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Theorising leadership authenticity: an existentialist–personalist perspective

Anthony Howard

B.Th.

Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy



School of Business

Sydney Campus

September 2020

Declaration of Authorship

Declaration

To the best of the candidate's knowledge, this thesis contains no material previously published by another person, except where due acknowledgement has been made.

This thesis is the candidate's own work and contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any institution.

Signature:

Name: Anthony Howard

Dated: 21st September, 2020

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to describe authentic leadership theory (ALT), identify its philosophical limitations regarding the meaning of authenticity and what it is to be authentically human. The study also evaluates the contribution of three thinkers—the existentialists Søren Kierkegaard and Martin Heidegger, and the personalist Karol Wojtyła—towards overcoming those limitations.

This study straddles the fields of management and philosophy, combining management concepts regarding authentic leadership with the philosophical traditions of existentialism and personalism, to interrogate authenticity and authentic leadership. It finds that the existentialists Kierkegaard and Heidegger offer a more extensive understanding of authenticity than what the authentic leadership literature recognises. However, neither answers the ultimate questions regarding being authentic persons. Therefore, this study introduces an explicitly personalist thinker—Karol Wojtyła—who focuses on the meaning of the person and the person in relationship with other persons. Ultimately, the study finds the philosophical limitations within ALT cannot be overcome; rather, these limitations are exposed when the meaning of authenticity and what it means to be an authentic person are considered from an existentialist and personalist perspective. What is advanced as ‘authentic leadership theory’ has largely failed to understand the concept of authenticity and authenticity in regard to persons, leaders and leadership.

This study contributes to the disciplines of management and philosophy in several ways. It reveals that in ALT, authenticity is a form of sincere autonomy and, thus, fundamentally in tension with leadership. The concept of fulfillment, which refers to becoming who and what one is, more adequately explains what is sought in authenticity—that persons are fulfilled by taking total responsibility for their choices and their actions. Further, leadership, which involves persons, is an intersubjective action of mutual service, between leader(s) and follower(s), in solidarity with one another for the common good. Thereby, people take full responsibility for themselves, others and their world, which then provides a framework for ethical behaviour. This understanding of leadership can be termed personalist leadership.

Keywords: existentialism, authenticity, leadership, personalism, authentic leadership

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Dedication

To my mother and father.

They modelled for me what it means to be a person, caring for other persons.

They showed in their lives that leadership is fundamentally a life of service.

Prologue

‘It is easy for me to imagine that the next great division of the world will be between people who wish to live as creatures and people who wish to live as machines.’

Wendell Berry, *Life is a Miracle: An Essay Against Modern Superstition*

The starting point for any personalist project must be the writer’s historical and social context, and an argument for what it means to be a human person in response to the exigencies of that context. As we enter the third decade of the twenty-first century, I am concerned by the increasing tendency to treat the human being as a unit of economic production, the confusion about what being human means, whether this is a subjective construct of each and every human, and the pressing need to clearly distinguish human persons as intelligent beings, distinct from artificially intelligent beings. Those issues affect leaders, as persons who lead other persons.

I began this work from the perspective of a philosophical professional, rather than a professional philosopher, with a deep personal interest in people following a career in leadership roles and ultimately founding a professional practice that helps people become leaders who care deeply for the people they lead. In this context, the matter of authenticity and being an authentic leader looms large, driven by people’s desire to be the best version of themselves—to be who they are and not a mere imitation or fraud. Further, people want to be led by and work alongside people who aspire and attempt to be the best version of themselves. In common parlance, this notion of being the best of who and what one can be accords with being authentic and is thought to be the foundation of authentic leadership.

However, the concept of authentic leadership jarred with my experience as I observed, and occasionally worked with, people who were considered authentic leaders, yet seemed inauthentic. Over time, I came to suspect that authentic leadership is a fiction, a play on words that may not refer to anything that actually exists. This idea, of authentic *leadership*, has no parallel in any other role, as one would not refer to an authentic teacher, an authentic parent, or an authentic bus driver, with their corresponding implications of possibly inauthentic teachers, parents or bus drivers. I further suspected that the underlying issue was how to be an authentic person, how to remain authentic when exercising specific roles and—if in a leadership role—how to create the conditions for others to become authentic. In that sense, perhaps one may be considered an authentic leader—an authentic person in a leadership role.

Further, working in very close proximity to senior leaders enabled me to see that their behaviour revealed implicit assumptions about what it means to be a person. Some leaders treat people as a resource, a means to an end, and act as if the values and needs of the organisation outweigh personal values and needs. Some assume the individual is motivated entirely by self-gratification, while some see people with hopes, dreams and aspirations. It is apparent that the actions of a leader are fundamentally acts of persons directed towards other persons, and that those actions include unstated assumptions about what it means to be a human person.

Hence, we have an underlying tension. On the one hand, people yearn for authenticity, to be and become who they are. On the other hand, people have little foundation for knowing who and what they are, and, hence, what may be the best version of themselves.

These are the kinds of thoughts that underpin this research. Naturally, the starting point is the very concept of authentic leadership—what is it, and how is it commonly understood, as a leadership theory? This reveals a theory largely developed within the social and behavioural sciences, which did not reach the kind of questions to which I sought answers: what does *authenticity* mean? What does it mean to be an authentic *person*? What does it mean to be such a person leading *other* persons? Since actions develop or diminish human persons—helping or hindering their becoming who and what they are—what are the moral implications of authentic leadership?

Within these questions lurks an even bigger set of questions: is authenticity *possible*? Can a person *become* authentic? Is there an inherent paradox between *being* and *becoming* authentic? If I am authentic, how did I become authentic, and do I continue to become authentic? On the other hand, if I am becoming authentic, am I ever actually being authentic? I ask these questions not in regard to an individual action—acting authentically in a moment of time—but in regard to my personhood, to being and becoming an authentic *person*. For it seems that authentic leadership, if it is to exist, must be grounded in being an authentic person, rather than a momentary authentic act or succession of acts. Therefore, looking at *who* authentic leaders are is more fundamental than examining what authentic leaders *do*, and may provide insight into the possibility and process for developing authentic leaders.

As a result of this study, I find myself becoming a professional philosopher, while remaining a philosophical professional. I trust that I have found an adequate balance between the two in such a manner that the leaders I have the privilege to serve may themselves be and become fulfilled human persons, and so promote companies and communities that truly foster human wellbeing.

1 Introduction

1.1 Leadership, persons and authenticity

Since leaders are persons who lead other persons—*someone* is doing the leading and *someone else* is following—one can reasonably assert that the way a leader acts towards their followers says something about what the leader wants the followers to do. A leader’s actions also imply what the leader considers people to be—for example, a means to an end, or a resource or asset. While an individual leader may not have given much thought to the meaning of a person, leadership theorists need to ask who and what a person is. However, leadership theorists have tended to seek answers in the social sciences, rather than philosophy. This is a particular issue for authentic leadership theory (ALT) since it is responding to the desire for authenticity in leadership, where such authenticity refers to being an authentic person.

1.1.1 Authentic leadership theory lacks philosophical perspective

Commentators in the field of ALT often note the absence of a philosophical foundation for the theory (cf. Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012; Alvesson & Einola, 2019; Cooper, Scandura & Schriesheim, 2005; Hayek, Williams, Clayton, Novicevic & Humphreys, 2014; Iszatt-White & Kempster, 2019; Lawler & Ashman, 2012). Some argue the theory is largely superficial (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 385; Iszatt-White & Kempster, 2019, p. 360), and a ‘moral washing of transformational leadership’ (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 388), rather than a new leadership theory in its own right. They claim it stands on an unstable intellectual foundation, cannot support its claims without significant revision (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 383) and may not be salvageable (Iszatt-White & Kempster, 2019, p. 360).

The social and behavioural sciences, the main proponents of ALT, are themselves restricted by their horizons. While science studies the actions of persons, and may enquire more deeply into the psychology of the action, the scientific approach is limited in its capacity to fully understand the person who acts, since persons are not their actions and ‘not packages of psychological traits’ (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 388).

Algera and Lips-Wiersma (2012) argue that understanding the ontological and existential foundations of authenticity in regard to human beings is crucial *before* applying the concept to leaders and leadership. They argue, ‘the concept of authenticity goes to the heart of what it is to be human and hence dwelling on “what it is to be authentically human” before asking “what is it to be an authentic leader” seems, to us, to be essential to theory building’ (p. 119). A

philosophical understanding of authenticity and what it is to be authentically human is central to ALT, yet has not ‘been systematically pursued’ (p. 119). Thus, what it is to be an authentic leader remains unclear.

1.1.2 Purpose: to understand philosophical limitations and evaluate a response

The purpose of this study is to describe ALT and identify its philosophical limitations regarding the meaning of authenticity and what is to be authentically human. Second, the thesis aims to fill the current gap in ALT by evaluating the contribution of three thinkers—the existentialists Søren Kierkegaard and Martin Heidegger, and the personalist Karol Wojtyła—towards overcoming the theory’s limitations.

1.1.3 The research questions

This study poses the following research questions:

1. What is ALT?
2. What does ‘authenticity’ and ‘authentically human’ mean in ALT, and from where and whom does the theory derive these concepts?
3. What are the philosophical limitations of ALT regarding authenticity, and what is it to be authentically human?
4. Do the philosophical contributions of Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Wojtyła overcome these limitations?
5. Does an evaluation of the philosophical perspective of these three thinkers indicate an alternative leadership theory?

1.1.4 Summary of the findings

This study evaluates two philosophers often cited in the authentic leadership literature—the existentialists Søren Kierkegaard and Martin Heidegger—and finds that their understanding of authenticity is more extensive than the authentic leadership literature recognises. However, neither Kierkegaard nor Heidegger are sufficiently far-reaching in their thinking regarding being authentic persons. Therefore, this study introduces an explicitly personalist thinker—Karol Wojtyła—who focuses on the meaning of the person and the person in relationship with other persons. This provides additional insight into the interpersonal aspect of leadership.

Ultimately, the study finds that the philosophical limitations of ALT cannot be overcome; rather, these limitations are exposed when the meaning of authenticity and what it means to be an authentic person are considered from an existentialist and personalist perspective. Those

limitations expose that what is advanced as ‘authentic leadership theory’ has largely failed to understand the concept of authenticity and authenticity in regard to persons, leaders and leadership. An understanding of what it means to be an authentic person reveals the following. First, the concept of fulfillment, which refers to becoming who and what one is, more adequately explains what is sought in authenticity. Second, the concept of person more adequately explains what is referred to by the term ‘human being’. Finally, persons are fulfilled by taking total responsibility for their choices and their actions, particularly self-giving actions. Further, understanding that persons are fulfilled in self-giving reveals that leadership, which involves persons, is an intersubjective action of mutual service, between leader(s) and follower(s), in solidarity with one another for the common good, wherein persons take full responsibility for themselves, others and their world, which then provides a framework for ethical behaviour. This understanding of leadership can be termed *personalist leadership*. This is the theory towards which this study ultimately moves.

1.2 Introducing two philosophical perspectives: existentialism and personalism

The contemporary understanding of authenticity regarding persons is influenced by the existentialists, including Sartre (Carman, 2006; Golomb, 2005; Lawler & Ashman, 2012; Santoni, 1995),¹ Heidegger (Carman, 2006; Crowe, 2006; Krentz & Malloy, 2005; Mulhall, 2005; Zimmerman, 1981) and Kierkegaard (Carman, 2006; Golomb, 2005). However, scholars note the paucity of philosophical frameworks for ALT (Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012; Alvesson & Einola, 2019; Guignon, 2011; Lawler & Ashman, 2012; Stroh, 2015; Tomkins & Simpson, 2015).

Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing and Peterson (2008, p. 93) recognise that they overlook the influence of philosophical perspectives in favour of those from social psychology, although they acknowledge Heidegger’s influence on contemporary thinking about authenticity. Likewise, many authentic leadership theorists cite Heidegger. However, there is scarce in-depth analysis of Heidegger’s understanding of authenticity (Gardiner, 2011, p. 100; Storberg-Walker & Gardiner, 2017, p. 353) other than one paper exploring a Heideggerian approach to leadership (Krentz & Malloy, 2005). A robust classical or existential understanding of authenticity, and how this might contribute to the theory and practice of authentic leadership, continues to attract little attention among ALT scholars (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 387). This presents an opportunity for research in the field of ALT.

Therefore, to shed light on the meaning of authenticity, we will first seek its ‘existential roots’ (Iszatt-White & Kempster, 2019, p. 365), since here we can find extensive theorising about authenticity (Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012, p. 119). Existentialism’s fundamental tenet is the authenticity of one’s existence (Greene, 1952, p. 266), in contrast with an inauthentic, unconscious way of being (Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012, p. 119) that fails to take responsibility for one’s life. We shall start our enquiry with Søren Kierkegaard, the father of existentialism, and will continue with the twentieth-century intellectual icon Martin Heidegger, who has had considerable influence on our contemporary understanding of authenticity.

However, to understand the human person in the act of authentic leadership, one must turn to the personalistic character of leadership, and so to the philosophy of personalism, since the social sciences and existentialist contribution fall short of entering into what Wojtyła (2013) calls ‘the domain of the person’ (p. xxiv). Hence, in seeking answers to the meaning of the human person within authentic leadership, this thesis anchors itself in a philosophical tradition grounded in classical philosophy and realist metaphysics. This enables a more rigorous interrogation of ALT as we investigate the person in the act of leading via the realistic personalism of Karol Wojtyła.

Scholars have applied Wojtyła’s personalism to economics (Danner & O’Boyle, 1999; Finn, 2003; Gronbacher, 1998; O’Boyle, 2001; Zúñiga, 2001), ethics (Acevedo, 2012; Jeffko, 1999; Mele, 2009), sociology (cf. Smith 2010; Dreher 2011 cited in Acevedo, 2012, p. 202), psychology (Lamiell & Laux, 2010) and business management (Acevedo, 2012; Alford & Naughton, 2001; Alford, 2010; Argandona, 2009; Bayer, 1994, 1999; Mele & Canton, 2014). However, other than Whetstone (2002), the field of leadership remains largely untouched by this approach.

Since personalism applies to every realm of human experience (Zúñiga, 2001, p. 165), it is relevant to the practice of leadership and, hence, could contribute to a theory of leadership. It offers ‘a goldmine of resources for management thinking’ (Alford, 2010, p. 698) that has ‘the potential to give a more effective and human grounding to management practice’ (p. 704). By extension, research focused on leadership and the personalist tradition could provide a human grounding to the practice of leadership.

The scientific method, which measures and observes objective data, may, for example, draw inferences about one’s mortality from irregularities in one’s heart rate. Similarly, the psychological sciences may explain the travails of the human heart. However, only philosophy can understand the inner structure of the being who is confronted with their finitude and

experiences such profound emotion. Only philosophy can investigate what, for that being, truly constitutes happiness or flourishing that accords with its being. Further, since metaphysics examines the internal structure of being, those constitutive elements that determine the nature of a being, it follows that one could discern limits to ways in which that being can be treated without damaging or destroying it, as well as behaviours that enable it to develop and flourish. Hence, metaphysical insights have moral implications and help provide a foundation for resolving the ethical challenges one confronts in both life and leadership. This is a particular concern for ALT since one of the driving motivations in the development of the theory is the view that authentic leaders, because of their authenticity, act in a more ethical manner (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 241).

1.3 An overview

This study examines three bodies of literature: authentic leadership, Kierkegaard and Heidegger's existentialism as it relates to authenticity, and Wojtyła's personalism as it relates to the person who is authentic. All three are needed to address our central themes regarding understanding the meaning of authenticity and being authentically human. From there, the study interrogates ALT through an existentialist–personalist lens. Finding that authentic leadership is unable to withstand such scrutiny, the study offers an alternative model of personalist leadership.

Following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 considers the authentic leadership literature. The literature shows that it is commonly agreed that authentic leadership includes four components: self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing and an internalised moral perspective (Walumbwa et al., 2008). However, an understanding of what it means to be and become authentic is lacking. ALT has failed to sufficiently distinguish between the person, their role and the act of leadership. This can be observed by noting that the literature has focused on the development of authentic leadership without having properly defined authenticity, authentic leader, or authentic leadership and, in that the four claimed components are subjective, they apply to persons rather than leadership per se.

In Chapter 3, we turn to Kierkegaard, the father of existentialism, and his search for the authentic self. He asks what it means to exist, to live one's life, and reveals that authenticity entails taking responsibility for oneself, rather than abdicating that responsibility to external authority. He distinguishes between an individual's being and becoming, indicates what constitutes the authentic self and the impact of personal choice on becoming one's self, and provides insight into authentic living. Kierkegaard argues that people have forgotten what it

means to exist; to retrieve what they have forgotten, they must take responsibility for themselves and find a purpose for which to live. Otherwise, a person exists as a mere cipher, lost among the multitude. Kierkegaard believes the majority of people are seduced by the crowd, lost to themselves and unaware of being a self. This remains the case until the day one experiences despair at the impossibility of being fulfilled by such an inauthentic existence. This launches a creative urge towards becoming who one is, in response to a moment of vision that reveals one's lostness in the crowd. The existential choice liberates one to act in an authentic manner, as one advances along two developmental stages—the ethical and the religious. Kierkegaard finally proposes an Abrahamic knight of faith as the paradigm of one in full possession of oneself. Kierkegaard highlights the distinctness of the individual rather than the multitude, and so provides insights about the self and how that self becomes authentic, or fulfilled, in its particular task or purpose. This is a lifelong task, conditional on a moment where one chooses to be oneself rather than lost in the crowd.

Chapter 4 considers our second existentialist, Martin Heidegger, who is frequently cited within ALT in regard to the contemporary notion of authenticity. Heidegger's interest in authenticity derives from his view that to understand Being, one must be an authentic being, and so he first addresses the question of Being. To understand Being requires a being who can so understand, which Heidegger designates as Dasein. However, Dasein is unable to fully grasp being since it exists inauthentically within an everyday world of the 'they', the dominant culture, which absorbs Dasein, limits choice and so absolves one of personal responsibility. In a moment of vision, prompted by a call of conscience, Dasein grasps its finitude and mortality, and so resolves to live authentically, as a 'being-toward-death'. This resolution is shaped by those things, or tasks, and those people for whom Dasein cares, which it is able to do since Care is the very Being of Dasein. Since Dasein is Care, its concern for things, and solicitude towards others, reveals Dasein is a someone, and not a something. As someone, Dasein is able to be authentic. Although Heidegger's focus is on Dasein, that being that can understand Being, his work does allow insight and understanding of authenticity as it pertains to individuals and leaders. Analysis reveals a number of key components that, according to a Heideggerian view, contribute to, or are a condition for, authenticity. These are care, which reveals one as someone; conscience, which reveals the limits of one's life (and hence finitude and mortality); and the moment of vision, which reveals the choice one can make for oneself, against the collective Other, to live authentically. Heidegger's perspective reminds us that business is conducted in an 'everyday world', a dominant culture that has an inherent tendency to encourage conformity and so foster inauthenticity.

Chapter 5 turns to Karol Wojtyła, a personalist philosopher who grounds anthropology and ethics in person and action, and so links authenticity with moral realism. He shares the existentialist concern for persons taking responsibility for their own lives, rather than being absorbed by the collective or ensnared by radical individualism. He emphasises the necessity of grasping what it means to be a human person, in community with other persons. Wojtyła's metaphysics, anthropology and ethics—taking the acting person as a starting point—can provide a philosophical foundation for leadership, which ALT lacks. That foundation complements, contrasts and advances the insights of the existentialists and their search for authenticity and authentic selfhood on the one hand, and the behavioural and social sciences and their largely traits- and strengths-based research into authentic leadership on the other. Wojtyła starts his analysis with the lived experience of the human person. He describes the human experience of oneself, others and one's culture, highlighting the distinction between something that happens to one and something that one causes to happen. This analysis reveals the person as subject to themselves. This subjectivity is ultimately irreducible and forms the basis of the dignity and respect due to persons. Wojtyła argues that the question of what it means to be a human person is crucial. His analysis reveals persons are unique, irreplaceable, a someone and not a something, who possess both ontological and moral dignity, and whose actions have a moral dimension. Since actions are actions of persons, who themselves are moral beings, actions have a moral significance and leave behind a moral footprint, an impression in the fabric of being. Having articulated an understanding of who the human person is, Wojtyła asks how persons are fulfilled, which means becoming who and what one is. In this sense, 'fulfillment' is a more suitable term than 'authenticity' for what he describes. He argues that persons are fulfilled through morally good actions, guided by one's conscience, and so determine themselves as they transcend internal and external boundaries. Further, since persons are relational beings, they are fulfilled in participation with others in the community, in mutual service of the common good and particularly where one freely gives oneself to the other.

Following this review of authentic leadership literature and an examination of two influential existentialist thinkers and the personalism of Karol Wojtyła, Chapter 6 brings these to bear on an understanding of authenticity, authentic leadership and the person of the leader and follower in that leadership relationship. Ultimately, while the four components of authentic leadership—self-awareness, internalised moral perspective, relational transparency and balanced processing—can be enhanced with a philosophical foundation, they are inadequate to explain or define authentic leadership. Authenticity itself is better understood as fulfillment,

which is a consequence of taking full responsibility for one's life, which in turn is predicated on a moment of vision where one grasps the reality of one's situation. Leadership in its fullness is a relational, intersubjective act between persons, and so responsibility for the persons one leads is added to the responsibility one has for oneself. However, that responsibility, and so service, is mutual between leaders and followers, in order that both can serve the common good, which grounds leadership in both the relationship and what is true and good. Therefore, we ultimately arrive at a vision for personalist leadership, which encompasses self-fulfilment and mutual service for the common good, grounded in radical personal responsibility.

In concluding the thesis, Chapter 7 reiterates the philosophical concerns with ALT and the reasons for considering an existential and personalist perspective. It then returns to the research questions posed in this study and summarises the retrieved answers. The chapter then highlights the particular contribution of this study to the fields of authentic leadership and personalism, as well as directions for future research.

2 Authentic leadership: the concept, components and unanswered questions

The first objective of this study is to describe ALT and identify its philosophical limitations regarding the meaning of authenticity and what is to be authentically human. This chapter intends to answer the questions this raises, namely, what is ALT; what does ‘authenticity’ and ‘authentically human’ mean in ALT, and from where and whom does the theory derive these concepts; and what are the philosophical limitations of ALT regarding authenticity and what is it to be authentically human. Following initial comments to locate ALT’s heritage within transformational leadership theory, we turn our attention to understanding the concept of authenticity in regard to individuals, leaders and leadership. We then describe the four components of authentic leadership as commonly formulated. In the process, the study identifies a number of concerns regarding the theory, particularly those indicating its philosophical limitations.

2.1 The call for authentic leadership

Interest in authenticity among leaders, and subsequently ALT, surfaced towards the end of the twentieth and early twenty-first century in the context of concerns about well-documented ethical failures of notable business leaders. Bill George, a former CEO of Medtronic (a pharmaceuticals firm) and subsequently a professor at Harvard Business School, published *True North*, an influential practical work that claimed poor leadership contributed to corporate scandal, and called for leadership with a moral dimension, which he called *authentic* leadership (George, 2003). Simultaneously, interest in ALT emerged in the academic sphere, led by scholars such as Bruce Avolio, William Gardner, Fred Luthans and Fred Walumbwa (Avolio & Luthans, 2005; Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans & May, 2004; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May & Walumbwa, 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003), each of whom has had considerable influence on the development of the theory.

2.1.1 The research methodology

Since the emergence of ALT, a considerable and growing body of research has been generated. To understand and describe the theory, this study examines the ALT literature published by scholars in key journals up to June 2020. It employs a similar search strategy to that used by Gardner, Coglisier, Davis and Dickens (2011), searching for key documents via EBSCO, SCOPUS, JSTOR and Emerald Insight, using specific keywords and limiting to

English-language texts. Keyword searches included ‘authentic’, ‘authenticity’, ‘leadership’ and ‘authentic leadership’ in titles and texts. However, the sheer volume generated led to restricting searches to the specific term ‘authentic leadership’ in titles and/or abstracts. This yielded 1,417 documents (articles, books and book chapters only), comprising 679 in Scopus, 287 in EBSCO, 380 in JSTOR and 71 in Emerald Insight, some of which were duplicates. The research then cross-checked bibliographical reference lists from key articles on authentic leadership, such as Gardner et al. (2011), Banks, McCauley, Gardner and Guler (2016), and 88 documents that Iszatt-White and Kempster (2019) identify as key papers, adding as necessary to the data set.

This study focuses on those authors who examine the concept of authentic leadership, rather than the application of ALT to a specific domain, such as health, which often considers authenticity in nursing and medical care (cf. for example, Laschinger, Borgogni, Consiglio & Read, 2015; Nurses, 2005; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2014; Wong, Spence Laschinger & Cummings, 2010),² or education, which often refers to the authenticity of teachers and school principals (cf. for example, Duignan & Bhindi, 1997; Gamson, 2004; Henderson, 2015). This literature is excluded from the review on the assumption that authors writing in a specific field are applying the commonly accepted and understood theories of authentic leadership to that field, rather than developing or extending those theories. However, abstracts and articles within these fields were regularly scanned for any contributions to ALT itself, and so the views expressed in a number of these have been taken into consideration. Finally, much of the literature on ALT is quantitative in nature. While this was considered, the focus of this study is on what constitutes authentic leadership or its components, the meaning of authenticity and being authentically human. Hence, the quantitative research was only considered where it contributed to these questions.

Narrowing the search process in this manner reduced the data set to 518 distinct documents. These were then divided into three main groups: 1) theoretical papers that focus on the meaning or understanding of authenticity and/or authentic leadership; 2) studies that attempt to apply ALT to a particular situation or environment; 3) studies that conduct quantitative research and/or develop case studies. A fourth group included the remaining documents, which were considered peripheral to the research. This process resulted in:

1. 186 documents for understanding authenticity and authentic leadership, the core documents for this research (group 1)
2. 126 documents classified as application (group 2)
3. 172 research documents (group 3)

4. 34 peripheral documents, four of which consider authenticity in the context of existentialism and so are considered in a later section of this thesis.

While some documents clearly belonged in a particular group, others were borderline, in which case an arbitrary decision was made regarding their categorisation.

2.1.2 Transformational leadership: authentic or pseudo?

The literature review shows that ALT has its roots in transformational leadership and attempts by theorists to distinguish between ‘authentic’ and ‘pseudo’ transformational leaders. It is important to understand not only the concept of transformational leadership but, in particular, why scholars argued that a theory of *authentic* transformational leadership was required, since in that we find the genesis of ALT.

The term ‘*transformational leadership*’ is most often associated with Burns, who was concerned that genuine ‘compelling and creative leadership’ (1978, p. 1) was in decline, and that power and status were more attractive substitutes. He distinguished between transactional leadership, which involves an exchange between leaders and followers, and *transforming* leadership, which fully engages followers (Burns, 1978, p. 4), increases their motivation, helps them achieve ‘their fullest potential’ (Northouse, 2016, p. 162) and possibly transforms them into leaders.

