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You are the Messiah and I should know — I've followed a few!

Leadership and followers in the New Testament, Christian Theology and Hollywood popular film

Justin Lewis-Anthony

Submitted for examination for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Kent at Canterbury

June 2012

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Abstract

"Leadership" is treated as a constant, given, virtue in our society. We expect leadership to be exercised in every sphere of human society, including the Ministry of Defence, secondary schools, the United Nations, and even the Church of England. But there appears to be no clear, concise and universally accepted definition of the term. Are we reduced to treating leadership like "obscenity" in Justice Stewart's famous definition: "we know it when we see it"?

When the secular literature of leadership is examined, the only unanimity displayed is in disagreement about the sources, character and expression of leadership. This has not prevented the Church from attempting to promote "managerial-leadership" as a necessary skill for its minsters: in doing so, the Church has created something that might be called "missional-leadership". Neither idea represents the real source of leadership in our society, "mythological-leadership".

I examine the continuing power of myth in our culture, along with the way in which myth is transmitted by popular cinema in three categories: cinemas of "affirmation", "repudiation", and "reassertion". None disputes the basic model of the mythological leader: the man (and he is invariably a male) from outside, who comes into a community in a time of peril, defeats the evil and transforms the community by the (reluctant) exercise of violence, finally refusing any status the community wishes to confer upon him, and leaves, mortally wounded.

Finally, I ask: is "leadership" no more than a useful sociological tool in the professionalization of the Church's ministry and mission? Is it, on the other hand, fatally compromised by its origins in violence and the will to power? Here the importance of Dietrich Bonhoeffer is once more presented, as a man who recognized the temptations of leadership and yet was able to assert, and model, a faithful Christian discipleship.

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The "Panacea" of Leadership

In October 2009, Charles Haddon-Cave QC presented a report into the crash of an RAF Nimrod aircraft in Afghanistan in 2006. It was a carefully compiled and devastatingly phrased condemnation of the "cultures" of the RAF, QinetiQ, BAE Systems, the Defence Logistics Organisation, and the Ministry of Defence. In his presentation of the report Haddon-Cave used the word "failure" 24 times in 18 minutes.¹ The report itself, almost 600 pages long, pinpoints the reason for the Nimrod's loss in the failure, by the five agencies and individuals within them, to uphold four key principles, chief among which was "leadership":

Leadership is the most common principle emphasised time-and-time again in reports into major incidents and other materials...The fundamental failure was a failure of Leadership. ...lack of Leadership manifested itself in relation to the way in which the Nimrod Safety Case was handled, in the way in which warning signs and trends were not spotted, and in relation to inexorable weakening of the Airworthiness system and pervading Safety Culture generally. For these reasons, Leadership is a key principle for the future.²

Fourteen lives were lost in the crash of Nimrod XV230; according to Haddon-Cave's review those deaths would not have occurred if "leadership" had been exercised.

The loss of aircraft XV230 is an acute example of the central role ascribed to leadership in our culture and society. Along with apple-pie and motherhood, leadership is a necessity and a given, required in every sphere of North Atlantic society.³ There is nothing in our society that does not require or cannot be

¹ Charles Haddon-Cave, "Statement by Charles Haddon-Cave QC" (Statement presented at the The Nimrod Review, London, October 28, 2009), <www.nimrod-review.org.uk/linkedfiles/nimrod_review/haddon_cave_statement.pdf>.

² Charles Haddon-Cave, *The Nimrod Review: an independent review into the broader issues surrounding the loss of the RAF Nimrod MR2 aircraft XV230 in Afghanistan in 2006* (London: The Stationery Office, October 28, 2009), para. 20.16–17, <www.officialdocuments.gov.uk/document/hc0809/hc10/1025/1025.asp>. Capitalisation as in the original. ³ This thesis confines itself to the cultural expressions of leadership within "North Atlantic" society, sometimes referred to as 'western society': namely, the English-speaking world, sharing the common law tradition of the United Kingdom, with a particular emphasis on the culture and influence of the United States of America. This is a similar definition to that used by, among others: Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press,

improved by the careful, judicial and thoughtful application of leadership. It is, in the words of John Storey, "a catch-all and a panacea." There is no area in our society in which leadership cannot be exercised. Central and local government bodies, non-governmental organizations, the health service and education bodies have all set up leadership programmes or institutions which can inculcate leadership values in their employees, or clients. And this is only what is expected and required.

So, for example, when James Purnell resigned from the cabinet in the summer of 2009 he felt the need to praise Gordon Brown's "economic leadership." If Britain is to develop a high speed railway system then it will require, along with financial investment, "political leadership, some dynamism and willingness to take risks." Combating climate change will place a greater demand on international relations than anything else since the Cold War: "Climate change is arguably a far graver threat to our long-term security than terrorism and probably a greater challenge to humankind's ingenuity and leadership than anything else ever faced." Ryan Bunning was selected "to represent Cornwall at a South West Young Leadership Camp", in which "football leaders" are given "the chance to receive specialist football leadership coaching from the Football Association." Even the catering business recognizes the need for (and profitability of) leadership: the 2010 Restaurant Leadership Conference, held in Scottsdale, Arizona, in April 2010, promised to "uncover new horizons from new vantage points, providing advantages for success."

In one three month period in 2008 there were 2,924 references to "leadership" in the UK national press alone.¹¹ Politicians are expected to demonstrate leadership as a *sine qua non*. After a series of unedifying and uninspiring debates in the autumn of 2011 between the candidates for the

^{2007), &}quot;Introduction"; Rowan Williams, *Lost Icons: reflections on cultural bereavement* (London: Continuum International, 2000), e.g. 39, 61,95,140–143.

⁴ John Storey, "Signs of Change: 'damned rascals' and beyond," in *Leadership in Organizations:* current issues and key trends, ed. John Storey (London: Routledge, 2004), 5.

⁵ See Storey for a useful summary of the situation in Europe and the United Kingdom as of 2004: Storey, "Signs of Change," 4–7.

⁶ Philip Webster, "Dear Gordon, I quit," The Times, June 5, 2009.

⁷ Will Hutton, "Don't let the defeatists and cynics talk down Britain's need for speed," *The Observer*, August 2, 2009, 24.

⁸ Paddy Ashdown and George Robertson, "The Cold War is over. We must move on, fast," *The Times*, June 30, 2009.

⁹ "Bunning's a true leader," North Devon Journal, June 4, 2009.

¹⁰ Restaurant Leadership, "Restaurant Leadership 2010", n.d., <www.restaurantleadership.com>.

¹¹ Search for "leadership" on LexisNexis (<u>www.lexisnexis.com</u>), in UK national newspapers, occurrences between 1 October 2008 and 31 December 2008. *The Times*, with 478 mentions, and *The Guardian*, with 475, were the leading users of the term.

Republican nomination for presidency, the British journalist Gary Younge reminded them, and his readers, that "good political leadership... demands emotional intelligence, gut instinct, an ability to persuade and strategic savvy." To be a successful politician requires both the aura and the practice of leadership.

North Atlantic society expects the same qualities to be manifest in its industrialists and entrepreneurs. Steve Jobs embodied this expectation. The obituaries printed after his death ascribed his success with Apple to his character as "a single, razor-focused, deeply opinionated, micromanaging, uncompromising, charismatic, persuasive, mind-blowingly visionary leader."¹³ Other companies, such as Microsoft and Hewlett-Packard, will never be as successful as Apple, even if they ran "its designs through the corporate copying machine,"¹⁴ as long as they lack Jobs's leadership. To be a successful industrialist requires the quality and practice of leadership.

Similarly, North Atlantic society displays a consensus about the dangers which exist when organizations lack leadership. ¹⁵ Ken Polcari, managing director at ICAP Equities in New York, blamed the continuing slide of stocks on Wall Street on "the lack of leadership on both sides of the pond"; former England Rugby Captain Martin Corry thought the disastrous 2011 World Cup campaign was the result of the "lack of leadership" in the Rugby Football Union; Howard Schultz, the CEO of Starbucks, placed advertisements in the American press criticizing the "partisan gridlock" in Congress caused by "lack of leadership"; the refusal by senior clergy to evict the "Occupy London" tent protest from outside St Paul's Cathedral was evidence of the Church of England's "chronic lack of leadership and self-confidence." ¹⁶

With the word "leadership" in such common usage, the concept behind the word must be understood— it must surely be working within an agreed, accepted, normative definition of both word and concept.

Unfortunately, there is no such thing as a generally agreed and useful definition of leadership. In the social sciences, the customary method to achieve such a definition would be to follow Shlomo Sand's advice: "[t]he best way to

¹² Gary Younge, "In Cain and Perry's gaffes, the Republicans' degradation is laid bare," *The Guardian*, November 21, 2011.

¹³ David Pogue, "Steve Jobs Reshaped Industries," The New York Times Technology Pages, *Pogue's Post*, August 25, 2011, http://pogue.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/08/25/steve-jobs-reshaped-industries.

¹⁴ Pogue, "Jobs Reshaped."

¹⁵ Search on LexisNexis (<u>www.lexisnexis.com</u>), in all English language news sources, occurrences between 25 August 2011 and 25 November 2011: 1821 non-duplicate reports on "lack of leadership".

¹⁶ Reuters, 23 November 2011; The Guardian, 25 November 2011; CNN "American Morning" broadcast, 5 September 2011; Leo McKinstry, "Anglican church has been pathetic in tent city crisis," The Express (London, November 3, 2011).

define a concept is to follow its history".¹⁷ This chronological approach, detailing the changes to the concept, and the contexts for the practice, of leadership, has been the method for countless textbooks and articles on leadership: see for example, Stogdill's comprehensive survey¹⁸, Stepanov, Yeoh, and Hart's chronology¹⁹, or Western's "timeline of the leadership discourses".²⁰ But the social-science method has not managed to produce an agreed definition. If anything it has complicated the discourse on leadership. By 1995 Keith Grint was able to present (in a regular and profitable motif of his work) a quantitative measurement of leadership studies:

Between January 1990 and January 1994, 5,341 articles were published on leadership just within those journals covered by the BPI/INFORM international database. That is getting on for four every day...: approximately every six hours, somewhere, someone publishes a paper on leadership in English.²¹

The volume has accelerated. By 2000, DuBrin could assert that there were 35,000 different definitions of leadership in academic literature.²²

The Methodology of this Thesis

There is a dissension in "leadership" studies. This thesis is designed first to describe that dissension and then to explore its consequences. Immediately I am presented with a difficult terminological choice: how do I refer to leadership? It would, on one hand, be useful to refer to "leadership" uniformly within quotation marks, to indicate that "leadership" is not a watertight definition signifying an empirically verifiable reality. On the other hand, quotation marks can function rhetorically as "scare-quotes", to indicate an (im)proper scepticism about the concept; as if to say "so-called leadership". I have decided, in the end, to be inconsistent in my use of quotation marks, to

¹⁷ Shlomo Sand, *The Invention of the Jewish People*, trans. Yael Lotan (London: Verso, 2009), 25. Sand's task is the slightly more contentious one of defining the meaning of "people" and "nation" with regard to the history of the Jewish people and nation.

¹⁸ Ralph M. Stogdill, *Handbook of Leadership: a survey of theory and research* (London: Collier Macmillan, 1974), chap. 2.

¹⁹ Roman Stepanov, Ken Yeoh, and David Hart, *Historical Development of Leadership Theory* (Newcastle: Newcastle Business School, March 2007).

²⁰ Simon Western, *Leadership: a critical text* (London; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 2008), fig. 6.1.

²¹ Keith Grint, Management: a sociological introduction (Oxford: Polity Press, 1995), 124.

²² Andrew J. DuBrin, *Leadership: research findings, practice, and skills,* 3rd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000), 3. By the time DuBrin got to the latest, and sixth, edition of his book (Mason, OH: South-Western / Cenage, 2010), he gave up on such relative precision: "A Google search of articles and books about leadership in organizations indicates 188 million articles. In all those entries, leadership has *probably* been defined in many ways." (p. 3; emphasis added).

show the inherent inconsistency in the way leadership is used in the literature and in practice.

I have chosen the Church as a primary focus of study because the Church understands itself to have, and is also understood by secular commentators as possessing, a strong, independent tradition of leadership: an independent tradition, which while cognizant of the trends within secular leadership studies (political, social, business), is formed through theological, scriptural and traditional reflection. I will show that this is an inadequate description of the leadership discourse which actually operates within the contemporary North Atlantic church, because it is an inadequate description of the nature of leadership in contemporary North Atlantic society.

Within the complexities of this society, secular leadership discourses are presented as rational, practical responses to questions of resource-management: hence, they are what I call "Managerial-Leadership" (*Ma-L*). The Church acknowledges an influence from this secular, 'morally-neutral', set of techniques, and its own, 'baptized', version is thought to be a rational, ecclesiastical adaptation: it has been called "Missionary-Leadership" (*Mi-L*).²³ Neither of these discourses acknowledges the most complete description of leadership, which comes from understanding its quality as a mythological discourse, and one which functions as a justification of the human tendency to exercise power, through violence over others: in short, the fundamental nature of leadership is "Mythological-Leadership" (*My-L*). This "Mythological-Leadership" derives its power from and is perpetuated by the tropes and world-view of popular film.

The thesis is divided into three sections. **Section 1** examines the "problem" of leadership. In *Chapter 1* I survey the myriad ways in which "leadership" has been presented and sold to the secular business world, looking chronologically and thematically at the differing and contradictory models of leadership. I will demonstrate how the secular advocates of leadership are unable to agree on a definition or even a family of definitions of leadership.

Despite leadership's definitional vagueness, in *Chapter 2* I demonstrate the way in which the church (principally the Church of England) in the late twentieth century began to incorporate the strictures of secular business consultants into church governance and ministerial formation (I include a case study on the Archbishop of Canterbury's "sharia law" speech). This incorporation has not happened without an attempt to find scriptural precedents for secular (multi-)model(s) of leadership. Therefore, in *Chapter 3* I examine the biblical passages which are usually presented as the biblical antecedents for leadership practices within the church and show that they are

²³ Although, as I shall demonstrate, there is an identifiable and persistent reluctance within the Church to admit even this slight instrumentality. See Douglas Hurd's contribution on page 53.

anything but that. I also make a preliminary identification of a praxis model possessed by the Church which stands in opposition to *Ma-L* and *My-L*, namely, the ministry of Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

If leadership is a mythological construct, then the characteristics of myth must be demonstrated to be working within leadership discourses. Therefore, in **Section 2** I move from the "problem" of leadership to the problem of "myth". In *Chapter 4*, "The Morphology of Myth", I examine the contesting and contending theories of myth, and show how the leadership 'dissensus'²⁴ is evidence for the mythological nature of the leadership discourses. In *Chapter 5*, "The Myths of the Mighty," I demonstrate the contextual nature of mythologies, showing that myths are always the expression of the culture of a particular, dominant, society: from the late twentieth century, this became that of the United States of America, and, with the industrialization and capitalization of society, the most powerful medium for myth became Cinema.

This last proposition is explored in **Section 3**, in which I examine the way leadership myths are depicted and interrogated in movies. *Chapter 6* surveys the films which might be said to advocate an uncritical acceptance of the "great man" model of leadership, and show how the model is reflected in most popular thinking about leadership. In *Chapter 7* I present a group of films, mostly made in the 1970s and 80s, which attempted to repudiate the older model of leadership, but in doing so, only managed to reinforce the underlying ideology of the cinema of affirmation. In *Chapter 8*, I look at the ways in which attempts were made to reintegrate a healthier model of leadership/followership in the cinema of the 1990s, but unconsciously worked within the "great man" model of leadership: behind all these films the "great man" either is, or is modelled upon, John Wayne.

In **Section 4** (*Chapter 9*), I examine the moral and ethical consequences of this leadership mythography, camouflaged by the privileged place ascribed to leadership in North Atlantic society. Walter Wink's "Myth of Redemptive Violence" and Jewett and Lawrence's "American Monomyth" are combined into the monomythic celebration of violence and totalitarianism. If "leadership" is fundamentally and fatally tainted by the threat, action and acceptance of violence, where might the Church find an alternative model of organization and ministry? The life and ministry of Dietrich Bonhoeffer is examined as the exemplar, in his repudiation of "great man" leadership, and his modelling of the true Christian pattern of social organization, discipleship.

²⁴ Keith Grint's happy phrase: see page 41.

A Movie Methodology

Theological reflection on movies fluctuates between two contrasting attitudes. On the one hand: "There is no single person, entity, organization, institution, or power in our society today that even comes close to rivalling the power of film and television to shape our faith, values, and behaviour." On the other hand: "What has Jerusalem to do with Hollywood?" On

It is reasonable to assume that James Wall's provocative question no longer has anything other than a contrarian status. Forty years of study and watching, with the growth in publication about, and courses taught on, the relationship between holy city and Hollywood means that now, within academic circles, it can be stipulated that there is an "interrelationship of religion and film." That it can be so is increasingly taken as axiomatic. How it can be so still requires the writer to show his or her workings. In other words, movies may illustrate theological / spiritual / political / ideological dynamics within society, but which movies and whose dynamics? The demonstration of workings does not happen very frequently. Often 'religion and film' books begin with an introductory chapter persuading the reader that this is a worthwhile exercise, and not merely a "lark". They then follow with a series of studies of movies selected thematically, but which very often appear to be the outcome of aesthetic preference or random choice. They was a study and they are the study as they are the study as they are they a

Counter-rationally, this may actually be a more profitable method than an *a priori* determination of movies to be discussed. It might be thought that a more 'objective' or 'systematic' testing of a hypothesis can only be achieved by

²⁵ Bryan P. Stone, *Faith and Film: theological themes at the cinema* (St. Louis, Mo.: Chalice Press, 2000), 7.

²⁶ James M. Wall, *Church and Cinema: a way of viewing film* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1971)— Wall's choice of title for chap. 1.

²⁷ Eichenberger's phrase, as part of a useful conspectus of the history of scholarship in religion and film between the 1950s and the 1990s: Amos Eichenberger, "Approaches to Film Criticism," in *New Image of Religious Film*, ed. John R. May (Kansas City, Mo.: Sheed & Ward, 1997), 19.

²⁸ To echo Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988).

²⁹ Margaret R. Miles, *Seeing and Believing: religion and values in the movies* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), ix.

³⁰ See, for example, films chosen thematically ("Affirming our humanity"; "Choosing life"; "Embracing our vocation"), in Barsotti and Johnston; films chosen doctrinally, illustrating the Apostles' Creed, in Stone; films chosen preferentially, in Martin and Ostwalt; films chosen devotionally, in Pavelin; films chosen homiletically, in Malone: Catherine M. Barsotti and Robert K. Johnston, Finding God in the Movies: 33 films of reel faith (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2004); Stone, Faith and Film; Joel W. Martin and Conrad E. Ostwalt, eds., Screening the Sacred: religion, myth, and ideology in popular American film (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995); Alan Pavelin, Fifty Religious Films (Chislehurst: A. P. Pavelin, 1990); Peter Malone, Lights, Camera — Faith!: A Movie Lover's Guide to Scripture, 3 vols. (Boston, Mass.: Pauline Books & Media, 2002).

having an 'objective' or 'systematic' method of selecting the movies. Unfortunately, film criticism is not part of the social sciences. An *a priori* methodology, by which the criteria for movie selection are clearly demonstrated before dealing with the movies themselves, is a fraught process. It is a form of cultural sampling perennially in danger of encountering, what Andrew Tudor has called in relation to genre studies of cinema, the "empiricist dilemma":

To take a genre such as a western, analyse it, and list its principal characteristics, is to beg the question that we must first isolate the body of films which are westerns. But they can only be isolated on the basis of the 'principal characteristics' which can only be discovered from the films themselves after they have been isolated.³¹

To take a selection of movies, analyse them, and list the principal means by which they reflect and propagate a certain mythological construction also begs the question: how can I assert that these movies are not just exemplars of a deductive argument?

Part of the justification comes from the nature of that to which I am arguing: the mythological functioning of a cultural artefact. As I will demonstrate in greater detail in **Section 2**, mythologies function unconsciously within the cultural artefacts which perpetuate those mythographies: myths are "framing metaphors." They are expressed through repetition, and their very power lies in that repetition: they are "stories we never get tired of hearing" an excellent, intuitive, definition of genre-pictures.

Therefore, to illustrate the mythological-bearing function of movies, it is possible to choose genre-pictures. The next question is: which genre? There are many different examples and genres of film which I might have chosen. Crime films, such as *The Godfather* series³⁴ or *Chinatown*³⁵; political thrillers, such as *The Parallax View*, *Three Days of the Condor*, and *All the President's Men*³⁶; even

³¹ Andrew Tudor, *Theories of Film* (London: Secker and Warburg; British Film Institute, 1974), 135; part of which is reprinted as "Genre," in *Film Genre Reader III*, ed. Barry Keith Grant, 3rd ed. (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 2003), 5. See the discussion below on *Saving Private Ryan* as a 'genre-film' on page 305ff.

³² William G. Doty, *Mythography: The Study of Myths and Rituals* (University, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1986), 18. See page 151.

³³ Kelton Cobb, *The Blackwell Guide to Theology and Popular Culture*, Blackwell guides to theology (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 123.

³⁴ Francis Ford Coppola, *The Godfather*, Technicolor 35mm, U.S.A. (Paramount Pictures, 1972); Francis Ford Coppola, *The Godfather: Part II*, Technicolor 35mm, U.S.A. (Paramount Pictures, 1974); Francis Ford Coppola, *The Godfather: Part III*, Technicolor / Super 35, U.S.A. (Paramount Pictures, 1990).

³⁵ Roman Polanski, Chinatown, Technicolor / Panavision, U.S.A. (Paramount Pictures, 1974).

³⁶ Alan J. Pakula, *The Parallax View*, Technicolor 35mm, U.S.A. (Paramount Pictures, 1974); Sydney Pollack, *Three Days of the Condor*, Technicolor / Panavision, U.S.A. (Paramount Pictures,

comedies, such as $M^*A^*S^*H$ and $Being\ There$, all depict leaders and those in authority (and the portrayal of leaders is usually to show them as amoral, corrupt, and self-serving).

However, I have chosen, chiefly, to look at the war-film. I concur with Stanley Kubrick, who early in his career, argued for the artistic, moral and cinematic usefulness of this genre. Kubrick believed that the war film as a genre "provides an almost unique opportunity to contrast an individual of our contemporary society with a solid framework of accepted value." Although the framework is of "accepted value", it is also, simultaneously and paradoxically, hidden. The work of the film-maker is to reveal the framework to the audience—they become "fully aware" of it—and then it may act as "a counterpoint to a human, individual, emotional situation." That individual situation may furthermore function as a means of intensifying the artistic, moral and cinematic impact of the framework, expressed through the genre-picture: this latter is effective as "a kind of hothouse for forced, quick breeding of attitudes and feelings" to be correct.⁴¹

The genre of war-films has the further advantage that it explores a world, a society, in which the expectations of authority and command are both explicit and implicit: explicit, in that protagonists have signifiers of their ranking and power within the society (four-star generals, double-bar captains, three-stripe sergeants, and so on); implicit, in that the signifiers point to modes of behaviour and relationship which are normative and imposed (saluting a senior officer, accepting orders, standing to attention), all of which are designed to reinforce the military chain of command and military effectiveness.⁴²

Within this genre, therefore, I will study in detail *Full Metal Jacket, Patton, Saving Private Ryan*, and *Twelve O'Clock High*, with other examples of the genre also examined.⁴³

^{1975);} Alan J. Pakula, *All the President's Men*, Technicolor 35mm, U.S.A. (Warner Bros. Pictures, 1976).

³⁷ Robert Altman, *MASH*, DeLuxe / Panavision, U.S.A. (Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation, 1970); Hal Ashby, *Being There*, Panavision 35mm, U.S.A. (United Artists, 1979).

³⁸ See the chapter on the cinema of suspicion, Chapter 7, below.

³⁹ Colin Young, "The Hollywood War of Independence," Film Quarterly 12, no. 3 (Spring 1959): 10

⁴⁰ Young, "War of Independence," 10.

⁴¹ Young, "War of Independence," 10.

⁴² See for example, in the modern U.S. Army, Army Regulation 600–20, "Army Command Policy" (Headquarters, Department of the Army, March 18, 2008); Army Regulation 600–25, "Salutes, Honors, and Visits of Courtesy" (Headquarters, Department of the Army, September 24, 2004).

⁴³ Stanley Kubrick, *Full Metal Jacket*, Colour film, U.S.A. / U.K. (Warner Bros. Pictures, 1987); Franklin J. Schaffner, *Patton*, Colour; Dimension 150, U.S.A. (Twentieth Century–Fox Film Corporation, 1970); Steven Spielberg, *Saving Private Ryan*, Panavision / Technicolor, U.S.A.

Related to the war-picture genre is a second, important, category of film, namely the Western. This group of films is largely represented by the work of John Ford and John Wayne in the so-called 'Cavalry Trilogy' of the late 1940s and early 1950s.44 The choice of these pictures was for three reasons: first, they are cinematically significant. John Ford is an acknowledged master of moviemaking, and the stories, motifs, techniques and tropes of the films have been replicated in many subsequent films. Second, they are morally significant. John Wayne accumulated much of his later status as an ethical American icon through his participation in these films, and I will note how his reputation and his presentation is quoted and critiqued in his own life and other, later films. Third, they are mythically significant. The films of the 'Cavalry Trilogy' fulfil a dual function: they are military-westerns. Thus, they allow me to further examine the clear hierarchical functioning of leadership within a clearly hierarchical society, and they do so within the cultural and geographical milieu of the American West. As I shall make evident in Chapter 5, "The Myths of the Mighty", the location and cardinal direction of the American West is central to the establishment of My-L. (This is a further factor in the choice of the earlier war-pictures: they depict an American military experience, the significance of which I shall also demonstrate in Chapter 5.)

Four films function as theological and mythological "outliers"⁴⁵: *Monty Python's Life of Brian, Shane, Spartacus, Triumph des Willens.*⁴⁶ *Life of Brian* was chosen as one of the few films whose focus is principally on the nature and role of followers, a curiously neglected area in leadership studies.⁴⁷ It also provides an alternative "hothouse" for the dissection of societal attitudes and divisions, through in its use of humour, bathos and incongruity.⁴⁸ *My-L* is not dependent

(DreamWorks Distribution, 1998); Henry King, *Twelve O'Clock High*, B&W film, U.S.A. (Twentieth Century Fox, 1949).

⁴⁴ John Ford, *Fort Apache*, B&W 35 mm, U.S.A. (RKO Radio Pictures, 1948); John Ford, *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, Technicolor 35mm, U.S.A. (RKO Radio Pictures, 1949); John Ford, *Rio Grande*, B&W 35 mm, U.S.A. (Republic Pictures, 1950).

⁴⁵ Properly, and technically: "An outlying observation... that appears to deviate markedly from other members of the sample in which it occurs" (Frank E. Grubbs, "Procedures for Detecting Outlying Observations in Samples," *Technometrics* 11, no. 1 (February 1969): 1.1.) Popularly, and imprecisely: "a place that [lies] outside everyday experience, a place where the normal rules [do] not apply" (Malcolm Gladwell, *Outliers: the story of success* (London: Penguin, 2009), 7.)

⁴⁶ Terry Jones, *Monty Python's Life of Brian*, Eastmancolor, U.K. (Cinema International Corporation / Orion Pictures Corporation, 1979); George Stevens, *Shane*, Technicolor 35mm, U.S.A. (Paramount Pictures, 1953); Stanley Kubrick, *Spartacus*, Technicolor / Super Technirama 70, U.S.A. (Universal Pictures, 1960); Leni Riefenstahl, *Triumph des Willens; das Dokument vom Reichsparteitag* 1934, B&W film (Reichspropagandaleitung der NSDAP; Leni Riefenstahl-Produktion, 1935).

 $^{^{47}}$ See especially the discussion about followers in the section on Rost's "postindustrial paradigm", on page 37ff.

⁴⁸ See note 168 on page 271.

on a particular style of dissemination: it functions through high-stakes warfilms and low-culture comedies.⁴⁹

Shane and Spartacus are chosen as two films with an ostensibly contrasting attitude to the moral status of the leader-protagonist. Spartacus is depicted critically, responsible for unnecessary suffering through his embrace of violence; Shane is depicted heroically, responsible for necessary retribution through his embrace of violence. Even so, the deeper requirements of *My-L* mean that Shane and Spartacus share a common status as social outsiders, not part of the society in which they find themselves. I explain the significance of this symmetry in the synthesis description of *My-L* in the section on 'The Emergence of Mythological-Leadership' on page 332.

Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will (TdW)* is prior to all these films, in that it is one film in which *My-L*, in all its ethical and moral corruption, is depicted wholly uncritically. Like the 'Cavalry Trilogy', it is largely self-selecting, as *TdW* marks the moment that *My-L* makes the transition from literary and philosophical sources into the power of cinema: I describe these antecedents, and trace its aesthetic and conceptual influences.⁵⁰ If myths are stories we tell ourselves over and over again, *TdW* is a film that has been remade over and over again.

Joel Martin, in his introductory essay to the influential volume *Screening the Sacred: religion, myth, and ideology in popular American film*, proposes that a threefold approach in the study of religion can be transferred into a study of religion and film in dialogue.⁵¹ Religion (and therefore 'religion and film') can be studied theologically (by which he means through "religious texts and thinkers in various traditions"⁵²), mythologically (which is a form of comparative religious studies, and which acknowledges that religion is "a universal and ubiquitous human activity"⁵³), and ideologically (examining the "historical, social, and political contexts" through which religion is expressed, legitimating or challenging "dominant visions of the social order").⁵⁴

I would not wish, for the purposes of my task, to follow Martin's division rigidly, but neither did Martin wish for these "suggestive...characteristics" to

 $^{^{49}}$ I explore more of these distinctions and their relationship to mythology in an examination of Northrop Frye's "Theory of Five Modes": see the section "Is Cinema Mythic?" on page 155ff.

⁵⁰ See the section 'Triumph of the Will Redux: Meaning and Abnegation' on page 231.

⁵¹ Joel W. Martin, "Introduction: seeing the sacred on the screen," in *Screening the Sacred: religion, myth, and ideology in popular American film,* ed. Joel W. Martin and Conrad E. Ostwalt (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995), 1–12.

⁵² Martin, "Seeing the Sacred," 6.

⁵³ Martin, "Seeing the Sacred," 6.

⁵⁴ Martin, "Seeing the Sacred," 7. The remainder of Martin and Ostwalt's book is structured in this tripartite way.

be rigidly adhered to.⁵⁵ These are clearly scholarly divisions, allowing the subject to be apprehended at all rather than definitively. Therefore, I will follow Martin in stipulating that 'religion', on the one hand, and 'religion and film', on the other hand, actually are useful, apprehendable categories of thought and human experience, dealing with a referent that can be thought of as something beyond 'mere' social construction. I depart from Martin by folding his last two categories into each other: as I hope to demonstrate, it is impossible to study a mythology of film without understanding an ideology of film (involving "historical, social, and political contexts"), and, I would go further, economic contexts and questions of power and violence. Mythography is something more than the comparison of cultural mythologies: this is not armchair anthropology, diverted by folkloric ways. The mythology of movies has an unavoidable *ethical* component.

The means by which this ethical component could be understood and manifested in society began to be addressed in Walter Benjamin's seminal essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction". ⁵⁶ Here Benjamin makes the important distinction between the cultic and the exhibition value of a cultural artefact. Benjamin asserts, with the confidence of a cultural theorist if not that of an historian, that the earliest 'works of art' were "ceremonial objects" made with purely cultic motives:

The elk portrayed by the man of the Stone Age on the walls of his cave was an instrument of magic. He did expose it to his fellow men, but in the main it was meant for the spirits.⁵⁷

Because of "the absolute emphasis on its cult value", the object was "an instrument of magic."⁵⁸ This meant, Benjamin argued, that ceremonial objects were invested with an "aura", which was the "unique phenomenon of a distance however close it may be".⁵⁹ Benjamin believed that this distance operated both within space and time, that is, as a physical phenomenon, the result of the sacralising of the ceremonial object being kept separate and apart from its beholders,⁶⁰ and, at the same time, it functioned conceptually, as a form of psychological, or moral distance (although he does not use those words, and, in fact, does not specify the non-physical means by which "distance" is maintained).

⁵⁵ Martin, "Seeing the Sacred," 7.

⁵⁶ Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction (1936)," in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zorn (London: Cape, 1970), 211–244.

⁵⁷ Benjamin, "Mechanical Reproduction," 218.

⁵⁸ Benjamin, "Mechanical Reproduction," 219.

⁵⁹ Benjamin, "Mechanical Reproduction," 216.

⁶⁰ Benjamin, "Mechanical Reproduction," n5, 236-7.

This aura was eliminated when ceremonial objects, or, more properly, cultural artefacts were produced for exhibition. No longer for the edification or propitiation of the spirits, the objects were made for their looks. Benjamin makes the distinction between the statue of a divinity fixed within its temple, and the bust of a beauty that can be moved from exhibition place to exhibition place:

by the absolute emphasis on its exhibition value the work of art becomes a creation with entirely new functions, among which the one we are conscious of, the artistic function, later may be recognized as incidental.⁶¹

The "most serviceable" exemplars of this new, political and exhibitionist mode, according to Benjamin, are photography and film. As the art works become mechanically reproduced, inevitably the ritual mode falls away, and with it the authenticity of the piece, for the "presence of the *original* is the prerequisite to the concept of authenticity." Because film acting is mediated without the involvement of personal contact (the screen actor acts not to an audience but to camera, and thereby is unable to adjust his performance in response to the audience's responses), the audience, insulated, takes "the position of a critic", which is "the position of the camera". They approach the film work of art through "testing", and this, Benjamin definitively concludes, "is not the approach to which cult values may be exposed." 63

In short, mechanical reproduction of a ceremonial object / artefact leads to the parallel removals of the aura of authenticity *and* the authority of ritual.

This is where Benjamin is mistaken: he believed that the nature of the artefact constructed the means by which it was apprehended. He argued that ritual was a consequence of the mode of reproduction: because he was accustomed to see a particular form of ritual, he further assumed that the particular form of ritual was inevitably and inescapably congruent with a particular form of reproduction. (A partial reason for this was his seemingly entirely theoretical knowledge of film-making: he believed, for instance, that if a film director, in a search for greater verisimilitude in the startle performed by an actor, physically frightened the actor, then this would somehow diminish the 'reality', the "beautiful semblance" of the process. Benjamin had no faith in actors' abilities, or even the process by which suspension of disbelief is irrelevant, during the performance, for the truth of the performance.)

Catherine Bell has provided the means of expanding our definition and expectations of ritual. She notes the parallels between the "special activities" which we permit to be ritualised, "inherently different from daily routine

⁶¹ Benjamin, "Mechanical Reproduction," 219.

 $^{^{\}rm 62}$ Benjamin, "Mechanical Reproduction," 214. Emphasis added.

⁶³ Benjamin, "Mechanical Reproduction," 222.

⁶⁴ Benjamin, "Mechanical Reproduction," 224.

actions",65 and the every-day, the mundane, activities which cannot be easily recognized as sharing in any sense of "public events", "codified by tradition", and with an "appeal to divine beings."66

Bell notes six aspects to "ritual-like activity" (acknowledging, again, that these are scholarly constructs, and are neither exclusive nor definitive). The aspects are: formalism, traditionalism, invariance, rule-governance, sacral symbolism and performance. These aspects appear to map quite satisfactorily onto the cultural experience and practice of film-going, and John Lyden notes: "The rituals of film viewing may not seem so invariant or rule governed, but that does not mean that such activities are not rituals." Film-going is more than repeated action: that is simply habit. Film-going, rather, is 'habit' plus 'meaning': in other words, ritual. Rituals, like film-going, "traffic in symbols—whether such symbols refer to traditional religious referents or not."

The truth of this can be seen when the process is noted at work within a popular cultural expression. The same desire for and expectations of ritual are at work in the "Wittertainment Code of Conduct", 70 produced by the influential BBC Radio film review programme of Mark Kermode and Simon Mayo. The list of proscribed behaviours ("No Eating, No Slurping, No Rustling, No Irresponsible Parenting") is an attempt to reimpose a rubrical uniformity on the ritual of consuming cinema. It is a reminder that shared standards of behaviour are to be expected and constructed, and that we behave this way because we always have behaved this way because this is the way in which we understand the experience of cinema-going.

As Bell says, "Ritualization quietly creates an environment within which quite distinctive symbolic behaviors can appear to be proper and effective responses." Geoffrey Hill describes the proper and effective rituals when it comes cinema going:

We pay our votive offerings at the box office. We buy our ritual corn. We hush in reverent anticipation as the lights go down and the celluloid magic begins. Throughout the filmic narrative we identify with the hero. We vilify the antihero. We vicariously exult in the victories of the drama.

⁶⁵ Catherine M. Bell, *Ritual: perspectives and dimensions* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 138.

⁶⁶ Bell, Ritual, 138.

⁶⁷ Dealt with in detail in *Ritual*, chap. 5.

⁶⁸ John C. Lyden, *Film as Religion: myths, morals, and rituals* (New York; London: New York University Press, 2003), 104.

⁶⁹ Lyden, Film as Religion, 105.

⁷⁰ Mark Kermode and Simon Mayo, "Wittertainment's Code of Conduct" (BBC Radio 5Live, November 19, 2010), <www.bbc.co.uk/5live/films/code_of_conduct.pdf>.

⁷¹ Bell, *Ritual*, 168.

And we are spiritually inspired by the moral of the story, all while believing we are modern techno-secular people, devoid of religion.⁷²

Martin Scorsese, a reflective film-maker with a sophisticated understanding of movies' wider cultural functioning, once said:

The church and the movie house both are places for people to come together and share a common experience. I believe there is spirituality in films, even if it's not one that can supplant faith. ...It's as if movies answer an ancient quest for the common unconscious. To fulfill a spiritual need that people have to share a common memory.⁷³

However much the reader thinks this is a good thing depends upon his or her own cultural milieu and values. For Scorsese the movie house as a place for sharing (and making?) a common memory is a thing of wonder. The French critic Georges Duhamel saw situation in another way: "Je ne peux déjà plus penser ce que je veux. Les images mouvantes se substituent à mes propres pensées."⁷⁴ Whether the common memory is or is not a moral and cultural good, the common memory exists.

The purpose of the remainder of this thesis is to recollect that common memory when it comes to the question of leadership, and to examine the moral and cultural consequences from submitting to the thoughts that follow the moving images.

⁷² Geoffrey Hill, *Illuminating Shadows: the mythic power of film* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1992), 3. Other scholars demur from such close parallelism: see Robert Segal's comments on page 151.

⁷³ Martin Scorsese and Michael Henry Wilson, *A Personal Journey with Martin Scorsese Through American Movies* (London: Faber, 1997), 166.

⁷⁴ "I can no longer think what I want to think. My thoughts have been replaced by moving images." Georges Duhamel, *Scènes de la Vie Future* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1930), 52; English translation as in Benjamin, "Mechanical Reproduction," 231.

Section 1 The "Problem" of Leadership

...Now the philosophers have engaged in a great deal of complicated debate about the supreme ends of good and evil; and by concentrating their attention on this question they have tried to discover what it is that makes a man happy. ...Although they have gone astray in different ways, the limits imposed by nature set bounds to their deviation from the path of truth, so that there were none who did not set the Supreme Good and Supreme Evil in one of three locations: in the soul, or in the body, or in both. On the basis of this threefold classification into what we may call the genera of philosophic schools, Marcus Varro by careful and minute examination noted such a wide variety of opinions, in his book On Philosophy, that by the application of certain criteria of differentiation he easily arrived at a total of 288 sects, not sects already in existence but possible schools of thought.

Augustine of Hippo, (c. AD 415-425)*

^{*} *The City of God*, ed. David Knowles, OSB, trans. Henry Bettenson (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1972), XIX.1, (in this edition, 483-484).

Chapter 1

Is Leadership a Problem?

"There go my people, I must find out where they are going so I can lead them."

Alexandre Ledru-Rollin, 1807–1874¹

The Problem of "Leadership"

In the period after the Second World War it was apparent that leadership studies was a burgeoning field. This brought its own problems. As long ago as 1961, the sheer volume of material produced on leadership and definitions defined, threatened to overwhelm both academic scholar and lay practitioner. That year *The Harvard Business Review* excitedly promised its readers that Warren G. Bennis had "created sense and order out of [the] chaos" caused by "two quite different schools of opinion on leadership", and produced a reconciled and integrated synthesis of the utter confusion felt by so many managers of the day.² Bennis, obviously, failed.

The following decade, Ralph Stogdill, one of the major post-Second World War scholars of management and organizational studies, attempted once more to provide conceptual clarity. Giving up on Bennis's ambition to synthesize two different schools, in his *Handbook* Stogdill described leadership as, variously: a focus of group processes; an expression of an individual personality; the art of inducing compliance; an exercise of influence; an act or behaviour; a form of persuasion (an act with the coercion of compliance removed from it); a means to achieve goals; an effect of interaction; the acceptance of a role differentiated from the rest of the group; or, finally and conversely, the *initiation* of a form of

Alexandre-Auguste Ledru-Rollin was a French politician, and a radical opponent of the accession in 1830 of Louis Philippe. He became minister of the interior in the government of 1848, and took part in an attempted coup against Louis-Napoléon (Napoléon III) in June 1849, which led to his exile in England. Alvin R. Calman says Ledru-Rollin's use of "I am their chief; I must follow them" is probably apocryphal. (Alvin Rosenblatt Calman, *Ledru-Rollin and the Second French Republic*, Reprint of the 1922 ed (Columbia University Studies in history, economics, and public law, no. 234) (New York: Octagon Books, 1980), 374.).

² Warren G. Bennis, "Revisionist Theory of Leadership," *Harvard Business Review* 39, no. 1 (February 1961): 26. Quotations from the editorial introduction.

group structure.³ Every one of these definitions is accompanied by an enormous literature, which Stogdill, industriously and helpfully, sets out: so, for example, if leadership is an instrument of goal achievement, it is possible to consult the work of Cowley (1928), Bellows (1959), Knickerbocker (1948), Cattell (1951) R.C. Davis (1951), Urwick (1953) and K. Davis (1962).⁴ Even so, he pessimistically concludes: "there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept."⁵

One cause of the immense volume of leadership studies is what Rost has identified as the "hyphenation-problem"6: most academic study of leadership emerges from one academic discipline or another. Similarly, most practitioner writing on leadership emerges from one kind of business or another. Thus is found representations of: anthropology-leadership (in which leadership is exercised within and subordinate to the larger cultural structures of any given society) in Bailey⁷; social psychology-leadership (in which leadership is expressed in the liminal ground between sociology and individual psychology as a form of needs-based social influence) with Bass and his collaborators⁸; human resources-leadership (in which styles of leadership are available in a

³ Stogdill, Handbook of Leadership, chap. 2.

⁴ W. H. Cowley, "Three distinctions in the study of leaders," *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 23, no. 2 (July 1928): 144–157; R. M. Bellows, *Creative Leadership*, Prentice-Hall Industrial Relations and Personnel Series (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1959); Irving Knickerbocker, "Leadership: a conception and some implications," *Journal of Social Issues* 4, no. 3 (1948): 23–40; R. B. Cattell, "New Concepts for Measuring Leadership, in Terms of Group Syntality," *Human Relations* 4, no. 2 (May 1951): 161–184; R. C. Davis, *The Fundamentals of Top Management* (New York: Harper & Bros, 1951); L. F. Urwick, "Leadership and Morale," Lecture transcript ([S.l.], March 1953), Archived at 1/15/2, PowerGen Library, Henley Management College; Keith Davis, *Human Relations at Work*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1962). The age of these references is partly to do with the period in which the definition was fashionable and partly to do with the age of Stogdill's work. Stogdill erroneously gives the date of the Ralph Davis book as 1942, and refers to Urwick's work as if it were a book published by Ohio State University's College of Commerce and Administration. It seems more likely, according to the archive of L. F. Urwick's work deposited at Henley Management College, to have been an instance of a lecture given on numerous occasions in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

⁵ Stogdill, Handbook of Leadership, 7.

⁶ Joseph C. Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century* (Westport, Conn.; London: Praeger, 1991), 1,14–17. We shall see the working out of an "unhyphenated" approach in Rost's work, on page 37.

⁷ F. G. Bailey, *Humbuggery and Manipulation: the art of leadership* (Ithaca, N.Y.; London: Cornell University Press, 1988).

⁸ Bernard M. Bass, *Leadership, Psychology, and Organizational Behavior* (New York: Harper & Row, 1960); Bernard M. Bass and Ruth Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: theory, research, and application,* 4th ed. (New York: Free Press, 2008). Maslow's work on the hierarchy of needs has also been very influential on this school: A. H. Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* (New York: Harper, 1954). See also the concise definition in Michael J. Markus, Scott T. Allison, and Dafna Eylon, "Social Psychology," ed. George R. Goethals, Georgia Jones Sorenson, and James MacGregor Burns, *Encyclopedia of Leadership* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.; London: Sage, 2004).

menu format to managers, to be utilised as is most appropriate given an organization's needs and situation—this is leadership for managers and personnel officers) with Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson⁹; political-leadership (in which the pattern and example of political leaders is measured according to internal and external criteria of success—internal by the ability of the political leader to affect his/her programme, external by the judgement of historians and political scientists) with Tucker¹⁰; military-leadership (in which the rigidly structured hierarchies of the military compete with the extreme demands of battle upon command and control situations) with Taylor and Rosenbach¹¹; and even ecclesiastical-leadership (in which the peculiarities of the church's historical situation, and its social and theological inheritances are accounted for) in Grundy.¹² As Rost says, "these one-discipline scholars...strongly hold the assumption that leadership practiced in the particular profession they are studying is different from leadership as practiced in other professions."¹³

Even so, the "one-discipline" approach to leadership at least has the benefit of intellectual modesty. To come up with a single *definition* of leadership requires nothing more than internal coherence. To construct a *theory* of leadership, a conceptual structure which explains the origins and outworkings of the different definitions, requires scholars to move beyond hyphenation, towards a multi-disciplinary approach. But as soon as two scholars' methodologies and conclusions are set against each other, the distance between intention and achievement becomes apparent. The quest for a "general theory of leadership" as Georgia Sorenson has put it, which attempts an integration of all that has been written about leadership to date, has been conspicuously unsuccessful. Tellingly, Sorenson uses the metaphor of a leadership "Genome Project", as if leadership were just out there, waiting to be discovered, as soon

⁹ Paul Hersey, Kenneth H. Blanchard, and Dewey E. Johnson, *Management of Organizational Behavior: leading human resources*, 9th ed. (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008). ¹⁰ Robert C. Tucker, *Politics as Leadership*, Rev. ed. (Columbia, Mo.; London: University of Missouri Press, 1995).

¹¹ Robert L. Taylor and William E. Rosenbach, eds., *Military Leadership: in pursuit of excellence*, 5th ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Westview Press, 2005).

¹² Malcolm Grundy, *What's New in Church Leadership? creative responses to the changing pattern of church life* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2007). We shall see more of ecclesiastical-leadership thinking and writing in the next, and subsequent chapters.

¹³ Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*, 1. Most, but not all, of the above examples, come from Rost. None of them represent the last, or, indeed, the only word on leadership in their subject areas.

¹⁴ Quoted in J. Thomas Wren, "A Quest for a Grand Theory of Leadership," in *The Quest for a General Theory of Leadership*, ed. George R. Goethals and Georgia L. J. Sorenson (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2006), 2. The project instigated by Sorenson, Goethals and James MacGregor Burns is described in Katherine S. Mangan, "Leading the Way in Leadership," *Chronicle of Higher Education* 48, no. 38 (May 31, 2002): A10. The success, or otherwise, of it might be measured by the contributions to Goethals and Sorenson's book cited above.

as the necessary technical and conceptual apparatus is developed. Stogdill, in his time, was unable to express confidence in the exercise: theories of leadership, "if such can be said to exist",¹⁵ are of more use in demonstrating the methodological problems in leadership research than in directly generating any enlightenment:

Four decades of research on leadership have produced a bewildering mass of findings...It is difficult to know what, if anything, has been convincingly demonstrated by replicated research. The endless accumulation of empirical data has not produced an integrated understanding of leadership.¹⁶

Stogdill was writing in 1974 and his opinion has, if anything, been vindicated in the years subsequently. Charles Greene said, in 1977, "What is missing, in addition to quantity of theoretical formulations or models, is a 'grand' or generalized theory of leader–subordinate relationships—if indeed, such a theoretical development is possible." Gary Yukl, writing a survey of managerial leadership materials in 1989, went further than Stogdill, criticizing not only the definitions of leadership which had been postulated, but also the methodology by which they had been derived:

The field of leadership is presently in a state of ferment and confusion. Most of the theories are beset with conceptual weaknesses and lack strong empirical support. Several thousand empirical studies have been conducted on leadership effectiveness, but most of the results are contradictory and inconclusive.¹⁸

So, for example, research into the correlation between leadership "effectiveness" and behaviour towards subordinates has failed to produce any conclusions more nuanced than "some simplistic interpretation such as more is always better."¹⁹

By 1991 Fleishman *et al.* had identified 65 different classification schemes.²⁰ The fermenting confusion in leadership studies is partly the product of the

¹⁵ Stogdill, Handbook of Leadership, 17.

¹⁶ Stogdill, Handbook of Leadership, vii.

¹⁷ Charles N. Greene, "Disenchantment with Leadership Research: some causes, recommendation, and alternative directions," in *Leadership: the cutting edge*, ed. James G. Hunt and Lars L. Larson (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1977), 64.

¹⁸ Gary Yukl, "Managerial Leadership: A Review of Theory and Research," *Journal of Management* 15, no. 2 (June 1989): 253.

¹⁹ Yukl, "Managerial Leadership," 259. For more on methodological flaws in leadership research, see page 32ff in the current work.

²⁰ Edwin A. Fleishman et al., "Taxonomic efforts in the description of leader behavior: A synthesis and functional interpretation," *The Leadership Quarterly* 2, no. 4 (Winter 1991): 245–287;

amount of material produced, and partly the result of the attitude of scholars to the subject: "Leadership has been the subject of an extraordinary amount of dogmatically stated nonsense."²¹

The fact is, despite the vast and increasing industry in "leadership studies" there is no, and never has been an, agreed, succinct and watertight definition of what constitutes leadership. Neither is there a consensus on what might constitute a taxonomy of leadership.

It would seem this is reasonable grounds for disposing of "leadership" as a useful theoretical construct in social studies. Perhaps leadership can be no more defined and used as a concept than obscentity can be defined and used: like Justice Stewart's famous definition all we can say is "we know it when we see it." Some scholars seem to have unconsciously adopted this pragmatic method. Gosling and Marturano assert the value of pragmatism: "the belief that we are all talking about more or less the same thing would seem to imply a common idea." In a review for the *THES* of the new journal, *Leadership*, Winston Fletcher argued that "…because the concept of leadership is so fuzzy and carries so much baggage, *Leadership* would do better to minimise the quasiphilosophical stuff and maximise the real-life examples…" It seems that the universal syllogism should be this: leadership exists, and so leadership must be exercised; leadership is exercised so leadership must exist.

Even so, despite the epistemological quagmire of the discipline, Stogdill remained confident enough to assert the possibility of identifying a network of family resemblances, "a rough scheme of classification",²⁵ between all the different definitions and theories of leadership. Recognising that this present work does not pretend to, nor requires, a predictive and complete theory of leadership, I have limited myself to following Stogdill, Jago and van Maurik by providing a brief, and rough, division of the various family resemblances into four categories; namely, *trait* theories, *behavioural* theories, *contingency* theories, and *transformational* theories.²⁶ I propose to set out a brief survey of the main

See also Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2004), 2–4.

²¹ Chester I. Barnard, *Organization and Management: Selected Papers* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1948), 80. Quoted, approvingly, in Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*, 179.

²² The formulation "I know it when I see it," derived from Justice Stewart's concurrence in a pornography case, *Jacobellis v. State of Ohio*, 378 U.S. 184, 197 (US Supreme Court 1964).

²³ Antonio Marturano and Jonathan Gosling, eds., *Leadership: the key concepts* (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon.; New York: Routledge, 2008), xxvi.

²⁴ Winston Fletcher, "Lots of bark, little bite for top dogs," *The Times Higher Education Supplement*, October 20, 2006, 26.

²⁵ Stogdill, Handbook of Leadership, 7.

²⁶ Stogdill's division is into six categories: Great Man, Environmental, Personal-Situational, Interaction-Expectation, Humanistic and Exchange theories (Stogdill, *Handbook of Leadership*,

claims of each theory, along with the deficiencies of each. I will conclude the survey with an examination of the arguments of two of the more assertive scholars of leadership studies, Joseph C. Rost and Keith Grint, noting Rost's description of a "postindustrial paradigm" of "collaborative leadership", and how it is indicative more of a wishful-thinking approach to leadership than empirical analysis, and then Grint's advocacy of the "essentially disputed concept" (and its usefulness for my examination of "myth" later on).

Trait theories

Trait theories, of which a sub-group is dismissively referred to as "great man" theories, were the earliest theories to be articulated in academic studies of leadership. The traits, character and inheritances of individual men (almost uniformly men²⁷) were thought to be the essential factors in any expression of leadership. Leaders, as great men, are born not made, yet still the lives and characters of the great men were analysed for common characteristics: age, appearance, height, intelligence, scholarship, dominance, and so on, were all thought to be important factors which could be isolated, and factored for. Amusingly, some studies even attempted correlations between leadership success and weight!²⁸ Stogdill dates this first "leadership quest" to the period 1904–1947, although this dating excludes the true *fons et origo* of the quest, Thomas Carlyle.

In May 1840 Thomas Carlyle delivered a series of lectures which he later reconstructed and published as *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History*. His intention was clear: "I mean to shew that 'Hero-worship' *never ceases*, that it is at bottom the main or only kind of worship." ²⁹ In the first

chap. 3.) The simpler four-fold division is van Maurik's summary of Jago: see John van Maurik, Writers on Leadership (London: Penguin, 2001), 3; Arthur G. Jago, "Leadership: Perspectives in theory and research," Management Science 28, no. 3 (March 1982): 315–336. Northouse also has a four-fold division, into trait, skills, style and situational approaches: Northouse, Leadership, chap. 2–5, to which he then adds contingency, path-goal, exchange theories (!). We can see that even the meta-theory of leadership is inchoate.

- ²⁷ For an exploration of the absence of "great women" in leadership studies, see Lenelis Kruse and Margret Wintermantel, "Leadership Ms.-Qualified: I. The Gender Bias in Everyday and Scientific Thinking," in *Changing Conceptions of Leadership*, ed. Carl F. Graumann and Serge Moscovici (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1986), 171–198.
- ²⁸ Stogdill, *Handbook of Leadership*, 39–63. Weight, for which there appears to be "a low positive relationship" with leadership (ie, it has no effect whatsoever on leadership effectiveness!), is tabulated in Table 1, on p. 40. We can see Stogdill's early conclusions on this non-correspondence on page 33.
- ²⁹ Letter of 2 March 1840 to John Carlyle, in Thomas Carlyle, *The Collected Letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle, Vol.* 12 1840, ed. K. J. Fielding, C. R. Sanders, and C. de L. Ryals, vol. 12 (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1985), 67. Quoted in the Introduction (by Goldberg) to Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (1841), ed. Michael K.

lecture, given the title "The Hero as Divinity", Carlyle began by stating his thesis:

...Universal History, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom, the history of the Great Men who have worked here. They were the leaders of men, these great ones; the modellers, patterns and in a wide sense creators, of whatsoever the general mass of men contrived to do or to attain; all things that we see standing accomplished in the world are properly the outer material result, the practical realisation and embodiment, of Thoughts that dwelt in the Great Men sent into the world: the soul of the whole world's history, it may be justly considered, were the history of these.³⁰

To summarize his thesis, he coined the famous aphorism of leadership studies: "The History of the world is but the Biography of great men".³¹

If Thomas Carlyle is the *terminus a quo* for the popularity of this theory, then the longevity of his poetic and imaginative construction can be seen in the fact that in 1960, one hundred and twenty years after the statement of his thesis, Eugene Jennings could produce a book on leadership subtitled "prince, heroes, and supermen"³², which can be fairly characterized as the *terminus ad quem* of the theory. Jennings mourns the loss of the "towering personalities" and "titans" of the past, and that the present world is the habitation of "cadres of professional managers who are responsible to boards of directors, to government regulators, to organized workers and to a fickle consuming public."³³ Jennings only marks the end of the *scholarly* validity of this theory³⁴: general conceptions of leadership, as can be seen in any number of popular works on business management, and general discussion of the subject in newspapers, is still predicated on the unquestioned effectiveness of the great man as leader.³⁵

By the late 1940s trait theory was beginning to fall out of fashion in academic leadership studies. As Stogdill put it: "[a] person does not become a leader by virtue of the possession of some combination of traits" and "[t]he qualities, characteristics, and skills required in a leader are determined to a

Goldberg, Joel J. Brattin, and Mark Engel, vol. 1, The Norman and Charlotte Strouse edition of the writings of Thomas Carlyle (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1993), xxvii. ³⁰ Carlyle, *On Heroes*, 1:3.

³¹ Carlyle, *On Heroes*, 1:26. We will come across Carlyle's influence on the Nazi programme, Riefenstahl and Adolf Hitler, in "The High Priest of Hero-Worship", from page 239.

³² E. E. Jennings, An Anatomy of Leadership: princes, heroes, and supermen (New York: Harper & Bros. 1960).

³³ Eugene Emerson Jennings, "The Anatomy of Leadership," *Management of Personnel Quarterly* 1, no. 1 (Autumn 1961): 2.

³⁴ But see note 45 in the present chapter.

³⁵ An assertion which will be repeatedly examined through the rest of this thesis.

large extent by the demands of the situation in which he is to function as a leader."³⁶ The reason for the decline in the popularity of trait theory was its obvious conceptual and practical unwieldiness. Simply put, there were too many traits. John Adair, doyen of British leadership studies, describes the multiplication of definitions: by 1936, Allport and Odbert had identified 17,000 words to describe qualities of personality³⁷; in 1940, one survey of 20 experimental studies revealed that only 5 per cent of leadership qualities examined were common to four or more studies³⁸; Adair attended a military conference at which 64 different traits of leadership were described (and in one of his books he sets out a comparative table of the different, complementary and contradictory, leadership qualities identified by the U.S. Marine Corps, the Royal Navy, the Royal Canadian Marines and so on³⁹); best (or worst) of all, in 2001 the Council for Excellence in Management and Leadership presented 83 attributes of leadership, condensed from a long list of more than 1,000. As Adair says:

These long lists of 'competencies', as leadership qualities now tend to be known, are virtually useless for the purposes of development. When they are reduced to a smaller number—say less than 20 (as in the case of the NHS)—they become more general. But if they are not grounded in the generic role of *leader*, they lack intellectual coherence and seem arbitrary, so they have little credibility or practical value.⁴⁰

This is an epistemological problem: if "leadership" is to be defined by the qualities ('competencies') possessed by the leader, then the definitional problem has been pushed from "leadership" to "quality / trait / competency". There is as little consensus in the latter as in the former: the dispute has merely moved from "leadership" to "trait". Adair's work acknowledges that this is not a new problem, but has been systemic in leadership studies since it developed as a separate discipline.

However, despite the theoretical obsolescence of trait theory, it remains easily the most prevalent example of a popular leadership theory. Leadership

³⁶ Ralph M. Stogdill, "Personal Factors associated with Leadership: a survey of the literature," *Journal of Psychology* 25 (1948): 64,63.

³⁷ Gordon W. Allport and Henry Odbert, *Trait-names: a psycho-lexical study: a study from the Harvard psychological laboratory*, Psychological monographs 211 (Princeton, N.J.: Psychological Review Co., 1936). Quoted in John Adair, *Effective Leadership Development* (London: CIPD, 2006), 9.

³⁸ Charles Bird, *Social Psychology* (New York; London: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1940), 378–379. Quoted in Adair, *Effective Leadership Development*, 9. Adair erroneously ascribes this book to authors I. C. Bird and D. Appleton.

³⁹ John Adair, The Skills of Leadership (Aldershot: Wildwood House, 1989), 265–266 (Appendix).

⁴⁰ Adair, Effective Leadership Development, 9–10. Emphasis in the original.

scholars are too sanguine to say that only "vestiges of the great man theory remain".⁴¹

So, for example, Luiz Felipe Scolari, sometime coach for Chelsea Football Club, eulogized the leadership qualities of his captain, John Terry:

"I think when you're born, you're born as a leader. After that maybe you read something, you study something, but if you don't have the spirit, the personality in the first place, it is difficult. A coach or businessman can read books. But what does that matter if they are weak? When you're born you know your life."⁴²

So, for example, *The Sunday Star* reported a May 2009 survey with very clear results:

...Apprentice wannabes have been warned that good business sense is in the genes. Experts researched more than 500 entrepreneurs, like Sir Alan Sugar, to decide if they were born great or had learned to be a master of the boardroom. A staggering 84% of the entrepreneurs studied had similar personality traits.⁴³

So, for example, Alastair Cook, the England batsman, had a difficult Test Series in South Africa in 2009/2010, because England were nurturing him to be a future captain:

"There is no sense in training a player up to be a captain anyway. Leaders are born, not made, and if a player has the right mindset he will naturally acquire the knowledge he needs as his experience grows."⁴⁴

Despite the death of "great man" / "trait" theories of leadership being proclaimed in the late 1940s it remains the single most powerful, popular, model for the exercise and location of leadership.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Nathan Harter, "Great Man Theory," in *Leadership: the key concepts*, ed. Antonio Marturano and Jonathan Gosling (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2008), 71.

⁴² Chris Hatherall, "Leadership? Watch JT, Arsene," *Sunday Mirror*, November 30, 2008, 68.

⁴³ "Sir Al's a pure gene-ius," *Sunday Star*, May 10, 2009, 16. This is not a tabloid distortion of a peer-reviewed survey. The report originated with a press-release from the O2 telephone company, in which the methodology of the survey was not described. Even so, the press-release states: "None of the traits were learned, rather they were all present as part of the individual's personality and constitute the *DNA* of the entrepreneur." (O2 Press Release, "Nature outweighs nurture in the make-up of an entreprenuer [sic.]," Press Release, *O2 News Centre*, May 11, 2009, http://news.o2.co.uk/Content/detail.aspx?ReleaseID=482&NewsAreaID=2 Emphasis added.)—an interesting reflection of Georgia Sorenson's biological metaphor in note 14 above!

⁴⁴ Duncan Fletcher, "It is time for flawed Cook to deliver," *The Guardian*, December 24, 2009, sec. Sport, 6.

⁴⁵ And trait theories are being revived in academic studies as well. See, for example, Stephen J. Zaccaro, "Trait-based perspectives of leadership," *American Psychologist* 62, no. 1 (January 2007): 6–16.

Behavioural Theories

Following the "failure" of the trait/great man theories in the mid-twentieth century, leadership theories moved from studying leaders to studying leadership, in other words, what the people-called-leaders actually did: "Leadership is expressed in terms of overt behavior patterns rather than in terms of some intrinsic property or characteristic."46 In this respect, it followed the development in social sciences and psychology towards the empirical study of observable behaviour.⁴⁷ It also developed from the experiences of the western, liberal, democracies in the Second World War: militarization required placing many more men in leadership positions within the armed forces than might otherwise have been provided for by waiting for the emergence of innately great men. Leadership had to be taught in West Point and Sandhurst. After the war, the experiences of the demobilised soldiers were analysed. One of the early normative results of the study was Tannenbaum and Schmidt's "How to choose a leadership pattern" (1958). In their model, leadership was no longer an innate possession of the leader, but a behavioural choice selected from a continuum of behaviours, that could be, more or less appropriately, authoritarian or delegatory. Tannenbaum and Schmidt recognized that the choices made were not necessarily wholly free from external influence: value systems of individual and organization, and the effectiveness of the group or subordinates within the group, would all influence the range of choices available. As they conclude:

[the successful leader] accurately understands himself, the individuals and group he is dealing with, and the company and broader social environment in which he operates. And certainly he is able to assess the present readiness for growth of his subordinates. [Moreover, he is] ...one who is able to behave appropriately in the light of these perceptions. If direction is in order, he is able to direct; if considerable participative freedom is called for, he is able to provide such freedom.⁴⁸

If leadership is a behavioural *choice*, then the processes involved in making that choice could be taught: "it could easily be implemented by practising managers to improve their leadership effectiveness."⁴⁹ If leadership was

⁴⁶ Jago, "Leadership Perspectives," 316.

⁴⁷ Thomas Mengel, "Behavioural Theories of Leadership," in *Leadership: the key concepts*, ed. Antonio Marturano and Jonathan Gosling (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2008), 11–15.

⁴⁸ Robert Tannenbaum and Warren H. Schmidt, "How to Choose A Leadership Pattern," *Harvard Business Review* 36, no. 2 (March 1958): 101.

⁴⁹ David A. Van Seters and Richard H.G. Field, "The Evolution of Leadership Theory," *Journal of Organizational Change Management* 3, no. 3 (1990): 32.

teachable, it meant that it could be profitable: as Jennings presciently asserted in 1961: "this approach stimulated a deluge of executive training and leadership development programs." ⁵⁰

The most prevalent, and possibly the most profitable, approach was Blake and Mouton's "Managerial Grid", first published in 1964, and reprinted in numerous editions subsequently.⁵¹ Here two dimensions of behaviour, along axes of "concern for people" and "concern for production", are mapped onto a 9×9 grid. The model assumes that management / leadership which falls in the "9,9" scoring zone, "team management", is the preferred goal for all managers / leaders: "This leadership style has a very high consideration for both tasks and people. Fostering commitment through supportive relationships and teamwork is equally important to promoting the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization."52 However, it is possible to postulate situations in which a manager is obliged to favour production over relationships, and vice versa: the tanks must be got out of the factory and into battlefield service; the work-force is so disenchanted that the management risks mass resignations and the immediate collapse of production.⁵³ Furthermore, there is little empirical evidence to support this (implicitly) normative description; as Yukl suggests, the "9,9" ideal does not allow a contingent/situational approach to leadership: a leader who switches back and forth between emphasizing production needs or people needs is not the same as a leader who emphasizes both simultaneously and continuously. Much of the evidence which supports the model is marked by methodological flaws. There are limitations to the value of behaviour questionnaires, the basis of the original research in the Ohio State and Michigan Leadership studies. For example, questionnaires required respondents to think back over a long period of time and judge an inferred motivation for their leader's behaviour. Little attempt was made to factor out personal antipathy (or affection) between leader and subordinate. Neither was a control set for the tendency for subordinates to impute desirable behaviour to effective leaders "even though the behavior was not actually observed".54 Furthermore, the studies found it difficult to determine causality, without assuming post hoc ergo propter hoc: do subordinates function well solely because their leaders are

⁵⁰ Jennings, "The Anatomy of Leadership," 3.

⁵¹ Robert R. Blake and Jane S. Mouton, *The Managerial Grid: key orientations for achieving production through people* (Houston, Tex.: Gulf Pub. Co, 1964). The Managerial Grid was later renamed the "Leadership Grid" and registered as a trademark by a consulting service, Grid International. A diagrammatic version of the grid itself is also a registered trademark.

⁵² Mengel, "Behavioural Theories of Leadership," 14.

⁵³ See Arthur Shriberg, David Shriberg, and Richard Kumari, *Practicing Leadership: principles and applications* (Hoboken, N.J.: J. Wiley & Sons, 2005), 182.

⁵⁴ Gary A. Yukl, *Leadership in Organizations*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1989), 79. See the discussion in the whole of ch. 5, especially p. 79-80,86-7,88-9,90-2.

considerate, or do leaders treat effective subordinates with more consideration? In short, is the ideal "9,9" leader the happy recipient of "9,9" subordinates?

Contingency Theories

Contingency theories recognize that nothing in life is certain or immutable, and, to use a military metaphor, no battle plan survives beyond the first engagement with the enemy. Contingency theories therefore work on the premise that leadership is contextual, and whatever works best in any given situation is whatever works best—the most effective style of leadership "depends…upon crucial aspects of the task situation or mission environment." Therefore, it is necessary to determine what the situational variables within the task situation might be: "the degree of support between leader and followers, the nature of the task…, the leader's formal or informal authority" and so on. 56

Contingency theories of leadership *per se* were first identified by Ralph Stogdill in 1948 in his initial survey of the field of trait theories. Recognizing the ultimate inutility of trait theories Stogdill said:

A person does not become a leader by virtue of the possession of some combination of traits, but the pattern of personal characteristics must bear some relevant relationship to the characteristics, activities and goals of the followers. Thus, leadership must be conceived in terms of the interaction of variables which are in constant flux and change. ... The persistence of individual patterns of human behavior in the face of constant situational change appears to be a primary obstacle encountered not only in the practice of leadership, but in the selection and placement of leaders. It is not especially difficult to find persons who are leaders. It is quite another matter to place these persons in different situations where they will begin to function as leaders.⁵⁷

In one respect contingency theories are an elaboration of an earlier form of leadership meta-theories, namely *environmental theories*. Environmental theories attempted to factor in the importance of group needs and situational challenges. Mumford in 1909 argued that a leader emerges "by virtue of abilities and skills [trait] enabling him to solve social problems [situation] in times of stress, change, and adaptation."⁵⁸ Interestingly the theory predated (by some 31 years)

⁵⁵ Martin M. Chemers, "Contingency Theories," ed. George R. Goethals, Georgia Jones Sorenson, and James MacGregor Burns, *Encyclopedia of Leadership* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.; London: Sage, 2004), 276.

⁵⁶ Chemers, "Contingency Theories," 277.

⁵⁷ Stogdill, "Personal Factors associated with Leadership," 64,65.

⁵⁸ E. M. Mumford, *The Origins of Leadership* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1909); This is Stogdill's summary, in *Handbook of Leadership*, 18.

the emergence of Winston Churchill as wartime Prime Minister: a man who enjoyed a conspicuous lack of political and popular success as a peace-time Chancellor and Home Secretary and as a post-war Prime Minister, yet emerged as the necessary and inevitable leader of his country following the catastrophe of the Fall of Norway in May 1940.⁵⁹ Churchill's role as PM seemingly confirms environmental theory's précis: "cometh the hour, cometh the man".⁶⁰

The limitation of single-datum theories had been recognised by social scientists. It was apparent that neither inherent traits, nor social environment could be the sole explanation for the successful exercise of leadership. By the early 1930s, with the increasing influence of psychological models of the "personality", and its constituent parts making up an organic whole, some scholars attempted to synthesise these earlier theories into a *personal-situational* interaction. The relationship between the "affective factors and the intellectual and action *habits* of the individual", and the situation in which he finds himself was the explanation for the successful (or unsuccessful) "performance" of leadership.⁶¹

According to Stogdill, this approach was still being successfully followed in the 1960s by management scholars. So, for example, Bennis argued that organizational theorists wished to delineate the environment (in which leadership is performed), into such topographies as bureaucratic, informal, organizational, autocratic, and the self-actualization of the employee.⁶²

Like all the categories of the meta-theory, it has not been wholly accepted. Trait proponents such as Jennings have been scathing of contingency / situational theories:

⁵⁹ Winston Churchill became Home Secretary in Asquith's Liberal government following the 1910 general election. Whilst home secretary he promoted the policy of compulsory sterilization for the "feeble-minded" and sent the Metropolitan Police and soldiers to break up the strikes in Tonypandy in the Rhondda. A demonstration in Llanelli in the summer of 1911 was met with fatal force: two men were shot dead. "His record as a social reformer was eclipsed by his new reputation as a class warrior with a 'Prussian' love of order, maintained if necessary by military force." He left the government in disgrace following the failure of the Dardanelles expedition in May 1915. Paul Addison, "Churchill, Sir Winston Leonard Spencer (1874–1965)," ed. H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/32413>.

⁶⁰ We shall see the persistence of this theory in the depictions of leadership in Western film in Section 2, and especially in "Hero-Worship Heritage" in Chapter 6.

⁶¹ E. M. Westburgh, "A point of view—studies in leadership," *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 25, no. 4 (January 1931): 419. Emphasis in the original. Westburgh goes on to say that leadership is "a phenomenon operating under specific conditions. It is not...a generic concept which can be defined."

⁶² Bennis, "Revisionist Theory of Leadership." Interestingly, Bennis's article, which set out to be a conspectus of previously articulated leadership theories, was later cited by Stogdill as an original contribution to the project (Stogdill, *Handbook of Leadership*, 19.)

The situational approach appealed to our ideal of democracy, our belief in the impact of the environment on the individual and our need to do something quickly about our shortage of leaders. ...[But, the] "right man for the right situation" is a subtle but lethal kind of fatalistic thinking that must not be cultivated if business is to maintain its necessarily dynamic and creative nature.⁶³

Transformational Theories

The idea of *transformational* theories of leadership has its origins in the work of James MacGregor Burns, and his immensely influential book *Leadership*, published in 1978.⁶⁴ Burns makes a distinction between two different, but related, styles of leadership; *transactional* and *transformational*.

Simply put, transactional leadership occurs when a leader exchanges something of value with his followers (which may be monetary, possessions or something more abstract like a sense of security and well-being) in reciprocation for something getting done: the transaction may move in either direction, from leader to follower or vice versa. So, for example, a war lord may expect tribute in exchange for security, a body of people may expect payment in exchange for a canal to be dug. In this way, need and the ability to fulfil that need are matched: "each party to the bargain is conscious of the power resources and attitudes of the other...[and] their purposes are related...". Nevertheless, the transaction marks the ending and limitation of the relationship: "The bargainers have no enduring purpose that holds them together; hence they may go their separate ways. A leadership act took place, but it was not one that binds leader and follower together in a mutual and continuing pursuit of a higher purpose."65 Under transactional leadership both sides of the transaction are in it for what they can get out of it. It is a form of leadership which is concerned only with modal-values (means rather than ends).

Transformational leadership, on the other hand, has a "higher" quality to it, functioning as normative and value-laden:

⁶³ Jennings, "The Anatomy of Leadership," 2–3.

⁶⁴ James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978). The book won the Pulitzer Prize, and it "significantly marked the course of leadership research for the next twenty-five years" meaning that transactional and transformational leadership are "the most widely researched constructs in the leadership literature": Bruce J. Avolio, "Transformational and Transactional Leadership," ed. George R. Goethals, Georgia Jones Sorenson, and James MacGregor Burns, *Encyclopedia of Leadership* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.; London: Sage, 2004), 1558. ⁶⁵ Burns, *Leadership*, 19.

Transforming leadership is normative in the sense that it does not simply describe how leaders do in fact behave but, rather, prescribes how they ought to behave.⁶⁶

Transformational leadership begins in recognizing the meeting of mutual needs, but the needs become "fused" or "engaged" so that it "ultimately becomes moral in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leader and led, and thus it has a transforming effect on both."⁶⁷ In other words, "transformational leaders engage followers not only to get them to achieve something of significance…but also to 'morally uplift' them to be leaders themselves."⁶⁸ This is leadership for a higher purpose (even if that higher purpose is simply to make more leaders); it is, in Burns's phrase, "leadership *engagé*".⁶⁹

But *engagé* with and by whom? Some critics have asked what happens if the followers refuse or are reluctant to engage with the leader's higher-values? What if followers remain in it (the implicit contract between leader and followers) for what they can get, and ignore the subtext of the leader (moral society, fostering leadership and responsibility)? Crudely, what if the leader can not sell, or the followers will not buy, the 'bigger picture'? Will the leader then be condemned to enact the 'catch-up' leadership of Ledru-Rollin, frantically chasing after his followers—that is, leadership becoming no more than the *ex post facto* articulation of the aspirations and actions of the mob? Conversely, what happens when *leaders* are mistaken about the moral worth of the bigger picture? Thus Hicks and Price say:

...the apparent nobility of one's inclusive and other-regarding aims does not make one immune to factual and moral mistakes. One can be mistaken, for example, about how to achieve what is in fact worth achieving as well as about the actual worth of what it is that one hopes to achieve.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Terry L. Price, "Transformational Leadership," in *Leadership: the key concepts*, ed. Antonio Marturano and Jonathan Gosling (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2008), 171.

⁶⁷ Burns, Leadership, 20.

⁶⁸ Avolio, "Transformational and Transactional Leadership," 1558.

⁶⁹ Burns, Leadership, 20.

⁷⁰ Douglas A. Hicks and Terry L. Price, "An Ethical Challenge for Leaders and Scholars: What do people really need?," in *Selected Proceedings of the Leaders/Scholars Association* (presented at the 1998 Annual Meeting: Leaders/Scholars Association, College Park, Md.: James MacGregor Burns Academy of Leadership, 1999), 56.

Bass says that we can determine this by distinguishing *transformational* from *pseudo-transformational* leadership⁷¹, but, as Hicks and Price point out, the epistemic handicap that affects the mistaken leader must similarly affect those who are attempting to judge his actions and motivations. In short, self-perceived notions of a higher-moral purpose do not automatically set a leadership exchange within the transformational spectrum, and neither do they mean that the decisions made and actions undertaken are morally correct or effective. For example, when Tony Blair left office as Prime Minister in the summer of 2007 not even his greatest critics could doubt the veracity of his sincerity. However:

He did what he thought was right for his country, bless him. Big deal. So did Joe Stalin. So did Neville Chamberlain. So did John Wilkes Booth. Sincerity is no excuse. The world is full of people doing what they feel is right, which is why we judge on consequence not intent. Guess what? Every bankrupt business really believed in the product. Every referee that pointed to the penalty spot was absolutely convinced there had been a foul. And every leader that committed his country to a bloody and disastrous war was convinced of the opposite outcome.⁷²

Rost's "postindustrial paradigm"

Two later writers deserve to be mentioned, Keith Grint and Joseph Rost. Rost falls into the optimistic school of leadership studies, but an optimism one can only accept after acquiescing to a case of special pleading, namely Rost's uniquely privileged perspective on leadership discourse. In *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*, Rost begins with a powerfully stated critique: too many other scholars have failed in defining a succinct and clear understanding of leadership. The major reason for this is that the other scholars tend to emerge from a discipline other than leadership studies: "the basic problem is that behavioural scientists have established a scientific culture wherein they are not expected to clearly articulate an understanding of what it is they are studying."⁷³ Too many leadership scholars seem to be prepared to treat leadership as a "socially constructed reality" by using a hermeneutic framework that tolerates ambiguity. This is as unacceptable, to Rost, as paying attention to a musicologist who is unable to define a symphony.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Bernard M. Bass, "The Ethics of Transformational Leadership," in *Ethics, the Heart of Leadership*, ed. Joanne B. Ciulla (Westport, Conn.; London: Quorum, 1998), 171.

⁷² Martin Samuel, "Enough schmaltz about Blair. Only one thing matters," *The Times* (London, May 15, 2007), 19.

⁷³ Rost, Leadership for the Twenty-First Century, 15.

⁷⁴ Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*, 14–15. Rost's discussion of this problem is tendentious, to say the least. He seems to assert that empirical research is the only valid

On the other hand, Rost claims for himself a privileged vantage point. First, he is a "leadership scholar", pure and simple, and therefore is able to approach leadership definition without the handicap of beginning from an external discipline ("external" in the sense that "leadership" is not a core-value of the discipline, such as *business*-leadership and so on). Second, he is writing around the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, with the "the advantage of being only a decade away from the twenty-first century."⁷⁵ Somehow, this supposedly provides a clearer conspectus than that afforded to earlier scholars. In actuality, it is nothing more than an inverted form of C. S. Lewis's "chronological snobbery". For Lewis, the past should not be despised simply for being in the past; for Rost, the present should be privileged simply for not being the past. But date changes and the progression of the calendar do not, of necessity, provide a kind of magical, empirical clarity.

Having asserted his credentials, Rost provides a definitive definition of leadership: it is "an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes." Rost breaks down his definition into four essential elements, in which each clause and word receives further clarification. Thus, the relationship is based on *influence*, which must be multi-directional and non-coercive; it is leaders *and* followers, both in the plural; real changes are intended ("real" meaning "substantive and transforming", "intend" meaning being purposefully desired, "changes" meaning transformations in the present or the future; "purposes" are not goals, and move from "mutual" to "common" purposes).

The interesting thing about Rost's definition is how much trouble he takes to reject the historic, "great-man", personal traits definitions of leadership and leader. Everything is defined on a collaborative, non-coercive, mutual basis: leadership is "not based on authority, power, or dictatorial actions, but is based on persuasive behaviours, thus allowing anyone in the relationship to freely agree or disagree and ultimately to drop into or out of the relationship."⁷⁸ This makes leadership fundamentally a rhetorical construct: leadership works through persuasion, and persuasion is exercised through the actions and words of the putative individual leader. Actions may be exemplary, but words will construct a relationship before the relationship exists in actuality. In this

approach, which he refers to as a "logical positivist framework", but then condemns certain leadership scholars for emphasizing quantitative studies over qualitative. For the hubristic dangers in pushing the concept of a "socially constructed reality" too far, see Alan D. Sokal, Beyond the Hoax: Science, Philosophy and Culture (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), especially ch. 1 and 4.

⁷⁵ Rost, Leadership for the Twenty-First Century, 102.

⁷⁶ C. S. Lewis, Surprised by Joy: the shape of my early life (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1955), 196.

⁷⁷ Rost, Leadership for the Twenty-First Century, 102.

⁷⁸ Rost, Leadership for the Twenty-First Century, 107.

respect, Rost is following the work of Fairhurst and Starr (and, to be fair, 2,000 years of classically influenced education) when they assert that "leadership is a language game" whereby reality is "framed" in order to supply a particular meaning to the discourse.⁷⁹

Rost's definition alters, fundamentally, the constitution of leaders. Leadership consists in the relationship between leaders and followers: it is most definitely not a quality of the leaders themselves, a quality which can exist in potentiality. It only exists in expression, and requires the medium of the relationship. Therefore, leadership is not a *possession* of leaders. This begs the question of why leaders are called leaders if their leadership is a shared possession. It is almost as if, to change the discipline, Rost imagines leaders to be the social equivalent of a chemical catalyst, necessary for the initiation of a chemical reaction, unable to effect the reaction in isolation, but ultimately unchanged by the reaction. This is not a subtext to Rost's position, as he also emphasises the development of common and/or mutual purposes in the leader/follower relationship. The exercise of leadership, according to Rost, is a relationship of mutuality, which changes both leader and follower.

Rost's important contribution to my thesis is his emphasis on the role of followers. As he admits, the idea of followers is uncongenial to some scholars, who prefer a less hierarchical term, like, for example, "constituents".

Notwithstanding a change of name, neither attitudes nor relationships are necessarily changed. Rost, on the other hand, is happy to use the word "follower", provided the industrial era definition, redolent of "sweaty masses", controlled by elites and unproductive otherwise, is replaced by a "postindustrial frame". This is dependent on the unlinking of "leadership" from "management," so that "follower" is unlinked from "subordinate". Even so, it is possible, and proper, to maintain a distinction between leaders and followers:

A distinction between leaders and followers remains crucial to the concept of leadership. Since leadership is a relationship, leaders must interact with

⁷⁹ Gail T. Fairhurst and Robert A. Sarr, *The Art of Framing: managing the language of leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1996), ix, 3. Fairhurst and Sarr's work was based, in turn on Louis R. Pondy, "Leadership is a language game," in *Leadership: where else can we go?*, ed. Morgan W. McCall and Michael M. Lombardo (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1978), 87–99.

⁸⁰ See, for example, the famous story of the substitution nickname by British Forces in the Falkland Islands: "By their own account, the [Falkland] islanders were a subdued, poorly educated people who had learnt not to stick their necks out. As in Victorian England, everyone knew their place. When the British soldiers arrived to liberate the islands, they nicknamed the islanders 'Bennies' after Benny, the simple soul in Crossroads. But this caused so much upset that the soldiers were banned from using the term, and instead nicknamed them 'Still'—as in 'Still a Benny'". Anthony Browne, "Oh! What a Lovely War," *The Observer*, March 17, 2002. Very often nomenclature is affected by, rather than effects, meaning.

other people. If all the people with whom leaders interacted were other leaders, leadership as a meaningful construct would not make much sense.⁸¹

It would be less than that. As Bennis has lately pointed out, "the only person who practices leadership alone in a room is the psychotic. ... Any person can aspire to lead. But leadership exists only with the consensus of followers.[It] is grounded in a relationship."82 Followers, according to Rost, are not passive (passive people are not participating at all in the leadership / followership relationship); they are more or less active in the relationship. There is no hard and fast distinction between leaders and followers, and leaders in one context might be followers in another. Most importantly, the quality possessed by followers is *not* followership. Followers do not "do followership"; they are engaged, just as much as leaders, in the relationship which is called "leadership". Rost's assertion for the non-existence of followership is entirely programmatic, and not based in any empirical evidence: followership does not exist because it is demeaning in our democratic and meritocratic days:

The cultural imperatives of the new century have made the word *followership* less acceptable in political, business, and commonplace communications....the word [is] rather demeaning and inappropriate...⁸³

Therefore, according to Rost, it would be best if we ceased the use of the terms "follower" and "followership" and used something more appropriate for our "flattened" world. Rost's preference is for "collaborator" although he acknowledges that some writers have gone so far as to use the term "people", unqualified by any hint of hierarchy. (I shall look in much greater detail at the

⁸¹ Rost, Leadership for the Twenty-First Century, 108.

⁸² Warren Bennis, "The challenges of leadership in the modern world: Introduction to the special issue," *American Psychologist* 62, no. 1, Leadership (January 2007): 3.

⁸³ Joseph Rost, "Followership: an outmoded concept," in *The Art of Followership: how great followers create great leaders and organizations*, ed. Ronald E. Riggio, Ira Chaleff, and Jean Lipman-Blumen (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 56. Original emphasis

⁸⁴ Rost appropriates, inaccurately, Thomas Friedman's metaphor for the effects of a globalized economic system. Rost, "The Art of Followership," 61. For Friedman's original use of the image see *The World Is Flat: a brief history of the twenty-first century* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005).

⁸⁵ Joseph C. Rost, "Leadership Definition," in *Leadership: the key concepts*, ed. Antonio Marturano and Jonathan Gosling (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge, 2008), 96.
86 Rost, "The Art of Followership," 56–8. Rost has reflected on the inertia and hostility his redefinition of "follower" and "followership" has faced: "I tried to transform the word followers in the book and in the presentations after the book was published. I used the word "followers" about two hundred times in the book and used the word in a very positive way. I ennobled followers by including them in the leadership dynamic." (57). It is a revealing verb:

issue of leadership and followership when we examine Monty Python's *The Life* of Brian in "They're in a rather funny mood today", on page 267ff.)

Rost's postindustrial paradigm, which he has elsewhere described as "collaborative leadership", is an explicitly and implicitly normative paradigm. Rost admits as much when he says:

The majority of leadership authors, both scholarly and practitioneroriented, are ensconced in the industrial paradigm of leadership...⁸⁷

This industrial paradigm is dependent on the great man/traits model: "great men and women with certain preferred traits who influence followers to do what the leaders wish in order to achieve group/organizational goals that reflect excellence defined as some kind of higher-order effectiveness." 88

Grint and the "essentially contested concept"

So it would seem that, after all the thousands of words written about leadership in the twentieth century, it comes down to a choice between two assertions: is leadership predicated upon the traits / characteristics / qualities of its protagonists, or is it not? Keith Grint, with his characteristic astringency, summarises the situation thus: is leadership about the Person, that is, is it who "leaders" are that makes them leaders? Is it the Result, that is, what is effected by the efforts of "leaders"? Is it the Position, that is, where "leaders" work (either geographically, sociologically, or socially)? Is it the Process, that is, how "leaders" operate? Or, is it some indefinable combination of all four factors?

Grint calls this four-fold typology the "dissensus", and, only slightly tongue in cheek, calls for the halting of all further research, so as to save us "39 years of wasted reading time".⁸⁹ Grint does not advocate another, differing, direction in which to seek the mythical consensus. Rather he makes a modest suggestion which might clarify the reasons why a consensus will remain impossible to achieve.

somehow, even in a post-industrial, collaborative, paradigm "leadership" is the activity and possession of the "nobility" of society.

⁸⁷ Rost, "Leadership Definition," 98.

⁸⁸ Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*, 95. Even this, hostile, definition betrays something of Rost's normative tendencies: what is the function of the "and women" clause in there, other than wishful thinking? Most studies of the leadership roles played by women, "great" or otherwise, spend much time and effort explaining the small number of referents. See, again, Kruse and Wintermantel, "Leadership Ms.-Qualified.".

⁸⁹ Keith Grint, *Leadership: limits and possibilities* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 17,18. But see, fairly, the whole of Ch. 1, and especially, the discussion of the four-fold typology on 19-31.

He directs leadership studies towards the work of W. B. Gallie, who, in the mid-1950s, and in the different discipline of philosophy, gave a paper delineating the existence of the "essentially contested concept" (ECC).

Gallie's thesis is that there are some discussions which are based on debates of fact (his example, "This picture is painted in oils"); there are other discussions which turn into disputes, seemingly insoluble ones at that, not predicated on facts ("This picture is a work of art"). The reason for the dispute is not simply "a difference of opinion", but because the proponents in the dispute are not able to make "an assumption of agreement" as to what *use* can be made of the term at the centre of the dispute. Parties to the dispute, even when introduced to an opponent's use of the term in dispute, will continue special pleading:

Each party continues to maintain that the special functions which the term "work of art" or "democracy" or "Christian doctrine" fulfils on *its* behalf or on *its* interpretation, is the correct or proper or primary, or the only important, function which the term in question can plainly be said to fulfil.⁹¹

Gallie's solution is a simple, philosophical, agreement to disagree:

Recognition of a given concept as essentially contested implies recognition of rival uses of it (such as oneself repudiates) as not only logically possible and humanly "likely", but as of permanent potential critical value to one's own use or interpretation of the concept in question...⁹²

For an ECC to qualify as such, Gallie states that it should exhibit four characteristics⁹³: it should be appraisive⁹⁴ ("We agree that this painting is a work of art"); it must be internally complex ("it represents something admirable in its technique / its materials / its place in art history…"); the sum of its whole must be able to be ambiguously described ("its greatest achievement is its technique / its materials / its place in art history"); and it must be open in character, that is, the initial achievement is not closed, but open to development and reappraisal ("we once thought it was great because of its material worth, but now we recognise its importance in the history of the development of western art").

⁹⁰ W. B. Gallie, "Essentially Contested Concepts," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 56, New Series (1956): 167–198.

⁹¹ Gallie, "Essentially Contested Concepts," 168. Emphasis in the original.

⁹² Gallie, "Essentially Contested Concepts," 193.

⁹³ Gallie, "Essentially Contested Concepts," 171–2. Gallie adds a further three conditions, to make seven in total, to clarify the distinction between "essentially contested" and "radically confused" concepts. (Gallie, "Essentially Contested Concepts," 172,180.) The original four are those essential to the definition.

 $^{^{94}}$ "...in the sense that it signifies or accredits some kind of valued achievement". Gallie, "Essentially Contested Concepts," 171.

Clarke later made the useful distinction (useful in that, once identified, it can be utilized to save the wasted energy that is Grint's concern) between a concept that that is "essentially contested" and a concept that is "essentially contestable". The former means there are arguments over the concept, which may or may not have their origins in the concept itself, rather than for instance, in different concepts sharing in English a noun with the same spelling (homonymy) or single words with differing definitions (polysemy). The latter means that there is something in the concept itself which is capable of generating disputes. The former focuses on the dispute; the latter on the concept. Clarke's distinction sidesteps the cul-de-sac of Joad's "it all depends on what you mean by..." and allows the users of ECC to sort the wheat from the chaff—there is a difference between a "hotly" contested concept and an essentially contested one: "essentially' refers to the location of the disagreement or indeterminacy: it is contestation at the core, not just at the borderlines or penumbra of a concept."

So does ECC assist when applied to "leadership"? In other words, can "leadership" be considered an ECC? The criterion of contestedness is uncontestable: Grint's statistics, Yukl's survey and Stogdill's pessimism outlined earlier in this chapter show that. Yet is "leadership" more than a contested concept: is it "contestable"? According to Waldron's thought-experiment, it certainly seems to be:

Each conception is put forward as an attempt to outdo others in capturing an elusive sense, that we all share, a sense that *somewhere* in the midst of this contestation there is an important ideal that social and political systems should aspire to. What that ideal *is* exactly none of us can say without participating in the contestation, i.e. without offering a conception of it that is bound to be controversial.⁹⁷

And can be seen, immediately, one directly applicable function of ECC in regard to leadership studies. Gallie's definition of ECCs is based upon the original achievement being appraisive, which acknowledges there is, at least, some agreement about an "original exemplar whose authority is acknowledged by all the contestant users of the concept". 98 In other words, Genghis Khan, Attila the Hun, Martin Luther King Jr, Rudy Giuliani or Steve Jobs exercised

⁹⁵ Barry Clarke, "Eccentrically Contested Concepts," *British Journal of Political Science* 9, no. 1 (January 1979): 124. "[T]o say a concept is contestable is to refer to some property of the concept itself; whilst to refer to a contested concept is merely to make a statement to the effect that the concept is, or will in fact be, contested."

⁹⁶ Jeremy Waldron, "Is the Rule of Law an Essentially Contested Concept (in Florida)?," *Law and Philosophy* 21, no. 2 (March 2002): 149.

⁹⁷ Waldron, "Is the Rule of Law an Essentially Contested Concept (in Florida)?," 150–1. A succinct description, it seems to me, of the leadership literature.

⁹⁸ Gallie, "Essentially Contested Concepts," 180.

leadership: they are examples of Carlyle's "modellers and patterns". 99 The dispute comes from attempting to determine the *essence* of that leadership exercised.

If Gallie is correct that such a construct as an ECC exists, and if Grint is correct that it can be applied to "leadership", then where does that leave us in this particular exercise?

First, we can set aside Sorenson's quest for the unified theory of leadership. There is both no need to find such a theoretical unity and no possibility of finding one. It is not necessary to postulate a unified theory in order to examine the way in which "leadership" has been articulated and expressed in the particular contexts of Christian theology, ecclesial life and the cultural expression of Hollywood theory. We can remain with the pragmatists, such as Gosling and Marturano, that leadership, however it is defined, exists, though perhaps not in the way its theoreticians think it does.

Second, we are made aware of the danger of the casual and uncontested use of "leadership" as a word and concept. The ECC status of "leadership" is not generally recognised by its users; most writers and practitioners have made the unconscious assumption that it can be empirically defined in water-tight fashion, and, crucially, their individual use of the word and concept reflects that empirically sustainable definition.

Third, we recognise with the situationalists and the contingency theorists that leadership is not something that is expressed in isolation; a leader requires, as a bare minimum, a follower, and that this implies a social context, a community of some kind, and as such, implies a shared culture. People, in order to be arranged into leader–follower / leadership-subordinate rankings must actually share some kind of common culture (Grint makes the facetious, but powerful, point that General Rommel would have made a poor leader of primary school pupils: the military genius and the children would not have shared a common purpose or culture, and the leader's actions could not possibly have been legitimated by his followers' responses¹⁰⁰).

The "Propagation" of Leadership

A problem remains: if "leadership" is *not* the innate possession of an individual acting independently of others, but is a pattern of behaviours and relationships that can be developed in individuals and their communities, how does that development take place? How is leadership disseminated, how are the ideal, normative, patterns, theories and concepts transmitted or conveyed?

⁹⁹ See the reference at note 31 above.

¹⁰⁰ See Grint, Management, 144-146.

(and which is the appropriate verb to use as a metaphor?)¹⁰¹ In other words, where do people get their ideas about leadership from?

Almost nowhere in the enormous literature about leadership is this dealt with as a foundational issue. Stogdill devotes a chapter to the question of "leadership training" ¹⁰²; Marturano and Gosling give an entry to "leadership development" ¹⁰³; Burns has a couple of pages on the relationship between education and leadership ¹⁰⁴; Goethals and Sorenson have three entries on education, but those are "leadership *in* education" and not *vice versa*. ¹⁰⁵

This is a curious omission. If "leadership" is a technique then might it be transmitted through training? If "leadership" is a concept, or a moral good, then surely it requires something more than training: it requires education, or, better, inculturation.

This is, suffice it to say, not a new problem. Plato explored the problematic relationship between an Essentially Contested Concept and training in the dialogue *Meno*¹⁰⁶, written around 387 B.C. In *Meno*, named after one of its protagonists, a Thessalian aristocrat (the other dialogist is, of course, Socrates), the ECC is virtue. Is it possible, Meno asks Socrates, for virtue to be taught? Or is it acquired by practice? Or natural aptitude? (The analogy with our discussion of leadership will be immediately apparent.) Before they can answer that question, Socrates replies, he and Meno should decide on what they mean by "virtue". Meno anachronistically adopts Justice Stewart's pragmatic approach: this is what is virtuous in a man, this is what is virtuous in a woman (71e–72b), but, as Socrates points out: "This puts us back where we are. In a different way we have discovered a number of virtues when we were looking for one only. This single virtue, which permeates each of them, we cannot find." (74a).

¹⁰¹ Not a trivial question. As Buchanan et al. point out, the impact of a metaphor for leadership may be conditioned by its use in other, less flattering, contexts. So, for example, "transmission" of leadership, when so described by the NHS Service Delivery and Organization Research and Development Programme, forgets that, elsewhere in the NHS, "transmission" is reserved to describe the means by which "diseases find new hosts"! See David Buchanan et al., "Leadership transmission: a muddled metaphor?," *Journal of Health Organisation and Management* 21, no. 3 (2007): 247.

 $^{^{\}rm 102}$ Stogdill, Handbook of Leadership, chap. 16.

¹⁰³ Scott J. Allen, "Leadership Development," in *Leadership: the key concepts*, ed. Antonio Marturano and Jonathan Gosling (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon.; New York: Routledge, 2008), 99–103.

¹⁰⁴ Burns, Leadership, 447–450.

¹⁰⁵ John W. Chandler, "Education, Higher,"; Susan Engel, "Education, K–12,"; Barbara Finkelstein, Meredith Honig, and Betty Malen, "Education: Overview,"; all in *Encyclopedia of Leadership*, ed. George R. Goethals, Georgia Jones Sorenson, and James MacGregor Burns, vol. 1, 4 vols. (Thousand Oaks, Calif.; London: Sage, 2004).

¹⁰⁶ Plato, "Meno," in *Protagoras and Meno*, trans. W. K. C. Guthrie (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1956). References to Meno are to section numbers, beginning at 70a and concluding at 100b.

Perhaps the problem lies in our grasp of knowledge. How are we able to *know* what is a virtue? Socrates' questioning provokes Meno into stating his famous paradox (although, to be more accurate, credit for it should be given to Socrates): "a man cannot try to discover either what he knows or what he does not know. ...he would not seek what he knows, for since he knows it there is no need of the inquiry, nor what he does not know, for in that case he does not even know what he is to look for." (80d–e).

In other words, is it possible to search for knowledge of X? If you know what X is, then you have already acquired knowledge of it, and therefore cannot search for it. If you do not know what X is, you cannot search for it, because you do not know what you are searching for. This classic statement of the paradox is the epistemic dilemma: if we take it seriously, it seems to make it impossible to acquire knowledge of anything.

This is the connection between Greek philosophy and American twenty-first century neo-conservatism. Donald Rumsfeld, when Secretary of Defense under the second Bush administration, memorably stated the problem:

"...[A]s we know, there are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns— the ones we don't know we don't know. And if one looks throughout the history of our country and other free countries, it is the latter category that tend to be the difficult ones." 107

Socrates' solution, incidental to our purposes, is that knowledge precedes the birth of the soul (which is immortal), and that the acquisition of knowledge is more accurately the *recollection* of knowledge, and that teaching is the process by which our previously acquired knowledge is recalled to us. In this way, it is knowledge all the way down. Nonetheless virtue is not knowledge, therefore it cannot be taught, therefore there cannot be teachers of virtue (98c–e). Virtue derives from wisdom, and is, at most "right opinion" (*orthēdoxa*), and it arises from an irrational "divine dispensation" (*theia moira*) (99e). Socrates' conclusion, in short, is that virtue cannot be taught. The exercise of virtue in society must derive from somewhere else.

¹⁰⁷ Donald H. Rumsfeld, "DoD News Briefing - Secretary Rumsfeld and Gen. Myers" (Press briefing presented at the U.S. Department of Defense, Washington, D.C., February 12, 2002), <www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2636>.

¹⁰⁸ Analogous to the popular cosmological fable of the world standing on the backs of turtles, all the way down—often, but not definitively ascribed to an encounter between William James and an elderly lady at a lecture he once gave. For a (inanimate) version of the story see William James, "The Sentiment of Rationality," in *The Will to Believe: and other essays in popular philosophy* (New York, London and Bombay: Longmans Green and Co., 1897), 104.

Augustine of Hippo examined the limitations of teaching as the means of acquiring complex aptitudes and attitudes eight hundred years after Socrates. In *de Magistro*, a dialogue with his son Adeodatus, Augustine concluded that one is unable to teach or to be taught through the use of signs, as signs presume a prior knowledge of the matter to be explored, discussed or explored:

"When a sign is given to me, it can teach me nothing if it finds me ignorant of the thing of which it is the sign; but if I'm not ignorant, what do I learn through the sign?" 109

Leadership as training

Part of the power of Meno's paradox comes from an imprecision in definition. Meno asks if virtue can be "taught"? What is meant by "teach"? Is it "education", or is it "training"? Is it a more nebulous process of "development"? This is not an easy question to answer. The differences between "education", "training" and "development" are almost as closely contested as definitions of "leadership", "myth", or "religion". However, Truelove gives a rough and ready distinction: the prime purpose of education is to impart knowledge and improve mental faculties and practice. It is not intended directly to affect job performance. The prime purpose of training is to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes which have a direct impact on job performance. (Development is training through experience). 110 Buckley and Caple argue that training and education differ in process as well: training is a "mechanistic" form, emphasizing "uniform and predictable responses to standard guidance and instruction reinforced by practice and repetition." Conversely, education is more "organic", which seems to mean that the changes wrought in the individual educated are "less predictable."111

Even so, in modern business, it is still thought that leadership can be taught through the Augustinian "sign" of training: "[t]raining is the most widely used approach for improving leadership" says Yukl, and immediately

¹⁰⁹ *De Magistro* by Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, in *Against the Academicians and The Teacher*, trans. Peter King (Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Co., 1995), sec. 10.33.

¹¹⁰ Steve Truelove, "Developing Employees," in *The Handbook of Training and Development*, ed. Steve Truelove, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 291.

¹¹¹ Roger Buckley and Jim Caple, *The Theory and Practice of Training* (London: Kogan Page, 1990), 14–15. Harrison, alternatively, inverts the implied hierarchy of education, training and development: "Development is the all-important primary process, through which individual and organizational growth can through time achieve their fullest potential. Education is a major contributor to that developmental process, because it directly and continuously affects the formation not only of knowledge and abilities, but of character and culture, aspirations and achievements. Training is the shorter-term, systematic process through which an individual is helped to master defined tasks or areas of skill and knowledge to pre-determined standards." Rosemary Harrison, *Training and Development* (London: Institute of Personnel Management, 1988), 5.

confuses his terms by continuing: "Most large companies have *management development* programs of one kind or another". These programs are based on exemplifying and instructing on technical skills: here leadership is management is technique. Yukl acknowledges the existence, and necessity, of "conceptual skills" and "interpersonal skills", and the greater difficulty training has in enhancing either. He suggests the use of video feedback and role-play to allow the recipients of the training to see the importance of these vaguer dispositions in underpinning their leadership techniques. There is no discussion, however, of the raw material that the training will be working on. Is the assumption that the trainees are empty vessels for the trainer to fill, that the latter is working with *tabluae rasae*? Neither is there any discussion of the empirical effectiveness of such training.

Stogdill, in his *Handbook's* concluding chapter, on "Directions for Future Research", recognizes the weakness of this area of leadership as a discipline. Research on training for leadership has too often been "done largely by individuals whose value commitments induced them to avoid using research designs that would provide any critical test of the effect of training." ¹¹⁴ In other words, such research has been designed to affirm previously reached conclusions: thus, Stogdill reports that, for example, certain research has not proved the correlation between democratic, participatory, "advanced" models of leadership with increased productivity. Rather, "socially distant, directive and structured leader behaviours tend to be related positively to productivity." ¹¹⁵

Burns recognises that "training" is, in itself, not enough: "training" can be used for coercive or repressive models of leader–follower relations. He sets himself against the "pernicious manipulation" of the "how-to" manuals, exemplified by Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People*¹¹⁶, in

¹¹² Yukl, *Leadership in Organizations (2nd)*, 284. Emphasis added. See the discussion in the later sections of ch. 12 of Yukl's work. The same confusion of terms continues in the seventh edition of the book: *Leadership in Organizations*, 7th ed. (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2010), chap. 15.

¹¹³ Yukl, Leadership in Organizations (2nd), 284.

¹¹⁴ Stogdill, Handbook of Leadership, 422.

¹¹⁵ Stogdill, Handbook of Leadership, 418.

¹¹⁶ Dale Carnegie, *How to Win Friends and Influence People* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1936). Carnegie's book has sold more than 15 million copies, and according to the catalogue of his publisher has been translated into almost every known written language: Simon & Schuster, "How To Win Friends And Influence People - Book Summary & Video," Publisher's catalogue, *Simon & Schuster*, 2009, http://books.simonandschuster.com/How-To-Win-Friends-And-Influence-People/Dale-Carnegie/9781439167342.

which people are treated as things, "tools to be used or objects to be stormed like a castle." ¹¹⁷

It is no surprise, therefore, to see that Carnegie's ideas are disseminated through training: throughout the United States, and 75 countries, almost 3,000 instructors in 25 languages have presented Carnegie's ideas to 400 of the Fortune 500 companies, and approximately 7 million people. Blake and Mouton used training as the means of spreading their concepts of leadership and management. The successor to their initial company, now called Grid International, works in 30 countries and 14 languages, with an impressive list of client companies, and equally impressive quantitative and empirical data for the effected improvement in "motivation to change". 119

If "training" is the appropriate and accurate descriptor for both Carnegie's "manipulations" and Burns and Mouton's "empowerment", then perhaps there is something wrong with the use of the term. Burns seems to think so, as he attempts to move the discussion from "training" to "education".

Leadership as education

Burns begins by defining his terms: leadership is "the tapping of existing and potential motive and power bases of followers by leaders, for the purpose of achieving intended change." He then defines education, in its proper essence, in the same way—thus defined, education and leadership become indistinguishable, so long as "both are defined as the reciprocal raising of levels of motivation rather than indoctrination or coercion." Because of this inclusive, empowering definition, education has to become something more than "merely the shaping of values, the imparting of 'facts' or the teaching of skills", and has to take place in a wider forum than the lecture theatre. Education is the *total* process, "operating in homes, schools, gangs, temples, churches, garages, streets, armies, corporations, bars and unions, conducted by both teachers and learners, engaging with the total environment, and involving influence over persons' *selves* and their opportunities, and destinies, not simply their minds." Thus, according to Burns, education is a morally and spiritually edifying experience which allows its recipients (participants?) to become the whole

¹¹⁷ Burns, *Leadership*, 447. Burns expresses his dislike of Carnegie by the use of a comparison: "It was almost as though Dale Carnegie had been brought up on Maslow (or Maslow on Carnegie)." (p. 447).

¹¹⁸ Figures from "About Us," Dale Carnegie Training, c 2010,

<www.dalecarnegie.com/about_us/about_us.jsp>.

