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**The development of leaders within a church network in Austria 'Life church Österreich'**

Wheeler, Gowan

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**THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEADERS  
WITHIN A CHURCH NETWORK IN AUSTRIA  
'LIFE CHURCH ÖSTERREICH': A CASE STUDY**

By

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Dissertation submitted for the degree of Doctor of Ministry  
in the College of Arts and Humanities,  
School of Theology and Religious Studies,  
Bangor University, September 2012.

## ABSTRACT

The development of leaders within church networks, in comparison to mainstream denominations, can appear *ad hoc*, lacking consistency, theological aptitude and structure. Nevertheless, some of these leaders are seeing remarkable church growth and are maintaining a relevancy in an increasingly pluralistic and fast changing Western society.

‘Life Church Österreich’ is a church network in Austria whose leaders, in contrast to its contemporaries, are almost one hundred percent indigenous. There is evidence that it has effectively developed leaders and pioneered churches in this Central European nation, but has the development been sufficient and can it be sustained? While revealing the significant hindrances of the unique cultural climate of Austria, this paper assesses the means of the network’s advancement to date.

The thorough literature review of leadership distinctives and the optimal means of developing leaders led to qualitative empirical research of the entire network’s leadership. Coupled with the author’s exclusive insider-outsider status, this has ensured a thorough analysis and evaluation of Life Church Österreich’s development of leaders.

The findings reveal that the development of a leader is a holistic life process and that Life Church Österreich will need to revive its focus on relational input, and training in the context of ministry, if indeed it is to produce the required leaders for the future growth of the network.

## ABSTRACT (Deutsch)

Das Hervorbringen von Leitern innerhalb freikirchlicher Netzwerke kann im Vergleich zu landeskirchlichen Einrichtungen *ad hoc* erscheinen, mit fehlender Konsistenz, theologischer Kompetenz und Struktur. Trotzdem erleben einige dieser Leiter ein bemerkenswertes Wachstum ihrer Kirche und bleiben in einer zunehmend pluralistischen und sich schnell verändernden westlichen Gesellschaft relevant.

'Life Church Österreich' ist ein Netzwerk von Freikirchen in Österreich, dessen Leiter im Gegensatz zu anderen freikirchlichen Bewegungen fast zu hundert Prozent Einheimische sind. Es wurden nachweislich auf effektive Weise Leiter hervorgebracht und in diesem mitteleuropäischen Land Kirchen gegründet. Aber ist diese Entwicklung ausreichend gewesen und kann sie aufrechterhalten werden? Diese wissenschaftliche Arbeit wird die wesentlichen Hindernisse des einzigartigen kulturellen Klimas von Österreich beleuchten und den Fortschritt des Netzwerks bis zum Erscheinungsdatum bewerten.

Eine gründliche Literaturrecherche über Merkmale von Leiterschaft und optimale Mittel zur Entwicklung von Leitern führte zu einer qualitativ - empirischen Untersuchung der Leiterschaft des gesamten Netzwerks. Gepaart mit dem speziellen Status des Autors als Insider-Outsider der Bewegung, bürgt dies für eine gründliche Analyse und Auswertung der Entwicklung von Führungskräften der Life Church Österreich.

Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass eine Entwicklung eines Leiters ein ganzheitlicher, lebenslanger Prozess ist, und dass Life Church Österreich seinen Fokus auf die Entwicklung des Leiters durch Beziehungen und Ausbildung im Kontext von praxisnahem Dienst erneuern muss, wenn die erforderlichen Leiter für das zukünftige Wachstum des Netzwerks mit Gewissheit hervorgebracht werden sollen.

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Although I spend much of my time leading, I am first and foremost a Christ-follower and I thank God for the opportunity to pursue these studies, and commit them and my life again to His service.

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# INTRODUCTION

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## 0.1 *Intention and Purpose for Writing*

By undertaking this research project, my primary intention is to benefit the 'Life Church Österreich' network of churches (LCÖ) and its leaders by assessing the work of the network in its development of leaders. I want to identify possible strengths and weaknesses in this area and aim to gain an understanding of how LCÖ could effectively raise up and train leaders in the current cultural climate in which it ministers. Although the network's development of leaders has been reviewed and discussed by its leadership, it has never been subject to a structured research of the doctoral standard I have undertaken. For this reason I agree with John Swinton and Harriet Mowat's summary of the four major functions of research:<sup>1</sup>

*Contextual* – describing the form or nature of what exists.

*Explanatory* – examining the reasons for, or associations between, what exists.

*Evaluative* – appraising the effectiveness of what exists.

*Generative* – aiding the development of theories, strategies or actions.

Swinton and Mowat's assessment indicates that research can both describe and explain what has been, as well as look forward, by evaluating the functionality of what is and proposing what could be. I therefore consider it an optimal time for the network to be subject to this manner of research. To date (2012) there are nine churches, the first being planted in 1988,<sup>2</sup> although the network has only been officially in existence for fifteen years.<sup>3</sup> LCÖ has therefore the advantage of being small and young enough to be flexible and thus potentially capable of appropriating any research findings.

My secondary intention, as a practitioner,<sup>4</sup> is that through the research and writing process I will gain further understanding and perspective which will

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<sup>1</sup> John Swinton & Harriet Mowat, *Practical Theology and Qualitative Research* (London: SCM Press, 2006), pp. 51-52; with reference to J. Ritchie & J. Lewis (eds.), *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers* (London: Sage, 2003), p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Supra 2.2.1.

<sup>3</sup> Supra 2.2.2.

<sup>4</sup> Supra 0.5.

enhance my ability as a minister and leader within LCÖ. I expound on my relationship to this research later in this paper.<sup>5</sup>

LCÖ's senior leadership has endorsed this research and I anticipate that this dissertation will have a keen readership both within LCÖ and in other church groupings in Austria. This is not only because of the interest in the development of leaders within church networks, but also because my research can be deemed to be original; research of this nature and subject matter has not been done regarding the Austrian context prior to this.<sup>6</sup>

## **0.2 Setting: Ecclesiastical Analysis and Cultural Engagement**

This dissertation is concerned with examining the effectiveness of leadership development within a relatively young church network. Both the distinctive character of the LCÖ network together with Austria's unique cultural setting will enhance the original nature of this work.<sup>7</sup> By researching the development of leaders, this paper concerns itself with ecclesiastical analysis and cultural engagement, and I am therefore placing the work within the discipline of practical theology. Practical theology recognises the importance of other texts which life and communities, both religious and secular, present.<sup>8</sup> It permits those ministering to engage with their 'mission field' and draw conclusions from various spheres that make up that mission field. To this end, Ray Anderson's description of practical theology proves helpful: the 'dynamic process of reflective, critical inquiry into the praxis of the church in the world and God's purposes for humanity, carried out in

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<sup>5</sup> Supra 0.5 & 5.5.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Martin Podobri, *Transformation in Österreich: Kultur- und gesellschaftsrelevanter Bau des Reiches Gottes im freikirchlichen Kontext* (Bonn: Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft, 2011); Podobri does write regarding the leadership and cultural situation, but the focus of his research is the mission and effectiveness of *Freikirchen* in Austria. See also: Frank Hinkelmann, 'Österreich – „Felix Austria“ oder „Friedhof der Missionare“?', *Evangelikale Missiologie* 25.3 (2009), pp. 128-136; Frank Hinkelmann, 'Kirchengeschichte Österreichs – ein Überblick' (unpublished seminar notes, Leadership Academy, 2009); Hinkelmann's writings concern themselves primarily with the historical progress of the *Freikirche* with some commentary as to their leadership. Klaus Winter & Anton Bergmair (eds), *Eine Bewegung stellt sich vor: 50 Jahre Freie Christengemeinden in Österreich, 1946-1996* (Salzburg: FCGÖ, 1997); provides a historical perspective of the Pentecostal churches in Austria, but no in depth analysis of their leadership development. Supra 1.3.2 for explanation re. *Freikirchen*.

<sup>7</sup> Supra ch. 1 & 2.

<sup>8</sup> Leonard Sweet, Brian D. McLaren & Jerry Haselmayer, *A is for Abductive: The Language of the Emerging Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), p. 277.



the light of Christian Scripture and tradition, and in critical dialogue with other sources of knowledge.’<sup>9</sup>

### **0.3 Definitions of Key Words and Concepts**

The study requires a fuller definition of some terms that are integral to the research. Terms such as Leadership, Christian Ministry, Development of Leadership, and Church Network, will now be clarified for their usage in the context of this work.

#### **0.3.1 Leader and Leadership**

There are varied views of and expectations associated with the term ‘leader’ and ‘leadership’, and therefore a brief summary of how I am using the term is necessary. A leader is often understood to be the figurehead, the statesman of an organisation, the public face to its members and general public alike. This does not automatically mean that they in fact lead anyone. In the same way, an individual may have assigned authority and utilize it, but not actually do much, if any, leading. LCÖ does not have a process of ordination. The leader is ‘recognised’ but receives no ordination status or documentation other than an official ‘appointment’<sup>10</sup> to a church or ministry by means of a special church service or statement. The leader may be the founder of a particular local church or someone to whom the leadership responsibility has been transferred by the founder. This leader is thus clearly recognised and relates also to the apostolic team<sup>11</sup> as such. Other leaders within each church are in turn recognised by the senior leader (and leadership team), primarily through the outworking of their gifting. As Leonard Sweet suggests, leadership is better understood ‘as a

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<sup>9</sup> Ray S. Anderson, *The Shape of Practical Theology: Empowering Ministry within Theological Praxis* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2001), p. 22; cf. Stanley J. Grenz & John R. Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism: Shaping Theology in a Postmodern Context* (Westminster: John Knox Press, 2001), p. 16.

<sup>10</sup> The German phrase ‘Einsetzung’ has been used by LCÖ, but possibly requires some evaluation.

<sup>11</sup> Supra 2.3.1.

movement word and a participatory phrase'.<sup>12</sup> Thus leadership may have more to do with the function of leading a given group or organization, with emphasis on ability rather than any given title. Sweet explains that it is more important to understand what great leaders actually do, than what they (or others) claim (them) to be.<sup>13</sup> Leadership is therefore to be found in the application of their skills and living out their calling, and not simply a case of having a known competence or gifting. Thus this research is concerned with the development of leaders in relation to their ability to function as such.

I develop the discussion on Christian leadership distinctives in chapter three, but while defining the term leadership, it is important to note that it is not the same function or role as management. John Kotter's management and leadership comparisons help to understand the differences and better define leadership.<sup>14</sup> Where management is necessary to measure progress and regulate how an organisation functions, leadership is concerned with knowing the overall destination, with setting direction not just goals. Leadership is about vision, about keeping the mission in the minds of workers and the practices of an organisation to achieve results, whereas management deals with establishing structure and systems to get those results. Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus conclude that, 'Managers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right thing'.<sup>15</sup> Consequently a manager can be understood to maintain, but a leader progresses the cause or fundamental purpose of the organisation.

### **0.3.2 Development of Leaders**

'Development' of a leader describes the whole process of a person moving towards and being trained and equipped to lead. Robert Clinton notes that it 'includes all of life's processes, not just formal training' and is therefore 'a much

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<sup>12</sup> Leonard Sweet, *Summoned to Lead* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), p. 19; 'The participatory understanding of "leadership" is actually more in agreement with the earliest definition of the word *lead*, which is derived from the Old English, meaning "to cause to go."'

<sup>13</sup> Sweet, *Summoned to Lead*, p. 19.

<sup>14</sup> John P. Kotter, *A Force for Change: How Leadership Differs from Management* (New York: The Free Press, 1990), p. 6; Management/ Leadership comparison summary: Planning & Budgeting/ Establishing Direction, Organising & Staffing/ Aligning People, Controlling & Problem Solving/ Motivating & Inspiring, Produces a degree of predictability & order/ Produces change.

<sup>15</sup> Warren G. Bennis & Burt Nanus, *Leadership: The Strategies for Taking Charge* (New York: Harper and Row, 1985), p. 21.

broader term than leadership training.’<sup>16</sup> I will expound on this development in the areas of both vocational preparedness and spiritual formation. I anticipate that it will become evident that development entails more than completing a course or obtaining a qualification.

### **0.3.3 Ministry**

‘Ministry’ will describe a broad range of responsibilities, jobs and functions of a church leader. Without developing the theological argument, it is helpful at this stage to be aware that LCÖ assumes an understanding of the ‘priesthood of all believers’, which acknowledges that the recognised leadership does not have exclusive rights to these practices, but rather they are practised by the congregation as a whole.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, there are leaders who indeed lead others, and by ministering release others to minister.

### **0.3.4 Church Network**

LCÖ is a self-described church network, whereby two elements are critical; the nature of organisation and relationships. The organisation remains more fluid and flexible than a church denomination. William Kay writes that the difference between a denomination and a network is open to discussion.<sup>18</sup> I would add that a church network may appear to be a denomination that is in its early years, which has not yet developed denominational structures. However in case of LCÖ, I agree with Kay, that the absence of denominational bureaucracies and ‘democratic decision making processes’ (*i.e.* voting) make it distinct from a denomination, and furthermore, such practices are deliberately avoided.

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<sup>16</sup> J. Robert Clinton, *The Making of a Leader* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1988), p. 15.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Colin Bulley, *The Priesthood of Some Believers: Developments from the General to the Special Priesthood in the Christian Literature of the First Three Centuries* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2000); p. 321; Bulley provides a detailed analysis of this issue, concluding that the New Testament demonstrates only the need for a ‘general priesthood ...whereas subsequent Christian history... illustrates that the insertion of a third priesthood (by which Bulley means the ordained) understood to derive from Christ’s in a different way from the general priesthood has resulted in the latter’s devaluation.’ See also Robert Muthiah, ‘Christian Practices, Congregational Leadership, and the Priesthood of All Believers’, *Journal of Religious Leadership* 2.2 (2003), pp. 167-203 [199].

<sup>18</sup> William K. Kay, *Apostolic Networks in Britain: New Ways of Being Church* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007), p. 284.

Each church is autonomous, but in close relationship with each other. The relational commitment not only holds together, but also inspires the cause of the churches and network-wide ministries. These characteristics will be more closely examined in chapter two.

## **0.4 Assumptions**

There are three inherent assumptions in this dissertation:

- The importance of leadership as a primary factor for the health and growth of a local church.
- The necessity to develop new church leaders
- The need of a growing church network in Austria.

### **0.4.1 The Importance of Leadership as a Primary Factor**

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, leadership may be considered to be the art of the future,<sup>19</sup> which influences every area of society. Bill Hybels claims that the local church's future 'rests primarily in the hands of its leaders'<sup>20</sup> and Kotter writes that leadership is the key to creating and sustaining a twenty-first century organisation.<sup>21</sup> Lesslie Newbigin claims that full participation of the church members cannot happen without leadership: 'The business of leadership is precisely to enable, encourage, and sustain the activity of all the members. To set "participation" and "leadership" against each other is absurd. Clericalism and anticlericalism are simply two sides of one mistake.'<sup>22</sup> Alan Hirsch and Michael Frost claim that when the Apostle Paul writes concerning apostles, prophets, evangelists, *etc.*, he writes primarily about the ministry of the church itself and not the official leadership of the church. They explain however, that leadership should

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<sup>19</sup> Sweet, *Summoned to Lead*, p. 11. Cf. almost a century earlier John Mott stated, 'To secure able men for the Christian ministry is an object of transcendent, urgent, and worldwide concern. It involves the life, the growth, the extension of the church – the future of Christianity itself.' John R. Mott, *The Future Leadership of the Church* (Whitefish: Kessinger Publishing, 2005), p. 3; (reprint of original ed.; New York: Student Department, YMCA, 1909).

<sup>20</sup> Bill Hybels, *Courageous Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), pp. 27 & 12.

<sup>21</sup> John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1996), p. 175.

<sup>22</sup> Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1989), p. 235.

facilitate and release this ministry,<sup>23</sup> thus, while affirming the ministry of all believers, they would agree with Newbigin's plea for leaders who would enable this to happen.<sup>24</sup>

At this point it should be admitted that 'leadership' is not a normative term used in the biblical text. Romans lists the gift of leadership and First Corinthians that of administration (management).<sup>25</sup> The New Testament credentials for an Elder (or Overseer) and a Deacon are concerned with personal character traits for such a position and not specific leadership 'skills' or a role description.<sup>26</sup> These terms stem from a Middle-Eastern, Judaic cultural context from which the Christian faith and concept of church developed. Much of the Old Testament gives consideration to the lives of different individuals and how they led given people groups and nations. In the New Testament we see a unity in diversity of styles and structures of church leadership developing. I suggest that the biblical text speaks very little about the need for leadership, but rather it is assumed.

Jeffrey Nielson argues that much has been misinterpreted through the 'myth' of leadership; that 'we tend to overlook and devalue the impact of the vast majority of people who lack status but truly contribute to making things work', in favour of seeing significant events as the result of a few heroic, gifted leaders.<sup>27</sup> His opinion seeks to bring balance, but fails to address the fact that none of the events of nations, politics or business happened in a leadership vacuum – praise may have been wrongly attributed to some leaders, but one cannot evade the presence and influence of leaders in these events. The peer-groups he proposes will still need individuals to take the lead, to co-ordinate the process; those who know which direction the organisation needs to go. Recent events in the so-called 'Arab Uprising' (e.g. in Egypt) were facilitated through social network sites, enabling impromptu demonstrations to take place within short notice. Nevertheless, there were ring leaders and small activist groups who rallied others

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<sup>23</sup> Alan Hirsch & Michael Frost, *The Shaping of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Church* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003), p. 171; Eph. 4:1-16; cf. pp. 166-181.

<sup>24</sup> Newbigin, *The Gospel*, p. 235; 'The priestly people need a ministering priesthood to sustain and nourish it.'

<sup>25</sup> Rom. 12:8; 1 Cor. 12:28.

<sup>26</sup> Tit. 1:5-9; 1 Tim. 3:1-13.

<sup>27</sup> Jeffrey Nielsen, *The Myth of Leadership: Creating Leaderless Organizations* (Mountain View: Davies-Black Publishing, 2004), p. 18.

to join<sup>28</sup> – thus the leadership is not conventional, top-down or orientated around recognised positions or status, but nonetheless evident and crucial. In this regard, Ori Brafman and Rod Beckstrom are more realistic in their description of what they identified as the ‘Catalyst’ within ‘starfish organisations’. They are similar to Malcolm Gladwell’s ‘connector’ and ‘maven’ types;<sup>29</sup> they interact with people as a peer, depend on trust and thrive on ambiguity and apparent chaos.<sup>30</sup> In their comparison of a catalyst and a CEO, qualities such as emotionally intelligent, connecting and collaborative<sup>31</sup> could just as well be describing the desired characteristics of a leader preferred by a Gen-X and Millennial workforce.<sup>32</sup> In my opinion, most leaderless organisations are not as their name suggests, but simply have a very different form of leadership to the traditional top-down model. Their leadership is often polycentric, with many leaders or centres of leadership, but no central leader. These leaders are like segments, they are ‘heterarchic’<sup>33</sup> rather than being organised in a hierarchy. Therefore, a further development – the adoption of cell-like practices in larger, established firms – is conceivable, as they become ‘spider-starfish hybrids’.<sup>34</sup>

Stuart Murray warns that as ‘Christendom fades, unhealthy dependence on leaders will produce dysfunctional churches and take a heavy toll on leaders.’<sup>35</sup> I agree that an overemphasis on leadership may result in burnt-out leaders unable to ‘perform’ what is unreasonably expected of them. He speaks of the ‘Christendom toxin’ of the dependence on church leaders for the church to

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<sup>28</sup> Staff writers, ‘Profile: Egypt’s Wael Ghonim’ *bbc.co.uk* (09/02/2011), <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12400529>> [accessed 25/01/2012]; cf. Yolande Knell, ‘Egypt’s Revolution: 18 days in Tahrir Square’ *bbc.co.uk* (25/01/2012), <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-16716089>> [accessed 25/01/2012]; Wael Ghonim utilised Facebook to organise protests. After appearing on Egyptian national television after twelve days in custody, it is reported that he had considerable influence over the continuance of the protests and was designated by many as a leader within a ‘leaderless movement’.

<sup>29</sup> Malcolm Gladwell, *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference* (London: Abacus, 2001), pp. 18 & 33-34.

<sup>30</sup> Ori Brafman & Rod A. Beckstrom, *The Starfish and The Spider: The Unstoppable Power of Leaderless Organizations* (New York: Penguin Group Inc., 2007), p. 129; cf. pp. 120-131.

<sup>31</sup> Brafman & Beckstrom, *The Starfish*, p. 130.

<sup>32</sup> Supra 3.2.2.1 (fn. 345) concerning these generational categories.

<sup>33</sup> John Arquilla & David F. Ronfeldt, *Networks and Netwars: The Future of Terror, Crime and Militancy* (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 2001), p. 294.

<sup>34</sup> Brafman & Beckstrom, *The Starfish*, p. 208; Brafman and Beckstrom claim that this decentralising will change the face of industry and society as organisations change in order to survive.

<sup>35</sup> Stuart Murray, *Church after Christendom* (Paternoster Press: Milton Keynes, 2004), p. 188.

progress, and of the need to 'reconfigure' and 'de-emphasise' leadership.<sup>36</sup> I disagree with this advice for the context which I am researching, as Murray is focused on the established church surviving, adapting, renewing itself, and not the pioneering of church in new territories. The assumption therefore remains, that although leadership is not imperative for survival, it is a primary factor to the health and growth of a local church.

#### **0.4.2 The Necessity to Develop New Church Leaders**

The second assumption is closely linked to the first, for if leadership holds importance, then it follows that the development of effective and new leaders is equally necessary. Aubrey Malphurs is adamant: 'a church that isn't developing leaders for the future will not have a future.'<sup>37</sup> Effectivity (and not mere survival) will not simply be dependent on leadership being in position and practised, but practised well. It is 'intriguing to see how leaders with very different styles can both be equally successful.'<sup>38</sup> Esther Cameron and Mike Green note that making a rational assessment of what works and does not work in leadership proves to be very difficult. Some common distinctives will however be examined in chapter three.

The ability to minister does not immediately equate to leadership ability, as Hirsch and Frost suggest that it 'is that added something that enables one to influence and get others to follow. In short, leadership must be viewed as conceptually distinct from gifting and ministry. In some people they do overlap, but not in all.'<sup>39</sup> Alan Roxburgh and Scott Boren further note that 'the Spirit is not the province of ordained leaders or super spiritual people.'<sup>40</sup> The challenge is not to wait or only look for the 'extraordinary' person to lead, but without hesitancy be recognising and developing the leaders in each church. Peter Bock writes of the need to 'deglamorize leadership and consider it a quality that exists in all human beings. We need to simplify leadership and construct it so that it is infinitely and

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<sup>36</sup> Murray, *Church after Christendom*, pp. 188 & 192.

<sup>37</sup> Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005), p. 235.

<sup>38</sup> Esther Cameron & Mike Green, *Making Sense of Change Management: A Complete Guide to the Models, Tools and Techniques of Organizational Change* (London: Kogan Page Limited, 2004), p. 157.

<sup>39</sup> Hirsch & Frost, *The Shaping*, p. 172.

<sup>40</sup> Alan Roxburgh & M. Scott Boren, *Introducing the Missional Church: What It Is, Why It Matters, How to Become One* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2009), p. 122.

universally available.’<sup>41</sup> Kotter summarises: ‘The key to sustaining the kind of successful twenty-first century organisation ...is leadership – not only at the top of the hierarchy, with a capital L, but also in a more modest sense (l) throughout the enterprise.’<sup>42</sup> I agree with Kotter, in that he introduces a perspective of leadership functioning at every level of an organisation, which is also applicable in the ecclesiastical context of developing new leaders.

#### **0.4.3 The Need of a Growing Church Network in Austria**

LCÖ was and continues to be driven by the need for a relevant church expression in towns where there is considered to be none, in a culture of predominately nominal Christianity. It is understood by the LCÖ leaders that church planting was and continues to be an effective means to realising this vision, and as a result, churches were planted that in turn are planting or intending to plant further churches. The outcome has been the formation of a church network. Chapter two will further examine the nature of this network after the Austrian context has been illuminated in chapter one.

Although I consider these three assumptions necessary in order to frame and focus the research, it does not imply that I had already formed conclusions regarding the outcome of the research. Rather, taking these general assumptions as read, they enabled me to pursue other issues that occurred through the case study.

### **0.5 Clarification of How I Relate to this Work as a Practitioner**

I have been serving as a missionary in Austria, based in Vienna, since 2001, having previously worked as an associate pastor for over seven years in Musselburgh, Scotland. My current ministry remit includes both local and national leadership responsibilities.

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<sup>41</sup> Peter Bock, *Community: The Structure of Belonging* (San Francisco: Barrett-Koehler, 2008), p. 121.

<sup>42</sup> Kotter, *Leading Change*, p. 175.



Locally, I am one of three leaders who make up the core leadership team of a church plant, 'Life Church Wien', in Vienna which began in 1997.<sup>43</sup> As well as regularly teaching and preaching, my other leadership responsibilities have included the development and oversight of new ministries and their leaders such as a student ministry, youth ministry, kids club and an internship programme. Development in this context entails pioneering a new area of ministry while recognising, raising up and releasing leaders to lead it.

Nationally, I work alongside the senior leader and founder of LCÖ, which was officially formed in 1997.<sup>44</sup> LCÖ endeavours to maintain a strong emphasis on church planting and raising up leaders. I am the director of a Leadership Academy which was founded in 2007. As well as teaching, I am responsible for the running of this part-time Academy, which seeks to train and equip leaders in and outside of our network, complementing the input they receive from their home churches. I am also responsible for the youth ministry in our network which includes supporting and training youth leaders and the emerging leaders within their youth groups, holding youth events such as summer youth camps, and networking with other senior youth workers from other church denominations and groupings. Thus my chosen focus for this dissertation is directly connected to my practical experience of and current engagement in ministry. Further details regarding my insider-outsider status and use of reflexivity as a researcher are described in chapter five. It is my opinion that I am at an optimal stage in my ministry to undertake and submit this research and that my dissertation title is well-suited to my area of ministry.

## **0.6 *Brief Explanation of Case Study***

In pursuing the focus of this dissertation, namely examining the development of leaders within LCÖ, I have chosen to conduct my research as a case study. This will entail an exploration of processes, activities and values of LCÖ as a network, and the studying of individuals and their leadership development journey. The case study will incorporate grounded theory that may arise from the views of

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<sup>43</sup> Formerly called 'City Church Wien'; supra 2.2.2 & 2.2.4 re. the name change.

<sup>44</sup> Formerly called 'Vision für Österreich'; supra 2.2.2 & 2.2.4 re. the name change.

interviewees.<sup>45</sup> The study of individual leadership experiences will in turn include a measure of narrative research and phenomenology.<sup>46</sup> All these findings will need to be understood in the context of the Austrian culture and examined with reference to leadership development literature.

### **0.6.1 Primary Sources**

There are two main areas of empirical research as mentioned above: the nature of the development of leaders in LCÖ, and the leaders' experiences and opinions. I therefore have two main sets of primary sources available to me; LCÖ observations and documents and the individual leaders.

#### **0.6.1.1 LCÖ – Observation and Documentary Research**

Having a working knowledge of LCÖ, as well as being actively involved in its ministry for over ten years, I am both informed and able to reflect on the network and its development of leaders.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, I have unlimited access to any LCÖ documents. I seek to provide a background understanding of the network and also describe its approach to leadership development and means of doing so.

#### **0.6.1.2 LCÖ Leaders – Interviews**

People with three types of experience were interviewed from within the LCÖ churches. Each type functions in a particular leadership capacity: Senior Leader, Associate Leader and Emerging Leader. 'Emerging leader' defines someone who does not yet have a major leadership responsibility or position within the church, but who is being prepared for such; an 'up-and-coming' leader.

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<sup>45</sup> Richard R. Osmer, *Practical Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2008), pp. 50-52.

<sup>46</sup> John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London: Sage, 2009), p. 201; see also Arlene Fink, *Conducting Research Literature Reviews: From Paper to the Internet* (London: Sage, 1998), p. 149.

<sup>47</sup> Supra 5.5, 5.5.1 & 5.5.2.

## **0.6.2 Secondary Sources**

### **0.6.2.1 Cultural Context – Literature Review and Observation**

I deem it crucial to gain an understanding of the Austrian context of this study for the following reasons. Austria's Christian landscape is in a time of significant change, coupled with the church's challenge to be relevant in an increasingly secular culture. Austria has a considerably different Christian heritage to my native land of England. In comparison to other European countries such as those in the United Kingdom which have had a wide range of Church expression, Austria has had almost exclusively a Roman Catholic Church for many centuries and is traditionally more conservative and cautious towards other forms of church, or expressions of Christian worship. I will seek to explain why factors such as *Kirchenbeitrag* 'church tax' and legislation regarding the varying degrees of religious and church status all have an influence on an Austrian's understanding of church.

Comprehending the Austrian context will require an analysis of dominant Austrian Roman Catholic cultural elements together with an increasing secular worldview in mainstream culture. Pete Ward notes that, 'culture is a basic part of ministerial life. Ministers of all kinds are regularly called upon to move into unfamiliar cultural worlds.'<sup>48</sup> He further argues that 'it lacks plausibility to deal with culture as somehow separate from Christ or Christian expression'.<sup>49</sup> In addition to literature sources, I have also drawn from my own first-hand observations.

### **0.6.2.2 Development of Leaders – Literature Review**

I have conducted a literature review to establish which leadership distinctives are preferable, before enquiring further into leadership development. Literature concerned with this type of church network and its leaders in an Austrian setting is not readily available. I have drawn on literature and research written in other, if not

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<sup>48</sup> Pete Ward, *Participation and Mediation: A Practical Theology for the Liquid Church* (London: SCM Press, 2008), p. 66.

<sup>49</sup> Ward, *Participation and Mediation*, p. 67; Ward continues, 'cultural studies cannot be situated through some form of correlation as a separate "discipline". Instead what is required is a way of working theologically which recognises theology's own cultural contingency and deals with the theological as culture and culture as theological.'

dissimilar, contexts. Although there are similarities between churches in the United Kingdom, North America and Central Europe, some of the ministry practices observed or suggested will inevitably be influenced by their given cultures.

### **0.6.3 Limitations and Delimitations**

#### **0.6.3.1 Limitations**

It is appropriate at this stage to admit the limitations of this research:

The findings and consequent conclusions of this dissertation may be limited to leadership development in the context of smaller sized or pioneer churches.

The LCÖ network does not yet have the experience of several generations of leadership; characteristics such as the founder still being the senior leader show that it is relatively young. Consequently I will not be able to compare senior network leadership styles and their respective influences within LCÖ.

#### **0.6.3.2 Delimitations**

The research has the following intentional boundaries:

I have delimited the research to one church network as it is the only one of its type in the nation of Austria. It will allow me to be comprehensive in my research and knowledge of the network, revealing all contributing factors to its leadership development.

Although it is a valid area of study to analyse the approval and competence of leaders from the viewpoint of the congregations in general, this would make the field of research too large for the intentions of this project. Empirical research has therefore been restricted to the interviewing of leaders alone.

## **0.7 Chapter Summary**

In addition to the contents pages, a concise chapter summary is provided here to show the progression of the case study and how the chapters relate to each other.

### **0.7.1 Part One**

Part one begins by assessing the current situation.

- Chapter one examines the Austrian cultural context using literature review and observation.
- Chapter two describes the LCÖ network through observation and documentary research.

### **0.7.2 Part Two**

Having gained an understanding of the cultural context and church environment, part two is dedicated to a literature review regarding the development of leaders.

- Chapter three first proposes which leadership distinctives are required.
- Chapter four then puts forward a means of developing such leaders.

### **0.7.3 Part Three**

Having gathered the necessary information, part three focuses on the empirical research achieved by interviewing LCÖ leaders.

- Chapter five outlines the research design and methodology.
- Chapter six presents the interview data with analysis and interpretation.

### **0.7.4 Conclusion**

The conclusion seeks to highlight the main strengths and concerns regarding LCÖ's development of leaders which arise from the research, and to submit recommendations for the future.

## PART ONE

‘Der Österreicher hat eine verdeckte Seele:  
Er deckt sich nicht auf, er sagt nicht, was er „wirklich“ denkt, glaubt, fühlt,  
über die ersten und die letzten Dinge in Gott, Staat,  
in seiner eigenen Seele.’<sup>50</sup>

*Friedrich Heer*

‘Die Sehnsucht boomt, aber die Kirchen schrumpfen.’<sup>51</sup>

*Günther Nenning*

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<sup>50</sup> ‘The Austrian has concealed his soul: He doesn’t reveal himself, doesn’t say what he really thinks, believes, feels about the first and last things concerning God, the state, and his own soul.’ Friedrich Heer, *Der Kampf um die österreichische Identität* (Wien: Böhlau, 1981), p. 86.

<sup>51</sup> ‘The craving is booming, but the churches are shrinking.’ Günther Nenning, *Gott ist verrückt: Die Zukunft der Religion* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1997), p. 19.

# **1 CHAPTER ONE**

## **CULTURAL CONTEXT: LITERATURE REVIEW & OBSERVATION**

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## 1.1 Introduction

In this chapter I aim to examine the cultural context in which church leaders are being developed in Austria.<sup>52</sup> The culture of the LCÖ network (whose cultural leanings I will argue are in many ways not typically Austrian) will be provided in chapter two. Here however, I wish to highlight elements of the Austrian Culture which have a bearing on how churches and church leadership are generally perceived, and any particular nuances that may influence the perception of the LCÖ network. This will reveal both the hindrances and opportunities in the environment in which LCÖ leaders are developing and seeking to minister. I will draw upon several secondary sources, combined with my own observations and experience of over ten years of living in and leading church ministries in Austria.

## 1.2 The Austrian Soul

I will now examine the main character traits that shape an Austrian's worldview, values and opinions. These *Prägungen*<sup>53</sup> are such that they can be unconsciously held to or observed, and therefore influence the normal expectations, judgements and decisions of the general public.

In his studies regarding Austrian consciousness and socio-political processes, Ernst Bruckmüller notes that since the end of the Second World War, 'The diverse state integration processes of Austrian history have molded [*sic*] diverse levels of cultural memory that are sometimes even materially diverse and contradictory.'<sup>54</sup> Thus the cultural memory – the things, thoughts and events by which Austrians identify themselves, are varied and not so easily reconciled. He maintains that the national identity nonetheless 'holds together', due to a sense of 'belonging' through active and passive components.<sup>55</sup> Passively, there are widely recognised 'symbols' such as the landscape, flags, food, etc., which evoke

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<sup>52</sup> Supra 3.2.2 (Robinson) for a definition of culture.

<sup>53</sup> 'conditioning or tendencies'.

<sup>54</sup> Ernst Bruckmüller, *The Austrian Nation: Cultural Consciousness and Socio-political Processes* (Riverside: Ariadne Press, 2003), p. 394; original German ed.: *Nation Österreich: Kulturelles Bewusstsein und gesellschaftlich-politische Prozesse* (Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 1996).

<sup>55</sup> Bruckmüller, *The Austrian Nation*, pp. 394-395.



national pride.<sup>56</sup> An example of active participation since 1945 is the way in which Austrians have been involved in the 'reconstruction' of establishments.<sup>57</sup> Although these active and passive components are self-evident, the experience of the Austrians would seem to be contrary to Bruckmüller's conclusions. Gordon Brook-Shepherd states that: 'They have never managed to establish a clear-cut identity for themselves as Austrians (as opposed to Syrians or Tyroleans).'<sup>58</sup> That is to say that they find more identity, pride and allegiance to their individual *Bundesländer*<sup>59</sup> than to the Austrian nation as a whole. In my conversations with leaders from various counties, I have found this to be the case. In the early years of the Second Republic, Friedrich Heer wrote that the Austrian knows no state or national identity, but has what Bruckmüller later called 'symbols': a music, a poetry, an architecture, a psychology, an art of life.<sup>60</sup>

In his 'Eine neue Rede über Österreich' ('A new speech about Austria'), Austrian psychiatrist and neurologist, Ewin Ringel presented the following five theses regarding the Austrian identity and 'soul':<sup>61</sup>

*Thesis 1* – Austria is a breeding ground (hotbed) of neuroses; leading to compulsive behaviour.<sup>62</sup>

*Thesis 2* – Repression, leading to the inability to express feelings.<sup>63</sup>

*Thesis 3* – Fear of admonishers or revealers of repression, leading to repression and deportation of such persons.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Bruckmüller, *The Austrian Nation*, p. 69.

<sup>57</sup> According to Peter Ulram's research, from a process beginning in 1945, a definite Austrian national consciousness can be spoken of by the middle of the 1980s; Peter Ulram, 'Österreichs Nationalbewusstsein heute', in Hans Rauscher (ed.), *Das Buch Österreich: Texte, die man kennen muss* (Wien: Verlag Christian Brandstätter, 2005), pp. 583-586 [583].

<sup>58</sup> Gordon Brook-Shepherd, *The Austrians: A Thousand Year Odyssey* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1997), p. 454.

<sup>59</sup> 'counties'.

<sup>60</sup> Friedrich Heer, cit. in William M. Johnston, *Der österreichische Mensch: Kulturgeschichte der Eigenart Österreichs* (Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2010), p. 285; from: Friedrich Heer, *Land im Strom der Zeit* (Wien-München: Herold Verlag, 1958), pp. 376-377; 'Der Österreicher kennt ... kein Staatsdenken und kein Nationalbewusstsein – wohl aber besitzt er eine Musik, eine Lyrik, eine Baukunst..., eine Psychologie, eine Kunst des Leben und des Kontaktnehmens...'

<sup>61</sup> Erwin Ringel, *Die Österreichische Seele: Zehn Reden über Medizin, Politik, Kunst und Religion* (Wien: Böhlau, 1984), pp. 7-45. This chapter was originally written as a speech which Ringel gave on the 26/10/1983. His title is an adaptation of Anton Wildgans' speech 'Rede über Österreich' written in 1929 (supra 1.2.1), the contents of which he claimed were beautiful but not true! Ringel gained wide acclaim for his work and writings, becoming known as the 'Seelendoktor der Nation' ('The nation's soul doctor').

<sup>62</sup> Ringel, *Die Österreichische Seele*, pp. 9-12 [9]; 'Dieses Land ist eine Brutstätte der Neurose'.

<sup>63</sup> Ringel, *Die Österreichische Seele*, pp. 12-20 [13]; '...die negative Erlebnisse und die daraus resultierende Erbitterung ins Unbewußte zu verdrängen. ...so daß man uns geradezu eine „Verdrängungsgesellschaft“ nennen könnte.'

*Thesis 4 – Ambivalence, leading to love-hate relations with others.*<sup>65</sup>

*Thesis 5 – Sense of guilt, leading to self-hate and pessimism.*<sup>66</sup>

Peter Pawlowsky praises Ringel for having been able to see deep enough to understand what would be the result of the problems he highlighted.<sup>67</sup> After living in Austria for over eight years before discovering Ringel's theses, I was interested to find some of my own life observations confirmed (with possible explanations), and furthermore to hear an Austrian acknowledge such national traits that I thought may have just been exaggerated from my perspective as a foreigner. To discuss the causes in detail and enter into the psychiatric arguments surpasses the scope of this research, but I will cross-reference Ringel's theses as I highlight four elements of the Austrian soul which I argue are significant factors effecting the development of leaders in an Austrian context.<sup>68</sup>

### 1.2.1 'Unentschiedenheit' – Indecisiveness

Indecisiveness is the first of these elements or traits, which will be addressed in no particular order. Austrian authors, whether to praise, condemn or simply observe, have repeatedly noted this national trait. For example, Franz Grillparzer wrote, 'Such is the curse of our noble house; Halfway to halt, and doubtfully to aim. At half a deed, with half-considered means.'<sup>69</sup> Later, Anton Wildgans praised the tendency to hesitate, particularly in the face of new developments and the resulting conservatism. His reasoning was that not being, or even resisting being

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<sup>64</sup> Ringel, *Die Österreichische Seele*, pp. 20-25 [20 & 25]; '...die Verdränger haben vor niemandem so große Angst wie vor denjenigen, die kommen und versuchen, diese Verdrängung aufzuheben'; '...die Unterdrückung und Abschiebung der Aufdecker.'

<sup>65</sup> Ringel, *Die Österreichische Seele*, pp. 25-30 [25]; 'nämlich die Ambivalenz. Neurotisiert werden heißt, einen Menschen zugleich zu lieben und zu hassen'.

<sup>66</sup> Ringel, *Die Österreichische Seele*, p. 30-35 [30 & 31]; '...und weil diese Haßgefühle mit seinem Gewissen nicht vereinbar sind, fühlt es sich schuldig'; 'Diese Feindschaft auch gegen die eigene Person ist in Österreich, ich möchte sagen, allgegenwärtig'.

<sup>67</sup> Peter Pawlowsky, 'Altes Elend – neue Chancen: Gibt es Wege aus der Kirchenkrise?', in Angela Ringel (ed.), *Österreichs verwundete Seele: 20 Jahre nach Erwin Ringel* (Wien: Kremayr & Scheriau, 2005), pp. 70-90 [71].

<sup>68</sup> Martin Podobri has also made reference to Ringel in his analysis of the Austrian culture and mentality in the context of church growth: Podobri, *Transformation in Österreich*, pp. 92-105.

<sup>69</sup> Franz Grillparzer, *Ein Bruderzwist in Habsburg* (1850), p. 30, <<http://www.dominiopublico.gov.br/download/texto/gu008964.pdf>> [03/02/2011]; 'Das ist der Fluch von unserm edeln Haus: Auf halben Wegen und zu halber Tat, Mit halben Mitteln zauderhaft zu streben.'

up-to-date, resulted in stability and consistency.<sup>70</sup> The disadvantage is inaction and indecisiveness, that which Brook-Shepherd calls an 'old Austrian reluctance to grasp any nettle firmly; the same tendency to face both ways at once'.<sup>71</sup> In the context of leadership this results in not pushing anything to a conclusion and being over-cautious of the new. I refer back to Ringel's second thesis, as he (in reaction to Wildgans) noted the prevalent repression in the Austrian psyche.<sup>72</sup> He observes that even the way of speaking has been developed to avoid expressing true feelings<sup>73</sup>, and thus strong opinions are withheld. Brook-Shepherd notes that 'Austrians were very good at simmering but not so good at boiling over';<sup>74</sup> and I would argue that indecisiveness is prevalent due to this desire to 'play it safe'.

The resulting reluctance to take responsibility is problematic in the context of leadership; decisions can be slow to attain and the prized political 'neutrality' of the nation could be adversely understood to underpin an evasion of responsibility. Heer wrote that an Austrian is convinced of the purpose of compromise in life and argues that it enables him or her to accommodate and take into account various peoples, groups and opinions.<sup>75</sup> This willingness to compromise has enabled Austria to have thirty-eight years of coalition government within the sixty-five years of the Second Republic (2011), something that would have been almost impossible in other industrial nations such as Germany and Britain according to Martin Podobri.<sup>76</sup> Due to its smaller size, Christoph Schönborn claims that Austria now functions as a bridge between small and large nations, and as a way into Europe.<sup>77</sup> Thus, the importance of compromise and a primary Austrian virtue of diplomacy (at least since the Second Republic) is acknowledged and commended. However, my opinion remains that this trait and attitude may not always equate to

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<sup>70</sup> Anton Wildgans, 'Rede über Österreich' (1929), <<http://www.antonwildgans.at/page87.html>> [03/02/2011].

<sup>71</sup> Brook-Shepherd, *The Austrians*, p. 221; cf. p. 158; Brooks-Shepherd notes that the twin-headed Imperial Habsburg eagle was 'an excellent symbol' as it gazes in two different directions. See also pp. 238, 243 & 266.

<sup>72</sup> Supra 1.2.

<sup>73</sup> Ringel, *Die Österreichische Seele*, p. 19; 'Jedenfalls haben wir zu reden gelernt, ohne Gefühle äußern zu dürfen (zu müssen), und damit verlernt, sie ausdrücken zu können, wir verstecken uns also vor der anderen.'

<sup>74</sup> Brook-Shepherd, *The Austrians*, p. 362.

<sup>75</sup> Heer, cit. in Johnston, *Der österreichische Mensch*, p. 284; 'Der Österreicher ist überzeugt von Lebenssinn des „Kompromisses“ und des Understatement.'

<sup>76</sup> Podobri, *Transformation in Österreich*, p. 95

<sup>77</sup> Christoph Schönborn, 'Ein Immigrationsdruck der vielen Angst macht' (interview), in Andreas Unterberger, *Österreich – und jetzt? Gespräche zum Nachdenken* (Wien: Molden Verlag, 2005), pp. 81-92 [83]; As Archbishop of Vienna, Schönborn notes this is ecclesiastically also the case.

the resolve necessary to lead well, because of the aforementioned tendency towards inaction and indecisiveness.

### 1.2.2 'Führer-Angst' – Anxiety concerning leaders

Since the Nazi period and Adolf Hitler, the word *Führer* 'leader' is avoided when speaking of a leader or leadership.<sup>78</sup> *Führungskraft*<sup>79</sup> may be used when speaking of management or company executives, but the English terms 'leader' and 'leadership' or *Leiter*<sup>80</sup> are often used. It would seem however, that the memory of misused leadership is not just an unfortunate semantic problem; leadership that is very resolute and determined, whether it be political, ecclesiastical or in another context, seems to be automatically treated with suspicion. Fear to stand above the rest and lead is in turn discouraged. Ringel notes this unease in his third thesis, particularly with those who wish to break free from the issues regarding the Austrian 'soul', thus revealing them, or who seek to lead to bring change in a prominent way.<sup>81</sup>

At this point I consider it important to note the Austrian reaction over the decades to the events of the last century. Unlike Germany, there remains a lack of clarity regarding Austria's role under Hitler's leadership. Were her inhabitants victims or perpetrators? Did they suffer a Nazi occupation or welcome the *Anschluss*<sup>82</sup>, or both? Brooks-Shepherd is of the opinion that 'after it was all over, the Austrians laid stress on the respectable role and tried to play down or cover up the disreputable one.'<sup>83</sup> Kurt Waldheim (*Bundespräsident*) claimed that he, like many other Austrians, had simply fulfilled his duty during the National Socialist Regime (1986).<sup>84</sup> Viktor Frankl argued that there could be no collective blame for

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<sup>78</sup> In daily life, even indirect references to National Socialism such as abbreviations resulting in 'SS' are avoided. Symbols such as the Nazi Swastika are forbidden by law.

<sup>79</sup> 'leadership or management'.

<sup>80</sup> 'head or leader'.

<sup>81</sup> Supra 1.2; Ringel refers to Sigmund Freud and Gustav Mahler amongst others; Ringel, *Die Österreichische Seele* pp. 20-24; Podobri adds Ferdinand Porsche, Frank Stronach and Arnold Schwarzenegger to this list. It may however be argued that the career opportunities afforded to someone like Schwarzenegger are simply not possible in a small nation like Austria; Podobri, *Transformation in Österreich*, p. 100.

<sup>82</sup> The 1938 annexation of Austria into Greater Germany by the Nazi regime.

<sup>83</sup> Brook-Shepherd, *The Austrians*, p. 334.

<sup>84</sup> Heidmarie Uhl, 'Transformationen des österreichischen Gedächtnisses: Geschichtspolitik und Denkmalkultur in der Zweiten Republik', *Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften: Institut für Kulturwissenschaften und Theatergeschichte* (18/07/2011),

what happened, only individual blame (1988).<sup>85</sup> Not until 1991 was a clearer signal from Franz Vranitzky (*Bundeskanzler*) that an apology was necessary.<sup>86</sup> This is an immense subject which cannot be adequately dealt with in this paper. However, I am of the opinion that the Austrians did not come to terms with their National Socialism past and move on in the same way that the Germans did.<sup>87</sup> The peculiar situation is expressed for example by Austrian authors who grapple with the issues of conscience in writing about resistance efforts against the Nazis, whereas, other lands would simply speak of defending their land from the enemy.<sup>88</sup>

### 1.2.3 'Alles eine Fassade' – The importance of appearances

Austrians have a concealed soul, claimed Heer; they do not reveal themselves and what they really think, believe and feel concerning God, the state, and their own soul.<sup>89</sup> A discussion of Heer's conclusions regarding the cause of this condition is beyond the purpose of this dissertation,<sup>90</sup> but I propose that this

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<<http://www.oeaw.ac.at/ikt/mitarbeit/uhl/uhl2.html>> [accessed 26/07/2011]; cit. Kurt Waldheim: 'Ich habe im Krieg nichts anderes getan als Hunderttausende andere Österreicher, nämlich, meine Pflicht als Soldat erfüllt.' Cf. Brook-Shepherd, *The Austrians*, pp. 425 & 439-441; Having interviewed President Waldheim in 1992, Brook-Shepherd notes that Waldheim, unlike his opposite in West Germany, would not admit any wrong doing on his part in the Nazi years, only regret regarding how he had handled the publicity.

<sup>85</sup> Viktor E. Frankl, 'In memoriam 1938', in Hans Rauscher (ed.), *Das Buch Österreich: Texte, die man kennen muss* (Wien: Verlag Christian Brandstätter, 2005), pp. 543-545 [543].

<sup>86</sup> Franz Vranitzky, 'Erklärung zur Verantwortung Österreichs', in Hans Rauscher (ed.), *Das Buch Österreich: Texte, die man kennen muss* (Wien: Verlag Christian Brandstätter, 2005), pp. 555-556 [555-556]; '...deshalb müssen wir uns auch zu der anderen Seite unserer Geschichte bekennen; zur Mitverantwortung für das Leid, das zwar nicht Österreich als Staat, wohl aber Bürger dieses Landes über andere Menschen und Völker gebracht haben. ...Wir bekennen uns zu allen Taten unserer Geschichte und zu den Taten aller Teile unseres Volkes, zu den guten wie zu den bösen; und so wie wir die guten für uns in Anspruch nehmen, haben wir uns für die bösen zu entschuldigen - bei den Überlebenden und bei den Nachkommen der Toten.'

<sup>87</sup> Ruth Wodak, Rudolf de Cilla, Martin Reisigl & Karin Liebhart, *The Discursive Construction of National Identity*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), p. 5.

<sup>88</sup> Austrian Authors such as Ludwig Jedlicka, *Das Einsame Gewissen: Beiträge zur Geschichte Österreichs 1938 bis 1945* (Vienna: Herold, 1965) and Otto Molden, *Der Ruf des Gewissens: Der Österreichische Freiheitskampf 1938-1945, Beiträge zur Geschichte der österreichischen Widerstandsbewegung* (Vienna: Herold, 1958); A detailed analysis of Austrian speeches and addresses regarding these matters can be found in: Wodak, *The Discursive Construction*.

<sup>89</sup> Heer, *Der Kampf*, p. 86; cited on title page of part one.

<sup>90</sup> Heer, *Der Kampf*, p. 86; 'Diese „verdeckte“ Lage, in der sich so viele Bürger zunächst, „Gebildete“, Theologen, Gelehrte, Lehrer, Beamte im 19./20. Jahrhundert befinden – eine Situation, die gerade bei deutschen Gästen starkes Unbehagen auslöst („Man weiß nie, wie man diesen Österreichern wirklich dran ist“) –, ist nicht zuletzt eine Erbschaft der Situation des Geheimprotestantismus in 17. und 18. Jahrhundert.' Cf. Helmut Kuzmics, 'Friedrich Heer und Norbert Elias: Zwei Ansätze zur Psychohistorie mitteleuropäischer Staatsgesellschaften', in Richard Faber & Sigurd Paul Scheichl (eds.), *Die geistige Welt des Friedrich Heer* (Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2008), pp. 147-170 [154-159].

tendency to conceal and thus provide a facade has obvious ramifications in the context of developing church leaders. The German language can be seen to support this condition, still retaining the polite or formal form (*Höflichkeitsform*) when addressing others, thus providing a safe distance between people which is to be expected in Austria. Strengthening this interpersonal detachment is Austria's fixation with titles.<sup>91</sup> Although aristocratic forms of address have been forbidden since 1918, all other titles – whether academic, professional or bureaucratic – are held in high regard and commonly used, both in the workplace and even socially.

In contrast to Germany and Switzerland, Podobri speaks of a *Schamkultur* 'culture of shame', which causes fear and guilt in Austrians when they don't live according to the social norms. This in turn heightens the need to keep up appearances, typified in the saying, 'When an Austrian says yes, he means maybe. When he says maybe, he means no. And when he says no, he is not Austrian'.<sup>92</sup> Again, Ringel's observations are helpful; in his fourth thesis he highlights an ambivalence which he claims to be commonplace in Austria.<sup>93</sup> He uses the illustration of the Austrian having a two room apartment: the one room, where guests are received, being bright, friendly, beautiful and well-furnished, but the other room is dim, dark, locked, inaccessible and completely unfathomable.<sup>94</sup> These positive and negative feelings towards the same person, claims Ringel, cause one to be momentarily open and good-natured towards someone, but eventually to ignore them and be emotionally cold. Thus it was only ever an 'appearance of friendliness', a *Scheinfreundlichkeit*, which Ringel rephrased as '*Scheißfreundlichkeit*'.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Brook-Shepherd, *The Austrians*, p. 277; 'no nation in Europe is more addicted to them than the Austrians.' Podobri agrees that one defines one's value according to position and title. He notes that it is most evident in the civil services, although I consider it to also be commonplace in the private sector; Podobri, *Transformation in Österreich*, p. 98.

<sup>92</sup> Podobri, *Transformation in Österreich*, pp. 98-99; 'Wenn ein Österreicher ja sagt, meint er vielleicht. Wenn er vielleicht sagt, meint er nein. Und wenn er nein sagt, ist er kein Österreicher.' Robert Müller expressed the same sentiment in 1918! 'Wir sagen gehorsam zu allem Ja, mit der reservatio mentalis, Nein zu meinen, und so halten wir verbal bewundernswert durch. Daher das Erstaunen, ja das Erschrecken, über diesen Civis, den Verräter, der laut zu denken wagt; er muß gar kein richtiger Österreicher sein!' Robert Müller, 'Austrophile Österreicher', in Günter Helmes (ed.), *Kritische Schriften II* (Paderborn: Igel Verlag Literatur, 1995), pp. 145-150 [146].

<sup>93</sup> Supra 1.2.

<sup>94</sup> Ringel, *Die Österreichische Seele*, pp. 25-26.

<sup>95</sup> Ringel, *Die Österreichische Seele*, p. 26.

#### 1.2.4 'Es wird schon schief gehen' – A daily pessimism

I will now look at another area where Austrians more freely express themselves. Francis Schaeffer noted that people groups not only have their own languages, but also the 'thought-forms' which shape their language and expression.<sup>96</sup> *Es wird schon schief gehen* 'it's bound to go wrong' is a common Austrian phrase, said not to wish the worst for someone, but to express solidarity with them. Nevertheless, it encapsulates a pessimistic approach, view or expectation of life. The current Austrian president, Heinz Fischer, writes of a '*vorsichtigen Optimismus*' regarding Austria's future,<sup>97</sup> and Schönborn claims to have hope, but would not claim to be optimistic when speaking of the Roman Church's present situation.<sup>98</sup>

I acknowledge that such an undercurrent of pessimism in public and private conversations is more noticeable to me and other foreigners. When identifying national traits, it can be difficult to recognise one's own cultural influences and tendencies.<sup>99</sup> Ringel however, was able to engage with this issue in his fifth thesis.<sup>100</sup> He notes that because feelings of hate cannot be reconciled with one's conscience, one becomes one's own worst friend, resulting in a strong dissatisfaction and pessimism.<sup>101</sup> Whatever our acceptance of Ringel's psychological reasoning might be, I share the opinion that the symptoms which he identified are still relevant.<sup>102</sup> A leader will have difficulty motivating and encouraging others if they themselves live with such pessimism, and when those following have this default approach to life.

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<sup>96</sup> Francis Schaeffer, *Trilogy – Book Two: Escape from Reason* (Leicester: IVP, 1990), pp. 205-270 [207]

<sup>97</sup> 'cautious optimism'; Heinz Fischer, 'Österreich hat zu seinem unverwechselbaren Selbst gefunden', in Hans Rauscher (ed.), *Das Buch Österreich: Texte, die man kennen muss* (Wien: Verlag Christian Brandstätter, 2005), pp. 598-603 [602].

<sup>98</sup> Christoph Schönborn, 'Drei Minarette in Österreich, wo ist das Problem?' (interview), *Wiener Bezirkszeitung* no.52 (2010), pp. 8-9 [8]; 'Ich habe Hoffnung, ich würde aber nicht sagen, dass ich optimistisch bin.'

<sup>99</sup> Supra 3.2.2, (White & Ward).

<sup>100</sup> Supra 1.2.

<sup>101</sup> Ringel, *Die Österreichische Seele*, pp. 30-31.

<sup>102</sup> Hans Georg Zapotoczky, 'Die Neurose blüht...', in Angela Ringel (ed.), *Österreichs verwundete Seele: 20 Jahre nach Erwin Ringel* (Wien: Kremayr & Scheriau, 2005), pp. 35-51 [50]; 'Wir stehen mit Ringel am Anfang. Die Neurose blüht – und die Verdrängungen noch viel mehr. Und wir haben nichts dazugelernt.'; see also Angela Ringel, 'Nachwort', in Angela Ringel (ed.), *Österreichs verwundete Seele: 20 Jahre nach Erwin Ringel* (Wien: Kremayr & Scheriau, 2005), pp. 150-155 [154]; 'Die Diagnosen von Erwin Ringel haben sich (leider) als richtig erwiesen, sie waren nicht übertrieben, wie das damals viele behauptet haben. Sie waren vorsichtig und wahr.'

These traits will be revisited in chapter six, where the interviewees' opinions regarding the Austrian culture will be analysed and compared.

### **1.3 The Austrian Church**

The church situation in Austria will now be examined. Although there are similarities with Western European countries, I will show that this nation has a unique ecclesiastical understanding and relationship to the church. This may have an influence on the self-identification of LCÖ leaders as they develop, and how they are perceived.

#### **1.3.1 Roman Catholicism**

LCÖ is operating within a Roman Catholic culture. This is not simply a religious backdrop, but an integral part of the Austrian identity and daily life. Two key commonalities which strengthened the Austrian consciousness, even after the demise of the monarchy, are still relevant for today: a deep Catholic faith and reverence for the past. On the journey from a monarchical empire to the current democracy of the Second Republic, the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) has remained an integral part of the Austrian political consciousness. For example, when Engelbert Dollfuß announced his *Ständestaat* 'Corporate State' he proclaimed, 'We believe it is our duty to preserve the true German culture in these Christian lands of Central Europe ...to fashion this culture into a Christian mould.'<sup>103</sup> His vision was short-lived, but even at the time of the *Anschluss* by Germany, the Austrian bishops announced their duty to declare themselves as 'Germans for the German empire' and their expectation that 'all faithful Christians' would know what they should do.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Brook-Shepherd, *The Austrians*, p. 276; Brooks-Shepherd notes that Dollfuß made his announcement on the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the defeat of the Turks thus ending their siege of Vienna. This time the Nazis were the common enemy (11/09/1933); see also pp. 284-286; Dollfuß's Constitution for the Corporate State began; 'In the name of God the Almighty, from whom all justice flows.'

