this complex shifting environment.

CONVERSION: You suggesting this is a problem, yet is it not the same *baby-boomer generation* leaders who have set up organizations and financial stability in the western world?

MENNIGKE: They have indeed. One view is that there are sufficient examples of baby-boomer generation leaders to negotiate the future. On the contrary, some believe that these are the very roadblocks to future success, because they use frameworks that in this age are no longer

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[157] I am aware that when I refer to "young people in this era", on the one hand I am suggesting young people in privileged first world society, with access to education and current media. On the other hand, there is something in the raw, developing psyche of all young people that, given the slightest innovative atmosphere, leaps into creativity as if it were always there, waiting to be accessed. Lauren Berlant cited above, claims that our minds are always trying to catch up with our bodies. In this sense, young people learn in a naturally embodied way, and then conceptualize what their bodies already know. This begins to help us understand how embodiment as a quality encouraged in leaders, might be inherent though lost, and when activated can be re-learned. In the interviews following, I will suggest embodiment and mystery are closely linked. Ideally, we see this in children, both uninhibited with their bodies, and in touch with the mysterious. Chapter 3 is the conversation on embodiment and mystery.

[158] Green, 1.

effective. My view is that if you try to negotiate complexity using simplicity, it results in

confusion. I believe that the demonstrations of nationalistic fervour, scrambling, and gaining a

foothold in some European countries and some states of the United States of America point to

this kind of confusion. A current example is the persistent riots by millions of demonstrators on

the streets of Hong Kong.[159] It is a call for social accountability of leaders, unshackled from

nationalistic fervour. The promise by Hong-Kong chief executive Carrie Lam, that the

extradition bill causing the uproar "is dead" is not trusted, because demonstrators do not trust her

leadership[160]. A year after this, the tenuous situation is no better − only interrupted and

exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Hong Kong demonstrators are looking for some

demonstration of vulnerability from a leader who operates in a paradoxical space of old-style

authoritarianism, and in a region, which under its previous – albeit colonial rule – was already

living in the liquid age.

I will address *complexity* further in chapter 4 of this dissertation, but because my role in

the Church places me at the front of the fray, I postulate that where nationalistic zeal is drawn by

religious engines, it is an even greater ingredient for confusion.

CONVERSION: Christianity as a world religion has enjoyed religious dominance since

Constantine's conversion in the 4th century CE. Inquiry into the conversions this major Faith has

undergone in the liquid age no doubt plays a part in how you see and teach leaders negotiating

the unknown.

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[159] June and July 2019.
[160] BBC news App, Top Stories, accessed online 2019-07-12.

MENNIGKE: This is a vast topic that may divert us from our track here, but a comment from a recent dialogue on the history of Christianity's dominance may be useful:

> This is a question uncountable books have been written on. It has always been undisputed that Constantine was a turning-point. Just in the last ten years scholars started to point out that it wasn't a black and white moment, from zero to one-hundred. However, I think, most scholars, would still call to the term of the (I translate literally from German) "Constantine turning point". It was not all changed from one moment to the next but the legalization of Christianity made a huge difference and made it possible that 150 years or so later, in the Western Roman Empire, Bishops took the role of the former Roman political elite which had disappeared. Interestingly, what is much more controversial than the importance of Constantine's legalization of Christianity, is whether he actually became Christian or whether his baptism is just a legend.[161]

Christianity may have claimed dominance of the term *conversion*, but even if it has, it has also given conversion a *subsistence*,[162] a sense of vitality and energy that I use purposefully to describe the transformative journey from longstanding and old ways of leadership, to new and refreshing ways of being a deliberately vulnerable leader. Conversion of religious leaders has always happened. Constantine's conversion to Christianity – through the prayers of his mother Helena – changed the governance of the then-known world. This political, spiritual and social dominance was in effect until some time into the current liquid age.[163] I do not doubt that the transformations of many leaders I engage with are partly a result of the world's present attitude to Christianity's need to shift its dominance. Green notes:

> The traveller scans for possibilities, unexpected opportunities whereas the pilgrim aims at preconceived actualities—a geographical endpoint. Bauman further notes that this shift was a reaction to, and a further acceleration of liquid modernity. That is, individuals have learned that to have fixed expectations—as perhaps their parents did—most often produces frustration and disappointment. Instead one must be "light on one's feet," ready to change direction when circumstances change. Experience has taught the postmodern individual that it is dangerous to identify with a fixed form during liquid times. A

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[161] André Stephany, Email discussion with the author. Feast of the Epiphany, 2020
[162] Rocha, 12.
[163] Bauman estimates this as around the turn of the millennium.

marriage or career is no longer guaranteed in the long term. One must be ready to improvise at a moment's notice; able to "go with the flow." That is to say that the meanings or maps with which we formerly journeyed need to be replaced by navigational aids and tide charts. We're at sea.[164]

The shifting of Christianity's dominance has left many formally secure social, ethical and moral maps needing to be redrawn. This is what Green means about being adrift at sea. Chapters 3 and 4, will draw on Taylor's thesis on secularity, and chapter 3, on Max Weber's work on management and organizational theory. These great figures of transformation speak with wisdom on how the Secular Age lives within today's Liquid Age, and "has profoundly shaped the forms of social imagery which dominate in the modern West: the market economy, the public sphere, the sovereign 'people'."[165]

Green entertains the notion of people being in transition, en route to another life status. His description matches the experience of many leaders I accompany who have made a choice for vulnerability and thoughtful examination in their leadership style. Prompted by an internal call,[166] or an external warning, their "transition" stems from the awareness that whatever principles worked for them before in managerial and leadership roles no longer seem to work in their current world. Similarly, whatever epistemological strategies were once adopted in life now seem empty in the face of exposure to further realization or learning. Furthermore, if we're honest, the ontological and spiritual truths once held dear no longer address the leader's practical experience in the liquid age. The experience of many counsellors, therapists and spiritual

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[164] Green, 13.

[165] Charles Taylor, "What is Secularity?" Vanhoozer, Kevin and Warner, Martin. Eds. *Transcending boundaries in Philosophy and Theology: Reason, Meaning and Experience*. Abingdon, Oxon, GBR: Ashgate Publishing Group, 2007. ProQuest eLibrary. Web. 5 August 2015.378.

[166] By an "internal call" I mean as described in above, that someone has a sense of a "wake-up" connected to a loss, crisis, a gradual or sudden realization that they cannot continue as before.

directors bear witness to comparable narratives as a 'call' from the psyche for restoring the natural balance it craves.

In making this claim, I am asserting that these realizations and transitions may be the result of a wholly more fluid and unpredictable age in which leaders have to operate. Chiefly, however, it is a call from the psyche and spirit to a more mature path of living the leadership journey. In the spiritual life, it is sometimes referred to as a call to 'deepening conversion'. Writing about 'the dynamics of conversion of heart', Paul Robb describes what he calls a second conversion in the spiritual experience: "In the new testament, the call of the apostles is really an invitation to set out on a new course, a pathway to a deeper and fuller conversion of the heart"[167]. Robb goes on to explain: "I will consider second conversion as primarily an affective conversion involving feelings, emotions, and a change of heart. After walking around this interior kingdom of affections, we find that a transformation of feelings makes possible a real transformation of self. Without such a transformation of feelings, a so-called transformation of self is just a behavioral change; it will not last. Transformation of self begins with a confrontation of myself in sinfulness."[168]

My experience working with leaders in spiritual and secular settings testifies to this *affective conversion*. In many instances, what religion sometimes calls 'sinfulness' may be expressed by others as "a separation from self and others".

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[167] Paul V. Robb, S.J. "Conversion as a Human Experience*." Studies in the spirituality of Jesuits*; Vol. XIV; No 3. *Paper for the 33rd General Council*, Illinois; American Assistancy Seminar on Jesuit Spirituality (May, 1982), 6.
[168] Ibid, 7.

2.3   After the Word

CONVERSION: May I reflect on what I experienced as we talked about conversion and transformation? Mostly, you describe transformation from an individual perspective, and I wonder if your view is that group or organisational transformation always happens as a collective of individual transformations? Organizational systems may well be converted through the sum of the individual, but I'd urge you to look at what happens if you began at the other end – that is, can group transformation cause individual conversion? It may mean trusting the power of systems which use different metrics to enhance change. Inquiry pointed out in chapter 1, that your plan of operation generally operates from personal influence to group change. I am not suggesting this is unsuccessful, but that it may include your personal narrative that learned to trust the individual relationship before having faith in the wider group. Of course, there is merit in your doubt, as you know from your work *in Process Orientated Psychology* and *Worldwork* that groups have complex psyches[169] that take skill to facilitate. I think you know from experience that transformation from the part to the whole works because of your ability in developing trusted and meaningful relationships, but my challenge to you is to enquire what this says about your adaptation to trusting group change processes. Can you see the benefit of working from group to individual in the same way you've learned to rely on starting with the individual and influencing the group?

I encourage you to think back to the transformation of church and nation that you witnessed when working alongside Desmond Tutu in South Africa, as well as your testimony to

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[169] I am referring to groups having a psyche as individuals do. Worldwork is Processwork applied to small and large groups, communities and organizations, business, international events and environmental problems. Deep Democracy is the core principle and practice of worldwork. See homepage for Amy and Arnold Mindell, *Worldwork in Action.* Accessed from: http://www.aamindell.net/worldwork-applications#wwarticles. Also specifically on Worldwork: Arnold Mindell, *Sitting in the Fire*. Large Group Transformation Through Diversity And Conflict.(…….2018)

how Nelson Mandela went about the conversion of a nation. While I will not ask you to reflect

on it now, these are examples of leaders who challenged the whole, while also working with

individuals one-on-one. I have heard you tell stories about Archbishop Tutu's work with you in

various settings, and how, in your own parish churches he challenged the group first, then came

alongside individuals, sometimes leaving you to work with the fall-out. While you have

certainly challenged whole congregations in your ministry, you have generally built trusting

individual relationships to fall back on. Is it possible that because of your personal history, you

may shy away from group challenge? Similarly in the workplace, examine how you approach the

change you are aiming for, and perhaps begin testing whether you trust the dynamics of group

transformation. You have training in spiritual direction and counselling. These are effective one-

on-one tools of facilitating change. Though it is a question of preference of style, I encourage

you to test other models. Through integrating people development and performance metrics with

organizational strategy, we allow for change by making human systems an ongoing part of

business systems. This involves culture change in organisations, which is in itself a kind of

macro-conversion. You are part of changes similar to this in team education, but you generally

back this up by forming personal foundations up front.

 For your readers, I'd like to share a fictitious story of a leader experiencing a "collision"

between his inner and outer worlds. It speaks to the narrative of chapter 2.

 A middle-aged man, in mid-career, and raised in a traditional Christian background,

is a departmental leader in a medium-sized organization. Over the last year he has been part

of an active leadership program in his workplace, and is mentored by an experienced work-

place mentor. He receives what feels like a double blow, where both his inner (personal) and

outer world (work) feel like they are collapsing. His 22 year-old daughter, still financially

dependent on him, a recent *cum laude* graduate from university, and who leads the 50-strong youth orchestra at their thriving family church, comes out as lesbian. Simultaneously, at work he is asked to reduce his department's talent complement by half to meet severe budgetary restrictions, and to instruct the remaining staff to reduce to a 0.75 FTE[170] work load. He seeks help in negotiating what feels like a crisis to him. This is an example of an externally complex situation, for which he needs to employ his own inner resources, as he understands no one "out there" is going to solve it for him. How do you think he meets the personal challenges here?

CONVERSION: This example of complexity is really a way of describing the necessity of conversion in the age of liquid modernity. You have linked Bauman's work, and also Green's development of Bauman's work, to show why it is necessary for leaders to be involved in ongoing self- awareness, and even that conversion needs to be an ongoing process for leaders. I appreciate your use of an *events model* you designed for workshop use, and note that you use this tool among leaders in a group setting! You have introduced Badiou's work on *event*, and I encourage the use of your tool inspired by him. Clearly, it helps the re-ordering of reality for leaders through the *universal*, and teaches them that their transformation touches the lives of others, and so affects community. It is a particular application of how word and action are not separable. I have appreciated the opportunity to reflect on aspects of your own conversion as a teacher and leader. We will meet again!

(*Exit, Conversion*)

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[170] Meaning, people work only ¾ of their normal work time, and take a similar salary reduction.

3   Leadership, Embodied and Mysterious

3.1   Before the Word

In chapter 2, Mennigke traced the path of conversion as a foundational part of reframing

leadership culture in the liquid age. Highlighting personal transformation as a key element in the

needed action for group and public transformation, Mennigke defined the liquid age, and other

concepts aligned with liquidity, using Bauman's work on liquid modernity and Greens'

application of Bauman's work.[171]

Chapter 3 outlines the central question of this study. *The key to freeing leadership from*

the deception of an instrumental rationality to an embodied mode of being, lies in reframing

rationality.[172] The meaning of leadership and education have shifted over time, and in different

contexts. Like many previously accepted concepts and definitions, Mennigke will suggest that

these are in a liminal[173] state in the liquid age.[174] Yet, despite being in a transitional state, the

style of many western leaders in our age still carries a label depicting instrumental rationality,[175]

success, status, and the power to include or exclude.[176] Chapter 3 argues that one of the

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[171] Zygmund Bauman, Liquid Modernity. (Cambridge; Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2000) and Larry Green, "Metaphors: Action Frameworks for a Liquid Time." In: *Challenging Organizations and Society*. *Reflective Hybrids.* Vol. 5, issue 2 .Oct. 2016.

[172] Three key terms used here - instrumental reality, embodied, and rationality - will be defined in the text of the chapter.

[173] As defined in chap 2 section 2.2.1, something is in a liminal state when the old forms and institutions seem to be dissolving or disintegrating and the new ones have yet to be recognized and named.

[174] Bauman's concept of liquidity, defined by Green, suggests that all previous candidates for ground—religion, ideology, even objectivity—have been problematized. Instead we must learn how to navigate through a dynamic, shifting environment—a fluid or liquid environment. Green, 1

[175] I'm using Merriam-Webster's definition of Instrumentalism: "a doctrine that ideas are instruments of action and that their usefulness determines their truth." Found in: Merriam-Webster.com. Accessed November 6, 2017. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/instrumentalism. Combined with "rationality," I mean the use of rationale to emphasize that it is logical for leadership to view ideas as instruments of action. This equates to "essentialism."

[176] In relation to exercise of authority in the Church for example, the inclusion of women in ministry, and a willingness to wrestle with LGBTQ2S issues, the views of the traditional church of the 20th and 21st centuries have shifted. Vatican Council II, and the Church of England's Synods, have prompted these shifts, but they may not have yet in themselves fully dealt with exclusion as a theological and societal issue. In the liquid age, emergent conditions provide a bridge through which these issues can be further negotiated.

metaphors[177] needed to navigate leadership practice in the liquid age is embodied[178] qualities of leadership. Mennigke reasons that this is what opens the mind to concepts like mystical,[179] behavioral awareness, and affectivity.[180]

In this chapter Mennigke cites architect Louis Kahn's insights on rationality from an artistic perspective, as a channel to suggesting a more embodied rationality. He draws on St Augustine's consideration of false freedom, and Kegan and Lahey's work on *Immunity to Change,* to illustrate natural resistance to abstract issues and adaptability. This chapter cites Charles Taylor's[181] investigation of the supremacy of the ego, the limiting nature of religion, and the reduction of the mystical, as contributions to modern secularity and the maintenance of essential[182] rationality in leadership.

Mennigke references Hollis',[183] Heidegger's,[184] and Rocha's [185] understanding of the nature of *being,* and Badiou's[186] view of the *event* to further develop the theme from chapter 2.

Finally, in this chapter, the insights of C.S Lewis[187] and J.K. Rowling[188] help cultivate an understanding of how mystery informs complexity.

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[177] I use Green's understanding of "metaphors" to be platforms or bridges that temporarily hold concepts while they are in a liquid phase, and in a metamorphosis.

[178] I use the word "embodied" to mean "incarnated," meaning "to come among," or "to pitch a tent among."

[179] I introduce the term "mystical" here to mean "having a spiritual meaning or reality that is neither apparent to the senses nor obvious to the intelligence" *Merriam-Webster.com*. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 6 Sept. 2017. www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mystical. (accessed 12 August. 2017)

[180] By "affectivity," I mean things of the heart and the emotional state.

[181] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age.* (Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007)

[182] Essentialism is an ideology about the identity and function of everything having attributes particular to its function.

[183] Hollis, *On this Journey we call our life. Living the Questions* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 2003).

[184] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time. (*New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1962).

[185] Samuel D. Rocha, *Folk Phenomenology: Education, Study, and the Human person* (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2015)

[186] Alain Badiou, *Being and Event*. (London: Continuum, 2005).

[187] C.S. Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe.* (Middlesex, UK: Geoffrey Bles, 1950).

[188] J.K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone.* (London, UK: Bloomsbury, 1997).

A reminder for the reader is that the characters Embodiment and Mystery, teach respect for the unseen and mysterious, and patience with transitional states in which people find themselves.

3.2   The Word

Consider the momentous event in architecture when the wall parted and the column became.
–Louis Kahn

3.2.1   Rational

(Embodiment and mystery enter. Embodiment sits in the interviewer's chair. Mystery sits to the side.)

EMBODIMENT: (*Enters*, *picks up a book*.) You've been reading modernist art. I'm intrigued about you wanting to begin talking about the 1950's architect Louis Kahn. Perhaps you will paint a picture for the reader of where this inquiry takes us?

MENNIGKE: It is about rationality, embodiment, mystery and leadership. I am convinced that we have generally lost the quality of how we validate leaders, and this presses us to ask whether leadership has not become captive to a heartless, *instrumental rationality*. The liquid age, with all its shifting ground, offers us as educators an opportunity for examining the ontological nature of leadership, by making the qualities of mystery and creativity accessible to leaders.

EMBODIMENT: (*Pondering)* Something lost to leadership suggests a search for something to be found. Many successful corporate and financial leaders in the west would claim they have set the industrialized world on a solid footing, and your musings are those of an artistic cleric safer in the pulpit or the classroom.

MENNIGKE: For years, I have accompanied leaders, many of whom are informed directly or indirectly by the Christian spiritual history of the last century. In many instances, I see their

resistance to organizational change as a fear of the "heart" and of aspects of an incarnated or personable way of being. This study encourages leaders to understand their own behaviour and learn how it affects their leadership practice. Choosing this route means growing to understand personal complexity,[189] and permitting leaders to identify their personal and institutional[190] resistance to change. I'll save defining these concepts further till the next interview and chapter.

EMBODIMENT: So, explain how *rationality* has contributed to a problem among leaders as you see it.

MENNIGKE: May I use a simile from architecture to do this? Lobell's book on the architect Louis Kahn you were paging through, paints an historic picture of the development of architecture. It helps describe my view of how rationality is part of the problem of leaders struggling to get in touch with the parts of their being that are more personable or embodied. Lobell explains that: "Rationality is a discipline for understanding things that are. However, if we attempt to see a larger world, one that includes that which *is not yet* along with *that which is*, as the creative artist, scientist, and architect must, then a more powerful discipline is needed, one used by the poets, which the ancient Chinese Taoist philosopher Lao Tzu called the Tao, the existential philosopher Martin Heidegger called Being, and Louis Kahn called order."[191] An architectural metaphor is a useful bridge, because, instead of separating the disciplines of art and

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[189] We will inquire in the nature of complexity in chap 4. But, so the reader is not distracted here, by "personal complexity" I mean learning increased consciousness through self-awareness and deliberate exposure to understanding my patterns of behaviour and tendency to make choices in a patterned way. See Kegan and Lahey's use of mental complexity in section 4.2 of the next chapter.

[190] I use "institution" as a collective for groups, teams, families, organizations and institutions. By this I mean that our various life narratives develop ways of protecting our "tribe," the things we hold dear, and the things we come to believe are necessary for the survival and charism of ourselves or our group. They may be masks, and as such, are generally not healthy for the group or individual, but we come to rely on them to protect us in the world. What protective barriers do, however, is drive us into personal or group rackets to ensure the maintenance of the destructive pattern for existing. Kegan and Lahey refer to this as "organizational immunity."

[191] Lobell, 62.

science, it allows them to speak in an equal way. Lobell shows how: "Kahn's philosophy is unique in that it exists not only in words, but also in buildings and can therefore be experienced directly."[192] When you *experience* a building, you are taking it in as an art form, yet what goes into its design is expressly scientific. This helps illustrate a difference between kinds of rationality. A rationality called *instrumental*[193] *reality* defines something by virtue of its usefulness, just as in a particular phase in architecture's history, buildings were defined in terms of their usefulness. By contrast, an *embodied reality* comes about through experiencing, connecting, embracing and personifying things. Both instrumental and embodied rationality are real, they just exemplify different ways of being, and different ways of imagining the real. It is what Rocha explains about understanding things in a phenomenological way – that phenomenology provides a "different a way to imagine the real."[194]

EMBODIMENT: I hear you suggesting that there are different kinds of rationality, not that rationality in itself is an unhelpful way of describing something ontologically. I wonder if the distinction between *rationality* and *rationalism* might help in understanding these different realities?

MENNIGKE: I think it does. Lobell describes *rationalism* saying: "the rational worldview might be described as a vision of a great clockwork universe of uniform space and time in which the motion was governed by mathematical laws. All was knowable, and ultimately all would be known."[195] Many will argue that this view held well for outright rigour in the sciences, but

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[192] Ibid., 2.

[193] I'm using Merriam-Webster's definition of Instrumentalism: "a doctrine that ideas are instruments of action and that their usefulness determines their truth." Found in: Merriam-Webster.com. Accessed November 6, 2017. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/instrumentalism. Where combined with "rationality," I mean the use of rationale to emphasize that it is logical for leadership to view ideas as instruments of action. This equates to "essentialism."

[194] Rocha, 15.

[195] Lobell, 62.

"eventually Einstein's special and general relativity did away with uniform space and time."[196]

Kahn's struggle to find the deeper order beyond rationalism describes how rationality finds an *embodied* meaning through what, for architecture, he called *order*. In this, he allows phenomenology to introduce its reality:

> Order became Kahn's means of finding the human place in the world, the nature of our consciousness, and the relationship of our consciousness to nature. Rationalism had separated consciousness and nature, with mathematics as their common link. Order placed them together, each dependent on the other. Kahn did not say what Order is, but spoke of it in metaphor. Order is the principle behind all things and is expressed in them as an existence-will, a quality things have in their beginnings outside of time, which Kahn liked to call Volume Zero. We might also say that order is an underlying principle and a quality of things but also an active creativity: It is the way things come into being.[197]

I suggest that historically, leadership practice held onto an essential view of rationality as one of its most protected icons – meaning that it was a virtue to be *rational* as an expression of level-headedness and production orientation. While as a discipline, rationality is really an ontological tool. When used in an essential (or instrumental) way, it removes the heart[198] from rationality and disables the understanding of things that are abstract and seek connection. However, when used in an embodied way, it qualifies the abstract and makes connections that liberate situations**.** Saint Augustine used his *City of God*[199] to differentiate falsity from freedom. Phenomenology enables the use of *two realities* to make the same distinction. Similarly, Saint

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[196] Ibid.