¹¹⁹ See the brochure "About GII" available from "Grid Power to Change Program," *Grid International, Inc.*, 2009, www.gridinternational.com/powertochange.html>.

¹²⁰ Burns, Leadership, 448.

¹²¹ Burns, Leadership, 448.

person they can become: it is a "search for wholeness", defined as a "kind of *full, sharing, feeling* relationship". 122

Having mentioned examples of specific, topographical locations for educational encounter ("home, schools, gangs" etc.), Burns gives the conceptual and social locations as well: people are taught within "identifiable physical, psychological, and socio-political environments." Burns does not make his physical and conceptual environments exclusive (that is, he doesn't specify that these are the only places where people can encounter the wholeness of leadership and education), but nowhere does he suggest that there may be other locations, and, specifically, none of his environments are cultural, or, at least, identified as such. The church, the home, the bar and the union may express a form of culture (that is, a creative and imaginative expression of human fulfilment), but the implication of Burns's taxonomy is that they are representatives here of psychological (that is, addressing people's deep-seated and perhaps unconscious needs¹²³) and socio-political entities (that is, representatives of the institutions that both build-up and express people's elective associations). Where are the theatres, bookstores, cinemas, song schools, opera houses, television studios? This is an important question, as I hope to show that the principal means by which leadership is conveyed as a social phenomenon is not by business development programmes, nor by training, nor by academic literature, but through cultural means. The pub is more effective than the business school, the theatre than the lecture-hall. This will be examined in more detail in the chapters on myth in general (see chapter 7, "The Mythography of Myth) and the *mythos* of the culture of the United States (see chapter 8, "Myths of the Mighty").

Conclusion: Leadership, and "divine dispensation"

Meno's paradox and Augustine's lament both imply that to be taught anything more complicated than flute-playing, medicine or navigation (Socrates' examples) requires prior knowledge of the subject. We could, with Socrates, add "leadership" to his instances of "virtue" and geometry within the category of knowledge acquired either through immortal, reincarnated, recollection or through divine dispensation. However, if we did so, it would prove to be a singularly unconvincing hermeneutic in today's secular, empirical world. Even so, I have shown that the assumption made in the leadership literature is that leadership is a previously existing attribute, either (unfashionably) subsisting with the character, traits and qualities of individual

¹²² Burns, Leadership, 448. Emphasis in the original.

¹²³ Given Burns's expressed antipathy to Maslow, we should not press this definition too far (see note 117).

"leaders", or (more popularly) expressed in the relationship between those we call "leaders" and "followers", and agreed upon, even if vaguely, by those in such a relationship. Leadership either pre-exists, or it is pre-known. Therefore, whence comes our prior knowledge of leadership? I shall explore that after an examination of a particular class and environment of leadership; namely leadership expressed in the church.

Chapter 2

Jesus, MBA

People have described me as a 'management bishop,' but I say to my critics: 'Jesus was a management expert too.' George Carey, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1991¹

In December 2007 in a pre-Christmas article for *The Times* Dr Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, made the following revealing remark: Often people demand "moral leadership" from religious figures. Confession time: like others, I suspect, my heart sometimes sinks when I hear this, and I think, cynically, that it's just about people wanting religious leaders to tell them that they're right.2

He alluded to this phenomenon again in a public conversation with Ian Hislop, the editor of *Private Eye*, which took place in Canterbury Cathedral: "The leadership thing is one of the problems here. I've sometimes said when people say, 'We want you to give a lead,' what they mean is, 'We want you to tell them, not us. We don't want to be led.'"3

Part of Dr Williams's problem is that the Archbishop of Canterbury is expected to provide leadership, within and without the Church. In 2001 Douglas Hurd was asked by Dr Williams's predecessor, George Carey, to prepare a report on the requirements and resources of the office. In a preliminary overview the report recognized that while the Archbishop might no longer be the "spiritual director" of English society, he does remain "the nation's primary spiritual conscience." 4 As a result of this "[t]he modern media require a personality to whom they can turn for comment. In return they scrutinize that individual's life and opinions with an intensity that must often

¹ See n.34 below.

² Rowan Williams, "The stable door is open. Anyone can come in," *The Times* (London, December 24, 2007), 17.

³ Ian Hislop and Rowan Williams, "Ian Hislop and Rowan Williams in Conversation" (presented at the Gathering, Canterbury Cathedral, September 4, 2009), <www.canterburydiocese.org/thegathering/audio/>.

⁴ Douglas Hurd, To Lead and To Serve: the report of the review of the See of Canterbury (London: Church House Publishing, 2001), 14.

be hard to take."⁵ This results in a "desire for clear and firm leadership in the Church", which is both a "demand for missionary leadership" and, at the same time, "assumes that the Archbishop has more control over the Church's institutions than he in fact possesses."⁶ This latter aspect we may call, in contrast to Hurd's *Missionary-Leadership* (*Mi-L*), *Managerial-Leadership* (*Ma-L*).⁷

The Archbishop of Canterbury is therefore expected both to lead directly and to model leadership. However, we may infer from the reflections of the present incumbent that leadership is generally *rec*eived as moral and ethical affirmation, and *perc*eived as admonition. In other words, when directed towards 'us', leadership should be confirmation; when directed towards 'others', leadership is coercion.

But the exercise of leadership in the Church is not limited to the Archbishop or the 'higher echelons'. As a document delineating the selection criteria for ordination in the Church of England put it:

A basic ability required of leaders is to identify where the group or community stands and what it should aim to achieve. Leaders should then be able to set out the means to obtain the objectives, drawing the group or community towards the aim and motivating its members towards the goal. ... This ability [leadership] includes the capacity to offer an example of faith and discipleship, to collaborate effectively with others, as well as to guide and shape the life of the Church community in its mission to the world.⁸

All clergy within the established Church, or, at least, those appointed to posts since the early 1990s⁹, are expected to demonstrate "this ability". More than ten years ago Steven Croft, in an unsystematic and informal way, quantified the expectation by examining the advertisements for incumbencies in the church press: "I have continued to make random checks on the kind of language used since [October 1997] and find that, if anything, leadership language is becoming even more predominant across the traditions." ¹⁰

One would think, from listening to individual Christians, reading the accounts of Christian leadership in the national press, and examining its official

⁵ Hurd, The "Hurd" Report, 14.

⁶ The "Hurd" Report, 14.

⁷ We will examine more closely the connection between managerialism and leadership below, in the section "Managerial-Leadership as a religion" from p. 54.

⁸ Advisory Board of Ministry of the Church of England, *The Report of a Working Party on Criteria for Selection for Ministry in the Church of England*, Policy Paper (London: Advisory Board of Ministry, October 1993), 96,102.

⁹ The reason for the dating will be examined in this chapter.

¹⁰ Steven Croft, *Ministry in Three Dimensions: ordination and leadership in the local church* (London: Darton Longman & Todd, 1999), notes 26, p. 203.

and semi-official teaching, 11 that the Church operates with clear ideas of what constitutes leadership, and, furthermore, that these ideas receive part of their clarity from a contrast with 'secular' leadership models: the Church operates with a model of Missionary-, not Managerial-Leadership, a distinction implied by Hurd. And yet, my contention is that a theologically derived notion of Missionary-Leadership is not the dominant model at work within the Church, or in secular expectations of the Church. Other patterns and models are at work, and through the course of my thesis, I intend to demonstrate that the dominant source of what constitutes ecclesiastical or ecclesial leadership derives not from Christian Scripture, neither from Christian theology, nor even (as some critics claim¹²) from 'unbaptized' patterns of secular, business, leadership, but from the tropes and world-view of popular film, which works on a 'mythical' level. In short, the dominant model of leadership in the Church proclaims allegiance to Missionary-Leadership, acknowledges the lessons to be learnt from Managerial-*Leadership,* but, ultimately, is an expression of *Mythological-Leadership* (*Mi-L* / Ma-L / My-L).¹³

Before I look at the Church's inheritance of *Missionary-Leadership* in the following chapter, I will in this chapter examine the modern church's fascination with *Managerial-Leadership*. I will look at the influence of paraecclesial organizations such as MODEM; the abundance of semi-official works about leadership produced in the last decade and a selection of the Church of England's official documents of the last fifteen years (with comparators in both categories from the Episcopal Church in the United States). I will also briefly discuss the way in which church leadership has been depicted in the secular media; noting symmetries in another faith tradition, namely the leadership of Bevis Marks synagogue in the City of London; and, finally, examining a casestudy which incorporates all these factors, the speech made by Rowan Williams in February 2008 on the place of sharia law in the English legal system.

Managerial-Leadership as a religion

In 1997, Stephen Pattison presented an exploration what he called the "faith of the manager". Arising from his experience as a NHS chaplain and an

¹¹ All these sources will be evaluated in the course of this chapter.

¹² As encountered by the Hurd Commission: "some of those who have helped us were evidently afraid that we would see it as our main task to create a more efficient Chief Executive." *The* "*Hurd" Report*, 2. See also David Gortner's prolegomenon to his evaluation of secular models of leadership: "I inevitably hear [church people] attempt to separate the ecclesia from the rest of human riffraff. 'The church is not a business.'" David T. Gortner, "Looking at Leadership Beyond Our Own Horizon," *Anglican Theological Review* 91, no. 1 (Winter 2009): 119.

¹³ I will come to a final definition of *My-L* in Chapter 9 with "The Emergence of Mythological-Leadership" (on page 332).

administrator of a Community Health Council, Pattison was intrigued by the parallels he saw developing between managerialism (as a systematic way of structuring and apportioning resources of time, energy, money and value, with an overarching sense of its morality in functioning in this way)¹⁴ and religion (as a system of thought and practice which, through both, supplies meaning to human activity).¹⁵ Indeed, Pattison went further than noticing parallels with religion in general. He noted the resemblance between managerialism and a particular manifestation of religion: it can "instructively be construed as having many of the characteristics of fundamentalist sectarianism."¹⁶

According to Christopher Pollitt (whose ideas were the basis of Newman and Clarke's own work), this *Ma-L* flourished in the public sector of the late twentieth century from the confluence of two new trends in management theory and practice. First there was what Pollit / Newman / Clarke called neo-Taylorism,¹⁷ in which resource efficiency was the sole (measurable) goal, overlaid with a moral purpose. A foundational example of this 'morality-management' can be seen in Michael Heseltine's manifesto as Secretary of State for the Environment in 1980: "I believe we are faced, as a nation, by a task of national revival as daunting as we have ever faced. Efficient management is a key to the revival. If Britain's managers fail, we can turn out the lights." ¹⁸

The benefits of efficiency management were not to be limited to the DoE: it applied to "public and private companies, civil service, nationalized industries,

¹⁴ For the "wider ideology of managerialism", Pattison cites, approvingly, Newman and Clarke's definition: "the commitment to 'management' as the solution to social and economic problems, particularly those of the public sector; the belief in management as an overarching system of authority; and the view of management as founded on an inalienable 'right to manage'." Janet Newman and John Clarke, "Going about our business? The managerialization of public services," in *Managing Social Policy*, ed. John Clarke, Allan Cochrane, and Eugene McLaughlin (London: Sage, 1994), 16. Quoted in Stephen Pattison, *The Faith of the Managers: when management becomes religion* (London: Cassell, 1997), 23.

¹⁵ Pattison is happy to use a functionalist definition of religion (which is entirely appropriate for his thesis). He defines religion, imaginatively and disconcertingly, by using Roger Cooter's definition of the cultural function of phrenology: "a panacea, a blessing, a comfort, a source of all meaning, a path to indentity [sic. corrected by Pattison to "identity"], morality, wholeness, progress, worth." Roger Cooter, *The Cultural Meaning of Popular Science: phrenology and the organization of consent in nineteenth-century Britain*, Cambridge history of medicine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 190. Quoted in Pattison, *Faith of the Managers*, 28.

¹⁶ Pattison, *Faith of the Managers*, 26. Pattison gives a list of analogies between managerialism and sectarianism on 36-37.

¹⁷ Named for Frederick Winslow Taylor, whose book on "scientific management" was the basis of all "classical management" writing and practices: "The Principles of Scientific Management (1911)," in *Scientific Management*, 3rd ed. (New York; London: Harper & Bros, 1947). See the discussion in Christopher Pollitt, *Managerialism and the Public Services: the Anglo-American experience* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 13–17, 111–18.

¹⁸ Michael Heseltine, "Ministers and Management in Whitehall," *Management Services in Government* 35, no. 2 (May 1980): 68.

local government, the National Health Service". 19 Heseltine's opening of the doors to management soon meant that, in the British public sector, managers were overwhelmingly directed to "the rational analysis of organizational inputs and outputs and committed to the creation of efficiency and increased productivity." 20

Entwined with the neo-Taylorian 'efficiency management', there secondly flourished another model, known variously as 'new wave management', 'new managerialism', or the 'Excellence School'. The high priest of Excellence was Tom Peters, with his extensive and ubiquitous series of books exploring the theme.²¹ This school believed that in order to succeed, any organization, whether business or non-profit, needed to loosen bureaucratic controls in order to motivate the workers into achieving a largely self-motivated commitment to quality and innovation. It meant a different style of management: "[m]anagers became leaders rather than controllers, providing the visions and inspirations which generate a collective or corporate commitment to 'being the best'."²²

So we can see that neo-Taylorism and 'excellence management' both make claims to a teleology: they are means to achieve a moral good. Through this ethical purpose, which underlies any contrasting technical specifics, management of both schools is more properly recognized as an example of managerialism, a philosophy which encompasses a wider world-view than just selling better widgets or treating more patients. The managers attained a moral purpose as agents of quality, innovation and excellence. Their methods were morally neutral; it was the goals which were elevated to an ethical good: efficiency, public accountability, reduction of Government expenditure, workforce empowerment, and so on.

Perhaps it was this sense of mission that was the attraction for the "religious admirers of managerialism".²³ Perhaps it was the promise of effectiveness, actually being able to make a difference in a complex world, which seemed to be increasing in complexity. If so (and we shall see the extent to which these factors are important in the official and semi-official publications

¹⁹ Heseltine, "Ministers and Management in Whitehall," 68. Christopher Pollitt has called this Heseltine's "cosmic" definition of management: "Beyond the Managerial Model: the case for broadening performance assessment in Government and the Public Services," *Financial Accountability and Management* 2, no. 3 (Autumn 1986): 159. Part of the reason for Heseltine's panacean attitude might be that the paper was originally addressed to the Westminster Branch of the British Institute of Management.

²⁰ Newman and Clarke, "Going about our business," 15.

²¹ Tom Peters and Robert H. Waterman, *In Search of Excellence: lessons from America's best-run companies* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982); Tom Peters and Nancy Austin, *A Passion for Excellence: the leadership difference* (London: Fontana, 1986).

²² Newman and Clarke, "Going about our business," 15.

²³ The epithet in Pattison's warning coda, Faith of the Managers, 157.

of the Church below), then the religious admirers of *Ma-L* would do well to hearken to the warning of Alasdair MacIntyre.

MacIntyre describes managerialism as one of the "central moral fictions of the age", its fictive status based upon the claims "to possess systematic effectiveness in controlling certain aspects of social reality." This claim must acknowledge the profound moral component of its methods, despite the modesty of most managers, or writers on management, in limiting their morality to the *telos*. This *telos* is predicated upon *effectiveness*, not upon the manager's personal morality: not 'is he faithful to his wife?', but 'is he able to make the trains run on time?' Even more so, the effectiveness of the manager is something quite separate from the morality of the task he is managing: it does not matter whether the trains he is efficiently directing carry commuters to work or prisoners to the gas chambers. In this respect, MacIntyre is consciously playing with the 'fascism got the job done' trope of much popular political discourse: Mussolini was an (effective) manager. MacIntyre denies that morality and effectiveness can be so glibly divorced from each other:

...the whole concept of effectiveness is... inseparable from a mode of human existence in which the contrivance of means is in central part the manipulation of human beings into compliant patterns of behaviour; and it is by appeal to his own effectiveness that the manager claims authority within the manipulative mode. ²⁵

This "alleged quality of effectiveness" MacIntyre calls "expertise", but more than that it is also a "masquerade". It is a pretence because, he suggests, we are not oppressed by the misuse of power "as some radical critics believe", 26 but by impotence. The telling image often used is 'levers of power'—"one of managerial expertise's own key metaphors". 27 But when political life has been taken over by technocrats, who promise to "manage things better" than their opponents, 'levers of power' can be false instruments. Before the resignation of Tony Blair as Prime Minister and the assumption of the office by Gordon Brown, Michael Portillo (not a neutral observer), pointed out that some government actions, like raising pension rates or ages, are as simple as moving a lever, and the lever works. However, there are aspects of government, such as "organisational change" that are not susceptible to such a simple approach: "In dealing with the Home Office, for example, the levers of power have simply

²⁴ Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *After Virtue: a study in moral theory*, 2nd ed. (London: Duckworth, 1985), 71.

²⁵ MacIntyre, After Virtue, 71.

²⁶ MacIntyre, After Virtue, 72. He does not state who he means by this: Chomsky? Foucault?

²⁷ MacIntyre, After Virtue, 73.

broken off in his [Blair's] hand. He has no talent for managing such complex change, nor indeed has any other politician."²⁸

This is a pragmatic example of MacIntyre's criticism of the metaphor: it is no more, he says, than a rhetorical sleight of hand, desperately attempting to camouflage the fact that correlation does not mean causation:

...all too often, when imputed organisational skill and power are deployed and the desired effect follows, all that we have witnessed is the same kind of sequence as that to be observed when a clergyman is fortunate enough to pray for rain just before the unpredicted end of a drought; that the levers of power... produce effects unsystematically and too often only coincidentally related to the effects of which their users boast.²⁹

MacIntyre thus gives us four warnings: first, that *Ma-L* is a cultural fiction; second, it cannot be morally neutral; third, it concerns the manipulation of people into compliancy; and fourth, it is unproven as an effective social action. These warnings have gone unheeded within the Church.

Thus, before David Hope's enthronement as Archbishop of York in 1995 he was interviewed by *The Church Times*. At the end of the interview, having spent some time trying to explain to the interviewer the importance of the organizational changes in the Church's governance, he decided to quote from Charles Handy, whom he was reading. The passage describes "the right approach to the...Archbishop's Council. It was a lesson from Silicon Valley."³⁰

Thus, before his enthronement as 103rd Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey was interviewed for *Reader's Digest*. In the accompanying profile it was noted that he "is a man of modern self-taught managerial methods" and, in the interview itself, when asked whether it was true that he would be running the Church "much more as a business, with vicars being assessed, attending courses and so on?", he responded "Yes—and this is already happening." 32

...There are many hard-working, conscientious and gifted clergy in the Church, but I believe ministers should be assessed every five years to expose and deal with those who are incompetent, lazy, or simply inept.

²⁸ Michael Portillo, "It's a dirty secret: no party has the answer to a state in chaos," *The Sunday Times* (London, May 14, 2006), 19.

²⁹ MacIntyre, After Virtue, 73.

³⁰ Paul Handley, "Holder of the ring," *The Church Times* (London, December 8, 1995), 11; Quoted in Pattison, *Faith of the Managers*, 157.

³¹ David Moller, "Bishop George comes to Canterbury," Reader's Digest, March 1991, 39.

³² Russell Twisk and David Moller, "There'll be a big party going on," *Reader's Digest*, March 1991, 42.

Bishops, too, should not hold jobs in freehold, but should be subject to evaluation. ³³

Carey aphoristically summed up his philosophy:

People have described me as a "management bishop," but I say to my critics: "Jesus was a management expert too." Christ... is looking for results. I see nothing wrong with that. 34

The model for Bishops and Priests in the established Church is not so much Jesus the Good Shepherd as "Jesus, MBA".

In this aspect (at least) Dr Carey's thought was original. It was not until four years after the Archbishop's interview that Jesus's career path had advanced from MBA to executive authority, with the publication of Laurie Beth Jones's "Jesus, CEO".³⁵ Her book is a whimsical collection of 85 principles, allegedly derived from Jesus's public ministry, illustrating what Jones calls the "Omega management style"³⁶, and divided unequally into three different areas: "strength of self-mastery", "strength of action" and "strength of relationships". So we find the disciples described as "staff",³⁷ Jesus's prayer life is presenting a report to the "Chairman of the Board",³⁸ his healing ministry is self-expression,³⁹ and the promise of the kingdom of heaven is a pension plan.⁴⁰

Laurie Beth Jones's appropriation of the Gospels for American capitalism has obviously been successful.⁴¹ *Industry Week* felt able to present a long

³³ Moller, "Bishop George comes to Canterbury," 40.

³⁴ Twisk and Moller, "George Carey interview," 42.

³⁵ Laurie Beth Jones, *Jesus, CEO: using ancient wisdom for visionary leadership* (New York: Hyperion, 1995).

³⁶ Jones, *Jesus*, *CEO*, xiii. Management styles for Jones are predicated upon the use of power, and she (unwittingly?) presents the "Omega" style as a Hegelian synthesis between an "Alpha" style, based the authoritative use of power, and a "Beta" style, based on co-operative use of power. The former is "masculine", the latter "feminine" (although Jones presents no evidence for such a distinction). "Omega", on the other hand, "incorporates and enhances them both" (Jones, *Jesus*, *CEO*, xiii.). It is also monetized, through the Jones Management Group news letter (Jones, *Jesus*, *CEO*, 310.), a lesson which Jones presumably learnt from, among others, Blake and Mouton (see the discussion of "Grid International", on page 49).

³⁷ "He took his staff in hand", Jones, Jesus, CEO, 134–7.

³⁸ "He saw them as his greatest accomplishment", Jones, Jesus, CEO, 284–8.

³⁹ "He expressed himself", Jones, Jesus, CEO, 39–42.

⁴⁰ "He clearly defined their work-related benefits", Jones, Jesus, CEO, 200–2.

⁴¹ She has two further books, one of which *The Path*, is now the basis of a self-help career development programme, she has sold more than 1 million copies of her books, her name is trade-marked, and Ken Blanchard (of the Hersey-Blanchard situational theory) has called her "One of the Great Thought Leaders of Our Time" (original capitalization): see Laurie Beth Jones, "Home Page," *Laurie Beth Jones: The Path, Four Elements of Success, Best Selling Author*, 2008, <www.lauriebethjones.com>. See also *The Path: creating your mission statement for work and for life* (New York: Hyperion, 1996).

interview with her on the book's publication, where the only caveat was a particularly American concern about the First Amendment (is it right to bring religion into the workplace?), and the gentle presence of a question mark in the article's title.⁴²

However, her contribution to an understanding of Jesus's model for leadership (even if such a construct is either possible or appropriate to seek) is theologically flawed, a significant drawback for someone whose intention was to describe the relevance of Jesus for "today". "The text is a painful combination of shallow sentiment, self-help clichés..., and trivialization of the Gospel accounts..."43, in which we see a portrayal of the cleansing of the Temple, with no account taken of the political and theological implications of Jesus's actions, but rather as an object lesson in how to be "passionate". 44 Furthermore, Jones's first Omega principle, "He said 'I am'" (in which she examines and approves Jesus's sense of self-identity), is taken up in her "Affirmations for Leaders", a summary appendix of 61 bullet-points, where it exhorts the business leader to affirm "I proudly say I AM, knowing clearly my strengths and God-given talents. I repeat my strengths to myself often, knowing my words are my wardrobe."45 It seems unlikely that this is an appropriate appropriation of the Divine Name (the tetragrammaton) as applied by Jesus to his own ministry. In what possible way can a model of (human) leadership be based upon a claim to divinity?

Jones's work has not been directly influential in the British context; perhaps its semi-Gnostic understanding of the creation of reality and the self-creation of the protagonist ("My word goes out and accomplishes that which I sent it to do"⁴⁶) is too much for most British writers.⁴⁷ Even so, others have attempted Jones's initial project, to map a pattern derived from Jesus's model onto modern-day business. Hence, Peter Shaw, in a Grove Booklet, wished to look "...at Jesus as a role model in a way that is relevant both to those who fully

⁴² Tom Brown, "Jesus, CEO?," Industry Week, March 6, 1995.

⁴³ Michael L. Budde, "God is not a capitalist," in *God is Not...*, ed. D. Brent Laytham (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Brazos Press, 2004), 83.

⁴⁴ Budde, "God is not a capitalist," 83. Jones's treatment of the cleansing is found in "He had a passionate commitment to the cause", *Jesus*, *CEO*, 50–54, where she explicitly says that a political or theological interpretation of Matt 21:12 is "reading too much into it".

⁴⁵ Jones, Jesus, CEO, 295.

⁴⁶ "Affirmations for Leaders", Jones, Jesus, CEO, 301.

⁴⁷ It was part of a small fashion for books in a similar idiom in the U.S.: Larry S. Julian, God Is My CEO: following God's principles in a bottom-line world (Avon, Mass.: Adams Media, 2002); John Heider, The Tao of Leadership: Lao Tzu's Tao Te Ching Adapted for a New Age (Atlanta, Ga.: Humanics New Age, 1985); Erik d' Auchamp, What You Think, You Become: doing business the Gandhi way (Charleston, S.C.: BookSurge Publishing, 2009); John Man, The Leadership Secrets of Genghis Khan (London: Bantam, 2009); and even Wess Roberts, Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun (New York: Warner Books, 1989).

embrace the Christian faith and those who simply regard Jesus as a significant leader", for, whatever one's faith background, "[m]easured by his impact on history, Jesus was an outstanding leader."⁴⁸ By examining the interplay between our understanding of Jesus as leader, current thinking on leadership, the requirements of leadership within organizations and the "practical implications of living out Jesus' approach".⁴⁹ Shaw hopes to present a model that can deal with the dilemmas (opportunities?) facing leaders today, among which we find: "defining the clearest possible strategy against a background of continuous change... developing clarity about where the leader can add the most value; ...[and] communicating succinctly and effectively amidst a barrage of communication vehicles."⁵⁰ His examples deal, substantially, with the higher echelons of business: he presents two lists of 'C' words which describe patterns of behaviour that should be cultivated by those in leadership positions.⁵¹ Many of the words/behaviour patterns address the isolation which comes from being at the top of a business.⁵²

Both Jones and Shaw are relatively late examples of the dialogue between leadership/management studies and ecclesiological thinking, and neither would pretend that they represent anything other than a resolutely popular treatment of the subject. More rigorous, 'academic', treatments are not over-common. Stephen Pattison asserts that, before 1990, only two substantial books were written about the management of the Church in a British context, both by Peter Rudge.⁵³ Following the enthronement of a self-taught management expert it

⁴⁸ Peter Shaw, *Mirroring Jesus as Leader*, Grove ethics series E135 (Cambridge: Grove Books, 2004), 3.

⁴⁹ Shaw, Mirroring Jesus, 4.

⁵⁰ Shaw, Mirroring Jesus, 4. Shaw actually gives eight dilemmas in total.

⁵¹ List 1: conviction; character; care; courage; composure; competence. List 2: consciousness; congruence; compassion; connection; communication; culture; courage; confidence; creativity; coaching style. Shaw, *Mirroring Jesus*, 14.

⁵² An interesting variant on this strategy (looking to a hero of the faith for a model of leadership) may be found in Kit Dollard, Anthony Marett-Crosby, OSB, and Timothy Wright, OSB, *Doing Business with Benedict: the rule of St Benedict and business management, a conversation* (London; New York: Continuum, 2002), especially, ch. 4 & 5. It is interesting because it is more modest in its application, and the analogies between the stable, settled, ministry of Benedict and modern business are closer than with Jesus's short-term, itinerant, preaching and teaching.

⁵³ Peter F. Rudge, Ministry and Management: the study of ecclesiastical administration (London: Tavistock, 1968); Management in the Church (London: McGraw-Hill, 1976); Pattison, Faith of the Managers, n.4, 184. This is not to say that there were not any number of vade mecum volumes written by clergy before 1990: see, for example, Trevor Beeson, New Area Mission: the parish in the new housing estates (London: A. R. Mowbray, 1963); Michael Hocking, The Parish Seeks the Way: a strategy for a working class parish (London: A. R. Mowbray, 1960); E. W. Southcott, The Parish Comes Alive (London: A. R. Mowbray, 1956); Charles R. Forder, The Parish Priest at Work: an introduction to systematic pastoralia (London: S.P.C.K., 1947); or even, George Herbert, The Country Parson, The Temple, ed. John N. Wall, Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1981). These books, however, understood themselves to be pastoralia, and were written

was inevitable that the number of books on, and interest in, secular–ecclesiastical management would increase, bearing in mind Wesley Carr's caveat: there is a "reasonable wish to manage the church at many levels, without... selling out to the secular themes of management techniques." 54

The role of semi-official church publications

In 1993 a new group was formed: MODEM (which, at least initially, stood for "Managerial and Organisational Disciplines for the Enhancement of Ministry"). 55 MODEM sought to "promote the relevance of sound management to the churches and the mutuality of interest between churches and secular organisations."56 It set out to do this by organizing conferences, publishing seminars, drawing up a directory of interested parties and maintaining a membership list: all the paraphernalia of a modern, networking, pressure group. In 1996 it published its first book, aiming to "set the agenda for management/ministry issues in the 1990s."57 It included chapters on appraisal schemes, the application of ISO quality standards to ministry, human resources, and the church as a voluntary non-profit organization.⁵⁸ The value of the contributions might be judged more by their content than their brevity. So, for example, the chapter on appraisal begins with the surprising admission by the author that he has never been responsible for implementing an appraisal scheme, and Bemrose's parallels between the Church and third sector organizations ignores the already existing literature that criticised the

without benefit of a thorough grounding in secular management principles. See the history of clerical "how-to" books in Justin Lewis-Anthony, *If You Meet George Herbert on the Road, Kill Him: radically re-thinking priestly ministry* (London: Continuum International, 2009), chap. 3. ⁵⁴ Wesley Carr, "Leading without Leadership: managing without management," in *Creative Church Leadership*, ed. John Adair and John Nelson (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2004), 76. ⁵⁵ Alan Harpham, "MODEM's Background," in *Management and Ministry: appreciating contemporary issues*, ed. John Nelson (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1996), 221–226. Latterly, a suggestion has been made, presumably seriously, that the acronym stands for "Ministerial and Ontological Disciplines for the Enhancement of Management". In any case, much play is made of the electronic modem's function as a piece of equipment facilitating two-way communication. MODEM, "History," *MODEM: A Hub for Leadership, Management and Ministry*, 2007, <www.modem-uk.org/History.html>.

⁵⁶ Editor's Note, John Nelson, ed., *Management and Ministry: appreciating contemporary issues* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1996), iii.

⁵⁷ Editor's Note, Nelson, Management and Ministry, iii.

⁵⁸ Colin Hill, "Appraisal Schemes," 177-185; John Walker, "Quality Ministry: the application of quality standards (BS5750, ISO9000) to the church ministry," 141-146; Bryan Pettifer, "Human Resource Management," 187-199; Chris Bemrose, "The Church as a Voluntary Non-Profit Organization," 111-118.

application of management techniques to voluntary organizations.⁵⁹ In brief, *Management and Ministry* betrays all the fervour of the convert, believing that a little bit of DMS ("Documented Management System") can make all the difference to pastoral visiting in rural parishes.⁶⁰

Later MODEM publications have moderated this enthusiasm. Thus, some of the essays in *Creative Church Leadership*,⁶¹ MODEM's third collection of such, recognize the limitations of a strictly managerial approach to church life: Charles Handy (the *éminence grise* of the Archbishop of York) points out the dangers, if not the impossibility, of imposing this mode within a church community.⁶² Philip Mawer, in an essay whose title, 'Believing in Leadership', might lead one to think that managerialism should become a credal clause, concludes his analysis by saying the belief, which is also about relationship, should ultimately be grounded on something beyond the leader, "which for Christians of course means essentially a focus on God."⁶³ At the same time, Elizabeth Welch drew out the biblical grounding of a creative understanding of church leadership: "Leadership in the church has its foundation in our understanding and interpretation of God and God's purposes for the world. The most creative church leadership is that which is deeply rooted within the life of God."⁶⁴

In some ways the more directly ecclesial functions of MODEM have been taken on by another organisation, the Foundation for Church Leadership,⁶⁵

⁵⁹ See for example, the case study of RELATE's unhappy dealings with management consultancy: the NMGC [National Marriage Guidance Council] needed to provide evidence to the Home Office (its major funding source) that it was capably and professionally run, evidence that was independently verified. In the 1980s it was uniformly believed that management consultancy companies were morally and professionally reliable analysts, even if their values clashed with the therapeutic culture of the organization. See Jane Lewis, David Clark, and David Morgan, *Whom God Hath Joined Together: the work of marriage guidance* (London: Tavistock/Routledge, 1992), chap. 5.

⁶⁰ The design of the book also adds to the impression of a "Year Zero" attitude: it has a bright red cover, with white circle, and, centred on the circle, a four point arrowhead — disconcertingly similar to the flag of the NSDAP.

⁶¹ John Adair and John Nelson, eds., *Creative Church Leadership: on the challenge of making a difference through leadership,* A MODEM Handbook (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2004).

⁶² See Charles Handy, "One question and ten answers," in *Creative Church Leadership*, ed. John Adair and John Nelson (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2004), 24–31, especially the pitiful anecdote on pp. 27-28, involving a motivated but misguided churchwarden.

⁶³ Philip Mawer, "Believing in Leadership," in *Creative Church Leadership: on the challenge of making a difference through leadership*, ed. John Adair and John Nelson, A MODEM Handbook (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2004), 88.

⁶⁴ Elizabeth Welch, "Leadership with vision: a challenge for the churches?," in *Creative Church Leadership*, ed. John Adair and John Nelson (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2004), 135.

⁶⁵ Foundation for Church Leadership, "Home page," Foundation for Church Leadership, 2008, http://churchleadershipfoundation.org/>.

whose first director was Malcolm Grundy, one of MODEM's founding fathers.⁶⁶ The FCL's aim was simple: "to support, encourage and inspire church leaders as they tackle new challenges in leadership."⁶⁷ It would achieve this simple aim by "identifying emerging theologies of leadership", encouraging the development of leadership potential, "evaluating" and "sharing best practice".⁶⁸ The public launch of FCL took the form of a seminar, with a series of papers and responses, held at King's College, London in January 2005. The major paper was presented by Steven Croft.⁶⁹

Croft's paper begins by acknowledging the looming threat of the business school to the church, in a metaphor contrasting the bright, welcoming building of the former with the dowdy, overlooked facilities of the latter. But, continuing the metaphor, he wonders what would happen if the church building discovered itself to be sitting atop a mine, full of the most wonderful minerals, and well-built foundations, whose air is "sweet and inviting." The metaphor, welcomed by Rowan Williams and David Ford in their responses to Croft's paper, is an attempt to assert the importance of the Christian tradition's insights into the question and practice of leadership. As Croft says, many secular leadership books quote Plato or Sun Tzu, but neglect the far older tradition of Moses:

'Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint someone over the congregation who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in, so that the congregation of the Lord may not be like sheep without a shepherd.' [Num 27:16–17]

⁶⁶ Grundy had been Archdeacon of Craven, in Bradford Diocese, before his appointment to the FCL. I will mention the positions and promotions of some of the authors cited in this chapter, not because their positions validate the authors' contentions (an "argument from authority"), but because preferment might reflect the value placed on their work by the Church as a patron. ⁶⁷ Foundation for Church Leadership, Focus on Leadership: papers, commentary, and reflections on a seminar launching the Foundation for Church Leadership, King's College, London 20 January 2005 (York: Foundation for Church Leadership, 2005), 61.

⁶⁸ Foundation for Church Leadership, *Focus on Leadership*, 61. This is, of course, a significantly "managerial" model of addressing the question.

⁶⁹ Steven Croft, "Leadership and the Emerging Church: a theology of church leadership," in Focus on Leadership: papers, commentary, and reflections on a seminar launching the Foundation for Church Leadership, King's College, London 20 January 2005 (York: Foundation for Church Leadership, 2005), 7–41. At the time Croft was the Archbishops' Missioner, and was subsequently appointed Bishop of Sheffield.

⁷⁰ Croft, "Leadership and the Emerging Church," 13.

⁷¹ Rowan Williams, "Opening Remarks," in *Focus on Leadership: papers, commentary, and reflections on a seminar launching the Foundation for Church Leadership, King's College, London 20 January 2005* (York: Foundation for Church Leadership, 2005), 6; David F. Ford, "A Theology of Church Leadership: a response to Steven Croft," in *Focus on Leadership: papers, commentary, and reflections on a seminar launching the Foundation for Church Leadership, King's College, London 20 <i>January 2005* (York: Foundation for Church Leadership, 2005), 42–45.

This description in Numbers is, Croft asserts, "possibly the earliest description of leadership...in the world."72 Moses is to be found at the "head of the tradition (and the very bottom of the mineshaft)",73 a man whose story is an archetype for leadership, full of difficulties of administration, resourcing, opposition, and yet who is capable of expressing a "transformative vision of a new future".74 The Old Testament tradition of leadership builds on the humility of Moses and his acknowledged dependence on God, and this is transfigured (a word that Croft does not use) in the person and model of Jesus Christ. In Christ we see, says Croft, "a remarkable figure in the human story, not least for what he reveals about the nature of leadership."⁷⁵ According to Croft, Jesus responds to the leadership traditions of the Hebrew Scriptures in three ways. First, Jesus places humble dependency on God at the centre and heart of leadership. Second, the Church's subsequent reflection on the person and nature of Jesus disperses Jesus's self-understanding through the Church's self-understanding: doctrines of faith about Jesus (as seen in the earliest credal statements) become the means of transmission of ideas of Christian ministry:

The united witness of the New Testament tradition is that the risen Christ is present with the church to build, guide and guard her life. This *must* affect reflection on future direction and the way the church responds to the challenges of its context.⁷⁶

Third, and consequently, this reflection and transmission happens in the context of a community, which reinforces its understanding and self-identity through condemnation and commendation of those moral aspects of leadership that conform to, or remain within the parameters of, Jesus's example: Croft cites Matt 23:13 and Luke 9:48 as examples of these two dynamics.

When these three responses are formally arranged in the Church, we find a four-fold, episcopal,⁷⁷ pattern, what Croft calls the "elements" and "shape" of Christian ministry. First, leadership is "grounded in character",⁷⁸ and (therefore?) requires a moral and ethical response, what Croft calls "watching

⁷² Croft, "Leadership and the Emerging Church," n. 1, p. 55. Croft references the passage as "Numbers 27.15", a typographical mistake that is typical of the whole essay: "Richard baxter"; "WHATCHING OVER YOURSELF", &c.

⁷³ Croft, "Leadership and the Emerging Church," 15.

⁷⁴ Croft, "Leadership and the Emerging Church," 15.

⁷⁵ Croft, "Leadership and the Emerging Church," 18.

⁷⁶ Croft, "Leadership and the Emerging Church," 18–19. Emphasis added to make clear the imperative thrust of Croft's analysis.

⁷⁷ Croft doesn't actually use adjective "episcopal" in his paper, preferring to use the uninflected noun "episcope". He clearly means it to mean "oversight" rather than a monarchical form of church leadership.

⁷⁸ Croft, "Leadership and the Emerging Church," 19. Significantly a "trait-based" origin of leadership.

over yourself". Second, leadership can only exist in action (not in potential), and must be expressed in a series of gerunds: "building, guarding and guiding" a very particular form of community, "missionary". Third, it requires placement within a tradition (in the original sense of "handing on"): others must be enabled to become, not leaders, but disciples. Fourth, the episcopal leader will be concerned with placing this missionary community within the widest possible context: after all, God is God of all creation.

Croft asserts that the root of Christian leadership is, therefore, episcope, which is not limited to those who exercise an episcopal, *bishop's*, ministry: Parish priests, deacons, youth leaders and diocesan secretaries all exercise episcope. Its four distinct roles, which Croft represents in a series of increasingly elaborate figures, require seventeen "qualities", some of which actually are qualities ("humility", "trust", "maturity"), some of which are behaviours ("planning", understanding", "empowerment"), and some of which are abstract nouns with no indication of how they are to be incarnated ("alignment"⁸¹, "scanning"⁸²). Croft himself acknowledges that these aren't qualities *per se*, and refers to them in other places as "skills" or "competencies". We can see this uncertainty of terminology at work in another, official, Church document, the "Hind Report" (on page 74ff).

Croft's paper was admired by David Ford in his short response ("an exemplary treatment of Church leadership"⁸³). Imaginatively Ford moves the discussion from a survey of (selected) aspects of the tradition of Church leadership to the discourse itself: in other words, he moves from a historical to a grammatical register. He identifies the importance in understanding Church leadership of what he calls the sense of "moods", the linguistic expression of possibility or necessity. Too often, says Ford, leadership is expressed solely in the imperative mood, "the mood of command".⁸⁴ However, leadership can also be expressed (*ought* to be expressed? Ford does not make his preference clear in such a concise paper) through the indicative mood, "the mood of affirmation", so which is dependent on an ability to discern the reality of events (what the Archbishop of Canterbury has called elsewhere the role of Christian minister as

⁷⁹ Croft, "Leadership and the Emerging Church," 19.

⁸⁰ This is a significant change of vocabulary: a leader is not a disciple (as we shall see in Chapter 6), nor is a disciple a leader (as we shall see in Chapter 7).

⁸¹ By this Croft says he means, in a Humpty-Dumptyish way, "the skill to engage the different parts of the enterprise in a common endeavour, dealing with any conflicts of interest as they arise." Croft, "Leadership and the Emerging Church," 36. He says his word is better without explaining why.

⁸² Croft, "Leadership and the Emerging Church," 37.

⁸³ Ford, "Response to Croft," 42.

⁸⁴ Ford, "Response to Croft," 44.

⁸⁵ Ford, "Response to Croft," 45.

"watchman"⁸⁶). As part of this discerning process, there is required a mood of questioning (not technically a grammatical mood). The subjunctive "mood of possibility" is best located within a leadership team, but the most important mood, for Ford, is the optative mood, a "mood of vision", or "the embracing mood of wise leadership",⁸⁷ which Ford believes to be at the heart of the leadership fulfilled by Jesus, Paul, John (the Evangelist), Jean Vanier and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. At the same time, Ford believes the leadership of church ministers to be expressed through *blessing*, the "core dynamic" of Croft's analysis, a dynamic which requires a willingness to be part of God's "transformative ecology", working within a missionary community, by "guiding, guarding, and building" that community, and an awareness of the specific geographic and social contexts of the "God-given connexion".⁸⁸

Croft had already explored some of the ideas sketched out in his FCL lecture in *Ministry in Three Dimensions*, first published in 1999.⁸⁹ Describing how the inherited models of ministry are no longer working (the instances of stress and break-down being indicators of that⁹⁰), Croft warns against a false solution, "the flight into management models", ⁹¹ with the evangelical clergy of the Church being particularly susceptible to the siren dangers: "for many younger evangelical clergy the primary focus of what it means to be ordained is focused in the very exercise of leadership skills." ⁹² Croft links this evangelical ease to the influence of the Church Growth Movement, originating in Fuller Theological Seminary and the work of Wimber, Gibbs and George, and finding expression in the Vineyard Movement. John Wimber argues that a "healthy church" begins with a vision, which is then quantified and made concrete in values, strategy and programmes. For Croft, while this process may be effective, its assumptions are less based on Scriptural and Traditional models than the secular, systemic,

⁸⁶ Rowan Williams, "The Christian Priest Today" (Lecture presented at the 150th anniversary of Ripon College, Cuddesdon, Ripon College Cuddesdon, May 28, 2004),

<www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/2097/the-christian-priest-today-lecture-on-the-occasion-of-the-150th-anniversary-of-ripon-college-cuddesd>. See an exploration of the implications of this idea in Lewis-Anthony, *If You Meet George Herbert*, chap. 8.

⁸⁷ Ford, "Response to Croft," 45.

⁸⁸ Ford, "Response to Croft," 44.

⁸⁹ Croft, *Ministry in Three Dimensions*. A second edition of Croft's book was published in 2008, but the only substantive change was a new chapter on "pioneer ministry" and "fresh expressions", neither of which are relevant to our task.

⁹⁰ Croft, Ministry in Three Dimensions, 17–21.

⁹¹ Croft, Ministry in Three Dimensions, 22.

⁹² Croft, *Ministry in Three Dimensions*, 22. Croft mentions "skills" here, and "styles" elsewhere. It is not clear from his use of the terms whether they are mere synonyms or denote some substantive distinction.

models of organizational complexity, advocated by Peter Drucker. 93 However, the empirical results of this congruence did not reflect the optimism of its advocates: despite attempting to implement the model in his own parochial ministry, Croft eventually felt that it was a "denial within myself of my calling to be ordained", and that the model failed to "fit" either its roots in Scripture/Tradition or in commerce/industry.94 This didn't prevent the growth of Leadership models in the Church. By the late 1990s, according to Croft, "leader" was becoming "the most commonly used title for a person called to full-time Christian work".95 "Leader" had become the universal solvent, the shorthand expression for a General Theory of Everything. Thus, according to David Pytches, 96 everything that an ordained minister could, or should, do can be described as an expression of one form or another of leadership.⁹⁷ Pytches's work is significant as he was the Vicar (leader?) of St Andrew's, Chorleywood, where Drew Williams later served as an associate vicar (leader?). Williams is now modelling a Chorleywood form of leadership in a new pastoral charge in Connecticut, where he has received the commendation of Gary Hamel, visiting professor of Management at the London Business School, director of the Management Lab, and writer for the Wall Street Journal.98 Church leadership, having been formed by commercial and industrial models, is now being repackaged as an exemplar for commerce and industry.

This is not the dominant dynamic, however. The move is still in the other direction. As Croft says: "it would be arrogant in the extreme for the Church to say that it had nothing to learn from the world of management and leadership studies. But when the insights gained from these worlds are adopted uncritically by the Church, there are dangers. Pendulum swings are not always healthy... The secular concepts of 'leader' and 'manager' cannot do justice to

⁹³ Croft notes the resemblances between John Wimber's *Power Evangelism: signs and wonders today* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1985); and Peter Drucker's monumental *Management: Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices* (London: Heinemann, 1974).

⁹⁴ Croft, Ministry in Three Dimensions, 25.

⁹⁵ Croft, Ministry in Three Dimensions, 25.

⁹⁶ Pytches's career is an inversion of the usual pattern for our other authors: he began as a Bishop (of the Anglican Church in Chile, Bolivia and Peru) and ended as a Vicar. However, it can be argued that the parish of St Andrew's Chorleywood is a larger and more significant pastoral charge than a diocese in the Southern Cone for the life of the Anglican Communion.

⁹⁷ David Pytches, *Leadership for New Life* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1998). So, for example, chapters 23-25 are "Leadership and the Church Council"; "Leadership and New Staff Members"; "Leadership and Maintenance" (as in 'upkeep of premises' rather than 'sustaining an existing congregation').

⁹⁸ Gary Hamel, "Leadership From the Inside Out—Part I," blog, WSJ.com: Gary Hamel's Management 2.0, May 27, 2010, http://blogs.wsj.com/management/2010/05/27/leadership-from-the-inside-out-part-i.

the whole of what it means to be ordained nor must we allow them uncritically to shape our understanding of Christian ministry."99

We can see one way in which uncritical adoption of secular models has influenced Christian understandings of ministry in David Brown's 2008 pamphlet, written for the FCL. Here Brown sets in dialogue Christian leadership and leadership within the armed forces. Through the former prism, he asserts that leadership is implicit in Christian revelation, and collates a series of thoroughly biblical and pastoral images which, he says, should be associated with church leadership:

... confidence of the led; ability to enlist willing co-operation; sympathy to the needs of the led; loyalty; consistency/trustworthiness; clarity of thought and communication; ability to listen; willingness to change one's mind; cheerfulness and enthusiasm; largeness of heart; willingness to take responsibility for mistakes; absence of self-seeking, jealousy and resentment; good personal knowledge of the led and concern for their welfare; self control and consistency; tact and consideration; being transparently straightforward; moral courage; professional knowledge and competence; humour; sense of justice; determination; approachability; team-player...¹⁰⁰

This is, it should be noted, as with Croft's "qualities" and "character" an overwhelmingly trait-based taxonomy of leadership. How are these traits to be acquired? Brown does not specify. At the same time, these leadership traits are not to be expressed in isolation; they are expressed in company:

Leadership, in seeking to draw a community into creative harmony and purpose, is intrinsically pro-teamworking and therefore to an extent counter-individualist, and will routinely face indifference within the Anglican setting.¹⁰²

But, Brown goes on to say, it is not just indifference to the idea of leadership within the Church of England. Often the structures of the Church themselves, both inherited and newly devised, actively militate against the expression of a true form of leadership, which he calls "unrobed friendship". This idea derives from his experience of working under the leadership of an admiral of the Royal Navy:

⁹⁹ Croft, Ministry in Three Dimensions, 27,28.

¹⁰⁰ David Brown, *Making Room for Church Leadership* (York: Foundation for Church Leadership, 2008), 7,

<www.churchleadershipfoundation.org/website_documents/david_brown_making_room.pdf>.

¹⁰¹ See note 78 above.

¹⁰² Brown, Making Room, 5.

¹⁰³ Brown, Making Room, 4.

Aside from his essential professionalism the admiral's particular hallmarks were friendliness and humility. It was as though he regarded 'rank' as an encumbrance. Except on the more formal occasion, he removed it like a robe and related to people as an ordinary human being. We all felt valued and respected regardless of rank or role, and were drawn into his circle of friendship.¹⁰⁴

This "unrobed friendship" is almost impossible to find, according to Brown, in today's Church. It requires relationship, which cannot be "stimulated", or simulated "from an 'office' or a committee". Unrobed friendship has to be encouraged by a person, and, in the Church, that person is the Bishop. But the Church's increasingly bureaucratic systems "have tended increasingly to relieve bishops of significant components of their engagement with clergy". ¹⁰⁵ In short, *Managerial-Leadership* wins out over *Missionary-Leadership*.

David Gortner's article in the Winter 2009 edition of the *Anglican Theological Review* attempted to delineate the connections between *Ma-L* and *Mi-L*, and what those connections might mean for the value we might place on leadership models whose origins are in the secular world.

Gortner proceeds on the basis of four premises. First, leadership is not an "abstracted ideal" or an "ultimate aim". ¹⁰⁶ Rather it is an expression of skills and competencies that can be developed. It is "in no small part learned." ¹⁰⁷ Second, just as those who work in other "human enterprises" believe effective leadership is a good, and something to be worked at, then those who work in the church should seek to emulate them (a "don't get left behind" attitude). Third, although leadership is expressed in the context of relationship (it is a "relational reality"), it is most effective (left undefined) when it operates, not in manipulation or placation ("control or warmth"), but with a primary focus on "continuous development". ¹⁰⁸ Lastly, expressing leadership through "continuous development" allows an analogy to be drawn out with some aspects of the spiritual life, what Gortner calls the "habitus of mindfulness", and others have called "spiritual proficiency". ¹⁰⁹ Immediately we can see Gortner's

¹⁰⁴ Brown, Making Room, 3.

¹⁰⁵ Brown, *Making Room*, 5. For Brown, "active involvement" with clergy includes, among other things, spiritual and professional nurture, training, pastoral care, encouragement and ministerial development, counselling, *and* discipline.

¹⁰⁶ Gortner, "Looking at Leadership," 121.

¹⁰⁷ Gortner, "Looking at Leadership," 121,120.

¹⁰⁸ Gortner, "Looking at Leadership," 121. Which implies that it might have a secondary focus on manipulation or placation?

¹⁰⁹ See, for example, Martin Thornton, *Christian Proficiency* (London: S.P.C.K., 1959). Gortner's use of "habitus" is almost certainly alluding to Aquinas. Aquinas meant by "habitus" a disposition that is not easily lost, as it is the result of constant practice and attention. See St

secularly influenced assumptions: leadership as a skill-set to be developed, and selected depending on context, is the behavioural models of Tannenbaum and Schmidt and Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson. Leadership as expressive of continuous development is leadership as part of the human potential movement of James MacGregor Burns, and his transformational theory. Leadership as the thing you need to do because everyone else is doing it is the motivation for the existence and profitability of the consultancy companies, such as Mouton and Blake's "Leadership Grid".

The *habitus* metaphor is at the core of Gortner's analysis: it is a constant disposition to reframe the situation faced by the leader and his/her community: "altering frameworks and helping others reframe their perspectives". 110 This matches Croft's fourth group of qualities: "scanning; dialogue; interpretation; prophecy", 111 in which the effective leader should be aware, "through continuous engagement and scanning", 112 of the changing environment in which the Church finds itself. Gortner relates this act of wilful interpretation of the context in which the leader serves to the so-called Pygmalion Effect first described by Rosenthal and Jacobson.¹¹³ In an experiment it was found that not only did teachers treat pupils in differing ways depending on (fictional) preexisting test scores, but also that the subsequent attainment of the pupils began to reflect the pre-existing test scores, as a result of the verbal and non-verbal interaction with their teachers' manipulated expectations of the pupils. As Gortner puts it, what you see is *not* what you get; rather "you get what you choose to look for, find, and focus on."114 To combat the Pygmalion Effect, church leaders should endeavour to develop: a disposition of framing and reframing; a willingness to step out of the day-to-day context of ministry to see a higher, wider, or just plain different, view; 115 and an awareness of the dangers of "single loop learning" (in which, if a particular action is not having the desired effect the action is changed, rather than stepping back and asking if the desired effect is truly the outcome that is desired or needed). 116

Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae: Dispositions for Human Acts (1a2ae. 49-54)*, trans. Anthony Kenny, vol. 22, 61 vols. (London: Blackfriars; Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1964), especially Q. 49.

¹¹⁰ Gortner, "Looking at Leadership," 121.

¹¹¹ Croft, "Leadership and the Emerging Church," 37.

¹¹² Croft, "Leadership and the Emerging Church," 36.

¹¹³ Robert Rosenthal and Lenore Jacobson, *Pygmalion in the Classroom: Teacher Expectation and Pupils' Intellectual Development* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968).

¹¹⁴ Gortner, "Looking at Leadership," 123.

¹¹⁵ Gortner approves of Heifetz's metaphor of leaving the dancefloor to watch from the balcony: Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994), 252–3; Gortner, "Looking at Leadership," 127.

¹¹⁶ Single-loop learning happens when "participants in organizations are encouraged to learn to perform as long as the learning does not question the fundamental design, goals, and activities of their organizations." Double-loop learning happens when "a participant would be able to ask

Gortner's advocacy of Argyris and Heifetz, combined with his warning excursus against the temptations of "visionary" literature, shows an admirable realism in adapting secular/business models of leadership to the context of church communities. Argyris gives a real insight into the dangers of seeking the "quick fix", and strategies for avoiding such ultimately damaging choices. Heifetz is the man who defined leadership as "disappointing people at a rate they can absorb." 118

Another contribution to the "realist" school of leadership is Stephen Cottrell's Hit the Ground Kneeling (2008), in which he intended to "see leadership differently".119 He achieved this by taking eight truisms and inverting them: he calls this "upside down wisdom". 120 Thus the leader is advised to reinvent the wheel, shed the thick skin, let the grass grow underfoot, spoil the broth, and so on.¹²¹ His guiding Scriptural precept is what he calls "the parable of the trees" [Judg 9:8–15] in which the olive, the fig, the vine and eventually the bramble are invited to become king of all the trees. Cottrell doesn't unpack the relevance of the parable to his model, but rather, at the end of the book, returns his reader to contemplating the meaning of the parable for the reader's own context and vocation to lead. Although Cottrell makes much of the difference between his idea of leadership and those of other secular and ecclesiastical writers, it is clear where his model can be placed. Leadership is not the gift and expression of the individual leader: whether you are responsible "for laying on a meal for twenty unexpected family guests... [or]... a Girl Guide leader, play-group supervisor or community police office... [or]... CEO of GlaxoSmithKline", your task as leader is the same—"to enable others to do their very best and to achieve their fullest potential".122 Cottrell's model has a large debt to James MacGregor Burns's "transformational" leadership. 123

questions about changing fundamental aspects of the organization." Chris Argyris, "Single-Loop and Double-Loop Models in Research on Decision Making," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 21, no. 3 (September 1976): 367.

¹¹⁷ Chris Argyris, *Overcoming Organizational Defenses; Facilitating Organizational Learning* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1990), chap. 6.

¹¹⁸ Ronald A. Heifetz and Martin Linsky, *Leadership on the Line: staying alive through the dangers of leading* (Boston, Mass.: Harvard Business School Press, 2002), 142.

¹¹⁹ Stephen Cottrell, *Hit the Ground Kneeling: seeing leadership differently* (London: Church House Publishing, 2008). Cottrell was Bishop of Reading, and subsequently, in 2009, was appointed diocesan Bishop of Chelmsford. Although the book contained a caveat that the opinions expressed were the author's own, and "do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the General Synod" (iv), it was published by Church House Publishing, the official publishing arm of the Church of England.

¹²⁰ Cottrell, Hit the Ground Kneeling, 71.

¹²¹ The themes of chapters 7, 8, 3 and 5 respectively.

¹²² Cottrell, Hit the Ground Kneeling, 15.

¹²³ See "Transformational Theories" in "Is Leadership a Problem?", on page 35 above.

In the end, though, Cottrell's book is less about leadership and more about the need for leaders to build-in "down time", moments of stillness and contemplation, into the busyness of their lives: "The wise leader will... make wise choices about how time is managed, giving first priority to that space for refreshment and discernment where decisions about the right use of the *rest* of the time can be profitably made." 124

Cottrell finishes his book with a characteristically contrarian stricture. The best form of leadership, especially for someone who exercises an activist model of leadership, is to sleep more: that limits the "opportunity to do further damage". Leadership is, occasionally, a refusal to do anything: no leadership can be good leadership.

There are other sources we could examine, but space precludes any more detailed study of, for example, Malcolm Grundy's two books *What's New in Church Leadership?* and *What They Don't Teach You at Theological College*; from a non-conformist background James Lawrence's *Growing Leaders*; from North America Bill Hybels's *Ax-I-Om*, and Neil Cole's *Organic Leadership*. 126

So far we have examined the role of semi-official and unofficial church publications on Leadership. But, as we have seen, the Church as a body has not remained aloof from exploring the implications of leadership studies for the Church's ministry and polity. What then, can we say about official Church publications?

Official Church Publications

There are more than 600 references to "leadership" on the Church of England website.¹²⁷ Most of these references are to one or other of the various papers, reports, forms, notes or other official publications, produced by a bewildering variety of departments, divisions and three-letter-acronyms. I propose to restrict this brief survey to three sources of "official" Church material on leadership, two from the Church of England and one from the Episcopal Church of the United States (TEC). The Church of England's material comes from, firstly, the report produced in 2003 by the Bishop of Chichester on

¹²⁴ Cottrell, *Hit the Ground Kneeling*, 17. Emphasis in the original.

¹²⁵ Cottrell, Hit the Ground Kneeling, 81.

¹²⁶ Malcolm Grundy, What They Don't Teach You at Theological College: a practical guide to life in the ministry (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2003); Grundy, What's New in Church Leadership?; Bill Hybels, Ax-I-Om (ak-See-Uhm): Powerful Leadership Proverbs (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2008); James Lawrence, Growing Leaders: reflections on leadership, life and Jesus (Oxford: Bible Reading Fellowship, 2004); Neil Cole, Organic Leadership: leading naturally right where you are (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2009).

¹²⁷ Search, using the built-in search engine on <www.cofe.anglican.org> (accessed 19 February 2010).

the future of theological education and training within the Church of England, and secondly, the various papers produced by the Ministry Division of the Archbishops' Council. This is the secretariat responsible "for advising the House of Bishops, individual bishops and members of diocesan staff about matters relating to: vocations, recruitment & selection; theological education & training; deployment, remuneration and conditions of service": it functions both as the human resources and research department of the Church of England in its role as an employer. 128

In 2003 the report "Formation for Ministry within a Learning Church: The Structure and Funding of Ordination Training (more frequently referred to as *The Hind Report*, after its author) was presented to the General Synod of the Church of England.¹²⁹ It sought to provide direction on the financial resources required by the Church's theological training, but also to explore what such training attempted to provide: in other words, it was the product of two (contradictory?) imperatives, financial and theological. The (modest) aim of the report was to "to provide high-quality training for the clergy that will equip them to offer vibrant and collaborative spiritual leadership, to empower a vocationally motivated laity and, thereby, to promote and serve God's mission in the world."¹³⁰ The working-out of this high-quality training is clear: it will provide candidates for ordained ministry with formation (properly, *trans*formation), so that they may fulfil the public roles of:

- prayer, within the Church's life of worship;
- acting as a spokesperson on behalf of and to the Church;
- continued theological and ministerial learning, not least to support a ministry of teaching, preaching and interpretation;
- leadership of the Christian community in its calling and in its service to the wider life of the community.¹³¹

So we can already see the importance that "leadership" will have to play in this revision of ordained ministry training, education and formation. The ordained minister will provide leadership "of" the Christian community (not "for" or "within", notice), and this leadership will have the adjectival qualities of being "vibrant" and "collaborative". Furthermore, training "leadership", along with "communication", will be prioritized as a "practical skill" while at

¹²⁸ Ministry Division of the Archbishops' Council, "The Work of the Ministry Division," *The Church of England*, [n.d.], <www.cofe.anglican.org/lifeevents/ministry/workofmindiv/>.

¹²⁹ Ministry Division of the Archbishops' Council, *Formation for Ministry within a Learning Church: the structure and funding of ordination training (The "Hind Report")*, Working Group Report, GS 1496 (London: Ministry Division, 2003).

¹³⁰ The "Hind Report," para. 9.4.

¹³¹ The "Hind Report," para. 4.6. Interestingly, Hind describes these different functions with the singular noun "public role".

¹³² The "Hind Report," para. 4.16.

the same time, "leadership" must be a requisite "gift" of the ordained ministers, along with skills in "pastoral care, worship and mission". Leadership" seems to be both important, central to the delivery of *Hind's* intentions, and conceptually confused. In one place it functions as a practical skill that can be transmitted by training. In another place it is a pre-existing gift of the trainee (a 'trait'?) which is utilized by the Church. At one moment, it is expressed within a social context ("collaborative ministry"); at another, it is placed in a separate position to its community, delineated from the community (leadership "of" a community). What does this mean?

We are not told. Nowhere in the *Hind Report* is "leadership" defined. We are not informed whether the authors of the report believe leadership to be a trait, a contingent relationship, an interaction of influence or transaction, a rhetorical or theological construct, all of these or none of these. We are just given to understand that leadership is a given, a necessity, a social and theological good. So much so, *Hind* produced a structured table for an educational curriculum, in which "credits" are apportioned, and, in which, under the heading "Doing—developing skills in and for ministry" and at "Level 3", ministers must be able to demonstrate their competence in "collaborative leadership in supervised and unsupervised and varied contexts". On fulfilling this requirement, candidates will receive "30 credits minimum".

The *Hind Report* was presented to the July 2003 meeting of the General Synod. The synod welcomed the analysis and proposals set out in the report, and, by their vote, set in motion the implementation of *Hind* within the Church of England. Responsibility passed to the Ministry Division. In January 2006 "MinDiv" produced *Learning Outcome Statements for Ordained Ministry*, a document which systematized *Hind's* draft table of competencies. This, theoretically, made it clear what the Church's ministers should know, have learnt, and be able to demonstrate, as a result of their vocation and training. The competencies are divided into eight horizontal "bands": Vocation ("Ministry within the Church of England"); Spirituality; Personality and Character; Relationships; Leadership and Collaboration; Mission and Evangelism; Faith; and Quality of Mind. Each of these horizontal qualities is to be judged at four, "vertical" stages: at selection; at the point of ordination; at completion of IME

¹³³ The "Hind Report," 57, from "A Statement of Expectations for Ministerial Education."

¹³⁴ The "Hind Report," 59.

¹³⁵ General Synod of the Church of England, "July 2003 Group of Sessions," *Report of Proceedings* 34, no. 2 (July 2003): 320.

Ministry Division of the Archbishops' Council, Learning Outcome Statements for Ordained
 Ministry within the Church of England (London: Ministry Division, January 2006),
 <www.cofe.anglican.org/lifeevents/ministry/workofmindiv/tetc/safwp/outcomestatements.doc>

(initial ministerial education); and prior to licensing to "a post of incumbent status or equivalent responsibility". "Leadership" is mentioned eighteen times. The densest cluster is, to be expected, in the Leadership and Collaboration band. Here the candidates:

... should show ability to offer leadership in the Church community and to some extent in the wider community. This ability includes the capacity to offer an example of faith and discipleships [sic], to collaborate effectively with others, as well as to guide and shape the life of the church community in its mission to the world.¹³⁷

Reasonably, the candidates are expected to demonstrate this leadership to a greater degree at the end of IME, prior to appointment as incumbent or equivalent position, than at selection. Thus: candidates should "[s]how an integration and integrity of authority and obedience, leadership and service that empowers and enables others in their leadership and service." 138 This implies that such leadership has been passed to the candidate through the process of selection, training and post-ordination training. If it were an inherent trait, then candidates would surely be expected to "demonstrate" possession of that trait prior to selection. In the view of MinDiv, the ability to demonstrate leadership is a gift of the training and formation provided by the Church. But leadership is, again, undefined. Leadership, in and without the church community, is described in no more detail than providing "an example" (indefinite, not definite article, note) of "faith and discipleships". This is leadership as exemplar, as model, although it is also to be expressed through "guiding" and "shaping" a church community in its relationship with the world as a mission field. Does this latter clause function as an exclusive definition? That is, is leadership within a church community only to be expressed in orienting that church community outwards? It is not made clear.

Using Shlomo Sand's source-critical method,¹³⁹ it appears that the definitional source of this particular "leadership" avatar in the (semi-)official teaching of the Church of England is the work of Robert Warren.¹⁴⁰ In the 1995

¹³⁷ Ministry Division of the Archbishops' Council, *Learning Outcome Statements*, 3. This is a direct quotation of the earlier ABM paper, 3A (see note 8 above) with the exception of the unexplained pluralizing of "discipleships".

¹³⁸ Ministry Division of the Archbishops' Council, *Learning Outcome Statements*, 3.

¹³⁹ See the reference at note 17 Error! Bookmark not defined..

¹⁴⁰ For example, Warren is reproduced as an offprint on the section of national Church's website devoted to adult education: "Shared Ministry," *The Church of England*, [n.d.], <www.cofe.anglican.org/info/education/lifelong/sharedresources>. Although "leadership" was used before Warren (as in *ABM Policy Paper 3A*.) it was only finally *defined*, as much as it is defined at all, with Warren. All subsequent uses of "leadership" lead back, in an almost apostolic succession, to him. At the time Warren was the National Officer for Evangelism, and previously had been "Team Rector of one of the largest and fastest growing churches in

report, *A Time for Sharing*, Robert Warren, wrote a short section on the character of "leadership" within a pattern of collaborative ministry:

If new structures for the mission of the church are to emerge there will need to be a matching change in the church's understanding and practice of leadership within the ordained ministry.¹⁴¹

The problem with existing patterns of ministry (and existing models of leadership) within the Church is that they have been predicated upon the "gifts of the incumbent", rather than the "rich mosaic of gifts...of the whole of the laity". The Church (as a national and a local body) will have to move away from this, but, in order for this to happen "the ordained minister will need to affirm, train and support such gifts..." Straightaway we see the methodological and conceptual paradox at the heart of this collaborative leadership. We want collaborative leadership because we should not rely on the gifts of one person; in order to achieve collaborative leadership we will have to rely on the gifts of one person.

Warren presents us with a series of five alternatives: a leader in this new pattern will be a "conductor rather than a director"; "facilitator" rather than "provider"; "permission-giver" rather than a "permission-witholder"; a steersman rather than a "rower"; and a "person" rather than a "parson". 144 This last is no more than a piece of rhetorical alliteration, because by "person" Warren means that the leader should be comfortable in his/her humanity, and through that function as "an icon, or representative, of Christ". 145 Leaders achieve this by owning and articulating "their own sense of meaning", whilst seeking a "discovery of wholeness" and living with an intention to "escape from addictions". 146 Warren doesn't explain how this is a function of being a "person": does he mean that seeking to be a "parson" is somehow to capitulate to addiction and brokenness, while refusing to seek meaning?

Interestingly, and supportive of Pattison's thesis, Warren articulates his five alternatives (theses?) with a deliberately credal structure. Each, with the exception of the first, begins with "I believe..." And, as Rowan Williams has articulated, to say 'I believe' in religious discourse means something more than acknowledging the existence, objective or otherwise, of a pattern of otherwise

England, St Thomas', Crookes in Sheffield." "Meet the Authors," *Emmaus: the way of faith*, 2008, <www.e-mmaus.org.uk/emm_section.asp?id=2380759>.

¹⁴¹ Robert Warren, "Styles of Leadership," in *A Time for Sharing: collaborative ministry in mission*, by Board of Mission of the General Synod of the Church of England, General Synod Misc. GS 465 (London: Church House Publishing for the Board of Mission, 1995), 25.

¹⁴² Warren, "Styles of Leadership," 25.

¹⁴³ Warren, "Styles of Leadership," 25.

¹⁴⁴ Warren, "Styles of Leadership," 25–26.

¹⁴⁵ Warren, "Styles of Leadership," 26.

¹⁴⁶ Warren, "Styles of Leadership," 26.

insignificant facts (like 'I believe in the Loch Ness Monster'): it actually marks the beginning of a "series of statements about where I find the anchorage of my life, where I find solid ground, home." To turn leadership into a credal statement is to say that this is the "anchorage" of your life.

The final thing to say about Warren's definition is to note the significance of the title of piece: "Styles of leadership" places it definitively within the "human-resources" genus developed by Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson. As we have seen this is only one such genus among a vast array of models of leadership. It is not the only, let alone the definitive, model of leadership.

Warren's paper is less than 500 words long. It might seem disproportionate to spend much time on such a slim piece of work, but it has had a profound influence on the understanding of "leadership" within the established Church. Despite its brevity, it has therefore been necessary to take seriously its conceptual assumptions and weaknesses.

Not surprisingly, the Episcopal Church of the United States (TEC) is not immune from the search for, and explanation of, leadership. In 2003 the Episcopal Church Foundation, a lay-led educative and capacity-building organization within TEC, 149 published a report building on their "Zacchaeus" and "Emmaus" projects. *The Search for Coherence* attempted, through interviews in TEC, to quantify and qualify the attitudes towards and practice of leadership within the Church: the authors wanted to discover "is there a uniquely Episcopal/Anglican approach to effective religious leadership?",150 or, more simply, "what is religious about religious leadership?"151 The answers were many and varied, which in itself is both answer and part of a further problem:

"It has something to do with reconciliation."

"Part of leadership is putting people in touch with their holy life."

"It also includes the telling of stories."

"A good leader has an authentic self; this implies the person has wrestled with transcendence."

"Theological skills are essential."

"A kind of longing and tension in seeking a coherence." 152

¹⁴⁷ Rowan Williams, *Tokens of Trust: an introduction to Christian belief* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2007), 6.

¹⁴⁸ See page Error! Bookmark not defined..

¹⁴⁹ Episcopal Church Foundation, "About us," *Episcopal Church Foundation*, 2010, <www.episcopalfoundation.org/about-us>.

¹⁵⁰ L. Ann Hallisey et al., *The Search for Coherence: soundings on the state of leadership among Episcopalians* (New York, N.Y.: Episcopal Church Foundation, Autumn 2003), 3, https://www.episcopalfoundation.org/resource/Resource%20Library/Search%20for%20Coherence/SearchforCoherence.pdf.

¹⁵¹ The title of a section heading, Hallisey et al., Search for Coherence, 3.

¹⁵² Sample responses, quoted in Hallisey et al., Search for Coherence, 4.

A contemporaneous study of TEC had identified four types of religious leader: reformers, activists, guardians, and spiritual guides.¹⁵³ For the authors of Search of Coherence it is clear that the last is the significant one at the beginning of the twenty-first century. TEC has not been immune from the weakening of ties of denominational loyalty that have affected all mainstream denominations in the United States¹⁵⁴ (indeed, it has been argued that TEC has experienced such weakening more than any other denomination¹⁵⁵). As a result of this weakening of ties, Episcopalians, those who remain committed to the organization and those who are 'lapsed', are best described as "spiritual seekers... engaged in their faith life as a spiritual quest." 156 Search for Coherence postulates that reasons for this may lie in the multi-culturalism of American society, the "communications revolution" of the Internet-enabled world, the "relevance problem" of mainstream Christianity, and, in an unacknowledged circularity "a growth in the number and kinds of spiritual seekers". 157 (I will argue, in a later chapter, that a greater, previously unidentified contributory factor is the prevalence of Emersonian mythic thinking in American society.) What this means for a religious leader is that he/she must expect to act as a "spiritual guide who draws individual journeys together into life-giving patterns of shared discovery and social responsibility." 158 In this respect, and perhaps unexpectedly, Search for Coherence is congruent with Pope Benedict XVI, who told an audience of the priests in Warsaw Diocese in 2006 that:

The faithful expect only one thing from priests: that they be specialists in promoting the encounter between man and God. The priest is not asked to

¹⁵³ William L. Sachs and Thomas P. Holland, *Restoring the Ties that Bind: the grassroots transformation of the Episcopal Church* (New York: Church Publishing, 2003), 160.

¹⁵⁴ R. Stephen Warner, "Work in Progress Toward a New Paradigm for the Sociological Study of Religion in the United States," *The American Journal of Sociology* 98, no. 5 (March 1993): 1044–1093; C. Kirk Hadaway, Penny Long Marler, and Mark Chaves, "What the Polls Don't Show: a closer look at U.S. church attendance," *American Sociological Review* 58, no. 6 (December 1993): 741–752; Andrew M. Greeley, *Religious Change in America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996); Richard Cimino and Don Lattin, *Shopping for Faith: American religion in the new millennium* (San Francisco, Calif.: Jossey-Bass, 1998).

¹⁵⁵ An 11 percent decline in active baptised members over ten years to 2008, a 16 percent decline in "Average Sunday Worship Attendance" over the same period: see Research & Statistics Department, "Episcopal Domestic Fast Facts 2008" (The Episcopal Church, 2009), <www.episcopalchurch.org/documents/Domestic_FAST_FACTS_2008.pdf>. See also Roger Finke and Rodney. Stark, *The Churching of America, 1776-2005: winners and losers in our religious economy, 2nd ed.* (Piscataway, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2005), chap. 7.

¹⁵⁶ Hallisey et al., Search for Coherence, 5.

¹⁵⁷ Hallisey et al., Search for Coherence, 5.

¹⁵⁸ Sachs and Holland, Restoring the Ties, 171. Quoted in Hallisey et al., Search for Coherence, 5.

be an expert in economics, construction or politics. He is expected to be an expert in the spiritual life. 159

One interesting aspect about Search for Coherence is that it attempts to describe the differences which gender might make to the understanding and exercise of leadership. The authors asked "is women's approach to leadership different from their male colleagues?"160 They recognize two contradictory starting points for this question. Following the work of Constance H. Buchanan, where it is asserted women "possess distinctive ways of reasoning morally, of knowing, of managing and leading, of thinking, and even of speaking"161, it could be argued that the contribution of women will transform the general, generic, gendered understanding of leadership in the church. Alternatively, to speak of "women's leadership", or to constantly define distinctive leadership offices in the church by a qualifying adjective (a "woman bishop" as opposed to a "bishop") has the danger of creating "artificial distinctions". 162 While recognizing that some (male) bishops pride themselves on "spiritual" leadership practices that are "relational, collaborative and... listening", 163 the report concludes that such praxis is overwhelmingly the province of women. The report agrees with the words of one Bishop (who happens to be female) that women have been required to use their "countervailing strengths", namely "skills in sustaining relationships, nurturing groups, and building networks." 164 The evidence for the report's favouring of women's relational leadership, from Darling and two other books, 165 appears to be based on nothing more than interviews with protagonists. This is not empirical evidence: the plural of 'anecdote' is not 'data'. Rather, it appears to be evidence of the authors of the report finding things they wanted to find: the Pygmalion Effect in operation again.

The report concludes that "[a]larmingly, there seems to be no theology of leadership among Episcopalians, as evidenced by the popularity of secular organizational literature that makes broadly spiritual references. Despite the

¹⁵⁹ Benedict XVI, "Priests Should Be Experts in Spiritual Life," *Zenit.org*, May 25, 2006, ZE06052509 edition, <www.zenit.org/article-16119?l=english>.

¹⁶⁰ Hallisey et al., Search for Coherence, 33.

¹⁶¹ Constance H. Buchanan, *Choosing to Lead: women and the crisis of American values* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 115–6. Quoted in Hallisey et al., *Search for Coherence*, 33.

¹⁶² Hallisey et al., Search for Coherence, 33.

¹⁶³ Hallisey et al., Search for Coherence, 33.

¹⁶⁴ Pamela W. Darling, *New Wine: the story of women transforming leadership and power in the Episcopal Church* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cowley Publications, 1994), 3. Quoted in Hallisey et al., *Search for Coherence*, 35.

¹⁶⁵ Namely, Sally Helgesen, *The Female Advantage: women's ways of leadership*, New ed. (New York: Doubleday Currency, 1995); Carol E. Becker, *Leading Women: how church women can avoid leadership traps and negotiate the gender maze* (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1996).

creative energy generated by references to spirituality, the implications of this interest for the church's identity lack clarity." ¹⁶⁶ The alarm doesn't come from the absence of leadership, but the incoherence of the theoretical underpinnings (which, in an ecclesial community, ought to be *theological* underpinnings) of the leadership that is described, modelled and actually practised within the church. This has a direct, practical consequence: it affects the method and the ability of the Church to make decisions and to carry them. Whereas most Episcopalians say they prefer to be part of an ecclesial community which makes decisions by "collective discernment", this does not assist clarity in the church's mission, or the church leaders' ability to carry it out. Rather, in the absence of a "consensus on how to lead" there is "creative incoherence". ¹⁶⁷ A vague spiritual allegiance to leadership is not enough to be effective in the world in which the church operates.

Even so, there is no room in this analysis for *Ma-L*, but neither is there much room for *Mi-L*. Rather, the normative leadership which is valued is *Spiritual-Leadership*. And the reason for this, as we shall see later, is that TEC is firmly placed within the *mythos* of the United States which values, above every other form, *Mythological-Leadership*.

Church Leadership in popular understanding

In February 2005, the Primates of the Anglican Communion met at Dromantine in Northern Ireland to discuss the issues facing the Communion: principally the ordination of homosexual clergy, the blessing of same-sex partnerships and the accompanying extra-diocesan interventions by bishops opposed to the first two. It may seem curious but these discussions of ecclesial polity drew a response in the secular press. Will Hutton in The Observer lamented the loss of the role of the Church of England in the nation's life: "As a national church, its job is to include and tolerate us all; it is everyone's friend in need. Except now it is losing its way...suffering a crisis of confidence so severe that it has lost touch with its mission." ¹⁶⁸ Part of the reason for this problem is the Archbishop of Canterbury: "he finds himself as the prelate overseeing the gradual division of the Anglican communion, desperately playing for time in the hope that something will come up. ...the auguries are that Williams's temporising will bring no relief." 169 The temporising is part of the "leadership" which Williams chooses to exercise, part of the "the contemporary defensiveness of liberalism in all its guises": instead Williams should "offer

¹⁶⁶ Hallisey et al., Search for Coherence, 40.

¹⁶⁷ Hallisey et al., Search for Coherence, 41. This latter phrase is bolded in the original.

¹⁶⁸ Will Hutton, "A schism that threatens us all," The Observer (London, February 27, 2005), 28.

¹⁶⁹ Hutton, "Schism," 28.

more committed leadership... Liberal leadership in almost every sphere is insecure and un-surefooted." ¹⁷⁰ And for Hutton, simply and clearly, secure and surefooted leadership is based on "conviction in the notions of progress and advance." ¹⁷¹

The "agonising" noted by Hutton is apparent in an interview the Archbishop gave a year later to Alan Rushbridger, editor of *The Guardian*, with the painful title "I am comic vicar to the nation". Rushbridger begins by asking the Archbishop why he is so "averse" to the idea that he should offer moral leadership?

"Leadership is, to me, a very, very murky and complicated concept... I think the question I always find myself asking of myself is, 'Will a pronouncement here or a statement there actually move things on, or is it something that makes me feel better and other people feel better, but doesn't necessarily contribute very much?" 172

His critics in the media are sure that the problem is one of visibility: "Here was someone of tremendous intelligence, warmth, integrity and personal charisma and yet (that leadership issue again) for the most part he remains hidden from view." Leadership in this instance is presence, and presence centred on the actions of an individual. The Archbishop refuses to comply: "I'm just a bit cautious of this fascination in our culture with personality, making yourself an object in a particular way. ... I just feel that the centrality of highly individual drama—individual struggles, individual views—is not a comfortable place for a Christian to be, perhaps for anybody to be." Rusbridger calls this wanting to be a "broker", rather than a "leader", and questions whether it is "either possible or even desirable". 174

For Williams, the clamour for "moral leadership" from the public and media expects him to provide a public discourse on morals: he calls this clamour "a bit of a myth". The public discourse is expected to be in a single key or mood: "negative, condemnatory." He parodies the myth as "Why doesn't the archbishop condemn X, Y, Z?" This does not persuade Rushbridger:

The liberals [within and without the Church] might not quite have yearned for "moral leadership". But they did hope they had a church leader who would remain true to what they assumed him to believe—and many were dismayed by his apparent retreat in the face of ferocious fire

¹⁷⁰ Hutton, "Schism," 28.

¹⁷¹ Hutton, "Schism," 28.

¹⁷² Alan Rushbridger, "I am comic vicar to the nation," *The Guardian* (London, March 21, 2006), 6.

¹⁷³ Rushbridger, "Comic Vicar," 6.

¹⁷⁴ Rushbridger, "Comic Vicar," 6.

¹⁷⁵ Rushbridger, "Comic Vicar," 6.

from evangelicals and theological conservatives, most notably over the issue of gay priests. ...'The question you should ask him, but you can't,' said one frustrated observer, 'is, why should anyone care what his beliefs are if he's never going to stand up for them?' 176

This frustrated questioning is not limited to the British media. In February 2008, six months before the Lambeth Conference, the Christian Science Monitor wondered if the Archbishop of Canterbury was "too intellectual to lead?" The writer certainly seemed to think so, beginning his article with an aphorism attributed to a Bishop of Norwich: "If you want to lead someone in this part of the world, find out where they're going. And walk in front of them."177 Rowan Williams cannot be accused of that, making it a habit to go against the grain of public and ecclesiastical opinion, and expressing himself in ways which are "ponderous, studious, and given to rich, convoluted peroration." 178 It seems that Williams's rhetorical 'handicap' is enough to disbar him from acting as a religious leader. Rice-Oxley concludes his piece with words from a member of the General Synod of the Church of England, Col. Edward Armitstead: "Rowan Williams is a godly, gracious and clearly very able person in many ways, but I don't think he's got the gift of leadership that the church needs at this present time. ...[The problems faced by the Church mean] it really needs a clear Christian leadership."179 It is clear in the eyes of Rice-Oxley and his interviewee that Christian leadership is made up of something other than godly graciousness and great ability.

In an interview for *The Atlantic*, conducted just before but not published until after the Lambeth Conference of 2008, Williams explained the nature of the leadership he exercised in relation to the difficult questions, the contested concepts, as it were, facing the Anglican Communion: in this instance, as defined by the interviewer, "the place of gay people in the church". ¹⁸⁰ Pretending that the difficult question will go away does not make it do so: "[So] my question as archbishop of Canterbury is: How do we address this as a church, not just a group of local religious enthusiasts here and there? ...part of my job becomes to ask: If there is to be any change, how do you decide what change is appropriate?" Williams believes that his leadership consists in allowing a safe forum in which the contested concepts can actually be

¹⁷⁶ Rushbridger, "Comic Vicar," 6.

¹⁷⁷ Mark Rice-Oxley, "Anglican Archbishop: too intellectual to lead?," *Christian Science Monitor*, February 20, 2008. The aphorism is almost certainly apocryphal: see Jeremy Paxman, *The English: A Portrait of a People* (London: Michael Joseph, 1998), 138.

¹⁷⁸ Rice-Oxley, "Too Intellectual?".

¹⁷⁹ Rice-Oxley, "Too Intellectual?".

¹⁸⁰ Paul Elie, "The Velvet Reformation: can Rowan Williams save the Anglican Church from itself?," *The Atlantic*, March 2009, 80.

¹⁸¹ Elie, "Velvet Reformation," 79.

addressed, or in which the contested nature of the concepts can even be admitted. He recognizes that attempting to clear the space for the discussion to take place is not always appreciated: it "…leads to the characterization of being indecisive and all the other things that everybody always says." For Williams's interviewer this is not enough of a justification. As a man with "one of the strongest, subtlest voices in all Christianity", it is important for the Archbishop to "moderate the discussion". He is choosing a role not proper to a "leader", but "a stage manager": Williams "should also take part in the conversation; he should somehow declare himself for the course of action he favors…"¹⁸³

Leadership in this secular reaction to ecclesiastical problems is clear: it is a variation of Ledru-Rollin's precept, ¹⁸⁴ except the adept leader is expected to anticipate the direction in which his followers will drive him, rather than play catch-up. Furthermore, leadership should not be rhetorically constructed; it requires declarative action. However, if the leader wishes to lead the followers in a new, different or difficult direction, then he must be prepared for conflict and deprecation.

A Brief Comparison with another Religious Tradition

Such conflict is not limited to Christian ministry. Rabbi Natan Asmoucha was the Rabbi at Britain's oldest synagogue, Bevis Marks, in the city of London. In July 2009 he allowed an interfaith group to meet in the synagogue before marching to the headquarters of the Royal Bank of Scotland in protest against unjust interest rates. He was suspended from his post, disciplined, and eventually removed. The Board of Elders (the *mahamad*) gave a statement:

[Rabbi Asmoucha] gave all the demonstrators access to the inside of the synagogue, in order to be addressed by him, as well as its hall and court-yard, without any security checks first taking place... He then accompanied and assisted the demonstrators with their goal of delivering a political message to the chairman of the Royal Bank of Scotland, that had not been authorised by his employer.¹⁸⁵

One prominent rabbinical commentator deplored this exercise of the *mahamad's* authority: "This extreme case is representative of how rabbis are seen by the communities that hire them in the UK and in the Diaspora in general. They are expected to toe the line of their employers and not to do anything

¹⁸² Elie, "Velvet Reformation," 79.

¹⁸³ Elie, "Velvet Reformation," 80.

¹⁸⁴ See above, Error! Bookmark not defined..

¹⁸⁵ Alfred Magnus of the Board of Elders, quoted in Isabel de Bertodano, "Rabbi forced out after joining bank protest," *The Tablet*, October 24, 2009, 36.

dynamic without full consultation with the board of management." ¹⁸⁶ Asmoucha's mistake was to think "that he was a communal leader when in fact he is seen by the synagogue's management as little more than an employee that must follow their dictates." ¹⁸⁷

In an interesting inversion of Rost's taxonomy, Brackman diagnoses: "With shackles like these it is impossible for rabbis to actually lead. So indeed there is a crisis of leadership within our Diaspora Jewish communities ...Simply put: without real leaders there won't be any followers." 188

A Case Study: Rowan Williams and Shariah

In February 2008 the Archbishop of Canterbury was invited to give the foundation lecture for the Temple Festival, which marked the 400th anniversary of the Inns of Court (though the granting of Letters Patent by James I). ¹⁸⁹ The nature of the occasion was made clear by the lecture's title and format: "Civil and Religious Law in England: A Religious Perspective"; the chairman of the lecture was Lord Phillips, Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales; the event was presented by the Temple Church and the Centre of Islam and Middle Eastern Law at the School of Oriental and African Studies; the audience was an invited one of lawyers, academics and churchmen; it was delivered in the Royal Courts of Justice in London. ¹⁹⁰ This was an intellectual survey of a jurisprudential question.

Williams's lecture began with the empirical observation that within British society we have "the presence of communities which, while no less 'lawabiding' than the rest of the population, relate to something other than the British legal system alone." The important word in that sentence is "alone": within British society there exist a number of groups for whom an internal religious legal system operates in parallel with the "secular" British system of law. This might be felt to be a challenge to the stability and cohesion of a

¹⁸⁶ Levi Brackman, "Traditional synagogues will die off," *Ynetnews*, August 16, 2009, <www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3762706,00.html>.

¹⁸⁷ Levi Brackman, "Malice at Britain's Oldest Synagogue," Personal Blog, *Levi Brackman.com*, August 14, 2009, <www.levibrackman.com/politics/malice-at-britain-s-oldest-synagogue.html>. This is also an interesting, if assertive, inversion of the Ledru-Rollin / Bishop of Norwich precept (on page 83).

¹⁸⁸ Brackman, "Traditional synagogues will die off."

¹⁸⁹ Temple Foundation, "2008 Temple Festival - celebrating 400 years," *Temple 2008 Festival*, December 26, 2007, http://web.archive.org/web/20071226164310/www.temple2008.org/.

¹⁹⁰ Temple Foundation, "Festival Brochure," Temple 2008 Festival, January 23, 2008,

http://web.archive.org/web/20080123105409/temple2008.org/pgeBrochure1.htm>.

¹⁹¹ Rowan Williams, "Civil and Religious Law in England: a Religious Perspective" (Lecture presented at the Temple 2008 Festival, Royal Courts of Justice, London, February 7, 2008), <www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/1575>.

particularly hegemonic view of British society,¹⁹² but, even so, Williams asks, should the British legal system afford any privileged place to these parallel jurisdictions, and, if so, on what basis? Of course, the question is moot: the British legal system has already declared some actions of these parallel jurisdictions as licit: the law of the Church of England, to give one example, has the status of the law of the land, and "a delegation of certain legal functions to the religious courts of a community" also applies to "areas of Orthodox Jewish practice."¹⁹³

Williams then delineates two separate but related questions, practical and theoretical: *how* could this delegation work, and do we *want* a delegation to take place? These questions are governed, perhaps unconsciously, by "what we understand by and expect from the law".¹⁹⁴

Now the working out of Williams's argument, and the provisional conclusions he comes up with are not directly relevant to our discussion (although Williams does, faux-modestly, make a special plea for the part that theological reflection can play in avoiding the oppression of positivism, "legal universalism", of whatever kind, in jurisprudential debates¹⁹⁵). What is relevant is what Williams thought he was doing in asking these questions in a public forum, and attempting to describe, however conditionally, a possible approach to answering them. He believed that he was sketching the outline of a "universal principle of legal right", predicated upon "a certain valuation of the human as such" and "a conviction that the human subject is always endowed with some degree of freedom over against any and every actual system of human social life". Both these predicates are "historically rooted in Christian theology" (despite the subsequent disconnection from that Christian theology), and therefore it is appropriate for a representative of the tradition to remind the practitioners whence came their assumptions.

The public reception of the lecture was coloured by an interview Williams gave that same afternoon to Christopher Landau on BBC Radio 4's "The World at One". 197 In the interview Williams addressed the reality that people, in a multi-cultural and globalized world which experiences large population movements between nation states, have multiple and sometimes overlapping loyalties and affiliations. The law needs to recognise the multivalence of peoples' associations rather than make a simple demand: "There is one law for

¹⁹² The lecture does not use, with one exception, a vocabulary of 'cohesion'.

¹⁹³ Williams, "Civil and Religious Law ('Sharia' Lecture)."

¹⁹⁴ Williams, "Civil and Religious Law ('Sharia' Lecture)."

¹⁹⁵ Concluding paragraph, Williams, "Civil and Religious Law ('Sharia' Lecture)."

¹⁹⁶ Williams, "Civil and Religious Law ('Sharia' Lecture)."

¹⁹⁷ Christopher Landau, "Interview with the Archbishop of Canterbury," *World at One* (London: BBC Radio 4, February 7, 2008),

http://news.bbc.co.uk/player/nol/newsid_7230000/newsid_7233200/7233254.stm.

everybody and that is all there is to be said, and anything else that commands your loyalty or your allegiance is completely irrelevant in the processes of the courts." Williams thinks "that's a bit of a danger." ¹⁹⁸

Media reactions to both lecture and interview were less nuanced than the originals. At first they concentrated on the intelligibility, or otherwise, of Williams's text (in the lecture) and words (in the interview). On the (unofficial) aggregator website Thinking Anglicans, Riazat Butt, the religion correspondent of The Guardian wrote: "I've read the speech and re-read it. I don't understand a word of it and unfortunately for us hacks he doesn't replicate his BBC words in the bloody text. If anyone can tell me what he's saying I'll buy them a beer."199 This is a telling remark: it shows that Butt, along with most so-called 'mainstream media' commentators, was more interested in playing a "Archbishop-prefers-barbarism-to-Christian-British-values" story than dealing with the substance of his comments: for the 'MSM' this was a process story, impeded by the Archbishop's characteristic inability to express himself. The Daily Mail continued in this line of criticism in an editorial five days after the lecture. The Archbishop stirred up "a wholly unnecessary controversy" with "ill-chosen words" about sharia law: "Dr Williams, who is said to have a great intellect, has repeatedly insisted that his comments have been misunderstood. One question: is that great brain really such an asset, when he's apparently the only man intelligent enough to understand a word he says?"200 The intelligibility critique was swiftly discarded when it became apparent that the lecture was comprehensible, even by people with no training in western or Islamic jurisprudence, provided a little time was taken in reading carefully what Williams said. For example, Mike Higton, a lecturer in theology at the University of Exeter, produced a short series of blog posts in which Williams's ideas were readily explicated.²⁰¹

If, in reality, Williams could be understood then he had to be criticised on other grounds: the argument shifted to whether the Archbishop should have said what he said at all. Williams's words were illicit because by speaking, he was somehow neglecting his own people: "These are troubling times for British society and we need leaders with the strength and determination to safeguard the values that made Britain an advanced liberal democracy long before most

¹⁹⁸ Landau, "World at One interview."

¹⁹⁹ Simon Sarmiento, "Sharia law in UK is 'unavoidable'," *Thinking Anglicans*, February 7, 2008, <www.thinkinganglicans.org.uk/archives/002898.html>.

²⁰⁰ Editorial, "A Great Intellect?," The Daily Mail (London, February 12, 2008), 12.

²⁰¹ Mike Higton, "Rowan Williams and Sharia: A Guide for the Perplexed," Blog, *kai euthus*, February 11, 2008, http://goringe.net/theology/?p=120. See also my own "The Archbishop and those who will not hear," blog, 3 *Minute Theology*, February 8, 2008,

< http://3 minute the ologian.org. uk/blog/2008/02/08/the-archbishop-and-those-who-will-not-hear>.

other nations. We must hope that Dr Williams will devote himself in future to providing moral guidance to his own flock."²⁰² Alternatively, the Archbishop's remarks, in the interview and lecture, were evidence of incipient madness,²⁰³ being a closet medieval reactionary and simultaneously a "silly old booby",²⁰⁴ or being politically inept.²⁰⁵

Some commentators argued that Williams's words were, if not prescient and necessary, at least permissible. Andrew Gimson, in an article otherwise dripping with distancing irony, concluded: "Dr Williams speaks for a traditional English culture—learned, charitable, understated—which the Church of England exists to uphold". 206 Even the leader writer of the Daily Telegraph agreed that Williams's argument recognizes a situation "which already exists" and "the idea is not as outlandish as it may first appear." 207 Gillian Reynolds noted the beam which may have blocked the ears of the Archbishop's audience: "He probably didn't anticipate, in his interview... that once he said 'sharia'...few people thereafter would pay attention to what he was actually saying and instead start visualising blood and brutal executions."208 But the overwhelming urge was to abuse the interlocutor and his argument: "...we now live in an age where those who say unexpected or complicated things are immediately put in the merciless stocks of public opinion."209 Ben Myers, an Australian academic and blogger, described the process in limerick form:

An archbishop once gave an oration On religion and law in our nation; When we heard what he said

²⁰² Editorial, "Tend thine own flock," The Daily Mail (London, February 8, 2008), 14.

²⁰³ Ruth Gledhill, "Has the Archbishop gone bonkers?," Newspaper blog, *Times Online - WBLG*, February 7, 2008, http://timescolumns.typepad.com/gledhill/2008/02/has-the-archbis.html>.
²⁰⁴ Stanban Glever "A betty old booky but dengarous with it" The Daily Mail (London)

²⁰⁴ Stephen Glover, "A batty old booby, but dangerous with it," *The Daily Mail* (London, February 8, 2008), 9.

²⁰⁵ "Coming from the senior bishop in the Church of England, [the lecture] is vulnerable to interpretation as appeasement of Islamic extremism prompted by fear of social unrest. ...Add to this the growing recognition of the failures of multiculturalism, and you have on the part of the archbishop a classic example of political ineptitude." Leading article, "The archbishop's inept intervention," *The Daily Telegraph* (London, February 8, 2008), 27.

²⁰⁶ Andrew Gimson, "The executioners who failed to cast the first stone," *The Daily Telegraph* (London, February 12, 2008), 6.

²⁰⁷ Leading article, "The archbishop's inept intervention," 27.

²⁰⁸ Gillian Reynolds, "Time to call off the hounds of hysteria," *The Daily Telegraph* (London, February 12, 2008), 27.

²⁰⁹ Giles Fraser, "Sharia row," The Guardian (London, February 12, 2008), 28.

We all stoned him down dead, To protect our great civilisation.²¹⁰

Williams had made such a serious transgression of the accepted norms of religious–political–legal debate one writer even went so far as to use the rhetorical device of inverted irony:

[Williams]... is not in favour of women being stoned to death for adultery, as happens in a few Muslim countries where sharia law is applied in its most extreme form. I suppose we should be grateful for that.²¹¹

The Archbishop was obliged to deal with the issue in his Presidential Address to the General Synod of the Church of England which took place four days after the original lecture. Beginning with a quotation from Ronald Knox ("The prevailing attitude...was one of heavy disagreement with a number of things which the speaker had not said"), Williams stated that the purpose of his lecture was to ask the question whether "there may be ways of engaging with the world of Islamic law on something other than an all-or-nothing basis." He believed that he, as a representative of the established Church, was an appropriate person to ask this question because "we are often looked to for some coherent voice on behalf of all the faith communities living here." 213

The General Synod (mostly) accepted the sincerity of his motives and the efficacy of his actions. Paul Eddy, a lay member from Winchester diocese, dissented:

While I appreciate his huge intellect, what people want is clear leadership based on the Gospel and a clear defence of Christian rights and values in British culture.²¹⁴

The Guardian leader writer, while noting the support given by Synod, tellingly warned the Archbishop that he "should not be in any way complacent. It is not enough to be right. It is also important to be successful."²¹⁵ Success, for *The Guardian*, is defined by being a clear voice in other ethical and moral issues: "The really big challenge that Dr Williams faces this year is not about sharia. It

²¹⁰ Ben Myers, "Rowan Williams and sharia: time for some satire," blog, *Faith and Theology*, February 10, 2008, http://faith-theology.blogspot.com/2008/02/rowan-williams-and-sharia-time-for-some.html>.

²¹¹ Glover, "Batty old booby," 9.

²¹² Rowan Williams, "Presidential Address to the opening of General Synod" (presented at the General Synod, Church House, London, February 11, 2008),

<www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/1583>.

²¹³ Williams, "Presidential Address to the opening of General Synod."

²¹⁴ Jonathan Petre, "I was clumsy on sharia law, says the Archbishop," *The Daily Telegraph* (London, February 12, 2008), 1.

²¹⁵ Leading article, "Archbishop of Canterbury: wounded and wiser," *The Guardian* (London, February 12, 2008), 30.

is about whether he can give clear leadership on the issue of gay bishops and the place of homosexual and lesbian people within the church. His leadership has been found wanting on that issue until now. The faltering way in which he handled the sharia argument has not encouraged confidence that he will rise to the greater challenge this summer."²¹⁶ And leadership, presumably, is defined as leading the leader writers in the direction they wish to go. Amazingly, in this *The Guardian* and *The Daily Mail* concur:

... millions of decent people—in a Britain of morning-after pills, drug abuse, family breakdown and an all-pervading, nihilistic celebrity culture—yearn for the Established Church to provide some leadership.²¹⁷

A Preliminary Conclusion

We have seen in this chapter what happens when the Church of England (and, to a degree, TEC) attempts to operate and foster a model of leadership predicated on secular, business models. This model of leadership I have called Managerial-Leadership. At the same time, most Church leaders and certainly almost all Church literature, believes that the Church is called to exercise what I agree with Douglas Hurd is called Missionary-Leadership. What happens when Mi-L transforms into Ma-L? The most pessimistic judgement, extrapolated from two of the most pungent critics of Ma-L, Pattison and MacIntyre, is that the foundational model of leadership of the Christian Church, that of Jesus and his disciples²¹⁸, which was expressed in a radical powerlessness, becomes trampled and corrupted by the husbanding and extension of power. As Stephen Pattison, in concluding his study of Ma-L with an admonition to management's "religious admirers"²¹⁹, warns: "Ecclesiastical hierarchy and the rights of employing churches are powerfully reinforced by the introduction of management techniques and theories."220 Furthermore, there is precious little evidence of beneficial results for the workforce on the receiving end of such techniques and theories. Negatively, there is "evidence of demoralization, intimidation, the need to conform and a move to unionization on the part of parish clergy."221 In the end, the result is likely to be analogous to the effects of Ma-L in the public sector: "A few people will feel more powerful and freer, while many will not."222 Pattison is not quite as pessimistic as MacIntyre.

²¹⁶ Leading article, "Archbishop of Canterbury: wounded and wiser," 30.

²¹⁷ The opinion of the leader writer of *The Daily Mail*: Editorial, "A Great Intellect?," 12.

²¹⁸ I will examine more of the nature of the leadership–discipleship community of Jesus and his disciples in the subsequent chapters.

²¹⁹ Pattison, Faith of the Managers, 157.

²²⁰ Pattison, Faith of the Managers, 162.

²²¹ Pattison, Faith of the Managers, 162.

²²² Pattison, Faith of the Managers, 162–3.

Whereas the latter is clear that Ma-L is a "masquerade" with merely an "alleged quality of effectiveness" Pattison at least allows the possibility that "the Church will be more efficient, effective or economical... [although that] is unknown as yet. 224

We need now to examine the origins of the *Mi-L* model in the social and cultural context of Jesus and his disciples, and, briefly, sketch out how it has been expressed within the Christian tradition. Was Jesus, as has been so blithely asserted, really a "management expert", and is the Christian tradition the means of perpetuating this particular school of management?

²²³ MacIntyre, After Virtue, 72. See the discussion on page 57.

²²⁴ Pattison, Faith of the Managers, 163.

Chapter 3

Leading and Leaving the Dead

Jesus points his disciples to God and himself walks the way of God, yet it is not possible to substitute another teacher for him; a pupil may move from one philosopher to another and a disciple from one rabbi to another but Christians cannot go to another leader. The disciple of the rabbi, if all goes well, becomes a rabbi; the pupil of the philosopher may equally become a philosopher and have his own pupils; disciples of Christ, however, never become Christs or have their own disciples.

Ernest Best, Following Jesus (1981)¹

The Praxis of Leadership in the Jesus Movement

In order for us to determine the Christian tradition of leadership (or, perhaps, the tradition of Christian leadership) we need to begin with the primary datum of Christianity, namely, Jesus. From this datum, the so-called "Jesus-event"², we might be able to extrapolate a description of the leadership he exercised (if it is possible to determine such a thing). Furthermore, recognising that leadership is exercised in context, we will have to undertake a preliminary task to delineate the community, in which, or amongst whom, this leadership was exercised (again, if it is possible to determine such a community).

The exercise is complicated by its relationship to the so-called "quest for the historical Jesus". N. T. Wright has delineated at least four phases to the

¹ Ernest Best, *Following Jesus: discipleship in the Gospel of Mark*, Journal for the study of the New Testament 4 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1981), 248.

² See, among countless references: Michael Ramsey, "Christian Belief: An Unchanging Essence?," *Religious Studies* 11, no. 2 (June 1975): 193–200; Edward Schillebeeckx, *Jesus: an experiment in Christology* (London: Collins, 1979), 57.

³ Among the many histories of the quest, see: J. M. Robinson, *A New Quest of the Historical Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1959); N. T. Wright, "The Quest for the Historical Jesus," ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992); W. Barnes Tatum, *In Quest of Jesus*, Rev. and enl. ed. (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1999); Clinton Bennett, *In Search of Jesus: insider and outsider images* (London; New York: Continuum International, 2001). See also see Marcus J. Borg, "Portraits of Jesus in Contemporary North American Scholarship," *The Harvard Theological Review* 84, no. 1 (January 1991): 1–22; James H. Charlesworth, *Jesus Within*

quest⁴: the "first quest", 1776–1906, as identified by Albert Schweitzer⁵, in which nineteenth century scholars, in attempting to write a life of Jesus which was historically grounded, paradoxically produced an ahistorical portrait of "a timeless teacher of eternal verities"⁶; the "no quest" (1906–1953), where, shocked by the consequences of Schweitzer's conclusions, scholars (Bultmann being the major example) attempted to study Jesus without dealing with questions of history, by asserting that all discourse about Jesus was based on faith, and "history had nothing to do with faith"⁷; the "new quest" (1953–), following a lecture by Käsemann⁸ in which the political consequences of an ahistorical Christ had in the development of an "Aryan Jesus" in the Third Reich were recognized; and, finally, the "third quest", (e. 1980s–) when the Jewish background of Jesus was recognized, the central, historical, fact of the crucifixion of this Jewish Messiah required an explanation, and the political context of first century Judea was an adducible factor.⁹

These two centuries of questing has resulted in a hermeneutical and historical complexity of our primary datum. Jesus was a revolutionary. ¹⁰ Jesus was an eschatological ¹¹ or an apocalyptic prophet. ¹² Jesus was a Galilean holy man, opposed to the religious establishment. ¹³ Jesus was a sage. ¹⁴ Jesus was a

Judaism: new light from exciting archaeological discoveries (London: S.P.C.K., 1989), chap. 1 and Appendix 5.

⁴ Wright, "Quest for the Historical Jesus"; N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God 2 (London: S.P.C.K., 1996), pt. 1, especially sections 1.3, 2.1 and 3.1.

⁵ Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus: a critical study of its progress from Reimarus to Wrede*, 3d ed. (London: A. & C. Black, 1954). The beginning of the quest is usually dated to the posthumous publication in 1778 of Reimarus's "Von dem Zwecke Jesu und seiner Jünger": Hermann Samuel Reimarus, *Fragments*, ed. Charles H. Talbert, trans. Ralph S. Fraser (London: S.C.M. Press, 1970).

⁶ Wright, Jesus and the Victory of God, 20.

⁷ Wright, Jesus and the Victory of God, 23.

⁸ Ernst Käsemann, "The problem of the historical Jesus," in *Essays on New Testament Themes*, trans. W. J. Montague (London: S.C.M. Press, 1964), 15–47.

⁹ See Ben F. Meyer, *The Aims of Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1979), 48–59. For the contrast between the "new quest" and the "third quest", see Stephen Neill and N. T. Wright, *The Interpretation of the New Testament*, 1861-1986, 2nd ed. (Oxford: O.U.P, 1988), 379–403.

¹⁰ S. G. F. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots: a study of the political factor in primitive Christianity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967).

¹¹ E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (London: S.C.M. Press, 1985).

¹² Bart D. Ehrman, *Jesus, Apocalyptic Prophet of the New Millennium* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

¹³ Geza Vermes, *Jesus the Jew: a historian's reading of the Gospels*, 2nd ed. (London: SCM Press, 1983).