<sup>104</sup> Brook-Shepherd, *The Austrians*, p. 331; A proclamation was read in all Catholic churches on 27<sup>th</sup> March 1938. The Protestant Church acted similarly on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1938, evoking their desire for a 'return to the German empire'; see also Pawlowsky, 'Altes Elend', in Ringel, *Österreichs verwundete Seele*, pp. 72-77; Pawlowsky's summary is helpful to gain an understanding of the



Austria is currently 65.1 % Roman Catholic.<sup>105</sup> This statistic is not speculative, nor is it reflected in church attendance, but is rather the result of a strong tradition of infant baptism which automatically results in church membership, records of which are accurately kept and annually published. From the age of twenty, members pay a mandatory *Kirchenbeitrag* of approximately one percent of their gross income.<sup>106</sup> Declaration of religious confession is requested on most government, medical, educational forms and the like - 'Christian' is considered an inadequate designation (it does not exist), rather, Roman Catholic, Protestant, Greek Orthodox, etc., is required. From the age of six to fourteen, the state education teaches separate Roman Catholic and Protestant religion lessons after which the teenager must choose to continue in this class or do 'ethics'.<sup>107</sup> A typical greeting, '*Grüß Gott!*' now conveys the sentiment of 'Good day!' for the younger generations, but actually means 'God bless you!' and is still used by young and old alike. All of these factors – family traditions, state practices and everyday language – contribute to an Austrian culture which is strongly rooted in the customs and language of the RCC, even when many Austrians have no active faith. Despite Europe no longer being one of the Christian centres of gravity,<sup>108</sup> I would argue that Austria is emerging from the modernist era with a worldview and culture which has uniquely combined humanism with its Roman Catholic legacy.

This Roman Catholic influence, however, is weakening each year with large numbers officially leaving the RCC; a procedure which includes submitting their baptism certificate and foregoing all the 'services' provided by the RCC and priests.<sup>109</sup> The statistics are self-evident: in 2010, 87,393 Austrians relinquished

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integral role of the RCC in her relationship to and powerbase through the Austrian monarchy and politics.

<sup>105</sup> Dieter Neuwirth, 'Bis 2031 nur jeder Zweite katholisch', *Die Presse* (11/01/2011), <[http://diepresse.com/home/panorama/religion/624480/Bis-2031-nur-noch-jeder-Zweite-katholisch?direct=624480&\\_vl\\_backlink=/home/meinung/kommentare/leitartikel/624460/index.do&selChannel=399](http://diepresse.com/home/panorama/religion/624480/Bis-2031-nur-noch-jeder-Zweite-katholisch?direct=624480&_vl_backlink=/home/meinung/kommentare/leitartikel/624460/index.do&selChannel=399)> [accessed 11/01/2011].

<sup>106</sup> <<http://www.kirchenbeitrag.at>> [accessed 11/01/2011].

<sup>107</sup> Lessons for children of other faiths may be available depending on the size of school and town. Children of no religious confession may request to take part in the religion lessons.

<sup>108</sup> Pavel Cerny, 'The Relationship between Theology and Missiology: The Missiological Hermeneutics', *European Journal of Theology* 19:2 (2010), pp. 104-109 [108]; 'In the beginning of the twentieth century, 90% of all Christians lived in Europe and North America. In the beginning of the twenty-first century, at least 75% of the world's Christians live in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific region. The centre of gravity of Christianity moved south.'

<sup>109</sup> Officially relinquishing one's church membership is known as 'Kirchenaustritt'; <<http://www.kirchenaustritt.at>> [accessed 11/01/2011]; RCC privileges include the right to a

their RCC membership, sixty-four percent more than in 2009 (53,216).<sup>110</sup> The percentage of Roman Catholics has been falling since 1961 when 89% of Austrians were members, and demographic expert Alexander Hanika (Statistik Austria) observes that it is plausible that it will be down to 50% by 2031. (In a metropolis such as Vienna, the change is particularly noticeable with a 39.8% membership.)<sup>111</sup>

Leaving the RCC does not necessarily indicate a loss of faith. Some church-leavers claim that they still believe in God, but can no longer associate themselves with the RCC as an institution, with its sex-abuse scandals and church tax.<sup>112</sup> Furthermore, it is deemed to have become irrelevant and slow to change and detached from its members. Kurt Appel argues that the church tax and the way it is enforced only strengthens the public's view of the church as being an impersonal 'religious' government agency.<sup>113</sup> Pawlowsky notes that the Austrian RCC finds itself sharing in a Europe-wide 'backlash' caused by the low ability of the '*römischen Zentrale*' to learn. These symptoms are heightened and have their own quality in the Austrian context.<sup>114</sup> Schönborn concedes that Austria has switched from a *Traditionschristentum* 'Christianity through tradition' to an *Entscheidungschristentum* 'Christianity of choice'.<sup>115</sup> I would argue that this is also connected to the younger generations' relationship to authority or what they consider to be authoritative in their lives. Hubert Ehalt claims that the old authorities of church, politics, university, *etc.*, are being (or have been) replaced by independent worldviews drawn from various sources. People are now acting according to 'maxims' that the media model for them (which constantly change with the trends). Thus lifestyles are less geared to previous authoritarian non-negotiables such as duty and responsibility, but rather towards fun and

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church marriage, a priest officiating or speaking at one's burial, partaking in mass, being a Godparent and similar activities.

<sup>110</sup> Neuwirth, 'Bis 2031'; see also Staff writers, 'Kirche: 2010 in Wien um 47 Prozent mehr Austritte', *Der Standard* (07/01/2011), <<http://derstandard.at/1293370200017/Kirche-2010-in-Wien-um-47-Prozent-mehr-Austritte>> [accessed 11/01/2011]; Figures for 2008: 40,596 and for 2007: 36,858.

<sup>111</sup> Alexander Hanika cit. in Neuwirth, 'Bis 2031'; Percentage of Roman Catholics in 2001: 74%; 1991: 78%; 1981: 84%; 1971: 87%; 1961: 89%; 1951: 89%.

<sup>112</sup> Saskia Jungnikl & Markus Rohrhofer, 'Die Kirche und das Problem der „neuen Freiheit“', *Der Standard* (12/01/2011), p. 8 [8]; Kurt Appel, 'Weg mit der Kirchensteuer!', *Der Standard* (13/01/2011), p. 31 [31].

<sup>113</sup> Appel, 'Weg mit der Kirchensteuer!', p. 31.

<sup>114</sup> Pawlowsky, 'Altes Elend', in Ringel, *Österreichs verwundete Seele*, p. 77.

<sup>115</sup> Christoph Schönborn cit. in Neuwirth, 'Bis 2031'.

entertainment.<sup>116</sup> I question how independently or consciously the new ‘authority’ of the media is being adopted. It would seem rather to be passively adopted (particularly amongst younger people), but nonetheless it is seen as authoritative in a way that the individual feels that they now have a choice.

### 1.3.2 The ‘Others’

With such a strong Roman Catholic Church presence, other church denominations and groupings have always been in the minority in Austria. This excludes the Reformation era which resulted in much of present day Austria being Protestant by the end of the seventeenth century; only to be quickly quashed by a thorough and forceful counter-Reformation (*‘katholische Erneuerung’*) towards the middle of the seventeen-hundreds.<sup>117</sup> In 1781, Emperor Joseph II’s *Toleranzpatent* ‘Edict of Toleration’ officially granted freedom of worship and civil equality to Protestants, but not before many had emigrated, been martyred or returned to Catholicism, some continuing as ‘secret’ Protestants.<sup>118</sup> Nevertheless, Protestant churches were ‘forbidden to erect towers, or to have bells, or main entrances onto the street,’<sup>119</sup> and Frank Hinkelmann notes that until the present day, Protestantism has been unable to recuperate from the eviction and suppression it endured.<sup>120</sup> *Evangelische Kirche* is the German name for the official Protestant Church, not to be confused with the British understanding of ‘evangelical churches’.<sup>121</sup> They currently have less people joining than leaving, but their situation is more stable than that of the RCC.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Hubert Christian Ehalt, ‘„Die österreichische Seele“ – 20 Jahre nach Erwin Ringels Diagnose’, in Angela Ringel (ed.), *Österreichs verwundete Seele: 20 Jahre nach Erwin Ringel* (Wien: Kremayr & Scheriau, 2005), pp. 11-34 [33].

<sup>117</sup> Hinkelmann, ‘Österreich’, pp. 129-130.

<sup>118</sup> William M. Johnston, *The Austrian Mind: An Intellectual and Social History, 1848-1938* (Berkeley: University of California, 1972), p. 16; this was granted to Protestants (Lutherans & Calvinists) and the Greek Orthodox; cf. Staff writers, ‘A Brief History’, *evang.at* (1999-2011), <<http://www.evangel.at/english/a-brief-history/>> [accessed 13/05/2011].

<sup>119</sup> Johnston, *The Austrian Mind*, p. 16.

<sup>120</sup> Hinkelmann, ‘Österreich’, p. 130; Both Hinkelmann and Podobri provide helpful summaries of this period of Austrian church history: Hinkelmann, ‘Kirchengeschichte Österreichs’, pp. 22-31; Podobri, *Transformation in Österreich*, pp. 77-90.

<sup>121</sup> There are two official streams of the Protestant Church in Austria: Evangelisch A.B. (Augsburg Confession) of the Lutheran tradition, and Evangelisch H.B. (Helvetic, i.e. Swiss Confession) of the Reformed Tradition; Staff writers, ‘Evangelicals in Austria’, *evang.at* (1999-2011), <<http://www.evangel.at/english/evangelicals-in-austria/>> [accessed 13/05/2011].

<sup>122</sup> Jungnikl & Rohrhofer, ‘Die Kirche’, p. 8; in 2010 1,300 people joined (an increase of 60% compared to 2009) and 3,900 left.

Other denominations or church groupings are labelled *Freikirchen* 'Free Churches',<sup>123</sup> such as the Baptists and Methodists who both pioneered their first small churches in Vienna in 1870. After the First World War, the Pentecostals, Brethren and the Church of the Nazarene also planted churches, but it was not until after 1945 through to the mid 1980s that most *Freikirchen* were planted, including the *Evangelikaler Gemeinden*<sup>124</sup> advanced by evangelical missions' works, but rarely working together with the established Protestant Church.<sup>125</sup> It is during this period of church planting and missionary interest that Austria was labelled by David Sanford and other missions organisations as the 'graveyard of missionaries' and there is evidence of missionaries finding it much harder than expected to integrate and sustain their ministry for any significant length of time in Austria's 'hard soil'.<sup>126</sup> In response, Andreas Köstenberger agrees that his people have 'generally hardened their hearts to the gospel, not just individually, but also nationally, culturally, religiously, socially, and politically. They actively suppress the truth. ...with their minds resembling a spiritual obstacle course.'<sup>127</sup> He does however take issue with what he perceives to be an approach to missions which puts the missionaries at the centre, thus their feelings 'supersede the condition of the lost' and notes that Sanford writes as an outsider without considering the 'complexities of the Austrian national history and psyche' or notably consulting Austrians.<sup>128</sup> He further argues that much church planting or missionary activity has not adequately sought to understand or engage with the established Austrian church, that is the RCC, and the cultural influence it has, nor to acquire the

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<sup>123</sup> Not to be confused with the 'The Free Kirk' (Free Church of Scotland).

<sup>124</sup> These evangelical free churches have formed two main groupings in Austria: 'Die Arbeitsgemeinschaft Evangelikaler Gemeinden in Österreich' (ARGEÖ) <[www.evangelikal.at/](http://www.evangelikal.at/)> [accessed 13/05/2011] and 'Der Bund evangelikaler Gemeinden' (BEG) <[www.beg.or.at/](http://www.beg.or.at/)> [accessed 13/05/2011].

<sup>125</sup> Hinkelmann, 'Österreich', pp. 130-131; Both Hinkelmann and Podobri provide helpful summaries of the expansion of free churches in Austria: Hinkelmann, 'Kirchengeschichte Österreichs', pp. 31-39; Podobri, *Transformation in Österreich*, pp. 115-143.

<sup>126</sup> David Sanford, "'Graveyard of Missions' Requires New Approaches: Too Many Missionaries Are Failing in Western and Central Europe', *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 30.2 (1994), pp. 154-160 [154]

<sup>127</sup> Andreas J. Köstenberger, 'Anguish over Austria: Rising above Pragmatism', p. 1, <<http://www.biblicalfoundations.org/pdf/Anguish%20over%20Austria.PDF>> [accessed 25/05/2011]; p. 2; Köstenberger adds, 'Spiritually speaking, Austria is a country living in the Dark Ages'. Originally published in Andreas Köstenberger, 'Anguish over Austria: Rising above Pragmatism', *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 31:1 (1995) pp. 64-70.

<sup>128</sup> Köstenberger, 'Anguish over Austria', pp. 1 & 3.

necessary theological training.<sup>129</sup> Hinkelmann continues this thought by questioning if the contextualisation of the gospel in a land with a deeply Roman Catholic cultural imprint has been overlooked by predominantly Protestant based foreign missions endeavours. He has also observed an 'anti-Catholic' attitude which has created barriers.<sup>130</sup> Understandably there are elements of RCC teaching and dogma which are deemed unpalatable for Reformed Theology, but I suggest that the problem could occur when one does not distinguish between them, and the traditions or practices that are simply ingrained in Austrian culture and thus 'Austrian'. To attack or discredit these cultural customs (which are often practised with no theological interest or understanding of the partaker) is to attack or discredit someone's nationality. Both Austrians and foreigners must ask: which aspects of this culture can be accepted, even used, and which are not appropriate for proclaiming biblical truths and church practice? Even those elements deemed unsuitable do not necessarily need to be attacked.

Pawlowsky notes that Pentecostal and Charismatic groups in recent years have proven to be more congenial to the *Amtskirche* 'official Church', because he understands their focus to be on reviving an excitement for the Christian faith and 'inner' conversion, thus posing no threat to the church-politic of the nation.<sup>131</sup> He has rightly observed that their emphasis is on that which is experienced and a practical application of their faith, and not on membership with all its ramifications in the Austrian context. (Members of a Charismatic church may well remain members of the RCC or *Evangelische Kirche*.) His remark is however incorrect for two reasons. Firstly, such churches often do intend for their expression of faith to go beyond the individual and group, and to affect society at large. Secondly, due to strict governmental ruling regarding official religious recognition, many *Freikirchen* are withheld from influencing the nation's church-politic. There are currently only fourteen legally acknowledged churches and religious bodies in Austria (*Gesetzlich anerkannte Kirchen und Religionsgesellschaften*).<sup>132</sup> Before

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<sup>129</sup> Köstenberger, 'Anguish over Austria', p. 2; 'we need to reach them not just as religious beings but also as cultural and political individuals.'

<sup>130</sup> Hinkelmann, 'Österreich', pp. 131-132.

<sup>131</sup> Pawlowsky, 'Altes Elend', in Ringel, *Österreichs verwundete Seele*, p. 79.

<sup>132</sup> 'Gesetzlich anerkannte Kirchen und religionsgesellschaften in Österreich', *Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur* (06/07/2011), <[http://www.bmukk.gv.at/ministerium/kultusamt/ges\\_anerk\\_krg.xml#toc3-id2](http://www.bmukk.gv.at/ministerium/kultusamt/ges_anerk_krg.xml#toc3-id2)> [accessed 25/07/2011].

1998, any other church could only register itself as a society or association, but they were not recognised as an official church as such. Therefore a new category was introduced: '*Staatlich eingetragene religiöse Bekenntnisgemeinschaft*' ('State registered communities of religious confession').<sup>133</sup> LCÖ has this government recognition through being a *Zweig* 'branch' of the 'Freie Christengemeinde – Pfingstgemeinden in Österreich' (FCGÖ).<sup>134</sup> This category provided a better recognition of the ecclesiastical worth and needs of *Freikirchen*.<sup>135</sup> It was intended both to prohibit some pseudo-Christian groupings from gaining full church status,<sup>136</sup> and provide a 'step' towards the aforementioned full church status subject to time scales and numerical requirements. However the process to gain full recognition remains difficult and several *Freikirche* groupings are currently negotiating how they can collaborate together to achieve it.<sup>137</sup> I agree with Hinkelmann, that the current ruling introduces an official religious 'class system' into the Austrian society, although it is the most favourable ruling to date.<sup>138</sup>

Schönborn has been Archbishop of Vienna since 1995. He openly speaks and writes of his good relationship with senior ministers of other denominations,<sup>139</sup> which encourages a positive public perception of other churches. He appears to be pragmatic in both theory and practice; in the case of RCC property being given to the Serbian-Orthodox Church, he stated that the RCC must orientate itself to the changes in the demographic situation.<sup>140</sup> There are also interdenominational

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<sup>133</sup> 'Staatlich eingetragene religiöse Bekenntnisgemeinschaften', *Bundesministerium für Unterricht, Kunst und Kultur* (13/01/2011),

<[http://www.bmukk.gv.at/ministerium/kultusamt/eingetr\\_rel\\_bekg.xml](http://www.bmukk.gv.at/ministerium/kultusamt/eingetr_rel_bekg.xml)> [accessed 25/07/2011].

<sup>134</sup> An older Austrian Pentecostal denomination founded in 1946; see Klaus Winter & Anton Bergmair (eds), *Eine Bewegung stellt sich vor: 50 Jahre Freie Christengemeinden in Österreich, 1946-1996* (Salzburg: FCGÖ, 1997); <<http://fcgoe.at/>> [accessed 25/07/2011].

<sup>135</sup> This status is not exclusively for Christian faith communities.

<sup>136</sup> I.e. Jehovah's Witnesses who went on to receive full status in 2009.

<sup>137</sup> Meetings have been held between the aforementioned FCGÖ & BEG, together with the Mennonitische Freikirche Österreich (MFÖ) & the Bund der Baptistengemeinden in Österreich.

<sup>138</sup> Hinkelmann, 'Österreich', p. 133; 'religiösen Mehr-Klassen-Gesellschaft'.

<sup>139</sup> Christoph Schönborn, 'Antworten von Kardinal Christoph Schönborn: Woher kommt der Adventkranz?', *Heute* no.1814 (Wien: AHVV Verlags GmbH, 2011), p. 10 [10]; Schönborn wrote in his regular newspaper column of a gift he received from Michael Chalupka, leader of 'Diakonie', praising the origins and work of this Protestant (Evangelisch) Church charity in Austria. See also Staff writers, 'Diakonie: Adventaktion für chancenlose Jugendliche', *Evangelische Kirche in Österreich* (23/11/2011), <<http://www.evangel.at/themen/nachrichten/detail/article/adventkranz-fuer-kardinal-schoenborn/>> [accessed 25/11/2011].

<sup>140</sup> Schönborn, 'Drei Minarette', p. 9; see also Dieter Neuwirth, 'Schönborn siegt im Streit um verschenkte Kirche', *Die Presse* (13/11/2011), <<http://diepresse.com/home/panorama/religion/708193/Schoenborn-siegt-im-Streit-um-verschenkte-Kirche>> [accessed 25/11/2011].

movements such as ‘*Weg der Versöhnung*’ (‘Path of Reconciliation’) who call themselves, and function as, a ‘round-table’ for leaders from different church networks and groupings,<sup>141</sup> which has enabled dialogue resulting in mutual understanding and collaboration in mission.

Despite the increased variety of church expression and growing acceptance thereof, be it through legal rulings or the national media, the word ‘church’ is still commonly associated with the RCC. Paul Zulehner and Regina Polak note that legal acknowledgement does not automatically imply social integration and acceptance of other churches.<sup>142</sup> As he met with the Council of the *Evangelische Kirche* in Germany, Pope Benedict XVI referred to Martin Luther’s desire to be Christ-centred in his spirituality and of the shared Scriptures and early Christian creeds that both churches have. He appealed for a renewed ecumenical strength to be found in order to stand together against secularism, but also identified the challenge of forms of Christianity with less dogma, institutional substance and stability.<sup>143</sup> The current head of the RCC thus provided a mixed message to those observing, and those in the *Freikirchen*: on one side he acknowledges the sincerity of the Protestant tradition, but in the same speech warns of a ‘new form of Christianity’ which would include those of a broadly Protestant theology, but not under the auspices of the *Evangelische Kirche*.<sup>144</sup>

The ambiguity of the Austrian RCC’s relationship to other churches is well illustrated when LCÖ, attempting to hire a facility owned and run by a well-known Catholic charity to host their Leadership Academy weekends, were denied a contract due to the Academy being an organisation of a *Freikirche*. The same facility regularly hosts non-Christian based meditation groups, spiritual healers and

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<sup>141</sup> <[www.versoehnung.net](http://www.versoehnung.net)> [accessed 13/05/2011]; including Evangelicals, Protestants, Pentecostals, Charismatics, Roman Catholics and independent churches.

<sup>142</sup> Paul M. Zulehner & Regina Polak, *Religion – Kirche – Spiritualität in Österreich nach 1945: Befund, Kritik, Perspektive* (Wien: Studienverlag, 2006), p. 21.

<sup>143</sup> Joseph A. Ratzinger, ‘Frage nach Gott war Luthers tiefe Leidenschaft’ (transcript of speech), *Kathweb: Katholische Presseagentur Österreich* (23/09/2011), <<http://www.kathpress.at/site/nachrichten/archiv/archive/41763.html?SWS=351e73fe4d2b7d1bb14d5b8e6c6d79ca&ts=0.205085001322472202>> [accessed 05/10/2011]; cf. Staff writers, ‘Ökumene? Mhm...’, *news.at* (23/09/2011), <[http://www.news.at/articles/1138/15/307802\\_s4/papst-benedikt-xvi-oekumene-mhm](http://www.news.at/articles/1138/15/307802_s4/papst-benedikt-xvi-oekumene-mhm)> [accessed 05/10/2011].

<sup>144</sup> Ratzinger, ‘Frage nach Gott’; ‘Vor einer neuen Form von Christentum, die mit einer ungeheuren und in ihren Formen manchmal beängstigenden missionarischen Dynamik sich ausbreitet, stehen die klassischen Konfessionskirchen oft ratlos da. Es ist ein Christentum mit geringer institutioneller Dichte, mit wenig rationalem und mit noch weniger dogmatischem Gepäck, auch mit geringer Stabilität.’

the like. Conversely, the Academy now holds its training weekends at a seminar centre run by another Catholic movement where they have experienced great respect and praise for their work.<sup>145</sup>

## 1.4 *The Austrian Soil*

As the RCC slowly loses its monopoly on religious expression and as Austrians increasingly take advantage of their newfound religious ‘freedom’, the self-realised religious concepts they are developing may well be complex and more fluid than before.<sup>146</sup> This fluid and complex situation will now be further examined, particularly as it relates to the perception and ministry of LCÖ leaders. Understanding the cultural context with its dual desire for both an acceptance and rejection of Church and Christianity, and what is understood by those two terms, could possibly remain a task for church leaders in the years to come. To use a biblical picture, the soil which is receiving the seed these leaders are sowing, is changing in its character.

### 1.4.1 ‘Die Sehnsucht boomt, aber die Kirchen schrumpfen’

The significance of *Kirchenaustritt* ‘leaving of the Church’ in Austria has been noted,<sup>147</sup> but what of those who no longer belong, and their perception of church? ‘*Die Sehnsucht boomt, aber die Kirchen schrumpfen*’ (‘The craving is booming, but the churches are shrinking’) is a phrase originally used by Günther Nenning to describe this European phenomenon, whereby church membership and attendance are in constant decline, but the populace retains a longing and searching for spiritual encounter or meaning.<sup>148</sup> Pawlowsky observes that an Austrian who leaves the church does not necessarily want to avoid religion, but

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<sup>145</sup> Leadership Academy currently uses the facilities at Am Spiegeln Seminarzentrum, owned and run by the Catholic Focolare Movement; <<http://amspiegeln.at/>> [accessed 13/05/2011].

<sup>146</sup> Zulehner & Polak, *Religion – Kirche – Spiritualität*, pp. 14-15; ‘Österreich befindet sich in einem Übergangsprozess hin zu einer religiös pluralen Gesellschaft.’

<sup>147</sup> Supra 1.3.1.

<sup>148</sup> Nenning, *Gott ist verrückt*, p. 19; cited on title page of part one; see also Zulehner & Polak, *Religion – Kirche – Spiritualität*, p. 82.



rather the institution thereof.<sup>149</sup> He notes that some go to sects, some to charismatic groups (also within the RCC) and some depart from their Christian roots to experiment in New Age practices.<sup>150</sup> It should however be noted that it is not uncommon for a RCC member to also engage in such practices and beliefs alongside their Christian traditions.<sup>151</sup> Schönborn considers the increased interest in the New Age or '*Esoterismus*' be a reflection of the current attitude that one can put together one's own religion or '*religionmix*'. He is however convinced that the established Church (Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant) will remain the '*zentralen Phänomenen dieses Kontinents*' through its presence and influence.<sup>152</sup> He is realistic regarding the changing situation in the RCC,<sup>153</sup> but I note that his confidence is in the historical size and integrality of the Church and Christian faith in Europe. I agree that this is to the RCC's advantage in Austria for the aforementioned cultural reasons,<sup>154</sup> and because change occurs there slowly, but the RCC foundation is nonetheless deteriorating. It is not my opinion that a New Age interest or another religion such as Islam will take its place,<sup>155</sup> but rather that the Austrians' attitude to religion and spirituality has and will continue to fundamentally change.

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<sup>149</sup> Pawlowsky, 'Altes Elend', in Ringel, *Österreichs verwundete Seele*, p. 78.

<sup>150</sup> Pawlowsky, 'Altes Elend', in Ringel, *Österreichs verwundete Seele*, p. 79.

<sup>151</sup> Franz Höllinger, 'Christliche Religiosität und New Age – zwei Pole des religiösen Feldes der Gegenwartsgesellschaft', in Wolfgang Schulz, Max Haller & Alfred Grausgruber (eds), *Österreich zur Jahrhundertwende: Gesellschaftliche Werthaltungen und Lebensqualität 1986 – 2004* (Wiesbaden: Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2005), pp. 487-518 [511]; Höllinger argues from survey results that belief in esoteric phenomena and the use of New Age practices is by all means compatible with traditional Christian religiosity. I suggest that his findings confirm again the nominal Catholic Austrian's understanding of their faith (supra 1.3.1), rather than identifying a theological unity. He admits those from a 'narrower church connection' are further detached from such practices.

<sup>152</sup> Schönborn, 'Ein Immigrationsdruck', in Unterberger, *Österreich – und jetzt?*, p. 89.

<sup>153</sup> Supra 1.3.1.

<sup>154</sup> Supra 1.3.1.

<sup>155</sup> Thomas Schmidinger, 'Islam in Österreich – zwischen Repräsentation und Integration', in Bernhard Moser (ed.), *Österreichisches Jahrbuch für Politik 2007* (Wien: Böhlau Verlag, 2008), pp. 235-256,

<[http://homepage.univie.ac.at/thomas.schmidinger/php/texte/pol\\_islam\\_pol\\_jahrbuch.pdf](http://homepage.univie.ac.at/thomas.schmidinger/php/texte/pol_islam_pol_jahrbuch.pdf)>

[accessed 27/07/2011]; The demographical changes due to both the immigration of people of the Muslim faith (nominal or otherwise) and differing birth rates are notable. Schmidinger states that because of this, the results of the 2011 census are expected to show there to be more Muslims than those belonging to the Evangelische Kirche in Austria [236]. He highlights and documents however, that Austria's accommodation of Islam dates back to the nineteenth century in comparison to Britain or France, and does not anticipate a socio-religious upheaval [237-239]. Cf. previous censuses regarding religious affiliation: 'Bevölkerung nach dem Religionsbekenntnis und Bundesländern 1951 bis 2001', *Statistik Austria* (06/12/2007), <[http://www.statistik.at/web\\_de/statistiken/bevoelkerung/volkszaehlungen\\_registerzaehlungen/bevoelkerung\\_nach\\_demographischen\\_merkmalen/022885.html](http://www.statistik.at/web_de/statistiken/bevoelkerung/volkszaehlungen_registerzaehlungen/bevoelkerung_nach_demographischen_merkmalen/022885.html)> [accessed 27/07/2011].

Recent research which asked Austrians to self-evaluate how religious they perceive themselves to be provides similar evidence of the current changes (2008):<sup>156</sup>

61 % claimed to be religious

30% understood themselves to be unreligious

4% said they were convinced atheists

5% did not know

Polak *et al.* claim that Austrians are generally moving away from the traditional social-religious lifestyles, but still see themselves as 'religious' and don't see themselves as totally disconnected from the church.<sup>157</sup> I suggest that this future 'connectedness' to church will depend on to what extent each generation of parents continue to perpetuate the Austrian church membership tradition,<sup>158</sup> together with the shifting role of religious significance in society at large. W. Kay and Hans-Georg Ziebertz note that in some countries of Europe, schooling 'functions as a "carrier of memory"',<sup>159</sup> which is evident in Austria, although I consider that the introduction of 'ethics' for older teenagers as an option instead of religion lessons in the state school curriculum shows a decrease in the perceived significance of the established church.<sup>160</sup> *Kirchentage* are celebrated throughout the nation, often with little reference or focus on church at all, yet the name remains and a sense of tradition is preserved.<sup>161</sup> Researchers have also noted a significant change in religious self-evaluation compared to research findings from 1999: for example, there was a decline in those less than thirty years of age who consider themselves religious from 66% to 43% (2008).<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Paul M. Zulehner & Regina Polak, 'Von der „Wiederkehr der Religion“ zur fragilen Pluralität', in Christian Friesl, Ursula Hamachers-Zuba & Regina Polak (eds), *Die Österreicherinnen: Wertewandel 1990-2008* (Wien: Czernin, 2009), pp. 143-206 [157].

<sup>157</sup> Regina Polak, Christian Friesl & Ursula Hamachers-Zuba, 'Werte-Wende in Österreich', in Christian Friesl, Ursula Hamachers-Zuba & Regina Polak (eds), *Die Österreicherinnen: Wertewandel 1990-2008* (Wien: Czernin, 2009), pp. 295-325 [302-303].

<sup>158</sup> Supra 1.3.1; The author is personally acquainted with parents who baptise their children because of wider family expectations and traditions despite their own misgivings regarding the RCC and even holding contrary beliefs.

<sup>159</sup> William K. Kay & Hans-Georg Ziebertz, 'Understanding Religion and the Religiosity of European Youth', in William K. Kay & Hans-Georg Ziebertz (eds), *Youth in Europe I: An International Empirical Study about Religiosity* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2006), pp. 14-32 [24].

<sup>160</sup> Supra 1.3.1.

<sup>161</sup> Village fêtes/ town fairs (lit. 'Church Days').

<sup>162</sup> Zulehner & Polak, 'Von der „Wiederkehr der Religion“', in Friesl, Hamachers-Zuba & Polak, *Die Österreicherinnen*, p. 157; the age group from 30-45 years saw a decrease from 75% to 57%.

In attempting to build a picture of Austrian perceptions of church and God, and people's relationship to them, Zulehner and Polak's categorisations are helpful. By comparing statistics of church attendance and people's notion of God, they were able to categorise the Austrians into five main types:<sup>163</sup>

*Kirchlichen* 'Churchy'

Attend church weekly. Hold a Christian notion of God and Jesus of Nazareth as Son of God incarnate.

*Kulturkirchlichen* 'Cultural churchy'

Regularly at church, but don't believe in the incarnation; just a 'Lord God' who made and keeps the world in order.<sup>164</sup>

*Religiösen* 'Religious'

Hold a Christian notion of God, but church attendance is low; 'You can be a good Christian without going to church.' Christianity is a 'private thing' not a shared experience.<sup>165</sup>

*Kulturreligiösen* 'Cultural-Religious'

Not in contact with church, eventually leading to an 'evaporation' of Christian ethos or disposition.<sup>166</sup> Notion of God becomes simply that of a 'Higher Being'.

*Unreligiösen* 'Nonreligious'

Agnostic or Atheist.

With reference to my own observations and ministry experience in Austria, I find these categorisations explain the cross-section of belief and non-belief in this society. Many Austrians still believe in some form of Judeo-Christian God, although they are increasingly rejecting their traditional form of church as they look

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Their research also highlights geographical influences such as, people consider themselves more religious in the larger cities and in the countryside compared to the small towns (but all locations have experienced decline).

<sup>163</sup> Zulehner & Polak, *Religion – Kirche – Spiritualität*, pp. 61-62.

<sup>164</sup> Zulehner & Polak, *Religion – Kirche – Spiritualität*, p. 89; only 37% of paid up members believe that Jesus Christ is God's Son and that His resurrection brings purpose and a coming future Kingdom.

<sup>165</sup> Zulehner & Polak, *Religion – Kirche – Spiritualität*, p. 61.

<sup>166</sup> Zulehner & Polak, *Religion – Kirche – Spiritualität*, p. 62; 'Entkirchlichung und Privatisierung führen in vielen Einzelfällen zur „Verdunstung der Christlichkeit“.'

for new or different expressions of faith. I therefore suggest that Grace Davie's observation of the British situation also applies to Austria:<sup>167</sup>

The crucial point to grasp is that some sort of religiosity persists despite the obvious drop in practice. The sacred does not disappear – indeed in many ways it is becoming more rather than less prevalent in contemporary society.

Thus the tension between modernity and religious belief, as Kay and Ziebertz highlight, is not one of simple antagonism between the two,<sup>168</sup> because religious expression has continued, albeit in sometimes different forms. Secularisation has not eradicated religion, rather religion has evolved or adapted in its expression and practice. Peter Berger readdressed his earlier claims that modernity and science would lead to dramatic religious decline,<sup>169</sup> stating: 'the assumption that we live in a secularized world is false. The world today, with some exceptions ...is as furiously religious as ever.'<sup>170</sup> Steve Bruce disagrees with Berger's change of mind, claiming that 'we may yearn all we like but still be unable to reverse the changes that undermine the plausibility of religious belief systems.'<sup>171</sup> Bruce and Tony Glendinning also challenge Davie's conclusions, arguing that: 'The persistence of the sacred within the general culture is not self-evident.'<sup>172</sup> Although I agree with their concern regarding clarity of religious survey questions,<sup>173</sup> they seem to dismiss reported levels of belief on the basis that it is not as definable as the decline of conventional religion or church. Compared to the global scene, Berger notes Western Europe as an exception, but then concedes

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<sup>167</sup> Grace Davie, *Religion in Britain Since 1945: Believing Without Belonging* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1994), p. 43.

<sup>168</sup> Kay & Ziebertz, 'Understanding Religion', in Kay & Ziebertz, *Youth in Europe I*, p. 25.

<sup>169</sup> Michael Burleigh, 'God is Back by John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge: review', *The Telegraph* (06/06/2009), <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/bookreviews/5443032/God-is-Back-by-John-Micklethwait-and-Adrian-Wooldridge-review.html>> [accessed 28/07/2011]; 'In 1968 the sociologist of religion, Peter Berger, assured The New York Times that "by the 21st century, religious believers are likely to be found only in small sects, huddled together to resist a worldwide secular culture".'

<sup>170</sup> Peter L. Berger, 'The Desecularization of the World: A Global Overview', in Peter Berger (ed.), *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1999), pp. 1-18 [2].

<sup>171</sup> Steve Bruce, 'The curious case of the unnecessary recantation: Berger and secularization', in Linda Woodhead, Paul Heelas & David Martin (eds.), *Peter Berger and the Study of Religion* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 87-100 [96]; '...I am not persuaded that "needs" must always be met. People need food, but die of starvation.'

<sup>172</sup> Steve Bruce & Tony Glendinning, 'New ways of believing or belonging: is religion giving way to spirituality?', *The British Journal of Sociology* 57.3 (2006), pp. 399-414 [411]; see also Steve Bruce & Tony Glendinning, 'When was secularization? Dating the decline of the British churches and locating its cause', *The British Journal of Sociology* 61.1 (2010), pp. 107-126.

<sup>173</sup> Bruce & Glendinning, 'New ways', p. 411.

that 'a shift in the institutional location of religion, then, rather than secularization, would be a more accurate description of the European situation.'<sup>174</sup> Austrian researchers agree that there is a type of 'spiritual seeker', a cultural 'Avant-garde', who being 'emancipated' from the 'hand of the Church', has an increasing spiritual hunger. This search may include:<sup>175</sup>

An Inner Journey

*Reise zu sich selbst* – finding oneself and self-development

*Verzauberung* – experience, adventure, secrets

*Heilung* – healing

*Festigkeit* – orientation and wisdom

An Outward Journey

*Gemeinschaft* – fellowship

*Reise in der Weite* – transcendence; something higher, further

*Weltverhältnis* – old traditions, politics, future hope

Zulehner describes these characteristics again when speaking of a spiritual search which is expressed in three different lifestyles: atheistic, pragmatic and Christ-believing. As a theologian he approves the honesty, but shortcomings of the first two lifestyles, before suggesting that the Christian faith can provide a meaningful connection for each of the above points.<sup>176</sup>

## 1.4.2 Believing and Belonging

Having noted that there are those who to some degree 'believe', it has also been acknowledged that how people 'belong' to the church is changing. Tracking the history of pre-Christendom through to post-Christendom, Murray observes that there are many variations to the interactions between believing and belonging:<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Berger 'The Desecularization of the World', in Berger, *The Desecularization*, p. 10.

<sup>175</sup> Zulehner & Polak, *Religion – Kirche – Spiritualität*, pp. 81-83; cf. Ariane Martin, *Sehnsucht - der Anfang von allem: Dimensionen zeitgenössischer Spiritualität* (Ostfildern: Schwabenverlag AG, 2005), <<http://www.schwabenverlag-online.de/pdf/1249.pdf>> [accessed 28/07/2011]; Martin previously used these headings as the basis for her book.

<sup>176</sup> Paul M. Zulehner, 'Spirituelle Suche in säkularer Kultur' (audio file), [www.zulehner.org](http://www.zulehner.org) (12.07.2011), <<http://www.zulehner.org/site/vortraege>> [accessed 28/07/2011]; He describes Atheism - with its despair; Pragmatic - maximal happiness in minimal time, where 'life is the last chance to gain optimal pain free happiness.'

<sup>177</sup> Murray, *Church after Christendom*, pp. 13-23.

Believing and belonging (Pre-Christendom)  
Required to believe and belong (Christendom)  
Daring to believe and belong (dissenting believers within Christendom)

The following are the various forms of this interaction as 'Christendom has unravelled' through to post-Christendom:

Belonging but no longer believing  
Believing but not belonging  
Belonging but only partly believing  
Believing but no longer belonging  
Believing but belonging less intensely  
Believing and belonging intermittently  
Belonging but not yet believing  
Believing but not yet belonging  
Neither believing nor belonging

Davie previously used the phrase 'believing without belonging' to describe 'the persistence of the sacred in contemporary society despite the undeniable decline in churchgoing.'<sup>178</sup> '*Jesus ja, Kirche nein*' is a sentiment increasingly expressed in Austria and other Western European countries and beyond.<sup>179</sup> There remains a paradox or a societal '*Doppelmoral*' regarding the church: Austrians are of the opinion that the church should speak clearly and strongly regarding world peace and key social issues (poverty, ecology, racism), but do not want it to speak up regarding their personal values. It should be an agent of values, but they should not cause personal discomfort or have any consequences!<sup>180</sup> Thus Zulehner and Polak claim that many Catholics have made a God for themselves that best suits their '*Lebensdesign*',<sup>181</sup> and that the traditional RCC ties are

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<sup>178</sup> Davie, *Religion in Britain*, pp. 93-94; Note that Davie uses 'believing without belonging' to capture 'a mood' and suggest an 'area of enquiry, a way of looking at the problem, not to describe a detailed set of characteristics.'

<sup>179</sup> Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006), p.34; Zulehner & Polak, *Religion – Kirche – Spiritualität*, p. 64; Dan Kimball, *They Like Jesus but not the Church: Insights from Emerging Generations* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), pp. 20-21.

<sup>180</sup> Zulehner & Polak, *Religion – Kirche – Spiritualität*, p. 104; cf. William K. Kay & Hans-Georg Ziebertz, 'Religiosity of Youth in Europe – A Comparative Analysis', in William K. Kay & Hans-Georg Ziebertz (eds.), *Youth in Europe II: An international empirical Study about Religiosity* (Münster: LIT Verlag, 2006), pp. 246-265 [255]; Kay and Ziebertz write that this is a Europe-wide attitude: 'It is noticeable that with the exception of the Poles, all young people attach meaning to the church in social questions than for their personal life. That means that religious bodies are thought to be benevolent as public institutions and as a voice in society, even if they are not judged in a particularly positive light.'

<sup>181</sup> Zulehner & Polak, *Religion – Kirche – Spiritualität*, p. 89; cf. Newbigin, *The Gospel*, pp. 21-22; Newbigin speaks of an 'unknown god' as a 'convenient object of belief, since its character is a matter for me to decide.' He observes that this 'god' does not challenge or ask uncomfortable questions, but is simply an 'enlarged image of my ego thrown up against the sky'.

loosening, but are not completely gone.<sup>182</sup> I agree and observe that Austria is unique in that many still technically 'belong' to the RCC,<sup>183</sup> but no longer 'belong' in practice. Their 'believing' becomes a private issue as they find space to develop their own notion of God and religious expression.<sup>184</sup>

Hirsch likens the current situation in the West to the pre-Constantinian, early Christian Church before the development of Christendom, which 'homogenized culture, and everyone born in its realm was considered to be Christian.' Pre-Christendom was a pluralistic environment and not a mono-cultural one.<sup>185</sup> I would add that the current situation has the disadvantage, or advantage, of being increasingly post-Christian; that is to say the culture was 'Christian', but is increasingly no more. The similarities between the first three centuries of church history and now are indeed evident, however people in Austria now have some kind of inherent knowledge or acknowledgement of Christianity and Church which is in the process of being increasingly rejected, but also retained as the traditional religion of the culture. This knowledge may not always be an accurate picture of the church that church leaders wish to represent; nevertheless it is part of their shared Church history. Unlike pre-Christendom, post-Christendom has 'de-churched'<sup>186</sup> as well as 'non-churched' people.

## 1.5 Conclusions

In summary, the observations of this chapter suggest that there are both challenges and opportunities to be recognised in the current Austrian cultural

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<sup>182</sup> Zulehner & Polak, 'Von der „Wiederkehr der Religion“', in Friesl, Hamachers-Zuba & Polak, *Die Österreicherinnen*, p. 156; 'Aus einem katholisch geprägten Land wird ein religiös plurales Land, das weiterhin stark christlich geprägt bleibt. Die traditionellen Kirchenbindungen lösen sich auf, das Verhältnis zu den Kirchen geht aber nicht ganz verloren, sondern transformiert sich.'

<sup>183</sup> They were christened and have never officially gone through the process of officially leaving the RCC; supra 1.3.1.

<sup>184</sup> Supra 1.4.1: *Religious & Cultural-Religious*; cf. Kay & Ziebertz, 'Understanding Religion', in Kay & Ziebertz, *Youth in Europe II*, p. 20; '...religious beliefs are scattered indiscriminately within the population and, without the support of a church community, become mixed up in a variety of heterodox ways as people formulate their own belief systems.'

<sup>185</sup> Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, p. 62.

<sup>186</sup> Stuart Murray, 'Belonging/ Believing/ Behaving', *Church after Christendom* (03/03/2008), p. 7, <<http://www.anabaptistnetwork.com/node/260>> [accessed 27/05/2009]; cf. Newbigin, *The Gospel*, p. 224; 'We are in a radically new situation and cannot dream either of a Constantinian authority or of a pre-Constantinian innocence'.

context. There may be difficulties in recognising one's own culture as explained in chapter three.<sup>187</sup> However LCÖ leaders, wherever they are in their process of development, will need to be aware of the advantages and disadvantages, and how they affect not only their ministry, but how they are developing as leaders.

### 1.5.1 Challenges

Austrian leaders will need to be open to acknowledge and work on the above mentioned negative cultural traits of indecisiveness, anxiety concerning leaders, the keeping of appearances and pessimism, which they may have passively adopted or developed.

There are very few examples or role models for emerging leaders of a more Charismatic form of church life and leadership.

There is a general distrust, even rejection of all things associated with the word 'church'.<sup>188</sup> Paradoxically, LCÖ churches may not be understood to be 'proper' churches by the average Austrian; that is to say, they are not RCC.

When an Austrian comes to active faith, regular church service attendance is not necessarily equated with being an active believer. LCÖ church members may also perceive their leaders as *Freikirche* versions of a RCC priest with all the associated expectations; who for example do the entire ministry or 'spiritual' activities of the church and who mediate with God on their behalf.

### 1.5.2 Opportunities

If developing leaders will take the time to understand their nation's RCC culture, they have the opportunity to express their faith in a fresh, but authentically Austrian way by using those cultural levers that Austrians are familiar with.

In contrast to this, but not in conflict, people's disappointment and disillusionment with the RCC means those seeking a different church experience<sup>189</sup> are ready and open for *Freikirche* church services and church life. Although Christianity would seem to be in decline, in Austria it is the known church

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<sup>187</sup> Supra 3.2.2, (White & Ward).

<sup>188</sup> Brian D. McLaren, *A Generous Orthodoxy* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), p. 230; Writing regarding the Catholic scandals (in America), McLaren does not consider them to be "their" problem but "our" problem.'

<sup>189</sup> Not to imply that this can never be found in a RCC setting.



as an institution that is being ignored or rejected. Churches such as LCÖ are for the most part still unknown. Developing leaders will need to see this as an opportunity.

These two opportunities can be expressed in the tension Leonard Sweet describes for church leaders: 'It is one thing to create a countercultural community or a Christian subculture, but it is a much more difficult thing to live as an "incarnational-missional *communitas*" in the midst of a culture and not be bound by its dictates and decrees: to be "in" it, not "of" it, but not "out of it" either.'<sup>190</sup> Strong and healthy church leadership which inspires and is forward looking and risk-taking may currently be in short supply in Austria: thus if developing leaders are willing to put their heads above the proverbial wall, they may well be seen and heard.

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<sup>190</sup> Leonard Sweet, 'Foreword: have you defragged recently?', in Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, p. 12. Supra 2.3.4 re. 'missional' & 3.4.2 re. 'incarnational'.

## **2 CHAPTER TWO**

### **LIFE CHURCH ÖSTERREICH: OBSERVATION & DOCUMENTARY RESEARCH**

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## 2.1 Introduction

Having gained some understanding regarding the cultural situation in which leaders are being developed in Austria, this chapter will now provide insight into the LCÖ network of churches in which they are being developed and serving. No church leader develops in a vacuum, but is influenced and shaped not only by their national culture, but by the culture – that is the norms of behaviour and shared values – of the church body to which they belong.<sup>191</sup> I consider that when people come to active faith through the same church or network in which they now serve in a leadership capacity (such is often the case in LCÖ), the shared philosophy of ministry and understanding of leadership will be particularly strong; that which Hirsch describes as having the same ‘DNA’.<sup>192</sup>

I have therefore given a brief description of the network’s history, before identifying key elements of the network, and then tracing and reviewing the strategies for the development of leaders to date.

## 2.2 The Story So Far

There is currently no detailed written account of LCÖ available. My research therefore led me to begin by providing a brief history of the network. Robert Stake reasons that the researcher can be ‘something of a biographer’,<sup>193</sup> and I have briefly adopted this approach to identify ‘patterns and phases’<sup>194</sup> of LCÖ’s story. This enables me to gain a perspective of the context in which leaders have been developed, thus highlighting that which I consider to be of importance to the development of leaders.

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<sup>191</sup> Cf. Kotter gives three primary reasons for the ‘power’ of culture in a secular business context which may also apply to an ecclesiastical one. Kotter, *Leading Change*, pp. 145-151; 1) *individuals are selected and indoctrinated so well*; 2) *the culture exerts itself through the actions of hundreds or thousands of people*; 3) *all of this happens without much conscious intent and thus is difficult to challenge or even discuss*. [151].

<sup>192</sup> Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, pp. 75-82 & 283; ‘...what DNA does for biological systems, mDNA does for ecclesial ones.’ (Hirsch places an *m* before DNA which stands for *missional*, thus differentiating it from the biological abbreviation.) Cf. Sweet, McLaren & Haselmayer, *A is for Abductive*, pp.143-144.

<sup>193</sup> Robert E. Stake, *The Art of Case Study Research* (London: Sage, 1995), p. 96.

<sup>194</sup> Stake, *The Art of Case Study*, p. 97.

### 2.2.1 Beginnings

The history of the LCÖ network of churches is entwined with the founders' story. Gianni Gaeta comes from southern Italy and grew up in a Pentecostal home which was involved in church planting. Having studied electrical engineering, he ran a small Christian radio station in his home town. He then went on to study at the International Bible Training Institute (IBTI) in Burgess Hill (England) with the intention to serve in his home church in some capacity in the future. It was there he met second year student Angela Gaeta (nee Thomas) from Cornwall. She had previously been employed as a bank clerk and had been preaching in Methodist churches since her teens. A. Gaeta was already convinced that she was called to be a missionary in Austria and so their future together depended on G. Gaeta accepting this calling. Three years later they were married, and having been accepted by Assemblies of God in Great Britain (AoG)<sup>195</sup> as certified missionaries, they itinerated throughout England and Wales to raise financial support. In 1986 they moved to southern Austria and lived near Villach (Kärnten), where they were helping another AoG missionary couple by leading worship and the youth and children's ministry. At this stage they had no intentions of starting and leading a church or network and did not see themselves as called to do so.

In 1987 they joined Reinhard Hirtler and Walter Hirtler to help them in their evangelistic efforts in Bruck an der Mur (Steirmark).<sup>196</sup> Their joint efforts were unsuccessful in establishing a church and in 1988 the Gaetas decided to start a church plant in the neighbouring town of Leoben (Steirmark). After a year, which saw little progress, they finally had some success in reaching a group of young adults, who not only came to faith, but also got behind their efforts to establish the church.

It is significant to consider all these personal details, as they reveal the Gaetas' experience of the call of God which has been progressive, requiring them to be flexible and adaptive.<sup>197</sup> This has had an influence on how they, as senior leaders, advise and guide others in understanding and responding to God's

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<sup>195</sup> At the time it was 'Assemblies of God in Great Britain and Northern Ireland'.

<sup>196</sup> Reinhard & Walter Hirtler are Austrian brothers the Gaeta's had known from the IBTI.

<sup>197</sup> G. & A. Gaeta have given a personal account of their story. The series of talks is focused on their experience of God's calling and leading rather than their church planting or leadership strategy: Gianni & Angela Gaeta, 'Abenteuer mit Gott' (audio file), (Wien: City Church Wien, 2005).

calling. Their experience or journey has become an inspiration, and also a 'benchmark', in stimulating others to do the same.<sup>198</sup> Adversely, such a story may also act as a deterrent for those unsure if they can show such a commitment or take such risks.

### 2.2.2 Expansion

With the momentum of growth in Leoben, G. Gaeta had further opportunities to help plant or develop new churches in Kärnten; first in Klagenfurt<sup>199</sup> then in Villach,<sup>200</sup> supported by small teams who travelled with him from the Leoben church. In 1997 G. Gaeta, together with the leaders he was working with, formed the 'Vision für Österreich'<sup>201</sup> network based on the following needs:<sup>202</sup>

- To see churches integrated into a larger vision, in which they can find their own personal expression.
- To offer leaders and/or pastors relationships, in which they can experience growth and development of their gifts and abilities.
- To offer leaders protection and security through covenant relationships, requiring mutual accountability and openness.

The same publication also officially stated their vision for the first time:<sup>203</sup>

We want to lead people to a living and practised faith in God, and thereby positively influence the nation of Austria on a spiritual and social level.

This was to happen not only through planting churches in every district capital, but by training leaders, evangelism through the arts, music, literature and other media, social and political involvement, and a nation-wide youth and children's ministry.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> G. Gaeta encourages Austrians to be missionaries in their own land; Gaeta, 'Abenteuer mit Gott', part 1, track 8 (00:25).

<sup>199</sup> 1989

<sup>200</sup> 1992

<sup>201</sup> 'Vision für Österreich' and 'Life Church Österreich' are the same network; supra 2.1.4 re. change of name.

<sup>202</sup> Gianni Gaeta, *Vision für Österreich: Vision & Strategie für progressive Gemeindebau* (Wien: Vision für Österreich, 1997), p. 3.

<sup>203</sup> Gaeta, *Vision für Österreich*, p. 5.

<sup>204</sup> Gaeta, *Vision für Österreich*, p. 5; These goals, although re-phrased have remained the same; 'LIFE Church Österreich verfolgt ein gemeinsames Ziel: Die Wahrheit des Evangeliums zu verbreiten

- durch die Kunst, Literatur, Musik, Medienarbeit und Gottesdienste.
- durch soziales und politisches Engagement.
- durch österreichweite Arbeit mit Kindern und Jugendlichen.
- durch die Gründung von Freien Christengemeinden in allen Bezirkshauptstädten Österreichs.'

Thus they did not restrict their future engagement solely to pioneering churches, but having an influence in society as a whole. I will elaborate on this later in this chapter.<sup>205</sup>

They had now identified three ways in which churches could be planted; by a church reproducing itself ('mother' and 'daughter' churches), by an apostolic team, or as a result of a leader's personal calling.<sup>206</sup>

By 1997, the Gaetas, together with the Hirtlers and several people from the Leoben church, had moved to the capital, Vienna, and the City Church Wien was pioneered. Church plants in Wolfsberg (Kärnten)<sup>207</sup> and Liezen (Steirmark)<sup>208</sup> followed as new converts responded to the leadership call to pioneer under G. Gaeta's supervision. Subsequently the church in Wolfsberg planted a church in Judenburg (Steirmark),<sup>209</sup> where some of its members had been travelling from.

Contrariwise, some church plants did not take root; the church in Villach branched out to nearby Feldkirchen (Kärnten), where some of its members lived. It experienced rapid growth, but after eight years, it was closed and members repatriated back into the Villach congregation.<sup>210</sup> Klagenfurt experienced a failed attempt to start a church in Völkermarkt (Kärnten),<sup>211</sup> and the network gave support to a small group meeting in Großkirchheim (Kärnten), but they were unable to be established as a church.<sup>212</sup> These were disappointing cases for those leaders involved, however the willingness to abort shows a pragmatic approach, whereby each situation is evaluated regarding its sustainable future. They also sought to learn from these experiences. For example, G. Gaeta later noted that church plants would not be attempted in the future without a more definite idea of

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Staff writers, 'Life Church Österreich', *lifechurch.at*, <[http://lifechurch.at/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1&Itemid=105&lang=de](http://lifechurch.at/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1&Itemid=105&lang=de)> [accessed 18/05/2012]; previously available on the Vision für Österreich website: Staff writers, 'Vision für Österreich', *vision-austria.net* (2002-2011), <[http://www.vision-austria.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=category&sectionid=5&id=29&Itemid=45](http://www.vision-austria.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=category&sectionid=5&id=29&Itemid=45)> [accessed 13/05/2011].

<sup>205</sup> Supra 2.3.4.

<sup>206</sup> Gaeta, *Vision für Österreich*, p. 6.

<sup>207</sup> 1998

<sup>208</sup> 2000

<sup>209</sup> 2003

<sup>210</sup> 1998-2006; a key reason for closure was the failed attempt of a local leader to lead the church coupled with the plateau in growth.

<sup>211</sup> 2000-2002; after the initial interest in the first church services, they were unable to establish a local group of members.

<sup>212</sup> 2002-2009; a key reason being the absence of someone willing to take responsibility for leading the group.

who the main leader would be.<sup>213</sup> Furthermore, the desired four year cycle of mother churches reproducing daughter churches has not been realised.<sup>214</sup> This strategy, born out a period of consecutive church planting, may have been unrealistic: by underestimating the time necessary for a new church to become stable enough to support the next pioneer project, and for pioneer leaders to be found or recognised, and be both willing and equipped for the task. This is not to say that the strategy would not be possible as the network grew and matured.

Recently a church has been established in Hermagor (Kärnten)<sup>215</sup> and a church plant has begun in Lienz (Tirol).<sup>216</sup> Both couples involved in these ventures were formerly in the church in Vienna and both husbands originally come from the regions they have returned to.

### 2.2.3 Culture and Consolidation

In 2004 a daughter church plant from the Vienna church in another district of Vienna was closed to focus attention back on the mother church's development.<sup>217</sup> This was due to major changes in the approach to ministry which G. Gaeta was introducing both to the Vienna church he leads and the network's churches. This came from a personal process of re-defining how he should be leading and building church. The purpose of change was to boost quality and effectiveness rather than any concerns of deterioration.<sup>218</sup> It is beyond the remit of this work to detail the process, but it is significant that the main focus was to change the underlying culture of the Vienna church. G. Gaeta asked the question; 'What do I need to do so that we become the City Church Wien I had envisioned?' He came to the conclusion that he would have to work on changing the culture as opposed

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<sup>213</sup> Explained in conversation with the author (03/2011).

<sup>214</sup> Gaeta, *Vision für Österreich*, pp. 6-9; Church plants to date have been by the following means – Mother/ daughter reproduction: Judenburg, Hermagor (closed: Feldkirchen, Völkermarkt, Wien); Pioneer team: Wien, Klagenfurt, Villach, Wolfsberg (closed: Großkirchheim); Personal calling: Leoben, Liezen, Lienz.

<sup>215</sup> 2010

<sup>216</sup> 2011

<sup>217</sup> 2002-2004

<sup>218</sup> Jim Collins, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap ...and Others Don't* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), p.1; Collins writes that most companies don't become great because they settle for being quite good. See also John P. Kotter, 'Leading Change: Why Transformational Efforts Fail', *Harvard Business Review* (London: Harvard Business School Publishing, 2007), p. 1, <<http://www.hbrlondon.org/articles/kotterArticle.cfm>> [accessed 11/06/2008].

to simply making structural changes.<sup>219</sup> After defining the core values, the practices and operating structures of the church were reviewed and changed.<sup>220</sup> Within six months, the results were tangible: more guests started coming to the church services, department leaders were promptly adopting the new culture and approach into their area of ministry or service and there was generally a renewed passion for the cause or the church. This emphasis on getting the culture 'right' then became an emphasis for the network as a whole, propagated by G. Gaeta with the City Church Wien as a model or 'work in progress'. The importance of a leader's ability to create a suitable culture will be expanded in the next chapter.<sup>221</sup>

The older or larger LCO churches now have second generation growth. The children of the founding members are entering adulthood and are already involved in leadership to various degrees, be it children's or youth ministry or leading worship for example. These churches have also undergone a certain amount of consolidation. Some have been able to secure more permanent property leases to accommodate fuller church programmes and even founded kindergartens and schools.<sup>222</sup> It has been necessary to develop organisational structures to facilitate busier church lives. In addition, others have focused on producing music, or involvement in social-political issues.<sup>223</sup>

I consider consolidation to be necessary in the local churches because, as noted above, operational structures and programmes need to be reviewed to adjust to the growth they have experienced since being planted, and to be able to accommodate further growth. This consolidation may however result in some original purpose and the broader (national) mission being lost. Individual churches

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<sup>219</sup> Explained in conversation with the author (01/2009); The question was asked, 'With which cultural attributes would God feel at home?' The reasoning was that if God could be God, then the church would develop and grow accordingly. The Austrian and Viennese cultural attributes were then listed and compared with an 'ideal' list to identify similarities and cultural attributes which were missing or working in the opposite direction.