[197] Ibid.

[198] By "heart" I mean the core feeling and life substance of something. See also Sam Rocha's description of *subsistence* within Being, subsistence and existence as: "the vital, energetic and conceptual, as opposed to perceptual, category of things that are within Being" referenced in the Foreword, and in the footnotes of section 2.2.4

[199] Augustine of Hippo, *Concerning the City of God against the Pagans*. (London: Pelican Books, Cox and Wyman Ltd. 1972.)

Ignatius, in teaching the principles of discernment of spirits,[200] provides guidelines to help recognize the direction in which things lead us[201] to help differentiate freedom from falsity.

EMBODIMENT: This is an inquiry into embodied leadership. It seems as if rationality is a historic moment in time – and as you said earlier, many will argue that this view held well for outright rigour in the sciences – so it had its place and purpose. On the other hand, "by the nineteenth century the Industrial Revolution had seemingly confirmed the powers of rationalism not only to understand nature, but also to conquer nature."[202] But what did it do to squeeze out what you are suggesting was lost?

MENNIGKE: The Renaissance opposition to the scholasticism of the late middle ages was recorded in art, through the powerful human qualities of the subjects. Renaissance humanism captured emotion as a "let us return to the source" movement, a retort against the medieval institutions of the church, empire and feudalism. Lobell express it this way:

> In place of these institutions, Renaissance thinkers placed the human being, which they designated the measure of all things. They proposed that the human being was a creature of nature, capable of understanding both itself and nature with the tools of mathematics, rational thought and the senses.[203]

Aided by Isaac Newton's support of rational thought in the 17th century, the Enlightenment era – of which Newton was a major focus – was not only exciting for its investment in scientific method surpassing the concept of the supernatural, but was also the time where "rationalism was extended from the natural sciences to human affairs, where it played a

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[200] When Ignatius uses the phrase *discernment of spirits*, he means discerning the action of good and evil spirits on the heart or spirit of a person, and that these spirits can come from within ourselves or from outside of us.

[201] David L. Fleming, S.J., *The Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius. A literal translation and A Contemporary Reading*. (St Louis, US, The institute of Jesuit Sources, 1978), 202. In my practice, we teach these principles from a spiritual or ordinary life perspective to identify essential and embodied phenomena in the course of leadership decision-making. See my leadership courses on "Balance of Life" and "Conflict, Consensus and Deep Democracy." Mennigke, 2016.

[202] Lobell, 61.

[203] Ibid.

role in the American and French Revolutions."[204] By the twentieth century, it had dominated

thinking with a functionalism[205] that is characteristic of leadership into the liquid age. The result

was it squeezed out any expression not related to a direct purpose, and successfully displaced any

sense of personification. It also gave permission to other functional cause's – like economists

talking about pollution as a neighborhood effect[206] – citing collateral damage, and abdicating

responsibility. A current example may be the justification of a wall on the US boarder with

Mexico, where complex issues surrounding intricate problems are reduced to simplistic

solutions.

EMBODIMENT: You've spoken to the case for wanting to reclaim a lost embodiment among

leaders. I'd like you to connect this to organizational practice and leadership.

MENNIGKE: Sure. Max Weber offers situated examples of discerning these movements in

the field of management and organizational theory. This is especially so, with the posthumous

development of his *traditional, rational-legal, and charismatic* theory on authority. These styles,

further developed by other theorists, contributed significantly to the multi-dimensional aspect of

leadership theory we understand today. Jeffery Houghton records that:

> Weber painted a distinct contrast between the acts of following a personal yet transitory
> charismatic leader as opposed to submitting to the more stable and impersonal traditional
> and rational-legal forms of authority. He saw further, that both legal-rational and
> charismatic authority, were forms of rebellion against the stagnant status quo of

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[204] Ibid.

[205] I am using *Functionalism*, like essentialism, to means a way of thought and operating which fulfills its direct purpose with little expression that is not related to its functional use.

[206] An example cited here is, "where *the neighborhood effect* is a central analytic notion in epidemiological studies for assessing people's exposures to and the health impact of environmental factors." (See Mei-Po Kwan, *The Neighborhood Effect Averaging Problem (NEAP): An Elusive Confounder of the Neighborhood Effect.* International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health 15, no. 9 (2018): 1841.)

traditional authority, the former through principles and procedures based on consensus and rationality, and the latter through an emotional reaction to a heroic leader.[207]

Weber suggested that the charismatic authority was transitory and unstable in nature, that "times of stress, turbulence, and rapid change are more conducive to a charismatic leadership approach because the transforming vision of a charismatic leader is more appealing in times of uncertainly."[208] The model gives the appearance of being a personalized, embodied form of leadership, but is in reality quite instrumental in its motive. Weber noted that charismatic authority often becomes the thing against which it is reacting. His *iron cage of rationality,* expressing a rational-legal model of authority, is also a symbol of social pressure encouraging behaviour beneficial to the self. It is a form of instrumental rationality "founded upon laws, rules and the power stemming from legitimate position or office."[209] This form of authority, growing from the perceptions and attitudes developed by functional rationality, defines the motive of work ethic and essentializes[210] leadership style.

In this study I make an assumption that the lengthy historical movement towards the "closed world system" (CWS) which Charles Taylor suggests played an almost unseen, yet definite formation of the motive among modern leaders. Taylor believes that "the modern conception of social order, starting with individuals, reinforces and is reinforced by the primacy of the ego in epistemology."[211] The supremacy of the ego, the limitation of religion, and the

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[207] Jeffery D. Houghton, "Does Max Weber's notion of authority still hold in the twenty-first century?" Journal of Management History, Vol. 16 Is 4. 2010, 449 – 45.Permanent link to this document: http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/17511341011073933.Downloaded on: 18 February 2017, at: 17:39 (PT),449

[208] Ibid., 452.

[209] Ibid., 450.

[210] Essentialism is the view that every entity has a set of attributes that are necessary to its identity and function. Those holding an essential view remain pragmatic about the segments of issues, and call repeatedly for a return to boundaries. In the case of political functionality, the leader calls for a return to the functional promises of election, and the followers are swept along by the tide of pragmatism of the leader. However, they are being shifted into a dualistic mindset which suits their own needs. There is little expression that is not related to its functional use.

[211] Taylor, 74.

reduction of the mystical, are part of what Taylor suggests in CWS as "the key entry point to modern secularity."[212] This state of being among leaders, slowly infused as the new normal, emphasized *production, action, stoicism, and an instrumental rationality in decision making*. I trace this very understandable enlightenment movement to argue that it erodes the role that vulnerability and personability play in recovering an embodied way of being among leaders.

Instrumental rationality is deceptive. Some leaders, unable to discern their motive for choosing behaviour in one way or another, see themselves as the answer to the crises in society. Driven by functional passion, they can incite partisan movements in a society in transition. In 2016, *Fortune* magazine reported that then U.S. presidential candidate, Donald Trump, called his campaign a more intense version of the movement that swept Reagan into the White House in 1980. "We're an incredible and great movement,"[213] he boasted in his victory speech on November 9, 2016. When political pundits made reference to Trump's constant rebranding of his campaign as a movement, a "ground swell" or "surge," it fed this instrumental-like passion. Three years later, what was a campaign, then a movement, is now even more entrenched as an 'ism. A movement, different in nature from a campaign, shifts the rhetoric surrounding it from the dispassionate to the passionate, from the politically intense to the popular, from a common way to an unconventional approach. Similarly, rigid political and spiritual movements drive with a passion that excludes those who do not buy in to the leader's distinctive form. This is different from a passion that invites freedom, and the discussion on the nature of being.

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[212] Ibid., 73.

[213] *Fortune* magazine. Retrieved from: http://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2016/11/9/13569124/donald-trump-wins-2016-presidential-election-victory-speech-transcript.

3.2.2   Embodied

EMBODIMENT: I'm going to push back at you about this blend of knowledge and the humane!

We talked earlier about having made a case for a lost sense of human quality which holds to itself the best of sagacity, but blended with sharing its humanness. I see you wanting to correct the balance which history has skewed, but at times your retort sounds reactive! What part of your preference for embodiment is rooted in your personal history? How do you examine this, and more interestingly, what is the response of people on your programs to how you drive the balance?

MENNIGKE: *(Taken aback.)* You are scarily direct! However if I am honest, there is a small attraction for wanting to be a functional leader myself, just to make sure I measure up! So I see the tendency, because of how success has come to be measured. On the issue of whether there is a balanced view of whether the leadership world is stuck in a functional rationality versus a personified rationality, I will hold my ground. However, embedded in my history from childhood is a script which reads: "You do not have an innate ability for using logic." I can see how it has played out over the years of my development, until I sought out, or stumbled upon, significant people who affirmed my logical ability.

EMBODIMENT: Well done. You challenge others on these things regularly, and I would want to be sure that your self-challenge is as rigorous as is your guidance of others. I know you take regular supervision on your work, and no doubt your supervisor ensures your journey runs parallel to that of your mentees and students?

MENNIGKE: I do take regular supervision on my work, and ensure it is a line item in my work budget. While I know that working with my shadow side is a personal growth area, I have

to face into why I shrink from trusting it, when this is obvious. However, over years I have noticed my attraction for forming friendships that develop my more logical self, which is a natural inclination for the psyche in seeking to balance itself. Sure, there is always the possibility that I might criticise and over-invest in a reactive side of my own *need* for growth. I am aware of this having occupied a large place in my adult development. I think the aim is to trust and develop the balance of these sides of myself, to ensure I am not living out of a vicarious role as a teacher and counsellor, as apposed to facing into the issues myself. I recognize how, early on in ministry this was a potential danger I had to confront, and how, too easily it can revert to a pattern. This is a danger for all leaders in helping professions – counsellors, clergy, educators, medical doctors' – we hold power over our clients, simply through our titles.

EMBODIMENT: I don't imagine this was a comfortable challenge – and especially so as you're staking your own growth in history here! An article that caught my attention a while ago, illustrates the balance you desire. The Vatican News Service records how pope Francis, during the 2013 Chrism Mass[214] in St Peter's Basilica, called on the world's priests "to bring the healing power of God's grace to everyone in need, to stay close to the marginalized, and to be shepherds living with the smell of the sheep."[215] Of course, the Pontiff's personal history as an agent for social justice in his home country speaks loudly, but I suspect the pope means that leading others does not mean managing from a distance, receiving reports, or even watching what people do,

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[214] The Chrism Mass is the liturgy held by Christians in the Anglican, Orthodox and Roman Catholic traditions on the (Maundy) Thursday before Easter. Here, the bishop, as the first among the priests, and from whom the clergy take their authority to operate as pastors among God's people, encourages the clergy in their role as shepherds, intercessors, priests and leaders of God's people. At this liturgy Clergy renew the vows of their ordination, and witness the blessing of the oils that will be used in the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, ordination and the anointing of the sick.

[215] (Glaztz, C., 2013, March 28). Priests should be "shepherds living with the smell of the sheep." *The Catholic Telegraph.* Retrieved from http://www.thecatholictelegraph.com/pope-francis-priests-should-be-shepherds-living-with-the-smell-of-the-sheep/13439

but being among them, operationally as well as emotionally. How do you relate to this in your work?

MENNIGKE: I think you're right; it is too easy for leaders to use operational-type discussions to *know about* the issues which affect people on their teams, whereas *knowing* the people you lead, their fears and vulnerabilities, means being comfortable in sharing life with them. It introduces the 'smell' of reciprocal knowing as a leadership art. Such knowing requires knowing oneself first, followed closely by knowing the real nature of leadership. The challenge that leaders face is how best to explore this reality and I would submit it is not achieved through a "hands-off" model. Through his incarnational metaphor, the pope, as a priest and shepherd, is encouraging an embodied leadership presence, and one he practices.

EMBODIMENT: The point is, rationality is a quality of balance not a logical bias. I think you have developed the point about functional rationality historically, but the emphasis is that leadership is a way of being as a person, more than it is a carrying the flag of action with the followers trailing behind.

MENNIGKE: I think some would say the leader should carry the flag, and this is one way people experienced leadership in the great wars of 1914-1918 and 1939-1945, for example. However, I think military examples defeat the purpose – even though there are all kinds of war leaders. Certainly many have led with compassion. However, I think it is as much *who one is* in relation to self, others, and the environment[216] as it is what one *does* in the role of being a leader. Congruous leadership action arises *from* oneself rather than an imposed action *on* the self. In a chapter about our *obligation to the world*, Hollis expresses the interdependence of the encounter

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[216] I include the environment here to make the point that we are custodians of the environment. In the rubric for baptism in the Anglican Church of Canada, inclusion into Christ and the community of the church, candidates and their sponsors are asked: "Will you respect and care for this fragile earth, our island home, striving to be good stewards who support life?"

of self and others: "We cannot know ourselves without the dialectical encounter with others, an encounter which obliges us to define who we are, and then to grow by incorporating our experience of the other."[217] I argue that among the many processes involved in developing leaders for our time, the more converting processes are those that affirm an energy and passion at the center of how leaders live, find freedom in themselves, and recognize the events of life that are transformative. Such events are conversions[218] in a leader's journey from a place previously occupied, with its truths and ways of being, to new ways of operating or being in the world. I have accompanied many leaders who testify to personally transformative experiences like these. Leaders who have not found personal freedom cannot offer it to others as something they know from within themselves – attempts to do so are short-lived.

EMBODIMENT: I guess that means the freedom you have found in developing a balance personally is what makes you able to teach others? Hence my question earlier. But I'm eager to know whether the freedom you refer to is a consequence of modern psychology, or whether it has been known by leaders before these more psychologically active times. What I mean is that our age gives more permission than times before now, to access, apply and express emotional understanding. This does not mean that those from previous generations did not access this freedom of knowledge and expression, but just that our world now, finds it more acceptable for expression of this kind. In many first-world contexts, children learn in school, and (some)

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[217] Hollis, *On This Journey We Call Our Home*. 86.

[218] By "conversion" here, as in chapter 2, I mean recognising a movement from one way of being to another way of being. It may be accompanied by some divine realization, or by having worked at an attribute of the self for a while, the realization that I am now in another space or see things in a different way. It could simply be the knowledge that I was in one place/space, and now am in another. Generally, it is accompanied by a sense of gratitude that I did not make the change happen, but that I realize it has happened, and experience gratitude for this. Conversion recognizes the change of a state: from something to something.

governments legislate for rights to expression of being which were foreign to previous

generations.

MENNIGKE: I think the argument for freedom as an embodied reality is as timeless as

conversion. For example, it finds a raison d'être in St Augustine's 4th century *Confessions*, and

the human desire for freedom.[219] He acknowledges in a response to his God in this famed verse:

> You are merciful towards the sins of those who confess to you; you hear the groans of the captives, and set us free from the bonds we have forged for ourselves, provided only we no longer defy you in the arrogance of a spurious freedom. Hence it is that through loving humility we find our way back to you.[220]

But Augustine's comparison of freedoms here is a tension in which leaders live more and

more. In the previous century, Max Weber's inquiry into authority and leadership faced into the

description of what he calls the *rational/legal* form of authority, with its roots in the *Iron Cage of

Rationality*.[221] The tension will live with us for as long as it takes us to balance the liberation of

leadership from that which of what sacramentalizes[222] it. The core of leadership freedom lies in

the release from the trap of false freedom to an embodied way of seeing life from the most vital

part of ourselves,[223] which is the heart. The absence of embodied rationality, allows leadership

education and leadership practice to slip into a "heartless," functional mode. In my regular work

as a priest, I have been called to large worksites where there have been accidents and deaths of

workers. In these places, one can feel the mood, and see tangible displays of emotion and

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[219] Lest we think this freedom is limited to a spiritual sense, consider Augustine's life prior to his conversion to Christianity. Initially, Augustine was not strongly influenced by Christianity and its belief system, despite growing up as a nominal Christian. He lived as a Manichean for many years, and enjoyed a lifestyle of his own choice.

[220] Augustine, Book 3, chapter 8, #16.

[221] Max Weber's *Iron Cage*, as it is sometimes known, is like a symbol of the social pressure to behave in an expected way. It may be pressure from within ourselves, or from another, the group or an organisation. Weber focussed on the examination of subjective social stress.

[222] By *sacramentalizes* I mean making some ideology especially holy and therefore not changeable or negotiable.

[223] The "heart" as "the essential or most vital part of something." From: "Heart." Merriam-Webster.com. Accessed November 7, 2017. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/heart.

expressions of the heart among usually emotion-free men. Tears, reminiscing on relationships, and feelings of helplessness emerge as they face mortality, and the love and appreciation they didn't express to their deceased colleague. These are expressions of being, where *being* is an abstract concept. Embodiment can be described as "giving concrete form to an abstract concept,"[224] and as such, *being* cannot be understood outside of embodiment. Therefore, understanding the mode of being a leader helps grasp the *being* of the thing called leadership, and as such describes its nature. By contrast, instrumental rationality needs to remain within its own functional confines to respond to issues. However, may I also suggest that the fate of being caught in the confines of an instrumental rationality is also the responsibility of those who choose to live on one side of rationality because it can be a safe, protected existence. Augustine's reference to *the bonds we have forged for ourselves,* is that kind of choice − for a safe and protected existence − holding the embodied self at bay in favour of the safer, less rational. When the reason for choosing instrumental rationality as a way of being, it restricts the freedom to embrace a personable rationality, and open to the vulnerability of failure. It is our responsibility if we choose to keep the balancing side of the psyche at bay.

Describing the nature of something can be illusive to a mind that has been trained functionally, and hence it is often difficult for leaders operating in an instrumental or functional mode to begin grasping the concept of an embodied mode of operating in what they conceive to be a functional world. In a footnote below (see # 216), I have captured an all-too-brief summary, called the *trinitarian lens*, devised by Rocha as a tool for responding to the challenge that tries to define being or imagine the reality of something. Rocha claims that: "Phenomenology is nothing

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[224] "Embodiment": *American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*, Fifth Edition. S.V. "embodiment." Retrieved November 13 2017 from https://www.thefreedictionary.com/embodiment.

more or less than a way to imagine the real."[225] He offers the *trinitarian lens* as a tool that can

help the important understanding about what he calls "the particular affinity between

phenomenology and ontology," and says, "This relationship exists in stark contrast to other

methods and approaches that respond to 'problems.' "[226] It is a means to defining the being of

something in a way that makes it real. As I understand my engineering friends, for a scientific,

functional mind, being able to define something in a real way makes it possible to work with it.

EMBODIMENT: This inquiry into understanding *being* seems connected to what I heard you

discussing about transformation in your interview with Conversion. You reference your *model of

events* which derives inspiration from Badiou's *Being and Event*. Is there a connection between

all these senses of being?

MENNIGKE: When those of us who are less experienced writers discover inspirational

concepts, we want to exploit them! Indeed, there is a connection. I argue that in leadership

education, *understanding the nature of being comes about better through the comparison of how

I understand the nature of ones being before and after events that are personally transforming*. It

empowers my attempts to answer the questions posed when organizations query why leaders

who truly "access the heart" undergo changes in themselves. They ask because of noticing that

more often than not, change results in disruption of the leader's personal and work environment.

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[225] Rocha. 15.

[226] Rocha*,* 25. Rocha's tool called the *trinitatian lens* assists us in a phenomenological study on the nature of the *Being, Existence and Subsistence* of the thing called leadership. He means it to be a lens through which one can look at something and see its various parts in three ways of existing. Rocha offers these categories to assist describing the reality of things in an embodied mode of being. He describes *being* as "the context within which all things are, where things subsist and exist. Anything outside of being is nothing and therefore of no concern to us." His description of *subsistence* is "the vital, energetic and conceptual, as opposed to perceptual, category of things that are within Being," and he calls *existence* "the category of things within Being that subsist and that possess these two qualities (being within Being and subsisting), with the added feature of existing." See the beginning of this footnote [226] for the citation.

I list these definitions, because each holds a quality of embodiment, which enables holding these elements in balance, thus preventing essentializing any one aspect of leadership. Rocha clarifies: "The purpose of the trinitarian lens I have presented is to use the categories together, as a single and irreducible whole but in different focuses, in order to seek Being, sense subsistence, and see existence."[226]

Leadership journeys, spiritual or psychological, which take embodiment seriously, open us up to

embodied cognition[227] of some sort. I propose that such "converting" events are often

experienced as *graced events*. Graced, in that we experience receiving a gift simply as a gift

without previous cause**.**[228] To use Rocha's term, which I have referenced elsewhere, they have a

subsistence that energizes the being, often seen in historic, spiritual and psychological events.

These events, when shared and lived out by the person, have the potential to liberate others, thus

giving them consequence with a *universal* – that is, a far-reaching – quality. Ray Brassier*,*

commenting on Badiou's *Being and Event*,[229] describes these events as "ruptures in the order of

being and knowledge: ruptures which simultaneously reconfigure the order of reality and the

conditions structuring our access to reality. Badiou calls such ruptures 'events.' "[230] Configuring

reality like this is part of the description of how phenomenology can describe leadership as

ontologically real. It is a conversion from an essential reality to one changed by acknowledging

embodied reality in life events. These events allow an osmosis between intellectual and mystical

experience, about which I would like us to talk next.

EMBODIMENT: Sure, and I think Mystery will take up the conversation from here.

3.2.3 **Mysterious**

(Mystery Enters, Embodiment sits in the background, listening.)

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[227] Embodied cognition is the emerging viewpoint which holds that cognitive processes are deeply rooted in the body's interactions with the world. Margaret Wilson, Six Views of Embodied Cognition. *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review* 9, no. 4 (2002): 625-636.

[228] Fleming, para.330, page 214.

[229] Badiou, fn #185.

[230] Ray Brassier*,* "Presentation as anti-phenomenon in Alain Badiou's being and event." Continental Philosophy Review.39: 59–77(2006), DOI: 10.1007/s11007-006-9014-5.

MYSTERY: So, where would you like to pick up? I've been listening in from the side here.

MENNIGKE: Embodiment and I were talking about my observation of *events* in the lives of leaders I have accompanied, and reflected that events often allow an ease of passage between the intellectual and mystical experience. It is like the mystical makes the adaptation into an embodied experience more possible. I am keen to know what you think.

MYSTERY: (*Wistfully.*) In our previous interview, I suggested that the mystical introduces a curious protest against the unknown in many western adults. The question is: Would leaders operating in a concrete world, requiring solid results, have time to bother with uncharted territory like the mystical? Especially a land that for many belongs safely in the fairy-tale world. Your thoughts?