¹⁴ Burton L. Mack, *A Myth of Innocence: Mark and Christian Origins* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988); Ben Witherington, *Jesus the Sage: the pilgrimage of wisdom* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994).

Cynic philosopher.¹⁵ Jesus was a magician.¹⁶ Jesus was a myth.¹⁷ Nowhere in all these different construals¹⁸ do we find support for George Carey's analysis: it is never asserted that the interpretative key for the person and meaning of Jesus is a first century schematic for a managerial target-setting and appraisal system.

There are some who argue that it is impossible to say anything coherent or reliable about the historical Jesus: thus, for example, Bultmann's judgement: "I do indeed think that we can now know almost nothing concerning the life and personality of Jesus."19 Bultmann is clear that the meaning of Jesus (an existential meaning for his present-day interlocutors, rather than the historical meaning of Jesus or the personal meaning of Jesus for himself) is to be found in the words of Jesus²⁰, the *ipsissima verba Jesu*, with an accompanying doubt that the very words can be accurately recovered. However, this textual emphasis overlooks the significance of Jesus's actions, actions that are expressive of his purpose.²¹ As Ben Meyer puts it, "the principle public actions of Jesus were symbolic and these symbolic actions were correlative to his proclamation."22 There is a close identity between Jesus's words about the kingdom of God and his enacting of the kingdom of God: the flock of Israel is gathered [Matt 15:24; 10:6; Luke 19:9; cf. 13:6], and lost sheep are found [Luke 19:10; Luke 15:3–7; par. Matt 18:10–14]; the sick are cured [Mark 2:17; par. Matt 9:12; Luke 5:31], the possessed are cleansed [Luke 13:32], and the dead are brought to life [Matt 11:5; par. Luke 7:22. Matt 8:22; par. Luke 9:60; Luke 13:3; 15:32]; the Law is completed [Matt 5:17]; and the banquet of salvation is brought into being [Mark 2:17; par. Matt 9:12; Luke 5:31. Luke 19:9–10].²³ Thus, according to Meyer, Jesus was the "bearer of the supreme mission to Israel", which began as a circle of the baptized gathered around a holy man, and culminated in the ultimate "act of faith-recognition" in the responses of the baptized circle to Jesus's passion.²⁴

¹⁵ F. Gerald Downing, *Christ and the Cynics: Jesus and other radical preachers in first-century tradition*, JSOT manuals 4 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988); F. Gerald Downing, *Cynics and Christian Origins* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1992).

¹⁶ Morton Smith, Jesus the Magician (London: Gollancz, 1978).

¹⁷ George A. Wells, *The Jesus Myth* (Chicago, Ill: Open Court, 1999).

¹⁸ Borg's term, used throughout "Portraits of Jesus."

¹⁹ Rudolf Bultmann, *Jesus and the Word (1934)*, trans. Louise Pettibone Smith and Erminie Huntress Lantero (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), 8.

²⁰ "... those who like Jesus have worked through the medium of *word*, what they purposed can be reproduced only as a group of sayings, of ideas—as *teaching*. ...his purpose can be comprehended only as teaching." Bultmann, *Jesus and the Word*, 10. Emphasis in original.

²¹ The fifth assumption in Charlesworth's methodology: see *Jesus Within Judaism*, 20.

²² Ben F. Meyer, "Jesus Christ," ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 780–1.

²³ See the summary in Ben F. Meyer, "Jesus' Ministry and Self-Understanding," in *Studying the Historical Jesus: evaluations of the state of current research*, ed. Bruce Chilton and Craig A. Evans, New Testament tools and studies 19 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994), 351–2.

²⁴ Meyer, "Jesus' Ministry and Self-Understanding," 351.

The 'Purpose' of Jesus

Actions and words cohere into Jesus's 'self-understanding', which is another way of describing Jesus's 'purpose'. There is a danger in using such terminology, not least of which is a contrarian impulse against the general thrust of post-Bultmann scholarship, in which it is illicit to attempt to present "a historical phenomenon or personality [as] 'psychologically comprehensible.'"25 However, it is psychologically incomprehensible to say that Jesus would have had no self-understanding or purpose: "He must have had some selfunderstanding. He must have reflected on his own relationship to the major proclamation... He must have wrestled with the implications of his words and actions for his self-understanding."26 Therefore it is reasonable to use the expression and concept of 'self-understanding' as, what N. T. Wright has called a "heuristically functioning label"; such a label need not be delimited comprehensively to begin with, but is flexible and useful enough to be "defined more precisely by its content."27 In other words, a description of Jesus's 'selfunderstanding' could be formulated by answering Paul Rhodes Eddy's question: "What beliefs about himself would Jesus have held in order to most plausibly explain what he said and did?"28 Wright himself is, correctly, unabashed by this provisional and narrative approach: by approaching the question in this way, he argues, it shows that we are not attempting psychoanalysis, nor romantic fiction, but history:

History seeks, among other things, to answer the question: why did this character act in this way? And among the characteristic answers such questions receive: he believed, at the core of his being, that it was his duty, his destiny, his vocation, to do so.²⁹

²⁵ Bultmann, Jesus and the Word, 5. Emphasis in original.

²⁶ Charlesworth, *Jesus Within Judaism*, 135. Charlesworth points to three passages within the tradition that changed his previous belief that it was not possible to know anything about Jesus's self-understanding: the choosing of the twelve; the triumphal entry into Jerusalem; and, most importantly, the Parable of the Wicked Tenant. See the discussion in Charlesworth, *Jesus Within Judaism*, 136–153.

²⁷ N. T. Wright, "Jesus' Self-Understanding," in *The Incarnation: an interdisciplinary symposium on the Incarnation of the Son of God*, ed. Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, and Gerald O'Collins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 53.

²⁸ Paul Rhodes Eddy, "Remembering Jesus' Self-Understanding: James D. G. Dunn on Jesus' sense of role and identity," in *Memories of Jesus: a critical appraisal of James D. G. Dunn's "Jesus Remembered,"* ed. Robert B. Stewart and Gary R. Habermas (Nashville, Tenn.: B&H Publishing Group, 2010), note 2, p. 227.

²⁹ Wright, "Jesus' Self-Understanding," 53.

And what was that vocation? Jesus was to be the "mediator of God's final controversy with his people". 30 In this way, he was the "the climactic and definitive fulfiller of the hopes of Israel,"31 and the fulfiller who was, necessarily, to be rejected. The Kingdom of God was come among His people, and the exile, which continued despite the physical return from Babylon, and which included the person of the Lord (YHWH)³², was now to be overcome in the person of Jesus, in whom we find the "tabernacled" presence of YHWH.33 "And the Word became flesh and lived among us..." [John 1:14] is better translated as "and tabernacled [εσχηνωσεν] in our midst". This tabernacled presence was that as found in the Temple in Jerusalem (not analogous, but exact). The work of the Temple (forgiveness of sins and restoration of fellowship with God), was also the work of Jesus: "He was acting as a one-man Temple-substitute... [and when he] came to Jerusalem the place wasn't big enough for both of them, himself and the Temple side by side."34 Jesus's major proclamation was "the dawning of God's Kingdom in his presence and through his words and miracles."35

One of the problems of the old quest, especially found in the work of Bultmann, was the desire to describe the "timeless" nature of Jesus's proclamation. If pushed too far then its dynamic led inevitably towards docetism³⁶, in which Jesus is removed from his historical roots and becomes a cipher, or a "moderately pale Galilean".³⁷

Bearing the danger of docetism in mind, and before we examine the social / political / religious and economic context in which the "Jesus movement" recorded in the Christian scriptures found itself³⁸, it will be profitable to see

³⁰ Amos Wilder, "Eschatology and the Speech-Modes of the Gospel," in *Zeit und Geschichte: Dankesgabe an Rudolf Bultmann zum 80. Geburtstag*, ed. Erich Dinkler (Tübingen: Mohr, 1964), 29.

³¹ Meyer, "Jesus' Ministry and Self-Understanding," 353. Meyer's definition is italicised in the original.

³² Wright, Jesus and the Victory of God, chap. 13.

³³ Wright, "Jesus' Self-Understanding," 56–8.

³⁴ Wright, "Jesus' Self-Understanding," 57.

³⁵ Charlesworth, Jesus Within Judaism, 135.

³⁶ The tendency to docetism is warned of by Käsemann, "The problem of the historical Jesus"; see especially §3, pp. 24-29.

³⁷ N. T. Wright's caricature of A. N. Wilson's biography of Jesus, which is firmly, if carelessly, dependent on the "old quest". N. T. Wright, *Who Was Jesus?* (London: S.P.C.K., 1992), chap. 3; A. N. Wilson, *Jesus* (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1992).

³⁸ The phrase is taken from Gerd Theissen, *The First Followers of Jesus: a sociological analysis of the earliest Christianity* (London: S.C.M. Press, 1978), 1. Theissen defines the Jesus movement as "the renewal movement with Judaism brought into being through Jesus and existing in the area of Syria and Palestine between about A.D. 30 and A.D. 70". The appropriateness of this nomenclature has been disputed: see Richard A. Horsley, *Sociology and the Jesus Movement* (New York: Crossroad, 1989), 30–42; James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, vol. 1, Christianity in the making (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2003), 54–7. A good summary and

what, if anything, we can identify within the Jesus Movement that typifies its structure as a social organization; that is, what it may have in common with every other social organization, whether from the period of Second Temple Judaism or twentieth century industrialised societies.

The Jesus Movement as a Social Organization

A profitable way forward might be to examine the Jesus Movement in the light of twentieth century studies of social organizations. What can be said about the Jesus Movement in its functioning as an entity within a wider society? If we are able to identify the common characteristics of the Jesus Movement with all social organizations, whether within Second Temple Judaism or twenty-first century industrialised societies, we might also be able to identify any "timelessness" within the patterns of social structure, leadership and followership expressed by the Jesus Movement. In other words, does the heuristic model of 'social organization' allow us to determine whether the relationship between Jesus and his disciples was anything more than a contingent and temporary arrangement, and, therefore, are we able to extrapolate from it an enduring, "Christian" understanding of community and the part that leadership and followership play in that community?

Marvin Olsen says that for any social organization to persist it requires three interlocking factors to be present: *boundaries* (to distinguish it from its social environment)³⁹; *structural stability* (which may or may not involve superficial change in order "to preserve its fundamental patterns of social order"⁴⁰); and *a unique culture* (expressed by "values, goals, norms, rules and other ideas"⁴¹). In short, "a social organization is a relatively bounded and stable occurrence of social order, together with an associated culture."⁴² Other scholars have built upon this concept of "organizational culture", and the relationship of it to leadership and vice versa. Thus Pettigrew defines organizational culture less as one of the constituent parts of a social organizational than as the medium in which the social organization is constituted: "... purpose, commitment, and order are generated in an organization both through the feelings and actions of its founder and through the amalgam of beliefs, ideology, language, ritual, and myth we collapse into

selection of readings on the "social-scientific study" of the New Testament is contained in David G. Horrell, ed., *Social-Scientific Approaches to New Testament Interpretation* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1999).

³⁹ Marvin E. Olsen, *The Process of Social Organization* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968), 66.

⁴⁰ Olsen, Social Organization, 68.

⁴¹ Olsen, Social Organization, 69.

⁴² Olsen, Social Organization, 69.

the label of organizational culture."⁴³ Schein broadly concurs with this definition: culture is a "pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems."⁴⁴ However, Schein takes the passing mention of the "founder" in Pettigrew's definition and extends its significance. Organizational culture is not a monad, but a dyad, a dialogue between "culture" and "leadership":

Culture and leadership are two sides of the same coin in that leaders first create cultures when they create groups and organizations. Once cultures exist, they determine who will or will not be a leader.⁴⁵

Immediately we see the importance of the founder/leader to the creation, definition and sustaining of the organization and its culture. Aitken concurs, and extends the importance of the role of leadership into its own culture. "Leadership culture" is "that amalgam of primary purpose, critical behaviours and essential personal values, identified and agreed by the leaders as authentic and functional for their distinctive organisation culture (whole or part), which the leaders (formal and emergent) role model through their everyday communications and actions."⁴⁶

The structural stability of every social organization as a social entity (and therefore, heuristically, the Jesus Movement) is focused largely upon "leadership, the allocation of power, the differentiation of roles, and the management of conflict."⁴⁷

Noting for the moment this fourth factor, the dyad of leadership and organizational culture, let us examine how Olsen's three fundamental factors in a social organization might apply to the Jesus Movement.

Bounded

In what ways might we describe the Jesus Movement as being "bounded"? We can see ways in which the boundaries of the Jesus Movement

⁴³ Andrew M. Pettigrew, "On Studying Organizational Cultures," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 24, no. 4 (December 1979): 572.

⁴⁴ Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership: a dynamic view*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco, Calif.: Jossey-Bass, 1992), 12.

⁴⁵ Schein, Organizational Culture and Leadership, 15.

⁴⁶ Paul Aitken, "'Walking the talk': the nature and role of leadership culture within organisation culture/s," *Journal of General Management* 32, no. 4 (Summer 2007): 18–19.

⁴⁷ Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: the social world of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 84. Meeks is discussing the *ekklēsia* of the apostolic period, but, following Olsen's third criteria, stability over time, these factors must surely apply to the earlier expression of the same entity in the period of Jesus's ministry.

operate by examining the frequently asserted parallel between it and the relationship of a rabbi and his pupils.⁴⁸ Does a rabbinical Jesus Movement show a conformity demanded by Olsen's model, with a clear delineation of roles within and without the social entity?

At first glance the parallels seem promising. Jesus is frequently called or referred to as "rabbi" — twice in Matthew, four times in Mark, none in Luke, and eight in John, although, in comparison, and perhaps equivalently, he is referred to as "teacher" διδάσκαλος (didaskalos) 44 times⁴⁹, and mentioned as having pupils [Matt 9:11; 17:24; Mark 12:32; Luke 19:39; and so on].

However, Hengel is not convinced that this can be the case: he entitles a section of his classic study "Jesus was not a 'rabbi'". ⁵⁰ Theissen and Merz concur with Hengel (sharing his belief that the best sociological match for Jesus is with the wandering charismatics ⁵¹): they produce a table of contrasts between traditional understandings of rabbinic-pupil relationships and what seems to be at work within the Jesus movement ⁵²:

⁴⁸ The most frequently made parallel, according to James D. G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament: an inquiry into the character of earliest Christianity* (London: SCM Press, 1977), 104. ⁴⁹ Clinton Morrison, *An Analytical Concordance to the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament*

⁴⁹ Clinton Morrison, An Analytical Concordance to the Revised Standard Version of the New Testame (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979), 467–468 and 570.

⁵⁰ Martin Hengel, *The Charismatic Leader and His Followers*, ed. John Riches (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1981), 42–50.

⁵¹ Although, as Mark Edwards warns "Cynics were free itinerants without a creed or social organization, while [Christians] were avowedly the people of a book." Mark Edwards, "The Development of Office in the Early Church," in *The Early Christian World*, ed. Philip F. Esler, vol. 1 (London; New York: Routledge, 2000), 325. See also what should be the final word against the assumptions and conclusions of the "charismatic scholars" (Theissen, Hengel and Crossan, amongst others) in Jonathan A. Draper, "Weber, Theissen and 'Wandering Charismatics' in the Didache," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6, no. 4 (1998): 541–576.

⁵² Based on the table in section 5.2, Gerd Theissen and Annette Merz, *The Historical Jesus: a comprehensive guide*, trans. John Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1998), 214. Anthony Saldarini identifies four errors made by modern "naïve", historians in using rabbinic literature to describe Second Temple Judaism. Anthony J. Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees in Palestinian Society: A Sociological Approach* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1989), 7–10.

Rabbinic teacher-pupil relationship	Relationship of Jesus to his disciples
Stable abode in a house of study	Itinerant life in Galilee and its environs
Limited period of time: a change of teacher is possible	Discipleship is a permanent relationship
Conscious forming of traditions by memories	Free formation of traditions
Discipleship is reserved for men	There are also women among the followers and hearers

Furthermore, the parallel breaks down when we consider the limina of the Jesus Movement: it is unclear, according to Dunn, whether we should "recognize the distinction between 'disciples' and 'followers' as significant." 53 (And a clear distinction between those within and those without a social organization is necessary for Olsen's model to apply.) Jesus appeared to have expressed and practised a concern to include those who were regularly excluded from the grace of the covenantal relationship with Israel's God by the "main opinion-formers" 54 of Second Temple Judaism: the poor (a familiar favoured group in prophetic Judaism), but also 'sinners', whose status as objects of disapproval was clear to all and among whom could be included "many practitioners of 'common Judaism'". 55 The way in which Jesus's inclusive vision differed from his "prophetic predecessors" was in his expectation that the inclusion would be effected in the near future, and would be effected within and because of his own person. To this end, as a symbolic prophetic action "he did seek to anticipate it in the circle of discipleship which he drew around him."56

This circle is more accurately described in the plural. There are a series of overlapping relationships and obligations in the many different groupings centred around Jesus: the inner circle of the Twelve; the women followers; 'secret' followers; those who hear Jesus gladly [Mark 3:35]; those who live out his teaching [Matt 7:24–25]; sinners who repented [Luke 18:13–14; 19:1–10]; Gentiles [Matt 8:10]; even sympathetic Pharisees [Luke 7:36; 11:37; 14:1].⁵⁷ In the

⁵³ Dunn, Jesus Remembered, 1:540.

⁵⁴ Dunn, Jesus Remembered, 1:540.

⁵⁵ Dunn, Jesus Remembered, 1:540.

⁵⁶ Dunn, Jesus Remembered, 1:540.

⁵⁷ See especially the clear elucidation of the audiences and circles surrounding Jesus in John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Companions and Competitors*, Rethinking the Historical Jesus 3 (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2001), chap. 24–27. An older study, which questions a rigid distinction between the statuses of the Twelve, the disciples and "those about him", is

end, Dunn says, we need to live with the ambiguity of *circles* of discipleship: "What is striking about these circles of discipleship is the way they overlap and intertwine, forbidding us to make any hard and fast distinction between disciples and followers, or to designate different grades of discipleship." And those who attempted to make distinctions were severely rebuked by Jesus himself [Mark 9:38–41/Luke 9:49–50]. As Schweizer says: Jesus "founds no new Church; for there is no salvation even by entering a religious society, however radically transformed. Even the best reform of Church order still does not achieve conversion to God." According to this approach, Christ's mission was to no greater, or more complex form, of social organization than the individual. Schweizer is possibly open to criticism for making an *a posteriori* assertion in support of his theological and ecclesiological convictions. He is certainly mistaken in his theological and sociological confusion between "church" and "religious society". We shall see the limitations of Schweizer's approach later in the chapter.

There is a permeable boundary between being, and not being, a follower of Jesus: "...many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him." [John 6:66]. Bruce Chilton notes that Jesus had allowed for this "theology of failure, the recognition that the word of the kingdom would not always prove productive after sowing." ⁶¹

Robert P. Meye, *Jesus and the Twelve: discipleship and revelation in Mark's Gospel* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 1968). Meye is contradicted by Davis, who places a greater emphasis on the function of the Twelve: Philip G. Davis, "Christology, discipleship, and self-understanding in the Gospel of Mark," in *Self-Definition and Self-Discovery in Early Christianity: a study in changing horizons: essays in appreciation of Ben F. Meyer*, ed. David J. Hawkin and Thomas A. Robinson, Studies in the Bible and early Christianity 26 (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1990), 101–119.

⁶¹ Bruce Chilton, "Friends and enemies," in *The Cambridge Companion to Jesus*, ed. Markus Bockmuehl, Cambridge Companions to Religion (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 79.

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⁵⁸ Dunn, Jesus Remembered, 1:540–1.

⁵⁹ Eduard Schweizer, *Church Order in the New Testament* (London: S.C.M. Press, 1961), 24 (§ 2c). Cited by Dunn, *Unity and Diversity*, 105.

^{60 &}quot;... in essence Jesus Christ was no more the founder of the Christian religious community than the founder of a religion. ... He brought, established, and proclaimed the reality of a new humanity. ... It is not a new religion recruiting followers... Rather, God established the reality of the church, of humanity pardoned in Jesus Christ—not religion, but revelation, not religious community, but church." Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Sanctorum Communio: a theological study of the sociology of the church, ed. Clifford J. Green and Joachim von Soosten, trans. Reinhard Krauss and Nancy Lukens, DBWE 1 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 152–3. [emphasis in original] Most quotations from Bonhoeffer's works will be taken from the definitive series being produced by Fortress Press (DBWE), translations of the German critical edition Dietrich Bonhoeffer Werke, ed. Eberhard Bethge et al., 17 vols., (DBW) (München; Gütersloh: Chr. Kaiser Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1986).

But a permeable boundary is still a boundary. John Meier prefers to concentrate not on the permeability of the boundary but its invisibility: "most people in the crowds never crossed the invisible line separating curious or sympathetic audiences from deeply committed adherents." This permeable, invisible, boundary was made all the stronger by the way in which the Jesus Movement conforms to the two other criteria of Olsen's model.

Stable

For any grouping to exist as a social entity, Olsen requires a second constituent factor, "structural stability".⁶³ Is it possible to say that the Jesus Movement constitutes an enduring community?

To begin with the answer seems "Yes". Dunn gives us six reasons⁶⁴ why it may be fairly thought that Jesus and his disciples constitute an enduring community.

First, we see the repeated use of the word ἐκκλησία (ekklēsia), the assembly of God's people [Matt 16:8; 18:17]. Does an assembly count as a community? Curiously, other than three instances in two verses of Matthew's Gospel, the New Testament use of ekklēsia is non-Gospel: 19 times in Acts, five times in Romans, 30 times in 1 and 2 Corinthians, 20 times in Revelation, and so on. 65

Second, we can see the programmatic way in which Jesus selects and uses the twelve disciples of the inner circle. He regarded, in some way, the twelve as representatives of Israel's past and Israel's future [Matt 19:28; par. Luke 22:28–30], and the way in which the number is symbolically reused in the tradition of the feeding of the five thousand [Matt 14:15–21; par. Mark 6:34–44, Luke 9:12–17, John 6:5–13]. This is an important point: Jesus was not, in Lohfink's memorable formulation, instituting "disciples in an *eschatological office of witness*"66; rather this was a "symbolic prophetic action", which was both "an exemplification or demonstration", and also, more importantly, "the initiation of something future, something which was already present in an anticipatory manner in the prophetically performed sign."67

Third, Jesus made use of the well-established imagery of Israel as God's flock and God as the good shepherd. Dunn points out dependence of Luke 12:32 and Matt 10:6; 15:24 [par. Mark 14:27] on the Old Testament use of the trope [in Isa 40:11, Ezek 34:11–24, Mic 4:6–8 and so on]. The "good"

⁶² Meier, Marginal Jew 3, 30.

⁶³ Olsen, Social Organization, 69, 44-50.

⁶⁴ Dunn, Unity and Diversity, 104-105.

⁶⁵ According to Morrison, Analytical Concordance, 99.

⁶⁶ Gerhard Lohfink, *Jesus and Community: the social dimension of Christian faith*, trans. John P. Galvin (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 9–10. Emphasis in original.

⁶⁷ Lohfink, *Jesus and Community*, 10. Some original emphasis removed.

⁶⁸ Dunn, Unity and Diversity, 105.

shepherd" is to be reinterpreted and recentred on the person of Jesus: if you want to see what Scripture meant by 'the good shepherd', Jesus says, then look at me.

Fourth, Jesus made an explicit contrast between his disciples' status as a family and the status of his biological family [Mark 3:31–35], in which the former has a greater status, and a greater claim on his attention and presence because of their explicit acceptance of fulfilling the will of God. Furthermore, it is implied that it is impossible to fulfil the will of God without accepting the conflict with the disciple's biological family: "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple" [Luke 14:26]. "Hate" here functions hyperbolically, as a form of μ etávoia, the "turning away" required by followers of Christ, which includes family and all previous ties. ⁶⁹ Jesus also reinforced the disciples' status within the new family: they were to be as little children, [Matt 18:3] with the privileges and restrictions that being as little children allowed.

Fifth, at the Last Supper Jesus seems to change the status of the disciples by introducing the idea of the new Covenant: "And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood." [Luke 22:20 and par.]. The disciples are to be "'founder members' of the new covenant, as the new Israel". A new covenant requires a new covenant community.

Sixth, any community worth the name will have some form of recognizable organization, Olsen's "structural stability". Can this organization be read from the hints in Luke 8:2–3 and John 12:6?—a common purse was kept, and there was a means by which sympathetic outsiders, Mary, Joanna, and Susanna, could support the work of the disciples. Gerd Theissen accords an important status to the sympathetic outsiders:

The radical attitude of the wandering charismatics [his description for Jesus and his disciples] was possibly only on the basis of the material support offered to them by the local communities...The two social forms of the Jesus movement were both associated and distinguished by a gradated pattern of norms [that is, attitudes to the "world"].⁷¹

Ultimately, Dunn decides against the possibility of talking about a community of Jesus for three reasons. First, there was no ritualized ceremony which marked the joining or the leaving of this community. Jesus seems to have

⁶⁹ Lohfink, *Jesus and Community*, 32–35. Strong's Number 3341 (James Strong, *The New Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* (Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990), cited hereafter within the text.

⁷⁰ Dunn, *Unity and Diversity*, 105.

⁷¹ Theissen, First Followers, 22–23.

swiftly dropped the "baptism of John" as a requirement to follow him, "presumably because he did not want any cultic or ritual act which might become a barrier to be surmounted."⁷² This, of course, assumes that a boundary is only expressed or constituted by a ritual ceremony. As Olsen notes, participants need not be "self-consciously aware of what they are doing when they create these boundaries."⁷³ Often the means of identifying boundaries will exist in "the underlying patterns of social organization"⁷⁴, such as attendance, the sharing of values or participation. The ambiguity in these 'shared-value boundaries' was acted upon by the disciples, when they attempted to forbid exorcisms in the name of Jesus [Mark 9:38–41, and par.], and the evangelists, when Jesus's own attitude to inclusion was inverted ("against me", Matt 12:30, Luke 11:23; versus "with me", Mark 9:40).

Second, the role of the disciples as members of the new covenant and in the emblematic number of twelve seems to be something reserved for the future, rather than something to be acted out in Jesus's present:

There is no evidence that they were regarded or acted as functionaries, far less a hierarchy, constituting a community gathered around Jesus in Palestine...What power and authority they did exercise was not within a community of discipleship for its upbuilding, but was given to them to share in Jesus' mission.⁷⁵

In other words, the Twelve "exemplified the gathering [of Israel] simply through the fact they were created as *Twelve*, but they also exemplified through being sent out to all of Israel."⁷⁶ Institution and mission were inseparable.

Third, Dunn correctly points out the complete dependence of the disciples and their community upon Jesus himself. The word used most often to designate the followers of Jesus ("that is, for one who accepted his teachings and sought to be identified with him"⁷⁷) is "disciple": μαθητής (mathētēs), meaning "a pupil" or "a learner" (S 3101). Discipleship, fellowship with Jesus, meant 'following' him. 'Following Jesus' meant doing the will of God: "Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother" [Mark 3:35]. It would be wrong to think that during his teaching ministry Jesus

⁷² Dunn, *Unity and Diversity*, 105. Although that "presumably" does cover a great deal of assumption into the possible motivations for Jesus's actions.

⁷³ Olsen, *Social Organization*, note 2 on p. 66.

⁷⁴ Olsen, Social Organization, 66.

⁷⁵ Dunn, Unity and Diversity, 106.

⁷⁶ Lohfink, *Jesus and Community*, 10. Emphasis in original. The question of the historicity of the Twelve is addressed in John P. Meier, "The Circle of the Twelve: did it exist during Jesus' public ministry?," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 116, no. 4 (Winter 1997): 635–672.

⁷⁷ From the Introduction to Richard N. Longenecker, ed., *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament*, McMaster New Testament studies (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 1996), 2.

was "empowering" his disciples to undertake their own missionary work. When he sent out the Twelve [Matt; Mark] or the Seventy [Luke], he was "pursuing his ministry by proxy." This was not collaborative ministry, and it is not sustainable ministry: it was only "larger or smaller groups of disciples either observing his mission or hindering his mission or participating in some small part in his mission." Here, the mission of the Twelve, or the Seventy, is naturally overshadowed by the salvific weight of Jesus's passion: "The person and activity of the disciples as they followed their Master had... no 'soteriological' dignity, and could not but fall into the background, for the community wished to be informed not about the 'words and deeds' of the first disciples, but purely and solely about the activities of their Lord." In other words, there is no salvation to be found in following Peter, James or John, but only in so much that Peter, James or John are able, authentically, to connect their listeners to the person and actions of Christ.

Dunn finds these three objections convincing, giving them greater weight than the six factors which might demonstrate a community centred on Jesus. He provides a warning against speaking of the disciples as the "church": if they are the church, then they are a church of a particular character: "a group or groups of disciples gathered around Jesus with each individually and together *directly* dependent on Jesus *alone* for all ministry and teaching."⁸¹

Culturally distinguishable

We have noted the need to place the Jesus Movement within its context of Second Temple Judaism. We need not go so far as some of the earliest historical–critical scholars of the New Testament in treating the topography of the Holy Land as, in the words of Ernest Renan, a "fifth Gospel". 82 The physical environment is not as important as the social / religious / political and economic context in which the Jesus movement exercised its ministry—although we should be aware of the misleading consequences of neatly dividing the context into these, or other, anachronistic, categories. 83

⁷⁸ Dunn, *Unity and Diversity*, 106.

⁷⁹ Dunn, Unity and Diversity, 106.

⁸⁰ Hengel, *Charismatic Leader*, 79. Hengel exaggerates his case here: for the community to wish to hear "purely and simply" about the activities of their Lord would have removed the necessity for and survival of the Acts of the Apostles and some of the details of the early Pauline epistles.

⁸¹ Dunn, Unity and Diversity, 106. Emphasis in the original.

⁸² Ernest Renan, The Life of Jesus, trans. Charles Edwin Wilbour (New York: Carleton, 1864), 46.

⁸³ See, for example, how Theissen sets out "socio–economic", "socio–ecological", "socio–political" and "socio–cultural" factors that will influence the Jesus movement as a group of wandering charismatics within Judaism. He omits "socio–religious" factors explicitly, folding it into socio–cultural factors: Theissen, *First Followers*, pt. 2, "Analysis of Factors: The Effects of Society on the Jesus Movement."

The religious community within which the Jesus Movement lived and moved and had its being was Judaism; the political community was the Roman province of Judea (and the client kingdoms of the Herodians); the economic community was that of tenanted farming, prosperous enough to support a taxation economy and large estates owned by absentee landlords.⁸⁴

Each of these three overlapping communities⁸⁵ had some influence on the characteristics of the Jesus movement. On the other hand, as James Dunn, among others, has pointed out, it is more accurate to note the overlap than to fix on the distinctions between the three contexts. During the twentieth century scholarship moved from an emphasis on a model of pre-Rabbinic "normative" Judaism⁸⁶ to an emphasis on a multivalent definition and expression of the religion, as a direct result of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the radically different pattern of religious observance evidenced therein.⁸⁷ Thus Kraft and Nickelsburg assert that whereas "rabbinic Judaism is dominated by an identifiable perspective that holds together many otherwise diverse elements, early Judaism appears to encompass almost unlimited diversity and variety—indeed it may be more appropriate to speak of early Judaisms."⁸⁸ The pluralised fashion has declined in recent years as scholars recognized the essential unity of Judaism⁸⁹, focused on the religion, political and social life of

⁸⁴ See K. C. Hanson and Douglas E. Oakman, *Palestine in the Time of Jesus: social structures and social conflicts* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 1998), chap. 4, "'The Denarius Stops Here': political economy in Roman Palestine."

⁸⁵ By which is *not* meant the three groups (or *haireseis* "schools of thought", or *tagma* "orders") of Josephus (*Ant*. XII.171); Pharisees (*BJ* II.110 & II.162-166), Sadducees (*BJ* II.167) and Essenes (*BJ* II.119-161)—and occasionally we find mention of a fourth grouping, the "rioters" or "troublemakers". For these references see note 93 on page 107.

⁸⁶ A model most closely associated with George F. Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927).

⁸⁷ Dunn gives five factors in this change: the Dead Sea Scrolls, a general resurgence in interest in "intertestamental Judaism", the beginnings of a tradition-historical analysis of Rabbinc Judaism, a re-examination of the nature of "Pharisaic" Judaism and the recognition of Christian antisemitism after the Second World War: James D. G. Dunn, *The Partings of the Ways between Christianity and Judaism: and their significance for the character of Christianity*, 2nd ed. (London: Philadelphia: S.C.M. Press: Trinity Press International, 2006), 15–21.

⁸⁸ Introduction, in Robert A. Kraft and George W. E. Nickelsburg, eds., *Early Judaism and its Modern Interpreters* (Philadelphia; Atlanta: Fortress Press; Scholars Press, 1986), 2. Two other important contributions to this school are Jacob Neusner, William Scott Green, and Ernest S. Frerichs, eds., *Judaisms and their Messiahs at the turn of the Christian Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Alan F. Segal, *The Other Judaisms of Late Antiquity*, Brown Judaic Studies 127 (Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1987).

⁸⁹ James Dunn underlines the importance in getting the terminology right: 'Judaism' originated as a self-defining term by and for those who were "worshippers of the God whose Temple was in Jerusalem" *over and against* the 'rest of the world' (for example, 'Greeks' or 'Gentiles'). The preferred term for describing the person in his relationship with his own people is 'Israelite' (see for example Paul in Rom 11:1 or 2 Cor 11:22). In other words, "'Jew' betokens the

the people and the land. Dunn speaks of the "four pillars"⁹⁰ of Second Temple Judaism, the "axiomatic convictions round which the diverse interpretations and practices of the different groups within Judaism revolved".⁹¹ The pillars were the Temple; belief in God; belief in Israel as an elected nation; and the place of the Torah in Judaism's self-understanding.⁹²

Without the rediscovery of the unity of Judaism we would otherwise have been obliged to enter into a comprehensive discussion on the taxonomy of Josephus' "three schools", in order to identify extent of plural Judaisms and the similarities and dissimilarities between the community of the Jesus movement and the other contemporary groupings. To have done so, would have required a discussion of the reliability of Josephus as a historian⁹³, a delineation of the sociological and doctrinal differences between the groupings, examination of the existence of extra-Josephan evidence about their beliefs and activities, and a discussion of the feasibility, or otherwise, of matching both their internal structures and teaching and their external social intercourses on to the Jesus movement.⁹⁴ This would be diverting, but, ultimately, a distraction. For our

perspective of the spectator (Jewish included), 'Israel' that of the participant". See Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 1:263,264.

⁹⁰ First described in Dunn, Partings, chap. 2.

⁹¹ Dunn, Partings, 47. The passage is italicized in the original as a summary definition.

⁹² Dunn, Jesus Remembered, 1:286–92.

⁹³ Flavius Josephus, *The Life; Against Apion*, trans. H. St. J. Thackeray, vol. 1, 9 vols., Loeb Classical Library 186 (London; Cambridge, Mass.: Heinemann; Harvard University Press, 1926) [Vita]; *Jewish Antiquities (Books XII-XIV)*, trans. Ralph Marcus, vol. 7, 9 vols., Loeb Classical Library 365 (London; Cambridge, Mass.: Heinemann; Harvard University Press, 1943); *Jewish Antiquities (Books XVIII-XX)*, trans. Louis H. Feldman, vol. 9, 9 vols., Loeb Classical Library 433 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1965) [Ant.]; *The Jewish War (De bello Judaico) Books I-II*, trans. H. St. J. Thackeray, vol. 2, 9 vols., Loeb Classical Library 203 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927) [BJ].

⁹⁴ For the beginnings of such discussions, see Morton Smith, "The Troublemakers," in The Cambridge History of Judaism: The Early Roman Period, ed. W. D. Davies, William Horbury, and John Sturdy, vol. 3, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 501-68; Louis H. Feldman, "Introduction," in Josephus, Judaism, and Christianity, ed. Louis H. Feldman and Gohei Hata (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 46-7; Dunn, Jesus Remembered, 1:1,266; Saldarini, Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees in Palestinian Society, 7-10. See also, for the sake of completeness, John Bowker, Jesus and the Pharisees (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973); John J. Collins, "Essenes"; Anthony J. Saldarini, "Scribes"; Gary G. Porton, "Saducees"; Anthony J. Saldarini, "Pharisees," all in ed. David Noel Freedman, The Anchor Bible Dictionary (New York: Doubleday, 1992); R. Meyer, "Σαδδουκαίος," ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1960); Günter Baumbach, "The Sadducees in Josephus," in Josephus, Judaism, and Christianity, ed. Louis H. Feldman and Gohei Hata (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 173-195; James S. McLaren, Turbulent Times?: Josephus and scholarship on Judaea in the first century CE, Journal for the study of the pseudepigrapha 29 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998); Martin Goodman, The Ruling Class of Judaea: The Origins of the Jewish Revolt Against Rome A.D. 66-70 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The

purposes it is only necessary to state, broadly, that first century Judea and Galilee was a Temple-based religious and political entity, and that the intensity of the differences between each of the groupings (Pharisees, Essenes, and Zealots, the brigands, Herodians, and "troublemakers"), was a result of the commonalities shared among the groupings: internal to Judaism (what Dunn calls "Judaism from within"⁹⁵); and external, as a result of the social and political circumstances of the time.

The internal commonality was the unquestioned importance for each of the groups of the four pillars of Second Temple Judaism. Differences arose only because each grouping felt, according to Dunn, that the importance of one or other of the pillars was not sufficiently taken into account by their rivals. In this respect, variations in *doxis* and *praxis* were an expression of what Freud would dismissively and misleadingly have referred to as the "narcissism of minor differences". 97

The external commonality was the fact of Roman rule and economic oppression: "the pressing needs of most Jews of the period had to do with liberation—from oppression, from debt, from Rome."98

Bearing all this in mind, the most profitable treatment, and certainly the most succinct, of the relationship(s) of the *haireseis* to the Jesus Movement would be to follow Meyer's summary: the differences between the Jesus Movement and the schools were, *pace* Freud, "fundamental". 99 The legitimacy of the Zealots was "demolished" 100 by the punch-line to one of Jesus's enacted parables [Mark 12:17; par. Matt 22:21; Luke 20:25; *Gos. Thom.* 100]. Pharisaic *halaka* was condemned as "a perversion of the will of God" [Mark 7:8], which perversely and paradoxically "frustrated the command of love" [Mark 3:4] by its rigour and connived with "the will to disobey" 101 [Mark 7:10–12] through its leniency. Against the Sadducees, "whose very selfhood was peculiarly bound

Qumran Community: Essene or Sadducean?," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Christian origins*, ed. Joseph A. Fitzmyer (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 2000), 249-260.

⁹⁵ Dunn, Jesus Remembered, 1:1, 281-286.

⁹⁶ Dunn, Jesus Remembered, 1:1, 285–286.

⁹⁷ Sigmund Freud, "The Taboo of Virginity (Contributions to the Psychology of Love III) (1918)," in *Five Lectures on Psycho-Analysis: Leonardo Da Vinci and Other Works* (1910), trans. James Strachey, The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud vol. 11 (1910) (London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-analysis, 1957), 199.

⁹⁸ N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God 1 (London: S.P.C.K., 1992), 169. For Wright, the implication of this is to begin the sociology of Second-Temple with the "special interest" groups of the period, those which explicitly described the need for revolutionary liberation: the Maccabees, the brigands under Hezekiah, Judas "the Galilean" and so on (Wright, *New Testament and the People of God*, 170–181.)

⁹⁹ Meyer, *The Aims of Jesus*, 239.

Wieyer, The Times of Jesus, 25%.

¹⁰⁰ Meyer, The Aims of Jesus, 239.

¹⁰¹ Meyer, The Aims of Jesus, 239.

up with the temple"102, he prophesies the destruction of the Temple and its replacement, in his own person, in three days [John 2:19].

The differences between the Jesus Movement and the three schools have two consequences. First, it is unprofitable to seek any kind of heuristic advantage by deciding which one of the three is most closely related to the Jesus Movement. Second, and at the same, the difference means that it is possible to assert the validity of Olsen's third criterion: the Jesus Movement is culturally distinct within the *Sitz im Leben* of Second Temple Judaism.

We have examined three of Olsen's fundamental factors for any social grouping in their application to the Jesus Movement. How does the fourth factor, or the second part of the constituent dyad, namely 'leadership', apply to the Jesus Movement?

The Jesus Movement as a Leadership Community

We saw in the previous chapter the way in which the ministry of Jesus has frequently been used as an exemplar for patterns of leadership in today's church, corporations and society. John Adair, whose work on secular, business, leadership we examined on page 29, expresses this clearly. He asserts that there are four aspects to the leadership expressed by Jesus. First, it was expressed on a journey. The proclamation of the coming of the kingdom of God was, for Jesus, a journey which led from his baptism, through his teaching ministry in Galilee and Jerusalem, to the passion. The journey is (part of) the message: a leader, therefore, "is the person who, in one form or other, shows the way on that common journey."103 Second, Adair notes that Jesus's leadership was expressed through what we now call teamwork. Some disciples were called, some disciples chose him. Jesus chose to yoke them into a team (Adair notes the origin of the English word "team" in the Old English team, the rope which hitches draft animals together). Hence the appropriateness of Jesus's metaphor and promise: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" [Matt 11:29]. This team is not hierarchical but is based on friendship:

There is no trace of hierarchy or inequality in the relation of friendship. Arguably, to be a friend stresses freedom more than to be a brother or sister, where there is a tie of 'blood'. 'My friends' suggests the companionship, camaraderie of those who work together in a common cause.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Meyer, *The Aims of Jesus*, 239.

¹⁰³ John Adair, The Leadership of Jesus and its Legacy Today (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2001), 91.

¹⁰⁴ Adair, Leadership of Jesus, 117.

Third, says Adair, Jesus's leadership is articulated and invigorated by a clear statement of a vision: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near" [Mark 1:14]. This made the greatest possible difference to the lives of Jesus and his followers:

Jesus' own vision was about the clarity of his purpose and the necessity of his early death. He had a vision about his followers; he sends them very explicitly into the world to preach the gospel. Jesus was visionary for his followers because he looked at the world and the way people live in a very different way. Achievements were not based on keeping the law but on demonstrating love.¹⁰⁵

Fourth, and finally, Jesus's leadership was expressed through service, and a form of service in which the values and hierarchies of the kingdom are the inverse of the world's values and hierarchies. Those who seek places of honour will lose them [Luke 11:7–14]; expectations of honour within the Twelve are subverted [Matt 20:20–28/Mark 10:35–40/Luke 22:24–27]; those who seek public status and respect are condemned [Matt 23:5–12]. Jesus's servant leadership is distinguished by an "unqualified availability." 106

Adair's work in the leadership of Jesus has been very influential. Shaw among others, acknowledges his debt to Adair. However, in Adair's own work and those who have followed him, we can identify a fatal discrepancy. All discussions of "leadership" based upon a NT hermeneutic are actually *second-order formulations*: we *infer* from the text that this is the way a leader behaves, or ought to behave, even if the text of text is actually focused upon a different matter entirely. However, in Adair's own

We see a similar methodological flaw in the frequent studies made of authority structures in the early Church, which often focus (for reasons of extant evidence) on the Church in Corinth. Holmberg calls the flaw the "fallacy of idealism", that is, believing that all "determining factors of historical processes are ideas, and nothing else."¹⁰⁹ Under the influence of this methodological mistake "...what is...in reality a secondary reaction (Paul's theology of charisma) on primary, concrete phenomena in the social world (the pneumatic gifts in Corinth) is misinterpreted as being the structuring principle of that social world."¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁵ Shaw, Mirroring Jesus, 6.

¹⁰⁶ Adair, Leadership of Jesus, 139.

¹⁰⁷ Shaw, Mirroring Jesus, 9–10.

¹⁰⁸ See the discussion on John 21 in the next section.

¹⁰⁹ Bengt Holmberg, *Paul and Power: the structure of authority in the primitive church as reflected in the Pauline Epistles*, Coniectanea Biblica 11 (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1978), 204.

¹¹⁰ Holmberg, Paul and Power, 205.

We can see the "fallacy of idealism" working on leadership in the New Testament by examining three representative passages which are often cited as examples of the "New Testament's teaching on leadership". The examples are not exhaustive, but other passages we might have chosen will also be susceptible to the second-order inference. The passages are the "leadership discourse" of John 21, the role of the "supervisor" in 1 Timothy, and the "presider" in Romans 12.

Leading and Feeding Sheep — John 21

Jesus's post-resurrection appearance to the disciples and Peter in John 21:15–23 is very often glossed as a discourse on "leadership". This is especially true in recent popular scholarship. Thus, for example, Andrew Dawswell says that Jesus prepares the ministry of the Church for the post-Ascension experience by envisioning "a distinctive individual leadership role for Peter"¹¹¹, and cites Matt 16:13–19 and John 21:15ff in support. John 21 can be read, alternatively, as a masterclass on the "three critical elements of leadership", the "conduct", "context" and "complications" of Christian leadership.¹¹²

Popular presentations are reinforced by more scholarly exegesis. Thus Randy Poon characterizes Jesus's interaction with Peter as, among other things, an exercise in capacity-building for previously weak followers:

[Peter] has to know for himself that he is ready to take on the responsibilities that Jesus sets before him and that he is indeed ready to obey his Lord as a sign of his love for Him [John 14:15]. ...Jesus' encounter with Peter that day engages the headstrong disciple and helps him decide intrinsically whether he is committed and willing to follow Jesus.¹¹³

Similarly, Wilson, using socio-rhetorical criticism and the secular leadership theory of leader-member exchange, determines that on one level the passages display a "development path" devised by Jesus for Peter, which is, "in a fashion consistent with active management-by-exception and clear directives consistent with contingent reinforcement, forms of transactional leadership." 114

¹¹¹ Andrew Dawswell, *Ministry leadership teams: theory and practice in effective collaborative ministry*, Grove pastoral series P93 (Cambridge: Grove Books, 2003), 14.

¹¹² Tom Frame, "Jesus's checklist for good leadership," *The Church Times* (London, August 8, 2008). "Context" requires us to note that this article was published in the church press just before the 2008 meeting of the Lambeth Conference. Presumably the author saw a direct contemporary resonance for his interpretation.

¹¹³ Randy Poon, "John 21: A Johannine model of leadership," *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* 1, no. 1 (2006): 66.

¹¹⁴ John H. Wilson, "Jesus as Agent of Change: Leadership in John 21," *Emerging Leadership Journeys* 3, no. 1 (2010): 19.

Other scholars, operating with older, purely ecclesiological models, come to similar conclusions.

Peter is questioned with a three-fold pattern about the care of the "sheep" of the "flock". His answers given, even if unsatisfactory, are enough for him to be entrusted with the role of the shepherd, one previously reserved for Christ himself [John 10]. Jesus's questioning demonstrates that Peter has the devoted love that is the essence of leadership (to paraphrase Brown¹¹⁵). This, then, is the justification for Peter's unique apostolate: "the command to feed the sheep includes two activities which we have shown to be the successive expressions of Peter's apostolate: leadership of the Primitive Church in Jerusalem and missionary preaching."¹¹⁶ At the very least, it is the Johannine equivalent of "the apostolic mission conferred on the other disciples in the post-resurrectional appearances".¹¹²

There are two objections to this interpretation.

First, does Peter's assumed role of shepherd involve an assumption of leadership? The ministry of the shepherd, especially in John, is not a ministry of leadership, but rather of protection. Granted, the Johannine model shepherd is admitted by the gatekeeper to the sheepfold, is recognized by the sheep, and leads the sheep out from the fold [John 10:3,4]; but this is not the telos of the ideal shepherd. Thus Schnackenburg overstates his argument when he says Peter "is to lead the 'lambs' to the pasture of life and guard them in union with Jesus."118 The telos of the ideal shepherd is to lay down his life for the sheep as a direct result of receiving the commandment to do so from the Father [John 10:18]. Peter's qualification to share in this commandment does not come from his love for the sheep, but rather from his love for Jesus ("do you love me?" John 21:15,16,17). And that love is comparative: because Peter loves Jesus more than he loves the other disciples (or, alternatively, because he loves Jesus more than the other disciples do?), he is permitted to follow the example of the good shepherd. The example is a willing and obedient acceptance of death: "for among all the NT uses of shepherd imagery, only John x specifies that one of the functions of the model shepherd is to lay down his life for his sheep."119

¹¹⁵ Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John (XIII-XXI)*, The Anchor Yale Bible 29A (New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 1111. Brown considers it to demonstrate the "essence of *discipleship*".

¹¹⁶ Oscar Cullmann, *Peter, Disciple, Apostle, Martyr: a historical and theological study,* trans. Floyd V. Filson, 2nd ed. (London: S.C.M. Press, 1962), 65.

¹¹⁷ Brown, John XIII-XXI, 1113.

¹¹⁸ Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St John*, vol. 3 (London & Tunbridge Wells: Burns & Oates, 1982), 373.

¹¹⁹ Brown, John XIII-XXI, 1114.

This is reinforced by the second objection, which takes seriously the context of Jesus's conversation with Peter. Immediately following the injunctions to "feed my sheep" is the prophecy of Peter's martyrdom:

Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go. [John 21:18]

There is a parallelism here with the description of discipleship in Mark 8. Mark requires (1) denial of self, (2) a taking up of the cross, and (3) following Jesus. ¹²⁰ John requires (1) the surrendering of the fisherman to the role of shepherd [vv. 15–17], (2) the loss of personal autonomy which is expressed through being girded and led by others, and (3) an explicit command to "Follow me!" [v. 19, repeated at v. 22], which means "follow me to death" — "(He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.)" [v. 19]. ¹²¹ In reality, all three parts are a surrendering to death; the death of the ideal shepherd, the destination of death that no one wishes to reach, and the explicit following of Jesus to death. ¹²²

Bacon made an explicit connection between this discourse and our second passage from 1 Timothy: Peter is assigned "the functions of a faithful shepherd", but these functions are limited to "the *administrative* activity of a 'ruling overseer' in the classification of 1 Tim 3:1–7."¹²³ How does the leadership of a model shepherd compare with the leadership of a ruling overseer?

Supervising and Managing Households — 1 Timothy

The saying is sure: whoever aspires to the office of bishop desires a noble task. ²Now a bishop must be above reproach, married only once, temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, an apt teacher, ³not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, and not a lover of money. ⁴He must manage his own household well, keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way— ⁵for if someone does not know

¹²⁰ For more on Mark 8, see "Taking up—Mark 8", on page 120.

¹²¹ Tomas Arvedson, "Några notiser till två nytestamentliga perikoper," *Svensk Exegetisk Årsbok* 21 (1956): 27–29; subsequently summarized in Tomas Arvedson, "Some notes on two New Testament pericopes," *New Testament Abstracts* 3 (1958): 77. Ascribed erroneously by Brown to "N. Arvedson" in *John XIII-XXI*, 1113.

¹²² Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, ed. R. W. N. Hoare and J. K. Riches, trans. G. R. Beasley-Murray (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971), 713–4; Ersnt Haenchen, *John 2: A Commentary on the Gospel of John, Chapters 7-21*, ed. Robert W. Funk and Ulrich Busse, trans. Robert W. Funk (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 232, 226–7.

¹²³ B. W. Bacon, "The Motivation of John 21:15-25," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 50, no. 2 (1931): 74. Bacon contrasts this assignment with the role of the 'teaching' elder from 1 Tim 5:17 given to the Beloved Disciple.

how to manage his own household, how can he take care of God's church? ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may be puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace and the snare of the devil. [1 Tim 3:1–7, NRSV]

Discussions of the "authenticity" of 1 Tim or the "pastoral epistles" have no bearing on our task.¹²⁴ Even if we follow the influential, and ultimately unexamined, 125 conclusions of F. C. Baur and the Tübingen School in rejecting the epistles as authentically apostolic, Olsen's criterion of stability allows us to use the descriptions in the letter as indicative of the way in which the early Christian community thought a first century Christian community should be organised. 126 In 1 Tim 3:1–7 we see the first, and only, mention of episkopē in the New Testament in relation to a position within the community. It is a difficult word to translate linguistically and conceptually, "not because the Greek is unclear, but because English equivalents can be misleading."127 'Bishop' has accumulated later meanings, and it is difficult to read that "without associating aspects of pomp and ceremony (and authority)" which are neither historically nor ecclesiologically appropriate "in the case of the supervisor of a relatively small collegium in the first-century Roman Empire."128 Johnson here notes the appearance of episkopos alone, separated from its companions in the rest of the NT: diakonoi in Phil 1:1, presbyteros/presbyterion in Titus 1:7, Acts 20:28. "Supervisor" is the best translation for the word, idea, and role, says Johnson, as it is "a remarkably simple structure of leadership, and [has a] complete lack of theological legitimation." 129 Or, as Raymond Brown, emphatically puts it:

¹²⁴ See the extensive chronology and commentary in Luke Timothy Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy: a new translation with introduction and commentary,* The Anchor Yale Bible 35A (New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale University Press, 2001), sec. II, esp. II.E., "The Decisive and Divisive Nineteenth Century."

¹²⁵ The idea that these epistles are not Pauline "has come to seem to be a fact of nature rather than a scholarly hypothesis." Johnson, 1 & 2 Timothy (Anchor), 53.

¹²⁶ See Ferdinand Christian Baur, *Die sogennanten Pastoralbriefe des Apostels Paulus aufs neue kritisch untersucht* (Stuttgart & Tübingen: J. G. Cotta, 1835); and the description in Horton Harris, *The Tübingen School* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975). Luke Timothy Johnson convincingly argues for both the "uncoupling" of 1 and 2 Timothy from the yoke of the "pastoral epistles" nomenclature and the authenticity of the traditional attribution. See Johnson, *1 & 2 Timothy (Anchor)*, sec. III.A.3,4; III.D.

¹²⁷ Johnson, 1 & 2 Timothy (Anchor), 212.

¹²⁸ Johnson, 1 & 2 Timothy (Anchor), 212.

 $^{^{129}}$ Johnson, 1 & 2 *Timothy (Anchor)*, 213. The choice of "supervisor" is Johnson's own, and somewhat begs the translation.

No cultic or liturgical role is assigned to the presbyter-bishops in the Pastorals.¹³⁰

The lack of a cultic locus is developed in the chapter: the supervisor "must manage [προ-ϊστάμενον] his own household well, keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way—for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how can he take care of God's church?" [1 Tim 3:4-5]. *Prohistēmi* means "to govern or administer", but its root meaning is "to stand-before, to be in the one in such a position". It is the verb or participle usually translated as exercising leadership within the ecclesial community [see Rom. 12:8 and 1 Thess 5:12] and 1 Tim uses it to mean supervision over deacons [3:12] and elders [5:17] as well as the ministry particular to the *episkopos*. But before whom is one 'before-standing'? In what forum in this "ruling well" exercised? The supervisor must keep "his children submissive and respectful in every way" / "with his children in *subordination* with complete reverence". 131 $Hypotag\bar{e}$ is the same noun used to describe the position of women in the ecclesial assembly in 2:11. The supervisor is to maintain order in his household, and by analogical extension, within the ecclesial community. This is leadership modelled uncritically on the cultural norm of Greco-Roman culture, particularly in the absolute rule of the pater familas. 132 As Johnson points out, for Paul the question in verse 5 is rhetorical: "the ability to rule the church [as paterfamilias] presupposes at least the ability to govern one's own household" in the same, culturally determined, manner.133

Deacons [in 1 Tim 3:12] and elders [in 5:17] are expected to supervise the blend of household and ecclesial community in a similar manner.¹³⁴ After all, the *ekklēsia* (the church) is itself the *oikos tou theou* (the household of God) [1 Tim 3:15].

¹³⁰ Raymond E. Brown, "Episkopē and Episkopos: The New Testament Evidence," *Theological Studies* 41, no. 2 (June 1980): 336.

¹³¹ Johnson's translation: 1 & 2 Timothy (Anchor), 212.

¹³² See, for example, Dionysius of Halicarnassus (fl. 60-7 BC) and the *Digest* of Ulpian (fl AD 211 and 222), in Tim G. Parkin and Arthur J. Pomeroy, eds., *Roman Social History: a sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 2007), s.v. 3.59,3.60. For the influence of the Roman *patria potestas* on the Hellenic world, and through that in the social world of the New Testament, see Gottfried Quell and Gottlob Schrenk, " $\pi\alpha\tau\dot{\eta}\varrho$," ed. Gerhard Friedrich and G. W. Bromiley, trans. G. W. Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1968), 950–1.

¹³³ Johnson, 1 & 2 Timothy (Anchor), 216.

¹³⁴ David C. Verner, *The Household of God: the social world of the Pastoral Epistles* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1983), 128,145–7. Cited by Johnson, *1 & 2 Timothy (Anchor)*, 223.

Clearly, leadership here is envisaged as a much more directive and controlling role than is comfortable for contemporary readers who at best consider leaders as 'enablers' or 'facilitators'.¹³⁵

Before-Standing and Gifts — Romans 12

Paul's description of leadership in 1 Tim does seem to assume that it is a function of socially conventional roles. What about his description in Romans, where 'before-standing' is much more closely connected to pneumatic gifts?

The charisma of Rom 12 are "the specific participation of individual Christians in grace". 136 That participation is "the special gift for service" 137, and the service is the edification of the church. Thus we see Paul's (non-exclusive) list¹³⁸, in which the *charisma* (sometimes noun, but more often participle) is accompanied by the serving gerund-participle: prophecy, in proportion to faith, ministry and ministering; teacher, teaching and so on. An exception is the leader; he is to be diligent in his 'before-standing' (ο προισταμενος εν σπουδη) [Rom 12:8]. But as Ziesler points out, *proïstamenos* is placed, sixth in the list, between 'contributing liberally' and 'performing acts of mercy'. The context is the "social-service aspect of the primitive church's life"139, not its polity. The reference, surely, is to the person in charge of the disbursement of the church's financial support, and therefore a more reasonable translation would be "he who gives let him do so with simplicity, he who cares with zeal, he who does good with cheerfulness."140 This is a socially-reflexive role, rather than a theologically-defined one: as Cranfield puts it, the phrase seems to conjure an image of the charitable administrator who by "virtue of his social status" was able to act as friend, advocate and protector "for those members of the community who were not in a position to defend themselves."141 This is first century noblesse oblige. There is a theological depth to this teaching, which moves beyond mere charity: "the task of the προϊστάμενοι is in large measure

¹³⁵ Johnson, 1 & 2 Timothy (Anchor), 223–4.

¹³⁶ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, Romans: a new translation with introduction and commentary, Anchor Bible

^{33 (}London: Doubleday, 1992), 646.

¹³⁷ Johnson, 1 & 2 Timothy (Anchor), 253.

¹³⁸ They are a symbolic seven in number, standing for the "totality of such God-given charisms." Fitzmyer, *Romans (Anchor)*, 647.

¹³⁹ John Ziesler, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, TPI New Testament Commentaries (London; Philadelphia: S.C.M. Press; Trinity Press International, 1989), 300. See also C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans: commentary on Romans IX-XVI and essays*, vol. 2, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979), 626.

140 Bo Reicke, "προϊστημι," ed. Gerhard Friedrich and G. W. Bromiley, trans. G. W. Bromiley, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1968), 701. Compare with "he who gives aid, [to do so] with zeal" in Ziesler, *Romans*, 290.

¹⁴¹ Cranfield, Romans, 2:626-7.

that of pastoral care, and the emphasis is not on their rank or authority but on their efforts for the eternal salvation of believers."¹⁴²

"Leadership" here is not heroic. It is to administer diligently the pastoral care of the *ekklēsia*. To do so will require the disqualification of those "who love money" [1 Tim 3:3], among other examples of "bourgeois morality". 143 And yet, as Johnson points out, "to ask for a leader who has moral probity and is known by outsiders as having such virtue is to make a legitimate request at any time, but, above all, when the reputation of the community is threatened by leaders who lack such qualities." 144 There may be some source in contemporary ideas of power and authority vested in the head of the household (*patria potestas*) but in Rom 12 and 1 Tim 3, Paul's attention is not on the exercise of that power, but the discretion, care and diligence required of him who holds that power. The one who "before-stands" might be a leader, but he is one who serves: δ ἡγούμενος ὡς δ διακονῶν [Luke 22:26]. 145

The bounded, stable, and culturally distinguishable characteristics of the Jesus movement do not seem to have placed a great weight on the quest for "leadership". At least, the sort of leadership we have found in the Jesus Movement and its scriptures does not seem to be the sort of leadership looked for and desired by the secular scholars of the twentieth century and their ecclesiastical admirers. If the Jesus Movement was not a leadership movement, what, therefore, can we say its nature more exactly was?

The Jesus Movement as a Discipleship Community

Simply put, the Jesus Movement was a *Discipleship Community* (DC), in which the primary purpose of the community was to instil in its (loosely defined) members, a sense of what it means to be a disciple ("one who accepted [Jesus's] teachings and sought to be identified with him"¹⁴⁶).

Thus, following Dunn¹⁴⁷, the proclamation of Jesus's Gospel was based on the three-fold message of: 'Repent'; 'Believe'; 'Follow Me'.¹⁴⁸ This final injunction demonstrates the irreducibly personal nature of the Jesus movement. In this description, the important emphasis should be placed on the personal

¹⁴² Reicke, "προϊστημι," 701.

¹⁴³ See, among many others, Ferdinand Hahn, *Mission in the New Testament*, trans. Frank Clarke, Studies in Biblical Theology 47 (London: S.C.M. Press, 1965), 140; Martin Dibelius and Hans Conzelmann, *The Pastoral Epistles: a commentary*, ed. Helmut Koester (Philadelphia, Pa.: Fortress Press, 1972), 76f.

¹⁴⁴ Johnson, 1 & 2 Timothy (Anchor), 225.

¹⁴⁵ Reicke, "προϊστημι," 702.

¹⁴⁶ From the Introduction to Longenecker, *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament*, 2.

¹⁴⁷ Dunn, Jesus Remembered, 1:9 & 13.

¹⁴⁸ Dunn, Jesus Remembered, 1:13.2.

nature of the relationship structures within the DC. Everything was focused through and around Jesus. Here Dunn is reconstructing in a different arena and from a different angle the insight of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in which Christian discipleship should only be, *can* only be, mediated through the person of Jesus Christ, through the process which Bonhoeffer called *Christus als Gemeinde existierend*, Christ existing as community.¹⁴⁹

We have reached a sufficient position to move onto the examination of particular scriptural passages in which we can trace the outworking of this DC. In what ways did the community of the Jesus movement, swiftly, come to understand its vocation and its relationship with its founder? What are the significant scriptural reflections on what it means to be a disciple within this community? We shall see, in the scriptural witness, what Hengel has called the "almost inseparable fusion of the 'Jesus tradition' and 'community formations' in the Gospel traditions." ¹⁵⁰ In other words, from the very earliest expressions of the Synoptic tradition, the Christian community was aware of continuity between what it understood discipleship to be, and what was taught and modelled by its founder.

Discipleship and the Cross

The fact that Jesus was judicially executed through the Roman punishment of crucifixion was a major evangelistic and theological handicap for the early Church. Paul recognised it as such when he referred to the "stumbling-block" for the Jews and "foolishness" for the Gentiles to hear the message of a crucified Christ [1 Cor 1:23]. His only strategy was to proclaim the qualitative difference between the wisdom of God and the wisdom of the world.

The stumbling block did not recede for later Christian apologists. Thus Justin acknowledges that the pagans regard the crucified Christ as evidence of Christian "madness" ($\mu\alpha\nu i\alpha$), in that "we give to a crucified man a place second to the unchangeable and eternal God." ¹⁵¹

 $^{^{149}}$ See, for example, Bonhoeffer, *DBWE 1*, 121. We will examine this concept, along with others central to Bonhoeffer's work, in much greater detail in Chapter 9. See especially the discussion below from page 336.

¹⁵⁰ Hengel, Charismatic Leader, 83.

¹⁵¹ Justin Martyr, "First Apology," in *The Apostolic Fathers; Justin Martyr; Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, vol. 1, The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), 13.4. See also *Dialogue with Trypho* 8.3; 10.3; 90.1; 137.1ff.

Pagan observers were no less damning. For Tacitus, Christianity as a whole was a "pernicious superstition" (*exitiabilis superstitio*)¹⁵²; for Pliny the Younger it was also "extravagant" (*superstitionem pravam et immodicam*).¹⁵³ Even popular authors were able to mock the public role of the cross: Plautus connected the outstretching of arms with the weight of the cross-piece of the cross:

You'll soon have to trudge out beyond the gate in that attitude, I take it—arms outstretched, with your gibbet on your shoulders (*patibulum cum habetis*).¹⁵⁴

Minucius Felix, a Christian apologist (fl. c. A.D. 210), shows how such vituperation was sustained in pagan Roman culture:

...he who explains their ceremonies by reference to a man punished by extreme suffering for his wickedness, and to the deadly wood of the cross, (hominem summo supplicio pro facinore punitum et crucis ligna feralia) appropriates fitting altars for reprobate and wicked men (congruentia perditis sceleratisque tribuit altaria), that they may worship what they deserve.¹⁵⁵

As Hengel, who collated many more examples of Greco-Roman attitudes to the cross and crucifixion, puts it:

A crucified messiah, son of God or God [himself] must have seemed a contradiction in terms to anyone Jew, Greek, Roman or barbarian, asked to believe such a claim, and it will certainly have been thought offensive and foolish.¹⁵⁶

And yet we have it on good authority that Christ was crucified. And, more than that, the fact of his crucifixion was a central part of Christian preaching

¹⁵² Annals, Cornelius Tacitus, *The Histories; The Annals*, trans. Jackson, vol. IV, Loeb Classical Library 249 (London; Cambridge, Mass.: William Heinemann; Harvard University Press, 1937), 15.44.3.

¹⁵³ Pliny the Younger, *Letters and Panegyricus*, trans. Betty Radice, vol. 2, Loeb Classical Library 59 (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press; William Heinemann, 1975), Letters 10.96.4–8.

¹⁵⁴ Titus Maccius Plautus, "The Braggart Warrior (Miles Gloriosus)," in *Works*, vol. 3, Loeb Classical Library 163 (London: William Heinemann, 1924), 2.4.7, p. 161.

¹⁵⁵ Octavius 9.4. Latin from M. Minucius Felix, Octavius, ed. Hans von Geisau (Münster Westfalen: Aschendorff, 1946). English translation from "Octavius," in Fathers of the Third Century: Tertullian, Minucius Felix; Commodian; Origen, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, trans. Robert Ernest Wallis, vol. 4, 10 vols., The Ante-Nicene Fathers: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers down to A.D. 325 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956), 167–198.

¹⁵⁶ Martin Hengel, *Crucifixion: in the ancient world and the folly of the message of the cross* (London: Philadelphia: S.C.M. Press; Fortress Press, 1977), 10.

from the beginning, as we can see from its incorporation in Paul's letters, and the way Jesus's own teaching about crucifixion was retained. Why was the fact of crucifixion so important for the kerygma of the Gospel? What does the cross have to teach those who seek to follow Christ?

Taking up—Mark 8

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." [Mark 8:34]

This passage comes in within the long exploration of discipleship in Mark 8:22–10:52. This passage, according to Ernest Best, marks the transition in Jesus's ministry from public to private, where the focus is no longer teaching *to* the crowd but teaching *for* the disciples. The crowds might be present, they might overhear, or even be addressed by Jesus, but from this central section of the gospel onwards, the content of Jesus's message is intended for the inner circle, those who have chosen to follow him: it is "the centre of Mark's instruction to his readers on the meaning for them of Christ and their own discipleship." ¹⁵⁷

The section begins and ends with the healing of a blind man, the man from Bethsaida and the separate healing of Bartimaeus. The healings function as catalysts for Jesus's true nature and purpose to be both demonstrated and explained. The blindness of the man at Bethsaida is contrasted explicitly with the blindness of Peter in refusing to see the nature of the Messiah's vocation [Mark 8:32]. Mark does not give us the terms of Peter's rebuke, but Matthew presents it as an attempt to preserve Jesus from such a fate: "God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you" [Matt 16:22]. Jesus's response is just as direct as before: "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things" [Mark 8:33].

Now it is time to set the disciples' minds (and the minds of the accompanying crowd) upon divine things, to instruct the listeners into the true nature of the discipleship they seem to have so blithely accepted. Jesus turns to the assembled crowd and instructs them on the nature of the relationship into which they have entered.

Ernest Best points out the significance of Mark's Greek in vv. 34–38. The commands "deny" and "take up" are in the aorist tense: the action is past and complete. But the verb translated "follow" as in "take up their cross and

¹⁵⁷ Best, Following Jesus, 15.

¹⁵⁸ Here Best is surely wrong when he says: "The *three* commands, 'come, deny, take up', here in the aorist tense…" (Ernest Best, *Disciples and discipleship: studies in the Gospel according to Mark* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986), 7. Emphasis added.) The word which Best translates as "come" and the NRSV translates as "followers", is ἀχολουθεῖν, whose lemma is ἀχολουθέω.

follow me", ἀκολουθείω, is in the present active imperative singular¹⁵⁹ (S. 190). The action, the *following*, with a cross that has been once and for all taken up, continues.

In the social and religious world of first century Palestine, a disciple would often expect to 'follow' his rabbi. 'Following' meant something particular and practical: in Rabbinic literature, to follow was "the act of the disciple who walks at a respectful distance behind their master." However, for Jesus and his disciples, "coming after" means something new and innovative:

The call is not one to accept a certain system of teaching, live by it, continue faithfully to interpret it and pass it on, which was in essence the call of a rabbi to his disciples; nor was it a call to accept a certain philosophical position which will express itself in a certain type of behaviour, as in stoicism; nor is it the call to devote the alleviation of suffering for others; nor is it the call to pass through certain rites as in the Mysteries so as to become an initiate of the God, his companion—the carrying of the cross is no rite! It is a call to fall in behind Jesus and go with him.¹⁶¹

For Mark, the taking-up of the cross is neither wholly metaphorical, as it is with Luke ['If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross *daily* and follow me.' Luke 9:23: emphasis added]; nor is it wholly literal. Even though Mark was probably written in the time of the Neronian persecution, AD 63, as Best points out¹⁶², Mark expected some of the disciples to survive physically to the time of the Second Coming of Christ and the vindication of the persecuted church: 'Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see that the kingdom of God has come with power' [Mark 9:1]. The "cross" must mean, therefore, the "ever present possibility" of persecution in the early church.¹⁶³ As Daniel Berrigan said, "If you want to follow Jesus, you had better look good on wood."¹⁶⁴ It

¹⁵⁹ Its meaning is "to be in the same way with": see Strong.

¹⁶⁰ Eduard Schweizer, Lordship and Discipleship (London: S.C.M. Press, 1960), 12...

¹⁶¹ Best, Disciples and discipleship, 7f.

¹⁶² Best, *Disciples and discipleship*, 8. This is not a uniformly agreed dating. See the extensive discussion by Crossley, where the "persecution context" of Mark 13 is ascribed to the 'Caligula crisis', and therefore the Gospel is dated to the late 30s and early 40s: James G. Crossley, *The Date of Mark's Gospel: insight from the law in earliest Christianity* (London: T. & T. Clark International, 2004).

¹⁶³ Best, Disciples and discipleship, 9.

¹⁶⁴ This aphorism is widely attributed to Berrigan, but never with a source. Even Ross Labrie, the editor of a collection of his writings, was unable to confirm the accuracy of the attribution to me: Ross Labrie, "Daniel Berrigan and Discipleship", October 29, 2009; *The Writings of Daniel Berrigan* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1989).

should be noted that Berrigan does not mean by this that the means of Jesus's passion should be literally and physically emulated; rather he affirms that to be a true disciple of Jesus will require an intimate and costly acquaintance with persecution and suffering. Hurtado describes this as a "cross-emphasis" in Mark's Christology and the scheme of his Gospel, which "coheres with his emphasis on Jesus's crucifixion as the paradigm of faithful discipleship." ¹⁶⁵

In the instruction to take up the cross Mark makes no distinction between two potential audiences: the crowds and the disciples. He is happy to differentiate between the two in other passages; for example showing Jesus physically or rhetorically withdrawing to give his disciples a hidden teaching; in Mark 9:9 "he ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead"; in Mark 10:45 "For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many" [see further Mark 4:10ff; 6:31; 7:17; 10:10]. In this passage the significance of the cross and its connection to Jesus's own resurrection is described to the inner circle alone. But in Mark 8 it is both crowd and disciples who are presented with the *consequences* of discipleship: it is only later that the disciples are presented with the *rewards* of discipleship. This is, Best says lightly:

...the reverse of the modern evangelist's practice: to preach Christ crucified and then explain to converts the nature of discipleship and the activities involved therein. Does this mean that it was the custom in Mark's community to challenge the uncommitted with the hard call to dedicated service and leave the difficult matter of the cross until they had accepted the call to committal?¹⁶⁶

Best thinks that this would be unfair to Mark: the intention of the evangelist is to question the commitment of those who claim to be Christian but whose expression of faith was feeble and half-hearted. For Mark and his community there was

...essentially no difference in the meaning of Christianity for the new Christian and the experienced convert of long-standing: for each it is as simple and as difficult as taking the cross and denying the self.¹⁶⁷

These two aspects for discipleship in the early Church are equally important and we should treat them separately.

¹⁶⁵ Larry W. Hurtado, "Following Jesus in the Gospel of Mark—and beyond," in *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament*, ed. Richard N. Longenecker, McMaster New Testament studies (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 1996), 25.

¹⁶⁶ Best, *Following Jesus*, 31. The whole section on Mark 8:34-9:1 on pages 28-54 is relevant to this discussion.

¹⁶⁷ Best, Following Jesus, 32.

Discipleship and Denial

There is a practical component to the discipleship of the early church: it is not "mere" intellectual assent, or ritual action. It is an encompassing attitude, which finds its expression through continuing action. And the encompassing attitude is to be summed up in the word "denial": $\dot{\alpha}\pi\alpha\rho\nu\dot{\epsilon}o\mu\alpha\iota$ (aparnéomai).

This is the important word to understand if we are to understand Christianity's earliest concepts of leadership and followership. *Self*-denial is the royal road to discipleship. Often, however, inquiries are so fixated on the question of the destination, discipleship, that the place of origin is neglected: what or who is it that is being denied?

In modern Western culture the answer is so apparent as to be axiomatic: the self being denied is purely and completely congruent with the autonomous individual. We see a fine, and perhaps defining, expression of this idea in the work of Adolf Harnack. In the third of his sixteen lectures on "What is Christianity?" delivered in the University of Berlin in 1899–1900, Harnack explored the meaning of the "kingdom of God". For Harnack the metaphor was only explicable as a kingdom of individuals:

The kingdom of God comes by coming to the individual, by entering into his soul and laying hold of it. True, the kingdom of God is the rule of God; but it is the rule of the holy God in the hearts of individuals; it is *God Himself in His power*. From this point of view everything that is dramatic in the external and historical sense has vanished; and gone, too, are all the external hopes for the future.¹⁶⁸

Harnack justified his position by reference to Jesus's parabolic teaching:

Take whatever parable you will, the parable of the sower, of the pearl of great price, of the treasure buried in the field—the word of God, God himself, is the kingdom. It is not a question of angels and devils, thrones and principalities, but of God and the soul, the soul and its God.¹⁶⁹

Harnack was not alone in this belief: it was a *sine qua non* of his time and culture. So, for example, Paul Wernle believed that "the most certain characteristic of Jesus' thought [was] a decisive stern religious individualism." ¹⁷⁰ Ernst Troeltsch in a study (which verged on the polemical) directed against the theological implications of Klaus Kautsky's social

¹⁶⁸ "Lecture III", in Adolf Harnack, *What Is Christianity? sixteen lectures delivered in the University of Berlin during the winter term, 1899-1900*, trans. Thomas Bailey Saunders, 3rd and rev. (London; New York: Williams and Norgate; G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), 57. Emphasis in original. ¹⁶⁹ Harnack, *What Is Christianity?*, 57–8. Of course this is only true if one ignores the parable of the tares, the net, the talents, sheep and goats, and so on.

¹⁷⁰ Paul Wernle, *Jesus* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1917); quoted in Martin Dibelius, "Jesus in contemporary German theology," *The Journal of Religion* 11, no. 2 (April 1931): 191.

democratic sociology¹⁷¹, makes it clear that the Christian faith is not a social organization concerned with social justice (the Christian church was not "a social movement", neither was it "the product of a class struggle", nor was it concerned with the "social upheavals of the ancient world"¹⁷²). Rather the root idea was religious individualism: "...in the whole range of Early Christian literature...there is no hint of any formulation of the 'Social' question'; the central problem is always purely religious..."¹⁷³ For Troeltsch, "purely religious" problems are to do with "the salvation of the soul, monotheism, life after death, purity of worship, the right kind of congregational organization, the application of Christian ideals to daily life, and the need for severe self-discipline in the interests of personal holiness".¹⁷⁴ Jesus has nothing to say about social injustice. He "was too lofty a figure to be addressing workaday concerns of social reform... Above all, he was concerned to help the individual prepare the soul for an imminent Kingdom that was not of this world."¹⁷⁵

One might speculate why this was so. Dibelius thought it evidence of a curious persistence of Enlightenment ideas in German theology. The But if this is the case, then it was a particularly and peculiarly German form of Enlightenment thought: the German idea of "individualism" has its roots in the threefold related eighteenth century concepts of the egalitarian rights of man (political liberalism), a utilitarian doctrine of *laissez faire* (economic liberalism), and thirdly, the "aristocratic cult of individuality" (Romantic individualism). It was this third strand which became the defining factor for German thinking on individualism: it was 'individuality' (*Individualität*), "the notion of individual uniqueness, originality, self-realization" that became the basis of German thinking on the subject. Karl Brüggemann in the 1840s called this a characteristically German quality, "wholesouled", that demonstrated "the

¹⁷¹ Karl Kautsky, *Die Vorläufer des neueren Sozialismus [The Forerunners of Modern Socialism]*, ed. Karl Kautsky and Eduard Bernstein, vol. 1, Die Geschichte des Sozialismus in Einzeldarstellungen (Stuttgart: Diek, 1895), 16–40. See the notes to chapter 1 in Ernst Troeltsch, *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches*, trans. Olive Wyon, vol. 1 (London: Allen & Unwin, 1931), 165–7.

¹⁷² Troeltsch, Social Teaching, 1:39.

¹⁷³ Troeltsch, Social Teaching, 1:39.

¹⁷⁴ Troeltsch, Social Teaching, 1:39.

¹⁷⁵ Constance L. Benson, *God and Caesar: Troeltsch's Social Teaching as legitimation* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 1998), 159.

¹⁷⁶ Dibelius, "Jesus in contemporary German theology," 191.

¹⁷⁷ Koenraad W. Swart, "'Individualism' in the Mid-Nineteenth Century (1826-1860)," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 23, no. 1 (March 1962): 77.

¹⁷⁸ Steven Lukes, "The Meanings of 'Individualism'," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 32, no. 1 (March 1971): 52.

infinite self-confidence of the individual aiming to be personally free in morals and in truth." ¹⁷⁹

This may have been so for nineteenth and twentieth century Germany, but there is little to be said for the argument that a Romantic and heroic individual was the proper seat for the "self" in the Mediterranean culture of the Palestine of Jesus's day. Rather, as Bruce Malina argues180, then the "self" was to be understood properly as a "collective" entity. "Self" is the arena in which "selfinterest" might be expressed, and the values of self-interest protected: in "individualistic cultures, self-interests are proper to single persons, while in collectivist societies, self-interests are proper to ingroups."181 In other words, what we call the "self" is limited to the autonomous actions of an individual: within a collectivist culture, the parameters of the self are drawn, paradoxically to our way of thinking, further out, incorporating psychological and social entities we think are beyond the self proper.¹⁸² In these societies, to deny the self, is to deny the collectivist self, not what might be thought of in an individualistic culture such as the present-day West, and the "outcome of such [collectivist] self-denial...would be a new ingroup consisting of affiliation to a fictive kin group"183, that is, an elective group with whom the individual self could align him/herself in order to fulfil the needs of a collectivist identity. Aligning with this fictive, elective group is a necessity to survive in a collectivist-self society if "family integrity" 184 is negated, for one reason (social catastrophe) or another (following Jesus). Fundamentally (and problematically for a post-Harnack individualist society and religion), "[a]dherence to a fictive kin group centred on God and adhering to the teaching of Jesus was to characterize true Israel". 185 Davis notes how this functions in Mark's Gospel. The calling of the Twelve [Mark 3:13–35] is followed by "a group of stories set in a house which show Jesus at odds with his blood kin and forming a 'new family' including only those who do the will of God."186 The leaving of "one's literal family" is both the cause of persecution and the means by which one

¹⁷⁹ Karl Heinrich Brüggemann, *Dr. List's Nationales System der politischen Ökonomie* (Berlin: W. Cornelius, 1842). Quoted in Lukes, "The Meanings of 'Individualism'," 52.

¹⁸⁰ Bruce J. Malina, *The Social World of Jesus and the Gospels* (London: Routledge, 1996), 73–94.

¹⁸¹ Malina, Social World of Jesus, 73-4.

The analogy with the Bantu ethical concept of *ubuntu* is striking, under which an individual is only human inasmuch as s/he is in connection with a wider community: see the discussion of Desmond Tutu's exploration of the connections between Christian theology and *ubuntu* in Michael Battle, *Ubuntu*: *I in you and you in me* (New York: Seabury Books, 2009), chap. 2.

¹⁸³ Malina, Social World of Jesus, 87.

¹⁸⁴ Malina, Social World of Jesus, 86.

¹⁸⁵ Malina, Social World of Jesus, 94.

¹⁸⁶ Davis, "Self-understanding in Mark," 112.

"embrace[s] a new Christian family". 187 One theologian, despite teaching in Harnack's university, was able to affirm this collectivist teaching: "Human existence has continuity only through the other person. We are imaginable only as bound to our neighbour." 188

We can examine in more detail the constituting of a fictive kin group in the teaching of Luke 9:57–62.

Leaving the dead—Luke 9

To another Jesus said: 'Follow me.' But he said, 'Lord, first let me go and bury my father.' But Jesus said to him, 'Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.' [Luke 9:59–60]

As Sanders points out, this teaching has a double impact.¹⁸⁹ The first, a positive one, is widely recognised: to be a disciple of Jesus is a response to an urgent call, and trumps all other responsibilities. So, for example, Schweizer argues that this shows "discipleship excludes all other ties." The disciples of Jesus "should be prepared to deny everything, including their lives." ¹⁹⁰ But, as Sanders notes, the refusal to bury one's parents is not just disobeying filial obligations; it is also disobedience to God in the Torah.¹⁹¹ Caring for the dead bodies of one's family superseded all other commandments of the Torah:

He who is confronted by a dead relative is freed from reciting the Shema' from the Eighteen Benedictions, and from all the commandments stated in the Torah.¹⁹²

It is not enough to set this refusal to obey the Torah to one side, as if Jesus were referring to a different situation from that envisaged in the Law: it is hard, says Sanders, "to believe that Jesus saw the requirement to bury dead parents

¹⁸⁷ Davis, "Self-understanding in Mark," 112. See also the experience of converts in Mark 10:29-30, and the metaphor of the household awaiting the master's return in 13:34-36. See also John R. Donahue, *The Theology and Setting of Discipleship in the Gospel of Mark* (Milwaukee, Wisc.: Marquette University Press, 1983), 31–51.

¹⁸⁸ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "Dogmatic Exercises on 'Theological Anthropology'," in *Berlin*, 1932-1933, ed. Carsten Nicolaisen, Ernst-Albert Scharffenorth, and Larry L. Rasmussen, trans. Isabel Best, David Higgins, and Douglas W. Stott, DBWE 12 (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2009), 222.

¹⁸⁹ Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 253.

¹⁹⁰ Schweizer, Lordship and Discipleship, 16,21.

¹⁹¹ Sanders, Jesus and Judaism, 253.

¹⁹² Berakoth 3.1, quoted in Hengel, *Charismatic Leader*, 9. There is an significant transgression of this commandment in the work of Ralph Waldo Emerson: "I shun father and mother and wife and brother, when my genius calls me." Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance (1841)," in *Essays: First Series*, ed. Alfred R. Ferguson, vol. 2, The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1979), 30. We shall see the significance of this in Chapter 5, "The Individuator of Individualism".

as only 'domestic responsibility' and did not know that it was a commandment from God."¹⁹³ It seems reasonable to conclude, therefore, that in this circumstance at least, Jesus believed that the call to follow him would require clear disobedience of the Law of Moses. Discipleship, here, sets the disciple beyond the conventions and requirements of society. The "fictive kin group" has first call.

Five Provisional Heuristic Strategies

Before we examine the way in which the mythos of leadership has been depicted, expressed and constructed in popular film, we can draw five provisional heuristic strategies from this treatment of discipleship in the New Testament.¹⁹⁴

First and foremost, whatever else we say, we should acknowledge that Jesus called people to follow him, in a way in which a direct allegiance to his person and authority was expected. Schweizer calls this "decisive, indeed as *the* decisive act." ¹⁹⁵ To be a disciple meant *following* Jesus. ¹⁹⁶

Second, Jesus's calling begins something new, in which everything will be changed. Even the oldest, most instinctive, requirements of the Law and the function of grace through the Law, are subject to change, if not overthrowal (as we saw with the injunction to bury the dead in the previous section). This calling assumes "the character of an act of divine grace".¹⁹⁷

Third, "following Jesus" means sharing an intimacy with Jesus, and performing acts of service with and to him. As Hurtado puts it, it means following *Jesus*, "with no rival, no distraction and no competition for the allegiance of his disciples". 198

Fourth, it requires self-denial, which, as we have seen in the cultural world of first-century Palestine, is not limited solely to (modern) understandings of the self as an individuated person; the self was identified and located within a complex network of relationships, responsibilities and obligations. These are all to be given up.

Fifth, and not unexpectedly, denying the self, whether collectivist or individualist, in order to follow Jesus will lead to rejection, suffering and death,

¹⁹³ Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism*, 254. Sanders is quoting Robert Banks, *Jesus and the Law in the Synoptic Tradition*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph series 28 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 97.

¹⁹⁴ Following, and expanding upon, Schweizer, Lordship and Discipleship, chap. 1.

¹⁹⁵ Schweizer, Lordship and Discipleship, 20.

¹⁹⁶ See Hurtado, "Following Jesus," 25–27; Davis, "Self-understanding in Mark," 108–110.

¹⁹⁷ Schweizer, Lordship and Discipleship, 20.

¹⁹⁸ Hurtado, "Following Jesus," 25.

just as Jesus himself experienced all those things. But rejection, suffering and death is also the path to redemptive glory, for the Teacher and disciple alike.

One Provisional Teleology

If these five strategies are anything more than provisional, and I believe they are, then what Gerhard Lohfink has called the "confirmation of truth through praxis" should be manifested, that is, the strategies will be enacted in the world in which we inhabit.

Within the traumas of twentieth century North Atlantic society one man stands out as an exemplar of the consequences of behaving as if the Jesus Movement were a Discipleship Community: namely, Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–1945). Born into academic prosperity, with personal gifts of intellect, wit, charisma and culture, Bonhoeffer might have been the perfect avatar for the culturally fashionable, if not dominant, expectation of hero-worship.²⁰⁰ This desire for the hero manifested itself in both Wilhelmine and Weimar German society as the search for the Leader, the Führer, and the intellectual foundation for the leadership of the Leader as das Führerprinzip (the Leadership Principle). In many ways, as we shall see in Chapter 6, Bonhoeffer would have been an ideal candidate for fulfilling these expectations of his time and culture. However, Bonhoeffer was a Christian, of a particular and serious kind, who was able to identify the ways in which the Christianity of his country had become culturally conditioned and, ultimately, culturally contaminated. Through his identification with the Jesus Movement as a DC, Bonhoeffer was able to resist the totalitarian domination of *My-L* in twentieth century Germany. Furthermore, he was able to explore and model the validity of the DC in circumstances far removed from the original.

But before I describe the details of Bonhoeffer's ethos,²⁰¹ I need to examine the other side of our dialogue, the nature and functioning of "myth" within an industrialised, capitalist, society and culture.

¹⁹⁹ Lohfink, Jesus and Community, 176.

²⁰⁰ The most comprehensive biography of Bonhoeffer is that prepared and revised by his colleague Eberhard Bethge: *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: a biography*, ed. Victoria Barnett and Edwin Robertson, trans. Eric Mosbacher, Rev. ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000). Ashorter guide is Joel Lawrence, *Bonhoeffer: a guide for the perplexed* (London: Continuum International, 2010). Two important works on the context and consequences of Bonhoeffer's stand against the mythology of his time are: Clifford J. Green, *Bonhoeffer: a theology of sociality*, Rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999); Geffrey B. Kelly and F. Burton Nelson, *The Cost of Moral Leadership: the spirituality of Dietrich Bonhoeffer* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 2003).

²⁰¹ See Chapter 9, and the section "Refuting the Dominion of Some Over Others" below.

Section 2 The "Problem" of Myth

Jesus Christ belonged to the true race of prophets. He saw with open eye the mystery of the soul. Drawn by its severe harmony, ravished with its beauty, he lived in it, and had his being there. Alone in all history, he estimated the greatness of man. One man was true to what is in you and me. He saw that God incarnates himself in man, and evermore goes forth anew to take possession of his world. He said, in this jubilee of sublime emotion, 'I am divine. Through me, God acts; through me, speaks. Would you see God, see me; or, see thee, when thou also thinkest as I now think.' But what a distortion did his doctrine and memory suffer in the same, in the next, and the following ages! There is no doctrine of the Reason which will bear to be taught by the Understanding. The understanding caught this high chant from the poet's lips, and said, in the next age, 'This was Jehovah come down out of heaven. I will kill you, if you say he was a man.' The idioms of his language, and the figures of his rhetoric, have usurped the place of his truth; and churches are not built on his principles, but on his tropes. Christianity became a Mythus, as the poetic teaching of Greece and of Egypt, before. He spoke of miracles; for he felt that man's life was a miracle, and all that man doth, and he knew that this daily miracle shines, as the character ascends. But the word Miracle, as pronounced by Christian churches, gives a false impression; it is Monster. It is not one with the blowing clover and the falling rain.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1838)*

^{* &}quot;Divinity School Address (1838)," in *Nature, Addresses, and Lectures*, ed. Alfred R. Ferguson, vol. 1, The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press, 1971), 81.

Chapter 4

The Morphology of Myth

...my beliefs are a strong conviction, yours a dogma, his a myth...

Percy Cohen (1969)¹

There is a memorable scene at the beginning of Norman Jewison's *Fiddler* on the Roof (1971). Tevye, a thoughtful milkman, introduces us to life in the small village of Anatevka in Tsarist Russia. Fundamental to the shared life of the Jews of Anatevka is their adherence to tradition: this helps them to overcome all the tensions of being poor and oppressed to a degree. For, as Tevye shows us, it is very easy to open up the suppressed conflicts of the inhabitants of Anatevka:

And among ourselves, we always get along perfectly well. Of course, there was the time when *he* sold *him* a horse. He told him it was only six years old, when it was really twelve. But now it's all over. And we all live in simple peace and harmony. [whispering into the seller's ear] It was really twelve years old.²

An argument begins, with bewildering speed, and the whole village becomes involved in no time at all.

It is simple to replicate the scene by simply replacing the Jewish peasants with anthropologists and cultural theorists, and whisper into one's ear: "a myth is a fiction that gives us the facts", or "myth is the secret opening through which the inexhaustible energies of the cosmos pour into human manifestation." The ensuing dispute will be equally explosive.

This is simply a picturesque way of saying that there is no agreed definition of "myth", and every attempt to come up with an agreed definition is fiercely disputed. In fact, John Lyden has recently asserted that

¹ Percy S. Cohen, "Theories of Myth," Man 4, no. 3, New Series (September 1969): 337.

² From 'Tradition', *Fiddler on the Roof* (1971), dir/prod Norman Jewison; written by Joseph Stein; music by Jerry Bock, lyrics by Sheldon Harnick. Norman Jewison, *Fiddler on the Roof*, Technicolor / 35 mm, U.S.A. (United Artists, 1971).

³ Salley Vickers, "Blind to the truth: Salley Vickers rereads the Oedipus myth," *The Guardian*, December 15, 2007, sec. Review, 22.

⁴ Joseph Campbell, *The Hero With A Thousand Faces* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1949), 3.

...[the] term "myth" is so laden with negative connotations that it is practically unserviceable for the study of religion.⁵

Which is perhaps an unnecessarily pessimistic judgement, especially as Lyden then spends fifty pages untangling a possible workable definition of myth when applying it to the study of religion and film. Lyden's purpose overlaps with mine, and I share with him a persistent confidence in the utility of "myth" for understanding the functioning of religion and religious understanding in our times and culture.

A Muddle of Myth

Look at any book, essay, chapter, monograph or website on myths, and you will see a pattern: the traditional social-studies methodology for definition through historiography. The work will usually begin with a description of the etymological origins of the word, as if by uncovering what the Greeks meant by *mythos* we might have some better grasp of what *mythos* eventually grew into. For the Greeks, *muthos* means, simply, something spoken, and then, less simply, that which is spoken in sequence; the tale or the statement or the story. Plato, who perhaps coined the word mutholgia, used it to mean nothing more than the telling of stories.⁷ Then, usually, the pattern will fall apart. Some writers will attempt a historical survey of earlier studies of mythology (mythography), although not all agree on starting points and wayside points. Usually the surveys will begin with Friedrich Max Müller (1823–1900) and pass through the early anthropologists Edward Tylor (1832–1917) and James Frazer (1854–1941), onto the psychological interpreters, Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) and Carl Jung (1875–1961), and their disciples, especially Joseph Campbell (1904–1987), reaching the social anthropologists and sociologists Emile Durkheim (1858– 1917), Bronislaw Malinowski (1884-1942), Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908-2009), and concluding, unavoidably, with Mircea Eliade (1907–1986). Every one of these thinkers, and it is by no means an exhaustive list of contributors to mythography, could justify a study in themselves, and usually do.

Some writers will attempt a thematic description of the various different types of mythologies and their relationships with one another. The problem with this approach is that very often, even with the best of the writers, the structure peters out: the *a priori* categories aren't able to perform the 'heavy lifting' the writers expect them to achieve. A good example of this difficulty is

⁵ Lyden, Film as Religion, 56.

⁶ See the formulation by Shlomo Sand at the reference at note 17 Error! Bookmark not defined..

⁷ G. S. Kirk, *Myth: its meaning and functions in ancient and other cultures*, Sather classical lectures 40 (Cambridge; Berkeley, Calif.: Cambridge University Press; University of California Press, 1970), 8.

Robert A. Segal's chapter on myth in *The Blackwell Companion to the Study of Religion* (2006), one of the best recent historical surveys of mythography.⁸ Segal superimposes on his historical survey a thematic layer which is useful for interpretative purposes, but gradually the complexity of the subject begins to undermine the clear-cut definitions he provides, and the reader eventually is left with the impression that it doesn't matter which category any particular thinker belongs to, for the purpose of myth is merely to help us come to terms with the disappointments of life.

Yet a third group of writers will refrain from dealing with definitions directly and will instead attempt a meta-mythography, describing the relationships between different systems of mythological categorization (see, for example, Milton Scarborough's bewildering six-fold systematization of modern myth systems into "inside" and "outside" categories with "up", "down" and "middle" flavours⁹).

None of this should be surprising. Like other grand concepts of human civilization (think of "religion", "God", "art", "justice", and, as we have already seen, "leadership"), "myth" is easy to recognise but hard to define. An example of this can be seen in the work of Don Cupitt and a reaction to it by Laurence Coupe. Cupitt, recognising the shifting sands of comprehensive definition advocated a "family resemblance" strategy. Although no single definition of myth might be satisfactorily derived and universally supported, it is still possible to compile "a large number of the typical features of myth", and say that a myth is a myth if it shares a lot of these typical features—a seemingly circular process of definition. Having listed our typical features we can then say that:

...a myth is typically a traditional sacred story of anonymous authorship and archetypal or universal significance which is recounted in a certain community and is often linked with a ritual; that it tells of the deeds of superhuman beings such as gods, demigods, heroes, spirits or ghosts; that it is set outside historical time in primal or eschatological time or in the supernatural world, or may deal with comings and goings between the supernatural world and the world of human history; that the superhuman beings are imagined in anthropomorphic ways, although their powers are more than human and the story often is not naturalistic but has the fractured, disorderly logic of dreams; that the whole body of a people's mythology is often prolix, extravagant and full of seeming inconsistencies; and finally that the work of myth is to explain, to reconcile, to guide action

⁸ Robert A. Segal, "Myth," in *The Blackwell Companion to the Study of Religion*, ed. Robert A. Segal (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 337–356.

⁹ Milton Scarborough, *Myth and Modernity: postcritical reflections* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1994), chap. 2.

or to legitimate. We can add the myth-making is evidently a primal and universal function of the human mind as it seeks a more-or-less unified vision of the cosmic order, the social order and the meaning of the individual's life. Both for society at large and for the individual, this storygenerating function seems irreplaceable. The individual finds meaning in his life by making of his life a story set within a larger social and cosmic story.¹⁰

To which *tour de force* Laurence Coupe adds "up to a point, Don Cupitt", for, as Coupe admonishes "…not all myths are linked with a ritual; not all myths are about gods; and not all myths concern a time outside historical time. Exceptions to, and contradictions of, any particular paradigm are endless."¹¹

The Modest Proposal of G. B. Caird

In this respect myth must function within human society and scholarly discourse as an Essentially Contested Concept. There is no agreed, comprehensive and universal definition of "myth", and there is no similarly comprehensive meta-theory of myth. It is extremely unlikely, if Gallie is right, that there *ever* could be a comprehensive definition. The only comfort is that the literature on myth is nothing like as voluminous as the literature on leadership, and in no way as compromised by the financial inducements of business and management consultancy.

Even so, bearing in mind the dangers of exceptions and contradictions, I propose to examine mythography using a thematic survey first set out by G. B. Caird in his definitive book *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (1980).¹³ It might seem curious to use such an old book, and one not within the discipline of mythography, but Caird's scheme has two advantages. First, it is not overly ambitious. It does not seek out deep complementarities between scholars of different ages and disciplines. Neither does it attempt to impose an epistemological schema derived from an external philosophical, political or academic school. It recognizes that concision, without the imposition of an overelaborate hermeneutic, might be profitable. It is a book "by an amateur, written for amateurs" and all the more accessible for that. Second, the typology that it provides is simple enough to be useful (operating as a skeletal structure which can be expanded and detailed according to whim and inclination) without

¹⁰ Don Cupitt, The World To Come (London: S.C.M., 1982), 29.

¹¹ Laurence Coupe, *Myth* (London: Routledge, 1997), 6.

¹² See the discussion on Gallie and ECC in relation to "leadership" from page 42 above.

¹³ G. B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (London: Duckworth, 1980), chap. 13, The Language of Myth.

¹⁴ Caird, Language and Imagery, viii, from the Preface.

being so general as to be unfalsifiable. Instead it provides what I call a series of "interpretative strategies" rather than a hard and fast definition of myth and mythography. "Interpretative strategies" imply an approach that is the opposite of "completed" or "systematic". Just as a carpenter's vice is not the object upon which the carpenter works, but merely the tool by which the object may be held, an interpretative strategy is merely a means by which a concept can be held on to while work is done to it.

In short, to use a metaphor from the business world, Caird's typology under-promises and over-delivers.

Myth: falseness and modernity

Caird begins with a clearing of the ground. There are two forms of mythographical definition, common in occurrence, but factually and practically in error, for his (and our) purpose.

The first is that represented by Plato, Bidney and Larkin: myth is a story, an unreality, a fiction, a fairy-tale. Caird designates this Myth^F (for "falsehood"). There is a problem for biblical scholars in that this is the plain meaning whenever the word is used in the New Testament. So, for example, 1 Tim. 1:4; 4:7 and 2 Pet. 1:16 tell us "not to occupy themselves with myths and endless genealogies", "have nothing to do with profane myths and old wives' tales", and "for we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" respectively. In this way, the New Testament writers shared the prejudices of many later scholars, for this use of Myth^F was for many years the default position. From the middle of the nineteenth to the middle of the twentieth centuries there was a real hostility towards the very idea of mythology as a legitimate category of human thought and cultural expression. Sometimes the hostility was mildly expressed; for example, the classicist G. S. Kirk, unsympathetically noted:

...man's endearing insistence on carrying quasi-mythical modes of thought, expression, and communication into a supposedly scientific age.¹⁵

Kirk's use of the word "quasi" in that sentence is polemical. The definition of myth, as he himself acknowledges, is so imprecise that to assert a mode of thought which only *approximates* to mythic cannot be reliably differentiated from a form of thought more reliably mythic.

Occasionally the hostility was much more pointed and programmatic. David Bidney (1908–1987, professor of anthropology and philosophy at Indiana University and author of *Theoretical Anthropology*, 1967), concluded his contribution to a 1958 symposium with these words:

¹⁵ Kirk, Myth, 2.

Myth must be taken seriously as a cultural force but it must be taken seriously precisely in order that it may be gradually superseded in the interests of the advancement of truth and the growth of human intelligence. Narrative, critical and scientific thought provides the only self-correcting means of combating the diffusion of myth, but it may do so only on condition that we retain a firm and uncompromising faith in the integrity of reason and in the transcultural validity of the scientific enterprise.¹⁶

For Bidney and those like him, myth is something to be understood, only inasmuch as that can help us set it to one side. This is one definition of modernity. As Milton Scarborough puts it:

...there is something in the touch of modernity which destroys not simply some particular myth but also myth itself. Modernity seems to result in the termination of the possibility of having any vital myth whatsoever. Indeed, modernity is that era in our history in which the elimination of myth itself became for some a self-conscious goal.¹⁷

In this way, modernity might claim Plato for its founding father, and take an unnuanced reading of Plato's use of *mutholgia* as the popular definition of myth: the telling of stories with the implication that the stories are somehow "untrue", and therefore immoral.¹⁸ As Percy Cohen tartly puts it:

...its usage conveys the implication that the believer lives, at best, in cloud-cuckoo land and, at worst, in a state of savage perdition.¹⁹

The moral degradation that accompanies such a belief in myth was neatly summed up by Philip Larkin's neologism, "myth-kitty": "As a guiding principle I believe that every poem must be its own sole freshly-created universe, and therefore have no belief in 'tradition' or a common myth-kitty."²⁰

¹⁶ David Bidney, "Myth, Symbolism and Truth," in *Myth: a symposium*, ed. Thomas A. Sebeok (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958), 23.

¹⁷ Scarborough, Myth and Modernity, 6–7.

¹⁸ Although Plato's use of "myth", as a concept, and "myths", as a medium, is of course, far more complex than this. See Janet E. Smith, "Plato's Use of Myth in the Education of Philosophic Man," *Phoenix* 40, no. 1 (Spring 1986): 20–34; Ludwig Edelstein, "The Function of the Myth in Plato's Philosophy," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 10, no. 4 (October 1949): 463–481; Plato, *The Myths of Plato*, ed. Gertrude R. Levy, trans. J. A. Stewart (London: Centaur Press, 1960); Luc Brisson, *Plato the Myth Maker*, trans. Gerard Naddaf (Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

¹⁹ Cohen, "Theories of Myth," 337.

²⁰ Philip Larkin in D. J. Enright, ed., *Poets of the 1950's: an anthology of new English verse* (Tokyo: Kenkyusha, 1955), 78. The OED gives this helpful definition of "myth-kitty": "A body of myths known to and shared by the members of a particular society or community; a mythos". "myth-

Myth: deconstructed theology

The second category Caird wishes to set to one side is the assumption that "myth" is merely another way of talking about "theology": **Myth**^T. The great, but not the only, representative of this fruitless category is the German New Testament scholar Rudolf Bultmann (1884–1976).

In 1941 Bultmann prepared, evidently in some haste, a lecture which sketched out the process by which the New Testament might be demythologized. The lecture's publication seven years later caused immense ripples in the still waters of New Testament scholarship, and a series of articles, ripostes, considerations and refutations were still being written and published thirty years after that, all handily compiled in the expanding volume *Kerygma and Myth*, edited by Hans-Werner Bartsch.²¹

In the original essay, "New Testament and Mythology", Bultmann sets out the task.²² The original proclamation (*kerygma*) of the New Testament has been cloaked (not his word) in the trappings of mythology. The New Testament cosmology, in which the world is a three-storeyed structure, prevents modern man from comprehending the essence of the New Testament *kerygma*: "the *kerygma* is incredible to modern man, for he is convinced that the mythical view of the world is obsolete."²³ The heavens get in the way of the message. So, in order to make the message comprehensible, the pre-scientific medium (which in itself contains nothing of significance for the Christian *kerygma*) must be stripped from the message.

Part of the problem with Bultmann's position is that he mistakes the most important characteristic of pre-scientific cosmology as being its pre-scientific character. He thinks that this cosmology is the best that primitive, biblical, man can do, and that if the full panoply of Copernican / Galilean / Newtonian / Einsteinian scientific technology and theory had been available to, say, the writer of the first chapters of Genesis, then the creation story would necessarily have been very different. He does not demonstrate, but merely assumes, that Genesis is an attempt to answer "how?" questions.

When Bultmann considers the function of myth and mythology, he moves onto more solid ground. Showing the influence of Heidegger and the

http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/00320435.

kitty, n," OED Online (Oxford University Press, June 2008),

²¹ Hans Werner Bartsch, ed., *Kerygma and Myth: a theological debate*, trans. Reginald H. Fuller (London: S.P.C.K., 1972).

²² Rudolf Bultmann, "New Testament and Mythology (1941)," in *Kerygma and Myth: a theological debate*, ed. Hans Werner Bartsch, trans. Reginald H. Fuller, vol. 1, 2 vols. (London: S.P.C.K., 1972), 1–44.

²³ Bultmann, "New Testament and Mythology," 3. Originally printed entirely in italics.

existentialist philosophers²⁴, (indeed giving the heading "an existentialist interpretation the only solution"²⁵ shows his hand pretty clearly!), Bultmann sets out to provide an answer to "the riddle of human life which will be acceptable to the non-mythological mind of today".²⁶ His definition of myth is clear, simple and constructive:

The real purpose of myth is not to present an objective picture of the world as it is, but to express man's understanding of himself in the world in which he lives. Myth should be interpreted not cosmologically, but anthropologically, or better still, existentially. Myth speaks of the power or the powers which man supposes he experiences as the ground and limit of his world and of his own activity and suffering. He describes these powers in terms derived from the visible world, with its tangible objects and forces, and from human life, with its feelings, motives, and potentialities.²⁷

It must be noted that not everyone believed Bultmann's contribution to mythography to be useful or even accurate. C. S. Lewis had no time for Bultmann's work; not because Lewis was threatened by the religious implications of what Bultmann taught, but because he was offended by the literary weaknesses of the German's arguments:

First then, whatever these men may be as Biblical critics, I distrust them as critics. They seem to me to lack literary judgement, to be imperceptive about the very quality of the texts they are reading. It sounds a strange charge to bring against men who have been steeped in those books all their lives. But that might be just the trouble. A man who has spent his youth and manhood in the minute study of New Testament texts and of other people's studies of them, whose literary experience of those texts lacks any standard of comparison such as can only grow from a wide and deep and genial experience of literature in general, is, I should think, very

²⁴ Robert A. Segal groups Bultmann's work with that of the German philosopher and historian of Gnosticism Hans Jonas (1903–1993), principally on the grounds that Jonas's work on Gnosticism identified the surprising parallels with existentialism, and therefore the continuance of a myth of meaning in a cosmologically demythologized world. I think Segal's reliance on Jonas is misplaced. There is less direct involvement with mythography in Jonas's work than Segal asserts, and the parallels are ultimately forced. Segal is correct in noting that "rightly grasped, [Gnostic mythology] addresses not the nature of the world, but the nature of the experience of the world." (Segal, "Myth," 346.) In this way, Jonas's mythography is similar to those of Malinowski and Eliade, and so falls out of the category to which Segal has assigned it. Jonas's gnostic/existential myth helps us come to terms with the buffets and disappointments of life as it is lived, to overcome the contradictions. Jonas differs from Malinowski and Eliade in that he finds the subject matter of this overcoming within the individual rather than without, in the physical world.