Transformational leadership has four components: ‘charisma or idealized influence (attributed or behavioural), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration’ (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999, p. 184). However, questions emerged about how to distinguish between leaders one may reasonably follow, rather than another leader who may display these attributes, yet not be someone one would wish to follow or emulate. Both Adolf Hitler and Mahatma Gandhi, for example, were charismatic, motivating, intellectually stimulating and considered the individual, yet the contrast between them is such that the former could not be recognised as a transformational leader (cf. Caza & Jackson, 2011, p. 353).

This dilemma was resolved by taking a leader’s moral character, ethical values and moral choices into account, and so scholars distinguished between an *authentic* transformational leader and a *pseudo* transformational leader (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999, p. 181). It was argued that authentic transformational leaders have ‘high moral and ethical standards’ (p. 190) and develop moral persons and environments (p. 190). They focus on what is best in and for people, are open to the transcendent and the spiritual, exercise values-based leadership, and are genuinely interested in the growth and development of each individual they lead (p. 189).

Therefore, transformational leadership requires a personal moral maturity that fosters moral competence in followers (Burns, 1978, p. 20), encouraging them to cultivate and ‘develop strong moral character ... embrace virtue ... [and] transform themselves and society’ (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999, p. 196). Hence, one’s ethical competence became a key differentiator between an authentic and pseudo leader.

At this point, one could ask why an emphasis on the moral component of leadership, in combination with charisma, motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration, did not satisfy theorists and stimulate the development of authentic transformational leadership theory. The difficulty arises because merely making a distinction between authentic and pseudo-authentic transformational leaders does not sufficiently ground an ethical framework (Price, 2003). It fails to account for the reality that leaders are sometimes ‘blinded by their own values’ (Price, 2003, p. 67) and, thus, blind to the immorality of their actions. This study will argue that ethical frameworks are built on anthropological frameworks—that who and what a person is has bearing on those behaviours compatible with being a person. Hence, we see in transformational leadership theory the seeds of the lack of philosophical reflection, which also permeates ALT.

2.1.3 Authentic (transformational) leadership

Avolio (2013, p. xxv) says many years of pondering whether there was ‘an authentic form of transformational leadership, as well as one that looked like it, but was inauthentic’ lay behind an ultimately influential paper: ‘Authentic Leadership and Positive Development’ (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). This paper is frequently cited as the starting point and foundation (Banks et al., 2016, p. 635) for theoretical research into authentic leadership and authentic leadership development in the management and leadership domain (Gardner, Avolio & Walumbwa, 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008; Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009). Luthans and Avolio (2003, p. 241) argue that the prevailing positive, ethical and transformational leadership theories are unable to sufficiently respond to contemporary crises of leadership, and that a possible solution could be found in a new model of ‘positive leadership’ that applies authenticity to leaders and, in particular, demonstrates how to develop authentic leaders.

Luthans and Avolio (2003), with backgrounds in positive organisational behaviour and transformational leadership respectively, worked together to examine and understand positive approaches to leadership, which they called ‘*authentic leadership*’ (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 242 [emphasis added]). They argue that their proposed model of authentic leadership combines the insights of transformational leadership theory, which ‘provides the context, leader

characteristics and ethical/moral theoretical foundation’ (p. 246), and the strengths and ‘state-like’ (p. 245) approach of positive organisational behaviour, which contributes ‘positive psychological antecedents’ (p. 246). This state-like, strengths-based approach contrasts with traits-based psychological approaches (p. 245) and is an important distinction for understanding the theoretical basis and developmental assumptions behind their model of authentic leadership. They assume the ‘core attributes of such [authentic] leaders can be developed, including moral reasoning capacity, confidence, hope, optimism, resiliency and future orientation’ (p. 246). Hence, the origins of ALT are ‘deeply rooted in the social psychology literature’ (Banks et al., 2016, p. 644) and the strength-based approaches to leadership (Caza & Jackson, 2011, p. 352).

The groundwork was laid for the belief that authentic leadership would contribute to positive outcomes and fewer ethical failures if leaders themselves were more authentic. The research trajectory thus launched in the direction of developing authentic leaders, without, as this study advocates, evaluating the philosophical meaning of authenticity or authentic leadership. This study argues that to become not only authentic but, in particular, to assume that leadership responsibility to help others become authentic—and ultimately authentic leaders—one must be clear about both the psychological and philosophical meaning of authenticity. Appreciating this distinction enables one to discover and understand not just a potential psychological state of authenticity but, as the final analysis in this study demonstrates, the possibility of and conditions for human fulfillment.

2.2 The concept of authenticity

Building on the origins of ALT, the desire for authenticity among leaders and the claim that the meaning of authenticity is unclear in the literature, this section considers the concept of authenticity within the authentic leadership literature in regard to individuals and leaders. We will then be in a position to examine the prevailing definition of authentic leadership and its four generally accepted components. This will show that the understanding of the terms is, as pointed out by Banks et al. (2016), grounded in social psychology and lacks a philosophical foundation (Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012).

2.2.1 Personal authenticity

The term ‘authenticity’ has been used in different contexts and disciplines throughout history, and so can be quite difficult to define (Erickson, 1995). Therefore, we first consider the notion of personal authenticity, in the traditional sense of knowing oneself. We then turn to

how the ALT literature develops this as knowing oneself, taking ownership of oneself and one's values, and acting in accord with those values. The following section will then examine what it means to be an authentic leader.

Broadly speaking, scholars differentiate between authenticity regarding *entities*—meaning they are 'real' or 'genuine' when they accord with objective reality (Iszatt-White & Kempster, 2019, p. 356)—and authenticity regarding *persons*, which is often associated with a moral way of life and ethical decision-making (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 385). However, existentialist questions about the self shifted the emphasis towards a psychological understanding of authenticity, which associates it with traits and identity (Novicevic, Harvey, Buckley, Brown & Evans, 2006). Hence, personal authenticity usually refers to a psychological state, such as acting sincerely and feeling authentic (Iszatt-White & Kempster, 2019, p. 356).

There is general agreement that authenticity refers to both knowing and being true to oneself and one's values, that authenticity manifests in behaviour—in the way one lives out those values—and that inauthenticity is associated with failure to live out those values. Hence, we proceed by examining the origins of this understanding and then turn our attention to the way authenticity is discussed in the literature.

2.2.1.1 Authenticity as knowing oneself

The provenance of personal authenticity as knowing oneself is often attributed to Socrates's admonition, quoting the Delphic Oracle, to 'know oneself' (Harter, 2002, p. 382). Nehamas, a recognised scholar of the classics, claims Plato portrays Socrates as the paradigm of an authentic individual, who remains true to his convictions even until he is sentenced to death, on the charge of seducing people away from what the court and prevailing culture considered norms of acceptable behaviour (Nehamas, 1999, p. xxxii). Socrates refuses to conform to the demands of the social environment and insists on living an authentic life of virtue, based on knowable standards that are independent of time and place, so that his 'soul will be in the best possible state' (Apology, Plato, 2017, p. 29E) as a result of consistency between his values and actions. Plato contrasts this with the inauthenticity of Socrates's accusers, whose values—and hence way of life—are determined by popular culture or the weight of public opinion (Nehamas, 1999, p. xxxii), and so lack a grounding in themselves for personal authenticity. We see that the challenge of knowing, and living by, one's values—which can be exacerbated by one's environment—in the face of great opposition and possible risk to one's wellbeing are perennial human challenges. While Socrates often engages in debate about self-knowledge and/or self-examination (cf. for example, *Charmides*), the call to

know oneself is highlighted in two specific texts (Rowe, 2011, p. 201), which are quoted at length here for both context and the insight these afford.

First, from the *Apology*:

Perhaps, then, someone might say, ‘By keeping quiet, Socrates, won’t you be able to live in exile for us?’ It is the hardest level to persuade some of you about this. For if I say that this is to disobey the god and that because of this it is impossible to keep quiet, you will not be persuaded by me, on the ground that I am being ironic. And on the other hand, if I say that this even happens to be a very great good for a human being — to make speeches every day about virtue and the other things about which you hear me conversing and examining both myself and others — and that *the unexamined life is not worth living* for a human being, you will be persuaded by me still worse when I say these things. This is the way it is, as I affirm, men; but to persuade you is not easy. (Plato, 2017, 37E3–38A6 [emphasis added])

The context for the second text, from *Phaedrus*, is Socrates’s response to a question about mythology, which he says is a distraction:

Now I have no leisure for such enquiries; shall I tell you why? *I must first know myself*, as the Delphic inscription says; to be curious about that which is not my concern, while I am still in ignorance of my own self, would be ridiculous. And therefore I bid farewell to all this; the common opinion is enough for me. For, as I was saying, I want to know not about this, but about myself: am I a monster more complicated and swollen with passion than the serpent Typho, or a creature of a gentler and simpler sort, to whom Nature has given a diviner and lowlier destiny? (Plato, 2017, 229E–230A [emphasis added])

These texts reveal Socrates’s view that the self stands in relation to truth and virtue, that examining oneself involves examining what is real and what is good—which he affirms in the final moments of his life:

There is one way, then, in which a man can be free from all anxiety about the fate of his soul; if in life he ... has devoted himself to the pleasures of acquiring knowledge, and so by decking his soul not with a borrowed

beauty but with its own — with self-control, and goodness, and courage, and liberality, and truth — has fitted himself to await his journey to the next world. (Plato, 1969, 114E–115A)

Hence, we learn that when Socrates says ‘know oneself’, he is not referring to the notion of discovering one’s strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes, or even what is *unique* about oneself. Instead, he encourages the discovery of what one can hold to be true, accompanied by the identification and abandonment of erroneous convictions and beliefs, enabling one to know something of one’s true self (Rowe, 2011, p. 203). In other words, the particular aspect of the self that Socrates invites us to understand is our disposition towards truth—whether one is attracted by what is rational, or to irrational false beliefs. Together these form a whole—what is rational is drawn to wisdom, while recognising one’s false beliefs orients one towards truth and wisdom.

We find a telling example of this in Plato’s *Symposium*, when Alcibiades, the Athenian General, reveals his inner turmoil and his resistance to truth:

Even now I am still conscious that if I consented to lend him [Socrates] my ear, I could not resist him ... For he compels me to admit that, sorely deficient as I am, I neglect myself while I attend to the affairs of Athens. So I withhold my ears perforce as from the Sirens, and make off as fast as I can, for fear I should go on sitting beside him till old age was upon me. And there is one experience I have in presence of this man alone, such as nobody would expect in me,—to be made to feel ashamed by anyone; he alone can make me feel it. For he brings home to me that I cannot disown the duty of doing what he bids me, but that as soon as I turn from his company I fall a victim to the favours of the crowd. (Plato, 1925, 216: a–b)

Note in particular, Alcibiades ‘withholds’ his ears and makes off as fast as he can to avoid the Socratic challenge to know oneself. However, as Alcibiades so eloquently demonstrates, the moment one turns from the truth about oneself, one falls victim to the crowd, which tells us what we want to hear. This contrasts with Socrates’s choice to die rather than dishonour truth. However, it is not until Kierkegaard explores the power of the crowd, and the tension between being true to oneself or true to the crowd, that this is fully revealed as the fundamental authentic choice.

Hence, authenticity can refer to aligning oneself with external truths, and may be a dynamic state that unfolds as one learns externally validated truths about oneself and, in response to those truths, constructs a life of virtue to live in accordance with those truths. In this case, an authentic life requires choosing for what is good, in accordance with what is true, and so authenticity involves a coherence between inner value and outer action, in accordance with objective reality. Socrates's emphasis on authenticity aligning with external truth is quite distinct from a contemporary idea of authenticity that emphasises the discovery of one's own truth within (Guignon, 2008, p. 279). Finally, we note that Socrates's desire for a happy soul (Apology, Plato, 2017, p. 29E) indicates that a disconnection between one's values and actions—what may be considered as inauthenticity—causes a disturbance in one's soul, perhaps experienced as a lack of inner equilibrium, or a sense of discombobulation.

However, neither Plato or Socrates, despite encouraging one to know oneself, satisfactorily answered the question about what that self is, or who it is that one might know. Plato and Socrates did not consider the unique distinctiveness of one self from another self (Rowe, 2011, p. 211) and did not recognise the idea of the self as a self-contained individual with some form of inner life, with which we are familiar today (Guignon, 2008, p. 279). What it means to be a self who is authentic is a central concern for this enquiry and, thus, a question that remains ever-present throughout this study. A philosophical tradition has inherited from Socrates the need for the self to quest after truth. However, what or who that self is still needs to be investigated.

2.2.1.2 Authenticity in the literature: self-aware, responsible, and coherence in action

Having situated the origins of authenticity in the Socratic 'know thyself' and explained the emphasis on a correspondence between values, actions and objective reality, this study now turns its attention specifically to the authentic leadership literature and how that literature discusses authenticity.

While there are many definitions of authenticity—of which Kernis (2003, p. 13), Harter (2002, p. 382) and Luthans and Avolio (2003, p. 242) are the most frequently cited—one can discern three consistent themes regarding aspects of personal authenticity: knowing the self, owning that self and acting in accord with that self. Personal authenticity includes an 'unobstructed operation of one's true, or core, self' (Kernis, 2003, p. 13); an owning of those 'thoughts, emotions, needs, preferences, or beliefs, processes' (Harter, 2002, p. 382) which one discovers about oneself, acting in consistency with one's values (Avolio & Walumbwa, 2014,

p. 334); and taking responsibility for those actions (Kernis & Goldman, 2006, p. 288), particularly since those actions impact other people (Guignon, 2008, p. 286).

Kernis (2003, p. 13) claims that personal authenticity includes ‘four discriminable components: awareness, unbiased processing, action, and relational orientation’, which the present study notes since these have influenced later models of authentic leadership (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, et al., 2005; Ilies, Morgeson & Nahrgang, 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008). While these are admirable traits or attributes in any person, to suggest that these together constitute something as complex as personal authenticity appears problematic. Perhaps these are instead the outcomes of authenticity, the kinds of characteristics found in mature human beings who are living in accordance with their true selves and moral norms. This will become more apparent when we consider the notion of fulfillment in Chapter 3.

The observation being made here is that commonly accepted definitions of personal authenticity include self-awareness, personal responsibility and behaviour aligned with who one is. At the same time, authenticity is often summarised as being true to oneself (cf. Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 242). However, being true to oneself does not have the same connotation as the Socratic ideal, which regards truth as an objective reality. The phrase itself originates with the character Polonius addressing his son, who is about to embark on a journey. Having stressed the value of financial security and ‘neither a borrower or lender be’ (Hamlet, Act 1, Scene 3), Polonius continues, ‘This above all: to thine own self be true, And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man’ (Hamlet, Act 1, Scene 3)—although commentators note Shakespeare’s use of irony in the ignoble Polonius expounding noble truth (Golomb, 2005). How far this is from the Socratic ideal is indicated by the view that being true to oneself means being inwardly sincere (Carman, 2006, p. 229; Guignon, 2004, p. 18), which manifests in ‘the honest or sincere expression of what the individual actually thinks, feels, desires, and values’ (Medlock, 2012, p. 46).

The values and standards to which one holds oneself are key components of authenticity and ‘permeate the basic assumptions that persons make about “who” they are’ (Erickson, 1995, p. 133). One often forms these values in ‘protest against the blind, mechanical acceptance of an externally imposed code of values’ (Golomb, 2005, p. 11), which is the central argument of the existentialists—to ‘be authentic’ one must take personal responsibility, rather than acquiesce to external authority (Golomb, 2005, p. 14). Conversely, a person feels inauthentic when they fail to fulfil the commitments they make to themselves (Erickson, 1995, p. 125) and, thus, are

aware of how authentic or otherwise they are relative to the extent to which they act in accordance with their own expectations or commitments (Erickson, 1995, p. 131).

The challenge facing any person to know and be their true self—whether because of one’s personal limitations or social environment—means personal authenticity is not easy to achieve (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 387). While it may seem straightforward to say ‘be true to yourself’, knowing who or what that self is, truly discovering oneself, requires a lifelong search, and may, in fact, be an unachievable aspiration (Harter, 2002, p. 390), made even harder for busy leaders who are perhaps more firmly focused on action and outcome rather than internal self-inspection. It can be very difficult, for example, to be true to oneself, to express one’s honest opinions and moral convictions when these do not easily align with the opinions of one’s colleagues or companions (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 393). Leaders frequently face the challenges of navigating the dilemmas of representing an organisation while staying true to themselves—no easy feat. While being true to oneself is a noble aspiration, it may set a high bar for authenticity that inadvertently creates tension between the organisation and the individuals within it. Further, advocating that persons be true to themselves and their values can also introduce tensions between individual team members, and/or individuals and the leader, as each person can argue their attitude or outlook is grounded in authenticity, and thus not something they will readily abandon.

Here we find one of the greatest challenges confronting the notion of personal authenticity, that it is a subjective, ‘self-referential concept’ (Erickson, 1995, p. 122), grounded in what one personally holds to be true and good, relative to a hidden inner self that may even be inaccessible to the individual who claims they are authentic (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 395). One determines for oneself whether we are authentic or otherwise based on an emotional experience, with no reference to what in reality is true and good.

Therefore, this study argues that personal authenticity, as understood in the authentic leadership field, refers to *sincere autonomy*—a felt belief that one is authentically being oneself, grounded in one’s own perception, united with a view that one is both agent and arbiter of what is true and good. A sincerely autonomous person is resistant to external influence, even when that influence is a caring, well-meaning person who may well be an advocate of what is objectively true and good, in order to defend their autonomy. A sincerely autonomous person can feel they have become all they can be, or are the source of all knowledge regarding themselves, and resist further learning and growth in defence of their perceived authenticity. Such sincere autonomy may, if unchecked, foster narcissism, as one

looks evermore at oneself and one's qualities, resulting in an abdication of the very responsibilities existentialists argue lie at the heart of authenticity. Hence, sincere autonomy is fundamentally a contradiction of what one seeks in authenticity.

Ultimately, however, the apotheosis of the autonomous individual is an obstacle to leadership, since the feelings of the individual eclipse the needs of the organisation. Hence, authenticity is itself an impediment to leadership, and so the term 'authentic leadership' may be an oxymoron. This study will argue that the solution to this dilemma lies in a proper understanding of the person and fulfillment of the person, and mutual responsibility for each other and common goods, which emerges from the personalist contribution.

Despite these weaknesses in the concept of authenticity, it is argued that authentic persons, who integrate their 'espoused values, actions and behaviours' (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 242), are more consistent in action, easier to follow and best suited to meet the complex and often ambiguous challenges of leadership. In other words, it is assumed that authentic persons can be authentic leaders.

2.2.2 Authentic leader

The second way in which authenticity is used within ALT is authenticity regarding a leader. Whereas personal authenticity refers to oneself, being an authentic leader refers to both oneself and those that one leads. In this regard, the literature adds to what has been understood regarding personal authenticity—sometimes restating it—and focuses on the interpersonal dimension of authenticity in the context of leader–follower relationships.

Regarding *oneself*, the literature describes authentic leaders as individuals who:

1. are self-aware, self-accepting (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, et al., 2005, p. 345) individuals who know their purpose (George, 2003, p. 5), and '*who they are* and what they believe in' (Avolio, Gardner & Walumbwa, 2005, p. xxii [emphasis added]).
2. demonstrate 'authentic actions and interactions in trusting relationships ... [and who] enshrine authentic values and standards' (Bhindi & Duignan, 1997, p. 119), which is more likely to generate allegiance among their followers (Bhindi & Duignan, 1997, p. 119). Bhindi and Duignan (1997) wrote about authentic leadership in an educational context, prior to the 2003 emergence of ALT within the social sciences, and are rarely discussed within the literature. However, they offer a distinct perspective on interpersonal relationships, which will be discussed in this study.

3. are ‘true to their core values’ (George, 2003, p. 5), transparent and consistent in their ‘values, ethical reasoning and actions’ (Avolio et al., 2005, p. xxii) and operate with minimal gap between their espoused (i.e., authentic) and demonstrated values (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 248). Authentic values include courage, service to society and a commitment to the long, rather than short, term (George, 2003, p. 5). However, it is problematic to claim particular values—courage, service and long-term focus—are authentic, yet insist that authentic leaders remain true to *their* core values. A leader may demonstrate a very different set of values, such as loyalty, integrity and excellence—or even self-promotion, competition and scepticism—and still consider themselves authentic. Further, if someone holds that they are being authentic in standing by their values, it is unclear how their authenticity could be disputed. Advocating one should be true to one’s values and then stating what those values should be is the kind of problem that arises whenever a definition is self-referential, and is a consequence of the prevailing individualistic, subjectivist notion of authenticity.
4. show integrity (Avolio et al., 2005, p. xxii; George, 2003, p. 5), are ethical in thought and action (Bhindi & Duignan, 1997, p. 119; Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 243) and have the moral maturity to navigate ethical dilemmas in a way based on the good of the whole, rather than self-interest (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 247).
5. are aware of and transparent about ‘their own vulnerabilities’ (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 248), which gives followers the confidence to question their leader’s direction when necessary and enables a complementarity between the respective strengths and weaknesses of leaders and followers (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 248).

Regarding *others*, the literature says authentic leaders:

1. are person-centred (Bhindi & Duignan, 1997, p. 119), achieve authenticity in relationship with followers (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, et al., 2005, p. 345) and influence followers by ‘lead[ing] from the front’ (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 248).
2. place equal emphasis on both the task of leadership and development of themselves and their followers (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 249). One important role of an authentic leader is to identify and cultivate key strengths (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 248), including ‘positive psychological states such as confidence, optimism, hope and resilience within themselves and their associates’ (Avolio et al., 2005, p. xxii). This is predicated on the belief that ‘each individual has something positive to contribute to the group’ (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 248). Authentic leaders prioritise leadership development among their followers and recognise the positive impact their values,

beliefs and behaviour have on both the moral and authentic development of followers (Gardner, Avolio & Walumbwa, 2005; Hannah, Lester & Vogelgesang, 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Walumbwa et al., 2008).

3. balance the needs of all stakeholders (George, 2003, p. 5) and are oriented ‘toward doing what’s right for their constituency’ (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 248).

The nexus between attitude towards self and others occurs in the realm of responsibility, when an authentic leader takes responsibility for themselves, others in their organisation (Braun & Peus, 2016, p. 878) and the community of which they are a part, balancing public and private obligations (Novicevic et al., 2006, p. 64), which can be a source of considerable tension. Thus, responsibility is central to being an authentic leader. However, responsibility is not simply for the obligations one assumes in leadership. A full understanding of responsibility requires the perspective of the existentialists (Fusco, O’Riordan & Palmer, 2015) and, ultimately, a personalist view, and so will be developed in the philosophical chapters of this study.

The challenge to be authentic, in keeping with these lofty definitions, risks placing a burden on those who would be authentic, which overlooks the reality of the human condition. While being authentic is both a noble and reasonable aspiration, the values the literature attributes to authentic leaders—ethical, morally mature, courageous, long-term focused and so on—describe someone who is well advanced in their moral development, and so makes significant claims about the characteristics and strengths of an authentic leader. However, these read as a ‘wish list’ of qualities one would want in an ideal leader, without clearly establishing why they constitute being an authentic leader per se. While values such as these may be important for effective leadership, insisting on them as the requisites of an authentic leader potentially restricts such leadership to a small, heroic domain and risks enshrining the ‘great leader’ model of leadership.

2.3 Authentic leadership

Having reviewed the understanding of authenticity, authentic persons and authentic leaders in the literature, we are now in a position to examine how ALT describes authentic leadership itself, the first question of the research. This section will focus on, first, the definition of authentic leadership, and second, the four components of authentic leadership that emerge from that definition.

Following Luthans and Avolio's (2003) call for the development of authentic leaders, scholars sought a common understanding of authentic leadership. By 2008, just five years later, we find authentic leadership being described as:

a pattern of leader behavior that draws upon and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate, to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency on the part of leaders working with followers, fostering positive self-development. (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 94)

This remains the commonly accepted definition (Banks et al., 2016; Beddoes-Jones & Swailes, 2015; Caza & Jackson, 2011; Iszatt-White & Kempster, 2019, p. 361; Ladkin & Spiller, 2013; Northouse, 2016), and will be referred to throughout this study as the 'common formulation' of authentic leadership. It conforms with Kernis's (2003) frequently cited four components of authenticity and identifies similar components described by other scholars: self-awareness (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, et al., 2005, p. 345; Ilies et al., 2005, p. 373; Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 243); unbiased (Ilies et al., 2005, p. 373) or balanced (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, et al., 2005, p. 345) processing; authentic behaviour (Ilies et al., 2005, p. 373), including transparency, openness and trust (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, et al., 2005, p. 345); and authentic relational orientation (Ilies et al., 2005, p. 373). All agree that such authentic leadership has a developmental impact on a leader and their followers (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 243; Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 94).

However, Luthans and Avolio's original proposal of 'a theory-driven model identifying the specific construct variables and relationships that can guide authentic leader *development* and suggest researchable propositions' (2003, p. 244 [emphasis added]) influenced the research trajectory (Caza & Jackson, 2011, p. 360), placing a significant emphasis on the *development* of authentic *leaders*, rather than on the *meaning* of authentic *leadership*. The claim that authentic leadership development is '*the root construct* underlying *all* positive forms of leadership and its development' (Avolio & Gardner, 2005, p. 316 [emphasis added]) remained largely unchallenged until relatively recently (cf. Alvesson & Einola, 2019; Ford & Harding, 2011; Iszatt-White & Kempster, 2019; Ladkin & Spiller, 2013).

Further, while the combination of the four components constitute authentic leadership, 'the model most likely does not include all relevant or important constructs' (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 119), and there may yet be unidentified factors, such as humility (Avolio &

Walumbwa, 2014, p. 337). Although no commonly accepted additional component has yet emerged, Crawford, Dawkins, Martin and Lewis (2020, p. 11) make an important contribution with their proposal that the fifth component of an authentic leader is 'leadership influence'. They distinguish between formal role-dependent influence and informal influence, which is 'the ability to inspire and motivate individuals to accomplish goals of their own volition, regardless of rank or position' (p. 12). Since Walumbwa et al.'s (2008) definition actually regards the person of the leader, rather than leadership, a 'leadership influence' component could be helpful in orienting the model towards leadership actions and outcomes, and away from the individual.

Avolio, Wernsing and Gardner (2018, p. 408) conclude that continued use of 'the four factors that were proposed in the foundational theory on authentic leadership' is justified, and that these provide a basis for research into antecedents and consequences. The four factors were also confirmed in the development of the Authentic Leadership Inventory (Neider & Schriesheim, 2011), an alternative tool for measuring authentic leadership. At the same time, scholars recognise that the field of ALT remains relatively new and will benefit from ongoing dialogue and research (Avolio et al., 2018, p. 408).

Finally, the reference to a pattern of behaviour follows Luthans and Avolio's (2003, p. 243) conceptualisation of authentic leadership as a process grounded in positive psychology, embedding a confusion between the person of the leader and the process of leadership in the ALT literature (Crawford et al., 2020, p. 2). The definition also says nothing about the activity of authentic leadership itself, embedding a confusion between the person of the leader and the process of leadership in the ALT literature (Crawford et al., 2020, p. 2).