MENNIGKE: It can be argued that the world of mythology is a snubbing of human intelligence. On the other hand, belief and human spiritual experience has always contributed to human wisdom. I would agree with Karen Armstrong that while the unknown can be a scary experience:

> In our scientific culture, we often have rather simplistic notions of the divine. In the ancient world, the 'gods' were rarely regarded as supernatural beings with discrete personalities, living a totally separate metaphysical existence. Mythology was not about theology, in the modern sense, but about human experience. People thought that gods, humans, animals and nature were inextricably bound up together, subject to the same laws, and composed of the same divine substance. There was initially no ontological gulf between the world of the gods and the world of men and women. When people spoke of the divine, they were usually speaking about an aspect of the mundane. The very existence of the gods was inseparable from that of a storm, a sea, a river, or from those powerful human emotions – love, rage or sexual passion – that seemed momentarily to lift men and women onto a different plane of existence so that they saw the world with new eyes.[231]

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[231] Armstrong, *5.*

Karen Armstrong is in a way describing Badiou's *event*, but instilled with Rocha's description of *subsistence* that even momentarily energizes the being in an everyday way. This is what leadership needs to recapture from what was commonplace in Neanderthal[232] times – when "mythology and science both extend the scope of human beings. Like science and technology, mythology, as we shall see, is not about opting out of this world, but about enabling us to live more intensely within it."[233] I suggest that this is the substance of embodiment, and I list as it as the third element of reframing leadership in this age.

MYSTERY: I know Armstrong's work well, so I can say with her: "It is, therefore, a mistake to regard myth as an inferior mode of thought, which can be cast aside when human beings have attained the age of reason."[234] There is a sense in which myth is always happening, yet in some ways evades the knowledge of ever having happened. It is in our nature to remain hidden when we choose.

MENNIGKE: You suggested that the numinous introduces a curious protest against the unknown in many western adults. While exploring how to express this, I reflected with Moss Whelan – an author of mystical novels – on the emotional mix of terror and beauty one experiences when stepping out of the ordinary world into the mystical. He says: "it is our ego or persona resisting the loss of identity. It does not want to end." He said, "To approach the divine is to lose one's grasp of borders, schedules, and identities. A curious fear indeed. It's curious in the sense of being the thing that defines us and contains us."[235]

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[232] This is the time Armstrong begins writing about as she traces the history of myth.

[233] Ibid.,3

[234] Ibid., 8.

[235] Moss Whelan, e-mail correspondence with the author, July 22, 2019. Whelan had recently published *Gray Hawk of Terrapin.* (Los Angeles: Prodigy Gold Books,2018)

MYSTERY: It is interesting to me that you use *mystical* in a much more tangible way than many – perhaps your author-friend Moss excluded. Are you describing the mystical as a metaphor in the liquid age? Green's description of metaphor is of something employing the tangible to refer to something intangible, so that it "provides a temporary framework that allows us to make enough sense of our situation so that we can respond more or less adequately to it."[236]

MENNIGKE: Forgive me if I misunderstand your world – because you *are* mystery –but I think part of the problem in our very functional world is that we describe the mystical world too gently, almost forcing it to be intangible. However, if you consider the mysterious world with the same reality as we do the tangible world, and if we see the liquidity of the liquid age as expressing the intangible in our time, then mystery can be a metaphor to –as Green describes it – help us make sense of our situation. I submit that seeing the mysterious world as exclusively intangible is a product of the secular age. This has contributed to some Christians struggling to see that the incarnation of Christ means the natural and the divine meet in the present!

MYSTERY: (*Breaking in*) And, you're about to say, that the incarnation means this does not change when Christ ascended. Heaven is as much *here* as it is *there*?

MENNIGKE: Indeed! Our world has learned to separate the secular and the mysterious, a way that does not find expression in the Hebraic understanding of the spiritual, or in any ancient Indigenous cultures. Mystics of many traditions testify to the presence of the divine in everyday life, and my contention is that – certainly for Christians – we stand with one foot on earth and the other in heaven, all the time. The mysterious so often seems intangible to the western mind!

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[236] Green, 6.

Therefore, mystery is a metaphor that can enable a more personified kind of leadership in the liquid age, but the process of it becoming part of leadership language is a journey in itself. We fool ourselves if we think it is without risk for many leaders who protest within themselves at having to access something they have not risked before! I work with this reality among leaders almost every day. "Is it safe? Will I look silly? Can I be vulnerable? What will my staff or boss say? These are not imagined questions. If you have thought them, then this is you!

MYSTERY: I see you challenge me with some passion! Clearly, you have felt this fear! Is there an example of another metaphor that could help a leader bridge the world of the logical rational and the embodied rational?

MENNIGKE: I think another metaphor could be seeing oneself as the host to the mystical – to say: "It's as if I am the custodian of welcoming mystery to myself for now." I think there is a natural curiosity in the "child" part of us, which wants to explore the unknown even if it is scary. Why else would the children in C. S. Lewis' *Narnia* tales be tempted to look into the wardrobe? Leaders have been taught that wasting time with what is not judged to be real and busy is career-limiting. More often, however, I think they lack the introduction to the notion of visiting the mystical land of *their* inner world. Saying "yes" to the charm of what I'd call an *underground generosity* is to realize how much, in daily leadership, we really miss out on the hospitality of visiting with ourselves in places unknown. Successful novelists and science-fiction writers— from classics such as J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, C.S. Lewis' *Narnia* tales, and J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter*, to George Lucas' *Star Wars,* and even George R.R Martin's *Game of Thrones* – play with a world outside of reality, and successfully mesmerise all ages to escape and stay there for a time. Similarly, if we play host to mystery for long enough to find the "sweet

spot" on the leadership journey, I am increasingly convinced it makes the difference in how we lead others, chiefly because it is about how we live with ourselves.

MYSTERY: When out at the movies or theatre, adults seem to enter this mystical land as quickly as a child during a bed-time story. Do film directors have a formula you don't yet have, to entice leaders into your Narnia of leadership education?

MENNIGKE: Live theatre and film are metaphors which carry us along the journey of various liminal states in the liquid age. I recently saw the stage production *Tolkien* by Ron Reed. It portrayed the extraordinary relationship between J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis.[237] It traced an evocative thirty-year relationship – seemingly experienced by both people as an emotional, literary, real and mystical, internal and external tug of war between two celebrated minds. On that journey, Tolkien and Lewis wrote the works that publishers, filmmakers, preachers and parents have used to captivate their audiences since 1977. Their relationship journey and creative work is a story of a rationality/embodiment tug-of-war, illustrating a tension which resolves in the end product of truly best-seller writing and film. Difficult journeys generally bring recognition of wonder, and invite *events* for self-aware people. Education as a journey will be argued in an interview with my interlocutor named *Contradiction* (in scene five).[238]

MYSTERY: Armstrong suggests that the inquiry into how leadership practice and education have shifted over time seems dependent on the major movements reflecting how the intellectual,

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[237] Cecilia Lu, "New Vancouver Play Explores the Relationship between the Narnia and Hobbit Authors," *Daily Hive*, 2018, http://dailyhive.com/vancouver/vancouver-play-tolkien-cs-lewis-geek-history. Vancouver's *Daily Hive* arts commentary said, "Perhaps mirroring the authors' most enduring characters, Tolkien follows the development of a deep friendship that 'profoundly' influenced their imagination and writing. The complex 'literary friendship' came under strain over time, and after thirty years of being BFFs, Tolkien and C. S. Lewis eventually grew apart."

[238] My bracket - this is a live interview, and not yet recorded at this point. I use the word *scene* to fit with the sense of the interview and characters. It means chapter 5.

social and spiritual revolutions have forced human beings to revise their mythology.[239] Are you

suggesting that we are simply in another era of human history, and that liquid modernity has to

ride out this fluidity as other periods of history have done, simply applying your leadership

formulae?

MENNIGKE: *(Challenging.)* No! Not simply in the ordinary way! This age requires a much

more robust approach! Bauman believes firmly that the kind of liquidity we are facing in this age

is different, and I agree. It would be presumptuous to claim that because our intellectual ability is

more advanced, we have the answers. This will put us back into the instrumental rationality that

has always lured the human mind. We have increasing historic hindsight and a responsibility to

analyse and learn from history, so as not to repeat patterns that lead nowhere. However, human

desire for possession and power might mean we do not learn from our history and mistakes.

Because of this, we constantly deal with countering binary ideologies and 'isms, driven by

spiritual, educational, political and other opportunistic leaders. Opting for an increased

embodiment in leadership practice is never at the expense of the rational, but a journey looking

for the balanced mixture of ancient and modern wisdom.

MYSTERY: You are asking for education in the liquid age to produce a set of sensible

leaders who will in turn teach other leaders for posterity. But what do embodiment and mystery

need to do to make this possible?

MENNIGKE: Embodiment is the process of incarnating something. Leaders who are able to

expand their own previously lived experience are able to provide the metaphors that bridge the

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[239] Armstrong, 66. I use *mythology* to mean the collected stories (or myths) of a culture. It might be the recorded story of a people, as the combination of myth and logos. This is different from *mystical experience*, which may be how one experiences an encounter with the mystical, which means the spiritual or transcendent. See also Hollis' citation at footnote #232.

uncertainty of fluidity. They do this for themselves, and for their followers. Those who are unable to reach into intangible or ambiguous experience sacramentalize their leadership or ministry, institution or intellect, bible or ritual, until it becomes an idol. Essentializing something is often the result of the fear of change. Hollis captures this when he says that:

> the anxiety we feel in the face of change and ambiguity leads us to cling to known symbols, but continuing to worship them is to pay disrespect to the mystery, which is already elsewhere. Fundamentalism is the sin of literalism. It is blasphemous because it seeks to limit the autonomy of divine energy to what can be known and contained. This may seem to lower anxiety, but is contrary to the very nature of mystery."[240]

Every generation of leaders who remain comfortable in the purely rational produce yet another generation of the same kind of leaders by breeding disinterest, or fueling revolt.

MYSTERY: Speaking for ourselves, the link between *myth* and *mystery*[241] helps understand the value of abstract issues informing leadership. For example, imagine a team meeting where the members are stressed, through weeks of having met deadlines in preparation for an important strategic exercise. If the leader were able to begin the meeting with an imaginative contemplation, breathing exercise, or by reading an applicable fairy tale, the team members would be carried into a relaxing space for a while. If the story was carefully chosen, it may even speak into how people can relieve their stress, or simply relax in the work space which has been stressful. Not many leaders have confidence to do this. But you offer exercises such as this in your workshops, so can you offer some understanding of how we can better use the imaginative or mystical to operate in an age of liquidity?

MENNIGKE: Hollis helps by explaining that:

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[240] Hollis, *Tracking the Gods*, 10.

[241] In this paper I am using a number of words which relate broadly to myth and mystery. I am purposefully using the common root of sacred, holy, transformed, mystery, mythical, numinous and mysterious, as containing elements of the supernatural.

> Myth, with its substance of symbol, rhythm and metaphor, bridges from the unknown to the known and helps the human stand in some sort of meaningful relationship to mystery. Myth has a mediatorial function, as implied by the etymology of symbol and metaphor (*syn + ballein*, to project towards sameness, and *meta + pherein*, to carry over or across).[242]

While the concept of myth has lost significance for many, and particularly so in some branches of Christian history, mystery itself remains intact as an interpreter. I have accompanied leaders whose Christian traditions[243] had historically discarded sacred images, myth and the use of mystery in teaching and homiletics. But I have seen some rediscover a more "in touch," personable leadership way, as they learned to use and trust myth, image and metaphor on their own journeys. Hollis teaches that: "given this understanding of the mediatorial function of symbol or mythic image, one can see how critical images are, for they help us stand in a human relationship to the mystery."[244] He helps bridge the gap in the fluid age through explaining:

> Expressed in its most succinct form, the study of myth is the search for that which connects us most deeply with our own nature and our place in the cosmos. Surely no more central issue confronts us collectively and individually. Our culture has lost the longitudes and latitudes of the soul, hence our crazed careering from ideology to ideology.[245]

This helps express two important threads in my study. One is my hypothesis on the importance of mystery in human development theory, and the second is the connection to developing leaders in a liquid age. Hollis' urgency about connection with self and community reminds us of the need for an embodied mode of being accessed through participating in the transcendent.

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[242] Hollis, *Tracking the Gods*, 8.
[243] I refer here to the 16th century protestant reformation, and the many 'reformations' to follow.
[244] Hollis, *Tracking the Gods*: 9.
[245] Ibid., 8.

Taylor, researching long term trends in secularity, wrestles with what he calls "our cross purposes around the struggle of the issue of transcendent" – and how "the supernatural can be denied only from a firm footing in the 'natural' as an autonomous order."[246] One of Taylor's major contributions to leadership, as I appreciate it, is the explanation of what it means when the value of mystery is denied. He is writing close to the beginning of the age of liquid modernity,[247] and expresses his struggle with the issues of secularity, having lived through and documented the widening historical separation between the natural and the supernatural. He claims that the separation involved the (re)conceptualization of the social order, which epistemologically emphasizes the centrality of the Ego above the communal. This, Taylor would concur, defeats an incarnate mode of leadership. Children, up to a certain age, process things, learn and yearn in the realm of mystery. Through society's eagerness for us to grow up and understand on a cognitive level, many of us are weaned too early from this innate ability.

MYSTERY: You're saying that the value of an inquiry like this dissertation is to stop a kind of early weaning, before it imprints on the minds of another generation of leaders?

MENNIGKE: I am. Lewis wrote his Narnia tales to "appeal especially to nine to twelve-year-olds but some will read it earlier, and many will still enjoy it a good deal later."[248] There are stories of parents in some Christian traditions who prohibit their children from reading Harry Potter, for fear that God does not approve of magic. I would argue that a healthy access to the transcendent enables personal creativity and the ability to solve problems through the

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[246] Taylor, 59.

[247] The term *liquid modernity* is Bauman's word for the current time. In the mid-1990's his work referred to "modernity" and "postmodernity", but since the turn of the millennium, his books have used "liquid" and "solid" modernity as descriptions.

[248] Comment by Kay Webb, editor of Puffin Books in 1959, in C.S. Lewis *'The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe'*. In flyleaf of 1959 edition.

progression of metaphors, story, saga, narrative, myth, fairy tales and archetype.[249] We learn to

use and know the supernatural through the various spiritual traditions of our tribes,[250] and these

offer access to a world that is able to complement the cognitive mind. Charles Taylor refers to

this need for balance in his chapter on *Nineteenth-Century Trajectories*.[251] He points out the

movement away from the balance between the cognitive mind and the mystical: "An important

retreat occurred; so that by mid-century John Stuart Mill (true, not quite a neutral observer) could

say that 'the old opinions in religion, morals and politics, are so much discredited in the

intellectual minds as to have lost the greater part of their efficacy for good.'"[252] Taylor is tracing

the emergence of the secular age as an evolution into 'Polite' society, a form of the preservation

of life, and using God-given reason for discipline and improvement. Quoting John Locke, the

seventeenth century Enlightenment thinker, Taylor explains: "So that 'everyone as he is bound to

preserve himself, and not quit his Station willfully; so by the like reason when his Preservation

comes not in competition, ought he, as much as he can, to preserve the rest of Mankind."[253]

Taylor's desire is for us to: "see in Locke's formulation how much he sees mutual service in

terms of profitable exchange. 'Economic' (that is, ordered, peaceful, productive) activity has

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[249] See my Leadership course: *Professional conduct/provoking issues. Using Archetypes to unpack and enlighten difficult situations, June 2017.* See also: Peter Reason (ed), in *Human Inquiry in Action: Developments in new paradigm research*. (London, Sage Publications: 1988), records his research using two paths of inquiry into experience: One a conventional path of *Explanation* inquiry, and another, a path of *Expression*. In the latter, he traces the progression of investigating the problem or experience through metaphor, story, saga, myth, fairy tale and archetypes, and then allows the two paths to communicate with each other towards meaningful inquiry through an arena for dialogue and dialectic development. Using this method of research inquiry, I have successfully done practical work in "researching" problems in the field with management consultants in highly pressured situations. Using Reason's expressive path of Inquiry, we have processed issues and found solutions for previously deadlocked situations. This methodology employs the use of the mystical, and I found it successful in releasing the blockages to which the cognitive mind could no longer find solutions through logic and analysis. These could emerge through storytelling, which both relaxed the tired consultants, enabled relaxation, and found solutions which when applied, surprised the participants.

[250] By "tribes," I mean the cultures, communities and spirituality to which we belong, and which form our initial perceptions and attitudes responses and behaviors.

[251] Taylor, 377.

[252] Taylor, 378.

[253] Taylor, in Vanhoozer and Martin, 72.

become the model for human behavior, and the key for harmonious coexistence."[254] The "Secular

Age" lives within today's Liquid Age and "has profoundly shaped the forms of social imaginary

which dominate in the modern West: the market economy, the public sphere, the sovereign

'people.' "[255]

If the call on leadership educators in the fluid age is to liberate leadership from the trap of

rationality and engage a mode of embodied leadership, then answering this call suggests a

journey of transformative learning of which mystery is a core part. Armstrong concludes her

book on a history of myth, by comparing myth and the power of the novel:

> A powerful novel becomes part of the backdrop of our lives long after we have laid the
> book aside. It is an exercise in make-believe that, like yoga or a religious festival, breaks
> down the barriers of space and time and extends our sympathies, so that we are able to
> empathize with other lives and sorrows. It teaches compassion, the ability to 'feel with'
> others. And like mythology, an important novel is transformative. If we allow it to do so,
> it can change us forever. Mythology, as we have seen, is an art form. Any powerful work
> of art invades our being and changes it forever.[256]

MYSTERY: It seems that your view about embodiment and mystery as part of leadership

culture in the liquid age expresses a strong desire for leaders to choose the beginning of this

journey. But I also remember your statement– that all leaders *can* experience conversion, some

should, none must, and many do not.

MENNIGKE: There cannot be imperative on this. Human transformation can only be

encouraged, never imposed; therefore, my argument is at best an appeal for leaders in our age to

examine the points of inquiry. An embodied rationality alongside mystery, are two parts of

reframing leadership culture in a way that is able to embrace contradiction and complexity

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[254] Ibid., 73.
[255] Taylor, in Vanhoozer and Martin, 73.
[256] Armstrong, 147.

effectively, or not. Without at least a felt experience of embodied rationality and mystery as a bridge in this liminal world, I believe that leaders lack the basic tools to properly confront complexity in the liquid age.

MYSTERY: I do not hear you denying the need for employing rationality, but arguing for the *kind* of rationality that supports much needed leadership transformation but outside of historically practiced critical rationality? Is the gap not too wide for many leaders to bridge when critical rationality involves formal logic, subject specificity, understanding context, and argument,[257] and leaders are taught to argue in this way?

MENNIGKE: It may be, but that is a choice leaders must make – particularly when faced with the kind of significant events described in chapter 2's dialogue with Contradiction – events which transformational leadership theory describes as *disorientating dilemmas*.[258] In chapter 2, I referred to graced events as transforming occasions displaying "ruptures in the order of being and knowledge: ruptures which simultaneously reconfigure the order of reality and the conditions structuring our access to reality."[259] Disorientating dilemmas are such events, and adult educators like myself make a call for recognizing the surprize and mystery of these events which do not subject themselves to critical analysis. In my experience, persistence in trying to apply such analysis generally results in confusion, in much the same way as relentless questioning of spiritual grace may result in spiritual desolation. I would seem that in education–

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[257] Here. we are defining the elements of critical rationality as offered by: Christopher Winch, "Developing Critical Rationality as a Pedagogical Aim." *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 38, no. 3 (2004): 467-484. Accessed online at: https://doi-org.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/10.1111/j.0309-8249.2004.00398.x . June 10th, 2020.

[258] Here I use a definition disorienting dilemma explained by: "Mezirow's model of an ideal-typical learning process, a disorienting dilemma represents the initiation of a transformative learning experience usually denoting a life crisis that triggers a questioning of assumptions, resulting in transformed beliefs" . See: Disorienting Dilemmas as a Catalyst for Transformative Learning. In: Anna Laros, Fuhr T., Taylor E.W. (eds) Transformative Learning Meets Bildung. *International Issues in adult Education*. Sense Publishers, Rotterdam. (2017). Accessed online at https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6300-797-9_7. June 10th, 2020.

[259] See footnote # 229.

either induced by an educator– or by happenstance, generally induce anxiety and stress, but time, and acceptance often result in transformative experience.

MYSTERY: You are suggesting that mystery plays a significant part in such events, as they could be entrances into transformative life experiences. It may also be true for many in this time of the global Covid-19 pandemic, that disorientating dilemmas are induced through unplanned life circumstances, from sickness to death, from financial upheaval to extreme material loss. I understand that young people may not be able to negotiate these alone, but do you think that adult leaders need guidance to negotiate the circumstances which as far as can be seen now, are not time-predictable?

MENNIGKE: Covid-19 is a painful yet realistic icon for the age of liquid modernity. It provides a ready platform to help discern and hold the unknown for leaders. It is reflective of the mysterious unknown, and of what was described in an earlier dialogue as a *liminal state*. The state of not knowing yet knowing, is the place of knowing from outside of critical rational thought. It is a mysterious, *emergent condition* to help form the as-yet-unformed new rationality. And in this lays a foundation for an *emergent rationality* that can be relied upon in the future, but without the encumbrances of what developed as functional rationality.

MYSTERY: Between us, we've approached critical rationality from the other side. I hope this will steer the inquiry for the next set of interviews with interlocutor *Contradiction*.

(*Mystery exits to join Embodiment*.)

3.3   After the Word

(*Embodiment and Mystery join Mennigke.*)

EMBODIMENT: We are going to offer some reflection on our engagement with you about embodied and mysterious leadership. For my part, I've heard you say some impassioned things

about shifting the culture of leadership education in the liquid age, as you called embodiment and mystery pivotal to a leader's journey. I liked how you traced a brief history of why rationality lost what you called the *sagacity of personal incarnation*. I think you meant it to be either an invitation to what is not known about these personified attributes which are normal to life, or a reminder of what is missing for a large part of teaching culture among western leaders. Your argument that either way, the liquid age –containing a large proportion of millennials who are the current and next generation of corporate, industrial, financial and spiritual leadership – demands a leadership culture that boasts awareness of self. My focus is an extension of your point, that if more senior leaders and leadership educators are not at least *as* aware of themselves as are those they teach, then the teacher cannot hope to make a lasting impression of what leadership is in a liquid age. More important however, is talent succession[260] and the loss of the opportunity to invite tomorrow's leadership into effective practice.

MYSTERY: And I think it is deeper than this – there needs to be something of the unknown, the mystical, in what you as priest and teacher offer from your being – for education to be real. If the teacher is not making a journey towards her or his own self when requiring it of others, it is evident. I believe millennials have sensitive feelers that pick this up. In fact, all people have it really, but it has been dulled in many adults, as it has in children who are the victims of trauma. Since you are citing him a lot, I found a copy of Rocha's book, *Folk Phenomenology*. Embodiment, who knows me well, will not be surprised to hear that I was stuck on a section called "The Offering," because it moved me so. He records that he is building on

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[260] Talent succession refers to the preparation, following on, or replacement of people ability in organizations. It is best achieved through deliberate preparation of future leaders by existing leaders, and in particular, ensuring that not only ability, but enhanced ability is trained to meet future needs which cannot be seen at this point in an in the current age.