<sup>220</sup> The importance of culture and its particular attributes were regularly taught in the church services as well as a monthly meeting that was established for the church to meet together and look in depth and understand the change it had entered into.

<sup>221</sup> Supra 3.2.2.2; cf. Alan J. Roxburgh & Fred Romanuk, *The Missional Leader: Equipping Your Church to Reach a Changing World* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), p. 6; Roxburgh & Romanuk maintain that leaders should create an environment for the people of God in a given location to thrive in, in the same way that parents can set the context for a child to thrive, but they cannot dictate to their children what they will become.

<sup>222</sup> Supra 2.3.4.

<sup>223</sup> Supra 2.3.4.



now have larger budgets and localised needs and demands. Second generation members have not had the pioneer experience of church planting with its uncertainties and high demands for commitment of time and energy. They have always had church with all its variety of ministries such as a youth group or a media team. Hinkelmann's research notes that the spate of *Freikirche* church plants in Austria also entered a period of consolidation in the 1980s from which they did not emerge. They now had finances and opportunities to adapt or buy buildings and their efforts were concentrated on their church life and gaining legal status. Their main focus did not return to evangelisation and multiplication.<sup>224</sup> In my opinion, this issue of focus or vision is crucial. I deem that the impetus and enthusiasm needed to plant a church comes from the focus on establishing something new and on that vision being accomplished. I suggest that when a church considers that it has arrived at their original goal, or at least in part, the focus may change automatically. LCÖ, with its measure of success, enjoys more favour and influence than in its early years. For this same reason, LCÖ may also be at a more pivotal stage as a network than is immediately apparent.

#### **2.2.4 New Name, New Chapter?**

LCÖ has held the Austrian religious status described in chapter one since 2005 by becoming a branch of the longer established Pentecostal denomination, FCGÖ.<sup>225</sup> Both LCÖ and FCGÖ have benefitted from this arrangement, and continue to investigate possible areas of synergy. Joint leadership conferences, as well as youth and children's workers conferences have been held. LCÖ's theological stance is a blend of Pentecostal and Charismatic teaching, but differences in culture, systems and values have been both welcomed and treated with reservation.<sup>226</sup> LCÖ has retained its identity, function and structure as a previously established church network.

At the time of writing, Life Church Österreich is still officially called 'Vision für Österreich'. The name change is planned for May 2012, which also includes a name change for the individual churches as well. The churches currently have an

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<sup>224</sup> Hinkelmann, 'Österreich', p. 132.

<sup>225</sup> 'Staatlich eingetragene religiöse Bekenntnisgemeinschaften'; supra 1.3.2.

<sup>226</sup> A notable difference is LCÖ's understanding and inclusion of women in leadership; supra 5.4.1.1 (fn. 581).

assortment of names which will be unified by each church being called 'Life Church...' followed by the town's name.<sup>227</sup> The reasons for the change have been formulated in a statement read to the churches.<sup>228</sup> The main reasons are: to acknowledge the future international interests of the network, and not only a 'vision for Austria'; to strengthen the network's self-identity through a homogeneous name for each church without changing their autonomy; and to provide a unified public image.<sup>229</sup> This is hoped to particularly help a church plant in identifying it with a nation-wide network of churches.

I do not perceive a departure from LCÖ's relational apostolic approach<sup>230</sup> upon reading this statement and the subsequent changes that it announces. The reason could be that there is sufficient LCÖ DNA<sup>231</sup> in its leaders to welcome and embrace this new stage or chapter without unnecessary coercion to bring them to this point. The changes have not come through a top-down command although they have been pursued and introduced by the main network leadership. I see a likeness to Hirsch's explanation: 'Institutional systems tend to try and organize through external hierarchical command and control; organic missional movements organize through healthy mDNA coding embedded in each cell and then let go.'<sup>232</sup>

## 2.3 Key Elements

I will now seek to highlight the key elements and most recognisable characteristics of the LCÖ network and its churches, which consequently have a bearing on church leaders' understanding of their role and how they should develop and function. It is difficult to designate LCÖ to an exact type of church network, particularly because there is no other like it in Austria at this time.<sup>233</sup> Tom Sine's

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<sup>227</sup> E.g. 'Christliche Initiative Leoben' will become 'Life Church Leoben', and 'Salz und Licht Klagenfurt' will become 'Life Church Klagenfurt'.

<sup>228</sup> Helge Plonner, 'Life Church: Unser Weg zu einem gemeinsamen Namen', ver. 12 (unpublished statement, 28/09/2011).

<sup>229</sup> Plonner, 'Life Church', p. 3; 'In alledem freuen wir uns, dass durch den gemeinsamen Namen eine noch stärkere Identifikation der Gemeinden untereinander und ein einheitliches Auftreten nach außen erzielt werden wird.'

<sup>230</sup> Supra 2.3.1 & 2.3.2.

<sup>231</sup> Supra 2.1.

<sup>232</sup> Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, p. 77; Supra 2.3.4 re. 'missional'.

<sup>233</sup> Podobri, *Transformation in Österreich*, p. 202; Podobri notes that as an independent network, it is successfully breaking new ground in many areas.

research identifies the four main 'streams' of 'new church' to be Emerging, Missional, Mosaic and Monastic.<sup>234</sup> Sine concerns himself with the need to leave, reinvent or rediscover church and the Christian life as these streams question the essence of what it means to be a disciple, a steward, the church and the church's mission.<sup>235</sup> LCÖ is not however an older denomination reinventing itself or a new group leaving a more established movement to do church 'their' way. I therefore find what Frost describes as 'Neo-apostolic' groups and networks more helpful.<sup>236</sup> This is because they do not have the buildings, seminaries, and 'full-time paid clergy' of denominationalism and reject restrictive central authority to focus rather on missionary activity and the establishment of new churches.<sup>237</sup> I have observed that LCÖ shares these characteristics, although the practical outworking of these distinctives may differ to the examples Frost provides from Southeast Asia and South America. This may be for cultural reasons, but may also reveal areas in which LCÖ needs to further develop, in the frequency of church planting for example.

### 2.3.1 Apostolic Leadership

The terms 'apostle' and 'apostolic' are commonplace amongst LCÖ churches and those coming to faith are immediately familiar with this ecclesiastical term. It is beyond the purpose and remit of this work to theologically verify LCÖ's apostolic approach; rather I seek to explain their understanding and practice of it. G. Gaeta is not only the founder, but is understood to be the apostolic leader of the network. He has an 'apostolic team' of leaders of his choosing, who support him in this task. There is currently no other similar church network in Austria with which to compare this key element. Alan Vincent<sup>238</sup> and Barney Coombs<sup>239</sup> teaching and approach to apostolic leadership is however similar to that of LCÖ. Vincent regularly visited

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<sup>234</sup> Tom Sine, *The New Conspirators* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2008), p. 24.

<sup>235</sup> Sine, *The New Conspirators*, pp. 27-28.

<sup>236</sup> Michael Frost, *Exiles: Living Missionally in a Post-Christian Culture* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2006), pp.135-136.

<sup>237</sup> Frost, *Exiles*, p. 136; Frost claims they now represent 'one of the fastest-growing sectors of the Christian movement'.

<sup>238</sup> Alan Vincent ministers apostolically into several church networks, and is founder and leader of 'Outpouring Ministries', <<http://outpouringmissions.org/outpouringministries/>> [accessed 13/05/2011].

<sup>239</sup> Barney Coombs is the founder and until recently (2010) apostolic leader of 'Salt & Light Ministries', <<http://www.saltlight.org/europe/>> [accessed 13/05/2011].

G. and A. Gaeta and the leaders in the early stages of the network and his teachings and apostolic input were very influential.<sup>240</sup> Audio recordings of his and Coombs' teaching were also circulated. Kay describes the core of Coombs' philosophy of ministry:<sup>241</sup>

He believed the apostle is a master builder who builds relationally, pastorally, supernaturally and on a strong foundation of grace. Apostles are a gift from Jesus designed to help local elders build governmentally, prophetically and in a balanced way. His original contribution lay in his notion of the spiritual fatherhood of the apostle and the spiritual sonship of many of his team. The motif of spiritual family genes running through Coombs's ministry led him to invest the mentoring and caring role of the apostle with great importance. Relationships were intended to be personal and permanent rather than professional and transcendent.

This mirrors Vincent's teaching and ministry, and relies upon an understanding of Scripture which accepts the present day office or function of an apostle. John Stott is adamant that there are no longer apostles in the church today,<sup>242</sup> and as I have already noted, it is beyond the remit of this research to examine the theological arguments, pro and contra this interpretation. Stott does however concede that; 'Perhaps some leaders could be described as having "apostolic ministries"',<sup>243</sup> and I note that for those involved both as apostles or otherwise, they are content both with their perception of the Scriptural basis and the functionality of this model which they experience.

Kay's aforementioned description is close to how the apostolic ministry is intended to function in LCÖ. Firstly, it is understood within LCÖ that the apostolic ministry is one that *builds*, that is, to see churches and ministries pioneered and subsequently grow by remaining healthy. 'Healthy' is understood to require appropriate doctrine, vision and leadership which the apostle (and apostolic team) concerns themselves with. Similarly Hirsch emphasises that the apostolic should not be understood as an office, but a function concerned with the expansion of Christianity both physically and geographically (church planting), theologically

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<sup>240</sup> Alan Vincent is still one of the apostolic leaders who have an apostolic influence in the lives of G. Gaeta & A. Gaeta, and the network.

<sup>241</sup> Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, p. 246.

<sup>242</sup> John Stott, *Calling Christian Leaders: Biblical Models of Church, Gospel and Ministry* (London: IVP, 2002), p. 21; cf. pp. 18-20.

<sup>243</sup> Stott, *Calling Christian Leaders*, p. 21.

through foundational teaching and guarding of doctrine, and creating an environment and reference point for other ministries to emerge.<sup>244</sup>

Secondly, the apostle builds *relationally* and as a *father* to the other leaders. This means that the leaders and that which is reproduced or established have a two-fold advantage. They hold the same apostolic DNA or family genes,<sup>245</sup> and they have a guaranteed parental commitment rather than a working arrangement. Kay also notes the relationship between church leaders and the apostolic leader is a key issue for British apostolic networks, comparable to the relationship between the elders of newly formed congregations and the New Testament apostles.<sup>246</sup> An example of how this both relational and practical apostolic input is perceived is the attitude of an associate pastor who left the church in Vienna where he was working to plant a church in Lienz. When it was commented upon, that he would be able to ‘come out from under G. Gaeta’s wing’, to be ‘free’ from the apostle’s influence, and lead as he wanted to, he replied that that was not the case, rather he would now need G. Gaeta’s input more than ever.<sup>247</sup>

LCÖ has retained a flat structure to date, whereby the apostle visits the individual leaders and churches with no delegated people or hierarchy of leaders to fulfil this role. Additionally, leadership events are organised to facilitate teaching and provide a forum for G. Gaeta to communicate his ‘heart’ regarding the network. Although it is characteristic of apostolic networks to avoid unnecessary bureaucracy,<sup>248</sup> it is my observation, that the current means of apostolic input will need to be evaluated. Either the network will grow to a size that it is no longer physically possible for the main apostle to operate in his current capacity, or the growth will be restricted because of this limitation. Likewise, thought will need to be given to the matter of succession. I consider replacing a uniquely gifted apostolic leader, who is also the founder with a strong charisma to be a significant

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<sup>244</sup> Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, pp. 154-158; c.f. Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, p. 171; Kay notes John Wimber’s approach which has also been formative in G. Gaeta’s understanding of ministry: ‘Wimber’s philosophy of ministry, dating back to the early 1980s, saw leadership in terms of function rather than office. What mattered was what a man or woman did for God, rather than the badge they wore.’

<sup>245</sup> Supra 2.1

<sup>246</sup> Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, pp. 248-249.

<sup>247</sup> Made known to the author in a conversation with the leader concerned (06/2010).

<sup>248</sup> Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, p. 288; ‘The radically novel thing about apostolic networks is that, from the first, they set their faces against bureaucracy.’

challenge. Kay notes the difficulties apostolic networks face 'when the charismatic leader dies or retires', whereby the organisational structure and bureaucracy alone are unable to provide the impetus the founder had provided.<sup>249</sup> All these concerns further highlight the importance of LCÖ's development of competent leaders, who can both function and relate apostolically.

### 2.3.2 Relational

Church and network life in LCÖ is predominantly relational in nature. This is to be expected, as Kay notes that the British apostolic networks both promoted relationships and consequently practised what they preached!<sup>250</sup> His observations echo the LCÖ approach:<sup>251</sup>

Meetings of leaders were dependent for their success upon trust and willingness to take part in untrammelled discussion. It became important to 'hear the heart' of other people – to let them say what they really thought without fear of disapproval. And relationships were crucial to the connection between groups of leaders and their apostle or apostolic team.

It is common for LCÖ leaders' meetings (both local church and network) to include a mealtime and the opportunity for casual exchange. Leaders meetings may well have an agreed agenda, but are not agenda-driven. Friendships are not expected to be only task orientated. Relationships characterised by openness, general interests and not just work related issues, are the adhesive for such a network. Earlier in the network's development, intense, covenantal friendships were encouraged, with a high level of accountability being exercised from leader to leader and between trainee and senior leaders. This was later considered inappropriate and accordingly relaxed. G. Gaeta has explained that such a high commitment to making a friendship work may be detrimental to the call of God in that friendship could come before obeying a calling or become an 'idol', an end in itself.<sup>252</sup> In this regard, one could say that the relational emphasis of the early years had in some respects failed. I suggest that the concept has had to mature, and in reference to G. Gaeta's comments, become more balanced. The risk and

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<sup>249</sup> Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, p. 287.

<sup>250</sup> Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, p. 347.

<sup>251</sup> Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, p. 348.

<sup>252</sup> Explained in conversation with the author (03/2011).

possibility of disappointment and even emotional trauma for leaders however remains.

To what extent the relational element can be sustained as the LCÖ network and churches grow will depend on the importance placed on it by senior church leaders, and the subsequent time allocated for it. I deem it essential for the type of church growth and development of leaders that LCÖ aspires to.<sup>253</sup>

### 2.3.3 Pioneering Churches

Church planting is integral to LCÖ's *raison d'être*. I have shown that the network was born out of pioneering experiences and these churches in turn seek to plant other new churches.<sup>254</sup> Richard Tiplady observes that Pentecostal churches generally hold to the primacy of the local church, and a theological emphasis on the 'empowering of the Holy Spirit' enabling all to be involved in mission. This results in church planting being a 'fundamental principle of Pentecostal mission strategy.'<sup>255</sup> Thus the impetus to pioneer does not only come from the church leaders, but from the members of LCÖ churches. For example, members of the church in Leoben moved and found new jobs in Vienna to help plant a new church there.<sup>256</sup> I have expressed concern that this level of commitment to pioneer work may be failing.<sup>257</sup> Nevertheless, Pavel Cerny's claim that mission is not just an activity of the church, but 'the very expression of the existence of the church' is a view that LCÖ churches still appear to hold.<sup>258</sup>

If church planting is the normal aspiration for local churches, it should influence the lives of individual members. As Murray notes, it 'has the capacity not only to increase the number of churches but also to be a catalyst for renewal.'<sup>259</sup> He is primarily speaking of planting out from state churches or long established

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<sup>253</sup> Supra 3.2.3.1.

<sup>254</sup> Supra 2.2.1 & 2.2.2.

<sup>255</sup> Richard Tiplady, *World of Difference: Global Mission at the Pick 'n' Mix Counter* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2003), pp. 91-92.

<sup>256</sup> Supra 2.2.2.

<sup>257</sup> Supra 2.2.3.

<sup>258</sup> Cerny, 'The Relationship', p.107; see also pp.104-109; cf. Roxburgh & Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, p. 13; Roxburgh and Romanuk appeal for leaders to create a context that is missional rather than pastoral.

<sup>259</sup> Stuart Murray, *Changing Mission: Learning from the Newer Churches* (London: CTBI, 2006), p. 29.

churches, but the principle holds that members cannot be involved in mission without being personally enriched in the process.

### 2.3.4 Transformation

LCÖ's pioneer drive has not been limited to church planting. Both leaders and members have initiated various projects with the intention to bring transformation in Austria; that is to influence the mainstream culture and not remain a church subculture.<sup>260</sup> According to the vision booklet, 'evangelism' is not just leading people to faith in Jesus, but that the nation should be influenced to the extent that the 'principles' of God's Kingdom become evident in every area of society.<sup>261</sup> I observe that an understanding that the Kingdom of God should permeate every aspect of society and an absence of dualistic thinking regarding church and secular work<sup>262</sup> has helped establish a foundation for this and encouraged transformative action. For example:

*Founding kindergartens and schools* – Christian teachers from various *Freikirche* came together for teachers' conferences in 2002 and 2003. Since then, private kindergartens and schools have been established in two LCÖ churches.<sup>263</sup> Together with other private schools, they have formed an association for Christian education which provides them with legal representation and enables the possibility of government funding.<sup>264</sup>

*Involvement in social-political issues* – LCÖ members and leaders have invested both time and finances in agencies helping those with unwanted pregnancies and to promote the sanctity of life for unborn children.<sup>265</sup> A drop-in centre for the homeless has been established to help from crisis situations to

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<sup>260</sup> Gaeta, *Vision für Österreich*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>261</sup> Gaeta, *Vision für Österreich*, p.11; thus achieving Hirsch's claim that 'new movements awaken the centrality of the core meanings of the gospel freed from the paraphernalia of inherited traditions and rituals.' Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, p. 56.

<sup>262</sup> Cf. Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2004), p.36; 'In secular/sacred dualism, ordinary work is actually denigrated, while church is elevated as more valuable.'

<sup>263</sup> 'Trinity', <<http://www.trinity.co.at/>> [accessed 15/06/2012]; 'ABC Schulinitiative', <[http://lifechurch.at/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=156&Itemid=414&lang=de](http://lifechurch.at/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=156&Itemid=414&lang=de)> [accessed 15/06/2012].

<sup>264</sup> 'Verband der Christlichen Bildungsinitiativen/ Schulen Österreichs', <<http://www.edu-gate.at/>> [accessed 15/06/2012].

<sup>265</sup> 'Österreichische Lebensbewegung', <<http://www.lebensbewegung.at/>> [accessed 18/05/2011]; 'Deine Alternative', <<http://www.deinealternative.at/>> [accessed 18/05/2011].



rehabilitation.<sup>266</sup> Political involvement ranges from some members having run for local election with different political parties (or have undergone training programmes with these parties) to organising letter writing groups.

*Music performance and production* – An emphasis on contemporary Christian worship in LCÖ church services has resulted in many worship songs being written by members and leaders to be sung throughout the network. Several LCÖ CD productions have become known on the German-speaking Christian market, and songs have been used in worship services outwith LCÖ churches.<sup>267</sup> Furthermore, the classical and mainstream music scene is also in focus, through CD productions, radio-play and concerts.<sup>268</sup>

*Business* – LCÖ leaders are very comfortable with crossing between secular business and ecclesiastical roles. Five of the nine senior leaders are also running their own businesses. Two others are also in secular employment. Therefore LCÖ members are also encouraged to excel as employees or employers, and entrepreneurship is promoted. Business and finance, as with all other areas of society, are understood to belong to the sphere of influence for God's Kingdom.

It is notable that all the above involvement and influence in Austrian society has taken place after the vision booklet was written in 1997, suggesting that the vision has either inspired such activities or at least given them permission to be pursued. Cerny writes that, 'The church realized it cannot exist "above" the world or "against" the world but it must exist for the world.'<sup>269</sup> I agree with this viewpoint, but add that the church primarily exists for God Himself, and then, as His body it exists for the good of the world He is seeking to love and reach. Thus the church is by nature *missional*: this is a philosophy of ministry based on a theological understanding that the church embodies God's mission in the world, that she has been sent into the world and she cannot assume or expect that people will come

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<sup>266</sup> 'Wendepunkt', <<http://www.wendepunkt-leoben.at/>> [accessed 18/05/2011].

<sup>267</sup> 'Helge Plonner', <<http://www.helgeplonner.at/>> [accessed 06/10/2011]; 'City Worship', <<http://www.cityworship.at/>> [accessed 06/10/2011].

<sup>268</sup> 'Da Guzi', <<http://www.daguzi.at/>> [accessed 06/10/2011]; 'Joel Singer', <<http://www.facebook.com/joelsingermusik>> [accessed 06/10/2011]; 'MEK MC', <<http://www.myspace.com/mekmc>> [accessed 06/10/2011]; 'Teresa Adler', <<http://www.teresa-adler.com/>> [accessed 06/10/2011]; 'Suono Vero', <<http://www.suonovero.at/>> [accessed 06/10/2011].

<sup>269</sup> Cerny, 'The Relationship', p.107; cf. pp. 104-109.

to her; thus a church is a missionary church in and to her own society.<sup>270</sup> Köstenberger's studies identify the similarities and differences between Jesus' and the disciples' missions. Although the first disciples were not to be 'of the world', they were categorically sent 'into the world.'<sup>271</sup> Referencing John 17:18 Köstenberger concludes that 'Retrospectively, Jesus has accomplished his mission (cf. 17:4). Prospectively, the disciples' mission is about to begin'.<sup>272</sup> The commonality found in 'just as', 'in the same way as' or 'in like manner'<sup>273</sup> is significant, and Köstenberger is in favour for understanding this 'sending' to apply to all believers and not just the original disciples.<sup>274</sup> Concerning John 17, William Barclay notes that,<sup>275</sup>

Christianity was never meant to withdraw people from life, but to equip them better for it. ...However much it may be true that Christians are not of the world, it remains true that it is within the world that their Christianity must be lived out. We must never desire to abandon the world, but always desire to win it.

Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk, exponents of a missional perspective, assert; 'Mission is therefore not a program or project some people in the church do from time to time ...the church's very nature is to be God's missionary people.'<sup>276</sup> Podobri attributes LCÖ's growth principally to how the network serves in a way which is relevant to society, which he says is seldom experienced in Austria.<sup>277</sup> I therefore summarise that LCÖ's transformational element has become as key as its pioneering of churches. This need not be a problem, if the vision is to *positively influence the nation of Austria on a spiritual and social level*.<sup>278</sup> Tension may however ensue, when transformational projects are considered to be to the detriment of local church growth. Decisions regarding finance and manpower are an example of this tension. A new transformational project will require funding and

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<sup>270</sup> For further definitions of 'missional' and 'missional church' see: Eddie Gibbs & Ian Coffey, *Church Next: Quantum Changes in Christian Ministry* (Nottingham: Inter-Varsity Press, 2001), pp. 55-58; Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, pp. 284-285; Leonard Sweet, *So Beautiful: Divine Design for Life and the Church* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2009), pp. 55-59.

<sup>271</sup> John 17:14-18 (NIV).

<sup>272</sup> Andreas J. Köstenberger, *The Missions of Jesus and the Disciples According to the Fourth Gospel: With Implications for the Fourth Gospel's Purpose and the Mission of the Contemporary Church* (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1998), p. 187.

<sup>273</sup> Köstenberger, *The Missions of Jesus*, p. 186.

<sup>274</sup> Köstenberger, *The Missions of Jesus*, pp. 188-189.

<sup>275</sup> William Barclay, *The Gospel of John*, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 2001), p. 215.

<sup>276</sup> Roxburgh & Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, p. xv.

<sup>277</sup> Podobri, *Transformation in Österreich*, p. 205.

<sup>278</sup> Supra 2.2.2.

people's time and energy from the sometimes limited resources of a local church; the same church which should be investing in a new church plant.

### **2.3.5 Indigenous Leaders**

A distinctive element of LCÖ is its predominantly indigenous leadership - eight of its nine senior leaders are Austrian nationals. This is in direct contrast to other Austrian *Freikirche* where the already few native leaders are in decline.<sup>279</sup> The leadership development strategies, which I will examine in the next section,<sup>280</sup> seem to have played a significant role in this accomplishment to date. Underlying these strategies, I have identified three crucial paradigms in LCÖ thinking.

#### **2.3.5.1 The Role of the Missionary**

Missionaries in Austria have often found themselves leading a church as the senior pastor. This role has been widely accepted and appreciated in Pentecostal and *Freikirchen* because not only is the missionary independently financially supported from abroad, but they also import expertise or experience gained elsewhere.<sup>281</sup> The problem however, is one of reproduction and building local churches which are self-sustaining. This is because when the missionary moves on or retires, the next leader cannot be supported by the local church, or if the church is still small, nationals are not able to finance themselves while fulfilling a church leadership role. There is a reliance on missionaries to do the work that indigenous leaders have not been sufficiently trained, or as Podobri notes are not willing, to do.<sup>282</sup>

LCÖ understands a missionary's role is to reproduce themselves; that is, to recognise and train nationals to lead their own churches and ministries. Foreign support and finance is welcomed to support the missionary or pioneer project or ministry. However, the goal remains for a church or a ministry and its leaders to

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<sup>279</sup> Frank Hinkelmann, 'Österreich', pp. 134-135. See also Martin Podobri, 'Wien ist anders – und Österreich auch! Ein ganzheitliches Missionsverständnis als Basis der Mission in Österreich', *Evangelikale Missiologie* 27.4 (2011), pp. 182-195 [193-194].

<sup>280</sup> Supra 2.4.

<sup>281</sup> Podobri, *Transformation in Österreich*, p. 166; Podobri argues that there are enough capable Austrians, but the number of Austrian pastors continues to fall.

<sup>282</sup> Podobri, 'Wien ist anders', p. 192.

become self-sufficient and subsequently reproduce themselves. To accomplish this, the missionary is required to act as a catalyst, involving nationals at an early stage of pioneering.

#### **2.3.5.2 Finance and funding**

The widely accepted missionary work mentioned above (in contrast to the LCÖ approach) is more cost effective, but could perpetuate the mentality and reliance on foreign support, rather than developing financial stability and independence.<sup>283</sup> Due to Austrian taxation and health insurance payments, the step for a national to go from voluntary to employed status in church ministry is considerably more expensive.<sup>284</sup> This does not mean that it should not be considered necessary. Most LCÖ leaders are not on a full salary from the church they lead.<sup>285</sup> This is disappointing in that the churches have not yet grown large enough to fully finance a leader (assuming that they would do so if they could). This in turn means that the leader cannot give as much time to the growth and development of the church as they might wish to, due to other work commitments. However, the situation does highlight the LCÖ leaders' pragmatic approach to finances. If the church cannot financially support them due to its size, then they choose to continue leading, while seeking to finance themselves. Some have planted a church by first gaining employment or establishing a business in the town they have moved to, and then begun to pioneer the church.

LCÖ churches are expected to pay into an 'Apostolic Fund' either annually or monthly. Additionally individuals may give their monthly support, and an annual offering is collected at 'Vision and Mission Day' events. This fund helps finance new church plants, and ministries which serve the network such as the youth department, as well as the apostolic work and its expenses being partially funded. I find this an important means of financing the network's ministry, because it

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<sup>283</sup> Podobri, *Transformation in Österreich*, pp. 169-175; Podobri provides a detailed critic of the free churches' failure to finance indigenous leaders and argues for a 'paradigm shift' to correct this.

<sup>284</sup> Sharon Mumper, 'Cents or Nonsense? The Argument for National Workers Versus Foreign Missionaries', *Lausanne World Pulse* (formerly *World Pulse Online*), (06/2004), <<http://www.lausanneworldpulse.com/worldpulse/531>> [accessed 04/04/2011]; Mumper illustrates that although it is more cost effective for a missions organisation to employ nationals in Eastern Europe, in Western Europe the opposite is the case due to health insurance and other overheads.

<sup>285</sup> Supra 2.3.4.

encourages and facilitates the network's ability, as well as the individual churches, to be self-financing.

### **2.3.5.3 Clergy and laity**

LCÖ does not have a division between clergy and laity; that is, there is no strong distinction between the value or jobs and ministries that church leaders and church members are allowed or encouraged to do. This may be connected to the lack of formal ordination in the network in contrast to other denominations.<sup>286</sup> I observe an advantage in that nationals can be encouraged to develop in their leadership ability and calling in a gradual manner. They can do so without fear of appearing presumptuous or ambitious for a title, or being overwhelmed by being confronted with a career decision to 'enter the ministry'.<sup>287</sup> Podobri agrees with the need for 'process', arguing for a 'change of paradigm' in *Freikirche* to enable Austrian leaders to be developed. This would require them to be led and accompanied in a discipleship process in order to become leaders.<sup>288</sup> The following illustrates how that unfolds in a LCÖ church: someone may assist leading a small Bible study or prayer group which meets in a home, before leading that or another group themselves. After a period of time, they may show an ability to preach and do so in the church service. They are later invited to serve on the leadership team of the church. During this time they become interested in planting a new church in the neighbouring town, and so the leadership journey continues. Even when someone is officially appointed to lead a church,<sup>289</sup> there has been no stage in their journey whereby they have stepped from laity to clergy, and I am therefore of the opinion that a clergy-laity divide does not exist within the LCÖ network. This does not necessarily result in a problem free development of leaders. Recognition from those other than senior leaders of the developing leader's status and role may be challenged. The point at which a local church or church plant should be

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<sup>286</sup> Supra 0.3.1.

<sup>287</sup> There is an additional advantage regarding how people may gain a positive perception of church, as opposed to the 'high degree of social stratification' which John Drane observes, with a 'strict demarcation' between laity and clergy. John Drane, *The McDonaldization of the Church: Spirituality, Creativity and the Future of the Church* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2000), p. 31.

<sup>288</sup> Podobri, 'Wien ist anders', p. 193.

<sup>289</sup> Supra 0.3.1.

responsible for financially supporting the newly developed leader in their task may also remain ambiguous.

## **2.4 Development of Leaders**

To date there have been two official training programmes for the development of leaders outside of local church settings in LCÖ: The '*Timotheus Projekt*' (1996-2003) and the 'Leadership Academy' (2007 - ).

### **2.4.1 Das Timotheus Projekt**

The *Timotheus Projekt* was an informal training programme whereby participants were individually chosen and invited to take part. It had a strong focus on character development and had a flexible and often spontaneous programme. It was initiated and led by the network's founder and leader. When it started, the churches and the network were still very young, so *Timotheus* was the only leadership training which took place. Participants would spend one day a month together for teaching, prayer and discussion. Additionally once a year they would take a retreat together for three days. The input was highly relational and focused on character development. There was no written curriculum, no arranged length of time that someone should attend the project (average attendance was four to five years), no fees and no graduation. It was considered a privilege to be invited to join and participants were expected to make every effort to do that which was required or leave. Over thirty Austrians took part with a maximum of fifteen in attendance at any one time. Some chose to opt out before they were considered ready to do so. The age of participants ranged from eighteen to thirty years of age.

The following are outcomes of the *Timotheus Projekt* that have affected the network's current leadership:

Four of the nine network churches are both led and co-led by those who did the *Timotheus Projekt*.

Four of the eight Apostolic Team members were also participants. These two points show a significant transfer of the founder's ideals and passion for church planting and LCÖ's vision. This cannot be attributed solely to *Timotheus*,

for the same people came to faith through his ministry, and the fatherly relationship resulting from that is also a strong contributing factor.

Others have gone on to be youth leaders, and serve their local churches. Conversely, some have chosen to no longer be members of LCO churches. I note that an intense discipleship experience is no guarantee of loyalty or longevity in service.

#### **2.4.2 Leadership Academy**

Due to the size to which the network and its churches had grown, it was decided that the *Timotheus Projekt* was no longer a viable means of training and equipping new and existing leaders. Churches were already training their own leaders for different ministries and it became impossible for G. Gaeta to maintain an overview of all potential trainees. In 2003 the project was closed and G. Gaeta together with the author, and the approval of the apostolic team, began to plan a different approach to training leaders as a network. After four years planning which included researching curriculums and approaches of other training programmes, the Leadership Academy was launched in 2007.<sup>290</sup> This training is different from the previous training in several ways:

Although some people are personally invited, it is open for all to apply. Senior leaders are also expected to encourage members to attend who they consider will benefit from the course which in turn will benefit the home church through the participant's increased leadership capacity.

Leadership Academy has a two year fixed programme (nineteen weekends and one week foreign trip) with set fees.

It has a defined curriculum based on three areas of development: Leadership Skills, Theology and Self Leadership. Guest speakers from outside of the network complement G. Gaeta and the author in teaching on their given field of expertise.

Participants' connection to their local church remains essential to their development. Character training, pastoral care and implementation of what has been taught are expected to take place where the leader is already involved to

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<sup>290</sup> <[http://www.leadership-academy.info/html\\_engl/home.html](http://www.leadership-academy.info/html_engl/home.html)> [accessed 25/05/2011].

some degree in ministry. Monthly feedback sessions with a leader in the participant's home church are expected to take place.

To date fifty-one people have completed or are currently participating in the Leadership Academy. An additional thirteen were unable to complete the two year course.<sup>291</sup>

Years of course begin	Participants	(Participants – 1 <sup>st</sup> year only)
2007/08	16	(6)
2008/09	5	
2009/10	15	(5)
2010/11	4	(0)
2011/12	11	(2)
	<b>51</b>	<b>(13)</b>

Almost all of those who have completed the course are involved in leadership in their home churches,<sup>292</sup> although at varying degrees of responsibility; some lead ministries in their churches or at least serve on ministry teams. Others are on church leadership teams or planting or leading a church. Feedback from the senior leaders of LCÖ churches is very positive.<sup>293</sup> They have noticed the advantage gained by their members doing the course, but if the Academy can help produce the number of pioneer leaders needed still remains to be seen. Four of the six ex-participants now leading and co-leading churches or church plants had also previously attended the *Timotheus Projekt*. I suggest that the Leadership Academy may be able to provide the know-how and preparation needed for pioneer work, but the desire to do so may still be the responsibility of the home church leadership.

### 2.4.3 Youth Leadership

The LCÖ network focuses man-power and financial resources into youth ministry. The purpose is not primarily to provide activities for its teenagers, but to train them

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<sup>291</sup> Reasons given: relocation (3), not enough new teaching (6), not what they expected (1), no reason given (3).

<sup>292</sup> That is 38 of the 40 people who have already completed the course.

<sup>293</sup> This was made known to me in conversations with the leaders concerned. I receive feedback at least twice a year from these leaders.



and inspire them to lead. There is regular training and opportunity for youth leaders to meet together. An 'Emerging Leaders' course for those in their late teens assists youth leaders in developing leaders from amongst their young people. The network's youth ministry is now collaborating with the FCGÖ to provide a new youth leadership training programme.<sup>294</sup> The church in Vienna is also developing an internship programme with the help of foreign participants. Sine observes that churches 'retaining the highest percentage of youth at the highest levels of participation are those placing teens and twenty-somethings [*sic*] in significant leadership roles and sincerely inviting their ideas and creativity.'<sup>295</sup> In the Austrian context Podobri records that the few churches that have been successful in it, have greatly profited from recruiting their youth into church ministries.<sup>296</sup> It is noticeable in LCÖ churches that young people are not only helping, but leading and carrying responsibility in the ministries of the churches, such as the worship band, media, audio and children's ministries, as well as in the youth groups.

## 2.5 Conclusions

In contrast to LCÖ's beginnings, it now receives some positive recognition from secular media sources.<sup>297</sup> For example, a national TV broadcaster, 'Puls 4', ran a series about faith in Austria, an episode of which included the City Church Wien.<sup>298</sup> Church services were filmed and members interviewed. While on location, one of the journalists requested prayer to give up a twenty-year nicotine addiction. She was subsequently able to give up smoking cigarettes and both the prayer and her account are documented on the programme. Furthermore, in the following studio

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<sup>294</sup> <<http://www.nexttraining.at>> [accessed 14/09/2011].

<sup>295</sup> Sine, *The New Conspirators*, p. 295.

<sup>296</sup> Podobri, 'Wien ist anders', p. 192.

<sup>297</sup> Hinkelmann, 'Österreich', p.134; Hinkelmann notes that all *Freikirche* are now experiencing an unprecedented level of media and public acceptance compared to earlier experiences of being labelled as sects. Supra 1.3.2.

<sup>298</sup> 'Österreich Undercover: Christentum' (television documentary), *Puls 4 TV* (14/03/2011), <<http://www.puls4.com/video/oesterreich-undercover/play/1119778>> [accessed 13/05/2011]; for section of documentary concerning City Church Wien: 'Österreich Undercover: Christentum' (television documentary - edited) *citychurch.at*, <<http://citychurch.at/movie/puls4-film/puls4-film.html>> [accessed 13/05/2011].

discussion regarding the documentation, both *Evangelisch* and RCC officials remarked on the positive influence of such churches.<sup>299</sup>

I have shown that LCÖ has been able to introduce a church planting model to Austria. The network's leadership claim that the network's name is associated with freshness, flexibility, creativity and a 'pioneer-spirit',<sup>300</sup> and Podobri's research claims that LCÖ is one of few growing church movements in the nation.<sup>301</sup> It is evident from this chapter that LCÖ's church planting model is essentially connected with its development of leaders. This entails not only training in leadership skills and know-how, but a transmission of vision and values; a philosophy of ministry which has a given DNA at its core to reproduce churches, ministries, and leaders with the same motivation.

I have noted the measure of success in training Austrian nationals. I am of the opinion that LCÖ will continue to train leaders, as it is integral to its philosophy of ministry. The current senior leaders need to see more leaders prepared from amongst their congregations, not only for the growth of these individual churches, but for the establishment of new churches in the nation. It is in my opinion however uncertain, if there will be the necessary number of Austrian leaders willing to pioneer, and leaders willing to take on senior leadership roles in the future, and thus a cause for concern.

I anticipate finding from my research that each church and senior leader will have their own approach to leadership development. That procedures for leadership development and selection are individual to each church is not unusual for an apostolic network,<sup>302</sup> but it is of interest to establish if these are by design or an unconscious default.

As the local churches have grown both numerically and in their ministries, they have become more independent in resourcing the leaders needed to do so. To what extent it will be the task of the local church and to what extent the task of

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<sup>299</sup> Erich Leitenberger, (press-secretary for Cardinal Schönborn) and Jürgen Öllinger (evangelischer Pfarrer).

<sup>300</sup> Plonner, 'Life Church', p. 1.

<sup>301</sup> Podobri, *Transformation in Österreich*, p. 205; 'Vision für Österreich gehört aktuell zu den wenigen wachsenden freikirchlichen Bewegungen in Österreich.'

<sup>302</sup> Cf. Stuart Mayho, 'The Role, Recognition and Release of Leadership in the New Testament and Their Relationship to Recruitment in the Church Today' (unpublished MTh. Dissertation, University of Wales, Bangor, 2006), appendix 5; email correspondence with Steve Blaber (International Apostolic Team, New Frontiers International) and with Gerald Coates (Team Leader, Pioneer).

the network to develop leaders in the future will need clarifying as the network expands. I suggest that the nature of this partnership between the churches and the network and the understanding of responsibility will be crucial as LCÖ matures as a network, and seeks to ensure that capable leaders are developed for the present and future.

## PART TWO

‘And David shepherded them with integrity of heart;  
with skilful hands he led them.’

*Psalm 78:72 (NIV)*

‘Go forward in personal attainments,  
forward in gifts and in grace, forward in fitness for the work,  
and forward in conformity to the image of Jesus.’<sup>303</sup>

*Charles Haddon Spurgeon*

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<sup>303</sup> Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Lectures to my Students*, (London: Marshall Pickering, 1989), p. 205.

### **3 CHAPTER THREE**

## **CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP DISTINCTIVES: LITERATURE REVIEW**

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### 3.1 Introduction

Having assessed the Austrian cultural context and gained an understanding of the LCÖ environment, part two now brings attention to the development of leaders. It is important to gain an understanding of the type and nature of leader who needs to be developed, before considering the appropriate means of developing and training such leaders. What is their role and how should they function? What should their philosophy of ministry be? Is there a blueprint to which training and development should be moving towards? In the same way that church has distinguishing qualities as well as similarities to other organisations,<sup>304</sup> I suggest that Christian leadership also has its unique distinctives. At its core is the combination of Christian spirituality with leadership competence. I further suggest that the nature of each will in turn influence the other. Alan Nelson states that 'spiritual leadership has a colour of its own; ...significantly different from the two individual elements.'<sup>305</sup> Thus a church leader is required to understand both spirituality and leadership, and minister out of the resulting synergy.

Two main areas of competence will be examined – vocational preparedness and spiritual formation. Vocational preparedness indicates possessing both the skills and knowledge required for the task and having the means to increase them. Spiritual formation encompasses sense of calling, character traits, beliefs and disciplines.

### 3.2 Vocational Preparedness

For the church leader, vocational preparedness should not only include a sufficient biblical knowledge and understanding, but an ability to discern and relate with the

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<sup>304</sup> Local church mission and vision statements generally include the following points: to build a community where God can be worshipped and proclaimed, spiritual growth of its members, numerical growth of its congregation, social action for the good of the local community, global action through missionary involvement. Cf. Brian D. McLaren, *The Church on the Other Side: Doing Ministry in the Postmodern Matrix* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), p. 28. McLaren's suggested mission for church: 'More Christians/ Better Christians/ Authentic missional community/ For the good of the world.'

<sup>305</sup> Alan E. Nelson, *Spirituality and Leadership: Harnessing the Wisdom, Guidance, and Power of the Soul* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 2002), p. 12.

community they are serving – what I will term culturally literate. Furthermore, I shall also consider what leadership skills are deemed essential for their task.

### **3.2.1 Theological Understanding**

It is widely acknowledged that a church leader must be capable of sufficient theological reflection to perform their tasks, such as preaching and teaching, disciplining and counselling, even vision-setting and planning. Roxburgh and Romanuk note that local churches need leaders who function as ‘local theologians’.<sup>306</sup> I will now explain why this expands on biblical knowledge and theological aptitude.

#### **3.2.1.1 Systemic Theology**

I am of the opinion that adequate theological understanding is not a matter of developing a static systematic theology. I do not mean that it is detrimental to a leader’s vocational preparedness, but simply inadequate for the task.<sup>307</sup> Rather the leader should find themselves in a continual process, using theological study and hermeneutical tools to engage with their given mission field. Sweet *et al.* use the phrase ‘systemic theology’ in contrast to ‘systematic’ theology. Whereas the latter breaks a situation down into individual components to find a solution, systemic theology requires focusing on the whole not the individual components: ‘systemic theology is characterised by “integrative thinking” or the ability to see complex organisms like the church as a whole and to make strategic decisions accordingly’.<sup>308</sup> Terry Veling explains that theological aptitude it is a ‘craft more than a method’.<sup>309</sup> He borrows an example from Martin Heidegger of an apprentice cabinetmaker who learns to respond to the grain of the wood, with its various

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<sup>306</sup> Roxburgh & Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, p. 170.

<sup>307</sup> Eddie Gibbs, *Leadership Next: Changing Leaders in a Changing Culture* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 2005), p. 81; Gibbs notes the problem of much ministry training which is ‘still based on the assumptions of modernity’, with its compartmentalisation of knowledge and the expectation of predictable outcomes from the methods being taught.

<sup>308</sup> Sweet, McLaren & Haselmayer, *A is for Abductive*, pp. 272-273; cf. 4.2.3, regarding Drane’s observations and argument for a ‘holistic model’ of theology and learning.

<sup>309</sup> Terry A. Veling, *Practical Theology: On Earth as It Is in Heaven* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2005), pp. 15-16.

forms and ‘hidden riches’.<sup>310</sup> This is to be seen in contrast to the ‘how to’ of modernist methodologies,<sup>311</sup> thus he proposes that the Christian minister should not only learn the ‘tools’ and methods of theology, but also ‘develop an essential “relatedness” to theology’ in order to be properly prepared for their task.<sup>312</sup>

Artists and scientists acknowledge that they will never fully represent their subjects, but provide models according to the knowledge they have. I suggest that theologians can attempt the same. The leader should understand their theological understanding be both exploratory (science) and creative (art). This will require a full immersion in the Scriptures and other texts which life and communities, both religious and secular, present.<sup>313</sup> This leads to the next point regarding practical theology.

### **3.2.1.2 Practical Theology**

I suggest that within the discipline of practical theology, aspects are found which provide the leader with an appropriate theological approach. Don Browning understands practical theology to be an all-encompassing discipline. He states that ‘viewing theology as a practical discipline through and through leads to discoveries that will benefit theology, the churches, and theological education.’<sup>314</sup>

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<sup>310</sup> Martin Heidegger, ‘What calls for thinking?’ in David Farrell Krell (ed.), *Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), pp. 341-367 [355-356]; ‘A cabinetmaker’s apprentice ... will serve as an example. His learning is not mere practice, to gain facility in use of the tools. Nor does he merely gather knowledge about the customary forms of the things he is to build. If he is to become a true cabinetmaker, he makes himself answer and respond above all to the different kinds of wood and the shapes slumbering within the wood - to wood as it enters into a man’s dwelling with all the hidden riches of its nature. In fact, this relatedness to wood is what maintains the whole craft. Without that relatedness, the craft will never be anything but empty busywork... Every handicraft, *all human dealings*, are constantly in that danger.’

<sup>311</sup> By *modernist methodologies*, I refer to the theological approaches born out of The Enlightenment which had ‘forced the Christians of the Western world to defend their understanding of theology and its position within the university.’ These include the attempt to treat theology scientifically in order for it to retain its academic value, and the compartmentalised approach of systematic theology; Pavel Cerny, ‘The Relationship’, p. 105.

<sup>312</sup> Veling, *Practical Theology*, p. 16.

<sup>313</sup> Sweet, McLaren & Haselmayer, *A is for Abductive*, p. 277.

<sup>314</sup> Don. S. Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), p. ix; Ballard concurs claiming that theology is essentially practical; Paul Ballard, ‘Can Theology be Practical?’, in David Willows and John Swinton (eds), *Spiritual Dimensions of Pastoral Care: Practical Theology in a Multidisciplinary Context* (London: Jessica Kingsley, 2000), pp. 27-35 [27]; Veling develops this further suggesting it would be ‘better to speak of “practicing theology” rather than “practical theology.”’ Veling, *Practical Theology*, p. 4. Cf. for a helpful definition, David Lyall, ‘So, What is Practical Theology?’, *Practical Theology* 2.2 (2009), pp. 157-159 [158-159]; ‘It is concerned with practice



Practical theology recognises a mission behind theology, that theological reflection is not an end in itself, nor something separate - the responsibility of academia or career theologians alone, or a disconnected duty of the Christian leader. Rather, according to Veling, it is 'practice', a way of life.<sup>315</sup> Referring to Friedrich Schleiermacher's viewpoint, Johannes van der Ven writes of this practice being a mindful action which goes beyond ecclesiastical issues and our comprehension of God to encompass both 'academia and the public in civil society at large', by constructing and spreading comparative knowledge on mindful action.<sup>316</sup>

Practical theology's prevailing characteristic is the interplay of primary sources or texts, often placing practice and experience before the conventional normative sources of Scripture and traditions. Thus theological understanding is gained by interpreting to varying degrees the following sources or primary texts:<sup>317</sup>

- Written texts of the Bible and Christian tradition
- Texts of the world
- Living human documents in community
- The 'text' which is 'God' ('the discernment of the work of God, the interpretation of the ways of God in the world')

Because of its engagement with a diversity of texts, practical theology has the capacity to pursue many directions or causes; there are possibilities for the leader beyond the boundaries provided by systematic theological approaches. For example, Browning claims the practice of 'practical wisdom' with or without the Christian tradition to be significant.<sup>318</sup> Drawing from other sources and disciplines

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and it is an academic discipline; it seeks to serve both the mission of the Church and the needs of the world; it touches that which is most personal and engages with that which is most public. Perhaps the truth of the matter is that practical theology cannot be defined too precisely—nor should we try to do so.'

<sup>315</sup> Veling, *Practical Theology*, p. 3.

<sup>316</sup> Johannes A. van der Ven, 'Towards a Comparative Empirical Theology of Mindful Action', in Chris A. M. Hermans & Mary E. Moore (eds.), *Hermeneutics and Empirical Research in Practical Theology: The Contribution of Empirical Theology by Johannes A. van der Ven* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), pp. 331-388 [382].

<sup>317</sup> Zöe Bennett, 'Theology and the Researching Professional: The Professional Doctorate in Practical Theology', *Theology* 112.869 (2009), pp. 333-343 [339].

<sup>318</sup> Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology*, p. 4; Browning further notes that practical wisdom is generally thought to be the action of individuals, but that he is interested in the practical wisdom of (religious) communities. Cf. p. 139. '...listen to the classic texts of other traditions as well, especially those non-Christian texts to which Christianity itself has listened'; by which he refers not only to the Hebrew Scriptures, but also to the Greek classics which influenced the society that Jesus lived in, as also the gospels and epistles.

as well as the biblical text and Christian tradition can reach beyond a desire for effective contextualisation and understanding, to a recognition that classical texts, social sciences, even circumstances, are not only of value but are as authoritative as Scripture in theological study. This characteristic raises the issue of the authority of Scripture, a significant theological tenet, particularly for the Protestant tradition. Anderson expresses concern, that when Scripture is appropriated to an actual situation, it can be done in such a way that the 'immediate occasion becomes the authoritative "text"'.<sup>319</sup> Richard Roberts claims that some theologians have long acknowledged that they must refer to other texts such as the social sciences to be effective,<sup>320</sup> but there remains none the less, a question of authority, if not loyalty, for the church leader when engaging with various texts, something which they must continually evaluate. It follows that this is not a methodology that everyone can so quickly adopt. Earl Creps writes of the personal dilemma he experienced in his desire as a theologian to draw from sources beyond the Christian sphere, but I agree with his conclusion, that in identifying himself as a practical theologian, these disciplines can be unified.<sup>321</sup> The tension however remains, when one text or source diametrically opposes the other. Paul Ballard and John Pritchard agree that these tensions cannot be avoided, warning that whole theories and practices can be adopted without any 'real theological critique': 'The insights, skills and purposes that are being made available from other caring professions also carry with them a baggage of often undeclared assumptions about human nature and human values.'<sup>322</sup> I share their opinion and suggested solution: the practical theologian should, through dialogue with other disciplines and critical appraisal of other 'texts', introduce (if not already present) a

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<sup>319</sup> Anderson, *The Shape*, p. 61; and thus the emphasis has shifted from revelation 'as determinative of truth in action, to action as determinative of truth in revelation.' E.g. Stephan Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1992), p. 11; 'We can no longer speak of culture and world events as areas to which theology is adapted and applied; culture and world events are the very sources of the theological enterprise, along with and equal to Scripture and tradition.'

<sup>320</sup> Richard H. Roberts, 'Theology and the Social Sciences', in David F. Ford (ed.), *The Modern Theologians: An Introduction to Christian Theology in the Twentieth Century* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1997), pp. 700-719 [701-702]; 'In "practical" or "pastoral theology" eclectic appropriations of insights and methodology often take place, and pragmatic syntheses are arranged which enhance instrumental insight into the ministerial task and the ongoing life of the church.'

<sup>321</sup> Earl Creps, 'I Am a Practical Theologian', *Enrichment Journal* (08/12/03), <[http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/extra/20030827\\_theologian.cfm](http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/extra/20030827_theologian.cfm)> [accessed 05/02/2010].

<sup>322</sup> Paul Ballard & John Pritchard, *Practical Theology in Action: Christian Thinking in the Service of Church and Society*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: SPCK, 2006), p. 36.

higher priority, thus developing a more holistic and God-centred praxis.<sup>323</sup> I therefore refer again to Anderson's definition of practical theology:<sup>324</sup>

...a dynamic process of reflective, critical inquiry into the praxis of the church in the world and God's purposes for humanity, carried out in the light of Christian Scripture and tradition, and in critical dialogue with other sources of knowledge.

I consider this to be best suited for leaders in a mission or church planting situation, as Anderson maintains the Christian faith as the basis for practical theology, with the intention of the church reflecting God's mission to the world in a way which is authentic and suited to any given environment. Many of the leaders in church planting networks have no formal theological training. They do however bring various experiences and knowledge from other sources such as commercial, management or caring professions into their church leadership roles. A practical theological approach makes it possible to value, acknowledge and allow the utilisation of understanding gained from these texts.<sup>325</sup>

I propose that through systemic and practical theology, the leader can be equipped with an approach to minister that is both theologically valid and relevant to any given culture or situation.

### 3.2.2 Cultural Literacy

Christian ministry does not take place in a vacuum; rather it is an interaction with the cultural environment in which it is situated and attempting to influence. I am therefore of the opinion that culture is not a supplementary issue but rather it is integral to ministry itself.<sup>326</sup> Culture can be summarised as the way people live and

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<sup>323</sup> Ballard & Pritchard, *Practical Theology*, pp. 35-36; '...to insist on the centrality of the less tangible but higher priority. The gospel seeks to engage the whole person in the service of the Kingdom of God in the setting of the whole of contemporary society.'

<sup>324</sup> Anderson, *The Shape*, p. 22; supra 0.2.

<sup>325</sup> Ballard & Pritchard, *Practical Theology*, p. 39; stress that it is the local pastor who is the 'true practical theologian; for practical theology finds its proper function precisely at that point where the people of God seek to discern the presence of God in the world and to live by faithful obedience.' See also Grenz & Franke, *Beyond foundationalism*, p. 16; claim that theology is to assist 'Christ's followers in their vocation to live as the people of God in the particular social-historical context in which they are situated',

<sup>326</sup> Ward, *Participation and Mediation*, p. 66.

define themselves in the world, a 'thick network of symbols, language, and behaviours that characterise and define a human community.'<sup>327</sup>

According to Tim Elmore there are three ways of dealing with culture: isolation, saturation or interpretation.<sup>328</sup> Fear or misunderstanding may cause a reaction of isolation, as would a leader's intolerance to the nature or norms of the culture, resulting in a lack of influence and an unheard message. Conversely, if the leader experiences saturation, it may render them incapable of initiating change, modelling a preferred way, and expressing their message.<sup>329</sup> I suggest that interpretation should be a leader's preferred approach, ultimately using 'what is cultural to say what is timeless.'<sup>330</sup> Thus, vocational preparedness will involve engaging the culture, exploring it and employing it to explain truth. However, this may not be as straightforward a task for the leader as initially thought. Heath White explains the leader's challenge; 'Cultures are to people what water is to fish, and thus it can be hard to get a grip on just how pervasive your own culture is in your life.'<sup>331</sup> The leader strains to examine their culture, but may be unaware of how much they are already fashioned by it to evaluate it objectively. Using the same allegory Ward agrees that there is no 'unambiguous and uncontaminated' place from which to view culture because it is the water in which the leader is also swimming.<sup>332</sup>

I use the term 'literacy' concerning competency in dealing with culture as it implies the ability to both read and write; the leader will need to both read the culture to understand the culture in which they are ministering, as well as write and

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<sup>327</sup> Anthony B. Robinson, *Transforming Congregational Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), p. 12.

<sup>328</sup> Tim Elmore, *Nurturing the Leader within Your Child* (Nelson Thomas Publishers, 2003), pp. 33-34; cf. Thomas K. Johnson, 'Christ and Culture', *Evangelical Review of Theology* 35.1 (2011), pp. 4-16 [4-6]; Johnson borrows the phrases 'Holy Withdrawal' and 'accommodation' to explain the first two ways, before developing the thought that Jesus has 'sent us into the world as hearers and bearers of the Word'; Miroslav Volf, 'When Gospel and Culture Intersect: Notes on the Nature of Christian Difference', *Evangelical Review of Theology* 22.3 (1998), pp.196-207; Volf highlights the 'liberal programme: accommodation', 'post-liberal programme: reversing the direction of conformation' and 'separatist programme: retreat from the world', before suggesting how a 'Christian difference' can be achieved.

<sup>329</sup> Cf. Pearcey, *Total Truth*, p.33; her critic of some Christian ministries, teachers, businessmen and families: 'While sincere in their faith, they have absorbed their views on just about everything else by osmosis from the surrounding culture.'

<sup>330</sup> Elmore, *Nurturing the Leader*, p. 29; cit. Reggie Joiner; Kent Schaffer, 'Relevance According to Reggie Joiner', *Church Relevance* (13/01/2007), <<http://churchrelevance.com/relevance-according-to-reggie-joiner/>> [accessed 05/12/2010].

<sup>331</sup> Heath White, *Postmodernism 101: A First Course for the Curious Christian* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006), p. 12.

<sup>332</sup> Ward, *Participation and Mediation*, p. 137.

form an effective and authentic church culture. I propose that this will aid in leading churches towards that which Miroslav Volf proposes, that 'churches should neither abandon nor dominate their cultural environments, but rather live differently *in them*'.<sup>333</sup>

### 3.2.2.1 Reading Culture

In the light of cultural literacy Hirsch speaks of an ecclesial future shock: 'We find ourselves lost in a perplexing global jungle where our well-used cultural and theological maps don't seem to work anymore.'<sup>334</sup> Church leaders are struggling for a means of understanding, 'reading' and finding their place in the current Western culture. Eddie Gibbs adds that church leaders are not the only ones who are 'overwhelmed by the flood of facts, theories, and opinions let loose in this information age'. The 'loss of place' they are experiencing due to rising pluralism and the predominant culture of relativism<sup>335</sup> is according to Hirsch, more than an intellectual challenge, but is leading to an 'intense spiritual, emotional, and existential crisis.'<sup>336</sup> Although Hirsch's language appears emotive, I agree that the situation is critical in both secular and ecclesiastical circles. Additionally, Western Christian leaders currently find themselves in a cultural setting where the modern, postmodern<sup>337</sup> and pseudo-modern<sup>338</sup> are to a lesser or greater degree influencing their own worldview and that of those they are ministering to; the extent of influence of each cultural paradigm also being dependent on the individual's age and life experience. It exceeds the intention of my research to attempt a full definition and evaluation of postmodernism, or to unravel to what extent it has replaced modernism, or as Alan Kirby and other cultural critics advocate, has been

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<sup>333</sup> Volf, 'When Gospel', pp. 203-204; Volf uses the phrase 'metaphorizing the culture': a 'Christian difference' whereby cultural elements are either used (sometimes differently), or transformed, or discarded (and sometimes replaced).

<sup>334</sup> Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, p. 16.

<sup>335</sup> Eddie Gibbs, 'Foreword', in Roxburgh & Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, pp. xi-xiv [xi].

<sup>336</sup> Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, p. 16.

<sup>337</sup> Stuart Murray, *Post-Christendom: Church and Mission in a Strange New World*, ch. 1 (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2004), <<http://www.anabaptistnetwork.com/endofchristendom>> [accessed 26/05/2009]; Murray defines 'postmodernism' as the philosophical stance and 'postmodernity' as the cultural shift.