²⁵ Bultmann, "New Testament and Mythology," 15.

²⁶ Bultmann, "New Testament and Mythology," 16.

²⁷ Bultmann, "New Testament and Mythology," 10.

likely to miss the obvious thing about them. If he tells me that something in a Gospel is legend or romance, I want to know how many legends and romances he has read, how well his palate is trained in detecting them by the flavour; not how many years he has spent on that Gospel.²⁸

Or, as Andrew Walker devastatingly summarised Lewis's objections:

...Bultmann's demythologising programme suffered from one fundamental flaw: Bultmann did not know enough about mythology to recognise a myth when he saw one. Lewis granted Bultmann superior knowledge in anthropology and hermeneutical sophistication, but doubted if he had read enough mythical material to know a myth from a fact, or a historical narrative from epic poetry.²⁹

Even so, and taking the professional literary scholar's critique into account, Bultmann asserts that mythology is a form of metaphor: one kind of thing stands for another. For example, "spatial distance" stands for "divine transcendence"—to say that heaven is "up there" is really to say something about the relative power standings of God and man. Bultmann has only had to demythologize the New Testament because he literalised it in the first place. "Mythology, he would have us believe," wrote Caird "is the theological use of metaphor; and since all theological language is metaphorical, his critics justifiably retorted that demythologising would on this definition reduce theology to silence." 31

The curious thing about Bultmann's project is that he doesn't take it all the way. Rather like contemporary film-makers removing all references to the miraculous in the life of Jesus, but leaving in the big one, the resurrection, for Bultmann, most language of the New Testament might be metaphorical or mythological, describing immaterial power in terms of material means, but the ultimate referent, God, remains objectively real:

Even when demythologized, however, the New Testament still refers to God, albeit of a nonphysical form. One must continue to believe in God to accept the mythology.³²

²⁸ C. S. Lewis, "Modern Theology and Biblical Criticism," in *Christian Reflections*, ed. Walter Hooper (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1967), 154. Later republished as "Fern-seed and elephants," in *Fern-seed and elephants, and other essays on Christianity*, ed. Walter Hooper (London: Fontana, 1975). It was a lecture originally delivered to Westcott House, Cambridge, on 11 May 1959.
²⁹ Andrew Walker, "Scripture, Revelation and Platonism in C. S. Lewis," *Scottish Journal of*

Theology 55, no. 1 (February 2002): 23. ³⁰ Bultmann, "New Testament and Mythology," 2, p. 10.

³¹ Caird, Language and Imagery, 219.

³² Segal, "Myth," 345.

However, the final judgement on Bultmann's mythography is his faulty anthropology. His mythographic project began with a concern for the inability of modern man to settle in the cosmology of the ancient world, and the project continues with the unexamined assumption that:

...the mythical creature he called 'modern man' would be more comfortable among the abstractions of existentialist philosophy than with the picture language of the Bible...³³

Ultimately Bultmann's project fails because it was not needed.

So Myth^F and Myth^T are both rejected. Caird then offers seven typologies split into two uneven categories: one category deals with mythology as an element in culture, however primitive, and is therefore to do with phenomenology; the second category is to do primarily with mythology functioning as a "vehicle of meaning"³⁴, and is therefore the concern of the symbolists.

Myth: culture and phenomenology

The first of the phenomenological typologies is myth as an expression of the evolution of human culture: **Myth**^E. This was the understanding of the earliest, amateur anthropologists, men such as Andrew Lang (1844–1912), who pioneered the study of fairy-tales, and translations of Homer and was the author of *Myth*, *Ritual and Religion* (1887)³⁵; E. B. Tylor, the founder of cultural anthropology, and author of *Primitive Culture*³⁶; and J. G. Frazer, folklorist, classical scholar, and author of *The Golden Bough*.³⁷

Robert A. Segal notes that Tylor and Frazer in particular deal with mythography in a way typical of the nineteenth century, concerned solely with the physical world. Tylor and Frazer approached myth as if it were simply "a primitive counterpart to science". For Tylor, according to Segal, myth as a system of thought is as rational as science later became; this is because myth proper, *primary* myth, limits itself to explanations of observable phenomena: why does the sun rise? Why do the rains fall in particular seasons? In this way, Tylor's approach to myth is to treat it as a form of theoretical science. Frazer differs, in that he sees myth as an irrational precursor of applied science: myth is the explanatory structure behind magic, or, to express it the other way

³³ Caird, Language and Imagery, 193.

³⁴ Caird, Language and Imagery, 220.

³⁵ Andrew Lang, *Myth, Ritual and Religion*, 2 vols., New ed. (London; New York; Bombay: Longmans, Green, 1899).

³⁶ E. B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture: researches into the development of mythology, philosophy, religion, art, and custom,* 2 vols. (London: J. Murray, 1871).

³⁷ J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough: a study in comparative religion* (London: Macmillan, 1890).

³⁸ Segal, "Myth," 339-342.

around, magic "puts myth into practice in the form of ritual, which is a vain attempt to gain control over the physical world".³⁹ For Frazer, this is both irrational (because it makes the basic category error of all magical ways of thinking, confusing the symbol for the symbolized), and also inefficacious: it does not actually work. If the king were not sacrificed at the end of the agricultural year, spring would still roll around. (Northrop Frye acutely criticises Frazer on this point when he says: "...Frazer was a Classical and Biblical scholar who thought he was a scientist because he had read so much anthropology, and hence was subject to fits of rationalism, which seems to have attacked him like a disease."⁴⁰)

A different approach was taken by the next generation of mythographers. For them, myth had its origins in social structures and the way in which social structures were formed and expressed by ritual: hence Caird's term **Myth**^R. The most notable example of this typology is Bronislaw Malinowski (in his essay 'Myth in primitive psychology', 1926⁴¹). Myth was not, for Malinowski a solution to a scientific problem: primitive people did not lack scientific knowledge, either theoretical or applied:

...primitives use science, however rudimentary, both to explain and to control the physical world. They use myth to do the opposite: to reconcile themselves to aspects of the world that cannot be controlled...⁴²

This recalls C. S. Lewis's sharp observation that the pregnancy of Mary was a problem for St Joseph precisely because "he knew just as well as any modern gynaecologist that in the ordinary course of nature women do not have babies unless they have lain with men". 43 The virgin birth was not a cover for scientific ignorance: rather, scientific knowledge led to a moral problem! Similarly, Austin Farrer's appraisal of Bultmann's demythologizing of the Biblical three-storey cosmology points out that biblical man was as capable of a poetic sensibility as modern man, and such poetic sensibility would prevent him from thinking that hell would be reached by mining or heaven by flying. 44

As far as it is possible to generalise for such a prolific author, Mircea Eliade asserts that myth is an explanation for things that happen in the world:

³⁹ Segal, "Myth," 341.

⁴⁰ Northrop Frye, *The Great Code: the Bible and literature* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), 35.

⁴¹ Bronislaw Malinowski, "Myth in primitive psychology (1926)," in *Magic, science and religion and other essays* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1954), 93–148.

⁴² Segal, "Myth," 342.

⁴³ C. S. Lewis, *Miracles: a preliminary study* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1942), 57.

⁴⁴ Austin Farrer, "An English Appreciation," in *Kerygma and Myth: a theological debate*, ed. Hans Werner Bartsch (London: S.P.C.K., 1972), 215.

the physical and the social worlds.⁴⁵ For Eliade myth is the means to return to the time and place before those contradictions came into being—myth is "a magic carpet", in Segal's memorable phrase:

Because all religions, according to Eliade, believe that gods were closer at hand in days of yore than now, to be whisked back in time is to be able to brush up against god—the ultimate pay-off. Myth is a medium for encountering God.⁴⁶

That this is a fair definition of Eliade's work on myth can be seen when it is remembered that much of his work concentrated on cosmogony, theories about the origins of things, whether the universe (in general) or a social custom (in particular).

Caird then considers what he calls **Myth**^P, Myth Pragmatic, in which myth is used as a means of social control, or as a means of achieving widespread social support for a particular programme or position. The example that Caird gives, the nineteenth century French social theorist Georges Sorel, is probably less compelling now outside the rarefied world of anarchosyndicalism than he was when Caird was originally writing. Even so **Myth**^P is an important category for other thinkers such as Malinowski, and René Girard.⁴⁷

Human beings will constantly and inescapably encounter insurmountable contradictions between what is wanted or needed and what is actual; in society, and in the natural world around that society. According to Malinowski, myth, therefore, has a utilitarian value, and one that is inescapable in primitive society:

Myth fulfils in primitive culture an indispensable function: it expresses, enhances and codifies belief; it safeguards and enforces morality; it vouches for the efficiency of ritual and contains practical rules for the guidance of man. Myth is thus a vital ingredient of human civilization; it is not an idle tale, but a hard-worked active force; it is not an intellectual explanation or an artistic imagery, but a pragmatic charter of primitive faith and moral wisdom.⁴⁸

Myth^p does not function only in primitive societies either. Every time an attitude or an institution is justified by an explanation which begins "because..." rather than "in order that...", we can see the functioning of Myth

⁴⁵ See especially *The Sacred and the Profane: the nature of religion,* trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1959).

⁴⁶ Segal, "Myth," 343.

⁴⁷ See, for example, René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (London: The Athlone Press, 1988), chap. 4. See also Lucien Scubla, "Sacred king, sacrificial victim, surrogate victim or Frazer, Hocart, Girard," in *The Character of Kingship*, ed. Declan Quigley (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 39–62.

⁴⁸ Malinowski, "Myth in primitive psychology," 101.

Pragmatic: a story is being used to explain. A clear example is seen in the functioning of **Myth**^p within political discourse. Much of what passes for such discourse in the western liberal democracies is actually an appeal to a particular understanding of who we are, where we have come from and where we want to be. What is the "myth of the American Dream" but the monstrously powerful outworking of **Myth**^p? This is Claude Lévi-Strauss's point he asserts that it is politics which has replaced myth in modern societies.⁴⁹ We shall see variations on the American **Myth**^p in our next chapter.

Incidentally and curiously, Segal asserts that the common denominator to Malinowski and Eliade's work is that they both regard myth as something to be read "literally". ⁵⁰ I am unclear what Segal means by "literal" in this context. He begins his essay with a brief analysis of hell in Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667/1674), in which he notes occasions in which hell seems to be, for Satan, a mental state and alternatively a place "out there". Perhaps he means by "literal" the latter: he surely cannot mean that myth is restricted to a literal *form*, for Malinowski, at the very least, makes it clear that although myth is a narrative, it is not *merely* a narrative:

Myth as it exists in a savage community, that is, in its living primitive form, is not merely a story told but a reality lived. It is not of the nature of fiction, such as we read to-day in a novel, but it is a living reality, believed to have once happened in primeval times, and continuing ever since to influence the world and human destinies.⁵¹

Perhaps Segal would have benefited from reading chapter seven, "Literal and Non-Literal", of Caird's book, which begins with a dissection of an unfortunate sentiment: "our rector is literally the father of every boy and girl in our village"!

Caird's last typology in the phenomenological category is his sketchiest description: **Myth**^N, Myth Naturalist. He cites the French philosopher (and Nobel Prize for Literature winner) Henri Bergson as the representative of this category. Myth is the means by which modern, alienated man remains in contact with his true identity. I find it hard to see how this category can be usefully distinguished from Caird's later category of **Myth**^{PS}, Myth Psychological, and so I propose to fold it into our later discussion of psychological understandings of mythography.

⁴⁹ Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth," in *Structural anthropology*, trans. Claire Jacobson and Brooke Grundfest Schoepf (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), 209.

⁵⁰ Segal, "Myth," 342.

⁵¹ Malinowski, "Myth in primitive psychology," 100.

Myth: symbols and meaning

We pass now on to Caird's symbolic category, one in which the typologies are more concerned with myth as meaning than myth as an explanation (of externally occurring events in human culture).

The first typology is the modern equivalent to Platonic idealism (hence **Myth**^I). Caird sees the close inheritance between the universal truths conveyed mythologically by Plato and the deep structural truths uncovered mathematically by Claude Lévi-Strauss and others in the so-called structuralist school. Here Segal dissents from Caird's typology. For Segal structuralism applies a phenomenological understanding to myths: it "deals with concrete, tangible phenomena", which it then classifies.⁵² But Caird has picked up on Lévi-Strauss's description of the *point* of myth:

On the one hand, a myth always refers to events alleged have taken place long ago. But what gives the myth an operational value is that the specific pattern described is timeless; it explains the present and the past as well as the future.⁵³

This is why Caird assigns the structuralists to his symbolic category: for Lévi-Strauss and the rest of his school myths meant something above and beyond the immediate referent. But they weren't content to explain what myths *could* mean. They insisted on going further: explaining *how* myths could mean what they mean. The fundamental sterility of this approach to mythology can be seen in structuralism's foundational document, Lévi-Strauss's "The Structural Study of Myth", a paper originally written in 1955 for *The Journal of American Folklore*, 68, and reproduced as a chapter in *Structural Anthropology* (1963). Here Lévi-Strauss articulated his thesis that the purpose of every myth is to overcome contradictions:

...the purpose of myth is to provide a logical model capable of overcoming a contradiction (an impossible achievement if, as it happens, the contradiction is real).⁵⁴

These contradictions can be most fruitfully analysed by breaking down their transmitting myths into the smallest structural components: the so-called

⁵² Segal, "Myth," 351.

⁵³ Lévi-Strauss, "Structural Study," 209.

⁵⁴ Lévi-Strauss, "Structural Study," 229. What does this use of "real" mean, other than a rhetorical flourish for 'good'? "Contradiction" means 'spoken against'. Does 'speaking against' constitute creation / actualization? Is this Lévi-Strauss arguing for the structuralist reality of the creation myth of Genesis 1 ("And God said...")?

mythèmes.⁵⁵ The mythemes can then be tabulated in such a way as to make apparent, to decode, the deep structures of every myth (hence the name of the school). Visions of pigeon holes and punch cards and IBM machines follow, by which Lévi-Strauss can test his mythic formula:

...it seems that every myth (considered as the aggregates of its variants) corresponds to a formula of the following type:

$$F_x(a) : F_y(b) :: F_x(b) : F_a - 1(y)$$
.

Here, with two terms, a and b, being given as well as two functions, x and y, of these two terms, it is assumed that a relation of equivalence exists between two situations defined respectively by an inversion of *terms* and *relations*, under two conditions: (1) that one term be replaced by its opposite (in the above formula, a and a-1); (2) that an inversion be made between the *function value*, and the *term value* of two elements (above, y and a).⁵⁶

This may be (and I stress *may* be) internally intellectually consistent, but it misses the point. Rather as Keith Ward satirises the application of scientific empiricism when applied to the study of history (the question "who won the Battle of Waterloo?" could only be answered by an equation, and a person's autobiography would have to be reduced to "25 million microtubules resonated at a certain frequency"⁵⁷), Lévi-Strauss might think that this approach describes an important aspect of mythography, but in doing so, he misses the whole point of myths. They are there to tell a story, a story that may be true in some manner, and whose truthfulness reflects upon the situation of the teller and the hearer, but the story is the thing.

Caird has almost as little time for his next typology as he did for **Myth**^N. Of **Myth**^{PS}, Myth Psychological, he says simply:

Under the influence of Jung's psycho-analytical theory of universal archetypes arising from the collective unconscious, myth has been treated as the same expression of deep-seated and permanent human needs...⁵⁸

Something a little more than that needs to be said about **Myth**^{ps} in a study of the influence of mythography upon movies. It is impossible to escape the influence of Jung, and his vicar-in-Hollywood (if not on-earth) Joseph

⁵⁵ A term first used by Lévi-Strauss in the French language versions of "The Structural Study of Myth". In the English language versions he calls them, less memorably, "gross constituent units": Lévi-Strauss, "Structural Study," 211.

⁵⁶ Lévi-Strauss, "Structural Study," 228. Lévi-Strauss has the (unintentional?) sense of humour to describe this as an "approximate formulation which will certainly need to be refined in the future"!

⁵⁷ Keith Ward, "Pascal's Fire: scientific faith and religious understanding" (Lecture, Gresham College, London, June 27, 2006), <www.gresham.ac.uk/event.asp?PageId=39&EventId=475>. ⁵⁸ Caird, *Language and Imagery*, 223.

Campbell. Segal treats **Myth**^{PS} much more extensively than Caird, noting how **Myth**^{PS} operates as a state of the unconscious mind, not as a description of the physical world. The two most influential proponents of **Myth**^{PS} are Freud and Jung, and Segal identifies a neat and effective distinction between them: "for Freud, the function of myth is to vent the unconscious. For Jung, the function is to encounter the unconscious."⁵⁹

This distinction explains how, for the Freudian, myths are the expression of wish-fulfilment: "myths are the dream-thinking of the people" 60, or, "it seems extremely probable that myths, for example, are the distorted vestiges of the wish-fantasies of whole nations—the age-long dreams of young humanity." 61 The wish-fulfilment was focused most often in males, as expressed through the Oedipal drive. As Otto Rank put it:

Myths are, therefore, created by adults, by means of retrograde childhood fantasies, the hero being credited with the myth-maker's personal infantile history.⁶²

In this way, **Myth**^{PS} is similar to **Myth**^R: myth is being used to overcome the dichotomy between reality as experienced and reality as experienced. Segal argues that, whereas for classical Freudians, the primary function of myth was "to satisfy in fantasy what cannot be satisfied in reality"⁶³, for modern Freudians such as Jacob Arlow, myth functions more subtly as the psychological "adaptation to reality".⁶⁴ Even so, in both forms, myth is not about reality (which can only be approached through or explained by natural science): it is about the individual's conflict with reality.

This is not a very high view of myth and mythography. For Jung and his followers, while believing that myth is not descriptive of the external world, it

⁵⁹ Segal, "Myth," 346.

⁶⁰ Otto Rank, *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero: a psychological interpretation of mythology,* trans. F. Robbins and Smith Ely Jelliffe (New York: The Journal of nervous and mental disease publishing company, 1914), 6. Quoted in Segal, "Myth," 347.

⁶¹ Sigmund Freud, "The Relation of the Poet to Day-Dreaming (1908)," in *Collected papers*, trans. I. F. Grant Duff, vol. Vol. IV (London: Leonard and Virginia Woolf at the Hogarth Press, 1925), 182. There is a slightly different emphasis in the translation made for the *Standard Edition* of Freud's work. There myths are "distorted vestiges [no article, definite or indefinite] of the wishful phantasies of whole nations, the *secular dreams* of youthful humanity." Sigmund Freud, "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming (1908)," in *Jensen's "Gradiva" and Other Works*, trans. James Strachey, The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud vol. 9 (1906-1908) (London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-analysis, 1962), 152. Emphasis in the original. It is unclear what difference the substitution of "secular" for "agelong" makes, other than to distance mythography from any kind of religious hermeneutic.

⁶² Rank, *Birth of the Hero*, 82. Quoted in Segal, "Myth," 347.

⁶³ Segal, "Myth," 347.

⁶⁴ Jacob A. Arlow, "Ego Psychology and the Study of Mythology," *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* IX (1961): 375. Quoted in Segal, "Myth," 347.

was still possible to ascribe to it a higher status. Myth is about the unconscious functioning of the human mind, but that unconscious is not limited to the individual and neither is it somehow 'less' than the psychoanalyst's description of what constitutes reality. In this way, myth was a product of the unconscious as the "storehouse of innately unconscious archetypes that have simply never had an opportunity at realization." Myth is not a means of releasing repressed conscious desires, as for Freudians, but rather a means of encouraging or cultivating a healthy relationship between the conscious and unconscious aspects of the personality. Myth becomes a means for self-realization, and both Freudians and Jungians are interested in myth only insomuch as the subject is aware of the operation of myth upon his unconscious. This is a solipsistic approach to myth, "myth as autobiography" as Segal puts it, 66 and is the unavoidable conclusion when any connection between myth and the external world is severed.

The final typology in Caird's scheme is **Myth**^L, Myth Literary, the work of literary scholars such as Tillyard, Frye, and Lewis. This is the typology most easily mappable onto biblical criticism, as it is espoused by, one would hope, scholars who have some understanding of the way in which biblical literature and mythical literature function *as literature* (although as we have seen in Lewis's critique of Bultmann above, this is not always the case). Northrop Frye describes **Myth**^L very cogently:

Certain stories seem to have a peculiar significance: they are stories that tell a society what is important for it to know, whether about its gods, its history, its laws, or its class structure. These stories may be called myths in a secondary sense, a sense that distinguishes them from folktales—stories told for entertainment or other less central purposes. They thus become 'sacred' as distinct from 'profane' stories, and form part of what Biblical tradition calls revelation... Mythical in this secondary sense, therefore means the opposite of 'not really true': it means being charged with a special seriousness and importance. Sacred stories illustrate a specific social concern; profane stories are related to social concern much more distantly: sometimes, at least in their origin, not at all.⁶⁷

This is the last of Caird's seven typologies, but having enumerated the differences he is not down-hearted. He notices the "impressive areas of agreement" between the various schools, and attempts to summarise the agreement. Myth is

...performative, 'a living reality' which commits its adherents to a pattern of life. It is expressive and evocative, appealing to the imagination through

⁶⁵ Segal, "Myth," 349.

⁶⁶ Segal, "Myth," 349.

⁶⁷ Frye, Great Code, 32-33.

a sense of the impressive, the enchanting, the sublime and the mysterious. It is par excellence the language of social cohesion. Above all it is referential in the same fashion as metaphor is referential. It tells a story about the past, but only in order to say something about the present and the future. It has a literal referent in the characters and events of the vehicle's story, but its tenor referent is the situation of the user and his audience.⁶⁸

I argued above for the ultimate sterility of the structuralist approach to mythography, and yet there is something within Lévi-Strauss's work which immeasurably assists my task. For he asserts, and many scholars have followed him, that myths and mythmaking and mythologies continue in the mind of modern, 'mythless', man. In *The Raw and the Cooked*, Lévi-Strauss recognizes the possibility that "the speakers who create and transmit myths may become aware of their structure and mode of operation" but he denies that this is a normal occurrence. He argues from an analogy with normal speech:

...the individual who conscientiously applied phonological and grammatical laws in his speech, supposing he possessed the necessary knowledge and virtuosity to do so, would nevertheless lose the thread of his ideas almost immediately. In the same way the practice and use of mythological thought demands that its properties remain hidden: otherwise the subject would find himself in the position of the mythologist, who cannot believe in myths because it is his task to take them to pieces.⁷⁰

He sets out his thesis: "I therefore claim to show, not how men think in myths, but how *myths operate in men's minds without their being aware of the fact.*"⁷¹

Louis Althusser, in the different discipline of political philosophy, also acknowledges the importance of the unconscious operating of supra-individual structures of thought. For Althusser it was a necessary hypothesis to explain the operation of ideology:

...ideology has very little to do with 'consciousness', even supposing this term to have an unambiguous meaning. It is profoundly *unconscious*, even when it presents itself in a reflected form... [It is] indeed a system of

⁶⁸ Caird, *Language and Imagery*, 224. This is not a definition with which Joseph Campbell would concur. For him "imagery, especially the imagery of dreams, is the basis of mythology." Joseph Campbell, *The Mythic Image*, Bollingen series 100 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974), back cover.

⁶⁹ Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked*, trans. John Weightman and Doreen Weightman, Introduction to a science of mythology 1 (London: Cape, 1970), 11.

⁷⁰ Lévi-Strauss, Raw and Cooked, 11–12.

⁷¹ Lévi-Strauss, Raw and Cooked, 12. Emphasis added.

representations, but in the majority of cases these representations have nothing to do with 'consciousness': they are usually images and occasionally concepts, but it is above all as *structures* that they impose on the vast majority of men, not via their 'consciousness'.⁷²

The unconscious and unreflexive functioning of myth or ideology⁷³ is a hypothesis supported by Eliade. In "Myths of the Modern World", the first chapter of *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries* (1968), Eliade at first seems to concede that "...at least apparently, the modern world is not rich in myths."⁷⁴ However, he then proceeds to redefine his terms, in such a way that the *possibility* of mythic functioning within the modern world can be allowed. Myth is "a mode of being in the world" (p. 24), "a type of human behaviour" (p. 27), even "an element of civilisation" (p. 27). These modes of being, types of behaviour and elements of civilization find their contemporary expression in modern day systems of education, for such systems of education address, at least in part, the essentials of mythical behaviour:

It seems unlikely that any society could completely dispense with myths, for, of what is essential in mythical behaviour—the exemplary pattern, the repetition, the break with profane duration and integration into primordial time—the first two at least consubstantial with every human condition. Thus, it is not so difficult to recognise, in all that modern people call instruction, education and didactic culture, the function that is fulfilled by the myth in archaic societies.⁷⁵

Despite this residual mythical functioning in education, Eliade argues that modern man suffers from an existential anxiety caused by his subjugation to "history"—the futile attempt to know factually all that has gone before. This insight is derived from German New Testament scholarship and particularly the work of Kähler and Bultmann. It was Kähler who made the first distinction between the two different historical modes of *historisch* and *geschichtlich* (there have been various different attempts to translate the German into clearly distinguishable English, but never satisfactorily). Here *historisch* means both the causal relations between events and the possibility that these causal relations

⁷² Louis Althusser, "Marxism and Humanism (1964)," in *For Marx*, trans. Ben Brewster (London: Allen Lane, 1969), 233. Emphasis in the original. Thus we have the incidental pleasure of the thorough-going materialist resorting to immaterial media for the functioning of his philosophy. ⁷³ Scarborough, *Myth and Modernity*, 94. "[M]yth belongs primarily to the background of human existence. It functions prereflectively as an orientation to that most comprehensive context which guides and gives meaning to the panoply of activities taking place in that context or world."

⁷⁴ Mircea Eliade, *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries: the encounter between contemporary faiths and archaic reality,* trans. Philip Mairet (London: Collins, 1968), 25.

⁷⁵ Eliade, *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries*, 31–32.

may be objectively verified: in other words, *historisch* means history as one damn thing after another. *Geschichtlich* on the other hand, denotes the context in which the historian places himself within the series of historical facts: as Kähler put it "[e]ven from a purely historical point of view the truly 'historic' (*geschichtlich*) in an important figure is the personal effect which he leaves behind and which posterity can feel."⁷⁶ In other words, *geschichtlich* is historical fact plus meaning.

Margaret Atwood, the Canadian novelist, elegantly expressed this latter sense of history in an interview for PBS:

We want a beginning of the story. And we go as far ahead in the future as we can. We want an end to the story. And that's not going to be just us getting born and us dying. We want to be able to place ourselves within a larger story. Here's where we came from. Here's where we're going in some version or another. And when you die, this is what happens.⁷⁷

This confusion between the two modes of history, *historisch* and *geschichtlich*, and the ineluctable needs of the "consubstantial human condition" is what leads modern man to endeavour

...to liberate himself from his 'history' [presumably *historisch*] and to live in a qualitatively different temporal rhythm. And in doing so he is returning, without being aware of it, to the mythical state of life.⁷⁸

This mythical state of life is what Eliade calls elsewhere *illud tempus*, "time now and always", which is the measure for primitive man of ultimate reality.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Martin Kähler, *Der sogenannte historische Jesus und der geschichtliche, biblische Christus*, ("The so called historical Jesus and the historic, biblical Christ") (Leipzig: A. Deichert'sche Verlagsbuchh. Nachf. (G. Böhme), 1892). Quoted in Hans Werner Bartsch, "The present state of the debate (1954)," in *Kerygma and Myth: a theological debate*, ed. Hans Werner Bartsch, vol. 2 (London: S.P.C.K., 1972), 51.

^{77 &}quot;Bill Moyers on Faith & Reason: Margaret Atwood," *Bill Moyers on Faith and Reason* (PBS, July 28, 2006), <www.pbs.org/moyers/faithandreason/watch_atwood.html>. Transcript available online from <www.pbs.org/moyers/faithandreason/print/faithandreason106_print.html>. Emphasis added. Atwood's formula is uncannily similar to the famous Valentinian definition of *gnosis*: what makes us free is "the knowledge of who we were, and what we have become; where we were or where we were placed, whither we hasten, from what we are redeemed; what birth is and what rebirth." Clement of Alexandria, *The Excerpta ex Theodoto of Clement of Alexandria*, ed. Robert Pierce Casey (London: Christophers, 1934), sec. 78.2.

⁷⁸ Eliade, Myths, Dreams and Mysteries, 34.

⁷⁹ See, among many other places, Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane*, chap. 2, esp. 85–91; *The Myth of the Eternal Return: or, cosmos and history*, trans. Willard R. Trask, rev., Bollingen series 46 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974), 85–92. It is also a major theme of his novel, *The Forbidden Forest*, trans. M. L. Ricketts and M. P. Stevenson (Notre Dame, Ind.: Notre Dame University Press, 1978).

Eliade describes two principal ways in which modern man seeks this distraction, this return to the mythical state of life. In early forms of society, organized on a different basis, we might have sought the return to *illud tempus* through the three-fold forms of mythic (religious) expression: "sacred speech, sacred acts, and sacred places".⁸⁰ This is a self-reinforcing cycle. According to Jerome S. Bruner:

It is not simply society that patterns itself upon the idealising myths, but unconsciously it is the individual man as well who is able to structure his internal clamour of identities in terms of prevailing myth. Life then produces myth and finally imitates it.⁸¹

However, as we live in an advanced capitalist society in which experience and culture are commodified, our cultural media for (unconscious) 'mythic returns' are the products of the publishing industry and the visual media industry, principally television and film. These "public spectacles" share the following in common:

...they take place in a 'concentrated time', time of a heightened intensity; a residuum of, or substitute for, magico-religious time. This 'concentrated time' is also the specific dimension of the theatre and the cinema. Even if we take no account of the ritual origins and mythological structure of the drama or the film, there is still the important fact that these are two kinds of spectacle that make us live in time of a quality quite unlike that of 'secular duration', in a temporal rhythm, at once concentrated and articulated, which apart from all aesthetic implications, evokes a profound echo in the spectator.⁸²

Segal thinks this idea is inadequate. He acknowledges the distracting qualities of the best examples of cinema, and that it is possible to be lost in time in the picture house:

But once the movie is over, and the lights come on, one usually remembers all too abruptly where one really is. Even if the memory of the experience

⁸⁰ Kees W. Bolle, "Myth: an overview," ed. Mircea Eliade, *The Encyclopedia of religion* (New York; London: Macmillan; Collier Macmillan, 1987), 262a.

⁸¹ Jerome S. Bruner, "Myth and Identity," in *Myth and Mythmaking*, ed. Henry Alexander Murray (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), 282–283.

⁸² Eliade, *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries*, 34–35. Curiously, yet typically for his time and generation, Eliade having identified the distractions of reading and visual entertainment as the media for modern-day myth, then spends four paragraphs on reading and one on the cinema! Similarly, Pelikan's history of the depictions of Christ manages to get through 2000 years and 264 pages without mentioning film once—Cimabue but no cinema!: Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Illustrated Jesus Through the Centuries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).

of the film lingers, the memory is of feeling *as if* one had been part of the action. Sane persons do not think they really had been.⁸³

We can see a depiction of this sophisticated modern distinction between *really* being and *as if* being in Denys Arcand's *Jésus de Montréal*.⁸⁴ As the passion play progresses around the grounds of the shrine the audience is more and more caught up in the story being told, but, significantly (and shamefully) it is only an African woman who, mistaking performance for reality, intervenes to prevent Jesus's persecutors from harming him further: modern man, in the person of sophisticated North American theatre goers, have no need to be reminded of the difference. Northrop Frye identified a similarly unconscious racism in the work of Frazer:

A century ago, many scholars, influenced partly by a naive identifying of evolution with progress, assumed that mythological thinking was an early form of conceptual thinking. This of course led immediately to the discovery that it was very bad conceptual thinking. Thus Frazer again, in another fit of rational *tic douloureux*: 'By myths I understand mistaken explanations of phenomena, whether of human life or of external nature.' This was obviously part of an ideology designed to rationalise the European treatment of 'natives' on darker continents, and the less attention given it now the better.⁸⁵

Ouite.

An Assumption about Myths

So let us assume that mythic thinking operates within our time and culture. Let us further assume that this mythic thinking operates at a level below our conscious thought, through the cultural artefacts we produce, and, in an advanced capitalist society, consume. Let us assume that the most powerful myths are the ones which operate most ubiquitously upon us, and that these ubiquitous myths, the "framing metaphors" in William Doty's words, are cloaked by our insistence that we deal only with the facts that can be apprehended by empiricism and scientific materialism. We will also assume, with Kelton Cobb, that:

⁸³ Segal, "Myth," 344. Emphasis in the original.

⁸⁴ Denys Arcand, *Jésus de Montréal (Jesus of Montreal)*, Colour, 35mm, Canada (Max Films / Gérard Mital Productions, 1989).

⁸⁵ Frye, *Great Code*, 38. Frazer's comment is taken from his introduction to Apollodorus, *The Library*, trans. Sir James George Frazer, 2 vols vols., Loeb Classical Library 121,121 (London: Heinemann, 1921).

⁸⁶ Doty, *Mythography*, 18. "Most of us have a considerable resistance to accepting such ruling stories as constructs or fictions. We suppose our own culture no longer needs to analyse the

We moderns and postmoderns do have metaphysical plots with which we tell the story of forces which have made the world what it is: survival of the fittest, rational choice, secularization, globalization, the war of all against all, dialectical materialism, chaos theory, the cunning collusion of power and knowledge, the triumph of the therapeutic, the decline of civilization, the 'end of history', the 'clash of civilizations,' the Big Bang and Murphy's Law...⁸⁷

How do we tease out the telling of these mythic ways of thinking, these metaphysical plots? We look for the repeated tropes and motifs and plots of our culture, "stories we never get tired of hearing".88 We look for the exemplary figures, the morality tales, and the social and cultural assumptions common to widely disparate artefacts. We examine the mythic media structurally, if you like, without ever forgetting that the mythic ways of thinking are conveyed by story. In this case, despite what Lévi-Strauss might say, the message is not in the formula: the message is in the medium.

For the purposes of this study the medium is popular film. However, popular film is not an art form that can exist in creative, social or economic isolation. Film is, in Robert B. Ray's elegant summary, a "technologically dependent, capital-intensive, commercial, collaborative medium, regulated by the government and financially linked to mass audiences..." It is the industrial art-form *par* excellence, and, as such, the art-form which requires contextualizing. In other words, films are made which reflect the cultural and social backgrounds of their production. The single largest, and most influential, source of popular film in the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century is Hollywood (used as a short-hand for American corporate film making). Before we are able to examine the mythic thinking of Hollywood film we ought to examine the hinterland of American society, from which the American film industry developed, to see if we can identify the social assumptions and cultural concerns which have affected the expression of leadership tropes in movies.

In short, what is the *mythos* of the United States?

framing metaphors, because we now (it is assumed) deal directly and scientifically with raw nature, facts, data—forgetting that these very terms are already second-order abstractions."

⁸⁷ Cobb, Popular Culture, 123-124.

⁸⁸ Cobb, Popular Culture, 123.

⁸⁹ Robert B. Ray, *A Certain Tendency of the Hollywood Cinema*, 1930-1980 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985), 6.

⁹⁰ The truth of this assertion is the subject of the following chapter, particularly with its examination of the work of Paul Monaco.

Chapter 5

The Myths of the Mighty (or, Emerson goes to the movies)

What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think.
...It is easy in the world to live after the world's opinion; it is easy in solitude to live after our own; but the great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance" (1841)¹

Richard Slotkin has argued that "myths provide society with a functioning memory system". If this is the case then the *mythos* of America is the functioning memory system of American society. But a *mythos* has to be more than a memory system, for that implies it faces in one chronological direction only, towards the past. A *mythos*, as we shall see, influences both the present and the future of a society as well: it manifests within the stories a society tells itself about its origins, and hence controls the forms society permits itself to take: 'This is who we were. Therefore this is who we should be.'

Those who seek the *mythos* of a society should, in the words of the intellectual historian, R. W. B. Lewis:

...look for the images and the 'story' that animate the ideas and are their imaginative and usually more compelling equivalent. ...while the vision may be formulated in the orderly language of rational thought, it also finds its form in a recurring pattern of images—ways of seeing and sensing experience—and in a certain habitual story, an assumed dramatic design for the representative life.³

The scholar of societal *mythoi* should be concerned with patterns and forms, the tale rather than the teller; and, especially, *repeated* tales.

¹ Emerson, "Self-Reliance," 31.

² Richard Slotkin, "Our Myths of Choice," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, September 28, 2001, B11.

³ R. W. B. Lewis, *The American Adam: Innocence, Tragedy and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), 3.

If this is so, and there is compelling evidence for believing it to be so, then we have to answer two further questions: where can we find these recurring images; and, what is the pattern they make? In short, can movies convey national and societal *mythoi*, and, if so, what is the relationship of cinematic mythography with other myth-bearing media. Can we understand cinema to be the dominant mythography?

Is Cinema Mythic?

The idea that cinema might be a medium of myth (which has a "long and often obscure history"⁴) has been complicated by two contradictory trajectories in cinematic scholarship. First, as Paul Monaco has pointed out, the popularity of escapist and fantasy tropes in much cinema seems to support the idea that myth is "anything opposed to reality"⁵: therefore cinema is mythic.⁶ Second, and contradictorily, the fact that cinema operates using photographic representations of reality (or a form of fantasy that is *presented* as reality) means that cinema cannot be operating on a mythic level: it is an artefact of "reality

For the escapism of less specific genres, see Jackie Stacey, *Star Gazing: Hollywood Cinema and Female Spectatorship* (London: Routledge, 1994), chap. 4, "Hollywood Cinema — the great escape." Stacey identifies how her respondents, even when viewing melodramas, musicals or romances, were aware of the fantasy component of their viewing: they were "playing with fictional worlds and selves" (p. 121). See also, for fantasy, Peter Nicholls, *Fantastic Cinema: an illustrated survey* (London: Ebury Press, 1984); David Butler, *Fantasy Cinema: impossible worlds on screen* (London; New York: Wallflower, 2009).

⁴ Paul Monaco, "Film as Myth and National Folklore," in *The Power of Myth in Literature and Film: Selected Papers from the Second Annual Florida State University Conference on Literature and Film,* ed. Victor Carrabino (Tallahassee: University Presses of Florida, 1980), 35.

⁵ Monaco, "Film as Myth and National Folklore," 35. Discussions of 'fantasy' or 'escapist' tropes in cinema are open to multiple definitions, and even the possibility of a settled definition is disputed. Thus, Alec Worley argues that there is an "absence of any comprehensive critical survey of fantasy cinema", and, "[d]efining fantasy is difficult." *Empires of the Imagination: a critical survey of fantasy cinema from Georges Méliès to The Lord of the Rings* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co., 2005), 3,7. Whilst some writer have examined the nature of fantasy films (see, in the film and theology discipline, for example, David Jasper and John Lyden's work), the vast majority of writers are content to use "fantasy" as a synonym for "horror", which functions as the medium for the study of "outsiders" and social alienation (see Bellin). In other words, fantasy is an exemplar of a pre-existing thesis, rather than examined as a genre or subject in its own right. Worley's statement is a fair one. David Jasper, "On Systematizing the Unsystematic: a response," in *Explorations in Theology and Film: movies and meaning*, ed. Clive Marsh and Gaye Williams Ortiz (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 235–244; Lyden, *Film as Religion*; Joshua David Bellin, *Framing Monsters: fantasy film and social alienation* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2005).

⁶ This is "mythic" in Caird's Myth^F sense we saw above (on page 134): myth as falsehood.

lived".⁷ As André Bazin argued, cinema has "an integral realism, a recreation of the world in its own image, an image unburdened by the freedom of interpretation of the artist or the irreversibility of time." Therefore cinema is a-mythic, or, even more strongly, anti-mythic.

This contrast has an analogue in Northrop Frye's "Theory of Modes". Whereas Monaco presents a division between mythic and a-mythic, historic and a-historic, Frye gives us five *modes* through which a fiction might be expressed. His scheme, based on a prefatory remark of Aristotle, categorizes fictive texts according to the extent of a protagonist's competency and faculties: "the hero's power of action". The analogy is closer than the numerical discrepancy might first suggest.

Frye limits the first mode, *Myth*, to the actions of the hero as a divine being. This is not a common genre in popular Hollywood films, at least, not since the fashion for "Jesus-pics" declined. However it might be possible to argue that this mode lives on in the recent fashion for the depiction and redepiction of super-heroes through quasi-religious tropes.¹⁰ As Arthur C. Clarke formulated his "Third Law" ("any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic"¹¹) perhaps we similarly need to assert that 'any sufficiently advanced super-hero is indistinguishable from divinity'. Even so, Frye's first mode need not concern us for our present purposes. The escapist and fantasy genres described by Monaco would map more readily to Frye's second and third modes, *Romance* and *High Mimetic*. Thus:

The hero of romance moves in a world in which the ordinary laws of nature are slightly suspended: prodigies of courage and endurance, unnatural to us, are natural to him, and enchanted weapons, talking animals, terrifying ogres and witches, and talismans of miraculous power violate no rule of probability once the postulates of romance have been established.¹²

⁷ Monaco, "Film as Myth and National Folklore," 36. Walter Benjamin gave a prescient, and recently influential, discussion on the political implications of cinema's technical medium: the masses' desire "to bring things 'closer' spatially and humanly", at the same time as wishing to overcome "the uniqueness of every reality by accepting its reproduction": Benjamin, "Mechanical Reproduction," 216–217.

⁸ André Bazin, "The Myth of Total Cinema (1946)," in *What is Cinema?*, ed. Hugh Gray, vol. 1, New ed. (Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 2005), 21.

⁹ Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: four essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 33.

¹⁰ For an egregious example see Bryan Singer, *Superman Returns*, Technicolor / Panavision, U.S.A. (Warner Bros. Pictures, 2006).

¹¹ Arthur C. Clarke, "Hazard of Prophecy: the failure of imagination," in *Profiles of the Future: an inquiry into the limits of the possible,* 3rd ed. (London: Victor Gollancz, 1982), note on p. 36. ¹² Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, 33.

Romance is expressed in the fictional genres of legends and folk tales (and the cinematic equivalents of fantasy, super-heroes, and science fiction?).

The *High Mimetic* mode exists when the protagonist shares the same environment as other characters in the fiction, but exceeds them in degree: "He has authority, passions, and powers of expression far greater than ours, but what he does is subject both to social criticism and to the order of nature." ¹³ This is the mode in which cinematic tragedies and epics operate.

Monaco's second alternative, photographic representations of reality, maps onto Frye's third and fourth modes, *Low Mimetic* and *Ironic*. In the *Low Mimetic* mode, the protagonist's spheres of autonomy and ability reflect those of the majority of humanity: he is 'one of us' and the problems he faces and the resources he has to deal with those problems belong to all men. This is the mode of realistic fiction, and most 'realistic' genres of cinema. In the *Ironic* mode, on the other hand, the protagonist is inferior in autonomy and ability to the fiction's consumers, who find themselves "looking down on a scene of bondage, frustration, or absurdity". ¹⁴ Frye says that this is the mode of most serious fiction in the later part of the twentieth century, but, paradoxically, it is also the mode of most comic or farcical films.

But, as Monaco points out, this customary division of cinema into 'unreal fantasy' and 'reality lived' is not actually how cinema works. Just as myth is multivalent and ambiguous, so too is cinema: "it transcends reality (quasimagically) while maintaining a close connection to the pictorial accuracy often associated with reality." ¹⁵ Cinema's quasi-magical means of transcending reality comes through its ability to manipulate time, concentrating and elongating it, in an unconscious replication of Eliade's *illud tempus*. ¹⁶ Film makers very quickly perfected the techniques of parallel editing so that transitions in time, *qua* transitions, are invisible to the audiences. Monaco thinks that it is cinema's interaction with time, how it "overcomes" or "disregards" time, that shows cinema working at its most mythic. ¹⁷ However, in an irony that "reinforces" the mythic dimension of cinema, cinema is simultaneously based on a "discontinuous presentation *in* films" and that at the same time "presentation of films is continuous" ¹⁸; that is, the viewer experiences a film as an artefact that

¹³ Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, 34.

¹⁴ Frye, Anatomy of Criticism, 34.

¹⁵ Monaco, "Film as Myth and National Folklore," 37. For example, my children, watching Peter Jackson's *The Return of the King* commented that the special effects in the Battle of Pelennor Fields looked "fake", without realising they were describing the depiction of a ghost-army attacking 30 metre high battle-elephants. Somehow the fantasy should have looked "more real". Peter Jackson, *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King*, Super 35 mm, U.S.A. / New Zealand (New Line Cinema, 2003).

¹⁶ See the discussion on page 149ff.

¹⁷ Monaco, "Film as Myth and National Folklore," 38.

¹⁸ Monaco, "Film as Myth and National Folklore," 38.

unfolds over a measurable period of time—90 or 150 or 180 minutes.¹⁹ At the same time, the period of time involved in the narrative of the film is very rarely limited to the 'real' time of the film's running (and when it is, it is usually commented upon as an unusual artistic exercise²⁰). The 'narrative' time might be a day, a week, or millions of years.²¹ And yet, says Monaco, the disjuncture between the "mode of a film's creation (discontinuity)" and the "form of its presentation (continuity)" does not "reinforce" a "historical tension", but, rather, "relieves" it. Here Monaco does not mean that tension originates in times past, but rather in the unfolding of a story through time: it would have been more precise to say that the *narrative* tension is relieved. Curiously, this relief means that the motion picture, as an art form, is "antihistorical, or, at least, ahistorical", and so is an example of "Eliade's description of the modern myth."²²

Furthermore, as an individual film is the product of collective action (Monaco has no time for an auteur theory of origination), film as a medium is also a collective genre, and is the product, and expressive, of collective thought: "Movies are not 'authored' but are rather reflections of shared thoughts and structures…[and such collective thinking is] impersonal, archetypic, and prototypic."²³

Before I consider *whose* collective thought is the source of the mythography of movies, it is as well to consider whether movies deserve all this attention as the origin of mythological thinking in our society. Are movies the only, or the pre-eminent, myth-making medium?

¹⁹ Or 726 minutes if watching the Director's Cut Blu-Ray version of the entire *Lord of the Rings* Trilogy!

²⁰ See, for example, Bosley Crowther's review of Hitchcock's *Rope*: "The novelty of the picture is ...in the method which Mr. Hitchcock has used to stretch the intended tension for the length of the little stunt." Although "daring", Hitchcock's real-time, single-view photography "is neither effective nor does it appear that it could be." Bosley Crowther, "The Screen in Review; 'Rope,' an Exercise in Suspense Directed by Alfred Hitchcock, Is New Bill at the Globe," *The New York Times*, August 27, 1948, http://movies.nytimes.com/movie/review; Alfred Hitchcock, *Rope*, B&W film, U.S.A. (Warner Bros. Pictures, 1948).

²¹ See, for example, the most famous jump-cut in cinematic history: the transition between prehistoric man throwing a thigh-bone into the air, and the orbiting space weapon system in Stanley Kubrick, 2001: A Space Odyssey, Super Panavision 70 mm, U.K. / U.S.A. (Metro–Goldwyn–Mayer, 1968).

²² Monaco, "Film as Myth and National Folklore," 38. Presumably Monaco is referring to Eliade's exploration of "concentrated time" ("the specific dimension of the theatre and the cinema"), and modern mythic obsessions with breaking out of time: Eliade, *Myths, Dreams and Mysteries*, 34–8.

²³ Monaco, "Film as Myth and National Folklore," 39. This approach to interpreting myth is one taken by, among others, Siegfried Kracauer, and will be useful when we come to examine the 'films of affirmation' in Chapter 6, "The Leadership Principle", below.

Is Cinema the dominant mythography?

During the rise of cinema as the economically powerful art form Walter Benjamin addressed the question of cultural formation. The twentieth century was passing into the age of mechanical art, and the power of other cultural and artistic endeavours would wither in the face of the power of the mechanical arts. Tradition will be shattered by the technique of reproduction: "a plurality of copies [is substituted] for a unique existence." The beholder is able to determine the location and situation in which the reproduced copy is beheld, thus determining how and when the object is "reactivated".²⁴ According to Benjamin, the "most powerful agent" for this process is cinema:

Its social significance, particularly in its most positive form, is inconceivable without its destructive, cathartic aspect, that is, the liquidation of the traditional value of the cultural heritage.²⁵

Benjamin quotes, approvingly, the judgement of the early French director, Abel Gance: "Shakespeare, Rembrandt, Beethoven will make films... all legends, all mythologies and all myths, all founders of religion, and the very religions...await their exposed resurrection, and the heroes crowd each other at the gate." ²⁶

Despite Benjamin's caution and Gance's enthusiasm it would be wrong to say that cinema is the only means by which repeated tales, about a society's origins, values and destinations are told. Anecdotal reflection will throw up numerous examples of ways in which other media play a role in creating, curating, and propagating mythic understandings of the world: how does print media (novels, short stories, poetry, polemics) function? In what way is music-making mythic (opera, oratorios, musical theatre, popular music)? What about the visual arts (think of the nationalist function of Soviet socialist realism, the revolutionary art of Jacques-Louis David or the anti-fascist mythology of *Guernica*)?²⁷

What indeed about the power of the news media for constructing myths? This is an undoubted source of mythology in North Atlantic society. By examining their power, and means of constructing myths, it is possible to see

²⁴ Benjamin, "Mechanical Reproduction," 215.

²⁵ Benjamin, "Mechanical Reproduction," 215.

²⁶ Abel Gance, "Le Temps de l'Image est venu," in *L'Art cinématographique*, vol. 2 (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1927), 94–95. Quoted by Benjamin, "Mechanical Reproduction," 215–216.

²⁷ Gleb Prokhorov, *Art Under Socialist Realism: Soviet Painting, 1930-1950* (East Roseville, NSW, Australia: Craftsman House®: G + B Arts Int, 1995); Warren Roberts, *Jacques-Louis David, Revolutionary Artist: art, politics and the French Revolution* (Chapel Hill; London: University of North Carolina Press, 1989); Gijs Van Hensbergen, *Guernica: the biography of a Twentieth-Century icon* (London: Bloomsbury, 2005).

the relative status of movies to news. Which is the dominant mode of myth-making?

W. Joseph Campbell's book *Getting it Wrong*²⁸ functions as an indictment of the way the news media has been more effective at making myths than they have been with reporting important social, political and military stories over the last seventy or more years. (For Campbell this is 'myth' in Caird's Myth^F sense).²⁹ He lists the more egregious myths, for which he holds print, television and radio journalism responsible: Walter Cronkite was *not* responsible for the US Government's disengagement from the Vietnam war, Ed Murrow did *not* singlehandedly bring down Senator McCarthy, there never was an epidemic of babies addicted to crack cocaine, and, bizarrely but entertainingly, no feminists burnt their bras in Atlantic City during the Miss America pageant in September 1968.³⁰ The reason why these stories remain so lodged in public (American) consciousness is the way that they are repeatedly and continually reported in the news media (Campbell's discipline is journalism and journalistic ethics). So this would seem to be evidence that the news media is a powerful, mythbearing, force as well.

For all that, within Campbell's close analysis of the role the news media play in constructing and perpetuating myth is an unacknowledged but telling strand. The Watergate scandal has become a tale of heroic-journalists bringing down a corrupt president, and this is so because of the movie, *All the President's Men*,³¹ "the first and perhaps only extended exposure many people have to the complex scandal". The Murrow-McCarthy conflict, as well as participating in the news media's own internal "heroic-journalist myth", has been reinforced by the seductiveness of *Good Night and Good Luck*.³² As Campbell says: "High-quality cinematic treatments are powerful agents of media-mythmaking and can enhance a myth's durability."³³ More than enhance: once the template of the story has been set, it can only be interpreted through the hermeneutic prism of movies: "historical lies are nearly impossible to correct once movies and television have given them credibility."³⁴

It might be expected that movie mythography would have a power and pre-eminence when dealing with *historical* lies. After all, to make a balanced

²⁸ W. Joseph Campbell, *Getting it Wrong: ten of the greatest misreported stories in American journalism* (Berkeley, Ca.; London: University of California Press, 2010). W. Joseph Campbell is no relation to the Joseph Campbell mentioned on page 131 and discussed on page 173.

²⁹ See the discussion on page 134.

³⁰ Campbell, *Getting it Wrong*, chap. 5, 3, 8, 7 respectively.

³¹ Pakula, All the President's Men.

³² George Clooney, *Good Night, and Good Luck,* Technicolor / Super 35, U.S.A. (Warner Independent Pictures, 2005).

³³ Campbell, Getting it Wrong, 188.

³⁴ Brent Staples, "Hollywood: History by Default," *The New York Times*, December 25, 1991. Quoted in Campbell, *Getting it Wrong*, 5–6.

judgement about two or more conflicting interpretations of a particular event accessible only through a historical record not necessarily written in the vernacular, requires a degree of historiographical expertise and sophistication. Was the dissolution of the monasteries in England to do with the rise of the merchant classes and the economic pressures experienced by the landed gentry, to do with the decline of traditional catholic belief and practice in the face of humanist literacy and continental Protestantism, or was it simply to do with the force of personality of Henry Tudor and Thomas Cromwell? With such questions as these, it might be agreed that cultural depictions, through movies and television, will influence or even determine popular understandings.

Nevertheless, the same process applies equally to current events, those which occur within a shared cultural and epistemological milieu. There is no "gap of translation" when it comes to the nightly news, and yet these events are still interpreted through the prism of movies. Consider how many times a bystander will describe unexpected or shocking events in such terms as "It didn't feel real. It was just like a movie." 35

This is exactly what happened in one of Campbell's examples. The rescue of Pfc Jessica Lynch, held "captive" or held "in hospital" by the Iraqis during the American led invasion in 2003, was initially presented as the story of the plucky young woman, fighting off and then being tortured by captors, before being rescued in a heroically-explosive fire fight. Other parts of the media, believing that the narrative fitted too neatly into predefined political requirements, swiftly reinterpreted events with suspicion. A BBC documentary, "War Spin", interviewed doctors in the Iraqi hospital from which Lynch had been rescued. Dr Anmar Uday recounted: "When they enter they say go, go! Wait, wait, wait! Just like Hollywood movies. Just like Hollywood films." Dr Harith Al-Houssona concurred "Like a film of Hollywood, they cry, 'Go, go, go!'...and shout, 'Go, go, go!', with guns and blanks, without bullets."36 Al-Houssona was even familiar with genre of what he experienced: "They make a show for the American attack for the hospital. Action movies like Sylvester Stallone or Jackie Chan..."37 The reporter, John Kampfner, made the connection between the 'visuals' of the edited video tape released by the Pentagon, and the imagery of a blockbuster Hollywood film: "The Pentagon had been influenced

³⁵ "After four decades of big-budget Hollywood disaster films, 'It felt like a movie' seems to have displaced the way survivors of a catastrophe used to express the short-term unassimilability of what they had gone through: 'It felt like a dream.'" Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2003), 19. See also chapter 3, "Like a Movie", in Marc Redfield, *The Rhetoric of Terror: reflections on 9/11 and the war on terror* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009).

³⁶ From the transcript to "War Spin," Correspondent (BBC 2, May 18, 2003),

http://news.bbc.co.uk/nol/shared/spl/hi/programmes/correspondent/transcripts/18.5.031.txt.

³⁷ From the transcript to "War Spin."

by Hollywood producers of reality TV and action movies, notably the man behind *Black Hawk Down*, Jerry Bruckheimer."³⁸

Campbell rejects this interpretation: he says that a later Pentagon investigation found no evidence of 'play-acting' to the cameras, the Americans were reasonable to expect armed resistance from this hospital, and that there was, at that stage, no morale requirement to promote the popularity of the war: the American public had not yet become sceptical of the motives and objectives of the war. Even so, his point is otiose.³⁹ The importance of the episode is that the both narratives from the news media, heroic capture and staged rescue, were constructed using a movie hermeneutic. It did not seem real, because it seemed like a movie. Broadcast and print journalism may originate myths, but they do so using cinematic motifs.

The cultural dominance of cinematic motifs (a 'movie way' of thinking and understanding) is not limited to the observers and reporters of events: it affects the participants as well.

In *Gunner Palace*⁴⁰, a documentary made about an American artillery troop during the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the filmmaker Michael Tucker added, in post-production, "The Ride of the Valkyries" to a night-raid sequence. This is "an inescapable reference"⁴¹ to the Air Cavalry assault on the Nung River delta in *Apocalypse Now*.⁴² Even so, this is not art imposing a interpretative-texture upon life. Whereas Tucker "acknowledges 'Apocalypse' as part of his own vernacular", he still says "the soldiers themselves blared 'Valkyries' from their vehicles during psychological operations missions."⁴³ It was part of the soldiers' "vernacular". This is reinforced in another sequence in the film, in which the

³⁸ John Kampfner, "Saving Private Lynch story 'flawed'," *BBC News Online*, May 15, 2003, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/correspondent/3028585.stm; Ridley Scott, *Black Hawk Down*, Technicolor / 35 mm, U.S.A. (Columbia Pictures, 2001). *The Washington Post* had earlier reported on Lynch's experiences using, according to Christopher Hanson, an "anonymously sourced story [which] read like a Hollywood script and in fact bore an uncanny resemblance to a climactic scene in the Gulf War I film, *Courage Under Fire*." Susan Schmidt and Vernon Loeb, "She was fighting to the death," *The Washington Post*, April 3, 2003; Christopher Hanson, "American Idol: the press finds the war's true meaning," *Columbia Journalism Review* (mmmJuly/August 2003mmm): 58–59; Edward Zwick, *Courage Under Fire*, Super 35 mm, U.S.A. (Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 1996). Schmidt and Loeb, and Hanson, cited by Campbell, *Getting it Wrong*, 234, n4&5.

³⁹ Campbell, Getting it Wrong, 153–154.

⁴⁰ Petra Epperlein and Michael Tucker, *Gunner Palace*, Digital Video / 35 mm, U.S.A. (Palm Pictures, 2005).

⁴¹ Mark Follman, "Inside 'Gunner Palace'," *Salon.com*, March 4, 2005, <www.salon.com/2005/03/04/gunner>.

⁴² Francis Ford Coppola, *Apocalypse Now*, Technovision / Technicolor, U.S.A. (United Artists, 1979); Francis Ford Coppola, *Apocalypse Now Redux*, Technovision / Technicolor, U.S.A. (Buena Vista International, 2001).

⁴³ Follman, "Inside 'Gunner Palace'."

soldiers enjoy R&R (rest and relaxation). Tucker was surprised by the spontaneous and yet imitative way this leisure time was enacted:

I realized, looking at how young the soldiers are, that these guys learned this stuff—the aloha shirts and everything else—from *Platoon* and *Full Metal Jacket*.⁴⁴

The soldiers' imaginative subconscious had been colonized by cinema.⁴⁵

Is American Cinema the dominant Mythos?

Having tested both the mythic possibilities of cinema and its pre-eminent position as the myth-bearing medium, I now turn to the question of whose myth, which mythography? If, as argued by Monaco, it is possible to testify to the collective origins and expression of film as a medium, we have to identify which collectivity is the origin. Monaco makes his choice clear:

Insofar as the societies of the film age are accurately described as national ones the mythocontent and mythostructure of films function as elements of national folklore. Moreover, since the motion picture possesses elements of fantasy of a certain sort based on the suspension of time, and aspects of wish-fulfilment which are collective, these function primarily at the level of national society.⁴⁶

Monaco asserts that the point of collective origin is "film as national folklore", which he says derives from the work of Ricardo Canudo.⁴⁷ For film to function as a national folklore three premises must be acceptd. First, film as a secular art form will displace, or has displaced, the religious or sacred qualities present in myth proper. Second, film is of the folk, "that is, appealing to the broad populace and expressing widely shared ideas and attitudes through the pressure of audience taste." Third, film as a medium can be read as a body of "lore"; that is, cinema might be established as "a corpus of works from which

⁴⁴ Follman, "Inside 'Gunner Palace'."

⁴⁵ For more on this process, in relation to the power of American mythology, see Wim Wenders on page 184. See also the experiences of Gustav Hasford and Michael Herr, as described in their memoirs and then, in an example of the reinforcing spiral hermeneutic of Movie Mythology, filmed as *Full Metal Jacket*: discussed below in "Is that you, John Wayne? Is this me?" from page 259ff.

⁴⁶ Monaco, "Film as Myth and National Folklore," 41. Emphasis added.

⁴⁷ Actually *Ricciotto* Canudo (1879-1923), the Italian-French philosopher of aesthetics, and most famous for his dubbing of cinema as the sixth (and, later, seventh) art: "The Birth of the Sixth Art (1911)," trans. Ben Gibson et al., *Framework*, no. 13 (Autumn 1980): 3–7. Monaco appears to be citing Canudo's 1927 collection of essays, *L'Usine aux Images*, ed. Jean-Paul Morel (Paris: Séguier, 1995).

derives a collective meaningfulness beyond the significance of any single film."48

Monaco, naturally, believes that all three criteria are provable and useful, and even though film might be created by an elite (with access to the capital and technology necessary for the mass production of films), the elite still exists in a symbiotic relationship with the masses. The one could not exist without the other, and therefore the psychological and social needs of the masses, a need for identity and wish-fulfilment, will affect the content of the film.

It can be said with historical accuracy that the mode of 'normal' film-making has been national. And it has been folkloric in that national genres predominate, national standards of commercial estimation and artistic evaluation hold in the first instance, and films originate through a symbiosis of those who put up the money, those who make the films, and those who see them.

In short, for Monaco, in order to understand its true nature, the *context* of a film is as important as its *text*. And this context is firmly placed along a nationalist scale:

The cinema emerged and developed in the period 1895–1940. This was an era of strident and self-conscious nationalism and aggressive chauvinism in the industrial world. The history of film is, then, related necessarily to questions of national consciousness.⁴⁹

It is reasonable to assume that the history of film is "related" to "questions of national consciousness". Monaco's argument, by means of a rhetorical sleight of hand, goes much farther than that. The weakness of his argument begins with his analysis of the nature of society / societies in the film age: "Insofar as the societies of the film age are accurately described as national ones..." It is the "insofar" that exposes the problem in Monaco's argument. It is impossible to portray convincingly the film industries of the separate industrialized nations as separated from one other, existing without fear or possibility of crosscontamination. Furthermore, if the film companies and industries are affected by one another, is it really possible to say that there only exist "national" folklores of cinema? What happens when one nation dominates the cultural and economic unconsciousness of the world? Is it possible to adapt Monaco's argument to the reality of the early twentieth century, when national film companies, and later, industries, competed with, and were influenced by, each other? It is possible to talk about an international folklore, retaining Monaco's argument that cinema is a myth-bearing medium?

⁴⁸ Monaco, "Film as Myth and National Folklore," 41.

⁴⁹ Monaco, "Film as Myth and National Folklore," 46.

Despite Monaco's assertions that every national cinema is the medium of a national *mythos*, I wish to argue that national cinemas (and therefore national *mythoi*) have been subsumed into the national *mythos* and national cinema of the United States. The subsumption has been so total, that, according Robert Ray, the customary *American* way of doing things has become *the* way of doing things: "different ways of making movies would appear as aberrations from some 'intrinsic essence of cinema' rather than simply as alternatives...because departures from the American Cinema's dominant paradigms risked not only commercial disaster but critical incomprehension, one form of cinema threatened to drive out all others." ⁵⁰

Although the dominant paradigms of American Cinema are a function of many different discourses,⁵¹ it will be enough for our purposes to confine ourselves to two main types: the dominance of economics and culture.

The economic dominance of American Cinema

In the very early years of cinema, once the early technological problems had been solved by patented and pirated processes, the only entry requirements for a successful career in the movie-business in cinema were a small amount of financial liquidity and a large amount of determination. Before the First World War almost anyone could become a movie mogul: "All you needed was fifty dollars, a broad, and a camera", according to an early participant. 52 Such a low threshold misdirected the early American participants from the possibilities and profits that could accompany cinema: Thomas Edison, who, if not the inventor of motion pictures, was certainly its earliest plagiarist plagiarist, thought of movies as little more than toys. It took two European companies, Nordisk in Denmark and Pathé in France, to show the Americans that movies could be serious business.

In 1908 Nordisk, owned by the former shepherd and fairground barker Ole Olsen, was the second largest film company in the world. Before the first American moguls, Olsen had "built an international organization in which he controlled all aspects of production, distribution and exhibition."⁵⁴ He acquired his first camera in 1906, and by the end of the year had made 37 fiction films: the following year Nordisk doubled its production of fictional and

⁵⁰ Ray, Certain Tendency, 26.

⁵¹ As we shall partially see, we might also have studied political, technological, ethical, geographic or linguistic factors as well.

⁵² Jesse L. Lasky, Jr, Whatever Happened to Hollywood? (New York; London: W. H. Allen, 1973), 46; Quoted in David Puttnam, The Undeclared War: the struggle for control of the world's film industry (London: HarperCollins, 1997), 38.

⁵³ See Puttnam, The Undeclared War, 11,12,22,40.

⁵⁴ Ron Mottram, *The Danish Cinema Before Dreyer* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1988), 14. Production figures are taken from ch. 1.

"documentary" films, and distributed 38 of the former and seven of the latter in the United States (36 of the 60 movies made by Nordisk were distributed in the U.S. in 1908/09). Olsen set up production and distribution offices in New York and the major European capitals, and it was only the formation of the Motion Picture Patents Company (MPPC), the so-called "Trust" in 1909, and the economic difficulties of the First World War, which undermined Nordisk's position as a major distributor of movies in the United States.

Olsen's Nordisk was second only to Charles Pathé, who, in the Pathé company, invented the form of cinema production that was to dominate the twentieth century. It was not enough, despite the enthusiasm of the early participants, to have access to a camera, film-stock and a pretty girl. In order for money to be made the film company needed to be 'vertically integrated'. This meant owning the means of production (the film company proper, with technicians, writers, directors and actors all contracted); the means of distribution (protecting the importance of copyright); and the means of exhibition (the nickelodeons, theatres, and movie houses in which the movies were actually shown). It was Pathé who first set up such a vertically integrated system: the structure he invented "allowed him to minimize risk, using profits generated by the distribution of his films to fund the production of new ones. ...[he] exercise[d] an almost seamless integrated control over the entire operation."55 The results were quantifiable and profitable: by 1906 Pathé's company was making a movie a day, and its potential world-wide reach was 300 million people per film; by 1908 it was selling twice as many films as the entire American film industry. His "domination of world cinema was complete."56 As Pathé later boasted: "I didn't invent cinema, but I did industrialize it."57

It did not, and could not, last. As with Nordisk, Pathé faced the unequal struggle against the American film industry's inherent advantages. It was a unified market, operating in a politically and economically unified country, with a potential audience, which, if not greater than the European market, was a reasonably large proportion of the former (325 million in Europe, 92 million in the United States⁵⁸). The motion picture industry, despite its origins in the actions of individual mavericks, such as Carl Laemmle, the Warner brothers,

⁵⁵ Puttnam, The Undeclared War, 41.

⁵⁶ Puttnam, The Undeclared War, 43.

⁵⁷ Charles Pathé, *De Pathé Frères à Pathé Cinéma* (Lyons: Premier Plan, 1970), 36; trans. by and quoted in Puttnam, *The Undeclared War*, 43.

⁵⁸ For Europe the figure is for 1913, excluding the Russian Empire. For the United States, the figure is from the 1910 Census: Table 6.2, Massimo Livi Bacci, *The Population of Europe* (Malden, Mass.; Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 132; United States Census Bureau, *Population, Housing Units, Area Measurements, and Density*, 1990 Census of Population and Housing (Washington, D.C., 1990), <www.census.gov/population/www/censusdata/files/table-2.pdf>.

and Harry Cohn, very swiftly and effectively formed itself into a series of cartels, with the active assistance of the U.S. Federal Government. The Webb-Pomerene Export Trade Act of 1918 permitted the operation of the Motion Picture Export Association (MPEA) as a legal cartel. Woodrow Wilson formed the Creel Committee on Public Information in 1916 to act as the conduit for liberal democratic propaganda. In August 1918, the Federal Government declared the American movie-making businesses (Thomas Edison's "toys" of fifteen years before) as an "essential industry". ⁵⁹ Without these actions, and others, it is doubtful that the American movie industry would have so swiftly and comprehensively overwhelmed the European film companies, even before the introduction of sound.

And overwhelm they did. By 1925 Hollywood feature films, as a percentage of films exhibited, took 95 percent of the British, 60 percent of the German, 85 percent of the Scandinavian, and 70 percent of the French markets. By 1923, *Photoplay*, a popular fan magazine, was able to boast: "We're getting a throttle-hold on the old world; it's all to the jazz and celluloid right now." The "throttle-hold" was tenacious: "by the early 20s, the American film industry had virtually taken over world markets." Even so, the "highest tide" for American domination of all forms of media was not until the years 1947–53. In 1950, America cinema produced 622 feature films: all were available for export, and it was estimated by UNESCO that U.S. produced movies consumed three-quarters of exhibition time on the world's cinema screens.

This could not last, but even if the U.S. lost moral high ground and sales by the early 1980s⁶⁵, in 1985 the revenue of the American film industry had grown to \$1 billion a year, and 40 percent of its revenue came from overseas rentals. The Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), under its president Jack Valenti⁶⁶, operated as a mini State Department, with 300

⁵⁹ Puttnam, *The Undeclared War*, 203,90–1. For the history and influence of the Creel Committee and its "Division of Films", see Kristin Thompson, *Exporting Entertainment: America in the world film market*, 1907-34 (London: BFI Publishing, 1985), 92–9.

⁶⁰ Figures taken from "Table 4: The Hollywood Share in Foreign Film Markets, 1925, 1928, 1937", Jeremy Tunstall, *The Media Are American: Anglo-American media in the world* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), 284.

⁶¹ Herbert Howe, "What Europe thinks of American Stars," *Photoplay*, February 1923, 41; Quoted in Thompson, *Exporting Entertainment*, 100.

⁶² Thompson, *Exporting Entertainment*, 148. Thompson's conclusion is justified by her superb quantitative analysis, presented in Appendices I & II of her book.

⁶³ Tunstall, The Media Are American, 141-3.

⁶⁴ Figures quoted in William H. Read, *America's Mass Media Merchants* (Baltimore; London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 53.

⁶⁵ Tunstall's updates and gloomier thesis: *The Media Were American: U.S. mass media in decline* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 93ff.

⁶⁶ Jack Valenti, 1921–2007, was special assistant to Lyndon Johnson, before being invited to become President of the MPAA in 1966. He retired from the post in 2004, after 38 years as "the

"diplomats" stationed in 60 countries around the world, furthering the commercial and moral interests of the major American studios.⁶⁷ By 1994 the American film industry made more money from overseas exhibitions than from domestic for the first time⁶⁸; in 1995 the European Union's audio-visual industries were in deficit to the United States by \$6.3 billion⁶⁹; by 2000 in the European Union, the market share for American films was 73.7 percent, an increase of 4 percent in a single year.⁷⁰ No wonder a provocative sub-editor on *Variety* was able to summarise the situation: "Earth to H'wood: You Win".⁷¹

Paul Monaco, in his attempt to supply a hermeneutic *context* to the *text* of cinema did not go far enough. He argued:

It is possible to divorce the making of a film from the exigencies that require technicians, actors, crews, editors and so forth. It is impossible, however, to divorce film from itself; its mode of manifestation will always be collective.⁷²

He could well have added that the mode of manifestation, and the monopoly of manifestation, will also be dependent on economic, political and cultural dynamics. William Read makes this point. The domination of American cultural values, piggy-backing on a dominant American mass media, is not the result of a quasi-imperialist government/industry cabal⁷³: Read calls this a

public face of the movie and television production industry and one of its fiercest advocates." David M. Halbfinger, "Jack Valenti, 85, Confidant of a President and Stars, Dies," *The New York Times* (New York, April 27, 2007), C10. The MPAA had its origins in the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America, established in 1922 by major Hollywood production studios as a response to increasing public unease about decency and morality in movies and the movie industry. The MPPDA, most commonly known as the Hays Office, after its first director, Will H. Hays, concentrated on the implementation of the Motion Picture Production Code. It was only with its reformation as the MPAA that its trade association functions became preeminent.

- ⁶⁷ Clyde H. Farnesworth, "Jack Valenti's State Department," *The New York Times* (New York, December 18, 1985), B12.
- 68 Source: "Worldwide rentals beat domestic take," Variety 358, no. 2 (February 13, 1995): 28.
- ⁶⁹ Source: the European Audiovisual Observatory, quoted in Puttnam, *The Undeclared War*, 350.
- ⁷⁰ European Audiovisual Observatory, "Cinema admissions in the European Union continue to grow but market shares of European films register an important decline in 2000," Press Release (Strasbourg, April 23, 2001), <www.obs.coe.int/about/oea/pr/mif2001.pdf>.
- ⁷¹ Leonard Klady, "Earth to H'wood: you win," *Variety* 358, no. 2 (February 13, 1995): 1; John Rockwell, "The New Colossus: American culture as power export," *The New York Times* (New York, January 30, 1994), H1.
- ⁷² Monaco, "Film as Myth and National Folklore," 39.
- ⁷³ For examples of this tendency, see, for example: Toby Miller, "Hollywood and the World," in *The Oxford Guide to Film Studies*, ed. John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 371–81; Tunstall, *The Media Are American*; Tunstall, *The Media Were American*: U.S. mass media in decline. The most acute example can be found in Toby Miller et al.,

"near-conspiracy theory", and asserts that the evidence does not back it up.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, the U.S. Government's insistence on a press freedom clause in the U.N.'s Universal Declaration on Human Rights in 194875 did "have the effect of bestowing legitimacy on American mass media operations". 76 So, more accurately it might be said, according to Reed, that American cultural hegemony is the result of four factors: commercial momentum; a co-operative government (exercising its own forms of 'hard' and 'soft' power)—what Emily Rosenberg has dubbed "the promotional state" an economically large and diverse society with a taste for novelty and invention; and, fourthly, the immigrant-driven population growth in American society, with a strong ethnic and cultural identity that encouraged "media with transnational cultural contents."78 In short, private innovation and ruthlessness in the film companies, public support through government legislation and lobbying, the inherent market of the United States and the connections between American society (societies?) and the remainder of the world, all combined to promote American ascendency. America became the world's media provider because the world was already in America.

The cultural dominance of American Cinema

In the early days of the Creel Committee it was not necessary for the film companies to exert themselves to make films which people, even people from outside the United States, wanted to see: Europeans, especially, "are eager—it is not too much to say they are wild—for films that illustrate the various operations of American industry such as the manufacture of fountain pens." This could not continue, and it could not explain the continuing, and increasing, attraction of the products of the American film industry. Even the most monopolistic and state-subsidized cinema will not survive on educational and

Global Hollywood 2 (London: BFI Publishing, 2005). This is a useful compendium of statistics and references, spoilt by a posturing political gloss.

⁷⁴ Read, *America's Mass Media Merchants*, 7. Read discusses, for example, how the U.S. Government funded news agency USIA competed directly with the privately-owned and run news media.

⁷⁵ Article 19: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers." General Assembly of the United Nations, "Universal Declaration of Human Rights", December 10, 1948,

<www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>.

⁷⁶ Read, America's Mass Media Merchants, 8.

⁷⁷ Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion,* 1890-1945 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 48–59.

⁷⁸ Read, America's Mass Media Merchants, 9.

⁷⁹ A foreign trade representative, writing in *Moving Picture World*, 5 April 1919, quoted in Puttnam, *The Undeclared War*, 91.

informative public relations films. In short, the economic dominance of the American film industry is not the full explanation for the dominance of the American film industry as a whole. There must be another component, and this is the *cultural* dominance.

Neal Gabler, the historian of popular film, proposes that cultural dominance is made up of two components: aesthetical and ideological. Products of the American film industry were attractive because they had an aesthetic of scale, speed and action that "made them accessible to anyone." Secondly, "American films, concentrating on stars framed in close-ups, promoted the centrality and the efficacy of individual action—a world that conformed to our vicarious will." Gabler points out that this combination ensures the continuing success of American films: they are universally "exporting the primal aesthetic of excitement and individualism." With this acknowledgement of the importance of ideology, Gabler is following, consciously or unconsciously, the work of Althusser, who defined ideology as "a system... of representations (images, myths, ideas or concepts, depending on the case) endowed with a historical existence and role within a given society." Sa

Ray explained the connection between economic realities and this aesthetic/ideological ethos. During the 'classic' period of American film-making (1930–1945), as a result of economic concentration and the pressure to produce large quantities of 'product', Hollywood's solution was to work "endless variations around a few basic patterns" ⁸⁴, and, for the "sake of a regular audience", to "consistently deploy the basic ideologies and myths of American culture" ⁸⁵: in short, "to repeat what had worked before", and to give the audience what they want, "standard American stories". ⁸⁶

Gabler's and Ray's joint thesis has a point, when we recall what we have already seen of the economic results of this aesthetic ideology. At the height of the Cold War, Jack Valenti was able to assert the cultural benefits of the American motion picture industry, whose films are "America's secret weapon—the supreme visual force in the world, dominating screens in theaters and in living rooms." The reason why was simple: "People like what we create better than what others create." Following the end of the Cold War, and the

⁸⁰ Neal Gabler, "The world still watches America," *The New York Times* (New York, January 9, 2003), A27.

⁸¹ Gabler, "The world still watches America," A27.

⁸² Gabler, "The world still watches America," A27.

⁸³ Althusser, "Marxism and Humanism," 231.

⁸⁴ Ray, Certain Tendency, 30.

⁸⁵ Ray, Certain Tendency, 30.

⁸⁶ Ray, Certain Tendency, 30.

⁸⁷ Farnesworth, "Jack Valenti's State Department."

so-called "End of History", and the triumph of the liberal democracies, Valenti was able to be even more expansive:

...it is a fact, blessedly confirmed, that the American movie is affectionately received by audiences of all races, cultures and creeds on all continents, amid turmoil and stress as well as hope and promise.⁸⁸

If this were so (and no one can pretend that Valenti's boosterism is a nuanced, water-tight, analysis of the world's cultural–political dynamics), then the events of 2001 would be inexplicable. The hi-jacking and destruction of four aircraft on 11 September 2001, with the loss of life (on the aircraft and on the ground), and the destruction imposed on three American architectural icons seems to give the lie to Valenti. If American cultural values and mores were so universally well-regarded, if "they" liked what "we" do more than "they" like what "they" do themselves, then why was America not protected from foreign-based terrorism?⁸⁹

The usual analysis in those first months following 9/11 was not sophisticated. George W. Bush articulated it in his address to a joint session of Congress on 20 September 2001⁹⁰: "Why do they hate us?" They hate us because we are free, because we are democratic, because we stand against their atrocities. Shortly afterwards, in a press conference to mark one month since the attacks, Bush rhetorically asked himself:

How do I respond when I see that in some Islamic countries there is vitriolic hatred for America? I'll tell you how I respond: I'm amazed. I'm amazed that there's such misunderstanding of what our country is about that people would hate us. I am, like most Americans, I just can't believe. Because I know how good we are.⁹¹

Even in the weeks shortly after the attacks it was clear that this was not a nuanced analysis: why should the "Muslim world" hate freedom? What is it about the freedom of the Western liberal democracies that can instigate such hatred? Don DeLillo, in a ruminative essay published in *Harper's Magazine* three

⁸⁸ Jack Valenti and MPAA, "Collapse of the Common Wisdom: How Movies Beat the Competition!," Press Release (Washington, D.C., March 10, 1998), originally posted at www.mpaa.org/jack/98/98_3_10b.htm, now archived at

http://web.archive.org/web/20000815060143/www.mpaa.org/jack/>.

⁸⁹ A preliminary answer may have been found in the division of the world into a "we" who produce the coveted media and a "they" whose function was merely to consume that which was produced.

⁹⁰ George W. Bush, "Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People" (presented at the U.S. Congress, Washington, D.C., September 20, 2001), http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html>.

⁹¹ George W. Bush, "A Nation Challenged: excerpts from the President's remarks on the war on terrorism," *The New York Times* (New York, October 21, 2001), B4.

months after the attacks on New York and Washington (and later republished in *The Guardian*), attempted to answer those questions. The attacks couldn't just be a response to a political objection, DeLillo thought; there must be a cultural component as well:

...the primary target of the men who attacked the Pentagon and the World Trade Centre was not the global economy. It was America that drew their fury. It was the high gloss of our modernity. It was the thrust of our technology. It was our perceived godlessness. It was the blunt force of our foreign policy. It was the power of American culture to penetrate every wall, home, life and mind.⁹²

The same thing had already occurred to Wim Wenders. As a film student in Munich in the late 1960s he wrote article after article for the review magazine *Filmkritik* full of references to, and quotations from, American cultural artefacts: European art films in dialogue with Credence Clearwater Revival.⁹³ Fifteen years later, and after having made four films in America, he reflected on the effect of America culture and film-making on him, a European film-maker, in the prose-poem "The American Dream":

No other country in the world has sold itself so much and sent its images, its SELF-image with such power into every corner of the world. For seventy or eighty years, since the existence of cinema, American films—or better, this ONE American film—has been preaching the dream of the unexampled, exemplary, Promised Land.⁹⁴

David Puttnam, with his characteristic insight into the economics of film-making, summarises in the nexus of economic–aesthetic–ideological values that combine in the American movie industry:

Hollywood sees itself as being at the heart of an entertainment industry, the very essence of a mass culture which can reach out and touch audiences everywhere. The duty to entertain has been raised to the status of an ethical imperative. No rules or obligations, no canons of art can displace that fundamental obligation to entertain, to be accessible, to succeed with the audience. The deification of movie stars, the ceaseless

⁹² Don DeLillo, "In the Ruins of the Future: reflections on terror and loss in the shadow of September," *Harper's Magazine*, December 2001, 33.

⁹³ See, for example, the quotation from "Suzie Q" in a review of Rudolf Thome's *Rote Sonne* in Wim Wenders, *Emotion Pictures: reflections on the cinema*, trans. Sean Whiteside and Michael Hofmann (London: Faber and Faber, 1989), 38–9.

^{94 &}quot;The American Dream" (March/April 1984), in Wenders, Emotion Pictures, 119–20.

exaltation of emotional uplift, the relentless exploitation of every conceivable weapon of advertising and publicity, all these are vital components of a truly popular global culture which has become virtually synonymous with Hollywood, and, by extension, America itself.⁹⁵

In short, Hollywood cinema is a "revolutionary cultural form" which has successfully "synthesized the American Dream to become a universal language." ⁹⁶

As Althusser said of human society, and could well have said of Hollywood film, it is a "unity...constituted by a certain specific type of *complexity*" which, we can, "very schematically, reduce to three: the economy, politics and ideology."⁹⁷ (And we have already seen how Althusser collapsed myth into ideology). That great advocate of everything anti-Althusserian, Jack Valenti, unwittingly agreed. The success and reception of the American movie, and the values it represents, is not the result of "happenstance":

It is the confluence of creative reach, story telling skill, decision making by studio top executives and the interlocking exertions of distribution and marketing artisans.⁹⁸

Technically adept, financially expansive, logistically slick, industrial-scale, vertically integrated, film making was now indistinguishable from the American *mythos*.

What is the American mythos?

There are almost as many American myths as there are Americans. For example, Richard Hughes, in his powerful polemic *Myths America Lives By*, identifies five national myths ("the means by which we affirm the meaning of the United States"⁹⁹). For Hughes these are: the myth of the chosen people (originating in the colonial era); the myth of nature's nation, that is, the assumption that the political and social constructs of American society were determined by inherent, "natural", traits (from the time of the revolution); the myth of the Christian nation (as a result of the "Great Awakenings" of the early nineteenth century); the myth of the millennial nation, that is, American society as a shining city on the hill, which will usher in peace and goodwill for the whole of human kind (from the early nineteenth century as well); and the myth

⁹⁵ Puttnam, The Undeclared War, 334.

⁹⁶ Puttnam, The Undeclared War, 334.

⁹⁷ Althusser, "Marxism and Humanism," 231–2. Emphasis in the original.

⁹⁸ Valenti and MPAA, "Collapse of the Common Wisdom."

⁹⁹ Richard T. Hughes, Myths America Lives By (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 2.

of the innocent nation (from the twentieth century, and incorporating the reaction to the 9/11 attacks).

The conventional strategy to evaluate the mythological functioning of Hollywood film is to discuss the work and influence of Joseph Campbell. In the 1970s, with the return of "pop storytelling" to cinema¹⁰⁰, Campbell's studies, and especially his Hero with a Thousand Faces¹⁰¹, were "construed as outlining a mythic formula" which aided in the production of meaningful, and profitable, artefacts: Hollywood turned Campbell's book into a "screenwriting manual". 102 At first the manual was intuited: George Lucas kept a copy of Hero with a Thousand Faces alongside Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings while writing Star Wars¹⁰³, and he later described the book as having a "wonderful life force". ¹⁰⁴ The manual was made explicit in a series of 'how-to' books, in which we see the celebration of Campbell's influence on Hollywood. Thus Christopher Vogler, "Director of Development at Fox 2000", says that Campbell's "great accomplishment was to articulate clearly something that had been there all along—the life principles embedded in the structure of stories."105 Whilst Vogler was studying at USC film school he used Campbell to interpret Star Wars and Close Encounters of the Third Kind: "People were going back to see these films as if seeking some kind of religious experience. It seemed to me these films drew people in this special way because they reflected the universally satisfying patterns Campbell found in myths."106 This is an example of the circularity of dependence that often surrounds Campbell's work. A film-maker is influenced and impressed by Campbell. He makes his film according to Campbell's "mythic structure" ("Call to Adventure", "Refusal of the Call", etc). Campbell sees the film and praises it for being true to the mythic structure (which "is not an invention, but an observation"107). Other writers take the concurrence between the film and the theory as confirmatory evidence of the theory: "the beauty of [Campbell's] paradigm is its simplicity and the rich interpretations and varied applications of its simple truths."108

¹⁰⁰ Worley, Empires of the Imagination, 265.

¹⁰¹ Campbell, Hero.

¹⁰² Worley, Empires of the Imagination, 265.

¹⁰³ Worley, Empires of the Imagination, 258.

¹⁰⁴ Mary S. Henderson, Star Wars: the magic of myth (New York: Bantam Books, 1997), 7.

¹⁰⁵ Christopher Vogler, *The Writer's Journey: mythic structure for storytellers and screenwriters*, 2nd ed. (London: Pan, 1999), xi; see also Stuart Voytilla, *Myth and the Movies: discovering the mythic structure of 50 unforgettable films* (Studio City, Calif.: Michael Wiese Productions, 1999).

¹⁰⁶ Vogler, Writer's Journey, 2.

¹⁰⁷ Vogler, Writer's Journey, ix.

¹⁰⁸ Voytilla, *Myth and the Movies*, 3. See Moyers's description of this cycle: "Lucas and Campbell had become good friends after the filmmaker, acknowledging a debt to the Campbell's work, invited the scholar to view the *Star Wars* trilogy. Campbell reveled in the ancient themes and motifs of mythology unfolding on the wide screen in powerful contemporary images. ...Joe

Campbell's paradigm, the so-called "Monomyth" ¹⁰⁹, states that every hero undertakes a three-part journey: separation from society; trials whilst separated, reintegration to society (having been transformed by his separation and trials). This three part journey is broken down into seventeen distinct units, forming a narrative process¹¹⁰:

A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder; fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won; the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow human beings.¹¹¹

Campbell's theory has been criticised¹¹², but its usual reception, especially since the synergistic capitalist phenomenon that is the *Star Wars* saga, has been approbation. His theories, adapted and categorised by an evangelically Campbellian text like Voytilla's *Myth and Movies*, can be used to interpret and construct a series of films that inspire, move, and make money. These films "succeed", according to Campbell's acolytes, because they answer the mythic questions we need answering (expressing the answer in Campbell's structured journey). But what are those mythic questions? To answer this, Voytilla betrays the existence of a *pre-existing* mythological structure:

First, look within *yourself*. What are *your* own needs and desires? *Your* dreams and fears? *Your* triumphs and shortcomings? Second, look at the stories that attract *you*. What films are most significant in *your* life?¹¹³

Campbell's "Monomyth", when applied to American cinema, is actually no such thing: it is an inference, a second-order mythology, layered upon an 'ur-Mythology' of what it is to be American. And that prior mythology (which is both chronologically and conceptually prior) found its greatest and most enduring expression in the work of Ralph Waldo Emerson. Thus, although George Lucas believes that he was filming Campbell's Monomyth, in actuality

grew animated as he talked about how Lucas 'has put the newest and most powerful spin' to the classic story of the hero." Joseph Campbell and Bill Moyers, *The Power of Myth*, ed. Betty Sue Flowers (New York: Broadway Books, 2001), xiv.

¹⁰⁹ Campbell, *Hero*, 30. For a discussion on the origins of the term and concept, see Robert A. Segal, *Joseph Campbell: an introduction*, Rev. ed. (New York; London: Mentor, 1990), chap. 2. ¹¹⁰ Campbell, *Hero*, 36–7.

¹¹¹ Campbell, Hero, 30.

^{112 &}quot;...Campbell may be faulted for positing a trans-historical *mythos* with little variation in the morphology..." Frank P. Tomasulo, "Mr. Jones Goes to Washington: myth and religion in 'Raiders of the Lost Ark'," *Quarterly Review of Film Studies* 7, no. 4 (1982): 332. Tomasulo's criticism is that Campbell doesn't take into account Freudian-psychological and Marxisthegemonic factors, as evidenced by the Reaganite ethos of *Indiana Jones*. Steven Spielberg's plea ("The thing to keep in mind about this film is that it is only a movie. *Raiders* is not a statement of its times." quoted 334) cuts no ice with him.

¹¹³ Voytilla, Myth and the Movies, 293.

the *Star Wars* cycle is Emersonian. Although Tomasulo criticizes Spielberg for being captive to Campbell's political and psychological errors, actually Spielberg (in the *Indiana Jones* series and his other films) precisely and unconsciously replicates Emerson's *Weltanschauung*.

The 'Emersonian Monomythology', while participating in some of myths identified by Richard Hughes, and retaining a dangerous fascination with the role of heroes¹¹⁴, is actually the amalgam of two distinct, but related myths, namely, the myth of the Frontier and the myth of the American Adam.

The Myth of Frontier

It might be thought by casual readers of American history that the importance of the Frontier to the American *mythos* is the importance of a particular place. Like all nations, newly founded or antediluvian, the United States swiftly developed traditions of pilgrimage to places of secular sacredness: Plymouth Rock, the Alamo, Valley Forge, Lexington Common, Graceland, and so on. Does the Frontier fit into this litany? Not so much. As will become clear, it is more accurate to say that the Frontier is less a *place*, than it is a defining *experience*. More than that, it is an experience which is not necessarily dependent on the facts of history. The clearest way to see this is to examine the story of the Frontier's demise.

In 1874 Francis Walker published a statistical atlas based on the results of the ninth Federal Census, held in 1870.¹¹⁶ Walker included an essay on "The Progress of the Nation, 1790–1870", in which was used, for the first time, the expressions "the line of continuous settlement" and "the frontier line".¹¹⁷

¹¹⁴ See Emerson's views of the hero and the masses, in the context of the films of affirmation: "Suspicion of the masses, charisma of the one", on page 215.

¹¹⁵ The most comprehensive work on the sacralizing of secular places in the United States has been undertaken by Wilbur Zelinsky: see "Nationalistic Pilgrimages in the United States," in *Geographia Religionum*, ed. G. Rinschede and S. Bhardwaj, vol. Band 5 (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1990), 253–267; and *Nation into State: the shifting symbolic foundations of American nationalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988).

¹¹⁶ Francis A. Walker, "The Progress of the Nation, 1790–1890," in *Statistical Atlas of the United States Based on the Results of the Ninth Census, 1870: with contributions from many eminent men of science and several departments of the Government* ([New York]: J. Bien, lith, 1874), Part II, 1–4.

117 It was a student of Frederick Jackson Turner, Fulmer Mood, who identified Walker's as the first usage of "frontier" in the sense which later became identified with Turner: see Fulmer Mood, "The Concept of the Frontier, 1871-1898: comments on a select list of source documents," *Agricultural History* 19, no. 1 (January 1945): 24–30. Mood's conclusions have been disputed: see John T. Juricek, "American Usage of the Word 'Frontier' from Colonial Times to Frederick Jackson Turner," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 110, no. 1 (February 1966): 10–34. Interestingly, at one point in the word's development Juricek notes that "frontier" meant "the people who live on the frontier", what we would now qualify as "frontiers-men".

Walker's coinage swiftly became an immensely powerful conceptual and cultural tool. Thus, following the 1890 census (taken in the same year as the "Battle" of Wounded Knee), the Superintendent of the Census declared that the frontier line was no longer traceable:

Up to and including 1880 the country had a frontier of settlement, but at present the unsettled area has been so broken into by isolated bodies of settlement that there can hardly be said to be a frontier line. In the discussion of its extent, its westward movement, etc., it can not, therefore, really longer have a place in the census reports.¹¹⁸

The significance of the Superintendent's conclusion was to consign the "frontier" to the domain of history. This meant that it was now a subject open to historical study, and therefore "could be subjected to sociological analysis to reveal its significance." One of the first historians to recognize the import of the Census data was Frederick Jackson Turner, a young professor of history at the University of Wisconsin. Three years after the census had been taken, he was invited to give a paper to the American Historical Association congress held in Chicago as part of the "World's Columbia Exhibition" to mark the four-hundredth anniversary of Columbus's arrival in the Americas. The lecture, The Significance of the Frontier in American History, was later published in a collected volume of lectures and essays called The Frontier in American History.

Turner's lecture, and the thesis it contained (later to bear his name), had its origins in revisionism. Until this point, the orthodox explanation for the development of American social institutions and culture was a "germ" theory. American social institutions should trace their origins to the social institutions of Europe, particularly in their "Teutonic" manifestations, which were imported

The significance of this federally-mandated judgement was camouflaged by the means of its publication, as the concluding paragraph of a six page bulletin on patterns of population density: United States Census Office, Distribution of Population According to Density: 1890, Extra Census Bulletin 2 (Washington, D.C.: United States Census Office, April 20, 1891), 4. Even Turner seemingly was unaware of the Superintendent's conclusion until eighteen months after its publication—see the discussion in n. 92, Ray Allen Billington, The Genesis of the Frontier Thesis: a study in historical creativity (San Marino, Calif.: The Huntington Library, 1971), 114. Interestingly, many authors, including Billington, misquote the Superintendent's conclusion, dating the closing of the frontier to 1890, when the Bulletin clearly states that the last definitive date in which the frontier existed was 1880: the implication being that some time between the two censuses of 1880 and 1890, the frontier ceased as a useful demographic concept.

¹¹⁹ Billington, Genesis of the Frontier Thesis, 115.

¹²⁰ For the circumstances surrounding the meeting of the AHA, see Billington, *Genesis of the Frontier Thesis*, chap. 7.

¹²¹ Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History (1893)," in *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1921), 1–38. For a good summary of Turner's career and intellectual formation, see Martin Ridge, "Turner the Historian: A Long Shadow," *Journal of the Early Republic* 13, no. 2 (Summer 1993): 133–144.

as embryonic forms (to mix the metaphor) before expanding and developing in the New World.¹²² The theory did not match Turner's personal experience, in his boyhood in the former frontier-town of Portage, Wisconsin, or his historical training. Instead, in his lecture, Turner argued that the single greatest influence on the development of the American nation was its constant movement westwards, and the continual transforming effect of the frontier upon the settlers:

The wilderness masters the colonist. It finds him a European in dress, industries, tools, modes of travel, and thought. It takes him from the railroad car and puts him in the birch canoe. It strips off the garments of civilization and arrays him in the hunting shirt and moccasin. It puts him in the log cabin of the Cherokee and Iroquois and runs an Indian palisade around him. ...at the frontier the environment is at first too strong for the man. He must accept the conditions which it furnishes, or perish, and so he fits himself into the Indian clearings and follows the Indian trails. ...here is a new product that is American. 123

Turner's use of the term was not precisely defined. On occasions, by "frontier" he means nothing more than "the edge of settlement" in other places "the hither edge of free land", or the "meeting place between savagery and civilization". 125 Often he uses "frontier" (by metonymy) to mean 'that region *beyond* the edge of settlement'. Even so, Turner asserts that the concept does not need precise definition for his purposes 126, and, as its Walker–Turner sense was not limited simply to forms of social organization or assumptions about agricultural and economic structures, Turner did not need one. Rather, he wished to recognize the cultural and personal consequences of frontier living:

...to the frontier the American intellect owes its striking characteristics. That coarseness and strength combined with acuteness and inquisitiveness; that practical, inventive turn of mind, quick to find expedients; that masterful grasp of material things, lacking in the artistic but powerful to effect great ends; that restless, nervous energy; that dominant individualism, working for good and for evil, and withal that

¹²² For a description of the "germ theory", see Billington, *Genesis of the Frontier Thesis*, 3, 27–28 (particularly for the influence of Hebert Baxter Adams); and Gregory H. Nobles, *American Frontiers: Cultural Encounters and Continental Conquest* (London: Penguin, 1998), 5–6.

¹²³ Turner, "Significance of the Frontier," 4.

¹²⁴ Frederick Jackson Turner, "The First Official Frontier of the Massachusetts Bay (1914)," in *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1921), 41.

¹²⁵ Turner, "Significance of the Frontier," 3.

¹²⁶ Turner, "Significance of the Frontier," 3.

buoyancy and exuberance which comes with freedom—these are traits of the frontier...¹²⁷

The frontier originally began at Plymouth Rock, or on Manhattan Island, and the transformation of the colonists into "Americans" began almost immediately:

At first, the frontier was the Atlantic coast. It was the frontier of Europe in a very real sense. Moving westward, the frontier became more and more American.¹²⁸

One of the first writers to describe the phenomenon later defined by Turner, was John Hector St John, otherwise known as Jean de Crèvecoeur. ¹²⁹ In his *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782), he presented an epistolary description of American society, written from the point of view of a fictional, Pennsylvanian, new-American farmer. The book was a success, perhaps because it was so flattering to his compatriots. In Letter III, "What is an American?", Crèvecoeur described the influence of the already receding frontier on the character of the American people. Americans begin at the coast, where "bold and enterprising" people make a living by marine mercantilism. The settlements of the northern states, what Crèvecoeur calls the "middle settlements" are filled with the chosen people: "The simple cultivation of the earth purifies them." They are industrious, well-informed, independently-minded, enjoy the "cheerful cup", and tolerant (preparing to be forbearing of neighbours who would be their natural religious and political enemies back in the Old World). ¹³⁰

However the inhabitants of the frontier are very different: feral, rude, "modern" and living in semi-savagery. "Their wives and children live in sloth and inactivity; and having no proper pursuits, you may judge what education the latter receive. Their tender minds have nothing else to contemplate but the example of their parents; like them they grow up a mongrel breed, half

¹²⁷ Turner, "Significance of the Frontier," 37.

¹²⁸ Turner, "Significance of the Frontier," 4.

¹²⁹ Details of Crèvecoeur's life can be found in Melvin Yazawa, "Crèvecoeur, J. Hector St John de (1735–1813)," ed. H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/68590>; Katherine Emerson, "Crèvecoeur, J. Hector St. John de," *American National Biography Online* (Oxford University Press, February 2000), <www.anb.org/articles/16/16-00853.html>.

¹³⁰ J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, *Letters from an American Farmer; and, Sketches of Eighteenth-Century America*, ed. Albert E. Stone, The Penguin American library (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1981), 71. The passage on the pragmatic religious tolerance of the American settlers is on 73-6.

¹³¹ For de Crèvecoeur this meant 'as opposed to adhering to the universally agreed values of civilization'.

civilized, half savage..."¹³² But this unhappy, anti-Rousseauian, situation does not last long. The frontier, which for Crèvecoeur is a moral, as well as an economic and demographic region, moves forward: within the space of a dozen years "the most respectable army of veterans" will follow them, and prosperity, virtue and the law will convert the "forlorn hope" of pioneers into "industrious people"¹³³:

Thus are our first steps trod, thus are our first trees felled, in general, by the most vicious of our people and thus the path is opened for the arrival of a second and better class, the true American freeholders...¹³⁴

We have evidence that movies can be the medium of a mythic understanding when we reflect that Crèvecoeur's theory of progression, which already participates in a mythic model of European progress, was given cinematic expression in George Steven's *Shane*¹³⁵: there the frontier progression was expressed in a "mythical succession pattern" of "Indians, cowboys, farmers, suburbanites". ¹³⁶

By the late 1780s Crèvecoeur had already identified the moving frontier and the effect that it had on the colonists. Another Frenchman, two generations later, was able to come up with the definitive description of the nascent American nation, in its political, economic and social characteristics. Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859) held office as a *juge auditeur*, an assistant magistrate, under the Bourbon monarchy. ¹³⁷ In 1831–32, in the company of another magistrate Gustave de Beaumont, he visited North America to research the American justice and penal system. ¹³⁸ From his nine months in America, Tocqueville was able to produce the two volumes of his seminal work *Democracy in America* (1835, 1840).

Like Crèvecoeur before him Tocqueville recognised the onslaught of the frontier on the life of the nation: "This gradual and continuous progress of the European race towards the Rocky Mountains has the solemnity of a providential event. It is like a deluge of men, rising unabatedly, and driven

¹³² Crèvecoeur, American Farmer, 77.

¹³³ Crèvecoeur, American Farmer, 72-3.

¹³⁴ Crèvecoeur, American Farmer, 79.

¹³⁵ Stevens, Shane.

Bernard Brandon Scott, Hollywood Dreams and Biblical Stories (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 56. We will see more of the mythic importance of Shane in chapter 8, "Citizen Soldiers".
 For an outline of Tocqueville's life and career see John M. McClain, "Tocqueville, Alexis de," American National Biography Online (Oxford University Press, February 2000),

<www.anb.org/articles/16/16-01648.html>.

¹³⁸ The most recent history of Tocqueville's journey, and the writing of *Democracy in America*, is Leopold Damrosch, *Tocqueville's Discovery of America* (New York: Farrar Straus and Giroux, 2010).

daily onward by the hand of God."¹³⁹ Unlike Turner after him, Tocqueville deprecated the effect of the frontier: Tocqueville asserted that the greatest threat to the survival of the Union was the frontier itself, inducing a "continual displacement" of the population from the Union. For Tocqueville, it was the expansion of the Frontier, not its elimination, which threatened the United States.

The importance of the bearing

The Frontier as a metaphysical place came to be associated from the earliest period of the republic with a cardinal direction, West. In *The Prairie*, first published in 1827 and the last in the narrative order of James Fenimore Cooper's "Leatherstocking Tales", we read how the hero Natty Bumppo, referred to as "the trapper", has left his home in New York State, where "the sound of axes, and the crash of falling trees" had disturbed his frontiersman's sensibilities. The journey away from the east continues even in the moment of Bumppo's death:

The trapper had remained nearly motionless for an hour. His eyes, alone, had occasionally opened and shut. When opened, his gaze seemed fastened on the clouds, which hung around the western horizon, reflecting the bright colours, and giving form and loveliness to the glorious tints of an American sunset.¹⁴¹

West is the direction of hope, even in the face of death.

The great prophet of the Wilderness and the West was Henry David Thoreau, even though he was only a theoretical frontiersman. ¹⁴² In a lecture, published posthumously in *The Atlantic Monthly* (June 1862), Thoreau explained

¹³⁹ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America (1835,1840)*, ed. Phillips Bradley, trans. Francis Bowen, Everyman's Library 179 (London: David Campbell, 1994), I. xviii (page 398 in this edition).

¹⁴⁰ James Fenimore Cooper, "The Prairie: a tale," in *The Leatherstocking Tales*, ed. James P. Elliott, vol. 1 (New York: The Library of America, 1985), chap. 2 (page 903 in this edition). The introduction to the edition of 1844 makes Bumppo's flight from civilization explicit: "The sound of the axe has driven him from his beloved forests to seek a refuge, by a species of desperate resignation, on the denuded plains that stretch to the Rocky Mountains. Here he passes the few closing years of his life, dying as he had lived, a philosopher of the wilderness, with few of the failings, none of the vices, and all the nature and truth of his position." (Cooper, "The Prairie (1827)," n. 885.7–11, on page 1345.)

¹⁴¹ Cooper, "The Prairie (1827)," 34 (page 1316 in this edition).

¹⁴² In *Walden* Thoreau self-praised his isolation and independence, but the log cabin was a gentle stroll from his mother's house, and he took his laundry home at weekends. See Paul Theroux's introduction to *The Maine Woods*, ed. Joseph J. Moldenhauer (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2004), ix. The most recent critical edition of Thoreau's work is *Walden*, *Civil Disobedience*, and *Other Writings: authoritative texts, journal, reviews and posthumous assessments, criticism*, ed. William Rossi, 3rd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008).

the connection between "west" as a direction and "west" as an inclination. Strangely and whimsically, whenever he sets out for walk, he eventually finds himself heading a little south of west: "The future lies that way to me, and the earth seems more unexhausted and richer on that side. …Eastward I go only by force; but westward I go free." The countryside is uninterrupted in that direction, and there is no sign of human habitation ("towns nor cities…of enough consequence to disturb me" Thoreau is not alone in his whimsy, for "that way the nation is moving, and I may say that mankind progress from east to west. …We go eastward to realize history and study the works of art and literature, retracing the steps of the race; we go westward as into the future, with a spirit of enterprise and adventure." Page 145

For Thoreau "west" is the label for a nexus of complicated, and contradictory, impulses. It signifies wilderness, an abandonment of, if not a repentance for, the compromises of European civilization. At the same time, it also refers to the spiritual questing of that European civilization: the "eastern Tartars" care nothing for knowing what is over the horizon of the boundless ocean, because their ocean is to the "unmitigated East". At the same time, "westwards" is the direction of enterprise and adventure, rather than art and literature: man travels west for business; he looks east for culture, and, even then not often, as the Atlantic is a Lethean stream. Those who look east forget the west, and the future is in the west. 147

It is interesting to compare Thoreau's refined frontiersmanship with the story of Joseph Knowles, who in 1913 spent sixty days living in the woods of north eastern Maine without any equipment, food, or clothing. Knowles promised the *Boston Post* that he would live off the land "as Adam lived." This latter-day Adam emerged from his wilderness Eden a celebrity, the most curious manifestation of what Roderick Nash has called the enthusiasm for the primitive, which in the years after 1890 (a significant date) reached the status of a "national cult". We shall see the significance of Knowles's self-description in the next section.