Jean-Luc Marion's condition of *givenness*, "Every thing that shows, offers."[261] Clearly, for me, it

is the mystical element of what Rocha is about in the first chapter called *The Folkloric Reversal*,

and the notion of how much is left to mystery – no, how much *is* mystery – in what the teacher

offers through their *being* which is present, is poignant:

> From the shaman to the rabbi, from the prophetess to the pedagogue, from imam to priest, from parent to professor: teaching is the art of showing. And showing is made possible by the offering. The teacher never knows that the offering is given; the exchange is never clear or realized. The teacher can only be present, which is the first and last pedagogical offering, with the hope of showing something real, a hope without expectation or confirmation. When the offering is shown, beauty is present. When a lesson or a homily or a routine or a scale is complete, these are the only questions left to ask: What was offered? What was shown?[262]

Your use of key authors of children's literature fantasy – like C.S. Lewis, J.R.R. Tolkien

and J.K. Rowling – introduces a bridge between the rational and mysterious worlds. This is an

invitation alongside the reliable psychological and theological analysis of today's accredited

writers like Hollis and Taylor, Weber, Badiou, Bauman, and, latterly, Rocha whom I quoted

here. Saints like Augustine and Ignatius as a foundation to these writers, help build your case for

a more embodied contemporary leadership culture.

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[261] Rocha, 6.
[262] Rocha, 7.

4   Leadership Embraces Contradiction and Complexity

4.1   Before the Word

In chapter 3, we inquired into embodiment and mystery, and Mennigke suggested that emerging leaders look to more experienced peers for the example of applied self-awareness. He used universally known writers of mysterious fiction[263] to introduce the bridge between the rational and mysterious worlds as an invitation to examine psychological, theological and philosophical analysis on embodiment.

In chapter 4, Mennigke outlines why leaders live with contradiction in the liquid age more than ever before, and that it is incumbent upon leadership in this age to recognise and deal with contradiction in a mature way. Continuing with Kegan and Lahey's understanding of complexity[264] raised in chapter 3, he develops reasons why we cannot solve the diverse issues faced by leaders through employing the kind of reason that reduces complexity to a set of rational formulae or populist leadership programs. Using Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus, he answers the question related to chapters 4 and 5, about whether embracing contradiction and complexity leads to greater freedom, or has regressive implications for building leadership culture. This chapter builds a case *for contradiction and complexity being easier to negotiate when a leader lives out of an embodied rationality*. Mennigke enquires into Kegan and Lahey's understanding of *immunity to change* as applied to contradiction and complexity, and introduces his concept of being *landed* as an example of living with contradiction. Exploring the freedom

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[263] Mysterious fiction here refers to the form of writing which uses metaphor, story, saga, myth and fairly tale in fictional narrative.

[264] The meaning of complexity here is defined in chapter 3, and expounded in section 4.2.1 below.

that comes from living in an adaptive way[265], Mennigke will discuss with his interlocutor the opportunities that come from leadership education geared towards adaption in an individual as well as an organization. The chapter ends with the concept of *resting* as a necessary part of leaders living with contradiction and complexity.

The interlocutor in this chapter is Contradiction, who generally holds the alternative view – also called the "no" voice. It is not to play what some call "devil's advocate," but to encourage robust inquiry. Contradiction is the reminder for leaders to face into complexity in a balanced way.

4.2   The Word

> For the leader who is on a path towards greater awareness of the self, contradiction is implicit – because souls who question themselves are sensitive to the knowledge that solids have come to be viewed as transient in the presence of liquidity
> – Stuart Mennigke

4.2.1   Holding Contradiction

(*Enters, takes Mennigke's chair, who sits in another.*)

CONTRADICTION: We had a contradictory conversation a while back, when you introduced us six interlocutors. Why do you want to continue? Listening off-stage to the end of your interview with Mystery you said all leaders *can* experience conversion, some should, none must, and many do not. Do you accept that many will not?

MENNIGKE: I do, but I'm also persuasive, and so will try to find a way that works for someone, even if it's a deviation from how I intended a program to work out.

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[265] By adaptive, I mean open change in the circumstance that requires it. Kegan and Lahey use the term in their work *Immunity to Change*, cited extensively in this paper.

CONTRADICTION: But is the different way not just *how* you string out the inevitable? What if the different way is accepting a leader who may not find mystery or embodiment their thing? What if they are not driven by the need for freedom? You focus on liquid modernity, which is part of Bauman's sociology. But Pierre Bourdieu, a social theorist and contemporary of Bauman's did not believe in free will. I'm sure you're aware of *habitus* as one of Bourdieu's key concepts.[266] Does your emphasis on leaders embracing contradiction as a necessary part of changing leadership culture, not simply replace the old expectation you voiced in the previous interview with Embodiment − of being productive, action-orientated and stoical − with a new ideology where leaders believe that it is their choice to be more vulnerable as a necessary part of leadership in the liquid age? They may believe they are making a choice using free will, but in fact, buy into a system destined to collapse on itself. It was a kind of structuralist view prevalent among philosophers of the 1960's and 70's which Bourdieu saw as a control mechanism.

MENNIGKE: I don't think so. The structuralist view which Bourdieu rejects, is that "what people did was ultimately dictated by the needs of the economic system, and their belief in free will and choice was simply a false consciousness inculcated and supported by various cultural and social apparatus (e.g. Althusser, 1971)."[267] So, while it's good to sort out the inference upfront, I think you will see that the inquiry into contradiction involves an understanding of complexity in our age, and *adult mental complexity* which I am about to describe.[268] This is well-

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[266] Bourdieu explains the concept of *habitus* as "systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. (Bourdieu, 1990b, p. 53)". Thomson, 14. Full citation below in footnote # 263.

[267] Pat Thomson, *Educational Leadership and Pierre Bourdieu*. (London: Routledge, 2017), https://doi-org.ezproxy.library.ubc.ca/10.4324/9780203818213

[268] I am referring to the work of Kegan and Lahey, cited above.

researched inquiry into helping leaders find freedom through heightened awareness of their

immersion in the fields they are deliberately negotiating −

CONTRADICTION: (*Interrupting*) – that does not mean they cannot be misled by false

consciousness!

MENNIGKE: If you'll allow me, Bourdieu can explain why the choice to which I am

referring leads to greater personal freedom:

> Bourdieu argued that 'the social' was embedded and embodied in people (agents through
> their immersion in social fields and in the overall field of power.
> When an individual enters a field, playing the game specific to the field, they
> take up and take on its rules, beliefs and moves – in other words, they become
> a player. Much of what players initially have to consciously learn soon becomes
> almost automatic and taken for granted. Bourdieu often used sporting analogies to make
> this point. He suggested that learning how to be in a field is the same as how football
> players learn to play. As we learn the ways of the fields we are in, key aspects of it
> become second nature to us. Just as football players eventually (appear to) instinctively
> sense where a ball is heading and position themselves accordingly, we too become more
> skilful field players. [269]

So, it's about a choice to become a more skilful leader, and when this choice is exercised with a

motive for growth and development in keeping with accepted researched analysis, and can be

tested in the open world, there is a move toward greater personal freedom. From a spiritual

perspective, St Ignatius notes that *spiritual consolation* in the interior life can be found in any

increase of our faith, our hope, and our love.[270] This is a movement towards greater freedom for

the soul disposed towards God. Hopefully then, the potential for regression which might cause

collapse is less likely. Bourdieu also insisted that *habitus* implies social action in an incarnated

way − the way I have referred to *word* becoming *action* in the preface above (section 1.2.1), and

hopefully follows in the next set of interviews with your colleague, Education. (Chapter 5).

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[269] Thomson, 14.

[270] See section #316 of the spiritual exercises of St Ignatius, which describes the term *spiritual consolation.*

But back to you original query of accepting that many leaders may not choose conversion. I found it more difficult when I was younger and driven by a passion which did not yet trust the greater process, or maybe trust the inevitability of life. But now, even though I believe choice is important, I'm not sure I have *the* answer − though this does not dampen my appetite for introducing what I think will bring greater freedom to how leaders operate. My initial thinking in this study was to debate leadership as a binary against sureness, logic, and over-definite leadership principles. *However, this is generally reductive against complexity, and defeats the value of having diverse opinions in a creative tension.*[271] Bauman's notion of *liquid modernity* describes the shifting environment of most key issues in our age.

CONTRADICTION: (*Testing*.) By "most key issues in our age," do you mean leadership issues or general life issues?

MENNIGKE: I mean general life issues - how we understand issues differently in the liquid age from how we previously perceived them. For example, how we understand concepts like marriage and divorce, same sex relationships, women in business and the church, who is the teacher and who the learner, the issues of race and class and the ethics of how humans should participate in the beginning and ending of life. Bauman claims that: "Forms of modern life may differ in quite a few respects – but what unites them all is their fragility, temporariness, vulnerability and inclination to constant change. To be 'modern' means to modernize – compulsively, obsessively."[272]

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[271] By "creative tension" I mean the way of holding two opposing views in such a way that they do not squash the other view, but allow it to exist in such a way that the views can learn from each other. Creative tension is a term I use in teaching deep democratic discussion method (for example, see Arnold Mindell, *The Dreambody in Relationships*. (London; New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987)

[272] Ibid., viii.

CONTRADICTION: A contrary view is that changes in life are normal in any age, and progress has always happened in some form or another! My point is that we don't have to find a different formula for every form of modern life. Change is a normal occurrence of life!

MENNIGKE: It is normal to life, but humans become fixed in patterns and inertia sets in. For example, by comparison with Bauman's view of modern life, by the time I entered college in the late 1970's, the views of the church and society in my country were virtually immovable on moral and ethical issues.[273] These were, as Green calls them "candidates for ground,"[274] and we could rely on our sensible view of them. From the time I graduated from seminary in 1980, these candidates for ground were shifting gradually but definitely. Christian spirituality saw the advent of a fluidity through the worldwide sweep of the charismatic renewal in the main-line Christian churches of North America, the UK, South Africa, and a number of other countries. [275] With hindsight, this was part of the freshness of God's Spirit infusing the Church and preparing it for change. This is quite apart from how Church, in its many divisions, dealt with the contradictions of post-modern societal change. It was the problematizing of religion, ideology, even objectivity, says Green.[276]

CONTRADICTION: People expect change in the Church, and it has a history of conflicts that breed change, new doctrines and re-formations. Why are you making this point here?

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[273] By these I mean issues of marriage, divorce, same sex relationships, women's roles in business and the church, and who was the teacher and who the learner in the classroom. Similarly, with the ethics of how humans should participate in beginning and ending life

[274] Green, 1.

[275] The charismatic renewal was the spiritual movement of change in the main-line churches, beginning in the Roman church in Houston, Texas, and spreading like fire really, across continents in the Roman Catholic, Anglican, and then the Methodist church.

[276] Green, 1.

MENNIGKE: I mention the church and impending global liquidity because of my part with many others, in reframing Anglican Church leadership practice. However, it's not about the church and change as much as it is about shifts in the world order. Zygmunt Bauman, in revising the forward to the 2012 edition of *Liquid Modernity*, shares his dilemma about impending liquidity:

> When more than ten years ago I tried to unpack the meaning of the metaphor of "liquidity" in its application to the form of life currently practised, one of the mysteries obtrusively haunting me and staunchly resisting resolution, was the status of the liquid-human condition: Was it an intimation, an early version, an augury or a portent of things to come? Or was it, rather, a temporary and transient – as well as unfinished, incomplete and inconsistent – interim settlement; an interval between two distinct, yet viable and durable, complete and consistent answers to the challenges of human togetherness?[277]

These are life issues around which leaders make decisions. Giving voice to, and wrestling with issues is at the heart of the leadership problematic involving contradiction and complexity.

CONTRADICTION: Only four decades since the 1980's you referred to, the world has seen political leaders cause some historic catastrophes. Church leaders are not exempt from equally weighty calamities – and do your own Church leaders not still wrestle with equally complex issues – and only some – successfully?[278]

MENNIGKE: Illustrations of *how* flexible the liquid age is, may be useful. Church examples are my work, but they are also reflective of society's flexibility and inflexibility because of what many consider to be the end of religious world dominance by Christianity since the 4th century!

CONTRADICTION: What are some of these examples?

MENNIGKE: I remember wrestling with the complexity of preparing the first Anglican women for ordination in two South African dioceses only 20 years ago. The issue is now no

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[277] Bauman, vii.

[278] He means Anglican Church leaders.

longer a cause for division in most parts of the Anglican tradition, though the Roman Catholic and Orthodox positions remain firmly opposed. I am also part of the Anglican Church of Canada where, in the National Synod of July 2019, the bishops as the senior leaders voted against the motion proposing same-sex marriage. This, being a controversial motion,[279] arose when the houses of laity and clergy voted in favour of the motion. These issues, like most complexities, are not about "right "or "wrong" arguments. Rather, like all leadership concerns, they are complex issues requiring that we live -

CONTRADICTION: (*Interrupting*.) Forgive me, but are you aware that how the Church sees and deals with the issues you mention is largely irrelevant for a high percentage of any population in the non-churchgoing world? There is at times a laughable unbelief among young people in North America and in large parts of Europe today that stodgy church rules actually still restrict people's freedom of expression and practice! Many think it is domination and write it off!

MENNIGKE: Perhaps so, but as I quoted in an interview with Inquiry earlier, the concepts of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity remain of prime importance considering the intrinsic conservatism (to say the least) of *any* Church. This conservative nature must not be considered as moral (though it can be one of its expressions), but should be understood as this tendency to generally refuse, often condemn and sometimes fight against any reconsideration or change of its current order of things.[280] This is what makes contradiction what it is!

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[279] In Anglican canon law, controversial motions are defined as: "A proposal on a matter about which strongly-held convictions are held on both sides of the question, usually involving a change to doctrine, tradition or long-established practice, potentially requiring elevated voting or procedural thresholds to be met in order to be approved." Elevated voting or procedural thresholds require the synod to vote in three separate houses, laity, clergy and bishops. For such motions to be passed, they need to be passed in each house before proceeding to the next, from laity, through clergy, to bishops. Source: Email correspondence with the author from Kevin Smith, and Alan Perry, Canonist in the Anglican Church of Canada. July 31, 2019.

[280] See footnotes # 95 and #97 in section 1.3

CONTRADICTION: I want to check that from within the Church, you are not denying major contradictions arising from its myopia or desire for control.

MENNIGKE: You mean desire for control, or for what brings people freedom?

CONTRADICTION: Is this an equivalency or a choice?

MENNIGKE: For many who have been hurt, it is equivalency. For others, not, as spiritual life assumes freedom. This remains a contradiction to be wrestled with. Another example from the Church living with contradiction is: At the same July 2019 synod I mentioned just now, a bishop who is a woman, was installed as Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada.[281] Four decades ago, in this part of the traditional church,[282] the dispute over women as clergy was raging furiously, threatening to divide the worldwide Anglican Church. Today, it is no longer a major cause for dissention,[283] and the reason, I argue, is that the Church largely manages to wrestle with many of its - (*Interrupted.*)

CONTRADICTION: − were you going to say *contradictions over time*? Over a *very* long time, if I may say, and remains divided in itself, let alone between its many denominations!

MENNIGKE: I agree that these things cause divisions among the larger body of-

CONTRADICTION: (*Raised level.*) Division puts it too mildly!

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[281] The presiding Archbishop of the national Anglican church in a country. This bishop works as "first among equals" among the Archbishops in Anglican tradition.

[282] I mean of the Anglican, Orthodox and Roman Catholic centres of what was the known Christian Church, until the 1054AD Great Schism of the Orthodox division, and then the 1517AD Anglican/ Roman division. I use AD and not CE, as *Common Era* was not part of understanding then.

[283] I should clarify - not all parts of the worldwide Anglican Communion ordain women to the priesthood or the episcopate. It is a Diocesan synodical decision.

MENNIGKE: (*irritated.*) I was going to say… body of Christians. However, this is the nature of complexity!

CONTRADICTION: You are wrong! It is not complexity – it's divisive and disrespectful of women! Simply a human decision of the Church that excludes and uses people, and of course, the Roman Catholic Church it has all the power it needs to hide behind Papal supremacy as a doctrine.

MENNIGKE: I accept that. However, in the context of this conversation, we should question what kind of rationality is able to define how alternative views are to be considered when contradictions *seem* to be irreparable. [284]

CONTRADICTION: You present worked examples of holding contradiction in reality, yet what is actually different between living with contradiction and living in liquid modernity? This is what folk working in the world want to know.

MENNIGKE: I think that living with contradiction has always been a challenge. Liquid modernity presents its own challenges, which when combined with any contradiction just magnifies the contradiction, or magnifies the complexity. However, with Kegan and Lahey, I see three struggles for leaders in attempting to hold contradiction: Engaging with rationality;[285] the inability to confront complexity; and personal and organizational immunity to change.

CONTRADICTION: We need it explained in a more, like unsophisticated, way!

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[284] That is, a way of thought and operating which fulfills its purpose while not merely related to its function.

[285] As a reminder of the definition, see chapter 3, section 3.2.1, and the interview with Embodiment.

MENNIGKE: Rationality is "a discipline for understanding things that are."[286] How leaders engage with rationality was the subject of the interviews with Embodiment. I claimed that historically, leadership practice held onto an essential view of rationality as one of its most protected icons. As a discipline, rationality is an ontological tool, because it seeks to understand what something is – its reality. When used in an essential (or instrumental) way, it removes the *heart*[287] from rationality, and disables the understanding for things that seek connection on an emotional scale. However, when used in an embodied way, rationality engages the personal, and the abstract, and makes connections that liberate situations. It is like a leader who, when presented with a difficult staff situation, recalls their own difficulty, how it felt and what happened, and applies a personified experience to making the decision. If leaders see themselves as essential rational[288] beings, and insist on purely functional solutions to complex issues, it disables the ability to hold contradiction.

CONTRADICTION: You insist on leaders learning a broader understanding of rationality, and when put like that, I get it. So, I appeal for patience when teaching leaders, because I see how foreign the expectation for delivering on emotional content is for many of them. They were taught to be strong and resilient. But you are appealing for being non-binary and multi-dimensional when dealing with difficult issues.

MENNIGKE: I am suggesting that, and in particular, the fluidity of this age calls for resisting one-dimensional, solutions in general, but particularly in the development of leaders.

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[286] Lobell, 62.

[287] By "heart" I mean the core feeling and life substance of something. See also Sam Rocha's description of *subsistence* within Being, subsistence and existence as: "the vital, energetic and conceptual, as opposed to perceptual, category of things that are within Being" referenced in section.

[288] I'm using essential rationality, instrumental rationality and functional rationality all to mean a rationality which focusses on that which is only essential to its function and purpose, and excludes the connectivity inherent in holding contradiction, and allowing a multi-faceted, personal and embodied rationality.

What causes a single-dimensional view is the inability to confront complexity, through believing that it is all too difficult, but more so, through thinking that the solution to complex issues lies somewhere outside of ourselves. The expanded words of Richard Rohr I quoted earlier when talking with Inquiry are: "The people who hold the contradictions — and resolve them in themselves — are the saviours of the world. They are agents of transformation, reconciliation, and newness. These are the people, as Ken Wilber says, who 'transcend and include,'"[289] they demonstrate what we notice in wise people – the learned ability to grapple with issues internally, without projecting them onto others. Rather, staying in the discomfort, using their developed ability to wrestle with themselves, their own behavioural patterns and the issue, and live the answer more than tell it.

CONTRADICTION: On the one hand, I agree with you. On the other however, your view can be exclusive. There are millions of religious people whose beliefs, supported by their articles of faith and holy writings, dictate what they should believe and do. Consider too the clubs, societies, parliaments and legislations of countries who follow the laws and creeds of their ancestors and culture. There are millions of people for whom the contradiction is not obvious, and who do not have the power to break free from the group who gives them identity, and explore options. They may be held by cultural or religious boundaries, and if from among the poor and marginalized in society, may not know *how* to break out. Is the life of hidden contradiction theirs simply because a belief prevents them from being agents of transformation? What about those who really do trust the authority of those set over them? You are a priest

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[289] Richard Rohr**.** *At-One-Ment***,** *Deepening Connection*. From Richard Rohr's Daily Meditation. Adapted from: Richard Rohr, Eager to Love: The Alternative Way of Francis of Assisi,(Albuquerque. Centre for Action and Contemplation. Thursday, July 27, 2017). 218, 222-223, 226.

whose tradition requires you to acknowledge the authority of your bishop, and act accordingly.

No doubt, this has not always been a comfortable submission!

MENNIGKE: Correct, it has not always been easy. We are talking about contradiction in the

age of liquid modernity, and training leaders in non-binary thinking. Perhaps my best answer

reflects what Badiou and Žižek propose about the role of the philosopher:

> The most profound philosophical concepts tell us something like this: "If you want your life to have some meaning, you must accept the event, you must remain at a distance from power, and you must be firm in your decision." This is the story that philosophy is always telling us, under many different guises: to be in the exception, in the sense of the event, to keep one's distance from power, and to accept the consequence of a decision, however remote and difficult this may prove.[290]

Their suggestion is that, when faced with circumstances, philosophy looks for the link

between choice, distance and exception.[291] Millions of religious people are potentially confined

by not being able to investigate contradiction or react against authority, it is not as simple as

saying they should choose their state of life, especially if they are the poor and outcast of society,

or if education was not theirs to have. Yet, even among the poor, holy people have always made

choices in their faith, martyrs have always chosen to die for their belief even without knowing

the philosophy of it, while many choose to keep their distance from power. I have no answer for

how religion, religious leaders, and political leaders must account for their leadership at the end

of time, save to say that we are responsible for one another, and especially for the poor and

voiceless. The contradiction we all have to hold is that humans are created as people of reason

and choice, yet many humans cannot make choices because they are subject to the power of

others' selfishness.

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[290] Badiou and Žižek, 13.
[291] Ibid.

CONTRADICTION: You said the second struggle for leaders in holding contradiction, is the inability to live with complexity. Clearly, it is intricate, but is it key to your understanding of a leader's ability to hold contradiction?

MENNIGKE: If there were a single aim in my work of leadership education, it would be helping leaders to recognize complexity and work with it effectively. It is key because holding contradiction begins with identifying that you are dealing with a complex issue, and this means I know where to begin addressing the complexity. It is addressed not *outside* of ourselves but internally, first. Kegan and Lahey's research into *age and mental complexity* inquires into adult coping skills to help people meet the challenges of today's world. They claim that:

> When we experience the world as "too complex" we are not just experiencing the complexity of the world. We are experiencing a mismatch between the world's complexity *and our own at this moment*. There are only two logical ways to mend this mismatch– reduce the world's complexity or increase our own. The first isn't going to happen. The second has long seemed an impossibility in adulthood.[292]

Investigating the difference between these two complexities is crucial. Kegan and Lahey develop *three plateaus in adult mental complexity,* which describe their concept of a socialized, self-authoring, and self-transforming mind.[293] I have used their concept to help leaders wrestle with their own mental complexity through understanding their own behavioural patterns and their origin, while dealing with the complexity of day-to-day leadership challenges. Kegan and Lahey's claim that: "In gaining that awareness,[294] you will begin to see a new frontier of human capabilities, the place where tomorrow's most successful leaders will focus their leadership

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[292] Kegan and Laskow Lahey, 12.