<sup>338</sup> Alan Kirby, 'The Death of Postmodernism and Beyond', *Philosophy Now*, Issue 58 (2006), <[http://www.philosophynow.org/issues/58/The\\_Death\\_of\\_Postmodernism\\_And\\_Beyond](http://www.philosophynow.org/issues/58/The_Death_of_Postmodernism_And_Beyond)> [accessed 09/12/2010]. Cf. Kirby now describes pseudo-modernism as 'digimodernism'; Alan Kirby, 'What is Digimodernism?', *alanfikirby.com* (2009), <<http://www.alanfikirby.com/digimodernism.html>> [accessed 09/12/2010].

superseded by the 'digimodern'.<sup>339</sup> In my opinion, all three worldviews or philosophical stances maintain an influence to varying degrees. I consider it important to appreciate that a worldview shift has taken place which has a bearing on many aspects of life and culture.<sup>340</sup> For example, Murray explains that postmodernity represents a 'critique of modernism' and 'enhances the process of desecularisation: it endorses the resurgence of spirituality, reflects loss of confidence in rationalism and science and urges pursuit of authentic humanity.'<sup>341</sup> Donald Carson provides an in-depth critic of the adoption of postmodernism in some streams of the church, claiming that some cultural analysis is 'more emotive than accurate.'<sup>342</sup> I agree with his concerns regarding the extent to which postmodernism should be adopted, when it can, for example, remove the possibility of acknowledging objective truth and the self-disclosure of God.<sup>343</sup> I find Carson's tone too defensive of evangelical conservatism, but his critique confirms my opinion, that while reading the culture, the Christian leader should seek to be aware and determine to what extent they should adopt or use the prevailing cultural paradigms. I maintain that there is no returning to the 'modern' world after this cultural shift, and if postmodernity is also passing, 'the terms by which

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<sup>339</sup> Alan Kirby, *Digimodernism: How New Technologies Dismantle the Postmodern and Reconfigure Our Culture*, ch. 1 (New York: Continuum, 2009), <<http://www.alanfkirby.com/Introduction.pdf>> [accessed 09/12/2010]; 'Since its first appearance in the second half of the 1990s under the impetus of new technologies, digimodernism has decisively displaced postmodernism to establish itself as the twenty-first century's new cultural paradigm'; see also Kirby, 'The Death'; where he draws from contemporary cultural productions and our use of and relationship to technology to show the absence of postmodernity. Cf. Alan Kirby, 'Successor States to an Empire in Free Fall', *timeshighereducation.co.uk* (27/05/2010), <<http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=411731&c=2>> [accessed 09/12/2010], where Kirby cites other similar theories: Nicolas Bourriaud's 'altermodern', Gilles Lipovetsky's 'hypermodernity', Raoul Eshelman's 'performatism' and Robert Samuels' 'automodernity' claiming that 'the theories speak of paradigm shifts and new cultural dominants, and suggest that our world now runs in different patterns and according to another logic.'

<sup>340</sup> Heath White, *Postmodernism 101*, p. 158.

<sup>341</sup> Murray, *Post-Christendom*; see also Chris Alrock, *Preaching to Pluralists: How to Proclaim Christ in a Postmodern Age* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2004), pp. 9-10; Alrock summarises seven key elements which underlie their perceptions, understanding and values, of postmoderns: *Uninformed* about the basics of Christianity, *Interested* in spiritual matters, *Anti-institutional*, *Pluralistic* in belief (all truth is relative), *Pragmatic*, *Relational*, *Experiential*.

<sup>342</sup> Donald A. Carson, *Becoming Conversant with the Emerging Church: Understanding a Movement and its Implications* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), p. 81.

<sup>343</sup> Carson, *Becoming Conversant*, pp. 130-131 & 154; Carson admits that 'a grasp of objective reality is certainly murkier and more difficult than was frequently presupposed under modernism'. Cf. Newbigin, *The Gospel*, pp. 14-19; Newbigin's argumentation regarding the problem of modernist dualism such as 'knowledge/beliefs' and 'facts/values'.

authority, knowledge, selfhood, reality and time are conceived have been altered, suddenly and forever.<sup>344</sup>

In close association with the prevailing worldview of a culture are the generational differences within the culture. These are crucial for leaders to understand as generations differ in the leadership styles they wish to relate to and adopt.<sup>345</sup> For example, hierarchical and dualistic leadership models which were adopted by Baby Boomers and often only endured by Gen-Xers, are most definitely being rejected by Millennials.<sup>346</sup> Creps provides another example in the priority or value that Boomers (even Gen-Xers) place on information which can prohibit them from gaining insight and understanding from the younger generations (Millennials) and the emerging culture.<sup>347</sup> Elmore further highlights that 'the millennial generation and the postmodern world in which they live are not synonymous.'<sup>348</sup> The emerging youth generation may be seemingly optimistic and ambitious, whereas the postmodern culture may not share their optimism. If they will shape the culture, or vice-a-versa, remains to be seen, which exposes the caution necessary in defining recent generations. As a Gen-Xer, Tiplady explains, 'we desire input into our lives (stability, mentoring, fathering)', although paradoxically we are 'sceptical and cynical, finding it hard to trust others'.<sup>349</sup> This shows that it is possible to recognise trends and tendencies within generations, but these will not always be universal.

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<sup>344</sup> Kirby, 'The Death'; explains the state of being 'swallowed up by your activity. In place of the neurosis of modernism and the narcissism of postmodernism, pseudo-modernism *takes the world away*, by creating a new weightless nowhere of silent autism. You click, you punch the keys, you are 'involved', engulfed, deciding. You are the text, there is no-one else, no 'author'; there is nowhere else, no other time or place. You are free: you are the text: the text is superseded.'

<sup>345</sup> Exact dates from the end of Gen-X onwards vary by 1 – 4 years according to opinion, but I have adopted the following timeline for those generations of current employment age: Builders <1945/1946> Boomers <1964/1965> Gen-X <1981/1982> Millennials <2000/2001> Gen-Z; Cf. for dates and generational characteristics: Elmore, *Nurturing the Leader*, p. 17; Earl Creps, *Reverse Mentoring: How Young Leaders Can Transform the Church and Why We Should Let Them* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), p.14; Staff writers, 'The Six Living Generations in America', *MarketingTeacher.com* (2008), <<http://www.marketingteacher.com/lesson-store/lesson-six-living-generations.html>> [accessed 05/12/2010].

<sup>346</sup> Cf. Elmore, *Nurturing the Leader*, pp. 17-21.

<sup>347</sup> Creps, *Reverse Mentoring*, pp. 71 & 129.

<sup>348</sup> Elmore, *Nurturing the Leader*, p. 26.

<sup>349</sup> Richard Tiplady, 'Report of the Holy Island Roundtable', *tiplady.org.uk* (03/04/2001), p. 2, <<http://www.tiplady.org.uk/pdfs/HolyIslandRoundtableReport.pdf>> [accessed 11/12/2008].

### 3.2.2.2 Writing Culture

Not only should the leader see their work as cross-cultural, but they should also be aware that their church's faith and beliefs will have a cultural expression (whether it is a church plant or established church). These may need to be evaluated and formed or re-formed, namely: written or re-written. Referring to Charles Kraft's studies in missiology, Ward suggests that our own understanding of faith is 'itself largely culturally conditioned', and goes so far as to claim that culture is also 'the substance from which all ecclesial life is constructed.'<sup>350</sup> The church leader is therefore called upon to be a 'cultural architect',<sup>351</sup> not only to adopt or use a given culture in order to make contact and communicate, but 'also seek to adapt and transform' that same culture.<sup>352</sup> Thus the disciplines of theology and anthropology need to work together for the task. The leader requires 'a deep appreciation and respect for their cultural world' so that 'a relevant expression of faith and church might emerge.'<sup>353</sup>

In the same way that a computer operating system needs an interface, Sweet encourages Christians to develop the appropriate cultural interfaces for their cultural systems in which they live and serve. He explains how the 'Gutenberg culture' resulted in the centrality of the book and the cultural interface of print technology. In the same way, the interface for a digital and global orientated 'Google culture' is the screen.<sup>354</sup> Even when proposing his own 'EPIC' interface, Sweet concedes that this will with time need to be replaced as it will lose its relevancy.<sup>355</sup>

In the process of reading and writing culture, leaders will unavoidably be confronted with tensions concerning the acceptability of methods, values, norms and beliefs of the culture they are connecting with. They will be forced to discern what can be adopted into their culture and what can be used to interpret faith to

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<sup>350</sup> Ward, *Participation and Mediation*, pp. 11 & 137; ref. C.H. Kraft, *Christianity in Culture* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1979).

<sup>351</sup> The author first heard the phrase 'cultural architect' in the context of church leadership in a lecture given by Gary Clarke (although not original to him).  
<<http://hillsongcollected.com/contributor/gary-clarke>> [accessed 15/10/2011].

Cf. Nelson, *Spirituality and Leadership*, p. 13; 'social artist' and 'culture sculptor'.

<sup>352</sup> Ward, *Participation and Mediation*, p. 137.

<sup>353</sup> Ward, *Participation and Mediation*, p. 12.

<sup>354</sup> Sweet, *So Beautiful*, pp. 35-36.

<sup>355</sup> Sweet, *So Beautiful*, p. 36; 'EPIC' is an abbreviation for Experiential, Participatory, Image-Rich, Connectional.



the culture they are reaching. This tension is seen in Ward's acknowledgement of consumerism in Western culture and how that should interplay with church culture.<sup>356</sup> For example he describes a context where 'worshippers are free to shop' and is concerned with the 'priorities of the worship consumer'.<sup>357</sup> Hirsch while praising Ward's concept of 'Liquid Church', is concerned that consumerism is such a strong force, that it is already adversely affecting and undermining the church.<sup>358</sup> He is not alone in his assessment of consumerism. Recent research suggests that successful products have much in common with religion, in areas of branding, advertising and evoked feelings.<sup>359</sup> Noting the global obsession with celebrity and the smaller-scale 'cult of the individual', Sweet further highlights the challenge to 'incarnate the gospel in a celebrity culture ruled by cultic narcissism'.<sup>360</sup> Hirsch also warns that it is not possible to 'consume our way into discipleship', a discipleship where death to self is required.<sup>361</sup> I lean towards this view. My concern with Ward's terminology and approach is that it leads towards celebrity and possible exclusivity of guru-like teachers and leaders. This in turn adds to the clergy-laity divide, only in a different form to the traditional form which he seems to be seeking to correct. I agree that the 'heavy church' of which he speaks will become obsolete if it does not adapt to the reality of a consumer society, but question whether leaders should in turn encourage such 'shopping around' or spiritual consumerism.

I conclude that leaders will inevitably develop different ways of interpreting the current Western culture, in order to write their church culture.<sup>362</sup> Various pitfalls must be identified, so as to keep the gospel message distinct, but the challenge must be accepted to avoid cultural illiteracy.

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<sup>356</sup> Ward, *Participation and Mediation*, particularly ch. 9, pp.150-167.

<sup>357</sup> Peter Ward, *Liquid Church* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2002), p. 90.

<sup>358</sup> Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, pp.111-112.

<sup>359</sup> Martin U. Müller & Thomas Tuma, 'Weltreligion Shoppen', *Der Spiegel* 50 (2010), pp. 56-63; Research has suggested that successful products stimulate the same areas of the brain where religious feelings are aroused. Furthermore, marketing experts have been comparing the key features of world religions with successful brands: symbols secrets, vision, collective stories, opponents and membership.

<sup>360</sup> Sweet, *So Beautiful*, p. 52; 'Youniverse'.

<sup>361</sup> Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, pp. 110 & 112.

<sup>362</sup> Cf. Volf, 'When Gospel and Culture', p. 204; 'There is no single correct way to relate to a given culture as a whole, ...there are only numerous ways of accepting, transforming, or replacing various aspects of a given culture from within.'

### 3.2.3 Leadership Skills

There is a plethora of literature available in Western Europe and North America of both secular and overtly Christian persuasions concerning leadership qualities and skills.<sup>363</sup> It is beyond the scope of this research to analyse all the different priorities and opinions, rather I will focus on skills that I deem to have a particular bearing on the leadership required for planting and developing young churches in Austria.

#### 3.2.3.1 Relational

Leadership can be observed to be influence, in that followers not only hear the given vision, advice or direction, but understand and react accordingly. As Newbigin notes, 'the only effective hermeneutic of the gospel is the life of the congregation which believes it'.<sup>364</sup> Roxburgh and Romanuk concur that 'God's missionary people' should be 'living as a demonstration of what God plans to do'.<sup>365</sup> This adds, in my opinion, significant responsibility to the leader's task and raises the question of how a church leader should influence their congregation. John Maxwell draws attention to the relational aspect of leading, 'Leadership is the capacity to care, and in caring, to liberate the ideas, energy and capacities of others'.<sup>366</sup> Nelson develops this further in that for the benefit of an organisation, 'individuals who unleash the synergy among people are called leaders'.<sup>367</sup> John Drane prefers the phrase 'strong partner', rather than 'strong leader' to describe future pastors who will have a 'strong and positive self-image, enabling them to work as partners with God's people'.<sup>368</sup> He emphasises that tomorrow's pastors will need to be relational and not hierarchical; 'In methods of working, tomorrow's

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<sup>363</sup> Overtly Christian writers include 'popular' authors such as Bill Hybels and John Ortberg, through to more scholarly works by Eddie Gibbs, Alan J. Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk. Secular writers include John P. Kotter and Robert E. Quinn. John C. Maxwell and Brian D. Molitor are authors who publish with both audiences in mind. Cf. Bibliography.

<sup>364</sup> Newbigin, *The Gospel*, p.234; cf. Gibbs & Coffey, *Church Next*, p. 209; Gibbs and Coffey develop this view of the church: 'the history of Jesus, the living Christ, continues in our own history as a living Christology.' They refer to Paul's mention of the Corinthian believers as 'letters of Christ, written by the Spirit of the living God.' (Paraphrased); 2 Cor. 3:3.

<sup>365</sup> Roxburgh & Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, p. xv.

<sup>366</sup> John C. Maxwell, *Leadership Gold* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2008), p. xi.

<sup>367</sup> Nelson, *Spirituality and Leadership*, p. 12.

<sup>368</sup> John Drane, *Cultural Change and Biblical Faith: The Future of the Church, Biblical and Missiological Essays for the New Century* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2000), p. 123.

pastors will not be lone individuals.<sup>369</sup> I consider this to be a necessary rebalance to the C.E.O. style model adopted from the business community and propagated in leadership circles during the 1980s and 1990s. Not only can the unhealthy dependency on a few spiritual heroes or one-size-fits-all church models be avoided, but I agree that the 'partner' approach releases more church members to minister. I do not however see the need to remove the word 'leader', rather strong leaders who *partner* with those they are leading.

Creps' comparisons between what he calls the 'churchy and unchurchy followership styles' are helpful. The former has been based on the 'ability of this lone entrepreneur (the leader) to sway a large group of people with the quality of his/her strategy and the force of his/her personality' which is regarded as 'the very definition of leadership.' This 'celebrity model' he argues, is perceived as being about control and ego more than servant-hood by the 'unchurchy' followers.<sup>370</sup> John Stott also speaks out against leaders being 'lionized as celebrities.'<sup>371</sup> I share Creps' view, but as Stott's opinion suggests, I propose that the 'churchy' followers have changed, and now also find this high-profile and overbearing leadership style undesirable. The emerging followership is 'more likely to be receptive to the "small personality" leader who ...brings people together in a faith community.'<sup>372</sup> Speaking of 'Cultural Creatives' (the postmodern upwardly mobile young adults who are increasingly shaping western cultural and economic norms), Creps notes that in the old economy, everybody knew the rules - who's leading, how to behave and make decisions - whereas Cultural Creatives neither know these rules nor live by them.<sup>373</sup> Thus we are experiencing an increase in what Elmore describes as the Poet-Gardener leader,<sup>374</sup> who is secure, relational and a listener. They do not claim to have all the answers, but rather draw from the ideas of others. Connection and others' development is consequently of high importance. Such leaders read the nuances of a given culture well and are comfortable with apparent contradictions and ambiguity. I agree with Gibbs who states that 'leadership is

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<sup>369</sup> Drane, *Cultural Change*, pp. 122 & 124.

<sup>370</sup> Earl Creps, 'Leadership, Followership and Mission', *earlcreps.com* (10/11/2007), <<http://www.earlcreps.com/article/leadership-followership-and-mission>> [accessed 16/01/2009].

<sup>371</sup> Stott, *Calling Christian Leaders*, p. 106.

<sup>372</sup> Creps, 'Leadership, Followership and Mission'.

<sup>373</sup> Earl Creps, 'Ministry to Cultural Creatives' (audio), *earlcreps.com* (17/11/2007), <[http://earlcreps.libsyn.com/index.php?post\\_id=278911#](http://earlcreps.libsyn.com/index.php?post_id=278911#)> [accessed 22/01/2009].

<sup>374</sup> Elmore, *Nurturing the Leader*, p. 84; cf. Roxburgh & Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, p. 27; a leader is a 'cultivator of an environment', discerning 'God's activities among the congregation'.

about connecting, not controlling ...bringing people together for the purpose of creative synergy.<sup>375</sup>

I see two possible dangers to be avoided when developing this relational approach. Firstly, it is no guarantee against false motives; leaders can simply learn to interact with people and teams more relationally, but it remains only a means to an end. Secondly, if the leader serving as a partner is not correctly understood, there is risk of leaders being (unwillingly) emasculated of some necessary elements of authority. Brian Molitor goes some way to solving these issues by stating that 'leadership begins and ends in the heart. No techniques can motivate followers when they know their leaders don't care about them. Conversely, there is no end to what followers will attempt for leaders who have shown that they truly care.'<sup>376</sup> I therefore propose that a leader will not only need to develop in their relational skills, but these will need to be matched by a development in character so that they can use them with integrity.<sup>377</sup>

### **3.2.3.2 Reproduce**

It has been noted that being a leader is exercising influence, and that a good leader will do so relationally. I will now pursue this further by stating that such leaders will also ensure the reproduction of themselves. Leighton Ford writes that leadership should belong to 'those who are able to divest themselves of their power and invest it in their followers in such a way that others are empowered.'<sup>378</sup> They will ultimately see themselves reproduced in others as they require everyone to participate in leadership and followership as well.<sup>379</sup>

Kotter explains that: 'Just as we need more people to provide leadership, we also need more people to develop cultures that will create that leadership.

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<sup>375</sup> Gibbs, *Leadership Next*, p. 93. See also Max De Pree, *Leadership Jazz* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1992), pp. 8-9; De Pree has a similar approach to leadership using an illustration of a jazz band, where everyone performs as individuals and as a group, where the leader depends on the band members and vice-a-versa. '...for jazz, like leadership, combines the unpredictability of the future with the gifts of individuals.'

<sup>376</sup> Brian D. Molitor, *The Power of Agreement* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), p. 181.

<sup>377</sup> Supra 3.3.2.

<sup>378</sup> Leighton Ford, *Transforming Leadership: Jesus' Way of Creating Vision, Shaping Values and Empowering Change* (Downer Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 1991), p. 16.

<sup>379</sup> Warren Bennis & Joan Goldsmith, *Learning to Lead: A Workbook on Becoming a Leader*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Cambridge: Basic Books, 2003), p. 6.

Institutionalizing a leadership-centred culture is the ultimate act of leadership.<sup>380</sup> While agreeing with Kotter, that creating leaders must be intrinsic to the organisation's culture, I question whether it is the ultimate act of leadership. I would advocate for a mission-centred culture before a leadership-centred one, in which leadership is the means by which the mission is focused on and moved towards. I consider it vital that leaders reproduce themselves, but in so doing, care must be taken to avoid a two tier value system, particularly in a church context. To this end, Hybels speaks of the need to develop a congregation of 'self-feeders', not solely dependent on one weekly church service for their growth.<sup>381</sup> They should also not be solely dependent on their leaders. Nevertheless, Nelson notes that: 'Leaders who fail to raise up other leaders stunt the growth of an organisation, as well as risk their own health due to stress.'<sup>382</sup> Roxburgh and Romanuk advise: 'A congregation must become a place where members learn to function like cross-cultural missionaries rather than be a gathering place where people receive religious goods and services'<sup>383</sup> I summarise by noting that both secular and ecclesiastical scholars agree on this distinctive, and I therefore maintain that the priority for the leader is not to meet all the needs of the church members, but rather reproduce themselves in some of those members to accomplish the work of the ministry. I will develop this distinctive of leadership reproduction further in chapter four.<sup>384</sup>

### **3.2.3.3 Leading and Managing**

There has been a tendency to diminish the value of management in the exaltation of leadership. W. Bennis and Joan Goldsmith state that a new generation of leaders - not managers – is required; 'Leaders conquer the context – the turbulent, ambiguous surroundings that sometimes seem to conspire against us and will surely suffocate us if we let them – while managers surrender to it.'<sup>385</sup> I agree that more leaders are needed, but note that their choice of words belittles the need and

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<sup>380</sup> John P. Kotter, 'What Leaders Really Do', in Joan V. Gallos (ed.), *Business Leadership*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), pp. 5-15 [15].

<sup>381</sup> Bill Hybels & Greg Hawkins, 'Leadership Summit 07' (media clip), *revealnow.com* (2007), <[http://www.revealnow.com/video/Reveal\\_Long\\_Form-1.mov](http://www.revealnow.com/video/Reveal_Long_Form-1.mov)> [accessed 22/01/2009].

<sup>382</sup> Nelson, *Spirituality and Leadership*, p. 133.

<sup>383</sup> Roxburgh & Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, p. 13.

<sup>384</sup> Supra 4.3.

<sup>385</sup> Bennis & Goldsmith, *Learning to Lead*, p. 6.

role of management. My view is similar to Kotter's who states that both managerial and leadership processes and approaches are needed for an organisation to prosper.<sup>386</sup> I have noted that management is not to be confused with leadership; both have their own skill set and necessary biases.<sup>387</sup> However, in a smaller operation such as LCÖ, leaders will not have the benefit of focusing solely on leadership as opposed to management. A low budget and volunteer co-workers will require them to have a certain proficiency in management in a small church or church plant situation. Furthermore, their volunteers are often initially unskilled and untrained as they take on responsibility to run ministries such as a children's programme or lead a church service or small group.

### **3.2.3.4 Change**

I suggest that change is an issue for church leaders on two fronts. Firstly they need to be able to capitalise on and adapt to changes in society. Secondly they have the task of initiating and successfully producing change in the community of believers they are serving.

Gibbs and Ian Coffey's insights are helpful in describing the nature of change from without; current western culture now has discontinuous and unpredictable change where the 'Newtonian world' of linear thinking and straightforward cause-and-effect relationships is being replaced by a 'quantum world'.<sup>388</sup> This is one of 'unanticipated consequences and previously unidentified potential and resources'.<sup>389</sup> They therefore claim that, 'In a culture of discontinuous change, long-range planning is no longer an appropriate management strategy. It is replaced by a plan-do, rapid-response mode of operation.'<sup>390</sup> Roxburgh and Romanuk concur that working harder will not meet the challenge; rather the unpredictable environment requires new skills.<sup>391</sup> I therefore agree with Robert

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<sup>386</sup> Kotter, *A Force for Change*, p. 7; see also Kotter, *Leading Change*, p. 175; 'The twenty-first century employee will need to know more about both leadership and management than did his or her twentieth-century counterpart.'

<sup>387</sup> Supra 0.3.1.

<sup>388</sup> Gibbs & Coffey, *Church Next*, p. 83; cf. Roxburgh & Fred Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, p. 7; 'Continuous change develops out of what has gone before and therefore can be expected, anticipated, and managed. ...Discontinuous change is disruptive and unanticipated; it creates situations that challenge our assumptions'.

<sup>389</sup> Gibbs & Coffey, *Church Next*, p. 106

<sup>390</sup> Gibbs & Coffey, *Church Next*, p. 83; see also p.36.

<sup>391</sup> Roxburgh & Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, pp. 7 & 9.

Quinn, that leaders will need to build the bridges as they walk on them;<sup>392</sup> which means that being prepared requires them to know how to position and resource themselves according to the moment, rather than acquiring a particular set of skills and knowledge of strategic planning.<sup>393</sup> A key point that Quinn, Gibbs and Coffey are making is that the leader develops an approach which avoids planning for a future that cannot be predicted; rather they develop practices that can adapt to and capitalise on change. I suggest that this does not imply a complete absence of planning or not giving any thought to the future, but rather admitting the limitations of planning, and living with, and being able to optimise the dynamic of discontinuous change.

This approach or stance is also applicable concerning change from within; as the leader seeks to bring change in the church they are planting or growing. Linda Holbeche's categorisations identify four main types of organisational change: Transactional change is concerned with ongoing modifications and the day-to-day management and improvement of an existing organisation. Variance or incremental change refers to a gradual, but significant change. Radical change describes the pivotal moments such as a crisis point, start up phase, growth curve, or when new leadership or culture are introduced. Transformational is the change required for survival, that which challenges the basic assumptions underpinning the organisation to 'regain strategic alignment with its environment'.<sup>394</sup> The execution of these different changes depends greatly on a range of factors including the organisation's environment, age, history, structure and leadership and therefore it is not so easy to define a clear process, (nor is it the work of this paper to do so).<sup>395</sup> It is however important to note the significance of the leader's role and how they involve and release their team and others concerned in the process. Quinn stresses the importance of the leader internalizing the

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<sup>392</sup> Robert E. Quinn, *Deep Change: Discovering the Leader Within* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996), pp. 83-84; cf. Robert E. Quinn, *Building the Bridge as You Walk On It: A Guide For Leading Change* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004); where Quinn further develops his bridge illustration.

<sup>393</sup> Cf. Gibbs & Coffey, *Church Next*, p. 40; the 'need to replace strategic planning with strategic actions'.

<sup>394</sup> Linda Holbeche, *Understanding Change: Theory, Implementation and Success* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2006), pp. 5-6.

<sup>395</sup> Cf. Holbeche, *Understanding Change*, p.167; 'The nature and amount of change to be achieved will depend on a range of factors, one of which will be the organization's stage in its life cycle. The nature of change required at each of the different stages – emergence, growth, maturity, decline, decay – will vary'.

transformational paradigm, that is, they should go through the change process themselves causing them to become independent of an organisation, expressing self determined and self authorizing behaviour resulting in them being attached to an organisation by choice not fear (*i.e.* their source of income, *etc.*).<sup>396</sup> He maintains that others are then motivated to join themselves and their resources to the leader and the transformational process because of the leader's courage and motivation.<sup>397</sup> Michael Poutiatine agrees, noting that transformational change is a holistic change on every level of the leader's life.<sup>398</sup> I share both Quinn and Poutiatine's opinions, for when a leader embodies the process they generate a positive reaction in those following, as well as preparing themselves to lead through the change. From a Christian understanding of the issue, the leader will be in a constant process of internal change,<sup>399</sup> although there may be periods when the intensity of that process is more acute, and therefore noticeable, than others.

Additionally, the leader must have a strategy to empower those in the organisation in the change process. Too much time spent supervising instead of leading can slow things down, so Lawrence Miller describes a 'synergist' leader who will be able to balance creativity with necessary order.<sup>400</sup> I suggest a mix of 'mechanical' and 'organic' approaches to empowerment as categorised by Quinn would be optimal.<sup>401</sup> Whereas the mechanical model is easier to control with clear delegation and accountability, organic empowerment requires risk, trust and teamwork at all levels. Rather than conflict, I suggest a helpful dynamic may be possible as the mechanical begins at the top developing clear vision and plans before moving decisions down to the appropriate levels, and the organic begins with the needs of the people at ground level and encourages initiative taking.

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<sup>396</sup> Quinn, *Deep Change*, pp. 128-129.

<sup>397</sup> Quinn, *Deep Change*, pp. 84-85.

<sup>398</sup> Michael I. Poutiatine, 'What is Transformation?: Nine Principles Toward an Understanding of the Transformational Process for Transformational Leadership' *Journal of Transformative Education* 7.3 (2009), pp. 189-208 [191-192 & 204].

<sup>399</sup> Supra 3.3 & 3.3.2

<sup>400</sup> Lawrence M. Miller *Barbarians to Bureaucrats: Corporate Life Cycle Strategies* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989), pp. 165 -190 [177].

<sup>401</sup> Quinn, *Deep Change*, p. 223; Mechanical Empowerment: start at top – develop clear vision, plans & assignments – move decisions to the appropriate levels – provide necessary information & resources – encourage improvement. Organic Empowerment: start with needs of people – expose the difficult issues – model integrity through risk taking – build credibility through small wins – encourage initiative – build teamwork.



### 3.3 *Spiritual Formation*

Having focused on the vocational preparedness concerning knowledge which can be learnt or abilities which can be trained and improved, I will now look at the interior life of the leader. Creps proposes that it is the work of the Holy Spirit, not methods or strategies, to rearrange one's 'inner being'.<sup>402</sup> Hybels writes that the leader's toughest leadership challenge is oneself,<sup>403</sup> and Creps further insists that the ministry needs personal transformation more than academic degrees!<sup>404</sup> Hence, who the leader is becomes of primary importance to what they can do: 'Leaders who are spiritual can't separate their souls from leading.'<sup>405</sup> I suggest that the church leader may well draw on some management skills (from themselves or from others), but their cause is more of a heart and life encompassing issue - a 'mission'. Thus there is a strong argument for the process of spiritual formation, which Reggie McNeal terms as 'heart-shaping'.<sup>406</sup> This process may be understood in three general areas of calling, character and Christ-centeredness, and I propose to examine them in that order. Frost and Hirsch note that the source of greatness in leaders such as the apostle Paul was not only gifting, but calling and personal integrity.<sup>407</sup> Furthermore, leadership selection in the New Testament would seem to be based on these qualities.<sup>408</sup> It is my opinion that although leadership skills and other aspects of vocational preparedness may initially appear more expedient, the biblical narrative's primary emphasis is spiritual formation.

#### 3.3.1 **Calling**

A Christian leader's ministry may be assumed to start with a call.<sup>409</sup> 'A calling is a holy attraction, an involuntary tugging, an unshakable sense that you

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<sup>402</sup> Earl Creps, *Off-road Disciplines: Spiritual Adventures of Missional Leaders* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), p. xiv. Cf. Eph. 3:16 (NIV); 'I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being.'

<sup>403</sup> Hybels, *Courageous Leadership*, p. 182.

<sup>404</sup> Earl Creps, 'Incarnational Ministry: 2007 DMin Project Symposium Response' (audio file), *Earl Creps' Podcast* (30/05/07), <<http://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/earl-creps-podcast/id254819170>> [accessed 03/02/2010].

<sup>405</sup> Nelson, *Spirituality and Leadership*, p. 17.

<sup>406</sup> Reggie McNeal, *A Work of Heart: Understanding How God Shapes Spiritual Leaders* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), p. xi.

<sup>407</sup> Hirsch & Frost, *The Shaping*, p. 167; see also Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, p. 118.

<sup>408</sup> Supra 0.4.1.

<sup>409</sup> Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, p. 44.

can't do anything else,'<sup>410</sup> claims Mike Yaconelli. John Ortberg concurs that a calling is very different to pursuing fulfilment: 'a calling, though we glamorize it, is not glamorous. It is a response to a summons. It is a kind of surrender.'<sup>411</sup> Although he emphasises that a leader has a conscious acknowledgement of having received a calling, Clinton maintains that the ministry journey begins from birth; an individual's upbringing and circumstances being key to their leadership potential, before the person has realised their role. The call will however at some point be necessary to see the journey through.<sup>412</sup> In this regard, I consider a sense of calling to be essential to a leader's development, and my understanding is similar to Ortberg and Yaconelli's in that calling is not a preferred future or simply about a leader discovering their gifting, but an unavoidable 'summons'. Sweet takes this further, insisting that leaders are not born or made, but 'summoned', and that hearing their call may even be due to circumstances and not a direct divine revelation.<sup>413</sup> Kotter, in light of his secular research, has rejected the notion that leadership is a 'divine gift of birth' granted to a small number of people.<sup>414</sup> Kotter is focused on the ability or skills aspect of leading, in which case I agree with him, that one is not born a leader. I argue however, that one can be called to be a leader, maybe even from birth. (A person may also realise that they are called to lead at a young age.) I find Sweet's reasoning helpful in this regard, that following the summons or calling, the leader can be formed and developed, whether they are deemed to have innate leadership qualities or not. Furthermore, depending on one's understanding of the sovereignty of God, the leader's preparation may have begun before they realised and responded to their call as Clinton claims.

If circumstances are involved in a call, then it implies that calling is not only about identifying or acknowledging a leader, but that a calling is linked to a specific purpose or mission. Sweet claims that there is a general calling for every believer: 'One's baptism is one's ordination into ministry and mission. Every baptised disciple has a ministry to the body and a mission in the world.'<sup>415</sup> Thus all Christ-

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<sup>410</sup> Mike Yaconelli, *The Core Realities of Youth Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), p. 5.

<sup>411</sup> John Ortberg, 'Leadership, God's Call Waiting', *Leadership Journal* (03/2008), pp. 19-21.

<sup>412</sup> Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, p. 44.

<sup>413</sup> Sweet, *Summoned to Lead*, p. 12.

<sup>414</sup> Kotter, *Leading Change*, p. 176.

<sup>415</sup> Leonard Sweet, 'Foreword: 18 Rungs in the Ladder of Learning', in Carl Savage & William Presnell, *Narrative Research in Ministry: A Postmodern Research Approach for Faith*

followers are called and arguably gifted in different ways to fulfil this calling. If this is so, then a specific calling to leadership is more about responsibility than ability; a responsibility to respond to a call to lead thus becoming a leader as they respond, in contrast to some people possessing an innate aptitude to lead and others not.<sup>416</sup> Hirsch and Frost write that each one already has gifting by being part of Jesus' 'gracing act', but then they are called beyond that to actually lead in the mode they were already gifted in. This can be seen as a 'calling within a calling.'<sup>417</sup> I agree that leadership calling is a matter of responsibility and not ability, but that is not to say that some will not have innate leadership qualities, however the qualities do not automatically imply that they are leaders. I summarise that leadership is consequently not only a privileged but also a humbling calling and occupation.

### 3.3.2 Character

I have noted that the New Testament credentials for an Elder/ Overseer appear more concerned with personal character traits and not specific leadership 'skills' or a role description.<sup>418</sup> Gibbs emphasises that charisma is no substitute for character and agrees that the New Testament places character foremost when addressing the issue of leadership.<sup>419</sup>

Not only is forming a Christ-like character a basic biblical requirement, but it is arguably essential for church leadership to be credible. Integrity of character can be understood as the 'harmony between what is said and what is led.'<sup>420</sup> Ward is adamant that being an example now takes precedence over appointment and authority.<sup>421</sup> I suggest that consistency between message and messenger requires

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*Communities* (Louisville: Wayne E. Oates Institute, 2008), pp. 11-20 [18]; see also Sweet, *Summoned to Lead*, p. 13.

<sup>416</sup> Sweet, *Summoned to Lead*, pp. 12-14.

<sup>417</sup> Hirsch & Frost, *The Shaping*, p. 172; cf. Eph. 4:7-13. See also Sweet, *Summoned to Lead*, p. 13; 'But sometimes the "called" are "called out" for leadership.'

<sup>418</sup> Supra 0.4.1.

<sup>419</sup> Gibbs, *Leadership Next*, p. 114.

<sup>420</sup> Sweet, *Summoned to Lead*, p. 36.

<sup>421</sup> Ward, *Liquid Church*, pp. 90-91; makes the distinction between 'heavy church' whose leaders rely on appointment & hierarchy and 'liquid church' leaders.

the leader to accept the adage that 'the medium is the message',<sup>422</sup> and understand that their life and in turn the collective life of their church community is essentially the message.<sup>423</sup>

Furthermore, as character flaws undermine a leader's effectivity they inevitably influence co-workers and those being led. Nelson points out that 'it's difficult to be in tune with God and out of sync with other people',<sup>424</sup> while Sweet is of the opinion that 'the "holy life" has everything to do with the quality of our relationships and less to do with picture-perfect kitsch lives of purity or piety.'<sup>425</sup> This goes beyond the media publicised leadership pitfalls of sexual infidelity and financial dishonesty to everyday issues such as anger, impatience and respect. A secular understanding of this concept can be found in Goleman's emotional intelligence, in particular self-regulation, which he describes as 'not only a personal virtue but also an organizational strength.'<sup>426</sup> The leader's character traits, both positive and negative, will certainly have a wider bearing than just their own lives; the goal should not simply be to remain beyond reproach, but to live the message they propagate amongst others and inspire the same in them.<sup>427</sup>

If the leader does not develop integrity of character, a possible dichotomy can develop, whereby there are two 'stages': the leader's idealized life is front stage and the less-than-ideal is backstage.<sup>428</sup> If this continues for a prolonged

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<sup>422</sup> Phrase first used and published by Marshall McLuhan, *The Medium is the Message: An Inventory of Effects* (Penguin Classics, 2008). Originally a typing error, 'massage' instead of 'message' was intentionally kept as the title for the book by McLuhan.

<sup>423</sup> Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, pp. 114 & 116; '...the embodiment of the gospel had to be observed as living integrity in their lives for the message to have any lasting effect. It is this consistency between message and messenger that authenticated the apostolic message and cultivated receptivity in the hearers.' Supra 3.2.3.1, (Newbigin).' See also De Pree, *Leadership Jazz*, p. 60; '...people only listen to preaching; they emulate behaviour.'

<sup>424</sup> Nelson, *Spirituality & Leadership*, p. 139.

<sup>425</sup> Sweet, *So Beautiful*, p. 29; cit. Michael Lodahl & Thomas J. Oord, *Relational Holiness* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 2005).

<sup>426</sup> Daniel Goleman, 'What Makes a Leader?', *Harvard Business Review* (01/2004), p. 7, <<http://www.hbrlondon.org/articles/golemanArticle.cfm>> [accessed 11/06/2008]; see also p. 1: 'Self-regulation. This attribute flows from self-awareness, but runs in a different direction. People with this trait are able to control their impulses or even channel them for good purposes.'

<sup>427</sup> E.g. David Wells said of evangelical theologian and leader John Stott, with whom he had shared a household: 'He was known all over the world, but when you met him he was a most devout, humble Christian man. His private life was no different from his public life. It was the same person. That's another way to say that he had integrity. There was no posing.' Cit. in Tim Stafford, 'John Stott Has Died', *Christianity Today* (27/07/2011), <<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2011/julyweb-only/john-stott-obit.html>> [accessed 28/07/2011].

<sup>428</sup> Simon P. Walker, *Leading Out of Who You Are: Discovering the Secret of Undefended Leadership* (Carlisle: Piquant Editions, 2007), p. 26.

period of time, serious repercussions can be expected not only in the aforementioned credibility, effectiveness and influence, but in the leader becoming emotionally unstable; on one hand becoming frustrated with themselves and conversely blasé regarding their ethical convictions, or both.

I contend that a Christ-like character will not be automatically formed in the leader, but rather it must be actively developed and strengthened. Nelson suggests that the greatest indicators of true spiritual leadership are found in a series of responses referred to in the Bible as spiritual fruit.<sup>429</sup> Continuing with the scriptural terminology from the Galatians passage, he writes that the believer ensures their growth by ‘keeping in step with the Spirit’.<sup>430</sup> John Adair is also familiar with the concept in other leadership roles, ‘that holding firmly to sovereign values outside yourself grows a wholeness of personality and moral strength of character’.<sup>431</sup> This is not however the whole picture, the measures for correction or improvement (growth) for the Christian cannot simply be listed as ‘to do’ and ‘not to do’. I agree rather with Nelson, that the leader’s job ‘is to create as many good conditions as possible to let the seed do what it is pre-programmed to do’,<sup>432</sup> the seed being that which God has invested and begun in one’s life. That means that the leader does not try to be more patient, gentle, kind, but creates an environment in their life where God’s seed can flourish – presenting oneself to God as good soil. My point is that this is not a passive stance, but requires decision and recognition of character weaknesses. Such development requires self-leadership: inner as well as outer leadership.

### **3.3.3 Christ-Centred**

It may be stating the obvious that spiritual formation in Christian leadership is important and should be Christocentric. However, Tim Keel notes that ‘the Spirit of God’ and intuitive decision-making can often be disregarded because many have been trained not to heed it, but trust unemotional, logical analysis and thought

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<sup>429</sup> Nelson, *Spirituality and Leadership*, p. 139; Gal. 5:22-23 (NIV), ‘But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.’

<sup>430</sup> Gal. 5:25 (NIV), ‘Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.’

<sup>431</sup> John Adair, *Effective Leadership: How to Develop Leadership Skills* (London: Pan Macmillan, 1998), p. 12.

<sup>432</sup> Nelson, *Spirituality & Leadership*, p. 145; 1 Pet.1:22-2:1.

processes.<sup>433</sup> Roxburgh and Romanuk counter this problem with a sailing illustration, whereby there is no straight line to a destination; rather one has to tack with the wind.<sup>434</sup> Keel draws attention to the direct and simple way in which Jesus said that his sheep will hear his voice, as opposed to having to pray in a certain way or 'hire the right consultant'.<sup>435</sup> Hirsch notes that the Pauline 'in Christ' or Johannine 'abiding in Christ' is a spiritual state and discipline aimed at Christ likeness – not for our appeasement, but so that Christ can live fully through his followers.<sup>436</sup> Creps agrees, maintaining that leaders should not assume the centre, the 'hub' position, but rather 'invite Christ to assume the central role in practice, instead of just doctrine'.<sup>437</sup> I agree with these scholars because they draw the focus and source of Christian leadership back to a very simple tenet: Christ himself. This may appear over simplistic, but I consider it to be the distinctive without which the other distinctives lack purpose in a Christian context. Thus, I would argue that the principal emphasis of a leader's development is not directed towards self improvement or obtaining the required skills, but being Christ-centred.

Understanding that 'leadership is an extension of discipleship'<sup>438</sup>, that the minister is primarily a follower in the process of becoming more like Christ, is advanced by Newbigin, who states that the leader leads his congregation in its mission 'first and foremost in the area of his or her own discipleship, in the life of prayer and daily consecration'.<sup>439</sup> Here is a proactive lordship of Christ on the leader's part, not simply a passive acknowledgement, for as Frost and Hirsch argue, when an understanding of Jesus remains an abstract theology, the motivation for discipleship through actions is removed; Jesus remains someone to be worshipped, but not followed.<sup>440</sup> Rather, the activity of discipleship forms the leader.

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<sup>433</sup> Tim Keel, *Intuitive Leadership: Embracing a Paradigm of Narrative, Metaphor, and Chaos* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007), pp. 260-261.

<sup>434</sup> Roxburgh & Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, pp. 205-206.

<sup>435</sup> Keel, *Intuitive Leadership*, p. 257; John 10:2-5 (NIV); Keel uses the phrase, 'learning to trust your gut'.

<sup>436</sup> Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, p. 113; 'in Christ': Rom. 8:1; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 5:6 (NIV); 'abide in Me': John 15:4-10 (NASB).

<sup>437</sup> Creps, *Off-Road Disciplines*, p. 10.

<sup>438</sup> Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, p. 119.

<sup>439</sup> Newbigin, *The Gospel*, p. 240; see also p. 241; 'Ministerial leadership is, first and finally, discipleship.'

<sup>440</sup> Michael Frost & Alan Hirsch, *ReJesus: A Wild Messiah for a Missional Church* (Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 2009), pp. 19 & 17; cf. Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, p.120; Hirsch

I do not want to imply that every disciple is a leader, but that discipleship is the essential basis to Christian leadership. To be Christ-centred is to proactively recognise Christ's lordship resulting in learning and following Him on a daily basis.<sup>441</sup> Essentially Christ-centeredness honours God who the leader claims to follow and represent. It not only benefits them in their personal development, but ensures that they ultimately fulfil their calling and model for others how to do the same.<sup>442</sup>

### **3.4 Conclusions – Towards Synergy**

The combination of 'skilful hands' (vocational preparedness) and 'integrity of heart' (spiritual formation) quoted from Scripture on the title page to part two,<sup>443</sup> and the charge of Charles Spurgeon to his students in the nineteenth century,<sup>444</sup> express the combination I wish to highlight regarding leadership. In my introduction to this chapter I stated that Christian leadership has its unique distinctives and that at its core is the required union of Christian spirituality with leadership. Thus a church leader is required to understand both spirituality and leadership, and minister out of the resulting synergy. I will now mention two issues which I consider important regarding this synergy.

#### **3.4.1 Avoiding Dualism**

Although it helps to identify the specific components and how they belong to either vocational skills or spiritual formation, care should be taken to avoid a dualistic understanding of the subject. Vocational preparedness and spirituality can often

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notes that Jesus disciplined his first followers in the context of mission, rather than introducing it later as a job to be done.

<sup>441</sup> Brian D. McLaren, *Finding Our Way Again: The Return of the Ancient Practices* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2008), p. 3; McLaren notes that the Christian faith is a 'way of life', not simply a 'system of belief'.

<sup>442</sup> Kimball, *They Like Jesus*, p. 229; 'emerging generations are sensitive to whether churches and Christian leaders follow Jesus or follow our feelings and personal agendas.'; Creps, *Reverse Mentoring*, p. 126; 'Followers will respond to the influence of those devoted to the treasure rather than to the clay jars.'

<sup>443</sup> Ps. 78:72 (NIV).

<sup>444</sup> Also cited on title page of part one; Spurgeon, *Lectures to my Students*, p. 205; cf. ch. 15: 'The Necessity of Ministerial Progress', pp. 205-219; 'Mental acquirements/ Oratorical qualifications/ Moral qualities/ Spiritual qualifications/ Actual work/ The choice of your sphere of action.'

seem to be opposed to one another; an 'either/ or' choice that those in Christian ministry are either pressured to make, or they find themselves unconsciously leaning towards one approach more than the other. Nancy Pearcey highlights the 'divided concepts of truth' in Western culture as 'secular/sacred, fact/value, public/private',<sup>445</sup> and warns against inhabiting two separate 'worlds', thus attempting to navigate 'a sharp divide between our religious life and ordinary life.'<sup>446</sup> Pearcey's main tenet concurs with Newbigin's view, that Christianity is 'total truth' which can and should be applied to every aspect of life and not just religious issues.<sup>447</sup> I therefore argue that ministry should not be compartmentalized between spiritual and non-spiritual practices and activities. To speak of achieving a balance may only deepen the dualistic way of thinking. Sweet writes that 'There is no spiritual life. There is only life. One life where the spiritual is not separate but the whole.'<sup>448</sup>

I propose that a Christian leader's spirituality should lead them to be engaged in, rather than separate from, practical tasks and 'the world'. For example, Veling notes that, 'Prayer does not remove us from life; rather, when we pray we "yield" or refer our life to God.'<sup>449</sup> This will avoid the frustration of dissecting life's details to know if they are spiritual or not. Brian McLaren agrees; 'we need a fusion of the sacred and secular ...everyday sacredness'.<sup>450</sup> Hirsch and Frost describe this as a 'messianic spirituality'. In contrast to dualism, it is 'a spirituality of engagement with culture and the world in the same mode as the Messiah himself.'<sup>451</sup> Eugene Peterson expands this point in noting that spirituality and ministry are always localised within specific conditions. 'We aren't working with a set of truths, abstractions, and generalities, but rather with a cultivated habit of the heart and a determination to immerse ourselves in our place, our town, our

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<sup>445</sup> Pearcey, *Total Truth*, p. 32; see also Newbigin, *The Gospel*, ch. 2; Newbigin provides an explanation regarding the development of this dualist thinking, particularly the dichotomies which influence contemporary Western culture.

<sup>446</sup> Pearcey, *Total Truth*, p. 35.

<sup>447</sup> Pearcey, *Total Truth*, p. 33; 'a unified, overarching system of truth'; Newbigin, *The Gospel*, p. 22; Newbigin reasons that when one believes, they are 'not merely describing an inward feeling or experience', but affirming what they believe to be true, 'and therefore true for everyone.'

<sup>448</sup> Sweet, *So Beautiful*, p. 25.

<sup>449</sup> Veling, *Practical Theology*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>450</sup> McLaren, *Finding Our Way Again*, p. 5.

<sup>451</sup> Frost & Hirsch, *The Shaping*, p. 30; cf. Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, p. 95; Hirsch points out, that when we label some places, things or practices 'sacred', we automatically imply that everything else is not sacred. Rather all aspects of life should be sacred, thus not limiting the presence of God in our understanding.



congregation'.<sup>452</sup> This leads to the next issue of incarnation as a model for the leader's life.

### 3.4.2 Incarnational

There are scholars claiming the importance of 'Incarnational Leading' which Nelson describes as the leader and leading becoming one.<sup>453</sup> I suggest that the term is helpful to describe the holistic approach and process which contemporary leadership needs to assume, because the objective is for the leader to lead out of who they are, as opposed to depending on any contracted position or superior talents they may have or may not have.<sup>454</sup> Incarnational implies that the beliefs and messages the leader holds are not just privately believed and publically taught, but literally *embodied* in that person. Hirsch develops this point.<sup>455</sup>

Embodiment is an important factor in the healthy leadership of all human organisations but is absolutely crucial to the viability and witness of the Christian movement and therefore to both discipleship and missional leadership. And this cannot be passed on through mere writing and books: it is always communicated through life itself, by the leader to the community, from teacher to disciple...

Roxburgh and Romanuk claim that Christ's incarnation became for the Early Church, the centre 'from which all reality must now be understood and all of life practiced.' It was the act by which Christian formation and therefore ministry and leadership was and should be based.<sup>456</sup> I propose that this incarnational basis also provides a reference point for evaluating the leader's vocational preparation and spiritual formation. The next chapter will explore a means for developing these Christian leadership distinctives.

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<sup>452</sup> Marva Dawn & Eugene Peterson, *The Unnecessary Pastor: Rediscovering the Call* (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Erdmans Publishing Co., 2000), pp. vii-viii.

<sup>453</sup> Nelson, *Spirituality and Leadership*, p. 34; see also Roxburgh & Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, pp. 120-122.

<sup>454</sup> Walker, *Leading Out of Who You Are*, p. 5.

<sup>455</sup> Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, pp. 114-115.

<sup>456</sup> Roxburgh & Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, pp. 121-122; see also Newbigin, *The Gospel*, p. 118; Newbigin previously developed this concept, stating that 'in the incarnation of the Son he (God) has made known his nature and purpose fully and completely'. Cf. Carol A. Alexander, 'Missional Leadership: A Christian Response to Cultural Shifts, Authority Structures and Moral Ambiguities in Contemporary Western Society' (unpublished PhD. Dissertation, University of Wales, Bangor, 2010) p. 327; C. Alexander notes that society is 'now looking for community and authenticity' and that leaders need to 'model a form of leadership more akin to the first century Church described by New Testament metaphors.'

## **4 CHAPTER FOUR**

### **CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: LITERATURE REVIEW**

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## 4.1 Introduction

Bearing in mind the importance of vocational preparedness and spiritual formation, I will consider three main approaches used in developing church leaders: training, relationships and continuous learning.

## 4.2 'Prepare' - Training

In Western Europe and North America, it has been widely assumed that church leadership development will include some type of formal training including a measure of theological education and ministerial or leadership skills, preferably near the beginning of the leader's journey so as to be rightly positioned for a life of ministry and service.<sup>457</sup> Typically this is obtained by the (potential) leader attending a Bible college or university course, which may or may not result in an academic qualification.<sup>458</sup> This requires the leader to attend a full-time course lasting one to three or even four years. Networks such as LCÖ do not require a ministerial or theological degree to gain ministerial accreditation in comparison to more defined routes of ordination such as in denominations. There remains however a level of respect for that route being taken and a desire amongst some to do likewise. Young adults or those in their late teens often say to me, 'I want to go away to Bible college!' What they are trying to express is that they have a sense of calling and desire to enhance their biblical skills in order to be adequately prepared for a future ministry role. What concerns me is that they have an idealistic view of what such an institution will do for them and may be overlooking the opportunities they have now in their home church and network to develop as leaders. I therefore intend to briefly identify areas where this formal training needs some evaluation and possible restructuring as it may no longer be (and may have never been) an adequate training model,<sup>459</sup> particularly for the LCÖ and Austrian context.

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<sup>457</sup> Gibbs & Coffey, *Church Next*, pp. 93-99; Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, pp. 31 & 90-91; Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, pp. 120-123; see also 4.4 (Drane).

<sup>458</sup> Bachelor degrees have become more readily available in the last twenty years as Bible colleges have gained recognition with awarding universities. Gibbs & Coffey, *Church Next*, p. 99.

<sup>459</sup> Sweet, 'Foreword: 18 Rungs', in Savage & Presnell, *Narrative Research*, pp. 12-13; Sweet claims that theological education is 'more important than ever', but questions whether the (American) seminary is still the best means to provide it. He highlights that many of the current influential pastors in northern America were not credentialed in this way, and similarly many successful business leaders today never graduated from college. Cf. Hirsch & Frost, *The*

### 4.2.1 Format

The format of formal training is the first area I will address. Hirsch and Frost note that the teaching is often done by an expert holding a monologue as they pass on information. They claim it was not the approach Jesus used and there is no reason to expect it to work now.<sup>460</sup> Their illustration may not be true for every situation, but I detect two issues here: the nature or role of the teacher, and the style of teaching. What role should Bible college faculty have: educators, mentors, co-learners? Paul Alexander is of the opinion that faculty should not see themselves as employees, but rather ‘mentors, friends and engaged scholars.’<sup>461</sup> Sweet goes even further:<sup>462</sup>

‘I don’t teach. I organize learning and mentor learners. I don’t do classes. I organise learning courses. I study with my students, and their participant-observer status means they shape the course of study much like a river takes its course from what it encounters on the journey. The ultimate syllabus is the student anyway.’

At first reading this sounds idyllic and organisationally challenging, but I submit that it is a format which teachers and faculty should strive towards. The emphasis is on positioning the leader to learn as a participant-observer, both in the training context and in the future; they are actively involved, but also able to reflect and assess what has been and needs to be learnt.

### 4.2.2 Setting

Secondly, the setting or environment of formal training comes under scrutiny. Hirsch critiques the way in which a potential leader is removed from the context of

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*Shaping*, p. 153; ‘There seems to be something about the way we are training leaders that is making the church dysfunctional.’

<sup>460</sup> Hirsch & Frost, *The Shaping*, p. 153.

<sup>461</sup> Paul R. Alexander, ‘Connectedness and Advanced Study’ (unpublished DMin seminar notes, Mattersey Hall Graduate School, 2009), p. 20; see also Drane, *Cultural Change*, p. 146; Drane agrees explaining that the role of a teacher is not to be a lecturer, but ‘a mentor and resource person’; Sylvia Wilkey Collinson, ‘Making Disciples and the Christian Faith’, *Evangelical Review of Theology* 29.3 (2005), pp. 240-250 [249]; Collinson notes that the teacher is often the focus of attention in formal situations rather than the learners.

<sup>462</sup> Sweet, ‘Foreword: 18 Rungs’, in Savage & Presnell, *Narrative Research*, p. 15.

ordinary life and ministry in order to study in a somewhat cloistered environment:<sup>463</sup>

In effect he or she is socialized out of ordinary life and develops a kind of language and thinking that is seldom understood and expressed outside of seminary. It's as if in order to learn about ministry and theology, we leave our places of habitation and take a flight into the wonderfully abstracted world of abstraction, we fly around there for a long time, and then wonder why we have trouble landing again.

In my view, the main problem with the setting is the separation it causes. Not just the above mentioned abstraction that can take place, but separation from formative relationships, and from avenues for ministry and service. Leaders that are identified and initially encouraged and developed in the local church are then separated from influential coaching or mentoring relationships to attend theological or Bible college. Relational ties are severed, and consequently the guidance and wisdom which had hitherto been provided through these relationships is no longer at hand.<sup>464</sup> Observing the situation in Britain, Coombs is of the opinion that students leave Bible colleges to work alongside a senior pastor with whom they often don't share the same ministry DNA. He claims that the result is typically a parting of ways after approximately two years, with more disruption than progress achieved for both church and leaders.<sup>465</sup> Although I have shown that the role and input of faculty could be more relational,<sup>466</sup> this form of training will inevitably cause strain if not a severing of formative ties for the developing leader.

Regarding ministry, formal training could change a leader to a degree that they are no longer effective in the cultural setting where they were originally placed. Gibbs proposes that 'preparation for ministry needs to be reconceived as engagement in ministry'<sup>467</sup> and therefore more practice orientated. Theory and practice needs to be integrated so that the leader's 'knowledge does not outstrip their wisdom in endeavouring to apply what they have learned.'<sup>468</sup> My concern is that some institutions may effectively train scholars, but scholarship and

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<sup>463</sup> Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, p. 121; see also Gibbs, *Leadership Next*, p. 182; 'extractionist policies... resulted in people being trained out of a situation instead of being equipped to return to their ministry'; supra 4.2 (Gibbs & Coffey); cf. Creps, *Reverse Mentoring*, p. 124.

<sup>464</sup> Supra 4.3 for the role of relationships in leadership development.

<sup>465</sup> Barney Coombs & Dennis Peacocke, 'Recovering the Apostolic Church' (audio format), (Wien: Vision für Österreich, 1999), cassette 3.

<sup>466</sup> Supra 4.2.1.

<sup>467</sup> Gibbs, *Leadership Next*, p. 185.

<sup>468</sup> Gibbs, *Leadership Next*, pp. 177-178.

leadership are not the same.<sup>469</sup> Gibbs agrees that many newly ordained leaders ‘emerge from their training with a distorted or naïve view of ministry and mission in today’s challenging cultural climate’ and that academic ability does not always translate into ministry competence.<sup>470</sup> As Sweet claims: ‘The ultimate credentialing is not “Do you have a degree?” but “Can you do ministry?”’<sup>471</sup> Alexander is just as direct: ‘Touching the world with the love of an eternal God is the only viable lens through which the effectiveness of a ministry training enterprise can be evaluated.’<sup>472</sup> I hold that a passivity or apathy towards the purpose of ministry must be avoided, rather the effective ministry should be the ultimate goal, whatever form, setting and level of academic training takes place.

Alexander addresses separation problems by proposing ministry training with ‘connectedness’. He notes that ‘the very root of our ontology is that we exist to fellowship’ and thus we should seek a ‘connectedness of theology, curriculum, people, institutions and networks’.<sup>473</sup> Hwa Yong agrees in his appeal for relational theological education: ‘Effective learning, spiritual formation and mission need to be done in the context of the community and strong relational bonds.’<sup>474</sup> I agree with both Alexander’s interrelated approach and Yung’s relational emphasis, but question if a training institute, such as a Bible college, can ever provide that intensity of connection and if attempts will not appear artificial or inferior to that of a healthy local church. A training institute provides a different type of community compared to the local church – at best it may be a temporary reconstruction.

### 4.2.3 Theology

I have considered the format and setting of formal training and now I will look at the theological aspect. It is not the aim of this paper to provide an overview of the various approaches to theological education and critic them.<sup>475</sup> I have focused

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<sup>469</sup> Cf. McLaren, *The Church*, p. 114.

<sup>470</sup> Gibbs, *Leadership Next*, pp. 177 & 186.

<sup>471</sup> Sweet, ‘Foreword: 18 Rungs’, in Savage & Presnell, *Narrative Research*, p. 13.

<sup>472</sup> Alexander, ‘Connectedness’, p. 21.

<sup>473</sup> Alexander, ‘Connectedness’, p. 10.

<sup>474</sup> Hwa Yung, ‘Energising Community: Theological Education’s Relational Mandate’, *Evangelical Review of Theology* 35.1 (2011), pp. 61-77 [77]

<sup>475</sup> For a concise overview and opinion see Brian Edgar, ‘The Theology of Theological Education’, *Evangelical Review of Theology* 29.3 (2005), pp. 208-217; Brian Edgar uses a fourfold typology to ‘locate specific theological education programs and institutions and their emphases’ [209]: Athens (Classical), Berlin (Vocational), Geneva (Confessional), and Jerusalem (Missional).

rather on the presumptions and available means of study which are familiar to LCÖ. I have evaluated theological understanding as a leadership distinctive in chapter three, arguing that a systemic view and a practical theological approach are best suited for leaders in the context I am researching.<sup>476</sup> It therefore follows that it is important to train in or teach theology in a way that encourages that understanding.