Further, the initial staking out of the research agenda within the transformational leadership and positive psychology fields minimises the contribution to research from other fields and earlier periods. In this regard, this study notes the work of Duignan and Bhindi in the educational field, since they argue authentic leadership integrates the leader, their beliefs and ethics through human values with the leadership, management and governance of an organisation in a morally uplifting manner (1997, p. 208). They contend that authentic leadership consists of four qualities: authenticity, which 'entails the discovery of the authentic self through meaningful relationships within organisational structures and processes that support core, significant values' (p. 119); intentionality, which 'implies visionary leadership that takes its energy and direction from the good intentions of current organisational members who put their intellects, hearts and souls into shaping a vision for the future' (p. 119);

spirituality, which refers to ‘the rediscovery of the spirit within each person and a celebration of the shared meaning and purpose of relationship’ (p. 119); and sensibility to others, which recognises their ‘feelings, aspirations ... needs’ and the context in which they operate (p. 119). This definition highlights that the authentic self, that self in caring and concerned relationships with others, and the overall good of the enterprise in which all work are important aspects of authentic leadership. They also provide perhaps the only definition of authentic leadership that considers authenticity of the leader as one aspect of that leadership, hence avoiding the confusion between authenticity of the leader and authentic leadership. In other words, Bhindi and Duignan argue that authentic leadership refers to an authentic person undertaking leadership activities.

Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, et al. also include an additional characteristic of ‘guidance toward worthy objectives’ (2005, p. 345). This is similar to Bhindi and Duignan’s claim that authentic leadership ‘emphasises *visionary activity*’ (1997, p. 119 [emphasis added]), which they say is grounded in the leader–follower relationship (p. 119). For a theory of authentic leadership to be about leadership, it seems essential to include an intersubjective, relational component and a visionary, or at least outcome directed, component, since ‘a key aspect of leadership is to structure the way that the inputs of others are combined to produce organizational outputs’ (Dinh et al., 2014, p. 37). The observation that leadership must move people towards some goal, objective or purpose beyond personal authentic development has been overlooked in ALT, to the detriment of authentic *leadership*. Hence, a failure to consider the meaning of the person, and the intersubjective, communal nature of persons, allows ALT to focus too much on the authentic individual.

Crawford et al. (2020) cogently argue for the need to clearly distinguish between the authentic leader and authentic leadership, and claim that most of what purports to be ALT is in fact poorly worded authentic leader theory. Therefore, they propose a definition of an authentic leader as one who ‘influences and motivates followers to achieve goals through their sincerity (Crawford et al., 2020, p. 9) and positive moral perspective, enabled through heightened awareness and balanced processing’ (Crawford et al., 2020, p. 13). They suggest that ‘sincerity’ more ably captures the interpersonal aspect of authentic leadership and is, therefore, a more suitable term than ‘relational transparency’ or ‘orientation’, which occur in other definitions. Like Bhindi and Duignan (1997), Crawford et al.’s (2020) definition appears to offer possibilities for understanding authentic leadership as actual leadership, not as poorly disguised authentic leader theory. However, their emphasis on sincerity risks the subjectivism that this study considers problematic.

Whereas Walumbwa et al.'s (2008) definition of authentic leadership focuses on components with respect to the person of the leader, Bhindi and Duignan (1997) argue for authenticity itself, as a key aspect of authentic leadership, and intentionality as vision; spirituality, as meaning and purpose; and sensibility towards others. Hence, while Walumbwa et al. (2008) highlight the inner aspects of the leader—self-awareness, internalised moral perspective, balanced processing and relational transparency—Bhindi and Duignan (1997) argue that authentic leadership requires leaders who are authentic, visionary, purposeful and caring. These are profoundly different definitions, and there seems little justification for the inability of such alternative perspectives to be considered and potentially incorporated into a definition.

However, this study argues that the underlying reason why another, more suitable definition of authentic leadership is not forthcoming is that the very concept of authentic leadership is problematic, grounded as it is in a subjectivist notion of authenticity and autonomy, and the fundamental tension between the aims of an autonomous individual and the collective objectives of an organisation. In other words, it may not be possible for a leader to lead a sincerely autonomous individual, and one may find it difficult to persist as a sincerely autonomous individual if one has to lead other individuals, since, at some point, one will must prevail over the other. We cannot all do our own thing on the basis of being authentic. Hence, a leadership theory must demonstrate how autonomous individuals function effectively together to accomplish some task without diminishing, or aggrandising, any particular individual(s).

2.3.1 The four components of authentic leadership

Following the definition of authentic leadership and its commonly accepted formulation, we turn our attention to understanding the four components of self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing and an internalised moral perspective identified by Walumbwa et al. (2008). However, the view that authentic leadership is a construct of self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing and an internalised moral perspective is particularly problematic, since the four components may not indicate authenticity, but may simply indicate strengths that every person possesses to some degree (i.e., there is no leadership dimension in the components). It is also arguable whether a leader who possesses these traits *therefore* demonstrates *authentic leadership*. On the other hand, anyone who lacks self-awareness and ethical competence, who ignores their blind spots and lacks relational transparency would struggle in a leadership role. Hence, while these traits are admirable in any

leader, one could possess all these traits and not be a leader and have little leadership capability (Crawford et al., 2020, p. 5).

Avolio and Walumbwa acknowledge that although the four components ‘contributes equally to leaders’ overall levels of perceived authenticity’ (2014, p. 337), each may contribute differently in different contexts to the overall construct of authentic leadership (p. 338).

One consequence of the influence of the social sciences on ALT is an interest in testing and measuring authentic leadership. However, it is questionable whether the concept can be reduced to, and measured on, a simple test (Jones & Grint, 2013, p. 28), such as the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1123), and whether these tests ‘capture the complexities of what it means to be an authentic leader’ (Iszatt-White & Kempster, 2019, p. 357) or truly indicate if one is authentic. If a test such as the ALQ does indicate authenticity, then the implication is that failure on the test indicates that a leader is inauthentic. If the four accepted components are reasonable, one must also ask what quantum of these traits one needs to possess—how high does one need to score on the test—to be considered an authentic leader, or below what score is one considered an inauthentic leader. At best, the test may indicate one is more or less authentic.

Finally, the four components may actually help one become authentic, rather than being measures of authenticity. While reading great literature may help one write well, being in possession of an expansive library does not indicate one can actually write well. Improving one’s self-awareness, balanced processing, and ethical and relational capability may help one become authentic, but simply possessing these traits may not mean one *is* authentic. On the other hand, just as one may discover a great writer has an expansive library, so too may one discover that an authentic person displays self-awareness, balanced processing, and ethical and relational capability. In other words, the components may be either antecedent or consequent to authenticity.

2.3.1.1 Self-awareness: who or what is the self, and is authenticity possible?

According to Walumbwa et al., self-awareness refers to a deepening process through which one makes sense of one’s self in a social context, ‘learning one’s self-concept and self-views, how past events shape current perceptions and behaviors, ... [and how] to make meaning of personal experiences’ (2008, p. 103), and in that process discovering ‘the multifaceted nature of the self’ (p. 95). A person who is self-aware exhibits clarity about their values, talents, emotional framework, strengths and weaknesses (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, et al., 2005; Ilies et al., 2005) in interactions with others (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 95).

The possibility of authenticity is based on a ‘psychological belief that each individual has a “true” self ... something constant to be authentic about’ (Caza & Jackson, 2011, p. 359). Grasping ‘what it means to be an “authentic” self’ (Sparrowe, 2005, p. 434) is essential to understanding authentic leadership (Ladkin & Spiller, 2013). Gardner et al. (2011) identified 30 publications, including Avolio et al. (2004), Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, et al. (2005), Ilies et al. (2005) and Luthans and Avolio (2003) and Shamir and Eilam (2005), where theories of the self provided foundational support to ALT. Most of these:

advanced models that incorporate self-based constructs (e.g., self-awareness, self-regulation, self-knowledge, self-esteem, self-verification, self-concept clarity, self-certainty, self-determination, self-congruence, self-consistency, self-concordance, self-expression). (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1129)

Incorporating self-based constructs does not, however, constitute a theory of the self; rather, it emphasises the importance of these to authenticity without necessarily explaining what that self is. There is a lack of agreement regarding the definition of the self; what it means to be an ‘authentic self’ (Medlock, 2012, p. 42); whether the self is a fixed, ‘well-bounded entity’ (Ladkin & Spiller, 2013, p. 2), a work in progress (p. 2), or merely ‘specific kind of mental representation’ (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 252); and, indeed, whether the self even exists (Erickson, 1995, p. 122; Medlock, 2012, p. 51; Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 252;).

It is argued that the self is a relational construct, a ‘biographically unique set of relationships with others that ... develop[s] over time into one’s own system of self-values’ and, therefore, ‘emerges out of relationships rather than out of individual minds’ (Erickson, 1995, p. 139). In that case, any ‘true’ self that does exist does so in relation to other selves, and ‘hence cannot be constant in the sense required for authenticity (Peterson, 2005; Sandilands, 1998)’ (Caza & Jackson, 2011, p. 359).

Some claim we live in an ‘era of multiple selves’ (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 242), raising a question as to which self should one be true to (Harter, 2002, p. 384). Harter (2002) argues that people present as different selves in different roles, situations and relational contexts, and that this is exacerbated in a technologically connected and globalised world. Although this raises a question regarding to which self one should be true (p. 384), it seems a failure to distinguish between a role one plays and the person who plays the role. For example, the fact that Mary is a mother and manager, a daughter and director, a sportswoman and a spouse does

not mean there are multiple Marys. It means Mary has the opportunity to discover how she can consistently be herself in every role in which she participates.

If the self is socially constructed in response to one's environment and relationships, then one would need to discover how to be that constructed self in each situation. In that case, one's authenticity would need review whenever 'one switches from being an engineer to being a manager, or from being an analyst to being an account director' (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 393), thus rendering stable authenticity quite difficult. Further, if there are multiple selves, it becomes difficult to ascribe or accept responsibility (Guignon, 2004, p. 62), since one could point to another self as the agent, arguing that self is not who one is today.

Moreover, the self is transmitted in a bodily manner, which means leaders are perceived as authentic or otherwise in and through their embodied selves. The concept of embodiment is relevant for ALT (Caza & Jackson, 2011, p. 361) since 'it is the leader's body, and the way in which he or she uses it to express their "true self", which is the seemingly invisible mechanism through which authenticity is conveyed' (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010, p. 65). The fact that a leader can be perceived as authentic, or otherwise, in and through the embodiment of that self implies the possibility and presence of a true self (p. 65) (cf. also Ladkin, 2008). If not, one would hesitate to attribute authenticity to anyone, since in the moment of confronting an embodied being, one would remain uncertain about whether one is encountering a true self. Therefore, one must ask how a true self is embodied (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010). However, the concept of embodiment, and the person who acts in and through their body, is given little attention in the ALT literature, which is an oversight given that leaders and followers encounter one another in a bodily manner. This study will address this deficiency when we consider a philosophical understanding of the human person and the essentiality of embodiment, independent of awareness, to personhood.

Gardner et al. conclude their literature review with a quote from Maslow: '“Musicians must make music, artists must paint, poets must write if they are to ultimately be at peace with themselves. What humans *can* be, they *must* be. They must be true to their own nature” (Maslow, 1970, p. 22, original emphasis)' (2011, p. 1142). In so doing, they highlight, but do not answer, what the present study considers a set of crucial questions that lie at the heart of authenticity and authentic leadership. One must consider what it is that humans can be and must be; whether there is such a thing as human nature, and what it might mean to be true to that nature. This leads to questions regarding the meaning of being a human person, an authentic person and, hence, an authentic leader. Perhaps unwittingly, Gardner et al. (2011)

draw attention to a fundamental philosophical limitation within ALT, that of the meaning of the human person. Their statement highlights that while authenticity may be a state in which one lives, philosophical tools are needed to understand the meaning of the concept. It further highlights that ALT has, in essence, failed to answer the question regarding the meaning of the self of which one is self-aware.

2.3.1.2 Relational transparency or orientation

The second component of authentic leadership is relational transparency, which refers to an appropriate level of self-disclosure of one's 'authentic self' (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 95), which depends on three components: 'self exposure, relating, and making leaderly choices' (Ladkin & Taylor, 2010). Appropriate self-disclosure promotes trust in relationships, encourages followers to act in a similar way (Gardner, Avolio & Walumbwa, 2005), significantly influences whether followers attribute authenticity to leaders, and results in followers who are more likely to 'experience self-determination in their work as they take greater responsibility for their actions' (Avolio & Walumbwa, 2014, p. 342). The capacity for self-determination is a key to people becoming who and what they are (i.e., authentic) and has not been sufficiently explored within ALT, a deficiency for which this study offers a remedy with its analysis of the human person.

While taking responsibility for one's actions is self-determining, it is unclear from the ALT literature why relational transparency is a causal factor. The claim appears to be that when a leader is more transparent about their true self, followers feel trusted and so exercise greater responsibility for their work. While one's freely chosen actions are self-determining, questions remain about how a leader's disclosure of their authentic self *causes* followers to feel trusted, and whether, and to what degree, a feeling of another person's trust is a factor in responsibility for one's acts. The leader may themselves be wracked by fear and anxiety. They may be troubled about their future, uncertain of their direction. They may be manipulative and hungry for power. In other words, there are persons in leadership roles whose self-disclosure would not engender trusting relationships, and would in fact cause followers to be much more circumspect and much more cautious about taking responsibility for their actions.

Although Kernis identifies relational *orientation* as a component of authenticity (Kernis, 2003, p. 13; Kernis & Goldman, 2006, p. 294)—a person both reveals and discovers their true self in a social context—others (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, et al., 2005; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Walumbwa et al., 2008) emphasise relational *transparency* as a key component of authentic leadership. The latter shifts the focus to the leader as an individual and diminishes the

interpersonal dimension of authentic leadership (Jones & Grint, 2013, p. 26). Whereas the idea of orientation indicates an engagement with, or disposition towards, others, transparency suggests an openness of oneself to others. A leader who allows others to see their true self, while that may be beneficial, is quite distinct from a leader who is oriented towards others, a notion that sits more easily with the intersubjective nature of human beings.

In a perspective that potentially unites these two views, Ilies et al. hold that authentic leaders create the conditions for *relational authenticity* (2005, p. 377), which allows ‘both leaders and followers [to] feel at ease to disclose and act in accordance with their thoughts and ideals ... [which] foster[s] higher levels of moral courage to stand up and exhibit ethical behaviour’ (Avolio & Walumbwa, 2014, p. 345). Authenticity in relationships seems fundamental to authentic leadership (Duignan & Bhindi, 1997, p. 200; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, et al., 2005, p. 345) since connection and interdependence with others provides a context for understanding both one’s identity and place in an organisation (Duignan & Bhindi, 1997, p. 200). The interaction between authentic leaders and their followers ‘reinforce[s] the formation and development of authenticity in each other, subsequently establishing more authentic relationships’ (Avolio & Walumbwa, 2014, p. 339). Hence, authenticity can be a quality one possesses and ‘a product of relationships’ (Duignan & Bhindi, 1997, p. 201). Authentic followership is a central aspect of authentic leadership (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans et al., 2005; George, 2003; Shamir & Eilam, 2005) and ‘may be as important to the development of authentic leadership as the authenticity of the leader’ (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1141). However, authentic followership, and the role followers play in such relationships, has not been the subject of empirical investigation (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1141). Notwithstanding that, philosophical analysis reveals a distinct perspective on the leader–follower relationship and how that positively impacts the growth of each person.

Some commentators observe that, since work colleagues are usually appointed or allocated rather than chosen, it can sometimes be quite difficult to establish and/or maintain transparent interactions (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 388). While this is undoubtedly the case, it perhaps establishes a case for transparency on the part of leaders who, in their display of openness, can model the kind of behaviour that will support effective team relationships. Alvesson and Einola (2019) also note that people understand transparency in different ways. Some leaders lack an adequate understanding of personal boundaries and can reveal considerable personal detail to be open and authentic. When they urge similar levels of disclosure from others, they risk fostering inauthenticity in the person who must feign interest in the leader while disclosing theoretically hidden, but often innocuous, aspects of themselves.

By arguing for self-disclosure as a fundamental component of authentic leadership, theorists are continuing to make assumptions about that self who is to be disclosed, despite their lack of agreement on the existence of a self or what constitutes a self. This study argues that a sound anthropology of the person, and the intersubjectivity of persons, is fundamental to understanding the relational dynamic between the person of the leader and the person of the follower(s).

2.3.1.3 Balanced processing: can one overcome subjective bias?

The third component of authentic leadership is balanced processing, which means ‘objectively analys[ing] all the relevant data’ (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 95), including other opinions and perspectives (p. 95), paying particular attention to those ‘which challenges one’s prior beliefs’ (Caza & Jackson, 2011, p. 354), before making decisions.

If authenticity includes knowing and being true to oneself, being authentic must entail a search for what *is* true—‘we are authentic when we discern, seek and live into truth’ (Terry, 1993, p. 111)—which this study argues is the proper understanding of the Socratic ‘know oneself’. How to do that is, however, not discussed in the ALT literature. The challenge to recognise and overcome one’s own subjective bias, transcending the limits of one’s own mind, to know what is objectively real and true is more than an abstract philosophical question. Since authentic leaders seek to be authentic, and authenticity has a direct relationship with truth, which includes knowing the truth about oneself, knowing how to discern what is objectively real and true is particularly salient in any theory of authentic leadership (Crawford et al., 2020, p. 10).

Effective challenging of one’s beliefs requires a combination of feedback/input from others and a process of reflection on the part of the leader. Giving feedback—particularly if one is to be completely honest (i.e., authentically true to oneself)—to leaders is never easy (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 388). Doing so can risk one’s role, relationships and remuneration, and can sometimes be overshadowed by one’s own agenda. It can be very difficult, for example, to provide detailed feedback about one’s immediate superior’s poor relational capability when that leader has a significant influence on one’s career progression. Calling out unethical behaviour can be even more difficult when doing so appears to claim moral superiority for oneself.

At the same time, the distinction noted earlier between authenticity of objects and moral authenticity of persons (Iszatt-White & Kempster, 2019, p. 356) needs to be considered. While objects are static, persons are dynamic, and so in the very process of considering all the

relevant data, one may arrive at a contrary conclusion, and hence appear inauthentic relative to a previous position. One can, for example, have been firmly of a view and acted consistent with that view, despite later coming to an alternative understanding. The very process of incorporating other perspectives must foster change in the agent, which can be inadvertently interpreted as inauthenticity. The key insight of balanced processing as a component of authenticity is not that one risks inauthenticity by changing one's mind, but that the capacity to learn and grow, and adopt alternative perspectives, is an important dimension of leadership.

However, balanced processing, that ability to objectively analyse all the data and ask all the relevant questions, seems to be a desired quality in any person, not just in a leader, or an authentic leader at that. Balanced processing does not appear to necessarily demonstrate authenticity so much as it does curiosity and a disposition for learning.

Lastly, balanced processing, that act of seeking and analysing data to understand and hence inform one's decision-making and action, in a manner that identifies and overcomes one's blind spots and biases, contains within itself assumptions regarding the epistemological question 'what is truth?' and the cognitional 'how does one know the truth?' ALT has not addressed the issue of epistemological and cognitional theory. While it is not within the scope of this study to evaluate and develop an epistemology, it does take a realist stance, the basis of which will be explained in Chapter 5 on Wojtyła and his realist personalism.

2.3.1.4 Internalised moral perspective

The fourth component of authentic leadership—in addition to self-awareness, relational orientation and balanced processing—is an internalised moral perspective. This refers to one's 'internalised and integrated self-regulation' (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 95) which anchors one's decisions and actions in 'internal moral standards and values' (p. 96) rather than external influences. Jones and Grint (2013) observe that Kernis (2003) made no reference to morality, yet others claim authentic leadership has an ethical dimension (Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 95) or moral core, since the level of self-awareness and self-acceptance necessary for authenticity implies a higher level of moral competence (Gardner, Avolio & Walumbwa, 2005). Hence, any theory of authentic leadership must call attention 'to the inherent ethical responsibilities that reside in the leadership role' (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 94).

Walumbwa et al. (2008) argue that ethics is a central component of leadership since leaders have a profoundly positive or negative impact on followers. They claim that authentic leaders model ethical behaviour by acting consistently (p. 95) with their moral values, which instils

confidence that they will do the right thing (Avolio & Walumbwa, 2014, p. 345) and encourages followers to act in accord with their values. This, in turn, promotes ethical organisational cultures (p. 345) that demonstrate the desired organisational values and ‘communicate the appropriate normative expectations to guide follower behaviour’ (p. 345). Hence, leaders have a moral responsibility beyond self-interest for ‘the interests of the collective’ (Banks et al., 2016, p. 643). Authentic leadership requires an ability to transcend one’s own self-interest, to choose what is good for all and not just oneself (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 247). The ability to choose for all demonstrates a moral maturity that enables leaders to make both ‘“selfless” judgements’ (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 248) and decisions that balance a range of competing interests. This notion of ethical behaviour in a social group—which includes commercial organisations—invites questions regarding the common good, which will be examined in a later chapter of this study.

The main argument advanced in favour of ALT and practice is that authentic leadership could help in the avoidance of ethical failures—which often contribute to enterprise failure—and so enable organisations to achieve ‘sustained and veritable performance’ (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1142) in an ethical manner. Walumbwa et al. (2008) suggest that testing the authentic leadership capability of a leader or potential leader could provide a means of managing and even avoiding ethical risk, since such a test will reveal the moral competence of the individual. Nonetheless, it would seem more judicious to test a person’s moral competence before appointing them to a leadership role. However, authentic leadership theorists have failed to adequately define what it means to be or to act ethically (Crawford et al., 2020, p. 7). If morality is an essential component of authentic leadership, scholars would benefit from identifying and understanding the implications of, their ethical frameworks and assumptions (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1130). Nor has ALT asked the more pressing question regarding *why* ethical failures occur, simply assuming authenticity is the answer and constructing a theory that supports that. ALT faces significant challenges in holding itself out as a panacea to the ethical failing of leaders, since there is an inherent tension between ethics/authenticity and commercial reality. Leaders face a constant juggling act to balance the utilitarian need for business to be sustainable, with sometimes contradictory demands to serve social agendas and the common good, while doing so in an ethical manner that cares for people. Merely being authentic does not necessarily resolve this tension, nor mitigate corporate misconduct (Cooper et al., 2005).

Authentic leadership literature consistently asserts this moral component. However, there is little research confirming a relationship between authentic leadership and ethical outcomes (Avolio & Walumbwa, 2014, p. 344). Given that more than 15 years have passed since the

emergence of ALT and unethical behaviour among leaders continues to accrue (Crawford et al., 2020, p. 2), it is reasonable to ask whether developing authentic leaders, as formulated by the theory, is able to advance moral capability among leaders. While the meaning of authenticity and authentic leadership remain unclear, it is overly simplistic to propose ethical failures in business can be solved by improving authentic leadership development.

Further, proponents of ethical competence as a component of authentic leadership have failed to respond to Price's (2003) concern that authentic/pseudo transformational leadership theory fails to take account of human nature and a tendency of people to choose what accords with their values. He argues, 'ethical failures are essentially volitional, not cognitive' (p. 69), since self-interest trumps moral objectivity. Hence, the challenge for leaders is not to conquer the demands of their ego, but to overcome what could be described as a moral exceptionalism—a belief that that they operate according to a different set of ethical norms than those that apply to others (p. 70). Despite Price's (2003) emphasis on the importance of volition, the term is very rarely used in the ALT literature, and nor has the place of the will, and subsequent choice, been subject to rigorous analysis in the ALT literature.

While scholars agree that leadership has an ethical component (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Case, French & Simpson, 2011; Ciulla & Forsyth, 2011; Grint, 2011; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Walumbwa et al., 2008), those same scholars rarely wrestle with the associated ontological and epistemological questions (Case et al., 2011, p. 248) regarding reality, truth and goodness. Therefore, this study challenges the notion that grounding one's actions in one's own internalised moral standards, in the absence of an ontological and epistemological framework, can resolve the ethical concerns and need for ethical leaders that gave impetus to the original theory.

2.4 Philosophical limitations of authentic leadership theory and problems arising

This study has noted the concerns of Algera and Lips-Wiersma (2012), Alvesson and Einola (2019), Iszatt-White and Kempster (2019) and Lawler and Ashman (2012), among others, who have expressed concerns about the lack of a sound philosophical foundation for ALT. However, the view that the world is desperate for 'authentic leaders and leadership' (Avolio & Walumbwa, 2014, p. 353) is argued to supersede any need for philosophical analysis or debate (p. 353). Hence, the view that the more pressing challenge is that of authentic leadership development (p. 347) still tends to prevail. This is despite the fact that a

diverse range of concepts of self, identity and authenticity from a range of disciplines can contribute further insights regarding authentic leadership (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1129). It seems more than reasonable that the discipline of Philosophy is included in that search for insight. This study argues that an urgent need for authentic leadership in practice calls even more urgently for an understanding of authenticity, and of the person who leads, in order to more fully understand authentic leadership.

The first objective of this study is, therefore, to describe ALT and identify its philosophical limitations regarding the meaning of authenticity and what is to be authentically human, prior to seeking philosophical insight in existentialism and personalism. We have addressed this objective in this chapter, noting concerns as we proceeded and finding confirmation of the view that although the concept of authentic leadership seems eminently reasonable, the theory struggles to withstand critical scrutiny (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 385). This concluding section summarises the philosophical limitations of ALT, as it is commonly understood. Following chapters will then take up the second objective of this study, to evaluate the contribution of the existentialists Søren Kierkegaard and Martin Heidegger and the personalist Karol Wojtyła towards overcoming those limitations.

Having considered the literature, we identify six major concerns, four of which are highlighted by the four components of authentic leadership, and two which issue from those concerns. First, the component of balanced processing lacks an epistemology and cognitional theory, which is needed to properly overcome biases and discern fact. Second, the concept of self-awareness invites an anthropological question as to who or what is the self of which one is aware. Specifically, the question asks what it means to be a human person who is self-aware, which is not taken up in the literature. Third, an internalised moral perspective requires a means of discerning what is good *for* persons, and what are those reasonable ways in which persons can act that affirm their personhood. ALT lacks an ethical theory and conflates authenticity with moral goodness. Fourth, relational transparency highlights the intersubjective nature of persons, particularly the leader–follower relationship, yet ALT has not explored this specific dynamic beyond recognising the developmental impact of leaders on followers.

Fifth, as a consequence of its epistemic failure, ALT is unable to effectively define authenticity beyond an individual feeling of knowing oneself and being in charge of oneself—what this study terms ‘sincere autonomy’. However, this term itself is fraught with contradiction. Finally, that same epistemic failure undermines, and establishes an internal conflict between, authenticity and leadership (i.e., authentic leadership) in practice.