[293] Ibid, 16.

[294] Here they mean "increasing your own awareness" to be able to resolve issues within yourself.

attention,"[295] is the practice of holding contradictions and resolving them in oneself. This is the antidote to dealing with problems in a dualistic way.

CONTRADICTION: That is quite a definite statement! Are you are referring to those who offer binary solutions to problems, and who believe that "keep it simple" solves the contradiction?

MENNIGKE: I am, and I find this prevalent among those who resist change, and often amongst Christian leaders. It is the belief that simple and literal interpretation solves the issue quickly. I am no longer surprised by how regularly I encounter this view. Charles Taylor, in his inquiry into secularism, describes the journey towards secularism having begun in Christian history "that led to the widespread acceptance in the West, of a set of narratives that have together served to make secular perspectives seem natural."[296] He mentions those that gave rise to his *Closed World Systems (CWS)*[297] were already reinforcing the rational mindset as the new normal early on in Latin Christendom. Time restrictions in this study will not permit further problematizing this view, but I believe that it is seminal to why leadership education still struggles with the contradictions of rationality. *By merely providing answers to intricate issues, one-dimensional models of leadership prevent rigorous engagement in the complexity of issues.* Developing an innate quality of leadership requires engaging the complexity of our outer and inner worlds and holding the contradictions inherent in these.

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[295] Ibid, 13

[296] Charles Taylor," What is Secularity?" Vanhoozer, Kevin and Warner, Martin. eds. *Transcending Boundaries in Philosophy and Theology: Reason, Meaning and Experience*. (Abingdon, Oxon, GBR: Ashgate Publishing Group, 2007. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 5 August 2015), 378.

[297] See chapter 3, for the development in this study.

CONTRADICTION: It seems as if you're suggesting that binary leadership is problematic for presenting solutions in a one-dimensional way, but isn't that what we find tiring about leaders who don't do this? That they are seen as indecisive, weak, or lacking that x-factor? It seems like you can describe the one leadership model but cannot put your finger on what it means to hold contradiction.

MENNIGKE: My reason for adopting inquiry, awareness, conversion, embodiment and mystery, contradiction, complexity, rationality and education into my frame of reference is that I see each one as a requisite part of what makes leaders able to cope in an age of liquid modernity. In my view, they are siblings in an effective program for talent development in this age. Do you have a different view?

CONTRADICTION: That is not important right now. What is important is trying to understand what you are saying about the danger of creating a functional rational view to meet your own ends. The third struggle you identified for leaders in holding contradiction *is personal and organizational immunity to change.* What is the point of this inquiry?

MENNIGKE: It is about resistance to being adaptable to change but also about a journey, or a strategy for getting there. I borrowed the term *immunity* from Kegan and Lahey, and the question for inquiry is theirs too: "So what would it mean to meet an adaptive change adaptively?"[298] Their study talks about adaptive formulation of the problem and adaptive solutions, then proceeds with exercises to help leaders with adaptive formulation of the problem.

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[298] Kegan and Laskow Lahey, 31.

CONTRADICTION: What about the adage *if something is not broken, do not fix it?* Surely not everything requires repair just because we live in a fluid age! What about systems that do have lifetime effectiveness? I can hear some of your senior leaders bemoaning constant new systems!

MENNIGKE: Functional rationality uses logic to argue for situations that do not see change as necessary. Bauman states plainly: "Flexibility has replaced solidity as the ideal condition to be pursued of things and affairs."[299] Adaption means both identifying what things do fit a new age, as well as analysing the cause of immunity to change. People's reluctance for change is most often at the root of immunities and inertia. When machines are inefficient, we replace them.

Immunity to change happens on personal and organizational levels. My contention is the need for adaption identifies itself through an organization's admission of the need for change, or through an individual's realization of "events" which transform, but this only occurs when the person is convinced of the consequences of their inadequate behaviour. Being adaptive is an embodied, lively, healthy existence, and the reminder is that immunities develop as a reaction against the things that keep us healthy.

4.2.2   Free and Adaptive

MENNIGKE: I remember a question once put to an Organisational Development Manager of a large industrial company:

> Assessing an offer to begin a program with their executive leadership, he asked what would happen with a 5-year intervention of a leadership program with *awareness of self* at the core. The consultant replied that she would not accept a contract trial of less than one year – as it would take about that length of time for individuals to judge the personal benefit of the intervention. She said that some leaders would benefit enormously and adapt to their new talent development plan. Others would coast along and see what happened to their peers before they bought in, and a small percentage would leave the

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[299] Bauman, ix.

organisation, because through the process they would discover what they really wanted to do in life. The OD manager asked why he should award a contract with that prognosis. The consultant replied he might accept because the personal freedom most of the leaders would enjoy in the long-term would change the face of how they saw themselves and one another, but that this was a risk. Further, that her program would change their perception of leadership as a given role, which was also a risk, because the executive leaders may not enjoy honest feedback initially. Lastly, she said the program would alter people's contribution to the organization, as well as other organizations they worked for in the future, but this was a risk because they would loose the security of what they once knew, before gaining a different concept of what security is. The manager figured a 5-year intervention was a journey, and that anything could happen on a journey. He knew only that they could not go back. he hired the consultant. [300]

MENNIGKE: This is an example of the kind of program that prefers developing leaders

through the awareness of self. For example, if you do *this* workout, you get *this* body, or if you

take *this* medication, you will have freedom from stress and pain. I am wondering if leadership is

a promise of freedom that people want to work hard to achieve.

CONTRADICTION: I think your assumption that people want freedom because it promises

something healthier is flawed. I know you will push back at this, because you believe in the

inherent goodness of people made in God's image. However, you will know that Aquinas for

example, does not consider a general tendency toward the good as freedom. Rather, freedom is

in the exercising of the will, which is an intellectual determination.[301] I take a view that people

choose what they can experience in the present, and the thought of unknown stress to get to a

place they cannot conceive of is unrealistic, particularly if that stress lies in the emotional world.

The program offered in your model suggests risks that people must take without background

knowledge and information of what those experiences feel like through their own experience.

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[300] Group conversation of OD managers and the author. Johannesburg, September, 2003.
[301] Thomas Aquinas, The Summa Theologica (ST Ia, 83, 1 and 5.)

Why would people choose that kind of risk unless programmed to will themselves towards that kind of unknown freedom?

MENNIGKE: Your view may hold for some, however the number of people and organizations I know who choose leadership programs similar to the one's I offer, even when they do not fully understand the process, contradicts your reasoning. I think they do it because they intuitively sense the freedom multi-dimensional models offer, and trust the evidence of others who have benefitted. One-dimensional models of leadership prevent rigorous engagement with the complexity of issues, by providing simple answers that close off the discussion and thus avoid ambiguity and ambivalence. While it seems to avoid ambivalence, it does so in the short-term, but then leads to more questions, and discontent. Kegan and Lahey maintain this is because "we may have learned, but we have not *developed*. Coping and dealing are valuable skills, but they are insufficient for meeting today's change challenges."[302] Developing an innate quality of leadership requires engaging the complexity of our outer and inner worlds. The outer world may be modern research and information, but the inner world requires confronting our life narratives, preferences and immunities to change.

Once leaders grasp a level of personal growth that allows them to communicate with some measure of vulnerability – or, in Kegan and Lahey's language, to increase their own complexity – only then do I introduce theories and models of leadership against which leaders can compare leadership style. Kegan and Lahey record that "If you do not attend as much to 'development' as to 'leadership', then your leadership development will always be directed to the plan or agenda you have. It will not be about the plan or agenda that 'has you', and therefore

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[302] Kegan and Laskow Lahey, 12.

your capacity for change will inherently be limited."[303] Their reference to an agenda that "has you" refers to something that carries energy and application to the issues and lives of the people involved, as well as the changing nature of the world around you. Such awareness better allows addressing the contradictions from which leaders may want to flee, but which in the long term facilitate adaption. I suggest that this adaption produces an experienced freedom.

CONTRADICTION: (*Challenging.*) I'm sure you are reminded regularly that your leadership methodology, which is financed by organizations who believe in it, and which in effect doesn't have an end, is – what shall I say – "deep"?

MENNIGKE: (*Pushing back.*) I am an educator, which means I look back at what formed our learning stories, and forward at where they might go. I see that repetitive tendencies in patterns of behaviour become "scripts"[304] or narratives, which define our responses to various stressors. Allamandri et al,[305] who address current trends in transactional analysis, show how we are able to develop new life scripts, different from the ones set up as childhood patterns. They claim: "according to this view, the more individuals identify with their script, the more they are dependent on context and the less autonomous they are. Conversely, the more individuals identify with their true selves, the less they are dependent on context and the more autonomous they are."[306] Leadership education is able to confront these ambiguities by employing rationality in a concrete, yet personified way to bring freedom. In the same way as Kegan and Lahey described confronting complexity through challenging one's own mental complexity. Again, it is

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[303] Ibid. 6.

[304] By "script" here, I am referring to life narratives as explained in transactional analysis.

[305] Daniela Allamandri, Marina Baldacci and Mario Augustso Procacci, "Levels of Identity and Their Development." *Transactional Analysis Journal*.92, no3 (2016), 196-208.

[306] Ibid. 196-208.

a model for development of the person, oneself and others. The *events model* in chap 3, is a process able to facilitate this development in a practical way.

My use of Kegan and Lahey's work on *adult mental complexity* convinces me that leadership education in the liquid age should be encouraging leaders to learn the skills of the philosopher– by which I mean – more than just broad philosophical thinking. As Badiou and Žižek claim, the ability to think philosophically[307] is to see the issues for what they are, and read situations for both the obvious and hidden processes. Searching out both the obvious and hidden issues involved in a problem employs one's development potential, and as such changes the concept of the problematic through wrestling with the situation. These three things are a necessary skill for meeting any institutional-social need.

Every day in current world news, global attention focuses on the U.S. Administration's enactment of their 2016 election campaign promises. While all politicians are at risk in this regard, the world's reaction – or amusement – to multiple daily tweets and the denial of responsibility, is really a reaction against the functional rationality, demonstrated by the inability to change the concepts of the problematic. For example, many argue that the hugely complex issues surrounding the current U.S. President, not only cannot see the concepts of the debate, but that he is the debate! Any distinct movement away from increased freedom, the inability to hold contradiction, and the execution of a solely functional rationality, threatens to be an historic catastrophe of leadership in the liquid age.

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[307] See section 4.2.1. Žižek also emphasizes that the task of the philosopher is not as much to enter the debate, but "to change the concepts of the debate." See Badiou, Žižek, and Engelmann, 51.

CONTRADICTION: It seems to me that you judge this from a place of self-awareness as a norm for leadership. Is this inquiry not about whether contradiction is implicit or explicit in the roles we assume?

MENNIGKE: I think that in most cases it is implicit in the leadership roles we choose. Leaders with little self-awareness are torn apart by the implicit contradictions that are invisible to them. Self-aware individuals are able to name their contradictions – at least some of them. For the leader who is on a path towards greater awareness of self, contradiction is implicit because people who question themselves are sensitive to the knowledge that, as Bauman says, "solids have come to be viewed as transient"[308] in the presence of liquidity.

People constantly assume roles – like leader, director, teacher and learner. These are archetypal roles.[309] Learning the value of archetypal roles is a practical tool[310] that helps to hold the contradiction in situations that seem to be unsolvable.

CONTRADICTION: How does this work in practice?

MENNIGKE: I wrote a course called *Using Archetypes in Confrontation, professional conduct in provoking situations*. [311] It teaches recognition of basic archetypal images, and invites participants to own theirs. Leaders need to operate with professional conduct in provoking situations, and to learn how to set boundaries in difficult relationships. Using stories of real confrontational situations, we explore what triggers negative behaviour, what causes one's

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[308] Bauman, ix.

[309] Archetypal here means images, patterns, and symbols that rise out of the collective unconscious and appear in dreams, mythology, and fairy tales (E. D. Hirsch, Jr., Author, Joseph F. Kett, Joint Author, James S. Trefil, Joint Author. 3rd edition. (The American Heritage® New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2002)

[310] See my course, *Professional conduct/provoking issues, Using Archetypes to unpack and enlighten difficult situations.* June 2017.

[311] See my 2016 course "Using Archetypes in Confrontation".

responses, and learning to judge the impact of our responses on others. Then by getting

participants to role-play the oppositional characters, the leader learns how to select an archetype

that is more effective for approaching the provoking situation, and watch how the oppositional

character shifts their position. The workshop also employs what participants know about their

own learned patterns of behaviour, and how to apply the more hidden aspects of their

behavioural preferences in solving these situations.

CONTRADICTION: You're talking about educating other leaders here. What about your own

journey as a leader? Is it complete now?

MENNIGKE: It would be naïve to believe that a leadership journey is ever over. The saints

of most spiritual disciplines know that we all deal with the same "stuff" repetitively, we just deal

with it at another level. The great saints of history seem to understand that the closer they draw

to their own centre, and to God as centre, the more they realize their need to explore the true self.

CONTRADICTION: It seems there is always something of the archetypal hero in the

leadership journey. How do you see this role in relation to the *self* you claim must develop in

leaders if they are to be effective mentors? More pointedly, you have lived most of your adult

life as a priest, which is among others, a hero or a saviour archetype. The role of priest is

divinely enabling for some, awkwardly exclusive for others, and increasingly nonaligned for

many. In short, it is for many, a contradiction!

MENNIGKE: The contradiction of myself as a priest in the workplace I discussed in the

earlier interview with Inquiry, and I will return to it. My preferred description of the hero role

comes from Hollis. He defines the hero as "one who expands our sense of the possible, and yet

reminds us of the necessary boundaries of the human condition."[312] I am aware that I have to balance the boundaries that contain a comfortable and an uncomfortable side, and like most of us, I struggle. Hollis maintains that heroic journeys show typical signs, like a sense of call, obstacles, temptations, wounding, and transformation of the person's conscious world.[313] Expanding the sense of the possible is not just a tactical, entrepreneurial, or even innovative move. It is more the ability to lead with the charisma of knowing *there's a cost attached to leadership*. The world boasts enough leaders who show novelty, and many who seem fearless in calculated situations, but it seems devoid of those who understand that the human condition often involves the cross.[314] Without this cost factor, I am not sure we are living true to the human condition in general. Life in the present is as much, if not even graver, a discerner of the authentic self as is history, yet the diminishing place of failure and vulnerability as a normal part of life's journey is a struggle for most leaders I encounter. You have to live it before you can teach it!

CONTRADICTION: Are you implying that all leaders must endure suffering or experience woundedness if they are to be effective? With respect, is this not a borrowed truth from the Christian church's story?

MENNIGKE: History more ancient than just Christian tradition testifies to the hero accepting woundedness as part of the call.[315] Rather it is a question of whether populist leaders

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[312] Hollis, *Tracking the Gods.* 69. In this regard, I also think of Hannah Arendt's view of the human condition and the title of her 1958 book. In the Introduction to *The Human Condition*, Margaret Canovan names Arendt as "pre-eminently the theorist of beginnings," and says that the capacity of humans to start something new pervades Arendt's thinking. Arendt, vii.

[313] Ibid.,71, 72.

[314] Here I'm using the "cross" in its Christian root. It involves suffering and death to something, like the glory and adulation which comes with leadership. For others, it is the vulnerability of not always having the quick answer. In different ways, this means death to something in the self, and it is costly.

[315] For example, Achilles, Aeneas, Atlanta, Daedalus are ancient Greek heroes, and history fills its archives with others from every culture and tradition. These are not confined to religious heroes. I have an icon at my front door of Steven Biko -a modern day South African Hero.

read widely enough to know this, and why mystery and mythology add richly to leadership education. Hollis puts it like this: "The call or summons represents some older value, personal or tribal, to be overthrown. Seldom is the way clear. Certainly it is never easy, with the greatest obstacle being his or her own lethargy, fear, and longing for home."[316] He goes on to explain that overcoming the obstacle is the hero descending to the depths of the unconscious, doing battle with whatever is there, and the death and/or rebirth experience is the transformation. It means that, who the person was, and what his or her conscious world was like is no more—all is transformed."[317]

Those who experience personal transformations know internally that these are a reminder of their own journey from woundedness to wholeness, no matter how big or small the conversion was. They are unique because they remind us of our particular human boundaries – limitations that are different from what restrict other people, but restrictions nevertheless – because these things separated us from our fuller potential. We cannot know this before we experience it, and for most people, there is fear about contemplating what we have to do to be free from it. This is so, because usually we have lived for longer with our un-transformed selves than we have not, so the unchanged self is in control with its emotions, responses, reinforced responses from others, and feels safe with the masks it has developed to survive. Perhaps the hardest part of transformation experiences is learning to accept and express what our un-transformed selves were like before. Leaders who can express this, teach through their own vulnerability. Those who cannot express this, yet *pretend* to understand, both confuse and deceive.

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[316] Hollis, 71.
[317] Hollis, 72.

CONTRADICTION: And priests, who too easily choose the trappings of the role, and do not live it?

MENNIGKE: Priests are leaders, though I think we have more guises to hide behind and more muscle to misuse. We live a daunting contradiction between the sacred and the powerful. How we use the sacred and represent the divine to others can hurt, dumb down, and exclude – or it can teach and include. This highlights the need for spiritual leaders to accept the hero archetype and scrutinize ourselves. Ideally, the clergy should be in touch with limitations of the human condition because we are "given authority to forgive"[318] in the name of the Divine. To teach forgiveness and reconciliation, we have to practice it, and acknowledge the power we evoke. Of course, we see clergy, academics, and politicians evoke different brands of their own sacred to manipulate their followers. For example, the Vatican's exposure of sexual abuse cases in Australia, the USA, Ireland, the Argentine, Austria – and not least the ongoing exposure of sexual abuse in Canada's residential schools – all involving priests, justly highlights the moral turpitude of many clergy. Pope Francis' recent expressions of shame and sorrow for the scandal covered up by the Roman Catholic Church exposes the Church's inability to live with contradiction, and that the robe cannot be a veil.

CONTRADICTION: The Pope's expression of shame may only be partly, if at all, appreciated by the victims and the critics who know that it is papal authority, which both protects, and can cause change! Before we leave leaders and roles: In your opinion, what about leaders who easily surpass their role, and live with contradiction as a customary way of being?

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[318] At the ordination of a priest, these words are used: "Receive the Holy Spirit for the office and work of a priest in the Church of God, now committed to you by the laying on of our hands. Whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; whose sins you retain, they are retained. Be a faithful minister of the word of God, and of his sacraments; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." From *An Anglican Prayer Book 1989* .*CPSA* (Collins Liturgical Publications, London. 1989)

MENNIGKE: I wonder if you are more able to answer that than I can! Are you suggesting that the true self has a natural tendency towards an inclusive, balanced way of being in the world, and that we struggle with any framework that is uncomfortable for us?

CONTRADICTION: I mean are there generic examples of truly landed leaders or communities who live from groundedness? I define *landed* as someone who historically has always lived in a place, is rooted there, and not ceded it. I think they hold contradiction with natural ease.

MENNIGKE: The human psyche, programed to seek balance through including its hidden side, regenerates naturally through rest.[319] It feels to me as if humanity has all but lost these examples and many western leaders I encounter seem unaware of the psyche's tendency towards natural balance. By contrast, in my reading of North American Indigenous Nations – and even older nations, like the *Khoisan* of Southern Africa – I see examples of leaders who have fought their way back to remind us of what they have always known and practiced about being grounded.

CONTRADICTION: Your iconic South African President Mandela is an example closer to your lived experience, as is your former mentor, Desmond Tutu!

MENNIGKE: Indeed, they are. Only more recently in Canada, the practice of acknowledging the traditional territory on which we gather for public meetings is becoming commonplace. Many Indigenous people are amused, if not silently angered, that it has taken so long for the Settler mentality to reach an accepted norm of respect in the way people greet one another. Indigenous people have always practiced respectful acknowledgement of the land, the ancestors,

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[319] Carl Jung's theory of Psychological Type maintains that the psyche can correct its own imbalance and is self-regulating. These principles are described by Naomi Quenk, *In the Grip of the Hidden Personality, Beside Ourselves.* Workshop 6. (Consulting Psychologists Press, 1996).

the compass and the Creator, when they walk onto the land of another nation. Western Settlers were not taught the basic awareness of acknowledging land that is sacred for others, or if taught, choose not to respect and adhere to Indigenous understanding. This has slowly excluded our ability to practice what I call "landed awareness." It can be a metaphor for being personally rooted as a leader while we negotiate the complexities of leadership in the fluidity if this age. I see landed awareness as an almost inherent quality displayed by many older First Nations[320] leaders. They naturally possess a multidimensional view of life, integrating the mystical with the whole, and possess a rootedness not easily captured by the western mind. Perhaps this means that when these Elders lead, they operate from an understanding that accepts contradiction as normal. I wonder if we could not forsake all our leadership programs in favor of sitting with ancient elders. The principles of mindfulness are naturally present in the being of Indigenous Elders if they were operating in an equal society.

CONTRADICTION: One further point of inquiry is whether a leader can be accelerated through a program teaching skills of self-knowledge and self-awareness?

MENNIGKE: Often in the work of leadership education, one meets a person who shows an attraction for what I've called *deliberate vulnerability*. It would seem that the good desire for what self-knowledge brings is sufficient momentum for accelerating leadership development.

CONTRADICTION: On the contrary, the desire for good things is often a cover for difficulties, or someone else's manipulation towards an end they have in mind.

MENNIGKE: But then it would not be the desire for self-knowledge! The self-seeking mind does not display genuine vulnerability. When someone has a selfish agenda, they turn good

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[320] As I am writing in North America, my comments are drawn from this continent, though they are connected to many global Indigenous Nations.

desire to their own desire. What I mean by good desire is one that seeks the good of the other as well as honesty with oneself.

CONTRADICTION: Part of this inquiry is whether leadership development needs *rest time*. For it seems to me that leaders like you have high expectations of their students in this field. Here is an example of this need for rest: Built into Ignatius' 30 day Spiritual Exercises, there are two *repose days*. These are generally at the discretion of the retreatant's director, but are there because of the rigour of the retreat experience over 30 silent days of prayer. The depth of internal examination that the retreatant does can be emotionally exhausting, and so the director – trained to discern the inner movements of the soul – watches the dynamic interaction of body, mind and spirit of the retreatant engaged in the relationship with God. The repose days are a rest from the rigour of the inner movements given before the next major section of prayer. You will say that the psyche is capable of huge expansion, but we can and do overuse people's abilities and exhaust them physically. Just as an athlete, training for an event takes time off training before the race, so leaders need rest time along their journey of developing the skills of leadership. Often, it is for the psyche to "catch up" with our desire for learning and growth. This requires patience from the learner and especially from the teacher.