Drane argues that the assumptions of the Enlightenment concerning what is worth knowing and how it should be taught have shaped theological training, causing it to be ‘fragmented and compartmentalised into different disciplines that have no idea how to speak to each other’.<sup>477</sup> He claims that lack of holistic learning is producing graduates who ‘cannot integrate either faith or personal development with what they think they know about theology’.<sup>478</sup> Ward shares a similar concern: ‘I was determined that I would not reproduce the kind of dislocation between practice and academic theology that I had been introduced to in my undergraduate studies’.<sup>479</sup> I agree that the divide that Drane and Ward identify is a problem, and I suggest two ways to reduce this. Firstly, due attention must be given to the *setting* as my observations have shown; that the developing leader remains in a ministry context and suitably connected throughout their theological studies.<sup>480</sup> Secondly, Miroslav Volf notes that the challenge for theological educators is to ‘keep God at the centre of what we do’.<sup>481</sup> I agree, and propose that when theology is perceived as a mere skill, treated as an academic exercise, or used to serve a limited

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<sup>476</sup> Supra 3.2.1, 3.2.1.1 & 3.2.1.2.

<sup>477</sup> Drane, *Cultural Change*, pp. 129-130; Drane notes the three main philosophical premises of rationalism, materialism and reductionism which have influenced theological education; see also Yung, ‘Energising Community’, p. 70; citing John’s Gospel, Jung challenges the ‘modern over reliance on reason as the primary means of knowing’, which in turn shapes theological curricula. Cf. Cerny, ‘The Relationship’, p. 105.

<sup>478</sup> Drane, *Cultural Change*, p. 130; supra 3.2.1.1; cf. Paul R. Alexander, ‘A Missional Rationale for Theological Education and Training’ (unpublished PhD. Dissertation, University of Wales, Bangor, 2007), p. 45; concedes that achieving the ‘blend of academic rigour and spiritual development’ is a ‘complex issue’ and has been so throughout history.

<sup>479</sup> Ward, *Participation and Mediation*, p. 25.

<sup>480</sup> Supra 4.2.2; see also, Cerny, ‘The Relationship’, p. 107; Cerny explains that Jesus showed His disciples that they were to read the Scriptures ‘messianically’ and ‘missionally’, and that the apostle Paul also had this dual emphasis. Engaging in theological study while in a ministry context could therefore enhance both emphases.

<sup>481</sup> Miroslav Volf, ‘Dancing for God: Challenges Facing Theological Education Today’, *Evangelical Review of Theology* 29.3 (2005), pp.197-207 [200]; Volf voices particular concern when theology is used to serve one particular agenda, even if it is an ecclesiastical one.

agenda, a disconnection between theological knowledge, ministry and personal faith may occur.<sup>482</sup>

#### 4.2.4 Reflections

The intention of this next section is not to be merely introspective, but by reflecting on my own experience of formal training, I seek to identify ways in which it helped and hindered me with regard to my leadership roles. Furthermore, I am acknowledging that my examination of formal training cannot be neutral, but is 'determined by the attitudes and understandings' that I as an interpreter bring to it.<sup>483</sup>

My expectation to gain a foundational understanding of the Bible was met; that is, obtaining an adequate understanding of the text and its background to assist me in being able to minister from Scripture. I was exposed to scriptural, theological and ethical tensions and arguments beyond the standard position of my home church and denomination, which proved helpful in obtaining a broader understanding of Christian thought, as well as having to form my personal opinions (some of which I later changed).<sup>484</sup> I also learnt how to conduct further research and study. To this extent I consider that the college course was able to prepare me theologically, albeit with a systematic tendency.<sup>485</sup> However the ministry and leadership skills which were taught lacked context,<sup>486</sup> and in retrospect I learnt more about the 'how to' of daily ministry in the years before these studies as a student serving in church and doing high school and college outreach, and then afterwards as I began to work as an assistant pastor.<sup>487</sup> Despite the opportunities to serve in local churches within driving distance of the college at weekends, it felt

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<sup>482</sup> Cf. Volf, 'Dancing for God', pp. 198-199; Volf claims that theology 'is itself a way of life'.

<sup>483</sup> Drane, *The McDonaldization*, p. 8; supra 5.5.2; see also Carl Savage & William Presnell, *Narrative Research in Ministry: A Postmodern Research Approach for Faith Communities* (Louisville: Wayne E. Oates Institute, 2008), pp. 74-75; Savage and Presnell explain the importance of 'attaining a grasp of the ways in which *the researcher's own story* intersects with the narrative of concern or opportunity'.

<sup>484</sup> Supra 3.2.1, (Roxburgh & Romanuk).

<sup>485</sup> Supra 3.2.1.1, (Gibbs; Sweet).

<sup>486</sup> Supra 4.2.2, (Gibbs).

<sup>487</sup> Supra 4.2.2, (Hirsch; Gibbs).



disconnected; I did not and could not belong to these communities to the extent that I could feel that I was 'building' or contributing anything of significance.<sup>488</sup>

Living on campus provided an intense setting for forming a Christ-like character, but only if the student realised that was the advantage of being part of the student community. I can remember being shocked that some students were enrolled with no sense of calling or strong desire to minister or lead.<sup>489</sup> My expectation had been that I would be studying for ministry together with those with similar passions and goals. Nevertheless, I consider the relationships I formed during those three years to have positively influenced and formed me, although this may be as much to do with my personality and choices as the setting.<sup>490</sup>

My spiritual disciplines and experience of God were varied. At times I was indifferent regarding prayer and personal Bible reading. This may have been due to the fact that we were talking about and studying these things anyway, thus there can develop a detachment, whereby the spiritual life is in theory only.<sup>491</sup> In addition there were no regular ministry responsibilities which require one to draw inspiration and strength thus staying focused in this area. This does not have to be the case, but in my immaturity, I was not able to recognise this difficulty produced by the setting.

I summarise that formal training, even with the improvements submitted above, is unable to stand alone as a comprehensive means of developing leaders.<sup>492</sup> For some it may not even be necessary at all. That is not to discard theological enquiry and academic learning altogether, but training must ideally take place in the context of ministry and not solely in the classroom. Formal training is not about the finished 'product' of a Christian minister, but rather positioning those leaders for their call in society. Academic knowledge is beneficial, and qualifications may be

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<sup>488</sup> Supra 4.2.2, (Alexander); cf. Sweet, 'Foreword: 18 Rungs', in Savage & Presnell, *Narrative Research*, p.15; 'We must do theological education and ministry formation together, not separately'.

<sup>489</sup> Alexander, 'A Missional Rationale', pp. 61-64; Alexander reasons for the call of God to be a 'necessary prerequisite for those entering ministry training' [61], if 'meaningful ministry training' is to take place [63].

<sup>490</sup> Supra 4.2.2, (Yong).

<sup>491</sup> Supra 4.2.3.

<sup>492</sup> Cf. Collinson, 'Making Disciples', pp. 248-249; Collinson acknowledges that both church and theological college educational programmes have passed on the basic elements of Christian belief, but agrees that 'formal teaching will never communicate the full spectrum of what it means to be a follower of Jesus.'

necessary, but the focus needs to be on preparation for leading, so that the leader is positioned to pursue their journey further.

### **4.3 ‘Reproduce’ – Relationships**

It is my opinion that the Christian leader needs both the centrality of God and the interaction with others to advance personal growth and achieve longevity of leadership. Molitor claims that leadership is all about human relations,<sup>493</sup> and Dawn warns that an individualistic concept regarding spiritual formation is problematic ‘since we cannot form ourselves’. She claims that ‘all shaping of the spiritual life and a servant’s character takes place in the midst of the entire Christian community throughout space and time.’<sup>494</sup> Gibbs agrees; ‘wise leaders recognise that they need the ministry of others’,<sup>495</sup> while Sweet is persuaded that these relationships are not merely to be preferred, but essential to fulfilling God’s call.<sup>496</sup> Hence I submit that the primary question regarding God’s calling, is not only what, where and how, but *with whom?*

Hirsch cites from New Testament epistles where Paul models this incarnational approach to leading, highlighting that movements, and the central ideas associated with them, must be embodied in the leaders and take root in the lives of their followers to be effective, thus ensuring that the original values, goals and message are conveyed to subsequent generations.<sup>497</sup> I agree that for the leader to reproduce themselves in the lives of others is not only an effective means of developing leaders, but also essential for the longevity of a movement.

#### **4.3.1 Apprenticeship**

I propose that one of the optimal ways that a synergy of spirituality and vocational preparedness can be achieved is through apprenticeship relationships as

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<sup>493</sup> Molitor, *The Power of Agreement*, pp. 189-191.

<sup>494</sup> Dawn & Peterson, *The Unnecessary Pastor*, p. 149.

<sup>495</sup> Gibbs, *Leadership Next*, p. 151.

<sup>496</sup> Leonard Sweet, *11 Indispensable Relationships You Can’t Be Without* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2008), pp. 21 & 19.

<sup>497</sup> Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, pp. 115-116; 1 Thess. 1:6-9; Phil. 3:17; 2 Thess. 3:9; Tit. 2:7-8; 1 Cor. 11:1.

mentioned of Paul and Timothy in Scripture.<sup>498</sup> I use the term apprenticeship because although it is similar to general discipleship, it goes further because it has a particular area of ministry in mind; the apprentice matures both spiritually and skilfully, to fulfil that particular leadership role or calling. On-the-job transfer of knowledge, know-how and experience can take place. I borrow headings from Sweet to indicate three distinctive characteristics of such relationships:

*Exchange of wisdom* – This will not only include the addition of wisdom, but also the ‘subtraction’ of ‘false notions, misleading navigations, and trapped assumptions that become theological pitfalls’.<sup>499</sup> This is communicated through life itself, not books. Sweet foresees the need for such relationships to be seen as ‘reflective-in-action’ (or theory-in-practice) and not as ‘theory to practice.’<sup>500</sup>

*Mutual honouring* – Honour is more than respect shown where it is due. In honouring (like praising), ‘you become what you honour.’ It flows both ways as Paul is always including Timothy in the introductions to his letters and thus promoting and honouring his apprentice.<sup>501</sup>

*Editability* – Sweet notes: ‘Accountability is designed to prevent you from doing bad. Editability is designed to help you do good.’<sup>502</sup> The senior leader has the opportunity to be like the editor of someone’s writing, wanting to get the best out of their apprentice’s gifting.

The result is that the apprentice becomes a reflective-practitioner. Not only do they develop in their ability to lead in a given context, but they learn to analyse and adapt, to go ‘off-road’, to mature as a leader in their own right. A significant difference is to be found between training someone *for* ministry and training them *in* ministry.<sup>503</sup> Emerging church leaders may claim that the primary qualification for leadership is simply learning to live as an ‘apprentice of Jesus’,<sup>504</sup> which is a

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<sup>498</sup> 1 Cor. 4:17; Phil. 2:22; 1 Tim. 1:2, 18; 2 Tim 3:10.

<sup>499</sup> Sweet, *11 Indispensable Relationships*, p. 128.

<sup>500</sup> Sweet, ‘Foreword: 18 Rungs’, in Savage & Presnell, *Narrative Research*, p. 17; supra 4.4.1; for Greek/ Hebrew approaches to learning.

<sup>501</sup> Sweet, *11 Indispensable Relationships*, pp. 128 & 76-77.

<sup>502</sup> Sweet, *11 Indispensable Relationships*, p. 33; ‘Edit-ability’ borrowed from Joseph R. Myers, *Organic Community: Creating a Place Where People Naturally Connect* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007), pp. 132-143; Sweet observes; ‘The problem with “accountability” is that it is too easy to keep double books: one book for your accountability team, and another secret book for yourself.’

<sup>503</sup> Sweet, ‘Foreword: 18 Rungs’, in Savage & Presnell, *Narrative Research*, p. 16.

<sup>504</sup> Eddie Gibbs & Ryan K. Bolger, *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Cultures* (London: SPCK, 2006), p. 215.

foundation for discipleship, but I agree with Gibbs, that ‘when new leaders are apprenticed to pioneering leaders and practitioners, life-transforming learning often takes place.’<sup>505</sup> I therefore maintain that a tangible human apprenticeship is essential as well as a commitment to be a disciple of Christ.<sup>506</sup> I propose that it will ensure that learning and development does not remain an intellectual exercise, nor a private spiritual experience, but a definable and accountable process.

There are three issues regarding such relationships which can inhibit their effectiveness. These may become acute in the case of succession, or when a younger leader (in experience, not necessarily age) needs to take the place of the senior leader in the same location or ministry. The illustration of the relay race is often used in church network circles and literature in this regard, with the passing on of the ‘leadership baton’ to describe how leadership succession may take place.<sup>507</sup> Firstly, the apprentice must understand that they are to be an ‘heir’ of their senior and not a ‘clone’. To use the language of this metaphor, it is crucial that the mentee grabs their end of the baton and not that which their mentor is holding.<sup>508</sup> However, the senior may well desire their apprentice to be an exact replica of themselves. Furthermore, they may hold on to the leadership baton too long because of a lack of confidence in the mentee, or their own insecurity of losing significance as the younger takes the lead.

Secondly, the next generation may not want the baton being passed on to them.<sup>509</sup> The senior may reach a prime time in their leadership, but find themselves

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<sup>505</sup> Gibbs, *Leadership Next*, p. 187.

<sup>506</sup> Supra 3.3.3.

<sup>507</sup> Creps, *Reverse Mentoring*, pp. 124-126; Earl Creps, ‘Baton Passers’ (audio file), [earlcreps.com](http://earlcreps.com) (17/08/2006), <<http://earlcreps.libsyn.com/webpage/2006>> [accessed 09/02/2010]; Sweet, *11 Indispensable Relationships*, pp. 82 & 132; Creps, *Off-Road Disciplines*, ch. 12, pp. 173-184; Rowland Forman, Jeff Jones & Bruce Miller, *The Leadership Baton: An Intentional Strategy for Developing Leaders in Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), pp. 21-22; Sherry Surratt & Wayne Smith, ‘Team Collaboration: Broadening the Church Leadership Platform’, *Leadership Network* (2011), p. 3, <[http://leadnet.org/docs/11for11-2011-MAR-Team\\_Collaboration-Surratt\\_and\\_Smith.pdf](http://leadnet.org/docs/11for11-2011-MAR-Team_Collaboration-Surratt_and_Smith.pdf)> [accessed 15/04/2012]; Warren Bird, ‘Passing the Baton to the Next Generation’ *Leadership Network* (10/04/2012), <[http://leadnet.org/resources/advance/passing\\_the\\_baton\\_to\\_the\\_next\\_generation](http://leadnet.org/resources/advance/passing_the_baton_to_the_next_generation)> [accessed 15/04/2012].

<sup>508</sup> Sweet, *11 Indispensable Relationships*, p. 82.

<sup>509</sup> Creps, *Reverse Mentoring*, p. 125.

becoming increasingly irrelevant.<sup>510</sup> Relational development through apprenticeship would, in this instance, place as much emphasis on the senior leader's growth and adaptation as the junior's. Otherwise the apprentice could for example, simply tolerate the senior's philosophy of ministry out of respect, but really be waiting to re-start or completely change course as soon as they have the opportunity. Creps recommends reverse mentoring as one means of combating this issue, which I will develop in the following section.<sup>511</sup>

Thirdly, Ward notes difficulties in attempting to provide theological education or knowledge, based on an apprenticeship model, because less experienced students may struggle and seek more 'traditional forms of theology'.<sup>512</sup> I would suggest that it is just as plausible that the opposite can happen, depending on the level of continuous learning and reflection undertaken by the senior leader. Nonetheless, I maintain that theological education is optimised in the context of apprenticeship rather than scholarship: if the relationship is understood to be one between a 'master learner' and an 'apprentice learner',<sup>513</sup> differing theological approaches and views may enrich the process of leadership development rather than be a hindrance. I will now further examine this bi-directional aspect by proposing the inclusion of reverse mentoring.

#### **4.3.2 In Reverse**

Reverse mentoring describes the development opportunity for both master and apprentice learners whereby the older leader inquires and spends time listening to the younger generation.<sup>514</sup> The method shifts the senior leader from being the only one having important information and the follower none (thus a passive listener), to one of journeying together, accomplishing any given task with complementary wisdom and abilities.

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<sup>510</sup> Earl Creps, 'Reverse Mentoring: Seminar and Interview' (audio file), *Earl Creps' Podcast* (11/05/07), <<http://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/earl-creps-podcast/id254819170>> [accessed 09/02/2010].

<sup>511</sup> Supra 4.3.2.

<sup>512</sup> Ward, *Participation and Mediation*, p. 23.

<sup>513</sup> Sweet, 'Foreword: 18 Rungs', in Savage & Presnell, *Narrative Research*, p. 18.

<sup>514</sup> Creps, *Off-road Disciplines*, pp. 41-44; Creps, *Reverse Mentoring*, pp. xv-xxii.

For it to work there needs to be an admission that you cannot learn while always doing the talking and seeking to instruct.<sup>515</sup> Creps writes: 'Learning from those we intend to lead offers a way to escape our own perspective ...and change not just our curriculum but our basic approach to leading.'<sup>516</sup> This is highly relational and not fitting with a top-down CEO or 'transactional' leadership style. There are still proponents of a more hierarchal leadership style within Pentecostal and Charismatic circles; 'prepare to be lonely' typifies the lack of relationship expected at 'the top'.<sup>517</sup> However, 'Old-style command-and-control approaches have to be replaced by ones based on partnership and co-operation, where mediation and negotiation skills are at a premium.'<sup>518</sup> Here reverse mentoring can provide a sincere means of achieving this. As Creps notes: 'The challenge for those who guide a ministry of any kind is the realization that no one sees things more clearly than the inexperienced person who remains (albeit briefly) *organizationally naive*.'<sup>519</sup>

I advocate for both established and developing leaders to practise mentoring 'in reverse' irrespective of the stage they are at in ministry, as it will develop them by opening new perspectives, understanding and know-how, while simultaneously encouraging and building relationships with those who follow them.

### 4.3.3 Various Forms

Having looked at the role of relationships as being a biblical and effective means of developing leaders, it follows that these relationships can take on various forms. Warren offers four key relationship dynamics with which those in Christian ministry should engage: Mentors (Coaches), Models, Partners (Team) and Friends.<sup>520</sup> I would add that the various relational descriptions also suggest that there can be varying depths of relationship with diverse types of people for differing periods of time. Susan Hope draws attention to the relationships Jesus had with his followers and concludes that leaders will have different 'degrees of openness with different

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<sup>515</sup> Creps, *Reverse Mentoring*, p. 73.

<sup>516</sup> Creps, *Reverse Mentoring*, p. 124.

<sup>517</sup> Ron Hibbert, 'Leadership: The Colin Powell Way', *Re* 10 (02/2011), pp. 46-49 [49]. Cf. Maxwell, *Leadership Gold*, p. 3; 'loneliness is not a positional issue; it is a personality issue.'

<sup>518</sup> Tiplady, *World of Difference*, p. 132.

<sup>519</sup> Creps, *Reverse Mentoring*, p. 126.

<sup>520</sup> Rick Warren, 'Rick Warren' (audio file/ interview), *Catalyst Podcast* 88 (21/01/2010), <<http://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/catalyst-podcast/id130079836>> [accessed 31/01/2010].

groups and teams.<sup>521</sup> To whichever form and depth these relationships are needed, I maintain that they all require the developing leader and other leaders involved to become vulnerable by admitting their (sometimes private) weaknesses and as Hope explains, avoid wearing 'the mask that the office can impose'.<sup>522</sup>

It is beyond the reach of this work to expound on the multiple nuances, definitions and techniques which can be employed regarding leadership relationships; rather I have made a case for an understanding of apprenticeship and its benefits. I summarise that networks and denominations vary in their terminology and methods, but the relational aspect of developing leaders is generally accepted and pursued.<sup>523</sup> On a local level, if the church is understood to be a network of relationships, then the development of a leader may also be fashioned by the church as a whole.<sup>524</sup> I propose that the developing leader needs to be aware not only of the range of relationships and how they may aid their development, but to see relationships as God's fundamental means of developing them as leader.

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<sup>521</sup> Susan Hope, *Mission-shaped Spirituality: The Transforming Power of Mission* (London: Church House Publishing, 2006), p. 58; the seventy-two: Luke 10:1, 17; the twelve: Luke 6:13; Mark 3:14; the three: Mark 9:2; Luke 9:28; the one: John 13:23; 19:26; 21:7, 20. See also J. Robert Clinton & Paul D. Stanley, *Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed in Life* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1992); Clinton and Stanley propose a three level approach which summarises the various degrees of mentoring; *Passive*: by observing contemporary leaders irrespective of whether they are known by the observed or not, or reading the biographies or personal writings of leaders from history. *Occasional*: through a two-way relationship. Regularity and nature of contact may or may not be agreed. *Intensive*: as the name suggests, this is a thorough and concentrated arrangement.

<sup>522</sup> Hope, *Mission-shaped Spirituality*, pp. 57-58.

<sup>523</sup> Ann-Marie Hobbs, 'The Role of Mentoring within the Probationary Ministers' Training Programme of the British Assemblies of God' (unpublished MA. Dissertation, University of Wales, Bangor, 2009), offers insight into Assemblies of God GB's current approach to mentoring; Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, pp. 172-173, Kay makes observations concerning the Vineyard UK's approach, in which senior Vineyard leaders may 'oversee' up to six other pastors. Vineyard seeks to ensure that leaders connect 'synergistically'; working as mentors and coaches. The frequency with which they meet is variable and Kay notes that these arrangements are more beneficial when the frequency of contact is understood.

<sup>524</sup> Creps, *Reverse Mentoring*, p. 111; see also p. 118; Creps suggests that leaders, as preachers, should start listening to their church. He claims that if the leader listens to 'audience nouveau long enough', giving the listeners permission to be 'mentors', the leader may learn to communicate in a better way.

#### 4.4 'Posture' – Continuous Learning

I have looked at the importance of appropriate training, combined with formative relationships as essential elements in the development of leaders. A third key approach is continuous learning. Drane comments that the concept of someone receiving training at the beginning of their ministry, which would see them 'right through to the end' is no longer valid.<sup>525</sup> According to Sweet, life-long learning was always required; it is 'The Prime Directive of ordained ministry and an imperative for every disciple (mathetes = learner) of Jesus.'<sup>526</sup> Clinton concludes from his research that 'effective leaders, at all levels of leadership, maintain a learning posture throughout life.'<sup>527</sup>

Posture is a term that can describe how an individual reacts to a challenge or a learning opportunity; a pre-disposition to people and new information.<sup>528</sup> Keel argues that if formal education and being alone in the study is the dominant way in which a leader learns, then they become the 'expert', which distances them from their community and places false expectations upon them to always provide answers. Conversely, Keel observes that Jesus most often responded to questions with a question, exposing something more important than the original question. Furthermore, 'If leaders are always in the position of answering questions, how will they ever learn anything in the environment where they are called to serve?'<sup>529</sup> Sweet pushes the point further, claiming that the church needs leaders who are not learned, but learners.<sup>530</sup> Peter Senge makes a similar claim: 'People with a high level of personal mastery live in a continual learning mode. They never "arrive"'.<sup>531</sup> To live in this learning mode, I suggest that a leader should be aware of their posture; that they are not only willing to learn, but actively seeking to learn and remain a learner.

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<sup>525</sup> Drane, *Cultural Change*, p. 135.

<sup>526</sup> Sweet, 'Foreword: 18 Rungs', in Savage & Presnell, *Narrative Research*, p. 12.

<sup>527</sup> Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, p. 180.

<sup>528</sup> Keel, *Intuitive Leadership*, p. 225; 'Posture': 'A person's bearing or attitude'.

<sup>529</sup> Keel, *Intuitive Leadership*, pp. 228-229.

<sup>530</sup> Sweet, *Summoned to Lead*, pp. 123-125.

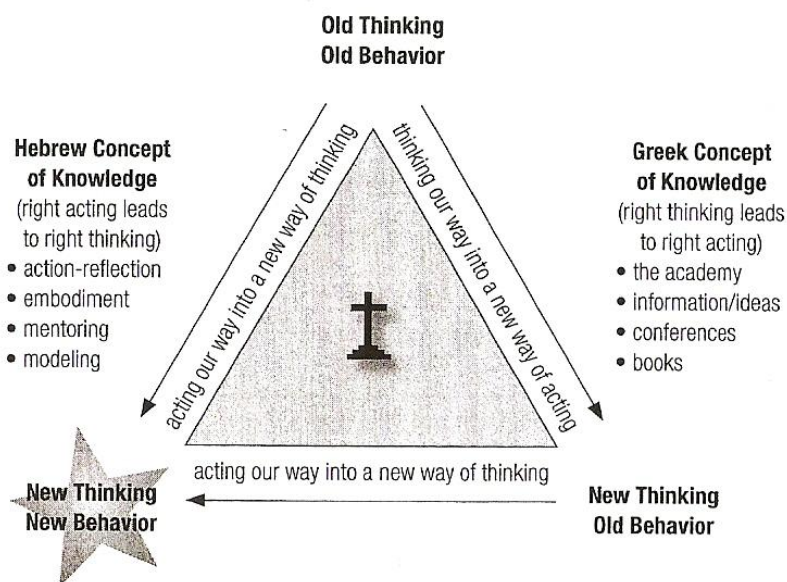
<sup>531</sup> Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of The Learning Organization* (New York: Doubleday/Currency, 1990), p. 142; Senge explains: 'personal mastery is not something you possess. It is a process. It is a lifelong discipline. People with a high level of personal mastery are acutely aware of their ignorance, their incompetence, their growth areas. And they are deeply self-confident. Paradoxical? Only for those who do not see the "journey is the reward".'



#### 4.4.1 Putting-in, Drawing-out, Raising-up

Exactly how a leader is learning from new or old stimuli will be varied. Sweet asks if education is putting in, drawing out, or raising up?<sup>532</sup> He notes the ability for children to learn a language simply by being surrounded by it or immersed in it, therefore developing an immersive environment for an educational experience – an ‘orchestrated immersion’ – would be optimal.<sup>533</sup> Sweet does not mention how this changes as the child’s analytical thinking develops, nevertheless to be immersed in a language and culture greatly helps language learning (as my own adult experience tells me). Thus the suggestion is that it is important that a leader is in a continuous mode of learning by intentionally immersing themselves in their situation and ministry. Those involved in their development can also ‘orchestrate’ opportunities which will ‘put in’ the know-how and knowledge needed. Other situations will ‘draw out’ the gifting or latent wisdom in the leader.<sup>534</sup>

It may not be possible or even desirable to disengage our adult analytical processes, but admitting our Western European tendency towards the Greek concept of learning, whereby right thinking is expected to lead to right acting is helpful.



(fig.1)

<sup>532</sup> Sweet, *So Beautiful*, p. 83.

<sup>533</sup> Sweet, *So Beautiful*, p. 83.

<sup>534</sup> Sweet, *So Beautiful*, p. 83; ‘The ultimate in learning is when you recognise something you hear from a mentor as always known, but unthought.’

Hirsch proposes that leaders adopt a more Hebrew approach, whereby right acting leads to right thinking (fig.1).<sup>535</sup> This requires real life, interactive situations, not simply rationalistic, cognitive models and strategies. Instead of the leader thinking their way into a new way of acting, they are continuously acting their way into a new way of thinking.

#### 4.4.2 Strategic

I am of the opinion that leaders need to discover and be aware of the posture best suited for them to continually learn. Although a natural lifestyle or rhythm of learning is preferable, they will nonetheless need to strategically plan for further development to avoid stagnation or worse. I reason that because change is continuous, learning must also be continuous. Kotter explains:<sup>536</sup>

In a static world, we can learn virtually everything we need to know in life by the time we are fifteen, and few of us are called on to provide leadership. In an ever changing world, we can never learn it all, even if we keep growing into our nineties, and the development of leadership skills becomes relevant to an ever-increasing number of people.

A period of active learning at the beginning of a leader's ministry experience will not suffice. Vocational preparedness should not be a one-off occurrence, rather a continuous and strategic activity.<sup>537</sup> Kotter's research shows that leaders who practise lifelong learning and development surpass the expected career peak of 35-45 years of age, even though they may have been seemingly 'insignificant' leaders at the age of 30-40. They may begin with less, but they outgrow the rest of their 'rivals'.<sup>538</sup> Although Kotter is writing in the context of the business leadership with its own objectives and working environment ('rivals' may even be within the same company), I consider the principles of learning and being vocationally prepared to be transferable. Even with significant years of experience in a

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<sup>535</sup> Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, pp. 122-124.

<sup>536</sup> Kotter, *Leading Change*, pp. 177-178.

<sup>537</sup> McLaren, *The Church*, p.114; 'three to four years formal training at the beginning of career will no longer suffice due to the nature of change in society'; see also Scott Wilson, *Making It All Work: The Art of Training and Development* (Denmark: Aponet, 2007), pp. 14 & 27; 'often people in organisations are only repeating what they learned fifteen to twenty years ago. ...Leaders have to consider life-long learning rather than front-on learning.'

<sup>538</sup> Kotter, *Leading Change*, pp. 177-178; cf. p.181; Kotter describes 'The Power of Compounded Growth', whereby the percentage of leadership growth, say 6% per year, is likened to a bank account – when compared to leadership growth of say 1% per year, the difference after 20 years is huge. He calls this the 'learning differential'.

particular role (Gladwell states that it takes at least ten years in any vocation to master it),<sup>539</sup> leaders not only need to have had training in skills for their field of ministry, but they need to assess their skills regularly.<sup>540</sup> Such assessment will need to be combined with action so as not to be stuck with ‘new thinking’ but ‘old behaviour’.<sup>541</sup> I find Kotter’s ‘mental habits’ for lifelong learning simple and uncomplicated:<sup>542</sup>

Risk Taking – Willingness to push oneself out of comfort zones.  
 Humble self-reflection – Honest assessment of successes and failures.  
 Solicitation of opinions – Aggressive collection of information and ideas from others.  
 Careful listening – Propensity to listen to others.  
 Openness to new ideas – Willingness to view life with an open mind.

Combined with a God conscious approach, I consider them useful in provoking the Christian leader to strategic action regarding their continuous development.

#### **4.5 ‘Process’ – Conclusions and Understanding the Journey**

I began chapter three by aiming to define the type and nature of leader who needs to be developed before going on to consider the appropriate means of developing and training such leaders in this chapter. In this context Gibbs heeds his own warning, that ‘when assembling a composite list characterizing the most effective or most successful emerging leaders, we must be careful not to create a non-existent superperson [sic].’<sup>543</sup> I suggest that if the distinctives are considered, as well as the means of developing a leader without removing them from the main context which has nurtured them, that is their church family, the individual ‘shape’ of each leader will be realised. The results will be both pragmatic but also mixed with faith and a vision of what God’s will is for the leader and their followers. Keel’s

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<sup>539</sup> Malcolm Gladwell, ‘Malcolm Gladwell’ (audio file/ interview), *Catalyst Podcast* 87 (07/01/2010), <<http://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/catalyst-podcast/id130079836>> [accessed 31/01/2010]; cf. ‘10,000-Hour Rule’ in Malcolm Gladwell, *Outliers: The Story of Success* (London: Penguin Books, 2009), pp. 35-68.

<sup>540</sup> Roxburgh & Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, p. 108. Cf. Alexander, ‘Missional Leadership’, p. 59; ‘leadership is a master discipline that requires a life time of skill development and continuous learning.’

<sup>541</sup> Supra 4.4.1 (fig. 1).

<sup>542</sup> Kotter, *Leading Change*, p. 183.

<sup>543</sup> Gibbs, *Leadership Next*, p. 113.

nine postures of engagement and possibility are useful in this regard, and remove the possible distance between leader and followers.<sup>544</sup>

Learning – from answers to questions  
Vulnerability – from head to heart  
Availability – from spoken words to living words  
Stillness – from preparation to meditation  
Surrender – from control to chaos  
Cultivation – from programmer to environmentalist  
Trust: – from defensiveness to creativity  
Joy – from work to play  
Dependence – from resolution to tension - and back again

The leader thus shares a journey as one who, ‘in one form or another, shows the way on that common journey.’<sup>545</sup> A learning posture will then lead to a shared unfolding story focused not on performance, but ‘emergence’ of the leader and those following.

Because of the incarnational nature of church leadership,<sup>546</sup> the leader’s journey is inherently personal to them. Skills and knowledge are essential, but it is more than the strategic acquirement of leadership tools. Adair suggests that ‘leadership grows by a natural process ...work with the grain of nature rather than against it.’<sup>547</sup> I suggest joining Adair’s approach with Clinton’s viewpoint, in which his studies note various patterns emerging in leaders’ lives, development phases which are common to all.<sup>548</sup> I would argue that Clinton’s work, although published over twenty years ago, presents relevant and enduring principles to the phases of a Christian leader’s journey, as he is not dealing with cultural trends, but human nature and experiences of God’s leading, citing biblical examples through to recent history. His ‘Generalised Time-Line’ is not intended to fit every leader exactly, but give perspective to what is happening at any given point of their journey:<sup>549</sup>

Phase 1 – Sovereign Foundations  
Phase 2 – Inner Growth  
Phase 3 – Ministry Maturing  
Phase 4 – Life Maturing  
Phase 5 – Convergence  
Phase 6 – Afterglow/ Celebration

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<sup>544</sup> Keel, *Intuitive Leadership*, pp. 227-254.

<sup>545</sup> Adair, *The Leadership of Jesus*, p. 91.

<sup>546</sup> Supra 3.4.2.

<sup>547</sup> John Adair, *How to Grow Leaders: The Seven Key Principles of Effective Leadership Development* (London: Kogan Page Limited, 2005), p. 4.

<sup>548</sup> Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, p. 40.

<sup>549</sup> Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, pp. 43-44.

The leader's progress and activity may not be as one would strategically plan it, especially when 'ministry activity or fruitfulness is not the focus of phases I, II and III. God is primarily working *in* the leader, not *through* him or her.'<sup>550</sup> I agree with the critical notion in Clinton's model; that mature effective leadership begins and is achieved by an appreciation for the development of a leader's interior life which then equips and strengthens them for exterior tasks and roles. Timing is therefore an issue. Gibbs notes that Jesus spent thirty years in comparative obscurity to his three years of ministry. He claims that many leaders go through a period of obscurity as part of their training, entailing 'a time of breaking' as God makes them aware of their weakness and limitations; until a designated time when the leader has a clearer sense of destiny to be 'realised' in the company of others.<sup>551</sup> Stuart Bell also warns emerging pastors that relationships will also bring pain into their lives.<sup>552</sup> This however may also be part of the process of formation. Mark Batterson agrees that God is strategically positioning the leader, although 'the right place often seems like the *wrong* place, and the right time often seems like the *wrong* time.'<sup>553</sup>

The culmination of the first four phases, when correctly interpreted, lead to a convergence whereby gifting, experience, temperament and location are working together to maximum effect.<sup>554</sup> Yet for a leader to be true to the person they were created to be will mean accepting their faults as well as using their strengths according to Bill George.<sup>555</sup> The leader should develop their own leadership style, adapting it when necessary to the demands of a situation, but always remaining consistent with their personality and character.<sup>556</sup> It is my opinion that the leader

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<sup>550</sup> Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, pp. 45-46; Clinton references Warren Wiersbe, 'Principles', *Leadership*, 1.1 (1980), p. 81-88 [80]; 'God makes a worker, then he uses that worker to make a work.'

<sup>551</sup> Gibbs, *Leadership Next*, p. 136; c.f. Sweet, *So Beautiful*, p. 89; with reference to Acts 9:6, Sweet notes that the Apostle Paul was not given a 'blueprint' of his future ministry immediately after his Damascus Road experience, but simply told where to go, where upon he would receive further instructions.

<sup>552</sup> Stuart Bell, *Sane Spirituality* (Tonbridge: Sovereign World Ltd, 2004), pp.181-82; Referencing Paul's second letter to Timothy (2 Tim. 4:9-22), he notes that there will be those who not only need to move on from serving alongside them, but also those who will desert and even cause harm to their leaders.

<sup>553</sup> Mark Batterson, *In a Pit with a Lion on a Snowy Day: How to Survive and Thrive when Opportunity Roars* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah Books, 2006), p. 12.

<sup>554</sup> Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, p. 32.

<sup>555</sup> Bill George, *Authentic Leadership: Rediscovering the Secrets to Creating Lasting Value* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), p. 14.

<sup>556</sup> George, *Authentic Leadership*, p. 13.

cannot cause convergence to happen at a specific time, but by correctly positioning themselves through training, relationships and the appropriate learning posture they will experience the 'making' of a leader in the process of life itself.

## PART THREE

‘When you look on leadership development in terms of life’s processes,  
you quickly realise who the academic dean really is. It is God.’<sup>557</sup>

*Robert Clinton*

‘Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them,  
that your progress may be evident to all.’

*1 Timothy 4:15 (NKJV)*

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<sup>557</sup> Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, pp. 15-16.

## **5 CHAPTER FIVE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

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## 5.1 Introduction

To this point, both the cultural and church network contexts have been researched, together with a literature review concerning the distinctives and development of leaders. Before introducing the interview findings and analysis, this chapter will begin by explaining in more detail the research design, that is, the methodology and methods employed in this research previously mentioned in the introduction.<sup>558</sup>

## 5.2 Methodology

By researching the development of leaders in a specific church network and cultural context, this research involves ecclesiastical analysis and cultural engagement. Therefore, I have placed this research within the discipline of practical theology.<sup>559</sup> The means of empirical research is qualitative. I have chosen qualitative and not quantitative research methods as I deem them most suitable to the task for the following reasons. Firstly, whereas quantitative research concerns examining the relationship between variables which can be measured, so that numbered data can be ‘analysed using statistical procedures’; qualitative research places more value on an inductive style, the focus on individual meaning, and the importance of ‘rendering the complexity of a situation’.<sup>560</sup> Qualitative methods of gathering data can include: observation, analysing texts, documents and images; interviews and recording and transcribing naturally occurring interaction.<sup>561</sup> Secondly, in qualitative research, ‘firsthand [*sic*] participation in the field under investigation is crucial.’<sup>562</sup> Swinton and Mowat use the analogy of a detective story for qualitative research, whereby the details of who did what, when, and under what circumstances are investigated, so that evidence can be formulated to ‘enable a fair judgement to be made’.<sup>563</sup> The expectation is not to solve the case,

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<sup>558</sup> Supra 0.6.

<sup>559</sup> Supra 0.2.

<sup>560</sup> Creswell, *Research Design*, p. 4.

<sup>561</sup> David Silverman, *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analyzing Talk, Text and Interaction*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London: Sage, 2006), p. 31.

<sup>562</sup> Osmer, *Practical Theology*, p. 60.

<sup>563</sup> Swinton & Mowat, *Practical Theology*, p.30

but to gather a cross-section of evidence to determine what is true and untrue. Thus the data must not only be competently gathered, but also accurately interpreted.

The chosen methodology or approach includes *grounded theory* as I have sought to start with 'real-world data and allow hypotheses to emerge.'<sup>564</sup> Due to my role in the area being researched,<sup>565</sup> there is also an element of *action research* to the work, whereby I have expected the research to identify any specific problems that might be found, and suggest necessary courses of action for the ministry I am leading. Furthermore, my methodology includes an aspect of *participant observation*, as I have been working with those I chose to research both before and during the period of research.

### 5.3 Case Study Strategy

As previously mentioned in the introduction, the chosen method is that of a case study drawing from both primary and secondary sources. Four main groupings of data or 'texts' were gathered, 'read' and analysed in the following ways:

- a) Cultural Context – Literature Review (*Secondary Sources*) and Observation (*Primary Sources*)
- b) Life Church Österreich – Observation (*Primary Sources*) and Documentary Research (*Secondary Sources*)
- c) Development of Leaders – Literature Review (*Secondary Sources*)
- d) Life Church Österreich Leaders – Interviews (*Primary Sources*)

Where there were both primary and secondary sources for a subject, they were presented in the same chapter. For example, I considered my personal observations from living in Austria for over ten years to be of value, and thus it was expedient to combine these with a literature review to gain a sufficient ethnographic evaluation of the cultural context.<sup>566</sup> Equally, I have an insider

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<sup>564</sup> Andrew Davies, 'What is Ministry Research?' (unpublished DMin seminar notes, Mattersey Hall Graduate School, 2009), p. 3; see also Osmer, *Practical Theology*, pp. 50-52.

<sup>565</sup> Supra 0.5 & 5.5

<sup>566</sup> David Silverman, *A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonably Cheap Book about Qualitative Research* (London: Sage, 2007), p. 82; Silverman provides a brief overview of the types of ethnography: *Structural* - 'The WHATS of social life' (mapping the woods); *Articulative* - 'The

working knowledge of the LCÖ network and how it functions, which contributed to chapter two. This was advantageous, as networks tend not to have the bureaucratic infrastructure of denominations such as yearbooks and ministerial lists; even minutes from meetings may not be recorded or filed so thoroughly.<sup>567</sup> Due to the smaller size and younger age of the network and their agreement for me to pursue this research, there were no problems incurred in gaining complete access to records and previous publications.

The use of observation as a research method demanded both a good understanding of my insider-outsider role and reflexivity which I have devoted a section of this chapter to.<sup>568</sup>

In summary, the strategy has been first to conduct research regarding the first three areas (a-c). By doing so, I was able to 'define the concept',<sup>569</sup> namely of Christian leadership distinctives and means of Christian leadership development in the context of a church network in Austria. It was then possible to design appropriate interview questions for LCÖ leaders (d).<sup>570</sup> The Interview data has then been analysed before offering some conclusions.

## 5.4 Interviews

### 5.4.1 Method

Because this research is to some extent a *phenomenological inquiry*,<sup>571</sup> investigating particular people's stories and how they experienced their leadership development, the interview was an appropriate method for me to employ. I agree with David Silverman, that gathering an 'authentic' understanding of people's experiences is the main priority in qualitative research.<sup>572</sup> Through interviews I am

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HOWS of interaction' (chopping up trees); *Practical* - situation and agenda of those interpreting their worlds.

<sup>567</sup> Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, p. 297.

<sup>568</sup> Supra 5.5.

<sup>569</sup> Fink, *Conducting Research*, p. 113; 'content validity'.

<sup>570</sup> Monique Hennink, Inge Hutter & Ajay Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods* (London: Sage Publications Ltd, 2011), p. 117; Hennink *et al.* suggest that the interview guide should reflect the 'concepts that are embedded within the research questions and the conceptual framework of the study.'

<sup>571</sup> Fink, *Conducting Research*, p. 149.

<sup>572</sup> Silverman, *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, p. 20.

also better equipped to gain contextual sensitivity to the issues discussed as people make known their stories.<sup>573</sup> Swinton and Mowat point out that this narrative emphasis is not a problem in the setting of practical theology, as theology and religious experience are communicated primarily within stories.<sup>574</sup> This ideographic knowledge 'presumes that meaningful knowledge can be discovered in unique, non-replicable experiences.'<sup>575</sup> I consider this type of knowledge to be vital in understanding an individual's leadership development and in turn gaining an insight of how a group of leaders in the given context have developed and are developing.

#### **5.4.1.1 Interviewees**

As previously mentioned, interviewees were purposefully sampled<sup>576</sup> from the entire LCÖ network.<sup>577</sup> To gain experiences and opinions from different stages of leadership development, three types of person, each currently functioning in a particular leadership capacity, were chosen. I have labelled them as 'Senior Leaders', 'Associate Leaders' and 'Emerging Leaders'.

Within LCÖ, the churches function with a recognised senior leader who may also be the founder of the church. Even if they are not employed by the church, it is clearly known and published who the senior leaders are. Senior is not a description of age, but of role and responsibility.

All senior leaders have a team which leads the church.<sup>578</sup> An associate leader would be on such a team and is considered to be 'second in charge'; immediately next to the senior leader in authority and responsibility. Six of the nine associate leaders interviewed are also the senior leader's marriage partner, but they were nevertheless interviewed separately to make their interviews as unhindered or uninfluenced by the other as possible, so as to gain each

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<sup>573</sup> Silverman, *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, pp. 17 & 44.

<sup>574</sup> Swinton & Mowat, *Practical Theology*, p. 31.

<sup>575</sup> Swinton & Mowat, *Practical Theology*, pp. 49 & 40-41; e.g. one can never step into the same river twice; no two people can experience the same event in the same way. This is in contrast to nomothetic knowledge gained through a scientific method: i.e. subject to the three criteria: falsifiable, replicatable and generalisable.

<sup>576</sup> Creswell, *Research Design*, p.201

<sup>577</sup> Supra 0.6.1.2.

<sup>578</sup> With the exception of the youngest church plant in Lienz.

individual's strongest opinions on matters of culture, leadership and the church network, and avoid them simply agreeing with each other's opinion.

An emerging leader defines someone who is not on the leadership team of a church, but carries some leadership responsibility and is being prepared or developed in their leadership ability and calling.

With both the associate and the emerging leaders, I anticipated gaining some insight into how new leaders were currently being developed from within the churches. This was to be expected as most leaders in the network have grown into that role in the same church they are now serving in or through another church of the LCÖ network.<sup>579</sup>

All nine churches have both a senior and associate leader and six had at least one recognised emerging leader whom I could interview. This meant I could complete twenty-four interviews, gaining insight from the network's entire leadership.<sup>580</sup> I deemed the gender of the leader to be insignificant to the sample choice for two reasons: firstly there was no choice regarding senior and associate leaders as each church only has one of each. Secondly, gender does not influence the opportunities for people to lead and be developed within the LCÖ network.<sup>581</sup>

#### **5.4.1.2 Semi-Structured**

There are several interview styles that could be employed, but I chose a semi-structured approach,<sup>582</sup> for the following reasons:<sup>583</sup>

- There are specific topics I intended to cover – therefore an interview guide with particular questions could be carefully prepared to ensure these topics were dealt with.

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<sup>579</sup> Supra 2.3.5.

<sup>580</sup> Supra 0.6.3, re. limitations and delimitations.

<sup>581</sup> The network leadership produced a document explaining their theological understanding of the status of men and women and emphasising their inclusion of women in ministry; Helge Plonner, 'Der Status von Mann und Frau im Reich Gottes', (unpublished paper, 01/11/2005).

<sup>582</sup> Osmer, *Practical Theology*, pp. 62-63; Silverman, *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, p. 110; Other interviews styles include: *Focus group* - facilitate and then stand back and observe interaction; *Open-ended* - flexibility, rapport with interviewee, active listening; opened ended questions; *Structured* (verbal questionnaire) - neutrality, no prompting, no improvising.

<sup>583</sup> Bernard, H. Russel, *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Methods*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Oxford: AltaMira Press, 2002), p. 205; see also Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods*, p. 109.

- The interview could include open ended and close ended questions to allow issues and topics to develop or occur.
- I had freedom to follow ‘leads’ and ‘probe’.
- I could capitalise on the rapport that I already had with the interviewees, which is vital for this style of interview.
- It ensured efficient use of interviewees’ and interviewer’s time.

Due to the size of the network, the number of leaders to be interviewed was not huge, but comprehensive.<sup>584</sup> This number allowed for the time needed to conduct semi-structured interviews.

#### **5.4.1.3 Procedure**

The following procedure was adhered to in requesting, conducting and processing the interviews. All correspondence and information, whether written or verbal, was in the first language (primarily German) of the interviewee to avoid any misunderstanding.

Interviewees were invited per email to give an interview, which was followed up by a telephone conversation to arrange the details. They were then sent both a Participant Information Sheet explaining the purpose and format of the interview and issues of confidentiality together with the Interview Guide questions.<sup>585</sup>

Two identical Participant Consent Forms were signed by the participants at the interviews – one for the interviewee, the other for my records. By doing so, the interviewees had the opportunity to give signed consent (or not) to being interviewed and the interview being recorded. With a second signature they agreed to being directly quoted (or not) in this paper.

The audio recording of each interview was used to write a transcript in the language the interview was conducted. Both the audio file and transcript file names were coded to ensure confidentiality.<sup>586</sup> Interviewees have also remained anonymous in the final dissertation. The above procedure is in keeping with the Ethics Committee guidelines of Bangor University.

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<sup>584</sup> Supra 5.4.1.1.

<sup>585</sup> Appendix One

<sup>586</sup> Supra 6.1.

## 5.4.2 Design

### 5.4.2.1 Questions

#### *A. General questions about your current leadership role*

These 'opening questions' were designed to set the tone for the interview - to help the interviewee to become comfortable in speaking about themselves. Easy questions are asked that do not necessitate a specific opinion to be expressed; rather they encourage the person to begin to talk about their story and enable the interviewer to build rapport.<sup>587</sup> Nevertheless the answers help confirm their leadership role and responsibility, and reveal some of their leadership self-awareness and calling.

#### *B. Questions about your cultural context*

These two questions reflect the research from chapter one regarding the Austrian cultural context in an attempt to find out how it may have influenced the development of the leader. The interviewee is now encouraged to reveal more of their personal experiences and story.

#### *C. Questions about Christian leadership distinctives*

In this section the interviewee is directly asked to give their opinions. The questions reflect the Christian leadership distinctives literature review in chapter three.

The next three sections reflect the philosophical content of chapter four concerning Christian Leadership Development:

#### *D. Questions about development through training*

#### *E. Questions about development through relationships*

#### *F. Questions about development through continuous learning*

The questions seek first of all to establish what has been and is being done in these areas. The aim is then to get the interviewee to reflect on and form

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<sup>587</sup> Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods*, pp. 112-113.

opinions of their experience, and how appropriate and effective these approaches to developing as a leader have been.

#### *G. Further comments*

In this section the questions draw the interviewee back to the wider context of the LCÖ network researched in chapter two; to the task of the local church and network in developing leaders, also referenced in chapter three.

#### *H. Closing questions*

To avoid an abrupt end to an intense time of thought and self-disclosure, the closing questions were intended to give the interviewee a sense of accomplishment while gently concluding the interview.<sup>588</sup> Even so, they can provide further insight from the participant on the subject, which they were unable to express until that point.

The interview guide was submitted and approved by the Ethics Committee of Bangor University before being used for research purposes. Full length mock interviews with church leaders outside of the LCÖ network were conducted in both German and English. This helped to check clarity and the effectiveness of the questions, and adjust the wording when necessary. It also confirmed the estimated length of the interview and helped to fashion my manner and pace as an interviewer.

#### **5.4.2.2 Setting and Manner**

All interviews were conducted in the interviewees' homes or their church buildings. I wanted to meet them in the context of their daily lives to gain a better feel and understanding of how they live and their locality.<sup>589</sup> Furthermore, it was important that they were as relaxed as possible.<sup>590</sup> Whenever possible we were alone in the room (but not the building), to avoid distraction and any possibility of

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<sup>588</sup> Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods*, pp. 113-114.

<sup>589</sup> Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods*, p. 110.

<sup>590</sup> Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods*, pp. 110 & 121.



the interviewee fashioning their answers to suit anyone else present.<sup>591</sup> Although half of the interviewees have a good degree of English comprehension, I decided to conduct the interviews in German.<sup>592</sup> This ensured that the interviewees were able to express themselves freely and precisely in their first language. This posed no difficulty for me as I am fluent in German, although I did take the precaution of checking my German translation of the English questions with an English-German language expert. This was not necessary to ensure that the questions had been correctly translated, but rather avoid any possibility of misunderstanding in the strength or the nuance of each question.

I began each interview by explaining the written introduction on the interview guide which the interviewees had previously received per email,<sup>593</sup> and asking if they needed any further clarification before starting the recording and proceeding with the first questions. I wanted to be sure that they understood that it was not a test and that there were no right or wrong answers, rather that I was interested in finding out their opinions and experiences. I reminded them that it would take thirty to forty-five minutes before we started, and thirty minutes into the interview I asked them if they were happy to continue for another fifteen minutes as necessary.

Probes were used alongside the guide questions as necessary.<sup>594</sup> I sought to give each interview the feel of a conversation, both verbally and through body language, although it was to remain an interview.<sup>595</sup> During each interview, I had to refrain from adding my opinion or information gathered from experience, the literature review or other completed interviews. Not holding back that which was in my 'power to state' would have compromised the interview by possibly leading the interviewee to agree with or please me, instead of sharing their thoughts, words and story.<sup>596</sup> Occasionally I repeated back to the interviewee what I understood their answer or opinion to be. Due to the ambiguity of language,<sup>597</sup> it was important

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<sup>591</sup> Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods*, p.121

<sup>592</sup> 22 interviews in German and 2 in English.

<sup>593</sup> Appendix One; supra 5.4.1.3.

<sup>594</sup> Appendix One; probes were not included on the Interview Guide sent to interviewees.

<sup>595</sup> Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods*, p. 109; Hennink *et al.* state that it can feel like a conversation if done well, but only the interviewee should be sharing the story while the interviewer elicits it.

<sup>596</sup> Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion & Keith R. B. Morrison, *Research Methods in Education*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (London: Routledge Falmer, 2000), pp. 267-268.

<sup>597</sup> Cohen, Manion & Morrison, *Research Methods*, pp. 267-268.

to say what I had understood in order to confirm what they meant. This was particularly helpful when a prolonged story was used in their answer, repeating back to them a shorter sentence what I had understood to be their point which they had made through a longer explanation.

### 5.4.3 Data Analysis

The analysis of the data has been an on-going process throughout the research.<sup>598</sup> Stake claims that analysis is ‘a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as final compilations’, and notes that the qualitative researcher is continually analysing, with or without ‘conscious protocol’.<sup>599</sup> I agree, this was my experience, but this does not remove the need for strategy and order to complete the analysis, rather to appreciate that I was continually analysing. For example, I looked for patterns to emerge while interviewing as well as the predetermined patterns provided by the interview guide based on my previous research.<sup>600</sup> I adopted John Creswell’s flow chart as a framework for the data analysis:<sup>601</sup>

- 1) Raw data
- 2) Organising and preparing data for analysis
- 3) Reading through data
- 4) Coding the data
- 5) Themes/ description
- 6) Interrelating themes/ description
- 7) Interpreting the meaning of themes/ description

The *raw data* was the interviews themselves – both my experience of conducting them and the audio recording of what was said. Immediately after each interview I made hand written notes of my observations of how the interview went, as well as commenting on some of the findings when I thought it would help me to remember.<sup>602</sup> *Organising and preparing data for analysis* entailed transcribing the interviews. A software programme was used which was able to automatically reference the time (location) on the audio recording on the transcription to help

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<sup>598</sup> Swinton & Mowat, *Practical Theology*, p. 175; Data analysis ‘should always be firmly linked to the research question and carried out simultaneously with the collection of data.’

<sup>599</sup> Stake, *The Art of Case Study*, pp. 71-72.

<sup>600</sup> Stake, *The Art of Case Study*, p. 78.

<sup>601</sup> Creswell, *Research Design*, p. 185; ‘Data Analysis in Qualitative Research (fig. 9.1)’.

<sup>602</sup> Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods*, p. 111.

with later referencing.<sup>603</sup> Swinton & Mowat insist that the researcher must 'immerse' themselves in the data,<sup>604</sup> and so having heard the interviews again, they were read through.

A process of *coding the data* then assisted in identifying themes and concepts, attitudes, values and perceptions. Codes can be developed on the basis of emerging information or be predetermined, to which the data must be categorised, or both. Two of Creswell's suggested codes provided the structure and flexibility needed: codes based on a literature review and 'common sense' accompanied by those which were not initially anticipated, unusual or of further conceptual interest.<sup>605</sup> Stake agrees, suggesting that the data is dealt with using the pre-established codes and then examined again to look for new ones.<sup>606</sup> Thus, a 'mass of data that has been generated begins to be formed into meaningful units which will illuminate the complexities of the situation.'<sup>607</sup>

The interpretation process can take insights spoken of in an interview about a particular situation and appropriate them for other situations. Hilary Randon writes, 'The unique situation is illuminated and at the same time insights are conveyed that exceed the limits of the situation from which they emerge.'<sup>608</sup> However, Creswell notes that the qualitative researcher's job is not to generalise these insights, but to supply 'as rich and thick description of the situation as possible'.<sup>609</sup> Swinton and Mowat do not agree, and I share their opinion, that shared experience can transfer from one context to another when it 'resonates' with experiences and situations of others.<sup>610</sup>

Swinton and Mowat note that interviews allow 'previously hidden life experiences to come to the fore and to develop a public voice'.<sup>611</sup> Silverman however warns that people may not tell their 'direct experiences', but

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<sup>603</sup> Both the mp3 file could be played and transcript typed up as a MS Word document within the same programme: 'f4'; <<http://www.audiotranskription.de/english/home>> [accessed 25/07/2011].

<sup>604</sup> Swinton & Mowat, *Practical Theology*, p. 175; 'familiarity with the original text of the data is essential'.

<sup>605</sup> Creswell, *Research Design*, pp. 186-187.

<sup>606</sup> Stake, *The Art of Case Study*, p. 79.

<sup>607</sup> Swinton & Mowat, *Practical Theology*, p. 175.

<sup>608</sup> Hilary Radnor, *Researching Your Professional Practice: Doing Interpretive Research* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2002), p. 40.

<sup>609</sup> Creswell, *Research Design*, p. 193; 'Particularity rather than generalizability is the hallmark of qualitative research.'

<sup>610</sup> Swinton & Mowat, *Practical Theology*, p. 47.

<sup>611</sup> Swinton & Mowat, *Practical Theology*, p. 33.

‘representations’ of those experiences. Direct objective access to the ‘facts’ may not be possible.<sup>612</sup> It is therefore essential that the interview data was thoroughly analysed and effectively interpreted.

#### **5.4.4 Validity**

Validating the accuracy of the research findings was imperative to ensure readers’ confidence in the study.<sup>613</sup> I have achieved this by maintaining the following approaches throughout the research process:<sup>614</sup>

- Openness towards the research process and personal reflexivity.
- Respect and absence of prejudice in listening to interviewees.
- ‘Participant validation’ by verifying and confirming opinions or stories with the interviewees during the interviews.
- Adhering to the Ethics Committee of Bangor University guidelines.
- Independent accountability through the doctorate supervisor.

#### **5.4.5 Observations**

All the interviewees appeared to be happy with their experience of being interviewed. Some felt more confident or comfortable having the interview guide in front of them during the interview and three had actually made notes beforehand on their copy of the guide. Some wanted to briefly read over the guide again before beginning, but other than those who had made notes, the interviewees did not appear to use the guide once the interview started.

None of the interviewees disagreed to having the interview recorded or giving permission to be quoted in this work. At no time was I asked to stop recording or to move on from a particular question or line of inquiry.

I discovered that it was more helpful to ask questions C.1 and C.2 regarding vocational skills and spiritual qualities<sup>615</sup> together or to inform the interviewee of the subsequent question ahead of time, so that their answer would focus in on the

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<sup>612</sup> Silverman, *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, p. 117.

<sup>613</sup> Fink, *Conducting Research*, p. 113; ‘Validity refers to the degree to which a measure assesses what it purports to measure.’

<sup>614</sup> Radnor, *Researching*, pp. 38-39; c.f. Swinton & Mowat, *Practical Theology*, p. 123.