2.4.1 The four components of authentic leadership reveal four philosophical limitations

2.4.1.1 Authentic leadership theory lacks an epistemology

First, ALT lacks an epistemology. Balanced processing, that act of seeking and analysing data to understand and hence inform one's decision-making and action, in a manner that identifies and overcomes one's blind spots and biases, contains within itself assumptions regarding the epistemological question 'what is truth?' and the cognitional 'how does one know the truth?' ALT has not addressed the issue of epistemological and cognitional theory. While it is not within the scope of this study to evaluate and develop an epistemology, it assumes a realist stance, the basis of which will be explained in Chapter 5 on Wojtyła and his realistic personalism.

2.4.1.2 Authentic leadership theory lacks an understanding of the human person

Self-awareness is perhaps one of the most commonly recognised traits of ideal leaders. However, one must ask who or what is that self of which one is aware, who relates to other selves, and how that self can come to know truth, which is required for balanced processing, and the good, which is required for a moral perspective. While ALT has identified four components—strengths and attributes—of authentic leadership, it does not explain the meaning of the person who has those strengths and attributes. If one is to be an authentic person and authentic leader, it is fundamental to understanding who, or what, that person is.

Understanding the self is a question to which one can find answers in both the sciences and philosophy. However, the sciences, which treat persons as measurable parts and have much to offer in regard to understanding human processes, are ultimately unable to provide meaning about the human person. Victor Frankl, arguing from the perspective of a psychotherapist, held that it is dangerous for someone who is an expert in the field of biology, or psychology, or sociology, to claim to understand and explain human beings exclusively in terms of that field since these reduce and compartmentalise persons into data, facts and findings, rather than a unified whole (Frankl, 2014). To demonstrate this, he observed that a cylindrical shape can cast either a rectangular or circular shadow, depending on whether a light source shines from the side or the end. Frankl pointed out that no amount of examination of either shadow alone would reveal a cylinder as its cause. So too with the empirical sciences. While they may reveal measurable aspects of the human person, they can never disclose the meaning of the human person (Frankl, 2014).

The sciences have overly influenced ALT at the expense of a philosophical understanding of what it means to be a human person. This study explains how both Heidegger and Wojtyła expressed grave concerns about the inability of the empirically based psychological and biological sciences to address their ontological foundations (Heidegger, 1962, p. 75) and grasp the fullness of what it means to be a human person (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 21). Hence, although the behavioural and social sciences have contributed much to an understanding of the human person, questions regarding the meaning of the human person are ultimately questions for philosophy.

2.4.1.3 Authentic leadership theory lacks an ethical framework

If morality is an essential component of authentic leadership, scholars would benefit from identifying and understanding the implications of their ethical frameworks and assumptions (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1130). However, while ALT has insisted on an ethical component, theorists have failed to adequately define what it means to be or to act ethically (Crawford et al., 2020, p. 7). This study argues that ethical frameworks are built on anthropological frameworks—that who and what a person is has bearing on those behaviours that are compatible with being a person. While ALT purports to be an ethically grounded theory, it has failed to articulate an ethical theory, or how one develops an objective, rather than arbitrary, ethical framework that can guide one's thinking and acting, in order to be ethical. Such a framework must ultimately be grounded in the Socratic ideal and a realist metaphysics, which argue truth and values are accessible to the rational mind, therefore providing an objective foundation for an ethical theory and an authentic life, and so overcoming the limitations of a subjectivist, relativist ethic.

Since ALT has failed to develop an ethical framework, it has equally failed to address the will, self-determination and personal responsibility—despite mentioning these in the literature—all of which are fundamental to personhood and so authenticity. Proponents of ethical competence as a component of authentic leadership have not responded to Price's (2003) concern that authentic/pseudo transformational leadership theory fails to take account of human nature and a tendency of people to choose what accords with their values. He argues, 'ethical failures are essentially volitional, not cognitive' (p. 69), since self-interest trumps moral objectivity. Hence, the challenge for leaders is not to conquer the demands of their ego, but to overcome what could be described as a moral exceptionalism—a belief that that they operate according to a different set of ethical norms than those that apply to others (p. 70). Despite Price's (2003) emphasis on the importance of volition, the term is very rarely used in

the ALT literature, and nor has the place of the will, and subsequent choice, been subject to rigorous analysis in the ALT literature. The capacity for self-determination is a key to people becoming who and what they are (i.e., authentic) and has not been sufficiently explored within ALT, a deficiency for which this study offers a remedy with its analysis of the human person. Since persons are self-determining, it is crucial that they are not deprived of freedom of choice, since doing so deprives them of an essential aspect of their personhood. Hence, the challenge for leaders is to manage the tension between the freedom of the individual, so they can be their authentic selves, and the needs of the organisation. This study argues that the moral and anthropological vision of personalism provides a means for reconciling this tension. This leads to the issue of personal responsibility, of taking charge of one's actions, which shape who and what one becomes, a central concern of existentialists. This study will also demonstrate the centrality of personal responsibility to leadership and the ethical obligations obtained in a leader–follower relationship.

Another consequence of the lack of an ethical framework is a failure to appreciate the inherent difficulty in proposing authentic leaders develop authenticity in their followers. The emphasis on development of others carries the subtle inference that leaders can 'make' others in some manner, specifically, to transform them into their true selves (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 387), and indeed have a responsibility to do so. The notion of 'leader making' is explicit in much of the theory. Avolio and Gardner conceived a 'model of authentic leadership starting with and integrating throughout our conceptualisation of the dynamic process of development in context' (2005, p. 317), advancing the notion that development of leaders is a fundamental role of leadership. Such a notion contradicts an emphasis on agency and responsibility. Contrary to this developmental view, since freedom and self-determination are central to personhood and deserving of the greatest respect, any leadership theory that includes a component that involves 'making' other leaders is fundamentally flawed since it reduces the person to an object, subject to the desires of the leader. The challenge is not to transform or make persons or leaders, but to foster environments conducive to transformation and personal growth and development (i.e., in which the individual chooses to transform themselves and, if they so desire and have the capability, become a leader). A fuller understanding of the human person, the respect and dignity due to them and their responsibility for self-determination reveals leadership's responsibility not to 'make' or develop others but to create the conditions for human flourishing.

Lastly, the absence of an ethical theory within ALT results in an often subjective view of moral capability. As ALT stands today, authentic leadership is attributed to those who live by a

set of personally ascribed values, or who act in accord with followers' internalised moral values. However, Walumbwa et al. (2008), and others since, have failed to answer the normative question about 'whose' or 'which' values.

2.4.1.4 Authentic leadership theory lacks an understanding of intersubjectivity

ALT recognises the relational transparency dimension of authentic leadership. However, because of its lack of philosophical perspective, ALT fails to fully consider the intersubjectivity of persons. A leader who allows others to see their true self (i.e., who is transparent), while potentially beneficial, is quite distinct from Kernis's (2003) argument that an authentic leader is oriented towards others, a notion that sits more easily with the intersubjective nature of human beings. As Ford and Harding (2011) observe, ALT fails to consider subjectivity, and thus intersubjectivity would not enter the purview of a researcher focusing on a component of the person and the degree to which they are transparent.

While the ALT literature acknowledges the relational dimension of leadership, and the impact of the leader on the follower in that relationship, the underlying discussion on what it means for persons to exist in relationship has not been explored. Philosophical analysis reveals a distinct perspective on the leader–follower relationship and how that positively impacts the growth of each person. Further, the fact that persons exist in a social group—which includes commercial organisations—invites questions regarding ethical behaviour towards one another and the common good, which will be examined in a subsequent chapter of this study. Thus, we continue to see how the threads of epistemology, anthropology, ethics and intersubjectivity weave together into a strand that must be viewed as a whole to grasp the meaning of the human person, and so understand what it means to be an authentic human person and an authentic leader.

2.4.2 Authentic leadership theory has too narrow an understanding of authenticity

The authentic leadership literature focuses on the development of authentic leadership, without having properly defined authenticity, authentic leader, or authentic leadership. While developing truly authentic leaders is a laudable goal, it seems difficult to develop such leaders if one has not found common ground on authenticity itself. The concept of authenticity has not been sufficiently investigated within ALT (Crawford et al., 2020, p. 6). This seems essential to ensuring effective authentic leadership development programs actually develop authentic leadership, and not merely promote a particular opinion on what constitutes authenticity.

Alvesson and Einola (2019) argue that the focus of social scientists on numbers and measurement overlooks the considerable difficulty in identifying and measuring an abstract concept such as authenticity, which resides entirely within a person and may or may not be effectively disclosed to others (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 389), or even to oneself.

To *be* authentic—and help others be authentic, and ultimately become authentic leaders—one must understand what authenticity *is*, not merely whether one feels authentic. Understanding the true meaning enables one to be clear about one's objectives, and who or what one is truly becoming. Hence, one of the major problems confronting ALT is the lack of a philosophical understanding of authenticity to complement the widely researched psychological understanding identified in this literature review. In this regard, this study has two major concerns: the conflation of authenticity and moral goodness, and the self-referential nature of authenticity.

2.4.2.1 Assumption that authentic means morally good

As noted, the distinction in transformational leadership theory between authentic and pseudo-authentic leaders, with its assumption that this separated the ethically sound from unethical leaders, carried over into ALT, with the accompanying belief that authentic (i.e., ethical) leaders would reduce or eliminate instances of ethical failure. A fundamental assumption at heart of ALT is that being moral is being authentic and vice versa. Hence, ALT conflates authenticity with ethical and assumes authentic people are morally good people who can be moral (i.e., authentic) leaders. However, since persons are complex beings, who straddle the gamut of human strengths and weaknesses, there are in fact people who are appalling human beings, with little drive for improvement or development, whose authentic way of being and acting leaves much to be desired. Some of those occupy leadership positions, and hence while it could be argued they are authentic leaders—grounded in *their* moral perspective—they are not leaders one would want to follow or promote.

To dismiss this with the argument that these are, therefore, pseudo-authentic overlooks the very real issue that ALT, in its current formulation and frameworks, lacks a means of addressing its inherent philosophical weaknesses. It is unable to confront the fact that high-minded ideals—such as self-awareness, balanced processing, moral competence and relational transparency—are undermined by the emphasis on being true to self, while allowing that to be grounded in subjective emotion, and lacking the courage to promote a model of that self, an anthropological vision of the human person. The issue arises because of, on the one hand,

ALT's failure to come to grips with an ethical and anthropological framework, and on the other, a too ready equivocation of morality and authenticity.

2.4.2.2 Self-referential: sincere autonomy

The understanding of authenticity has been influenced by classical and existentialist thought, and is often summarised as knowing and being true to oneself. However, this study claims that ALT has ultimately failed to adequately define both authenticity and what it means to be a self, and thus is unable to explain what it means to be an authentic self, or authentic person. Authenticity within ALT ultimately devolves to a subjectivist, individualistic ideal, grounded in what one personally holds to be true and good, relative to a hidden, inner self that may even be inaccessible to the individual who claims they are authentic (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 395). One determines for oneself whether we are authentic or otherwise based on an emotional experience, with no reference to what in reality is true and good. Psychological authenticity is consequent either upon a subjective claim to authenticity, which lacks sufficient objectivity to be justified (Betta, 2018, p. 253), or of attribution by another. Hence, a leader can consider themselves authentic when they feel as if they are being true to themselves, while others can consider the leader to be authentic when they appear to be consistent with what is socially acceptable. Both positions are subjective and sometimes opposed, meaning one may feel authentic and be considered inauthentic, and vice versa.

Therefore, authenticity is ultimately a 'self-referential concept' (Erickson, 1995, p. 122) that equates to an individualistic knowing and owning of one's values. Hence, one *feels* authentic when feeling congruent with one's values, chosen without any coercion or influence—a felt belief that one is authentically being oneself, grounded in one's own perception, united with a view that one is both agent and arbiter of what is true and good. Hence, the notion of being authentic has become being sincerely autonomous, which is inadequate for the task of expressing something unique, affirming and aspirational for human beings. It is even less suitable when applied to leadership, as this understanding is fundamentally in conflict with the notion of leadership. This way of being authentic is problematic, since it encourages resistance to external influence, to defend one's autonomy, and could result in an abdication of the very responsibilities the existentialists argue lie at the heart of authenticity. Sincere autonomy could foster narcissism, the experience of awful, bullying and egotistical bosses, many of whom claim they have moral high ground and are authentic, while in reality they are narcissistic, moral relativists, is one with which many people identify.

Ford and Harding's (2011) conclusion regarding what they style as the *immorality* of ALT reveals the consequences of a lack of a sound philosophical anthropology, in combination with authenticity as self-referential. They contend, 'there is little possibility of subjectivity in Authentic Leadership' (p. 476), that ALT is fundamentally flawed since the leader must deny their true self to conform with organisational norms and must objectify followers, using them as a means to achieve organisational outcomes. Therefore, according to their understanding of authentic leadership, neither leader nor follower can become a true self:

The individual subject is allowed no subjectivity beyond that required by the collective — thus privileging organizational over individual identification. The follower, this suggests, is an object to the subject of the leader. The follower is denied subjectivity, is not allowed to be an I. (p. 472f)

What Ford and Harding (2011) highlight is the difficulty of being oneself—being authentic—in the face of persuasive authority, such as the institution for whom one works. This is not dissimilar to the paradoxical argument made in this study, that, while authenticity is self-referential, leader authenticity is follower referential. In this case, Ford and Harding (2011) are arguing that authenticity derives from the organisation, making a similar observation as the present study, that the flawed notion of authenticity—as it has become commonly understood—is a distortion of its true meaning and ultimately denies subjectivity. Hence, authenticity contains an inner conflict, as it endeavours to reconcile competing demands to seek emotional satisfaction in being true to who one is, while experiencing pressure to conform to another's expectation of what constitutes authentic behaviour. Further, Ford and Harding (2011) have assumed that individuals—whether leaders or followers—are objectified by organisations and that authentic leaders conform to such practices. This is not what true authenticity or leadership regards, and indicates a failure to understand the concepts of freedom and responsibility, which one derives more fully from a philosophical perspective.

2.4.3 Authentic leadership theory establishes a tension between authenticity and leadership

ALT has failed to sufficiently distinguish between the person, their role and the act of leadership. Even if personal authenticity can be ascertained, scholars need to more clearly establish the relationship between that and leadership authenticity or, more specifically, authentic leadership, with an accompanying sound definition. Unless definitions are able to clearly distinguish between authentic persons in leadership roles and authentic leadership

enacted by persons, then linking authenticity and leadership is ultimately unhelpful (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 384).

The commonly formulated definition of authentic leadership contains a potentially irreconcilable tension. Walumbwa et al.'s (2008) understanding of authentic leadership is undermined by its inherent confusion between the act of authentic leadership and the person who is an authentic leader. While authenticity refers to individuals, to a 'self', leadership refers to a role that that self plays in a collective setting. Hence, authenticity as sincere autonomy, of an individual, is a barrier to leadership, in and of a social group, since the feelings of the individual eclipse the needs of the organisation. Alvesson and Einola argue that it is unlikely that one's authentic self:

would be aligned with the demands of business life and that the person would be able to transform others to align their true selves in a way compatible with a firm's goals as well. Even if that was the case, the whole concept of authenticity would dissipate and conforming clones would be the result — an antithesis of what being authentic is in the sense implied in the leadership literature. (2019, p. 387)

On the one hand, the individual ideal is a feeling of autonomy of identity and action, while on the other hand, the organisation, personalised in the leader, seeks harmony of action and creation of an overall corporate identity, or culture. Therefore, this study highlights that a tension is established in the very focus on authenticity. While command and control models of leadership may be outdated, the modern emphasis on leading authentic individuals surrenders command and control to the follower. This study argues, in Chapter 6, that the solution to this problem lies in an attitude of mutual service of each other—leader(s) and follower(s) for a common good—grounded in realistic personalism.

2.4.4 Conclusion

One can identify a number of concerns and difficulties regarding the authentic leadership construct. Authenticity itself is poorly understood, and grounded in feelings and autonomy, which establishes a barrier to being led, while a truly authentic leader needs to demonstrate almost heroic virtue. In other words, while the criterion for authenticity is self-referential, the criterion for leader authenticity is follower referential. By way of explanation, this means that the individual will decide when they are being authentic, and will also believe they can judge when someone else is being authentic. This judgement is subject to the changing whims and fancies of the individual. This is problematic for leadership. Only a truly outstanding

individual—who aligns with what the follower considers ethical, unbiased, relational and so forth—will be considered an authentic leader. While a leader may claim to be authentic, a follower can judge them to be inauthentic when the leader does not conform with the follower’s view of authenticity. This is what happens when someone says, ‘Bridget is an authentic leader’. At the same time, someone else can argue that Bridget is an inauthentic leader. It is most unlikely that either is applying an objective framework to that statement, but rather stating a view based on the speaker’s understanding of authenticity. Hence, while authenticity may be self-referential, it is most often attributed to one by others. The main point, however, is that the attribution of authenticity is disputable and complex, and the seeds of confusion are sown deeply within ALT.

3 Kierkegaard's search for the authentic self

This study argues that ALT lacks a philosophical foundation. The study intends to address that lack by, first, describing ALT and identifying its philosophical limitations regarding the meaning of authenticity and what is to be authentically human. Second, it seeks to evaluate the contribution of three thinkers—the existentialists Søren Kierkegaard and Martin Heidegger, and the personalist Karol Wojtyła—towards overcoming those limitations. The preceding review of the authentic leadership literature has described the theory and identified six specific limitations (regarding epistemology, anthropology, ethics, intersubjectivity, and a proper understanding of authenticity, and the relationship between it and leadership). We now turn to the philosophical triumvirate of Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Wojtyła, starting with Søren Kierkegaard in this chapter. Heidegger and Wojtyła are explored in Chapters 4 and 5, respectively.

3.1 Kierkegaard's quest to know what it means to exist and live as an individual

The Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855) is considered ‘the first modern philosopher of authenticity’ (Golomb, 2005, p. 41), and his voice continues to resonate today, as he inspires people to understand existence and the authentic self, and so live an authentic existence (Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012, p. 122). His particular contribution to our enquiry is anthropological, offering a meaning of the self. It is also definitional, giving a perspective on authenticity.

Some 2,200 years after Socrates quoted the Delphic maxim to know oneself, Kierkegaard lamented, ‘people have forgotten what it means to exist’ (Kierkegaard, 2009a, p. 249). He believed every individual is without precedent and so needs to discover for themselves what it means for them to be human (Kierkegaard, 1983, pp. 121, III 166). This knowledge forms a foundation for one's life: ‘one must first learn to know oneself before knowing anything else. Not until a man has inwardly understood himself and then sees the course he is to take does his life gain peace and meaning’ (Gilleleje, 1 Aug 1835, Kierkegaard, 2007, p. 5:5100).

Kierkegaard believes, however, that the majority of people remain oblivious to their own self because, as we shall see, they too easily consider themselves part of a larger group, rather than someone distinct from that group. Despite the breadth of knowledge people possess about things, they know little about themselves. Most are unaware of ‘what it is to *exist* [humanly] and what *inwardness* means’ (Kierkegaard, 2009a, p. 209), by which he indicates a belief in

the existence of a unique human self who has their own interior life. He argues that few people cultivate an inner life, which is one of the important ‘tasks of existence’ (p. 240). In ignorance of their interior selves, people instead clutch wearily at change in their external circumstances to divert them from their emptiness and deliver them from their superficial lives (p. 240), failing to grasp that, for conditions to change, *I* must change.

Kierkegaard believes that in discovering what it means to exist, one finds one’s purpose, a truth for which one is willing to live and die: ‘What I really need to do is to get clear about what I must do, not what I must know ... What matters is to find a purpose ... to find a truth which is truth for me, to find the idea for which I am willing to live and die’ (Gilleleje, 1 Aug 1835, Kierkegaard, 2007, p. 5:5100). Kierkegaard is not here advocating relativism, but emphasising that it is incumbent on each person to discover objective truth, and to discern how one is to respond to that truth in their own life. Their purpose, he believes, is to understand what it means to be human, and what it means for each person to be human. He endeavours to ‘to leave behind a highly accurate and experientially based depiction of the nature of existence’ (Kierkegaard, 2011, pp. 146, NB2:20), in contrast with the then-prevailing theocentric view, which argued existence—and hence purpose and nature—could be explained by reference to God, who created the world and all of humanity.

Kierkegaard says each person needs to discover for themselves what being human means for them (1983, p. 121). However, this task is quite difficult because of the unhealthy influence of what he calls ‘the crowd’ (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 117). The notion of the crowd refers to the seductive society, or social group, within which one lives, and which extols conformity over counter-cultural behaviour. Kierkegaard contends that finding an answer to the existential questions is imperilled when one is deprived of freedom in any way, which is what happens when one is absorbed into an amorphous crowd. One cannot become authentically oneself if one blindly follows the ‘all-knowing’ crowd, and so fails to take responsibility for oneself as an individual who makes one’s own decisions and finds and follows one’s own path.

Kierkegaard’s search for meaning about being human occurs in a cultural environment that attempts to impose uniformity, rather than encourage freedom. He therefore says that to become oneself, one must choose against the crowd and embark on what he describes as an ethical, and ultimately religious, life. Both of these involve personal freedom and choices by which one shapes oneself. His analysis of the development of the individual, from an inauthentic existence within the crowd to an authentic existence marked by personal responsibility for one’s life and one’s task in that life, reveals much about what it means to be a

self and to be authentic. Hence, the notions of choice and freedom, and grasping that one is free to choose, are key tenets for existentialist thought. How one responds to choice and freedom fundamentally determines whether one lives in an authentic or inauthentic manner. However, since Kierkegaard considers the crowd inauthentic, he fails to consider the reality that there are authentic human communities that encourage the exercise of choice and responsibility, and so places too great an emphasis on the individual. It is not until we turn to Wojtyła that we will discover an understanding of how persons become authentic in community with other persons (see Chapter 5).

Kierkegaard's fundamental question about what it means to exist as a specific individual gives rise to existentialism—that philosophy that, broadly, takes the concrete individual as a starting point for understanding who one is, rather than some pre-ordained essence, and argues one has agency to create oneself via one's choices (Guignon, 1998). Kierkegaard is often referred to as the father of existentialism (Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012, p. 122). In his quest to understand the individual, he also enquires about the meaning of persons, becoming a forerunner of the philosophy of personalism, and perhaps also can be considered the father of personalism.³ Beabout, Crespo, Grabill, Paffenroth and Swan (2002) and Crosby (2014) support the contention that Kierkegaardian 'existentialism clearly has a personalist thrust' (Crosby, 2014, p. 50) in that Kierkegaard emphasises 'the importance of the individual in philosophy and life' (Beabout et al., 2002, p. 11). His focus on 'the *singular individual* [as] the direct precedent of the modern concept of the person' (Burgos, 2018, p. 19) makes existentialism an important 'factor in the rise of personalism' (Burgos, 2018, p. 19). This matters since existentialism alone is ultimately unable to answer the question of what constitutes authenticity. Therefore, existentialism requires a personalist balance, which remains unexplored in Kierkegaard, and which the present study introduces with the philosophy of the twentieth-century Polish philosopher Karol Wojtyła (see Chapter 5).

3.2 Lost in the crowd and living inauthentically

Like every other philosopher, Kierkegaard's questions arise in a particular historical moment and social context. While others before him asked anthropological questions, Kierkegaard, facing a gnawing unhappiness with his cultural milieu, focuses his reflections on *his* existence, on *his* desire to exist as a human, bringing authenticity to the fore as an existential and personal concern. The search to know, and then be, oneself stands at the core of the desire for authenticity. If one can know oneself, then one can discover how to live in

keeping with that self—and Kierkegaard argues that the main barrier to that self-knowing is the pernicious nature of one’s social environment.

While ALT has focused on authenticity as knowing and being true to oneself as an autonomous individual, it has not addressed the fundamental existentialist insight regarding the collectivist nature of the crowd, and how the ‘crowd effect’ can operate in a team environment. This study hypothesises that the conforming influence, and desire to remain a part, of the crowd could be a contributing factor in the ethical failures that concerned the theorists. The existentialists point out how difficult it is for an individual, absent some sort of existential insight about their authentic self and reality, to act in a manner contrary to popular opinion.

Kierkegaard is dismayed by the superficial ‘level of humanity’ (1992, p. 231) at which people live their lives, and believes the majority of men and women live boring lives, embracing whatever opportunity for amusement or pleasure presents itself, while merely conforming to cultural norms such as having friends, getting married and working a job. Since, in his view, few people think deeply about the choices they make, the majority live only the illusion, rather than the reality, of a life.⁴

This section considers Kierkegaard’s understanding of inauthentic existence, before turning to how one discovers oneself and lives authentically.

3.2.1 The crowd and the individual

The notion of the individual being subsumed by the ‘crowd’, or the ‘world’, is a central concept for Kierkegaard. The crowd refers to that group where those who look and act like everyone else, being just one of the number, blend in and lose themselves: ‘The greatest hazard of all, losing the self, can occur very quietly in the world, as if it were nothing at all’ (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 32).⁵ When people fail to appreciate themselves as individuals, they meld into a crowd, which eventually takes on a life of its own and eventually becomes, by sheer weight of numbers, the adjudicator of truth (Kierkegaard, 1998, pp. 81–83) and the arbiter of moral behaviour:

If men are first permitted to run together in what Aristotle calls the animal category — the crowd — then this abstraction, instead of being less than nothing, even less than the most insignificant individual human being, comes to be regarded as being something—then it does not take long before this abstraction becomes God. (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 117f)

A human self is a particular instance of human being (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 118) who is ‘destined to become himself’ (p. 33). However, one can become entangled with the crowd (p. 118), and so, ‘surrounded by hordes of men, absorbed in all sorts of secular matters, ... [one] forgets himself, ... does not dare to believe in himself, finds it too hazardous to be himself and far easier and safer to be like the others, to become a copy, a number, a mass man’ (p. 33f). Such a person has ‘mortgage[d] themselves to the world’ (p. 35), has ‘no self for which they could [venture] everything’ (p. 35), exists without an existence, lives without a life and fails to exercise personal choice and responsibility. This individual is a mere instantiation of a human being.

It can be easy to categorise the crowd as a repressive totalitarianism, or a rampant populism, which enforce its thinking and will in some manner. However, Kierkegaard highlights the insidious crowds of which one inadvertently becomes a part simply because of an overall laziness towards one’s life. The person who fails to nurture their own self, their inner life and a disposition towards independent thought, will inevitably be captured by the slogans and rhetoric of any persuasive group. A century after Kierkegaard, the French journalist Daniel Guérin captured the seductive unifying power of the crowd in his description of a group of Hitler Youth, whom he observed vigorously singing their war songs: ‘When you sing in chorus you don’t feel hunger; you aren’t tempted to seek out the *how* and *why* of things. *You must be right* [emphasis added] since there are 50 of you side by side, crying out the same refrain’ (cited in Boyd, 2017, p. 124).