Carl Jung's *theory of psychological type* is a logical tool for understanding how easily we create a state of inner imbalance in our mental functions when "excessive focus on one of a pair of opposites produces one-sidedness."[321] Naomi Quenk, writing on the *inferior function* in Jung's theory says: "the psyche can correct its own imbalance and it is self-regulating; the self-regulation of the psyche occurs through compensation and projection; and one-sidedness is

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[321] Workshop notes: Naomi Quenk, "In the Grip. Workshop 6 –Beside Ourselves." (Consulting Psychologists Press Inc., Palo Alto, CA. 1996)

corrected by an equal but opposite compensatory expression of the neglected factor. This equal but opposite energetic response restores psychic balance."[322] Freedom and adaption shows when leaders encourage others to take breaks, have vacations and do tasks that balance the opposite of their most preferred way of doing things.

4.3   After the Word

CONTRADICTION: I have been contradicting some conspicuous points that emerge for me in this interview, and you may have a response to some. Certainly, the subject of this inquiry is a challenging one if for no other reason than the responsibility leaders carry in the emergent conditions of these times! Inquiring into converting leadership culture, arguing for the embodied and the mysterious as necessary elements of that culture and how you've argued for contradiction and complexity are a relatively confronting set of principles to challenge. In defence of leadership education, I want to stress that I do not see these as easy topics in the education of leaders. Yet, you have defended the route you take. I guess the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and while this is not quantitative research, the response of leaders you teach will tell the story. You have referred to this as a journey, and even though you will talk more about this in another set of interviews, the context of journey brings a few things to mind:

First is what we debated earlier about contradiction. As the teacher expecting others to make a journey at this level of emotional learning, you are bound to ensure you are doing the same. It is too easy to be the teacher hero, and as the students are introduced to your deeper concepts as they go long, my challenge to you is about your own vulnerability in sharing

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[322] Ibid.

yourself, and asking for feedback that allows learner leaders to push and test you. It is about who they see you to be as you defined in the earlier stages of the process. This is to say, *you have to be willing to be contradicted both academically and emotionally, and how you receive this is telling for the student.* I would ask whether you use enough of your own historic narrative in teaching and demonstrating the principles you teach, and do you choose *deliberate vulnerability*, to use your phrase?

MENNIGKE: *(Subdued)* Yes and no. Your question is challenging because it borders on the temptation of narcissism. As a pastoral and spiritual counsellor, I learned: "this session is not about you, so check who does most of the talking!" Yet I know the temptation to be too quiet is one which developed for me very early on in life. I will share a brief story, and borrow a phrase from Stephen King to illustrate it:

"In the *Taaibos* of my childhood, life often seemed confusing."[323] *Taaibos* is a place far from everywhere, in the province called *Orange Free State*, of South Africa's old apartheid regime. It is an Afrikaans/Dutch word meaning "tough bush." It was just that in winter temperatures and human attitude this remains the slowest South African Province to grow from its verkrampt,[324] Afrikaner[325] racist political stance. We lived in this province, where my father worked for the *Electricity Supply Commission* parastatal organisation He was a pipe fitter, turned mechanical engineer. He did his post-apprenticeship school studies in our detached garage,

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[323] King, 79. In King's book, the phrase "*In the Durham of my childhood, life wore little or any makeup…I went to school with kids who wore the same neckdirt for months*" made a profound impression on me.

[324] Literal meaning is "cramped," and very traditional.

[325] *Afrikaaners* is the name of the Dutch descendant cultural group, who were at first the subjects of discrimination under British colonial rule, and later, when in power, the architects of apartheid and its Nazi-like practices.

where he had made a comfortable study, assured of quiet from a trio of kids without many fancy toys. Here he retreated to study between work shifts until he qualified as a professional engineer.

Under the peach trees in our garden, my 5-year old intuition prospered as I graded roads for my cars in sand that obeyed my design. There, I arranged my world, was understood, and shared my ingenuity with the earth. This was not the organized world of finishing my food, making my bed, cleaning up and the other rules in competition with mother's strap! Her ordering of household life enabled her to survive in her way, but my shady under-the-trees world needed flexibility and design. This world was also my colour in the ordered regime of apartheids white teacher, white kids, white rules classroom. Here, I could sit on my own bench, not defined by "Net Blankes,"[326] and create the world that would be my free state to the restrictive, procedural, moralistic, reformed theological practice of Afrikanerdom.[327]

CONTRADICTION: Thanks. Does anyone in your work classes know that story? They know you worked with Tutu – that's the hero bit – but that you were clearly part of the white privileged class yet relatively poor as a family is an important part to your story and ability to identify with those who struggle. When shared purposefully, this side of you is what qualifies you able to run a program with the qualities you want leaders to imbibe. Not only the priest hero, just an ordinary hero whose life events in both *kairos* and *chronos* time have universal consequence, to quote your model. In an earlier interview, I heard you refer to Heidegger's understanding of *Dasein*, that "always understands itself in terms of its existence – in terms of a possibility of itself: to be itself or not itself."[328] The little boy of five under the fruit trees in

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[326] "Net Blankes," meaning "Whites only" was the sign on public benches, washroom entrances, ticket offices and the like.

[327] Afrikanerdom is the residual state of being *Afrikaner*, meaning descendants of the Dutch settlers.

[328] Heidegger, 33 or see footnote # 81

Taaibos fosters the *kairos*, and somehow grasps Heidegger's three-dimensional unity of *future, past and present*. The little boy under the trees can see that "the present is something that I can seize hold of and resolutely make my own. What is opened in the anticipation of the future is the fact of our having-been which releases itself into the present moment of action."[329] Similarly, you need to be at pains to ensure that your students' difficult life narratives should not adversely affect them when they participate in your leadership programs. So, I hope you are patient with them wherever they are at along the journey.

Starting with yourself as example, leaders who embrace complexity yet crave freedom, must confront where they may not want to go, where they do not like others to contradict them, and where they may not want to become an example of the martyr hero! This is what we covered in our interview, and which, no doubt becomes a chapter of your dissertation. I wish you well!

(*Exit Contradiction.*)

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[329](Critchley, S., 2009, July 27). Heidegger's Being and Time, part 8: Temporality. *The Guardian, International edition*. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2009/jul/27/heidegger-being-time-philosophy

5   Leadership Education, a Journey

5.1   Before the Word

Chapter 4 was an inquiry into the place of contradiction and complexity in reframing leadership in a liquid age. Using Bauman's concept of the liquid age, Mennigke used this theme to merge his work in leadership education with Kegan and Lahey's concept of *immunity* and *adaption* in adult mental complexity. The focus in chapter 4 was on leaders being able to hold the creative tension inherent in contradictory views without choosing one-dimensional options.

 In chapter 5, Mennigke looks at *partnering, ranking* and *friendship* as ways of achieving an embodied leadership. The focus of the inquiry is whether leadership education is a journey, and how leadership and education collaborate as a common way of being in the world. Both are journeys more than they are an achievement or an end. Mennigke draws on Jack Mezirow's view of transformative learning, and makes observations of how this theory acts in parallel with personal transformation. He draws on Hannah Arendt's experience of forming key leadership relationships to teach about the implications of friendship among leaders. The need for friendship in education, and the risk of forming relationships in a leadership context are important elements in chapter 5. Coulter and Wiens offer a practical thesis on educational leadership, and Mennigke refers to their work to set a baseline for seeing leadership as a journey and in partnership with education. His appreciation of spiritual and psychological mentors plays a part in how he asks St Augustine, Susan Rakoczy and James Hollis, among others, to share in this inquiry of whether leadership education is a journey.

The last interlocutor to interview Mennigke is Education. Education's main contribution in the interaction is balance in the face of misunderstanding and poor judgment. The reader will notice that, different from the previous interview with Contradiction, the dialogue with Education

is balanced and reciprocal, reflecting Education's steadiness in the outworking of intention and action.

5.2 The Word

He is more interested in motivating us to question ourselves than giving us answers. He is more interested in fruit than flowers, in wheat than chaff, in substance than fluff.
– Daryl Sharp, on James Hollis

5.2.1 Partnering

EDUCATION: (*Enters.)* You invited an inquiry about how to frame the partnership of education and leadership in liquid times, and I am eager to see how you frame this to connect intention, speech and action. There are few things in the lives of people, whether among the privileged or the deprived, that carry as much consequence as education does.

MENNIGKE: Kegan and Lahey's book *Immunity to Change* is a documented study of various challenges that change processes have on leaders. I have an aversion to "how to" books on leadership, but it does not apply to Kegan and Lahey despite its subtitle: *How to overcome it, and unlock potential in yourself and your organization.* The authors are experts in their subject, not least because of their claim to have taken literally their whole professional lives to write this particular book. It is a tried and tested research journey, which takes leaders into the world of their own behaviour. They add: "But it has also been a winding road, and to tell the truth, we didn't set out originally to work on the problem we are now getting credit for solving – how to close the gap between what people genuinely intend to do, and what they are actually able to bring about."[330] Kegan and Lahey's study echoes an important premise of mine, that when

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[330] Kegan and Lahey, ix.

leaders choose to operate from an embodied way of being, it is like facing a double challenge in the liquid age: The first challenge arises from factors external to a leader's journey, and the second from the changeableness of a personal inner journey. As suggested in chapter 4, what I mean by external factors, are those contributed by the era in which we live, and which are generally beyond our control. For some leaders, the journey[331] begins via an external prompt that may be synchronistic with their life's journey, and then develops to have internal consequences for personal change they could not have predicted. For others, the journey may begin internally, through a prompt in their own psyche, and develops to include some external, communal aspect.

I think that for a leader who acknowledges a journey as developing or growthful, this is what makes it educational. It is like what Badiou calls the *universal*, where the *event* alters the way a person configures their world, and this has potential implications outside the influence they intended. Paul Robb writes about similar spiritual journeys as "a kind of conversion experience which emphasizes the importance of the experiences of life through which we learn and become perfected. They do not call us to turn away from life, but to enter more fully and deeply into our own humanity with all its ambiguities."[332] These are descriptions from journeys of human transformation affecting self-aware people and cultivate partnerships between who we are and what we may not yet have matured to be in ourselves. Often, they are incarnations of new ways of being. Living these out may be especially complex for the person involved, but the

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[331] By journey here, I mean the leadership journey that occurs through embarking on a chosen path of increased awareness and deliberate vulnerability. It means choosing to see leadership as a path that will throw up challenges that are personal in nature, and not only the everyday pressures that come from solving work related problems.
[332] Robb, 12.

complexity can be somewhat relieved if we frame education as a bridge between leadership[333]

and the liquid age.

EDUCATION: (*Restless.*) You are inferring that philosophical and spiritual experience are

equivalent ways of meeting leadership challenges. Is this not taking license across the

disciplines?

MENNIGKE: For some, it is true to say that the philosophical and spiritual worlds have no

connection, for their experience originates in one discipline or the other, and others might reject

the spiritual or philosophical as a frame of reference. On the other hand, as Hollis questions:

> What is the "psyche" of which we speak, this psyche which is exiled, ironically, from
> modern psychiatry, psychology, psychopathology and psychotherapy? Who remembers
> psyche? Other than saying that psyche is the totality of who we are – blood, brain,
> viscera, history, spirit and soul – we cannot limit its meaning. Note that psyche comes
> from two etymological roots: that of breathing, suggestive of the invisible life force
> which enters at birth and departs at death; and that of the butterfly, suggesting a
> teleologically driven process of evolution and transformation, which in the end is both
> beautiful and elusive.[334]

Although my experience of working with leaders echoes Hollis' described here, in this

context I am suggesting something different: That the disciplines of philosophy, psychology and

spirituality relate through education. Education can be the force, the *subsistence*,[335] to use

Rocha's term, which reaches for the parallel paths in these disciplines, and enables them to

operate together. It is, as described in section 2.2.1, where the metaphor provides a temporary

framework needed to hold things together in a liminal state until they have enough time to

solidify. Using the metaphor: education is a bridge for leadership in the current liquid age, which

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[333] I mean leadership phenomenologically – that is seeing it as it is, as a thing that has a being - to use Rocha's
definition.

[334] Hollis, *On this Journey We Call Our* Life, 133.

[335] See the reference describing *subsistence* in the foreword, and Rocha's use of the life force that holds the being and
existence of something together.

ties into the *events model* described in chapter 2. If the "aha" moment – the event – happens, it is a reconceptualising of how I previously imagined leadership complexity or challenge. This helps me see education as the bridge, and not the end to achieving something.

EDUCATION: You are setting the scene for us to envisage that a transformation process is not just a personal conversion, but also an educational one that helps us see beyond ourselves to the needs of the team, society, and various communities – the world thirsty for help.

MENNIGKE: I am, because if personal transformation were the only focus for a leadership journey, it would be egocentric.

EDUCATION: There are a number of educational synonyms drawn from different frameworks, but referring to the same thing – personal transformation. Jack Mezirow's *transformation theory* adds an educational perspective to events experienced in a personal way. He suggests that "transformation theory's focus is on how we learn to negotiate and act on our own purposes, values, feelings and meanings, rather than those we have uncritically assimilated from others – to gain greater control over our lives as socially responsible, clear-thinking decision makers."[336] Like Mezirow, several other theorists emphasize the contribution of *critical theory* in transformative learning. Stephen Brookfield presents an understanding of transformative learning that reaffirms the dialogue on transformation is never an end in itself. Rather, it is a public/private discourse that makes the process of embodied leadership both a personal and a collective transformation. He reminds us "that the kind of transformative learning

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[336] Mezirow, 76.

that is endemic to critical theory, is learning how to create the cooperative and collective structures, systems, and processes necessary for democratic socialism."[337]

In the lives of holy people of almost all religious disciplines, personal growth moves us to action among the poor, lost, lonely and under-represented ones of the world. This is the bridge between the responsibility of leaders and the needs of the world, but the challenge for most programs is how this is measured. How do your programs measure up in this regard?

MENNIGKE: In the current one's, not well… yet. But I do not always look back over years to see the fruit of past programmes. I guess I see myself as setting the foundations for this through personal and pedagogic support, but I admit to losing focus in the busyness of organising work. It seems easier to hold the focus in the church that exists for transformation than in other organizations, where leaders see themselves preparing to lead for efficiency and production.

EDUCATION: It is a common issue, even where there is a commitment to justice enshrined in an organization's constitution. The work of developing culture in organisations is a determined one that comes from the conversion of its members. If leadership and education share a common way of being in the world, and if they are a journey more than an achievement, then engaging these journeys in an incarnational way is what makes leadership educational.[338] In a world that seems more than ever consumed by the desire for power and advantage, I suggest that educators and leaders are potential liberators. Both are about relationship with self and the other more than they are about position or academic status, achievement or gain.

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[337] Brookfield, 131. ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral.proqin Chap 3uest.com/lib/ubc/detail.action?docID=821727.

[338] By this I mean engaging in a way that is fully part of and present to the situation, people, risks, fears and joys, with the whole self.

MENNIGKE: Perhaps this helps set goals for changing workplace culture, as organizations geared towards their core function measure outcomes according to function. Conceivably, *it is about conversion from a functional culture to a life-long and integrated one.*

EDUCATION: The partnership between leadership and education is clearer when the context of education shifts from classroom learning to lifelong learning, and when the framework for a leadership role moves from power and status to relationship. In a world obsessed with individualism, Hollis' directive for leaders and educators is this: "There is a paradox at the heart of all relationships. We cannot know ourselves without the dialectical encounter with others, an encounter which obliges us to define who we are, and then to grow by incorporating our experience of the other. Yet we cannot find any relationship more evolved than the level of development we bring to it."[339] This self-development suggests that leadership is something educational. The redefining of education and re-imaging leadership can be parallel, interdependent tasks when seen as journeys of embodied growth for educating good leaders. This involves wrestling with personal complexities, challenging immunities to change in institutions and organizations, and the challenge of social and political systems. These three journeys depict an embodied growth in leaders,

The first two journeys we discussed in the previous interview, but regarding the third, I offer an illustration from the life of Evelyn Underhill, the 20th century English author and activist. Susan Rakoczy, in a unique composition that merges a grounded spirituality with the urge for social justice, calls Underhill "a unique and significant mystic."[340] She combined a quiet

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[339] Hollis*, On This Journey We Call Our Life,* 86.

[340] Susan Rakoczy IHM, *Great Mystics and Social Justice. Walking on the Two Feet of Love.* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2006), 99.

yet dynamic leadership as a writer and spiritual director, achieving through prayer what Rakoczy calls "practical mysticism"[341]. The combination of mysticism with practicality came from her prayerfulness alongside social commitment and scholarly writing. It is recorded that "On the eve of her seventeenth birthday she wrote: 'I believe in God and think it is better to love and help the poor people around me than go on saying that I love an abstract spirit whom I have never seen.'"[342] Her journey as a leader seemed initially prompted by a reaction to Pope Pius X's 1907 encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*[343] on modernism. As an Anglican Christian, who seriously considered becoming a Roman Catholic, Rakoczy relates that after studying the encyclical "Underhill considered herself a modernist and realized that she could not compromise herself intellectually by becoming a Catholic."[344] Compelled initially by her academic understanding, she described her writings on mysticism as 'the art of union with reality'.[345] Rakoczy records that Archbishop Michael Ramsey honoured Underhill posthumously by saying, "she did more than anyone else to keep the spiritual life alive in the Anglican Church in the period between the wars."[346]

Leaders in the current century whose personal journeys involved challenging socio-political systems, testify to significant educational leadership within heinous political systems. Among many others, the list includes Pope Francis, South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Nelson Mandela, Archbishop Denis Hurley OMI and Ds. Beyers Naude. Rakoczy, a sister of the

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[341] Rakoczy's chapter on Underhill is subtitled *A Practical Mysticism*. Underhill records many definitions on mysticism, but one, which describes her experience of combining mysticism and action, is mysticism is "the art of union with Reality". See Rakoczy, 102.

[342] Margaret Cropper, *Evelyn Underhill*, (London: Longmans, Green, 1985),5. In: Rakcozy,100.

[343] Pope Pius X, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis,* September 1907.

[344] Rakoczy 99, 100.

[345] Ibid.,102.

[346] Ibid.,105.

IHM religious community,[347] names the four South Africans above, among others through history, as modern-day mystics. She claims, "Christian life in this new century must be lived as a quest for transformation in God, transformation that is personal, communal, ecclesial, and social. The mystics of all ages have known this. We can do no less."[348] What is common to these leaders, seen in their writing and attested in their lives, is a theme that denies the desire for personal power and self-gain in favour of social justice. As presented in what will be chapter 1 of this dissertation, word seeks partnership with action, being and becoming are partners in leadership, and the modern-day mystics named by Rakoczy above all share the charism of being pastors and teachers.[349]

5.2.2   Ranking

MENNIGKE: The figures you list are all people who stood for justice, and for me they introduce the issue of rank in institutions. Church and education establishments share a long history of status and hierarchy. It begs the question: are prestige and status the only issues at hand if we consider what needs reframing about leadership and education systems?

EDUCATION: Certainly, this is part of the reframing needed in leadership culture. There seems to be something built into the human mind that confuses rank, leading and service. I am sure part of the answer lies here, and it should not be separated from various notions of social

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[347] Sue Rakoczy is a professed sister of the community of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Based in Howick, South Africa, she is a spiritual director, writer, teacher at St Joseph's Theological Institute, Cedara, and honorary professor of theology in the school of Religion and Theology, University of KwaZulu Natal.

[348] Ibid.,106.

[349] Apart from Mandela, this group are all ordained pastors and teachers, albeit in different Christian denominations. I include Nelson Mandela in this alliance – having witnessed his ability as a pastor of a nation, and a profoundly able teacher. Interestingly, Rakoczy is a seminary and university teacher and a homilist of note. As a Roman Catholic religious, her tradition gives her licence to teach, but as a woman-religious, not to preach. However, she is an often-invited preacher in denominations outside the Roman Catholic Church, and a worldwide conference speaker.

capital. For example, "Bourdieu proposed that the game in each field was to acquire the capitals that are specific to it. At stake in the field of education are institutionalised symbolic capitals, specific knowledges which take the form of hierarchically organised qualifications." [350] Thomson, describing Bourdieu's conceptual frames, and symbolic capital in particular, notes that in "Institutionalised cultural capitals – qualifications, awards, honours, titles and the like which are conferred by an institution to stand in the place of other cultural capitals; these could for example be knowledges demonstrated in exam results or publications produced for academic promotion or audit purposes."[351] Bourdieu understood society to be an interconnected system of social, cultural and material spaces – which he called *fields*. "Taken together the various fields constitute an overall societal field of power."[352] As part of this broad dynamic of power, earlier on Inquiry reflected on the difference between taking *charge* and being in *control* in leadership relationships. [353] It is the difference between taking charge when authority is delegated –which at best is about *sharing* it with the one who delegates – and taking control in a despotic way. However, if you believe in the inherent good of all beings, then perhaps it is the lesser nature of humans that looks for the desire for rank. More often, I think it is the poor example that leaders teach younger leaders, and parents and teachers give to children that develops misunderstanding about rank. While for many teachers *educational* means lifelong learning, in the everyday world of followers and leaders, the emphasis of *leaving* school, rather than *continuing* in school is the message given from an early age. Graduation ceremonies, practised in most educational systems

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[350] Thomson, 12.

[351] Thomson, 11. Thomson lists Bourdieu's conceptual frames as fields and capitals - and two general kinds of capital being economic and symbolic, with symbolic capital taking three major forms: Embodied cultural capitals; Objectified cultural capitals; and Institutionalised cultural capitals, listed in the text above.

[352] Thomson, 10.

[353] Section 1.3. This is the reference to *charge* with canonical (Church law) authority which is shared with the Bishop (or other senior person, like in academic settings, who grants faculty to lead, and taking control in a negative way.

in one way or another, feed an exit strategy from school education at different levels. The emphasis is on the best students, highest grades, which schools rank higher in the system, and have the highest fees. The connection with the best jobs, the most prestigious organizations to work for, and top salaries, creates high tension in students for academic performance from the initial stages of application and in the ongoing letter-grading system. In more cases than not, the best opportunities for leaders are linked with the best schools for education. The relative importance of faculty leaders in hierarchical education systems also feeds the ranking system. It is formal, majestic and reflected in the dress code of academic occasions. These formalities originated in the church, which served as both a vehicle of education as well as the promotor of rank. *Untangling the unhelpful unions of rank systems, while maintaining the value that church and education promote, is a key challenge for us in liquid modernity*. Few ages have been without the historical challenge of rank in education, well demonstrated in modernist writer Virginia Woolf's epistolary novel *Three Guineas.* She demonstrates how rank within education links to status and symbols and encourages societal exclusivity by maintaining boundaries. Woolf argues that boundaries are the foundation of conflict, with the answer to the novel's inquiry – *how… are we to prevent war*[354] – being the removal of ranking. The task is as much redefining education, as it is re-imaging rank in leadership.