<sup>615</sup> Appendix One.

current question I was asking. For some, however, it was almost impossible for them to honestly answer without mixing the two areas or slipping from one to the other and back again. I tried not to correct this, as I deemed a confident answer and opinion of more importance and more valuable to my research than my categories which had been formed during literature research and admittedly reflected my way of handling the subject.<sup>616</sup>

As expected, the senior leaders took forty-five minutes to one hour to interview due to their wealth of experience and the occasional need to ‘preach’ their answers. I found that I had to stay alert to digressions on the part of the interviewees and to judge whether such ‘departures’ would open up new and valuable perspectives. I wanted the interviewee to talk freely,<sup>617</sup> but when I felt the interviewee’s explanation or illustrative story was then leading to another one which was away from the subject,<sup>618</sup> I had to introduce a new question if I felt the subject had been exhausted, or ask the question again referring back to the point they or I had previously made. I tried not to be too quick in doing this, so as not to miss something that may become apparent during a flowing discourse. It was clear to me that some personalities needed to talk about things more to discover what their true opinion was.

Several commented that participating in the interview had been very helpful to them, because the questions had caused them to consider and evaluate some issues that they felt they had otherwise been overlooking.

## **5.5 *Researcher’s Role***

I will now elaborate on how I relate to this research as a practitioner and researcher<sup>619</sup> and how my understanding of this role is of importance to the nature and outcome of this research. Ward notes that a ‘consideration of where the writer is “coming from” has become a formal and structured part of many kinds of

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<sup>616</sup> Supra 6. 4.

<sup>617</sup> See 5.4.2.2.

<sup>618</sup> E.g. related themes to do with church planting, political opinions or the interviewee’s preferred topics or area of ministry.

<sup>619</sup> Supra 0.5.

academic enquiry',<sup>620</sup> and Arlene Fink writes that it is to be expected that researchers will bring their perspective to any study.<sup>621</sup> It is also my opinion that complete objectivity, particularly in qualitative research, is not only impossible, but that the unavoidable subjective element is acceptable within the discipline of practical theology and advantageous to the research. This however requires the researcher to be aware of their 'insider-outsider' status and practise sufficient reflexivity.

### 5.5.1 Insider-Outsider Status

My dual status as 'insider' and 'outsider' has benefitted my research in several ways. I am an English missionary who has been accepted into and has an integral role in the ministry of LCÖ. As an *insider*, I have unique access to and relationship with the leaders. Furthermore, my role in the network is that of facilitator and catalyst leader. I do not have any positional jurisdiction over any of those being interviewed (I am not their senior leader, nor am I directly involved in decisions regarding their appointment or role). Additionally, I have my own leadership journey (a significant part of which has been in Austria), skill base, and knowledge of the environment the leaders are working in which enhances my awareness and sensitivity to the issues. Not only has my fluency in the German language allowed me to make the most of valuable primary and secondary literature sources, but it has also enabled me to understand the subtle nuances in the words used and the mindset of the interviewees.

As an *outsider*, I am a researcher seeking to observe and gather new insights in the development of leaders within LCÖ. I have a research project to complete which is not necessarily the concern of those I am studying. I have a responsibility to the project and its readers which also distances me from those being interviewed. Furthermore, I have a different cultural heritage, upbringing and introduction to church life and ministry compared to those in the LCÖ network.

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<sup>620</sup> Ward, *Participation and Mediation*, p. 2.

<sup>621</sup> Fink, *Conducting Research*, p. 149.

### 5.5.2 Reflexivity

As an outsider, I have a degree of objectivity, but have needed to practise reflexivity in both interviewing and analysing the data. Swinton and Mowat describe reflexivity as a 'mode of knowing' that acknowledges that it is impossible for the one researching to position themselves outside of that being researched. Rather, their knowledge is incorporated 'creatively and effectively' into the work.<sup>622</sup> Ward's definition provides a helpful synopsis.<sup>623</sup>

Reflexivity is an intentional and disciplined form of reflection on how the personal, social and cultural context of the researcher not only affects what is researched, that is the choice of a particular field of study, but also the way that the research is conducted. It is a process of self-examination where the researcher attempts to disclose how personal, social and cultural factors have affected their work.

Donald Schön agrees that the roles of researcher and practitioner will have 'permeable boundaries'.<sup>624</sup> Past experiences, personal associations, values, assumptions and biases cannot and should not be entirely switched off, but critical self-reflection has been necessary throughout the research project so that I can monitor and respond to my 'contribution to the proceedings'.<sup>625</sup>

Reflexivity can be understood to be a 'correction of bias' or a means of 'informing readers of positions and partialities so that they are then able to make adjustments and judgements on what is being said'.<sup>626</sup> Ward argues however, that it is best not 'seen as an attempt to find some form of objectivity but rather it is an acknowledgement that the commitments of the writer are a part of the academic process'.<sup>627</sup> I draw some similarities with Ward in that my experience and viewpoint is that of a ministerial practitioner and also one who is involved in teaching others (albeit not at the same academic level) to be practitioners; which

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<sup>622</sup> Swinton & Mowat, *Practical Theology*, p. 59.

<sup>623</sup> Ward, *Participation and Mediation*, p. 3.

<sup>624</sup> Donald A. Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2003), p. 325.

<sup>625</sup> Swinton & Mowat, *Practical Theology*, p. 59; Reflexivity is 'not simply a tool of qualitative research but an integral part of what it actually *is*.' c.f. Savage & Presnell, *Narrative Research*, pp. 74-75; 'For these influences are the lens through which they see and describe what they study. Hence, those who do research in ministry themselves may need to recognize how their identities have been shaped by their dominant cultural messages.'

<sup>626</sup> Ward, *Participation and Mediation*, p. 3.

<sup>627</sup> Ward, *Participation and Mediation*, p. 4; see also p. 3; 'a process of disclosure and dialogue that is intended to make evident the situated and interested nature of academic work.'

has developed to a stage where it is deemed valuable to analyse and theorise these processes.

Reflexivity further aided my research in seeking to understand the relational dynamic between myself and those I was interviewing; my positionality.<sup>628</sup> Gillie Bolton writes, 'Reflexivity involves coming as close as possible to an awareness of the way I am experienced and perceived by others.'<sup>629</sup> Schön's comparison between the 'Expert' and the 'Reflective Practitioner'<sup>630</sup> helped me to reflectively position myself in my work and research. His comparison ranges from: 'I am presumed to know, and must claim to do so, regardless of my own uncertainty', to: 'Look for the sense of freedom and of real connection to the client, as a consequence of no longer needing to maintain a professional facade'.<sup>631</sup> To gain this 'freedom', it was not only necessary to reflect on how I saw myself in the interview situation, but how the interviewee perceived me to be. In a title respecting culture,<sup>632</sup> an interviewer researching for their doctorate can be intimidating for the interviewee, even though I was not seeking to gain respect for my (assumed) knowledge or maintain a (professional) distance.

While accepting the impossibility of conducting a 'perfect interview',<sup>633</sup> both the volume and usefulness of the data from the interviews met my expectations. In the next chapter the findings will be presented and analysed.

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<sup>628</sup> Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods*, pp. 122-123.

<sup>629</sup> Gillie Bolton, *Reflective Practice: Writing and Professional Development*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Sage 2005), p. 10.

<sup>630</sup> Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner*, p. 300; cf. p. 288, Schön speaks of the presumption that professionals or experts hold extraordinary knowledge 'rooted in techniques and theories derived from scientific research undertaken for the most part in institutions of higher learning,' and the attempts to 'demystify' their claim to such knowledge.

<sup>631</sup> Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner*, p. 300.

<sup>632</sup> Supra 1.2.3.

<sup>633</sup> Cohen, Manion & Morrison, *Research Methods*, p. 268.



## **6 CHAPTER SIX**

### **INTERVIEW ANALYSIS**

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## 6.1 Introduction

Having researched the Austrian cultural context and the LCÖ network in part one, and Christian leadership distinctives and development in part two, this chapter will serve the purpose of presenting, analysing and interpreting the interview data as described in chapter five. Reference will be made to the research of previous chapters as I seek to gain a fuller understanding of the development of leaders within LCÖ, and offer an informed critique.

The different leadership capacities are abbreviated as follows: Senior Leader (SL), Associate Leader (AL) and Emerging Leader (EL), followed by a number to indicate their respective churches (1-9). Additionally the line numbers of the interview transcript are provided in the footnotes when an interviewee is quoted or referred to (e.g. SL1\_20-22). When I have deemed it expedient to use the interviewee's own words or expressions, they appear in italics. The majority of interviews were conducted in German; however for ease of reading, quotes have been translated into English and the original German text is provided in italics as a footnote.

## 6.2 How Did You Get Here?

### Interview Guide, Section A:

#### General questions about your current leadership role<sup>634</sup>

It has been noted that the opening questions were principally to encourage the interviewee to begin to talk about their story and enable me to establish rapport with them.<sup>635</sup> Although they confirmed in the most part what I already knew about their leadership role, they also revealed several components which led the individuals into their current role.

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<sup>634</sup> Appendix One: Interview Guide, questions A1 & A2.

<sup>635</sup> Supra 5.4.2.1.

### 6.2.1 Sense of Calling

When asked, 'Explain to me how you came to be in your current leadership role', all but two senior leaders were quick to mention their sense of calling: *I would say it was simply calling,*<sup>636</sup> *I had a calling experience,*<sup>637</sup> *I had felt the calling for some time,*<sup>638</sup> *I had sensed before that it is a calling,*<sup>639</sup> *but it was really our desire, our calling.*<sup>640</sup> The word 'calling' was not always used, but implied in phrases such as: *it was already deep inside me, where I sensed, okay, I'd like to do that someday,*<sup>641</sup> *I somehow felt, to want to do something in this area, to plant a church, ...and that kept on increasing,*<sup>642</sup> *it has actually always been inside of me.*<sup>643</sup>

In contrast to the SLs, only one AL expressed a clear sense of calling which had led them to their current role.<sup>644</sup> Speaking of how they came into their role, some ELs spoke of two things coming together: *one's own interest is awakened and other people ask* [if one could lead a ministry],<sup>645</sup> and when asked, *at the same time the desire* [to lead] *came.*<sup>646</sup> Afterwards they begin to own or identify more with the ministry: *There is certainly a part of me there* [the ministry].<sup>647</sup> These expressions indicate a growing awareness of a sense of calling. I suggest two reasons for the discovered difference between the SLs and the rest regarding calling. Firstly, that the role of senior leadership requires the confidence to say, I am the one who should be doing this; I am in the right place at the right time, doing the right thing. Secondly, the ALs and ELs are still in the process of growing into particular leadership roles and may even be at a very early stage of their journey. Clinton speaks of the first three phases of leadership development where the focus is on the leader being developed more than the ministry being

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<sup>636</sup> ...ich würde sagen einfach Berufung. SL9\_9.

<sup>637</sup> Ich habe ein Berufungserlebnis gehabt. SL6\_13.

<sup>638</sup> Die Berufung habe ich schon länger gespürt; SL4\_32.

<sup>639</sup> Ich habe vorher gespürt, dass es so eine Berufung ist; SL2\_18.

<sup>640</sup> SL1\_18-19.

<sup>641</sup> ...es war eh schon was tief in mir drinnen, wo ich gespürt habe, okay, das möchte ich irgendwann einmal machen; SL5\_15-16.

<sup>642</sup> ...habe ich irgendwie empfunden, in dieser Gegend etwas machen zu wollen, eine Gemeinde zu gründen ...und das ist immer größer geworden; SL4\_21-22, 34-35.

<sup>643</sup> ...es ist eigentlich schon immer in mir drinnen gewesen; SL3\_7-8; cf. SL3\_13.

<sup>644</sup> I've come to Austria as a missionary with my own calling, to be here; AL1\_9-10.

<sup>645</sup> Die zwei Sachen kommen zusammen: eigenes Interesse geweckt und Ansprechen anderer Personen. EL3\_31-32.

<sup>646</sup> ...gleichzeitig ist der Wunsch in uns gekommen; EL6\_30.

<sup>647</sup> Es ist sicher ein Teil von mir dort. EL2\_20.

established.<sup>648</sup> These leaders have a general sense of calling, of wanting to serve God, to accomplish what they perceive God is telling them to do. As AL5 expressed, *where God needs me, I just do it; no matter what it is.*<sup>649</sup> They would not necessarily equate what they are doing now with their ultimate goal or calling. To use Clinton's model, they are in a phase where their ministry is still general and not specific; their current ministry experiences are forming and teaching them, which is part of the process towards a more precise ministry in the future.<sup>650</sup>

### 6.2.2 Serving and Need

This leads me to the next observation that leaders have often come into their leadership role through their willingness to serve. For example: AL8 said, *We came here in order to help, to support the church*<sup>651</sup> and speaking of what they did, AL3 recalls, *that which I saw, which was necessary to be done in the house.*<sup>652</sup> Thus recognition of a need was also a starting point for some in comparison to pursuing an interest or a defined sense of calling. This was the case particularly for AL4, AL5, EL2 and EL5.<sup>653</sup> EL2 explains, *leading the youth; that was simple, because the church was lacking; a sort of stopgap, which is not to say that I think: just a stopgap, that's okay, it was in God's timing, but actually a stopgap.*<sup>654</sup> EL6 admits to never wanting to lead a particular ministry,<sup>655</sup> but when later asked, *it was simply right at that time.*<sup>656</sup> I perceive that the combination of taking on a leadership responsibility to meet a need and then in retrospect acknowledging 'God's timing' is a common thread. Furthermore, many ELs were asked or invited

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<sup>648</sup> Supra 4.5.

<sup>649</sup> ...wo mich Gott braucht, da mache ich einfach mit, egal was es ist. AL5\_17-18.

<sup>650</sup> Supra 4.5.

<sup>651</sup> Wir sind hier her gekommen, um mitzuhelfen, die Gemeinde zu unterstützen; AL8\_7-8.

<sup>652</sup> ...was ich gesehen habe, was notwendig zu tun ist im Haus; AL3\_1-9. Note that the word 'house', refers to their local church, from the expression 'house of God'.

<sup>653</sup> ...weil ich es gerne mache aber zurzeit eben auch zur Not. AL5\_12-13; ...es war Not da. EL6\_28; ...es wurde von mir Sachen erwartet und ich habe dann mein Bestes gegeben. AL4\_15.

<sup>654</sup> ...in der Jugendleitung, das war einfach, weil Mangel in der Gemeinde war, irgendwie so ein Lückenfüller, das heißt jetzt nicht, dass ich denke: nur Lückenfüller, das passt schon, ist schon im Timing von Gott, aber eigentlich ein Lückenfüller. EL2\_14-17.

<sup>655</sup> Bei Jugendleitung war das anders, weil ich das nie machen wollte. EL6\_13.

<sup>656</sup> ...es hat einfach zusammen gepasst zu diesem Zeitpunkt. EL6\_23.

to lead or help to lead and did not take the initiative themselves.<sup>657</sup> I note that this does not imply that they were not willing, but they needed both the challenge and encouragement from another leader to get started.

### 6.2.3 Step by step or suddenly?

A third of the interviewees<sup>658</sup> made it clear that the leadership role they now have was something they grew into, or a result of a natural progression in their ministry.<sup>659</sup> EL7 describes the progression through *taking on smaller tasks and then the tasks became bigger and more, and through this I just grew into the youth work and then took on small leadership roles, which then just became more official*.<sup>660</sup> This is the same pattern as that described in chapter two.<sup>661</sup> Speaking from a context with significant responsibilities, AL2 mentions the same process; of *slowly growing into* their current role and responsibility by serving as a steward, then a home group leader and so on.<sup>662</sup> I suggest that this *getting there, step by step*<sup>663</sup> may be crucial in encouraging more people to get involved in leadership, in contrast to having to make a large decision to 'enter the ministry', the process is gradual.<sup>664</sup>

For some leaders however, the journey has not been entirely as planned or expected. The experience of three SLs reveals this. Describing how they came to one of their leadership roles, SL9 said, *it rather came about; it was not planned*.<sup>665</sup> SL8 claims that *I actually came here to help build up the church*<sup>666</sup> and not to

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<sup>657</sup> E.g. ...haben mich gefragt, ob ich mithelfen möchte - und das wollte ich. EL1\_15-16; Jaja. Das war der ...der einfach sofort: mach du! EL2\_14; ...haben mich eigentlich eingeladen in dem Bereich. EL3\_21-22.

<sup>658</sup> SL1, SL7, SL8, AL2, AL8, EL5, EL6 & EL7.

<sup>659</sup> ...at the moment this is more by natural development; SL1\_11; Es war ein natürlicher Übergang; SL7\_36; Aber es ist eigentlich für mich ein fließender Übergang, weil im Grunde machen wir das jetzt eigentlich auch schon. SL8\_12-13; Eigentlich bin ich in diese Rolle hineingewachsen. AL8\_1-7; ...Schritt für Schritt; EL5\_11; ...ich bin aus der Jugend raus in diese Rolle reingewachsen. EL6\_11; Reingewachsen, würde ich sagen. EL7\_13.

<sup>660</sup> ...kleinere Aufgaben zu übernehmen und die Aufgaben werden größer und mehr und dadurch bin ich halt in die Jugendarbeit reingewachsen und habe dann kleine Leiterschaftsrollen übernommen, die halt dann offizieller geworden sind. EL7\_15-17.

<sup>661</sup> Supra. 2.3.5.3.

<sup>662</sup> ...so bin ich langsam reingewachsen; AL2\_14-16.

<sup>663</sup> ...Schritt für Schritt, hineingekommen. EL5\_18-22.

<sup>664</sup> Supra. 2.3.5.3 (Podobri).

<sup>665</sup> Es ist eher zustande gekommen, es war nicht geplant; SL9\_22.

<sup>666</sup> ...eigentlich bin ich ...hierhergekommen, um mitzuhelfen beim Aufbau der Gemeinde; SL8\_21-22.

become the senior leader. In the same way SL7 states, *I have personally always seen myself as the second man; I never sought to become the senior pastor.*<sup>667</sup> Nevertheless, these leaders are content in their current roles, as is AL5 who thought they would eventually be a foreign missionary, rather than planting a church in their homeland.<sup>668</sup> Occasionally a leadership responsibility comes suddenly. AL4 recalls the surprise, *for I was stretched into something, I was not at that time.*<sup>669</sup> Unexpected church circumstances led to sudden senior leadership responsibilities for two SLs: *For me it came much earlier than expected. I hadn't reckoned with that.*<sup>670</sup> SL6 notes, *it just came much faster than we would have wished for.*<sup>671</sup> The new position was not unthinkable for both leaders, but it was not their choice of timing. However, I observe that the support given by the apostolic leader provided the necessary advice and confidence for them to work through the situation. I think this gives an indication of how beneficial the way in which the network leader functions is.<sup>672</sup>

### 6.3 The Cultural Context

#### Interview Guide, Section B:

#### Questions about your cultural context<sup>673</sup>

I was interested to hear the interviewees' observations and experiences regarding their cultural upbringing and the Austrian cultural context as it relates to their leadership development and role. What has and continues to influence them? Is the Austrian context advantageous or disadvantageous? Has it helped or hindered their development? I have analysed the questions in this section together because

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<sup>667</sup> ...ich persönlich habe mich immer als zweiten Mann gesehen, ich habe nicht angestrebt, da der Hauptpastor zu werden. SL7\_26-27.

<sup>668</sup> Und das ist dann z.B. Gemeindegründung geworden. Das habe ich mir jetzt nicht gedacht, das es sowas ist, Ich habe mir eher gedacht, irgendwo am Missionsfeld, irgendwo im Ausland. AL5\_19-21.

<sup>669</sup> Denn ich bin da in etwas hineingeschupft worden, was ich zu diesem Zeitpunkt noch nicht war. AL4\_13-14.

<sup>670</sup> Für mich ist es viel früher gekommen, als erwartet. Also mit dem habe ich nicht gerechnet; SL8\_31.

<sup>671</sup> Es ist halt dann viel rascher gekommen, als wie wir das gewünscht hätten. SL6\_29-30; see also: für mich fast über Nacht; SL6\_20-21.

<sup>672</sup> Supra 2.3.1.

<sup>673</sup> Appendix One: Interview Guide, questions B1 & B2.



I deem the cultural influences of one's upbringing and those of the culture at large to be so interrelated. I also reflect back to the research detailed in chapter one.

### 6.3.1 Das Sicherheitsdenken und die Unentschiedenheit

A significant proportion of the leaders mentioned the problem of *Sicherheitsdenken* 'safety mindedness' (SL9, AL3, AL7, AL9, EL1, EL6, EL7). EL6 explains: *I personally find the safety mindedness a major disadvantage, which is a strong part of the Austrian culture. This: better to make no mistakes, better not to risk anything.*<sup>674</sup> SL9 agrees; *prefer to take no risks, be sure that everything is secure, which is not necessarily a great support, rather a hindrance for a leader.*<sup>675</sup> It appears to be a mindset which is integral to the Austrian way of living. For example: *how you approach things, how one plans their studies, it is not always: the main thing is we are doing it because we like to do it, but rather with caution and safeguards.*<sup>676</sup> EL1 further notes that this can also be an advantage, but normally inhibits people from being confident and doing what they need to do.<sup>677</sup> EL6 sees this obsession with security as *a major shortcoming in our culture*, which people are fixated upon: *be sure to get a secure job, work there for forty years ...do not dream too big, do not think big.*<sup>678</sup> The result is an over-cautious approach which AL3 also experiences in church life, whereby people have the need to *know and check everything in advance, and thoroughly.*<sup>679</sup> The tendency to avoid taking responsibility was also deemed as unhelpful by those interviewed, which is presented by the prevailing culture as *being very difficult and [is] more often than*

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<sup>674</sup> *Ich persönlich finde das Sicherheitsdenken einen großen Nachteil, was sehr stark mit der österreichischen Kultur zusammenhängt. Dieses besser keinen Fehler machen, besser nichts riskieren.* EL6\_59-61.

<sup>675</sup> *...gehe ja kein Risiko ein, schau, das immer alles schön im sicheren Bereich ist, was ja jetzt nicht unbedingt eine tolle Unterstützung ist sondern eher ein Hemmnis ist für einen Leiter.* SL9\_33-36.

<sup>676</sup> *...wie man auf Dinge zugeht, wie man sein Studium plant, es ist nicht immer ein: Hauptsache wir tun es, weil wir es gerne machen sondern vielleicht mit vorsichtig und absichern.* EL1\_45-47.

<sup>677</sup> EL1\_49-51.

<sup>678</sup> *Und da glaube ich, dass wir in einem Land leben, wo Leute sehr drauf fixiert sind: schau, dass du einen sicheren Job bekommst, arbeite dort 40 Jahre ...träume nicht zu groß, denke nicht zu groß und das empfinde ich als großes Manko in unserer Kultur.* EL6\_69-72.

<sup>679</sup> *...muss vorher alles wissen und checken. Das Ordentlich.* AL3\_43-44.

not seen as negative.<sup>680</sup> EL7 is however of the opinion that the younger generation does want to take on more responsibility.<sup>681</sup>

A lack of risk taking, over-cautiousness and failure to take responsibility are cultural traits which were noted in chapter one, where I concluded that they contribute to a prevalent indecisiveness.<sup>682</sup> I also noted the issue of neutrality that can limit decisiveness.<sup>683</sup> SL9 and AL7 are adamant that the Austrian neutral consciousness weakens the ability to express strong opinions which they consider are sometimes necessary in order to lead. AL7 notes the contrast to their experience of the typically German mindset, saying that it is not typically Austrian to *form one's own opinion, to stand by it, and to communicate it*.<sup>684</sup> SL9's own words speak volumes as they describe the necessity for security, to be reserved, to try to fit in, for *the whole consciousness of Austria is to be neutral. Really a neutral country and that is simply in the minds of the people as well: we are neutral; we have a neutral view on things. Although behind the scenes we already have an opinion of course*.<sup>685</sup> The interviewees thus revealed a blend of *Sicherheitsdenken* and neutrality in the Austrian culture which they recognise can be a hindrance to their leadership and development.

### 6.3.2 Kleindenken und Minderwertigkeit

When speaking of the above issues, some interviewees also mentioned small thinking and feelings of inferiority. For example, SL9's upbringing was *not to think too big. Rather think small, be good, do not be too loud*...<sup>686</sup> Small thinking can be understood to be a national trait as well as a personal or family issue. SL1 spoke of the *village mentality* of smallness which they consider to be the culture of a

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<sup>680</sup> ...wird sehr schwer dargestellt und das würde ich eher als negativ sehen. EL7\_63-64.

<sup>681</sup> EL7\_60-61.

<sup>682</sup> Supra 1.2.1.

<sup>683</sup> Supra 1.2.1.

<sup>684</sup> *Eigene Meinung zu bilden, dazu zu stehen und das auch zu vermitteln*. AL7\_24-29.

<sup>685</sup> ...das ganze Bewusstsein Österreichs, neutral zu sein. So ein neutrales Land und das ist auch in den Köpfen der Leute einfach: wir sind neutral, wir haben eine neutrale Ansicht über Dinge. Obwohl wir hinter den Kulissen natürlich schon auch eine Meinung haben. SL9\_57-63.

<sup>686</sup> Was auch eher gehemmt hat in der Hinsicht dann eher: nur nicht zu groß zu denken. Eher klein denken, schön brav sein, nicht zu laut sein und größer zu denken das war nicht Teil meiner Erziehung. SL9\_36-39. See also: ...sei ja schön brav Angestellter, geh nicht dorthin irgendwo einmal eine Firma zu gründen oder Selbstständigkeit sondern so Angestelltenmentalität, weil dann hast du deinen sicheren Gehalt und passt. SL9\_39-41.

small nation.<sup>687</sup> But it may have more to do with their neighbours than their size. Austria is a small and therefore perceived to be an insignificant nation compared to Germany according to SL9; Germany is *somehow the big brother* which results in the tendency for Austrians to think small.<sup>688</sup> SL7 connects this small thinking to an inferiority complex in the culture - also noting that the Germans are perceived as always being *the greater ones, the good ones, we can do nothing, it is not thought that you are capable of much in society*.<sup>689</sup> AL3 is of the opinion that this *Kleindenken* 'small thinking' also influences Christians: *I notice it in myself and also in the church that we have very little confidence, although we are very talented in different ways, economically, musically and in different ways have great key people*.<sup>690</sup> I consider it important that Christian leaders acknowledge that they are not immune to this small thinking and inferiority problem, for by acknowledging it they are then in a position to contend with it.

### 6.3.3 Führer-Angst

The fear of leadership in chapter one,<sup>691</sup> was also referred to by five of the interviewees (SL8, AL1, AL5, AL9 and EL3). AL9 confirmed my suggested origin of this tendency: *Because of school education and what we learnt about the Second World War, how bad a dictator is or how it was with Hitler, one certainly has a cautious approach as a leader*.<sup>692</sup> They concluded that a leader is seen as a negative occupation.<sup>693</sup> AL1 also commented, *I think some of it is historical, particularly strong forms of leadership, I think Austria's history doesn't help*

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<sup>687</sup> ...is a culture of a small nation; SL1\_50; there is like that village mentality that smallness; SL1\_51-52.

<sup>688</sup> ...wir sind als Österreich eher ein kleines Land, halten uns für nicht so bedeutend, im Hinblick auch auf Deutschland, das ist so irgendwie der große Bruder und von dem her ist es eher klein zu denken; SL9\_57-63.

<sup>689</sup> Also minderwertig ist sicher etwas, was in der Kultur ist. Was auch im Verhältnis zu Deutschland, das sind immer die Großen, die Guten, wir können nichts, es wird dir wenig zugetraut in der Gesellschaft; SL7\_80-85.

<sup>690</sup> Ich glaube, dass das uns als Christen beeinflusst in Österreich dieses Kleindenken, dass wir nichts sind, wir sind einfach das kleine Österreich. Das merke ich an mir selber aber auch in der Gemeinde, dass wir sehr wenig Zutrauen haben, obwohl wir sehr begabt sind in verschiedenen Richtungen, wirtschaftlich, musikalisch und in verschiedenen Richtungen tolle Schlüsselleute haben; AL3\_40-51.

<sup>691</sup> Supra 1.2.2.

<sup>692</sup> Aufgrund der Schulbildung und was wir über den 2. Weltkrieg gelernt haben, wie schlecht ein Diktator ist oder wie es mit dem Hitler war, ist es sicher ein vorsichtige Herangehensweise wie ein Leiter ist. AL9\_27-29.

<sup>693</sup> ...ein Führer oder Leiter ist eher was negativ Besetztes. AL9\_37-38.

towards accepting or taking on board strong views.<sup>694</sup> I previously suggested that leadership that is very resolute and determined seems to be automatically treated with suspicion.<sup>695</sup> A lack of trust has been AL1's experience as they have observed that people question; *does the leader really have my well being at heart?*<sup>696</sup>

This fear has further ramifications for leadership development, in that the opportunity to lead is often avoided and discouraged by others. EL3 felt restricted, *because the Austrian culture is not enthusiastic about number one, that everyone is a leader, rather that there are certain leaders and the rest should follow suit.*<sup>697</sup> AL6 was more specific claiming that leadership is not promoted in the schools and universities, but rather equality in the sense of sameness; *make the strong as weak as the weak ...they always attempt to bring the level down, that is part of the Austrian culture.*<sup>698</sup> AL7 also mentioned this *Gleichheit des österreichischen Denkens* which prohibits standing out as a leader.<sup>699</sup> This may also take place in the way children are raised. AL5's experience reveals this. Their parents never said that they could not lead,<sup>700</sup> but *the thinking of my parents was to help, but not to lead.*<sup>701</sup> Serving was modelled to them, but never with the intention of taking on the responsibility to lead. AL5 continued, *That is, I believe, in the Austrian culture more so, that one tends not to be a know-it-all, at least from the part where I come from ...that one does not lift oneself over the others, rather, that one has a servant heart.*<sup>702</sup> AL5 admitted to this being a *plus-minus* situation;<sup>703</sup> the servitude appears to be a noble quality for any leader, but there remains the aforementioned

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<sup>694</sup> AL1\_100-103.

<sup>695</sup> Supra 1.2.2.

<sup>696</sup> AL1\_89-90.

<sup>697</sup> *Weil die österreichische Kultur nicht an Nummer Eins steht, dass jeder Leiter ist, sondern dass es gewisse Führungskräfte gibt und der Rest zieht nach.* EL3\_43-49.

<sup>698</sup> *Das wird bei uns in Schulen nicht gefördert, Leiterschaft, bei uns wird in Schulen Gleichheit gefördert, mach die Starken gleich schwach wie die Schwachen. Wir haben auf Universitäten kein Elitedenken, sondern es wird auch versucht, den Level immer runter zu geben, das ist ein Teil österreichischer Kultur.* AL6\_50-59.

<sup>699</sup> 'uniformity/ sameness/ equality in Austrian thinking'; *Weil in der Kultur die Haltung eines typischen Österreicher ist für mich: bloß nicht anders sein als die Menge, und wenn du Leiter bist, bist du einen Kopf höher, einen Kopf größer und das passt nicht in die Gleichheit des österreichischen Denkens;* AL7\_39-41.

<sup>700</sup> AL5\_34-35.

<sup>701</sup> *...das Denken von meinen Eltern her, eher so, mithelfen, aber nicht zu leiten.* AL5\_28-29.

<sup>702</sup> *Das ist glaube ich, in der österreichischen Kultur eher so, dass man eher ...nicht so Besserwisser ist, zumindest aus dem Teil, wo ich herkomme ...dass man sich nicht so überhebt über andre, sondern dass man eher ein Dienerherz hat.* AL5\_50-53.

<sup>703</sup> AL5\_58-59.

fear to stand above the rest - not with the intention to be 'over' others, but to be in a position to lead. Thus becoming a leader is discouraged.<sup>704</sup>

#### 6.3.4 Alles eine Fassade

The apprehension in taking on leadership responsibility together with the previously mentioned failure to express strong or decisive opinions is typified in AL8's experience: *My personal cultural background rather inhibited me, because I grew up in a small village, and back then it was all about remaining in the background, not to make yourself important; everything to do with strength or opinion or simply presenting oneself was to make oneself important.*<sup>705</sup> There is however an additional issue which emerges: *...only do not be too noticeable, but accordingly make a good impression, that is to represent something that looks good on the outside, no matter how it is at home or in life.*<sup>706</sup> SL9 shared this same pressure through their upbringing of having to keep up appearances: *you should always be aware of what the others think of you ...make sure that whatever you do is coordinated so that people see the positive ...that means do not take any steps, when you think, they may not please the others or may seem strange to them.*<sup>707</sup> EL3 said the culture was to *swim with the majority*,<sup>708</sup> SL8 spoke of growing up in an environment where they had to fit in, *where independent thinking was not asked for*,<sup>709</sup> and AL6 said that you must really be a *revolutionary* to stand out and not be concerned about what the others think of you.<sup>710</sup>

It was evident to me through the interviews that the use of a facade to keep up appearances becomes a way of living and thinking as early as childhood,

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<sup>704</sup> Supra 1.2.2.

<sup>705</sup> *Meine persönlichen kulturellen Hintergründe haben mich eher gehemmt, weil ich auch in einem kleinen Dorf aufgewachsen bin und da ging es damals darum, im Hintergrund zu stehen, sich nicht wichtig zu machen, alles, was mit Stärke oder mit Meinung oder einfach mit Auftreten zu tun hat, war, sich wichtig zu machen.* AL8\_15-21.

<sup>706</sup> *...nur nicht zu viel auffallen bzw. auch einen guten Eindruck zu machen, also etwas zu verkörpern, was gut aussieht nach außen, egal wie es dann zu Hause oder im Leben aussieht;* AL8\_15-21.

<sup>707</sup> *...dass du dir immer bewusst sein sollst, was andere über dich denken ...schau, was immer du machst koordiniert ist mit dem, was Leute das positiv sehen ...setz keine Schritte, wo du denkst, das könnte den aber anderen jetzt nicht so gefallen oder es könnte in den Augen anderer jetzt komisch sein.* SL9\_33-49.

<sup>708</sup> *Man schwimmt so mit der Mehrheit mit, das ist so die Kultur;* EL3\_53.

<sup>709</sup> *Gehemmt insofern, weil ich in einem kulturellen Umfeld aufgewachsen bin, wo eigenständiges Denken eigentlich nicht wirklich gefragt war;* SL8\_44-52.

<sup>710</sup> *Wenn du den Kopf aus der Masse raus stecken willst, dann musst du ein bisschen ein Revolutionär sein, weil dir egal ist, was andere denken.* AL6\_26-30.

confirming the tendency in adulthood towards Ringel's 'two room apartment' illustration.<sup>711</sup> I consider the resulting affect on interpersonal relationships, as well as limiting leadership development, a cause for concern when it is also to be found in church life as AL3 revealed; *simply this mentality: to make everything fine, that one does not stand out, not too extreme, simply what the others think of one, that is so important and one senses that also in the church.*<sup>712</sup> Equally, if the leaders remain aware of this hindrance, I propose that they will be able to combat it in their own leadership development and in the life of their churches.

### 6.3.5 Es wird schon schief gehen

The last cultural influence in my thesis regarding the 'Austrian soul' which was strongly reflected by the interviewees was that of a default approach to life of pessimism.<sup>713</sup> EL1 noted that the first attitude to a situation is never a positive one,<sup>714</sup> and AL3 spoke of a negative, complaining and critical attitude or mindset.<sup>715</sup> SL3 acknowledged this pessimism in their life, but explained that *through the relationship with God I was able to see things differently.*<sup>716</sup> Coming from another culture, SL1 had observed that they *did not have this pessimistic attitude, like what are the things that could go wrong if we do this? ...which is really a very Austrian thing and I guess in a couple of other countries in Europe it would be the same.*<sup>717</sup>

Two of the interviewees offered their understanding of where this pessimism has come from. SL3 considers the Austrian affluence to be a disadvantage. They reason that there is an expectation of perfection and when it is not met, people immediately complain.<sup>718</sup> SL7 referred back to their upbringing

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<sup>711</sup> Supra 1.2.3.

<sup>712</sup> *...einfach diese Mentalität: alles schön machen, dass man nicht auffällt, nicht zu extrem, einfach was die anderen von einem denken, das ist so wichtig und das spürt man dann auch in der Gemeinde.* AL3\_40-51.

<sup>713</sup> Supra 1.2.4.

<sup>714</sup> *Etwas Negatives ist vielleicht, dass nicht von vorne herein die Einstellung ist: ja, wir können das machen und das schaffen wir auf jeden Fall, also nicht immer so positiv.* EL1\_39-40.

<sup>715</sup> *Grundsätzlich diese negative, kritische Haltung, also das Raunzen und negativ sein.* AL3\_32.

<sup>716</sup> *...einfach dieses pessimistische. Diese Dinge sind in mir drinnen gewesen und durch die Beziehung mit Gott habe ich dann die Sache neu gesehen und ich merke einfach, die Sachen, die mir bekannt sind aber nicht mehr in mir drinnen sind.* SL3\_29-32.

<sup>717</sup> SL1\_39-43.

<sup>718</sup> *Österreichische Kultur ist eine wohlhabende Kultur und das, denke ich, ist ein Nachteil. Die Opferbereitschaft, die Bequemlichkeitszone zu überschreiten, es muss perfekt sein, sonst*

whereby they were always told that they were doing things in the wrong way, and one then tends to expect a negative result.<sup>719</sup> *It comes from this negative conditioning. You expect the negative, you expect that the others will be lucky and not you... And that is really an Austrian condition.*<sup>720</sup> SL7 continued by making a connection between Austria's pessimism and the above mentioned inferiority complex.<sup>721</sup> They are of the opinion that believers are not immune to the problem; that there is sometimes still the expectation *that things will work out bad.*<sup>722</sup> It may be expected that such traits remain with church members, even if the church encourages the opposite attitude. My concern however, is that although leaders may have dealt with this tendency, future leaders may still be hampered because of it.

### 6.3.6 Advantages

The interviewees did not mention many advantages to the Austrian culture in which they were developing and serving. Nonetheless, the following points are of note and may be capitalised on for future ministry and leadership development.

SL2 noted that *our culture is very much based on sociability, that is, on sitting together and talking.*<sup>723</sup> AL2 was also of the same opinion regarding this *Geselligkeit* 'companionability or sociability', and sees *this sitting together and drinking a coffee... [as] some kind of instrument* in leading people.<sup>724</sup>

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*raunze ich halt. SL3\_50-52; Ein konkretes Beispiel: ein tolles Seminarhotel, der Tisch hat sich gebogen, das ganze voll mit Essen, dann steht ein Typ da, nimmt ein Weckerl in die Hand und sagt: das ist doch von gestern. Das ist eine Kulturangelegenheit in Österreich, wo wir eine verwöhnte Kultur sind, wo also die Bereitschaft zu opfern, sich zu engagieren, wenn's unangenehm wird, ist es vielleicht nicht mehr ganz so interessant. SL3\_58-62.*

<sup>719</sup> *...wenn ich Dinge gemacht habe, ich war praktisch nicht sehr gut und der Vater hat immer gesagt: das machst falsch, das machst du falsch. Also eher mit diesem negativen Denken, was schon österreichisch auch ist. SL7\_56-60.*

<sup>720</sup> *Und das kommt schon von dieser eher negativen Prägung. Du erwartest eher das Negative, du erwartest eher, dass die Anderen Glück haben, du nicht... Und das ist schon eine österreichische Prägung; SL7\_71-75.*

<sup>721</sup> *Supra 6.3.2; ...auch, dass man sich minderwertig fühlt auch als Nation. Die Nation Österreich fühlt sich eigentlich schon auch sehr minderwertig. SL7\_71-75.*

<sup>722</sup> *Und das ist auch gemeindemäßig durchaus auch unter Christen immer noch ein bisschen, es ist eher die Erwartung, dass es schlecht wird. SL7\_80-85.*

<sup>723</sup> *Also ich habe gemerkt, dass unsere Kultur sehr auf Geselligkeit aufbau, also auf Zusammensitzen und reden; SL2\_56-59.*

<sup>724</sup> *Und dieses Zusammensitzen und einen Kaffee trinken, so irgendwie, das erleichtert das Ganze, das ist irgendwie ein Instrument, Menschen zu leiten. AL2\_62-64.*

Comparing Austria to their experience of working in other non-European lands, EL1 highlighted how the Austrian way of structuring and planning makes things easier to lead.<sup>725</sup> Another particularly Austrian trait was also seen as an advantage: *this stability, to remain, to hold on to traditions and not to throw them immediately overboard. This may be something negative or positive, but what I have noticed, what I already think is positive, is simply this stability, this solidity and permanence.*<sup>726</sup> While using it to their advantage, SL8 was aware of the adverse qualities of this characteristic. Such *Beständigkeit* 'stability or consistency' may also contribute to the Austrians' reluctance to accept other forms and expressions of church, as mentioned in chapter one.<sup>727</sup> SL6 was aware when they began leading their church that being in a *Freikirche* was seen as being in a sect.<sup>728</sup> Although it was harder for them at the end of the 1990s than now,<sup>729</sup> they still perceive that *my job as pastor in a Freikirche is not really regarded as a profession. It is rather somewhat off the wall.*<sup>730</sup> AL1 also spoke of a lack of trust ...general scepticism, there are obviously some incredible fears, regarding the style of church.<sup>731</sup> Nevertheless they do also see *coming to a little nation with something new is an amazing advantage.*<sup>732</sup> *I think the advantages of working here are that it is such virgin territory, that even the little beginnings, are already a lot. Also, the little that you invest as a leader has the potential of multiplying vastly.*<sup>733</sup> EL2 agrees, describing the *Freikirche* in Austria as still being *under construction* - because it is still new, there is space to make mistakes and develop which can be an advantage.<sup>734</sup> AL8 was the only one to hint at possible regional differences, their experience revealing that the people in Kärnten are relationally

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<sup>725</sup> AL2\_62-64.

<sup>726</sup> ...aber der Vorteil dabei ist einfach auch diese Beständigkeit, zu bleiben, auch an Traditionen festzuhalten und die nicht gleich über Bord zu werfen. Das kann etwas Negatives oder Positives sein, aber was ich einfach merke, was ich schon positiv finde, ist einfach diese Beständigkeit, diese Bodenständigkeit und Dauerhaftigkeit. SL8\_63-67.

<sup>727</sup> Supra 1.3.2.

<sup>728</sup> So, es war für mich, mein Gefühl als Österreicher: man hat sowieso gewusst, man ist in einer Sekte. SL6\_47-48; ...dass man in einer Freikirche war zur damaligen Zeit war man sowieso schon schrägen Blicken ausgesetzt. SL6\_50-51; supra 1.3.2.

<sup>729</sup> SL6\_55-56.

<sup>730</sup> Ich stelle mir vor, es ist schon meine Wahrnehmung, dass mein Beruf als Pastor in einer Freikirche nicht wirklich als Beruf angesehen wird. Das ist eher etwas Exotisches. SL6\_64-65.

<sup>731</sup> AL1\_82-85.

<sup>732</sup> AL1\_91-94.

<sup>733</sup> AL1\_67-69.

<sup>734</sup> Weil eben im christlichen Bereich, Freikirche, in Österreich nach immer eine Aufbausituation ist, nicht wie in England, dann sehe ich das positiv, dass es neu ist, aus dem Neuen heraus kann man aufbauen, Fehler machen, sich entwickeln, das finde ich gut. EL2\_36-39.



*much more open* and talkative, thus open to discuss matters of faith and church, whereas those in Vienna are more cautious and sceptical.<sup>735</sup>

SL3, AL1, AL3, EL1, EL6 and EL7 all mentioned the positive influence their parents had had on their leadership development. These range from helpful character strengths such as generosity,<sup>736</sup> sense of duty<sup>737</sup> and a developing self-dependence,<sup>738</sup> to being able to develop a strong faith.<sup>739</sup> Two emerging leaders whose parents are also actively involved in church life explained that they had been strongly influenced towards leadership. EL6 claimed: *I have a very strong cultural and family imprint regarding leadership.*<sup>740</sup> This was intentionally so,<sup>741</sup> whereas EL7's experience was that they grew up with this leadership influence in *a natural way...totally supported. Through which it was quite natural to assume leadership, to take the lead.*<sup>742</sup> For these emerging leaders, parental influence was an effective means to their leadership development which I had not identified in my thesis.

### 6.3.7 Concluding Comments

For the most part, the interviewees emphasised the disadvantages within the Austrian culture regarding their leadership development and ministry. The challenges were the same as I had highlighted in my thesis in chapter one except for the additional concerns regarding small-thinking and inferiority issues.<sup>743</sup> I consider AL7's summary accurate, whereby they listed the fears (potential) leaders would have to overcome: fear of *taking responsibility, fear of failing, being*

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<sup>735</sup> *Was ich speziell hier in Kärnten erlebt habe, ist der Vorteil, dass die Leute sehr offen sind, dass man recht schnell Freundschaften oder Bekanntschaften schließen kann und die Leute sehr gerne erzählen und man dadurch recht schnell einen Einblick bekommen kann in das Leben der Leute oder wie es ihnen geht oder wie sie ticken. Das ist nicht Österreich allgemein sondern diese Region. Mit Wien kann ich es vergleichen, da ist es wieder anders, da ist man vorsichtiger, die Skepsis ist größer.* AL8\_25-30.

<sup>736</sup> SL3\_42-45.

<sup>737</sup> EL1\_23-24.

<sup>738</sup> *Positiv ist sicher, ich bin nicht arbeitsscheu. Das war sicher einerseits durch die Großfamilie, ich habe ja zehn Geschwister, hat es halt immer geheißen: anpacken und mithelfen und eine gewisse Selbständigkeit war da natürlich gegeben und das hat mit persönlich geholfen und hilft mir noch immer, vor allem in der Pionierphase;* AL3\_22-25.

<sup>739</sup> AL1\_39-40.

<sup>740</sup> *Ich habe eine sehr starke kulturelle und familiäre Prägung, was Leiterschaft betrifft.* EL6\_42.

<sup>741</sup> EL6\_48.

<sup>742</sup> *Natürliche Art und Weise.* EL7\_46 *Unterstützt, absolut unterstützt. Dadurch, dass es ganz was Natürliches war, Leitung zu übernehmen, Führung zu übernehmen.* EL7\_52-53.

<sup>743</sup> Supra 6.3.2.

*criticised and being different, yes, I believe that is a huge problem.*<sup>744</sup> They further connected these fears to the lack of a *healthy personality*<sup>745</sup> reminiscent of Ringel's diagnosis.<sup>746</sup> However negative this sounds, I did not get the impression that the interviewees were currently suffering under these disadvantages, although they had had to confront them at some point in their leadership development. They remain acutely aware of them, which I suggest is to their advantage. Future leaders who have not yet begun their leadership journey may however remain hindered by these cultural elements.

## 6.4 Christian Leadership Distinctives

### Interview Guide, Section C:

#### Questions about Christian leadership distinctives<sup>747</sup>

In chapter three the leadership distinctives were divided between vocational preparedness and spiritual formation.<sup>748</sup> The interview guide dealt with them separately, asking an opinion of which vocational skills, and then which spiritual qualities, are important in order to be well prepared for Christian leadership. It soon became evident that the interviewees were unaccustomed to compartmentalising such issues in this way and thus constantly switched between matters of spiritual formation and vocational skills in their replies. EL6 even stated that they did *not really believe in this division!*<sup>749</sup> This is however encouraging, as I have argued for a synergy of these distinctives as opposed to a dualist understanding and practice of them.<sup>750</sup> The compartmentalisation may have been

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<sup>744</sup> ...Verantwortung übernehmen, Angst vorm Versagen, kritisiert zu werden und anders zu sein, ja. Ich glaube, das ist ein Riesenproblem. AL7\_52-60. AL7 addressed the problem further in their closing thoughts

<sup>745</sup> Ich glaube, das ist die Sache mit der österreichischen Kultur, dass sie Leute sehr schwer Verantwortung übernehmen oder Angst vorm Versagen haben, also dieser Grundsatz, warum wir keine Leiter haben, ich glaube dass man da spezifischer arbeiten und ansetzen sollten und das ist für mich diese Persönlichkeitsentwicklungssache, gesunde Persönlichkeiten übernehmen auch leichter Verantwortung oder haben nicht die Angst des Versagens. AL7\_403-408.

<sup>746</sup> Supra 1.2.

<sup>747</sup> Appendix One: Interview Guide, questions C1 & C2.

<sup>748</sup> Supra 3.1.

<sup>749</sup> Ich glaube nicht wirklich an diese Trennung! EL6\_95.

<sup>750</sup> Supra 3.4 & 3.4.1.

a necessary academic contrivance to clarify the distinctives, but the fluidity with which interviewees moved between spiritual formation and vocation skills reflects synergy and holistic thinking. I will therefore analyse these two interview questions together, but use the subdivisions used in chapter three for ease of reference.

#### 6.4.1 Theological Understanding

Over half (fourteen) of the interviewees mentioned the importance of theological and biblical understanding. AL8's opinion was typical: *...to have a love for God's Word. As a basic tool you simply need theological understanding and you must have knowledge of the Bible. And then just be based on the Word of God, not only outwardly, but for my life to be founded on it.*<sup>751</sup> It was generally expected that a leader has a working knowledge of the Bible and a basic theological understanding that goes beyond a devotional experience of the Scriptures.<sup>752</sup> The main concern was that leadership decisions and action is founded in Scripture, and that a leader would be able to answer questions of faith and be the final authority on theological issues within a church.<sup>753</sup> Reflecting this pragmatic approach, EL1 noted, *regarding theological knowledge, I think it depends on what one does,*<sup>754</sup> thus not committing every leader to the same level of theological competence. There was a reluctance towards the need for formal theological training (Bible college or/ and academic qualifications), although SL9 did state that *one should receive some level of theological education along the way.*<sup>755</sup> SL1 and SL7 were both concerned that a leader has a good understanding and overview of the whole Bible so that they are not consumed with just one theme or issue creating an imbalance.<sup>756</sup> Speaking metaphorically, SL1 explained, *There needs to*

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<sup>751</sup> *...eine Liebe zu Gottes Wort zu haben. Als Grundwerkzeug brauchst du einfach auch das theologische Wissen und du musst auch eine Bibelkenntnis haben; AL8\_51-53; Und sich dann eben auf das Wort Gottes zu gründen, und nicht nur äußerlich sonder mein Leben gegründet zu sein. AL8\_60-61.*

<sup>752</sup> SL1, SL2, SL5, SL6, SL7, SL9, AL2, AL6, AL7, AL8, AL9, EL1, EL3 & EL7.

<sup>753</sup> *Ich glaube nicht, dass du ein Theologe oder Lehrer sein musst, aber die Basis vom Wort Gottes, so Grundfragen, solltest du einfach beantworten können AL7\_101-103; dann sollten nicht alle Leute in der Gemeinde mehr theologisches Wissen haben als du selber, glaube ich; SL9\_111-112.*

<sup>754</sup> *Von theologischen Kenntnissen her, ich denke, das hängt davon ab, was man macht. EL1\_80.*

<sup>755</sup> *...ein gewisses Maß an theologischer Ausbildung sollte man schon mit auf den Weg bekommen haben; SL9\_101-102.*

<sup>756</sup> SL1\_122-123, 130-131; SL7\_198-201.

*be colours, and the leader, if he only prefers one colour, then very soon all the other colours will be pushed out.*<sup>757</sup>

The interviewees did not seem to have reflected on the type of theological understanding I have proposed regarding systemic and practical theology,<sup>758</sup> causing them to act as local theologians.<sup>759</sup> This would include, for example, dealing with the interplay of various texts outwith Scripture.<sup>760</sup> In fairness, none of the leaders have officially studied theology or pastoral studies to the academic level that would expose them to these concepts or terminology. That is not to assume that none of them engage in practical theology in the way I have suggested, but it did not appear to be a priority when discussing leadership distinctives. Köstenberger claims that theological training could be a weakness amongst *Freikirchen*<sup>761</sup> and there is a significant difference between the emphases I have given to theological rigor and that expressed by the interviewees.<sup>762</sup> This issue will be addressed later in this chapter.<sup>763</sup>

#### **6.4.2 Cultural Literacy**

Only two interviewees mentioned an understanding of culture as a leadership distinctive. *Where I am now? What was before us, what is the real cultural background, and why is the culture now dominated by such and such?* These are questions leaders should be asking according to EL3.<sup>764</sup> SL3 highlighted the practical application for leaders, in being culturally savvy: *The leader should be on the ball, understand people's concerns, therefore he must himself be a modern man or rather have an understanding of what is happening in the secular world.*<sup>765</sup>

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<sup>757</sup> SL1\_135-136.

<sup>758</sup> Supra 3.2.1.1 & 3.2.1.2.

<sup>759</sup> Supra 3.2.1 (Roxburgh & Romanuk).

<sup>760</sup> Supra 3.2.1.2.

<sup>761</sup> Supra 1.3.2.

<sup>762</sup> Supra 3.2.1 – 3.2.1.2.

<sup>763</sup> Supra 6.5.2 – 6.5.3.2.

<sup>764</sup> ...wo bin ich jetzt? Was war vor uns, was sind wirklich kulturelle Hintergründe und warum ist die Kultur jetzt geprägt von dem und dem? EL3\_94-95.

<sup>765</sup> Der Leiter sollte zeitlich am Ball sein, verstehen, was die Menschen beschäftigt, also muss er selber auch ein moderner Mensch sein oder bzw. der im weltlichen Geschehen eine Ahnung hat; SL3\_76-84.

Despite the disparity between the interviews and the emphasis I had given to cultural literacy,<sup>766</sup> most leaders showed that they were engaging culture with relevancy at different levels in their ministry. If culture is integral to ministry itself,<sup>767</sup> then it is a concern that they may not be giving due time to both reading and writing culture<sup>768</sup> and encouraging the same in the development of other leaders.

### 6.4.3 Leadership Skills

The leadership skills identified in chapter three were well represented in the interview data with the exception of leaders 'reproducing' themselves.<sup>769</sup>

#### 6.4.3.1 Relational

There was a significant agreement regarding the relational aspect of leading - seventeen interviewees stressed its importance.<sup>770</sup> They spoke of two areas, love for people and the ability to deal with people or people skills.

Regarding a leader's love for people, the comments were uncompromising: *...a true genuine love of people. Because it's not, leadership is not a project, leadership is people.*<sup>771</sup> *It is incredibly important that they love people ...people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care ...to have an attitude which encourages people to make the most of their lives.*<sup>772</sup> These and other remarks reflected the relational leadership argued for in chapter three as opposed to a hierarchical one.<sup>773</sup> Thus through interest, caring and partnering with people, the leader releases the capabilities of others.<sup>774</sup> SL6 admitted to having led their church as a *project leader ...rather like a manager* in its initial years with

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<sup>766</sup> Supra 3.2.2 – 3.2.2.2.

<sup>767</sup> Supra 3.2.2 (Ward).

<sup>768</sup> Supra 3.2.2.1 & 3.2.2.2.

<sup>769</sup> Supra 3.2.3.2.

<sup>770</sup> SL1, SL3, SL5, SL6, SL7, SL8, SL9, AL1, AL2, AL3, AL6, AL7, AL9, EL2, EL5, EL6 & EL7.

<sup>771</sup> AL1\_178-179.

<sup>772</sup> *...ist es enorm wichtig, dass sie Menschen leben. Du kennst das: people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. Ein aufrichtiges Interesse an Leuten zu haben und wie soll ich haben, ein dienendes Herz ist ein blödes, christliche Wort, aber du weißt, was ich meine, oder. Eine Einstellung zu haben, Leute zu fördern, das Beste aus ihrem Leben zu machen;* EL6\_83-87.

<sup>773</sup> Supra 3.2.3.1.

<sup>774</sup> Supra 3.2.3.1 (Maxwell, Nelson, Drane).

the subsequent lack of compassion.<sup>775</sup> In contrast EL2 explains leading from the heart: *this reflects the compassion, the grace that God gives you as a human being, which you can pass on;*<sup>776</sup> which resonates with Molitor's claim that 'leadership begins and ends in the heart.'<sup>777</sup>

Concerning people skills; *it is imperative that being able to deal with people is an ability [of a leader], because people are the core activity of the house of God.*<sup>778</sup> SL1 also maintained that being a *people person* was of uttermost importance, that is: *understanding where people are at ...and people can identify with what you're saying personally.*<sup>779</sup> Similar statements included, having a *knowledge of human nature,*<sup>780</sup> *understanding of people,*<sup>781</sup> *identify with others,*<sup>782</sup> *able to deal with people,*<sup>783</sup> *basic friendliness, politeness, helpfulness, just general basic people skills.*<sup>784</sup> AL6 insisted that it is not just something some can and some cannot do, but that it is a skill that Christian leaders must major in, and that it can be learnt.<sup>785</sup> SL7 explains that *what is really important is that one can deal with people, or one learns to respond to people ...a certain sensitivity in dealing with people; how I appear, how I treat them and so on.*<sup>786</sup> Of all the leadership distinctives, being relational and relationally capable was the most mentioned. This may be a result of the strong relational emphasis LCÖ has had since its

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<sup>775</sup> ...dass ich als Projektleiter die Gemeinde in den anfänglichen Jahren eher wie ein Manager geführt habe und da ist schon ein bisschen Barmherzigkeit vermisst worden. SL6\_93-96.

<sup>776</sup> ...dass sich das widerspiegelt, die Barmherzigkeit, die Gnade, die Gott dir als Mensch schenkt, dass du die weitergeben kannst. EL2\_104-105; EL2 continued to explain that the youth feel what the love of God is, simply because I love them; dass die Jugend spürt, was die Liebe Gottes ist, einfach, weil ich sie liebe. EL2\_120-121.

<sup>777</sup> Supra 3.2.3.1.

<sup>778</sup> ...der Umgang mit Menschen muss eine unbedingte Fähigkeit sein, weil ja Menschen die Kernhandlung des Hauses Gottes sind; SL3\_73-74.

<sup>779</sup> SL1\_97-99; SL1\_143-145; SL1 did however give caution: *although at the same time, being disconnected from people enough not to be a people pleaser, in the sense of that you almost follow the trend of what people like, instead of then what God wants you know.* SL1\_102-104.

<sup>780</sup> Menschenkenntnis; AL9\_82.

<sup>781</sup> ...die Menschen zu verstehen; SL5\_111.

<sup>782</sup> ...dass man sehr gut sich in andere Menschen reinversetzen soll; SL5\_109; Eine gewisse Art von Einfühlungsvermögen auch in den Menschen, mit denen man zu tun hat. SL8\_97-98.

<sup>783</sup> ...dass ein Leiter weiß, wie man mit Leuten umgeht; EL6\_99; AL3\_58-60.

<sup>784</sup> AL1\_137-138; People Skills sind enorm wichtig; EL6\_98.

<sup>785</sup> ...dass wir als christliche Leiter lernen, mit Menschen umzugehen, dass das nicht etwas ist, was man kann oder nicht kann, sondern dass das für uns ein Hauptfach wird, das Verstehen. AL6\_71-73; Man kann es lernen, hundertprozentig. AL6\_76.