Kierkegaard claims that when one is captured by the crowd, one is seduced by the lies and loses interest in discovering the *how* and *why* of things:

There is a view of life which holds that where the crowd is, the truth is also ... There is another view of life; which holds that wherever the crowd is, there is untruth, ... even if every individual possessed the truth in private, yet if they came together into a crowd ... untruth would at once be let in. For ‘the crowd’ is untruth. (Kierkegaard, 1847)

This is quite a common experience of the individual who is afraid to speak out, or ask deeper questions, when ‘everyone’ has agreed on a course of action, or appears to be of the same mind. Kierkegaard protests against this insidiousness. The individual who never grasps they are something whole in themselves, but only ‘a numerical within the crowd, a fraction within the earthly conglomeration’ (Kierkegaard, 2008, p. 99) only exists externally. To live as a number within the crowd means one is simply the shell of a person with no interiority.

However, since the crowd is constituted by a collective of individuals, it must be within every person's 'power to *become what he is*, a single individual' (Kierkegaard, 1847 [emphasis added]). To do so, one must renounce 'the anonymous pseudo-authority of the public and public opinion' (Carman, 2006, p. 232) to become one's true self. However, becoming oneself, recognising oneself as a subject distinct from the crowd, is no easy task:

People commonly assume that as far as being subjective goes there's nothing to it. Now, of course, every human being is in a way also somewhat of a subject. *To become what one in any case is*, yes, who would want to waste time on that, surely the most unrewarding of all life's tasks? Quite so, but just for that reason it is extremely hard, the hardest task of all, simply because every human being has a strong natural bent and urge to become something else and more. (Kierkegaard, 2009a, p. 108 [emphasis added]).

'Becoming what one is' is not simply a process of interior reflection but a passionate and total commitment to something beyond oneself that gives one's life meaning and purpose (Varga & Guignon, 2014, p. 14). It is, of course, far easier to conform to the crowd, to the expectations of others, rather than respond to, and follow, that urge to become 'something else and more', which is truly the path of authenticity.

The crowd is not simply a social group to which one belongs, since, quite evidently, individuals immerse themselves in social settings. It is something much more insidious and often much less obvious. The test one could apply, building on Kierkegaard's insight, is whether such a group becomes an authority unto itself, as shown by people referring to it in a collective sense, and its resistance to questioning. Hearing phrases such as 'we all agree', noticing the resistance to alternative perspectives, or observing any tendency to alienate those who are not part of the group indicate the presence of the seductive crowd.

3.2.2 The aesthete and despair

Kierkegaard refers to the individual lost in the crowd as an aesthete, who seeks meaning in pleasure or satisfaction (1992, p. 496), but who ultimately finds this is unfulfilling since their conditions for enjoyment lie in transitory, external (p. 493) goods that are illusory in nature (pp. 507, 544). The aesthete believes fulfillment lies in having what others have (Kierkegaard, 2002, p. 138), erroneously believing that, since others appear happy, having what they have will deliver similar satisfaction. He does not know himself, having 'his ideal, the content of his life, the fullness of his consciousness, his real nature in some way or other outside himself. ...

always absent from himself, never present to himself' (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 214), living a life that lacks 'continuity ... stability and focus' (Gardiner, 2002, p. 48). He is, as it were, a spectator to his own life. As such, the aesthete lacks selfhood and is the unhappiest of people, reduced to being a mere number among the multitude.

When the aesthete realises that they are living a meaningless life (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 503), which lacks possibility (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 37), they experience despair (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 502), which Kierkegaard likens to a 'dizziness' of one's spirit (1980, p. 16). However, the despair one experiences when one grasps that the crowd is unable to provide the longed-for meaning and purpose, launches 'a creative urge of the will' (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 509) and a search for deeper meaning (p. 511). Hence, despair plays a crucial role in one's reorientation from an inauthentic, superficial life among the crowd towards an authentic life where one can become who one is.

Kierkegaard says there are three types of despair—of defiance, weakness and finitude. The despair of defiance occurs when the person desperately wants to be himself, but lacks the power to be so (2002, p. 139), lacking a firm place on which to stand. This is the 'king without a country' (Kierkegaard, 2002, p. 139) who, rather than being a master, 'rules over nothing' (p. 139). Such a person lacks character and self-control, and so despairs at their inability to construct a life of meaning.

The second despair is that of weakness, experienced by the person who feels fulfilled when 'external circumstances change and his wishes are fulfilled' (p. 138), and therefore despairs when they experience the loss of something pleasant or pleasurable. Such a person 'neither was nor becomes a self. He is a cipher and simply carries on living merely on the level of what is immediate and of what is happening around him' (p. 138). This person desperately wants 'to be someone else ... [and] refuses to take responsibility' (p. 138) for their own life. Their limited sense of self is based on their external environment, which is the complete opposite of what constitutes a self (p. 138).

Lastly, the despair of finitude occurs when one is so caught up in the affairs of the world that one is oblivious to oneself and one's possibilities. It arises because 'the self is lost by being altogether reduced to the finite' (p. 136), and lives a life comparing oneself to others, becoming 'a number along with the crowd' (p. 137) in which one is immersed and unnoticed. In that crowd, one delivers 'a flawless performance in everyday life' (p. 137) and seems to be an exemplar of a human being, who is well regarded by others. However, they are not their

‘authentic selves. They are copies’ (p. 137) who have ‘pawn[ed] themselves to the world’ (p. 137).

3.3 Discovering oneself and living authentically

Kierkegaard believes despair at the impossibility of being fulfilled when living the inauthentic existence of an aesthete launches a creative urge towards becoming who one is, towards authenticity. This is a fundamental existential choice, underpinned by a moment of existential insight about who one can be, and how one can live one’s life authentically, which Kierkegaard proposes advances along two developmental stages—the ethical and the religious. The depth and breadth of this insight is not taken up in ALT, which touches on the meaning, but focuses on the measurability, of authenticity. Hence, this study continues to expound Kierkegaard’s potential philosophical contribution to ALT, and turns now to the discovery of oneself as an individual and living an authentic life.

3.3.1 The moment

Although despair alerts one to the destitution of one’s existential situation, it actually presages a new beginning where one is confronted with an existential choice: to take responsibility for one’s life or to abdicate that responsibility, and so lose oneself, remaining lost in the crowd (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 483). Kierkegaard employs the metaphor of a helmsman who, in the moment of altering a ship’s course, recognises he ‘can either do this or that’ (p. 483). However, a different decision is required if the decision is delayed, since circumstances change because of the headway of the vessel. Kierkegaard says life is like that: unless one remains attentive, forward momentum can carry one past a crucial moment of choice (p. 483), and the options available at that instant.

The notion of ‘moment’ is central to Kierkegaard’s thought. He considers the moment not simply as a present occasion in a succession of past present and future (The Concept of Anxiety, IV 355, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 149), nor an ‘intermediary between the past and the future’ (The Concept of Anxiety, IV 357, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 150), nor a ‘determination of time ... [which] “passes by”’ (The Concept of Anxiety, IV 357, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 150). It is rather, a ‘point of departure in time ... something accidental, a vanishing point, an occasion’ (Philosophical Fragments, IV 181, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 118)—a moment that serves as a departure point for the present, and like the helmsman, the turning point from which a new course was charted.

Kierkegaard uses the term '*øieblikket*' (Either/Or, II 125, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 70), which literally means 'blink of an eye' (The Concept of Anxiety, IV 357, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 151), to refer to the moment, or what he sometimes calls the 'instant' (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 462).⁶ Jacques Maritain, 'one of the foremost personalist thinkers of the twentieth century' (Acevedo, 2012, p. 203), considered 'the uniqueness of the instant' (Westra, 1988, p. 250) to be one of the great contributions of existentialism. It is the moment 'in which past, present, and future are uniquely and intrinsically interwoven ... [where] truth and freedom are actually and truly present' (Westra, 1988, p. 250). Therefore, *øieblikket* designates a moment where time 'is touched by eternity' (The Concept of Anxiety, IV 357, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 151), when, if one is attentive, one can set one's life on an entirely new trajectory (Herskowitz, 2016, p. 89). This concept is not taken up in ALT. While a focus on the four components of self-awareness, balanced processing, relational transparency and an internalised moral perspective may indicate authentic leadership, it would seem that helping people first discover their authentic selves, facilitating in some manner that existential insight about the possibility of one's lostness in the crowd, is one of the most significant contributions a leader could make in the life of a follower.

A 'blink' suggests that if one misses the choice offered in that moment because of the noise or momentum of one's life, then the same circumstances may never again transpire. Kierkegaard says the key to recognising the moment is silence, reminding us once again that to know oneself requires interior work:

the misfortune in the lives of the great majority of human beings is that, that they were never aware of the moment, that in their lives the eternal and the temporal are exclusively separated. And why? Because they could not be silent? (Lily in the Field, Bird of the Air, XI 18, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 336)

While Kierkegaard is not advocating the life of the hermit, it seems reasonable to suggest he would encourage practices that allow one to remain attentive to the small changes that may presage the *øieblik*, just as the helmsman carefully watches the wind on the water. Here we have an important aspect of self-awareness: not just knowing oneself, but Kierkegaard's choosing oneself, and searching out the conditions, those moments of insight, which shape the choices which make oneself.

The moment when eternity intrudes upon time is an event that one can never forget, standing as it does between that instant and all that went before and came after, as a departure

point from which all is since measured: ‘the moment in time must have such decisive significance that for no moment will I be able to forget it, neither in time nor in eternity, because the eternal, previously nonexistent, came into existence in that moment’ (Philosophical Fragments, IV 183, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 119). One is not the same person after the moment.

This means, says Kierkegaard, that persons are not only ‘a synthesis of psyche and body, but ... also a *synthesis of the temporal and the eternal*’ (The Concept of Anxiety, IV 354, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 149), and hence beings in which the moment of time can touch the eternal. Kierkegaard adopts the classical understanding of the person as a union of body and soul, and introduces the notion of eternity and temporality merging in the person. As will be discussed in Chapter 4, this same idea—the relationship between persons as beings, and being in time—lies at the heart of Heidegger’s quest to analyse being, in his seminal *Being and Time*.

3.3.2 The ethical individual

Kierkegaard says that the *øieblik* reveals the truth of one’s immersion in the crowd, in response to which one undergoes a ‘metamorphosis’: a transformation from the aesthetic to an ethical individual (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 544). This metamorphosis is an ‘infinite movement whereby [one] arrives at the point from which he *becomes what he becomes*’ (p. 525 [emphasis added]). Hence, at this moment one stands at the beginning of what one is to become, ‘choosing himself in respect of his freedom’ (p. 543), rather than abrogating choice to events or the environment (p. 489). As such, this seems a key to becoming that ethical leader which ALT seeks to promote, to mitigate ethical failure.

The ethical individual assumes personal responsibility for her actions (p. 542), grasping that each choice offers an opportunity for self-creation, self-determination, and fulfillment (p. 543). One’s self-determining choices express who one is and shape who one is to become, and so one creates oneself (p. 482): ‘in choosing himself as product he can just as well have been said to produce himself’ (p. 543). The inner work of creating oneself (p. 489) is the real ‘art of living’ (p. 548), whereby one discovers the ‘true life of freedom’ (p. 489), deriving meaning from within, rather than from extrinsic events or situations (pp. 553, 561f). Taking responsibility for oneself confirms one’s ‘personal sovereignty over himself’ (p. 543) and allows one to acquire ‘a quiet dignity’ (p. 490).

The ethical individual is an artist, choreographer and editor of their life. As editor, they are author of the story of their own life (p. 544ff), recognising that it is not ‘events and situations ... [that] make a man into something’ (p. 544), but choice. The ethical individual ‘knows that everywhere there is a dance floor’ (p. 544), where one is free to express oneself as one pleases.

The meaningful life created by the ethical individual contrasts with the aesthete, who remains a mystery to themselves (p. 582), and so faces not reality but illusion and ‘phantoms’ (p. 582) in their superficial life. The ethical individual has the concrete self—not some abstract self—as one’s teleology, as ‘the goal for which he strives’ (p. 561f). The fact that the person is an end in themselves, which we find in Kant’s categorical imperative, is one of the central claims of personalism (Wojtyła, 2013, p. 11). Grasping this fact is fundamental to the act of leadership, to ensure individuals do not become objects for another’s use.

In becoming who one can become via their own self-determining choices, the ethical person is disclosed both to themselves as a self, and as one’s own self in relationship to others (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 582). Despite this observation, Kierkegaard does not reach Wojtyła’s insight, which the present study will discuss, that the distinction between the self and the other is a key to understanding one’s subjectivity and hence personhood. However, Kierkegaard does hold that the grasping of the self is the meaning (1992, p. 582) and task (p. 584) of one’s life. Through ethical choice that one discovers one’s life’s task. The ethical choice connects one with the ‘inner work’ (p. 489) of creating oneself as a concrete definite individual (p. 542) while simultaneously revealing how the universal, which exists as possibility within the individual (p. 552), applies to them in this moment and in their life (p. 551).

Therefore, the choice to take personal responsibility for who one is and who one is to become (Kierkegaard, 1983, p. 45) is the starting point for becoming a more authentic self, and more effective leader. In the ethical stage, one’s actions take on the possibility of authenticity. One can choose to act authentically rather than superficially, choosing for what is good rather than what merely satisfies. Seizing control of one’s life gives the ethical person agency, and the possibility of creating one’s own life (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 544). Hence, the ethical individual is not distracted by the inevitable challenges that life throws at them, knowing ‘he has not perished, there is always a point he keeps hold of, and it is—himself’ (p. 544), since in the metamorphosis from the aesthete to the ethical, one discovers one’s true self. The challenge now is to act authentically in accord with that self, which one soon realises comes with its own difficulties.

We have now considered Kierkegaard’s first two stages—the inauthentic life of the aesthete and the authentic life of the ethical individual. The contrast between these is quite clear: the former lives for pleasure, is satisfied by externalities and judges oneself against the measures of the crowd, while the latter lives for doing what is right, derives satisfaction from within themselves and judges oneself against the best self they could be—a fully ethical

individual. In its simplest form, ALT embraces this model, contrasting an inauthentic, self-serving leader, driven by ego and maximising profit, with an authentic, other-centred leader, driven by ethics and maximising their own performance, being the best leader they can be. However, Kierkegaard observes a third stage, the religious, which is largely overlooked in ALT. In other words, Kierkegaard goes on to say that there is more to authenticity than just being ethical.

3.3.3 The religious individual

The ethical individual experiences further despair when they realise that despite their best efforts and intentions, they cannot achieve the ultimate goodness for which they strive. Kierkegaard considers falling short of the ethical ideal to be sin, or separation from what is good—ultimately God (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 109)—and so individuals are in need of redemption (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 519). In the face of that realisation and despair, one is consoled by an ‘eternal consciousness’ (Kierkegaard, 1983, p. 15), a ‘sacred bond’ (p. 15) that unites all humanity (p. 15), and which Kierkegaard describes as ‘my love for God’ (p. 48). Kierkegaard believes each ‘human being ... exists before God ... [and] is invited to live on the most intimate terms with God’ (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 85), whose ‘omnipresence interpenetrates the whole of existence’ (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 486). He asserts individuals have ‘a spiritual existence’ (Repetition, Kierkegaard, 1983, p. 287) and that the ultimate end of the person is eternal salvation (Kierkegaard, 1983, p. 54), found in the presence of God, where one becomes aware of their eternal self and the immortality of their soul (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 558).

Kierkegaard holds that in response to ethical despair, and recognition of one’s need for redemption, one turns towards God and enters the sphere of the religious self (Stages on Life’s Way, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 182)—the human self ‘directly before God’ (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 79)—and so one lives with an ‘essentially human’ (Kierkegaard, 1983, p. 121) passion. The ‘highest passion in a person is faith’ (Kierkegaard, 1983, p. 121), which is made possible by placing God ‘at the centre of one’s existence’ (Wright, 2013). This, for Kierkegaard, is the key to fulfillment, or to what is commonly called authenticity (Guignon, 1998) of the individual, which occurs in the religious stage (Stages on Life’s Way, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 182). Hence, fulfillment—authenticity—is possible in the religious stage when one places God at the centre of one’s existence and lives with a fully human passion. While ‘placing God at the centre of one’s life’ may sound anachronistic to a secular audience, perhaps the critical lesson to be learned is the contrast between the aesthete, who places self-satisfaction at the centre of their

existence; the ethical, who places self-fulfilment at the centre of existence; and the religious, who places themselves in service of something far greater than themselves: ultimate Goodness, Beauty and Truth. This desire for the religious aspect may be what is observed in the contemporary search for purpose. Having, theoretically, discovered one's authentic, as distinct from inauthentic, self—the ethical-aesthetical distinction—contemporary persons seek meaning and purpose beyond themselves when authenticity alone ultimately fails to satisfy. From a leadership perspective, Kierkegaard's religious stage reveals the possibility that truly authentic leadership may in fact be purposeful leadership, in pursuit of a noble purpose, constituted by what is true and good. Wojtyła's personalism will provide a foundation in the human person, and persons in community, for exploring this theme in more detail (see Chapter 5).

Kierkegaard depicts Abraham as an individual who lives that passionate life, with God at the centre of his existence. He describes Abraham as a 'knight of faith' (Kierkegaard, 1983), who places himself entirely at God's disposal to do His will. Abraham is ready and willing to sacrifice Isaac, 'For God's sake, and ... for his own sake. He does it for God's sake because God demands this proof of his faith; he does it for his own sake so that he can prove it' (p. 59). The apparent willingness of Abraham to sacrifice Isaac jars with what is considered acceptable human behaviour. However, Beabout et al. (2002) suggests the Abrahamic knight discovers his true self in an ultimate act of self-giving. He argues that Abraham willingly surrenders everything of value 'in order to perfect himself as a creature and servant of God' (p. 82). Abraham is fully in possession of himself, and hence the paradigm of the individual who is fulfilled via gift and sacrifice. Abraham becomes fully himself by giving fully himself, in the person of Isaiah who represents all Abraham is and can be. Only the person in possession of themselves is able to give themselves. The later analysis of personalism and Wojtyła reveals the importance of this theme. Kierkegaard upholds Abraham as the exemplar of the pinnacle of human development (Kierkegaard, 1983, p. 31), 'the only happy man' (p. 50) who transcends the ethical for a higher end (telos) above and beyond it (p. 59).

Likewise, the religious individual is someone who has made the 'movement of faith' (p. 34) to the religious stage. Hence, they no longer follow the crowd or their own whims, like the aesthete, nor merely seek to know and do the good, as does the ethical individual, but seek to live in complete surrender to God, the ultimate Good. The knight of faith, in full possession of himself, possesses a 'profound humanity' (p. 80), and witnesses to a life lived in pursuit of an end beyond himself. This is quite distinct from the person who chooses the path of 'worldly admiration' (p. 80). The knight of faith is not distracted by the (mundane) demands of life and

so is able to ‘concentrate the whole substance of his life and the meaning of actuality into one single desire ... [and] the conclusion of all his thinking into one act of consciousness’ (p. 43). This is a movement of faith in which he abandons those aspects of himself which have ‘the premises for their actions outside themselves’ (p. 44). In so doing, he does not ‘become another person’ (p. 43), but rather reconciles himself with existence (p. 43) and, by implication, becomes his fully realised self. Hence, the knight of faith is the model of the fully authentic individual.

3.3.4 Summary of the three stages

To sum up, the path to ever more authentic action unfolds through the three distinct stages, or spheres (Stages on Life’s Way, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 182), which Kierkegaard describes as the aesthete, in which one is inauthentic because one lacks knowledge of the self; the ethical, in which references one’s inner world, and what it means to be human, for guidance (Kierkegaard, 1992); and the religious, in which one responds to transcendent realities, and God specifically (Kierkegaard, 1983). This does not mean, however, that there are three distinct ‘stages’ of authenticity (Golomb, 2005, p. 35), as if one becomes more authentic as one advances through these stages; rather, the spheres distinguish between ways in which one can act inauthentically or authentically.

The metamorphosis from the aesthete to the ethical person does not render one authentic, as one can still choose to act in an authentic or inauthentic manner. Hence, the stages shed light on what responding to the truth of humanity might mean for each individual and how such truth may apply at a given stage in one’s life. In the first stage, the aesthete, captured by the crowd, acts inauthentically because they are not a self, not making free independent choices. The possibility of authentic action occurs in the ethical and religious spheres, subsequent to the *øieblik* and taking responsibility for one’s choices in the context of becoming who one is. Hence, what may constitute an authentic act for an ethical individual may be inauthentic for the religious. In other words, there is not only *one* authentic way of acting, but an authentic way *for me* at this moment. An ethical individual in a leadership role may, for example, realise that to accept a bribe would constitute an inauthentic act. That same leader at a later stage of their development (i.e., the religious, with a deeper sense of value) may well grasp that to remain silent in the face of systemic corruption is inauthentic, and the only way they can remain consistent with the authentic person they have become is to take a public stand and risk ostracism. Therefore, Kierkegaard alerts us to the fact that the stage of one’s development

influences one's behaviour, and so one must be careful when presuming to pass judgement on the authenticity, or otherwise, of another's act.

3.4 What does Kierkegaard reveal about the authentic self?

This study contends that Kierkegaard has much to offer ALT, which can help overcome the philosophical limitations regarding authenticity and being an authentic individual. Further, his emphasis on personal responsibility and discovering how one is to live one's life contributes to ethics and the manner in which authentic persons should act. It is now time to consider how Kierkegaard's views on the individual self, despair, *øieblikket* and the inauthenticity of the crowd, and the three stages shed light on what it means to be an authentic self. In this way, we can see how his philosophy addresses some of the concerns raised above regarding ALT. Kierkegaard maintains that it is hard to know what it is to be human and to live as a human—'it is not easy for me to determine what it takes to be a human being, nor is it easy to fulfill the requirements of one' (Repetition, Kierkegaard, 1983, p. 162)—indicating that the explanation of what constitutes authenticity is no easy task. Nonetheless, his reflections provide considerable insight about the meaning of being human, grounded in what it is to be a human self: one who is particular and individual, being and becoming, existing in relationship with oneself and others, who is ultimately fulfilled in possession of oneself and so able to give oneself.

Specifically, this study highlights the necessity of the existential moment for renouncing the crowd and turning towards authenticity; second, how Kierkegaard's question to discover what it is to be human is also our quest; third, how one becomes one's authentic self; and fourth, the notion of authenticity as fulfillment of who one is.

3.4.1 The necessity of *øieblikket* for renouncing the crowd

Authenticity requires one to stand out from the crowd, to shape one's own life, in contrast with the inauthentic 'mass man' lost in the crowd. Having argued that an individual is a human being who becomes a self, Kierkegaard argues the self does not exist when one remains among the crowd (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 35). The crowd of 'mass men' is a collective of human beings that, lacking authenticity, cannot be a community of human selves, a notion which will be explained from Wojtyła's understanding of participation with others in a community (see Chapter 5). The levelling down to the lowest common denominator that occurs in the crowd causes inauthenticity among those members of the crowd (Varga & Guignon, 2014, p. 13).

Since one cannot be fulfilled as an individual conforming with the crowd, one needs to discover a new way of being and acting, which must be predicated on some new insight, some new worldview. This, says Kierkegaard, is revealed in the *øieblik*, where one's life takes on a new trajectory. The existential moment stands as a dividing line between the inauthentic non-self and the self who can act authentically, and so become authentic. In the blink of an eye, and in a moment of choice, one's life changes.

It would appear, therefore, that the *øieblik* is a fundamental condition for the transition from the aesthete to the ethical. Hence, one test of the possibility of authenticity, and authentic action, is the ability to describe such a moment wherein one grasped one's interiority and freedom. This mitigates the problem highlighted earlier, of authenticity being self-referential or attributed by others. A person who claims they are acting authentically should, in some manner, be able to describe a moment when they realised they were living a life absorbed in, and dictated to by, a crowd, to which they responded with an existential, life-determining choice, to take full responsibility for their own choices and actions. A further proof of authenticity would be one's readiness to allow scrutiny of those actions against the norms of fully human behaviour. In the absence of an existential *øieblik*, and an orientation towards truth and reality, there is every likelihood the individual remains immersed in the crowd, appearing to be authentic but lacking the conditions to do so.

3.4.2 Kierkegaard's quest is our quest: to discover what it is to be human

Having the experience of an *øieblik*, and realised that one's authentic self lies beyond the crowd, Kierkegaard says one's first task is to discover what it is to be human. He observes that 'no generation learns the essentially human from a previous one' (Kierkegaard, 1983, p. 121) and so each person has to learn for themselves what it is to be human, which is itself the work of a lifetime (p. 122). While advances in technology, for instance, accumulate and benefit all, knowing and understanding the self is a task each person must confront anew. Everyone may benefit from electricity without having to understand physics. However, to grasp what it means to be human, and to then shape one's life in accord with one's particular vocation or task, requires an almost constant effort. Any insight available from those who have gone before us, such as Kierkegaard, is not available by osmosis, only by exertion. Kierkegaard reminds us that one is not born with the benefit of knowing what it is to be human, but must set out on the quest to discover this. Hence, to discover what it means to be human, and then to become fully human, authentically human, is *an inexhaustible* task that is more than sufficient to fill one's life.

In addition to discovering what it means to be human in the broad, anthropological sense, one must discover the moral dimension of what it means to be human in one's particular instance of human living (Kierkegaard, 1992, pp. 586, 589), and how one is to live that out via one's particular vocation (p. 566f). Once discovered, this vocation—or purpose—provides guidance, or 'inner bearings' (p. 546) for one's life. When one finds one's purpose, 'a work by which to live' (p. 567), it becomes a vocation, or task, through which one achieves 'satisfaction of his whole personal being' (p. 567), and which expresses the relationship between that work and that person.

According to Kierkegaard, 'it is not what happens to me that makes me great but what I do' (1983, p. 64). This observation in some manner combines Delphic knowing with Kierkegaardian choosing of oneself. As we shall see, this also pre-empts the Wojtyła distinction between those acts which happen to one and those acts which one causes to happen, which Wojtyła claims is one of the defining marks of humanity. The interior work on 'the closed machinery of your person' (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 590) is an intensely personal project as one grapples with understanding oneself and shaping who one becomes. The inner path 'to become a true self' (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 56) is a rewarding journey, for when 'the machine within me is fully at work' (Letters 80, May 15, 1843, Kierkegaard, 2009b, p. 151), one experiences an inner harmony. However, this is no easy task and, unfortunately, many turn away when they encounter the first difficulty (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 57). It is no small feat to grasp one's humanity and to discern how one will express that humanity in one's life.

However, despite—or perhaps because of—his insights, Kierkegaard appears to hint at personal feelings of inauthenticity. Having stated in the journal note mentioned earlier that, 'What matters is to find a purpose ... to find a truth which is truth for me, to find the idea for which I am willing to live and die' (Gilleleje, 1 Aug 1835, Kierkegaard, 2007, p. 5:5100), he later questions his own authenticity. He wonders whether his 'author-existence' has been truly authentic since he had no deep financial concerns, having inherited an estate from his father: 'From an ethical point of view, this advantage is a minus that subtracts a whole quality, so that not even my author-existence is a truly ethical existence' (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 159). He contrasts this with those people who pursue their task, or purpose, in the midst of economic insecurity, human responsibilities, marriage and family responsibilities, and occasional rejection of them and their task, with its accompanying 'sadness of soul' (p. 159). These people live a 'truly ethical existence' (p. 159), living authentically in the midst of the exigencies of life, while Kierkegaard only presumes to know what it would mean to live authentically,

having the advantages of a single man of independent means with little responsibility other than to his ideas.