Simon May's new book *The Power of Cute*, explores what he calls the *craze of cute*, "and why it has become so extraordinarily pervasive since the Second World War, especially in the United States and Japan?"[355] May declares his "aim in this short book is to investigate a sensibility and a style that are everywhere around us and yet on which philosophy has had next

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[354] Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* (London: The Hogarth Press,1943),7
[355] May, ix.

to nothing to say."[356] This observation may be worthy of further research into the effects of the *craze of cute* on leadership and rank. Although May cites some women leaders in this work, his noticeable examples among current world leaders who deliberately manipulate people and systems using the "power of Cute", are males. Although he also attributes the collective, like the Japanese armed forces and Ministry of Foreign Affairs as deliberately displaying attributes of *Cute*, it is political leaders like Kim Jong-Il, Kim Il-sung and Donald Trump, who take front-stage in May's analysis.

MENNIGKE: Now there is a challenge I could not pass up on! Especially as it bridges the global east west divide about leadership that I have hesitated about locating as too definite in this paper. One of the founding aims of the Ed D in Educational Leadership and Policy[357] is the redefinition of how we approach education, while nurturing new leaders in a broad understanding of education for our age. We are testing it, and UBC's department of educational studies boasts some success in this regard, but I'd like to discuss another difficult issue for leaders in most workplaces – and especially the health and helping professions, schools, church and business. The issue is about how we define the boundaries between friendship and leadership.

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[356] Ibid.

[357] The Ed D in Educational Leadership and Policy at the University of British Columbia provides advanced preparation for education practitioners with leadership and policy responsibilities in both formal and non-formal settings. These settings include, among many others, the post-secondary sector, business and health organizations, unions and community groups as well as the K–12 school system. http://edst.educ.ubc.ca/programs/edd-in-educational-leadership-and-policy/.

5.2.3   Friendship

MENNIGKE: The development of friendships between people in leadership or professional relationships is fraught with all kinds of transference[358] occurrences in workplaces. Is it right to encourage friendships in formal workplace settings or not? The same question apples in many professional relationships. Should I be friends with my professor, family physician, physiotherapist, and massage therapist, counsellor or pastor? Work-place relationship seems more pertinent, because that is where measurement for remuneration, promotion and success happens. This is a question of both rank and friendship. It is possible that we need to define friendship in contrast to workplace values, as many organizations have legislated boundaries built into organizational structure to prevent misuse of authority in relationships. However, in this context I am referring primarily to what it means to share friendship as companionable relationship within work teams, and the difficulties that emerge from the fears of rank and friendship.

EDUCATION: Certainly, I have found this to be a tricky issue to negotiate, but one thing the liquid age calls into question is over-formality. However, apart from my own positive and negative experiences, there are some noted examples of dealing with it. The opening words of the preface to Jon Nixon's work *Hannah Arendt and the Politics of Friendship* point out that "the notion of friendship is central to Hannah Arendt's conception of politics."[359] She weaves into the different endeavors of her work the recurring theme of developing friendship in all significant relationships. I submit that if one substituted Arendt's "politics" with "leadership," the motif of

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[358] Here I mean transference as a psychological occurrence in which there is the redirection of feelings of one person to another. This may be a positive or negative phenomenon.

[359] Jon Nixon. *Hannah Arendt and the Politics of Friendship*. (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), viii. Accessed September 25, 2017. http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781472505873.

friendship would be recognizable as a theme, even though there may be adjustments of context.

Nixon writes:

> Her friendships and the correspondence they generated show her working through her political ideas and the ethical implications of these ideas in relation to complex interpersonal and professional issues. Each of the friendships is unique, but they all show her grappling in practice with the ethical implications of her own political thought. Her politics is always ethically purposeful and grounded in common discourse, which is precisely why – thirty-seven years after her death –she remains such an influential and significant presence.[360]

MENNIGKE: You are saying that what is educational about leadership is similar to what Arendt practiced in her friendships – working through one's personal ideas "and the ethical implications of these ideas in relation to complex interpersonal and professional issues."[361]

EDUCATION: Like for Arendt, each personal and community friendship is unique for leaders. They all show the leader grappling in reality with the ethical and moral implications of one's thoughts about leadership. This is an example of living with contradiction as described in the previous interview. However, in the interview with Contradiction you referred to the contradiction as leadership for this age grounded in a pastoral purpose,[362] as "shepherds living with the smell of the sheep."[363] Leaders are poorer without the risk and deliberate vulnerability that comes from forming friendships with team members in the workplace. Failure to do so can feed an instrumental rationality that separates people according to rank. What do you do in these situations?

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[360] Ibid., vii.

[361] Ibid., ix.

[362] By "pastoral" here, I mean caring for or being concerned with the whole person, not only the worker's ability to be productive in the workplace. Pastoral theology is the science of the care of souls. W. Drum. (1912). "Pastoral Theology." In *The Catholic Encyclopedia*. New York: Robert Appleton Company. Retrieved February 8, 2017 from New Advent: http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14611a.htm).

[363] Pope Francis, 2016. This quote is referenced fully in chapter 3.

MENNIGKE: I encourage leaders to reflect on their roles using objective personal analyses

that reveal their strengths and weaknesses through behavioural patterns, as well as reflecting on

the development guidelines needed for growth. At their discretion, and with the initial guidance

from a mentor, many take the risk of sharing these more revealing details of their leadership style

with a line manager, as well as in small reflection groups. Teaching the guidelines and enabling

this sharing, I am aware of these as sacred moments, especially among senior leaders, grappling

in practice with the implications of their weaknesses and growth potential, their fears of being

deliberately vulnerable, and the implications of these moments on the Ego. What it translates to

in practice is leaders learning to exercise vulnerability with team members who report to them.

These are educative moments in the relationships of leaders, as they fear risking vulnerability

with employees. Shapiro et al reflect on this as part of transformative learning:

> Personal growth groups and self-awareness groups provide a context in which individuals
> can critically assess their assumptions and frames of reference, get in touch with and
> express their emotions, reflect on their own behavior, dialogue with aspects of their own
> subconscious, and reach new levels of personal integration and development. In such
> groups, the role of others is to listen and ask open and honest questions, witness and
> honor others' expressions of feelings, serve as a source of vicarious experience and
> identification, offer feedback about interpersonal behaviors, and at times challenge the
> validity of others' ideas and assumptions. In all such cases, others are there to help us to
> get in touch with, express, and clarify our own thoughts and feelings.[364]

It is important to accept that not all workplace friendships carry the same interactive energy, or

the desire for it. Some are closer, and others still developing or do not develop at all. Part of

learning expression in these relationships is acknowledging that workplace relationships can be

emotionally taxing. People in the helping professions − medical, spiritual and psychological −

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[364] Steven A. Schapiro, Ilene L. Wasserman, and Placida V. Gallegos. *"Group Work and Dialogue Spaces and Processes for Transformative Learning in Relationships*, in The Handbook of Transformative Learning: Theory, Research, and Practice, edited by E.W. Taylor and P. Cranton, and Ebooks Corporation. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass), 365. ProQuest Ebook Central, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ubc/detail.action?docID=821727.

who spend energy through their minds and hands as healing channels, are often limited in the amount of energy they can give to developing relationships in the workplace. Part of developing meaningful friendships in cases like this, may mean the honesty to clarify their needs and boundaries for themselves and for others.

Nixon notes further that: "friendship is a confirmation rather than a surrender of the self."[365] Too often, we see surrender of self as a lack of reinforcement of boundaries in relationships. Nixon's point puts the emphasis on the positive reinforcement of oneself – an encouragement affirming who we are *because* we honour ourselves and the other. Leadership is learning to risk friendship, and I suggest that this is rare when people have developed life narratives that associate leadership more with power and position than willingness to display weaknesses.

> The power of friendship lies in its sheer ordinariness. Power, insisted Arendt, was located not in the individual person but in the space between people. Arendt was not interested in establishing a hierarchy of friendship. I think she knew that the power of friendship lies in the fact that friendship is commonplace. By seeking to monopolize that power, notions of 'perfect' friendship or "sovereign" friendship can only serve to restrict and ultimately diminish it. To speak of the politics of friendship is to speak of the power that is activated when human beings think together and act together.[366]

Arendt took strength from St Augustine – perhaps even imitating his example – in reflecting on friendship. Her thoughts in *Love and Saint Augustine*[367] show a maturity that comes from both risking loving relationships and reflecting on love. Arendt's concept and words feel to me as if they were written in Augustine's time. The uniqueness of her writing is its translation into the social dimension of her own time, as was *City of God* for Augustine. In a final section,

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[365] Nixon, xii.

[366] Ibid, xiii.

[367] Hannah Arendt, *Love and St Augustine*, Eds: Joanna Vecchiarelli Scott and Judith Chelius Stark. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). Review: George McKenna, in: First Things, Vol 72, (April 1997): 43-47. Accessed via http://www.leaderu.com/ftissues/ft9704/reviews/mckenna.html

she refers to "Social Life," and offers a rationale for the deep friendships that stretched her own life, showing understanding for loving, not because "there but for the grace of God go I," but in what happens when I risk friendship – which is: "there go I, this one is me also." Arendt's lived reality of her reflection comes from the pain of her experience: "The reason one should love one's neighbor is that the neighbor is fundamentally one's equal and both share the same sinful past."[368]

EDUCATION: Your inquiry into Arendt and friendship can only reflect an acknowledgment of some of the many important themes that resonate in the historical conversations about education, leadership and friendship. I see the philosopher's "sorting" aspects of friendship into motive, forms, virtues and needs as revealing and profound for our age, but his embodied themes of the political community, people's motives for the provision of love, friendship, pleasure, are a reminder of why leaders should prompt philosophical questions. Aristotle's emphasis is that "it is in community then, that every form of friendship lies."[369]

What do you think then of Augustine's notion of love in relation to the wider public sphere? Prompting leaders to make allowance for friendship with individuals is one aspect of friendship, but what about leadership's attitude to wider society? There are world leaders who are disinterested in the plight of society – and whose words and actions, or lack of them − are disguised in different ways. Is there a responsibility that leaders have in this regard?

MENNIGKE: There may be some difficulties with interpretation of Augustine's notion of love in relation to the wider public sphere in the liquid age, because of what is no longer

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[368] Ibid.

[369] Aristotle, trans. C. D. C. Reeve, *Nicomachean Ethics*. *Book VIII: Friendship.* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., Inc, 2014), 678,150. https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ubc/reader.action?docID=1643868

regarded as common ground in relation to Church, God, love, sin and Paradise. Thomas Merton

suggests that in his *City of God* Augustine is really writing the autobiography of the Church –

albeit in the fifth century – and Church then, was still catholic in the sense of being universal.

It's therefore easier with historical hindsight, to see this autobiography written by one of

history's great saints, and Augustine's view of society, is better understood through

understanding what motivated him in his context. Merton, commenting on *The City of God* says:

"Yet to those who have ears to hear, it has a great deal to say to many of us who are not mystics,

today, in America. *The City of God* is a monumental theology of history. It grew out of St.

Augustine's meditations on the fall of the Roman Empire. But his analysis is timeless and

universal."[370] His comparison of Rome as the invaded and collapsed city of 410 CE, with the

other city of God, which is heaven in Christian theology, shows where sin is defeated and love

reigns. This is the love he would propose should govern the public sphere. "St. Augustine traces

the history of this divided city of conflict and hate through all history from the fall of Adam to

the end of time and even into eternity. But at the same time he contemplates and exposes to our

gaze the history of that other City, planned by God to repair the work that Adam's sin could not

be allowed to ruin."[371] So, Augustine's sense of love in the public sphere is in the explanation of

the two cities distinguished by two loves: **"**The love which unites the citizens of the heavenly

city is disinterested love, or charity. The other city is built on selfish love, or cupidity." [372]

Merton describes Augustine's *charity* as seeing people as a means to the possession of God, and

loving in a way that cannot be diminished by being shared. For public leaders today, I think this

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[370] Thomas Merton, *Introduction to the City of God*. In: Omnibus V. The personal Omnibus Classroom of Rachael Hughes: September 8, 2010, par #1. Accessed online through: https://omnibusfive.wordpress.com/2010/09/08/thomas-mertons-introduction-to-augustine/.
[371] Merton, par 10.
[372] Merton, par 12.

means: Being *with and part* of the public, not over them; being *reliable*, for there is no

friendship without reliability; being *honest*, for without honesty there is no recognition; and

receiving from the public, not taking from them. For Augustine, love in relation to the public

sphere comes from the influence of example − leaders giving their life for society. I think we do

see this example from many leaders, even in the fluidity of today's world, yet I think it

presupposes an embodied kind of leadership.

5.2.4   Embodied

EDUCATION: There are many different kinds of leadership. How will you sort the "grades,"

if you like, of leadership practice to help with reframing the subject?

MENNIGKE: Coulter and Wiens argue "that leadership is a parasitic concept, dependent on

purposes. Military leadership, business leadership and educational leadership may have common

features, but the nature of the activity determines what counts as good leadership."[373] The lenses

through which people judge what is good and bad leadership are subjective. This makes

discerning its quality difficult, even if one accepts a basic contention like Hannah Arendt's that

"central to a worthwhile life is building webs of relationships with other human beings that

allows us to define who we are and what kind of lives we want to lead."[374]

Todd dares to describe aspects of the nature of pedagogical leadership in a way that, for

some, might question the boundaries of classroom etiquette. In a deeply affective description of

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[373] David Coulter and John R. Wiens, "What is Educational about Leadership*?" Education Canada Journal* 99, Vol. 39 Issue 2, (1999), 5.

[374] Coulter and Wiens, quoting Arendt, 5.

what Todd calls "the liminal space between body and spirit"[375] present in relationship between a teacher and a student, she describes a "subtlety of presence that allows a bit of life in all its messiness to enter."[376] Todd goes on to discuss the nature of pedagogical relationships that allow the affective to enter, and says:

> There is something profoundly pedagogical in moments such as these. Such moments are pedagogical because they occur in educational contexts – which they can and do – but these moments also constitute what is "educational" about life: that through our encounters with others (human and non-human alike) we shift the borders of our self-understanding.[377]

Encounters and descriptions like these are not understood unless leaders dare to enter the vulnerable space created by self-awareness and make a journey into their own fears and history. I suggest that the fears and experiences of our hidden selves are present in us, whether or not we choose to access them. Leaders who allow themselves to explore the less conscious and hidden self, open a world of opportunity for the development of their followers. How we conceive of, and exercise, leadership is central to defining the degree of educational effectiveness a leader has with a team.

EDUCATION: I would be interested to hear you connect the central theme of *embodiment* to your current descriptions of educational opportunities.

MENNIGKE: Researching what is educational about leadership would be incomplete without a consideration of *phronesis*.[378] Primarily about the application of knowledge to human conduct, it is a virtue concerned with how leaders teach through their actions. Leaders are

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[375] Sharon Todd, **"**Between Body and Spirit: The Liminality of Pedagogical Relationships." *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, Vol. 48, No. 2014), 231.

[376] Ibid., 232.

[377] Ibid.

[378] By "phronesis" is meant the Aristotelian virtue of the application of "knowledge which cuts to the heart" of an issue, which is appropriate to the circumstance, and the ability to act on it.

educators by virtue of their role, and their effectiveness as mentors of others alongside how they act in leadership roles is defined by growth in knowledge appropriate to their circumstance. This is the exercising of Aristotelian phronesis, and through it, we live into *embodiment* precisely because of word becoming action, conversion events flowing into the *universal* (action). Eidinow and Ramirez "examine how, according to Aristotle, individuals might develop *phronesis*, and the role played by the 'eye of the soul,' which together with virtue allows individuals to use their experience to see what is the right decision and how to get there."[379] In their discussion on educational leadership, Coulter and Wiens, with Richard Peters, draw on Aristotelian concepts of what it means to live a good life. Looking at phronesis as part of a larger ethical system, Eidinow and Ramirez maintain that the "description of the system that Aristotle offers looks both into and out from the individual: comprising both the composition and workings of the human soul, and the role of the individual in a community."[380] Space does not allow for further explanation here, but a fuller examination of what contributes to the development of phronesis in liquid age leadership will be a valuable part of further study. The issues highlighted in what will be chapter 3, are part of this construction.

Coulter and Wiens strive to clarify education as an activity within a broader context of the worthwhile life, and capture the sense of action in *educational* when they propose: "if education is a continuing effort to lead a worthwhile life, then no final destination is possible or desirable; various stops may be warranted, but the journey must continue."[381] In this context, they are defining education using the work of Richard Peters, who explains, "to be educated is

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[379] Esther Eidinow and Rafael Ramirez, *The Eye of the Soul: Phronesis and the Aesthetics of Organizing. In Organizational Aesthetics*: Vol. 1: Iss.1, (2012), 28. Available at: http//digitalcommons.wpi.edu/oa/vol1/iss1/4

[380] Ibid.

[381] David Coulter and John, R. Wiens, "What is Educational about Leadership?" *Education Canada Journal* 99, Vol. 39 Issue 2, (1999), 6.

not to have arrived at a destination; it is to travel with a different view. What is required is not feverish preparation for something that lies ahead, but to work with precision, passion and taste at worthwhile things that lie to hand."[382] Peters' suggestion of working with this kind of measured energy encourages the exploration and use of educational metaphors to guide leaders as instructors in the liquid age.

EDUCATION: The phenomenological approach of redefining leadership as something we know by choice, decision and risk – rather than know about it – has stuck with me. How this promotes the consideration of education as a vehicle for developing leadership will be interesting. I wish you well in the inquiry.

5.3   After the Word

EDUCATION: My insight into our discourse will be briefer than that of my colleagues. It lies in gathering your initial intention to ensure that word and action are congruent. At the heart of education is inquiry. Inquiry leads to deeper understanding. The heart of understanding potentially exposes us to mystery, and mystery provides another channel for understanding the being of things that are. If this journey provides a way of approaching problems and living more comfortably with contradiction, this changes the way we respond to life.[383]

You have a passion for leaders to apply the theory of what they learn in leadership situations. Like many educators, I also think you struggle with how slowly people learn, often

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[382] Richard. S. Peters, "Aims of Education–A Conceptual Inquiry," in R.S. Peters, ed., *Philosophy of Education* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), 20.

[383] I am going to risk opening a box I cannot close here, by noting that Rocha records that "For Dewey, as for James. Education is not something fixed to a small and temporary institutional subject matter. For Dewey, education takes us out into the waters of social life and culture". See Rocha, 47. However, it provides a reference to James and Dewey in their influence on education, and in this context, what Rocha called "The Mystery of Education" in *Folk Phenomenology*.

reflected in your urgency for moving from the intention, to the spoken, to action. Perhaps more simply understood, this reflects your strongly preferred way of gathering of information through concept more than through detail. Those with a passion for education thirst for quicker understanding and action in the things they see through the eyes of mystery – meaning that *mystery transports us into an imaginary space where concepts seen as from a story, saga, myth or fairy tale perspective connect more easily*. What few educators make space for, however, is how the path of the mystery and the route of definite inquiry inform the other. I know, for example, you have referred to the work of the researcher Peter Reason, and implemented his thesis on paths of *expression* and *explanation*[384] for relieving stress among consultants in pressured fieldwork situations.

Those who "get it" about mystery, long for others to see what they see. For example, "Heidegger was keenly aware that ontological research often loses sight of Being,"[385] Rocha is concerned that "this continues to be true almost one hundred years later, especially within the academic and professional field of Education."[386] Tutu still prays that people do not lose the understanding that "all humanity are rowing in the same boat,"[387] and Jesus sometimes knew that despite repeated teaching, the disciples did not get it about his death and resurrection – or in fact whether they could successfully live out the reality of the incarnation!

All that is to say that we all lose sight of some aspect of our passion. The only way we resurrect our hope for it is through living the doubt and asking for grace to reignite it. As Rocha said about the Eros of study for example, "Study, as with most things, cannot be wholly

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[384] See my comments in footnote #249.
[385] Rocha, 45.
[386] Ibid.
[387] Conversation with the author, Alberta, Canada, December 2013.

determined by a strong will generated from a singular intending ego."[388] Explaining this through

his trinitarian lens, he suggests that the desire for the thing *so* desired, infused with an energy

called *subsistence* "subsists as an erotic force that comes and goes, but never leaves us

altogether."[389] I use this illustration because people passionate about their vision often fear that

the objective will be lost. Whereas time, the process of conversion, rest periods and patience –

and for people whose job it is to do this, not forgetting to pray for those you lead – achieves the

end. If you really trust your thesis on your *events model*, then you must also trust the depths of

what you cannot yet see about temporality and time: That human beings, not confined to the

present, walk ahead anticipating the future. People do this for themselves, and you merely open

before them the concepts and the possibility through solid pedagogy, and your desire for their

growth.

Your chapter 5 journey, which offers education as the bridge between leadership and the

insecurity of the liquid age, is a journey with an erotic force that also comes and goes, but never

leaves us altogether – to use Rocha's example of the power of erotic force applied to study.[390]

You choose Arendt, Kegan and Lahey, Augustine, Ambrose of Milan, Hollis, Rakoczy, Tutu,

Robb and Coulter and Wiens precisely because they also understand this erotic force and are

testimony to the fact that it never leaves altogether.

Now we must go, because we have a gathering planned!

(Exit Education.)

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[388] Rocha, 73
[389] Ibid.
[390] Ibid.

6   Conclusion

6.1   Assembly of the Characters

(*Enter Mennigke, Inquiry, Conversion, Contradiction and Education. Embodiment and Mystery are already there. The room is low-lit and warmly decorated with a fire burning in the grate. There is a long olivewood bar counter, behind which Embodiment and Mystery stand serving whiskey and wine from dusty bottles of old single-malts and cobweb-covered red wine bottles. Some sit, others stand. There is jazz music playing and spirited conversation.*)

MENNIGKE: I am a little awed by this unusual assembly. Have you ever been all together in one space?

MYSTERY: (*Speaks, everyone nodding, muttering expressively*.) We don't generally like to overwhelm people, because, of course, there are more of us….

CONTRADICTION: (*Quizzically.*) Some here…some there… all over in fact. We come to people who believe in us, and they get to know us. Well, as much as they can *know* us rather than know *about* us!

CONVERSION: But not many try, you know… *fides quaerens intellectum.* How many seek, I mean *really* seek reason enlightened by faith, even though they know they can't ever fully get there! Too often, it feels unreal and then they try to reason it out with the mind or argue irrationally with one another![391]

EMBODIMENT: Except the transformed ones! They get drawn deeper in and want to go places! Like some of those you cited in interviews. But what about you? How are you after these

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[391] The phrase *fides quaerens intellectum,* translated *"*faith seeking understanding", is accredited to St Anselm. Understanding involves some sort of seeing-the-whole by grasping the interrelatedness of the parts. (Frederick Christian Bauerschmidt, and University Press Scholarship Online. *Thomas Aquinas: Faith, Reason, and Following Christ*. First ed. Oxford, United Kingdom; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013. doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199213146.001.0001.)

six interviews, which you're going to write up and submit as a dissertation...we understand? Of course, you can't cite us in a bibliography – *they* will not believe you!

(*Affirmation from the group, and talking among themselves again*.)

INQUIRY: (*Speaking above the group.)* Unless he turns each discourse section into a stage production with six or seven scenes! His playwright son could direct it – I've seen him perform physical theatre – and I believe he helped Mennigke hone his thoughts on conceptualization and characterization, thinking through who creates whom, and who has autonomy, and the like.