¹⁴³ Henry David Thoreau, "Walking," in *Walden, Civil Disobedience, and Other Writings: authoritative texts, journal, reviews and posthumous assessments, criticism,* ed. William Rossi, 3rd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2008), 268.

¹⁴⁴ Thoreau, "Walking," 268.

¹⁴⁵ Thoreau, "Walking," 268-9.

¹⁴⁶ Thoreau, "Walking," 268.

¹⁴⁷ For a wider survey of the importance of the idea of the "west" to western civilization, see Loren Baritz, "The Idea of the West," *The American Historical Review* 66, no. 3 (April 1961): 618–640. Baritz, it will be seen, does not share Thoreau's idea of the unbridgeable chasm between "western" America and "eastern" Europe.

¹⁴⁸ Knowles's story is related in Roderick Nash, "The American Cult of the Primitive," *American Quarterly* 18, no. 3 (Autumn 1966): 517–9.

Shortly after Thoreau's death, his attitude to the "west" had become a political and economic imperative. "Go west, young man!" was Horace Greeley's advice, in various editorials and campaigning pamphlets published in New York in the 1850s and 1860s. 149 Frederick Jackson Turner, not unexpectedly, also shared in this yearning for a westward bearing, a yearning with a moral component: "The west looks to the future, the east toward the past." 150

A hundred and twenty years after Thoreau, "west" retained its connotations of progress, spiritual development and utopian anti-civilization, but, overlaid upon it, was now the sense of a cultural genre: "west" now included "Western". Wenders notes this in his eulogy to the American dream:

American films spoke more clearly about America

than anything else had before.

Especially the Westerns, my favourites.

The most exciting notion: that these adventurous stories

of pioneers, of the wilderness

happened only a hundred years ago.

Somehow that was very important to me.

That was an imaginable past.

...The Wild West!

That wasn't all that long ago.

The other points of the compass meant little to me,

the frozen North, the deep South,

or even the Far East.

My direction was the West.151

The reception of the Frontier Thesis

The initial response to Turner's paper was underwhelming. It was reported in only one Chicago newspaper by a fleeting mention on page three, and the *New York Times* was more interested in the arrival of a Norwegian replica of a Viking long boat. The official report of the Congress neglected to

¹⁴⁹ It is not possible to identify the first use of Greeley's admonition. Thomas Fuller has identified a number of "family resemblance" exhortations in Greeley's work, and the reasonable conclusion is that, in its most concise form, the expression is apocryphal, although Greeley's claim to authorship is firm. See Thomas Fuller, "'Go West, young man!'—an Elusive Slogan," *Indiana Magazine of History* 100, no. 3 (2004): 231–242. For Greeley's role as an eastern booster of the west, see Earle D. Ross, "Horace Greeley and the West," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 20, no. 1 (June 1933): 63–74; Coy Cross, *Go West, Young Man!: Horace Greeley's vision for America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), especially chapter 1.

¹⁵⁰ Letter of September, 1887, quoted in Billington, *Genesis of the Frontier Thesis*, 15.

¹⁵¹ Wenders, *Emotion Pictures*, 128. For more on the significance of the West and the Western for *My-L* see Chapter 8, especially "The Free Man, Living Greatly" from page 279.

mention Turner's paper at all, and, perhaps most poignantly, Turner's own father, in a letter written about his experiences at the exhibition, said that "Fred" was a fair guide to the exhibition, but neglected to mention the paper his son had delivered. Ironically, Max Otto, who later became a colleague of Turner's, missed the paper by going to see a performance of "Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show" instead: in Chicago that summer of 1893 the history of the West was being written even as the mythology of the West was being enacted. By the time the lecture was published in a collected edition of Turner's work on the frontier question in 1921, its authoritative status was secured. A review in *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* said "No one...has so completely redirected the course of historical research as has this westerner", pointing out Turner's analysis of the physical and economic conditions of the frontier, its effect on the American character, and its importance in determining national policies. 153

Turner's thesis, like all historical theories, has been subject to fashions in historiography. At first it was presented as the general theory of everything, then derided for its crudeness, and, more recently, re-examined for its robustness and utility.¹⁵⁴ Even if the thesis is vulnerable in certain aspects of its formulation, as a means of explaining American character and culture, it retains a fundamental soundness: it has a continuing *mythic* power.

Two Presidential examples: John F. Kennedy's acceptance of the Democratic nomination in 1960 made the rhetorical contrast between the place of its delivery, Los Angeles, at the edge of the last frontier, and the "New Frontier" stretching before his country, the "unconquered problems of ignorance and prejudice" Bill Clinton's first inauguration speech was thoroughly Turnerian, when he described Americans as "a restless, questing, hopeful people." And what is the prologue to every episode of the *Star Trek* television series but the Turner thesis transplanted into interstellar space? 157

¹⁵² Sources for these reactions, and others, are given in Billington, *Genesis of the Frontier Thesis*, 170–4.

¹⁵³ C. W. A., "Review: [untitled]," *The Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 7, no. 4 (March 1921): 404.

¹⁵⁴ See the discussions in Ray Allen Billington, *The Frontier Thesis: valid interpretation of American history?* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1966); Richard Hofstadter and Seymour Martin Lipset, eds., *Turner and the Sociology of the Frontier*, The Sociology of American History (New York: Basic Books, 1968); Ralph D. Gray, "A Centennial Symposium on the Significance of Frederick Jackson Turner," *Journal of the Early Republic* 13, no. 2 (Summer 1993): 133–249; and Jackson K. Putnam, "The Turner Thesis and the Westward Movement: a reappraisal," *The Western Historical Quarterly* 7, no. 4 (October 1976): 377–404.

¹⁵⁵ John F. Kennedy, "Acceptance of the Democratic Party Nomination for the Presidency of the United States" (Address presented at the Democratic Party Convention, Memorial Coliseum, Los Angeles, July 15, 1960), http://bit.ly/jfknewfrontier>.

¹⁵⁶ William Jefferson Clinton, "The Inauguration; 'We Force the Spring': Transcript of Address By President Clinton," *The New York Times*, January 21, 1993,

We can see how Wenders is right to assert that "the Americans have colonized our subconscious". ¹⁵⁸ For Turner the frontier experience turned European colonizers into Americans: the power of the frontier myth, upon those who had never had to travel in a birch canoe or throw up an Indian palisade, was also to turn them into Americans. The colonizers were themselves, in turn, colonized.

The Myth of the American Adam

We have already seen that the frontier could not have existed, in any form, or in any place, without the presence of people. The frontier was not an empty land.¹⁵⁹ As Benedict declares, "the world must be peopled,"¹⁶⁰ and the frontier was peopled, with people who effected, and were affected by, the frontier experience.

As we have seen, Crèvecoeur was horrified by the characters of those who lived in the first waves of frontier expansions. The frontiersmen were barbarous. Tocqueville was less disturbed than his compatriot by the mores of those who lived on the frontier. He was struck by the essential domesticity of all Americans, those on the frontier as much as those in the east. Whereas Europeans, unaffected by American sensibility, were impressed by the wilds of America,

...Americans themselves never think of them; they are insensible to the wonders of inanimate nature and they may be said not to perceive the mighty forests that surround them until they fall under the hatchet.¹⁶¹

The Americans had turned away from the external world of nature, and retreated into themselves. The phenomenon was so apparent, and so different from anything he had encountered in Europe, that Tocqueville decided a new word was needed to describe it. If Tocqueville did not coin the word, then he certainly popularized it for the English-speaking world: "individualism"

 $<\!www.ny times.com/1993/01/21/us/the-inauguration-we-force-the-spring-transcript-of-address-by-president-clinton.html>.$

¹⁵⁷ The immortal "Space. The final frontier..." was actually inserted into the third draft of the "standard opening narration" by the producer John Black. Gene Rodenberry's first two drafts omitted the Turnerian phrase (and were also lifeless and lumpen). See Herbert F. Solow and Robert H. Justman, *Inside Star Trek: the real story* (London: Pocket Books, 1996), 143–9.

¹⁵⁸ Wim Wenders, *The Logic of Images: essays and conversations*, trans. Michael Hofmann (London: Faber, 1991), 99.

¹⁵⁹ Despite some of the more politically and morally poisonous forms of the Frontier Myth asserting this as a corollary: see James A. Hijiya, "Why the West Is Lost," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 51, no. 2 (April 1994): 276–292.

¹⁶⁰ William Shakespeare, Much Ado About Nothing, 1598, II. iii. 229–30.

¹⁶¹ Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, II. ii. 7. (p 74 in this edition).

appeared for the first time in the English translation of *Democracy in America*. ¹⁶² Tocqueville denies that individualism is selfishness, already familiar to our fathers as "égoïsme", in which a "passionate and exaggerated love of self", leads a man to read the whole world in terms of himself and his own needs. This is égoïsme as a form of solipsism. Individualism, on the other hand, a "novel expression to which a novel idea has given birth", resulted in the deliberate and thoughtful withdrawal of a man from "the mass of his fellows", forming a "little circle of his own", and leaving "society at large to itself". Whereas selfishness is as old as humanity, individualism is the product of democratic societies. Even so, both have the capacity to weaken social bonds, and, paradoxically, open the inhabitants of the solely private sphere to the unchecked political power of the state:

They owe nothing to any man, they expect nothing from any man; they acquire the habit of always considering themselves as standing alone, and they are apt to imagine that their whole destiny is in their own hands.¹⁶³

In a telling final phrase, Tocqueville concludes that democratic individualism atomizes a man from ancestors, descendants, and contemporaries, so that, finally, he is confined "entirely within the solitude of his own heart." ¹⁶⁴

For Tocqueville, therefore, individualism was "a withdrawal from public life by Americans who felt deeply their own self-sufficiency". 165 Edwin Godkin, thirty years later, concurred:

Each person is from the necessity of the case so absorbed in his own struggle for existence, that he has seldom occasion or time for the consideration and cultivation of his social relations. ...the settler gets into the habit of looking at himself as an individual, of contemplating himself and his career separate and apart from the social organization. We do not

¹⁶² For the intellectual history of the word and concept see Lukes, "The Meanings of 'Individualism'"; Swart, "'Individualism' in the Mid-Nineteenth Century."

¹⁶³ Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, II.ii.2 ("Of Individualism in Democratic Countries", 98-9 in this edition).

¹⁶⁴ Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, II.ii.2 ("Of Individualism in Democratic Countries", 99 in this edition). Tocqueville spends some time discussing the ways in which American society makes use of "public associations" to counteract the dangers that extreme atomization would tend towards a "relapse into barbarism" (II.ii.5). However, the domestic solitude of the American is the fundamental base-line for American culture.

¹⁶⁵ Joyce Appleby, "Individualism," ed. Paul S. Boyer, *The Oxford Companion to United States History*, Oxford Reference Online (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), www.oxfordreference.com/views/ENTRY.html?subview=Main&entry=t119.e0762>.

say that this breeds selfishness,—far from that; but it breeds individualism.¹⁶⁶

Thus we see that Tocqueville and Godkin deprecated the individualism that developed as a necessary part of the frontier experience. Turner demurred. For him, the frontier experience, and its formation of individualism, was responsible for the "fundamental assumptions that have gone to make the American spirit and the meaning of America in world history". 167 This is the "ideal of democracy", which Turner defines as a "free self-directing people", which responds to leadership, but insistent that the implementation of the leadership's "programs [and]...execution" is made through "free choice" and not compulsion. In addition, and more importantly, the "ideal of individualism" supplants that of democracy. It might be possible to have a democracy akin to a "a disciplined army, where all must keep step and where the collective interests destroyed individual will and work", but this is not the case with America. Rather, American democratic individualism is the result of "a mobile mass of freely circulating atoms, each seeking its own place and finding play for its own powers and for its own original initiative." It is impossible to understand America, "the whole American movement", without comprehending this point, "the very heart" of what it means to be America and American. 168

Another foreign observer of the American experience, James Bryce (fifty years after Tocqueville and five years before Turner), also thought that this was the defining characteristic of the American experience:

...individualism, the love of enterprise, and the pride in personal freedom have been deemed by Americans not only their choicest, but their peculiar and exclusive possession.¹⁶⁹

So, the frontiers (plural) deepened the individualism which would eventually come to be considered the typically American trait. This was part of the story, Billington concludes, that Americans told themselves, or accepted unconsciously: for those who lived on the frontier, or who considered themselves to be formed by the frontier, "every man was a self-dependent individual, fully capable of caring for himself without the aid of society." ¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁶ Edwin L. Godkin, "Aristocratic Opinions of Democracy," *North American Review* 100, no. 206 (January 1865): 217.

¹⁶⁷ Frederick Jackson Turner, "The West and American Ideals (1914)," in *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1921), 306.

¹⁶⁸ Turner, "West and American Ideals," 306.

¹⁶⁹ James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth (1888)*, vol. 2, 3rd ed. (London; New York: Macmillan and Co., 1893), V. xcv (p. 539 in this edition).

¹⁷⁰ Ray Allen Billington, *Westward Expansion: a history of the American frontier*, 4th ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1980), 653.

Those who failed ("fell by the wayside" says Billington), had failed to seize the advantages and opportunities that belonged to those who, in Emerson's words, "begin life upon our shores, inflated by the mountain winds, shined upon by all the stars of God".¹⁷¹

This attitude to failure had political, philosophical and economic consequences. Politically, "the frontier was distrustful of governmental meddling with the affairs of the individual". Philosophically, the frontier was neo-Darwinian before Darwin: the "successful man should be let alone to achieve greater success; the unsuccessful should not be pampered for he could succeed if he tried." 172 Economically, the "economic elite" of the late nineteenth century was able to mouth the platitudes of "rugged American individualism"¹⁷³ knowing that they were honouring the values of the pioneers of the nation. Thus, for example, E. H. Harriman, the director of the Union Pacific Railroad, campaigned against the regulation of Interstate Commerce Commission on his railroads by persuading the "western agrarians", against their own interests, that such regulation "was a violation of our early pioneer ideals."174 This phenomenon has intensified in recent years. In the American mid-West electoral behaviour is at odds with the electorate's welfare. As the journalist Thomas Frank, puzzling about the values of his home state of Kansas, has put it:

Strip today's Kansans of their job security, and they head out to become registered Republicans. ...Squander their life savings on manicures for the CEO, and there's a good chance they'll join the John Birch Society. But ask them about the remedies their ancestors proposed (unions, antitrust, public ownership), and you might as well be referring to the days when knighthood was in flower.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The American Scholar (1837)," in *Nature, Addresses, and Lectures*, ed. Alfred R. Ferguson, vol. 1, The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press, 1971), 69.

¹⁷² Billington, Westward Expansion, 653.

¹⁷³ The expression was coined by Herbert Hoover, as a presidential candidate in the 1928 general election. The speech, on 22 October 1928, was the last he made in his presidential campaign, and was perhaps prescient: one year later Wall Street crashed, and the long economic boom of the United States was over. Herbert Hoover, "The Philosophy of Rugged Individualism," in *Documents of American History*, ed. Henry Steele Commager, 7th ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1963), 222–225.

¹⁷⁴ Mody C. Boatright, "The Myth of Frontier Individualism," in *Turner and the Sociology of the Frontier*, ed. Richard Hofstadter and Seymour Martin Lipset, The Sociology of American History (New York: Basic Books, 1968), 44. Boatright's chapter examines the way in which western pioneers actually used the "free associations" noted by Tocqueville to combat deprecations by the robber barons.

¹⁷⁵ Thomas Frank, *What's The Matter With Kansas?: how conservatives won the heart of America* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2004), 68.

We see in twenty-first century Kansas an example of the overwhelming power of mythology. Slotkin's "functioning memory system" negates the ability of people to act in their own self-interest: the tale is stronger than the teller.

But the myth of American individualism is more complex than simple economic and political contradictions: we need to understand the ideological framework in which a word and concept might be used, what Althusser calls the "problematic" (a noun rather than an adjective, but not a "world-view", and neither the "essence" of the thinking of an individual or an age. The problematic is as much based upon what is *not* said or thought).¹⁷⁶ In this instance the problematic is personal.

The Individuator of Individualism

We are unable to understand the origins, development and consequences of American individualism, without recognizing the central, iconic, role of Ralph Waldo Emerson.¹⁷⁷ The "Sage of Concord" is, for all practical and philosophical purposes, the problematic of individualism. He was, in the words of Wesley T. Mott, "America's great philosopher-psychologist-poet of the Self".¹⁷⁸ The continual debate about the character of the American nation, centred so often on the meaning and implications of "individualism", always returns to Emerson, "celebrated as an originator of our virtues, and damned for releasing our vices."¹⁷⁹

From the mid-1830s onwards, in his role as writer, lecturer and *bien-pensant*, Emerson had become "a dominant presence in American culture". ¹⁸⁰ I hope to show in this, and subsequent chapters, that through his synthesis of the myths of the American Frontier and the American Adam into the philosophy of American individualism, his is *the* dominant presence in American cinema.

Although Emerson is the great polemicist of American individualism, it would be wrong to assume that Emerson uses or provides a concise and exhaustive definition of the concept. As Whitman said of his elder: "He does

 $^{^{176}}$ Althusser, "Marxism and Humanism," 233. See, as well, Ben Brewster's "Glossary" to Althusser's writing in the same volume.

¹⁷⁷ For a brief outline of Emerson's life see Joel Myerson, "Emerson, Ralph Waldo," *American National Biography Online* (Oxford University Press, February 2000),

<www.anb.org/articles/16/16-00508.html>. A more detailed biography is in Robert D.
Richardson, Emerson: The Mind on Fire (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995). A superb intellectual biography, using a single essay by Emerson as the hermeneutic key, is Kenneth Sacks, Understanding Emerson: "The American Scholar" and his struggle for self-reliance (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003).

¹⁷⁸ Wesley T. Mott, "'The Age of the First Person Singular': Emerson and Individualism," in *A Historical Guide to Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Joel Myerson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 61.

¹⁷⁹ Mott, "First Person Singular," 62.

¹⁸⁰ Mott, "First Person Singular," 62.

not see or take one side, one presentation only or mainly, (as all the poets, or most of the fine writers anyhow)—he sees all sides. His final influence is to make his students cease to worship anything—almost cease to believe in anything, outside of themselves."181 Emerson uses many different terms for the idea, and those terms themselves, such as the "self", or "self-reliance", or the "individual", also share in a contestedness we have already seen at work in "myth" and "leadership". Koenraad Swart has shown that in the midnineteenth century, "individualism" could mean "first, the idealistic doctrine with equalitarian implications of the rights of man, or what may be called political liberalism; secondly, the anti-statist, largely utilitarian doctrine of laissez faire, or economic liberalism; thirdly, the aristocratic cult of individuality, or Romantic individualism." 182 Even within America, "individualism" shared in a "distinctive range of connotations." For Emerson, it could mean moral perfectibility; for John William Draper it was the driving force for economic and social betterment; for Walt Whitman it was the engine of progression; for the Social Darwinists it was the justification for a "ruthlessly competitive society"; for the industrialists it was the "absolute equality of opportunity and the equivalence of public welfare and private accumulation."183

Similarly, it is impossible to trace a single, overwhelming, influence on Emerson's thinking and writing. He was a Platonist influenced by Swedenborg, enamoured of the romanticism of Byron and Wordsworth, impressed by Goethe's description of the processes of nature and the organic nature of aesthetic appreciation, and reliant, during the personal crises in his life, on the Quaker doctrine of the Inner Light of Divinity in every man.¹⁸⁴ But it would be wrong to think that Emerson is no more than the sum of his influences: his work was "the most striking expression by an American of a historic international shift in the very structure of sentiment and feeling." ¹⁸⁵

It is therefore important to understand the contours and circumferences of Emerson's thinking in order to understand the American *mythos*, for "[w]hat we

¹⁸¹ Walt Whitman, "Emerson's Books (The Shadows of Them)," in *Complete Poetry and Collected Prose*, The Library of America (New York, N.Y: Literary Classics of the United States, 1982), 1077.

¹⁸² Swart, "'Individualism' in the Mid-Nineteenth Century," 77.

¹⁸³ Lukes, "The Meanings of 'Individualism'," 61–2. For Emerson's development of the idea, see Mott, "First Person Singular," 73–81.

¹⁸⁴ See Mott, "First Person Singular," 72; and Richardson, *Mind on Fire*. In the latter, see: Plato (in seven distinct stages of understanding), 65ff; Swedenborg 197-8; Byron and Wordsworth 16; Goethe 171ff; Quakerism 158-62. See also David M. Robinson, "Transcendentalism and Its Times," in *The Cambridge Companion to Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Joel Porte and Saundra Morris (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 13–29.

¹⁸⁵ Mott, "First Person Singular," 73.

make of Emersonian individualism...is no mere academic exercise but a matter central to our cultural identity." ¹⁸⁶

We can see such an outline in the essay "Self-Reliance" (published in his first collection of *Essays* in 1841, but the revised product of lectures from almost ten years before). Here Emerson speaks of the deadening hand of society, whose weight is made up of authority, convention and precedent, pressing down upon the heads and souls of individual freemen. The deathliness of society makes the individual forget the joyous freedom of youth ("boys sure of a dinner", p. 29), under the conspiracy of conformity. This denies the humanity of humanity: "whoso would be a man must be a nonconformist." (p. 29). Nonconformity is needful against every sacred cow of our society: charity (p. 31); what people think of one (p. 31); consistency ("a foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds" p. 33); hospitality (p. 35); and even filial duty:

Live no longer to the expectation of these deceived and deceiving people with whom we converse. Say to them, O father, O mother, O wife, O brother, O friend, I have lived with you after appearances hitherto. Henceforward I am the truth's. (p. 41–2)

For in the end "nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your mind" (p. 30).

This is not an exhortation to antinomianism, however. Emerson expects the self-reliant individual to live under the law, even if it is the law he has set for himself: it is a "law of consciousness", which is all the more worthy in that it is hard—"If anyone imagines that this law is lax, let him keep its commandment one day" (p. 42). To live this way it is necessary to recognize the godliness within the self-reliant individual: "High be his heart, faithful his will, clear his sight, that he may in good earnest be doctrine, society, law to himself, that a simple purpose may be to him as strong as iron necessity is to others" (p. 43).

Thus, the life of man will be like that of the drunk, picked up from the gutter, placed in the duke's bed and treated like the duke himself; except, in the case of the self-reliant individual, the reality is the deception, and the drunken life of the gutter was "the state of man, who is in the world a sort of sot, but now and then wakes up, exercises his reason, and finds himself a true prince" (p. 36). And the clamour that awakens is that of Emerson's new Golden Rule: "Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string" (p. 28).

Emerson's underlying premise, therefore, is that if we strive to be what we are, the world will be better off and all the better without the deliberate attempt to make it better. It will be better because it will be more moral, but also more human. It will be more human because the world will be

¹⁸⁶ Mott, "First Person Singular," 68.

¹⁸⁷ Emerson, "Self-Reliance." Page numbers in the text refer to this edition.

made up of individuals rather than masses, of individuals, not dependants and recipients, not instruments and followers.¹⁸⁸

As one formed by the curious New England dialogue between Calvinism and Unitarianism it is not surprising that Emerson's vocabulary for individualism and self-reliance was steeped in Biblical tropes. On a journey to the old world, overwhelmed and oppressed by the antiquity of Naples, Emerson expressed his preference for the New World and its inhabitants:

Here's for the plain old Adam, the simple genuine Self against the whole world. 189

Six years later, Emerson mused on possible topics for his autumn series of lectures he intended to give in Boston:

What shall be the substance of my shrift? Adam in the garden, I am to new name all the beasts in the field & all the gods in the Sky. I am to invite men drenched in time to recover themselves & come out of time, & taste their native immortal air. I am to fire with what skill I can the artillery of sympathy & emotion.¹⁹⁰

In order for an American to become himself, this rejuvenated Adam, he needed the boundless West: "The vast majority of the people of this country live by the land, and carry its quality in their manners and opinions." Unhappily, those who live in the settled east have "imbibed [too] easily an European culture." Fortunately, the intrusion of the "nervous, rocky West" means that the possibility of "an American genius" will arise: "How much better when the whole land is a garden, and the people have grown up in the bowers of a paradise." The land will act as the "sanative and Americanizing influence" on the populations, a sanitation which will "disclose new virtues". 193

Tocqueville had already realised the effect the geography of the continent would have upon American culture: "The valley of the Mississippi is, on the whole, the most magnificent dwelling-place prepared by God for man's abode;

¹⁸⁸ George Kateb, *Emerson and Self-Reliance* (Thousand Oaks, Calif.; London: Sage Publications, 1995), 139.

¹⁸⁹ Naples, 12 March 1833 in *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (1832-1834), ed. Alfred R. Ferguson, vol. 4 (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1964), 141. ¹⁹⁰ 18 October 1839, in *The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (1838-1842), ed. A. W. Plumstead and Harrison Hayford, vol. 7 (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1969), 270–1.

¹⁹¹ Ralph Waldo Emerson, "The Young American (1844)," in *Nature, Addresses, and Lectures,* ed. Alfred R. Ferguson, vol. 1, The Collected Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press, 1971), 229.

¹⁹² Emerson, "Young American," 229.

¹⁹³ Emerson, "Young American," 229.

and yet, it may be said that as present it is but a mighty desert." ¹⁹⁴ This vast area, a garden in potentiality, in the midst of the American continent became a driving force in American self-understanding: "The master symbol of the garden embraced a cluster of metaphors expressing fecundity, growth, increase, and blissful labor in the earth, all centering about the heroic figure of the idealized frontier farmer armed with that supreme agrarian weapon, the sacred plow." ¹⁹⁵

The earliest travellers west of the Appalachians again and again emoted in this way. So, for example, James Smith, a Methodist minister from (eastern and settled) Virginia, in 1797 took a circuit through (western and unsettled) Ohio. Having visited, in the middle of October 1797, Deerfield (now South Lebanon), which had only been settled for twelve months, Smith exclaimed:

O, what a country will this be at a future day! What field of delights! What a garden of spices! What a paradise of pleasures! when these forests shall be cultivated and the gospel of Christ spread through this rising republic, unshackled by the power of kings and religious oppression on the one hand and slavery, that bane of true Godliness, on the other.¹⁹⁶

The great prairies of the illimitable American West were a new Eden. But Nash Smith's identification of the "idealized frontier *farmer*" misses the central implication of this powerful myth.¹⁹⁷ A garden is not worked by a farmer, but by a gardener, and if the American West was an Edenic Garden, then the identity of the gardener was already known: for the nineteenth-century writers and thinkers who were immersed in the imagery of the Christian scriptures (even whilst they reacted against the doctrines and moral precepts of the Christian churches), the gardener of (the new) Eden was Adam.

This was expressed in a way which would have surprised Tocqueville. He believed that democracy inevitably meant the end of poetry: the poet's task is to extend and express the Ideal, but in a democracy there is no delineation between peoples which might allow for an individual to be portrayed as an Ideal subject: "I readily admit that the Americans have no poets...Nothing conceivable is so petty, so insipid, so crowded with paltry interests—in one

¹⁹⁴ Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, I. i (page 19 in this edition).

¹⁹⁵ Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950), 123.

¹⁹⁶ James Smith, "Tours into Kentucky and the Northwest Territory: Three Journals by the Rev. James Smith of Powhatan County, Va., 1783-1794-1797," ed. Josiah Morrow, *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly* 16 (1907): 396. Also quoted in Smith, *Virgin Land*, 132. James Smith dates his visit to Deerfield as "Fri. 12th. [October, 1797]": he means Friday 13th.

¹⁹⁷ The only Adam who appears in Smith's treatise is Adam Smith: Virgin Land, 143.

word, so anti-poetic—as the life of a man in the United States." ¹⁹⁸ There was no, and could be no, poet of individualism.

He did not anticipate the work of Walt Whitman, who, within *Leaves of Grass* (1860–), wrote a cycle of poems with the explicit title of "Children of Adam". Whitman takes upon himself the role, if not of Adam, then certainly of Adam's inheritor and vicar on earth¹⁹⁹:

I, chanter of Adamic songs,
Through the new garden the West, the great cities calling,
Deliriate, thus prelude what is generated, offering these,
offering myself...²⁰⁰

Even Melville, who wrote partly in reaction to Emerson's optimism about the moral perfectibility of mankind (Melville, Hawthorne, and Henry James were "Emersonians in denial"²⁰¹), was affected by the trope of the new man in the new creation. In *Moby-Dick* (1851), Melville describes an untamed horse of the American prairies, a land-locked version of the white whale, who was the "Xerxes" of

...that unfallen western world, which to the eyes of the old trappers and hunters revived the glories of those primeval times when Adam walked majestic as a god...²⁰²

The noble creature, worthy of respect, is given that respect according to its moral and physical proximity to the American West. In *Israel Potter* (1855), the proximity test is applied to a human being. Despite being born in New England, Melville's hero, Ethan Allen, receives the ultimate accolade:

His spirit was essentially Western; and herein is his peculiar Americanism; for the Western spirit is, or will yet be (for no other is, or can be), the true American one.²⁰³

¹⁹⁸ Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, II. i. 17 ("Of Some Sources of Poetry Among Democratic Nations", p. 74 in this edition).

¹⁹⁹ Beatrice Marovich is right to identify the importance of Whitman's poetry in developing the "self" as the basis of America's political and scriptural self-understanding—what she calls "progentive, genetic invocations" (348)—but she is wrong to say that Whitman was the originator of the trope. Beatrice Marovich, "Myself: Walt Whitman's Political, Theological Creature," *Anglican Theological Review* 92, no. 2 (Spring 2010): 347–366.

²⁰⁰ "Ages and Ages Returning at Intervals", part of the "Children of Adam" cycle in Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass and Other Writings: authoritative texts, other poetry and prose, criticism,* ed. Michael Moon, Expanded and rev. ed., A Norton critical edition (New York: Norton, 2002), 92. ²⁰¹ Harold Bloom, "Out of Panic, Self-Reliance," *The New York Times* (New York, October 12, 2008), WK12.

²⁰² Herman Melville, "Moby-Dick," in *Redburn; White-Jacket; Moby-Dick*, The Library of America (New York, N.Y.: Literary Classics of the United States, Inc, 1983), chap. 42, p. 996 in this edition.

Allen shows no trace of the disadvantage of his place of birth. Even a Yankee could become a (Western) American, a heroic Adam.

In 1955, R. W. B. Lewis synthesized the separate strands of individualism, frontiersmen, the bias to the west, transcendentalism and American exceptionalism, into a single structure: the myth of the American Adam. Taking as his starting point Emerson's complaint when faced with the wonders and age of Naples ("the plain old Adam"), Lewis collapsed the frontiersman and the husbandsman into the single figure of the gardener who tilled "the garden of the world", a pre-lapsarian Adam, given a second chance to live as if the Fall had never happened, and whose life and destiny would be limited only by the illimitable bounty of the American land and the sincerity of the American settler:

...the story implicit in American experience had to do with an Adamic person, springing from nowhere, outside time, at home only in the presence of nature and God, who is thrust by circumstances into an actual world and an actual age.²⁰⁴

The European settlers had been called by Providence into a new world, one in which the mistakes of the old (monarchy and slavery, according to James Smith; hobgoblined consistency, according to Emerson) could be renounced.

The American Adam is the mythic background to the religions of American exceptionalism, such as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (the Mormons). However, the Mormons, under the direction of their leader and prophet, Joseph Smith, were not content to find a *new* Eden in North America. Mormon revelation went further: the old Eden was also to be found there. Having to flee the settlement in Kirtland County, Ohio, in 1838 (a combination of religious suspicion and banking fraud), Smith took his family and followers west to Zion, the "central hub of God's millennial kingdom"²⁰⁵, otherwise known as Jackson County, Missouri. Once there, visiting a bluff above the Grand River, Smith was overwhelmed:

...a revelation filled his soul. He announced that the apparent ruins were indeed an altar; one built by none other than Adam, the first man. In fact, the very spot on which they all stood was where Adam and his wife, Eve,

²⁰³ Herman Melville, *Israel Potter: his fifty years of exile* (New York: G. P. Putnam & Co., 1855), chap. 22, p. 244 in this edition.

²⁰⁴ Lewis, The American Adam, 89.

²⁰⁵ Richard Abanes, *One Nation Under Gods: a history of the Mormon Church* (New York; London: Four Walls Eight Windows; Turnaround, 2002), 103.

had fled after being expelled from the Garden of Eden for disobeying $\operatorname{God}_{\cdot}^{206}$

The revelation was accepted by Smith's followers; after all he had already revealed that the Garden of Eden was in Jackson County:

Father Adam was instructed to multiply and replenish the earth, to make it beautiful and glorious, to make it, in short, like unto the garden from which the seeds were brought to plant the garden of Eden. ... God the Father made Adam the Lord of this creation in the beginning, and if we are the Lords of the creation under Adam, ought we not to take a course to imitate our Father in heaven? ... By faith and works we shall subdue the earth and make it glorious. We can plant vineyards and eat the fruit thereof; we possess this power within ourselves. ²⁰⁷

The Adamic foundation of the New World is made explicit, and extended, in Mormon teaching. Unlike Emerson, content with disavowing the old Adam of the Old World, the Mormons under Joseph Smith were prepared to style themselves as new Adams tilling the same ground and receiving the same blessing as the old. The responsibility of the Latter-Day Saints was to rebuild the once and future paradise.

And yet, the American Adam remains "an allusive figure, not definitively expressed anywhere in the literature...[but] nonetheless an intrinsic part of the American cultural tradition." ²⁰⁸ This has the great advantage that American Adams can be identified at all times and in all places of the American cultural tradition. So Garry Wills could title a section of his cultural biography of John Wayne "the American Adam" ²⁰⁹, and a review of Bob Dylan's autobiography, *Chronicles: Volume One*, could be headed the same way. ²¹⁰

²⁰⁶ Abanes, *One Nation Under Gods*, 147; The original revelation ("to Joseph, the Seer, given near Wight's Ferry, at a place called Spring Hill, Davis County, Missouri, May 19, 1838, wherein Spring Hill is named by the Lord") is recorded in Section 116, Joseph Smith, *The Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints* (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Deseret News, 1908), 415.

²⁰⁷ Heber C. Kimball, "Advancement of the Saints—Unity of the Temporal and Spiritual Interests of the People—Faith and Works Inseperably [sic] Connected, Etc. Discourse by President Heber C. Kimball, delivered in Provo City, June 27, 1863," in *Journal of Discourses: delivered by President Brigham Young, his two counsellors, the twelve apostles, and others,* ed. G. D. Watt and J. V. Long, vol. 10 (Liverpool: Daniel H. Wells, 1865), 235.

²⁰⁸ Richard Keenan, "American Adam," ed. Steven R. Serafin and Alfred Bendixen, *The Continuum Encyclopedia of American Literature* (New York; London: Continuum, 2005), 37.

²⁰⁹ Garry Wills, *John Wayne: the politics of celebrity* (London: Faber, 1997); the concluding chapter of which was first published as "American Adam," *The New York Review of Books*, March 6, 1997.

²¹⁰ Bob Dylan, *Chronicles: Volume One* (Simon & Schuster Ltd, 2004); reviewed by David E. Anderson, "Bob Dylan: American Adam," TV News Program, *Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly PBS*, February 11, 2005, <www.pbs.org/wnet/religionandethics/week824/exclusive.html>.

The American Religion

Robert Bellah and his colleagues in their classic work of sociology, Habits of the Heart, have traced the deep-seated ambivalence about the various modes of individualism which have operated, and continue to operate, in American society. We can delineate the modes, broadly, into four: biblical (from the emphasis in Reformation Christianity on the individual's response to God and to his fellows); civic (deriving from Classical Republicanism's image of "the active citizen contributing to the public good"211); ontological/utilitarian (from the seventeenth century English philosophical tradition of Locke, and others, in which society only comes into existence through the contracted agreements of free individuals); and expressive (which holds that "each person has a unique core of feeling and intuition that should unfold or be expressed if individuality is to be realized"212). These four modes have combined, unequally, into modern individualism, "a way of thinking about human action which can conceive of human relatedness only as the result of spontaneous feeling or calculated interest."213 It is a way of life that is atomized, and therefore socially and emotionally unviable²¹⁴, and its line of heritage leads directly back to Emerson:

...the current focus on a socially unsituated self from which all judgements are supposed to flow is a development out of aspects of American selfhood that go all the way back to the beginning. ...The American understanding of the autonomy of the self places the burden of one's own deepest self-definitions on one's own individual choice. ...Most of us imagine an autonomous self existing independently, entirely outside any tradition and community, and then perhaps choosing one.²¹⁵

This is especially ironic when Emerson himself complained about the deadening hand of precedence and authority.²¹⁶

The splitting of the "socially unsituated selves" from one another might have been combated by a return to the older forms of individualism implicit in the idealised New England towns of Emerson's youth and Tocqueville's tour, that is, individualism operating *within* civic and social communities, through

²¹¹ Robert N. Bellah et al., *Habits of the Heart: middle America observed* (London: Hutchinson Education, 1988), 142.

²¹² Bellah et al., *Habits of the Heart*, 334.

²¹³ Robert N. Bellah, "The Quest for the Self: individualism, morality, politics," in *Interpreting Tocqueville's Democracy in America*, ed. Ken Masugi (Savage, Md.: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1991), 344.

²¹⁴ See the poignant description of modern American life in Robert D. Putnam, "Bowling Alone: America's declining social capital," *Journal of Democracy* 6, no. 1 (1995): 65–78.

²¹⁵ Bellah et al., *Habits of the Heart*, 55,65.

²¹⁶ "Man is timid and apologetic; he is no longer upright; he dares not say 'I think,' 'I am,' but quotes some saint or sage." Emerson, "Self-Reliance," 38.

what Tocqueville called America's "public associations" or "free institutions". ²¹⁷ That option now appears to be removed from American society, appearing as reactionary and discriminatory:

...the quest for the self is a quest for autonomy, for leaving the past and the social structures that have previously enveloped us, for stripping off the obligations and constraints imposed by others, until at last we find our true self which is unique and individual.²¹⁸

However, the conflict remains between unsituated selves and the need for a society in which the selves can be situated. It is therefore, expressed, managed, and reconciled on the mythic level, a characteristically Lévi-Straussian dynamic. Thus in the mythic level of literature or popular culture "we find the fear [expressed] that society may overwhelm the individual and destroy any chance of autonomy unless he stands against it, but also recognition that it is only in relation to society that the individual can fulfil himself and that if the break in society is too radical, life has no meaning at all."²¹⁹

Campbell's Monomyth attempted to incorporate the unavoidable phenomenon of the unsituated self in its later forms. Thus, in conversation with Bill Moyers he asserts that the social system of the Western world is "the ideal of love"²²⁰, but this is love of self, and of the self's own experiences, which become "the source of wisdom." The love of self is expressed in the Western tradition as the teleological end of Western society: "the function of the society is to cultivate the individual. It is not the function of the individual to support society."²²¹

This is the "American Religion" ²²², as Bloom put it, this is the American *mythos*, and Emerson is its prophet: "the true prophet of an American kind of charisma, [who] founded the actual American religion…" ²²³ The American Religion ("Protestant without being Christian" ²²⁴) is actually the cult of Self-Reliance, which "converts solitude into a firm stance against history, including personal history." ²²⁵ In America, there is no history, "only biography" ²²⁶ (a

²¹⁷ Tocqueville, Democracy in America, I. xii; II. ii. 4; II. ii. 5.

²¹⁸ Bellah, "Quest for the Self," 334.

²¹⁹ Bellah et al., Habits of the Heart, 146.

²²⁰ Campbell and Moyers, Power of Myth, 192.

²²¹ Campbell and Moyers, *Power of Myth*, 192.

²²² Harold Bloom, "Mr. America," *The New York Review of Books*, November 22, 1984, 20; *The American Religion: the emergence of the post-christian nation* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993).

²²³ Bloom, "Mr. America," 20.

²²⁴ Bloom, "Mr. America," 20.

²²⁵ Bloom, "Mr. America," 22.

²²⁶ Bloom, "Mr. America," 22. Hence Emerson's throwaway comment: "all history resolves itself very easily into the biography of a few stout and earnest persons." "Self-Reliance," 36.

significant insight when we consider the continuing impact of "Great Men" in our subsequent chapters). Although Emerson might have exercised a cold and icy morality as a result of his new religion, in today's world, when "translated out of the inner life into the marketplace [it] is difficult to distinguish [Self Reliance] from our current religion of selfishness…"²²⁷

When we know what we are looking for we are able to find Emerson in the most unlikely places. In the first season of the hit American musical-drama series *Glee*, one of the main protagonists, Kurt, asserts his burgeoning identity as a gay person in a hostile school environment by singing a number from the Broadway musical *Wicked*: "Something has changed within me / Something is not the same / I'm through with playing by the rules / Of someone else's game / Too late for second-guessing / Too late to go back to sleep / It's time to trust my instincts / Close my eyes: and leap!"²²⁸

The unlikeliness of the location confirms the ubiquity of the myth. We are reminded of the truth of Lévi-Strauss's dictum that "myths operate in men's minds without their being aware of the fact". ²²⁹ This is so, even if the mind belongs to a gay teenager in an American television series

It is the pattern, and the ideology, that underpins and sustains American society. It is the expression and construction of American society, through culture and the cinematic expression of that culture. But how does the "Quest for Self" affect the way in which a society, seemingly so desperate for leaders, actually goes about finding, nurturing and depicting those leaders? It is time to look at the films themselves.

²²⁷ Bloom, "Mr. America," 23.

²²⁸ Stephen Schwartz, "Defying Gravity," in *Wicked*, 2003; performed by Chris Colfer, in the role of Kurt, in Paris Barclay, "Glee," *Wheels* (1ARC08: Fox, November 11, 2009). The assertion of self-sovereignty is intensified by the fact that the original song was intended to be sung by a female character.

²²⁹ Lévi-Strauss, Raw and Cooked, 12.

Section 3 Leadership Myths in Movies

...our myths feed us our scripts. We imitate the quests and struggles of the dominant figures in the myths and rehearse our lives informed by mythic plots. We awaken to a set of sacred stories, and then proceed to apprehend the world and to express ourselves in terms of these stories. They shape us secretly at a formative age and remain with us, informing the ongoing narrative constructions of our experience. They teach us how to perceive the world as we order our outlooks and choices in terms of their patterns and plots.

Kelton Cobb (2005)*

^{*} *The Blackwell Guide to Theology and Popular Culture*, Blackwell guides to theology (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 123.

Chapter 6

The Leadership Principle Leadership Affirmed

... they pulled me out of the sack,
And they stuck me together with glue.
And then I knew what to do.
I made a model of you,
A man in black with a Meinkampf look...

Sylvia Plath, "Daddy" (1965)¹

Making Leadership Cool

In April 2010 the newsletter of the West Midlands Ambulance Service announced that two employees had been given a £10,000 bursary by the local Strategic Health Authority to develop leadership projects in the region. Mark Iley and Paul Watkins's project was called "Making Leadership Cool; How do emerging leaders wish to be managed and supported!" and took the form of a questionnaire distributed with *Weekly Briefing*. Seven questions were asked with responses required on a ranked scale of 1–5, with "1 being Not Cool, 3 being Average and 5 being Cool." "Cool" was not defined. Question 1 gave a selection of ten "leaders" (again, not defined) and asked respondents' opinions on whether or not they were "cool": the list was neither alphabetical nor chronological. The ten names were, in the original order: Richard Branson; Gordon Brown; David Nicholson; Ian Cummings; Adolf Hitler; General Patton; Winston Churchill; Martin Johnson; Leroy Jethro Gibbs; Fabio Cappello. The

¹ 12 October 1962, printed in Ariel (London: Faber & Faber, 1965).

² Note the exclamation mark.

³ Mark Iley and Paul Watkins, "Emerging Leaders Questionnaire: 'Making Leadership Cool'" (Weekly Briefing News (Issue 192), West Midlands Ambulance Service, April 15, 2010), www.unionweb.co.uk/Websites/44/WeeklyBriefingissue192.pdf>.

⁴ Iley and Watkins, "Emerging Leaders Questionnaire," 15.

⁵ Iley and Watkins, "Emerging Leaders Questionnaire," 15. Ian Cummings is the chief executive of the NHS West Midlands Strategic Health Authority; David Nicholson is the chief executive of the National Health Service; Leroy Jethro Gibbs is the fictional protagonist of the NCIS television series made by CBS Television (and portrayed by Mark Harmon).

reaction of the national media was not equable. *The Times* reported that "NHS staff [were left] gasping in disbelief" at the question.⁶ The SHA attempted to defend the project: the intention was "to discuss different styles of leadership and the characteristics of leadership to help staff at all levels develop their careers. Staff were asked to look at different leadership styles, and one of those was a dictatorial style. Adolf Hitler's style galvanised a country into terrible things but it did galvanise a country. Perhaps, in hindsight, a better example could have been used."⁷

The public and media outrage was focused entirely on the appropriateness (or otherwise) of including Hitler in this project, disputing the criterion of "coolness", and his exemplary status as a leader. There was no public debate about the qualifications of the other nine men to be regarded as leaders, of one kind or another. This is significant, as it demonstrates, once again the implicit, unconscious, and mythical functioning of "leadership" as a social construct within our society.

We can see how this works out as we examine the way in which a 'cinema of affirmation' has depicted, interrogated, and, ultimately, affirmed a very particular model of leadership, the model of leadership to which the "Emerging Leaders Questionnaire" unconsciously subscribed. We can see the model at work most clearly in the lives and cultural depictions of two exemplars from the questionnaire: Adolf Hitler and General George S. Patton, Jr.

"Old Blood and Guts"

The culmination of John Ford's 1962 Western *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*⁸ examines the differences between public and private truth. Should the newspaper let its readers know that the outlaw Liberty Valance was killed by Tom Doniphon (played by John Wayne), or by Ransom Stoddard (James Stewart)? The former, the true killer, was "the toughest man south of the picket wire", the latter an idealistic Easterner lawyer. The discussion is briefly concluded:

⁶ Simon de Bruxelles, "Health workers' shock at NHS survey that asked: how cool was Hitler?," *The Times* (London, May 11, 2010).

⁷ Press Association, "Ambulance Chiefs Apologise For 'Cool Hitler' Questionnaire," *PA Regional Newswire of English Regions* (West Midlands, May 11, 2010).

⁸ John Ford, *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance*, B&W film (Paramount Pictures, 1962). See Mike Yawn and Bob Beatty, "The American Frontier in Film: John Ford's Vision of the Closing West: From Optimism to Cynicism," *Film & History* 26, no. 1–4 (January 1996): 6–19. Coursen describes it, ironically, as "one of John Ford's least underappreciated films": David F. Coursen, "John Ford's Wilderness: The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance," *Sight and Sound* 47, no. 4 (Autumn 1978): 237.

⁹ Doniphon's own description of himself.

[Ransom Stoddard] You're not going to use the story, Mr. Scott? [Maxwell Scott] No, sir. This is the West, sir. When the legend becomes fact, print the legend.¹⁰

John Ford is too good and too thoughtful a film-maker to believe that the distinction between legend and fact can be quite so easily determined.¹¹ It is interesting to imagine how Ford might have approached making a film of the life of George Smith Patton, Jr (1885–1945), a man in whom fact and legend are almost completely intermingled:

Patton's reputation has been perpetually tarnished by the facade he himself created and the public effortlessly accepted: that he was a swashbuckling, brash, profane, impetuous soldier who wore two ivoryhandled revolvers and loved war so much he was nicknamed 'Old Blood and Guts'—the general who slapped two soldiers in Sicily in August 1943 and was almost sent home in disgrace, his destiny unfulfilled because of momentary, irrational acts of rage.¹²

Even within D'Este's even-handed summary of Patton's public persona there are two points which need clarification. Often Patton's guns are described as "pearl-handled" (the symbolic significance of the guns we will see on p. 227), but as Patton himself said "no real gunman would carry a pearl-handled pistol." There is no real agreement on the origins of his nickname, either: D'Este gives two different accounts of how Patton might have acquired it but makes it clear that it was never a nickname common in Patton's Seventh or Third Army commands: "He was rarely referred to as 'Old Blood and Guts.' He was never idolized by his troops—his manner was, after all, too formal for that." Is

George Patton died as a result of a car accident in Germany in 1945. Although he was working on a volume of memoirs at the time (*War As I Knew*

¹⁰ For a not-entirely sympathetic discussion of this see Michael Dempsey, "John Ford: A Reassessment," *Film Quarterly* 28, no. 4 (Summer 1975): 14.

¹¹ In fact, many of his post-WWII films examined this distinction as we shall see in the following chapter.

¹² Carlo D'Este, Patton: A Genius for War (London: HarperCollins, 1995), 4.

¹³ Private, undated, and unpublished, interview with Leland Stowe: "You see that pistol... Take a good look. By God, it's ivory-handled—not pearl!... All this cockeyed nonsense about me wearing a pearl-handled revolver...! Just a bunch of goddamned ignoramuses... Why, no real gunman would carry a pearl-handled pistol. It's bad luck... Beside, I wear that particular gun because I killed my first man with it." Quoted by D'Este, *Genius for War*, 689.

¹⁴ D'Este, Genius for War, 387.

¹⁵ D'Este, Genius for War, 574.

It), he died before he could complete the manuscript satisfactorily. ¹⁶ His colleagues in Allied military command continued with successful post-war careers: Eisenhower became supreme commander of NATO and President of the United States ¹⁷; Omar Bradley was appointed by Truman as the first Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and retired as a five star general, and the last General of the Army of the United States. ¹⁸

However, Eisenhower and Bradley were not the subject of a blockbuster Hollywood movie. The impetus for a film about George Patton's life came from Frank McCarthy, who had served as secretary to General George C. Marshall, the Army Chief of Staff, during the Second World War and, following demobilization, became a producer for Twentieth Century–Fox. McCarthy thought that Patton was "the guy you ought to do a movie about", as he was "very theatrical and very flamboyant and had several Achilles heels. All these things put together made for very fine drama." Unfortunately, in the early 1950s, General Patton's widow and her family refused to co-operate in the making of any film based upon her husband's life or book. Even when the Department of Defense decided, in 1961, to assist in the production of a film, and Ladislas Farago's biography was published to great interest in 1964²⁰, the family still demurred. Patton's widow believed that the media had been the reason for his downfall, and although Mrs Patton had died in 1953, the family respected her wishes.

¹⁶ D'Este, *Genius for War*, 817–8. The ms. was edited and annotated by Colonel Paul D. Harkins, Patton's deputy chief of staff, and published as *War as I Knew It* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co, 1947).

¹⁷ See Thomas M. Sisk, "Forging the Weapon: Eisenhower as NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, 1950–1952," in *Eisenhower: A Centenary Assessment*, ed. Günter Bischof and Stephen E. Ambrose, Eisenhower Center studies on war and peace (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 64–83; Stephen E. Ambrose, *Eisenhower: soldier, General of the Army, President-elect, 1890-1952*, vol. 1 (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), chap. 27, for Eisenhower's election to the presidency. Although Ambrose's credibility as a biographer of Eisenhower was questioned after the former's death (principally questioning the amount of time the author was able to spend with his subject before Eisenhower's death in 1969), his general outline of, and conclusions about, Eisenhower's career remain valid and valuable. See Paul Harris, "Band Of Brothers author accused of fabrication for Eisenhower biography," *The Observer* (London, April 25, 2010).

¹⁸ Omar N. Bradley, *A Soldier's Story* (New York: Holt, 1951). The purchase of the film rights of this book by Twentieth Century-Fox ensured Bradley's involvement in the film biography of his great rival.

¹⁹ Lawrence H. Suid, *Guts and Glory: the making of the American military image in film*, rev. ed. (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2002), 260–1. Suid's book contains a comprehensive account of the making of the film, 260-277. See also, from McCarthy's point of view, Mel Gussow, "'Patton' Campaign: It Took 19 Years," *The New York Times* (New York, April 21, 1971); and, from the director, Schaffner's, point of view Erwin Kim, *Franklin J. Schaffner*, Filmmakers 9 (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1985), 241–265.

²⁰ Ladislas Farago, Patton: Ordeal and Triumph (New York: I. Obolensky, 1964).

McCarthy required a script, one which would satisfy the contradictory requirements of the Defense Department, Patton's family, and the commercial and artistic requirements of a successful drama. After a number of false starts he turned to Francis Ford Coppola, newly graduated from UCLA film school. He told Richard Zanuck, head of production at Fox, that Coppola was "the most impressive young writer I have met in years." Coppola's youth (in 1964 he was 25 years old) was an advantage: "they hired me to write the story of this American hero whom I had never heard of. I knew nothing about the Army except for a year and a half that I spent in military school." Coppola's script, completed in six months, was put on the back-burner as the movie went through "development hell": five different directors, six lead actors and two further scripts. Eventually Coppola's version, worked upon separately by Edmund North—to provide "structure and direction" and a "strong central story line between Patton and Bradley" — was the condition laid down by George C. Scott to work on the film.

The direction was given to Franklin Schaffner. Born in Tokyo to missionary parents in 1920, Schaffner had fought in the Navy during the Second World War (briefly encountering General Patton during Sicilian operations). After the war he worked for CBS Television, directing outside broadcasts, sports events, documentaries, and television plays²⁴, until invited to direct *The Stripper* (1963).²⁵ He was immensely successful, artistically and commercially, in his direction of *Planet of the Apes* (1968)²⁶, and Richard Zanuck of Fox decided that he was the best man to direct, and cheaper than John Huston or William Wyler.²⁷

Patton was released in February 1970 to (initial) slight commercial success and a great deal of ambivalence.²⁸ Some of the first critics seem to believe that the filmmakers had set out to pull a political confidence trick, presenting the themes of the film and character of its main protagonist as all things to all men: "When Patton was released it managed to please and to enrage liberal and

²¹ Quoted in Suid, Guts and Glory, 265.

²² Stephen Farber, "Coppola and 'The Godfather'," Sight and Sound 41, no. 4 (Autumn 1972): 220.

²³ Interview with Edmund North by Lawerence Suid, quoted in Suid, *Guts and Glory*, 267.

²⁴ See the Videography in Kim, Schaffner, 456–73.

²⁵ Franklin J. Schaffner, *The Stripper*, B&W; Cinemascope, U.S.A. (Twentieth Century–Fox Film Corporation, 1963).

²⁶ Franklin J. Schaffner, *Planet of the Apes*, Color; Panavision, U.S.A. (Twentieth Century–Fox Film Corporation, 1968).

²⁷ Kim, Schaffner, 247–8.

²⁸ Schaffner, *Patton*. The film was originally subtitled in both the U.S. and the U.K.: "Salute to a Rebel" and "Lust for Glory" respectively. Neither subtitle was liked by the film's writers, producer or director.

conservatives alike, which is probably what the producer wanted, since he sees the picture as neither a glorification nor an indictment."²⁹

Coppola also encouraged this interpretation. As he had been unaware of the historic Patton when asked to write a script he researched everything he could about the man. His immediate impression was that "this guy was obviously nuts." He came up with what he described, modestly, as "a brilliant solution" to make Patton an anachronism, "a 16th-century warrior trapped in the 20th century and to whom a war was a holy crusade". This gave Coppola

...the best of both approaches. The people who wanted to see him as a bad guy could say, 'He was crazy, he loved war.' The people who wanted to see him as a hero could say, 'We need a man like that now.'33

That was the immediate effect upon American critics: Vincent Canby said in *The New York Times*

...it seems that at least some of the people working on the project must have had mixed feelings about the man and the film. ...Thus, consciously, I'm sure, the contradictory tone of the film is set. ...Although [its] military reasoning is sound, [its tone] is one of astonishing arrogance, jingoistic tour de force full of enthusiasm for the butchery to come and reeking with the assumption that there is a God who is, of course, on the side of the Allies.³⁴

Gerald Pratley, on the other hand, recognizes that the skill and art of this film is found in the transcending of such a barren liberal/hawk dichotomy: *Patton* is "an historical document of a man who glorified in war, without making a film which glorifies war."³⁵ And this is not due to the screenplay of Coppola and North, but due to the skill of the director. That *Patton* is "personal, beautifully stylised, strikingly photographed, poignant and penetrating in its dramatic and psychological truths, is a tribute to [Franklin Schaffner's] skill and concern."³⁶

²⁹ Gussow, "'Patton' Campaign."

³⁰ Farber, "Coppola and 'The Godfather'," 220.

³¹ Farber, "Coppola and 'The Godfather'," 220.

³² Kim, Schaffner, 242.

³³ Farber, "Coppola and 'The Godfather'," 220.

³⁴ Vincent Canby, "Patton," *The New York Times*, February 8, 1970, sec. II. Canby is citing the opening speech, which we examine in more detail below. Elsewhere he makes explicit the political promiscuity of the opening speech: the film opens with "a sort of overture that liberals can view as pure Camp, and Patton fans will interpret as pure inspiration." Vincent Canby, "The Screen: 'Patton: Salute to Rebel'," *The New York Times*, February 5, 1970.

³⁵ Gerald Pratley, "Patton: Lust for Glory [review]," Focus on Film, no. 3 (August 1970): 14.

³⁶ Pratley, "Patton [review]," 14.

Patton the Legend, Patton the folk hero

We have noted the skill of the director. A discussion of *Patton* cannot pass without noting the performance of George C. Scott as the title character. Scott won, and refused, the Academy Award for his performance. It is easy to see why he was so acknowledged: "[Scott] dominates the film entirely, and is hardly ever off-screen, becoming alternately the foolish man and the tragic warrior."³⁷ His performance is "towering, tragic, classic,"³⁸ full of "odd, unexpected details that compel constant attention"³⁹, and is "continuously entertaining and, occasionally, very appealing".⁴⁰ This was Scott's intention: "I simply refused to play George Patton as the standard cliché you could get from the newspaper clips of the time. I didn't want to play him as a hero just to please the Pentagon, and I didn't want to play him as an obvious, gung ho bully either. I wanted to play every conceivable facet of the man."⁴¹ In the end, Scott's performance is so convincing that most viewers, critics, and historians believe that this is the way Patton *ought* to have been:

... he does create the man, and this, combined with his inner expression of the character brings about that magic which makes a great performance—one that convinces us that this man is indeed the character he is portraying.⁴²

The unicity between "Patton", the legend and protagonist in a film, and Patton, the human being who lived and died, is seen in almost every piece of writing about the film: "George C. Scott became Patton to those people who had never met the general." And even for people who had met the general, Scott became "more like Patton than Patton himself"—the film emphasised the general's idiosyncrasies, "...and in that way somehow the real Patton was left behind." If that was the case for men who fought with Patton, it is understandable that the mere scholars may confuse character, performance and person. Thus, for example, Robert Johnson, in attempting to explore the subtlety and praiseworthiness of the Coppola-North screenplay:

³⁷ Pratley, "Patton [review]," 13.

³⁸ Pratley, "Patton [review]," 13.

³⁹ Canby, "Patton."

⁴⁰ Canby, "Movie Review: Patton."

⁴¹ Rex Reed, "George is on his best behavior now," *The New York Times* (New York, March 29, 1970), sec. Arts and Leisure. See also the letter by George C. Scott to Suid, December 1977, quoted in Suid, *Guts and Glory*, 266.

⁴² Pratley, "Patton [review]," 13–14.

⁴³ Suid, Guts and Glory, 260.

⁴⁴ Gen. James Gavin, who fought with Patton in the Ardennes, interviewed in Suid, *Guts and Glory*, 260.

To the degree that *Patton* dramatizes the actions of a man of action, the film is a first-rate example of one traditional kind of motion picture. ...But *Patton* at its most interesting does not operate within a popular traditional framework. From the very start, its *major* emphasis is on a man's character rather than on his actions as a soldier. ...the outstanding presentation of the character of General Patton is unique and will never be superseded.⁴⁵

We should read a clear distinction between the movie (italicized), the character ("Patton", properly within quotation marks) and the historical person (Patton, plain and simple). However, Johnson moves swiftly, and seemingly unconsciously, into confusion between character and person:

At its frequent best, the presentation does make it difficult to label this character. For he will not simplify himself in order to make it easy for someone to judge him. He won't 'hold still'.⁴⁶

Patton is "shown to be a 'good guy' and a 'bad guy' simultaneously." He was "spurred to action by multiple motivations":

He revered and tried to embody admirable ancient ideals, and he vaingloriously lusted after fame. He strove to utilize his intellect and create strategy that would destroy the enemy commander, and he had a raw desire to destroy. He wanted to test his courage, and he simply loved war.⁴⁷

Who is this "he"? George S. Patton, Jr., or the character written by Coppola and North and played by George C. Scott? Johnson does not make it clear. Ultimately, Johnson's "Patton", in all the latter's ambivalence, allows him to wonder about the sanity of war and society:

Finally, if one decides one cannot judge Patton at all because he was insane, one must then agree that not all madmen should be locked up—at least not all of the time. For sometimes madmen prove very useful to society. And what, in turn, does this reveal about society?⁴⁸

Even a writer less concerned to show his impeccable liberal credentials⁴⁹, Carlo D'Este, realizes the impossibility of disentangling "Patton the legend"

⁴⁵ Robert K. Johnson, *Francis Ford Coppola* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1977), 91. Emphasis in original.

⁴⁶ Johnson, Coppola, 92.

⁴⁷ Johnson, *Coppola*, 93.

⁴⁸ Johnson, *Coppola*, 93.

⁴⁹ The sympathetic portrayal of the character is "never so blatant and insistent as to offend the members of the audience who would find a romanticized depiction of war and the warrior intolerable." Johnson, *Coppola*, 91.

from "Patton the folk hero". At the very beginning of his enormous biography of the man (978 pages), he quotes approvingly another author's judgement:

In the shape of Scott, with his dark scowling face and rasping voice, Patton had now become the essence of America's World War II. Just like the cowboy hero of the Old West, he had stepped into American mythology... the symbol of an older, simplistic America, untouched by social change, political doubts, [and] the uncertainties of the seventies and eighties.⁵⁰

"I don't want these men to love me!": Patton and leadership

George Patton is a model for leadership in the civilian world. The inclusion of his name in the list of exemplars for the West Midlands Ambulance Service demonstrates this. There are a number of books published by business imprints which also show this to be so. Charles Province has distilled Patton's "message" down as far as it might go.⁵¹ Alan Axelrod has adapted Patton's speeches into "strategic lessons for corporate warfare"⁵², and the book begins with a section on "Patton as Management Guru"⁵³, in which Axelrod discusses the opening scene from *Patton*, and develops his thesis as an exposition of the principles contained in the speech. The Canadian Association of Student Activity Advisors produces a regular series of DVDs containing clips to stimulate discussion on various leadership issues: *Patton* is one of the films⁵⁴, and the discussion questions are prefaced by a transcription of the opening speech of the film.

The 'Speech'

This is central to understanding *Patton* the movie, "Patton" as depicted by George C. Scott, and Patton the historical figure. As to the first, the image of Scott as Patton, standing in front of the brobdingnagian-scale American flag, is so familiar as to function as both synecdoche and shorthand (it is the frontispiece image for Suid and Yellin⁵⁵). As to the last, D'Este has a chapter

⁵⁰ Charles Whiting, *Patton's Last Battle* (New York: Stein and Day, 1987), 269; Quoted in D'Este, *Genius for War*, 1.

⁵¹ Charles M. Province, *Patton's One-Minute Messages: tactical leadership skills for business management* (New York: Presidio Press, 1995).

⁵² Alan Axelrod, *Patton on Leadership: strategic lessons for corporate warfare* (Paramus, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1999); Alan Axelrod, *Patton: a biography* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006). The former is another in the series of corporate lessons from historical characters which we saw in chapter 1.

⁵³ Axelrod, *Patton on Leadership*, 3–12.

⁵⁴ Dave Conlon, "Resources: Leadership Movies," *Canadian Association of Student Activity Advisors*, March 2003, <www.casaaleadership.ca/res-movies.html>.

⁵⁵ Suid, *Guts and Glory*; Keith Yellin, *Battle Exhortation: the rhetoric of combat leadership* (Columbia, S.C.; London: University of South Carolina Press, 2008).

which simply refers to "The Speech". Patton as a General made many speeches to his troops and staff during his military career, but, just as Julius Caesar crossed the Rubicon many times in his life, and only crossed it once in a significant historical manner⁵⁶, for the sake of Patton's biographer, he only made one 'Speech'. The 'Speech' is of fundamental significance in understanding Patton's role as exemplar of one particular type of leadership model.⁵⁷

But, even as we examine the importance of the 'Speech', we must remember that the power of the rhetorical exhortation is not universal to the exercise of leadership within the American military. General Tommy Franks, commander of U.S. Central Command and "Operation Iraqi Freedom" in 2003, was resistant to both military biography and battlefield exhortation. Before the beginning of combat operations in Iraq, Franks answered a press conference question about the first book he ever read: "It was a book about Julius Caesar. I remember parts of it. The book said Julius Caesar was a general. He made long speeches. They killed him." ⁵⁸

The depiction of the Speech and the historical record of the speeches which make up the historical data for the artistic representation converge and diverge significantly. To begin with, the words which Scott speaks are close enough to the words that Patton spoke in a number of speeches made to the Third Army in England in the spring and early summer of 1944:

... one cannot but be impressed by how faithfully Patton's words are woven into Scott's script by [the screenwriters]...⁵⁹

⁵⁶ See the discussion of the difference between actuality and history with reference to the Rubicon in E. H. Carr, *What Is History?*, The George Macaulay Trevelyan lectures 1961 (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1961), 10–11. See also the superb discussion on the history, and its constructed nature, in Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Real Jesus: the misguided quest for the historical Jesus and the truth of the traditional Gospels* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996), chap. 4.

⁵⁷ There are many places where Patton's speech is printed. See, among countless others, D'Este, Genius for War, chap. 38; Ian Freer, "Classic Scene: 'Patton'," Empire, no. 239 (May 2009): 162; Yellin, Battle Exhortation, 63–4; Charles M. Province, "The Famous Patton Speech," The Patton Society, n.d., <www.pattonhq.com/speech.html>. Yellin additionally cites the transcript at Michael E. Eidenmuller, "Movie Speech from 'Patton': General Patton Addresses the 3rd Army," American Rhetoric, 2010,

<www.americanrhetoric.com/MovieSpeeches/moviespeechpatton3rdarmyaddress.html>.
Finally, there is Martin Blumenson, ed., *The Patton Papers: 1940–1945*, vol. 2 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974), 456–58.

⁵⁸ BBC News Online, "Profile: General Tommy Franks," *BBC*, May 22, 2003, http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/1647358.stm.

⁵⁹ Yellin, *Battle Exhortation*, 61. Yellin notes the fixity of the movie speech compared with the delivery of Patton's actual speech. In historical actuality, the speech was delivered many times in multiple places; Stanley Hirshon has identified at least four occasions from the end of May to the beginning of July, 1944, when Patton's Third Army were deployed to France (Stanley P.

However, the *mise-en-scène* varies greatly. Historical accounts tell us that Patton's speeches were "gala events in themselves, with an honour guard and a band playing rousing marches." The men were assembled in a great hall. When the General arrived, with an MP escort, the hall would become quiet, and in his "buff-and-dark green uniform, helmet, and highly shined cavalry boots, he would march through [the] ranks to the front of the platform and inspect the honor guard closely with his eyes, before mounting the platform with his escort." The first spoken word would be an opening prayer from a chaplain; the General would then be introduced by the Commanding Officer present, and then "he would march stiffly to the microphone and..., as if satisfied all was well, command: 'Be seated!" Escated!"

Note the differences with the film version. The scene begins with no synchronism: there is no date or location caption. This is a moment out of time and space (eventually, as we watch the film, we can locate it, if we so choose, to about half-way through the film's narrative).

The audience for the Speech, the men who will kill for their country, is never shown. We infer their presence for two reasons: as the scene fades in we hear "the low-grade din of hundreds of soldiers talking among us, but suddenly we are called to attention" 63; second, Scott as Patton does not break the fourth wall of the invisible camera. He is addressing someone: is it someone other than us? The cinema audience is given privileged, physically impossible, views of the General's dress and accessories (close-ups of his medals, his shining helmet, and his ivory-handled revolvers). 64 Eventually, however, the intensity of Scott's delivery, and the continued absence of any other human presence, means the cinema audience begins to identity with the second-person plural of Patton's speech. When Scott/Patton concludes with "Alright, now you sons of bitches, you know how I feel. I will be proud to lead you wonderful guys into battle anytime, anywhere" 65, we know that we were the "sons of bitches", who are also "wonderful guys".

Scott/Patton's speech begins with shock-value, using a rhetorical inversion to impose his view of war upon his audience: "Now, I want you to remember

Hirshson, *General Patton: A Soldier's Life* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2003), 473–4.) Patton did not make use of any apparent fixed text: "Scott's performance minimizes differences in historical versions, inserts a few dictums Patton used elsewhere, and provides us with a single, reasonable, memorable account." Yellin, *Battle Exhortation*, 62. The legend has been printed.

⁶⁰ D'Este, Genius for War, 601.

⁶¹ D'Este, Genius for War, 601-2.

⁶² D'Este, Genius for War, 602.

⁶³ Yellin, Battle Exhortation, 62.

⁶⁴ We examine the significance of such close-ups, and their ideological parallels in Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*, on page 227 below.

⁶⁵ Quotations from the speech are taken from Freer, "Classic Scene"; corrected against Scott's delivery in Schaffner, *Patton*.

that no bastard ever won a war by dying for his country. He won it by making the other poor dumb bastard die for his country." Here Patton is asserting his own *ethos*. A concept taken from Aristotle's *Rhetorica*, Yellin identifies the three fundamental means of persuasion—*logos*, *pathos*, *ethos*—in Patton's battle exhortation:

Now the proofs furnished by the speech are of three kinds. The first depends upon the moral character of the speaker [ethos], the second upon putting the hearer into a certain frame of mind [pathos], the third upon the speech itself, in so far as it proves or seems to prove [logos].⁶⁶

Scott/Patton's *ethos* "explodes from the screen" ⁶⁷, just as the historical General's did: "mounting the stage, Patton, wearing riding boots and holding a riding crop, which he snapped about crisply, ...with his white hair and aristocratic air". ⁶⁸

Scott/Patton breaks the statuesque effect with his second paragraph, begun, again, with a conversational "Now":

Now, an army is a team—it lives, eats, sleeps, fights as a team. This individuality stuff is a bunch of crap. The bilious bastards who wrote that stuff about individuality for the Saturday Evening Post don't know anything more about real battle than they do about fornicating.⁶⁹

It is at this point that Scott/Patton and Patton diverge. The movie version goes on, with an interpolation from another speech Patton made in Sicily the year before, to assert his doctrine of continual advancing: "I don't want to get any messages saying that 'we are holding our position'". The historic version gave an extended disquisition on the exact analogy between the Army and a team alluded to previously: "Every single man in the Army plays a vital part. Every little job is essential to the whole scheme." A truck-driver frightened of shelling who refuses to drive would be missed. Fortunately, this is not something Americans do. Rather, "Every man does his job. Every man serves

⁶⁶ Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric*, trans. J. H. Freese, vol. Aristotle Volume XXII, Loeb Classical Library 193 (London: Heinemann, 1926), I.ii.3 (1356a); cited in Yellin, *Battle Exhortation*, 61, where it is erroneously cited as 1377b 22-24 (the pagination in Bekker's Berlin edition of 1831). ⁶⁷ Yellin, *Battle Exhortation*, 62.

⁶⁸ The recollection of Harry Kemp of the 28th Infantry Division, cited by Harry M. Kemp, *The Regiment: let the citizens bear arms!; a narrative history of an American Infantry Regiment in World War II* (Austin, Tex.: Nortex Press, 1990), 63–5; quoted by Hirshson, *General Patton*, 476. Interestingly, Kemp asserts that Patton had been forbidden by Bradley to wear his twin revolvers on a belt, and during the delivery of the speech wore a single revolver in a shoulder holster.

⁶⁹ The verb in the original was Anglo-Saxon, which "brought howls of delight and clapping" from the enlisted men in the audience. D'Este, *Genius for War*, 603.

⁷⁰ Quoted in D'Este, Genius for War, 603.

the whole." This is true for every unit, from Ordnance, to Quartermaster, to the mess-hall attendants. "Even the Chaplain is important, for if we get killed and he is not there to bury us we would all go to hell."⁷¹

Patton was responding to the articles in the *Saturday Evening Post*, which emphasised the role of individual heroes. For Patton, this "gave a false impression of how battles were won. The real message of his 'speech' was that training and teamwork win battles."⁷²

But here we see the deep and abiding irony in the way in mythic leadership treats the historical figure of George Patton. A speech intended to repudiate society's obsession with heroic individuals has been turned, through the editing of the words spoken by the character of Patton and the visual representation of that character, into a celebration of that very thing: "The battle exhortation of Scott's Patton is overwhelmingly about himself, the commander."

Yellin proposes three reasons⁷⁴ why this may be so: first, 'GI-issue' support staff do not conform to a 'band of brothers' romanticism; second, the movies choose a more vivid metaphor for the collective action of the Third Army ("We're going to murder those lousy Hun bastards by the bushel"); third, eliminating individual mentions of individual members of the 'team' focuses attention on Patton himself. Just as the movie removes the historically present Commanding Officer, bugler, chaplain, for the sake of the General alone on the stage, a rhetorical isolation means that "the opening scene of the film is all—and exclusively—commanding general."⁷⁵

Ultimately, the effect and the ideology are noticeable throughout the whole film, and not just in the prologue. As Pauline Kael says:

...the landscapes are full of men; the cast must surely run into the tens of thousands. But they're all extras—even the ones that *should* be important. There's really nobody in this movie except George C. Scott.⁷⁶

By which she means there is really nobody in this movie, except "Patton".

Suspicion of the masses, charisma of the one

The depiction of the General Patton in the film shows another iteration of the myth of the American Adam, the individual who can stand against the corruption and deceit of the Old World (and even use the "living guts" of the

⁷¹ Quoted in D'Este, Genius for War, 603.

⁷² D'Este, Genius for War, n.3, p. 909; quotation marks in the original.

⁷³ Yellin, Battle Exhortation, 61.

⁷⁴ Yellin, Battle Exhortation, 67–8.

⁷⁵ Yellin, Battle Exhortation, 68.

⁷⁶ Pauline Kael, "The man who loved war," *The New Yorker*, January 31, 1970. Emphasis in original.

"lousy Hun bastards" of the Old World to "grease the treads of our tanks"⁷⁷). Under the myth of the American Adam, the importance of the Man (singular) is emphasised over and against the deprecation of mankind (plural)—what are Neil Armstrong's words at the moon landing but a recapitulation of this distinction between instance and generality (although, in Apollo 11's case, to the elevation of both sides)? However, the suspicion of the many as against the one is not singularly and uniquely American. There are strong European expressions of the tendency as well.

The earliest developed exploration of crowd psychology was the work of Gustave Le Bon, who published in 1895 *La Psychologie des foules.*⁷⁸ Le Bon (1842–1931), trained as a medical doctor, travelled in North Africa and Europe, and following the failure of the Second Empire and the Parisian Commune in 1870, became increasingly interested in the developing disciplines of anthropology and the social sciences. Le Bon worked closely with Théodule Ribot, who is generally considered to be founder of scientific psychology.⁷⁹ Le Bon's interests were many and varied, his instinct was elitist but popularizing, his output was prodigious: he was the "supreme scientific vulgarizer of his generation".⁸⁰

The late nineteenth century marked, for Le Bon, the movement of world civilization into the "Era of Crowds" (the title of his introduction): "To-day the claims of the masses are becoming more and more sharply defined, and amount to nothing less than a determination to utterly destroy society as it now exists..."⁸¹ Crowds are "little adapted to reasoning" but "quick to act... All reasoning against it is a mere vain war of words... [the] rule [of crowds] is always tantamount to a barbarian phase."⁸² The mind of the crowd is fundamentally irrational, religious, supernatural, and miraculous.⁸³ However, it is possible for crowds to be swayed or directed, for the fundamental characteristic of crowds, just like any agglomeration of creatures, is to "place

⁷⁷ Again, from the prologue opening speech to *Patton*.

⁷⁸ Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd: a study of the popular mind* (Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications, 2002). For the circumstances of the publication of *The Crowd* see Jaap van Ginneken, "The 1895 debate on the origins of crowd psychology," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 21, no. 4 (October 1985): 375–382; Robert A. Nye, *The Origins of Crowd Psychology: Gustave Le Bon and the crisis of mass democracy in the Third Republic*, Sage studies in 20th century history 2 (London: Sage Publications, 1975), chap. 4; Serge Moscovici, *The Age of the Crowd: a historical treatise on mass psychology*, trans. J. C. Whitehouse (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pt. II ("Le Bon and the Fear of Cowards").

⁷⁹ Maurice Reuchlin, "The historical background for national trends in psychology: France," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 1, no. 2 (April 1965): 116; see also Nye, *Origins of Crowd Psychology*, 30–31.

⁸⁰ Nye, Origins of Crowd Psychology, 3.

⁸¹ Le Bon, The Crowd, xi.

⁸² Le Bon, The Crowd, xi,xii,xiii.

⁸³ Le Bon, The Crowd, chap. 4.

themselves instinctively under the authority of a chief."⁸⁴ This huddling under the shadow of the leader is essentially atavistic, bearing in mind the subrational functioning of the crowd: "Crowds unconsciously accord a mysterious power to the political formula or the victorious leader that for the moment arouses their enthusiasm."⁸⁵

Le Bon's work was very swiftly criticised, ⁸⁶ but it remains stubbornly influential. Le Bon's theory "assumed that crowd participation extinguishes our normal psychological capacities and reveals a primal nature, which is usually well hidden from view." ⁸⁷ It is a "theory without a referent". ⁸⁸

Even so, it is not the intellectual integrity of Le Bon's theorizing that is the important factor for our purposes, but rather its influence, and it needs to be acknowledged that Le Bon's intuitions about crowd psychology and sociopathology were influential in the Nazi project. As Ian Kershaw puts it:

Hitler himself, as is well known, paid the greatest attention to the building of his public image. He gave great care to style and posture during speeches and other public engagements. And he was keen to avoid any hint of human failings... All this was closely related to Hitler's known views on the 'psychology of the masses', already expounded in *Mein Kampf* and taking a line similar to Gustave le Bon's [sic] writings on the almost boundless manipulability of the masses.⁸⁹

Le Bon's fears of the masses were shared by other, very different, thinkers. In an address to the Society of St Alban and St Sergius, Oxford, delivered in the last months of the Second World War, 90 C. S. Lewis lamented the intrusion of

⁸⁴ Le Bon, *The Crowd*, 72. See the whole of Book II, Chapter III, "The Leaders of Crowds and Their Means of Persuasion".

⁸⁵ Le Bon, The Crowd, 39.

⁸⁶ An early demolition was by Harry Elmer Barnes, "A Psychological Interpretation of Modern Social Problems and of Contemporary History: a survey of the contributions of Gustave Le Bon to social psychology," *The American Journal of Psychology* 31, no. 4 (October 1920): 333–369.

⁸⁷ Stephen Reicher, "The Psychology of Crowd Dynamics," in *Group Processes*, ed. Michael A. Hogg and R. Scott Tindale, Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology (Malden, Mass; Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), 182.

⁸⁸ Reicher, "Psychology of Crowd Dynamics," 182-3.

⁸⁹ Ian Kershaw, *The "Hitler Myth": image and reality in the Third Reich* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 3. "Those passages in *Mein Kampf* concerning the masses and how to manipulate them read like a cheap copy of *The Crowd.*" Stephen Reicher, "'The Crowd' Century: Reconciling practical success with theoretical failure," *British Journal of Social Psychology* 35, no. 4 (December 1996): 538. We shall see how Le Bon's ideas were utilized and depicted in *Triumph of the Will* in 'Triumph of the Will Redux: Meaning and Abnegation' on page 231 below.

⁹⁰ Originally published in C. S. Lewis, "Membership," *Sobornost*, no. 31 (June 1945): 4–9; later collected in, amongst other places, "Membership," in *Faith*, *Christianity and the Church*, ed. Lesley Walmsley (London: HarperCollins, 2000), 332–340. References are to the latter.

the "collective" upon the individual, in both his solitude and in his "harmonious union" with small groups of others:

...on those occasions when a modern undergraduate is not attending some such society he is seldom engaged in solitary walks, or walks with a single companion, which built the minds of the previous generations. He lives in a crowd: caucus has replaced friendship.⁹²

He argues that "the Christian life defends the single personality from the collective"⁹³, which is to say, the "single personality" is privileged over the "collective", and is integrated with others, not in a collective form, but through "membership" as an "organ in the mystical Body."⁹⁴

Twenty years after Lewis's expressed horror of the collective, Thomas Merton gave an apocalyptic and eschatological interpretation to the empirical fact of the masses: "The time of the end is the time of the Crowd... We are numbered in billions, and massed together, marshalled, numbered, marched here and there, taxed, drilled, armed, worked to the point of insensibility, dazed by information, drugged by entertainment, surfeited with everything, nauseated with the human race and with ourselves, nauseated with life." The sheer existential fact of the crowd, as a symptom of the end, means "there is no room for quiet", which drives out (in order?) "solitude... thought... attention... [self-]awareness". The Eschaton, through the symptomatic medium of the Crowd, means "there is no room for us."

One might think that Lewis's and Merton's suspicion of the masses was a result of having lived through the bloody and barbaric twentieth century. Who could not be suspicious of massed movements having witnessed Nuremberg and Red Square? But the suspicion of crowds was not a *result* of the twentieth century totalitarian means of treating people and peoples; rather, paradoxically, it was a *cause*.

In "The American Scholar", delivered in 1837, Emerson gave his balanced judgement on the place of the people in civic society: "Men are become of no account. Men in history, men in the world of to-day are bugs, are spawn, and are called 'the mass' and 'the herd." Once or twice a century, a millennium, we see anyone who approximates "to the right state of every man." The rest, while seeing in the "hero or the poet" the fulfilment of their humanity, are

⁹¹ Lewis, "Membership," 335.

⁹² Lewis, "Membership," 332.

⁹³ Lewis, "Membership," 338.

⁹⁴ Lewis, "Membership," 338.

⁹⁵ Thomas Merton, "The Time of the End is the Time of No Room," in *Raids on the Unspeakable* (New York: New Directions, 1966), 67,70.

⁹⁶ Merton, "Time of the End," 71.

⁹⁷ Emerson, "American Scholar," 65.

actually "content to be less, so that [humanity] may attain to its full stature" in the one. The mass not only should be, but *are*, "content to be brushed like flies from the path of a great person". Thus "justice shall be done by him" and the mass will "sun themselves in the great man's light". The "dignity of man" is surrendered from the masses onto "the shoulders of a hero", and the masses will therefore give themselves to "perish to add one drop of blood to make that great heart beat, those giant sinews combat and conquer. He lives for us, and we live in him."98

The presence of the biological libel, to become so familiar in the twentieth century, is significant. Despite Emerson's desire to mark out the character of the *American* Scholar, in contradistinction to the European Scholar, we actually see at work the shared ethos of North Atlantic hero-worship in the suspicion of the spawn, the mass, the herd. What existed in potential, in the social and cultural values of Crèvecoeur, the America of de Tocqueville, the New England Transcendentalists, the nativist religion of the Mormons, and the western romanticism of Thoreau, Melville and Natty Bumppo, became manifest in the Nazi programme. The shared North Atlantic roots of *My-L*, which become so powerful with the dominance of American cultural forms and media in the twentieth century, found their initial and most influential cinematic expression in the work of the German film director Leni Riefenstahl.

The American Hero, despite Emerson's disdain for the Old World, was indelibly and cinematically conjured in *Triumph of the Will*. Patton was able to be the American Adam, because Hitler had already been the German Wotan. Emerson and Carlyle might have sketched out attitudes that tended to the 'worship of the one', but it was Leni Riefenstahl who filmed the Nazi programme. And once it was filmed, once it became mythologized into celluloid, it escaped back into North Atlantic mythology.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Emerson, "American Scholar," 65.

⁹⁹ Nazi anti-semitism was as much biological as it was cultural and/or religious. See, for example, Hitler's 'Testament' of February 1945: "I told [the Jews] that, if they precipitated another war, they would not be spared and that I would exterminate the vermin throughout Europe, and this time once for all." Adolf Hitler, The Testament of Adolf Hitler: The Hitler-Bormann Documents, February-April 1945, ed. François Genoud, trans. R. H. Stevens (London: Cassell, 1961), 57, (13 February 1945). Emphasis added. Goebbels in a newspaper essay in November 1941 said: "The Jews are a parasitic race that feeds like a rotting mould on the cultures of healthy but ignorant peoples. There is only one effective measure: cut them out." Das Reich, 16 November 1941 ("Die Juden sind schuld!"), reprinted in Das eherne Herz: Reden und Aufsätze aus den Jahren 1941/42, ed. M. A. v. Schirmeister (München: Zentralverlag der NSDAP, Franz Eher Nachf, 1943), 88. Again, emphasis added. For the background to this strand of anti-semitism, see Henry Friedlander, The Origins of Nazi Genocide: from euthanasia to the Final Solution (Chapel Hill; London: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), chap. 1, "The Setting."

100 I shall show how this happened by looking at the aesthetic (page 232ff.) and conceptual (page 235ff.) legacies of TdW.

The Nazi Political is Personal

In reality, to describe a Nazi 'programme' as such is to misunderstand the nature of the political movement that from its very beginning was less programmatic than personal. Wilhelm Frick, Minister of the Interior and later executed following the Nuremberg trials, described the Nazi political programme following the seizure of power (the *Machtergreifung*) in 1933: "They say we don't have a program; but the name of Hitler is program enough." 101

It is wrong to think that the Hitler phenomenon exploded upon a German state and people entirely unprepared for it. The occasional attempts to relativize the Nazi *Machtergreifung* by saying it could have happened to any of the fragile democracies of Western Europe, exhausted by the blood-letting of the First World War, neglects the way in which the culture of Wilhelmine and Weimar Germany sought salvation in 'heroic leadership'.

So, for example, in the late nineteenth century in Berlin Karl Fischer emerged as the leader of the *Wandervogel* movement, a nature-loving, romantic, fellowship, "sending a fresh breath of naturalism through the stuffy middle-class manners of the day..." Fischer gradually assumed a more and more idealised role within the youth movement: "When we shoot, he makes the most points; when we march, his endurance far surpasses ours; when we laugh, his example is the most infectious; when we talk, he talks the best..." The leader was inferred to be of "unfathomable background", possessing something that was "irrational", and "veiled him in mystery". Ultimately, he was thought to have a "standing in a higher superpersonal, and thereby superhuman, complex of values." ¹⁰³

This was not limited to uniformed youth groups. As one rightist tract from 1920 put it: "The Leader does not conform to the masses, but acts in accordance with his mission. ...The Leader is radical; he is entirely that which he does, and

¹⁰¹ Wilhelm Frick, *Frankfurer Zeitung*, 21 February 1933. Quoted in Hilmar Hoffmann, *The Triumph of Propaganda: Film and National Socialism*, 1933-1945 (Providence, R.I.: Berghahn Books, 1996), vii. See also David Welch, "'Working towards the Führer': charismatic leadership and the image of Adolf Hitler in Nazi propaganda," in *Working towards the Führer: essays in honour of Sir Ian Kershaw*, ed. Anthony McElligott and Tim Kirk (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 93–117.

¹⁰² Howard Becker, *German Youth: bond or free* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., 1946), viii.

¹⁰³ Heinrich Roth, *Psychologie der Jugendgruppe: Aufbau, Sinn und Wert jugendlichen Gemeinschaftslebens*, Die Lehre von der praktischen Menschenkenntnis 4/1 (Berlin, 1938), 37. Quoted in Becker, *German Youth*, 55,56.

he does entirely what he has to do. The Leader is responsible; that is, he carries out the will of God, which he embodies in himself."¹⁰⁴

This "Leader" (German: Führer) was not yet Hitler: the idea of the Leader of the Germans existed long before "it was fitted to Hitler" 105, and during the parallel rise of the NSDAP 106 and Hitler, it was not clear that Hitler was the *only* person to whom it could be applied: it was not "obvious to the protagonists of the need for 'heroic' leadership that Hitler himself was the leader for whom they had been waiting." 107

It did not take long. During the near-permanent election campaigns of 1932 one Nazi newspaper exalted Hitler to unparalleled levels:

Hitler is the alpha and omega of our world philosophy. Every National Socialist house must have a place in which the Führer is near at hand. Generous hands and hearts must offer him small tributes every day at such in a place in the form of flowers and plants.¹⁰⁸

For the Presidential election in the autumn of 1932 Hitler took to the air, in his *Deutschlandflug* campaign, addressing twenty rallies over six days. The effect on his listeners in Hamburg was ecstatic:

Nobody spoke of 'Hitler', always just 'the Führer', 'the Führer says', 'the Führer wants', and what he said and wanted seemed right and good. ...It was nearly 3 p.m. 'The Führer is coming!' A ripple went through the crowds. ...[He had] drawn 120,000 people of all classes and ages. ...How many look up to him with touching faith! as their helper, their saviour, their deliverer from unbearable distress—to him who rescues the Prussian prince, the scholar, the clergyman, the farmer, the worker, the unemployed, who rescues them from the parties back into the nation. 109

¹⁰⁴ Kurt Sontheimer, Antidemokratisches Denken in der Weimarer Republik: die politischen Ideen des deutschen Nationalismus zwischen 1918 und 1933, 4th ed. (München: Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, 1962), 272; cited in Kershaw, Hitler Myth, 19–20.

¹⁰⁵ Kershaw, Hitler Myth, 13.

¹⁰⁶ Nationalsozialistiche Deutsche Arbeiterpartei, the National Socialist German Workers Party, the Nazi Party.

¹⁰⁷ Kershaw, *Hitler Myth*, 13. During the 1932 elections in Germany the role of *Führer* of the Germans was ascribed to Brüning (of the *Deutsche Zentrumspartei* and Reich Chancellor, 1930-32), Hugenberg (leader of the *Deutschnationale Volkspartei*), and the dying Hindenburg (*Hitler Myth*, 46.) We shall see a contemporary critique of this "heroic leadership", and its immoral consequences, in a radio lecture given by Dietrich Bonhoeffer (discussed on page 335).

¹⁰⁸ Cited by a socialist journal "Das freie Wort", and quoted in Kershaw, *Hitler Myth*, 39.

¹⁰⁹ Luise Solmitz, diary entry for 23 April 1932, in Werner Jochmann, ed., *Nationalsozialismus und*

¹⁰⁹ Luise Solmitz, diary entry for 23 April 1932, in Werner Jochmann, ed., *Nationalsozialismus und Revolution. Ursprung und Geschichte der NSDAP in Hamburg. Dokumente.*, Veröffentlichungen der Forschungsstelle für die Geschichte des Nationalsozialismus in Hamburg 3 (Frankfurt am Main: Research Centre for the History of National Socialism in Hamburg, 1963), 404–5; trans. and cited

Victor Klemperer, a more astute diarist, recognized the parasitical religious mechanism of the Hitler construct. In November 1933 it was announced that the Führer would be making a live broadcast from a factory in Siemensstadt: "In the thirteenth hour Adolf Hitler will visit the workers.' This is, as everyone knows, the language of the Gospel. The Lord, the Saviour visits the poor and the prodigal. …the legend of Christ has been transported into the here and now: Adolf Hitler, the Redeemer, visits the workers in Siemensstadt."¹¹⁰

After the *Machtergreifung* and the ensuing *Gleichschaltung*¹¹¹, the process by which the institutions of civil society were eliminated, or "co-ordinated" with Nazi policy, Germany was to be identified with the NSDAP, and the NSDAP with Hitler. As the Führer said at the 1935 Party Congress: "No, gentlemen, the Führer is the Party and the Party is the Führer." Germany had, or should have, a single will, and Hitler himself was the embodiment of that will.

Hermann Rausching, the former President of the Danzig Senate who fled Germany in 1935, described the mysterious, cloaked relationship of the Leader to the nation in his 1938 book *Die Revolution des Nihilismus*: "Hitler is deliberately and unceasingly held up to the masses as a deity". ¹¹³ This deity had a soteriological function: The "Messiah-figure of the leader is the indispensible centre" of NSDAP propaganda, which has deliberately calculated that the leader "must be withdrawn more and more into seclusion and surrounded with mystery." ¹¹⁴ The Leader's appearances before the nation are carefully controlled, he "only come[s] visibly into the presence of the nation by means of startling actions and rare speeches at critical moments". ¹¹⁵ Remembering that Rausching was writing in 1938, before the *Anschluss*, his willingness to predict the dynamics of the Hitler-myth is impressive: "Only when Hitler had really

by J. Noakes and G. Pridham, eds., *Nazism 1919-1945: the rise to power*, *1919-1934*, vol. 1, Nazism 1919-1945: A Documentary Reader (Exeter: University of Exeter, 1983), 74.

¹¹⁰ Victor Klemperer, *The Language of the Third Reich: LTI, Lingua Tertii Imperii, a philologist's notebook* (London: Athlone Press, 2000), 39.

¹¹¹ See the description of what this meant in practice in Richard J. Evans, *The Coming of the Third Reich: how the Nazis destroyed democracy and seized power in Germany*, vol. 1, The Third Reich (London: Penguin, 2004), 380–6. For Klemperer's analysis of the word ("so horrendously representative of the basic attitude of Nazism"), see *LTI*, 159.

¹¹² Speech of 13 September 1935, published in *Völkischer Beobachter*, No. 257, 14 September 1935. Quoted by Kershaw, *Hitler Myth*, 104. Domarus does not quote from this section of the speech. ¹¹³ Hermann Rauschning, *Germany's Revolution of Destruction*, trans. E. W. Dickes (London: William Heinemann, 1939), 37.

¹¹⁴ Rauschning, Revolution of Destruction, 37,37–8.

¹¹⁵ Rauschning, Revolution of Destruction, 38.

become a mythical figure would the whole depth of his magical influence reveal itself." 116

No wonder Joseph Stern developed the concept of Hitler as the "representative individual".¹¹⁷ Hitler was representative by both being ordinary (from, and of, the people), and, simultaneously, extraordinary (able to reveal to the German people "aspects of their national (racial) will of which they were hitherto unaware"¹¹⁸). Thus, for example, during the 1936 Reichstag Election Hitler averred:

I myself come from out of the Volk. In fifteen years I have worked my way up out of this Volk with my Movement. I was not appointed by anyone to stand above this Volk. It is from the Volk I have evolved, it is within the Volk I have remained, and it is to the Volk I shall return! I will stake my ambition on the fact that there is no statesman I know in this world who has more right than I to say he is a representative of his Volk!¹¹⁹

Hitler was of the people. And yet, at the same time, he was to be distinguished from the mass of the people, even those who recognised themselves as part of the *Volk*: "The secret of his personality resides in the fact that in it the deepest of what lies dormant in the soul of the German people has taken shape in full living features... That has appeared in Adolf Hitler: the living incarnation of the nation's yearning." ¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ Rauschning, *Revolution of Destruction*, 38. These are all taken from a section entitled "The Divine Inspiration of the Leader." For another contemporaneous German understanding of the Messianic component of the Führer-cult, see Victor Klemperer, *I Shall Bear Witness: The Diaries of Victor Klemperer*, 1933-41, trans. Martin Chalmers (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1998); and especially the same author's *LTI* written while living as a "non-person" in the Third Reich. ¹¹⁷ J. P. Stern, *Hitler: the Führer and the People* (London: Flamingo, 1984), chap. 1.

¹¹⁸ Reicher, "Crowd Century," 546.

^{119 20} March 1936, Hanseatenhalle, Hamburg: "Ich bin aus dem Volk gekommen. In 15 Jahren habe ich mich aus diesem Volk langsam mit dieser Bewegung emporgearbeitet. Ich bin nicht von jemand eingesetzt worden über dieses Volk. Aus dem Volke bin ich gewachsen, im Volk bin ich gelieben, zum Volk kehre ich zurück! Ich setze meinen Ehrgeiz darein, keinen Staatsmann auf der Welt zu kennen, der mit mehr Recht als ich sagen kann, Vertreter seines Volkes zu sein!" Max Domarus, ed., Hitler: Reden und Proklamationen, 1932-1945; Kommentiert von einem deutschen Zeitgenossen, vol. 2 (München: Süddeutscher Verlag, 1988), 609; English translation in Max Domarus, ed., Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations, 1932-1945: the Chronicle of a Dictatorship (1935-1938), trans. Chris Wilcox and Mary Fran Gilbert, vol. 2 (Wauconda, Ill.: Bolchazy-Carducci, 1990), 794. Domarus notes the deliberate parody of the Ash Wednesday liturgy: "memento, homo, quia pulvis es, et in pulverem reverteris": Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations, vol. 2, notes 89, p1308.

¹²⁰ Georg Schott, *Das Volksbuch vom Hitler* (München: Franz Eher Nachfolger, 1924), 18. Quoted in Ian Kershaw, "Hitler and the Uniqueness of Nazism," *Journal of Contemporary History* 39, no. 2 (April 2004): 251. "Franz-Eher-Verlag" was the central publishing house of the NSDAP. For more on the development of the "cult" of Hitler, see Michael Burleigh, *The Third Reich: a new history* (London: Pan, 2001), 266,267–7; Welch, "Working Towards the Führer"; David Welch,

Hitler's manner of governing was conducted in exactly the same way he achieved power in Germany: it "was nothing if not intensely, incomparably personal." But how was this "incomparably personal" connection with *Volk* and *Reich* to be conveyed and effected? If the message was Hitler, the medium was propaganda.

Hitler had made this explicit as early as 1924 in *Mein Kampf*: "The art of propaganda lies in understanding the emotional ideas of the great masses and finding, through a psychologically correct form, the way to attention, and thence to the heart of the broad masses." Rudolf Hess agreed. It was necessary

...that the Führer must be absolute in his propaganda speeches. He must not weigh up the pros and cons like an academic, he must never leave his listeners the freedom to think that something else is right... The great popular leader is similar to the great founder of a religion: he must communicate to his listeners an apodictic faith. Only then can the mass of followers be led where they should be led. They will then follow the leader if setbacks are encountered; but only then, if they have communicated to them the unconditional belief in the absolute rightness of their own people.¹²³

This would not be achieved by wishful thinking. The image and persona was consciously constructed through propaganda: "Hitler well understood his own function, the role which he *had* to act out as 'Leader' of the Third Reich"; furthermore, consciously he "transformed himself into a function, the *function of Führer*." ¹²⁴

[&]quot;Nazi Propaganda and the 'Volksgemeinschaft': constructing a people's community," *Journal of Contemporary History* 39, no. 2 (April 2004): 213–238; M. Rainer Lepsius, "Charismatic Leadership: Max Weber's Model and its applicability to the rule of Hitler," in *Changing conceptions of leadership*, ed. Carl F. Graumann and Serge Moscovici (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1986), 53–66; Rauschning, *Revolution of Destruction*, especially the section already cited on "The Divine Inspiration of the Leader", 36-39; Joseph H. Berke, "When little men become big," *History Today* 45, no. 4 (April 1995): 4. Above all, there is the definitive study of Ian Kershaw, *Hitler Myth*, especially ch. 1, "Führer of the coming Germany" and ch. 2, "Symbol of the Nation."

¹²¹ Stern, Führer and the People, 18.

¹²² Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf, trans. Ralph Manheim (London: Hutchinson, 1974), 165.

¹²³ Rudolf Hess, in a private letter of 1927: Albrecht Tyrell, Führer befiehl: Selbstzeugnisse aus der "Kampfzeit" der NSDAP. Dokumentation und Analyse (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1969), 1973; quoted and trans. in Kershaw, Hitler Myth, 27.

¹²⁴ Timothy W. Mason, "Intention and Explanation: a current controversy about the interpretation of National Socialism," in *Nazism, Fascism and the Working Class*, ed. Jane Caplan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 225–6; originally published in Gerhard Hirschfeld and Lothar Kettenacker, eds., *Der "Führerstaat"*, *Mythos und Realitat: Studien zur Struktur und Politik des Dritten Reiches* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1981), 23–40. Emphasis in original.

Hitler appointed one of his more able lieutenants, Joseph Goebbels, to oversee the nurturing of this image through the dissemination of propaganda in the Third Reich. Through the *Reichsfilmkammer* (RFK) Goebbels was able to adapt the techniques used by the NSDAP in the *Kampfzeit*: street battles were no longer effective when a whole country, rather than just a city, had to be controlled and curtailed. As Goebbels said in a speech to the RFK during the war: "Even entertainment sometimes has the task of arming the nation to fight for its existence, of providing it with the requisite spiritual uplift, entertainment, and relaxation as the dramatic events of the day unfold." 125

A debate continues to be had about the effectiveness, or otherwise, of this propaganda exercise. However, the participants themselves believed it to be effective, for they had experienced, first-hand or mediated, the content of its message, namely the Leader himself: "The Leader's charismatic power is not a mere phantasm—none can doubt that millions believe in it. ... The leader uses and enhances the feeling of awe; the followers flock to him to attain their ends." ¹²⁷

Wilhelm Reich sees the ends of the followers in psychological terms: "Fascist mentality is the mentality of the subjugated 'little man' who craves authority and rebels against it at the same time. It is not by accident that all fascist dictators stem from the milieu of the little reactionary man." 128

The vocabulary Mason uses is partly as a result of addressing the so-called "functionalist" school of historical revisionism in which a greater emphasis is placed on "the machinery of government and its effect upon decision-making in the Third Reich…" "Intention and Explanation," 213–4.

¹²⁵ Speech by Reich Minster Dr Goebbels on the Occasion of the War Conference of the Reich Film Chamber, 15 February 1941, Gerd Albrecht, Nationalsozialistische Filmpolitik: eine soziologische Untersuchung über die Spielfilme des Dritten Reichs (Stuttgart: F. Enke, 1969), 465–79. Cited by Hoffmann, Triumph of Propaganda, viii.

¹²⁶ Nicholas Reeves, *The Power of Film Propaganda: myth or reality?* (London: Cassell, 1999); Ian Kershaw, "How effective was Nazi propaganda?," in *Nazi Propaganda: the power and the limitations*, ed. David Welch (London: Croom Helm, 1983), 180–205, on the one hand; Siegfried Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler: a psychological history of the German film* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1947); Erwin Leiser, *Nazi Cinema*, trans. Gertrud Mander and David Wilson (London: Secker and Warburg, 1974), on the other.

¹²⁷ Franz Neumann, *Behemoth: the structure and practice of National Socialism* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1942), 75,84. Neumann justifies this by the changed wording of the oath made by members of the army following Hitler's assumption to the Reich Chancellery: "I swear this holy oath of God: that I shall give unconditional obedience to Adolf Hitler, Leader of the Reich and the people..." Thus, the leadership of the German state and people is "not an institution regulated by rules and precedents, or an office with delegated authority, but the investiture of power in one person, Adolf Hitler." Neumann, *Behemoth*, 75.

¹²⁸ Wilhelm Reich, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, trans. Vincent R. Carfagno (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1970), xi. See also §II.1 "Führer and mass structure".

The participant-followers also believed in the medium of propaganda: even in the final days of the war, during the *Götterdämmerung* of April 1945, Goebbels encouraged his staff:

Gentlemen, in a hundred years' time they will be showing another fine colour film describing the terrible days we are living through. ...I can assure you that it will be a fine and elevating picture. ...Hold out now, so that a hundred years hence the audience does not hoot and whistle when you appear on screen.¹²⁹

"Führer! Command! We will obey"

Goebbels was wrong. It is not *Kolberg* we look to in order to understand the terrible days of the 1930s and 40s, but rather to the films of Leni Riefenstahl. Her five NSDAP films—the so-called Nuremberg Trilogy of *Sieg des Glaubens* (Victory of Faith), *Triumph des Willens* (Triumph of the Will), and *Tag der Freiheit* (Day of Freedom), and the two Olympic films, *Fest der Völker* and *Fest der Schönheit* (Festival of the People and Festival of Beauty)¹³⁰—show, to their core, the *Ordungsprinzip* (principle of order) of the NSDAP: her Party Congress films, especially, "provided filmmakers with an aesthetic model to guide them in observing the Party's principle of order with maximum vigour." ¹³¹

*Triumph of the Will*¹³² was the official film record of the Reich Party Congress, held in Nuremberg in September 1934¹³³ as part of the ten year series

¹²⁹ 17 April 1945: Rudolf Semmler, *Goebbels, the Man Next to Hitler* (London: Westhouse, 1947), 194. Goebbels is referring to *Kolberg*. For the circumstances of the making of the last film of Nazi cinema see Burleigh, *The Third Reich*, 786,788–9; David Welch, *Propaganda and the German Cinema*, 1933-1945, Rev. ed. (London: I.B. Tauris, 2001), 221–35.

¹³⁰ Der Sieg des Glaubens, B&W film, Germany (Reichspropagandaleitung der NSDAP, 1933);
TdW; Tag der Freiheit: Unsere Wehrmacht, B&W film, Germany (Reichsparteitagfilm; der Leni Riefenstahl Film, 1935); Olympia: Fest der Völker, B&W film, Germany (Olympia-Film GmbH, 1938); Olympia: Fest der Schönheit, B&W film, Germany (Olympia-Film GmbH, 1938).

¹³¹ Hoffmann, Triumph of Propaganda, ix.

¹³² Hereafter referred to by its German abbreviation *TdW*.

¹³³ For an account of the making of *TdW* see, among many discussions, Richard Meran Barsam, *Filmguide to "Triumph of the Will,"* Indiana University Press filmguide series (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975); Kevin Brownlow, "Leni Reifenstahl [sic]," *Film*, no. 47 (Winter 1966): 14–19; Clive Coultass, "The German Film 1933-1945 [Review]," *Screen* 12, no. 2 (1971): 38–41; Linda Deutschmann, *Triumph of the will: the image of the Third Reich* (Wakefield, N.H.: Longwood Academic, 1991); David B. Hinton, "'Triumph of the Will': Document or Artifice?," *Cinema Journal* 15, no. 1 (Autumn 1975): 48–57; Eric Rentschler, *The Ministry of Illusion: Nazi Cinema and its afterlife* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996), chap. 1; Alan Marcus, "Reappraising Riefenstahl's 'Triumph of the Will'," *Film Studies*, no. 4 (Summer 2004): 75–86; Steve Neale, "Triumph of the Will: Notes on Documentary and Spectacle," *Screen* 20, no. 1 (March 1, 1979): 63–86; David Bathrick, "The Afterlife of 'Triumph of the Will': the first twenty-five years," in *Riefenstahl Screened: an anthology of new criticism*, ed. Neil Christian Pages, Mary Rhiel, and Ingeborg Majer-O'Sickey (New York; London: Continuum International, 2008),

of Party Rallies in the medieval spiritual home of Germanism.¹³⁴ Each Nuremberg Rally (properly *Reichsparteitag*, the "Reich Party Congress") was part of the *Stunden der Nation* ("national moments") repeatedly staged by the NSDAP. The *Stunden* "were carefully staged theatrical pieces"¹³⁵ in which the appearance and speeches of the Führer were the culmination. During the *Stunden*, "Hitler's speeches would be broadcast simultaneously throughout the Reich. …life would come to a standstill, demonstrating the sense of national community where the individual participant in the ritual, moved by Hitler's rhetoric and swayed by the crowd, underwent a metamorphosis…"¹³⁶

It is therefore a category mistake to parse *TdW* for expressions of Nazi policy and belief: the curiously disjointed, "sound-bite" presentations of the speeches in the old Congress Hall were not placed in the film to explicate a Nazi manifesto, or even to introduce the German population to their leaders in a pretelevisual society.¹³⁷ The task was greater, and more mystical, than that. Riefenstahl set out, unquestionably, to depict Hitler as the Messiah figure for the German people. Thus, in various sequences, his plane emerges from the clouds; he walks through the 200,000 people in the crowd, parting them as Moses parts the Red Sea; he is set apart, in his individuality, from the other faceless and amorphous participants.