<sup>786</sup> ...was sicher total wichtig ist, dass man mit Menschen umgehen kann oder lernt, auf Menschen einzugehen und irgendwo eine gewisse Sensibilität im Umgang mit Menschen, wie ich auftreten wie ich sie behandle und so. SL7\_142-145.

beginnings which has nurtured most of the interviewees.<sup>787</sup> I consider it significant because it shows it to be a characteristic of the network which is still valued and deemed necessary. Furthermore, my thesis not only emphasises the need to be relational, but requires this skill to develop others through relationships.<sup>788</sup>

#### **6.4.3.2 Reproduce**

The importance of a leader being able to reproduce themselves in others as proposed in chapter three was scarcely mentioned by the interviewees.<sup>789</sup> AL5 and AL8 both spoke of the importance of a leader being able to bring out the gifting in others, (even when the others don't initially see it).<sup>790</sup> The interviewees did however have more to say in this regard when talking about their involvement in the development of leaders, dealt with later in this chapter.<sup>791</sup>

#### **6.4.3.3 Leading and Managing**

It has been noted that management is not to be confused with leadership,<sup>792</sup> but that leaders within LCÖ require a certain proficiency in management due to the smaller situations they are ministering in.<sup>793</sup> This necessity was specifically identified by only a few interviewees who highlighted the ability to organise.<sup>794</sup> In fairness, the question was regarding *leadership* distinctives, so they may well have discounted mentioning any management issues. SL7 makes this admission: *I am not an extremely good manager. Of course, I have learned to organise myself and do things, but now I prefer to have people around me that are good at organising.*<sup>795</sup> I notice that they have a twofold tactic which deals with the leader-manager tension; they must develop a sufficient level of organisational

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<sup>787</sup> Supra 2.3.2; cf. 6.6.1 – 6.6.3.

<sup>788</sup> Supra 3.2.3.1 & 4.3.

<sup>789</sup> Supra 3.2.3.2.

<sup>790</sup> ...was gute Leiter sind, sind die, die in anderen Menschen Sachen hervorholen können, die man selber eigentlich in sich gar nicht sieht. SL8\_104-105; Genau die anderen Gaben heraus kitzeln; AL5\_83-85.

<sup>791</sup> Supra 6.6.4.

<sup>792</sup> Supra 0.3.1 (Kotter).

<sup>793</sup> Supra 3.2.3.3.

<sup>794</sup> SL7, AL4, AL8 & EL7.

<sup>795</sup> Ich bin nicht ein so extrem guter Manager. Ich habe natürlich gelernt, mich zu organisieren und Dinge zu machen, aber jetzt so vom Organisatorischen habe ich gerne Leute um mich, die da gut sind. SL7\_254-257.

competency to lead the church, but then deploy others to manage as it grows.

Two leadership skills were important to the interviewees which I had not developed in my thesis.<sup>796</sup> *Teamfähig*,<sup>797</sup> meaning to be able to work well in a team and to be team-minded, is one such skill. Although I consider that it has to do with the aforementioned relational skill and is implied in Gibbs' statement that 'Leadership is about connecting, not controlling ...bringing people together for the purpose of creative synergy';<sup>798</sup> it is useful to highlight it as an individual distinctive here, as people working together does not necessarily imply teamwork is taking place. The other skill was the ability to communicate and motivate others.<sup>799</sup> *One is more motivator, the other more communicator, but the communicating, the sharing of what God gives you ...leading people has a lot to do with communication and motivation.*<sup>800</sup> I consider it to be self-evident, that a leader should be able to communicate and articulate them self in a way that others both understand and want to join the cause, yet it could be that a church environment seeks to cope with a lack in this skill, because of a potential leader's quality of character, faithfulness and biblical prowess. In which case, I would argue that they are a potential team member, but not yet suited to be the leader.

#### **6.4.3.4 Vision and Change**

To have vision and be visionary, with the ability to steer people towards a goal was a necessary leadership distinctive for one third of the interviewees.<sup>801</sup> I equate this with initiating and successfully producing change proposed in chapter three.<sup>802</sup> No mention was made of capitalising and adapting to change from outwith the church,<sup>803</sup> but rather those interviewed focused on the input for change being God-given to bring direction for the church: *I understand it in this way, that one receives*

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<sup>796</sup> Supra 3.2.3; There are so many individual skills, that I needed to focus on skills that I deemed to have a particular bearing on the leadership required for planting and developing young churches in Austria.

<sup>797</sup> AL5, AL9, EL5 & EL7.

<sup>798</sup> Supra 3.2.3.1 (Gibbs) & 6.4.3.1.

<sup>799</sup> AL1, AL3, AL5, AL7 & EL6.

<sup>800</sup> *Einer ist mehr Motivator, einer mehr Kommunikator, aber das kommunizieren, das weitergeben, was Gott dir gibt ...Leute führen hat viel mit Kommunikation oder Motivation zu tun; AL7\_133-135.*

<sup>801</sup> SL3, SL4, SL5, SL6, SL8, AL2, AL5, AL7 & AL8; notably none of the ELs mentioned this distinctive.

<sup>802</sup> Supra 3.2.3.4.

<sup>803</sup> Supra 3.2.3.4.



it from God<sup>804</sup> ...vision is actually only something, that God has already placed inside, which then begins to take shape.<sup>805</sup> You must have the gift to think further, to set goals, and also sense, where does God want to lead us? These are spiritual abilities that you must have as a leader.<sup>806</sup> As seen in this quote, some perceive this to be a purely spiritual activity and ability. However, the concept is similar to Quinn's, stressing the importance of the leader internalizing the transformational paradigm before it is pursued as a group.<sup>807</sup>

Two SL's showed clear recognition of the relationship between vision and the change process; how they need to involve and release their team and others concerned in the process and also monitor and remain flexible through the change process.<sup>808</sup> I therefore quote them in full:<sup>809</sup>

A leader must be a person who can tolerate tension; of the vision that one has, which is already very clear for the leader, it is OK, on the other hand, it is not OK because the other people are not ready ...Just this waiting, until one is at the point, when the real project can begin; and this with patience and waiting, on the other hand, realising the need, something needs to be done there, on the hand one needs to wait until they are ready and the timing is right.

To formulate goals, to be able to describe goals, to be able to inspire workers, in our case, volunteers. To monitor these goals along the way, to check up on them (where are we on our journey to the destination?); to be able to bring correction as necessary.

I expected an emphasis on a leader's capacity for vision from leaders of a network formerly called 'Vision für Österreich',<sup>810</sup> with its history of and zeal for

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<sup>804</sup> *Ich verstehe die so, dass man das von Gott bekommt; SL5\_140-141.*

<sup>805</sup> *Und eine Vision ist ja eigentlich eh nur etwas, was Gott schon hinein gelegt hat und die sich natürlich dann zu formen anfängt; SL5\_144-145.*

<sup>806</sup> *Das heißt, du musst die Gabe zum Weiterdenken haben, Ziele setzen auch empfinden, wo will Gott uns hinführen, das sind geistliche Fähigkeiten, die müsstest du als Leiter haben. AL7\_124-126.*

<sup>807</sup> Supra 3.2.3.4 (Quinn).

<sup>808</sup> Supra 3.2.3.4.

<sup>809</sup> *Ein Leiter muss eine Person sein, die auch Spannungen ertragen kann. Von Vision, die man hat, die für die Leiter schon so klar ist, es geht schon, auf der andern Seite geht es nicht weil es die anderen Leute es so nicht ...Einfach dieses Abwarten, bis man auf dem Punkt ist, dass ein wirklich Projekt gestartet werden kann, und dabei mit Geduld und Abwarten andererseits die Not zu realisieren, da gehört was gemacht, auf der anderen Seite man muss warten bis sie soweit sind, dass das Timing passt. SL3\_97\_102; Ziele zu formulieren, Ziele beschreiben zu können, Mitarbeiter in unserem Fall freiwillige Mitarbeiter hauptsächlich dafür begeistern zu können. Diese Ziele auf dem Weg auch zu monitoren, also abzuchecken, wo befinden wir uns auf unserer Reise zum Ziel und Korrekturen eben auch durchzuführen, falls notwendig. SL6\_83-87.*

<sup>810</sup> Supra 2.2.4.

pioneering new churches and ministries.<sup>811</sup> It is however vital, that this is not only in the realm of inspirational language and ideals, but that leaders develop in their capacity not only to speak vision, but also to action the change it requires.

#### 6.4.4 Calling

The significance of calling in the experience of the interviewees has been described.<sup>812</sup> Several of the interviewees gave calling precedence as a Christian leadership distinctive.<sup>813</sup> Although it may not be more dramatic than an 'inner voice', it was nonetheless understood to be specifically from God. SL2 said that you need to have a calling in order to really be a leader, *and no human can give you that*.<sup>814</sup> EL2 claimed that it was important to know that what you are doing is God's plan and *that it is not your idea, but that God is behind it*.<sup>815</sup> EL5 also stressed the importance of the calling, because without it one could cause damage, there would be no enjoyment and one would have to force oneself.<sup>816</sup> More positively expressed, SL7 noted that *the calling makes it easier to carry things ...the calling brings a certain stability, so that you can withstand pressure*.<sup>817</sup> EL1 seemed to have identified this dynamic by stating, *it is important that one knows who one is in God* or one will say yes to everything and become distressed.<sup>818</sup> One must be sure of one's identity, so that one can *stand strong even when one makes mistakes or things go wrong*.<sup>819</sup> This echoes the claim that a call be necessary to see the leadership journey through.<sup>820</sup>

Even though they had a very precise and dramatic calling experience, AL1 explained that peoples' sense of calling can be that *a more gentle calling comes*

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<sup>811</sup> Supra 2.3.3.

<sup>812</sup> Supra 6.2.1.

<sup>813</sup> SL2, SL4, SL7, AL1, EL1, EL2 & EL5.

<sup>814</sup> SL2\_90-92; ...das kann dir auch kein Mensch geben; SL2\_95.

<sup>815</sup> *Als Leiter, ich glaube, das Wichtigste ist, dass du weißt, was du machst, dass das Gottes Plan ist. Dass das nicht deine Idee ist, sondern dass Gott dahinter steckt*; EL2\_85-86.

<sup>816</sup> *Ich finde, dass ist sehr wichtig, dass man das weiß, weil wenn man nicht für so was berufen ist, kann man viel kaputt machen oder es macht einen keinen Spaß und man zwingt sich eher*; EL5\_78-80.

<sup>817</sup> *Weil ich glaube auch, dass die Berufung dazu führt, dass du Dinge leichter tragen kannst. SL7\_163-164; Genau, ich glaube, dass die Berufung eine gewisse Stabilität bringt, dass du auch Druck aushalten kannst. SL7\_171-172.*

<sup>818</sup> *Es ist wichtig, dass man weiß, wer man in Gott ist*; EL1\_68-70, 57-59.

<sup>819</sup> EL1\_75-78.

<sup>820</sup> Supra 3.3.1.

upon their life, that there's just really a heart's desire.<sup>821</sup> EL2 described their experience of God's call: *I have never had a really clear "that is what you should do" in my life. I have always stumbled into things ...in retrospect I am thankful to God... because I realise what God had planned. ...I continue further and notice that God is leading me. At some point one realises, this could be God's plan.*<sup>822</sup> This resonates with Sweet's explanation of how the call works, as people can hear their call through circumstances and not necessarily a direct divine revelation.<sup>823</sup> There is a progressive experience of calling as I have described in chapter two, possible because of the lack of clergy-laity divide in LCÖ churches.<sup>824</sup> Thus what begins as using one's gifting, develops into a calling.<sup>825</sup>

#### 6.4.5 Character

The interviewees spoke almost unanimously of the priority of character,<sup>826</sup> matching this distinctive found in chapter three.<sup>827</sup> AL7 stated: *I would always place character above a gifting. With character, God can enable you, but abilities without character will result in it all going down the drain,*<sup>828</sup> echoing the opinion that gifting is no substitute for character.<sup>829</sup> SL4 agrees: *That which is in me and who I am, is much more important than what one can learn, what one can determine and implement.*<sup>830</sup>

It has been argued that developing a Christ-like character is essential for church leadership to be credible.<sup>831</sup> Thus it was no surprise that the interviewees

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<sup>821</sup> AL1\_146-147.

<sup>822</sup> ...das ist in meinem Leben nie so richtig klar "das solltest du tun". Ich bin immer so rein gestolpert, trotzdem merke ich, dass in dem, wo ich rein gestolpert bin, im Nachhinein gesehen ich Gott dankbar bin, dass ich da hineingestolpert bin, weil ich weiß, das ist das, was Gott geplant hat. Das ist nicht so das große "das ist mein Job und das mache ich jetzt" sondern eher ich gehe weiter und voran und merke, Gott führt mich. Man kommt dann irgendwo drauf, das könnte doch Gottes Plan sein. Wann du das in dir spürst, dann wird das klarer. EL2\_90-96.

<sup>823</sup> Supra 3.3.1 (Sweet).

<sup>824</sup> Supra 2.3.5.3.

<sup>825</sup> Supra 3.3.1 (Hirsch & Frost); cf. ...nur die Bedingungen haben sich verändert, das andere war gleich. SL4\_87-88; Also für mich hat sich da nur mehr der Platz verändert; SL4\_91-92.

<sup>826</sup> SL1, SL2, SL3, SL4, SL5, SL6, SL7, SL8, SL9, AL1, AL3, AL4, AL5, AL6, AL7, AL8, AL9, EL1 & EL5.

<sup>827</sup> Supra 3.3.2.

<sup>828</sup> Ich würde Charakter immer höher stellen als eine Gabe. Mit dem Charakter kann Gott dich befähigen aber bei den Befähigungen ohne Charakter geht's den Bach runter. AL7\_137-139.

<sup>829</sup> Supra 3.3.2 (Gibbs).

<sup>830</sup> Genau, das was in mir ist und was ich bin, ist viel wichtiger, als das, was man lernen kann, was man rundherum auffassen kann und umsetzen kann. SL4\_119-120.

<sup>831</sup> Supra 3.3.2.

spoke of integrity: *being honest to oneself and being honest to others*,<sup>832</sup> *what you are on the outside is similar to what you are on the inside*,<sup>833</sup> how the leader lives at home as well as in church, *how he lives his life, not only when he is being seen, on the stage or somewhere*,<sup>834</sup> thus avoiding an unhealthy dichotomy.<sup>835</sup> SL2 included a *certain transparency in the areas where one has weaknesses*.<sup>836</sup> A consistency between message and messenger<sup>837</sup> should result in the leader being an example.<sup>838</sup> AL6 pleaded that leaders should *live it out* as there are *masses of theorists and very, very few practitioners*,<sup>839</sup> reflecting Ward's thought that more influence and authority is now held by those seen as examples rather than teachers.<sup>840</sup>

SL7 noted the problems caused by character flaws and how people do not progress in leadership when they do not allow their character to be shaped.<sup>841</sup> SL8 also spoke of *a character that allows itself to be formed so that one can grow*.<sup>842</sup> Both SL6 and AL6 highlighted that the source for this maturing of character is 'other', citing the *biblical standard* and the *fruit of the Spirit*.<sup>843</sup> This agrees with Adair's 'sovereign values outside of yourself' and Nelson's reference to spiritual fruit and the process involved.<sup>844</sup> Speaking of their relationship with God, EL5 explained that it *forms your character, encroaches on your life and forms you*.<sup>845</sup> However, it cannot and should not be argued that these character qualities are

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<sup>832</sup> AL1\_164-165.

<sup>833</sup> SL1\_160-161.

<sup>834</sup> ...*wie führt er seinen Alltag, ich meine, jetzt nicht in der Gemeinde sondern zu Hause, allgemein, wie er sein Leben lebt, nicht nur, wenn er gesehen wird, auf der Bühne Oder irgendwo*; AL5\_107-109.

<sup>835</sup> Supra 3.3.2 (Walker).

<sup>836</sup> ...*gewisse Transparenz üben in den Bereichen, wo man Schwächen hat auch*; SL2\_106-107.

<sup>837</sup> Supra 3.3.2.

<sup>838</sup> SL5, AL5, AL6, AL8 & EL1.

<sup>839</sup> *Ausleben, ja. Wir haben Massen von Theoretikern und ganz, ganz wenige Praktiker. AL6\_76-89; cf. Ja, das ist für mich eigentlich die Essenz der ganzen Leiterschaft. AL6\_98-99; Nicht nur darüber reden oder predigten zu hören oder was auch immer sondern das auch wirklich praktisch umsetzen zu können. Ich denke, wir können sehr wenig erzählen, wenn wir es nicht selber erleben. AL8\_70-72.*

<sup>840</sup> Supra 3.3.2 (Ward); cf. *Nicht nur darüber reden oder predigten zu hören oder was auch immer sondern das auch wirklich praktisch umsetzen zu können. Ich denke, wir können sehr wenig erzählen, wenn wir es nicht selber erleben. AL8\_70-72.*

<sup>841</sup> SL7\_241-244.

<sup>842</sup> ...*ein Charakter, der sich auch formen lässt, wo man wachsen kann*; SL8\_127-128.

<sup>843</sup> AL6\_138-139; SL6\_145-146.

<sup>844</sup> Supra 3.3.2 (Adair, Nelson).

<sup>845</sup> *Das formt den Charakter und greift in dein Leben ein und formt dich. EL5\_68-70.*

exclusive to Christian leaders (as opposed to secular leadership), but rather the source is unique and essentially spiritual.<sup>846</sup>

Of the character qualities mentioned, the following were stressed the most: *Emotional stability and to be balanced.*<sup>847</sup> *A healthy personality, not suffering from low self-esteem or easily offended.*<sup>848</sup> *An ability to cope with pressure and persevere.*<sup>849</sup> *Reliable and trustworthy with a good work ethic, self-motivation and self-discipline.*<sup>850</sup> From the above list, I see a direct reference can be drawn to the necessity of 'emotional intelligence' proposed by Goleman, which goes further than the leader simply being a better person, to them being an organisational strength.<sup>851</sup> It was also evident to me that the interviewees were aware of the magnitude of this particular leadership distinctive, although not all the ELs stressed its importance. This is not to assume the ELs are completely unaware of character issues, as it is needed for the relational distinctive of which they spoke.<sup>852</sup>

#### 6.4.6 Christ-Centred

The interviewees expected that Christian leaders would be active believers and that a key distinctive would be their relationship with God.<sup>853</sup> They did not however assume that this would always be the case, and so emphasised that *attention should be given to the personal relationship with God, because it is that which supports ones whole life.*<sup>854</sup> SL3's description is both devotional and practical: *...it must simply be a source, which bubbles up every day, and out of that it all simply develops; the life comes into all areas of work.*<sup>855</sup> SL4 described this relationship as *the drive* that one has to do what needs to be done.<sup>856</sup> Thus Christ's lordship

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<sup>846</sup> Supra 3.3.2 (Nelson; 'seed').

<sup>847</sup> SL7\_149; SL8\_132; AL1\_178; AL3\_64-67; AL4\_48-50; AL7\_92-96.

<sup>848</sup> AL3\_65-66; AL4\_40-43.

<sup>849</sup> SL4\_96; SL8\_128-129; SL9\_78, 123-127; AL4\_41-42; AL9\_100-103; EL1\_63.

<sup>850</sup> SL2\_105; SL5\_124-125; AL1\_114-115; AL3\_56; AL7\_69-70, 83-87; AL8\_43-44; AL9\_58.

<sup>851</sup> Supra 3.3.2 (Goleman).

<sup>852</sup> Supra 6.4.3.1.

<sup>853</sup> Supra 3.3.3.

<sup>854</sup> *...auf die persönliche Beziehung zu Gott einfach zu achten, weil die ist es, die das ganze Leben trägt; SL9\_136-137; cf. AL1\_130; AL2\_98.*

<sup>855</sup> *...das muss einfach eine Quelle sein, die jeden Tag sprudelt und draus entwickelt sich einfach, da kommt das Leben in die ganzen Arbeitsbereiche hinein; SL3\_110-114; cf. SL9\_151-152.*

<sup>856</sup> SL4\_76-78.

then steers the life and ministry of the leaders.<sup>857</sup> I have called this distinctive being Christ-centred.<sup>858</sup> It can appear to be purely an act of devotion, however, the interviewees saw it as essential, not only for their own personal faith, but in order *to hear His heart*, to know God's will<sup>859</sup> and be able to take the risks and accomplish that which they believe He requires of them.<sup>860</sup> It is a proactive lordship (as opposed to simple acknowledgement); the leader is first and foremost a disciple.<sup>861</sup>

## 6.5 Development through Training

### Interview Guide, Section D:

#### Questions about development through training<sup>862</sup>

The next three sections of the interview (D, E and F) reflect the philosophical content of chapter four concerning Christian leadership development through training, relationships and continuous learning.

Development through training questions have been analysed together and the different types of training used as subdivisions for ease of reference.

### 6.5.1 Secular Training

Most of the interviewees had completed further or higher education such as a bachelor or masters degree, or an apprenticeship or job specific training or qualifications. Some saw elements of their secular training as applicable and helpful for leading in an ecclesiastical context.<sup>863</sup> For example, learning to counsel and care for people,<sup>864</sup> and gaining an understanding of human nature<sup>865</sup> were

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<sup>857</sup> SL6\_129.

<sup>858</sup> Supra 3.3.3.

<sup>859</sup> SL1\_148-149.

<sup>860</sup> *Risikobereitschaft, Ausdauer, das alles ist ja eine Frucht, das sind ja Früchte dann von meiner persönlichen Beziehung zum Herrn.* SL9\_151-152.

<sup>861</sup> Supra 3.3.3.

<sup>862</sup> Appendix One: Interview Guide, questions D1, D2, D3 & D4.

<sup>863</sup> SL5, AL2, AL7, AL8, AL9, EL1, EL2, EL3 & EL6.

<sup>864</sup> *Seelsorge und dieses "Menschen weiterhelfen", das Pastore, das war in meiner Ausbildung bzw. in meinem Beruf gegeben.* AL9\_129-131.

perceived to be helpful for leadership, although they were not part of a leadership training course. AL2 explains, *we learnt really well how to serve people, which I find important, because leadership is serving.*<sup>866</sup> In contrast AL6 estimated that eighty percent of the leadership training advice they receive is *to throw away*; but as they are in a continuous leadership training programme they anticipate this, and are satisfied with that which does help.<sup>867</sup> For them, the question is always, *how can I use this for practical leadership?*<sup>868</sup>

Others understood their secular work experience as being of value.<sup>869</sup> SL3 said that their place of work was where they learnt to deal with people and to lead a team.<sup>870</sup> SL6 claims that there were skills that they had learnt as a project leader which they took with them as they began working as a pastor.<sup>871</sup> SL4's experience was similar: *The work experience has been my training; and it was not until later, that I realised or noticed that it was the basis for the work that was also to be done in the spiritual.*<sup>872</sup> SL9 notes that they had almost the same role in the church as in their secular employment as the *boss' right-hand man* in a small team.<sup>873</sup> EL6 attempted to explain these phenomena: *You do not lead secularly so, and then in the faith, lead the people totally differently. You are always one person, you are always communicating; it is the same principles that work in both directions.*<sup>874</sup>

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<sup>865</sup> ...diese Sachen haben mir wirklich weitergeholfen im Verständnis, wie Menschen sind, Menschenkenntnis, und für mich selber, dass ich einmal mich anschauen kann, aus einem anderen Blickwinkel, nicht nur aus dem christlichen sondern auch aus dem wirtschaftlichen. EL2\_161-164.

<sup>866</sup> Wir haben sehr gut gelernt, Leuten zu dienen, finde ich sehr wichtig, weil Leiterschaft ist Dienst. AL2\_175-177.

<sup>867</sup> AL6\_205-208, 211-215.

<sup>868</sup> Bei diesen ganzen Ausbildungen ist die Idee für mich dahinter immer, wie kann ich das für praktische Leiterschaft anwenden. AL6\_176-179.

<sup>869</sup> SL3, SL4, SL6, SL7, SL9 & AL1.

<sup>870</sup> Umgang mit Menschen das praktisch zu machen. Mir kommt irgendwie vor, die Fahrschule ist auch ein Übungszentrum, wo ich ein Team leiten lernen kann; SL3\_137-141.

<sup>871</sup> Meine langjährige Ausbildung und Erfahrung als Projektleiter hat ich natürlich auf dem Gebiet des Zielesetzens, des Begleitens, des Monitorings und auch der notwendigen Korrekturmaßnahmen usw. hat mir natürlich sehr geholfen. Das ist für mich sozusagen natürlich mitgekommen, das musste ich nicht lernen wenn ich jetzt dann als Pastor begonnen habe. Das ist in mir so drinnen. SL6\_173-177.

<sup>872</sup> Die Arbeitserfahrung ist für mich Training gewesen. Und das habe ich später erst erfahren, gemerkt, dass das die Basis war für das was dann im Geistlichen auch ...Charaktertraining war es erst dann, wie ich auch im Geistlichen zu arbeiten angefangen habe. SL4\_169.

<sup>873</sup> Arbeitswelt eigentlich fast dieselbe Rolle gehabt habe, wie ich sie in Wien in der Gemeinde gehabt habe. Ich war auch die rechte Hand vom Chef und war auch ein kleineres Team SL9\_178-180.

<sup>874</sup> Du führst nicht Leute säkular so und im Glauben führst du Leute ganz anders. Du bist immer eine Person, du kommunizierst immer, es sind die gleichen Prinzipien die in beiden Richtungen arbeiten. EL6\_139-144.

This is evidence of holistic and non-dualistic thinking and practice,<sup>875</sup> and may be connected to the fact that most LCÖ leaders are bi-vocational,<sup>876</sup> and that most leaders develop gradually into their church leadership responsibilities without a clergy/ laity divide.<sup>877</sup>

## 6.5.2 Christian Leadership Training

### 6.5.2.1 Bible College

Five of the interviewees had completed full-time Bible college courses.<sup>878</sup> These were varied in format but all included teaching to give the students a *biblical foundation*,<sup>879</sup> AL1 claims *the theological insight helped me immensely*,<sup>880</sup> and for AL7 it was important *to daily ...sit under the Word, to be really influenced by the Word of God*.<sup>881</sup> None of the courses had the academic rigour of a degree or post graduate course; rather the focus was on future practical ministry and character development. SL1 and AL1 both spoke of the personal *formation*<sup>882</sup> through the *living conditions*<sup>883</sup> and *lifestyle of the school*.<sup>884</sup> EL1 also spoke of their character being trained.<sup>885</sup> AL5 explained that their third year was fifty percent practical experience such as leading teams on mission trips,<sup>886</sup> whereby *through doing I actually learnt the most*.<sup>887</sup> AL7 also profited from the mix of theory and praxis (morning lessons followed by afternoons serving in different ministries).<sup>888</sup>

Differences in the full-time courses can be seen in the interviewees' comments regarding their deficits. SL7 would have preferred to have been able to

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<sup>875</sup> Supra 3.4.1 (Pearcey, Newbigin, Sweet).

<sup>876</sup> Supra 2.3.4.

<sup>877</sup> Supra 2.3.5.3.

<sup>878</sup> SL1 (2 years), SL7 (1 year), AL1 (2 years), AL5 (3 years), AL7 (1 year) & EL1 (6 months).

<sup>879</sup> *War wirklich Fundament vom Wort Gottes dort um eine theologische Grundlage zu bekommen*; AL7\_184-187.

<sup>880</sup> AL1\_242-243.

<sup>881</sup> *Dann diese tägliche stundenlang unter dem Wort zu sitzen, wirklich vom Wort Gottes geprägt zu werden*. AL7\_177-182; the phrase 'to sit under the Word' refers to listening to someone teaching from the Bible.

<sup>882</sup> SL1\_212.

<sup>883</sup> *Theological, practical, even just the living conditions were geared to character training, but good character training*; AL1\_200, 203 & 206.

<sup>884</sup> AL1\_231-236.

<sup>885</sup> *Was für mich am Wichtigsten war, war, dass es einfach meinen Charakter trainiert hat*; EL1\_101.

<sup>886</sup> AL5\_133-136; AL5\_162, 167-168.

<sup>887</sup> *...einfach durch das Tun habe eigentlich am Meisten gelernt*; AL5\_150, 151-152, 154.

<sup>888</sup> AL7\_184-187, 192-195.



do a second year of Bible studies, but having to work and help plant a church at the same time made it impossible.<sup>889</sup> In retrospect, SL1 noted the lack of academic development, *because we had to spend a lot of time more in practical work, more in relationship building and prayer and preaching.*<sup>890</sup> AL1 noted the lack of teaching regarding people skills and the opportunity for self reflection.<sup>891</sup> Such omissions are not recognised at the time of training, rather later in the leaders' (SL1 and AL1) experience. I think the reason is that the student does not entirely know what they need when studying at a younger age. It is only with retrospect that they may acknowledge the benefits (in this case, personal formation) and deficiencies (such as theological rigour) of their chosen course.

#### **6.5.2.2 Correspondence Bible College and Leadership Courses**

Two year correspondence Bible college courses were completed by SL4, SL5 and AL4. SL4 explained that because they were already leading a church at that time, they were immediately able to apply what they were learning.<sup>892</sup> Although they received a *biblical foundation*,<sup>893</sup> AL4 found that they did not want to have to work out their own process of putting the information into practice; rather it would have been better for them when the course had included both factors.<sup>894</sup> Similarly SL5 found that upon finishing their course, there was a difficulty in practical application of what had been learnt, partly for themselves and more so in other students.<sup>895</sup>

Two particular correspondence courses that some LCÖ leaders have completed are 'Strategisches Lebenstraining' (SLT)<sup>896</sup> and 'Schule für biblische

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<sup>889</sup> ...gewünscht hätte, dass ich ein bisschen mehr Zeit zum Bibelstudium gehabt hätte SL7\_358; wo du dich jeden Vormittag mit diese Themen beschäftigst, nur mit dem, ich habe ja doch vieles neben, wie wir Gemeinde aufgebaut haben, habe ich einen Job gehabt den ganzen Tag und am Abend haben wir Gemeinde aufgebaut. Vieles, was ich gelernt habe, ist so nebenbei zwischendurch gekommen. SL7\_360-363.

<sup>890</sup> SL1\_225-227.

<sup>891</sup> AL1\_251-253, 259-260.

<sup>892</sup> ...parallel dazu, also es hat man im Fernstudium gelernt und dann praktisch gleich ...Ich war schon in der Leitungsfunktion in der Gemeinde und habe das einfach nur noch erweitert, weil mir Dinge gefehlt haben, die ich natürlich von säkular nicht mitbekommen habe und das habe ich dann aufgebaut; SL4\_191-194.

<sup>893</sup> ...dass ich ein bisschen biblisches Fundament bekomme, das war okay; AL4\_61.

<sup>894</sup> AL4\_84-87.

<sup>895</sup> ...in der Umsetzung, wie man das dann wirklich machen kann. SL5\_232-237.

<sup>896</sup> SL2, SL5, SL7 & AL4; The German-speaking SLT was run out of a collaboration between 'Strategic Christian Ministries' in California and the 'Institut für biblische Reformen' based in Switzerland which was dissolved in 2010; <<http://www.strategiclifetraining.com>> [accessed 11/06/2012]; <<http://www.gostrategic.org/>> [accessed 11/06/2012].

Geschäftsprinzipien' (SBG).<sup>897</sup> Leaders benefited from SLT in varying ways: SL2 and SL7 both emphasised *the Christian worldview* and the *intellectual* understanding it gave them.<sup>898</sup> SL5 noticed the *change of character* it formed in them,<sup>899</sup> and AL4 appreciated the *character training* and projects alongside the theory.<sup>900</sup> SBG was an aid to those bi-vocational leaders concerning *economic-Kingdom of God-thinking*,<sup>901</sup> as they wanted to develop a holistic understanding and approach to business and church life.<sup>902</sup> Notably, both these courses complemented LCÖ's transformational approach.<sup>903</sup>

### 6.5.2.3 *Timotheus Projekt and Leadership Academy*

I will now focus on the training initiatives of the LCÖ. Seven interviewees had attended the *Timotheus Projekt* (TP)<sup>904</sup> and nine the Leadership Academy (LA).<sup>905</sup> The main way in which the leaders said that they benefited from TP was in the area of character formation<sup>906</sup> and personal development.<sup>907</sup> They spoke of values such as serving others and being a follower having been instilled in them.<sup>908</sup> They were inspired to have vision, and follow God's call,<sup>909</sup> and encouraged to *hunger for more from God, and to want to experience God, and to want to trust God*.<sup>910</sup>

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<sup>897</sup> SL3 & AL3; SBG was also formally run by the 'Institut für biblische Reformen' and is now run by Vita Perspektiv (Switzerland); <<http://www.sbgnet.ch/>> [accessed 11/06/2012];

<<http://www.vitaperspektiv.ch/>> [accessed 11/06/2012].  
<sup>898</sup> ...vieles in mir bewirkt in Bezug auf eine christlich biblische Weltanschauung; SL2\_179-180; ...dass ich mit Leuten in der Welt auf einer intellektuellen Ebene oder verständlichen Ebene argumentieren kann. SL7\_330-334.

<sup>899</sup> ...was ich auch gemerkt habe an mir persönlich einfach die Charakterveränderung; SL5\_208-211.

<sup>900</sup> ...es ist Theorie, viel zu hören und zu lesen, aber auch viel Charaktertraining und viel Praktisches. AL4\_67-68; Du musstest Projekte zu Hause in der Gemeinde umsetzen; AL4\_61-64.

<sup>901</sup> ...SBG in Bezug auf das ganze wirtschaftliche Reich-Gottes-Denken sehr wichtig; AL3\_133-136.

<sup>902</sup> Supra 2.3.5 & 6.5.1.

<sup>903</sup> Supra 2.3.4 (Gaeta, Pearcey).

<sup>904</sup> SL2, SL3, SL4, SL9; AL2, AL3 & AL9; supra 2.4.1.

<sup>905</sup> SL3, SL8, SL9, AL3, AL4, AL8, AL9, EL3 & EL7; supra 2.4.2.

<sup>906</sup> ...war sehr viel Charakterschulung. SL4\_198-199.

<sup>907</sup> *Timotheus war in der Schiene Persönliche Entwicklung, wahrscheinlich 80% oder mehr*; AL3\_142.

<sup>908</sup> *Auch ein Nachfolger zu sein, wenn man ein guter Leiter ist, muss man auch ein Nachfolger sein*; AL9\_144-145; *Also nicht nur zu empfangen "Gott hat mich als Leiter berufen", sondern ich muss auch jemand dienen können*; AL9\_146-147.

<sup>909</sup> ...dass man Vision hat, inspiriert zu sein und den Ding einfach zu folgen. Den Ruf, den Herzschatz zu folgen, den man spürt. AL2\_188-190.

<sup>910</sup> *Hunger nach mehr von Gott und Gott erleben wollen und Gott vertrauen wollen. Diese Dinge sind dann schon sehr stark, wie soll man sagen, gefördert worden dadurch*. SL2\_170-174.

Thus spiritual formation was the main preparation for leadership that the interviewees received. Some were of the opinion that TP was lacking in providing vocational preparedness. AL9 notes that *theological treatises were definitely not included*,<sup>911</sup> and AL3 described how *strategic guidance* was missing which could have followed up development of the practical skills being taught.<sup>912</sup>

Those who had completed the LA were all of a similar opinion as to how it had developed and prepared them. The practical know-how and specific advice for various leadership situations was a common factor: *in depth and very practical ...Where you get tools in the hand*.<sup>913</sup> *It really prepared me ...particularly because I would be in a leadership team. ...all the seminars, all the topics that were discussed, were really with a view to what I needed*.<sup>914</sup>

When asked if LA had trained them in skills more than spiritual formation, AL7 replied *I cannot really tell so much difference, because one is so often linked with the other or has to do with the other*.<sup>915</sup> For a leader with more experience it served primarily as a means of self-reflection: *...simply because when one is confronted with certain topics, one sees where one stands or where one is; the self-evaluation*.<sup>916</sup> The interviewees thus indicated that the LA had achieved a balance of spiritual formation and vocational preparation. However SL8 mentions a factor which I quote in full:<sup>917</sup>

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<sup>911</sup> ...*aber theologische Abhandlungen, bei Timotheus war es sicher nicht drinnen*. AL9\_170-171.

<sup>912</sup> AL3\_147-153.

<sup>913</sup> ...*LA vertiefend und sehr praktisch und total super. Wo du dann Tools in der Hand hältst; AL3\_136-137; cf. Leadership Academy speziell ist sehr konkret in Dinge reingegangen und hat viel Tipps gegeben und viele hilfreiche Praktiken*. EL7\_146-147.

<sup>914</sup> *Sehr. Es hat mich sehr vorbereitet, weil ich die LA schon im Hinblick darauf gemacht habe, dass wir hier her kommen. In dem Punkt, dass ich in einem Leiterschaftsteam drinnen sein werde. Also noch nicht als Leiter, sondern in einem Leiterschaftsteam. Ich habe die ganzen Vorträge, die ganzen Themen, die besprochen wurden, wirklich im Hinblick: was brauche ich. Nicht nur das, sondern auch die monatliche Auseinandersetzung mit dem Thema*; AL8\_103-108.

<sup>915</sup> [War für dich viel mit Fähigkeiten im Job zu tun oder hat es auch mit deiner geistigen Formation zu tun bei der LA?] *Sehr viel von Know-how und Skills, wobei ich das gar nicht so sehr unterscheiden kann, weil das eine oft mit dem andern verkettet ist oder zu tun hat* AL7\_113-116; cf. *Viel im geistlichen, aber auch im Praktischen*. EL7\_156.

<sup>916</sup> *In erster Linie denke ich, ist es für mich eine Selbstreflektion gewesen, um zu sehen, wo steht man, was gibt es alles rund um dich herum, weil, einfach wenn man mit gewissen Thematiken konfrontiert wird, sieht man, wo steht man einmal oder wo ist man. Die Selbsteinschätzung*; EL3\_134-137.

<sup>917</sup> ...*für mich war es die ideale Kombination, weil ich aktiv eingebettet war in eine Gemeinde, im Gemeindeleben selber und die Academy war nicht losgelöst davon, das heißt, ich habe nicht irgendeine Schule besucht, also nur studiert und nichts praktisches gemacht sondern für mich war die Kombination eigentlich das Ideale. Und ich sehe eigentlich fast jede Ausbildung viel besser wenn sie in Kombination mit einem Praktikum auch gleichzeitig, wo du das auch umsetzen kannst und nicht nur das theoretisch hörst aber praktisch nichts machen kannst*.

...for me it was the perfect combination, because I was actively embedded in a church, in the community life itself and the Academy was not detached from it; that is, I did not just attend any school, to only study and do nothing practical, rather the combination was actually ideal for me. And actually I consider almost every training much better when it is in combination with an internship at the same time, where you can also implement it, and not only hear the theory but not be able to do anything practically.

I agree and consider the students' input from and opportunity to serve in their local churches to be essential to the effectiveness of the course. This should include regular opportunity for feedback and to (re-)discuss the course subjects – the quality of this aspect would enhance the course according to AL8.<sup>918</sup>

### 6.5.3 Concluding Comments

Chapter four highlighted that formal training is unable to stand alone as a comprehensive means of developing leaders.<sup>919</sup> The data shows through their opinions and training experience that the interviewees are aware of this. This is not to say their training was unprofitable and unnecessary. They have experienced spiritual formation and vocational preparedness through various forms of course and there continues to be an expectation that training can facilitate this.

#### 6.5.3.1 Format and Setting

Concerning visiting speakers at LA and TP, SL9 said that *to be exposed to people who themselves have already built something big in their field or service*<sup>920</sup> had an immense impact on the students, thus highlighting the advantage of teachers who are also practitioners.

The interviews have revealed that training is most effective when theory is combined with practice. The leaders were adverse to a separation of training and ministry, and being able to remain in their local church context was welcomed.<sup>921</sup>

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SL8\_236-242.

<sup>918</sup> *Ich sehe es aber nicht als großes Loch sondern ich sehe es als Ergänzung, dass man dann für Überpunkte vielleicht einen Mentor, mit dem man das nochmal besprechen könnte. hat. Das gab es nicht, in dem Sinn, dass man sagt: an wen wende ich mich jetzt, um das Thema nochmal oder ich habe Fragen, das ist mir jetzt nicht ganz klar. AL8\_135-139.*

<sup>919</sup> Supra 4.2.4.

<sup>920</sup> *...aber es vor allem auch, Leuten ausgesetzt zu sein, die selber schon was Großes gebaut haben in ihrem Bereichen. SL9\_211-215.*

<sup>921</sup> *Cf. This classical situation, how teachers see it; I am the teacher, you are the student, let me enrich you; that works in the book, not in practice; Diese klassische Situation, wie Lehrer das*

SL2 noted that character is not formed only by being taught *truth*, but by *using it in life*,<sup>922</sup> thus reinforcing the need for training which is holistic in its approach.

### 6.5.3.2 Theology

A need was expressed for more rigorous theological studies. SL9 notes that for them, *a foundational theological training ...like at a Bible College* was lacking from the LA or TP courses, although they concede that it would not have been possible or expected.<sup>923</sup> SL2 explains that an academic theological training was not encouraged or promoted in the early years of the network<sup>924</sup> for two reasons. Firstly, they had observed graduates who did not appear to be able *to live a spiritual life* when they emerged from the seclusion of Bible School.<sup>925</sup> Secondly, they were exposed to other people who could get the job done without theological qualifications.<sup>926</sup> SL2 did not consider this wrong, but did not want to remove the value of theological studies. This reveals a pragmatism which keeps the accomplishment of the mission the priority, but also indicates an awareness of possible lack in theological credibility.

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*sehen: ich bin der Lehrer, du der Schüler, lass dich von mir befruchten, das funktioniert im Buch, nicht in der Praxis. AL6\_391-395.*

<sup>922</sup> *Ich würde auch sagen, ein Problem, das ich auch sehe, bei den ganzen Jüngerschaftsprogrammen: sie sind natürlich gut und es ist Wahrheit, was vermittelt wird, aber man sollte nicht glauben, dass der Charakter schon dadurch geformt ist, weil man eigentlich erst durch die Anwendung im Leben das wird. SL2\_209-215; cf. Man muss es erleben, und dann ist es erst wirklich Teil von dir selbst. SL2\_225.*

<sup>923</sup> *...aber da fehlt mir wirklich eine ganz eine fundierte, theologische Ausbildung, wo du wirklich wie vielleicht wie auf einer Bibelschule oder so, dazu waren die nicht fähig, waren aber auch nicht dahingehend ausgerichtet. SL9\_232-235; So, es war keine Enttäuschung, aber es war nicht das Ganze? Genau, klar. Die Leadership Academy ist ja nicht ein rein theologisches Seminar. Oder das war Timotheus auch nicht. Dazu war es nicht fähig, aber das schon von vornherein klar. SL9\_237-240.*

<sup>924</sup> *Ich glaube wir waren damals noch nicht, wir hatten noch nicht so ein Bewusstsein davon, in der Ausbildung wie wichtig vielleicht auch eine akademische Ausbildung ist; SL2\_283-284.*

<sup>925</sup> *Das Bewusstsein von Anfang an mal zumindest zu haben: hey, das ist wichtig. Weil wir einfach auch gemerkt habe und vielleicht auch reagiert haben, weil wir gemerkt haben: Bibelschule ist nicht das um und auf, wir haben gemerkt: Leute kommen von der Bibelschule und die können ihr geistliches Leben nicht, es ist wie, wenn du unter eine Käseglocke kommst, du kommst raus und du hast keine, du sagst schon, das machen wir; SL2\_294-299.*

<sup>926</sup> *...und immer wieder mit den richtigen Leute in Kontakt gebracht worden, aber du merkst, diese Leute bringen dann mehr weiter. Und da hat uns vielleicht auch geprägt und ist auch gar nicht schlecht so, aber ich glaube, man muss aufpassen, dass man nicht das Kind mit dem Badewasser ausschüttet, würde ich mal so sagen. SL2\_305-309.*

### **6.5.3.3 Secular Advantage**

I had omitted the role of secular training and work experience in chapter four. This was because the research was done from the viewpoint of what the church and its leaders could be doing to develop their leaders. Nevertheless, although outside the jurisdiction of a church network, it is evident that such training, experience and know-how can be to a developing leader's advantage. The application of secular input to church leadership settings shows an absence of ecclesiastical and secular boundaries and such input should be acknowledged in the leader's development process. I suggest that some of the knowledge and skills they have gained may also serve as 'texts' in developing a practical theological approach to leadership and pastoral ministry.<sup>927</sup>

## **6.6 Development through Relationships**

### **Interview Guide, Section E:**

#### **Questions about development through relationships<sup>928</sup>**

The second proposed means of developing leadership is through relationships. Interviewees had already highlighted the relational aspect of leading,<sup>929</sup> but these questions encouraged them to reflect on their personal experience. I have dealt with the first three questions of this section in the order they were used.

#### **6.6.1 Who and how?**

All of the SLs and half of the ALs spoke of G. Gaeta as having had a relational role in their development as leaders. A. Gaeta had also had considerable input, and this is to be anticipated from leaders of a network which is predominately relational in nature.<sup>930</sup> R. Hirtler and W. Hirtler's relational influence is also mentioned by some of those whose leadership journey began in the early stages of the

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<sup>927</sup> Supra 3.2.1.2 (Crepes).

<sup>928</sup> Appendix One: Interview Guide, questions E1, E2, & E3.

<sup>929</sup> Supra 6.4.3.1.

<sup>930</sup> Supra 2.3.2.

network's history.<sup>931</sup> Half of the interviewees also spoke of their first pastors or youth leaders as having an input in their development. Other people included parents, partners and people at their home church such as the person who did monthly feedback with them during the LA course.

The ways in which these people were involved in developing the leaders ranged between close friendships and spontaneous advice giving, to strategic input, discipleship and serving together. SL2, SL4 and SL7 described how they would individually be invited to travel with another leader, to spend time with them, to see how they preached and ministered, and also to minister to people with them.<sup>932</sup> EL1 spoke of the role-model nature of the relationship to their youth leader, with whom they now work together in leading the church youth work; they had been able to observe character qualities which they also needed.<sup>933</sup> The interviewees perceived that those doing the developing were intentional in their dealings and had taken the initiative to be involved with them, although the relationships were reciprocal. AL7 was the exception, in that they had had to *seek out* the people that they wanted to learn from.<sup>934</sup>

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<sup>931</sup> Supra 2.2.1 & 2.2.2.

<sup>932</sup> Also Gianni, das war ein aufeinander zu gehen. Ich habe gespürt, ich gehöre hierher und er hat das auch gespürt und eines Tage ist er zu mir gekommen und hat gesagt: weil er in Österreich immer wieder so unterwegs war, speziell in Kärnten und in Wien, ob ich mit ihm fahren möchte. Und ich war eigentlich schon sehr bereit für diese Frage und habe das bejaht und da sind wir zusammen unterwegs gewesen. SL2\_247-251; Das ist schon von ihnen ausgegangen, dass sie in uns investiert haben also, da habe ich eigentlich dieses Timotheusprinzip: du nimmst jemanden mit, also ich war, wenn der Gianni gepredigt hat, bin ich ab und zu mitgefahren und habe mit gebetet oder mit dem Reinhard und habe da schon mitbekommen, wie er dienst oder wie er betet, einfach mit dabei zu sein. Also es war schon mehr dieses Jüngerschaft oder dieses Timotheusprinzip, das habe ich durch den Gianni kennen gelernt. SL7\_433-439; ...aber immer nur eigentlich in dem Zusammenhang, wenn wir praktisch irgendwas umgesetzt haben, wenn wir in eine Gemeinde gegangen sind, wenn wir gemeinsam gedient haben oder wo ich einfach von dem her viel gelernt habe [G. Gaeta]. SL4\_238-240; Also mit dem [R. Hirtler] war ich auch sehr viel unterwegs, der hat mich mitgenommen, der hat das Bewusst gemacht. Der hat gesagt, okay, fahr dorthin, komm mit, mach das, mach das; SL4\_244-246; ...das war schon strategisch und das habe ich als sehr sinnvoll empfangen. SL4\_251.

<sup>933</sup> ...Jugendleiterin war und jetzt arbeiten wir gemeinsam. Aber auch hauptsächlich als Vorbild, weil ich gesehen habe, wie sie Entscheidungen trifft und ihr Leben lebt und viele Charaktereigenschaften, die ich sehr an ihr schätze, ich mir gedacht habe, die will ich übernehmen oder die sind sehr wertvoll; EL1\_146-149; [Manchmal ist sie zu dir gekommen, manchmal du zu ihr?] Ja, genau. EL1\_157-158.

<sup>934</sup> Notably AL7's experience was outwith the LCÖ network: Ich hatte mir immer einen Mentor gewünscht, der mich in allem trainiert, den gab's nie. Das ist ein Wunschgedanke, den jeder hat. Aber ich habe mit immer Leute gesucht, von denen ich mir gewisse Dinge aneignen oder lernen durfte. AL7\_214-216; Das waren Pastoren oder andere Leiter oder Leute im Dienst, die Fähigkeiten, in einem bestimmten Bereich hatten. Dann habe ich mit ihnen gemeinsam gearbeitet und mir Dinge zeigen lassen und mich trainieren lassen; AL7\_220-222; [...von dir geplant?] Ja, von mir ging das aus; AL7\_224-225.

### 6.6.2 In what ways has it developed and prepared you?

The ways in which the interviewees considered the relational input had developed and prepared them were a mix of practical knowledge or skills (vocational preparedness) and personal development (spiritual formation). Some spoke of gaining an understanding of *how a church should be*,<sup>935</sup> *how to plant churches*<sup>936</sup> and *theology*<sup>937</sup> or specific skills such as *working with youth*.<sup>938</sup> On a personal level, they were made aware of *blind spots*<sup>939</sup> in their development and could practise *accountability*.<sup>940</sup> SL1 explained the variation: *in a way they had the right from me to really tackle things in my life, to other more relaxed relationships*.<sup>941</sup> *They were people who we talked about everything with*.<sup>942</sup> This is comparable with the aforementioned 'editability' endorsed by Sweet.<sup>943</sup> AL1 continued, *sometimes talking with these people has often given me confidence in what I'm doing*.<sup>944</sup> AL8's experience is typical of how leaders benefited from such relationships:<sup>945</sup>

By challenging, through encouragement, through living it; I needed the push, but also the confirmation that I can do it; but also to have someone who is there, where I am, who I can ask. To know that there is someone there I can fall back on who has experience and wisdom.

SL9 further explains that there was always a *basis of encouragement* and being *entrusted with something*, and that in an atmosphere of not having to fear

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<sup>935</sup> ...es hat mein Verständnis, wie eine Gemeinde ausschauen soll; SL6\_241.

<sup>936</sup> SL1\_248-250.

<sup>937</sup> SL6\_244-245.

<sup>938</sup> ...Umgang mit Jugendlichen; EL5\_148, 155-156.

<sup>939</sup> Ich denke, dass jeder Mensch an sich einen toten Winkel hat, so wie beim Autofahren, du siehst einfach nicht überall alles ein und dessen bin ich mir auch bewusst, dass ich auch an mir einen toten Winkel habe und um dem entgegenzuwirken weiß ich, dass ich um mich Leute brauche, die mehr Dinge sehen oder anders die Dinge einfach sehen. SL5\_311-316.

<sup>940</sup> ...das für mich war immer wichtig Leadership von dem her oder Leiterschaft, dass man Leute hat, wo man Verantwortung schon kriegt, aber auch Rechenschaft abgeben muss; SL5\_295-297.

<sup>941</sup> SL1\_236-237;

<sup>942</sup> AL1\_297-299.

<sup>943</sup> Supra 4.3.1 (Sweet).

<sup>944</sup> AL1\_332-336.

<sup>945</sup> Durch Herausforderung, durch Ermutigung, durch Vorleben. Ich habe den Push gebraucht, aber auch die Bestätigung, dass ich das kann, aber auch jemanden zu haben, der da ist, der Vorort ist, den ich fragen kann. Zu wissen, es ist jemand da, auf den ich zurückgreifen kann. Der Erfahrungswert hat, der Weisheit hat; AL8\_162-165.



making a mistake.<sup>946</sup> The description *spiritual father*<sup>947</sup> or *fatherly input*<sup>948</sup> is the same language used of apostolic relationships which have influenced LCÖ.<sup>949</sup> SL8 stated that *my closeness to these people actually formed me*.<sup>950</sup> Thus it was not always the specific skills or knowledge that shaped the interviewees, so much as simply being with the leaders and sharing life together.

### 6.6.3 Is there anything you would have changed or improved?

The interviewees were generally satisfied with how they had experienced the relationships. There were some minor improvements from their side such as: *I could have actively done more*,<sup>951</sup> or *I wish I had asked more questions*.<sup>952</sup> There were two critiques regarding LCÖ mentors. AL3 said that they would have preferred more structure, that sometimes *we were trusted with too much, with too little monitoring*.<sup>953</sup> This may be a reflection of the personality of the leader being developed, but nevertheless a real concern. The second issue concerned the lack of advice and mentoring opportunities for women who were entering leadership. Men had, for example, more opportunity to travel and serve with other male leaders.<sup>954</sup> This may be due to the all-male leadership teams in the earlier phase of the network. Although LCÖ does not currently distinguish between male and female leadership, this was not always their theological understanding and

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<sup>946</sup> ...das war immer auf Basis der Ermutigung, es war immer auf Basis das mir etwas zugetraut worden ist, es war auch in einer Atmosphäre, wo ich nicht Angst haben müssen, Fehler zu machen. SL9\_315-317.

<sup>947</sup> Ich würde ihn als geistigen Vater bezeichnen, eindeutig. SL2\_276.

<sup>948</sup> SL1\_241-242.

<sup>949</sup> Supra 2.3.1.

<sup>950</sup> ...indem ich einfach an der Seite dieser Leute gewesen bin, indem ich einfach einen Teil ihres Lebens mitgegangen bin, sie erlebt habe, wie sie ihren Dienst machen, was sie tun, wie sie mit Alltagssituationen umgehen, das hat mich eigentlich geprägt und geformt. Das heißt, meine Nähe zu diesen Leuten hat mich eigentlich geformt. SL8\_265-269.

<sup>951</sup> ...ich hätte aktiver noch viel mehr tun können, aber im Grunde hat es gepasst. EL7\_211-212.

<sup>952</sup> ...wünsche ich mir, ich hätte mehr Fragen gestellt; AL6\_256.

<sup>953</sup> Da ist es mir teilweise schon vorgekommen uns wurde fast zu viel Vertrauen gegeben, zu wenig Check, das ich aber gerne gehabt hätte. AL3\_185-187.

<sup>954</sup> Es wäre von Vorteil gewesen, besonders wenn man ein die Leiterrolle hineinkommt als Frau, dass man da vielleicht mehr Input bekommt von Frauen, die schon Erfahrung haben. Also, was kommt auf dich zu, was ist deine Rolle. Aber das war zu diesem Zeitpunkt nach nicht. [Also, spezifisch für eine Frau, wie sie sich entwickeln soll?] Ja, ich habe mich halt irgendwie durchgewurstelt AL4\_117-123; Wenn es die Möglichkeit gegeben hätte, was für die jungen Männer wirklich leichter war, mit dem Reinhard auf Reisen zu gehen, das hätte mit schon sehr gut getan mit ein er Frau. Unterwegs, wirklich so eine Jüngerschaft; AL9\_252\_254.

practice.<sup>955</sup>

#### 6.6.4 Developing Others

The interviewees were asked questions regarding their involvement in the development of other leaders.<sup>956</sup> I deal with them here in the order in which they were asked

##### 6.6.4.1 How involved?

The interviewees are involved in the development of new leaders to varying degrees – from the network leader seeking to recognise and develop church leaders or planters, to a youth leader looking to develop leadership potential in a young person in their group. There were three aspects to this development which emerged from the interview data: being able to recognise potential leaders, that which is exchanged with them through relationship, and the opportunity to serve.

SL1 described how they recognise potential leaders: *I see people that the way they talk, the way they ask questions, they are interested in more than themselves ...then I realise this person is taking responsibility for something that's not his area and desire for more than just their lives and then I realise there's more in this person.*<sup>957</sup> AL6 agrees, *for me it is more important with what attitude they (potential leaders) do it.*<sup>958</sup> They explained that they look to bring people into situations where they show their potential.<sup>959</sup> I observe that some leaders actively look for potential leaders, *always keeping in mind to see the people so, not only to see them as sheep and followers, but that ...they will enter into ministry.*<sup>960</sup> Thus SL1's assumption is that *everybody's a leader, but there are some people who are called to be leaders of works.*<sup>961</sup> I observe that this approach makes it possible for

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<sup>955</sup> Supra 5.4.1.1 (fn. 581).

<sup>956</sup> Appendix One: Interview Guide, questions E4, E5 & E6.

<sup>957</sup> SL1\_332-336.

<sup>958</sup> *Für mich ist das vielmehr, mit welcher Einstellung sie das machen, ...Weil die Einstellung wird ihn viel, viel weiter bringen als die Technik.* AL6\_301-303.

<sup>959</sup> Wir versuchen, Leute in Situationen zu bringen, wo sie Potential zeigen können; AL6\_290-291.

<sup>960</sup> *...immer im Bewusstsein, die Leute auch so zu sehen, nicht nur zu sehen, sie werden Schäfchen und Nachfolger sein, sondern sie werden eintreten, sie werden in irgendeinen Dienst treten;* AL8\_186-189.

<sup>961</sup> SL1\_354-355; 'works' signifies leading a particular ministry.

anyone to begin to develop as a leader, similar to Bock's appeal to make leadership more 'available'.<sup>962</sup>

For SL5, developing leaders is primarily about *these relationships with each other, because there is a lot happening in the exchange with each other*.<sup>963</sup> *Through conversations and spending time with each other*<sup>964</sup> the aforementioned 'exchange of wisdom' is communicated not only by doing ministry together, but by spending time with them in any given situation.<sup>965</sup> AL1 explains that they *pastorally engage with them. Listen, I love to listen....ask ...the right questions at the right time and I'm ready to pass on experience that I have and also mistakes as well as successes. So this is my development of leaders, one on one*.<sup>966</sup> AL7 always has between five and ten people that they are *personally training*.<sup>967</sup> Hence some leaders are engaged in clearly defined apprenticeship relationships described in chapter four, which leads to my third observation - giving potential leaders the opportunity to serve.

SL9 describes how they are involved in the development of other leaders by working in a team together; by being observed, ministering together and discussing the ministry situation.<sup>968</sup> EL1 notes how much people can achieve *when you entrust it to them and trust them with the responsibility*.<sup>969</sup> The sharing of ministry responsibility and tasks concurs with the aforesaid 'leadership baton' illustration, as the emerging leaders serve alongside their senior leaders.<sup>970</sup> This does not always mean that an apprentice will take over the role and position the senior leader holds in LCÖ churches. More often it is the case that an experienced leader starts a new ministry within or outwith their current ministry, and their apprentice then takes over the lead of this new ministry at the appropriate time.

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<sup>962</sup> Supra 0.4.2.

<sup>963</sup> *Das ist für mich in erster Linie einmal diese Beziehungen untereinander, weil da sehr viel passiert im Austausch miteinander; SL5\_352-353.*

<sup>964</sup> *...durch Gespräche führen und die Zeit miteinander verbringen; EL1\_194, 197-198; see also: um die kümmere ich mich dann auch persönlich, schon sehr viel auf Mentoringbasis. SL7\_488-489.*

<sup>965</sup> Supra 4.3.1 (Sweet).