ASSEMBLY: (*All speak together, affirming Inquiry.)*

MYSTERY*: (Speaking above the group.)* They could call it "If I were a leader," and we will be the *Dramatis Personae*! Imagine us mystical figures acting as ourselves. That will be incarnation!

(*General enthusiasm from the Assembly.)*

EDUCATION: (*Enquiringly)* But do we think Mennigke got the *inquiry into leadership in a liquid age* right in this paper?

CONTRADICTION: (*First muttering, then correcting.)*There are flaws in Mennigke's writing for sure. For one, it's a broad inquiry. Yet he named the issues around us: leadership culture needs conversion; leadership needs to learn embodiment and mystery; leadership must be able to embrace *me*. I guess whether he got it right or not, he formed a relationship of ongoing inquiry with the six of us. Therefore, in our brother Socrates' approach – he makes no concrete definition about our virtues – yet he gets closer and closer to understanding us. To be sure, that is the objective that keeps our truth alive!

EMBODIMENT: (*while pouring lavish tots and sampling)* Well, I say he can get a little…say…ornate in his descriptions at times, yet I experienced something in these interviews!

It was like someone taking me seriously by not just knowing about the perspective I'm supposed to have, but almost like calling me out of my title into myself. Like a bit of a birth experience actually, and I don't get that a lot. Did anyone else feel the same?

MYSTERY: (*Slightly sheepishly*) Obviously I like it when someone gets excited about my world, but I also felt a little freed-up – at not having to be the formal "Honorable Mystery" invited to talk at functions and defend J.K. Rowling and C.S. Lewis among parents wedded to essentialism! It was more like someone did again what happened at our beginning, you'll remember: called me by my name – just quietly breathed m - y - s - s - s - s - t - e - r - y, and I felt mysterious again! It feels a little like after all this time we're also in the human liquid age, and in a, what did he call it – emergent condition[392] – waiting for something to solidify. I guess it's the amount of contact we have with humans and human complexities, and I begin to feel more human, even though we're both human and immortal. There's something significant about what I felt in being who I am.

CONTRADICTION: (*Challenging)* Mystery, you should be concerned this could be a slippery path! We could end up having to transform from our deity-status to something we don't know!

EDUCATION: That is the risk, Contradiction, else we're like distant deities without a plan! Is there anyone who did *not* feel moved in some way through the interviews? Let's ask Mennigke if he was aware of anything, like… shifting in us? Then, we will go on to lighter stuff!

ALL: (*Excited chatter*, *nodding, agreeing)*

INQUIRY: *(Speaking above others*.) Noticing what shifted in us is interesting, but I'm more interested in hearing Mennigke reflect on this interaction!

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[392] The reference to *emergent conditions* is in section 2.1

CONTRADICTION: (*Unapologetically.)* I thought we'd heard quite a lot about his views on things – at least individually we did! But (*pausing*)…

CONVERSION: (*Intercepting.)*Wait! Inquiry is right. Mennigke, which one of your roles in life would you choose if we invited you to be one of *us* for an interaction? More specifically, because you are used to living various roles as a priest anyway, what charism identifies *you*, and what has shifted in *you* through this exercise? Like, maybe there's an ontological shift …?

CONTRADICTION: (*muttering softly*) Ontological shift …this could take time!

MYSTERY: *(Ignores Contradiction, comes out from behind the bar counter.)* Wait! I'm keen to hear this too, but Conversion, I want to rephrase your question to him from a mythical view. Okay? (*Conversion nods agreement*). Is there a parable in the scriptures that gathers together your roles, charism and whatever transformation you've experienced through this process?

MENNIGKE: *(slightly reticent, then bolder.)* There *is* a story that comes to mind. In fact, it's the earliest example in the bible of a fable using plants or animals to point to a human moral.[393] So, it's appropriate in this context of personification of yourselves in a script, which is in itself a parable. The story is about Jotham's denunciation of his brother Abimelech, whose deception and vice led to his self- appointed wicked leadership over Israel, after the death of their father Gideon. It is also called *The Parable of the Trees*, in the Old Testament book of Judges 9:7-15.

MYSTERY: (*Animated*) I know it! I'd like to offer a summary.

MENNIGKE: Sure… fable is your calling and charism!

MYSTERY: The legend is this:

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[393] the New Jerusalem Bible. footnote Judges 9: 7-15

The trees go out to find and anoint a king to rule over them. They approach the first three trees, the olive, the fig and the vine, each of whom declines the invitation to rule, despite possessing the qualities – honour, sweetness and cheer – which are good and wholesome, and by which they could rule and prosper. The threefold refusal causes the trees to then approach the thorn bush to be their king. The thorn bush holds no qualities to lead, yet hankers for the honour and requires the other trees to submit to its threatening protection.

There are all kinds of lessons about leadership enveloped in this fable, but it is also the historical prophecy against Abimelech's cunning violence and greed for power. He represents the thorn bush in the parable, and history records that eventually Abimelech was fatally injured when a millstone was purposefully dropped on his head. He ordered his armour-bearer to draw his sword and kill him. [394]

MENNIGKE: A good allegorical summary Mystery! So may I attempt an answer to your questions about my experience in this interaction with you all, because they are embedded in the fable, but also in the context of the Book of Judges? The fable is applied to the situation created by Abimelech's reign of terror after the death of Gideon, who was God's rightfully appointed judge in Israel.

Judges is really a *leadership parable* about a group of hero-liberators in Israel's history c.1200 -1025 BCE. The judges were national figures in Israel, chosen by God for a mission of rescue and leading the wars of Yahweh[395] on behalf of Israel. Their role was metering out justice, and ruling on Yahweh's behalf. Being chosen by God meant they all received a *charism* or

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[394] Judges 9: 52-57

[395] Yahweh is a Hebrew name for God in the scriptures. It's useful to note that the etymology of the word *war* is "to confuse".

special grace from God to fulfil the task to which they were called. The task was *restoring God's rule* in the confusion caused by wars with the surrounding nations, and the perplexing situations into which God's people Israel, got themselves − often because of their unfaithfulness to Yahweh.[396]

INQUIRY: So, apply this to *your* current roles.

MENNIGKE: In a curious way, what I described as my role in our earlier interview is a replica of the leadership story in Judges, and is supporting of my work in leadership formation described in these interviews. My own leadership parable, described in the initial interviews (the Word, Contextual) is echoed in the ordination service of a priest. Among other things, it involves calling, charism and purpose. Calling: "And now we give thanks that you have called *this* your servant to share in this ministry entrusted to your Church;"[397] Charism: "Send down the Holy Spirit upon your servant *Stuart*, whom we consecrate in your name to the office and work of a priest in Church;"[398] Purpose: " … give to this your servant grace and power to fulfil *his/her* ministry among the people committed to *his/her* charge…"[399] It ends with the reminder to be faithful: "Do not forget the trust committed to you as a priest in the Church of God."[400]

CONTRADICTION: That's neat! But can you transfer these quite theological/spiritual charges and charisms to leadership in general? And is there room for failure?

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[396] An understanding of the people of Israel's (or Israel) marriage to God is based on the notion of an unequal relationship in which they promise to be faithful to Yahweh, but are unable to keep their promise, and God is faithful to them through thick and thin, because faithfulness is God's nature. This is the summation of the story called the Hebrew Scriptures- that *God is faithful*. In Judges, Gideon is God's faithful judge in Israel, but after his death Israel relapses into idolatry, and "the Israelites no longer remembered Yahweh their God who had rescued them from all the enemies around them", and This is what causes Jotham's rendering of the parable of the Trees. Jotham was the youngest son of Gideon, who escaped being killed by Abimelech along with his 70 brothers.

[397] The Book of Alternative Services of the Anglican Church of Canada. 648

[398] Ibid.

[399] Ibid. 649. The purpose of the work committed to the priest continues to include: to watch over them, care, absolve and bless in your name, proclaim the gospel of salvation, offer spiritual sacrifices, make him/her worthy, give them wisdom and discipline to work faithfully…

[400] Ibid.

MENNIGKE: Perhaps the answer to your question lies in the nature of charism. As with the Judges of Israel, the charism is not as much about the *gift* as it is what you *do* with it. How you apply the charism is what makes a leader a liberator of others. The charism is in *some* ways dependant on the kind of life a leader lives, while in other ways it operates despite the recipient, as even the upright make mistakes and seek forgiveness! But *the charism is something acting through the recipient*, and while it 'belongs' to them, its nature is gift and so is never totally the possession of the leader. Living out the calling faithfully, despite ones failings, is part of living an embodied leadership. In the ordination of priest-leaders, before the laying on of hands for imparting the gift of the Holy Spirit, the candidate answers a host of questions, among which is the promise to persevere in prayer, ask for God's grace for self and others, and offer their labours to God.

I think that in many ways the nature of gift is similar whether leadership is chosen and commissioned by God or not. It has aspects of giving and receiving, and charism's nature recognises that it needs to be handled with care. I guess in many ways this lies at the centre of my thesis that leadership requires self awareness to be fully operative, for how else can they detect and work with the sensitivity of charism?

CONVERSION: You teach the importance of transformation in leaders, and especially so in this age. Some of us suggested shifts in our experience, which is risky to admit, but true. So what about *your* changes through this process?

MENNIGKE: The *Parable of the Trees* leadership parable has been a profound reminder that the wisdom of ancient parables is incomplete until it finds a home in the reader. I could not have predicted what would happen in me over this journey of writing, but I am aware that over time, my supervisors saw a "projected me", and waited for it to ripen. I know this because of some of

their suggestions earlier on in the writing process – long before we got to this formal inquiry stage you've all shared. It has been an interesting play between me hearing things academically, even knowing their truth for the process of research and writing, but needing to wait in *the journey from the head to the heart.* If I'm honest, it's been humbling, as I have felt respected as a priest, while knowing that I am their student. The teacher draws out the gifts that are lodged in a leader because of the leader's calling, yet has to wait for the recognition to find a home in the soul. Conversion said it earlier − *fides quaerens intellectum* − it like waiting *with* the interplay between faith and understanding.

CONVERSION: Why humbling?

MENNIGKE: Because of the number of leaders I accompany in work and spiritual journeys. I suppose it's a kind of *graced skill* which comes from making the journey oneself. However, what is transforming for me, is watching it again with me as the subject. Another change has been an emergent skill in writing, and with is also transferring writing into preaching. My youngest son remarked a while ago, after hearing a homily I gave: "Hey Dad, this writing thing has changed the way you preach dude!" It wasn't the at-home-ness of preaching, as he's witnessed that over time, but the challenge that comes from reflection, writing and succinctness. I'm sure it's about who I perceive God to be at any point in the relationship, and this is always changing. These are heartening conversions.

CONVERSION: And why are these conversions important for your thesis about leadership in the liquid age?

MENNIGKE: I think this is an answer that is an "emergent condition" really. Unless leaders themselves are in a state of ongoing growth, they cannot be relevant in this age. I'm not convinced I have paid due respect to Bauman, whose concept of liquid modernity I use in my

thesis. But he was 92, when I began using his work, and his belief was that fragility, temporariness, vulnerability and inclination to constant change is what united modern life.[401] If I ever thought that I had an answer to anything, Bauman's belief is my convertor. Leaders themselves can only ever be *on a journey*, and the demise of those who claim "I know" or "I am" is always imminent.

And may I venture a reply to Education's earlier question about noticing a shift in yourselves: Only that you showed pleasure from the dialogue, and in this interaction you admit to noticing change in yourselves! Initially I expected something more academic, formal and discourse-like. At times, I was surprised that your points of inquiry were more agreeable than contradictory − except for Contradiction of course! When we started out, I thought I was really the host of the interviews, but as we went along, it was obvious to me that you were. There is something of a mystery in it all that I can't fathom right now, but I was aware that you treated me in a way that you want me to treat the leaders I teach. And listening to your interaction now reminds me of the story of *Majnun's search of Layla* from Persian mystical tradition:

> One day Majnun was sifting earth in the middle of a road.
> A pious man said to him: "O Majnun, what are you seeking here?"
> "I seek Layla" replied Majnun.
> "How can you find Layla here?" and the other.
> "Could a pearl so pure be found in such rubbish?"
> "Well" said Majnun, "I seek her everywhere, so that one day I may find her somewhere."[402]

(*They do not exit, the music is turned up, the party flows.*)

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[401] Bauman, x.
[402] Aṭṭār and Masani, 86.

Afterword

Setting out on the journey of writing this paper, my supervisors reminded me that trying to cover a subject as broad as reframing leadership was ambitious. Yet, working in educational leadership, as well as being a priest-leader in the liquid age, I owe it to others and my ordination vows, to reflect on my work and test it with academic rigour. Where I failed to do this in the discourse, the interlocutors somehow pushed it home. Therefore it was somewhat surprising that despite me being the author, opening myself to the process of dialogue with the characters I originally personified, the writing took on a life of its own by the interlocutors speaking to me about my development potential. This happened in each chapter's *after the word* section. I noticed that the issues they confronted were in fact suggestions or counsel that had previously come from my academic supervisors, counselling supervisor, line manager at work, my family, friends, and God. On reflection, I know that these were issues I needed to face with increased depth, but I also know that this was not just a mystical take-over of my psyche, but the product of including myself as part of the conceptual tool for building aspects of the journey I could yet not fully understand or control. This is the nature of charism. I may receive and exercise a gift of understanding or service or leadership, and in doing this I am the vehicle for something acting through me − in Augustine's words from the epigraph of chapter 1 − *the means of grace and vehicle of the Eternal Charity*. However, I do not get to choose the route. This is the message at the core of ʿAṭṭār's *Conference of the Birds*. They may choose to follow the leader, but they do not know what they will experience in the seven valleys.

In this dissertation, I think that it is unlikely for me to have honoured in full the insight and opinions of the more timeless philosophical and theological authors I have explored and cited. However, my supervisors kept finding a prize here and there, which showed me that I was

on the edge of my own Narnia often enough, for them to follow me through the wardrobe into the other reality.

       The individual points of inquiry I selected for reframing leadership may not be original in themselves, but what I defend is my hypothesis on their interrelationship in the age of liquid modernity. Most chiefly, I defend my expression of the marriage between characterization and conceptualization expressed in a literary way. I also know that the value of this work for humanities-based research depends largely on the investigator's risk in being willing to be an educational vehicle in the way I hypothesize. It is about the contract with oneself to be taken, consecrated, broken and distributed.

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Appendix A   Explanation of Characterization

This appendix offers notes from the discipline of the dramatic arts on personifying non-living things[403] as this paper has done with interlocutors like Inquiry, Conversion, Embodiment, Mystery, Contradiction and Education**.** Three points of explanation are important: Character biographies and personification, autonomy, and objective.

Character biographies and personification: These are useful for the reader to formulate the personality of the characters, while providing initial guidelines for the writer. For the writer, this is what I know about the characters. Ontologically they are beings (see my references to Rocha's trinitarian lens in the text) with the ability to do whatever it is for which they are distinguished. As the writer, I begin by asking what and who the characters are to me, and once they are created, the relationship between the characters, and me as writer, remains prime. As the writer in a personified interview, I am initially cognizant that my understanding of a character, like Conversion, for example, is flawed. However, from the characters' perspective, they care more that we have a relationship, than I answer their inquiries correctly. This is because the character is treated as a living, breathing person. My continued ontological questioning of the character is what keeps our relationship alive. If I as the writer stop questioning, then I make an assumption about knowing what gives life to our relationship. Ontologically, there is no way the writer can fully know the personified characters, especially as in this case, they are wisdom figures. Clearly, the link to embodiment, as I postulate it in this paper, is an important aspect here. In an interesting way, because my characters know I remain flawed about the

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[403] Francis Mennigke, Interview on characterization. Telephonically on June 25, 2019, and email notes from a second interview on June 26, 2019. Francis cited a Tedtalk lecture by Prof. Andrew Buckland, Rhodes University, South Africa, *Theatre or Extinction – Choose!* August 2012. https://youtu.be/C8DWMCbAyEs.

understanding of their being, I cannot fully define them. However, what is important is that they offer themselves for the interaction – for the show, the play – if you like.[404] This keeps a measure of mystery and respect alive in the relationship between the writer and the characters, as well as between the characters and observers who are reading or watching these interactions. This is an important aspect for me as the writer in the conceptual analysis, where I postulate that mystery is an important component in the formation of leaders. The characters defy the principles of being and time as Heidegger poses it, while also being the epitome of the acknowledgement that *Being and Time* is incomplete.

The Socratic conversation about justice or truth informs this further.[405] As referred to in the text of chapter 6 of this dissertation, Socrates, in his exchange, makes no concrete definition about the virtues of the character, yet he gets closer and closer to understanding them, which is the objective that keeps the character's truth alive.

The second point of explanation is autonomy in the writer and characters: As the writer, I carry the awareness that I am writing through and for Conversion, for example, as a character, and that Conversion arranges to support my response. Therefore, I am writing through them as a vessel and so I have autonomy in writing. Paradoxically, I carry the realization that as the writer, while I am not actually the characters, I am writing through and giving voice to them. In one way therefore, while I assume to make decisions for the characters, I am always cognizant that my understanding of the characters is flawed, and therefore they are free to interact independently. The writer creates the characters in a world, and the characters performing in that world are

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[404] I intend a deliberate play on these words, but the term we use for or a play or movie "there are six *showings* a day" is an aspect of this ontological reduction. Rocha develops this reduction quite masterfully in *Folk Phenomenology,* chapter 1.

[405] Michael C. Stokes, Plato's Socratic Conversations. Drama and Dialectic in Three Dialogues. (London: Athlone Press. 1986) 327- 336.

determined by the constraints the writer chooses to build. The writer assumes to understand how their world is affected and how they affect each other. Though this may appear implausible, it is because the author has independence.

You may ask then, if it is possible for a character to have autonomy from their creator if the rules are determined by the creator? It is, because the writer consciously revokes writer's autonomy, thus giving the character freedom to play, and this can only happen if I as the writer challenge my own desire for the world and the character I create. At this point, the writer is free because the roles are reversed. The writer becomes the character and the character becomes the writer – at which point only the idea is important. The reader should understand that in the kind of inquiry involved in this paper, the writer has given up control, as the writer is not attempting to predict what questions the characters are asking of them. Therefore, my consciousness as writer is that I have given up *my* desires for the characters I created. This is resolved in the interaction between the writer and characters in chapter 6 – the assembly of the characters.

The third point of explanation is about objective in characterization: In live theatre, characterization is about objective. The characters do what they do because of who they are. For example, Mystery is Mystery because of Mystery's objective, and Mystery's character is defined by Mystery's meaning. Therefore, when Mystery and I engage in a conversation, we also enter into a relationship determined by *Mystery's* objectives. My comment about who I initially thought was in charge of the interviews refers here. At first, I think that by inviting them, a gravity will added to the interaction, and I am in control of these interactions. However, I am not in control, because the relationship is defined by the characters' objectives. Over the course of the interviews, it becomes clear that they take charge, and give me, as the writer, licence to grow and interact through their reflections until I experience some freedom. Hence, they, as wisdom

figures, slowly take over the longer monologues in the inquiry, and each chapter ends with the

interlocutors teaching me, the writer, about personal aspects around the points of inquiry. They

are the teachers, they offer me as the writer something, and wait for me to see and absorb it. In

the receiving, I realize that an exchange has happened. It is never totally clear, but I know

something has happened, and that this is nature of charism. The characters, interestingly, reflect

this in the portrayal of the final assembly in chapter 6 – also aware that something has happened

in them through the interaction. As the writer, I could not have predicted how they or I might be

affected through the interaction. In the process of characterization, this is the beauty in

attempting to show something real as an artist writer. Rocha's claim is that in a philosophical

way, this is where "art precedes metaphysics," [406] and calls it *the folkloric reversal*:

> The folkloric reversal is an attempt to find not what is first or last but what is real, with
> the credibility that art has when it speaks for and from itself. The beautiful is not an
> axiomatic or critical affair: it is simply the struggle to show what has been offered, with a
> hope that never carries the expectation of a gift.[407]

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[406] Rocha, 5.
[407] Rocha, 6.

Appendix B   Acknowledgement of Epigraphs

1.2   The Word

> You are the Body of Christ: that is to say, in you and through you the work of the Incarnation must go forward. You are meant to incarnate in your lives the theme of your adoration - you are to be taken, consecrated, broken and distributed, that you may be the means of grace and vehicles of the Eternal Charity.
> – Augustine of Hippo

The epigraph to this chapter is drawn from the sermons of St Augustine on the Eucharist #57. Philip Schaff, ed. Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series, Vol. 6. Edited by (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1888). These words hold for me the essence of the sacramental practice of the Church. Truly *an outward and visible sign on an inward and spiritual grace*. It is how we practice incarnation in the world, and how we take God, received in the Eucharist, with us into whatever we do in everyday life. It is for me the repetition of how we can be in the world in a meaningful way.

2.2   The Word

> If you are what you should be, you will set the whole world on fire!
> ― St. Catherine of Siena

The epigraph is a variant version of "If you are what you ought to be, you will set fire to all Italy, and not only yonder." From Letter 368 to Stefano Maconi. after November 1378. Catherine's quotes have long been an inspiration to me on my own retreats, and material I have always used for retreatants I accompany. Her words are particularly relevant in the context of this dissertation addressing leadership in the time of liquid modernity, as "Catherine lived in a century when the Church and society and her own Dominican order were in chaos". See Catherine, of Siena, Saint and Suzanne Noffke. *The Dialogue*. (New York: Paulist Press, 1980), 1.

3.2   The Word

> Consider the momentous event in architecture when the wall parted and the column became.
> –Louis Kahn

The epigraph to this chapter is drawn from John Lobell**,** *Between Silence and Light; Spirit in the Architecture of Louis I. Kahn*. *The Wall, the Column*. (Boulder, Colorado: Shambhala Publications, Inc. 1979). 42. Kahn captures not just movements in architecture, but the corresponding development of art through its eras. Because his buildings are standing testimonies to architectural art movements, his work spells for me what I can only get to after much pondering. In this chapter he illustrates for me the dramatic breakthrough that rational thought makes as it considers there is more than one kind of rationality. It is like the power of light breaking the totality of silence.

4.2   The Word

> For the leader who is on a path towards greater awareness of the self, contradiction is implicit – because souls who question themselves are sensitive to the knowledge that solids have come to be viewed as transient in the presence of liquidity
> – Stuart Mennigke

The epigraph to this chapter is a combination of my thoughts on holding contradiction in creative tension and Zygmund Bauman's writing on the fragility of the liquid age. December 2019.

5.2   The Word

> He is more interested in motivating us to question ourselves than giving us answers. He is more interested in fruit than flowers, in wheat than chaff, in substance than fluff.
> – Daryl Sharp, on James Hollis

The Epigraph to Chapter 5 is publisher Daryl Sharp's words about James Hollis. See Hollis, James. *On this Journey we Call our Life: Living the Questions*. (Toronto: Inner City Books, 2003), 7. Hollis' understanding of life as a journey comes out of his own experience, but always fed by his scholarly insight. He holds a careful balance between the disciplines of psychology, theology and spirituality.