We can detect in Kierkegaard's observation important insights regarding the relationship between work and authenticity. First, Kierkegaard reveals that one's authentic work is that work that aligns with one's vocation or purpose. For example, the person called to service can express that in work as a therapist. Second, we can infer an obligation on the part of leaders to support followers in finding work that aligns with their purpose. Third, it is apparent that a leader can inadvertently deny someone the opportunity of taking responsibility for key aspects of their life—for example, when the leader limits delegated authority while giving full responsibility for a project—and so deny followers the possibility of becoming their full authentic selves.

Having discovered a sense of one's current and emerging self, the challenge is to remain consistent and continuous with that self while shaping who one is becoming through the various stages of one's life. Kierkegaard refers to this as a continuing sense of consciousness. While people are generally conscious regarding important matters, 'how rare is the person who has continuity with regard to his consciousness of himself' (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 105). Kierkegaard contends that people find it easy to 'play along in life ... but never experience putting everything together on one thing, never achieve the idea of an infinite self-consistency' (p. 107), and attributes this to a fear of being 'torn out of the totality in which he has his life' (p. 107). Here he is pointing to those persons who project the appearance of engagement and purpose, while this is simply a facade that hides their fear of losing what little they have, since that little seems vast to them. This is the person who makes excuses for why they must endure in work that does not truly challenge them, since they fear the unknown involved in striking out in a new direction which may offer entirely new possibilities. This person lacks true awareness of themselves in the moment and the continuity of that self in the totality of life. They are not fully engaged in the project of life and so lack authenticity.

The person who discovers their purpose, whether it lies in academia or activism, in business or politics, and crafts a life in accord with that, both satisfies their soul and demonstrates in their action the relationship between their humanity and the way they choose to express that humanity. Kierkegaard reveals that one constructs one's life via a series of choices that accord with one's task, and the life that emerges from those choices maintains a consistency or unity with those choices. Finding how one is to live out one's humanity, and doing so in a consistent and integrated series of choices, appears, therefore, to foster

authenticity. George noted that authentic individuals have a sense of purpose (2003, p. 5), but this notion has not been pursued in the ALT literature. However, it would seem, given what we learn from Kierkegaard, if knowing what it is to be human and having a sense of purpose are essential to authenticity, then they would seem to be essential aspects of authentic leadership.

3.4.3 Being and becoming one's authentic self

One of the philosophical challenges with an understanding of authenticity is—what this study considers unresolved—the tension between being and becoming authentic, with its implication of mutability of an apparently immutable subject. A careful reading of Kierkegaard is helpful in this regard.

Kierkegaard states the person ‘by virtue of existing, is in the process of becoming’ (Concluding Unscientific Postscript, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 200). He holds that one exists and one chooses ‘myself and not another’ (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 517), determining oneself by the free choices made in the act of choosing. Choice is pivotal because, in choosing, one chooses, accepts and becomes oneself (p. 491). Although Kierkegaard recognises ‘the more the self knows the more it knows itself’ (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 31), his assertion that one brings oneself into existence not in that knowing, but in choosing—‘I choose myself’ (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 517)—complements the Socratic ‘know thyself’ and provides a fuller insight regarding the individual. While one may discover oneself in silent contemplation, one creates oneself in actively choosing. True knowing of oneself calls one to action, from which ‘emerges the true individual’ (p. 549), and so Kierkegaard reveals the necessity of action grounded in knowledge to be oneself.

Free choice is not a mere choosing between options, but choosing a particular way of manifesting oneself (p. 523). In becoming who one can become, via choice—which is the meaning (p. 582) and ultimate task (p. 584) of life—the individual reveals themselves to themselves and to others. Choosing oneself is an act by which one both becomes oneself and becomes another self (p. 523), constantly changing while remaining the same individual (p. 517), with no limits on who they may become (p. 589). In the act of choosing, one confirms who one was, becomes who one is and shapes who one will be (p. 517).

In distinguishing between one's existing and choosing, Kierkegaard makes an important distinction between what one is (one's ontological self) and who one is (one's moral self), which is shaped by choice. This explains how the individual is able to both change and remain the same. This reconciles the apparent tension between being and becoming—the ontological self is immutable, while the moral self is mutable: ‘every moment that a self exists, it is in a

process of becoming, for the self ... [in potentiality] does not actually exist, it is simply that which ought to come into existence' (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 30). Kierkegaard relies on the classic distinction between potency and act to observe the individual exists in actuality, and, by the very fact of existing, has potential to become someone who does not yet exist, while remaining that same individual. In that sense, a leader can look on a follower and perceive who they may become with proper support and development opportunities. One does not doubt that the woman who lacks confidence today may become a great leader by choosing wisely from among the opportunities before her, while still being who she is. On this basis, one could propose a consistent choosing of oneself, in accordance with who one is, offers a path to authenticity, since that choosing is not a mere aesthetic choosing of what is gratifying, but a moral choice that shapes who one becomes, in keeping with who one is. This insight also infers the value that one could gain from reflecting on one's choices, and considering how these have shaped the person one is today, and who one may become in the future. Hence, activities that help people consider their choices, and the factors that influenced the choosing, are an important means of increasing one's self-awareness.

Golomb (2005, p. 35) claims that Kierkegaard's notion of authenticity regards the creation of the self: 'the self is something that should be created and formed, not something possessing an intrinsic essence to be further developed'. Although the self is created, this does not mean that authenticity refers to becoming in some future state. One's essence is fully human today and does not await a time of future fulfillment when the self one is creating becomes aligned with that essence. However, the individual experiences an absence of fulfillment when the ontological and moral self lacks integration and cohesion. This notion will be developed in more detail vis-à-vis Wojtyła's thought.

3.4.4 Authenticity as fulfillment of who one is

Lastly, regarding what we can learn from Kierkegaard about authenticity and the authentic self, Kierkegaard reveals the possibility of fulfillment that arises following the *øieblik*. The consequent taking of responsibility for one's choices and actions stands in contrast to the illusory fulfillment experienced by the aesthete, founded as it is in external change and pleasurable events (Kierkegaard, 2002, p. 138). He claims the ethical individual can be fulfilled as a result of their self-determining choices, while ultimate fulfillment is possible in the religious sphere (Stages on Life's Way, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 182), when one gives oneself over to something greater than oneself, as shown by the example of Abraham. Golomb (2005, p. 35) argues that 'authentic selves do not exist; there are only certain individuals who carry

out authentic acts and live authentic modes of life'. The ethical or religious person is not therefore *authentic* by virtue of existing at that stage, but able to act in an authentic manner *because* they are freed from the inauthenticity of the superficial crowd. It is the *act* that is authentic, in its accordance with who one is, relative to one's stage. However, one can still act in an inauthentic manner, in contradistinction to who they are. Therefore, it seems that, as a consequence of free self-determining authentic acts, one is able to be fulfilled, and in being fulfilled, able to live authentically.

Therefore, Kierkegaard's perspective on fulfillment suggests a similarity, and possibly an equivalence, with authenticity. Both are a consequence of the performance of authentic acts. Fulfillment, as described by Kierkegaard, occurs in the context of continuity and self-consistency with respect to one's task, within the totality of one's life, and arises from an *øieblik* where eternity touches time in the individual, awakening them to their life's trajectory and task. The act of choosing is, for Kierkegaard, the inner means by which one becomes, and so continuity and consistency with those choices is the means by which one is fulfilled and becomes authentic with respect to the self. Self-consistency requires self-consciousness and presence—one remains aware not just of one's choices but of one's task, oneself, one's relationships and so forth. Choosing and following one's task requires consciousness and continuity. This concept recognises the concepts of self-awareness and self-determination, being true to both who one is and who one is becoming, in and through one's choices, in a manner that remains consistent and continuous, in the context of one's life project. As such, it incorporates the commonly accepted Delphic 'know thyself' and the Shakespearean 'be true to thyself', with the existentialist concept of the self as becoming and the Kierkegaardian notion of living a particular expression of being human. It emphasises that authenticity is a lifelong personal journey that commences in the moment of existential insight.

This concept potentially provides an ontological basis for authentic leadership as called for by Ilies et al. (2005), which incorporates the notion of the self as both a fixed, 'well-bounded entity' (Ladkin & Spiller, 2013, p. 2) and a work in progress (p. 2). It provides an 'unobstructed [view of the] operation of one's true, or core, self in one's daily enterprise' (Kernis, 2003, p. 13), overcomes the binary either/or state of authenticity or inauthenticity (Erickson, 1995, p. 122), and indicates 'an ongoing process that occurs on several different levels and that promotes both greater differentiation and greater integration of the self' (Kernis, 2003, p. 17). Finally, it accords with the view that consistency is a central component of authentic leadership (Sparrowe, 2005, p. 423).

In conclusion, this study finds that the breadth of Kierkegaard's perspective on being an authentic individual can make a significant contribution to ALT, specifically regarding the moment of vision, the metamorphosis from inauthenticity to authenticity, and the stages one follows in the pursuit of becoming fully oneself. Nonetheless, while Kierkegaard has much to offer ALT, Martin Heidegger is the far more prominent of the two existentialists in our enquiry. While ALT may draw more explicitly on Heidegger's thought, it should not be forgotten that Heidegger is indebted in significant ways to Kierkegaard. Although some dispute the extent of Kierkegaard's influence (Guignon, 2011, p. 184), concepts such as 'anxiety, repetition, curiosity, *das Man* (Kierkegaard's "crowd"), and the Moment' (Herskowitz, 2017, p. 156) can be traced to Kierkegaard. Therefore, the next chapter undertakes an investigation of Heidegger's perspective on authenticity, prior to turning our attention to the personalism of Karol Wojtyła in Chapter 5.

4 Leadership authenticity: a Heideggerian perspective

ALT theorists consider Martin Heidegger to be the key existentialist influence on the contemporary notion of authenticity (Kernis & Goldman, 2006, p. 290). He reinforces what we have found in Kierkegaard regarding authenticity. In particular, Heidegger also emphasises the necessity of taking responsibility for oneself, rather than conforming to an amorphous crowd. Like Kierkegaard, Heidegger underlines the importance of a moment of vision as a condition for that transformation. He enhances these points with his insights about the crowd and one's mortality, and how living authentically means not simply living in the present but embracing the totality of one's whole life, including, ultimately, death itself. This has relevance both for leaders and their own authenticity, and the perspective it provides on both leading in an authentic manner, and helping followers become authentic.

Like Kierkegaard, Heidegger is drawn to the great existentialist question, 'what does it mean to exist?' However, he argues that to understand what it is to exist—to *be*—one must first understand *Being*. That is the focus of his enquiry, to understand Being and then how that being may exist in an authentic manner. This study continues with the Heideggerian question regarding Being, and then proceeds to explain how one exists in an inauthentic manner and the role of care, conscience and moment of vision in the transformation to authenticity. We are then in a position to comment on the insights Heidegger offers for ALT regarding the meaning of authenticity and of the individual who is authentic. However, Heidegger does not offer satisfactory answers to questions regarding the meaning of the person, morality and intersubjectivity—all of which are of considerable importance when thinking about authentic leadership.

We find in Heidegger a very specific enquiry into the meaning of authenticity. He starts with the intention of understanding Being, and argues that knowing Being requires a knower that is able to understand the Being, which he designates as *Dasein*. *Dasein* initially exists in an inauthentic mode, within the prevailing culture, or the 'they', and turns towards authenticity when it grasps the possibility of non-existence, or death. This occurs when *Dasein*, upon hearing a call of conscience that reveals its mortality, questions its existence and breaks free of the 'they'. In response to the revelation that *Dasein* will one day die, it takes responsibility for its choices and becomes authentic. To live authentically is therefore to live as a 'being-toward-death', in response to the certainty of death.

The call to authenticity occurs in a 'moment of vision', or *Augenblick*, which is grounded in the revelation of new understanding, not simply in regard to one's ultimate death, but more

particularly regarding the horizon of one's time. One grasps one has a finite amount of time to do what one may wish to do, which disposes one towards transformation. *Augenblick* refers to a moment when one is transformed into the authentic self, which extends while one continues choosing to be that authentic self, living as a 'being-toward-death'. Therefore, authenticity is, for Heidegger, a function of both Being *and* Time, and hence a foundational concept for his work *Being and Time*.

Heidegger's interest in authenticity derives from his view that to understand Being, one must be an authentic being (Guignon, 2014, p. 9), and so the question of Being must first be answered. Heidegger credits Max Scheler's observation of the person as a 'performer of acts' (Heidegger, 1961, p. 73) with launching his (Heidegger's) question about the Being of the person who performs those acts since, he reasoned, Being is not simply the sum of the being of body, soul and spirit (p. 73). Therefore, *Being and Time* is primarily an examination of *Being*, and as such is ontological, rather than a work of philosophical anthropology (Dostal, 1993, p. 133). Note, however, that in the conclusion to *Being and Time*, Heidegger states all he has ultimately done is established the 'point of departure' (Heidegger, 1962, p. 487), which provides a preliminary insight about Being, and Dasein as an existent Being comported towards other Beings (p. 488).

4.1 The question of Being

Heidegger contends Being is the necessary condition for beings (Heidegger, 1962, p. 32f), and so any examination of the being of entities must begin with the fundamental philosophical question regarding the meaning of Being, which he claims remains unanswered. He opens his magnum opus, *Being and Time*, with the question about the meaning of being Plato has a stranger ask of Theaetetus:

for manifestly you [Theaetetus] have long been aware of what you mean when you use the expression *being*. We, however, who used to think we understood it, have now become perplexed. (citing Plato, *Theaetetus*, 244a Heidegger, 1962, p. 1)⁷

Heidegger claims this question still needs an answer: 'Do we in our time have an answer to the question of what we really mean by the word "being"?' Not at all. So it is fitting that we should raise anew *the question of the meaning of Being* (Heidegger, 1962, p. 1) and 'work out the meaning of *Being*' (p. 19). The answer to this fundamental question of existence—how we understand Being, and what it means to be—ultimately shapes how humans lead their lives.

Heidegger argues that scientists, theologians and philosophers have all failed to understand Being because of restrictions imposed by their worldview. While the empirically based psychological and biological sciences fail to address the ontological foundations upon which their science rest (p. 75), Christian anthropology is limited by a worldview that contends man is a rational animal made in the image and likeness of God (Heidegger, 1962, p. 74). Recall that Kierkegaard shared this concern, which stimulated his search to ground existence in experience rather than theological claims (Kierkegaard, 2011, pp. 146, NB2:20). Among the philosophers, Kant (Heidegger, 2010, p. 21), Kierkegaard and Nietzsche (p. 9) are restricted by their historical context (p. 20f). Further, neither realism, which holds ‘Reality of the “world” ... is capable of proof’ (Heidegger, 1962, p. 251), nor idealism, which holds Being and Reality exist only in consciousness (p. 251), incorporate an adequate ontological understanding since both neglect an existential analysis of Being (p. 251). Nor, according to Heidegger, is Descartes’s approach satisfactory. When Descartes’s meditations strip all away until only doubt remains, he realises doubt requires thinking which in turn requires a thinker—an I that thinks (Heidegger, 2010, p. 33)—and so concludes *cogito ergo sum*. His enquiry turns then to the *cogito*, rather than Being (p. 36), overlooking the *sum* (Heidegger, 1962, p. 71). This neglect of the human self allows ‘the essence of the I ... [to be] seen, above all, in consciousness’ (Heidegger, 2010, p. 34)—a self-consciousness that determines Being (p. 36). Further, in his ‘self-discovery’, Descartes observes a subject lying immediately at hand in his thoughts, and so the I comes to be understood as a subject (p. 35). His concise *cogito ergo sum* does not answer ‘the ontological question of the Being of the *sum*’ (Heidegger, 1962, p. 72), nor explain the nature of the Being doing the thinking. Hence, Heidegger argues, the philosophers have failed, and so all ontology ‘remains blind and perverted’ (p. 31) regardless of the framework or system employed, since it fails to grasp that the fundamental task of philosophy is to clarify the meaning of Being. Note that not all philosophers would agree with this assertion. Nor would they agree that ontology is blind. Wojtyła’s metaphysics, for instance, which examines the objective and subjective perspectives on Being, are illuminating rather than obscuring. This will be explored in Chapter 5.

4.1.1 The ontic–ontological distinction

To examine Being, and a being that can understand both Being and its own Being, without the encumbrance of those worldviews he rejects, Heidegger makes two important philosophical distinctions: between *ontic–ontological* and between *existentiell–existential* enquiry (Heidegger, 1962, p. 32f). This distinction provides a framework for understanding that tension

between metaphysics and physics, between philosophy and the empirical sciences. *Ontic* enquiry is concerned with facts about entities, while *ontological* enquiry is concerned with the Being of those entities (p. 31, fn. 3): we ‘reserve the term “ontology” for that theoretical inquiry which is explicitly devoted to the meaning of entities’ (p. 32). When we turn to Wojtyła, we will find he often uses this ontic–ontological distinction in *The Acting Person*, particularly regarding the subjectivity of the human person (cf. Wojtyła, 1979c, pp. 21, 45, 185f).

Heidegger uses the terms ‘*existentiell*’ and ‘*existential*’ to distinguish between the ontic and ontological when the entity subject to enquiry is the *human* being. Hence, *existentiell* enquiry examines humans as beings, whereas *existential* enquiry examines the Being of humans (Guignon, 2011, p. 187). Therefore, when discussing human beings, *existentiell*–ontic enquiry refers to discoverable facts about individuals and their actions, while *existential*–ontological analysis examines those structures of Being which support the human being. Hence, in Heideggerian terms, to study, for example, self-awareness, is to investigate an *existentiell* fact, while the meaning of the self who is aware is an *existential* question.

This is a crucial distinction, which runs through our three philosophers, and is a fundamental premise of this study—that our understanding of the human person within ALT has been largely informed by the behavioural and social sciences, at the expense of philosophy. In other words, the *ontic*–*existentiell* has not just overshadowed, but almost entirely overlooked, the *ontological*–*existential*. This is the essence of Heidegger’s problem with Descartes; focusing on the *cogito* prioritised the *existentiell* over the *existential* not just for Descartes, but for all those who follow in his footsteps. Hence, any analysis of a being needs to clarify whether one is discussing facts about a being, or the structure of that being, and to appreciate that *ontic* or *existentiell* facts are quite distinct from *ontological* and *existential* realities. However, although this study argues that ALT focuses almost exclusively on the *ontic*–*existentiell*, rather than the *ontological*–*existential*, grasping this distinction reveals the necessity of each perspective. Hence, this study recognises and respects the different methodological approaches and seeks to balance the theorists with a philosophical perspective, to introduce an *ontological*–*existential* perspective to *ontic*–*existentiell* theorists.

4.1.2 What being can understand Being: Dasein

Having made the *existentiell*–*existential* distinction and claimed his intellectual forebears have failed to understand Being, Heidegger sets three conditions that need to be met to discover the meaning of Being. These will help us to grasp Heidegger’s understanding of

authenticity of being. They are, first, ‘there *is* something like an understanding of Being’ (Heidegger, 1962, p. 244); second, there is an entity that possesses being that can understand Being (p. 244); and third, the enquirer must be able to be made ‘transparent in his own Being’ (p. 27)—that is, the inquirer must be able to both discover oneself and know with some certainty that it is *their* self they have discovered (Heidegger, 2010, p. 167). We shall consider the first and second questions below, and be in a position to answer the third when we have explained Heidegger’s understanding of how one becomes authentic. The existentiell–existential distinction provides a means of satisfying the first and second condition.

Regarding the first, Heidegger argues that it is possible to understand Being, as long as one ensures one is conducting an ontological, rather than ontic, enquiry. Regarding the second—that there is an entity that possesses being that can understand Being (Heidegger, 1962, p. 244)—Heidegger makes the observation that ‘the roots of the existential analytic ... are ultimately *existentiell*, that is, *ontical*’ (p. 34). In other words, the ontological is grounded in the ontic, or, framed differently, the ontic can reveal the ontological. Hence, that which asks existential questions, in possession of existentiell properties, may be that being that can understand Being. Therefore, any examination of such ontical properties must start with the one conducting the enquiry (Guignon, 2011, p. 187). This is the field of phenomenology, which starts with the examination of one’s lived experience of being human (Guignon, 2011, p. 188) to then understand the meaning of the human Being. While science may uncover existentiell data *about* the human person, philosophy, and phenomenology in particular (Heidegger, 2010, p. 178f), is a method by which one can discover the existential *meaning* of the human person. Hence, Heidegger’s interest does not lie with the notion of the individual as a rational animal, an instance of human being. Instead, he is interested in the individual human as, for example, Martin, the son of Johanna and Friedrich, a husband and father, a teacher at the University of Freiburg. Heidegger argues that he finds insights regarding the existential in the discoverable existentiell: ‘In everyday terms, we understand ourselves and our existence by way of the activities we pursue and the things we take care of. We understand ourselves by starting from them because the Dasein finds itself primarily in things’ (Heidegger, 1982, p. 159). Therefore, the experience of the person can reveal the meaning of the person. As we shall see, Wojtyła takes a similar approach to arrive at the ‘irreducible ... that which is unique and unrepeatable in each human being, by virtue of which he or she is not just a particular human being ... but a personal subject’ (Wojtyła, 1993b, p. 214).

Heidegger thus argues that there is an entity that possesses such ontic characteristics—an entity which possesses being that can understand Being—which he designates as *Dasein*: ‘This

entity which each of us is himself ... we shall denote by the term “Dasein”’ (Heidegger, 1962, p. 27), a term which literally means ‘the “there” (*Da*) where being (*Sein*) shows itself’ (Dostal, 1993, p. 132). Heidegger contends that asking the question of being is Dasein’s ‘mode of Being’ (Heidegger, 1962, p. 27), in contrast to other entities for which the question of Being is not an issue. For example, Heidegger refers to Reality as an entity that does not have ‘the character of Dasein’ (p. 487), hence making it clear that he is not simply referring to material entities, and so placing Dasein on a distinctly metaphysical, rather than anthropological, plane. As noted, Heidegger argues the prevailing philosophical assumptions limit one’s ability to address the question of Being. Hence, in asking ‘what being is able to understand Being’, he cannot simply answer ‘persons’, since this term carries the implications of those assumptions, and so would restrict Heidegger to the existing philosophical canvas. In other words, if Heidegger had said ‘a person is that being who can understand Being’, one would immediately attribute to that person everything one assumes about personhood. At the same time, to designate something as Dasein is to refer not to ‘its “what” ... but its Being’ (Heidegger, 1962, p. 67), to ‘the place in which being occurs’ (Zimmerman, 1993, p. 297), and so when ‘that place’ pertains to one’s own Being, one can use the personal pronoun ‘I’ when referring to Dasein (Heidegger, 1962, p. 68).

Therefore, Heidegger claims—in response to the second condition for discovering the meaning of Being—that Dasein is that being that can understand Being. He says Dasein is constituted by ‘Being-in-the-world, in its everydayness and its averageness’ (Heidegger, 1962, p. 168) and has two characteristics that, taken together, meet the second condition. First, Dasein is characterised by ‘*mineness*’ (p. 68) and ‘is in each case mine’ (p. 68), comported towards its own Being (p. 67), and so able to understand its own being. Second, Heidegger rejects the classical view that essence precedes existence, and contends ‘*the “essence” of Dasein lies in its existence*’ (p. 67). He states:

because we cannot define Dasein’s essence by citing a ‘what’ of the kind that pertains to a subject-matter [*eines sachhaltigen Was*], and because its essence lies rather in the fact that in each case it has its Being to be, and has it as its own, we have chosen to designate this entity as Dasein, a term which is purely an expression of its Being [*als reiner Seinsausdruck*]. Dasein always understands itself in terms of its existence. (p. 32f)

Hence, Heidegger argues that existence precedes essence, saying elsewhere ‘man’s “*substance*” is not spirit as a synthesis of soul and body; it is rather *existence*’ (p. 153). His intense focus on the question of Being has the effect of prioritising existence over persons, contra to realist ontology which holds that ‘to know an existent it is necessary to have comprehended the Being of the existents’ (Levinas, 1979, p. 45). Heidegger’s claim that Dasein’s essence is constituted by its being is in direct contrast to traditional metaphysics which holds that essence precedes existence. The latter is the position taken by Wojtyła, who is thus able to ground personhood in being, rather than resort to a metaphysical abstraction such as Dasein.

In prioritising existence over essence, Heidegger maintains that one is what one makes of oneself (Guignon, 1993, p. 276), in that happening between life and death (Heidegger, 1962, p. 426), and that one has no predetermined, or assigned, essence or nature. This radical existentialism, that one is what one makes oneself, ultimately issues in the possibility of the self as a revocable idea, completely malleable and mutable, allowing a conclusion that one is who one chooses to be in any moment. This bears fruit in the twenty-first century notion of self-declared identity holding primacy over objective reality; that ontic facts accord with ontological reality and are discovered in the—changeable—mind of the observer, not one’s actual bodily experience, and so can hold a position that opposes ontological reality. This ultimately provides the foundation for the notion of authenticity as self-referential and being true to one’s feelings, which presents a challenge for authentic leaders who are grounded in the reality called for by balanced processing, and who wish to foster genuine self-awareness in others. Leading people who insist that their felt version of reality prevails is an extraordinarily difficult task.

We have discussed the first two conditions that Heidegger (1962) argues must be obtained to answer the question of Being. The third condition, regarding the self-transparency of the enquirer, can be answered once we have a better understanding of that enquirer, of Dasein.

4.2 Inauthentic existence in the ‘they’

Having identified Dasein as that entity that possesses being and that can understand Being, Heidegger wants to know how Dasein may exist authentically. However, just as Kierkegaard argues that the individual lives an inauthentic existence absorbed in the crowd, prior to a metamorphosis by which they become authentic, Heidegger also starts with Dasein’s inauthentic existence.

According to Heidegger, Dasein is unable to fully grasp being and possibility since it exists inauthentically in an ‘everyday’ (Heidegger, 1962, p. 213) world. The notion of ‘everyday’ does not refer to days of the week or the days of one’s life, but to *how* ‘Dasein “lives unto the day”’ (p. 422). It refers to ‘*Being-in-the-world*’ (p. 224) and is a ‘way to be’ (p. 422). The everyday world ‘incessantly tries to shape and conform us to its own design’ (Fusco, 2018, p. 11), imposing a constant pressure to conform, thus making it very difficult to find and become one’s unique self. This provides the dominant worldview and intellectual framework within which Dasein operates, and has the effect of limiting choice and absolving one of personal responsibility. Dasein is absorbed and lost to itself in the everyday world (Heidegger, 1962, p. 149), lacking awareness of Being, blinded ‘to its possibilities, and [so] tranquillizes itself with that which is merely “actual”’ (p. 239). As a result, Dasein’s own possibilities and potentialities remain concealed, covered and not yet revealed.