73–97; Susan Sontag, "Fascinating Fascism," in *Under the Sign of Saturn* (London: Vintage, 1996), 73–105; Vicki O'Donnell Stupp, "Myth, Meaning, and Message in 'The Triumph of the Will'," *Film Criticism* 2, no. 2/3 (Winter/Spring 1978): 40–49; Brian Winston, "Triumph of the Will: Brian Winston casts a critical eye over Leni Riefenstahl's cinematic paean to Nazi aesthetics," *History Today* 47, no. 1 (January 1997): 24–28; Brian Winston, "Home Movies: Playback: Triumph of the Dull," *Sight and Sound* 11, no. 9 (September 2001): 60. See also, with a degree of suspicion, Riefenstahl's own account in *Memoiren*: 1902-1945 (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Ulstein, 1994), 220–232; first published in English as *The Sieve of Time*: the memoirs of Leni Riefenstahl (London: Quartet Books, 1992); later republished as Leni Riefenstahl: a memoir (New York: Picador USA, 1995) in which the section on TdW is 156-166. Two posthumous biographies of Riefenstahl are necessary correctives to the director's prevaricating version: Steven Bach, Leni: the life and work of Leni Riefenstahl (London: Abacus, 2008), chap. 9 & 10; Jürgen Trimborn, Leni Riefenstahl: a life, trans. Edna McCown (London: I.B. Tauris, 2008), chap. 8, "Riefenstahl shapes the face of the Third Reich" (!).

- ¹³⁴ For a history of the rallies, see Hamilton T. Burden, *The Nuremberg Party Rallies*, 1929-39 (London: Pall Mall Press, 1967).
- 135 Welch, Propaganda and German Cinema, 134.
- 136 David Welch, *The Third Reich: Politics and Propaganda*, 2nd ed. (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), 115. We have seen the process from an unwilling participant's point of view with Victor Klemperer, on page 219 above. See also Peter Adam, *The Arts of the Third Reich* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1992), 88–90, for the contribution of the architect and staging of the events to the overall message. Hoffman examines the place of the Rallies in the "transfiguration" of the German nation: Hoffmann, *Triumph of Propaganda*, 151–7.
- ¹³⁷ As David Stewart Hull understandably, but mistakenly, thinks: *Film in the Third Reich: A Study of the German Cinema*, 1933-1945 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 75.

The visual compositions ...show Hitler as a new Siegfried and his supporters as extras in a colossal Wagner opera, an anonymous mass completely under his sway.¹³⁸

As Vicky Stupp puts it, using Lévi-Strauss's mythography to critique Riefenstahl:

Through the rituals enacted in the film and through Riefenstahl's editing. Hitler has been deified. He is the incarnation of Odin, the All-Father, Nordic god of light and victory, of the Germanic Woden of the *Nibelungenlied*, of Christ, in his second coming to Nuremberg from the sky, bringing 'the light' with him. Photographed against the sun or sky from a camera angle which places him above the people who look up to him with adoration, Hitler enacts the role of Divine Leader.¹³⁹

This is not an *ex post facto* interpretation. This is how the participants in the Party Congress and the Nazi Project also saw the role and person of Hitler. Thus *Illustrierter Film-Kurier* described the same sequences:

Here and there a brief, firm handshake, a friendly word, a glance of recognition. On the faces of those who were able to be there, there is the light of grateful confidence. With roaring cheers on all sides the Führer rides into the city. The streets tremble with the shouts of loyalty, of love, of faith! Nürnberg greets the Führer of the Germans in the proud exaltation [sic] of this festive, sun-filled day!¹⁴⁰

When Hitler greets individuals in the crowd directly, the writer is ecstatic:

How very much this nation belongs to the Führer, how very much this

Führer belong [sic] to it! In every glance, in every shake of the hands there is expressed the confession and the vow: We belong together. In eternal loyalty together. 141

This symbiosis between Leader and people, *Führer* and *Volk*¹⁴² is clearly marked by the cinematic techniques used by Riefenstahl to narrate Hitler's arrival at, and procession into, Nuremberg. The camera work is ostentatious, with constant movement between aerial, eye-, ground-level and overhead positions, tracking and zooming. Riefenstahl was here participating in the aesthetics of German fascist cinema. As Siegfried Kracauer noted, German film

¹³⁸ Leiser, Nazi Cinema, 25.

¹³⁹ Stupp, "Myth, Meaning, Message," 47.

¹⁴⁰ Illustrierter Film-Kurier, Nr. 2302, 1935, in John G. Hanhardt, trans., "Nazi Critical Praise for 'Triumph of the Will'," Film Culture, no. 56–57 (Spring 1973): 168.

¹⁴¹ Hanhardt, "Nazi Critical Praise," 169.

¹⁴² Or, in Stupp's words, "The film is a myth told to the German people so they might embody their salvation through Hitler." "Myth, Meaning, Message," 47.

makers knew how to edit long before the *Machtergreifung*, and their skills were swiftly utilized by the Nazis:

With a pronounced feeling for editing, they exploited each medium [commentary, visuals, sound] to the full, so that the total effect frequently resulted from the blending of different meanings in different media. Such polyphonic handling is not often found in democratic war films; nor did the Nazis themselves go to great pains when they merely wished to pass on information. But as soon as totalitarian propaganda sprang into action, a sumptuous orchestration was employed to influence the masses.¹⁴³

Riefenstahl herself acknowledged her participation and competence in this tradition: "The editing of the film plays an important role because it helps to bring the events to life for the viewer and convey them more directly. And it's true, I have a special gift when it comes to working at the cutting table. I'm a good editor." ¹⁴⁴

Riefenstahl concludes the arrival sequence with a punctuated coda of close-ups of Hitler's SS Bodyguard and their uniforms. These close-ups are significant both historically and cinematically. Historically, the Party Congress of September 1934 was the first to follow Hitler's purging of the SA, the *Sturmabteilung* (the "Brownshirts") on 30 June 1934, in the so-called "Night of the Long Knives". Even though the purge was initially unopposed within the NSDAP and wider German society, the SA was strongly represented in the *Stunden der Nation*. Hitler did not know, definitively, how he would be received at Nuremberg. As William Shirer, an American journalist, described it in his diary:

There was considerable tension in the stadium and I noticed that Hitler's own S.S. bodyguard was drawn up in force in front of him from the mass of the brown-shirts. We wondered if just one of those fifty thousand brown-shirts wouldn't pull a revolver, but not one did.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ Kracauer, From Caligari to Hitler, 278.

¹⁴⁴ Marcus, "Reappraising Riefenstahl's 'Triumph of the Will'," 81.

¹⁴⁵ For a superb examination of this opening sequence, see Marilyn Fabe, *Triumph of the Will: The Arrival of Hitler: Notes and Analysis*, A Macmillan Films Inc. Film Study Extract (Mount Vernon, N.Y.: Macmillan Films, 1975). I am grateful to Professor Fabe for sending me an offprint of this difficult-to-obtain study. See also a shot-by-shot aesthetic examination in Neale, "Documentary and Spectacle," 65–76, a superb dissection on the theatricality and spectaclism of TdW.

¹⁴⁶ "Nuremberg, September 9 [1934]", William L. Shirer, *Berlin Diary: the journal of a foreign correspondent*, 1934-1941 (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1941), 27. The text of Hitler's speech, "absolving" the remaining members of the SA, is in Max Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations*, 1932-1945: the Chronicle of a Dictatorship (1932-1934), trans. Mary Fran Gilbert, vol. 1 (Wauconda, Ill.: Bolchazy-Carducci, 1990), 535–6.

Hence the close presence, and representation, of his *Schutzstaffel* on the procession route and in the film. The iron fist was not, at this moment, hidden in any kind of glove.¹⁴⁷

Cinematically, the sequence pioneers the motif of "statuary in film", perfected by Riefenstahl in her later film *Olympia* (1938); Kracauer calls this motif "mass ornamentalism"¹⁴⁸; Hinton calls it "the dissection of detail".¹⁴⁹ The origins of the shot, which we have also seen in the cinematography and art-direction for the 'Speech' in *Patton*, had its origins in Renaissance high-art. The low-angle point of view was "used in the Renaissance in drawing classical statuary. Since these statues were invariably mounted on pedestals it was inevitable that they were seen and drawn from below."¹⁵⁰ There is an implicit hierarchy of power, and an explicit extending of that hierarchy. Furthermore, the low-angle viewpoint allows the possibility of representing an individual human as representative of an idealised humanity. It was "Renaissance worship of the sublime"¹⁵¹ expressed in a naturalistic way, but in a way which could never, for a human being, occur in nature: we are not pygmies living among giants. The low-angle fetishized shots, of Riefenstahl and Schaffner, imply that we are.

Thus a pre-fascist artistic convention, with specific connotations, is taken up by the fascists and those connotations are thereby extended. The result is not an automatic revulsion in the non-fascist viewer; on the contrary, the shared aesthetic effectively co-opts the viewer.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁷ For the circumstances of the SA purge and Hitler's concerns about the party's reactions at Nuremberg, see, for primary materials relating to the purge, Domarus, *Hitler: Speeches and Proclamations*, 1:467–503; for good secondary discussions, among other sources: Richard J. Evans, *The Third Reich in Power: how the Nazis won over the hearts and minds of a nation*, vol. 2, The Third Reich (New York; London: Penguin Books, 2006), 20–41; Ian Kershaw, *Hitler*, 1889-1936: *Hubris* (London: Allen Lane, 1998), 512–22; Brian Winston makes clear the connections between politics, purges and the film in "Critical Eye"; Kershaw, *Hitler Myth*, 84–95, examines the German public's reaction to the purge.

¹⁴⁸ Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler*, 302. See also Siegfried Kracauer, "The Mass Ornament," trans. Barbara Correll and Jack Zipes, *New German Critique*, no. 5 (April 1975): 67–76. ¹⁴⁹ David B. Hinton, *The Films of Leni Riefenstahl*, 3rd ed., Filmmakers Series 74 (Lanham, Md.; London: Scarecrow Press, 2000), 31.

¹⁵⁰ Berthold Hinz, *Art in the Third Reich*, trans. Robert Kimber and Rita Kimber (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1980), 113.

¹⁵¹ Hinz, Art in the Third Reich, 113.

¹⁵² Brian Winston, "Was Hitler There?: reconsidering 'Triumph of the Will'," *Sight and Sound* 50, no. 2 (March 1981): 104.

The subjects of these low-angled works of art declare their independence from the viewer: they "give the impression of not being subject to external, objective circumstances, but of determining those circumstances themselves." ¹⁵³

Riefenstahl's use of "mass-ornamentalism", and the (unconscious?) way in which Schaffner co-opted that technique for his own film, exemplify the outworking of the long-lived motif of the fear and hatred of the masses. If you deny the moral existence of the masses, then what do you put in its place? For "Patton" and for Riefenstahl the answer is clear.

The triumph of the "Hitler Myth", the heroic, divinized, individual depicted in contradistinction to the masses, was enacted by Riefenstahl through her directorial decisions. She spent the rest of her long life denying that this was so, denying her responsibility for the film as a cinematic and aesthetic artefact. In an interview with *Cahiers du Cinéma*, whilst taking credit for the hard work she put into the film, she simultaneously denied that the film was in any way *made* by her:

This film is purely historical. I state precisely: it is *film-vérité*. It reflects the truth that was then in 1934, history. It is therefore a documentary. Not a propaganda film. Oh! I know very well what propaganda is. That consists of recreating certain events in order to illustrate a thesis or, in the face of certain events, to let one thing go in order to accentuate another. I found myself, me, at the heart of an event which was the reality of a certain time and a certain place. My film is composed of what stemmed from that.¹⁵⁴

Those who championed the rediscovery and celebration of Riefenstahl from the 1960s onwards (of which Delahaye's interview is one of the earliest instances of aesthetic de-nazification) emphasized the difficulties that the

¹⁵³ Hinz, *Art in the Third Reich*, 114. Hinz is referring, in particular, to a painted triptych by Hans Schmitz-Wiednebrück, reproduced on p. 125 of his book. Hans Schmitz-Wiedenbrück, *Arbeiter*, *Bauern und Soldaten*, Triptych, 1941, Centre panel in German War Art Collection, U.S. Army Center of Military History, Army Art Collection, Washington D. C.; side panels German Historical Museum, Berlin.

^{154 &}quot;Ce film est purement historique. Je précise: c'est un film-vérité. II reflète la vérité de ce qu'était alors, en 1934, l'histoire. C'est donc un document. Pas un film de propagande. Oh! je sais bien ce que c'est que la propagande. Cela consiste à recréer certains événements pour illustrer une thèse, ou, face à certains événements, à laisser tomber une chose pour en accentuer une autre. Je me trouvais, moi, au coeur d'un événement qui était la réalité d'un certain temps et d'un certain lieu. Mon film se compose de ce qui en a surgi." Michel Delahaye, "Leni et le loup: entretien avec Leni Riefenstahl," *Cahiers du Cinéma*, September 1965, 49. English translation in Michel Delahaye, "Leni and the Wolf: Interview with Leni Riefenstahl," trans. Rose Kaplin (?), *Cahiers du Cinéma in English*, 1966, 51. In a later interview, she intensified the same assertion: "there's no thought behind the images, there's only the object or person that is being photographed." Marcus, "Reappraising Riefenstahl's 'Triumph of the Will'," 80.

director experienced in making her three Nuremberg films.¹⁵⁵ Her advocates, by noting the alleged logistical and administrative obstacles placed in Riefenstahl's path by the Nazi hierarchy (especially Goebbels¹⁵⁶), seem to hope, somehow, that this absolves her of the (patently hyperbolic) charge of being "Hitler's favourite film maker,"¹⁵⁷ and therefore lessens her culpability as a Nazi, a Nazi sympathizer, or a 'fellow traveller'.

But, as Susan Sontag put it, in her heated exchange of letters with David B. Hinton following the original publication of her critique of Riefenstahl's aesthetics in the *New York Review of Books*:¹⁵⁸

Mr. Hinton contends that there was virtually no cooperation between her and the Party—as if Riefenstahl arrived in Nuremberg in September 1934 the way filmmakers turned up at Woodstock.¹⁵⁹

The most ludicrously exculpatory example of the Riefenstahlites comes in Arnold Berson's 1965 article in *Films and Filmmaking*, "The truth about Leni". He begins by criticizing Siegfried Kracauer, who had identified Riefenstahl's use of characteristically German cinematic techniques, and her annexation of the motifs of the *Bergfilme* (mountain films) of the 1920s. This is declared an "arbitrary" thesis, and Berson refuses to consider further "the ulterior psychic dispositions that condition such irrational conclusions..." Having disposed of one of the more pertinent critiques of Riefenstahl's aesthetic (and a critique all the more powerful for having been made so soon after the events and films in

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¹⁵⁵ These champions, products of the film schools and film departments of the Western democracies, subscribed to the auteur-theory of cinema, of which Riefenstahl is an early, interesting, female, example. The "Riefenstahlites" include such writers as: Gordon Hitchens, "Leni Riefenstahl Interviewed October 11th, 1971, Munich," *Film Culture*, no. 56–57 (Spring 1973): 94–121; David Gunston, "Leni Riefenstahl," *Film Quarterly* 14, no. 1 (Autumn 1960): 4–19; Hinton, "'Triumph of the Will': Document or Artifice?"; Hinton, *Films of Riefenstahl*; Arnold Berson, "The Truth about Leni: Nazi collaborator or independent artist?," *Films and Filming* 11, no. 7 (April 1965): 15–19. Richard Meran Barsam had earlier been critical of Riefenstahl's intentions and achievements ("Leni Riefenstahl: artifice and truth in a world apart," *Film Comment* 9, no. 6 (November 1973): 32–37.), but by the time he published his *Filmguide*, he was required to give thanks to Riefenstahl "for her cooperation in many hours of interviews".

156 An allegation sourced and refuted by Marcus Phillips: "Riefenstahl's 'Harassment'," *Film Quarterly* 29, no. 3 (Spring 1976): 62.

¹⁵⁷ Riefenstahl was "the beautiful woman who became Adolf Hitler's favourite director and whose slick propaganda helped the Nazi war machine." Paul Harris, "Hollywood tackles Hitler's Leni," *The Observer*, April 29, 2007, 37. See also the equally hostile (towards Riefenstahl) review of Steven Bach's book by Christopher Bray, "The First Lady of Fascist Film," *The Daily Telegraph*, April 21, 2007, 23.

¹⁵⁸ Sontag, "Fascinating Fascism." Originally published as "Fascinating Fascism," *The New York Review of Books* 22, no. 1 (February 6, 1975): 23–28.

¹⁵⁹ David B. Hinton and Susan Sontag, "An Exchange on Leni Riefenstahl," *The New York Review of Books* 22, no. 14 (September 18, 1975).

¹⁶⁰ Berson, "Truth about Leni," 16.

question), Berson can then concentrate on the achievements of Riefenstahl in the film. Here there is no doubt about Riefenstahl's genius and the emotive power of the creation: the viewer's interest never flags, but the film "absorb[s] him into the events depicted by overpowering his emotions." Riefenstahl is a "genius" by being able to "transform... the dimensions of reality" through "impressionistic editing, brilliant in its sustained vigour" and "intensified" by her choice of camera angles. This presents a "grandiose conception", in which "[p]ast and present encompass all with a mystic sense of communication, of ancient glory reborn in the deified figure of Germany's new leader... the apotheosised Führer..." 163

At the end of this series of assertions (and all the way through Berson uses the third person "him" to assert the effectiveness of the imagery and editing of the film upon a putative exemplary spectator), Berson then has the gall (or, perhaps, to be charitable, the political naïvety) to affirm that "[a]lthough *Triumph of the Will* was a Nazi propaganda vehicle, it contained none of the virulent racist doctrine imputed to the infamous Third Reich…"¹⁶⁴

Berson is attempting to separate the political from the cinematic, to rescue Riefenstahl for the sake of Art. ¹⁶⁵ This separation was not seen by those who commissioned, paid for, distributed, projected and prized the film. Herbert Seehofer (the chief press officer for the film) told the German film magazine *Licht-Bild-Bühne*, that the title of the film was by no means an accident: *TdW* is an "epic picture of the new German created by the victory of the movement as a triumph of the will on which it is based." ¹⁶⁶ In May 1935 when *TdW* won the National Film Prize, the citation celebrated the film for conveying "in monumental hitherto unseen images the exhilarating events of our political life." ¹⁶⁷ What was shown was matched by how it was shown: "it is an epic, beating the tempo of marching formations, steel-like in its conviction, fired by a passionate artistry. ¹⁶⁸ A review in *The Observer* agreed with Seehofer: "the film is one long apotheosis of the Caesar Spirit...It is to be sincerely hoped that this film will be shown in all cinemas outside Germany if one wishes to understand the intoxicating spirit which is moving Germany these days." ¹⁶⁹

¹⁶¹ Berson, "Truth about Leni," 17.

¹⁶² Berson, "Truth about Leni," 17.

¹⁶³ Berson, "Truth about Leni," 17.

¹⁶⁴ Berson, "Truth about Leni," 17.

¹⁶⁵ See Winston, "Critical Eye," 25.

¹⁶⁶ From Licht-Bild-Bühne, 23 October 1934. Quoted in Leiser, Nazi Cinema, 137.

¹⁶⁷ Citation, quoted in Leiser, Nazi Cinema, 138.

¹⁶⁸ Quoted in Leiser, Nazi Cinema, 138.

¹⁶⁹ Anonymous, "Hail, Caesar!," *The Observer* (London, December 3, 1933), 17. Quoted in Martin Loiperdinger and David Culbert, "Leni Riefenstahl, the SA, and the Nazi Party Rally Films, Nuremberg 1933–1934: 'Sieg des Glaubens' and 'Triumph des Willens'," *Historical Journal of*

What these three contemporary encomiums show is that, in the 1930s at least, the aesthetic and the conceptual were inseparable.

Triumph of the Will Redux: Meaning and Abnegation

Ken Kelman identifies two cinematic techniques in particular which Riefenstahl used to "spiritualise" the material events of the Party Congress. These techniques are "disorientation" and "animation". Disorientation works by "leaving some crucial aspect of 'reality' out of the frame". The upper parts of people's bodies are shown, but not the place on which they stand; we are shown buildings against the sky and clouds, rather than in relation to the ground or other buildings: "some literally castles in the air." Animation, on the other hand, is achieved by close-up and controlling the angle of vision. In doing so, Riefenstahl shows the "imparting of spirit or life to matter". Kelman cites as the clearest example the parading of the flags during the "Ceremony of the Fallen" 173:

...there are the merest glimpses of those bearing [the flags]. Close-up plunges the viewer into the midst of flags that seem to move of themselves, and in longer shots the camera angle obscures any human presence.¹⁷⁴

Through these two techniques, especially, Riefenstahl deconstructs reality, forces it to become figurative, and persuades us that "things move as if charged with supernatural power, with a will of their own, or more precisely, the will of Hitler." ¹⁷⁵

Riefenstahl demonstrated, as Paul Virilio put it, that the "psychological identity [of the individual] disappears behind the allure of a technical valourization." This "Nazi aesthetic" has but a "single objective and a single method" — the collapse of the individual into the collective, and the apotheosis of the individual as part of the mass. The aesthetic of Nazism "was

Film, Radio and Television 8, no. 1 (1988): 6. The Observer article is referring to Riefenstahl's earlier film.

¹⁷⁰ Ken Kelman, "Propaganda as Vision—'Triumph of the Will'," *Film Culture* 56-57 (Spring 1973): 163.

¹⁷¹ Kelman, "Propaganda as Vision," 163.

¹⁷² Kelman, "Propaganda as Vision," 164.

¹⁷³ Held in the Luitpoldhain arena on 9 September 1934: scene 10 for Barsam, *Filmguide*; sequence 12 for Hinton, *Films of Riefenstahl*.

¹⁷⁴ Kelman, "Propaganda as Vision," 164.

¹⁷⁵ Kelman, "Propaganda as Vision," 164. For more on the totalitarian moulding of reality see Carlyle's mechanistic view of the "guides of the dull host", on page 241 below.

¹⁷⁶ Paul Virilio, *The Aesthetics of Disappearance* (New York: Semiotext(e), 1991), 98.

¹⁷⁷ Hoffmann, Triumph of Propaganda, 31. Emphasis in original.

not merely a medium, a 'package' for fascist idea and the fascist message." ¹⁷⁸ The message and the medium were indistinguishable. The individual was subordinated to the collective:

the moviegoer, the radio listener, the reader, and the participant in Nazi mass rallies [was given] a sense of power, of being one with the collective. In this state of intoxication, the meaning or content of idea was no longer important. Meaning was submerged in a state of total self-abnegation.¹⁷⁹

One individual remained immune from the abnegation of the collective and that was the one true, real, Man, the Leader, the Führer, the General, whether Hitler or Patton. And the fact that the two different historical figures and fictive 'characters' can be conflated shows the aesthetic and conceptual heritage of Riefenstahl's film.

The Aesthetic Legacy

Even before the rediscovery and attempted rehabilitation of Riefenstahl in the 1960s her film exerted its influence on those impressed by auteur theory and film-makers from within the American film schools. This was both a high-brow and a low-brow influence: after all, George Lucas has remade TdW in colour—six times! 180

Consider the parallels between the "throne room" sequence at the end of *Star Wars*¹⁸¹ (later subtitled "A New Hope"), and the final sequence, Hitler's speech in the Luitpoldhalle¹⁸², from *TdW*. The final sequence of *Star Wars* is described in the fourth (and final) draft of Lucas's script thus:

¹⁷⁸ Hoffmann, Triumph of Propaganda, 31.

¹⁷⁹ Hoffmann, Triumph of Propaganda, 31.

¹⁸⁰ See, among many other studies and pieces of fan-writing, Roger Copeland, "When Films 'Quote' Films, They Create A New Mythology," *The New York Times* (New York, September 25, 1977), sec. Arts & Leisure; Joel Frangquist, "STAR WARS and Triumph of the Will," *The Unordinary STAR WARS Web Site*, n.d., http://alum.hampshire.edu/~jbfF95/swtotw.htm; HeroOfTheSovietUnion, *Triumph of a New Hope* (*Throne Room and End*), 2007, www.youtube.com/watch?v=CbEEQxtnkHE; Kevin J. Wetmore, Jr., *The Empire Triumphant: race, religion and rebellion in the "Star Wars" films* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2005); Winston, "Home Movies: Playback: Triumph of the Dull"; Clive James, "Reich Star," *The New York Times*, March 25, 2007, sec. 7; and Glenn Kenny, ed., *A Galaxy Not So Far Away: writers and artists on twenty-five years of "Star Wars"* (London: Allison & Busby, 2003), in which is to be found; Tom Carson, "Jedi Über Alles," 160–171; Joe Queenan, "Anakin, get your gun," 113–126.

¹⁸¹ George Lucas, *Star Wars* (*Episode IV: A New Hope*), Technicolor, U.S.A. (20th Century Fox, 1977).

¹⁸² Occasionally this building is referred to as the "Kongresshalle", which is potentially confusing, as the Congress grounds in Nuremberg had another, newer, building with that name, which remained uncompleted. The Luitpoldhalle is sometimes known as the *Alte* Kongresshalle.

INTERIOR: MASSASSI OUTPOST—MAIN THRONE ROOM

Luke, Han, and Chewbacca enter the huge ruins of the main temple. Hundreds of troops are lined up in neat rows. Banners are flying and at the far end stands a vision in white, the beautiful young Senator Leia. Luke and the others solemnly march up the 1ong aisle and kneel before Senator Leia. ...[Leia] rises and places a gold medallion around Han's neck. He winks at her. She then repeats the ceremony with Luke, who is moved by the event. They turn and face the assembled troops, who all bow before them.

FADE OUT.183

Many critics have seen the origins of this scene in the final scene of *TdW*. The parallels, the 'quotation' of Riefenstahl by Lucas, seem undeniable. So, for example, when the YouTube user "HeroOfTheSovietUnion" interpolated both sequences in a "mash-up", there is no cognitive or aesthetic dissonance in the resulting re-edit. Tom Carson says that Lucas "blatantly mimics" Riefenstahl, and Wim Wenders, on his first viewing of *Star Wars*, also thought the connection to be so obvious that it did not need describing; rather it was the aesthetic, commercial and political dynamics of the connection which were significant:

A film like *Star Wars*, truly 'entertaining', makes that perfectly clear, not only because it's about war, not only because it supplies new images of war and a new mythology of war to a whole generation of children 'world-wide', but also because in the end it reveals, in all innocence, where these images come from and where they belong: the final sequence is a faithful copy of a sequence from Hitler's greatest propaganda film *Triumph of the Will.*¹⁸⁶

Lucas refutes his dependency on the earlier film, and denies watching *TdW* in preparation for making *Star Wars*. He avers, unconvincingly, that the throne room parallels are "just what happens when you put a large military group together and give out an award." ¹⁸⁷

In reality, Lucas's scene is itself a mash-up, between *two* sequences of *TdW*. The sequence most commonly referred to (as in Carson and Wenders) is

¹⁸³ The revised fourth draft of the script by George Lucas, dated January 1976, reproduced in Carol Titelman, ed., *The Art of Star Wars*, 1st ed. (New York: Ballantine Books, 1979), 134.

¹⁸⁴ HeroOfTheSovietUnion, Triumph of a New Hope.

¹⁸⁵ Carson, "Jedi Über Alles," 162.

¹⁸⁶ Wim Wenders, "The American Dream (March/April 1984)," in *Emotion Pictures: reflections on the cinema*, trans. Sean Whiteside and Michael Hofmann (London: Faber and Faber, 1989), 159. Originally written in blank verse sense-lines.

¹⁸⁷ Quoted in J. W. Rinzler, *The Making of Star Wars: the definitive story behind the original film* (London: Ebury Press, 2008), 325.

the ceremony held in the Luitpoldhalle in Nuremberg on 10 September 1934, sequence 10 or 12 in TdW^{188} , namely the *Schlusskongress* or "closing service", as Daniel Knopp calls it. ¹⁸⁹ An eagle atop a swastika opens the scene with a swift cut to Hitler entering the Luitpoldhalle at the head of dozens of Party officials (mostly the *alte Kämpfer*). Another cut, from a shoulder-height point of view with Hitler hidden behind a forest of arms raised in the "German Salute", to a position from above and behind of the processional party walking down the aisle. Riefenstahl tilts the camera, slowly this time, to "reveal the enormity of the spacious auditorium and the immense swastika insignia draped over the podium." ¹⁹⁰ The standards are brought into the auditorium, and, in another example of Kelman's disorientation technique, the shots are framed to exclude the banners' human carriers. Riefenstahl's "optical rhetoric" ¹⁹¹ privileges the Leader and his symbols by excluding those who participate in the ceremony. ¹⁹²

But the entrance of Hitler and the alte Kämpfer is not replicated in the final scene from Star Wars. There we see only three people who walk between the anonymous massed body of the Rebel Alliance; Han Solo, Luke Skywalker and Chewbacca. Lucas is actually quoting from the sequence filmed in the Luitpoldhain arena on 9 September 1934. The field is full, to the edge of the screen and beyond, of assembled SA and SS men. In an aisle between the two groups walk Hitler, Viktor Lutze (Röhm's successor as chief of the SA) and Heinrich Himmler (chief of the SS), as "Ich hatte einen Kameraden" (I once had a comrade) plays faintly on the soundtrack. 193 For Riefenstahl the hierarchy is clear: Hitler remains at the apex of the triangle of the three walkers, "the choreography of leadership sustained throughout." 194 Lucas has been less careful; there are continuity errors between cuts, with sometimes Han Solo walking in the Hitler position in the lead, and sometimes walking parallel with Skywalker.

¹⁸⁸ Scene 12, according to Barsam, *Filmguide*; sequence 13, according to Hinton, *Films of Riefenstahl*. For the chronology of the Congress related to the sequences of the film, see Table 1 in Hinton, *Films of Riefenstahl*, 27.

¹⁸⁹ Daniel Knopp, NS-Filmpropaganda Wunschbild und Feindbild in Leni Riefenstahls "Triumph des Willens" und Veit Harlans "Jud Süss" (Marburg: Tectum, 2004), 49.

¹⁹⁰ Frank P. Tomasulo, "The Mass Psychology of Fascist Cinema: Leni Riefenstahl's 'Triumph of the Will'," in *Documenting the Documentary: close readings of documentary film and video*, ed. Barry Keith Grant and Jeannette Sloniowski (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998), 113.

¹⁹¹ Tomasulo, "Mass Psychology," 113.

¹⁹² For the significance of the music (diegetic and extradiegetic) of the "closing service", see Stefan Strötgen, "'I compose the Party Rally...': The Role of Music in Leni Riefenstahl's 'Triumph of the Will'," *Music & Politics* 2, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 12–13. For Riefenstahl's use of music in general, and her collaboration with Herbert Windt, see Ben Morgan, "Music in Nazi film: How different is 'Triumph of the Will'?," *Studies in European Cinema* 3, no. 1 (April 2006): 37–53.

¹⁹³ See Barsam, *Filmguide*, 54–5, with certain errors of fact and interpretation.

¹⁹⁴ Reeves, Power of Film Propaganda, 108.

Even so, the significance of all three sequences in both films is clear: "they represent conformity underneath leadership, and the resulting power that comes from a large number of people with one focus."195 The imagery, and the mythic substructure conveyed by the imagery, undermine the ostensible message of Star Wars: that the Rebel Alliance is in rebellion against a totalitarian and oppressive hegemony. In reality, with the film-maker mapping SA and SS imagery upon the Rebel Alliance, and with movie-viewers "mistakenly rooting for the Rebel Alliance in Star Wars, [they] not only confuse good with evil, but also fail to see their own pellucid reflection in Darth Vader and the Empire."196 Star Wars "legitimizes the same conformist sentiment that made the Nazis so powerful."197 The production, release and fervent reception of Star Wars was "a mile-stone in the process of cultural forgetfulness by which damaged goods become undamaged."198 It was not until the 1970s, a period as politically and economically chaotic as the 1920s, that the "real-world connotations of [this] particular mythology... Lucas's idealization of righteous, ritualistic young Siegfrieds"199 could be so fondly overlooked.

The Conceptual Legacy

Lucas quotes from Riefenstahl on logistical and aesthetic grounds, even though there is no, and can be no, simple division between aesthetical and conceptual factors in an artwork's creation and reception. As Brian Winston points out any attempt to "save *Triumph of the Will* for art by ignoring its politics" 200 is the result of wilful blindness on the part of certain cinema scholars. Art and politics are, at the very least, in dialogue with one another, and, more reasonably, are in a symbiotic relationship. In short, the conceptual legacy of TdW is at least as strong as its aesthetic legacy. This is summed up, in even shorter order, by the grand unifying Nazi political concept of *Führerprinzip* (the leadership principle). The *Führerprinzip* laid down that

... at all levels of organization, ultimate authority was concentrated in a single leader imbued with special gifts. Those special gifts were more than merely managerial. ... The leader was a mystical figure embodying and guiding the nation's destiny. ²⁰¹

¹⁹⁵ Frangquist, "STAR WARS and Triumph of the Will."

¹⁹⁶ Queenan, "Anakin, get your gun," 116.

¹⁹⁷ Frangquist, "STAR WARS and Triumph of the Will."

¹⁹⁸ Carson, "Jedi Über Alles," 164.

¹⁹⁹ Carson, "Jedi Über Alles," 164.

²⁰⁰ Winston, "Critical Eye," 25.

²⁰¹ David Welch, Hitler: Profile of a Dictator (London: Routledge, 2001), 49 & 42.

The jurisprudence of the *Führerprinzip* was articulated by the constitutional theorist Ernst Rudolf Huber. Ahistorically, Huber insisted that the National Socialist movement was responsible for the office of the Führer:

The office of Führer has grown out of the movement into the Reich, firstly through the Führer taking over the authority of the Reich Chancellor and then through his taking over the position of Head of State.²⁰²

This means that the office of Führer was not subject to the offices of State, but *vice versa*. The primary role was that of Führer of the movement; only after the Führer of the NSDAP "absorbed the two highest functions of the political leadership of the Reich" did it create the brand new office of "Führer des Deutschen Reiches and Volkes".²⁰³

This office is conterminous with the sovereign power of the Reich: in fact, to be accurate, there is no such thing as "State power" in the *völkisch* Reich of Germany, but rather only *Führergewalt* (Führer power). Power is not the manifestation of the "impersonal entity" of the State, but of the Führer "as the executor of the nation's common will." Furthermore, there is no part of the *völkisch* Reich which is exempt from, or independent of, *Führergewalt*: "There is no position in the area of constitutional law in the Third Reich independent of this elemental will of the Führer." Führergewalt therefore is "comprehensive and total" and "embraces all spheres of national life". There are no restrictions on its exercise, there are no "safeguards and controls… autonomous protected spheres… vested individual rights". Rather *Führergewalt* is "free and independent, exclusive and unlimited." Rather *Führergewalt* is "free and independent, exclusive and unlimited."

This is right and proper, for the Führer is the manifestation of the nation's will. In fact, the Führer is simply, literally, the atavistic manifestation of the *völkisch* Reich itself.

The genius of *TdW* (in the sense of its core identity) lies in its attempt and success in representing this. Riefenstahl undertook a two-fold task in

²⁰² Ernst Huber, *Verfassungsrecht des Grossdeutschen Reiches*, 2., stark erw. Aufl. der "Verfassung." (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1939), 142; trans. in J. Noakes and G. Pridham, eds., *Nazism 1919-1945: state, economy and society, 1933-39*, vol. 2, Nazism 1919-1945: A Documentary Reader (Exeter: University of Exeter, 1984), 198–99. This was not, as we have seen, the case: on page 217-218 above.

²⁰³ See Huber, Verfassungsrecht, 142.

²⁰⁴ Huber, Verfassungsrecht, 142.

²⁰⁵ Speech by Hans Frank, head of the Nazi Association of Lawyers and the Academy of German Law, 1938, printed in *Im Angesicht des Galgens: Deutung Hitlers und seiner Zeit auf Grund eigener Erlebnisse u. Erkenntnisse geschrieben im Nürnberger Justizgefängnis*, 2. Aufl. (Neuhaus bei Schliersee: Frank, 1955), 466–7. Quoted in Noakes and Pridham, *Nazism 1919-1945*, 2:200. ²⁰⁶ Huber, *Verfassungsrecht*, 142.

²⁰⁷ Huber, *Verfassungsrecht*, 142. For more on the development of the *Führerprinzip* in Nazi Germany, see Noakes and Pridham, *Nazism* 1919-1945, 2:195–200.

representing the symbiosis between the *völkisch* Reich, mankind (in the sense of the multitude participating in the Party Congress, themselves representative of the greater multitude of the German people) and the Man (in the sense of the role of Hitler, depicted as the German Messiah, the representative human being).

As Werner Hager put it, in an article on the architecture of the Third Reich published three years after *TdW* was released:

People are no longer a mass of individuals, a formless, artless mass. Now they form a unison, moved by a will and a communal feeling. They learn again to move in formations or to stand still, as if moulded by an invisible hand. A new body feeling is born, beginning simply in the feature of lifting the arm for the greeting and culminating in the mass march...²⁰⁸

This is an important point. A new form of people, the German People's Body (*Volkskörper*), needs a new forum in which to express its identity and nature:

Mass assemblies are necessary for the reason that, in attending them, the individual... now begins to feel isolated and in fear of being left alone as he acquires for the first time the picture of a great community which has a strengthening and encouraging effect on most people... And only a mass demonstration can impress upon him the greatness of this community... while seeking his way, he is gripped by the force of mass suggestion.²⁰⁹

However, it was not enough to desire the emotions of being incorporated into the *Volkskörper*²¹⁰: it needed to be manifested, by being made visible and being public witnessed and testified to. Goebbels described the transformation in his usual menacing imagery: the "poor little man" in the crowd was given "the proud conviction" to go from being "a little worm into part of a large dragon".²¹¹

The "little worm" is the people (the *Volkskörper*); the "large dragon" is the person of Adolf Hitler, indistinguishable from his role of *Führer*.

²⁰⁸ Werner Hager, "Bauwerke im Dritten Reich," *Das Innere Reich: Zeitschrift für Dichtung, Kunst und deutsches Leben* 4, no. 1 (April 1937): 7; quoted in Adam, *The Arts of the Third Reich*, 88. ²⁰⁹ Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1939), 397–8. Quoted in Welch, *Propaganda and German Cinema*, 148.

²¹⁰ See Boaz Neumann, "The Phenomenology of the German People's Body (Volkskörper) and the Extermination of the Jewish Body," *New German Critique* 36, no. 1 106 (2009): 149–181, for a discussion on the importance of this concept in understanding the Nazi project.

²¹¹ Joseph Goebbels, *Kampf um Berlin: I Der Anfang (1926-1927)*, II. Aufl. (München: Verlag F. Eher Nachf., 1932), 18. "...den kleinen armseligen Menschen die stolze Überzeugung... als kleiner Wurm dennoch Glied eines großen Drachens zu sein." This dragon metaphor also occurred to Hitler himself after watching a mass demonstration in pre-First World War Vienna: Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, chap. 2.

Hero-Worship Heritage

Riefenstahl was doing nothing new or original, or even, for her time, reprehensible. Rather she was reflecting the assumptions of her time and culture, assumptions so deeply embedded in European culture that they remained, and mostly remain, unexamined. The rare occasions on which the assumptions were examined tended to reinforce their popular and unconscious power.

During the nineteenth century there was a widespread, almost pervasive, reappropriation of 'enthusiasm', a post-Romantic valuing of affective emotion over the Enlightenment's elevation of "educated intellect," the only human attribute which could moderate the social and personal damage of individual "selfish feelings". Enthusiasm was, or ought to be, expressed as admiration, and admiration, in turn, necessarily became focused upon individual exemplars of humanity, their actions, volitions, and value. As Coleridge put it "All the great—the permanently great—things that have been achieved in the world have been so achieved by individuals, working from the instinct of genius or of goodness." But Victorian thoroughness would not allow such admiration to be limited to individual sentiment. With the melancholy that can only come from describing events but recently ended, Edmund Gosse says the Victorians "carried admiration to the highest pitch. They marshalled it, they defined it, they turned it from a virtue into a religion, and called it Hero Worship." 215

Hero worship is the acknowledgement that human affairs evince the possibility of "greatness". According to Jacob Burckhardt (1818–1897), there is an ineluctable tide in history by which times become "suddenly concentrated in one man, who is then obeyed by the world."²¹⁶ Within "one personality", these

²¹² John Stuart Mill, "Autobiography (1873)," in *Autobiography and Literary Essays*, ed. John M. Robson and Jack Stillinger, Collected Works of John Stuart Mill 1 (Toronto; London: University of Toronto Press; Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), 112 (chap. 4); cited, in a different edition, by Walter E. Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind*, 1830-1870 (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1957), 268.

²¹³ This single sentence attempts to summarise Wordsworth and Ruskin, Mill and Macaulay. For an exemplary and more leisurely description of the cultural history see Houghton, *Victorian Frame of Mind* chap. 11, "Enthusiasm" and chap. 12, "Hero Worship."

²¹⁴ 24 July 1832, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *The Table Talk, and, Omniana*, ed. T. Ashe (London: George Bell, 1903), 173. This passage is often quoted, but without its context; this is perhaps understandable when we realise that Coleridge was discussing the parliamentary reform of infant education!

²¹⁵ Edmund Gosse, "The Agony of the Victorian Age," in *Some Diversions of a Man of Letters* (London: W. Heinemann, 1919), 335.

²¹⁶ Jacob Burckhardt, *Reflections on History* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1943), 188. The English edition of this book was published in 1943, but it had its origins in a series of lectures given in Basle between 1868 and 1885. Chapter 5, "The Great Men in History" from which these

"great individuals represent the coincidence of the general and the particular, of the static and the dynamic". The coincidence is "mysterious", and it represents the coming together of the "egoism of the individual and the thing we call the common weal... the glory of the community." The relationship of great man to epoch is, to develop a nuptial metaphor, "a $i\epsilon \varphi \delta \zeta \gamma \alpha \mu \sigma \zeta$ (a sacred marriage)". This coming together or marriage is not that of equals, though, for the great men, by and through their greatness, "subsume States, religions, cultures and crises", and the marriage is "consummated in times of terror". Although Burckhardt does mention the connection between "greatness" and "goodness" ("...we run the risk of confusing power and greatness and taking our own persons far too seriously" 221), he does not examine it, and the infliction of "great harm" is not thought to be a barrier to true greatness.

Most significantly for understanding Riefenstahl's depiction of the *Führerprinzip* is the volitionary aspect to greatness. According to Burckhardt, the great man is only subject to one thing greater than himself, and that is his *will* to greatness:

The vocation of greatness seems to be to fulfil a will that is greater than the individual will, and is denoted, according to its point of departure, as the will of God, the will of a nation or a community, the will of an epoch.²²²

The High Priest of Hero-Worship

It would be wrong, however, to believe that this search for a hero was the result of confidence or a Whiggish sense of human perfectibility. As Disraeli described it, through the mouth of his eponymous hero, Tancred:

No one has confidence in himself; on the contrary, every one has a mean idea of his own strength and has no reliance on his own judgement. ...there is a want of inward and personal energy in man; and that is what people feel and mean when they go about complaining there is no faith.²²³

quotations are taken, was a lecture given in Basle Museum in 1871: M. D. H. (Marie Donald Hottinger), "Introductory Note," in *Reflections on History*, by Jacob Burckhardt (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1943), 5–9.

²¹⁷ Burckhardt, Reflections, 188.

²¹⁸ Burckhardt, Reflections, 198.

²¹⁹ Burckhardt, Reflections, 188.

²²⁰ Burckhardt, Reflections, 188.

²²¹ Burckhardt, Reflections, 173.

²²² Burckhardt, Reflections, 197-8.

²²³ Benjamin Disraeli, *Tancred: or, the new crusade*, vol. 1 (London: Henry Colburn, 1847), 301 (chap. XIV).

Paradoxically for those with little true historical understanding of nineteenth century British and European culture, there was thought to be little dynamism or confidence in the Victorian age. Rather, it had

...a childlike craving for certitude, as if the natural end of every refuted dogma was to be replaced by another dogma. ...it [had] wilted in the sunlight and waved for support to something vaguely hopeful like the theology of Maurice, or loudly reassuring like the hero worship of Carlyle.²²⁴

The wilting age required loud reassurance, a new religion in which the damaged faith of Enlightenment earnestness might be revived. The high prophet of the new religion, whose influence was pervasive and atmospheric even when not being directly exerted²²⁵, was Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881). Hero worship was, according to Carlyle "the basis of all possible good, religious or social, for mankind."²²⁶ But hero worship is not an optional choice that can be rationally made for utilitarian reasons. Hero worship is ingrained into the very nature of humanity and human society:

Society is founded on Hero-worship. All dignities of rank, on which human association rests, are what we may call a *Hero*archy... some representation, not insupportably inaccurate, of a graduated Worship of Heroes—reverence and obedience done to men really great and wise.²²⁷

Carlyle's lecture series on heroes and hero worship is usually seen to be as the beginning of his thinking on the subject. As he said himself, at the end of the final lecture: "I promised to break ground on it; I know not whether I have even managed to do that. I have had to tear it up in the rudest manner in order to get into it at all."²²⁸ But this was not the first time he examined the relationship of the Hero to the masses. There is a clearer intellectual antecedent for the *Führerprinzip* in an essay Carlyle wrote nine years earlier, a review of Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. There Carlyle asserted that too many men live lives that are as a

²²⁴ George M. Young, ed., "Portrait of an Age," in *Early Victorian England*, 1830-1865, vol. 2 (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), 478.

²²⁵ See Young, "Portrait of an Age," 460.

²²⁶ Lecture 4, the Hero as Priest: Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History (1841)*, vol. 5, Collected Works Centenary Edition (London: Chapman & Hall, 1897), 123. ²²⁷ Lecture 1, the Hero as Divinity: Carlyle, *On Heroes*, 5:12. Emphasis in original.

²²⁸ Carlyle, *On Heroes*, 5:243. For more on the place of *On Heroes* in Carlyle's thinking and wider Victorian society, see Houghton, *Victorian Frame of Mind*, chap. 12; B. H. Lehman, *Carlyle's Theory of the Hero: its sources, development, history, and influence on Carlyle's work: a study of a nineteenth century idea* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1928); Michael K. Goldberg, "Introduction," in *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History (1841)*, ed. Michael K. Goldberg, Joel J. Brattin, and Mark Engel, by Thomas Carlyle, vol. 1, 8 vols., The Norman and Charlotte Strouse edition of the writings of Thomas Carlyle (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), xxi–lxxx, esp. §II, "The Lectures on Heroes."

"nightmare Dream", caught in a "hag-ridden vision of death-sleep".²²⁹ Fortunately, there are 'glad tidings', a Gospel proclaimed from Biography:

"Man is heaven-born; not the thrall of Circumstances, of Necessity, but the victorious subduer thereof: behold how he can become the 'Announcer of himself and of his Freedom'; and is ever what the Thinker has named him, 'the Messias of Nature.'"²³⁰

But, despite the capitalization, this is "Man" in the specific, singular, and particular, not "Mankind" in the general and plural. Carlyle makes that clear in the preceding paragraphs. The "Announcer of himself" has an audience, and a responsibility, for the vast majority of mankind are but

...dull millions, who, as a dull flock, roll hither and thither, whithersoever they are led; and seem all sightless and slavish, accomplishing, attempting little save what the animal instinct in its somewhat higher kind might teach, To keep themselves and their young ones alive...²³¹

However, these "dull millions" are fortunate, in that hidden among them, are those of superior nature, "whose eye is not destitute of free vision, nor their heart of free volition" (the importance of will again). The dull millions are no more than a "Machine... [which] is merely *fed*, or desires to be fed, and so *works*". ²³² Note the parallel with Coleridge's mechanistic deprecation of early Victorian society: "there must be organization, classification, machinery, &c., as if the capital of national morality could be increased by making a joint stock of it." ²³³ In contrast, for Carlyle there remains "the Person [who] can *will*, and so *do*." They live "not by Hearsay, but by clear Vision", and thus are able to *know* and to *believe*, undistracted by "the grand Vanity-fair of the World... the mere Shows of things", able to see "into the Things themselves". The Persons who can *will* and *do*, *know* and *believe*, are "properly our Men" (note capitalization); they are the "guides of the dull host", which is destined to follow the Great ones as by "an irrevocable decree". They are the only ones for whom we can say there is "a *Reality* in their existence". ²³⁴

There is an interesting echo here of the way in which Kracauer says German Totalitarianism

...endeavoured to supplant a reality based upon the acknowledgement of individual values. Since the Nazis aimed at totality, they could not be

²²⁹ Thomas Carlyle, "Boswell's Life of Johnson [1832]," in *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays*, vol. 3 (London: Chapman & Hall, 1899), 90,91.

²³⁰ Carlyle, "Boswell's Life of Johnson," 90. Carlyle's original spelling for 'Messiah'.

²³¹ Carlyle, "Boswell's Life of Johnson," 89.

²³² Carlyle, "Boswell's Life of Johnson," 89. Emphasis in original.

²³³ 24 July 1832, Coleridge, Table Talk, 173.

²³⁴ Carlyle, "Boswell's Life of Johnson," 89. Italicization in the original.

content with simply superseding this reality—the only reality deserving the name—by institutions of their own. If they had done so, the image of reality would not have been destroyed but merely banished; it might have continued to work in the sub-conscious mind, imperilling the principle of absolute leadership.²³⁵

There is a further parallel with the disdain shown in the Bush White House for the "reality based community". As an aide told a journalist from *The New York Times*, "We're an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality. And while you're studying that reality—judiciously, as you will—we'll act again, creating other new realities, which you can study too, and that's how things will sort out. We're history's actors… and you, all of you, will be left to just study what we do."²³⁶

Throughout the course of Carlyle's life and writing we see a deepening hostility to the world of economic necessity, social justice and mass democracy. This antipathy had its roots in contempt for the 'common man', the "dull millions", the unthinking sheep of the masses: "No writer, except Nietzsche, expressed such withering contempt of the common man and such fervent exaltation of the elite as did Carlyle."²³⁷

Carlyle's deprecation of the Many and adulation of the Great was recognized by the Nazis. The story of Goebbels reading Carlyle's biography of Frederick the Great to Hitler in the bunker in 1945, and deriving encouragement from it, is a famous one.²³⁸ Even before *Götterdämmerung*, in 1938 a pro-Nazi British journal proclaimed, as a praise worthy thing: "There is not one of the doctrines on which the Nazi religion has been built up which is not found... in

²³⁵ Kracauer, *From Caligari to Hitler*, 298. We have seen on page 231 above how Riefenstahl moulded the reality of *TdW*.

²³⁶ Ron Suskind, "Without a Doubt," *The New York Times* (New York, October 17, 2004), sec. Magazine. There has been an impetus, throughout my work on American political leadership, to interrogate the importance of *rhetoric* in the construction of the American Presidency, leadership in American society and the American Adam. There is a direct line of emotional, if not causal, connection between Cicero and John Wayne (see Wills, *Politics of Celebrity*, 23.). Unhappily, space prevents me from undertaking a more detailed examination of this task in the present work. I hope to do so as a future project.

²³⁷ J. Salwyn Schapiro, "Thomas Carlyle, Prophet of Fascism," *The Journal of Modern History* 17, no. 2 (June 1945): 102.

²³⁸ Hugh R. Trevor-Roper, *The Last Days of Hitler*, New and rev. ed. (London: Pan Books, 1962), 160–2; John D. Rosenberg, *Carlyle and the Burden of History* (Oxford; Cambridge MA: Clarendon Press; Harvard University Press, 1985), 117; Jonathan McCullom, "The Nazi Appropriation of Thomas Carlyle: or, how 'Frederick' wound up in the bunker," in *Thomas Carlyle Resartus: reappraising Carlyle's contribution to the philosophy of history, political theory, and cultural criticism*, ed. Paul E. Kerry and Marylu Hill (Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2010), 199–200.

Carlyle..."²³⁹ Jorge Luis Borges puts it most succinctly: Carlyle's "contemporaries did not understand it [his political theory], but it can be defined in a single and pervasive word: Nazism."²⁴⁰

Conclusion: the Führerprinzip is filmed

Carlyle cannot be held responsible, as some writers have tried to do,²⁴¹ for genocide and totalitarianism. Carlyle was a prophet, and therefore "had no blueprint of a future society. Being a moralist, he emphasized spiritual, not social, values."²⁴² A prophet's role is not to predict, or, even less, to direct the future implementation of society's structures, sanctions and values. The prophet influences, through an *ex post facto* patterning of his followers. As McCullom, who has little time for the proto-fascist trope, puts it: "If the public image of Hitler corresponded so closely to Carlyle's hero in the eyes of Nazis and anti-Fascists alike, it was because that image was manufactured to correspond to what Carlyle was understood to have written."²⁴³

But the fact remains that the model of human society advocated by Carlyle as the "the basis of all possible good" continues with us, despite the "fiery last days"²⁴⁴ of Hitler, the self-acknowledged exemplar of Carlyle's "Great man" and "Person". It continues with us in our political, social and economic discourse, and it continues by the means of depictions, conscious and unconscious, critical and uncritical, in our dominant art-form—cinema. For Riefenstahl and for Schaffner, in "Hitler" and "Patton", the model of a leader is an articulation of the *Führerprinzip*, an expression of *Führergewalt*. The leader is the great figure, who is able to see what must be done, and then does it; the one, and the only one, who is unafraid of the gulf that lies beneath us all; the man "born to bring the culminating movement to its close, to calm its separate waves and stand astride the abyss, ...menaced by huge dangers and recognized by few."²⁴⁵

We shall see, in the following chapters, how this image of the great man standing over the abyss, remains at the heart of our understanding of

²³⁹ Charles Sarolea, "Was Carlyle the First Nazi?," Anglo-German Review II, no. 2 (January 1938):

^{51.} The tenor of the article is 'yes he was, and this was to his credit.'

²⁴⁰ "Los contemporáneos no la entendieron, pero cabe en una sola y muy divulgada palabra: nazismo." Jorge Luis Borges, "Prólogo," in *De los héroes, Hombres representativos*, by Thomas Carlyle and Ralph Waldo Emerson, trans. Jorge Luis Borges (Mexico: Grolier International, 1979), x. Cited by McCullom, "Nazi Appropriation of Carlyle," 190.

²⁴¹ See, for example, Manuel Sarkisyanz, *Hitler's English Inspirers* (Belfast: Athol Books, 2003).

²⁴² Schapiro, "Thomas Carlyle, Prophet of Fascism," 100.

²⁴³ Alan Steinweis, "Hitler and Carlyle's 'historical greatness'," *History Today* 45, no. 6 (June 1995): 35.

²⁴⁴ Rosenberg, Carlyle and the Burden of History, 117.

²⁴⁵ Burckhardt, Reflections, 189.

leadership, even within a cinema which supposedly repudiates and then reaffirms leadership as a civic virtue.

Chapter 7

Splitters! Leadership repudiated

Americans are prisoners of their own mythology, having watched too many of their own movies. If they ever want to send Americans to the gas chambers, they won't tell us we're going to take showers, they'll herd us into cinder-block movie houses.

Gustav Hasford, 'The Phantom Blooper' (1990)1

Consider yourselves already dead

What is a war film without combat? Seemingly, a contradiction in terms, yet in the aftermath of World War Two, with the escalation of the post-war confrontation with the Soviet Union, and before the outbreak of the Korean war, a "new wave" of films set in and around the events of the Second World War were made. The main point of this type of war film was not scenes of violence, destruction and death, but rather "psychological studies of men under stress".² A prominent example of these films was *Sands of Iwo Jima*³, a John Wayne vehicle, which later became identified as a gung-ho recruiting film⁴, but at the time was released to a favourable reception. Garry Wills has identified *Iwo Jima*, *Battleground*⁵, *Home of the Brave*⁶, and *Task Force*⁷ as examples of the

¹ The Phantom Blooper (New York: Bantam Books, 1990), 221.

² Wills, Politics of Celebrity, 154.

³ Allan Dwan, Sands of Iwo Jima, B&W 35 mm, U.S.A. (Republic Pictures, 1949).

⁴ See the reference on page 263, at n. 110.

⁵ In which the siege of Bastogne is recreated in Culver City: William A. Wellman, *Battleground*, B&W 35 mm, U.S.A. (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1949).

⁶ In which James Edwards (who played Patton's valet and confident Sgt Meeks in *Patton*, and had a role in Stanley Kubrick's *The Killing*), plays a black soldier sent on a dangerous mission with a squad of white soldiers. Note that the U.S. Army was not integrated during the Second World War. Mark Robson, *Home of the Brave*, B&W 35 mm, U.S.A. (United Artists, 1949); Schaffner, *Patton*; Stanley Kubrick, *The Killing*, B&W 35 mm, U.S.A. (United Artists, 1956).

⁷ In which Gary Cooper personifies the development of U.S. naval aviation: Delmer Daves, *Task Force*, B&W / Technicolor 35 mm, U.S.A. (Warner Bros. Pictures, 1949).

way in which, by 1949, cinema was less interested in replaying the enmities of the Second World War: "[t]he drama lies in the neuroses of individuals, the tensions between 'men on the same side', the difficulty of maintaining the military as a social structure."

The best of the new wave was Henry King's *Twelve O'Clock High.*⁹ Acclaimed on its first release, it was, according to Bosley Crowther, incomparable with other recent films for its "rugged realism and punch".¹⁰ It was "a top-flight drama" with "conspicuous dramatic integrity, genuine emotional appeal... [and was] beautifully played", principally by its star, Gregory Peck, who did "an extraordinarily able job in revealing the hardness and the softness of a general exposed to peril."¹¹ Later critics concurred: it is "a truly outstanding and timeless work", made with "intelligence, perception and obvious affection for the human spirit..."¹²

Peck plays Brigadier General Frank Savage of the U.S.A.A.F., stationed in England in 1942, just as the Eighth Air Force began their daylight bombing raids over Germany but before they achieved a sufficient degree of expertise and battle-hardness. Savage is posted to the 918th Bomb Group, a failing "hardluck" Group, as an "iron-tail" commander. Through a combination of implacable discipline and admonishment he intends to accomplish the Group's mission. The psychological cost, for both crews and general, was, from the very first, intended to be central to the story. Henry King said the film explored "the responsibilities of officers to their men rather than merely a phase of aerial warfare". ¹⁴ As Suid puts it:

military officers must think of their men as numbers and impersonal units rather than as human beings, as sons, brothers, husbands, or fathers. To think of them as individuals would produce too great a psychological burden on leadership. So in war, leaders must reduce their fighting men to symbols they move on maps and commit to lists—whether of numbers of battle-ready soldiers or of casualties.¹⁵

⁸ Wills, *Politics of Celebrity*, 154. For more on the transition between war films in war-time and war films post-war, see Suid, *Guts and Glory*, chap. 6 & 7, "World War II: Pseudo-Reality" & "First Reflections."

⁹ King, Twelve O'Clock High.

¹⁰ Bosley Crowther, "The Screen in Review; 'Twelve O'Clock High,' Realistic Saga of the Eighth Air Force, Arrives at Roxy Theatre," *The New York Times*, January 28, 1950, http://movies.nytimes.com/movie/review.

¹¹ Crowther, "Review: Twelve O'Clock High."

¹² John Griggs, *The Films of Gregory Peck* (London: Columbus Books, 1988), 91.

¹³ Griggs, The Films of Gregory Peck, 92.

¹⁴ Quoted by Griggs, The Films of Gregory Peck, 92.

¹⁵ Suid, Guts and Glory, 109.

The first morning of his command Savage assembles the Group in the briefing hall. He begins by addressing practicalities: the "hard luck" reputation might come from the Group's flying skills, therefore they will practise. However, the greater cause is probably the self-pity exhibited by the men in the Group. There is only one solution for that, says Savage, and it is nothing to do with morale-boosting or political indoctrination:

Now I don't have a lot of patience with this 'What are we fighting for?' stuff. We're in a war, a shooting war. We've got to fight. And some of us have got to die. I'm not trying to tell you not to be afraid. Fear is normal. But stop worrying about it. And about yourselves. Stop making plans, forget about going home. Consider yourselves already dead.¹⁶

General Savage (not an accidental name) is portrayed, in the eyes of *Twelve O'Clock High* itself, as an admirable example of Suid's removed, strategic, form of leadership¹⁷, but eventually he is unable to practise what he preaches. Unable to maintain sufficient distance from his men, after a series of difficult missions he breaks down into a catatonic stupor. We are not told, in the film, what happens to Savage after his breakdown.¹⁸ He disappears from the narrative, and, in cinema, to disappear from the narrative is to cease to exist.

Twelve O'Clock High was once, but is no longer, used by the air force to teach leadership¹⁹, though it remains in use in "leadership training seminars" to dramatize and illustrate the challenges faced in "decision making for the commander in war, business, or education."²⁰ It was not as innovative as contemporary, or some later, reviewers think. As Clive Denton notes, similar themes were seen in *The Dawn Patrol*²¹ and *Command Decision*²²: "the solitude of

¹⁶ King, *Twelve O'Clock High*; Ch. 7, "Morale Problem", on the 2002 Twentieth Century Fox DVD release F1-SGB 01075DVD.

¹⁷ Savage receives "through camera placement and lighting and pictorial context, King's commendation, compassion and respect." Clive Denton, "Henry King," in *The Hollywood Professionals*, vol. 2 (London: Tantivy Press, 1974), 41–2.

¹⁸ The film's script was adapted from a novel of the same name by Beirne Lay Jr. and Sy Bartlett, who drew on their own wartime service experience. Most of the characters in novel and film were drawn directly from life. The "918th" was, in reality, the "306th", and "Savage" was based on the 306th commander, Col. Frank A. Armstrong, Jr. Armstrong did not have a mental breakdown and was often puzzled, after the war, to be asked about his nervous collapse in England. Beirne Lay and Sy Bartlett, *Twelve O'clock High!* (New York: Harper, 1948). For the connections between reality and the fictional depictions in novel and film, see John T. Correll, "The Real Twelve O'Clock High," *Airforce Magazine*, January 2011.

¹⁹ Correll, "The Real Twelve O'Clock High," 73.

²⁰ Suid, Guts and Glory, 109.

²¹ Two versions, Howard Hawks, *The Dawn Patrol*, B&W 35 mm, U.S.A. (First National Pictures, 1930); Edmund Goulding, *The Dawn Patrol*, B&W 35 mm, U.S.A. (Warner Bros. Pictures, 1938).

²² Sam Wood, Command Decision, B&W 35 mm, U.S.A., 1948.

authority and the pain but necessity of leadership decisions."23 The furthest that Twelve O'Clock High is willing to go are the truisms that "war is a bloody shame and leaders are dedicated but fallible".24

However, contained within its effective and affective portrayal of a variety of characters and responses to war (Dean Jagger's wryly compassionate outsider²⁵, Paul Stewart's thoughtful doctor, Peck's understanding martinet), are the seeds of what I call a 'cinema of suspicion', a suspicion and repudiation of leaders and leadership. Savage is portrayed from a distance: he is physically and emotionally separated from the men he leads. Major Cobb refuses to accept a drink from him, and (so?) Savage closes the mess-bar; when Stovall brews a cup of coffee for him, Savage is able neither to ask Stovall for help directly in delaying transfer requests, nor to thank him for the proposed, administrative, solution: "you red-tape adjutants are all alike". His concern is to save his Group by destroying, if necessary, his men, just as, in a later American war, it became necessary to destroy a town in order to save it.26

Paradoxically, and yet necessarily, cinema continued to nurture these seeds of repudiation within the genre of war films. What could possibly be a more fruitful growing medium than the moral, political and violent situation, war, which requires destruction for the achievement of salvation?²⁷ As Denton puts it, "Films feed on films and wars, unhappily, seem to feed on wars." 28 We can go further: films feed on wars and wars feed on films. The consummation of this symbiosis, a full-blown cinema of suspicion, can be seen in the works of Stanley Kubrick.

²³ Denton, "Henry King," 41.

²⁴ Denton, "Henry King," 41.

²⁵ For which he won the Academy Award as Best Supporting Actor in 1950: Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, "The 22nd Academy Awards Winners (1950)," Oscars Legacy, 2011, <www.oscars.org/awards/academyawards/legacy/ceremony/22nd-winners.html>.

²⁶ A description of military operations against Bến Tre in the Mekong delta, February 1968: Peter Arnett, Live from the Battlefield: from Vietnam to Baghdad, 35 years in the world's war zones (London: Bloomsbury, 1994), 255; first reported in Peter Arnett, "Major Describes Move," The New York Times, February 8, 1968.

²⁷ In another context, it may be fruitful to consider the way in which society's acceptance and use of violence and destruction, expressed by and constructed through cinema, may have influenced the development of Liberation Theology, and other strands of Christian praxis. See, for example, José Míguez Bonino, Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), esp ch. 6, "Love, Reconciliation, and Class Struggle"; and the same author's earlier "Violence: A Theological Reflection," The Ecumenical Review 25, no. 4 (October 1973): 468-474. For the hermeneutical importance of "conflict" in understanding Míguez Bonino see Paul John Davies, "Faith Seeking Effectiveness: The Missionary Theology of José Míguez Bonino" (Doctoral Thesis, Utrecht: University of Utrecht, 2006), . I am grateful to Dr Chris Deacy for pointing out the relevance of Míguez Bonino's work to me.

²⁸ Denton, "Henry King," 41.

Full Metal Legions

Shortly after the cinematic release of *Paths of Glory*²⁹, Stanley Kubrick gave an interview to the critic Colin Young as part of an article on the ostensible rise of the independent film-maker. At that point in his career, Kubrick was developing *Lolita* as a screenplay, had just been removed from the Marlon Brando project One Eyed Jacks, but had yet to be invited to direct Spartacus: his next film was going to be another war movie, The German Lieutenant, based on a novel by Richard Adams.³⁰ Two war-films in a row intrigued Young. He asked Kubrick why he wanted to make another genre film: "was there nothing about the contemporary scene which interested him?" Young described Kubrick's replay as "crucial".31 For Kubrick the war film "provides an almost unique opportunity to contrast an individual of our contemporary society with a solid framework of accepted value". This framework can be revealed to the audience—they become "fully aware" of it—and the framework then acts as "a counterpoint to a human, individual, emotional situation". Furthermore, the experience of individuals within a war is a dramatic situation: war "acts as a kind of hothouse for forced, quick breeding of attitudes and feelings". Attitudes can reasonably, and convincingly, be depicted, not in moral black and white, but as a form of "spectacle": they "crystallize and come out into the open". The spectacle derives from conflict, which, in war, is "natural", and which, not in war (or "a less critical situation"), would have to be introduced "almost as a contrivance", and thus appear "forced", or, worse, "false". War allows contrasts, and "within these contrasts you can begin to apply some of the possibilities of film..."32

Despite the way in which Kubrick is sometimes described as genre-promiscuous (making psychological, morality, science fiction, dystopian, and costume dramas)³³, he did favour the war film³⁴ for its "contrasts" and for the

²⁹ Stanley Kubrick, Paths of Glory, B&W 35 mm, U.S.A. (United Artists, 1957).

³⁰ The film was never made, although versions of the script, with unstated provenances, are available on the internet: for example, Stanley Kubrick and Richard Adams, "The German Lieutenant," Screenplays, *Anonymous*, [n.d.],

<www.fortunecity.com/tattooine/clarke/38/scripts/TheGermanLieutenant.txt>.

³¹ Young, "War of Independence," 10.

³² All quotations in this paragraph are from Young, "War of Independence," 10.

³³ Mario Falsetto, *Stanley Kubrick: a narrative and stylistic analysis*, 2nd ed. (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2001), 8; Patrick Murray and Jeanne Schuler, "Rebel without a Cause: Stanley Kubrick and the banality of the good," in *The Philosophy of Stanley Kubrick*, ed. Jerold J. Abrams (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2007), 136. "Kubrick virtually reinvented each genre in which he worked, whether it was horror or science fiction..." "Remembering Stanley Kubrick" from Gene D. Phillips and Rodney Hill, *The Encyclopedia of Stanley Kubrick*, Library of great filmmakers (New York, N.Y.: Facts on File, 2002), xxiv.

latitude it gave him to examine one of his favourite themes. We can see an exploration of that theme in Kubrick's first major studio film, *Spartacus*.

Large Spartacus vs Small Spartacus

The place of *Spartacus* in the oeuvre of Stanley Kubrick is an embarrassment for some critics.³⁵ The famous perfectionist and auteur, who was so dissatisfied with the corporate Hollywood system of film production that he left the U.S. for the delights of independent film-making in Hertfordshire³⁶, once made a big-budget, mainstream, robes-and-sandals epic. Some critics deal with *Spartacus* by bracketing it out of consideration of Kubrick's work³⁷: *Spartacus* is an outlying datum if one wishes to study Kubrick as an auteur, or if one thinks that cinema is only valid as an auteur's artform.³⁸

To read or view Kubrick's films only through the prism of auteur theory requires us to identify the "world-view or vision", the "trace or 'personal

³⁴ Kubrick completed 16 films, from 1951's documentary short *The Day of the Fight* to 1999's *Eyes Wide Shut* (I exclude from Kubrick's works *A.I.*, completed by Steven Spielberg). At least five may be, broadly, defined as war films: *Fear and Desire*, B&W 16mm, U.S.A. (Kubrick / Joseph Burstyn, 1953); *Paths of Glory; Spartacus; Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*, B&W 35 mm, U.S.A. / U.K. (Columbia Pictures Corporation, 1964); *Full Metal Jacket*. Furthermore, there were a number of unmade films which are part of this genre: for example, *The German Lieutenant*, and *Napoleon*.

³⁵ And, seemingly, for Kubrick himself: "The only film he disclaims is *Spartacus*. He says he worked on it as just a hired hand." Joseph Gelmis, "Stanley Kubrick," in *The Film Director as Superstar* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1970), 294.

³⁶ This is a caricature, and therefore inaccurate, but it is a frequent trope in journalism about Kubrick. See, for example: "Resolving not to be compromised again by the restrictions of studio filmmaking, Kubrick relocated to MGM British Studios, at Borehamwood, England, where he directed his remaining work with near-complete autonomy." Aaron E. N. Taylor, "Stanley Kubrick," ed. Barry Keith Grant, *Schirmer Encyclopedia of Film: 2 (Criticism-Ideology)* (Detroit; London: Schirmer Reference, 2007).

³⁷ See, for example, James Naremore, *On Kubrick* (London: British Film Institute, 2007), 16–18. For Thomas Allen Nelson *Spartacus* "sidetracked" Kubrick from his "artistic development". *Kubrick: inside a film artist's maze*, Rev. ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 31. ³⁸ "Auteurism" has a definitional history as disputed and complicated as any other contested concept. However, for a working definition Helen Stoddart's is more than adequate: "A true auteur...was distinguished by the presence in each film, above and beyond generic variations, of a distinctive personality, expressed as a world-view or vision, which would thereby constitute a trace or 'personal stamp' of the director's presence in the film and therefore within their *oeuvre*." Helen Stoddart, "Auteurism and Film Authorship," in *Approaches to Popular Film*, ed. Joanne Hollows and Mark Jancovich (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 40. For a concise history of "auteur theory" see Linda Ruth Williams, "Auteurism and Auteurs," in *Contemporary American Cinema*, ed. Linda Ruth Williams and Michael Hammond (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2006), 139–144; and for a discussion on the problems of the theory see Jim Hillier, "Auteur Theory and Authorship," ed. Barry Keith Grant, *Schirmer Encyclopedia of Film: (Academy Awards–Crime films)* (Detroit; London: Schirmer Reference, 2007), 141–151.

stamp" of the director. Many, many, critics have done so. Thus Kubrick's films set out "to study the relationship between the individual man and the cultural forms through which that individual must achieve the expression of himself" (ontological); or, in the face of the "very meaningless of life" they set out to explore how "man may create his own meaning" and "accept the challenges of life within the boundaries of death" (existential); or humanity's capacity and incapacity to act morally, "one of his major themes, a riff he played in all his films. Good and evil. Love and hate. Sex and violence. Desire and fear. Fidelity and betrayal" (ethical); or, to push the ethical duality towards its origins, "Kubrick's work revolves around particular dualities of meaning. ...subjective/objective, ...rational/irrational, ...order/chaos, ...what we know and what remains hidden" (psychological).

Fortunately, for my purposes we are not required to limit ourselves to the work done by the auteur theory. We are not required to conduct a source- or intention-critical analysis of Kubrick's work: what the director meant, or did not mean, in his work? The thesis that cinema functions as the medium of myth (in general) and a medium for the representation and reinforcement of My-L (in particular) is independent of auteur considerations. Indeed, the function of myth is almost, by definition, independent of the conscious creativity and directivity that the auteur theory requires. The world-view we detect is the unconscious world-view. And Kubrick himself has given us permission to approach his work in this way:

I have always enjoyed dealing with a slightly surrealistic situation and presenting it in a realistic manner. I've always liked fairy tales and myths, magical stories. I think they are somehow closer to the sense of reality one feels today than the equally stylized 'realistic' story in which a great deal of selectivity and omission has to occur in order to preserve its 'realist' style.⁴³

In other words, Kubrick was a mythic filmmaker, and his mythic films are susceptible to a mythic interpretation.

³⁹ Hans Feldmann, "Kubrick and His Discontents," Film Quarterly 30, no. 1 (Auutmn 1976): 15.

⁴⁰ Eric Norden, "Interview with Stanley Kubrick," *Playboy*, September 1968; reprinted in Eric Norden, "Interview with Stanley Kubrick," in *Stanley Kubrick: Interviews*, ed. Gene D. Phillips (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2001), 47–74, here quoted on p. 73.

⁴¹ Paul Duncan, *Stanley Kubrick: visual poet, 1928-1999 (aka The Complete Films)* (Köln; London: Taschen, 2003), 9.

⁴² Falsetto, *Kubrick: Narrative*, xxii. For a good general introduction to the relationship between Kubrick's epistemology and aesthetic see Nelson, *Artist's Maze*, chap. 1.

⁴³ Penelope Houston, "Kubrick Country," *Saturday Review*, December 25, 1971; reprinted as Penelope Houston, "Kubrick Country," in *Stanley Kubrick: Interviews*, ed. Gene D. Phillips (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2001), 108–115, quotation from p. 114.

When critics do engage with *Spartacus* much is made of the alleged allegorical qualities of the script and direction, that is, allegorical of the political situation in late 1950s America.⁴⁴ The scriptwriter, Dalton Trumbo, was one of the ten Hollywood workers black-listed as a result of the House (of Representatives) Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) investigations into the Communist infiltration of American society: he hadn't written a film script, under his own name, for ten years.⁴⁵ Thus, it does not take a great hermeneutic leap to read the contemporary overtones in the threat made by the victorious, but oppressive, Marcus Licinius Crassus (Laurence Olivier) to the populist Senator Gracchus (Charles Laughton):

The enemies of the state are known. Arrests are in progress. The prisons begin to fill. In every city and province, lists of the disloyal have been compiled. Tomorrow they will learn the cost of their terrible folly...their treason.

Alternatively, Kirk Douglas, star and executive producer, was an enthusiastic Zionist: "Looking at [Roman] ruins... I wince. I see thousands and thousands of slaves carrying rocks, beaten, starved, crushed, dying. I identify with them. As it says in the Torah: 'Slaves were we unto Egypt.' I come from a race of slaves. That would have been *my* family, *me*.".⁴⁶ In making the film he wished to reflect the heroism of the nascent state of Israel: "Douglas...saw *Spartacus* as an opportunity to make a large-scale Zionist statement... and reinterpreted the slave-rebel's story as a Roman variation on the let-my-peoplego theme."⁴⁷ In this way Spartacus becomes a Moses-figure, slavery in Italy stands for slavery in Egypt and Crassus for Pharaoh, the (unspecified) Promised Land is reachable, not across the Red, but the Ionian Sea, and not by foot through the miraculous intervention of God, but by ship with the commercial assistance of pirates. What was paralleled in the book of *the* Exodus could also be seen in the book *Exodus*⁴⁸, filmed at the same time and also with a script by the (non-Jewish) Trumbo.⁴⁹

Furthermore, if the emancipation of the Israelites could be referenced or inferred in *Spartacus* so could the slavery of the United States. In gladiatorial slavery Spartacus meets Draba (Woody Strode), an African slave who refuses to

⁴⁴ Paul Duncan, *The Pocket Essential Kubrick*, Rev. ed. (Harpenden: Pocket Essentials, 2002), 41.

⁴⁵ See Frederick Ahl, "'Spartacus', 'Exodus', and Dalton Trumbo: managing ideologies of war," in *Spartacus: Film and History*, ed. Martin M. Winkler (Malden, Mass.; Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 65–86.

⁴⁶ Kirk Douglas, *The Ragman's Son: an autobiography* (London: Simon & Schuster, 1988), 304. Emphasis in original.

⁴⁷ Derek Elley, The Epic Film: Myth and History (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), 110.

⁴⁸ Leon Uris, Exodus, 1st ed. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1958).

⁴⁹ Otto Preminger, *Exodus*, Technicolor / Super Panavision 70, U.S.A. (Universal Pictures, 1960). For the parallels between *Spartacus* and *Exodus* see Ahl, "Managing Ideologies of War," 78–9.

tell him his name, for gladiators "don't make friends. If we're ever matched in the arena together, I'll have to kill you." And yet, when Draba and Spartacus are matched in the arena, for the pleasure of the villainous Marcus Crassus (Laurence Olivier), Draba ultimately refuses to kill Spartacus, and instead attempts to kill the Roman. In this we see, supposedly, "an individual and group demand for freedom." Spartacus was released at the beginning of the civil rights movement, and Girgus draws parallels between the gladiator ("an amazing black figure" and Martin Luther King, both embodying "the readiness of African Americans to lead their fight for equality." Draba, in the person of Strode, "assumes a special status in the film, exercising his right to speak for freedom" the back of the black gladiator who fights Spartacus." Ultimately Strode's performance "renegotiates the relationship of history and fiction."

Thus *Spartacus* can variously be an allegory for McCarthyite witch-hunts in the United States, Zionism, or African-American civil rights. It is simpler to say that its major theme is more universal: inspired by the story of the rebel slave leader told in Howard Fast's self-published book⁵⁶, but indifferent to the specific political concerns of the author, Douglas "wanted to make an epic film that articulated the eternal human fight for freedom against oppression." The publicity material for the film certainly emphasised this universal aspiration: "Man's Eternal Struggle For Freedom Theme Of New Film". Douglas in a letter to an opponent of Trumbo said emphatically of the completed film, "it is a courageous and positive statement about mankind's most cherished goal—freedom." The publicity material positive statement about mankind's most cherished goal—freedom."

⁵⁰ Sam B. Girgus, *America on Film: modernism, documentary, and a changing America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 94.

⁵¹ Girgus, America on Film, 94.

⁵² Girgus, America on Film, 94.

⁵³ Girgus, America on Film, 94.

⁵⁴ Girgus, America on Film, 94–5.

⁵⁵ Girgus, *America on Film*, 95. This is quite a hermeneutical weight for a five minute sequence, and one which remains to other, reliable, critics, puzzlingly opaque in its motivations: see, for example, Phillips and Hill, *Kubrick Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Strode, Woody (Woodrow)", 363.

⁵⁶ The book was self-published in 1951 because Fast had been black-listed and imprisoned following his appearance before HUAC in 1950. *Spartacus* (the novel) was conceived while the author was in prison. See Howard Fast, "'Spartacus' and the Blacklist," in *Spartacus*, New ed. (Armonk, N.Y.: North Castle Books, 1996), vii–viii.

⁵⁷ Monica Silveira Cyrino, *Big Screen Rome* (Malden, Mass.; Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 103. See Douglas, *The Ragman's Son: an autobiography*, 304.

⁵⁸ See the illustration reproduced in Jeffrey P. Smith, "'A Good Business Proposition': Dalton Trumbo, 'Spartacus', and the End of the Blacklist," *The Velvet Light Trap*, no. 23 (Spring 1989): 93. ⁵⁹ Letter from Kirk Douglas to J. David Johnson, 6 May 1960: cited in Smith, "Good Business," 92.

In short, to some *Spartacus* "is a perfect example of epic transformation of material to suit contemporary taste, and Douglas should take full credit." ⁶⁰ To others it suffers from the "trite, simplistic, and sentimental morality of the script" ⁶¹, which came with "a church-of-your-choice inspirational message". ⁶²

In reality these are subsidiary themes in *Spartacus* as a completed artefact. The film reflects, despite the disavowal of the director and its dismissal by the critics, a thematic continuity with the rest of Kubrick's work. Stanley Kubrick, as a director, was interested in exploring, and repudiating, the idea of leadership. What else can we say about a man whose great, uncompleted, film was a life of Napoleon? Such a project was, in 1969, Kubrick's "next" film: Napoleon's life was, for Kubrick, "a fantastic subject for a film biography".63 As a character and historical protagonist Bonaparte fascinated Kubrick, as his life was (rightly) "described as an epic poem of action." ⁶⁴ He was "one of those rare men who move history and mold the destiny of their own times and of generations to come—in a very concrete sense, our own world is the result of Napoleon..."65 Any film, any good film (and there has never been "a good or accurate movie about him"), would be able to explore "oddly contemporary" issues: "the responsibilities and abuses of power, the dynamics of social revolution, the relationship of the individual to the state, war, militarism, etc."66 To make a film about Napoleon is to make a film "about the basic questions of our own times".67

Kubrick was unable, despite years of expensive and exhaustive research, to secure funding for the film.⁶⁸ Following his death Alison Castle was invited by his estate to collate and curate the director's Napoleon Archives. In a sumptuous series of volumes, with accompanying scholarly essays, we learn that "the story of Napoleon moved Kubrick to look at the glory and frailty of mankind through the character of a charismatic leader with unparalleled gifts, a man who was worshipped and who genuinely loved himself, but who, constrained by his arrogance, brought about his own downfall."⁶⁹

⁶⁰ Elley, Epic Film, 110.

⁶¹ Nelson, Artist's Maze, 58.

⁶² Burgess Jackson, "The 'Anti-Militarism' of Stanley Kubrick," *Film Quarterly* 18, no. 1 (Autumn 1964): 9.

⁶³ Gelmis, "Kubrick (Superstar)," 297.

⁶⁴ Gelmis, "Kubrick (Superstar)," 297.

⁶⁵ Gelmis, "Kubrick (Superstar)," 297.

⁶⁶ Gelmis, "Kubrick (Superstar)," 297.

⁶⁷ Gelmis, "Kubrick (Superstar)," 297.

⁶⁸ Which fact, in itself, gives lie to the studio-independent auteur myth which has coalesced around Kubrick.

⁶⁹ Jan Harlan, "Stanley Kubrick's 'Napoleon'," in *Stanley Kubrick's "Napoleon": the greatest movie never made*, ed. Alison Castle (Köln; London: Taschen GmbH, 2011), 25 / 15.

Thus, to return to Spartacus, we can see that the main theme of the film, its ostensible rhetoric, is a depiction, and repudiation, of a particular ideology of leadership. It was the deliberate intention of the scriptwriter (Trumbo) and starcum-producer (Douglas) to depict the protagonist and hero as an unequivocal hero and leader, in distinction to the opportunist and totalitarian corruption of the Roman state with its economic and moral slavery. This intention was stated explicitly in an 80-page memorandum written by Trumbo after he had repeatedly viewed a rough cut of the film.⁷⁰ In it Trumbo made a distinction between two different interpretations and depictions of Spartacus which he named "Large" and "Small" Spartacus. If the film ended up with a depiction of "Large Spartacus" then the audience would see: a man who led a major revolt which (inadvertently) led to the destruction of republican Rome and the creation of a totalitarian Empire; whose generalship was so successful that it required three Roman armies to suppress him; who, despite his slave background developed a political and intellectual capacity equal to that of the greatest patrician of his day, and possibly equivalent to that of the greatest in history; and whose commitment to his followers extended beyond narrow selfinterest to an absolute commitment to noble objectives. With a "Large Spartacus" we would see how:

...in the moment of his supreme test, ...[Spartacus] never doubts the rightness of his cause, or the need for all of them to have engaged in it, even unto death.⁷¹

A "Small Spartacus" would show us, instead: a man who repeatedly doubts his strategy and his tactics; who suffers in comparison with the rhetorical and political leadership of Crassus; who is obsessed with the physical safety of himself, his wife and his unborn child; who acts for the sake of fame and glory. A "Small Spartacus" would "probably [have] had leadership thrust on him, that he exercised it reluctantly, that he never be seen discussing destinations or planning strategy." He would not, like his rival "feel and think", but "feel" only: he would not be the "equal of Crassus". 72

⁷⁰ Part of the memo is printed in Dalton Trumbo, "Report on Spartacus," *Cineaste* 18, no. 3 (June 1991): 30–33. It is referred to in Natalie Zemon Davis, "Trumbo and Kubrick Argue History," *Raritan* 22, no. 1 (Summer 2002): 173–190; and extensively discussed in Duncan L. Cooper, "Who Killed the Legend of Spartacus? production, censorship, and reconstruction of Stanley Kubrick's epic film," in *Spartacus: Film and History*, ed. Martin M. Winkler (Malden, Mass; Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 14–55; and the same author's "Dalton Trumbo vs. Stanley Kubrick: the historical meaning of 'Spartacus'," in *Spartacus: Film and History*, ed. Martin M. Winkler (Malden, Mass; Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 56–64.

⁷¹ Trumbo, "Report on Spartacus." See also Davis, "Trumbo and Kubrick Argue History," 181; and Cooper, "Who killed the legend?," 26.

⁷² Trumbo, "Report on Spartacus."

Trumbo's preference, and the preference of the star, was for the former, the Large Spartacus. Trumbo sought to secure a rhetorical depiction of an individual as symbol and inspiration:

...That the essence of manhood is to rise above the petty ambitions of one's own self, and identify oneself with something larger, with mankind as a whole, with the good of mankind. That the spirit and intellect of Spartacus in his moment of defeat and moral agony rose so far above himself that it symbolized the spirit and intellect of the whole murdered slave community.⁷³

Trumbo's aspirations and rhetoric, although surviving in part in the completed film, are doubly subverted, firstly, by the inadequacies of the script and Kirk Douglas's acting ability. We hear too often exactly how heroic Spartacus is, exactly how much more of a man he is than his opponents (see, for example, Varinia's last conversation with Crassus): any script which is "too insistent about the honesty and intuitive vision of the film's proletarian hero"⁷⁴ will inevitably elicit the opposite opinion from a half-way conscious audience. When Douglas is required to act 'head-to-head' with Olivier, the British actor's understatement and variation of tone, pace and expression, is more than a match for Douglas's simple glowering.

Secondly, and paradoxically for those who dismiss *Spartacus* as the work of an auteur, the heroic status of Spartacus as a moral being and dramatic protagonist is undermined by Kubrick's directorial decisions. We can examine two examples.

The Political Exhortations on the Mount

In the first, it has become apparent that the Roman state, personified by Crassus, will not allow the slave army to flee the Italian mainland. Crassus has manoeuvred them into fighting one last battle (although, interestingly, it is the first and only battle which Kubrick chose to depict). Just as Spartacus realises this, Crassus in Rome assumes, unhistorically, full dictatorial powers ("election as first consul, command of all the legions of Italy, and the abolition of senatorial authority over the courts."). This is "order".

Kubrick shows the two situations, the slave resolution to face Crassus' legions and the totalitarian *Machtergreifung* through a montage sequence: Spartacus and Crassus, in moral and hierarchical equivalences, addressing their 'troops', both from elevated positions: Spartacus on a hill above Brundusium⁷⁵, Crassus on the podium before the Roman Senate. For Spartacus his hearers are

⁷³ Trumbo, "Report on Spartacus."

⁷⁴ Nelson, Artist's Maze, 58.

⁷⁵ The film's screenplay reproduced an American nineteenth century misspelling for Roman *Brundisium*, modern day Brindisi.

the mixed audience of the slave army: men, women, children, the elderly and the young, all dressed in homely robes of brown and greys. Crassus addresses the regular soldiers of the Roman legions, ranked in military discipline, and equipped with the impressive *lorica segmentata* and *heroic cuirass*.

Spartacus tells his people that they have no choice "but to march against Rome herself and end this war the only way it could have ended: by freeing every slave in Italy." At this point Kubrick changes the point of view: Spartacus is given his first close-up, from a side angle: it is, says Winkler, as if "he were standing between *two* crowds: his own people and those in the theater" a division between intra- and extradiegetic audiences. More significantly, Spartacus is filmed from the 'Renaissance' angle. We (and here the theatre audience and the slave army audience are identified) view him from a slightly inferior position. The evening sky (in an obviously studio iteration) glows behind him: "In this way Spartacus is elevated above all others and becomes almost godlike."

The point of view is shared with that of Crassus. We see him from slightly below the podium level of the Senate House, although behind Crassus we see the architectural glory of republican Rome. Crassus is the personification of military and economic might.

The distinctions between the two, Crassus and Spartacus, seem clear, in the way in which the interlocutors are depicted and the way they speak. Thus: "Crassus addresses a faceless mass which submits willingly to him as savior". Nhereas Spartacus' army, "[y]oung and old, men and women are shown literally looking up to him", they do so as "to someone who can federate disparate victims ready to take their own destiny in hand, if only to lose at this particular moment of history." In other words, the surrender of autonomy has been made willingly and knowingly, and we know this because Kubrick shows us their faces. And yet, as we have seen in the previous chapter, close-ups of individuals in a crowds, contrasted with images of the Führer or *imperator*, are not necessarily anti-totalitarian. In fact, rhythmic editing between *imperator* and crowd, even if the crowd is a slave army, may be the means of expressing and reinforcing the power of the Führer. Humphries undermines his own thesis, in a footnote to the same passage, when he reminds us that the crowd cry "Heil

⁷⁶ Martin M. Winkler, "The Holy Cause of Freedom: American ideals in 'Spartacus'," in *Spartacus: Film and History*, ed. Martin M. Winkler (Malden, Mass; Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 180.

⁷⁷ Winkler, "Holy Cause of Freedom," 180.

⁷⁸ Reynold Humphries, "'Spartacus': The Specter of Politics and the Politics of Spectacle," in *Stanley Kubrick: essays on his films and legacy*, ed. Gary D. Rhodes (Jefferson, N.C: McFarland & Co, 2008), 91.

⁷⁹ Humphries, "Specter of Politics," 91.

[sic] Crassus!" ("which is obviously intended to remind us of 'Sieg Heil!'"⁸⁰): we see close-ups of the Senators, including Gracchus and Caesar as Crassus is acclaimed. Furthermore, Winkler notes the way in which the sequence concludes. Crassus moves for the first time, his head turning to follow the movement of his soldiers. This parallels the exclamatory movement of Spartacus during his speech, and yet Winkler asserts that the "visual similarity with the movements of Spartacus' head points to a strong underlying contrast between them."⁸¹ Surely the similarity of movement is intended to compare rather than contrast the two interlocutors?

Some critics attempt to make a distinction between the delivery of the two speeches: Crassus delivers his lines "in a clipped, haughty tone", whereas Spartacus is "calm and affectionate". 82 Crassus promises "a new Italy and a new empire. And I promise you the body of Spartacus." Spartacus promises something less hopeful: "We've fought many battles and won great victories. Now, instead of taking ship for our homes across the sea, we must fight again." There is no goal, or end result, here. The slave army is not given a way of knowing when their war will be concluded, other than an abstracted principle: "I do know that we're brothers, and I know that we're free." How free? As Spartacus speaks we are given close-ups of his audience (without armour or weaponry, as Winkler notes⁸³) including a shot of a young girl with her mother. We see that girl again, on the night before the decisive battle, when Spartacus wanders through the sleeping encampment. The girl is awake, and pleads with her mother: "Mummy? Mummy? When do we go home?" There is no answer. The young girl does not go home—she is not free to go home, or to choose not to die. She is killed in the battle the next day, and we see her body in the aftermath. Here Kubrick is setting up an equivalent moral dilemma to the famous theodicy of The Brothers Karamazov.84 Does the majesty of God justify the death of an innocent child? Is Spartacus' freedom of brotherhood confirmed or denied by the death of a toddler?

Victory is Resistance is Death

The question is answered in the second example, when we see the consequences of Spartacus' leadership. Spartacus and Antoninus (Tony Curtis) are chained to a cart outside the walls of Rome, the last two slaves remaining to

⁸⁰ Humphries, "Specter of Politics," 91, n. 23. Humphries is either unable, or unwilling for ideological reasons, to mark the difference between the German "Heil" and the English "Hail" (for the Latin "Ave"). A vowel can mark a totalitarian difference.

⁸¹ Winkler, "Holy Cause of Freedom," 181.

⁸² Phillips and Hill, Kubrick Encyclopedia, s.v. "Olivier, Laurence", 278.

⁸³ Winkler, "Holy Cause of Freedom," 180.

⁸⁴ Ch. IV "Rebellion" in Pt. V "Pro and Contra", in Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880), trans. Constance Garnett (London: Heinemann, 1912).

be crucified. Antoninus asks if the slave army could ever have won? Could've won? replies Spartacus. We did win, and our victory was in our resistance:

When just one man says, 'No, I won't', Rome begins to fear. And we were tens of thousands who said no. That was the wonder of it. To have seen slaves lift their heads from the dust, to see them rise from their knees, stand tall, with a song on their lips, to hear them storm through the mountains shouting, to hear them sing along the plains.

But Spartacus' inspiring rhetoric in the face of an actual, empirical, imperial defeat is brutally undercut by Antoninus, with a quick glance down the Appian Way: "And now they're dead." As Winkler unwittingly affirms, the slave-army was made up of "fathers with young children, old people, young girls, women and children. ... They are Everyman and Everywoman, and viewers can readily identify themselves with them: There, but for the grace of God, go I!"85 Kubrick concurs, but not in a heroic or affirming way. Rather the director repudiates the leadership of Spartacus. Follow Spartacus, Kubrick says, follow any leader, and death will be your fate, even if it is not crucifixion along the Appian Way. Spartacus was as responsible as Crassus for the crucifixion of his followers.

Is that you, John Wayne? Is this me?

Kubrick made *Full Metal Jacket* at the tail-end of the 1980s cycle of Vietnam war-films, which had begun, while the war was still being fought, with John Wayne's *The Green Berets*. ⁸⁶ Critics were excited to see what the director of *Spartacus*, and, more pertinently, *Paths of Glory*, would make of the miring of American imperialism in the 'living-room war'. ⁸⁷ In other words, most critics expected *Full Metal Jacket* to examine war and anti-war, and that is what they found. Private Joker, Mathew Modine's character, we are told, is "a humanist in the process of being permanently bent by the war", illustrated by a photograph captioned "War Is Hell" it tells "a story hinged on the trauma of the Tet offensive in the Vietnam War" it the film "exemplifies the Vietnam War film in its mature stage", in which the "crucible of combat is rendered with state-of-

⁸⁵ Winkler, "Holy Cause of Freedom," 181.

⁸⁶ Ray Kellogg and John Wayne, *The Green Berets*, Technicolor / Panavision, U.S.A. (Warner Brothers/Seven Arts, 1968).

⁸⁷ A phrase coined by Michael Arlen in his television criticism for *The New Yorker*: Michael J. Arlen, *Living-Room War* (New York: Viking Press, 1969).

⁸⁸ Vincent Canby, "Kubrick's 'Full Metal Jacket,' on Vietnam," *The New York Times* (New York, N.Y., June 26, 1987).

⁸⁹ Francis X. Clines, "Stanley Kubrick's Vietnam," *The New York Times* (New York, N.Y., June 21, 1987).

the-art technology and showcased for maximum effect"90; even so, it is "one of the strangest war movies ever made" in which Kubrick's "Vietnam looks more and more like a landscape of the mind; his control is remote control, like a stateside general's". 91 Even posthumous judgements on Kubrick's work tend to focus on this motif. Thus Gene Phillips and Rodney Hill in their encyclopaedia entry for Full Metal Jacket state unequivocally that the work is "an anti-war film", which depicts "the dark desolation of war", and yet "that offers no ready answers to the painful political and moral issues it raises."92 Kubrick himself acknowledges the ambivalent way in which violence and human culpability was depicted: he was attracted to the original novel, Hasford's The Short-Timers⁹³, because the "book offered no easy moral or political answers; it was neither pro-war nor anti-war. It seemed only concerned with the way things are."94 Kubrick attempted to continue this descriptive discourse in the making of the film: "There may be a fallacy in the belief that showing people that war is bad will make them less willing to fight a war. But Full Metal Jacket, I think, suggests that there is more to say about war than that it is bad."95

Kubrick's admirers believe that he replicated this neutral naturalism in his film. As Philips says, the final sequence of the film, the third stanza⁹⁶, in which the marine platoon are engaged in extended and traumatic urban warfare, was shot "with the raw immediacy of a wartime documentary." Kubrick himself boasted of the authenticity of the *mise-en-scène* of his film: "We also flew in two hundred large palm trees from Spain and shipped a hundred thousand artificial tropical plants from Hong Kong. Set into marshlands covered with chest-high

⁹⁰ Thomas Doherty, "Full Metal Genre: Stanley Kubrick's Vietnam Combat Movie," Film Quarterly 42, no. 2 (Winter 1988): 24,29.

⁹¹ Terence Rafferty, "Remote Control," Sight and Sound 56, no. 4 (Autumn 1987): 254,259.

⁹² Phillips and Hill, Kubrick Encyclopedia, s.v. "Full Metal Jacket", 127,128.

⁹³ Gustav Hasford, *The Short-Timers* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979). Hasford later concluded the story of Joker in *The Phantom Blooper*. Kubrick also used as a source Michael Herr, *Dispatches* (London: Picador, 1978). Herr was employed as a consultant and scriptwriter for the film.
⁹⁴ Stanley Kubrick, "Kubrick on 'Full Metal Jacket' (an interview with Michael Ciment)," in *Kubrick: the definitive edition*, by Michel Ciment, trans. Robert Bononno (New York: Faber and Faber, 2001), 243. Cited by Phillips in the "Introduction" to Phillips and Hill, *Kubrick Encyclopedia*, xxiii.

⁹⁵ Kubrick, "Kubrick on 'Full Metal Jacket'," 246. Kubrick said something similar in an interview with Gene Siskel, "Candidly Kubrick: A private man talks openly about life, movies and the fate of the free world," *The Chicago Tribune*, June 21, 1987, sec. Arts; later reprinted in Gene D. Phillips, ed., *Stanley Kubrick: Interviews* (Jackson, Miss.: University Press of Mississippi, 2001), 185.

⁹⁶ Jay Cocks's phrase, in an attempt to move from traditional, theatrical language of structure which Kubrick had consciously repudiated in the structuring of the film. Jay Cocks, *Full Metal Jacket (special edition)*, DVD, Audio Commentary (Warner Home Video, 2007). See also "The new screenplay structure" in "Kubrick on 'Full Metal Jacket'," 247.

⁹⁷ Introduction, Phillips and Hill, Kubrick Encyclopedia, xxiii.

yellow grass, amidst helicopters and pink smoke—everything looked absolutely authentic."98

And yet, simultaneously, Kubrick's fictive and fairy-tale approach to making the film has also been noted. The movie is episodic, rather than narrative-driven. The characters remain no more than ciphers, made up of nicknames and the customizations of their uniforms: Jim Davis is baptised "Joker" by the drill sergeant in the first scene of the film and his given names are never mentioned again; Joker's ambivalent attitude to war and the Marine Corps is denoted by a CND "Peace badge" on his jacket and the slogan "Born to Kill" on his helmet. Even more noticeably Kubrick eschewed the temptations and dangers of filming in south east Asia and North America: the Parris Island training depot scenes were filmed at RAF Bassingbourn in Cambridgeshire; the Vietnamese rice paddies were played by the salt marshes of Cliffe-at-Hoo in Kent, the ruins of Huế city were filmed in the semi-demolished gas works in Beckton, E6, eight miles east of Charing Cross. How seriously is the audience supposed to take the 'documentary authenticity' of the film when a U.S. marine base is filled with English street furniture? Whereas Coppola in *Apocalypse* Now claimed an identity between his film and Vietnam ("My film is not a movie; it's not about Vietnam. It is Vietnam. It's what it was really like; it was crazy."100), Kubrick is, intentionally or not, putting quotation marks around both his film and its subject: this is not Vietnam, it is "Vietnam". The film and the war are "constructs", operating within a "symbolic space". 101

So we can see, taking into account the deconstructed narrative structure, the disinclination to provide full depictions of well-rounded characters, and the signifying of the fairy-tale making and depiction of the film and war, Kubrick is signalling to us that *Full Metal Jacket* is not 'about' Vietnam. If so, then what is it 'about'?

Running just under the surface of Kubrick's adaptation of Hasford and Herr's books is a meditation on the American myth of individual heroism, and the temptations of leadership. Let us examine three sequences in the film.

The film opens with medium close-ups of unprepossessing young men having their heads shaved. Extradiegetic music plays over: Johnnie Wright's

⁹⁸ Under a section entitled ""Beckton" in "Kubrick on 'Full Metal Jacket'," 243.

⁹⁹ Note the "Give Way" signs, double-yellow lines and dotted lane markings around "Parris Island" in the double-timing marches.

¹⁰⁰ G. Roy Levin, "Francis Ford Coppola discusses 'Apocalypse Now'," *Millimeter 7*, no. 7 (October 1979): 137–8; quoted in Jeffrey Chown, *Hollywood Auteur: Francis Coppola* (New York: Praeger, 1988), 126.

¹⁰¹ Robert Castle and Stephen Donatelli, "Kubrick's Ulterior War," *Film Comment* 34, no. 5 (October 1998): 25.

sentimentally patriotic and bloodthirsty "Hello Vietnam". 102 We do not know who these men are, but we watch them losing one of the great signifiers of individuality to young men in the late 1960s, their hair. 103 These young recruits have lost their "freak flag". Immediately the scene cuts to the interior of a barracks. In a bare and empty room, with a shining blood-red floor, the recruits stand by their bunks in shapeless olive green fatigues. The middle of the room and screen is occupied by Master Gunnery Sergeant Hartman (the only person in the room who is allowed to be self-identified). Hartman is played by Lee Ermey, a career marine (a "lifer" in Marine slang¹⁰⁴) who was employed by Kubrick as a military advisor, and impressed the director with his ability to improvise scatologically.¹⁰⁵ It is a bravura performance (and Ermey was nominated for a Golden Globe), aided by bravura filming. Kubrick must have consciously realised the parallels with Schaffner's opening scene in *Patton*: a "lifer" instructs reluctant soldiers on the realities of war. Whereas Schaffner is content to keep the scene static with all attention on General Patton and his military accoutrements, Kubrick almost immediately begins to move the camera. Hartman strides in a wide ellipse around the echoing barracks, and the camera leads the way in a characteristically Kubrickian reverse dolly-tracking shot. 106 We are distracted from the fluency of the film-making by the fluency of Hartman's cursing:

Because I am hard, you will not like me. But the more you hate me, the more you will learn. I am hard, but I am fair! There is no racial bigotry here! I do not look down on niggers, kikes, wops or greasers. Here you are all equally worthless!¹⁰⁷

¹⁰² Johnnie Wright, *Hello Vietnam*, Hello Vietnam (Decca, 1965). He is named "Johnny" in the published screenplay.

¹⁰³ For the identification of individuality, political rebellion and personal grooming, see Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, *Almost Cut My Hair*, Déjà Vu (Atlantic Records, 1970). "I almost cut my hair, it happened just the other day. / It was gettin' kinda long, I could've said it was in my way. / But I didn't and I wonder why, I feel like letting my freak flag fly, / And I feel like I owe it to someone."

¹⁰⁴ See Hasford's books, *The Short-Timers*; *The Phantom Blooper*.

¹⁰⁵ At least, this is the story told by Kubrick to Alexander Walker, and by Ermey himself. In reality, much of Hartman's dialogue is taken directly from Hasford's novel. Alexander Walker, Sybil Taylor, and Ulrich Ruchti, *Stanley Kubrick, Director* (London: Norton, 1999), 318–323; Aljean Harmetz, "'Jacket' Actor Invents His Dialogue," *The New York Times* (New York, June 30, 1987); Hasford, *The Short-Timers*, pt. 1 "The Spirit of the Bayonet."

¹⁰⁶ The same technique is used in, among other films, *Paths of Glory*; Stanley Kubrick, *A Clockwork Orange*, Colour, 35mm, U.K. / U.S.A. (Warner Bros. Pictures, 1972); *The Shining*, Eastmancolor / 35 mm, U.S.A. (Warner Bros. Pictures, 1980).

¹⁰⁷ Stanley Kubrick, Michael Herr, and Gustav Hasford, *Full Metal Jacket: the screenplay* (New York: Knopf, 1987), 3–4 (Sc. 2). Henceforth, referred to as *FMJ Screenplay*.

Hartman asserts his authority through rhetoric, through action and through violence: when Private Joker mocks Hartman's bravado¹⁰⁸, Hartman pounces on him.

What have we got here, a fucking comedian? Private Joker? I admire your honesty. Hell, I like you. You can come over to my house and fuck my sister.

Sergeant HARTMAN punches JOKER in the stomach. JOKER sags to his knees. 109

As Hasford tells us in the source novel:

Beatings, we learn, are a routine element of life on Parris Island. And not that I'm-only-rough-on-'um-because-I-love-'um crap civilians have seen in Jack Webb's Hollywood movie *The D.I.* and in Mr. John Wayne's *The Sands of Iwo Jima*. ¹¹⁰

The drill instructors (in the book the Gunnery Sergeant is called Gerheim) "administer brutal beatings to faces, chests, stomachs, and backs. With fists." They are scheming enough to concentrate on "any part of our bodies upon which a black and purple bruise won't show." 112

As Hasford writes, and Kubrick shows, leadership in the Marines is not just for the (sentimental) conditioning of the recruits into a body of men worthy of "the Corps". It is also an exercise in naked, Nietzschean, violence. Gunnery Sergeant Gerheim / Hartman beats the men, not because he loves them, but because he can.

Once out of training the leadership displayed is no more inspiring. In Vietnam, Joker (promoted to Sergeant himself¹¹³) is a Marine Correspondent reporting on a suspected mass grave. He is interrogated by a "poge"¹¹⁴ Colonel for wearing a peace symbol on his body armour and "Born to Kill" written on his helmet. He is told to "get with the program… jump on the team… for the big win":

¹⁰⁸ We shall examine the significance of the way Joker does this below, on page 266.

¹⁰⁹ Sc. 2, FMJ Screenplay, 4.

¹¹⁰ Hasford, The Short-Timers, 7.

¹¹¹ Hasford, The Short-Timers, 7.

¹¹² Hasford, The Short-Timers, 7.

¹¹³ Hasford makes the repeated point that Joker refuses the promotion and the authority that goes with it: e.g. "Sir, I rose by sheer military genius to the rank of corporal, as they say, like Hitler and Napoleon. But I'm not a sergeant. I guess I'm just a snuffy [junior enlisted soldier in the Marines] at heart." Hasford, *The Short-Timers*, 59.

¹¹⁴ A rear-echelon soldier. General Savage is a good example, in the beginning of *Twelve O'Clock High* at least, of a poge airman.