<sup>966</sup> AL1\_373-376.

<sup>967</sup> *Ich schaue immer, dass ich so und so viel Leute habe, was meine Zeit erlaubt, aber immer zwischen 5 und 10 Leuten, die ich persönlich trainiere; AL7\_275-276.*

<sup>968</sup> SL9\_335-342.

<sup>969</sup> *...wenn du es ihnen zutraust oder wenn du ihnen die Verantwortung zutraust; EL1\_199-201.*

<sup>970</sup> Supra 4.3.1 (Crepes).

#### 6.6.4.2 Are you capable?

When asked in what ways they felt they were capable or incapable, twenty claimed to be capable of the task: *It is something that brings me great pleasure ...and I think that based on my experience ...I have a very good basis to do it.*<sup>971</sup> SL4 was aware of their limitations: *I can only take someone to the level where I am. I can never lead someone to the level which is higher than my level.*<sup>972</sup> AL2 saw this as their challenge *that I only bring people as far as I am. That is the ceiling; that is the lid.*<sup>973</sup> SL2 admits that they cannot give an emerging leader all the skills that they might need, but they seek to *position* them so they can get that which they need.<sup>974</sup> The quality or intensity of input is also sometimes hindered by time restraints.<sup>975</sup>

#### 6.6.4.3 What importance?

Those who were not so confident expressed a desire to be proficient, and all but three interviewees considered it a high priority to develop new leaders. Two main reasons were given for doing so. The first was to ensure the process of multiplication takes place: *because it is important that I multiply myself ...Otherwise, who does it help, when I am doing well? I want to transport that which I have to others.*<sup>976</sup> SL9's experience is that the leaders they invested in were now subsequently training other leaders.<sup>977</sup> This equates to the 'reproduction' described in chapter four.<sup>978</sup> AL6 describes the second reason: *we simply have a permanent lack of people who want to take up a leadership position, although they have the potential.*<sup>979</sup> SL2 explained that this needs to be reversed because more

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<sup>971</sup> *Es ist etwas, was mir enorm Spaß macht ...und ich denke, dass ich aufgrund meiner Erfahrungen ...dass ich da eine ganz gute Basis habe, das zu tun;* SL9\_358, 361-362.

<sup>972</sup> *Ich kann jemanden nur mitnehmen zu dem Level, wo ich stehe, ja. Ich kann nie jemanden weiterführen wo der Level höher ist als mein Level.* SL4\_286-291.

<sup>973</sup> *...dass ich die Leute nur soweit bringe, soweit ich bin. Das ist das Dach, das ist der Deckel.* AL2\_271-273.

<sup>974</sup> *...dann versuche ich ihn zu fördern und ihn auch so zu positionieren, weil ich kann ihm ja nicht alles geben, jeder ist anders, ihn so zu positionieren, dass er sich die Fähigkeiten auch holt, die er braucht.* SL2\_325-328.

<sup>975</sup> SL1, SL2, SL3 & AL3.

<sup>976</sup> *Weil es wichtig ist, dass ich mich multipliziere ...Weil sonst, was hilft das jemand, wenn es mir gut geht. Ich möchte das gerne transportieren.* AL2\_276-278.

<sup>977</sup> SL9\_377-383; see also: AL1\_405; AL6\_334-339; AL7\_298-299; EL3\_258-259.

<sup>978</sup> Supra 4.3.

<sup>979</sup> *Mangel an Leuten, die in Leiterschaftsposition gehen wollen, obwohl sie das Potential hätten;*

pioneer leaders are needed to plant churches,<sup>980</sup> as well as providing a broader leadership basis in the churches in order to build bigger.<sup>981</sup> These concerns replicate the observations I made in chapter two regarding the necessary number of pioneer and senior leaders being developed for the ongoing vision of LCÖ.<sup>982</sup>

### 6.6.5 Concluding Comments

In summary, development through relationships has taken place in the lives of the interviewees and the data shows that they benefited from this approach, experiencing both spiritual formation and vocation preparation. Furthermore, it continues to be a significant way in which they are also developing other leaders. The development was and is intentional and the incarnational approach of the developer proposed in chapter four is both expected and evident.<sup>983</sup>

Varying degrees of apprenticeship have and are being used – from travelling and ministering together, to simply holding a feedback talk, facilitating an ‘exchange of wisdom’ and ‘accountability’.<sup>984</sup> This concurs with the ‘various forms’ of relationship that I anticipated whereby a set form of relationship cannot be imposed, but rather the depth and form of relationships are adapted for each individual situation.<sup>985</sup> The data reveals the strength of these relationships to be their genuine care which was acknowledged by the recipients.<sup>986</sup>

Development of leaders through relationships is time consuming, the strain of which I perceived is being felt. I suggest that to develop the number of leaders needed cannot be accomplished by one or two leaders in each church, thus more leaders will need to commit the time to using this approach.

Although I did not have reason to suspect any lack of mutual respect between ‘senior’ and ‘junior’ leaders, ‘mutual honouring’ was not mentioned.<sup>987</sup> It could be that it is not as commonplace as I have proposed. Indeed it may take

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AL6\_323-324; see also: SL7\_550-551.

<sup>980</sup> SL2\_345-351.

<sup>981</sup> SL2\_353-359.

<sup>982</sup> Supra 2.5.

<sup>983</sup> Supra 4.3 (Hirsch).

<sup>984</sup> Supra 4.3.1 (Sweet).

<sup>985</sup> Supra 4.3.3.

<sup>986</sup> Supra 3.2.3.1 (Molitor).

<sup>987</sup> Supra 4.3.1.

place, but not enough to be referred to. I suggest that it may only occur in more in-depth apprenticeship relationships, but it will need to happen for the younger generation of leaders to have the kind of credibility that Paul gave to Timothy.<sup>988</sup>

There was also no reference to the reverse mentoring that I advocated in chapter four.<sup>989</sup> It may be that the questions focused the interviewees' attention on mentor-mentored experiences, but if it was a significant means of development the data would have alluded to it. I am still of the opinion that this is an aspect of developing leaders that will need to be introduced, particularly if LCÖ is going to benefit from the skills and cultural savvy of its younger members and if the second and subsequent generations of leaders are to find their place within LCÖ.

## **6.7 Development through Continuous Learning**

### **Interview Guide, Section F:**

#### **Questions about development through continuous learning<sup>990</sup>**

Having analysed the data concerning development through training and relationships, the interviewees' experience and opinion regarding development through continuous learning addresses the last category of the Christian leadership development thesis in chapter four. The questions were dealt with in the order they were used.

### **6.7.1 Through Training and Studies**

The answers to this question divided the interviewees into three groups; three had no plans, eight others had 'wishes' but no plans, and thirteen were currently doing a training course or studying. The second group had a desire to do:

Christian leadership training (5)

Theological studies (1)

Secular training in a pastoral skill (1: youth and children's work)

Language course (1: English)

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<sup>988</sup> Supra 4.3.1 (Sweet).

<sup>989</sup> Supra 4.3.2; although it is alluded to when discussing current relational input, supra 6.7.2.

<sup>990</sup> Appendix One: Interview Guide, questions F1, F2, F3, F4, F5, F6 & F7.

Of the third group, there were five categories:

Further training through their secular employment (4)

ELs completing their secular education (3 full-time)

Secular leadership training (2)

Secular training in a pastoral skill (2: Family and marriage advisor; Death and bereavement support)

Christian leadership training (1)

Christian pastoral skill (1: Counselling)

When asked how they expected this training would further develop and equip them as leaders, their answers revealed three approaches.

The first was to develop an existing ability they already had. For example SL2 said that theological studies would correspond with their gifting which they want *to make more of, to multiply ...or sharpen*.<sup>991</sup>

The second approach was to prepare and equip them or to *position themselves*<sup>992</sup> for future ministry opportunities. Concerning their training in family and marriage matters, AL7 explains, *that is a strategic direction that we are taking*; so that the church can grow to *the next level* and in responsibility.<sup>993</sup> SL1 spoke of training which strategically prepares for the future *to be able to build something larger*.<sup>994</sup>

Thirdly, some interviewees saw the need to compensate for a lack, such as doing an English language course, *because through the German language one is kept back from so many possibilities to read or listen*.<sup>995</sup> Similarly AL5 thought doing the LA would help them to understand the culture of the network better and to be *up to date*.<sup>996</sup>

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<sup>991</sup> Es entspricht mal, glaube ich, meiner Begabung. Ich möchte unbedingt daraus etwas machen, es vervielfältigen, sozusagen oder schärfen. SL2\_375-380.

<sup>992</sup> ...einfach sich zu positionieren; EL3\_281, 286-287.

<sup>993</sup> ...das ist eine strategische Richtung, die wir ansetzen; AL7\_314-317; ...dass ich besser trainiert gehöre, denn irgendwo wollen wir auch wachsen und das Level wachsen und die Verantwortung; AL7\_322-324.

<sup>994</sup> SL1\_405 & 410.

<sup>995</sup> Weil durch die deutsche Sprache ist man begrenzt von so vielen Möglichkeiten zu lesen oder Dinge zu hören. AL3\_230-231.

<sup>996</sup> AL5\_258, 280-262.

Those who were obliged to do further training as part of their secular employment saw this as *partly an advantage*.<sup>997</sup> *Many things that one does in the secular, one can directly put in to practice* in a church setting.<sup>998</sup> Those still in full-time education had the same attitude that *everything contributes* to their leadership development.<sup>999</sup> Although I use the term 'secular' to distinguish between types of training, I observe that the interviewees do not have a secular-sacred divide in their approach, rather they appear to take the training that best suits, ecclesiastical or otherwise, for the skills they require to aid them in their ministry. This is with the exception of seeking spiritual formation, or specifically church related issues, whereby a Christian worldview and Bible-based teaching is preferred.

### 6.7.2 Through Relational Input

Over half the interviewees still received specific relational input to further develop as a leader from the people previously mentioned in question E1. Seven spoke of new relationships that had evolved due to relocation or new ministry responsibilities. The input is both planned and spontaneous. Some serve on the same teams together and telephone conversations suffice where it would be geographically difficult to meet. Five could not name any specific relational input; they conceded that their team situations were relational, but not at the level of input that may come from a mentor.

As before, the nature of the relationships varied. I noted that apprenticeship continues to take place,<sup>1000</sup> although not always as intensely as before. Some have close friendships which are less structured. Ten interviewees spoke of the teams they are a part of also being a means for relational input (four of whom mentioned it as the main format for input). In the team context there was a degree of reverse mentoring taking place for SLs. It did not appear to be intentional on

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<sup>997</sup> *Das ist schon zum Teil ein Vorteil, ich sehe es jetzt nicht unbedingt als Basis, aber weil der Bereich "Menschen" ist, wir arbeiten mit Menschen, das Verständnis der Menschen und überhaupt Menschen mit Handicaps; AL8\_237-239.*

<sup>998</sup> *Supra 6.5.1; ...viele Dinge, die man auch im Säkularen macht, die setzt man ja direkt um, SL4\_322-323; cf. ...getrennt? Nein überhaupt nicht. Für mich ist das sogar übergreifend, das heißt, ich kann von beiden Seiten überall hingehen. Das sollte man, also denke ich, ist auch wichtig. SL4\_329-331; see also: EL5\_214-217.*

<sup>999</sup> *Absolut, alles trägt dazu bei. Speziell jetzt mache ich ein Praktikum; EL7\_276-278.*

<sup>1000</sup> *Supra 6.6.4.*



their part, but as SL1 notes those on such teams have been developed as leaders by them<sup>1001</sup> and so the relationship develops leading the senior leader to be open to their input. This is not reverse mentoring in its purest form, because the expectation is that the 'younger' has reached a certain standard. Speaking of their team, AL4 illustrates my point: *Yes, of course, there is always in some way mentoring or reciprocal mentoring, even if we are on different levels, and also when another is a level lower, one can always take something, can always implement something*<sup>1002</sup>. AL6 was more forceful: *If you build a leadership based on respect, on mutual respect and so, then there's always an interaction by both, both can learn something.*<sup>1003</sup>

When asked how this relational input is developing and equipping them as leaders, I was able to identify three clear expectations.

*I expect that my friends and leaders are honest with me,*<sup>1004</sup> stated EL2. That those they are in relationship with would speak openly and honestly with them was a common factor.<sup>1005</sup> This would entail bringing correction and warning as well as encouragement. This reflects Sweets aforementioned 'editability'.<sup>1006</sup> Team situations are no exception: *that we really have a transparent relationship to one another, and rub off one another and inspire one another.*<sup>1007</sup>

Secondly, the interviewees gained from the others' leadership experience, and would seek advice for their situations through these relationships. *That one hears the experiences from others, what happened to them, how was it, how can one handle it?*<sup>1008</sup> Thus an 'exchange of wisdom' takes place.<sup>1009</sup> This is coupled

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<sup>1001</sup> SL1\_422.

<sup>1002</sup> *Ja natürlich, es ist immer in irgendeiner Art und Weise ein Mentoring oder ein gegenseitiges Mentoring, auch wenn man auf verschiedenen Level steht und auch, wenn der einen weiteren Level darunter ist, man kann immer etwas mitnehmen, kann immer etwas umsetzen.* SL4\_354-357.

<sup>1003</sup> *Wenn du als Leiterschaft auf Respekt aufbaust, auf gegenseitiger Achtung und so, dann ist das immer ein Interagieren von beiden, beide können was lernen.* AL6\_391-395

<sup>1004</sup> *Ich erwarte mir einfach, dass meine Freunde und die Leiter ehrlich sind einfach und so. Und ...die im Moment nicht super klingen, sondern nicht aufhören, auf gewisse Sachen zu klopfen.* EL2\_323-325.

<sup>1005</sup> Supra 4.3.3 (Hope); 'degrees of openness'.

<sup>1006</sup> Supra 4.3.1 (Sweet).

<sup>1007</sup> *...dass wir wirklich eine supertransparente Beziehung zueinander haben, und gegenseitig reiben und inspirieren;* AL7\_348-349; see also SL7\_626-629.

<sup>1008</sup> *Dass man da Erfahrungen von anderen hört, was ist es denen passiert, wie war das, wie kann man damit umgehen?* EL5\_240-241.

<sup>1009</sup> Supra 4.3.1 (Sweet).

with an expectation to gain a *different perspective*.<sup>1010</sup> SL7 needs the input regarding issues *that then take effect in the future, what I as a leader need, to be that step ahead*.<sup>1011</sup> *The expectation is that I don't get stuck* was SL1's short summary on the relational input they receive.<sup>1012</sup>

Finally, there is the expectation that the mentor helps develop the gifting and leadership abilities of the mentored.<sup>1013</sup> I think this shows awareness that learning and development are not only an intellectual exercise or 'a private spiritual experience, but a definable and accountable process', as previously argued.<sup>1014</sup>

### 6.7.3 Through Individual Exercises

Fifteen interviewees named reading as an individual exercise to further develop as a leader. Ten listen to preaching or teaching on MP3 or CDs (nine of whom belong to the readers). These exercises are done in order to stretch their thinking by being exposed to different points of view, to research a particular subject or theme, or to be better informed about culture or current affairs. They read both ecclesiastical and secular material, although mainly the former. SL9 for example, chooses material to better *understand the world in the twenty-first century, or the postmodern*.<sup>1015</sup> AL7 concentrates on a particular issue: *I grapple with certain things, where I think, I would like to be there, or that is underemphasised and I engage with certain books; not always my way of thinking but also to the contrary*.<sup>1016</sup> SL1 (who reads three or four books at a time) explained: *You know when you get it, it's like the brain is a bigger bag and you can catch more stuff coming to you than if you have a small container that can only catch a little bit*.

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<sup>1010</sup> SL1\_440.

<sup>1011</sup> ...die dann immer in der Zukunft erst diese Auswirkungen haben, was ich aber als Leiter brauche, grade diesen Schritt voraus zu sein. SL7\_611-614.

<sup>1012</sup> SL1\_436-437.

<sup>1013</sup> ...im Bezug auf Leiterschaft, ja, genau. Auch in der Gabe und im Bereich der Ermutigung, im Bereich der Gabe, die man hat sich auch weiter zu entwickeln. SL2\_416-418.

<sup>1014</sup> Supra 4.3.1.

<sup>1015</sup> Aber es sind auch gezielte Sachen, die ich lese, einfach um die Welt im 21. Jhd. zu verstehen, z.B. wie Jugendliche ticken, einfach was bedeutet Postmoderne, was für Fragen stellen die sich bzw. was ist für die nimmer relevant, d.h., das ist schon eine gezielte Sache. SL9\_455-461.

<sup>1016</sup> Ich setz mich mit gewissen Dingen auseinander, wo ich denke, da würde ich jetzt gerne oder das ist unterbetont und setzt mich mit gewissen Büchern auseinander. Nicht immer nur meine Denkweise sondern auch konträr. AL7\_360-362.

*Some books make you think, you know, actually it's possible to do that; this is what I expect from books.*<sup>1017</sup>

Prayer as an exercise in leadership development was mentioned by three leaders. It serves SL2 as a time of *self-reflection* as well.<sup>1018</sup> AL1 also explained that *journaling is part of my reflection*.<sup>1019</sup> I consider this to be a low number of leaders referring to prayer. It may be because they do not see or describe prayer as a leadership development discipline, but rather a devotional, albeit necessary, discipline. Their opinions regarding a leader's relationship with God would support my observation.<sup>1020</sup>

SL6 stated, *nothing works for me without a challenge*,<sup>1021</sup> and AL2 also plans their own personal challenges and sees it as important to *connect learning, practice and work together*.<sup>1022</sup>

Significantly fewer ELs had established individual development exercises that they would freely speak of (33%), compared to SLs and ALs (100%). The data shows that more defined exercises are being practised by those with greater leadership responsibility. I suggest that experience and ministry challenges have required those leaders to develop such disciplines. Furthermore, these exercises focused on vocational preparedness rather than spiritual formation. This would concur with Dawn's opinion that 'shaping' of character takes place in community,<sup>1023</sup> although the shaping of a leader's relationship with God needs both solitude and this community.

#### **6.7.4 Concluding Comments**

In summary, the interview data indicates that the LCÖ leaders engage in development through continuous learning. An understanding of its necessity is also apparent: *I do not think that you can just stand still anywhere. When you*

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<sup>1017</sup> SL1\_512-515

<sup>1018</sup> *Diese persönliche Gebetszeit mit Gott, wo man auch reflektiert.* SL2\_436-437.

<sup>1019</sup> AL1\_480-481; by 'journaling' the interviewee is referring to the process of writing in order to consider, analyse and clarify what they are reading, praying and thinking about.

<sup>1020</sup> Supra 6.4.6.

<sup>1021</sup> *Also ohne Herausforderung geht da bei mir nichts.* SL6\_378-380.

<sup>1022</sup> *Ich versuche, das Lernen, Üben und Arbeiten zu verbinden und ich glaube, das ist wichtig;* AL2\_347.

<sup>1023</sup> Supra 4.3 (Dawn)

*stand still, I think things are going downhill.*<sup>1024</sup> *It is never finished. The most important point for me is that one may always continue learning.*<sup>1025</sup> SL8 considers a quality of a good leader is to have a *willingness to learn new things...never satisfied with that which they have learned and saying “now I have arrived”, rather always looking outside of the box.*<sup>1026</sup> Never arriving is a phrase that Senge uses for someone in a ‘continual learning mode’,<sup>1027</sup> and it is evident that a learning ‘posture’ highlighted in chapter four<sup>1028</sup> is being adopted by the interviewees, although the extent to which they apply themselves to continuous learning is varied.

Regarding training and further studies, SL2 explained *that Austrians are really hung up on this educational route, and that it lends credibility, when one has something in that area.*<sup>1029</sup> They explained that it is not a reason for further learning, but a helpful *side-effect*. It leads me to suggest that, although LCÖ has not looked to academic accomplishments to qualify people to minister and lead in the past, as the network matures it may be expedient for some of its leaders to develop further in this area. In doing so, care should be taken not to overemphasise the cognitive ‘Greek’ concept of learning prevalent in Austria, at the loss of a more ‘Hebrew’ approach inherent to apprenticeship which I have proposed.<sup>1030</sup>

I also gather from the above analysis that a ‘putting-in, drawing-out and raising-up’ is happening through the relational input.<sup>1031</sup> I observe that there are however, a few leaders who are not in the same intensity of relational development as before, but are by no means disconnected from their local churches or LCÖ.

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<sup>1024</sup> ...*ich glaube nicht, dass du stehenbleiben kannst irgendwo. Wenn du stehst, glaube ich, geht es bergab*; AL6\_415-416.

<sup>1025</sup> *Es ist nie fertig. Der wichtigste Punkt ist für mich, dass man immer weiterlernen mag.* AL2\_111-112.

<sup>1026</sup> ...*die Lernbereitschaft ...Die nie mit dem, was sie gelernt habe, zufrieden sind und sagen, jetzt habe ich es erreicht sondern die immer weit über den Tellerrand hinausschauen immer. Das ist für mich eine sehr gute Qualität, die ein Leiter eigentlich haben soll.* SL8\_150-155.

<sup>1027</sup> Supra 4.4 (Senge).

<sup>1028</sup> Supra 4.4 (Keel).

<sup>1029</sup> ...*dass die Österreicher sehr stark an dieser Ausbildungsschiene festhängen, und dass es da Kreditität verleiht, wenn man etwas hat auf dem Gebiet.* SL2\_375-380.

<sup>1030</sup> Supra 4.4.1 (Hirsch).

<sup>1031</sup> Supra 4.4.1 (Sweet).

Some individual exercises showed strategic preparation regarding the direction of the leaders' development, as did some of the further training plans which prepared them for anticipated new avenues of ministry. These exercises and training were not only to avoid stagnation,<sup>1032</sup> but proof that the interviewees were assessing their skills base<sup>1033</sup> as they pursue their leadership journey further.

## 6.8 Local Church and Network

### Interview Guide, Section G:

#### Further comments<sup>1034</sup>

In this section the questions drew the interviewees back to the wider context of the LCÖ network researched in chapter two and to the task of the local church and network in developing leaders.

#### 6.8.1 Whose task is it?

The interviewees were unanimously of the opinion that it is the role of both the local church and the church network to develop leaders. They did however emphasise that the task and responsibility primarily belongs to the local church which is in turn supported by the network. SL1 noted that there would be cases where the network begins to develop people from smaller churches,<sup>1035</sup> but that a network alone cannot accomplish the task because *a leader must be a leader where he's home. So it's like, being raised in a home as a person, or being raised in an institution.*<sup>1036</sup> This comparison highlights the comments of the interviewees, that the *home church* knows the developing leader better – their personality and calling, their strengths and weaknesses, both in gifting and character.<sup>1037</sup>

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<sup>1032</sup> Supra 4.4.2 (Kotter, McLaren).

<sup>1033</sup> Supra 4.4.2 (Roxburgh & Romanuk).

<sup>1034</sup> Appendix One: Interview Guide, questions G1 & G2.

<sup>1035</sup> SL1\_533.

<sup>1036</sup> SL1\_523-528.

<sup>1037</sup> ...weil die Vorort sind, die kennen sie. AL5\_319-320; ...aber vorwiegend die Ortsgemeinde, weil da jeder sich da jeder kennt untereinander und die können auch sagen, der hat jetzt Leiterqualität; EL5\_257-259; ...und das andere ist das Praktische Vorort, wo du den Menschen siehst, weil die ganzen charakterlichen Sachen; SL7\_684-688.

Furthermore, it is *at home* that they have the opportunity to begin to minister and serve as they observe how the church functions.<sup>1038</sup>

The network's responsibility and contribution was understood to be significant. It should provide teaching, training and input beyond the resources and expertise of the local church, such as through the LA.<sup>1039</sup> For SL7, the main influence and *conditioning* should always come from the network which is by nature a *continuous flow*.<sup>1040</sup> There are some areas which the local church cannot provide *because it needs a broader view, a kind of apostolic ministry and a prophetic ministry, which says okay, the whole thing goes in this direction*.<sup>1041</sup> The transfer of a *shared culture* was also deemed important through connection to the network.<sup>1042</sup> SL3 summarised: *The network gives the vitamins, the concentrated feed and enables the local work to succeed better and with more quality*.<sup>1043</sup>

I think the interviewees' views concerning the network's role in developing leaders demonstrate the LCÖ understanding of apostolic leadership discussed in chapter two.<sup>1044</sup> This person (and their team) is not running the local church's affairs, but the exchange is out of relationship, as a 'father', bringing perspective and wisdom to local church's task. Additionally, how the interviewees perceive the local church's task reflects the gradual progression of a developing leader.<sup>1045</sup> I observe that they were speaking from experience, but also with an expectation for the future.

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<sup>1038</sup> *Speziell die Gemeinde ist ein Ort wo Menschen einfach gefördert, verändert werden, das ist so eine Grundaufgabe. Und das, wenn man eine Zeit lang in der Gemeinde ist, sollte es eigentlich normal sein, dass man in den Dienst reinkommt, da dann gefördert wird und irgendwann nach einer gewissen Zeit dann in eine Leitungsposition, zuerst klein, es eigentlich automatische Karriere fast sein sollte, es ist eine Grundaufgabe von Gemeinde. EL7\_335-341; Aber letzten Endes denke ich, die Gemeinde, die Vorort ist, sieht die Herausforderungen und die Problematik; EL3\_353-354.*

<sup>1039</sup> *...ein sehr gutes und intensives Training wie die LA ist als Ortsgemeinde nicht möglich. Weil das Niveau von Qualität von den Sprechern, von Input, die gewissen Lehren die Kapazitäten in den Ortsgemeinden nicht dabei ist. Das ist wirklich vom Feinsten. AL7\_379-384.*

<sup>1040</sup> *Aber die Hauptprägung kommt halt doch immer vom Netzwerk und das ist ein kontinuierlicher Fluss. SL7\_696-698.*

<sup>1041</sup> *...weil es einen größeren Überblick braucht, einen apostolischen Dienst irgendwie oder einen prophetischen Dienst, der dann sagt, okay, das Ganze, das Große geht in die Richtung. AL2\_368-370.*

<sup>1042</sup> *...aber es braucht immer wieder einen Input vom Netzwerk, damit wir eine gemeinsame Kultur haben. AL5\_322-324.*

<sup>1043</sup> *Das Netzwerk gibt die Vitamine, das Kraftfutter und lässt die Arbeit Vorort besser und qualitativer gelingen; SL3\_291-292.*

<sup>1044</sup> Supra 2.3.1.

<sup>1045</sup> Supra 2.3.5.3.

Some noted that there are different levels of ministry responsibility and roles, and therefore levels of leadership development.<sup>1046</sup> SL6 clearly defined that the local church should develop their leaders to a given stage and then the network would have to develop those further. These would include potential church leaders, church planters or associate leaders.<sup>1047</sup> AL2 spoke of help being needed from outside the local setting when the demands of ministry were greater than the leader's growth.<sup>1048</sup> I am of the opinion that there will be leaders who need to be developed for the ministries within the local churches and also leaders who will go on to lead churches or network-wide ministries. I agree that it is the role of the local church to develop both. The latter may only be discovered, or realise their calling, through serving their local church in some capacity. Thus I propose that caution must be given that the aforementioned advantages of the network's input are not ignored before a certain level of leadership development is reached, but rather that developing leaders receive input from the network and its leadership at every stage of their journey.

## 6.8.2 Into the Future

When asked how they foresee that capable leaders will be developed within LCÖ in the future, the ELs were very positive concerning the current approaches; the leadership development amongst the youth leaders and initiatives for training teenagers,<sup>1049</sup> as well as the LA.<sup>1050</sup> The SLs and ALs also affirmed that which is

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<sup>1046</sup> SL6, AL2, AL7 & EL2.

<sup>1047</sup> ...z.B. eben in junge Gemeindeleiter, Gemeindeleiternachwuchs, Stellvertreter, Co-Pastoren, Jugendleiter von größeren Jugendgruppen oder mehreren Jugendgruppen zusammen z.B. das ist für mich dann Leadership Academy; SL6\_450-455; see also: Das ist eine Aufgabe des Netzwerks, denke ich, letztendlich. Wenn ich da jetzt auf Hauptleitung, Gemeindeleitung, dann ist es sicher effektiver, wenn von der Ortsgemeinde wer rauskommt und sagt: ich möchte gerne eine Gemeinde gründen und wenn ich jetzt weiterdenke, ist es sicher besser, wenn das in einem Netzwerk passiert, wo er viel mehr Meinungen, viel mehr Input, viel mehr Ansprechpersonen hat. EL2\_357-261; Es sind zwei Ebenen. Die Pastorenebene, das ist die schöne Aufgabe vom Netzwerk; AL7\_373.

<sup>1048</sup> ...ich denke, dass die Gemeinde bis zu einem gewissen Grad verantwortlich ist, die eigenen Leiter hervor zu bringen. Und dann, wenn das die sozusagen das Volumen der Gemeinde das Wachstum dieser Personen überschreitet, dann denke ich, ist es wichtig, dass es jemanden gibt, der weiter oben ist in der Möglichkeit auch, verstehst du, der mehr Übersicht hat. AL2\_374-378.

<sup>1049</sup> Supra 2.4.3.

<sup>1050</sup> Supra 2.4.2.

being done, but were able to offer criticism and recommendations for improvement.<sup>1051</sup> Their remarks come under three main areas.

#### **6.8.2.1 Leadership Academy – Keep the Combination**

The need for both teaching and practical experience within LCÖ to aid leaders in their development was generally recognised. AL1 described that *within the local church ...there is just lots of opportunity to serve and to gain experience, then to have ...Leadership Academy, or training that can be done in a structured way*<sup>1052</sup> is an ideal arrangement. *I find this combination effective* explained AL2.<sup>1053</sup> They spoke of the *Zusammenspiel* 'interplay' between the network (that is the LA) and the local churches.<sup>1054</sup> AL6 felt however, that LA was *still too one-sided. I believe that it still needs a large practical part to it.*<sup>1055</sup> It thus became apparent to me that not every leader understood that the LA course was designed to be attended parallel to a period of practical application and mentoring in one's home church.<sup>1056</sup> This is currently not enforced, and the perception of how the LA course operates will need to be addressed within the network. Furthermore, it may be necessary to integrate and regulate the participant's home church involvement into the course itself to ensure that leaders are being trained *in* ministry, as my thesis recommended, and not simply *for* ministry.<sup>1057</sup> I recommend that these details are planned on an individual basis to suit the calling and experience of the leader being developed. This would avoid there being a problem of 'setting'<sup>1058</sup> – not geographically as the leader is still based in their home church – but in their approach and expectation of the course, they may be unnecessarily 'separated' from the relationships and opportunities which belong to their development.<sup>1059</sup>

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<sup>1051</sup> Some of their opinions and suggestions were expanded upon as they were answering the subsequent question (H1 ).

<sup>1052</sup> AL1\_529-531.

<sup>1053</sup> *...diese Kombination finde ich effektiv.* AL2\_396-398; see also: SL8\_488-495; SL9\_526.

<sup>1054</sup> AL2\_389-391.

<sup>1055</sup> *...dass das zu einseitig ist noch. Ich glaube, dass es einen großen, praktischen Teil dazu noch braucht;* AL6\_467-469; see also: *Bei der LA vielleicht mehr Praktisches, so wie ich gesagt habe, das wäre sicher gut.* AL4\_247.

<sup>1056</sup> Supra 2.4.2.

<sup>1057</sup> Supra 4.2.2 & 4.3.1 (Sweet).

<sup>1058</sup> Supra 4.2.2

<sup>1059</sup> Supra 6.5.3.1.



### 6.8.2.2 Specific Ministries – ‘Vernetzen’

The second area which could be expanded concerns leadership development and training in specific tasks: *We could be much more effective in some ways, if there were more training in various fields [of ministry].*<sup>1060</sup> AL3 suggested that this should happen on a network level. AL7 agreed: *concerning leadership training, we should network more together.*<sup>1061</sup> AL8 explained that different churches have developed in particular areas of ministry more than others; they now have skills and experience that could be shared and learned from throughout the network.<sup>1062</sup> Such network-wide training has occasionally taken place in the past and I consider this to be happening on a regular basis in the area of youth ministry.<sup>1063</sup> I think that a need is being expressed as the churches advance and have new ministry opportunities. For one leader or local church ministry to train others in their area of expertise is a logical progression for the network. It will however require increased commitment of someone's time. The person co-ordinating the youth leadership development is in full-time ministry with the time and resources to do so.

### 6.8.2.3 Leaders – Reproduce

An issue which seems to be understood, but not always practised to the extent required, is that of leaders reproducing themselves.<sup>1064</sup> SL1 admitted: *This is something we have to get better at, because I don't think it's happening as it should happen.*<sup>1065</sup> SL9 agreed: *It is precisely on this relationship level, that one should maybe commit themselves in a stronger way to say: when I lead, then it is also part of my task to raise up a new leader.*<sup>1066</sup> AL3 expressed the same concern that new or the next leaders would be led into and established in their roles so *that we really get to the next level.*<sup>1067</sup> AL1 added that *there's going to have to be a*

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<sup>1060</sup> *Wir könnten in gewisser Weise viel effektiver sein, wenn es auf den verschiedenen Gebieten mehr Training gäbe; AL3\_290-294.*

<sup>1061</sup> *...was Leitertraining betrifft, sollte man sich schon mehr vernetzen; AL7\_391-393.*

<sup>1062</sup> *AL8\_306-308, 320-322.*

<sup>1063</sup> *Supra 2.4.3.*

<sup>1064</sup> *Supra 4.3.*

<sup>1065</sup> *SL1\_599-565.*

<sup>1066</sup> *Es wird eben auf dieser Beziehungsebene, dass man wirklich sich vielleicht noch verstärkt dahin begibt, dass man sagt: wenn ich leite, dann ist es mit auch Teil meiner Aufgabe, einen neuen Leiter hervorzubringen. SL9\_516-518.*

<sup>1067</sup> *...das wir wirklich auch auf die nächste Stufe kommen; AL3\_268-271; 'next level' means the*

*reproduction in apostolic fathers and mothers within the network*<sup>1068</sup> to give future senior leaders the relational input they need. I therefore observe that there is an acknowledgement amongst the current leaders of what should be happening, but an increasing awareness that they are not reproducing themselves to the extent needed for LCÖ's future growth. The concept of leadership reproduction is that like produces like; that a pioneer or church leader will develop others to do the same.<sup>1069</sup> Concern that this needs to be addressed has been previously highlighted.<sup>1070</sup> AL6 explained:<sup>1071</sup>

We also have a tendency to lose ourselves in all kinds of ideas and plans, and also having the 'idea of the year' and so on; but I think one must always consciously focus on it, and constantly ask: Who could be the next leader? How can we multiply this ministry? Is there a back-up in sight behind this leadership? This is a question of focus, it does not happen automatically.

I find this explanation to be accurate and agree with the proposed solution; that it is a matter of focus and of choosing to make the reproduction of leaders a priority.

I previously stated that the nature of the partnership between the churches and the network and the understanding of responsibility to develop leaders will be essential for LCÖ's future.<sup>1072</sup> Analysis of the interview data has shown that there is a healthy understanding of this joint task, as the network supports the local churches in their primary role. Understanding does not however always translate into action, and I have therefore highlighted areas which require attention and improvement.

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next stage of the church's growth and development.

<sup>1068</sup> AL1\_533-535.

<sup>1069</sup> Supra 4.3 (Hirsch).

<sup>1070</sup> Supra 2.5.

<sup>1071</sup> *Wir haben auch eine Tendenz, uns in allen möglichen Ideen und Planungen zu verlieren und auch die Idee des Jahres zu haben usw. aber ich glaube, man muss immer wieder bewusst den Fokus drauflegen und immer wieder hinterfragen, wer könnte der nächste Leiter sein, wie können wir diesen Dienst multiplizieren. Ist hinter dieser Leiterfunktion schon ein Backup in Sicht, das ist eine Fokusfrage, das entsteht nicht automatisch.* AL6\_453-458.

<sup>1072</sup> Supra 2.5.

## 6.9 Final Thoughts

### Interview Guide, Section H: Closing questions<sup>1073</sup>

The intention of these closing questions was to bring the interview to a gentle rather than abrupt end. I was however still looking for comment and opinion which to this point had not been expressed.<sup>1074</sup>

The importance of character was further commented upon<sup>1075</sup> as being the basis of leadership<sup>1076</sup> and that *one can learn much, but ultimately the application ...in life, is that which the character brings through.*<sup>1077</sup> I note that EL1 had an ideal they were seeking to establish for themselves, whereas AL4 spoke from experience as they had observed how some leaders had left or become offended through difficulties and others had continued in their calling.<sup>1078</sup>

Concern was expressed that LCÖ leaders *have become very cautious and I think we should become a little more venturous again.*<sup>1079</sup> SL7 also felt that everything was *much more secure* than before.<sup>1080</sup> It was questioned whether church leaders having additional secular jobs had reduced the level of risk taking and the earlier missionary attitude towards the work at hand.<sup>1081</sup> This concurs with my observations in chapter two. SL6 suggested that this could be rectified by seeking to release people into pioneer situations again by trusting them and telling them so.<sup>1082</sup> They added that the support of LA training and the apostolic team are already in place and to a pioneer's advantage.<sup>1083</sup> I agree that this attitude will need to be revived, although new leaders willing to take such steps will need more than the senior leader's trust and encouragement. I propose that the theme of church planting would need to be present in the focus and talk of the church so that future leaders are made aware of the vision and need.

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<sup>1073</sup> Appendix One: Interview Guide, questions H1 & H2.

<sup>1074</sup> Supra 5.4.2.1.

<sup>1075</sup> Supra 6.4.5.

<sup>1076</sup> EL1\_290-292.

<sup>1077</sup> *...lernen kann man vieles, aber letztendlich, das Umsetzen oder das wirklich in dem Leben, das bringt dann der Charakter mit sich, und das ist für mich wesentlich; AL4\_420-421.*

<sup>1078</sup> AL4\_226-228.

<sup>1079</sup> *...sind schon sehr vorsichtig geworden und ich denke, wir sollten wieder ein bisschen mehr riskanter werden. SL6\_475-477.*

<sup>1080</sup> *...heute ist alles vielmehr abgesichert; SL7\_724.*

<sup>1081</sup> SL7\_730-737, 741-744.

<sup>1082</sup> SL6\_477-481.

<sup>1083</sup> SL6\_481-487.

When asked what they know now, that they would have preferred to have known at the beginning of their own leadership development journey, the interviewees provided various personal responses. One reoccurring theme however, was the acceptance that some things cannot be truly known at the beginning of one's journey, rather they belong to the leadership development process. Only through given situations, good and bad, can some lessons be learnt and understood. This echoes Clinton's definition of leadership development as that which goes beyond training as it incorporates all of life's processes.<sup>1084</sup> I consider the interviewees' recognition of this aspect of their leadership development to signify a level of maturity and appreciation of the nature of the leadership journey.<sup>1085</sup>

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<sup>1084</sup> Supra 0.3.2 (Clinton).

<sup>1085</sup> Supra 4.5.

# 7 CONCLUSION

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## 7.1 Introduction

The primary intention of this case study was to benefit LCÖ by assessing the work of the network in its development of leaders. Strengths and weaknesses have been identified and an understanding of how LCÖ can effectively raise up and train leaders in the current cultural climate in which it ministers has been gained.<sup>1086</sup> Consequently a unique contribution to this subject has been made concerning a church network in the Austrian context which has not previously been undertaken.<sup>1087</sup>

My conclusion serves to highlight the strengths and concerns regarding LCÖ's development of leaders arising from the case study, and to submit recommendations for the future that have emerged from the research.<sup>1088</sup>

## 7.2 Apostolic Influence

The network is positively influenced through the leadership of its founder. Its own understanding of 'apostolic' leadership is widely accepted within LCÖ, which has allowed the culture and vision – the DNA – to be transmitted to new leaders.<sup>1089</sup> Senior leaders have benefited from this visionary and 'fatherly' input in their development and it has supported them in sometimes adverse situations.<sup>1090</sup> I observe however, that it may be difficult to provide this type of influence, which is at times intensely relational, for the increasing number of leaders.

I would suggest that a multiplication of this apostolic involvement will be necessary as the network continues to grow.<sup>1091</sup> Several leaders need to begin to function apostolically among the network and its leaders, providing a broader basis for such input. Furthermore, this would help the emergence and recognition of a successor for the leadership of the network when the time comes. To avoid the problems highlighted by Kay, succession would not need to be based on an

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<sup>1086</sup> Supra 0.1.

<sup>1087</sup> Supra 0.1.

<sup>1088</sup> The footnotes give reference to the sections of the research supporting these conclusions. Note that initial observations were recorded in the 'Conclusions' and 'Concluding Comments' passages in each chapter of the case study.

<sup>1089</sup> Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, pp. 75-82 & 283; supra 2.3.1 & 2.1.

<sup>1090</sup> Supra 6.6.1 & 6.2.3.

<sup>1091</sup> Supra 2.3.1

individual having the same skills and personality as the founder, but rather their apostolic ability and calling.<sup>1092</sup>

### **7.3 Vision and Calling**

A sense of calling is a high priority for LCÖ leaders, together with the understanding that their calling will become clearer in the course of their leadership journey.<sup>1093</sup> To begin and during this process, leaders are keen to use their talents and are inspired by the network's vision.

There are however signs that the consolidation that has taken place in the churches in recent years has been at the cost of the intensity of calling; new leaders are emerging, but few with a desire to become senior leaders, pastors or pioneer a church plant.<sup>1094</sup> This reservation may be the opposite extreme to the commitment to the cause that leaders showed in the network's beginnings. I suggest that an awareness of the network's cause and a call to such leadership will need to increase, even as the local churches continue to adapt to growth. Senior leaders may need to re-examine their bi-vocational arrangements, to be able to invest more time in their churches or new churches.<sup>1095</sup>

LCÖ leaders are aware of the Austrian cultural hindrances – both personal tendencies and societal norms – and are contending with them. I maintain however that for new leaders to develop, cultural issues such as pessimism, inferiority and misgivings regarding strong leadership must be addressed to avoid the early stages of their development being inhibited.<sup>1096</sup> Furthermore, if these cultural elements are not continually challenged, they will influence the church culture, creating an environment that is adverse to pursuing an involvement in leadership.<sup>1097</sup> Thus the culture is being read; but more could be done to write the desired culture in the churches – not only the outward appearance achieved

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<sup>1092</sup> Kay, *Apostolic Networks*, p. 287.

<sup>1093</sup> Supra 6.2.1 & 6.4.4.

<sup>1094</sup> Hinkelmann, 'Österreich', p. 132; supra 2.5 & 2.2.3.

<sup>1095</sup> Supra 6.9 & 2.3.5.2.

<sup>1096</sup> Supra 6.3.7 & 1.5.1.

<sup>1097</sup> Supra 6.3.4 & 6.3.5.

through church services and websites, but the attitudes and aspirational norms of the members.<sup>1098</sup>

#### **7.4 Leaders Reproducing Leaders**

It is noteworthy that the vast majority of LCÖ leaders are Austrians compared to other *Freikirche* denominations or groupings in the nation.<sup>1099</sup> An effective use of missionary input and a flexibility regarding finance allowing leaders to be bi-vocational has enabled this.<sup>1100</sup> Furthermore, the gradual leadership journey afforded in the local churches with little concern for a clergy-laity divide makes it possible for leaders to emerge in various church ministries.<sup>1101</sup>

Formative relationships have been a strong basis from which the network functions and leaders have been developed.<sup>1102</sup> There are however concerns and signs that the current leaders are not reproducing enough new leaders, and are having difficulty in giving the time to nurture the same apprentice-like relationships that they benefited from.<sup>1103</sup> The interviewees all spoke of the importance of developing others when questioned, but it did not feature when asked which leadership skills or vocational abilities they considered important.<sup>1104</sup> I suggest that the tension revealed in this contradiction needs to be resolved by refocusing on leadership reproduction, making it a priority task. I recommend that every leader, irrespective of their level of responsibility, should know who they are currently developing.<sup>1105</sup>

I maintain that individual leadership development and understanding of God's call should primarily be a question of 'with whom?' over 'what?' and 'where?'<sup>1106</sup> It may help existing leaders to pursue developing a variety of leaders

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<sup>1098</sup> Nelson, *Spirituality and Leadership*, p. 13; 'culture sculptors'; supra 3.2.2.2.

<sup>1099</sup> Supra 2.3.5 (Hinkelmann & Podobri).

<sup>1100</sup> Supra 2.3.4, 2.3.5.1 & 2.3.5.2.

<sup>1101</sup> Supra 6.5.1, 6.2.3 & 2.3.5.3.

<sup>1102</sup> Supra 6.4.3.1 & 2.3.2.

<sup>1103</sup> Supra 6.6.5 & 4.3.1.

<sup>1104</sup> Supra 6.6.4, 6.4.3.2. & 3.2.3.2

<sup>1105</sup> Supra 6.8.2.3.

<sup>1106</sup> Gibbs, *Leadership Next*, p. 187; emphasises the benefits of an appropriate apprenticeship; supra 4.3.



around them and not just the one person who should receive the 'baton'.<sup>1107</sup> They would be able to pass on existing ministry responsibilities to a diversity of new leaders, as well as encourage them in the creation of new ministry opportunities. I further recommend an introduction of reverse mentoring to the network to assist this and counteract generation distance, thus aiding the network's longevity.<sup>1108</sup>

## 7.5 Training Improvements

The training offered and provided by the network has had a measure of success to date according to the experience of the participants and the current leaders it has helped produce.<sup>1109</sup> When someone attends a course such as the LA, it will be important to ensure that the knowledge and inspiration from these training weekends is combined with ministry involvement and relational input from their home church.<sup>1110</sup> Although this is the LA's intention,<sup>1111</sup> it may be necessary to make these aspects conditional to being accepted on the course, thus ensuring a defined period of apprenticeship for the participant in their local church.<sup>1112</sup>

Furthermore, advantage could be taken of the network's structure to provide further training and sharing of knowledge and experience between leaders and churches with regard to specific areas of ministry.<sup>1113</sup>

I also propose that the lack of theological rigour in LCÖs leadership development to date will need to be addressed, as the research showed a low level of understanding of a systemic theological approach and practical theology.<sup>1114</sup> I suggest that as the size of churches and the network increases, the need for church leaders to be 'local theologians' will become essential.<sup>1115</sup> Outsourcing theological study may be detrimental to the network's vision and

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<sup>1107</sup> Supra 4.3.1.

<sup>1108</sup> Creps, *Reverse Mentoring*, pp. xv-xxii; supra 4.3.2 & 6.6.5.

<sup>1109</sup> Supra 6.5.2.3, 2.4.1, 2.4.2 & 2.4.3.

<sup>1110</sup> Alexander, 'Connectedness', p. 10; supra 4.2.4.

<sup>1111</sup> Supra 2.4.2.

<sup>1112</sup> Sweet, 'Foreword: 18 Rungs', in Savage & Presnell, *Narrative Research*, p. 16; highlights the advantage of training *in* and not only *for* and the ministry; supra 6.8.2.1.

<sup>1113</sup> Supra 6.8.2.2. & 4.4.2.

<sup>1114</sup> Supra 6.4.1.

<sup>1115</sup> Roxburgh & Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*, p. 170; supra 3.2.1.

culture, causing the aforesaid setting and format problems,<sup>1116</sup> as well as hindering a leader developing an integrated approach to theology and ministry.<sup>1117</sup> I therefore propose that the LA curriculum be revised in this regard, but also that action be taken as to how existing leaders can raise their level of theological engagement. This would equip them to serve their local churches and allow the network to gain greater credibility as it achieves further public recognition.<sup>1118</sup> LCÖ's theological stance is expected to remain a hybrid of Pentecostal and Charismatic theology, but will need to gain an appreciation of how that intersects with the decreasing, but nonetheless dominant Roman Catholic populace, whose concept of God and worldview is in a state of transition.<sup>1119</sup>

## 7.6 *Prepare, Reproduce, Posture*

As the approach to preparing leaders in LCÖ continues to evolve (as indeed the network grows and matures), I propose that leadership development should increasingly be understood to be more than training, whether that training takes place in a classroom or in the workplace, or preferably both as I have argued for.<sup>1120</sup> Rather *development* signifies a spectrum of experience, input and situations which shape a leader towards spiritual formation and vocational preparedness.<sup>1121</sup> Thus this *process* of development will need to be appreciated, as indeed the circumstances and calling of a leader are acknowledged and recognised. In the light of the empirical research, I maintain that the synergy of appropriate training (*prepare*), formative relationships (*reproduce*), and continuous learning (*posture*) recommended in my thesis<sup>1122</sup> will assist LCÖ churches and the network as a whole to develop their leaders.

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<sup>1116</sup> Supra 4.2.3.

<sup>1117</sup> Volf, 'Dancing for God', p. 199; argues that theology is 'a way of life' and not a detached discipline.

<sup>1118</sup> Supra 6.5.3.2.

<sup>1119</sup> Supra 1.4, 1.4.1 & 1.4.2.

<sup>1120</sup> Supra 4.2.2 & 4.2.4.

<sup>1121</sup> Clinton, *The Making of a Leader*, p.15; supra 0.3.2 & 4.5.

<sup>1122</sup> Supra ch. 4.

I recommend that further empirical research be conducted within a decade from now with the same leaders and new leaders who may have emerged within LCÖ. This would provide the opportunity for further assessment of the network's development of leaders and an evaluation of any recommendations from this paper which may have been pursued. Another area of research would be to analyse this paper's findings with comparable research which may be conducted in a similar church network elsewhere in Europe. This would enable an identification of approaches to developing leaders which may be integral to a particular network and/ or culture and those which could be considered essential to the development of leaders in a variety of settings. For example, what approaches to leadership development would need to differ if LCÖ were to church plant and develop leaders in Slovakia or Italy?

## **7.7 Final Word**

I am confident that my research has been contextual and explanatory and moreover evaluative and generative.<sup>1123</sup> I trust that LCÖ will continue to capitalise on the above mentioned strengths, while paying attention to the concerns. As I submit this practical theological research, I share Ward's sentiments when he writes, 'I am therefore explicitly conscious that I write from within this community and my intention is to play a critical but also a creative and helpful part in the ongoing conversation in this community.'<sup>1124</sup> Thus my unique insider-outsider status within the LCÖ network has aided and enhanced my contribution.

As a matter of faith, I trust that there will be an increase of indigenous leaders and increased church growth in Austria.

As a practitioner I have given myself to this cause by investing in the vision of LCÖ.

As a researcher, I submit this case study as a contribution to this endeavour and welcome peer review.

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<sup>1123</sup> Supra 0.1 (Swinton & Mowat).

<sup>1124</sup> Pete Ward, *Participation and Mediation*, p. 7.

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# APPENDICES

## ***Appendix One: Interview Guide (English Version)***

**Research Title:**     **The Development of Leaders  
                                  within a Church Network in Austria  
                                  ‘Life Church Österreich’: A Case Study**

**Researcher:**         **Gowan Wheeler**

### **Interview Guide**

#### **Introduction**

This research is being conducted as part of a case study to gain a better understanding of the development of leaders in the Life Church Österreich network of churches. I am conducting this research for my doctorate degree at the University of Bangor in Wales (UK). The questions I would like to ask are not to test your overall knowledge of developing leaders; rather they relate to your personal experience and opinions regarding development of leaders. Everything you tell me will be treated with strict confidentiality and only be used for this research project. Your name will not be used to ensure that you cannot be identified with any of your answers. Thank you for already consenting to the interview by signing the consent form. Do you have any questions before we begin?

#### **A. General questions about your current leadership role**

1. Describe to me your current leadership role.
2. Explain to me how you came to be in your current leadership role.

#### **B. Questions about your cultural context**

1. How would you say that the cultural influences of your own upbringing have helped or hindered your development as a leader?
2. Can you tell me about any cultural advantages or disadvantages you experience as a leader developing and working within the Austrian culture?

### **C. Questions about Christian leadership distinctives**

1. Give me your opinion on which vocational skills are important in order to be well prepared for Christian leadership.

*Probe: Theological Understanding, Cultural Literacy and Leadership Skills*

2. Give me your opinion on which spiritual qualities are important in order to be well prepared for Christian leadership.

*Probe: Spiritual Formation: Calling, Character and Christ-centred*

### **D. Questions about development through training**

1. What vocational training or studies have you done?
2. What further training or studies have you done?
3. Describe to me in what ways you consider the above mentioned training developed and prepared you as a leader.

*Probe: Vocational preparedness/ Spiritual formation*

4. Are there areas in which the above mentioned training was unable to develop and prepare you?

*Probe: Vocational preparedness/ Spiritual formation*

### **E. Questions about development through relationships**

1. In what way has someone (or more than one person) been directly involved in your leadership development?

*Probe: spontaneous and/ or planned?*

2. Describe to me in what ways you consider the above mentioned input has developed and prepared you as a leader.

3. Is there anything you would have changed or improved?

*Probe: Situation, other person, yourself*

4. How are you involved in the development of other/ new leaders?

*Probe: How identify potential leaders? Methods/ approach used?*

5. In what ways do you feel you are capable or incapable of this task?

6. What importance would you say that you place upon this task and why?



## **F. Questions about development through continuous learning**

1. What vocational training or studies are you currently doing or planning to do?
2. What further training or studies are you doing or planning to do?
3. Describe to me in what ways you consider the above mentioned training will further develop and equip you as a leader.

*Probe: compensating for lack and/ or being strategic?*

4. What relational input do you currently receive to further develop as a leader?

*Probe: spontaneous and/ or planned?*

5. In what ways you consider the above mentioned input is or will further develop and equip you as a leader?

6. Can you tell me about any individual exercises that you practise to further develop as a leader?

*Probe: spontaneous and/ or planned?*

7. Describe to me in what ways you consider the above mentioned practices are further developing and equipping you as a leader.

## **G. Further comments**

1. To what extent do you consider it the task of the local church, and to what extent the task of the church network (Vision for Austria), to develop leaders?
2. How do you foresee that capable leaders in Vision for Austria will be developed in the future?

## **H. Closing questions**

1. Is there anything regarding the subject of developing leaders which you would like to further comment on?
2. What do you know now that you would have preferred to have known at the beginning of your own leadership development journey?

## ***Appendix Two: Interview Guide (German Version)***

**Titel der Studie:**     **Entwicklung von Leitern  
                                  innerhalb eines Kirchen-Netzwerkes in Österreich  
                                  „Life Church Österreich“: Eine Fallstudie**

**Ausführender:**     **Gowan Wheeler**

### **Interview Leitfaden**

#### **Einführung**

Diese Forschung wird im Rahmen einer Fallstudie zu einem besseren Verständnis der Entwicklung von Führungskräften im Netzwerk „Life Church Österreich“ durchgeführt. Ich führe diese Forschung für mein Doktorat an der Universität Bangor in Wales (UK) durch. Die gestellten Fragen sollen nicht dazu dienen, deine allgemeinen Kenntnisse über die Entwicklung von Führungskräften zu testen, sondern beziehen sich vielmehr auf deine persönlichen Erfahrungen und Meinungen über die Entwicklung von Leitern. Alles, was du mir sagst, wird streng vertraulich behandelt und nur im Zuge dieses Forschungsprojektes genutzt werden. Dein Name wird nicht verwendet, um sicherzustellen, dass du nicht anhand deiner Antworten identifiziert werden könntest. Vielen Dank, dass du dem Interview bereits zugestimmt hast, indem du die Einverständniserklärung unterschrieben hast. Hast du Fragen, bevor wir anfangen?

#### **A. Allgemeine Fragen zu deiner aktuellen Führungsrolle**

1. Bitte beschreibe mir deine aktuelle Leiterschaftsrolle.
2. Beschreibe bitte, wie du zu dieser Rolle gekommen bist.

#### **B. Fragen zu deinem kulturellen Hintergrund**

1. In welcher Hinsicht haben dich die kulturellen Einflüsse in deiner Erziehung in deiner Entwicklung als Leiter gehemmt bzw. unterstützt?
2. Kannst du mir etwas über kulturelle Vorteile bzw. Nachteile erzählen, die du in der Entwicklung und Arbeit als Leiter innerhalb der österreichischen Kultur erfahren hast?

### **C. Fragen zu besonderen Merkmalen der Christlichen Leiterschaft**

1. Welche Arbeits-Fähigkeiten sind deiner Meinung nach notwendig um für christliche Leiterschaft gut vorbereitet zu sein?
2. Welche geistlichen Qualitäten sind deiner Meinung nach notwendig, um für christliche Leiterschaft gut vorbereitet zu sein?

### **D. Fragen über Entwicklung durch Training**

1. Welche Berufsausbildung oder andere Abschlüsse hast du gemacht?
2. Welche Fort- oder Weiterbildungen hast du gemacht?
3. Beschreibst du bitte in welcher Weise das oben genannte Training dich als Leiter entwickelt und für Leiterschaft vorbereitet hat.
4. Gibt es Bereiche, in denen das oben genannte Training nicht fähig war, dich als Leiter zu entwickeln und auf Leiterschaft vorzubereiten?

### **E. Fragen über Entwicklung durch Beziehungen**

1. Auf welche Weise war eine andere Person (oder mehrere Personen) direkt involviert in deiner Entwicklung als Leiter?
2. Bitte beschreibe auf welche Weise der oben genannte Input dich als Leiter entwickelt und auf Leiterschaft vorbereitet hat.
3. Gibt es etwas, das du gerne daran ändern oder verbessern würdest?
4. Auf welche Weise bist du in die Entwicklung von anderen/ neuen Leitern involviert?
5. Inwiefern glaubst du, bist du für diese Aufgabe fähig oder unfähig?
6. Welche Bedeutung/ Wichtigkeit gibst du dieser Aufgabe und warum?

### **F. Fragen zur Entwicklung durch kontinuierliches Lernen**

1. In welche Berufsausbildung oder andere Abschlüsse bist du derzeit involviert, bzw. welche planst du in nächster Zeit zu machen?
2. In welche Fort- oder Weiterbildungen bist du derzeit involviert, bzw. planst du in nächster Zeit zu machen?
3. Bitte beschreibe, auf welche Weise die oben genannten Punkte dich weiter entwickeln und zurüsten werden.

4. Welchen Input durch Beziehungen bekommst du gerade, um dich als Leiter weiter zu entwickeln?
5. Auf welche Weise glaubst du, dass dieser oben genannte Input dich als Leiter entwickelt und zurüstet, bzw. dich entwickeln und zurüsten wird.
6. Kannst du Übungen nennen, die du für dich machst, um dich als Leiter weiterzuentwickeln?
7. Bitte beschreibst du, auf welche Weise die oben genannten Übungen, dich als Leiter weiter entwickeln und zurüsten.

#### **G. Weitere Kommentare**

1. Inwieweit glaubst du ist es die Aufgabe der örtlichen Kirche, bzw. die des Netzwerks (Vision für Österreich), Leiter zu entwickeln?
2. Wie erwartest du in der Zukunft, dass fähige Leiter für „Vision für Österreich“ entwickelt werden?

#### **H. Abschließende Fragen**

1. Gibt es noch etwas, dass du gerne zu dem Thema „Entwicklung von Leitern“ kommentieren würdest?
2. Was weißt du heute, das du schon zu Beginn deiner ‚Entwicklungsreise‘ als Leiter lieber gewusst hättest?