The subject of the everyday world is ‘the “they”’ (p. 150), a generic group of Others ‘who proximally and for the most part “*are there*” in everyday Being-with-one-another’ (p. 164) and who one encounters via their actions. This generic group collectively constitutes not a ‘who’ but a ‘they’: ‘not this one, not that one, not oneself ..., not some people ..., and not the sum of them all’ (p. 164). There is no ‘who’ at whom one can point, but merely a collective ‘they’. Many leaders would recognise in this their experience of an unseen body that can both support and oppose them, but which is difficult to locate in a particular group of individuals. In the everyday world of the ‘they’, each Other is like every Other, indistinguishable, inconspicuous and unconfirmable in an overall ‘dictatorship of the “they”’ (p. 164), where one is simply ‘dictated to’ by one’s environment, lacking both awareness of oneself and authenticity. The everyday world is also the world in which inauthenticity prevails, and so ‘everyday’ and ‘inauthentic’ often mean the same thing for Heidegger (Berthold-Bond, 1991).

The ‘they’ surreptitiously favours ‘idle talk, curiosity, and ambiguity’ (Heidegger, 1962, p. 264) rather than a search for truth. Hence, Dasein exists in ‘untruth’ (p. 264), absorbed in and dominated by the ‘they’, accepting without question the attendant public interpretation and understanding of things and events (p. 264). This reminds us of Kierkegaard’s (1847) view that ‘“the crowd” is untruth’, since, by its nature, the crowd is not naturally disposed towards seeking after truth—since it issues in freedom—and so resists anyone or anything that threatens its existence.

Since Dasein is lost in the ‘they’, it belongs essentially to the Others (Heidegger, 1962, p. 164), rather than itself, and so is rendered inauthentic and relieved of its possibilities (p.

312). One can observe this in both leaders and followers who fail to exercise personal responsibility and simply go along with the crowd. This could perhaps be one of the key leadership attributes sought in authentic leaders: that they are men and women who reject the inauthenticity of merely going along with the crowd, with what is popular or less risky to themselves. Instead, they strive to uphold what is right. The failure of leaders to act in an ethical manner—which contributed to the rise of ALT—may well be caused by a failure to speak up in the face of a group of persuasive others, the ‘they’ who are convinced of their own rightness.

Most people simply conform to the ‘they’, eating as *they* eat, seeing as *they* see, judging as *they* judge, choosing as *they* choose, being shocked by what shocks *them*, reduced to the ‘*averageness* which is an existential characteristic of the “they”’ (p. 164). Existential averageness reduces individuals to a lowest common denominator, obscuring what is not easily emotionally and intellectually accessible, creating the illusion, and belief, that the ‘they’—and also oneself when captivated by the ‘they’—is ‘always right’ (p. 165). The illusion of rightness is promoted via a persuasive ‘dictatorship of ideas’ and resistance by the ‘they’ to being challenged regarding its rightness. At the same time, however, individuals enamoured by the ‘they’ erroneously believe they are free agents who see, choose and judge insightfully and wisely. While they derive an almost perverse pleasure from feeling ‘right’ because everyone is in agreement with them, they remain oblivious to the fact that they are merely going along with the crowd. Somewhat perversely, the crowd also is merely going along with the crowd, self-reinforcing its own thinking and behaviour.

With this observation of everyday inauthenticity, Heidegger highlights the often stark reality that many people live silent lives of mediocrity, going about their everyday business, not being their fully authentic selves. They are entranced, like Plato’s cave dwellers, by the fanciful images before them. One of the challenges confronting leaders is to overcome the inertia imposed by everyday routines that lull people into an inauthentic comfort and superficiality, under the illusion they are in some manner living authentic lives, while actually being only an instance in a multitude.

In the ‘they’, it is unclear who or what is actually making choices. Despite its apparent transparency, the ‘they’ is sly and difficult to pin down (Heidegger, 1962, p. 166) to this one or that one. In the classic case of group-think, ‘everyone’ may be in agreement, for example, with a course of action. However, no one appears to take personal responsibility:

because the ‘they’ presents every judgement and decision as its own, it

deprives the particular Dasein of its answerability. The ‘they’ can ... manage to have ‘them’ constantly invoking it. It can be answerable for everything most easily, because it is not someone who needs to vouch for anything. It ‘was’ always the ‘they’ who did it, and yet it can be said that it has been ‘no one’. (p. 165)

Heidegger reveals in this comment the source of failure to take responsibility for one’s actions: individuals surrender responsibility to the ‘they’ and, thus, think they do not need to be held to account. The ‘they’ one blindly follows deprives one of the need to answer for one’s actions, a practice antithetical to leadership.

And so Dasein is ensnared in inauthenticity, captured as it were by the ‘they’, making no independent choices, ‘carried along by the nobody’ (p. 312), failing to recognise that one is not oneself, but merely an other to every other Other, having one’s inauthentic, and potentially erroneous, beliefs and actions validated by the crowd. The pervasive ‘all-seeing all-knowing’ ‘they’ enables the everyday, inauthentic Dasein to be ‘*disburdened*’ and absolved of personal ‘answerability’ (p. 165) in a manner that accommodates and approves every wish or whim. Dasein attributes agency to ‘they’—‘they did it, they caused events, ...’—which further empowers the amorphous ‘they’ ‘in which everyone is the other and no one is himself’ (p. 165) to ‘retain and enhance its stubborn dominion’ (p. 165). One can grasp the power and courage of Kierkegaard’s ‘solitary individual’ who stands against, and overcomes, the insidious nature of the crowd.

Heidegger believes ‘we yearn for but rarely achieve’ (Storberg-Walker & Gardiner, 2017, p. 353) authenticity, since we live largely inauthentic lives ‘trying to fit in and conform to dominant norms’ (p. 353) imposed by the multitude. However, this is not the conformity that causes one to abide by social norms and regulations, such as road rules. The real challenge arises, for example, when an authentic Board Director becomes aware of the need to confront a Board that is submitting to the demands of a domineering Chairman. Hence, they face a dilemma: to inauthentically conform to the social norm of collegiality, or authentically to speak the truth and risk their position on the Board. In reality, one rarely faces simple choices with obvious answers. Morally upright people can often argue quite cogently for opposing positions, and in each case remain consistent with their well-considered values, and so remain authentic. Hence, authenticity is not a simple binary choice that exists in tension with an abstract concept of inauthenticity. Authenticity exists in tension within oneself and with one’s values, and knowing how to act authentically in a given moment.

We now turn to the question of how Dasein becomes authentic. If Dasein exists inauthentically in the ‘they’, then one must explain how inauthentic Dasein can become authentic. This is not as simple as it may sound. This is the kind of question asked by Kierkegaard regarding the aesthete, as he sought to understand how one could grasp the existence of one’s own Self while existing superficially within a depersonalising crowd. If one is blinded by the illusory wisdom of the ‘they’, one’s mind must be opened in some manner for them to turn towards oneself as an individual, and specifically towards one’s authentic Self.

4.3 Becoming authentic

This study shows that Kierkegaard and Heidegger approach the notion of authentic existence in a similar manner. They first note the inauthentic existence that one obtains in the midst of a conforming crowd, and how an authentic existence, with its emphasis on autonomy and personal responsibility, contrasts with inauthenticity. Both recognise that some event occurs that facilitates the transformation from an inauthentic to authentic state. We have discussed Kierkegaard’s notion of metamorphosis, predicated on a moment of vision, and, in this section, we investigate Heidegger’s perspective.

Heidegger also holds that a moment of vision is a condition for authenticity. He adds that since Dasein’s Being is existential Care, it experiences itself as existentiell caring for others and about things, which reveals Dasein to be a someone, not something, who is immersed in the ‘they’. This disclosure of oneself disposes one to hear oneself, which occurs in a call of conscience, that reveals one’s mortality, and hence one’s potentiality: who and what one can be—one’s authentic self. The call of conscience also reveals one’s finitude, and so one resolves to live authentically, in pursuit of some authentic task, in whatever time is allotted prior to one’s demise. Hence, Heidegger offers a far more nuanced view of the inauthentic–authentic metamorphosis, introducing the notion of care and the role of conscience, and situates the transformation within the overall continuity of one’s being, framed ultimately by one’s non-being, or mortality.

4.3.1 The moment of vision as a condition for authenticity

Like Kierkegaard, Heidegger also holds that Dasein experiences a ‘moment of vision’ (Heidegger, 1962, p. 387), which reveals the reality of its situation and the possibility of authenticity. He uses the term *Augenblick* (‘a glance of the eye’) (cf. Translator’s fn. 2, Heidegger, 1962, p. 376; King, 2001, p. 233)—‘the German rendering’ (Herskowitz, 2016, p. 97) of the Danish *øjeblik* (‘a blink of the eye’) used by Kierkegaard—to refer to the moment

of vision. This moment of vision brings a lucidity to one's life, revealing both the illusory nature of what one had hitherto considered important and a clarity of purpose for one's life (Heidegger, 1962, p. 435). Heidegger says the unconcealing, or *Augenblick*, in which the light of truth replaces the darkness of ignorance, gives one a glimpse of the possibility of an authentic existence, and fundamentally transforms the subject of the experience (Heidegger, 2010, p. 157). This initial glimpse of authenticity does not reveal a radically different way of being from inauthenticity, but rather a qualification: 'On the other hand, *authentic* existence is not something which floats above falling everydayness; existentially, it is only a modified way in which such everydayness is seized upon' (Heidegger, 1962, p. 224). Recall that, for Heidegger, everydayness is interchangeable with inauthenticity. Hence, the possibility of authenticity involves a new attitude one takes towards inauthenticity, brought on by the *Augenblick*, and the new perspective one gains on temporality, distinguishing it from the everyday.

Heidegger agrees with Kierkegaard's assertion that an *Augenblick* is not something chronological, which separates the past from the present; rather, it is *kairological*, an appointed moment through which one is transformed by the unconcealing of existential truth, a similar concept to that found in Plato's analogy of the cave (Zimmerman, 1981, p. 167). Zimmerman describes an *Augenblick* as a moment where 'one experiences eternity here and now' (p. 138), recalling Kierkegaard's contention that 'time and eternity touch each other' (The Concept of Anxiety, IV 357, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 151) in the moment of vision. Note, however, that while Heidegger acclaims Kierkegaard's thinking regarding the moment of vision, he says the use of terms such as 'now' and 'eternity' risks reducing the moment to an existentiell phenomenon, whereas it should be understood existentially, as a transformation of one's being (H. 338, n, iii, Heidegger, 1962, p. 497).

Understanding time as kairological explains, for example, how a leader can forgive an employee's material error, truly liberating them from the accompanying shame or guilt, without denying the real chronological impact on the firm's reputation and performance. A kairological perspective allows one to grasp that one's potentiality-for-being exists in the wholeness and continuity of one's existence—that which is stretched between birth and death—in the same manner as being-one's-self, and so one is able to hear the voice of that potentiality.

4.3.2 Care as Dasein's Being, enables revelation

Heidegger argues that Dasein is able to be revealed to itself in the *Augenblick* because its Being is Care: the 'Being of Dasein [the *Sein*] ... is "care"' (Heidegger, 1962, p. 83f). Care is not 'the anxious fussing of some neurotic' (Heidegger, 2010, p. 163), but rather the '*fundamentally human way of Being*' (p. 163), and so is to be understood *ontologically–existentially* as the very structure of Dasein (Heidegger, 1962, p. 84).

Heidegger infers that care is the ground to perfection, to being all one can be: 'Man's *perfectio* — his *transformation into that which he can be* [emphasis added] in Being-free for his ownmost possibilities (projection) — is "accomplished" by "care"' (p. 243). In other words, according to Heidegger, care, as the very Being of Dasein, is the means by which the person is able to be free to become. Although the 'they' limits one's possibilities, Heidegger argues that care enables Dasein to become free from the 'they', for one's own possibilities. It seems reasonable to assume that that which one can be in freedom, for all one's possibilities— one's *perfectio*—is the authenticity which individuals crave. Hence, one may infer that authenticity refers to the perfecting of the person, to the person one can become when fully free to develop one's potential.

Heidegger uses the term '*Sorge*' ('care') to signify the Being of Dasein—the existential totality of Dasein's ontological structure—which includes Being in the world and Being alongside those entities encountered in the world (p. 237).

4.3.3 Existential Care manifests in existentiell action

Care, as Dasein's way of Being, manifests in Dasein's way of acting, as both care for the tasks one undertakes and for the others with whom one exists. While *Sorge* refers to the ontological structure of Dasein as Care, *Besorgen* and *Fursorge* refer to the ontic–existentiell manifestations of Care. *Besorgen* refers to the *concern* that arises from 'being-alongside' (Heidegger, 1962, p. 237) entities (p. 83, fn. 1) one encounters, experienced as, for example, concern for outcomes, or quarterly results, or the quality of one's products or services.

Hence, *Besorgen* refers to concern, as care for things, although more particularly for tasks: 'each one of us *is* what he pursues and *cares* for. In everyday terms, we understand ourselves and our existence by way of the activities we pursue and the *things* we take *care* of' (Heidegger, 1982, p. 159 [emphasis added]). This short passage is replete with insight. Heidegger indicates that what we pursue is grounded in what we care about, and that this gives meaning to our existence. Hence, if we want to understand ourselves, or another, then consider

what occupies one's concerns and one's actions. While Heidegger—because of his ontological focus—says caring actions reveal the Being of Dasein as Care, Wojtyła—because of his anthropological focus—says 'actions reveal the person' (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 16)—a theme this study will explore in depth. Although both start from the phenomenological lived experience, their overarching concern—to understand Being, or to understand persons—influences the outcome. As Heidegger says: 'we understand ourselves by that which we pursue', and hence leaders can learn much about their followers by taking the time to consider what they naturally pursue, or are attracted to.

Fursorge, on the other hand, refers to *solicitude*, the care one has for others with whom one is being in the world (Heidegger, 1962, p. 237).

Solicitude pertains essentially to authentic care—that is, to the existence of the Other, not to a 'what' with which they are concerned; it helps the Other to become transparent to themselves *in* their own care and to become *free* for it. (p. 159)

Existing with others is not simply 'the occurring together of several Subjects' (p. 436), but being with those for whom and from whom we experience solicitude, or care (Moran, 2002, p. 242). Hence, Being-with-others does not mean not simply working alongside but refers to a shared task to which both 'devote themselves' (Heidegger, 1962, p. 159) in a 'manner in which their Dasein, each in its own way, has been taken hold of' (p. 159).

4.3.4 The existentiell experience of care reveals Dasein as a someone

Therefore, *Fursorge* and *Besorgen* are ontical experiences that reveal ontological realities about Dasein. The existentiell experience of care (*Besorgen*) for what one does, or for whom one cares (*Fursorge*), reveals Dasein as a someone, not a something (Heidegger, 1982, p. 160). The shoemaker, for example, in diligently caring for and about their craft, grasps that he is the craftsman, and not the shoe, and so encounters *himself* as someone, distinct from his things: 'Certainly the shoemaker is not the shoe, and nevertheless he understands *himself* from his things, *himself*, his own self' (p. 160). On the other hand, when working with others on a shared task, Daseins are 'authentically bound together ... which frees the Other in his freedom for himself' (Heidegger, 1962, p. 159). Hence, through both solicitude and concern, one grasps both oneself and others are someone, not something. The view that the self is a someone, rather than something, is central to Heidegger's later concerns about the depersonalising impact of technology, which he worries reduces persons to things: 'everything depends on our manipulating technology in the proper manner as a means. ... The will to mastery becomes all

the more urgent the more technology threatens to slip from human control' (cf. Heidegger, 1977, p. 5).

Finally, in the disclosure of existential Care as Dasein's Being, and existentiell solicitude and concern as manifestations of Care, one grasps *someone* who cares, and, in grasping *someone* cares, one realises one is not the 'they'. This is a moment of individuation, and of the turn towards oneself as an individual and hence the possibility of authenticity, and becoming so in solicitude and concern for other beings and entities (Heidegger, 1962, p. 308), which, in a circular fashion, further discloses who one is, and who one can become (p. 243). Hence, when Dasein is revealed to itself as *Care*, Dasein grasps that it is lost in the everyday averageness of the 'they' and living inauthentically in conformity with the crowd.

Hence, a Heideggerian reading of authenticity would emphasise care for others and the world as an essential aspect of authentic leadership. However, this has not been considered within ALT and is not recognised as a core component of authentic leadership. Tomkins and Simpson (2015, p. 16) argue that leadership grounded in care is actually the antithesis of a positivist, strength-based model such as authentic leadership. They argue that the four components explicated by Walumbwa et al. (2008) are fundamentally self, rather than other-directed, and hence at odds with the Heideggerian notion of care and concern as those expressions of the very being of Dasein (Tomkins & Simpson, 2015).

4.3.5 Hence Dasein can hear a call of conscience which reveals its potentiality-for-Being authentic

In our investigation of Heidegger's understanding of the transformation from an inauthentic to authentic existence, we have considered the importance of the *Augenblick* and the possibility of grasping the self as someone, because Dasein is constituted by Care. Since Care, as Dasein's Being, is ultimately care for who Dasein can be, and Dasein has a glimpse of itself as someone, Dasein is able to hear a call from its conscience, summoning it from the 'they' to its potentiality-for-Being (Heidegger, 1962, p. 322).

Since Dasein's inauthentic existence is sanctioned by the 'they', any abdication of personal responsibility for self-choosing 'can be reversed only if Dasein specifically brings itself back to itself from its lostness in the "they"' (p. 312), and so 'becomes authentic Being-one's Self' (p. 313). This occurs when Dasein hears a 'voice of conscience' (p. 313) that appeals to Dasein's 'potentiality-for-Being-its-Self' (p. 313). Conscience '*manifests itself as the call of care* [because] the caller is Dasein which ... is anxious about its potentiality-for-Being'

(p. 322), and reveals the possibility of Dasein choosing its Self, in its Being, as ‘something which can be *authentic*’ (p. 68), rather than remaining lost and inauthentic. Crowe (2006) argues this notion of conscience that calls is ‘the centrepiece of Heidegger’s account of authenticity ... [a] catchall designation for the occasional moments in which our own lives are set into relief in such a way that we have the opportunity to take responsibility for them’ (p. 166). By hearing, and responding to, the appeal to the Self, Dasein wrenches itself ‘away from the “they”’ (Heidegger, 1962, p. 307), which collapses into insignificance (p. 317), and so Dasein is able to understand ‘one’s *ownmost* and uttermost potentiality-for-Being — that is to say, the possibility of *authentic existence*’ (p. 263). Hence, Heidegger’s claims awareness of the possibility of authenticity emerges from a call of conscience, which in turn is grounded in Dasein’s Being as Care.

Heidegger’s use of the term ‘conscience’ invites questions regarding how he understands the term, the origin of the voice one hears and how then one hears the voice of conscience. Heidegger holds conscience is a factual phenomenon not easily explained by biology, theology or the sciences (p. 313f). He says conscience is not a ‘faculty such as understanding, will ... feeling ... [or a] mixture of these’ (p. 317) but ‘a giving-to-understand’ (p. 316), which lacks no obscurity, ambiguity or equivocation (p. 319). The call of conscience is not planned, pre-empted or voluntary, calling as it does ‘against our expectations and even against our will’ (p. 320), and does not provide tidy answers or some useful specific action.

However, one must enquire as to the provenance of that voice Dasein hears. Although one experiences hearing a voice of conscience, it is difficult to discern the origin of that voice since no one makes themselves known or responds to the question regarding who is there (p. 319). Heidegger agrees that hearing a voice allows the presumption of a speaker, some ‘caller’ who must be ‘present-at-hand’ (p. 320f). However, Heidegger says the voice of conscience should not be attributed to an objective Other, such as God, who intends to influence Dasein (p. 320), since doing so allows Dasein to slink away (p. 323) from the reality of its ownmost Being. In other words, while Kierkegaard, in his discussion of Abraham and the religious stage of authenticity, holds the possibility of hearing a call from God, Heidegger believes attributing the voice of conscience to an external source represents an abdication of the reality of the person, a kind of outsourcing of responsibility.

Heidegger argues, instead, that Dasein is *both* the caller and the called, since one’s ‘ownmost Potentiality-for-Being-its-Self’ (Heidegger, 1962, p. 318), although not present-at-hand, objectively *is*, and so is able to be heard (p. 321). Heidegger claims ‘the call comes from

that entity which in each case I myself am' (p. 323). The caller is oneself: '*in conscience Dasein calls itself*' (p. 320), calling '*from me and yet from beyond me and over me*' (p. 320). Conscience calls '*to one's own Self. Not to what Dasein counts for, can do, or concerns itself with in being with one another publicly, nor to what it has taken hold of, set about, or let itself be carried along with*' (p. 317). Heidegger appears to argue that conscience speaks to one's existential self, rather than one's existentiell characteristics, and so when heard and understood authentically, conscience calls one towards what is good and true, rather than to (say) a specific action. Further, the voice of conscience requires not only a caller but also a hearer (p. 314), who can hear in a manner which admits an '*authentic understanding*' (p. 324) of the silent appeal (p. 318). Although that hearer is Dasein, it can, however, '*fail to hear its own [authentic] Self*' (p. 315) in the midst of the '*hubbub*' (p. 316) of the crowd, and so any call to possibility must be unambiguous, distinct from the surrounding public voices, and leave one in no doubt about what is revealed or disclosed.

Heidegger, therefore, is claiming conscience plays a central role in authenticity, allowing one to grasp one's inauthenticity, and hence the possibility of authenticity, and what that may include. Ultimately, however, it is when we turn to Wojtyła, and his understanding of the person, and those actions that complement personhood, that we will find a more complete explanation of the meaning and role of the conscience. The ALT literature, on the other hand, does not consider a sense of calling to potentiality or authenticity, and/or the role conscience may play in generating, and responding to, that call.

4.3.6 Potentiality-for-being reveals the possibility of non-being: mortality

Having explained Heidegger's understanding of conscience, we now come to a central aspect of his thought: conscience's revelation of ultimate non-being, and hence mortality and finitude.

When conscience reveals Dasein's '*potentiality-for-Being-its-Self*' (Heidegger, 1962, p. 313), it also reveals '*the possibility of no-longer-able-to-be-there*' (p. 294), and so the voice of conscience also discloses Dasein is a '*Being-toward-death*' (p. 311). Hence, death, that '*ultimate exit*' (Heidegger, 2010, p. 139) when Dasein '*loses the Being of its "there"*' (Heidegger, 1962, p. 281), relentlessly confronts and stands before one (Heidegger, 2010, p. 141). It is an ever-present reality over which one has no choice, occurring as it does at some indeterminate future moment.⁸ When Dasein grasps that it is a '*Being-toward-death*' (Heidegger, 1962, p. 310f), and '*the possible impossibility of its existence*' (p. 310) it experiences anxiety. Anxiety reveals the world as it is (p. 231) and its insignificance (p. 393),

bringing into stark relief what really matters: the possibility of authenticity (p. 232) in the context of mortality. In contrast to contemporary persons, who may wish to medicate anxiety or despair, Kierkegaard and Heidegger reveal these can be powerful existential drivers that both indicate the possibility of, and allow one to shape and create, an authentic life.

Death is revealed as an exclusively personal event that every individual must confront alone. While one can be present and ‘alongside’ others in their death, ‘the loss-of-Being ... which the dying man “suffers”’ (p. 282) is experienced by them alone. Although one can choose to act or not act with regard to, say, attending a meeting, or delegate that attendance to someone else, one cannot choose not to die, or send another in one’s place (Hoffman, 1993, p. 225). Hence, death is one’s own and no one else’s: ‘death *lays claim* to it as an individual Dasein. The non-relational character of death ... *individualizes* Dasein down to itself’ (Heidegger, 1962, p. 308). The grasping that *I* will die starkly reveals Dasein as an individual, not simply one of the crowd, for death will come for oneself. Hence, the grasping of one’s mortality, not as an intellectual understanding that humans die, but as an existential confrontation with one’s own ultimate demise, is, for Heidegger, a fundamental condition for authenticity.

In a crucial insight, Heidegger observes that if Dasein is individuated in death (p. 308), then Dasein must be able to be individuated in life—if one dies one’s own death, then one must be able to live one’s own life. This is an important point: whereas death does not allow choice, coming as it does at a time and for reasons beyond one’s control, the horizon of one’s life allows the possibility of choice independent of the crowd. Here, then, is the opportunity for a life-defining choice: if death is mine, then life also is mine. Whereas death is beyond one’s control, life—or more specifically, one’s response to the exigencies of life—is within one’s control. The confronting realisation of one’s temporal limitations should not invite the question as to how one might survive, or postpone death, but rather cause one to ask how one should live. This is, perhaps, the ultimate question of authenticity and the authentic life. The leader focused on how they should live, aspiring to their own potentiality-for-being (i.e., their authenticity) cannot fail to be attractive to followers. Further, such an existential outlook causes one to focus on what truly matters in the longer term, not one’s short-term gains or pleasures, which, by their very nature, correspond more closely with the inauthentic desires of the ‘they’.

The anticipation of one’s own death (Heidegger, 1962, p. 309f) calls forth not just a behavioural response but places demands on the totality of one’s Being: ‘holding death for true

does not demand just *one* definite kind of behaviour in Dasein, but demands Dasein itself in the full authenticity of its existence' (p. 310). In other words, becoming 'free for one's own death' (p. 308) liberates one from being lost in misleading possibilities in such a manner that one grasps 'for the first time [how] one can authentically understand and choose among the factual possibilities ... [which lie] ahead' (p. 308). Hence, the very possibility of living authentically lies in grasping one is a Being-toward-death: 'Being towards this possibility [of death] discloses to Dasein its ownmost potentiality-for-Being, in which its very Being is the issue' (p. 307). The revelation and truth of one's death invites not a mere existentiell change in one's demeanour or activities, but also an existential response, a reorienting of one's life towards that truth, and living out that truth as the reality of one's existence. Thus, Heidegger distinguishes 'the *authentic Self* ... which has been taken hold of in its own way' (p. 167) from the inauthentic self who has turned from those possibilities and so is dispersed, disconnected (p. 441), uprooted and unattached (p. 214). Therefore, understanding and accepting that one is a 'being-toward-death' transforms one's life (Guignon, 1993, p. 282), bringing a clarity that enables Dasein to see beyond the interests of the everyday to those 'possibilities which are determined by the end and ... understood as finite' (Heidegger, 1962, p. 308).

Heidegger reveals therefore that the choice one faces when confronted with one's mortality is not simply between authenticity or inauthenticity, but a more primal choice for one's being (Magrini, 2006, p. 83), as distinct from non-being. Dasein can respond to the revelation of mortality in an inauthentic manner and flee from finitude (Hoffman, 1993, p. 233) and mortality (Zimmerman, 1981, p. 139). However, avoiding a confrontation with death constitutes '*inauthentic Being-toward-death*' (Heidegger, 1962, p. 303) and confirms one in an inauthentic way of being. This is not, however, the naive inauthenticity of merely existing as a 'they-self ... *dispersed* into the "they"' (p. 167), having not yet found oneself and so unable to 'stand by one's Self' (p. 166). Inauthentic being-toward-death indicates a culpable fleeing from finitude and a subsequent determining of oneself in inauthenticity. Conversely, one can respond to death in an authentic manner, accepting it as both an existential transformative reality and an extension of one's lived experience and values.