Son, all I've ever asked of my marines is that they obey my orders as they would the word of God. ...It's a hardball world, son. We've gotta keep our heads until this peace craze blows over.¹¹⁵

But it is not just the "poges" and the "lifers" who fail in leadership: even "salty" and "righteous" Marines fail. Joker's training buddy Cowboy is assigned to combat infantry, and Joker meets up with him in the battle for the Citadel in Huế city. Cowboy has become, by death and default, the leader of the "Lusthog Squad". He leads the squad through the ruined city, until realising they are lost, he calls a halt. One marine, Eightball, is sent out from cover to recon. He is hit by a sniper's bullet and collapses, mortally wounded, in an exposed position. Cowboy is unable to persuade the squad either to cease fire or to stay put:

I think we're being set up for an ambush. I think there may be strong enemy forces in those buildings over there. I've requested tank support. We're gonna sit tight until it comes...¹¹⁶

Cowboy is not obeyed. First one, then another, then five more Marines, including Cowboy, move to try and rescue Eightball. Two are killed, including Cowboy. His last words are "I... I can hack it."¹¹⁷ Cowboy's leadership ends in failure, from the point of view of Kubrick and his civilian viewers. From the point of view of Gunnery Sergeant Hartman and the Marine Corps, Cowboy's death is all that can be expected of a Marine: as Hartman said to the recruits at graduation "always remember this: marines die, that's what we're here for! But the Marine Corps lives forever. And that means *you* live forever!"¹¹⁸

Finally, Joker achieves his ambition to be the first kid on his block with a "confirmed kill" when he shoots the mortally wounded sniper who had killed Cowboy: she was "a beautiful Vietnamese girl of about fifteen". The Marines withdraw, through a night lit by the burning ruins of the Citadel. We have a final voice-over from Joker, celebrating his continued existence: "We have nailed our names in the pages of history enough for today... I am so happy that I am alive, in one piece and short. I'm in a world of shit...yes. But I am alive. And I am not afraid." As Joker's voice-over ends, we hear clearly the song that the Marines are singing together, the theme from Disney's 'Mickey Mouse Club', with "the transcendental, ideologically prompted and universally

¹¹⁵ Sc. 65, FMJ Screenplay, 72.

¹¹⁶ Sc. 79, FMI Screenplay, 97.

¹¹⁷ Sc. 84, FMJ Screenplay, 112.

¹¹⁸ Sc. 45, FMJ Screenplay, 42.

¹¹⁹ Sc. 86, FMJ Screenplay, 113.

¹²⁰ Sc. 87, FMJ Screenplay, 120.

memorized Mickey Mouse question"¹²¹: "Who's the leader of the club that's made for you and me?" As the oral historian Mark Baker says, the Vietnam war, as experienced by the Americans, turned out to have been "a warped version of *Peter Pan*. Vietnam was a brutal Neverneverland, outside time and space, where little boys didn't have to grow up." It was "billed on the marquee as a John Wayne shoot-'em-up".¹²²

Here we see the person whom Hasford, Herr and Kubrick identify as Mickey Mouse's alter ego: "Mr John Wayne". John Wayne was the reason the soldiers of Vietnam accepted their role: "I was seduced by World War II and John Wayne movies." Michael Herr in his own work concurs. He recalls how the "grunts" were affected by the presence of TV cameras in the battlefield:

You don't know what a media freak is until you've seen the way a few of those grunts would run around during a fight when they knew there was a television crew nearby; they were actually making war movies in their heads, doing little guts-and-glory Leatherneck tap dances under fire, getting their pimples shot off for the networks.¹²⁴

They were killed, not by the VC bullets, but by "seventeen years of war movies before coming to Vietnam to get wiped out for good". 125 They were seduced into dying by Hollywood and John Wayne.

Hasford and Kubrick vehemently repudiate this seduction. ¹²⁶ Hasford recalls how he saw Wayne's *The Green Berets* in a forward area: it was "a Hollywood soap opera about the love of guns. ... The audience of Marines roars with laughter. This is the funniest movie we have seen in a long time." ¹²⁷ But if a Marine "does a John Wayne" it means he has gone berserk, and in such a way that he is likely to get himself killed. ¹²⁸

¹²¹ Janet C. Moore, "For Fighting and for Fun: Kubrick's Complicitous Critique in 'Full Metal Jacket'," *The Velvet Light Trap* 31 (Spring 1993): 43–4.

¹²² Mark Baker, *Nam: the Vietnam war in the words of the men and women who fought there* (London: Abacus, 1982), 24. A significant metaphor.

¹²³ Baker, Nam, 12.

¹²⁴ Herr, *Dispatches*, 169. Kubrick dramatizes this phenomenon with a series of straight-to-camera interviews by the members of the Lusthog Squad: Sc. 72, *FMJ Screenplay*, 81–86. ¹²⁵ Herr, *Dispatches*, 169.

¹²⁶ For an evaluation and enumeration of Hasford's demolition of John Wayne, see Matthew Ross, "An Examination of the Life and Work of Gustav Hasford" (Master of Arts thesis, Las Vegas, NV: University of Nevada, 2010),

http://digitalcommons.library.unlv.edu/thesesdissertations/236.

¹²⁷ Hasford, The Short-Timers, 38.

¹²⁸ Joker speaks to himself: "Legs, don't do any John Waynes. My body is serviceable. I intend to maintain my body in the excellent condition in which it was issued." Hasford, *The Short-Timers*, 98. See also 107.

In the first scene, as a minor rebellion against Hartman's hectoring, Joker asks out loud "Is that you, John Wayne? Is this me?" The distinction is unclear at the beginning of the movie; it is impossible to make at the end: "Lifeas-movie, war-as-(war)-movie, war-as-life; a complete process if you got to complete it". 130

Kubrick has enacted a solid and terrifying demolition of the myth of John Wayne, and the adolescent heroism of the American Adam. As Kubrick expressed it to Michel Ciment the troops who fought in Vietnam failed "to communicate on any human level with the Vietnamese" who were encountered solely as "whores, pimps, and Vietcong." The soldiers were "culturally unprepared for the situation they were put into…"¹³¹ Just as the boys from Parris Island are victims of the Mickey Mouse / John Wayne war machine, so too, Kubrick tells us, is the audience, the traditional cinema spectator. He has deliberately and methodically disrupted the compact between cinema audience and film-maker: the structures and expectations of the war-film have been abrogated¹³², and so "the film reneges on its promise to provide 'war entertainment,' leaving us gawking at what was supposed to be there."¹³³

In the Brueghel-like atmosphere of the final scene, the Marines, socialised into being "killers... indestructible men, men without fear"¹³⁴, psychologically process their experiences in the urban fighting of Huế by regressing to childhood. They are in a "world of shit", according to Joker's voice over, but they are also members of a gang, whose leader is a mouse with white gloves. According to Kubrick, all leaders are "M-I-C-K-E-Y-M-O-U-S-E"¹³⁵, and they will lead you to the grave, singing Mouseketeer songs as you go.

¹²⁹ Hasford, *The Short-Timers*, 4; Sc. 2, *FMJ Screenplay*, 4. In the novel, it is Cowboy who asks the question, and Joker who responds with the significant assessment "I think I'm going to hate this movie."

¹³⁰ Herr, *Dispatches*, 58. Herr emphasises the point: "A lot of things had to be unlearned", because a lot of "things got mixed, the war itself with those parts of the war that were just like the movies, just like *The Quiet American* or *Catch-22...*just like all that combat footage from television...your vision blurring, images jumping and falling as though they were being received by a dropped camera..." *Dispatches*, 169–70.

¹³¹ Kubrick, "Kubrick on 'Full Metal Jacket'," 243.

¹³² Castle and Donatelli, "Kubrick's Ulterior War," 25–6.

¹³³ Castle and Donatelli, "Kubrick's Ulterior War," 28.

¹³⁴ Joker's VO description at the end of the Parris Island training: Sc. 43, Kubrick, Herr, and Hasford, *FMJ Screenplay*, 42.

¹³⁵ Sc. 87, Kubrick, Herr, and Hasford, FMJ Screenplay, 120.

"They're in a rather funny mood today"

"Hell is other people", Sartre declares. ¹³⁶ If this is true, a corollary follows: "hell" as an existential state subsists in a medium which is inherently social. In other words, hell cannot be had without people: there is a quorum for damnation. Again, if this is true, there are implications for other existential states. If we require other people for hell, do we require other people for such relational states as "leadership" or "followership"?

At first glance, this seems to be an unnecessarily finessed question, a variation on the philosopher's subjective idealism: if an order is given to no followers, can it be enacted? As we discovered in the first chapter, Bennis, for one, denies the possibility of leadership without followers.¹³⁷ However, it is necessary for us to understand implicitly and explicitly that leadership and followership are states of human interaction which require, at a fundamental level, a social context. In other words, leadership and followership must happen in (some form of) community, whatever social or religious organisation that community takes. As a corollary, there is no such thing as leadership or followership which happens in social isolation, at least, there is no such thing as socially isolated leadership which is not depicted for satirical or humorous purposes.

Which brings us to *Monty Python's Life of Brian*¹³⁸, "this squalid little film...morally without merit and undeniably reprehensible", in the words of Malcolm Muggeridge. When *Life of Brian* was released in 1979 it was, almost reflexively, seen as an anti-religious film. For this reason, it was censored and/or banned in numerous local authority areas in England, Wales and Scotland. It was also, like Gunnery Sergeant Hartman, an equal opportunities offender, disgusting Christians and Jews alike: Robert E. A. Lee of the Lutheran Council of North America said "if blasphemy is still an operative word in our society we

¹³⁶ "L'enfer, c'est les autres", taken from *Huis Clos* (1944), usually performed in English under the title *No Exit*. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Huis Clos*, and *Other Plays* (London: Penguin Books, in association with Hamish Hamilton, 2000), 222.

¹³⁷ See the discussion on page 40 above.

¹³⁸ Jones, Life of Brian.

¹³⁹ His comments made during an encounter with John Cleese, Michael Palin, Muggeridge and Mervyn Stockwood, Bishop of Southwark, on a television chat show hosted by Tim Rice: "Friday Night, Saturday Morning" (London: BBC 2, November 9, 1979). Gavin Millar says that although Muggeridge's critique was "incoherent", he should be forgiven. The Bishop, however, is unforgivable for the way he "alternated boastful facetiousness with insulting condescension". Gavin Millar, "Blessed Brian," *The Listener* 102, no. 2637 (November 15, 1979): 673.

¹⁴⁰ Robert Hewison, *Monty Python: The Case Against—irreverence, scurrility, profanity, vilification and licentious abuse* (London: Methuen, 1981), chap. 5 & 6, in which Hewison enumerates the bans.

must apply it... [to this] outrageous" satire¹⁴¹, and Rabbi Abraham Hecht of the Rabbinical Alliance of America declared it to be "foul, disgusting, blasphemous".¹⁴²

Ironically, this was the intention of at least one of the members of the Python team. For Eric Idle religion *was* the target of the film:

Here were some of the basic thoughts and impulses of Western society, which had been inculcated into everyone and yet no one was allowed to refer to them or deal with them unless they were part of a religious body or organization which was dedicated to the promulgation of the very things we wanted to examine. We were drawn to the fact that this area was indeed taboo for all kinds of comedy.¹⁴³

Subsequently, Terry Jones, the film's director, has repeatedly made a distinction between "blasphemy" (which he defines as touching on "belief"), and the film's true, heretical, nature (which he defines as touching on "dogma", that is to say "the priesthood, the interpretation of belief, rather than belief itself"¹⁴⁴). The distinction is a subtle one, and does not necessarily protect Jones's position. For example, Thomas Aquinas also notes a distinction between blasphemy and heresy. Blasphemy is "to cast insult or abuse at the dignity of our creator."¹⁴⁵ There are three kinds of blasphemy: attributing something to God which is not his, denying something of God which is his, and lastly, attributing something to a creature which properly belongs to God. ¹⁴⁶ Heresy, on the other hand, "is a species of infidelity, attaching to those who profess faith in Christ yet corrupt his dogmas."¹⁴⁷ Heresy, therefore, is not just to do with ideas, but rather practice, and practice within a social context: it is a "socially embodied notion"¹⁴⁸, which raises a "social and political" threat by the heterodox, subsisting within a larger orthodox community. It is "an enemy of

General."

¹⁴¹ "Lutheran Broadcast Slam at 'Life of Brian': Crude, Rude," Variety 296, no. 4 (August 29, 1979): 7.

¹⁴² "Rabbinical Alliance Pours on Condemnation of 'Life of Brian'," *Variety* 296, no. 4 (August 29, 1979): 7; Robert Sellers, *Always Look on the Bright Side of Life: the inside story of Handmade Films* (London: Metro, 2003), 15.

¹⁴³ An unpublished essay, quoted by Hewison, Case Against, 59.

¹⁴⁴ From an interview given in Bill Jones, Alan G. Parker, and Ben Timlett, "Monty Python: Almost The Truth—The BBC Lawyer's Cut" (Eagle Rock Film Productions Ltd: BBC 2, October 3, 2009). See also Graham Chapman et al., *The Pythons' Autobiography* (London: Orion, 2003), 281, where Jones makes a distinction between blasphemy, which repudiates belief in "the Bible story as gospel" (sic), and heresy, which repudiates the Church's "interpretation" of the Bible. ¹⁴⁵ St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae: Consequences of Faith (2a2ae. 8–16)*, trans. Thomas Gilby, O.P., vol. 32 (London: Blackfriars; Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1975), q.13 a.1.1, "Blasphemy in

¹⁴⁶ Aquinas, Summa (2a2ae. 8–16), 32:q.13 a.1.3.

¹⁴⁷ Aguinas, Summa (2a2ae. 8–16), 32:q.11 a.1, "Heresy."

¹⁴⁸ Alister E. McGrath, Heresy: a history of defending the truth (London: S.P.C.K., 2009), 34.

faith that sows the seeds of faith's destruction."¹⁴⁹ To claim to be heretical is not necessarily a lesser of two evils; it does not necessarily protect from the ire of the Church.

Such distinctions, between heretical and blasphemous intentions, are of no concern to Eric Idle, always the most outspoken of the Pythons in delineating of the film's targets. It was Idle who quipped at the New York premiere of *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*¹⁵⁰ that the team's next project would be *Jesus Christ: Lust for Glory*. The Pythons, after reviewing the pomposity of most "reverent, choir-laden, star-studded gospel dramatisations" page the lack of humour to be found in the person and teaching of Jesus, "since what he says is very fine (and Buddhist)". There were satirical possibilities to be had in lampooning those around or associated with Jesus: according to Idle the film began life, and is intended to be seen, as "an attack on Churches and pontificators and self-righteous assholes who claim to speak for God, of whom there are too many still on the planet." 154

There was, and is, no consensus within the Pythons on the nature of *Life of Brian's* target. ¹⁵⁵ John Cleese, while agreeing with the hermeneutical importance of *interpretation* as insisted upon by Jones, adds a moral and political component: "What is absurd is not the teachings of the founders of religion, it's what followers subsequently make of it. And I was always astonished that people didn't get that." ¹⁵⁶ Michael Palin insists, in disagreement with Jones and Idle, the film is not "attacking Jesus" or "anyone's faith or religion". Rather, it

¹⁴⁹ McGrath, *Heresy*, 34. See the whole of Chapter 2 for a discussion on the character of heresy. ¹⁵⁰ Terry Gilliam and Terry Jones, *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, Technicolor 35mm, U.K. (EMI Films, 1975).

¹⁵¹ David Morgan, *Monty Python speaks!* (New York: Avon Books, 1999), 224. The throwaway remark betrays a significant connection with the attitudes and belief-system of *Patton*, which we explored in the previous chapter.

¹⁵² Clyde Jeavons, "Review of 'Monty Python's Life of Brian'," *The Monthly Film Bulletin (BFI)* 46, no. 550 (November 1979): 229.

¹⁵³ According to Idle; Morgan, Monty Python speaks!, 226.

¹⁵⁴ Morgan, *Monty Python speaks!*, 226. For a discussion on the blasphemous nature of the film see David S. Nash, *Blasphemy in the Christian World: a history* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 211–9; Nash is dependent on Hewison, *Case Against*. Idle's was a common attitude among those of his generation: compare his statement with John Lennon's "Jesus was all right but his disciples were thick and ordinary. It's them twisting it that ruins it for me." Maureen Cleave, "How Does a Beatle Live? John Lennon lives like this," *The Evening Standard* (London, March 4, 1966).

¹⁵⁵ Similarly there was initially no consensus among critics about the blasphemous nature of the film. For Michael Singer, whilst the film is "never boring", and "always funny", it is "always blasphemous". For Marjorie Bilbow the question of blasphemy is "brouhaha" and "a load of poppycock". Michael Singer, "Cinema Savior: Portrayals of Christ on Film," *Film Comment* 24, no. 5 (October 1988): 47; Marjorie Bilbow, "The New Films: 'Monty Python's Life of Brian'," *Screen International*, no. 217 (November 24, 1979): 18.

¹⁵⁶ Chapman et al., *The Pythons' Autobiography*, 280.

attacks "a kind of authoritarianism", one which "tells you what to believe and what to do". In carrying out this political and ethical critique, it uses a "religious metaphor" to explore how, "nowadays", people want "to have their own independent voice heard", and people are "critical of those in authority telling them what to say". He concludes, simply, "that's really what it's about." Gavin Millar's perceptive contemporary review concurs: "Insofar" as the film has a "moral charge", it is predicated upon "pragmatism, common sense and tolerance." English morality is implicitly and explicitly antipolitical: the only "stand" Brian will take is his sexual affair with the "spitfire revolutionary", Judith. Brian is the "homme moyen sensual." 159

However, Palin wishes to retain a political dimension to the film. In order to depict or understand Jesus, he says, we have to rely "on interpretation, and interpretation is a *political* thing" ¹⁶⁰, which therefore, is susceptible to a political depiction and a political critique.

David Jasper concurs. For him the success of *Life of Brian* lies in the way it subverts the pious Jesus-films. It is a "far more serious comedy" as it "leaves theology out of it and endlessly exposes what we do with theology and institutional religion as a means of self-justification." ¹⁶¹

The Politics of Brian

What can we see in *Life of Brian* to justify this political interpretation? First, we see the way in which Brian, a sincere but inept Jew, who identifies himself as such, despite his half-Roman ancestry¹⁶², attempts to associate himself with an anti-Roman resistance group. Brian does not care which resistance group he joins, as long as they are opposed to the Romans.¹⁶³ He asks "Are you the… Judean People's Front?" The leader of the group (whom we have already learnt

¹⁵⁷ All Palin's quotations in this paragraph are taken from "Interview with Michael Palin," *Simon Mayo* (London: BBC Radio 5 Live, September 14, 2009).

¹⁵⁸ Millar, "Blessed Brian," 673.

¹⁵⁹ Millar, "Blessed Brian," 673.

¹⁶⁰ Morgan, Monty Python speaks!, 227. Emphasis in original.

¹⁶¹ Jasper, "Systematizing," 243. Jasper's argument doesn't make clear what the "it" is, from which the theology has been left: is it "hope", "religious experience", or just the film itself? Even so, his political and ethical approval stands.

 ^{162 &}quot;I'm not a Roman, Mum and I never will be! I'm a Kike! A Yid! A Hebe! A Hook-nose! I'm Kosher, Mum. I'm a Red Sea Pedestrian and proud of it!" Graham Chapman et al., Monty Python's The Life of Brian / MONTYPYTHONSCRAPBOOKOFBRIANOFNAZARETH (London: Eyre Methuen, 1979), 15. Quotations from the film will be taken from the published screenplay, (hereafter Brian Screenplay.) corrected against the soundtrack on a DVD release of the film: Terry Jones et al., Monty Python's Life of Brian, DVD (Columbia TriStar Home Entertainment, 2003).
 163 An Oedipal rejection of his biological father, "Nortius Maximus", is a clear motivation.

has the archetypical 1970s trade-unionist's name of "Reg"¹⁶⁴) responds angrily: "Fuck off!... Judean People's Front!??? We're the People's Front of Judea. Judean People's Front! Cor!"¹⁶⁵ We learn that the PFJ hate the Romans, but they hate the JPF more: the latter are "Wankers! "Splitters! Bastards!"¹⁶⁶ There is momentary confusion within the PFJ: they are not the *Popular* Front of Judea, but the *People's* Front. The Popular Front exists, but "He's over there"¹⁶⁷: we have the absurdity of a *Popular* Front, which consists of only one member, emphasised by the comic technique of bathetic incongruity.¹⁶⁸ Along with this depiction of the lonely leader, note also the depiction, later in the film, of the solitary *follower*, the only person in the crowds pursuing Brian who calls upon the mass to "stop to consider the great significance of what Brian's coming may mean."¹⁶⁹

Brian's second mission for the PFJ is an assault on Pilate's Palace, through the drains, as a result of which they intend to kidnap Pilate's wife and hold her to ransom. Reg, the "glorious leader and founder of the PFJ" does not participate in the assault, but rather co-ordinates from the sewer entrance, "as he has a bad back". 170

So we see how, in an organization which "exhibits a pretentious and sanctimonious display of corporate equality" ¹⁷¹, the ideals of co-ordinated action are both unrealistic ("two days to dismantle the entire apparatus of the

¹⁶⁴ See, for example, Reg Birch, member of the Trades Union Congress General Council and Chairman of the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist–Leninist) from 1968–94: Geoffrey Goodman, "Birch, Reginald (1914–1994)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), <www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/54745>.

¹⁶⁵ Brian Screenplay, 17; punctuation as in the text, profanity as in the film.

¹⁶⁶ Brian Screenplay, 17,18.

¹⁶⁷ Brian Screenplay, 18. The sole representative of the Popular Front is, inevitably, a "splitter!" ¹⁶⁸ Bathos derives its power by "a sudden plummeting in tone, register, or theme", which identifies the preceding as pretension: R. D. V. Glasgow, Madness, Masks, and Laughter: An Essay on Comedy (Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1995), 119. "Incongruity" is a theory developed by, among others, Arthur Schopenhauer, which sources laughter in the "sudden perception of the incongruity between a concept and the real objects which have been thought through it in some relation." Arthur Schopenhauer, "The World as Will and Idea (1818/44)," in The Philosophy of Laughter and Humor, ed. John Morreall (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987), 52 (Book 1 §13). Note also Bergson's insight that "our laughter is always the laughter of a group"; here, one group against an individual, and we, the audience, are invited to share the perception of the "group", the PFJ: Henri Louis Bergson, "Laughter (1900)," in Comedy, ed. Wylie Sypher (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 64. ¹⁶⁹ Richard C. Stern, Clayton N. Jefford, and Guerric DeBona, Savior on the Silver Screen (New York: Paulist Press, 1999), 244. The "follower" is played by Spike Milligan who disappears from the scene, and immediately afterwards wandered away from the film set, so that Jones was unable to shoot any close-ups: see Chapman et al., The Pythons' Autobiography, 291. ¹⁷⁰ VO by Francis (Michael Palin), Jones et al., Life of Brian (DVD); not included in Brian

¹⁷¹ Cyrino, Big Screen Rome, 189-90.

Roman imperialist state"¹⁷²), and undermined by the "utterly self-interested ambitions and desires of individual members"¹⁷³, most clearly in the hypocritical actions of Reg, the group's "glorious leader".

Inside the palace the PFJ encounter the Campaign for Free Galilee¹⁷⁴, with an identical plan. The two revolutionary groups begin to fight until Brian reminds them "Brothers! We mustn't fight with each other. Surely we should be united against the common enemy." The revolutionaries pause, "in horrified unison": "The Judean People's Front?????"¹⁷⁵ The PFJ, the CFG, the "Judean Popular People's Front", and, presumably, the JPF, are all "paralyzed to inactivity", by the "gender-pronoun precision and the inflated rhetoric of oppression" in which they are required to "to draw up resolutions and exercise the democratic process". ¹⁷⁶ Leaders, like Reg, are not to be trusted. Popular movements, which pay lip-service to democratic processes, are also subject to sclerotic inactivity.

On the other hand, Brian's naïve idealism does lead to accomplishments: he is able to paint "Romanes Eunt Domus" ¹⁷⁷ a hundred times, "in letters ten feet high!" ¹⁷⁸ across the Forum. He is also able to escape Roman arrest (with the assistance of an alien space-craft), and, despite having led the Fifth Legion to the headquarters of the PFJ, is able to escape again by pretending to be a prophet. A small crowd is initially impressed by his entrance (falling from a great height), but they are hostile and sceptical when he begins to teach ("Don't pass judgment on other people, or else you might get judged, too" ¹⁷⁹). His pastiche of the Sermon on the Mount is greeted by literalistic questions: which birds need to be considered, why should the lilies of the field get jobs, what were the names of "two servants"? In panic, as Romans come closer to arrest him, Brian's pastiche breaks down into nonsense ("Blessed are they... who convert their neighbour's ox, for they shall inhibit their girth,... and to them only shall be given—to them only... shall... be...given..." ¹⁸⁰).

Unconvincing to a modern, extradiegetic, audience, this is the moment that Brian's intradiegetic audience begins to get intrigued by his message—which is the whole point of Python's critique of both the leader (the messiah) and the followers (the crowd / disciples): the message is unconvincing,

¹⁷² Brian Screenplay, 20.

¹⁷³ Cyrino, Big Screen Rome, 189–90.

¹⁷⁴ Whose leader, "Deadly Dirk", is played by John Cleese, with a high-pitched North Welsh accent.

 $^{^{175}}$ *Brian Screenplay*, 23. The published screenplay includes the attempted kidnap of Pilate's wife, deleted in the released film.

¹⁷⁶ Cyrino, Big Screen Rome, 189-90.

¹⁷⁷ "People called Romanes, they go the house": Brian Screenplay, 18.

¹⁷⁸ Judith Iscariot's praise: *Brian Screenplay*, 21.

¹⁷⁹ Brian Screenplay, 35.

¹⁸⁰ Brian Screenplay, 37.

nonsensical, and lacking in coherence, and *because* of those very characteristics, will be believed as the gateway to "the secret of Eternal Life." It is by refusing to tell the "secret", because he knows there is no secret, that Brian is first called "Master" (by "Arthur", played by Cleese). The crowd, portrayed as those who seek answers, are "depicted in a markedly negative way, first hostile and demanding, then fawning and fanatic." This is the nature of followers, according to the anthropology of Python.

The Crowds of Brian

In this respect, Philip Davies is wrong when he contrasts the treatment of the crowd in Life of Brian and the crowds in the New Testament. In the New Testament, according to Davies, the crowd is merely a "foil for dominical exploits", passively "hearing, receiving, or just gathering". 183 Instead, he says, they are the "hero" in Life of Brian, "stealing the initiative in listening to sermons, in stoning, in heckling the teller of parables, in creating a messiah, in ridiculing the Roman governor..."184 But these are still reactive actions. The crowd never takes the initiative. Rather, they are so blinded by their need to be a *crowd*, to find someone, anyone, to follow, that they do not see the absurdity of their actions. As Palin put it, he was always more interested in "people who get in the way of heroes being heroes."185 Thus, Brian, who is, if not the hero, then at least the protagonist, is pursued into the wilderness by the crowd, as they divide on the nature of the sign that the new Messiah has given them—is it a shoe or is it a gourd?¹⁸⁶ Everything is over-interpreted by the crowd: following Brian to the desert is a sign, a juniper bush is a miracle, being told to leave is "a blessing!"187 Even when Brian tells the crowd to "Fuck off!", it can be incorporated into their followership-weltanschauung: "How shall we fuck off, O Lord?" asks Arthur, who has promoted himself into a Peter-role of chief interpreter, guardian and confessor of Brian's messianic status. 188 It is Arthur who leads the crowd in a salutation of Brian's true, revealed nature:

¹⁸¹ Brian Screenplay, 37. Capitalization in the screenplay.

¹⁸² Cyrino, Big Screen Rome, 189.

¹⁸³ Philip R. Davies, "'Life of Brian' Research," in *Whose Bible Is It Anyway?*, 2nd ed. (London: T. & T. Clark, 2004), 153. Davies enumerates 14 occasions in Matthew, 24 in Mark, 15 in Luke, and 9 in John for this passive role. An earlier version of the essay was published as "'Life of Brian' Research," in *Biblical Studies / Cultural Studies: the third Sheffield colloquium*, ed. J. Cheryl Exum and Stephen D. Moore (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 400–414.

¹⁸⁴ Davies, "'Life of Brian' Research," 153.

¹⁸⁵ Morgan, Monty Python speaks!, 227. Emphasis in original.

¹⁸⁶ As Davies perceptively points out, also the sign of Jonah [Jonah 4:6-10, AV]: "'Life of Brian' Research," 147.

¹⁸⁷ Brian Screenplay, 41-2.

¹⁸⁸ Brian Screenplay, 43.

ARTHUR: Hail Messiah! BRIAN: I'm not the Messiah!

ARTHUR: I say you are Lord, and I should know. I've followed a few. 189

When violence breaks out Brian escapes again. He spends the night with the object of his lust, Judith Iscariot, but, in a moment of post-coital bliss, he opens the shutters of his house onto a view of the assembled mob, one even greater than the day before. He attempts once more to preach ("Please, please, please listen. I've got one or two things to say" 190); it is the Gospel of individualism and personal individuation:

BRIAN: Look. You've got it all wrong. You don't need to follow *me*. You don't *need* to follow anybody! You've got to think for yourselves. You're *all* individuals!

FOLLOWERS: Yes, we're all individuals!

BRIAN: You're all different!

FOLLOWERS: Yes, we are all different!

DENNIS: I'm not.191

"Dennis", played by Terence Bayler, is the drunk who originally tried to buy Brian's gourd. The only person who recognizes a distinction between individual and crowd is a drunk, who denies the existence of that distinction. In a self-consciously English pantomime idiom, we can see clearly what Michael Palin later called the "message" of the film, a message identical to the essence of the Pythons' humour: "It was the freedom of the individual, a very Sixties thing, the independence which was part of the way Python had been formed..." 192 In a curious way, the Pythons reflected an anthropology which seems innate to the British Isles, indeed, has been called the "British heresy". 193 It follows the work of Pelagius 194, who taught "the need of the individual to define himself, and to feel free to create his own values in the midst of the conventional, second-rate life of society." 195

John Godfrey relates an instance of the working out of (semi-)Pelagianism in British society. A British bishop named Fastidius (a Pythonesque name?)

¹⁸⁹ Brian Screenplay, 43.

¹⁹⁰ Brian Screenplay, 46.

¹⁹¹ Brian Screenplay, 46. Emphasis in original text and delivery.

¹⁹² Palin in Chapman et al., The Pythons' Autobiography, 306.

¹⁹³ Named as such by Leo Sherley-Price in Bede, *A History of the English Church and People*, trans. Leo Sherley-Price, Revised ed. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968), note to Bk. 1.10 on 339, without a source, as if it were a proverbial identification.

¹⁹⁴ The usual caveats apply: Pelagius was most likely not a "Pelagian" — just as Karl Marx was never a Marxist.

¹⁹⁵ Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 346–7.

averred "A Christian is he who shows pity to all, who is not in any way troubled by injury, who does not allow a poor man to be oppressed if he be present." Godfrey's description of Fastidius' work could, almost, be applied to the self-expressed ideology of Python: "The book is free of fanaticism or rancour, and with its humane, pious, and cultured tone, represents a type of Christianity which may well have been common in Britain at this time, and which has much to commend it." 197

Certainly, Davies believes that the portrayal of Brian adheres to this form of exemplary humanism. Brian is Everyman, the "human nature of the dichotomized Messiah." ¹⁹⁸ He represents a "meek and mild" humanity, victimised and "rarely, if ever, the instigator", a "true 'man for others'". ¹⁹⁹ He is betrayed by everyone in whom he places his trust; mother, fellow revolutionaries, girlfriend, disciples:

He is never the real leader, but rather that parodic leader, the stooge.²⁰⁰ He is the disciple of others, even when having messiahship foisted on him and when being betrayed by his own band of revolutionaries.²⁰¹

Brian's passivity, for Davies, is admirable: "His inability to accept any initiative and his willingness to be led into even the most dubious of causes displays a benevolence towards fellow humans that induces sympathy in the audience." The audience can self-identify with Brian, in the richness of his humanity: an "imitatio Briani" is almost inevitable." ²⁰³

The Nihilism of Brian

This is a far too optimistic and benevolent interpretation of the way in which Brian is depicted, and the real "message" of the film. If there is a hero in *Life of Brian*, and the political outlook of the Pythons probably precludes such a

¹⁹⁶ XIV, Fastidius, *De Vita Christiana*, ed. Jacques Paul Migne, vol. 50, Patrologiae Latinae (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1857), col. 400. Cited by John Godfrey, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 28. Fastidius probably wrote between A.D. 420 and 430.

¹⁹⁷ Godfrey, The Church in Anglo-Saxon England, 28.

¹⁹⁸ Davies, "'Life of Brian' Research," 151.

¹⁹⁹ Davies, "'Life of Brian' Research," 151.

²⁰⁰ It is unclear why Davies defines "parodic leader" as "stooge". The OED says that "stooge", possibly deriving from 'stage assistant', means: "A person whose function is merely to carry out another's directions; an unquestioningly loyal or obsequious subordinate, a lackey; a person used as an instrument by someone behind the scenes, a cat's paw." Surely, therefore "stooge" is the better definition of the way in which *followers* are regarded in the film?: "stooge, n.," *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

²⁰¹ Davies, "'Life of Brian' Research," 151.

²⁰² Davies, "'Life of Brian' Research," 151.

²⁰³ Davies, "'Life of Brian' Research," 151.

creature, then the only feasible candidate is neither Brian, nor Davies's corporate candidate of the crowd, but rather "Mr Cheeky", a character played by Eric Idle.

Cheeky is the man who begins the fight at the Sermon on the Mount, and the crucifixion victim who, at first claims to have been freed ("They said I hadn't done anything, so I could go free and live on an island somewhere"²⁰⁴), then refuses to be intimidated by the soldiers crucifying him ("You mean I might have to give up being crucified in the afternoons?"²⁰⁵), and finally has the presence of mind to claim to be Brian of Nazareth when a pardon arrives ("No, I'm only joking. I'm not really Brian… It was a joke."²⁰⁶). Contrast Mr Cheeky's existential insouciance with the parodic "I am Spartacus" reaction of the rest of those being crucified, all of whom claim to be Brian: "I'm Brian. And so's my wife."²⁰⁷ Kubrick's celebration of collective solidarity is now parodied as "the clamorous urge for self-preservation among those being crucified, with no thought whatsoever to Brian's survival."²⁰⁸

The anthropology of Monty Python is deeply pessimistic. In the face of the fact of existential annihilation, the best that can be said is to "look on the bright side of life". ²⁰⁹ This, paradoxically, undercuts the Pythons' Pelagianism: there is an unconscious contrast between what is expressed and what is depicted. Whereas for Pelagius, and the Pythons' espoused anthropology, the target is "the heavy artifice of society", in order to uncover the "raw bones of heroic individuality" ²¹⁰, the actual performance of the Python world-view shows that there are no heroes, and there can be no moral value expressed through being either a leader or a follower. Both roles are merely opportunities to exhibit the venal and corrupt nature of humanity. If one did not know the Pythons' approach to organized religion, one might say that they exhibit an almost Augustinian anthropology. For, as Augustine expressed it in one of his anti-Pelagian writings, "many sins are committed through pride; but yet not all things which are wrongly done are done proudly,—at any rate, not by the ignorant, not by the infirm, and not, generally speaking, by the weeping and

²⁰⁴ Not in *Brian Screenplay*; but in *Life of Brian (DVD)*, at 1'10".

²⁰⁵ Brian Screenplay, 59.

²⁰⁶ Brian Screenplay, 62.

²⁰⁷ Brian Screenplay, 62. Brian's identity is claimed by the upper-class "Mr Gregory", played by Terence Bayler, who has similar individuation problems to "Dennis", also played by Terence Bayler.

²⁰⁸ Cyrino, Big Screen Rome, 192.

²⁰⁹ It is not insignificant that the closing song is sung by Idle, if not *qua* Idle, then certainly as an extradiegetic protagonist: Mr Cheeky's creator is the man who chews on life's gristle.

²¹⁰ Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*, 350. Pelagius' model of heroic humanity is Job, who, like Brian, loses his possessions and status in human society, but retains his integrity: Pelagius, "Letter to Demetrias," in *Theological Anthropology*, ed. J. Patout Burns, Sources of Early Christian thought (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), ¶ 6 (pp. 47–8).

sorrowful."²¹¹ Which sounds like motivation notes for the protagonists of *Life of Brian*.

Conclusion

There are many different examples and genres of film which I might have chosen to illustrate what I have called 'the cinema of suspicion'. Crime films, such as *The Godfather* series²¹² or *Chinatown*²¹³; political thrillers, such as *The Parallax View*, *Three Days of the Condor*, and *All the President's Men*²¹⁴; even comedies, such as $M^*A^*S^*H$ and *Being There*²¹⁵, all depict leaders and those in authority as amoral, corrupt, and self-serving. There is no-one to trust in contemporary society.

However, I have chosen, chiefly, to look at the war-film, believing Kubrick's encomium to the genre as "a kind of hothouse for forced, quick breeding of attitudes and feelings" to be correct. *Life of Brian* functions as a theological "outlier" as humour also can function as a "hothouse" for the dissection of societal attitudes and divisions, as Glasgow and Bergson have shown. The "quick breeding" in war-films and this example of comedies is towards a deep, focused, and passionately held antipathy towards the forms of leadership which constitute military and religious societies (and thus, by extension, all society). In *Life of Brian* the antipathy is directed against everyone who seeks to act as a leader, and also everyone who seeks to be a follower. In Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket* the antipathy is personified, on a vicarious level, by Mickey Mouse, who stands as an avatar for John Wayne, who stands, in turn, as the avatar of Leadership. In the next chapter we shall explore how this avatar continued to be expressed before, during and after the period of the cinema of suspicion, and how the avatar re-emerged in the cinema of 'leadership redux'.

²¹¹ Augustine of Hippo, "On Nature and Grace," in *The Anti-Pelagian Works of Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo*, ed. Philip Schaff, trans. Peter Holmes, vol. 5, American reprint of the Edinburgh ed., Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church Series 1 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 1893), chap. XXIX (33).

²¹² Coppola, *The Godfather*; Coppola, *Godfather II*.

²¹³ Polanski, Chinatown.

²¹⁴ Pakula, The Parallax View; Pollack, Three Days of the Condor; Pakula, All the President's Men.

²¹⁵ Altman, MASH; Ashby, Being There.

²¹⁶ Young, "War of Independence," 10.

²¹⁷ Properly, and technically: "An outlying observation... that appears to deviate markedly from other members of the sample in which it occurs" (Grubbs, "Procedures for Detecting Outlying Observations in Samples," 1.1.) Popularly, and imprecisely: "a place that [lies] outside everyday experience, a place where the normal rules [do] not apply" (Gladwell, *Outliers*, 7.) ²¹⁸ See note 168 on page 271.

Chapter 8

Citizen Soldiers Leadership Redux

The West is the best,
The West is the best.
Get here and we'll do the rest...
The killer awoke before dawn
He put his boots on
He took a face from the ancient gallery
And he walked on down the hall...

The Doors, "The End" (1967)1

We saw in chapter 5 how the American *mythos* came to dominate transnational and international cinema. We further saw how this *mythos* developed from the American experience of the Frontier. We saw the importance for American self-understanding of the cardinal bearing, Westwards, which functions as the locus of the American *mythos*. We saw how Emerson, through his synthesis of the myths of the American Frontier and the American Adam, formed the true "American Religion", a quest for the self and the individual. We saw in chapter 7 how American cinema attempted, following the Second World War, to repudiate traditionally understood and enacted values of heroism and leadership, and how one man, John Wayne, became the focus for this rejected concept of leadership. Now, in a somewhat reverse hermeneutic direction, we shall examine why and how Wayne personified Adamic-leadership atavistically, and how, despite *and because of* the repudiation, the avatar remains intact today.

The Free Man, Living Greatly

The triumph and re-triumph of the American Adam in leadership emerges from the symbiosis of the West and Wayne. Wayne himself recognized, at the end of his career, the importance of locus for his contribution to American culture and *mythos*. Expressed through "songs and prose and poetry", an

¹ The Doors, *The End*, The Doors (Elektra Records, 1967).

American self-understanding had developed through the Western cultural tradition:

The fellows I worked with over the last 30 years authenticated what the West was like. Now people making movies are running out of ideas. They're making up all kinds of things. It used to be that the western was folklore and legend. Now it's all psychological, innuendos and petty fights.²

Wayne responded romantically to the idea and the possibilities of the West. In this he was not uncharacteristic of American culture. According to one of the earliest, and most astute, commentators on the American West, Bernard De Voto, to both understand and be realistic about the Westward *mythos*, is to respond to its romanticism:

Sure you're romantic about American history. ...[I]t is the most romantic of all histories. It began in myth and has developed through centuries of fairy stories. Whatever the time is in America it is always, at every moment, the mad and wayward hour when the prince is finding the little foot that alone fits into the slipper of glass. ...Ours is a story mad with the impossible, it is by chaos out of dream, it began as dream and it has continued as dream down to the last headlines you read in a newspaper.³

Furthermore the viability of the American West was inextricably dependent upon its essentially romantic nature:

...our dream there are two things above all others to be said, that only madmen could have dreamed them or would have dared to—and that we have shown a considerable faculty for making them come true.⁴

In other words, the Westward *mythos* was only true because it was romantic. In an article for *Harper's*⁵, published forty years before Wayne's complaint, De Voto showed how it was possible, and necessary, to reconcile the actor's antitheses of folklore and psychology. De Voto described the political, economic and psychological impetuses which went into the formation of the folklore of the Western. He noted, firstly, that westerners, *per se*, did not have a

² P. F. Kluge, "First and Last, a Cowboy," *Life*, January 28, 1972, 44a. A profile written with a profoundly elegiac tone while Wayne was making *The Cowboys* (1972).

³ In a letter to his collaborator Catherine Drinker Bowen, quoted by her in *Adventures of a Biographer* (Boston; Toronto: Little Brown, 1959), 106; and in "Bernard De Voto: historian, critic, and fighter," *The Atlantic*, December 1960, 75.

⁴ Bowen, "De Voto," 75.

⁵ Bernard De Voto, "The West: A Plundered Province," *Harper's Magazine*, August 1934; later reprinted as "The West: a plundered province," in *The Western Paradox: a conservation reader*, ed. Douglas Brinkley (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2000), 3–21. References will be to the anthologized essay.

good reputation in American society: in the "metropolitan press" the westerner is depicted as "the national wildman, the thunder-bringer, disciple of madness, begetter of economic heresy, immortal nincompoop deluded by maniac visions". He is endlessly complaining, being a drain on the public purse, "forever scuttling the ship of state."

But immediately you place the clamouring ninny in cowboy clothes ("Put a big hat on his head, cover the ragged overalls with hair pants and let high heels show beneath them, knot a bandanna round his neck", he becomes "one of the few romantic symbols in American life." He is no longer a profligate fool but "a free man living greatly, a rider into the sunset, enrapturer of women in dim theaters, solace of routine-weary men who seek relief in wood pulp, a figure of glamour in the reverie of adolescents, the only American who has an art and a literature devoted wholly to his celebration." As De Voto say, dryly, "[o]ne perceives a certain incompatibility between these avatars."

Christopher Maland concurs with De Voto's judgement. The myth of the American Adam, the myth of the American frontier and the myth of the American (success) dream are all focused on the cultural model of the cowboy: "When Frederick Jackson Turner and later historians emphasized the centrality of the frontier in shaping the American character from the 1890s on, one version of the American was transmuted into the solitary and often romantic cowboy hero." ¹⁰

De Voto identified two different and incompatible public personae in American society: the Westerner (a nincompoop) and the Cowboy (an atavistic hero). The latter is the former with "a mere change of clothes". There is, intended or unintended, a sense of impersonation in De Voto's description of the transformation, and, as with all impersonations, a question of authenticity. We can understand the relevance of authentic impersonation to the status of John Wayne when we recall the experiences of another European traveller to the American far-West.

More real, and more of it

In the early 1970s Umberto Eco spent some time visiting the west coast of California. He was amazed by the popularity of the wax museum in America—

⁶ De Voto, "Plundered Province," 4.

⁷ De Voto, "Plundered Province," 4.

⁸ De Voto, "Plundered Province," 4.

⁹ De Voto, "Plundered Province," 4.

¹⁰ Charles J. Maland, "The American Adam," in *The Columbia Companion to American History on Film: how the movies have portrayed the American past*, ed. Peter C. Rollins (New York; Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2003), 562.

¹¹ De Voto, "Plundered Province," 4.

the country is "spangled" with them. 12 On the road between San Francisco and Los Angeles he visited at least seven, in which a version of Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper was displayed. The quality of the waxwork varied: some were "crude and unwittingly caricatural"; others, though dimensionally accurate, were "unhappy in their violent colours, their chilling demolition of what had been Leonardo's vibrance..."13 Despite variations in quality, there was uniformity in display; at the end of a carefully directed tour, the visitor is led into a final, darkened room, "with symphonic background music and a son et lumière atmosphere."14 Often the waxwork is hidden behind a curtain, which, in a reverse of crematorium ritual, "slowly parts, as the taped voice, in deep and emotional tones, simultaneously informs you that you are having the most extraordinary spiritual experience of your life, and that you must tell your friends and acquaintances about it."15 Invariably, alongside the waxwork, in vibrant colours and three-dimensions is a reproduction of the original: sometimes a photograph of the fresco, ruined and mouldering in a museum in the Old World, more often a wooden carving or an engraving. Finally, the museums give you an opportunity to buy souvenirs, "printed reproductions of the reproduction in wax of the reproduction in wood, metal, glass."16 In all this, the underlying, almost acknowledged message is that the original work is "by now ruined, almost invisible, [and thus] unable to give you the emotion you have received from the three-dimensional wax, which is more real, and there is more of it."17

Here we see one of the perennial dialectics of American culture: the conversation between authenticity and artistry. The wax works of California are attempting to underpin their artistry by an appeal to authenticity. In fact, they attempt to assert their superiority over the original artistry of Leonardo by claiming a *greater* authenticity: "'We are giving you the reproduction so you will no longer feel any need for the original'" is Eco's summary of the motivation.¹⁸

If American culture requires a greater authenticity in artefacts than can possibly be found in authentic authenticity, how much more so is it required in people?

¹² Umberto Eco, *Travels in Hyperreality: essays*, trans. William Weaver (London: Picador, 1975), 12.

¹³ Eco, Hyperreality, 16.

¹⁴ Eco, Hyperreality, 17.

¹⁵ Eco, Hyperreality, 17.

¹⁶ Eco, Hyperreality, 17–18.

¹⁷ Eco, Hyperreality, 18.

¹⁸ Eco, Hyperreality, 19.

Citizen Soldiers 283

Following the release of *Sands of Iwo Jima*¹⁹ General Douglas MacArthur, no less, praised the film at the American Legion Convention in Florida, singling out John Wayne for his portrayal of Sergeant Stryker: "You represent the American serviceman better than the American serviceman himself." Wayne was 34 when America entered the war, seven years younger than Clark Gable, six years younger than Tyrone Power, and the same age as Gene Autry, all of whom served with distinction. Wayne began the war classified for the purposes of the draft as 3-A (family deferment), and ended it as 2-A (deferment in "support of national health, safety, or interest") following the intervention of Republic Pictures. He did not serve in the military during the Second World War.²¹

It is paradoxical, therefore, that despite his fictional war, and despite his lack of military service and experience, Wayne came to personify and embody American military service. As Slotkin interprets, correctly, MacArthur's (reported) statement, it "suggests that Wayne's mythic figure is not merely a representation but a valid substitute for and even improvement on the real thing."²² Or, as Eco neatly summarised:

... the American imagination demands the real thing and, to attain it, must fabricate the absolute fake.²³

John Wayne is both the absolute fake, and the absolute guarantor of authenticity of a model of leadership which is predicated upon the myth of the American Adam.

¹⁹ See Gustav Hasford's assimilation of the ideology of this film in the previous chapter, in the section "Is that you, John Wayne? Is this me?".

²⁰ At least, as reported by Wayne himself in Richard Warren Lewis, "John Wayne: The Playboy Interview," *Playboy Magazine*, May 1971; reprinted in Judith M. Riggin, "Interview: An 'American' Voice," in *John Wayne: a bio-bibliography* (London: Greenwood, 1992), 31–67. Later quoted in Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation: the myth of the Frontier in twentieth-century America* (New York: Atheneum, 1992), 514, without citation. Whereas there is a record of MacArthur making at speech to the Legion on 17 October 1951, there is no record of the praise of Wayne in in MacArthur's autobiography, his collected speeches, or a posthumous biography: Speech to the National Convention, Miami, Florida, *General MacArthur: Speeches and Reports* 1908-1964, ed. Edward T. Imparato (Paducah, Ky.: Turner Publishing, 2000), 188–91; Douglas MacArthur, *Reminiscences* (London: Heinemann, 1964); Douglas MacArthur, *A Soldier Speaks: public papers and speeches*, ed. Vorin E. Whan, Jr. (London: Praeger, 1965); William Manchester, *American Caesar: Douglas MacArthur*, 1880-1964 (Boston: Little, Brown, 1978).

²¹ See Wills, *Politics of Celebrity*, 107–110; Randy Roberts and James S. Olson, *John Wayne*, *American* (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 211–213.

²² Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation, 514.

²³ Eco, Hyperreality, 8.

Half Myth, Half Movie Star²⁴

We can see most clearly the transformation of John Wayne, the bit-part unsuccessful fictional war hero, into the myth and movie-star that he became for the last thirty years of his life through his participation in the three films made by John Ford beginning in 1948, *Fort Apache, She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, and *Rio Grande*²⁵: the so-called "Cavalry Trilogy". ²⁶

Wayne had worked with Ford before the war, in which Ford himself had served with distinction as part of the Navy Reserve and the Office of Strategic Services (an intelligence service of the United States) as a photographer and film-maker.²⁷ When Ford returned to civilian film-making in the post-war period his films were influenced by his wartime experiences, and the uncertainties of the developing Cold War. It is profitable to read the Cavalry Trilogy as complementary, if not unified, explorations of the concerns of this period. Ford explored in these films the "ideological concerns of the World War and its aftermath"28 by moving their locus from the combat film of the Pacific theatre (as he had done in his documentary The Battle of Midway and his feature film *They Were Expendable*²⁹) away from the contemporary and into the "mythic landscape of the Western". 30 By doing so, Ford "proposed a mythic response" 31 to, and critique of, both the Western victory in Europe and the Pacific and the West's response to super-power Soviet Communism. He used the American past "to seek historical or mythical answers to the problems that troubled him in the present."32 It was inevitable, despite his protestations against accusations of "art", that he chose to do so in the genre of the Western, as it was "a vital medium for reflecting and articulating crucial issues of modern American society."33 The Western, as the loco fabula of American self-understanding and so

²⁴ A subheading description of Wayne in Kluge, "First and Last, a Cowboy."

²⁵ Ford, *Fort Apache*; Ford, *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*; Ford, *Rio Grande*. The best biography of John Ford is Joseph McBride, *Searching for John Ford: a life* (London: Faber and Faber, 2003). To this may be added two works of "Fordolatry", Peter Bogdanovich, *John Ford* (London: Studio Vista, 1968); Lindsay Anderson, *About John Ford* (London: Plexus, 1981). An excellent examination of Ford's films is William Darby, *John Ford's Westerns: a thematic analysis, with a filmography* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1996).

²⁶ The films evolved into a trilogy without being planned as such: see McBride, Searching, 449.

²⁷ See McBride, *Searching*, chap. 10. Ford was injured during the Battle of Midway.

²⁸ Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation, 334.

²⁹ John Ford, *The Battle of Midway*, Technicolor 16mm, U.S.A. (Twentieth Century–Fox Film Corporation, 1942); John Ford, *They Were Expendable*, B&W 35 mm, U.S.A. (Metro–Goldwyn–Mayer, 1945).

³⁰ Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation, 334.

³¹ Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation, 334.

³² McBride, Searching, 418.

³³ Michael Coyne, *The Crowded Prairie: American national identity in the Hollywood Western,* Cinema and society series (London: I.B. Tauris, 1997), 33.

"implicitly bound up with pride in the American experience"³⁴, could therefore be used "with impunity to reproach twentieth-century political realities. The genre functioned as both a contained indictment and a reaffirmation of America, past and present."³⁵ Because it was "red-blooded"³⁶ American, it did not have to worry about accusations of Red-politics. Thus, by making genre-pictures, Ford was able to affirm "the importance of the patriotic solidarity that made victory possible"³⁷; victory in the Indian Wars of the 1870s and 1880s, and victory in the war against fascism in the 1940s. More pertinently for our requirements, "all three films of the loosely connected Cavalry trilogy revolve around a crisis of leadership".³⁸

It must be emphasised that John Ford did not believe that this was what he was doing. The most famous story about Ford relates his contribution to meeting of the Directors Guild in October 1950 at which the guild president Joseph Mankiewicz was accused of Communist sympathies. Ford apparently introduced his contribution to the meeting by saying: "My name's John Ford. I make Westerns." This was, even then, a bathetically understated description. Ford's career, from 1917 until 1970, included 226 films as director and/or producer, 87 documentary films made during his service with OSS; he received four Best Director Academy Awards, was the first recipient of the American Film Institute's Life Achievement Award, and received, among other awards, the Medal of Freedom, a Purple Heart, the Legion of Merit, the Navy Air Medal and the jewels and cape of a Knight of Malta from Pope Paul VI. Even so, Ford did not wish to claim much for his art, denying even that description to his films:

You say someone's called me the greatest poet of the Western saga. I am not a poet, and I don't know what a Western saga is. I would say that is horseshit. I am just a hardnosed, hard-working, run-of-the-mill director.⁴¹

³⁴ Coyne, Crowded Prairie, 33.

³⁵ Coyne, Crowded Prairie, 33.

³⁶ Coyne, Crowded Prairie, 33.

³⁷ Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation, 334.

³⁸ Joseph McBride and Michael Wilmington, John Ford (London: Secker and Warburg, 1974), 97.

³⁹ This is the pithier version preferred by: Gaylyn Studlar and Matthew Bernstein,

[&]quot;Introduction," in *John Ford Made Westerns: filming the legend in the sound era*, ed. Gaylyn Studlar and Matthew Bernstein (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 1. They acknowledge that there is better, but not definitive, testimony to the wordier "I am a director of Westerns." See Bogdanovich, *John Ford*, 18; Studlar and Bernstein, "Introduction," n1, 18; Kenneth L. Geist, *Pictures Will Talk: the life and films of Joseph L. Mankiewicz* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1978), 202; see also the other sources cited in McBride, *Searching*, 759.

⁴⁰ McBride, Searching, 9-10,28.

⁴¹ Walter Wagner, You Must Remember This (New York: Putnam, 1975), 65.

Lindsay Anderson did not think much of *Fort Apache*: it was not "a very satisfactory film". He thought the "casting was weak", with some minor parts "poorly played" and Henry Fonda was "unhappily miscast". ⁴² His opinion is in the minority. Bosley Crowther said Ford's work was that of a "genuine artist", in which "[e]very episode, every detail of drama and personality is crisply and tautly realized." ⁴³ James Agee was prepared to forgive John Ford the poor acting ("Shirley Temple and her husband, John Agar, handle the love interest as if they were sharing a soda-fountain special...") for the verve of the direction and "a good deal of the camera work which sneaks by as incidental are somewhere near enduring the rest for." ⁴⁴ Later critics were able to recognize the film's narrative and aesthetic pleasures:

More impressive even than the credit sequence's sweeps across Monument Valley are the vast, epic compositions of Thursday leading his columns, backed by thunderous skies, with Archie Stout's camera scarcely a foot off the ground.⁴⁵

And *Fort Apache*'s cinematographic achievement is more than matched by its "remarkable" ideological achievement that "enables us to see ...that an insane system may be perpetuated by noble men, and, indeed, that it needs noble and dedicated men to perpetuate itself." ⁴⁶ It is "a seminal work of mythography." ⁴⁷

The narrative device of all three films, centred upon the experiences of the U.S. Cavalry during the Indian Wars, provided Ford with the "convenient structure" to explore his themes, and provided a unity of location and protagonists. Ford was able to describe the tensions between the microcosm of the fort community ("static, unchanging... almost entirely severed from the outside world..." and the threat posed by the macrocosmic "natural and human environment", which is inevitably hostile.

⁴² Anderson, About John Ford, 79.

⁴³ Bosley Crowther, "'Fort Apache,' RKO Western, With Fonda, Wayne and Temple, Bill at Capitol," *The New York Times* (New York, June 25, 1948).

⁴⁴ James Agee, "Film reviews," *The Nation*, July 24, 1948; later reprinted in *Agee on Film: criticism and comment on the movies* (New York: Modern Library, 2000), 309.

⁴⁵ Tag Gallagher, *John Ford, the Man and His Films* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 317.

⁴⁶ McBride and Wilmington, John Ford, 109.

⁴⁷ Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation, 343.

⁴⁸ Jean Pierre Coursodon and Pierre Sauvage, *American Directors* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1983), 131.

⁴⁹ Coursodon and Sauvage, American Directors, 131.

Furthermore, at the heart of each film "is the character of the fort commander, his personal problems, his relationship to his men and the fort's civilians, his approach to the Indian problem." ⁵⁰

Ford's relationship with families, in the particular and the general, were complicated⁵¹, and, possibly as a result of his sense of rootlessness from his family emigration from Ireland, his films frequently depicted "traditional communities in Ireland and the Old West" in critical contrast to what he found in contemporary America.⁵² Because Ford was concerned at least to begin his films with a sense of 'how things were'53, his Westerns "cannot escape upholding traditional 'feminine' values (home and family, marriage and parenthood, religion and altruistic sacrifice...)".54 At the same time, he did not "merely idealise archaic communities or indulge in uncomplicated optimism." 55 The regiment, which "symbolizes the values of civilization", was constantly threatened by the macrocosm from without, personified by "a fanatical raceenemy", but also from within, "by the weakness (or corruption) of a political order ruled by 'female' sentiment."56 Slotkin would be more accurate to say "feminized" sentiment, in that it wasn't something limited to the female gender. It was a sentiment which originated not in gender, but geography. The regiment, the community, the avatar of America, was threatened by "Easterners".

Fort Apache begins with the stage coach bringing Colonel Owen Thursday⁵⁷ through the barren lands of Monument Valley. Thursday is frustrated that he has not yet arrived at his destination:

THURSDAY: What a country! Forty miles from mud hole to mud hole. [He consults his notebook] Mule Creek. Dead Man's Squaw. Schmidt Wells.

⁵⁰ Coursodon and Sauvage, American Directors, 131.

⁵¹ See McBride, Searching, 419–420, 232–237.

⁵² McBride, Searching, 419.

⁵³ For a soldier's assessment of Ford's accuracy, see Jeffrey C. Prater, "John Ford's Cavalry Trilogy: Myth or Reality?" (Master of Military Art and Science thesis, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1989),

<www.dtic.mil/docs/citations/ADA21179>.

⁵⁴ Gaylyn Studlar, "Sacred Duties, Poetic Passions: John Ford and the issue of femininity," in *John Ford Made Westerns: filming the legend in the sound era*, ed. Gaylyn Studlar and Matthew Bernstein (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 49.

⁵⁵ McBride, Searching, 419.

⁵⁶ Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation, 335.

⁵⁷ There is much debate on the historical characters and situations represented by Thursday and the events of the film. Most commentators settle on some reference to the massacre of general George Custer and the U.S. 7th Cavalry at Little Big Horn, Montana, in June 1876, although other suggestions have been made (see Steve Neale, "'The story of Custer in everything but name?': Colonel Thursday and Fort Apache," *Journal of Film and Video* 47, no. 1–3 (1995): 26–32; Coyne, *Crowded Prairie*, 59; Wills, *Politics of Celebrity*, 167; McBride, *Searching*, 447–448.) Ultimately, the historical referents are subservient to the mythology.

Hangman's Flats. Hassayampa. At the end of the rainbow, Fort Apache. Fort Apache. Blast an ungrateful war department that sends a man to a post out here.⁵⁸

With him is his daughter, Philadelphia (played by Shirley Temple, in her first film with John Ford since *Wee Willie Winkie*⁵⁹). Their conversation tells us that Thursday has recently been stationed in Europe, where Thursday wishes he were still.

When Colonel Thursday arrives in Fort Apache, complete with daughter, history and grievances, his new command react with suspicion towards him. Those suspicions are justified by his origins in the East, and his desire to return there as swiftly as possible. As Godkin put it, describing the historic suspicion Westerners had of Easterners:

The kind of man they [the Westerners] most admire is one who has evolved rules for the conduct of life out of his own brain by the help of his own observation; and they entertain a strong distrust of men who have learned what they know by a fixed course of study, mainly because persons who have passed the early part of their lives in learning out of books or from teachers are generally found less fitted to grapple with the kind of difficulties which usually present themselves in Western life, than those who were compelled to learn to conquer them by actual contact with them.⁶⁰

Thursday immediately and unpatriotically antagonizes his men with his interruption of the dance held in honour of General Washington's birthday. Ford skilfully sketches in the background of the regiment and its soldiers, with the unmentioned but unavoidable fact of the Civil War only ten years in the intradiegetic past. Captain York (John Wayne) greets "General Thursday":

THURSDAY: I am not a general, Captain. A man is what he's paid for. I am paid in the rank of lieutenant colonel.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Ford, *Fort Apache*. The screen play was by Frank S. Nugent, "suggested by" the short-story by James Warner Bellah, "Massacre," *Saturday Evening Post*, February 22, 1947. Bellah was later described (by his son!) as "a fascist, a racist, and a world-class bigot": Ronald L. Davis, *John Ford: Hollywood's Old Master* (Norman; London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1995), 204; quoted in McBride, *Searching*, 449.

⁵⁹ John Ford, Wee Willie Winkie, B&W 35 mm, U.S.A. (Twentieth Century–Fox Film Corporation, 1937).

⁶⁰ Godkin, "Aristocratic Opinions of Democracy," 218. See the (Emersonian deprecation and) comparison with Corporal Upham in *Saving Private Ryan* on page 314 below.

⁶¹ See Prater for a discussion of the realities of brevet ranks and the effect of the Civil War on the post-war Cavalry: "John Ford's Cavalry Trilogy," 42–43,51–52.

The next morning Thursday calls his senior officers to him, and reads his orders to them. York is relieved of command, Captain Collingwood (George O'Brien) is relieved as adjutant, and both are returned to their troops. Thursday makes it clear that he did not wish to be in command at Fort Apache, but as he has to be there, "I intend to make this regiment the finest on the frontier." He will achieve this by eliminating the carelessness that has grown up around "dress and deportment... The uniform, gentlemen, is not a subject for individual, whimsical expression." York and his fellow officers are implicitly criticised by the camera through the use of close-ups for their slouch hats and bandanas. In a tropic use of "Hollywood irony", Thursday tells the officers "Understand me, gentlemen, I am not a martinet." The inference we take is that he is exactly that.

Later, Thursday realises that the Apache revolt is being fomented by a "well-known" warband leader, Cochise. Over six campaigns Cochise has "outgeneraled us, out-fought us, out-run us," Collingwood recalls. Thursday muses on the possibility of being "the man who brought Cochise back," and Collingwood stares at him in shock, realising that from then on "the commander will be working for his own posterior glory at the expense of his men's lives." 63

This is part of the process by which Thursday is described as and constructed into the anti-archetype of the right, proper, and noble hero, one appropriate for the noble citizens of the Cavalry. Opposed to the values and actions of Thursday is York. The contrast between them is so clear, at the beginning of the film, that Jim Kitses is able to tabulate the antitheses⁶⁴:

Thursday	York
East	West
Europe	frontier
West Point	Fort Apache
book knowledge	wilderness knowledge
individual	family and community
glory	duty

⁶² Gradually, though, we see Thursday adapting to his environment and deviating from regulation uniform. On his first patrol against Diablo's band he adopts non-regulation headgear: see note 65 on page 290 below.

⁶³ McBride and Wilmington, John Ford, 106.

⁶⁴ Jim Kitses, *Horizons West: directing the Western from John Ford to Clint Eastwood*, New ed. (London: British Film Institute Publishing, 2004), 64.

And yet, after Thursday's futile death at the end of the film, York has transformed his anti-regulation dress and manner into an approximation of his dead commander's. He wears Thursday's havelock cap⁶⁵, instead of his erstwhile slouch hat. As McBride and Wilmington put it: "It is impossible to put too much stress on this gesture; it implies nothing less than York's tragic submission to Thursday's vainglory, and, through this 'obedient rebel', the submission of the Cavalry itself." York memorialises Thursday both through mimesis and also in his interactions with the press, the first estate of American civic society:

YORK: No man died more gallantly. Nor won more honour for his regiment.

REPORTER: Of course, you're familiar with the famous painting of 'Thursday's Charge', sir?

YORK: Yes, I saw it when last in Washington.

SECOND REPORTER: That was a magnificent work. There were these massed columns of Apaches in their warpaint and feathered bonnets. And here was Thursday, leading his men in that heroic charge.

YORK: Correct in every detail.

The second reporter consciously or unconsciously uses the word "legend" to describe Thursday's new status: "the newspapers—with the help of those Army men who witnessed the spectacle—are writing the birth of a legend, creating a noble leader who died with his men..."⁶⁷

York espoused the memory of Thursday for the sake of the regiment and its morale in the Indian wars. It was an attitude and a sacrifice that Wayne himself imbued: "I don't believe in giving authority and positions of leadership and judgment to irresponsible people." York was not an irresponsible person: he realised that the war would continue and so the regiment, and its *mythos*, needed to continue as well:

Ford is saying that the Cavalry, in fact the country, lives on despite the errors of any one leader; and if printing a falsehood will help the morales [sic] of the Cavalry or the nation—then print the legend.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Made by wearing a white handkerchief under his regulation kepi to keep the sun from the neck and shoulders. See Prater, "John Ford's Cavalry Trilogy," 40.

⁶⁶ McBride and Wilmington, John Ford, 108.

⁶⁷ Bogdanovich, John Ford, 34.

⁶⁸ Warren Lewis, "Playboy Interview." Wayne was controversially, but unsurprisingly, talking about "giving" leadership responsibilities to black Americans.

⁶⁹ Bogdanovich, *John Ford*, 34. See also James A. Sandos, "Westward Expansion and the Indian Wars," in *The Columbia Companion to American History on Film: how the movies have portrayed the*

But Ford has actually depicted something more than the mere printing of the legend: he has shown how events have become legendary, and, through their apotheosis, begin to exercise their influence over men, even men as sympathetically portrayed as Captain York. Ford has reconstituted the mythology of Custer/Thursday and his futile leadership into the necessary nutrient of American, patriotic, self-understanding. As Slotkin puts it: "We are to continue to believe in our myths despite our knowledge that they are untrue." And conscious knowledge is not even required for this process to work. Thus, when Slotkin argues that *Rio Grande* was seen by Ford as a potboiler constructed from motifs close to hand? we have proof of Lévi-Strauss's dictum that myth moves unconsciously.

It would seem on a first viewing (and repeated viewings) of *Fort Apache*, that York is portrayed as the archetypical Western hero, and that Thursday is (clearly) the Easterner villain, shallow, self-seeking, socially isolated, and destined to come to a bad end. But the final scene tells us and shows us that Thursday, through mythological action and then in reality, secured the future of the regiment and the victory of the United States, represented by the U.S. Cavalry and its "flags"⁷³, by his actions. He is truly, in the eyes of the film, a leader worthy of imitation, even if it is a leadership of symbolism. But in order for him to be that, he had to fail as a man, a father, and a friend. Thursday is a leader *by being* socially isolated.

Furthermore, Michael Coyne, posits an interesting contrarian thesis against the idea that York, the westerner who can get things done, is a truly western individual. Rather, he suggests, York is actually "the consummate organization man, a true corporate liberal." He directs our attention to William Whyte's book of business sociology, *The Organization Man*, in which white-collar (if not yellow bandana) workers are the ones

of our middle class who have left home, spiritually as well as physically, to take the vows of organization life, and it is they who are the mind and soul of our great self-perpetuating institutions. Only a few are top managers or ever will be. ...But they are the dominant members of our

American past, ed. Peter C. Rollins (New York; Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2003), 103–108.

⁷⁰ Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation, 342.

⁷¹ Slotkin, Gunfighter Nation, 356.

⁷² See the discussion on page 147 above.

⁷³ Mrs Collingwood, watching her husband and his men riding out to battle from the rooftops of Fort Apache, declares "I can't see him—all I can see is the flags". Her husband has been visually, and completely, subsumed into the symbols of the Cavalry and the state. For the mythological and ideological importance of this scene, see McBride, *Searching*, 30; Leland Poague, "'All I Can See Is the Flags': 'Fort Apache' and the Visibility of History," *Cinema Journal* 27, no. 2 (1988): 8–26.

⁷⁴ Coyne, Crowded Prairie, 59.

society nonetheless. ...it is from their ranks that are coming most of the first and second echelons of our leadership, and it is their values which will set the American temper.⁷⁵

Whyte's analysis gives us a further reason to explain York's "capitulation" at the end of *Fort Apache*, where he allows himself to be subsumed sartorially and mythologically, into the pattern set by Thursday: "between themselves and organization they believe they see an ultimate harmony and, more than most elders recognize, they are building an ideology that will vouchsafe this trust." ⁷⁶

York's final speech in the film, over the ghostly image of the dead troopers, shows the subsumption of individual to the collective, the triumph of the organization. The dead soldiers (like "Collingworth") haven't been forgotten, because

...they haven't died. They're living, right out there. Collingwood and the rest. They'll keep on living as long as the regiment lives. ...The faces may change, the names, but they're there, they're the regiment. The regular army, now and fifty years from now. They're better men than they used to be. Thursday did that. He made it a command to be proud of.⁷⁷

York celebrates Thursday, to be sure, but he does so in a way which celebrates the members of the Regiment. This was an important part of Ford's post-war ethos. As Anderson notes, it is "the key to Ford's post war Cavalry pictures":

Ford's attitude to war is that of a professional soldier, not that of a militarist; and the soldiers whom his films invite us to respect are men who have freely chosen to serve their country in its armed forces...⁷⁸

In *Rio Grande*⁷⁹ John Wayne plays Lt Col. Kirby Yorke (the same character, in all but rank and a variation in spelling his surname, as he played in *Fort Apache*⁸⁰), a U.S. cavalry officer estranged from his (Confederate) wife and son since he burnt down her family plantation during the Civil War fifteen years

⁷⁵ William H. Whyte, *The Organization Man* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1956), 3.

⁷⁶ Whyte, Organization Man, 4.

 $^{^{77}}$ Note the echoes of Sergeant Hartman's "regimental immortality" from Full Metal Jacket discussed on page 264.

⁷⁸ Anderson, *About John Ford*, 122.

⁷⁹ The screenplay was written by "archconservative" James Kevin McGuinness (McBride, *Searching*, 503), and was based on the story by James Warner Bellah, "Mission with No Record," *The Saturday Evening Post*, September 27, 1947. The theme of the film ("breaking the law in pursuit of a supposedly greater goal is justified by the demands of American empire building." McBride, *Searching*, 503.) has led Slotkin to describe it as "the Cold War Western" Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, 353; see the section on "Cult of the Cavalry", 353-365.

⁸⁰ Some complicated interpretations have grown up around this variation, which, in fact, was no more than a transcription error. See McBride, *Searching*, note 13, page 502.

before. When Yorke learns that his son (Claude Jarman Jr.) has been expelled from West Point, enlisted as a trooper and been posted to his father's command, he addresses the recruits:

YORKE: I don't want you men to be fooled about what's coming up for you. Torture? At least that. The war department promised me at least one hundred eighty men. They sent me eighteen all told. You are the eighteen. [CLOSE] So, each one of you will have to do the work of ten men. If you fail I'll have you spread-eagled on a wagon wheel. [CUT TO TROOPER YORKE] If you desert you'll be found, tracked down and broken into bits. That is all.

The recruits are taken by the sergeants for training, except for Trooper Yorke, who is escorted to his father's tent. Yorke establishes how long it is since he last saw his son, and yet how displeased he is that he failed at West Point. He makes it clear that there is to be no nepotism on his post:

YORKE: Well, on the official record, you're my son. But on this post you're just another trooper. You heard me tell the recruits what I need from them. Twice that I will expect from you. At Chapultepec my father, your grandfather, shot for cowardice the son of a United States senator. That was his duty. I will do mine. You've chosen my way of life. I hope you have the guts to... endure it. But put out of your mind any romantic ideas that it's a way of glory. It's a life of suffering and hardship and uncompromising devotion to your oath and your duty.

But Ford doesn't allow the scene to end on such a hard statement of arid duty. Trooper Yorke refuses to dismiss until his salute is properly returned, according to "Army regulations", and, when he leaves the tent, Col. Yorke measures his son's height against the tent's roof, as the extradiegetic music modulates from a martial flourish into to a more domestic theme.

We can see two things from this sequence. Firstly, to be a true leader (and Yorke is a true leader in the eyes of the film) there is no apparent distinction, on the surface, from being an unsympathetic martinet: Yorke's speech to the recruits is as uncompromising as Thursday's speech to his officers. However, second, we see that the true leader tempers his severity with both an overwhelming sense of duty (Yorke's willingness to shoot a senator's son if duty calls for it) and a private, unexpressed, affection for those in his care.

Even though Thursday ultimately succeeded as the symbol of a leader, he failed as a man because he was isolated from his community, represented by his daughter, his domestic accommodation, and his relationship with his fellow officers. Yorke is a more sympathetic character but even he cannot escape the inevitable consequences of being a leader. He is alone and isolated; his family is removed from him by his sense of duty. Even when his estranged wife comes to the Fort to buy out their son, she acknowledges that she can never overcome

her rival, the U.S. Cavalry. She describes Yorke as "that ramrod, wrecked ruin. The same old Kirby." To be a leader is to be cast off from society and all that makes us human.

The Mysteriously Attractive Man⁸¹

The classic example of this trope in Hollywood film is, of course, *Shane*⁸², which exhibited "with remarkable purity all the basic components of the classical Western." The story is "simple and moralistic, undeviating in its imagery and utterly without irony, but precisely for those reasons it allows its images to work as myth powerfully and directly upon the audience." Alan Ladd plays the mysterious stranger who rides into the nameless and characterless town of pig farmers, with a past and a gun. When the homesteaders face extinction from the cattle ranchers Shane takes up his gun again ("It's only a tool. It's men who are good or evil"), and makes the township safe for the domesticity represented by Joey (Brandon De Wilde), his father Joe Starrett (Van Heflin), and his mother Marian (Jean Arthur). The film deals with the interplay between history and mythology, content and style, the "aestheticizing tendency", as its "highest expression": the *mythos* of the West is "virtually reduced to its essentials and then fixed in the dreamy clarity of a fairy tale."

Shane is the personification of the Western hero, hardly a man at all, "but something like the Spirit of the West". 86 He is "the man-in-the-middle who mediates the forces of civilization and savagery." 87 His mediation comes through the use of his gun, or, more properly, his willingness to embody the emotions and actions by which the force and meaning of the gun is enacted:

Shane is purified violence. He is celibate but he loves. He is not from the valley but from the mountain. 88

⁸¹ Lloyd Baugh's description of Shane, along with "friend, helper, confidante...moral support and encouragement...educator, protector, defender...[with] goodness and natural grace..." *Imaging the Divine: Jesus and Christ-figures in film* (Kansas City, Mo.: Sheed & Ward, 1997), 162–163.

⁸² Stevens, Shane.

⁸³ Will Wright, *Sixguns and Society: a structural study of the Western* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), 33.

⁸⁴ Jasper, "Systematizing," 241.

⁸⁵ Robert Warshow, "Movie Chronicle: The Westerner," in *The Immediate Experience: movies, comics, theatre & other aspects of popular culture,* Enlarged ed. (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 2001), 120.

⁸⁶ Warshow, "Westerner," 120.

⁸⁷ Thomas Schatz, *Old Hollywood/New Hollywood: ritual, art and industry,* Studies in Cinema 15 (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1983), 105.

⁸⁸ Scott, Hollywood Dreams and Biblical Stories, 52.

In the end, Shane returns to the mountains, mortally wounded, having entrusted Joe and Marian to the care of Joey. David Jasper recognizes the religious dimensions of this narrative arc: "as a drama of salvation in the 'holy land' of the American West [the film] fulfils the viewer's fantasies without disturbing the longings which underpin them." Shane is Moses, unable to reach the Promised Land; he is Jesus, establishing the Church by giving his Mother and St John each into the care of the other. But, more importantly, he does not belong in the homesteaders' town; he came from elsewhere, and he will die elsewhere, after having served and led the people of whom he is not a part: "the hero who saves the family cannot remain within it without disrupting it further." He must leave the community he saved in order to free it of his (violent) taint; "he becomes the [expelled] scapegoat to which we transfer our own violent sins."

In this way the American Adam has become the American Cain; exercising heroic individual leadership results in being expelled from the community and marked, not with the curse of the restless wanderer [Gen 4:10–12], but with the status of hero and leader. As Shane tells Joey, "there's no living with a killing...there's no going back from one. Right or wrong, it's a brand. A brand that sticks."

But, as we have already seen, to be cast off from society does not mean being cast-off from the Organization. There is a way back in for Adam–Cain. The immortality which accrues to true members of the Marines, the Cavalry, the Regiment, the Organization, is the feudal *fief* which derives from surrendering to the power of *My-L*. ⁹² The importance of this idea to Ford and *My-L* is seen in the way an encomium to the past and future men of the regiment is repeated in the closing narration of *She Wore A Yellow Ribbon*:

So here they are, the dog-faced soldiers, the regulars, the fifty-cents-a-day professionals, riding the outposts of a nation. From Fort Reno to Fort Apache, from Sheridan to Stark, they were all the same: men in dirty shirt blue and only a cold page in the history books to mark their passing. But

⁸⁹ Jasper, "Systematizing," 241.

⁹⁰ Lyden, Film as Religion, 142.

⁹¹ Lyden, *Film as Religion*, 142 (and similarly 92–93); see also John Lyden, "To Commend or To Critique? The Question of Religion and Film Studies," *Journal of Religion and Film* 1, no. 2 (October 1997), <www.unomaha.edu/jrf/tocommend.htm>.

⁹² For a preliminary division of leadership, including the functioning of Mythological-Leadership, see Chapter 2, and the discussion on page 54. For a concluding definition of *My-L*, see Chapter 9, "The Emergence of Mythological-Leadership", on page 332.

wherever they rode, and whatever they fought for, that place became the United States.⁹³

We see here the strategic means by which the model of *My-L* by the isolated, heroic individual of the American Adam is perpetuated beyond and despite its (seeming) repudiation in the films of the previous chapter. The American Adam may remain the heroic, isolated leader, just so long as he leads citizen soldiers.

"...an ordinary man doing the best he can"94

grace, gravitas, and good intentions.99

In 1998 Hollywood returned to this theme, in the most spectacular, impressive, and profitable means imaginable. Steven Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan*⁹⁵, released shortly after his anti-slavery film *Amistad*⁹⁶, received near, but not universal, adulation. It earned \$440 million worldwide in its first three years of release⁹⁷, and received five Academy Awards, including Best Director for Spielberg.⁹⁸ Thomas Doherty, in a nuanced, and sometimes critical, review says Perfectly timed and pitched (in both senses), *Saving Private Ryan* radiates

"Sheer massed authenticity"

Part of Steven Spielberg's "good intentions" was to present an 'authentic' record of the Normandy invasion of 1944. In his many interviews to publicise the film Spielberg repeated, again and again, his desire "to recreate the Omaha Beach landing the way the veterans experienced it, not the way Hollywood producers and directors have imagined it." He was "trying to show something

⁹³ Ford, *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*. The film was written by Frank S. Nugent and Laurence Stallings, and based on two Bellah stories: "Big Hunt," *The Saturday Evening Post*, December 6, 1947; "War Party," *Saturday Evening Post*, June 19, 1948.

⁹⁴ John Wrathall's description of Captain Miller: "Reviews: On The Beach," *Sight and Sound* 8, no. 9 (September 1998): 34.

⁹⁵ Spielberg, Saving Private Ryan.

⁹⁶ Steven Spielberg, Amistad, Technicolor / Panavision, U.S.A. (DreamWorks Distribution, 1997).

⁹⁷ Ian Freer, *The Complete Spielberg* (London: Virgin, 2001), 272. One online source says the film's total lifetime gross is \$481,840,909: "Summary Gross: 'Saving Private Ryan' (1998)," *Box Office Mojo*, November 2011, <www.boxofficemojo.com/movies/?id=savingprivateryan.htm>.

⁹⁸ Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, "The 71st Academy Awards Winners (1999)," Oscars Legacy, 2011, <www.oscars.org/awards/academyawards/legacy/ceremony/71st.html>. The other winners were Cinematography (Janusz Kaminski), Film Editing (Michael Kahn), Sound (Gary Rydstrom, Gary Summers, Andy Nelson, Ronald Judkins) and Sound Effects Editing (Gary Rydstrom, Richard Hymns).

⁹⁹ Thomas Doherty, "'Saving Private Ryan' [review]," Cineaste 24, no. 1 (December 15, 1998): 68.

the war film really hadn't dared to show". 100 This was an issue of morality, setting aside any aesthetic considerations. Spielberg told media representatives in Los Angeles:

You know, in this age of disclosure, it would have been irresponsible for me to undercut the truth of what that war was like... There have been 84 World War II films that showed something else. This would have been the 85th slap in the face to the men who died knowing the truth.¹⁰¹

In order to do this, Spielberg and his team assembled (and publicized their assembling) the greatest number of authentic World War Two weapons, uniforms, insignia and regulations since, if not the Normandy landings then certainly, the filming of *The Longest Day*¹⁰², the film which most critics took as the baseline measure of Spielberg's achievement.¹⁰³ The filmmakers' dedication was recognized by the critics: "Like monks bent over an illuminated manuscript", Spielberg and his crew paid "attention to martial detail".¹⁰⁴ The film crew refought the Normandy landings "with a degree of hard detail unprecedented in fictional Cinema."¹⁰⁵ As Neal Ascherson put it, "Spielberg's method is to smash through all the philosophical problems [in the depiction of war] by sheer massed 'authenticity'."¹⁰⁶

The aesthetic detail had its intended moral effect. John Nichols, who had flown strike missions, been shot down and taken prisoner in the first Gulf War, reviewed the film for *The Sun. Ryan* has present day implications: "next time Clinton decides to loose off a barrage of missiles he should watch this film. Because *Saving Private Ryan* opens one's eyes to the fact that wars are not about governments, they are about people. War is not glamorous and safe, just brutal, cruel and bloody terrifying—and people die." A Royal Marines veteran, Sergeant Major Ken Murgatroyd, who helped recreate the Omaha beach

¹⁰⁰ In an interview with Matt Lauer on NBC's *Today Show*, broadcast over two days, 23-24 July 1998. Quoted by Suid, *Guts and Glory*, 626.

¹⁰¹ Judith I. Brennan, "Rating the Big One," *The Los Angeles Times*, July 15, 1998. Despite Suid's attempts to evaluate, literally, Spielberg's quantities, it seems clear that the director was speaking figuratively: Suid, *Guts and Glory*, n32, 735.

¹⁰² Ken Annakin et al., *The Longest Day*, CinemaScope 35mm, U.S.A. (Twentieth Century–Fox Film Corporation, 1962). John Wayne played Lt. Col. Benjamin Vandervoort, commanding officer of 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment (82nd Airborne). In 1944 Vandervoort was 27 years old; when Wayne made the film he was 55.

¹⁰³ *The Longest* Day was itself, merely "a kind of storytelling newsreel" (in Jeanine Basinger's happy phrase): *The World War II Combat Film: anatomy of a genre*, rev. ed. (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 2003), 171.

¹⁰⁴ Doherty, "Ryan [review]," 68.

¹⁰⁵ Geoff Brown, "'Saving Private Ryan' [review]," The Times (London, September 10, 1998).

¹⁰⁶ Neal Ascherson, "Missing In Action," *The Observer*, September 6, 1998. Note the distancing quotation marks used by Ascherson.

¹⁰⁷ Flt Lt Jon Nichols, "The Brutal Truth," The Sun (London, September 11, 1998).

landings, reported that "[t]he lads who fought in the Falklands war said the filming brought back Bomb Alley." Benis Frank, an American Marine veteran, admitted "I have never seen combat portrayed so realistically in any other war film I have seen in 60+ years of moviegoing." Paul Fussell, whose career as a historian has explored the way in which the horror of war is simultaneously coopted and ignored by political and patriotic sentiment, admitted, despite some reservations

...the movie's treatment of D-Day is so unrelenting in its appalling honesty that few combat veterans will emerge from it without crying and trembling all over again. Indeed, the first half-hour of this film should stifle forever all the unfeeling cant about the Good War. I'd like the Omaha Beach section made into a self-contained pseudo-documentary titled 'Omaha Beach: Aren't You Glad You Weren't There?' 110

Neal Ascherson, in an ambivalent review, concurred about the Omaha Landing section: "At the end, almost anyone must feel: 'Yes, that is what it must have been like.'"111

Some critics refused to accept this ascribed *sui generis* status for *Ryan*. Critics with any kind of cultural memory, such as Thomas Doherty or Jeanine Basinger, knew that it is impossible to believe that *Saving Private Ryan* has managed to say something about war that no film had dared articulate before. It was not the first film to proclaim that war "is violent and terrifying, that good guys die, that moral verities wilt under fire." It is, on the other hand, "a major example of the struggle film historians face when dealing with modern critics who judge artistic events by the standards of their own time, and with viewers whose knowledge of the films of the past is thin, if not nonexistent." 113

The "struggle" follows twin tracks. First, the previous artistic decisions of filmmakers are discounted. For example, James Wolcott refers to the "cornball, recruiting poster legend of John Wayne"¹¹⁴; Derek Malcolm tells us *Ryan* "is not a John Wayne movie. It is trying desperately hard to say that war is an obscenity."¹¹⁵ Both these criticisms betray an assumption that earlier films, and

¹⁰⁸ Nick Hopkins, "Wrong number lands navy expert in Spielberg's war," *The Guardian*, August 6, 1998.

¹⁰⁹ "An Internet Discussion of 'Saving Private Ryan'," *Film & History* 28, no. 3/4 (December 1998): 77. Frank was a veteran of the landing on Peleliu, and the former Chief Historian of the Marine Corps.

¹¹⁰ Paul Fussell, "The Guts, Not the Glory, of Fighting the 'Good War'," *The Washington Post*, July 26, 1998.

¹¹¹ Ascherson, "Missing In Action."

¹¹² Doherty, "Ryan [review]," 69.

¹¹³ Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 253.

¹¹⁴ James Wolcott, "Tanks For The Memories," Vanity Fair, August 1998.

¹¹⁵ Derek Malcolm, "Saving the director's bacon," The Guardian, August 6, 1998.

especially those which starred John Wayne, wanted to recruit men to fight in wars which were uniformly glorious. The evidence does not bear this out: *They Were Expendable* gives its opinion on glory in its title; *Iwo Jima* has Wayne killed pointlessly, and in futility, just as the battle is won. Second, Spielberg's aesthetic decisions, *qua* aesthetic decisions, are bracketed out from any authenticity equation. For example, Janet Maslin testifies to the authentic portrayal of war by inviting her readers to "[i]magine Hieronymus Bosch with a Steadicam". This is misleading on two counts: to have Bosch as an art-director implies a very high degree of aesthetic manipulation and construction. *Ryan* is an extremely highly constructed aesthetic artefact. Kaminski eschewed a Steadicam for the sake of hand-held 'authenticity'; it was "a reversion to the precise opposite: a patenting, almost, of the radically 'unsteadicam'."

Spielberg acknowledged the conscious aesthetic considerations which went into the cinematography:

Janusz stripped all the glossy filters and filaments from the lenses so they were just like the kind of lenses they actually used in the Second World War. We shot a lot of the war sequences with the shutter speed used by those Bell and Howell cameras of the 1940s for making newsreels.¹¹⁹

Furthermore, the colour palate was deliberately manipulated in post-production, with "about sixty percent of the color... extracted from the final negative". Ppielberg and Kaminski included and created camera movement, such as shaking and wild, uncontrolled pans. The (unfiltered) camera lenses were allowed to become contaminated by sea-water and 'blood'. We viewed the beach, aware that we were viewing it through a cameraman's lens: this is the "cardinal sin" of commercial, 'realistic', cinema. The filmmaker may only break the 'fourth wall' constructed by the mechanism of film-making in "humorous and satirical films". 122

¹¹⁶ Janet Maslin, "Panoramic and Personal Visions of War's Anguish," *The New York Times*, July 24, 1998

¹¹⁷ See my own earlier work on Bosch: *Circles of Thorns: Hieronymus Bosch and Being Human* (London: Continuum International, 2008), especially 161-174.

¹¹⁸ Geoff King, Spectacular Narratives: Hollywood in the age of the blockbuster (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000), 121.

¹¹⁹ Linda Sunshine, ed., *Saving Private Ryan: the men, the mission, the movie* (New York: Newmarket Press, 1998), 79.

¹²⁰ Janusz Kaminski in Sunshine, *Men, Mission, Movie*, 81. See also the comprehensive interview with Kaminski in Christopher Probst, "The Last Great War: cinematographer Janusz Kaminski, ASC and his crack camera team re-enlist with director Steven Spielberg for 'Saving Private Ryan'," *American Cinematographer* 79, no. 8 (1998): 30–34, 36–42.

¹²¹ Toby Haggith, "D-Day Filming—For Real. A comparison of 'truth' and 'reality' in 'Saving Private Ryan' and combat film by the British Army's Film and Photographic Unit," *Film History* 14, no. 3/4 (2002): 335.

¹²² Haggith, "D-Day Filming," 335.

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This is the paradox of *Ryan's* 'authenticity'. To make the film seem more authentic, Spielberg and Kaminski, perhaps counter-intuitively, made the audience more aware that they were watching a created artefact. It is only by drawing attention to its constructed nature that its authentic qualities are simultaneously asserted. Rather than using cuts between shots to provide the cinematic rhythm for the landings on Dog Green sector, for example, Spielberg and his editor (Michael Kahn) punctuate the sequence with camera *movement*, thus "maintaining a greater sense of the substance of the pro-filmic event". ¹²³ Because human vision does not follow the same movement patterns as a camera's movement, the images that come from the movement of a camera, are, perhaps counter-intuitively, more noticeably 'cinematic' than cross-cutting.

In the Omaha sequence, Spielberg moves the camera and privileges its point of view inconsistently. In sequential order, the camera functions firstly as a conventional omniscient 'point of view' (we see one Higgins boat from above and to the front, and then cut to an unsteady side view of at least six boats, bow to bow, from slightly above, again, a diegetic position); it then shifts to point of view shots for both the attacking Rangers and the Wehrmacht defenders, before moving back to the position of the omniscient external viewer (Rangers fall into the sea, drowning as the near-silent, balletic, bullets scythe through sea and bodies filmed from a fixed, submerged, viewpoint); it then specifically assumes the point of view of Captain Miller (Tom Hanks) on the beach (and the sound design reinforces the individualisation of this point of view, with Miller's deafness replicated in the murmuring and subsonic frequencies on the soundtrack¹²⁴); lastly, it becomes the point of view of an otherwise unacknowledged solider following Captain Miller up the beach (we hear the Ranger's panting—our panting?—on the soundtrack). As Toby Haggith says, with the faux-documentary aesthetic assumed by Spielberg this is, to say the least, "perplexing": "only a suicidal cameraman flying around the battlefield in an armoured micro-light could have covered the battle at Omaha as comprehensively as Spielberg's camera-team."125

There is no surviving movie footage of the landings on the American beaches in Normandy. Toby Haggith convincingly describes how Spielberg and Kaminski (unwittingly?) imitated the surviving film footage of the American *Pacific* war. A Normandy connection is signified by the blurring and flaring of the images (which subtly intrudes at moments of high emotional stress during

¹²³ King, Spectacular Narratives, 121.

¹²⁴ Identified by Wrathall as a reference to Klimov's harrowing *Come and See*: Wrathall, "On the Beach"; Elem Klimov, *Come and See*, Colour / B&W, 35mm, U.S.S.R. (Sovexportfilm / Mosfilm, 1985).

¹²⁵ Haggith, "D-Day Filming," 348.

the whole of the film); these were suggested to Spielberg by Robert Capa's (damaged) photographs of the Omaha landings.¹²⁶

Saving Private Ryan is an aesthetic success. As Ascherson admitted "Yes, that is what it must have been like." We believe that this is what it must have been like, even if the data against which we measure that judgement are actually the series of combat films we have already seen. This is the problem Spielberg himself had in judging the authenticity of his film: as Suid, uncharitably, puts it: "Spielberg's only knowledge of war came from watching the very movies he was now denigrating..." Combat cinematic epistemology is necessarily contingent: "A viewer thinks, 'This is true, I am seeing truth,' but the source of visual belief comes from the nontruth of movies." And so we bracket out the historical and cinematic inconsistencies in the presentation of the film.

Saving Private Ryan is an aesthetic success because of these inconsistencies. But, when measured against actuality, it fails. The war experience can only be depicted; it cannot be experienced *qua* unmediated experience. As Sam Fuller put it "You can never do it. The only way... is to fire live ammo over the heads of the people in the movie theatre." ¹³⁰

The guilty secret here is that far from being horrifying and repulsive, the stunning spectacle of sight and sound is a joy to behold and harken to from a theater seat, pure cinema at its most hypnotic and intense. Godard is right: war on screen is always exhilarating.¹³¹

Spielberg's intention was clear: "...if we've done our jobs, [the audience] will think we were actually on the beach on D-Day." In the words of one critic, he aimed to "prescriptively guide the audience's eye and understanding, as if screaming to us 'This is exactly like WWII footage' or 'Now you understand what the main protagonist experiences.' But it is not, and we don't." 133

¹²⁶ Haggith, "D-Day Filming," 333,336; for Spielberg's own assessment of the aesthetic influences on the film, see Nick Rossiter, "War Stories: Mark Cousins talks to Steven Spielberg" (BBC 2, September 13, 1998); Stephen Pizzello, "Five Star General: Steven Spielberg answers AC's questions about his cinematic battle plan for 'Saving Private Ryan'," *American Cinematographer* 79, no. 8 (1998): 45.

¹²⁷ See the passage on page 298 above.

¹²⁸ Suid, Guts and Glory, 627.

¹²⁹ Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 177.

¹³⁰ Lee Server, *Sam Fuller: Film is a Battleground: a critical study, with interviews, a filmography and a bibliography* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1994), 22,52; quoted in Basinger, *Anatomy of a Genre*, 257.

¹³¹ Doherty, "Ryan [review]," 69.

¹³² Sunshine, Men, Mission, Movie, 79.

¹³³ Laurent Ditmann, "Made You Look: Towards a Critical Evaluation of Steven Spielberg's 'Saving Private Ryan'," *Film & History* 28, no. 3/4 (December 1998): 67–68.

Some critics believe that *Saving Private Ryan* fails on ideological grounds as well. It ignores the importance of the part the Normandy Landings played in "the Good War".¹³⁴ It does not reinforce the (historical) collectivity developed by Roosevelt's presidency, and culturally and ideologically expressed through Frank Capra's *Why We Fight* series.¹³⁵ *Ryan* did not "evoke the memory of 'a people's war'"¹³⁶, and thus revealed its reactionary politics. The war, for its participants, was designed to achieve "the quest for equality, a just capitalism, [and] citizen participation in political life."¹³⁷ Because *Ryan* concentrated on "trauma and patriotism", it participates in our contemporary obsessions with "memory, anguish, and the testimony of victims".¹³⁸ It is the result of a contemporary "disenchantment with democratic politics", and therefore, in a hermeneutically reinforcing cycle, "remembers individuals in a more exemplary way than they were understood by their own generation."¹³⁹

Tom Carson, in an entertainingly dyspeptic essay published just before the 1999 Academy Awards, notes the theological weaknesses of *Ryan* as well. Accepting that Matt Damon (marvellously) plays the "guileless farm boy" Ryan as a Jesus figure¹⁴⁰, then the movie becomes a manifestation of "what must be the ultimate American fantasy—one in which our guns and courage prevent the crucifixion, letting Jesus move to the suburbs and, in old age, take the kids on sentimental journeys back to Golgotha."¹⁴¹ *The Last Temptation of Christ* is actually the Veterans' trip to Normandy.¹⁴²

¹³⁴ The phrase originated with Studs Terkel's prize winning history, "*The Good War*": an oral history of World War Two (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984). Most repeaters of the phrase do not notice Terkel's distancing quotation marks around the description.

¹³⁵ Frank Capra and Anatole Litvak, *Why We Fight (series)*, B&W 35 mm, U.S.A. (War Activities Committee / U. S. War Department, May1942-June1945).

¹³⁶ John Bodnar, "'Saving Private Ryan' and Postwar Memory in America," *The American Historical Review* 106, no. 3 (June 2001): 817.

¹³⁷ Bodnar, "Postwar Memory," 817.

¹³⁸ Bodnar, "Postwar Memory," 817.

¹³⁹ Bodnar, "Postwar Memory," 817.

¹⁴⁰ A once-useful and now monumentally vague term, which has become a catch-all for any kind of protagonist who suffers, represents hope, gathers companions around him- or herself. See, however, an early, and disciplined, example of the genre in Baugh, *Imaging the Divine*, pt. 2, chap. 6, "Essential Dimensions and Guises of the Christ-Figure."

¹⁴¹ Tom Carson, "And the Leni Riefenstahl Award for Rabid Nationalism goes to...: a reconsideration of 'Saving Private Ryan'," *Esquire*, March 1, 1999.

¹⁴² This is a not entirely polemical criticism. Ira Chernus has identified the way in which American armed forces, since the Revolutionary War, have functioned with an implicit understanding of their collective and individual Christological role: "In every war, the nation has believed that its blood sacrifices would sow the seeds of a new world in which liberty would be given to all. And the individual soldier would find redemption through blood, for his red badge was less a badge of courage than of Christlikeness." "War and Myth: 'the Show Must Go On'," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* LIII, no. 3 (1985): 453.

For other critics the problem with *Ryan* might be called matériel: despite Spielberg's protestations and the best efforts of his history monks (to use Doherty's metaphor), there are great holes of plot, equipment, and protocol in the film¹⁴³: why does Captain Miller display visible bars of rank on his helmet when most officers disguised them to protect themselves from targeting by German snipers? How did Washington get the information about the death of the Ryan brothers and how did orders to rescue James Ryan reach Allied lines so quickly?¹⁴⁴ Why does Miller divert his platoon from their mission to attack the German radar station?¹⁴⁵ Why are P-51 Mustangs used as ground-attack aircraft (and referred to as "Tankbusters") when properly it was the P-47 Thunderbolt which filled that role?¹⁴⁶

Against Bodnar's collectivist despair, Carson's theological misgivings, and Ditmann and Suid's technical reservations, Doherty holds a middle way. He admits that, contrary to the manner common to the "fifth wave" of combat films¹⁴⁷ the military command structure in *Ryan* is presented as "decent, competent, and courageous".¹⁴⁸ But he does not see that as necessarily connected with any 'hermeneutic of good will' that Spielberg might be utilising. The director has no need to produce "blustery pro-American, anti-Nazi rhetoric"¹⁴⁹, and he and Rodat are willing to assume their audience's

¹⁴³ See, among many other places, the 'nitpicks' enumerated by Suid and Ditmann: Suid, *Guts and Glory*, 633–634; Ditmann, "Made You Look," n8, 70.

¹⁴⁴ For the bureaucratic way such a decision would have been handled, *if it in fact had happened*, see Brien Hallet, "'Saving Private Ryan' [review]," *Social Alternatives* 18, no. 2 (April 1999): 68. ¹⁴⁵ Milton A. Cohen, "Saving Private Ryan (Motion picture)," *War, Literature & the Arts: An International Journal of the Humanities* 11, no. 1 (Summer 1999): 324.

¹⁴⁶ The souvenir book, replicating some of the shooting script says: "a P-51 MUSTANG sweeps grandly over the bridge. Tank-buster. It peels overhead, no longer with the sound of voices but with a THROATY ROAR OF A PACKARD ENGINE." Sunshine, *Men, Mission, Movie* (capitals in the original). P-51 Mustangs, in both the P-51B and P-51D (as depicted in the film) variants, were powered by Rolls Royce Merlin engines, manufactured under licence by the Packard Motor Car Company. More evidence of the airbrushing out of the narrative of the presence of any other Allied nationality in Normandy? See Albert Auster, "'Saving Private Ryan' and American Triumphalism," *Journal of Popular Film & Television* 30, no. 2 (Summer 2002): 98–104; Hallet, "Ryan [review]."

¹⁴⁷ Basinger's classification: she means the cycle of "Dirty Group" films from 1965-1975, in which the genre of the combat film was inverted, parodied, satirised and presented as an "opposite reality": *Anatomy of a Genre*, 181–193.

¹⁴⁸ Doherty, "Ryan [review]," 70. Thus, General George Marshall is given the roles of moral arbiter and wise judge, subverting the usual dynamic that "the higher up in the command, the lower the IQ and moral character" (70). The depiction of Marshall grated on Cohen: "With the music hinting of Copland's Fanfare for the Common Man and the *chiaroscuro* lighting behind the good General, we understand that even those at the top have a heart. All very moving, except that it's phony." Cohen, "Ryan [review]," 323–324.

 $^{^{149}}$ Doherty, "Ryan [review]," 70. For an interesting discussion on the sympathetic way the German soldiers are portrayed, and especially the killer of Private Mellish, who, despite being

concurrence that the Second World War was a good war, and that "the nobility of the enterprise is too obvious to require a recitation of why we fight." Spielberg did not want or need to make an anti-war film about the Second World War: "[h]e's already made a film about the alternative." ¹⁵¹

Those like Bodnar, Carson, and Suid who object to the 'unauthentic' nature or 'dis-verisimilitude' of *Ryan* have misunderstood the nature of the film. They have (perhaps deliberately?) taken the filmmaker at his word, and assessed the film as if it were a "just-as-it-was" record of the events of June 1944. But *Saving Private Ryan* is neither a descriptive, nor an historical artefact. It is *normative mythology*. The 'realism' which it uses as its medium and as its goal, is a realism that 'feels real', or what we can believe might have been real, if we had been there: hence the surrendering approval of an astute critic like Ascherson. In effect, Spielberg is using 'realism' as just another cinematic technique to present an unrealistic, programmatic film.

Saving Private Ryan has much less to do with what veterans or historians want us to know, and much more with what Spielberg wants us to see.¹⁵²

Discussions about the true nature of *Ryan* are hampered by confusion between what we mean by 'authentic' (which could be defined as "implying genuineness, reliability and trustworthiness" ¹⁵³), and what we understand by 'realism' (which could be similarly defined as "the use of representational devices... to depict or portray a physical, social or moral universe which is held to exist objectively beyond its representation by such means, and which is thus the arbiter of the truth of the representation." ¹⁵⁴). Thus, we should be mindful of Landon's judgement: "the history of the war film might prove a better context for understanding *Saving Private Ryan*'s achievement than the history of the War itself." ¹⁵⁵

In short, the more faked it is, the more authentic it is assumed to be. Umberto Eco's waxworks concur.

in the *Waffen-SS*, "seems to bring mercy to the ghastly business of being a soldier", see Karen Jaehne, "'Saving Private Ryan' [review]," *Film Quarterly* 53, no. 1 (Autumn 1999): 40.

¹⁵⁰ Doherty, "Ryan [review]," 70.

¹⁵¹ Namely in *Schindler's List*: Doherty, "Ryan [review]," 70.

¹⁵² Ditmann, "Made You Look," 66.

¹⁵³ Nigel Morris, *The Cinema of Steven Spielberg: Empire of Light*, Directors' cuts (London: Wallflower, 2007), 272.

¹⁵⁴ Tim O'Sullivan et al., *Key Concepts in Communication and Cultural Studies*, 2nd ed., Studies in culture and communication (London: Routledge, 1994), s.v. "realism"; cited by Morris, *Empire of Light*, 273.

¹⁵⁵ Phil Landon, "Realism, Genre, and 'Saving Private Ryan'," Film & History 28, no. 3/4 (December 1998): 59.

Saving Private Genre

Ditmann, while playfully nitpicking the film, recognizes there is a problem in describing what manner of thing *Ryan* might possibly be. There is a difficulty in finding the correct terms in which to discuss or assess "a work of art at once intense, rich and compelling, but also trite, formulaic and downright predictable." ¹⁵⁶ He has an attempt. *Saving Private Ryan* is

...an archetypal, bare-bone, psychomachic war narrative, an *Anabasis* in reverse, a *chanson de geste* slyly toying with the most common tropes of the quest cum combat story.¹⁵⁷

Surely Ditmann is making his task unnecessarily complicated? A simpler and more effective method would be to identify *Saving Private Ryan* as an example of a "genre" film.

Immediately we should note that "genre", when used in film studies, is as contested a concept as "Myth", "Leadership", or "Individualism". There is much that has been written on the taxonomies of genres, the pre-existing 'Platonic' forms of genres, or the socially-constructed and eisegetic nature of genre when applied to movies. In short, the use of genre as an explanatory tool can be hampered by what Andrew Tudor has called the "empiricist dilemma":

To take a genre such as a western, analyse it, and list its principal characteristics, is to beg the question that we must first isolate the body of films which are westerns. But they can only be isolated on the basis of the 'principal characteristics' which can only be discovered from the films themselves after they have been isolated.¹⁵⁸

Bearing this in mind, it is still worthwhile, if only to observe the practical, 'empirical' (if you like), influence that film studies can have on film production, to note Jeanine Basinger's influential taxonomy of the War Combat film. Basinger presents a "summary of the genre" which we can see through the film's story, the way in which the narrative of the film is presented. The generic nature begins with the credits of the film, which "unfold against a military reference" a map, or a flag, or a regimental insignia. The credits will include the name of a military advisor, and a dedication ('to the memory of the men who...'; a quotation from a great national war leader). We are introduced to the

¹⁵⁶ Ditmann, "Made You Look," 65.

¹⁵⁷ Ditmann, "Made You Look," 65.

¹⁵⁸ Tudor, *Theories of Film*, 135; part of which is reprinted as "Genre," 5. For more on the problems of genre definition, particularly as it applies to Hollywood, see Stephen Neale, *Genre and Hollywood* (London: Routledge, 2000), chap. 1 & 7.

¹⁵⁹ Basinger, *Anatomy of a Genre*, 67–69. Basinger prints the "primary units" of the genre in bold, which I have substituted, outside direct quotation, with italics.

¹⁶⁰ Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 67.

"group of men, led by a hero" 161 who will undertake the mission, necessary to achieve a significant strategic objective ('this mission will shorten the war by six months...'). The group will contain an outsider, "an observer or commentator." 162 The hero is not the original leader, but has had "leadership forced upon him in dire circumstances."163 The group undertake the military objective, and in the undertaking, the story unfolds, and a "series of episodes occur which alternates in uneven patterns" 164 of antitheses between action and rest, danger and safety, humour and heartbreak. We encounter the enemy (although it may only be through suggestion and a faceless presence). In these narrative episodes, military iconography (by which she means hardware and systems) is presented and demonstrated, using the medium of the group's observer as a stand-in for the civilian audience. The group is subject to internal conflict, which is resolved when they encounter external conflict. Rituals are enacted, both from past and the present (for example, a recreation of a Christmas celebration or discussions of post-war plans, usually whilst weapons are cleaned). Members of the group die ("The minorities almost always die, and die most horribly" 165). A climactic battle takes place, during which "a learning or growth process" 166 happens. The "situation is resolved", although it sometimes has required the death of the entire group. "THE END appears on the screen", sometimes accompanied by a posthumous rollcall of those killed.¹⁶⁷

During the telling of the story, "tools of cinema are employed": tension and release are indicated through cutting and camera movement; composition, lighting, art direction, and the use of documentary footage (or, indeed mock-documentary footage) all contribute to an audience's sense of "intimacy and alienation" and its judgement about the authenticity of the story. 168

Ultimately, the "audience is ennobled for having shared their combat experience, as they are ennobled for having undergone it. We are all comrades in arms." ¹⁶⁹

Basinger wittily suggests that genre in World War II combat films fulfils a similar function to a World War II graffito. She calls it the "Kilroy Test for Genre". There is no film that contains "all the remembered elements from all the remembered films. This isn't possible." What is possible is to use enough

¹⁶¹ Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 68.

¹⁶² Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 68.

¹⁶³ Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 68.

¹⁶⁴ Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 68.

¹⁶⁵ Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 69.

¹⁶⁶ Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 69.

¹⁶⁷ Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 69.

¹⁶⁸ Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 69.

¹⁶⁹ Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 69.

¹⁷⁰ Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 16.

¹⁷¹ Basinger, *Anatomy of a Genre*, 16. Emphasis in original.

of "primary units" so as to suggest all the others to an audience familiar with more examples of the genre: "The sense of repeated elements solidifies, and filmgoers then imagine that a single film contained them all." Hence, "Kilroy": the 'Kilroy was here' graffito was replicated by someone who, unconsciously, accepted that at least an original Kilroy existed, even though Kilroy was *not* present to write the grafitto's latest iteration.

Genre is like this. No one film ever appears that is quintessentially *the* genre. A group of films with very similar characteristics emerge, blend, and become the one film in memory.¹⁷³

Basinger's analysis is a sophisticated one, which incorporates an awareness of "intratextuality" in filmmaking. The genre is formed not just by the story and the characters, but by the way in which film-titling is used ("paratextuality"), the narrative is structured ("architextuality"), and references are made to other examples of the genre ("hypertextuality").¹⁷⁴

We can see an example of the effectiveness of Basinger's taxonomy when we examine the opening of *Saving Private Ryan*.

The film begins in darkness, with a bare minimum of production titles displayed. John Williams's soundtrack is playing: a solo French horn, over a martial rhythm tapped out on snares and lower strings. As the title disappears, we hear, crackling and snapping, a flag in the wind. The solo horn is swiftly joined by others, playing in the open fifths and glissandos which, since Aaron Copland's "western" works¹⁷⁵, have been a musical metonym for "America". The image of the flag fades in, but not completely. Like *Patton*, *Saving Private Ryan* begins with a full-frame image of the flag of the United States. Unlike *Patton*, this flag is the 50-star flag of the present day¹⁷⁶, in movement (not pinned to the flats of a theatre wall). And, most noticeably, whereas the flag in *Patton* is pristine and depicted in its full colour range, the flag in *Ryan* is faded, washed out, almost translucent: 'Old Glory' is something less than glorious.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷² Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 16.

¹⁷³ Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 17. Emphasis in original.

¹⁷⁴ For the origins of transtextuality in French literary criticism see Gérard Genette, *Palimpsestes: la littérature au second degré* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1982); published in English as *Palimpsests: literature in the second degree*, trans. Channa Newman and Claude Doubinksky (Lincoln; London: University of Nebraska Press, 1997); especially see chap. 1, "Five types of transtextuality." ¹⁷⁵ For example, *Billy the Kid* (1938), *Lincoln Portrait* and *Rodeo* (both 1942), and *Appalachian Spring* (1944).

¹⁷⁶ It is intriguing how many commentators are unable to recognize which flag is portrayed when. For example, Hallet constructs his review partially around the "fact" that this is the 48-star flag of the Second World War period: Hallet, "Ryan [review]," 69. The 48-star flag has the stars arranged in a perfect rectangle.

¹⁷⁷ Curiously, in Leni Riefenstahl's *Tag der Freiheit* the first shot after the titles, fading in from black, is of the German *Nationalflagge* filmed against the sun, with a soundtrack of solo brass and timpani. The shot is strikingly similar to Spielberg's image: Riefenstahl, *TdF*.

Basinger said it was not possible to make a film which contained every possible primary unit. Some film critics disagree and believe that *Saving Private Ryan* is the disproof of her assertion, even if it was the result of film criticism influencing the making of films. Just as Joseph Campbell's theory on the monomyth were filmed by George Lucas in the first *Star Wars* cycle¹⁷⁸, which then became further evidence of the validity of Campbell's thesis, Robert Toplin wonders whether *Ryan* might not be evidence of a closed hermeneutic circle. He believes that Robert Rodat, the screenwriter, must surely have "honed his skills" by reading the "magnificent primer". ¹⁷⁹ He notes how Basinger's unit of the "group" is represented by *Ryan*'s squad: "a small U.S. military unit made up of diverse ethnic types. There is a smart aleck from Brooklyn, a Jew, a religiously inclined southern sharpshooter (who resembles Sergeant York)" ¹⁸⁰, and so on—what Doherty called a "multi-ethnic sampling of homo americanus". ¹⁸¹ This conforms absolutely to Basinger's prescription for the "group":

...a mixture of unrelated types, with varying ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. They may be men from different military forces and/or different countries. They are of different ages. Some have never fought in combat before, and others are experienced. Some are intellectual and well-educated, others are not. They are both married and single, shy and bold, urban and rural, comic and tragic.¹⁸²

The diversity of the group is reinforced by the symbolic nature of their geographical origins. The Mid West represents "stability", the Southerner is naïve, but has "good shooting ability", the New Englander is educated and the New Yorker sophisticated. Specific states are favoured (including, significantly, Iowa as a metonym for the Mid West). Amusingly, an area of a city is granted para-State status: Brooklyn. Basinger says, parenthetically, "in the war film, Brooklyn is a state unto itself, and is almost always present one way or another." Private Reiben (Edward Burns), the soldier who articulates the internal conflict in the group, is from Brooklyn (his combat blouse is inscribed with "Brooklyn, NY, USA").

James Ryan and his brothers are all from Iowa. By placing the Ryan brothers in Iowa,

¹⁷⁸ See the description on page 173.

¹⁷⁹ Robert Brent Toplin, "Hollywood's D-Day from the Perspective of the 1960s and 1990s: 'The Longest Day' and 'Saving Private Ryan'," in *Why We Fought: America's Wars in Film and History*, ed. Peter C. Rollins and John E. O'Connor (Lexington, Ky: University Press of Kentucky, 2008), 310

¹⁸⁰ Toplin, "Hollywood's D-Day," 310.

¹⁸¹ Doherty, "Ryan [review]," 70.

¹⁸² Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 69.

¹⁸³ Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 69.

Spielberg equates them with archetypal Americans who live in the heartland and embody quintessential American values [in] so many Hollywood films.¹⁸⁴

We can also see the way in which *Ryan* works hypertextually by its self-conscious references to other examples of the genre. The use of sound, particularly in Miller's subjective response to shell-noise and shell-shock, is, we have seen, one example.¹⁸⁵ Another can be seen when Miller, shocked into stupor on the water's edge, views the horrors of the landing (flamethrowers exploding, men on fire running from a landing craft, a soldier searching for his severed arm).

...Miller reaches for his helmet, which has fallen into the sand. It remains on camera just long enough for viewers to catch its ironic significance; the helmet is in exactly the same position as the one which can be found behind the title credits and in the advertising photos of Darryl Zanuck's relentlessly heroic *The Longest Day*. 186

Thus, even in the Omaha sequence, the part of the film most lauded for its innovative vision and moral honesty, "Spielberg used virtually every cliché in the genre in a way that seems fresh only because of the camera work and editing." 187 It is "a generic war movie about a generic war." 188

In the mission section of the film, (Basinger's primary unit of "they go forward, the action unfolds"), we experience an episodic war, like Odysseus and his men seeking the way home. The walk through the Normandy countryside (denuded of its distinctive *bocage*), a sniper in the church tower, the glider crash-landing site, the radar station set-piece battle, all these transform the film "into a series of vignettes pertaining more to the aesthetics of reenactment..." 189

Within the group, the audience is represented by Corporal Timothy E. Upham (Jeremy Davies), a translator and mapmaker of 29th Infantry Regiment. Upham, whom we meet in a rear signals area in neat uniform and equipped with a typewriter, has not fired a weapon since basic training. His attempts to ingratiate himself with the group are met with hostility: basic field security has to be explained to him (do not salute the captain); he is writing a book on the

¹⁸⁴ Landon, "Realism, Genre," 59.

¹⁸⁵ See note 124 on page 300.

¹⁸⁶ Landon, "Realism, Genre," 61. Later we meet a captain called "Hamill" (played by Ted Danson as "the world's oldest paratroop officer", according to Carson), and Private Reiben says, of the attack on the radar station, "I don't have a good feeling about this one"; both are references to Lucas's *Star Wars* cycle. (Carson, "Rabid Nationalism.")

¹⁸⁷ Suid, Guts and Glory, 630.

¹⁸⁸ Suid, Guts and Glory, 634.

¹⁸⁹ Ditmann, "Made You Look," 67.

"bond of brotherhood"; he doesn't understand what "FUBAR" means. There are strong parallels, Landon suggests, in the function of Upham as the external observer and Stovall (Dean Jagger) in *Twelve O'Clock High*: he "mediates between the military unit and the audience." ¹⁹⁰ Unlike Stovall, Upham is a coward. He is "our entry into the reality [of total war] because he sees it clearly as a vast system designed to humiliate and destroy him. And so it is. His survival depends on his doing the very best he can, yes, but even more on chance." ¹⁹¹ Thus, when the group assault the radar station, Upham is left on the start line, and observes the skirmish through a sniper scope left by crack-shot Jackson (Barry Pepper). The group disappear over the skyline, and the audience sees only Upham's point of view. The sound of the battle is overlaid with his—our?—heavy breathing.

Upham presents the vocal argument for "decency" by not summarily executing the German POW captured at the radar station. The rest of the group realise that the needs of the mission and the realities of war and revenge require "Steamboat Willie" (Joerg Stadler) to be shot. Upham attempts to intervene on the side of clemency: "This isn't right. He's a prisoner. He surrendered. He surrendered, sir!"

Upham plays an important role in the agonizing conclusion of the film: Mellish (Adam Goldberg), the group's Jew, is caught in an excruciating hand-to-hand battle with a member of the *Waffen-SS*. Upham is paralysed by fear and unable to assist. Mellish dies and Upham is left alive by the German, as being unworthy of his military attention:

...what exactly is Spielberg trying to tell us here? That it's all right to kill prisoners of war? Or that American intellectuals like Upham, through their sympathy with the Germans as civilised human beings, somehow condoned the Holocaust? It's open to interpretation. 192

Finally, Upham takes action. He kills the killer of Captain Miller, the same German soldier for whom he effected a release. Upham leaps out of a shell hole and confronts six German soldiers. One is Steamboat Willie: "I know this soldier", the German says. "Shut your mouth", Upham responds (literally "hold your snout!"). Willie appeals—"Upham!"—upon which Upham shoots him dead. Willie was a prisoner. He had surrendered. To the rest of the prisoners Upham screams, "Scram! Vanish!" as the film stock flares with light in the same way we saw in the Omaha sequence. As Roger Ebert says of

¹⁹⁰ Landon, "Realism, Genre," 61. "Interestingly, the director saw himself in Upham, and Screenwriter Rodat intended him "'as a stand-in for the audience.'" (quoted in Landon).

¹⁹¹ Roger Ebert, "A 'Private' matter; Spielberg conveys action, feelings of war," *Chicago Sun-Times*, July 24, 1998, sec. Weekend.

¹⁹² Wrathall, "On the Beach."

Upham, "[e]ventually he arrives at his personal turning point, and his action writes the closing words of Spielberg's unspoken philosophical argument." ¹⁹³

As Spielberg himself described the script when it was only a prospective film: "It was the perfect morality play, except on some levels you have to call it an immorality play." The question then is, what is Spielberg's philosophical argument? What does he, in Ditmann's words, want us to see? What is the morality of this immorality play?

Captain Miller's Message

If *Ryan* is a message film, then Captain Miller is the messenger. Ditmann notes that Miller is the only character who has dying words addressed beyond his own pain and suffering: he is the only character "allowed to die imparting some sort of 'message' upon us." ¹⁹⁶ Miller's last words, before his shaking right hand finally stops shaking, are to Ryan: an emphatic "Earn this." Ditmann thinks this can be interpreted both as "a curse or a peace offering". ¹⁹⁷ Doherty disagrees: it is neither a "benediction nor a curse" but something more pointed: "a reminder". ¹⁹⁸ It is not directed at Ryan but at the "callow inheritors" of Ryan's posterity, children of the post-war generation. ¹⁹⁹ Some of those children recognized the import:

The message was not just for Ryan, but for everyone in the audience as well, who benefit from the sacrifices made during the Second World War.²⁰⁰

Regarded in this way, the "epanaleptic" framing of the film²⁰¹, with the present-day visit to the cemetery, is not "blubbery"²⁰², or "dully ceremonial"²⁰³,

¹⁹³ Ebert, "'Private' Matter."

¹⁹⁴ Quoted in Peter Bart, *The Gross: the hits, the flops—the summer that ate Hollywood* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2000), 154.

¹⁹⁵ Ditmann, "Made You Look," 66. See the discussion on page 304.

¹⁹⁶ Ditmann, "Made You Look," 65. Carpazo dies in silence in the rain; Wade dies crying for his mama; Jackson dies sniping from the bell tower, reciting Psalm 144; Mellish dies asking his killer to stop, to listen to him; Horvath (Tom Sizemore) dies, saying he just got the wind knocked out of him—no messages there.

¹⁹⁷ Ditmann, "Made You Look," 65.

¹⁹⁸ Doherty, "Ryan [review]," 71.

¹⁹⁹ Doherty, "Ryan [review]," 71.

²⁰⁰ Solomon Davidoff's contribution to the list-serv discussion on *Saving Private Ryan*, transcribed in "Internet Discussion (Film & History)," 73–74. Davidoff admitted this moment was the reason he left the theatre with tears on his cheeks.

²⁰¹ As Ditmann calls it: "Made You Look," 67. The OED defines *epanalepsis* as "a figure by which the same word or clause is repeated after intervening matter."

²⁰² Carson, "Rabid Nationalism."

²⁰³ David Denby, "Heroic Proportions," New York, July 27, 1998.

or "confused chauvinism"²⁰⁴: "Better than any of the violence Spielberg thought he needed, the quiet thanks that Ryan offers at Miller's burial spot serves as the film's *raison d'être*."²⁰⁵

Ryan as an old man asks his wife if he has been a good man: has he lived a decent life? Decency, its possibility and its expression, is a perennial theme in the World War II combat film. As Captain MacDonald says to his troops in *Beach Red*: "This isn't the end of everything out here. Some of us are going back home, and we can't leave all that's decent on this battlefield." 206 Ryan demonstrates for us that, in the brutality of war, we can know that the American GI was not brutal:

...the common American soldier was fundamentally a good man who loved his country and his family. He went to war out of a sense of duty to both, and he wanted to get it over with as quickly as possible. Rather than being a natural-born killer, he was a loving family man who abhorred the use of extreme force but could inflict it when necessary.²⁰⁷

The loving family man is exemplified by John Miller, a school teacher²⁰⁸ who coaches baseball, and whose wife has rose bushes in her garden. He is traumatized by battle, yet still able to rouse himself to continue doing the necessary job. It was a recognizable trope of the period. Norman Corwin, in his VE Day broadcast, saluted the triumph of the citizen soldier: "Take a bow, GI. Take a bow, little guy," Corwin told his listeners. "The superman of tomorrow lies at the feet of you common men this afternoon."²⁰⁹

Toplin²¹⁰ suggests that Miller's character was based on Major Tom Howie, of 3rd Battalion, 116th Regiment, who was "a mild-mannered teacher of English

²⁰⁴ Hallet, "Ryan [review]," 69.

²⁰⁵ Suid, Guts and Glory, 637.

²⁰⁶ Cornel Wilde, *Beach Red*, DeLuxe / 35mm, U.S.A. (United Artists, 1968). Wilde's film is a clear ancestor of the Omaha beach landing in *Ryan*, opening as it does with a 30-minute sequence of a beach invasion on a Japanese-held island: "its present-tense story is almost nothing but combat". Basinger, *Anatomy of a Genre*, 257.

²⁰⁷ Bodnar, "Postwar Memory," 805. This was perhaps not necessarily always the case: "A paratrooper recalled having come across a member of his company the following morning and being surprised to see that he was wearing red gloves instead of the issued yellow ones. 'I asked him where he got the red gloves from, and he reached down in his jump pants and pulled out a whole string of ears. He had been ear-hunting all night and had them all sewed on an old boot lace.'" The testimony of William M. Sawyer, 508th PIR, quoted in Antony Beevor, *D-Day: the battle for Normandy* (London: Viking, 2009), 68.

²⁰⁸ "Their occupations vary: farmer: cab driver, teacher." Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 69.

²⁰⁹ Norman Corwin, "On A Note of Triumph," radio broadcast (CBS Network, May 8, 1945). Corwin died on 18 October 2011, aged 101.

²¹⁰ Toplin, "Hollywood's D-Day," 308.

literature"²¹¹ before the war. Howie died in the assault on Saint-Lô, and, after his death, he was immortalised by *Life* magazine as "The Major of St. Lo".

Miller is the hero of the film, and as Basinger tells us, "[t]he hero has leadership forced upon him in dire circumstances." For Miller those circumstances could not be more dire, in a firehole on Dog Green: "Who's in command here?" "You are sir!"

Miller rises to the task. He is tough ("they assembled him at OCS out of spare body parts from dead GIs", Reiben teases Upham), but he keeps a count of the men who have died under his leadership. He has assimilated to the needs and demands of the military structure. When Carpazo (Vin Diesel) wants to take the little girl from Neuville to the next town, because it is "the decent thing to do", Miller tells him "We're not here to do the decent thing. We're here to follow fucking orders."

Miller separates himself from his men. He doesn't share their griping: "I don't gripe to you, Reiben. I'm a captain. There's a chain of command. Gripes go up, not down. Always up." He gently satirizes them, by inverting Rieben's complaints, and playing up to the fact that the company have a pool on his origins and civilian life: "What's the pool on me up to right now?" As played by Hanks, Miller "realizes that maintaining his distance is crucial to military discipline, and thus survival". Miller accepts the mission to find Ryan because that will earn him the right to get back to his wife.

Following Carpazo's death the squad shelter in a ruined church, and Miller speaks to Upham, who finds that combat experience is good for him. When Miller expresses surprise, Upham recites: "War educates the senses, calls into action the will, perfects the physical constitution, brings men into such swift and close collision in critical moments that man measures man." Upham, in his neediness to be part of the squad, with his comically inappropriate attempts to connect his experiences with war as described by Tennyson and Shakespeare, is the man denounced by Emerson in "The American Scholar", "the bookish man who relies on the past." Upham is the scholar, "in the degenerate state", who has become "a mere thinker, or, still worse, the parrot of other men's thinking." Miller is depicted antithetically to

²¹¹ Stephen E. Ambrose, *Citizen Soldiers: the U.S. Army from the Normandy beaches to the Bulge to the surrender of Germany: June 7, 1944 to May 7, 1945* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998), 74.

²¹² Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 68.

²¹³ Basinger, Anatomy of a Genre, 259.

²¹⁴ The quotation is from Ralph Waldo Emerson's lecture "On War", delivered to the Boston Peace Society, March 1838. "War (1838)," in *Miscellanies*, ed. Edward Waldo Emerson, vol. 11, Centenary ed., The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1911), 152.

²¹⁵ Auster, "Triumphalism," 102.

²¹⁶ Emerson, "American Scholar," 53.

Upham. He is not thrown by Upham's scholarliness: "Yeah, well I guess that's Emerson's way of finding the bright side." But the whole of Miller's demeanour and deportment shows that he would have won Emerson's approval. Indeed, he has almost been constructed according to Emerson's specifications. Miller is the model of "the great man... who in the midst of the crowd keeps with perfect sweetness the independence of solitude."²¹⁷

It is significant that, in a moment of transition for John Miller, between his roles of anonymous warrior and compassionate leader, it is Emerson, of all the possible writers on war, who is quoted by the filmmakers.²¹⁸ The sequence was placed into the shooting script to offer the audience "glints of a higher sensibility"²¹⁹ in Miller. He is, we are assured, a scholar-warrior, that "most generic of all Hollywood heroes, 'the uncommon common man'"²²⁰, and a representative of Emersonian individualism.²²¹

When Miller is required to suppress the mutiny within the squad following the death of Wade (Giovanni Ribisi) at the radar station, he does so by finally breaking the cover of his closely guarded privacy. He tells the men where he is from (Addley, Penn.); he tells them his job (he teaches English composition); he tells them about his fears for his relationship with his wife ("Sometimes I wonder whether I've changed so much my wife will even recognise me whenever it is I get back to her."). He tells them that the missions of the war are subservient to his desire to return home, and resume his life and be subsumed by it:

I don't know anything about Ryan. I don't care. The man means nothing to me, it's just a name. But if—you know, if going to Ramelle, and finding him so he can go home, if that earns me the right to get back to my wife—well, then... then that's my mission.

It is unclear, in retrospect, why Miller's self-exposure should placate the incipient mutiny. It is, as Cohen says, a "deus ex machina" ²²², although, in conformity with Spielberg and Emerson's humanism, it should more properly be labelled *homo ex machina*. It is the true humanity of Miller which allows the mission to continue: Miller's confession represents for Spielberg "the mystical citizen-soldier theme: the disgruntled soldiers are somehow supposed to feel

²¹⁷ Emerson, "Self-Reliance," 31. See the way, later in the film, Miller mentions to Ryan his contextual memory of his wife, with her rose garden, but refuses to divulge any more: "That one I save just for me."

²¹⁸ This is yet more evidence, according to Auster, of the film's sensibility of "American triumphalism": Auster, "Triumphalism," 102–103.

²¹⁹ Bart, *The Gross*, 157. The Emerson quotation was added by Scott Frank as scriptdoctor.

²²⁰ Auster, "Triumphalism," 102.

²²¹ See the section on the "Individuator of Individualism", in Chapter 5 above.

²²² Cohen, "Ryan [review]," 324.

this."²²³ The speech as originally scripted was even more revealing. Hanks in performance removed much of the excess: "It seemed to compromise the integrity of my character for him suddenly to explain himself."²²⁴ Hanks is able then to walk the narrow line between a believable Emersonian individual and a believable officer in the U.S. Rangers. His

...brilliant performance allows a viewer to see that beneath Miller's weary stoicism and despite the battlefield experiences which have driven him to the verge of collapse, the high school English teacher turned citizen soldier never questions the reasons for which the War is being fought or abandons his sense of duty.²²⁵

Miller is the personification of the pride taken by liberal, individualistic democracies in their armies. The war, and the strategy of the generals, meant that the "citizen soldiers were attempting to fulfil tasks which ran profoundly against the grain of their societies' culture."²²⁶ The (western) Allied armies were manned by "conscientious but never fanatical civilian soldiers".²²⁷ Miller is the "antithesis of the *Wehrmacht* automaton".²²⁸ He is mortal. We see his hand shake, presumably through battle trauma (although the scriptwriters tell us that the shaking began in Portsmouth, *before* embarkation, so it cannot be the result of cowardice). We smile sympathetically when he explains to Ryan that the shake is his attempt to keep the rhythm of the Piaf record playing in Ramelle. We are shaken ourselves when Miller's hand finally comes to rest. All the way through the film Miller's mortality and humanity is signified with this "physical tic and visual symbol that will have a wrenching emotional payoff in his last seconds of animation."²²⁹

It is not coincidental that Miller's squad finally discover Ryan in a "small, *leaderless* group of paratroopers". Miller offers Ryan two things, the "ticket home", and then, when that is rejected, leadership: this encompasses the original squad, Ryan, and his remaining "brothers", guarding a small bridge on the Mederet river from falling back into German hands. Miller is "a natural leader who might have sprung from a Walter Mitty daydream." ²³¹

²²³ Cohen, "Ryan [review]," 324.

²²⁴ Quoted in Bart, The Gross, 157.

²²⁵ Landon, "Realism, Genre," 62.

²²⁶ Max Hastings, *Armageddon: the battle for Germany*, 1944-45 (London: Macmillan, 2004), 105.

²²⁷ Hastings, Armageddon, 105.

²²⁸ Doherty, "Ryan [review]," 70.

²²⁹ Doherty, "Ryan [review]," 70.

²³⁰ Landon, "Realism, Genre," 59. Emphasis added.

²³¹ Doherty, "Ryan [review]," 70. "'The Old Man'll get us through,' [the crew] said to one another. 'The Old Man ain't afraid of hell!' ...'It's forty kilometers through hell, sir,' said the sergeant. Mitty finished one last brandy. 'After all,' he said softly, 'what isn't?'". From James Thurber, "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," in *My World—and Welcome to It* (New York:

If Spielberg's 'message' to the audience is a reminder to "earn" the results of the death of Miller and his men, his message comes via the medium of Emersonian individualism. As they prepare to receive the counter-attack of the SS Panzer Division²³² in Ramelle, Miller and Horvath muse on the bizarre place in which they have found themselves: "Sergeant, we have crossed some strange boundary here. The world has taken a turn for the surreal." Sergeant Horvath understands, but in trying to make sense of the surreal world, he explains the mission to Miller:

HORVATH: Part of me thinks the kid's right. What's he done to deserve this? He wants to stay here, fine, let's leave him and go home.

MILLER: Yeah.

HORVATH: But another part of me thinks, what if by some miracle we stay, and actually make it out of here. Someday we might look back on this and decide that—saving Private Ryan was the one decent thing we were able to pull out of this whole—godawful, shitty mess. That's what I was thinking, sir. Like you said, Captain, we do that, we all earn the right to go home.

Through this speech, on the banks of the Mederet river, Horvath and Miller accept the challenge and the injustice against which Private Reiben has struggled all through the mission: "You want to explain the math of this to me? I mean, where's the sense in risking the lives of the eight of us to save one guy?" Together, Miller and Horvath decide to commit the squad to the defence of the bridge ("Oh, brother", is Miller's significant response to his own decision), and the mission becomes saving Private Ryan through permitting Ryan to remain with his brother soldiers.

This is the crux of Bodnar's objection to *Ryan* and Spielberg's ideology: the collective (the squad, and the remnant of the 101st paratroopers) is sacrificed for the sake of the individual. Two of the original squad have already been killed.

Harcourt, Brace, 1942), 72–81; collected in *Writings and Drawings*, Library of America 90 (New York: Library of America, 1996), 545–550.

²³² In the film the Germans are referred to as the 2nd SS Panzer Division (*Das Reich*). In reality, in June 1944 *Das Reich* were stationed in Montauban in southern France, and, hampered by Allied air attacks, did not reach rear echelons in Normandy until 15-30 June, long after the (fictional) attack on the (fictional) village of Ramelle is supposed to have taken place. Max Hastings, *Das Reich: the march of the 2nd SS Panzer Division through France, June 1944* (London: Pan, 2009), 241. One commentator asserts that the tanks which take part in the attack have the insignia of the *1st* SS Panzer Division, the *Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler*, but the evidence of the film is unclear, as were, indeed, the regimental markings on German tanks during this period. Robert Oliver, "2nd SS Panzer Division," *Saving Private Ryan Online Encyclopedia*, 2009, <www.sproe.com/s/2nd-ss-panzer.html>; Bruce Quarrie, *2nd SS Panzer Division "Das Reich,"* Osprey Vanguard 7 (London: Osprey Publishing, 1979), 39. Amongst the minutiae, the point remains that *Ryan*'s 'realism' is privileged over its 'authenticity'.

By the end of the final battle, only Reiben and Upham remain alive, and Upham was not a member of the original squad: this truly is "all for one". Miller does not fight his war to extinguish evil, or to uphold freedom, or to prepare the world for the furtherance of liberal democracy. He fights his war to go home. When it is clear that he will never go home, he tells Ryan (and through him, Ryan's progeny) to earn the deaths of the individual soldiers of his squad: the post-war generation are to "rehabilitate traditions of good fathers, patriotic men, and self-sacrifice." Thus, Ryan itself rehabilitates the mythologizing leadership of Colonel Thursday and Captain York. The nation is made great through its survival of the testing times, whether it is the Indian Wars of the South-West or the liberation of Normandy. It will only survive through the heroism, detachment and moral decency of the American Adam, reluctantly putting down his baseball bat, and picking up his rifle. In short, as Bodnar says:

Past, present, and future are now contingent on standards of individual behavior rather than on democratic ideals. ²³⁴

Emerson's ideals have reached their perfect avatar in Captains Miller and York, through the personifications of Tom Hanks and John Wayne.

The Duke of Deception

We have identified the romanticization of the West as the generative power of the American *mythos*, which grew into and derived strength from the interchange between the dream of the West, the "free man living greatly" and the "reverie of adolescents".²³⁵ In "The Duke of Deception", a ruminative piece written shortly after the death of John Wayne²³⁶, Terry Curtis Fox suggests the way in which it found its personalised form in the life, career and old age of John Wayne. The "deception" is the dialogue between authenticity and realism.

The American *mythos* assumed the geographical quality of its locus: just as the West was a greater and wider land than the European settlers had ever known, the myth too needed to be "more real", and greater in quantity than that from which it originated, and that what it signified. To paraphrase Eco, the *mythos* promised 'We are giving you the avatar so you will no longer feel any need for the original'.²³⁷ This is why we have been required to examine the question of 'authenticity' versus 'realism' when it comes to the manifestations of the avatar.

²³³ Bodnar, "Postwar Memory," 816.

²³⁴ Bodnar, "Postwar Memory," 817.

²³⁵ De Voto, "Plundered Province," 4. See the discussion at note 8 on page 281.

²³⁶ Terry Curtis Fox, "People We Like: The Duke of Deception," *Film Comment* 15, no. 5 (October 1979): 68,70.

²³⁷ See the discussion on page 282.

Can we rely on the representation of the Westerner, the Cavalry Trooper, the Gunfighter, the Citizen Soldier (all properly, and atavistically, capitalised)? To ask the question is to misunderstand their atavistic functioning in society. One does not watch *Fort Apache* to understand the socio-economic development of the American south-west through the actions of the Indian Affairs agent; *Shane* does not teach us anything about the economics of subsistence farming in Wyoming territory; *Saving Private Ryan* is not the filmed version of the *Ranger Handbook*, and we should not expect to learn how to disable an SS-Regiment by watching Spielberg's work.

Rather we watch these films (in profitable quantities) because they reflect something back to us—something of the pain, wonder and complexity of being a human being. We fall, like Thurber's Walter Mitty, into dreams of what we wish to be, but, unlike Mitty, we know that we could never achieve our dreams. So we project our dreaming need upon the iconic representatives of that very need. We require of Wayne, and Ladd, and Hanks, a degree of common humanity: we need to see enough of ourselves in them to feel connected. But we also require them to be mysterious. Where does Shane come from? Whom has he killed? Does he die in the end? How does York assimilate his transformation in Colonel Thursday? What was the Captain's job back home, where did he go to school?

The actors who are successful at portraying the power of the avatar are the ones we return to, time after time. As McBride and Wilmington say, the most powerful quality of Wayne's acting ability was not his horse-riding, or his masculinity, or his ability with a gun or his fists, but simply "his mysteriousness."

The audience is never quite sure what he is going to do next, and every shift in mood is a revelation of something which, at the end of the film, will still remain partly inexplicable.²³⁸

The mysteriousness gave Wayne his status. Similarly, would Shane have been such a powerful representative of salvation to his unnamed community if they had known who he was and where he was going? Status, in Wayne's case, both built up, and derived from, "an authoritarian manner." His post-war film roles, in a time in which American society was so uncertain about where it was going, what it needed to be, and where its new frontier was to be found, gave Wayne the opportunity to play his part removed from the petty requirements and values of other characters in the narratives. Instead:

²³⁸ Joseph McBride and Michael Wilmington, "Prisoner of the Desert," *Sight and Sound* 40, no. 4 (Autumn 1971): 212.

²³⁹ Fox, "Duke of Deception," 70.

...Wayne depicted moral authority, a knowledge of what was right, which superceded any of the squabbling beneath him.²⁴⁰

The personal qualities of the actor were reflected synergistically in the parts he was given, by directors (like John Ford, and Howard Hawks) sensitive enough to detect his lightning rod qualities. Wayne's personal "intransigence, his innate authority, his ability to suggest an inordinate sorrow beneath a heroic exterior", made him a star and a "political symbol". He became identified "with a mythical America of moral certainty and individual power. The older Wayne got, the more he could embody the American Past." John Wayne (the person) became "John Wayne" (the avatar). As Maureen O'Hara put it, when petitioning the House of Representatives in May 1979 for a Congressional Gold Medal to be struck in Wayne's honour:

To the people of the world, John Wayne is not just an actor and a very fine actor. John Wayne is the United States of America. He is what they believe it to be. He is what they hope it to be. And he is what they hope it will always be.²⁴⁴

Fox concludes his meditative piece with this description:

Wayne fused two apparently contradictory qualities: those of a man who is thoroughly a part of society, who is more than willing to put himself second to society's demands... and those of a man who is thoroughly outside society, a loner who cannot be reconciled with 'civilization.' ²⁴⁵

In what way can this description *not* apply to the character of Captain John Miller, hero of *Saving Private Ryan*, and the (fictional) hero to whom a grateful generation paid \$500 million of thanks?²⁴⁶

We saw in the previous chapter how the model and symbol of John Wayne was repudiated. Paradoxically, the repudiation was based upon the same mythic-structures of thinking which created Wayne as an icon of American society: a free man, living greatly had no need of "John Wayne", but at the same time, "John Wayne" was the cause and guarantor for every man to

²⁴⁰ Fox, "Duke of Deception," 68.

²⁴¹ Fox, "Duke of Deception," 70.

²⁴² Fox, "Duke of Deception," 70.

²⁴³ A transformation predicated upon and predicted by the transformation of the person, Marion Morrison, into the actor, John Wayne, in the first place. (For the renaming of the actor, decided upon by director Raoul Walsh and producer Winfield Sheehan without Morrison/Wayne even present, see Roberts and Olson, *John Wayne*, *American*, 84.)

²⁴⁴ Quoted in Roberts and Olson, John Wayne, American, 647.

²⁴⁵ Fox, "Duke of Deception," 70.

²⁴⁶ For a written example of the tributes, see "Internet Discussion (Film & History)"; and the Epilogue, "The GIs and Modern America", in Ambrose, *Citizen Soldiers*, 470–473.

be transformed into the free man, living greatly. Both the construction *and* the denunciation of the mythic figure are products of the same, deeper, structural, cultural dynamics. We hate "John Wayne" for the same reasons we need "John Wayne". And we need "John Wayne", even without realising our need. As the theatre critic John Simon put it:

Oh, hell: the last century had its Iron Duke, Wellington; this century has its Granite Duke, Wayne. Every era gets the leader it deserves; John Wayne is ours.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁷ Writing in 1975. Cited by Roberts and Olson, *John Wayne, American*, 645.

Section 4 Domination and Discipleship

With extreme impatience, many young people today confuse the great nation-forming leader with this or that party leader—only few truly intellectual youth avoid this confusion.

These intellectual youths understand with the certainty of God's mercy that only the superior human being is the salvation of the world, that he whose myth is the continuing source of fecundity and fruitfulness for the race, is a true leader of the people... Only a superior human being is leader and ruler: he is utterly radiant, world-encompassing, all-comprehending spirit, a fundamentally sage heart, utterly masculine, all infusing action, utterly suprapersonal, visionary will of Earth, he is creator of the people, the nation; in him the divine spirit and earthly kingdom are one.

Jonas Lesser (1932)*

^{*} Von deutscher Jugend (Berlin: Neff, 1932), 323.

Chapter 9

Mythos and Anti-Mythos

A society's mass fantasies are anything but trivial, and I do not think we have anything to gain by underrating or simply mocking them... Societies give themselves away in their favourite fantasies; they betray their assumptions of what the world is really like.

Rowan Williams, The Truce of God (1983)¹

"...True, adventurous and uninhibited..."

As we learnt in the foreword, when the Foundation for Church Leadership was launched², Bishop Michael Turnbull described the situation faced by church leaders, and the underlying interrogative attitude which should be modelled by those leaders:

A question never far from the mind of a church leader is 'How can I break out of institutional shackles and be the true, adventurous, uninhibited leader I want to be?'³

Thus we can see the triumph of *Mythological-Leadership*. Even there, in an organization which sought to connect the best of business praxis with the depths of Christian theological *doxis*, the assumed model of leadership which is at work is leadership as self-expression, self-reliant individuation. To be a true leader is to disconnect oneself from community ("institutional shackles") and to launch out on a journey ("adventurous") of personal growth ("I want to be"). The Father of Church Leadership is thus, finally, completely and definitively, Emersonian.

We have sketched out one possible way of reading the mythography of our time, with its constant yearning for the leadership of the heroic individual

¹ *The Truce of God: peacemaking in troubled times,* revised ed. (Norwich: Grand Rapids: Canterbury Press; Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2005), 8–9.

² See the discussion on page 63.

³ Michael Turnbull, "Introduction," in Focus on Leadership: papers, commentary, and reflections on a seminar launching the Foundation for Church Leadership, King's College, London 20 January 2005 (York: Foundation for Church Leadership, 2005), 4.

and the constant flowing between assertion, repudiation, and resurgence of this yearning. We have seen there is a relationship dynamic between leader and follower, the individual and his community, the will to power and the lack of will to passivity.

There remains one last task to undertake, in two related parts. First, we need to show the moral importance of this analysis. Martin Luther relates a story which demonstrates the similar conundrum:

A certain village mayor, when he was about to die, told his pastor, who had been debating the Resurrection with the mayor a long time in an effort to convince him of its reality; 'To be sure, I am ready to believe this, but you will see that nothing comes of it'.4

In other words, just as Luther's pastor found, the analysis might be true, but what difference does it make: leadership may function mythologically, but 'so what?'

Given a demonstrable moral importance, we secondly need to demonstrate an alternative to the mythological functioning of leadership: an anti-mythos to the mythos.

Management by Machine Gun

At the end of the 1990s Keith Grint and Peter Case noted the sudden and pervasive popularity of a new "development in managerial discourse". The content of the discourse, "business process re-engineering" (with its inevitable three-letter acronym, BPR) is not particularly important for our purposes. What intrigued Grint and Case was the *register* in which much of the literature surrounding BPR was written. The fact that BPR had, by the late 1990s, gained "a significant place in the consciousness of management professionals throughout the developed world", meant that it is reasonable to interrogate the mode by which BPR discourse was undertaken. Grint and Case concede that all managerial discourse may tend towards violence, as any form of management "requires some degree of coercion", but, since the rise of BPR, "rhetoric associated with the workplace seems to have taken a violent turn". So, for example, the only way "to persuade many folks to undertake painful therapy like reengineering, followed by a permanent state of mobilization, is to

⁴ Martin Luther, *Selected Pauline Epistles*: 1 *Corinthians* 7, 15; 1 *Timothy*, ed. Hilton C. Oswald, Luther's Works 28 (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Pub. House, 1973), 102.

⁵ Keith Grint and Peter Case, "The Violent Rhetoric of Re-Engineering: management consultancy on the offensive," *Journal of Management Studies* 35, no. 5 (September 1998): 558.

⁶ Grint and Case, "Violent Rhetoric," 558.

⁷ Grint and Case, "Violent Rhetoric," 559.

⁸ Grint and Case, "Violent Rhetoric," 559.

persuade them that the alternative will be more painful". That pain is particular: "On this journey we…shoot dissenters." BPR has a purpose, which is to improve the functioning of the company, but "[d]ramatic improvement has to be paid for in some way, and the coinage is usually denominated in units of suffering." Those who persistently resist the "militarization" of the company "need the back of the hand." And if fisticuffs is not sufficient: "It's basically taking an ax and a machine gun to your existing organization."

Grint and Case posit five aspects¹⁴ to this bizarre articulation: first, there is a need to mark an absolute discontinuity with previous methods of business management; second, rhetorical, instrumental violence is powerful enough to signify this 'Year Zero' attitude; third, such a transformation will require its adherents to undergo a macho "proving ordeal" to demonstrate its seriousness; fourth, the journey is so terrifying that adherents will require leaders of the calibre of Moses, or Daniel Boone, to "lead the faithful out of the valley of darkness into the promised land"¹⁵; fifth, it is a playing out of a "colonizer–colonized dialectic"¹⁶, which allows the use of 'Us' and 'Them' language, while simultaneously absorbing a colonized perception of how the colonizers manage their business.¹⁷ In this way, BPR functions mythologically, for, as Lévi-Strauss pointed out, one of the functions of myth is to overcome apparent contradictions.¹⁸

The most powerful 'myth-kitty' called upon by BPR is "The Code of the West". 19 This Code, which has cultural and legal existence, meant that, in the face of assault or violence, there was no "duty to retreat". 20 Violence could, in fact *should*, be met with violence. Even such a civilized man as President

⁹ James Champy, *Reengineering Management: the mandate for new leadership* (New York: HarperBusiness, 1995), 49; cited by Grint and Case, "Violent Rhetoric," 561. Note the subtitle of Champy's book.

¹⁰ Rich Karlgaard, "Interview: Mike Hammer," *Forbes ASAP*, September 1993, 71; cited (inaccurately) by Grint and Case, "Violent Rhetoric," 561.

¹¹ Michael Hammer and Steven A. Stanton, *The Reengineering Revolution: the handbook* (London: HarperCollins, 1996), 174,183; cited by Grint and Case, "Violent Rhetoric," 562.

¹² Hammer and Stanton, *The Reengineering Revolution*, 174,183; cited by Grint and Case, "Violent Rhetoric," 562.

¹³ Joseph Maglitta, "One on One: Michael Hammer," *Computerworld*, January 24, 1994, 85. In the same interview it is revealed that Hammer had copyrighted the word "reengineering". Champy and Hammer are also dealt with in Brad Jackson, *Management Gurus and Management Fashions: a dramatistic inquiry* (London: Routledge, 2001), chap. 4.

¹⁴ Grint and Case, "Violent Rhetoric," 566.

¹⁵ Hammer and Stanton, The Reengineering Revolution, 132–134.

¹⁶ Grint and Case, "Violent Rhetoric," 566.

¹⁷ i.e. it is an American business perception of how Japanese business conducts itself.

¹⁸ Lévi-Strauss, "Structural Study," 229. See the discussion on page 143.

¹⁹ Grint and Case, "Violent Rhetoric," 566-568.

²⁰ Grint and Case, "Violent Rhetoric," 558.

Eisenhower, could, in a televised address in 1953, summarise the Code of the West by saying American society allows you to "[m]eet anyone face to face with whom you disagree". The Code meant "you could not sneak up on him from behind, do any damage without suffering the penalty of an outraged citizenry", but "[i]f you met him face to face and took the same risk as he did, you could get away with almost anything, as long as the bullet was in front." 22

The myth of the West, and its heroic, pioneering inhabitants, is not a whimsical piece of cultural history. Its effects are felt directly in our society today, and in no more a pernicious way, as BPR exemplifies, through the continuing cult of violence.

Monomythic Violence

It is impossible, says Rowan Williams, in *The Truce of God*, to understand any ethical project (in his particular instance, the Christian imperative to peacemaking) without first examining the fantasies of violence which appear to haunt our society. "Violence" must mean something more than the "level of realism" by which "physical struggle and physical injury" are depicted—although popular concerns about society's exposure to dramatic violence do not seem to move much beyond concerns about 'realism'. Williams gives us a four-fold taxonomy of these cultural fears and fantasies.

First, there is the violence of *catastrophe*, through which we experience the destruction or irreparable damage of our sophisticated technologies and/or systems. Catastrophe is unpredictable and utterly overwhelming: "[u]ncontrollable force has been unleashed against us, and we are helpless victims." Recent examples of this genus might be eco-catastrophe films such as *Volcano*, *Dante's Peak*, 2012 and *Armageddon*.²⁶

²¹ "Eisenhower Scores Character Attack; Cites Code of Meeting Accuser Face to Face—B'nai B'rith Group Gives Him Award," *The New York Times*, November 24, 1953. Quoted in Richard Maxwell Brown, "Violence," in *The Oxford History of the American West*, ed. Clyde A. Milner, Carol A. O'Connor, and Martha A. Sandweiss (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 395; cited by Grint and Case, "Violent Rhetoric," 567, but there mistakenly attributed to Wild Bill Hickcock and not the President. Eisenhower gave his address when presented with the "1953 Democratic Legacy Award" by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

²² "Eisenhower Character Attack." Brown adds, in parentheses, that the "almost anything"

included killing.
²³ Williams, *Truce of God*, 3.

²⁴ See the way in which *Saving Private Ryan* was received and its perceived 'authenticity', discussed in the previous chapter.

²⁵ Williams, Truce of God, 4.

²⁶ Mick Jackson, *Volcano*, DeLuxe / 35mm, U.S.A. (Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation, 1997); Roger Donaldson, *Dante's Peak*, DeLuxe / Super 35, U.S.A. (Universal Pictures, 1997); Roland Emmerich, *2012*, DeLuxe / Panavision, U.S.A. (Columbia Pictures, 2009); Michael Bay, *Armageddon*, Technicolor / Panavision, U.S.A. (Buena Vista Pictures, 1998).

Second, there is the violence of *occult terror*, in which force is unleashed against us, but this time from unseen, unknown and unknowable powers: *Poltergeist* and *The Fog* would be good examples of this genus.²⁷ Williams notes the popularity of the possessed child trope in this genus, part of the delight of cinema in expressing paedophobia²⁸: *The Others* might be an example.²⁹

Third, there is violence that is the result of human *insanity*. We see the actions of the psychopathic mass murderer working against the "vulnerable and marginal".³⁰ Very often, and tellingly, this violence is enacted by males against females.³¹ As Williams says, the violence has a "curiously amoral quality, it is done by an agent outside the ordinary range of social control and reasoned decision."³² Carpenter's *Halloween* is a good example.³³

Fourth, the final category we might call the *revenge of nature*. Films which include animal attacks, whether the animals are fictional, factual, conceivable, or just plain fantastic, are all evidence of our fears about uncontrollable violence: *The Birds*, *Cujo*, and even *The Thing* would be included.³⁴ This subgenus includes many films within the science-fiction genre. The alien in *Alien* is natural³⁵: we just do not understand it.

Although the forms of, and audiences for, these genres may be different, they have a close "family resemblance", as Williams calls it.³⁶ They are all fantasies originating in the "source and nature of violence". They share in the implicit, helpless assumption that "violence is something done *to* us by agencies

²⁷ Tobe Hooper, *Poltergeist*, Metrocolor; J-D-C Scope, U.S.A. (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1982); John Carpenter, *The Fog*, Metrocolor; Panavision, U.S.A. (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, 1980). Or indeed, almost any film directed by Hooper and Carpenter.

²⁸ See Kendall R. Phillips, *Projected Fears: horror films and American culture* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger Publishers, 2005), 109–112.

²⁹ Alejandro Amenábar, *The Others*, DeLuxe / Panavision, U.S.A. / U.K. / Spain (Dimension Films, 2001).

³⁰ Williams, *Truce of God*, 5.

³¹ In figures cited by Grint and Case, in the United Kingdom, about one quarter of all homicides are committed by men killing women who have been a sexual partner, and that 92 per cent of *all* violent crimes are committed by men. Grint and Case, "Violent Rhetoric," 559; citing Kenneth Polk, *When Men Kill: scenarios of masculine violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Susie Orbach, "The Seeds of Destruction," *The Guardian*, July 23, 1994, sec. Weekend. The ultimate source for Orbach's figures was *Criminal Statistics, England and Wales*, 1992: *Statistics Relating to Crime and Criminal Proceedings for the Year 1992*, Home Office (London: HMSO, December 3, 1993), Table 5.8.

³² Williams, Truce of God, 6.

³³ John Carpenter, Halloween, Metrocolor; Panavision, U.S.A. (Compass International, 1978).

³⁴ Alfred Hitchcock, *The Birds*, Technicolor, U.S.A. (Universal Pictures, 1963); Lewis Teague, *Cujo*, Panavision 35mm, U.S.A. (Warner Bros. Pictures, 1983); John Carpenter, *The Thing*, Panavision / Technicolor, U.S.A. (Universal Pictures, 1982).

³⁵ Ridley Scott, *Alien*, DeLuxe / Panavision, U.S.A. / U.K. (Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation, 1979).

³⁶ Williams, *Truce of God*, 7.

over which we have no control."³⁷ There is very little sense of moral judgement in these fantasies, according to Williams: "the agents of [the violence] are beyond or below moral assessment. Violence 'happens'."³⁸ Williams laments that this inability or refusal to see that violence has a moral component means that our society is incapable of recognizing the involvement of our own members in the commissioning and tolerating of violence. We pretend that "violence is never something ordinary human beings *decide to do*", ignoring that the commissioning of violence is "something to do with power, vision, understanding and choice, with the ways in which we make sense of our lives."³⁹

Paul Ricoeur made the connection between the aetiology of violence and our fears. There is a human-shaped hole in the centre of our morality of violence. Ricoeur says that we admit to "a very limited and very reassuring idea of violence" by reducing it to two extremes; on the one hand murder, on the other hand, the "strength of nature".⁴⁰

Between a murder and an avalanche, however, there is the whole realm of the intermediate, which is perhaps violence itself: human violence, the individual as violence. His violence has aspects of the hurricane and of the murder: on the side of the hurricane, it is the violence of desire, of fear, and of hate; on the side of murder, it is the will to dominate the other man, the attempt to deprive him of freedom or of expression, it is racism and imperialism.⁴¹

According to Ricoeur we cannot understand the power and persistence of violence without understanding the role and responsibility of the individual in violence. This is the reason why human society deals with the 'problem' and the 'contradictions' of violence mythologically, to bridge the epistemological and moral gaps between what exists and what is permitted, between what we can

³⁷ Williams, Truce of God, 7.

³⁸ Williams, *Truce of God*, 7 (emphasis in original). This analysis neglects the common trope that psychotic or 'natural' violence is often the result of human meddling: 'You've gone too far this time, professor'. Such a trope has its origins in twentieth century reactions to the Frankenstein myth. See Christopher P. Toumey, "The Moral Character of Mad Scientists: A Cultural Critique of Science," *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 17, no. 4 (Autumn1992): 411–437. "Disorder in these movies is a direct consequence of individual scientists' actions": Andrew Tudor, *Monsters and Mad Scientists: a cultural history of the horror movie* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 133, chap. 7, "Mad Science."

³⁹ Williams, *Truce of God*, 7, 9, emphasis in original.

⁴⁰ Paul Ricoeur, "Violence and Language," *Journal of French and Francophone Philosophy* 10, no. 2 (2011): 32. Originally written in 1967 ("Violence et langage [communication à la Semaine des Intellectuels Catholiques, Paris]," *Recherches et Débats* 16, no. 59 [1967]: 86–94); published in translated form as "Violence and Language," in *Political and Social Essays*, ed. David Stewart and Joseph Bien (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1974), 88–101.

⁴¹ Ricoeur, "Violence and Language (JFFP)," 32.

admit about, and what is the reality of, ourselves.⁴² Three authors (two working collaboratively) have produced significant works on this mythic overcoming of the contradictions of violence: Lawrence and Jewett's "American Monomyth"⁴³ and Wink's "myth of redemptive violence".⁴⁴

Walter Wink's myth is simple enough to summarize: "Violence is the ethos of our times. It is the spirituality of the modern world." It is an ultrasuccessful mythology because it is not recognized as such. It is an ultrasuccessful mythology because it is not recognized as such. It myth, according to Wink (following Ricoeur II), has its beginnings in and derives its power from the Babylonian creation/destruction myth of $En\hat{u}ma~Eli\check{s}^{48}$, from which comes the moral propositions that "[v]iolence inheres in the godhead... [and that evil] is an ineradicable constituent of ultimate reality, and possesses ontological priority over good." In the beginning was chaos, and order only triumphed over chaos by means of violence. Therefore, "might is right", the gods "favour those who conquer", religion exists only "to legitimate power and

⁴⁵ Wink, Engaging the Powers, 13.

⁴² Lévi-Strauss, "Structural Study," 229. Again, see the discussion on page 143.

⁴³ Originally published as Robert Jewett and John Shelton Lawrence, *The American Monomyth* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press, 1977); subsequently updated and extended as John Shelton Lawrence and Robert Jewett, *The Myth of the American Superhero* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 2002). Quotations will be from the latter volume.

⁴⁴ Originally published in Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers: discernment and resistance in a world of domination*, The Powers 3 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992); there is a digest of Wink's "Powers" trilogy in *The Powers That Be: theology for a new millennium* (New York; London: Doubleday, 1998). Quotations will be from the earlier volume. In a footnote Wink acknowledges the conceptual relationship between the two myths, developed simultaneously, and pays tribute to Jewett and Lawrence "brilliantly" tracing the idea through American culture, and that Jewett's similar thesis was expressed "in far more penetrating detail" (*Engaging the Powers*, notes 20, p. 330–331). I have been unable to discover a similar acknowledgement of Wink by Jewett or Lawrence, even though a chapter in a book edited by Lawrence includes a discussion on the applicability of Wink's thesis to the *Star Wars* mythology: Michelle J. Kinnucan, "Pedagogy of (the) Force: The Myth of Redemptive Violence," in *Finding the Force of the "Star Wars" Franchise: fans, merchandise and critics*, ed. Matthew Wilhelm Kapell and John Shelton Lawrence, Popular culture & everyday life 14 (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 59–72.

⁴⁶ "...precisely because it does not seem to be mythic in the least." Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, 13. Lévi-Strauss concurs.

⁴⁷ Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, trans. Emerson Buchanan (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), 175–210.

⁴⁸ Text in James B. Pritchard, ed., "Enûma Eliš (Akkadian Creation Myth)," in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, trans. E. A. Speiser, 3rd ed. (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1969), 60–72.

⁴⁹ Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, 14.

⁵⁰ Tiâmat (female and symbolizing chaos) was killed and dismembered by Marduk (male and representing order). Thus, we see a pre-history version of Williams's male-on-female psychopathic violence.

privilege", life is "a theatre of perpetual conflict in which the prize goes to the strong."⁵¹

"Peace through strength" continues in popular culture today. The myth of redemptive violence may be expressed thus:

An indestructible good guy is unalterably opposed to an irreformable and equally indestructible bad guy. Nothing can kill the good guy, though... he (rarely she) suffers grievously, appearing hopelessly trapped, until somehow the hero breaks free, vanquishes the villain, and restores order...⁵²

Popular cultural expressions of the myth differ from the aetiology of the myth in one significant way: Tiâmat's killing by Marduk was for a *purpose*: political, creative, legitimating. Violence today appears to be violent for its own sake:

Redemptive violence gives way to violence as an end in itself—not a religion that uses violence in the pursuit of order and salvation, but a religion in which violence has become the ultimate concern, an elixir, sheer titillation, an addictive high, a substitute for relationships. Violence is no longer the means to a higher good, namely order; violence itself becomes the goal.⁵³

Wink's myth operates in an entirely mythical mode, proper to its identified origins in *illud tempus* of Babylonian creation.⁵⁴ The advantage of Jewett and Lawrence's American Monomyth is that it is firmly rooted in the minutiae of American cultural life. We can see who is responsible for the enacting, and the propagating, of the myth. It is easily summarised, and Jewett and Lawrence have done so on a number of occasions. They based their idea on what they call the "classical monomyth" of Joseph Campbell.⁵⁵ The classical Monomyth is based upon an initiation-narrative. Lawrence and Jewett adapted (in a Darwinian sense) Campbell's theory because they sought to account for a specifically American context. What would the Monomyth look like when

⁵¹ Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, 16,17.

⁵² Wink, *Engaging the Powers*, 17. For Wink, the myth is cyclic, and the bad guy escapes to be bad again another day.

⁵³ Wink, Engaging the Powers, 25.

⁵⁴ See page 149. Jolyon Mitchell criticises this atemporal aspect of Wink's thesis by pointing out that the depiction of violence in films has been subject to development, and that audiences "use cinematic violence in a wide range of ways": Jolyon Mitchell, *Media Violence and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 164. Wink's point, and that of Lévi-Strauss and my own, is that violence, as a mythological expression, uses the *audience*.

⁵⁵ Discussed above on page 174.

transplanted into an American pattern of cultural expression, with its unexpressed need for soteriology?⁵⁶

Thus Lawrence and Jewett define the American Monomyth in the following way:

A community in harmonious paradise is threatened by evil; normal institutions fail to contend with this threat; a selfless superhero emerges to renounce temptations and carry out the redemptive task; aided by fate, his decisive victory restores the community to its paradisiacal condition; the superhero tends to recede into obscurity.⁵⁷

Jewett and Lawrence later adapted the definition by paying more attention to the moral nature of the hero:

...a lone hero is summoned by destiny to a mission of redeeming innocents suffering depredations by evil powers. The hero marks himself as morally fit by renouncing sexual and material temptations, thereby enabling himself to rescue the community whose institutions are too weak to protect it from predators.⁵⁸

Note the way in which Shane (as character) and *Shane* (as cultural artefact) conforms to this amended definition.⁵⁹ Note also, two further aspects of these complementary definitions. First, the hero is "lone": he is extra-societal, coming in from the outside, and returning to the place beyond his temporary community: he might have been 'in' the weakened community, but he was not 'of' the weakened community. This is both symbolized and effected by his asexual, ascetic nature.⁶⁰

Second, neither definition speaks about the *means* by which the hero will achieve his "redemptive task". We are told that he is to work against "evil", and that "normal institutions" are "too weak" or have failed to deal with the threat of evil (again with no qualification of how they are too weak). We are further told that his victory is "decisive". Part of the reason for this vagueness comes from the range of protagonists that Jewett and Lawrence are prepared to claim as conforming to the American Monomyth: Neo from *The Matrix*, American Presidents, super-heroes and Heidi.⁶¹ A variety of heroes requires a variety of

⁵⁶ For this soteriological neediness, see Harold Bloom, *The American Religion: the emergence of the post-christian nation* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), 32–33, & chap. 16.

⁵⁷ Lawrence and Jewett, American Superhero, 6.

⁵⁸ Robert Jewett and John Shelton Lawrence, "Heroes and superheroes," in *The Routledge Companion to Religion and Film*, ed. John Lyden (London: Routledge, 2009), 390.

⁵⁹ See the discussion in "The Mysteriously Attractive Man", from page 294 above.

⁶⁰ Recall the beautifully underplayed scenes between Shane, Marion and Joe Starrett in which Shane renounces the temptation to take Marion as wife and/or lover.

⁶¹ Lawrence and Jewett, *American Superhero*, chap. 4, "Heidi visits a 'Little House on the Prairie'."

tasks and techniques. Some of the techniques coalesce around what they call "golden violence"⁶², violence enacted by a righteous man for a righteous cause. Extra-legal violence, vigilantism, is an important part of American self-understanding: such films as Michael Winner's *Death Wish*⁶³, provide a "transitional bridge" between "archaic myth" and "current needs"⁶⁴: the "ever-recurring fantasy of redemptive violence" on the first part, and violent acts committed by "virile males" or "weak male outcasts" on the second.⁶⁵ The moral danger of the monomyth therefore arises in the myth being enacted: "such fantasies lead audiences to follow leaders who act as vigilantes to rid the world of evil. It should not be surprising that this message occasionally comes from some superheroes themselves."⁶⁶ Lawrence and Jewett go so far as to describe this "message" and "following" process as "discipleship":

...popular materials issue a call that seems aimed at courageous viewers. This is what we call the *invitation to emulate*... Some of those who participated vicariously in the mythic drama internalize the behaviour patterns and subsequently follow them when they face analogous situations in their lives.⁶⁷

The American Monomyth, therefore, is not a morally neutral cultural artefact. The Virginian, the Lone Ranger or Paul Kersey⁶⁸ have a real effect on real lives. The actions of the superhero, the extra-legal, extra-societal Adam, are not cathartic, but invocatory:

The superhero of the American monomyth does not free us from violence, but perpetuates it even as he claims to be a force for 'peace' in his own use of rationalized violence.⁶⁹

Tom Wright made the connection between the monomyth of redemptive violence and *realpolitik* following the death⁷⁰ of Osama bin Laden in Pakistan as a result of action by American Special Forces in May 2011. The only difference, he asserted, between British commandos executing IRA members in a Boston

⁶² Lawrence and Jewett, American Superhero, chap. 6.

⁶³ Michael Winner, *Death Wish*, Technicolor, U.S.A. (Paramount Pictures, 1974). Winner's nationality (British) merely proves the transnational nature of the "American" monomyth.

⁶⁴ Lawrence and Jewett, American Superhero, 113.

⁶⁵ Lawrence and Jewett, American Superhero, 113.

⁶⁶ Jewett and Lawrence, "Heroes and superheroes," 399.

⁶⁷ Lawrence and Jewett, American Superhero, 117. Emphasis in original.

⁶⁸ Examples given by Lawrence and Jewett: Kersey is the name of the character played by Charles Bronson in *Death Wish*.

⁶⁹ Jewett and Lawrence, "Heroes and superheroes," 400.

⁷⁰ The correct noun would be a contested term in itself: was bin Laden's death an "extra-judicial execution", an "assassination" or a "targeted killing in war"? See A. P. V. Rogers and Dominic McGoldrick, "Assassination and Targeted Killing—the Killing of Osama Bin Laden," *International & Comparative Law Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (2011): 778–788.

suburb and the action in Abbottabad is "American exceptionalism. America is subject to different rules to the rest of the world."⁷¹ The reason for the exceptionalism is the failure of "proper justice"⁷², and the subsequent right of Americans to take back justice from, what Owen Wister called, the "withered hands" of the law, into their own hands "where it was once at the beginning of all things."⁷³ President Obama was praised for the action, "even by his bitter opponents", for completing a phase in the war against Al-Qaeda, but, more importantly, because "he has just enacted one of America's most powerful myths."⁷⁴

As Wister puts it, describing the Virginian's famous threat "when you call me that, *smile!*", "The letter means nothing until the spirit gives it life"—and for Wister and the Virginian, the spirit gives the letter life by producing a pistol to back up the threat.⁷⁵

Under the American monomyth of redemptive violence, to be a leader/hero means to be prepared to use violence. To be a disciple/follower means to accept, in turn, an invitation to use and be thrilled by violence. But, as Wright asks:

...what has any of this to do with something most Americans also believe, that the God of ultimate justice and truth was fully and finally revealed in the crucified Jesus of Nazareth, who taught people to love their enemies, and warned that those who take the sword will perish by the sword?⁷⁶

The Emergence of Mythological-Leadership

Many strands have come together to form the pattern, *telos*, and moral imperative of *Mythological-Leadership* as it is presented within the Church of England today. The Church has inherited what it thinks of as its *Missionary-Leadership*⁷⁷, and has attempted to learn lessons from the secular world in *Managerial-Leadership*. It has produced papers, reports, syllabuses and quality assurance documents all designed to foster, encourage and express the

⁷¹ Tom Wright, "America's Exceptionalist Justice," newspaper blog, *The Guardian: Comment is Free*, May 5, 2011, <www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/belief/2011/may/05/america-lone-ranger>.

⁷² Wright, "America's Exceptionalist Justice."

⁷³ Judge Henry's description of the ineffective law of Wyoming in Owen Wister, *The Virginian: a horseman of the plains*, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 284; cited, in a different edition, by Lawrence and Jewett, *American Superhero*, 32.

⁷⁴ Wright, "America's Exceptionalist Justice."

⁷⁵ Wister, *The Virginian* (1902), 29.

⁷⁶ Wright, "America's Exceptionalist Justice."

⁷⁷ See the naming of *Missionary-Leadership* in the context of the ministry of the Archbishop of Canterbury, as discussed in Chapter 2 on page 52.

⁷⁸ See, similarly, the discussion in Chapter 2, "Managerial-Leadership as a religion", on pages 62-81.

leadership (innate or developed) it finds in its ordinands and ministers.⁷⁹ It believes that this is a useful and necessary project; otherwise, why would it devote so much time, money and effort to the promulgation of its varying definitions?

But we have also seen how the strictures and insights of *Ma-L* in the secular world have been contradicted by the continuing power of the mythography of America: the power of the West, the place of the Frontier, the perfectibility of the American Adam, the heroic, lone, rugged, individual. Using the important definitional work of Jewett, Lawrence, and Wink, we are finally able to delineate the outline of *My-L*. Let us do so by adapting Jewett and Lawrence's many definitions of the American Monomyth⁸⁰ into a definition of *Mythological-Leadership*:

The Leader originates outside the community he is called to lead. The structures of the community have failed to deal with an existential threat, but the rise of the threat has coincided with, or even called up, the arrival of the idealistic Leader, who is selfless, ascetic, asexual and alone. The community, as a collective and as individuals, dissolve into the dominance of the Leader⁸¹, who swiftly assumes an authority that is less to do with his office and more to do with the power ascribed to his personality. The Leader will find himself faced by violent adversaries, and the degree of the opposing violence and the implacability of the adversation, demonstrates the sincerity and the righteousness of the Leader's actions. He remains patient and controlled in the face of provocations, "utterly cool and thus divinely competent".82 The leadership of the Leader is exercised on behalf of the community, and thus must be directed outwards: to be successful, leadership is something that is exercised against the 'Other'.83 The community is finally saved through a violent confrontation, in which only the guilty and unrighteous are hurt, with the sole exception of the Leader, who is mortally wounded. However, by his stripes the community has been redeemed: the "siege of paradise"84 is lifted, and the community has thrilled by the exercise of vicarious violence, focused away from the community. The Leader is removed from the community, and his exit demonstrates both the costliness of his

⁷⁹ See, most significantly, the *fons et origo* in the work of Robert Warren, discussed on pages 77-78.

⁸⁰ Namely, those found in American Superhero, 6, 47; "Heroes and superheroes," 390.

 $^{^{81}}$ For the use of the verb "dissolve", see Bonhoeffer's discussion of the Führer-cult on page 335 below

⁸² Lawrence and Jewett, American Superhero, 47.

⁸³ "People want religious leaders to tell them that *they're* right", and thus, by extension, that the 'Others' are wrong. Williams, "The stable door is open," 17. See page 52.

⁸⁴ Lawrence and Jewett, American Superhero, 47.

sacrifice and his disconnection with the community in the first place. Very few recognize his leaving, and, if he is remembered, it is in a distorted and hypocritical way—those from within the community who were most opposed to his presence are now the greatest advocates of his memory.

Inescapably within this model of *My-L* we come across the need (unexpressed and unacknowledged) that the Leader is required to be violent, on behalf of 'Us' against 'Them'. This 'violence' may be moral or symbolic or figurative or metaphorical, but it is still violence. There is no situation that cannot be redeemed by the death of Tiâmat.

Where can we find another model, an *anti-mythos*, which stands against this primordial, and ineluctable Domination System, and might conform more closely to Jesus's rejection of the violence of androcracy.⁸⁵

Refuting the Dominion of Some Over Others⁸⁶

By May 1934 the Nazi government had been in power for fourteen months. The process of *Gleichschaltung*⁸⁷ was beginning to impinge upon the practice of Christianity and the polity of the Church. Churchmen opposed to such "Co-ordination" met in Barmen, in North Rhine-Westphalia. Under the guidance of Karl Barth, the synod issued the Barmen Declaration, which reminded the Church that it was not the world, and the world that it was not the Church.⁸⁸ The Third Article of the Declaration makes clear that the Evangelical Church of Germany,

...as a church of pardoned sinners, has to witness in the midst of a sinful world, with its faith as with its obedience, with its message as with its order, that it belongs solely to him [Jesus Christ, its Lord] and that it lives and wants to live solely from his comfort and from his direction in the expectations of his appearance.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ "Domination System" and "androcacy" are epithets of Wink's coining. The latter should not be read as a purely gender based criticism, but one in which the violence of humankind is expressed through the self-interested rule of men: *Engaging the Powers*, 110–111.

⁸⁶ From the Fourth Thesis of the Barmen Declaration: John H. Leith, ed., "The Barmen Declaration (1934)," in *Creeds of the Churches: a reader in Christian doctrine, from the Bible to the present*, 3rd ed. (Louisville, Ky.: John Knox Press, 1982), 521.

⁸⁷ See the discussion on page 219f.

⁸⁸ See Sam Wells's introduction to the Declaration in Samuel Wells, *Christian Ethics: an introductory reader* (Malden, Mass.; Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 186. For a further, excellent, discussion of the historical context and content of the Declaration, see Eberhard Busch, *The Barmen Theses Then and Now: the 2004 Warfield lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary*, trans. Darrell Guder and Judith Guder (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2010).
⁸⁹ Leith, "The Barmen Declaration (1934)," 521; Busch, *Barmen Theses*, 49.

*The Fire, the Brilliance, the Pathos of the Leader*⁹⁰

Bonhoeffer had already begun publicly to grapple with the issues addressed by the Barmen Declaration. In the preceding year, he gave an address on 'The Führer and the Individual', part of a series of lectures on 'The Younger Generation', broadcast by Berliner Rundfunk. Bonhoeffer's was the second of the series and was broadcast on 1 February 1933, two days after Hitler was appointed Reich Chancellor. The lecture was well received by the radio critics⁹¹, but the lecture was curtailed before he addressed the specific political and religious critiques of the Führer cult.⁹²

Bonhoeffer identifies the contrast between the younger and older generations, the former born since the turn of the century (*DBWE 12*, 269) and who have experienced the crisis in which "the previously well-established Western world came apart at the seams" (*DBWE 12*, 271). As a result of this crisis they have issued an "impassioned call...for new authority" (*DBWE 12*, 272), which, through opposition to the "unreal individualism" of the older generation, could only imagined "in terms of a new human being" (*DBWE 12*, 272), one in whom the search for community and authority could be combined and found. This is a natural process: there have always been leaders, and "[w]here there is community there is leadership" (*DBWE 12*, 274). But before the leader was embedded within a "given social structure", and was dependent upon a specific context: we had "teachers, statesmen, fathers". Now the demand is for a leader divorced from this social structure, "totally divorced from an office... essentially and only leader" (*DBWE 12*, 274). We have *solo dux*.

Because of the deracination of the leader, we have the deracination of the follower: the "individual is totally dissolved; he becomes a tool in the hands of the leader" (*DBWE 12*, 277). The individual submits, and is disconnected (Bonhoeffer provocatively calls this process *Ausschaltung*, deliberately recalling the *Gleichschaltung* of the new government). The leader, assuming the "collective power of the people", is "transformed into the political–messianic idea of leader that we see today" (*DBWE 12*, 278). This the leader must refuse.

⁹⁰ Bonhoeffer's epithets for the younger generation's concept of 'leader' in an essay published as "The Younger Generation's Altered View of the Concept of Führer," *Der Rundfunkhörer*, January 27, 1933, and printed in *Berlin*, 1932-1933, ed. Carsten Nicolaisen, Ernst-Albert Scharffenorth, and Larry L. Rasmussen, trans. Isabel Best, David Higgins, and Douglas W. Stott, DBWE 12 (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2009), 266–268.

⁹¹ "[W]ell -formed sentences that one hopes to be able to read at leisure in print", said a critic in *Der Rundfunkhörer*; quoted in Dietrich Bonhoeffer, DBWE 12, 268, n. 1.

⁹² This was due to the simple technical problem that Bonhoeffer overran in time, rather than an attempt to silence a critic of the brand-new regime. He subsequently delivered an expanded version of the lecture at the Berlin Technical College (23 February 1933) and the College of Political Science (March 1933). The lecture is published, with later insertions and clarifications, in "DBWE 12," 268–282. Part of Bonhoeffer's intention was to address the influential work of Jonas Lesser, quoted as the epigraph to this section.

He is morally obliged to "lead the led from the authority of the leader's person to a recognition of the true authority of order and office" (*DBWE 12*, 280). He must "radically reject the temptation to become an idol" (*DBWE 12*, 280). If the leader accepts this idolization, if he refuses the true, limited nature of leadership ("this clear restriction of authority" *DBWE 12*, 280), then "the image of the leader shifts to one of misleader" (*DBWE 12*, 280).

Calling and Following

This political and social exploration was in the back of Bonhoeffer's mind when, as an indirect result of the Barmen Declaration, he taught in an illegal seminary of the Confessing Church based in Finkenwalde, Pomerania from 1935 to 1937. It was an immensely productive time for his theological thinking and writing, and three books were the result: *Life Together, The Prayerbook of the Bible* (an introduction to the Psalms)⁹³ and, most pertinently for our purposes, *Discipleship*.⁹⁴ It is possible to regard *Discipleship* as an extended commentary on the third thesis of the Barmen Declaration, for, as Bonhoeffer's editors say in their afterword to *Discipleship*, here he "expounded [the thesis] in such a way that its truth became undeniable, even beyond the historical context of the Church Struggle in the Third Reich."⁹⁵

He addresses the deracination of leader and followers head-on, by refusing to engage with the concept on its own terms. Rather, he asserts a new paradigm: "Discipleship is a commitment to Christ. Because Christ exists, he must be followed" (*DBWE 4*, 59). There is no programme or abstraction which can be substituted for the person of Jesus Christ: "the dogmatic systems then in vogue were, in fact, mere ideas about Jesus unrelated to the personal obediential relationship to which Jesus calls his followers." Nothing can be substituted for this absolute, unconditional and personal imperative: "the call to discipleship is a commitment solely to the person of Jesus Christ, a breaking through of all legalisms by the grace of him who calls" (*DBWE 4*, 59). And it is Jesus Christ himself, in his concrete individuality, which is the measure and completeness of the call. He is the normative one: "No further content is possible because Jesus is the only content. There is no other content beside Jesus. He himself is it" (*DBWE 4*, 59). Jesus is the means by which disciples are

⁹³ Published together as Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together and Prayerbook of the Bible*, ed. Gerhard Ludwig Müller, Albrecht Schönherr, and Geffrey B. Kelly, trans. James H. Burtness and Daniel W. Bloesch, DBWE 5 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996).

⁹⁴ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Discipleship*, ed. Martin Kuske et al., trans. Barbara Green and Reinhard Krauss, DBWE 4 (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2003).

⁹⁵ Martin Kuske and Ilse Tödt, "Editors' Afterword to the German Edition," in *Discipleship*, ed. Geffrey B. Kelly and John D. Godsey, by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, trans. Barbara Green and Reinhard Krauss, DBWE 4 (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2003), 298.

⁹⁶ Kelly and Nelson, Cost of Moral Leadership, 135.

called, and the content of that call. Jesus says, 'Follow me', not 'Assent to a series of programmatic strategies', and certainly not 'Submit yourself to an idolized *Ausschaltung*.'

The focus of the call must not and cannot be upon those who respond. This is perhaps one reason why the Gospels make no attempt at a psychologically satisfying explanation of the reason why the disciples responded to Jesus. There is no 'back-story' for the disciples, so that attention is not deflected from the 'front-story' of the one who is calling. And there can be no implicit assumptions about the one who calls: "this creative Word has no presuppositions whatsoever. ...The Word of God addressed to these particular concrete persons has no presupposition but Itself."⁹⁷

The Word of God, in the person of Jesus, is *self*-supposition, and that self-supposition is encountered not "through speculation but through the concrete demands and addresses of others in concrete situations." Jesus's disciples did not come to him as if he were a Rabbi, in order to "debate with a learned and wise man and so increase their knowledge." Rather, a radical separation between old and new is expected; old man and new disciple, old and new life, old sin and new grace. The first step, after hearing the call, is to renounce the self: "Allegiance to Christ displaces (by transforming) that to self. The command is to 'follow me', not to choose a way of life for oneself." In other words, "discipleship is not an addition to the old life." The first thing which must be lost is the "illusion of independent self-sufficiency" and that can only be achieved by recognising the confrontation with a demand, to which there were (and are!) only two possible responses: obedience or disobedience.

Obedience and Grace

The context for the disciples in the Scriptures is the same as the context for Christians in Bonhoeffer's own day: the disciple is called. There is nothing between him and the one who does the calling. However, immediately interposed between the disciple and the caller are the "forces" of the world: "reason... conscience, responsibility, piety, even the law and the principle of Scripture" intervene (DBWE 4, 77). The human soul can call upon a myriad of rationalisations to refuse the call, or not to hear the call in the first place. None of those rationalisations are acceptable: "Jesus' call broke through all of this and

⁹⁷ A. I. McFadyen, "The Call to Discipleship: Reflections on Bonhoeffer's Theme 50 Years On," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 43, no. 4 (1990): 463.

⁹⁸ McFadyen, "Call to Discipleship," 475.

⁹⁹ McFadyen, "Call to Discipleship," 469.

¹⁰⁰ McFadyen, "Call to Discipleship," 468.

¹⁰¹ McFadyen, "Call to Discipleship," 469.

¹⁰² McFadyen, "Call to Discipleship," 470.

mandated obedience. It was God's own word. Simple obedience was required" (*DBWE 4*, 77; see the whole of chap. 3, "Simple Obedience").

It might seem, therefore, that obedience engenders within the disciple the faith which responds to the call. Or does faith allow the disciple to hear the call in the first place? Bonhoeffer refutes the premise of the question: "only the believers obey" and "only the obedient believe" (*DBWE 4*, 64). He neither believes that first there is belief and then there is obedience, nor first there is obedience followed by belief (*DBWE 4*, 63–4): more exactly, there can never be some "invariable chronological sequence".¹⁰³ The one does not exist without the other.

Faith and obedience are linked together in a dialectical and indissoluble unity in which willingness to serve God by obeying the Gospel mandates is the natural and spontaneous note of Christian life governed by the person and mission of Jesus Christ.¹⁰⁴

Bonhoeffer explicates the consequences of this understanding of obedience by his treatment of the encounter between Jesus and the rich young man as a parable (*DBWE 4*, 69–72). The fault of the rich young man lies, first, in seeking the opinion of a wise religious teacher, rather than recognizing his encounter with "a divine order with unconditional authority" (*DBWE 4*, 70). The rich young man then attempts to sift and prioritize the commandments of God through "ethical conflict": 'Which commandments should I obey?' [Matt 19:18]. This is nothing less than "the human revolt against God." The young man does not recognize Satan hiding in the question, for, to "invoke ethical conflict is to terminate obedience. It is a retreat from God's reality to human possibility, from faith to doubt." (*DBWE 4*, 71). And in this instance "doubt" means the devil's solution to ethical conflicts: "keep asking questions, so that you are free from having to obey." (*DBWE 4*, 72). The rich young man, in refusing to recognize his encounter with God, is unable to 'affirm' God: instead "he affirms himself in a distorted form of individuality (isolation and self-interest)." ¹⁰⁵

The rich young man is the exemplar of Bonhoeffer's animadversion on "cheap grace" (*DBWE 4*, chap. 1). Discipleship is not predicated on any faithfulness which may belong to the disciple. Discipleship, if it comes from an assertion of the power of "individuals to constitute themselves through their decisions", would then be "identified with the power of believers individually to achieve heaven on their own resources and therefore for themselves." That way leads to "cheap grace".

¹⁰³ Stephen Plant, *Bonhoeffer*, Outstanding Christian Thinkers (London; New York: Continuum International, 2004), 100.

¹⁰⁴ Kelly and Nelson, Cost of Moral Leadership, 134.

¹⁰⁵ McFadyen, "Call to Discipleship," 466.

¹⁰⁶ McFadyen, "Call to Discipleship," 466–7.

Bonhoeffer's autobiographical and ecclesiastical context had made him realise that the "Protestant principles of faith alone, Scripture alone, and giving glory to God alone now had deteriorated into mere boorish churchgoing, easy procurement of sacramentalized grace, and [the] reduction of the Bible to legalisms and routine rituals." The task was now to state the condemnation as clearly as possible.

"Cheap grace is the mortal enemy of our church... [it] means grace as bargain-basement goods, cut-rate forgiveness, cut-rate comfort, cut-rate sacrament..." (*DBWE 4*, 43). The German Church had been knowingly complicit in peddling this forgery: "Like ravens we have gathered around the carcass of cheap grace. From it we have imbibed the poison which has killed the following of Jesus among us" (*DBWE 4*, 53). The only solution is to seek "costly grace": costly, "because it calls to discipleship", "costs people their lives" and thus "condemns sin"; grace, "because it calls us to follow *Jesus Christ*", "thereby makes [us] live", and "justifies the sinner" (*DBWE 4*, 45: emphasis in original). Above all, it is costly grace because it was costly to God, "because it costs God the life of God's Son" (*DBWE 4*, 45). The fact of the Incarnation and Passion of Jesus Christ means that grace can be nothing other than costly.

Individual are removed from "their surroundings and present context", a context of self-infatuation, and then, through renunciation of self (which is different from *self*-renunciation), is recreated through "an incorporation into a different relation and relational context." That relation is solely directed towards Christ: "his call to discipleship dissolved all ties for the sake of the unique commitment to Jesus Christ" (*DBWE 4*, 62). It cannot be the result of an individual's recreation through an act of individualistic will: it is "not an act of self-constitution though an internally generated and self-directed decision but a response to an external address." This recreation is what McFadyen calls a "recontextualization", this time within the "God-context":

The God-context in which these called persons now find themselves is not, however, primarily individual. Such individual confrontations take place within a history of salvation which is not principally individual but corporate. ¹¹⁰

The individual experiences grace, but grace is not contingent upon the individual. Rather, grace is experienced by the individual, through "intersubjectively valid structures of meaning which belong to the social

¹⁰⁷ Kelly and Nelson, Cost of Moral Leadership, 131.

¹⁰⁸ McFadyen, "Call to Discipleship," 462,462–3.

¹⁰⁹ McFadyen, "Call to Discipleship," 463.

¹¹⁰ McFadyen, "Call to Discipleship," 472.

context" in which "events of grace" take place.¹¹¹ In short, grace happens *to* you, not *because* of you.

Community and Sociality¹¹²

In locating grace within community we see how Bonhoeffer's theology of discipleship and sociality was radically variant to the prevailing Harnackian individualism of his day.¹¹³ It is true that the operation of grace acknowledges the importance of individual obedience:

Christ makes everyone he calls into an individual. Each is called alone. Each must follow alone. (*DBWE 4*, 92)

But this 'aloneness', as we have seen in the previous section, is emphatically *not* coterminous with the heroic individualism of nineteenth and twentieth century German Protestantism. Then the individual was delimited by his own, autonomous, authority. 114 Rather, Bonhoeffer means that the obedient disciple, through a radical dislocation, is called out of, away from, "immediate relationships", "connections with the world" (DBWE 4, 98, 93), for this "immediacy [Unmittelbarkeit] is a delusion", and one which is strengthened and deepened by every claim of "father..., mother..., spouse..., child..., nation..., history" upon the disciple: it is "the caprice of self-willed life" (DBWE 4, 95, 92, 93). Instead, in its place is the reality that Bonhoeffer expressed aphoristically when he said "...the Christian concept of the person is really exhibited only in sociality..." (DBWE 1, 33). To be placed in the "God-context" requires an "external address", which does not, and cannot, occur in "asocial terms". 115 Through grace (the process of decontextualization from self-infatuation, and recontextualization within the God-context), the delusion of the unmediated *individual* is replaced with the *sociality* of the *person*: for Bonhoeffer "human beings [are] essentially social persons whose personal and corporate relationships have become self-contradictory through egotism and destructive power."116

What does it mean to talk about a "person"? Where do "persons" exist? Bonhoeffer is very clear on this:

Every concept of community is essentially related to a concept of person. It is impossible to say what constitutes community without asking what

¹¹¹ McFadyen, "Call to Discipleship," 472.

¹¹² Some of this material is expanded from a chapter in my earlier book: Lewis-Anthony, *If You Meet George Herbert*, chap. 9.

¹¹³ See the discussions on page 123 and 336 above.

¹¹⁴ For the importance, and misleading nature, of "authority" in Bohoeffer's thinking, see *DBWE* 12, 279-282.

¹¹⁵ McFadyen, "Call to Discipleship," 463.

¹¹⁶ Green, Theology of Sociality, 156.

constitutes a person. ... The concepts of person, community and God are inseparably and essentially interrelated. A concept of God is always conceived in relation to a concept of person and a concept of a community of persons. Whatever one thinks of a concept of God, it is done in relation to person and community of persons. (DBWE 1, 34. Emphasis in original)

Sociality is the crucial word to understanding Bonhoeffer's concept of community. Whereas the OED defines "sociality" as "the state or quality of being social; social intercourse or companionship with one's fellows, or the enjoyment of this"¹¹⁷, Bonhoeffer's use of the concept is made richer and more complex by his use of it in performing *theological anthropology*. As Clifford Green suggests, Bonhoeffer is walking and thinking in that narrow space where what we say about humanity depends upon what we say about God, which in turn depends upon what we think about humanity. This is inescapable, because Christian words about God (Christian theology) can only be spoken in the light of the Incarnation:

God's being is not in transcendent isolation and absence. God is free for humanity in our history; that is, in the light of Jesus Christ, God is revealed as present to us in the world—God's being is being-in-relation-to-us. This is the meaning of the incarnation: God with us, and God for us.¹¹⁸

Nicholas Lash explains this interconnection:

The Church is a people, an assembly of men and women. Therefore, we will not think sensibly about the Church unless we think sensibly about the kinds of things human beings are. Moreover, human beings are creatures, constituents of the world of which they form a part. Therefore, we will not think sensibly about human beings unless we think sensibly about the world which God creates.¹¹⁹

Because the self-revelation of God in relation to humanity is through the person and saving actions of Jesus Christ, the very nature of being human has been changed: we are fundamentally people in relationship—with each other

¹¹⁷ "Sociality," *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), sec. a.1.a, 2, http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/50229738>.

¹¹⁸ Clifford Green, "Human sociality and Christian community," in *The Cambridge Companion to Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, ed. John W. de Gruchy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 114. ¹¹⁹ Nicholas Lash, "Conversation in Context," in *Theology for Pilgrims* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2008), 157–158. Lash glosses his explanation further: "For those readers who prefer to have these things clothed in academic dignity, I am suggesting that our ecclesiology is shaped by whatever anthropology we simply take for granted, and that our anthropology, in turn, is shaped by whatever ontology we simply take for granted." Lash, "Conversation in Context," 12 on p. 158.

and with God. "To be human is to be a person before God, and in relation to God. The relation of individual persons to each other, and the relations between human communities of persons, has this theological understanding of God and human existence at its core." 120

This has a deep impact on the meaning of community. It is impossible for any human, social, community to truly exist apart from the community of God: Inherent in the Christian concept of God that we know through revelation in Christ, but ultimately through Christ's church-community, is that community of God and social community belong together... (*DBWE 1*, n1, p. 60).¹²¹

In other words, it is impossible to be a Christian apart from community: the relational nature of being human means that if we are to be fully human, by being drawn into relationship with God, then, at *one and the same time*, we are being drawn into relationship with others.

But on what basis will this community arise? What will be its ethical component? Theoretically, it should be simple: human community functions best (that is, most authentically) when it is completely subordinated to the will of God.

To be in community with God obviously means, first of all, the absolute identity of purpose of the divine and human wills, within the relation of the creative to the created (i.e. obedient) will—in other words, in the relation of ruling and serving. (*DBWE 1*, n. 1, p. 60)

But Bonhoeffer is also a realist. He recognizes that such an "absolute identity of purpose" is no easy thing to achieve this side of the Fall:

... since every person is created with a uniquely individual character, tension between wills cannot be avoided even in the community of love. With this concession we already recognize that strife as such is by no means as a result of the fall but arises from a common love of God. The will of every individual strives to attain the single goal of serving the divine will, that is, serving the community in its own way. (*DBWE 1*, n. 1, pp. 60–1)

Bonhoeffer gives us two concepts to correct against this imposition of the human will in place of God's will. First of all he emphasises the importance of "responsibility", the less-than-adequate English translation for the original

¹²⁰ Green, "Human sociality," 115.

¹²¹ Bonhoeffer here points out the significance of Gen 2:18, which he later expanded upon in his lectures on Genesis: *Creation and Fall: a theological exposition of Genesis 1-3*, ed. Martin Rüter, Ilse Tödt, and John W. de Gruchy, trans. Douglas S. Bax, DBWE 3 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997), 63–4.

Verantwortlichkeit. This means much more than merely 'being answerable' or 'accountable'. ¹²² For Bonhoeffer, *Verantwortlichkeit* was the constant encountering of one ethical agent against another: we achieve maturity as human beings when we realise that the boundaries and limitations of our will are defined against the boundaries and limitations of another's will. ¹²³ In other words, this accountability, what Rowan Williams has called "being responsible" ¹²⁴, allows Christian communities to discover the limits of will and the scope of autonomy.

The second idea is that of *Stellvertretung* (*DBWE 1*, 79, 120). This means, literally, 'standing in the place of another', but it has a much deeper resonance than can be conveyed by a simple translation like 'proxy' or 'deputy'. For Bonhoeffer, the "vicarious representation" of Jesus's actions (his passion and death) are the means by which God takes human culpability seriously, and by which sin is punished and overcome—and by which "grace" becomes "costly". Humanity can only abandon ethical responsibility for ourselves in the face of this loving offer by God:

Through the Christian principle of vicarious representative action the new humanity is made whole and sustained. This principle gives Christian basic-relations their substantive uniqueness... [and] unites the new humanity with Christ, but also links its membership to each other in community (*DBWE 1*, 156–7).

Christ's free, self-giving and other-loving actions are the basis of this new community. Bonhoeffer says that it has (or should have) two modes of being, 'being-with-each-other' and 'being-for-each-other', each depending on the other. Bonhoeffer traces an expression of the former in the work of Martin Luther, most directly from the latter's *Fourteen Consolations*:

Therefore, when we feel pain, when we suffer, when we die, let us turn to this, firmly believing and certain that it is not we alone, but Christ and the church who are in pain and are suffering and dying with us... Indeed, we set out upon the road of suffering and death accompanied by the entire church.¹²⁵

'Being-with-each-other' cannot happen without 'being-for-each-other': "Since I as a Christian cannot live without the church, since I owe my life to the

¹²² See Green, "Human sociality," 115-116.

¹²³ See "The Structure of Responsible Life" in Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics*, ed. Clifford J. Green et al., trans. Reinhard Krauss, Charles C. West, and Douglas W. Stott, DBWE 6 (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2005), 254–289; see also in *DBWE 1*, 155–156, among other places.

¹²⁴ Williams, "Christian Priest Today."

¹²⁵ Martin Luther, "Fourteen Consolations, 1520," in *Devotional Writings I*, ed. Martin O. Dietrich, trans. Martin H. Bertram, Luther's Works 42 (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1969), 163. Quoted in *DBWE 1*, n47, p. 180.

church and now belong to it, so my merits are also no longer my own, but belong to the church" (*DBWE 1*, 183). Bonhoeffer argues that Christ is the measure and standard of human conduct: the "example set" in Jesus's farewell discourse [John 13:15]; the love of the brethren in the Johannine epistles [1 John 3:10]; the unified Body of Christ, differentiated and interconnecting in Pauline teaching [1 Cor 2:12; Rom 12:4ff] (*DBWE 1*, 183).

A human society unlike human societies

So, throughout *Sanctorum Communio*, *Ethics*, and *Discipleship* Bonhoeffer has argued that the Church, the holy community called into being by God, is not a human society like all other human societies, a disparate group of people with something (or one thing) in common, who have gathered together to advance general interest in the something / one thing, and who, in the memorable phrase of Rowan Williams, become "a chaotic mass trying to apportion jobs". Rather, the Church is the place in which human beings subject ourselves to the 'ethical other', God and fellow humans, and in which we find ourselves under the rule of serving and being served, through mutual love:

Community with God is not an individualistic possibility, but is actual and real in the community of God's creatures with each other; to serve and love God is simultaneously to serve and love God's creatures, one's fellow human beings. Community with God is simultaneously the community of co-humanity.¹²⁷

It is all summed up in Bonhoeffer's repeated, memorable, phrase: the church is *Christus als Gemeinde existierend*, Christ existing as community (see, for example, *DBWE 1*, 121). And from this we can say, "the word of the Church to the world is the word of Christ spoken with the same authority as words spoken during his earthly life." 128

For Bonhoeffer, discipleship is, on one trifling, heuristic level, a solution to a problem, the apparent false dichotomy between grace or law, faithfulness or idolatry. On the deeper level, discipleship is the means by which *Christus als Gemeinde* is constituted. Through discipleship, and within the sociality of the Body of Christ, "obedience and faith, works and grace are harmonised in responding to the Lord whose claim upon us is both a total demand and the concrete fullness of grace."¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Williams, "Christian Priest Today."

¹²⁷ Green, "Human sociality," 120.

¹²⁸ Stephen Plant, "The sacrament of ethical reality: Dietrich Bonhoeffer on ethics for Christian citizens," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 18, no. 3 (December 2005): 78.

¹²⁹ Haddon Willmer, "Costly discipleship," in *The Cambridge Companion to Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, ed. John W. de Gruchy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 177.

But how did it work in practice? Was it possible for the theory of sociality, and *Christus als Gemeinde existierend*, to be enacted, or did the necessity of apportioning out the jobs and the power of the *Führerprinzip* overwhelm the fragile community?

Bonhoeffer had very firm ideas on how the seminary in Finkenwalde was to be organised, but he was also a realist, one of the few in the German church of his day. He knew that if we rely on human will then any Christian community will fail. In *Life Together* he notes Luke's report of the dissension among the disciples as to who should be greatest in the kingdom of heaven: "no Christian community ever comes together without this argument appearing as a seed of discord" (*DBWE 5*, 93). ¹³⁰ As soon as Christians come together they begin to classify and judge and condemn each other. There is only one solution to this dynamic, which begins so naturally and so inevitably. That solution is service.

Service begins by simply refusing to verbalise comparisons between Christians. Bonhoeffer instructed the seminarians of Finkenwalde never to speak of a brother in his absence, or, if they did so, to explain it to him afterwards: they "learned almost as much from the failure to observe this simple rule, and from the renewed resolution to keep it, as they did from the sermons and exegeses". ¹³¹ In doing so, Bonhoeffer believed (and experience proved him right) that the seminarians could see in one another opportunities for service, and, in serving others, serving God.

The service of one Christian sinner towards another took three forms. First, simply listening to your brother or sister: "We do God's work for our brothers or sisters when we learn to listen to them" (*DBWE 5*, 98). Anyone not prepared to surrender this time to the other members of the Christian community is not prepared to surrender the time to God. Second, living in "active helpfulness... [where] nobody is too good for the lowest service. Those who worry about the loss of time entailed by such small, external acts of helpfulness are usually taking their own work too seriously" (*DBWE 5*, 99). Third, Christian service is expressed by forbearance: "Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ" [Gal 6:2]. For Bonhoeffer forbearance was an expression of the mutuality of the Christian community, the interconnectedness of the Body of Christ. The strong and the weak, the healthy and the sick, the learned and the ignorant, the dedicated and the slack should all seek ways in which each may help in the building up of the other. Even sinners should be forgiven daily (*DBWE 5*, 95, 100–102).

¹³⁰ See the discussion of this passage on page 126.

¹³¹ Bethge, *Bonhoeffer*, 428; expanded and revised from *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: theologian, Christian, contemporary*, ed. Edwin Robertson, trans. Eric Mosbacher (London: Collins, 1970).

The source of all life within the community is the person of Jesus Christ: it is only in seeking to follow Christ that the building blocks of the community's life together can find expression:

Such commitment to Jesus Christ opens up a number of elementary Christian concepts: community, solitude, service, Scripture reading, prayer, intercession, meditation, the ability to listen, forgiveness, confession and the forgiveness of sins, Christians' breaking of bread together, the celebration of the Lord's Supper in the church of Christ, as well as the hope of breaking bread together eternally.¹³²

Again and again in *Life Together* we see Bonhoeffer's abiding commitment to the person and authority of Jesus Christ: it is Jesus Christ who is the leader and authority of the community. For Bonhoeffer, apart from Jesus Christ a Christian community is a leaderless community. Thus it is wrong for one person to act as confessor to all the community, because that would place an unnecessary burden upon the shoulders of the confessor, which may lead to "the exercise of spiritual tyranny over souls" (*DBWE 5*, 116). Although Bonhoeffer mentions the role of *Hausvater* ('head of the house'), he does so only once, and in the context of the person offering extemporaneous prayer at evening prayer.¹³³

We should note, though, that although the description in *Life Together* might make us think Finkenwalde was a leaderless community, it was not a community without direction. Bonhoeffer, Eberhard Bethge tells us, "did not look kindly on attempts to evade [the necessary] daily routine". His capacity for hard work and "his ability to interrupt work for play without ever falling behind sometimes made him unjust towards others who were toiling night and day in preparation for some examination." His manner, like his preaching style, was "startlingly in [its] directness". Bonhoeffer's 'leadership' was in reality, servantship:

A request arrived from the kitchen for help with the washing up, but there were no immediate volunteers. Without saying a word Bonhoeffer rose from the table, disappeared into the kitchen and refused to let in the others who hurried to follow him. Afterward he rejoined the students on the beach but made no comment. And in Finkenwalde many a student was to

¹³² Gerhard Ludwig Müller and Albrecht Schönherr, "Editors' Afterword to the German Edition," in *Life Together and Prayerbook of the Bible*, ed. Geffrey B. Kelly, by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, trans. James H. Burtness and Daniel W. Bloesch, DBWE 5 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 128

¹³³ "The extemporaneous prayer at the close of daily worship normally will be said by the head of the house. But in any case it is best that it is always said by the same person. That places an unexpected responsibility on this person..." (DBWE 5, 69).

¹³⁴ Bethge, Bonhoeffer, 428, 430, 444.

discover with shame that someone else had made his bed in the big dormitory. 135

Bonhoeffer's role as *Hausvater* enabled the Finkenwalde community to begin the transformation from a collection of individuals to a community. Bonhoeffer held himself, in action and service, as a disciple of Jesus, who was, therefore a servant to the other disciples of Christ. In doing so, he allowed the community to place itself, penultimately and ultimately (to use a favourite Bonhoeffer motif), under the authority of Christ.

The Renunciation of Mythological-Leadership

This position, under the authority of Christ, is the essential one to be assumed and accepted. Any 'leadership' exercised by a Christian must be based, not on personal skills, not on innate traits, not on charismatic authority, not a will to power, not on a willingness to exercise violence, nor on a manipulation of others' fears and fantasies. The end result of all those strategies is to become complicit in the monomyth of redemptive violence. Rather, the 'leadership' exercised by a Christian must be based firmly, wholly and completely under the authority of Christ.

Perhaps we can articulate a renunciation of My-L by returning to the five provisional heuristic strategies outlined at the end of chapter three. ¹³⁶

First, the authority of Christ was primarily expressed by calling people to follow him, in a way in which a direct allegiance to his person and authority was expected. We saw how Schweizer described this as "decisive, indeed as *the* decisive act" of being a Christian. To acknowledge the authority of Christ means to be a *follower* of Jesus. And to acknowledge the authority of Christ, which, to use the vocabulary of Schweizer and Bonhoeffer, is to be a *disciple* of Christ, is not to choose one authority above other authorities: "There is only one discipleship, because discipleship is the immediate relation to the one and only Lord." 139

Second, to hear Jesus's calling, and to respond to it as a follower, begins something new, in which everything will be changed. The best way to describe this is, according to Schweizer, "an act of divine grace". 140

Third, "following Jesus" means sharing an intimacy with Jesus, and performing acts of service with and to him. As Hurtado says, this means

¹³⁵ Bethge, Bonhoeffer, 429.

¹³⁶ See page 127.

¹³⁷ Schweizer, Lordship and Discipleship, 20.

¹³⁸ See, again, Hurtado, "Following Jesus," 25–27; Davis, "Self-understanding in Mark," 108–110.

¹³⁹ Willmer, "Costly discipleship," 177.

¹⁴⁰ Schweizer, Lordship and Discipleship, 20.

following *Jesus*, "with no rival, no distraction and no competition for the allegiance of his disciples". ¹⁴¹ Bonhoeffer confronts the temptations faced by the disciples in Luke 9:46 with the requirement of service, which prevents (in both senses of the word) self and self-actualisation at the cost of others.

Therefore, fourth, submission to the authority of Jesus requires self-denial, which extends further than the limits of the individual's body and will, and includes the complex network of relationships, responsibilities and obligations in which we deposit our esteem (both self-esteem and social-esteem). These are all to be given up. Willmer again:

Discipleship was more than an open, indefinite and individualistic lifequest, because Jesus Christ who called was Lord of the world. Discipleship was not a humanist adventure but a theologically grounded obedience.¹⁴²

Fifth, and finally, to deny the collectivist and the individualistic self in order to follow Jesus will lead to rejection, suffering and death, in a world in which the will to power and the will to submit to power are terrifyingly strong. As Bonhoeffer said: "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die" (*DBWE 4*, n.11, p.87). But, there "is not discipleship with, and without, the cross, but nor is it suffering as such which defines or exalts the disciple." As exemplified and achieved by Jesus, this path is the path to redemptive glory, for the Teacher and disciple alike.

Gerhard Lohfink required, in order to demonstrate the truthfulness of Christian community, a criterion of "confirmation of truth through praxis". 144 We have seen how that truth through praxis was also exemplified in the life and ministry of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. In Bonhoeffer we can see the intellectual, theological, and practical rejection of the monomyth of leadership: the *Führerprinzip* and redemptive violence are condemned, through prophetic word and prophetic action. In Bonhoeffer we see no 'darkness of leadership at all'. 145

As we have examined cultural manifestations of *My-L*, perhaps it is appropriate to summarize our opposition to *My-L* through a cultural expression as well. Bonhoeffer made no films, but he did express an antidote to *My-L* in the form of a poem. "Station on the Way to Freedom" was written in Tegel Prison some time in early August 1944, and included with a letter of birthday greetings sent to Eberhard Bethge on 14 August. ¹⁴⁶ Bonhoeffer realized at this point that

¹⁴¹ Hurtado, "Following Jesus," 25.

¹⁴² Willmer, "Costly discipleship," 178.

¹⁴³ Willmer, "Costly discipleship," 177.

¹⁴⁴ Lohfink, Jesus and Community, 176.

¹⁴⁵ To paraphrase 1 John 1.

¹⁴⁶ See the discussion of the dating, significantly *after* the failure of the 20 July Plot to assassinate Hitler, in Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, ed. Christian Gremmels et al., trans. Isabel Best et al., DBWE 8 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), notes 1, p. 512.

the powers of totalitarian violence (that which Wink today, and Klemperer contemporaneously, call the "system"¹⁴⁷) would achieve his death. And yet he was prepared to celebrate his "freedom". Not from confinement, certainly. By "freedom", Bonhoeffer rather meant the presence of God in his life, accepting his unavoidable calling to live in the presence of God, a 'living with' that meant "submission, dedicating oneself to God's will and action in any walk of life."¹⁴⁸ This is "discipleship", which is both "the witness of a 'disciple'"—that is, "a human being sanctified by God"¹⁴⁹—and is also "being delivered into God's will and plan".¹⁵⁰ But it would be wrong to think that Bonhoeffer is being programmatic or catechetical in either this poem or his life: "Stations" is not Bonhoeffer's attempt to teach Christians how they should live. Rather, "he is examining God's overwhelming presence in a human life."¹⁵¹ There is no other way possible, once one accepts the fact and ethical imperative of God's presence in the life of a disciple.

The disciple encounters God in stations¹⁵², "places of God's acting"¹⁵³, which, because God is "I AM" [Exod 3:14], are also "places of God's presence."¹⁵⁴ There are four stations¹⁵⁵: the disciple encounters God, first, in *discipline* ("Zucht"), secondly in *action* ("Tat"), thirdly in *suffering* ("Leiden"), and finally, in and through *death* ("Tod"). We begin the journey with the search for freedom, but not the self-serving 'freedom' sought by the self-individuating American Adam:

If you set out to seek freedom, then learn above all things to govern your soul and your senses, for fear that your passions and longings may lead you away from the path you should follow.¹⁵⁶

But discipline is not expressed by "thoughts taking wing" (stanza 2). The disciple is required to "go out to the storm and the action", trusting in God's

¹⁴⁷ For Wink, see n. 85 in this chapter; for Klemperer see Klemperer, *LTI*, chap. 17, "'System' and 'Organisation'."

¹⁴⁸ Hans G. Ulrich, "'Stations on the Way to Freedom': The Presence of God – The Freedom of Disciples," in *Who Am I? Bonhoeffer's theology through his poetry*, ed. Bernd Wannenwetsch (London: T & T Clark, 2009), 152.

¹⁴⁹ Ulrich, "Freedom of Disciples," 151.

¹⁵⁰ Ulrich, "Freedom of Disciples," 151.

¹⁵¹ Ulrich, "Freedom of Disciples," 152.

¹⁵² In German, 'Stationen' has a greater subtlety of meaning than can be translated by 'stages' or 'stations'.

¹⁵³ Ulrich, "Freedom of Disciples," 152.

¹⁵⁴ Ulrich, "Freedom of Disciples," 154.

¹⁵⁵ A parallel may be seen in the traditional ethical idea of 'orders' or 'mandates'; *oeconomia*, *politia*, *ecclesia*. For Bonhoeffer's treatment of the 'mandates' see *DBWE 6*, 388–408; *DBWE 8*, 267–269. See also Ulrich, "Freedom of Disciples," 158.

¹⁵⁶ Quotations from 'Stations on the Way to Freedom' are all take from John Bowden's translation in Ulrich, "Freedom of Disciples," 149.

goodness and his commandments. Inevitably, to act in a world of storm, the disciple will experience suffering: "Your hands, so strong and active, / are bound" (stanza 3). Suffering comes in being powerless ("ohnmächtig"), but joy and blessed freedom ("selig die Freiheit") comes from placing that moment of suffering back in God's hands. The token of that perfected glory is completed in death, the "greatest of feasts" ("höchstes Fest"), when we finally "may see that which here remains hidden" (stanza 4). We have sought freedom in "discipline, action, and suffering". It is only through dying that we may behold freedom "revealed in the Lord" ("erkennen wir nun im Angesicht Gottes dich selbst").

In the end, it is the mythos of leadership that is the *anti*-mythos. It stands condemned, for its worship of power, its pursuit of injustice, its fetishizing of violence, by the silent witness of the mythos of discipleship. Freedom is found, in the hands of God, as we pass through discipline, action, and suffering. It is a life that is possible; in reality, it is the only life that is possible if we are to remain, or become, human.

All who either, confessionally, seek to be a disciple of Christ, or those who, morally, seek to resist the "Domination System" of *My-L*, can find their ethical model in Willmer's summation of the praxis and doxis of Dietrich Bonhoeffer:

[Bonhoeffer] spoke consistently as a disciple, in a fellowship of disciples. He worked in the world which was mediated to him through the only relation, with Jesus Christ, which he believed could and should be a direct, immediate relation. He rested his whole being, including the worth of his ideas, on the truth of Jesus Christ as the Lord and Son of God. That was a truth he yielded to as a disciple who obeys the call; he explained it with no rational apology but lived it to the end in faith.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ Willmer, "Costly discipleship," 188.

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