It may seem unusual to consider death in a business context, or with respect to ALT, since these seem by nature to be oriented towards creativity, life and longevity—what we may call sustainability. However, Heidegger alerts us not just to the impermanence and temporality of life, but also to those factors that constitute a life, such as a purposeful task and relationships with others. Leaders who demonstrate an acceptance of such a reality may be those authentic leaders we seek.

4.3.7 Awareness of finitude and mortality prompts choice about how to live

Heidegger also argues that, in the *Augenblick*, the authentic individual recognises and accepts not only one's mortality, in the sense of bodily demise, but in the confronting realisation that *time* is finite, that there is a temporal limit on one's opportunities and expectations (King, 2001, p. 18). Hence, the moment of vision is grounded in the revelation (unconcealing) of new insights, not simply that one is a Being-toward-death, but that one has a finite amount of time, that time itself will be exhausted. When one grasps 'death as one's *ownmost* possibility [namely *I* will cease to be], one's potentiality-for-Being becomes authentic and wholly transparent' (Heidegger, 1962, p. 354). Heidegger says 'Dasein can be *authentically itself* only if it makes this [potentiality-for-Being] possible for itself *of its own accord*' (p. 263 [emphasis added]). Hence, being authentic, and how one is to live that authenticity in the allotted time, is a fundamental choice for each individual.

Recall that Heidegger claimed three conditions need to be met to understand the meaning of Being. The first two conditions—that 'there *is* something like an understanding of Being' (p. 244), and that there is an entity which possesses being that can understand Being (p. 244)—have been explained earlier. The third condition required an enquirer that can become 'transparent in his own Being' (p. 27), able to both discover oneself and know with some certainty that it is *their* self they have discovered (Heidegger, 2010, p. 167). Heidegger claims this condition is satisfied since Dasein 'becomes authentic and wholly transparent' (Heidegger, 1962, p. 354) to itself, 'of its own accord' (p. 263) when, in grasping its mortality and finitude, Dasein understands it can choose and take responsibility for itself. Grasping one's finitude 'snatches one back from the endless multiplicity of possibilities which offer themselves' (p. 435), enabling one to focus on what matters and one's particular task. This, for example, is the person who has a sudden awareness of impending death and, having faced their fears regarding mortality, still experiences anxiety regarding finitude, and about what needs to be done in the time allotted. The clarity and focus created by finality causes what is of little authentic concern to fall from one's view, as one turns, for example, to ensuring one's affairs are in order. A trite example of this, which conveys the point quite readily, is the experience one has when a project or role is coming to an end. Knowing one is finishing in four weeks' time liberates one from fear for the future, as that will be someone else's concern, yet it creates anxiety about identifying and completing those very few critical tasks and holding those crucial conversations. Finitude does not actually *force* authenticity per se, but creates the conditions for it to occur in an integrated, almost effortless, manner.

Heidegger is not simply arguing that the reality of future non-existence proves one's present existence, but that one's eventual death is the ground of authenticity, and that grasping one's finitude alters the manner in which one lives authentically as a being-toward-death. This is not in any sense a depressed, fearful state, but a life of fullness and hope because, in grasping the reality of one's condition, one has liberated oneself from the 'they', and consequently lives life with considerable lucidity. The existential proximity of death elicits a choice between radically different approaches to living—sedated by the somnambulist they or self-mastery in an active, purposeful life. Dasein then makes 'a resolute commitment to something' (Guignon, 2000, p. 91) of 'world-defining importance' (p. 90) for its world, according to 'what is factually possible at that time' (Heidegger, 1962, p. 345). Living in such a fashion includes a positive stance towards one's mortality, 'accepting the finitude of one's possibilities and choosing in the light of this finitude' (Polt, 1999, p. 87), rather than filling the quotidian with concerns about one's fate.

Heidegger contends that when one grasps and courageously lives the truth of things as they are—when 'all things become visible, decidable and durable' (Heidegger, 2010, p. 70)—one breaks out of an ordinary life that pursues 'arbitrary objects and opportunities' (p. 70) that offer transient emotional satisfaction. At this point, one discovers something more fundamental—how to be (authentic) and act in accord with what is, rather than what satisfies (p. 70). It seems reasonable to conclude from this that the authentic life is lived in light of the truth, rather than the shadow of illusion.

Although one's ultimate death may yet be far away, one experiences finitude and demise in roles and relationships, and inevitable decline in health and wellbeing. These experiences presage death in some small manner, and therefore influence the thought and action of an authentic individual. For example, authentic individuals who are aware of their existential limitations, including the uncertainty of tenure in their role, often consider themselves as stewards, and focus on their legacy, and what can be done with the time and resources at hand. This kind of leader ensures the firm is equipped for the next leader and the next phase of its development. Conversely, non-authentic individuals are usually more interested in the opinion—and accolades—of the crowds, and have a proclivity towards what is popular, rather than what is right and proper. This self-centred approach can drive a focus on profit as the measure of success and contribute to the kinds of ethical failures that ALT intends to confront. Hence, an awareness of both one's own finality and the temporality of all created reality—other persons, businesses and institutions—introduces a level of thoughtfulness and

consideration for oneself, one's companions and the future beyond oneself (i.e., subsequent generations). This coincides with living authentically.

4.4 What can we learn from Heidegger regarding individual or leader authenticity?

Having considered Heidegger's understanding of authenticity, the conditions for it and the distinction between authentic and inauthentic living, we proceed to evaluate the relevance and application of Heidegger's thought to authenticity and leader authenticity.

Although Heidegger's focus is on Dasein, that being that can understand Being, his work does allow insight and understanding of authenticity as it pertains to individuals and leaders. Analysis reveals a number of key components that, according to a Heideggerian view, contribute to, or are a condition for, authenticity: care that reveals one as someone; conscience that reveals the limits of one's life, and hence finitude and mortality; and the moment of vision that reveals the choice one can make for oneself, against the collective Other, to live authentically.

Like Kierkegaard, Heidegger argues one exists inauthentically within the prevailing culture, which Heidegger calls the 'they', and which provides the dominant worldview and intellectual framework within which one operates. The 'they' can easily lull one into a false sense of authenticity since one appears to be accepted by others for who one is. However, the crowd is actually reinforcing thinking and action that accords with what it considers acceptable. One is completely absorbed by the crowd, which therefore relieves one of any need to take personal responsibility for one's action, since the source of authority can be attributed to the 'they'. In this context, the individual loses any sense of themselves and their possibilities, and so exist inauthentically.

Hence, to become authentic, one must make a decision for oneself over against the crowd, in a manner that involves taking responsibility for one's own life, rather than abdicating that responsibility to the 'they'. However, the actual possibility of authenticity emerges when, as result of caring for other persons and one's tasks, one experiences a sense of being someone, not something. Since an individual is someone, with potential for being, one is able to hear the voice of one's conscience, over the clamour of the 'they', calling one to whom one can be. That same recognition of oneself as a someone also discloses the possibility of one day ceasing to be someone, hence, of dying, and so reveals one has a fixed, although indeterminate, amount of time at one's disposal.

Hence, the voice of conscience reveals one's mortality—I will cease to be. It also reveals one's finitude—I have a finite amount of time to be. The revelation and realisation of one's mortality liberates one from the illusory possibilities of the 'they', seeing beyond the everyday to what truly matters, enabling one to make wiser choices regarding the manner in which one exists—that is, taking personal responsibility for one's life, which is one of the hallmarks of authenticity. In other words, one does not simply divorce oneself from the 'they', but reorients one's life towards the truth and goodness of who and what one is. Hence, the possibility of living authentically lies in grasping one is a Being-toward-death.

The confronting realisation of one's temporal limitations causes one to ask how one should live, rather than when will one die. This is a fundamental question for those who wish to live an authentic life. The authentic individual does not simply live to forestall death, but embraces their finitude and mortality in a resolute manner that gives meaning and structure to their life, hence enabling them to be authentic in each moment. Authentic individuals are 'whole' in their historical constancy—they integrate their future, past and present in an overall wholeness of an authentic life. Such acceptance of finitude and mortality fosters greater self-awareness and care for others, one's society and environment.

Finally, analysis also reveals two possible modes of inauthenticity—one caused by ignorance and the other by choice. As noted, Heidegger says Dasein exists inauthentically in the 'they', unknowingly abdicating responsibility for choice and action to the crowd. This is that individual who lives their life in the shadow of others, having never grasped they have a life of that they can take charge, living instead an empty existence going along with what the crowd deems to be acceptable. However, there is a second kind of inauthentic existence which is more pernicious, coming as it does from one's choice. This is that individual who has grasped the reality of their existence—their finitude and capacity for choice and responsibility—but yet has culpably turned their back on possibility, preferring instead the anonymity afforded by the 'they'. This is the individual who rejects opportunity for fear of failure, who fails to speak up for fear of standing out, who does the minimum required to not be noticed, who lacks independent thought and forever swings with popular opinion. This person can never be a leader, for they stand for nothing in their inauthenticity.

Heidegger also reveals that authenticity is an experience shared with others, that authenticity refers not only to the individual, but to the manner in which one exists authentically with others. While the inauthentic individual is shackled to their inauthenticity by an impersonal faceless crowd, the authentic individual is encouraged in their authenticity in

their relationship with others, in pursuit of a shared task. Hence, in an organisational context, the others with whom one works are those with whom one discovers one's authenticity, and becomes more authentic. Therefore, it is evident that, by denying agency to the 'they', a leader can actively encourage followers to take personal responsibility, and hence promote the conditions for authenticity.

Like Kierkegaard, Heidegger confirms a moment of vision—what he terms an *Augenblick*—is integral to the turn to self from the crowd and key to a life of authenticity. He says the revelation of one's inauthenticity in the 'they', and the possibility of authenticity, occurs in a moment of vision, an *Augenblick*, as a consequence of which, one resolves to live authentically, directed towards some life-defining purpose. This purpose is shaped by those things, or tasks, and those people for whom one cares. For example, if one has chosen a career in education, one is now able to affirm that choice as a teacher in service of one's students, with a purpose of fostering a generation of learners. In other words, the *Augenblick* can give meaning and purpose to what one is already pursuing, enabling one to do so authentically. As a consequence, one resolves to follow one's path, living a fully authentic life in service of those people and those tasks that engender the greatest concern. The moment of vision is an existential insight that forever alters one's perception and, because of this, the manner in which one lives one's life. Now one lives in accordance with the reality of who one is, was and can be. This is a profound moment of existential unconcealing or revelation about oneself, as distinct from an existentiell insight about humanity—that is, one grasps in that moment what it is for one to be, not a mere insight regarding what one might do. This is the decisive moment in which one embraces authenticity, choosing for all one's possibility, in response to an existential call of conscience to be all one can be, as distinct from those existentiell momentary calls of conscience to act in a particular manner.

While one cannot 'resolve to become authentic' (Zimmerman, 1993, p. 310), Heidegger suggests that one can create the conditions for the moment of vision (Heidegger, 1962, p. 387) by self-awareness practices that allow deeper questions, and so insights, and hence increase the possibility of authenticity, to emerge. Zimmerman says that Heidegger later advocated practices of breathing and meditation and the contemplation of 'paradoxical questions' (cf. Zimmerman, 1993, p. 310) to foster authenticity. While ALT emphasises self-awareness, Heidegger indicates the kind of awareness one should seek—an awareness of one's mortality and finitude, and a full grasp of what authenticity may mean for oneself, revealed in the moment of vision.

One of the key insights of the existentialists that is relevant for leadership is that regarding the threatening power of the crowd, which can force compliance from all but the most secure individuals. Hence, a key aspect of authentic leadership must be to strongly encourage people to speak up, while at the same time restricting the power of the crowd by calling attention to its presence. Resistance to the crowd may be a crucial role for an authentic leader, as that leader welcomes all voices and perspectives, actively stamping out those human tendencies to enlist the crowd to one's point of view, such as when one casually remarks 'we all agree ...' or 'everybody is doing ...'. Doing so would certainly contribute to revealing and overcoming biases, and hence balanced processing.

As discussed, the *Augenblick* is not something chronological, but rather kairological—an appointed moment where time touches eternity—in a revelation where one hears the call of conscience and one's eyes are opened. This understanding offers another perspective on authenticity, since it enables us to grasp that the moment of vision, and hence authenticity, are situated within the wholeness and continuity of one's life, as it is stretched between life and death. The *Augenblick* is unforgettable and ever-present in the same way as any other insight once grasped cannot be 'ungrasped', or once a glimmer of light has entered the darkness all darkness is repelled. This notion confirms that we are not slaves to time, living lives dictated by '9-to-5' or the routines imposed by timetables. It reminds us that persons are more than our work, and of the importance of leisure—not as a momentary cessation of work, but as an occasion to both replenish and develop our humanity. It reminds leaders that followers need unstructured time for themselves, and that an overly rigorous insistence on detailed schedules is not conducive to authenticity, since imposing strict limitations on one's time forces people into depersonalising routines, treating them as something subject to time constraints, rather than someone for whom time is a means for them to be authentic.

This ever-present moment is not the interminable succession of 'nows' of the inauthentic individual, detached from their past and future, lacking continuity with themselves; like Don Juan, repetitively searching for love, seeking but never finding meaning, for the answer lies not beyond himself but within himself. It is, however, an ever-present moment of vision, wherein one becomes and remains authentic in the very integration of one's past and future with the present. This is the individual who accepts the reality of their situation, embracing, and creating, opportunities to live their life to the fullest. Therefore, integrating the reality of one's Being in a kairological moment of vision eliminates the chronological tension between being and becoming, while encompassing the continuity of choice and personal responsibility that shapes who one becomes, while being and remaining authentic. In this sense, authenticity is a

choice that one makes and renews in such a manner that the original choice remains transcendentally present—similar to the concept of *anamnesis* and making present via recollection—and continually reaffirmed. Therefore, authenticity is not something one becomes, but an acceptance of who one is and a stand one takes, in the present, being authentic alongside the possibility of inauthenticity.

4.5 How could this understanding be useful to authentic leadership theory and practice?

Heidegger's perspective reminds us that business is conducted in an 'everyday world', a dominant culture that has an inherent tendency to encourage conformity and so foster inauthenticity. One can infer the responsibility of leaders to create the conditions for authenticity in both themselves and their followers. This includes that crucial moment of vision, which may in fact be facilitated by deep care for oneself and others, which launches that initial movement of individuation.

This understanding raises questions for leadership, and for authentic leadership. Leaders need to juggle the significant and relentless demands on their time and attention. While trying to be authentic, they face constant pressures that may pull one towards inauthenticity—to accept, for example, the demands of the 'they'. While the authentic person has grasped the emptiness of the everyday 'they', this person still lives and leads in that everyday, since not everyone is enlightened by an *Augenblick*. Business is conducted in the field of the everyday, with colleagues who may not have experienced a moment of vision, who themselves may be inauthentic.

Authenticity is poorly understood in the authentic leadership literature, and most commonly is grounded in the notion of 'being true to one's self'. The concept of a 'moment' of stepping into authenticity, a moment of decision where one reorients one's life around meaning and purpose with intense clarity, and subsequent responsibility, is not recognised in the literature. This concept is also absent from the standard four components model, which fails to appreciate that authenticity is not simply being self-aware, relationally transparent, ethically competent and a balanced thinker. Instead, authenticity is consequent to a conscious rejection of *Das Man*, and subsequent to a moment of vision that arises from the call of conscience, enabled by, according to Heidegger, one's ontological structure of Care.

Therefore, an authentic person should be able to point to a moment of profound realisation, of response to the call of conscience, with a consequent reorientation of their life, preceded by

a time of inauthenticity when they were captive to the ‘they’. A leader who is unaware of the collective Other is probably still in its thrall. Conversely, a leader who grasps their life as a whole—stretched between life and death—with a life-defining purpose oriented around care and concern for others and things, almost certainly brings clarity and focus to their thought and action. Acceptance of finitude reveals one has an allotment of life, a time in which one can make a contribution that aligns with one’s authentic purpose. This accords with the existentialist view that authentic individuals do not follow the whims of culture or crowds, but take personal responsibility for their own life and action.

One can envisage what this begins to look like in practice. Imagine, for example, the caricature of the leader driven by greed and ego, who has achieved excessive power, money and goods, and so appears successful to those who use the same measures. Then, one day, they suffer a traumatic experience—perhaps a heart attack due to neglecting their health, a messy divorce due to neglecting their partner, an open staff revolt due to neglecting their people, or even all three. Such a bruising experience can prompt a reflective moment that allows a stark choice to emerge: do they continue living in the same selfish manner and risk losing everyone and everything, or change while they are still able? The leader who chooses to ignore the mounting signs of imminent disaster almost certainly has a false sense of their own immortality. Conversely, the leader who grasps their mortality, in a moment of existential clarity, undergoes a metamorphosis. Some turn from a search for success to a search for significance. Some resign and pursue work that has meaning and purpose. Some return to work a changed person, treating colleagues in an entirely different manner.

When one chooses in light of the possibilities of one’s life—both existentially in regard to the reality of who one is and existentially in regard to one’s options, and, therefore, actions—then those choices have the nature of authenticity. Hence, when one determines, existentially, to seek truth and goodness, and, as a consequence, chooses in a given moment to defend truth and goodness, one acts authentically. In a practical sense, leadership shaped by service to others for the good of society is a more authentic form of leadership than that whose end is to beat the competition or lift the share price. The former is informed by existential possibility, while the latter displays a limited existentiell outlook.

The authentic person lives their life as a ‘coherent story’ (Guignon, 1993, p. 283), simultaneously author, editor, publisher and reader of one’s life story, reminding us of Kierkegaard’s ethical individual who is an artist, choreographer and editor of their own life (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 544ff). Hence, to foster genuine authenticity people, and so leaders,

people require the freedom to write their own story, grounded in what matters to them (Fusco, 2018, p. 57), *not* to the organisation. This contrasts with the inauthentic individual who writes in a seemingly unstructured flow of consciousness, oblivious to the future, uncaring about how the story will unfold and somewhat forgetful of the past. What is even more tragic, however, is that any other can take up a pen and add their own notes to an inauthentic story.

If one is claiming authenticity—or having it attributed to them—in the absence of an existential *Augenblick*, then one may be mirroring Shakespeare’s inauthentic Polonius and being true to one’s (inauthentic) self, while oblivious to Heidegger’s insight about mortality and finitude. Thus, they replace the illusory claims of *Das Man*—the apparently ‘all knowing, all wise’ crowd—with the illusion of personal infallibility, of *I* am right. In other words, the supremely confident person may appear to be authentic to the collective crowd *because* the person appears to be one of them. This could explain why well-known leaders are sometimes considered authentic (i.e., true to themselves according to the popular definition) while exhibiting behaviour that suggests the absence of any moment of *Augenblick*; any metamorphosis; and any grasp of existential reality and Being, Time or Truth.

Leading authentically means being authentic as one leads, which means being present and attentive to who one is, to who the other is, to one’s shared purpose, informed by the radical insight offered in the moment of vision. An inauthentic person is not present to themselves, nor their followers, since they are enamoured by their ego, captive to the collective Other of the nondescript ‘they’, and almost certainly failing to assume responsibility for themselves and their leadership.

Whereas the inauthentic individual drifts through life, the authentic individual takes responsibility for the possibilities of their life, lived in relationship with others whose life also lies within a particular heritage at a temporal moment. Hence, the authentic leader draws their inspiration from the mission or purpose of which they are a part, following the footsteps of other authentic leaders. Authenticity, and authentic leadership, involves not merely an *I* but a *we*, and not only the *we* of leaders and followers, but the *we* of the company, community and cumulative whole of which the leader is a part.

5 Karol Wojtyła: the human person in community with other persons

5.1 From existentialism to personalism

Chapter 2 noted a number of concerns. These included that the component of balanced processing lacks an epistemology and cognitional theory; the concept of self-awareness invites an anthropological question as to who or what is the self of which one is aware, and, specifically, what it means to be a human person who is self-aware; ALT lacks the ethical theory or frameworks to support an internalised moral perspective that can grasp what is good *for* persons, and how persons should act in accord with their personhood; and ALT has not explored the intersubjective, communal nature of human persons, which grounds relational transparency. The lack of philosophical substance allows authenticity to become little more than sincere autonomy, and establishes a paradoxical tension between authenticity and leadership that ultimately undermines attempts at authentic leadership. This study argues that the combined insights of behavioural, psychological and social sciences, each taken in isolation and then synthesised into a whole, can never reach the truth of the human person, which requires analysis at the level of the person themselves.

Hence, we set out to consider a philosophical perspective, starting with the existentialists Søren Kierkegaard and Martin Heidegger. Although they influence the contemporary understanding of authenticity regarding persons and are frequently cited in the literature, they have attracted little attention in this field. Yet, they have much to offer. The fundamental concern of the existentialists is that people live inauthentic lives, as passive followers of what the existentialists term the crowd, or the ‘they’. The existentialists believe the majority of people live not their own life, but, vicariously, that of another, evaluating one’s interests and actions—and ultimately existence—through the eyes of another. The damaging impact of that is that the mood and opinion of the other becomes the standard for one’s thinking, acting and existing. To be authentic, they argue, one must cease going along with everyone else and take responsibility for one’s own life.

The existentialists make three specific contributions that are helpful for our understanding of authenticity and being an authentic self, and which are largely overlooked within ALT: they reveal the necessity of an *øieblikket*, or *Augenblick*, as a moment of existential insight; the metamorphosis consequent upon that insight; and the subsequent taking of personal responsibility. Further, Kierkegaard considers two spheres, or stages, of authenticity—the

ethical and the religious, in contrast to the inauthentic aesthete—and the possibility of self-fulfilment which derives from taking responsibility. This last point lies somewhat dormant until Wojtyła identifies the human urge for completion and, with the benefit of a personalist perspective, explains how persons become fulfilled. Heidegger, on the other hand, highlights the role of conscience in the *Augenblick*, which discloses one's mortality and finitude, and argues the authentic life is lived as a being-toward-death. Wojtyła, for his part, provides a personalist, and hence more comprehensive, understanding of conscience, and how this relates to self-determination and the becoming of the person.

However, Kierkegaard and Heidegger's focus on the individual means we are still left with unanswered questions, regarding, among other things, the meaning of the person and being a person in relationships with other persons. Their notion of responsibility is primarily in regard to one's authentic self, rather than to one's companions or community. While this can ground a theory of personal action, and so provide ethical insight, it is incomplete as the basis of an ethical theory for individuals in relationships with other individuals. Therefore, although they make a significant contribution to our questions, an understanding of the fullness of the existing, acting *person* who is, or can be, authentic, and who then leads other persons, in relationship with other persons, remains unanswered in either the authentic leadership literature or by the existentialists.

Both existentialists and personalists are troubled by the contiguity of the 'they', that which might be deemed to be the 'faceless' individuals who dictate social behaviour, the undetectable 'somebody' whom one cannot identify, but to whose demands one must conform or risk social ostracism. The 'they' can be that group or clique to whom we wish to belong, for fear of being an outcast. Sometimes people feel a need to belong to the group in order to succeed. Perhaps the real culture in organisations is revealed by those behaviours the nebulous crowd deems unacceptable, because they transgress unspoken conventions, rather than moral norms. In other words, the subtle and often hidden understandings about 'the way we do things here' not only constitutes culture, but is an example of the 'they' in operation. The degree to which one can freely discuss contrary opinions on either contentious moral issues such as gay marriage or climate change, or business matters such as strategic focus or capital allocation, indicate the presence and power of the 'they' in an organisational setting. In these kinds of crowds, although nobody takes responsibility for these diktats, everybody 'knows' the unwritten norms to which one must conform to maintain the status quo. The manifestation of this behaviour indicates leadership failure. While no one controls the crowd, the 'they' encourages everyday

averageness, and hence needs to be a key area of attention for authentic leaders, to ensure no one is captured by the crowd and everyone is able to take responsibility for their own lives.

Existentialists and personalists agree that the person's first real personal act is to rebel against the degradation, depersonalisation and anonymisation of the crowd, which follows an inner awakening to the truth of one's situation. The personalist Mounier notes that the crowd lulls one into a dull, anonymous, life of 'moral mediocrity' (Mounier, 1950, p. 27) and loss of oneself as a 'responsible subject' (p. 27). He confirms the importance of the moment of vision: 'the first act of personal life is an awakening to the consciousness of this anonymous life and a revolt against the degradation that it represents' (p. 27). This is that moment in which a person grasps that they lack independent thought and action, and are living inauthentically in conformance with the crowd—a superficial life of existential averageness.

A closer examination reveals two motifs that lie beneath this existential conflict: first, that there is a human person who acts and, second, that truly personal acts towards oneself and others require persons to take and accept responsibility. These two related themes—the responsible, acting person—are the bedrock of the personalist thought of Karol Wojtyła. This chapter proceeds to introduce Wojtyła and personalism, followed by a discussion of his philosophical foundations. This enables an evaluation of his contribution to the questions that concern this study, seeking answers to the limitations identified in ALT and existentialism.

5.2 Introducing Karol Wojtyła

For a more complete understanding of the human person as a performer of acts, and what it could mean to be an authentically human person, and so an authentic leader, we turn to personalism and the thought of Karol Wojtyła (1920–2005), better known as Pope John Paul II. Personalism emerged as a distinct philosophical stream in the twentieth century, in the context of philosophical and scientific questions about the meaning of the human person (Zúñiga, 2001, p. 160; Mele & Canton, 2014, p. 86), although, as this study has argued, its origins can be traced to Kierkegaard. Personalism is primarily a philosophical framework for thinking about persons, grounded in a theory of personhood and what is unique, irreplaceable and irreducible about persons. It addresses matters that involve persons from the perspective of the dignity and unrepeatability of each person (Mele & Canton, 2014, p. 86) by considering them in a holistic manner, not simply as an object of scientific study or psychological analysis. It helps to resolve the tension between the individual and the collective whole, and explains why persons can never be used as a means to an end, but are an end in themselves. Therefore,

personalism can provide insight regarding the meaning of the human person, and the authenticity of the person, which is lacking in ALT.

Personalism can be found to varying degrees in American, European and Eastern thought (Williams & Bengtsson, 2014). However, the focus here is on the European approach, which developed in three broad streams, across France, Germany and Poland, where we find Karol Wojtyła. Prior to becoming Pope, Wojtyła was a well-regarded philosopher with an extensive body of writing on what it means to be a fully human person and what it means for that person to live in relationship with others. Wojtyła defines personalism as:

the understanding and solving of various human questions and matters in accordance with this premise: that man is a person, an unrepeatable value that does not pass away. (Wojtyła, 2016, p. 159)⁹

This conception arose from a practical concern for persons (Wojtyła, 1993, p. 165) and the dignity due to them. He was convinced that rediscovering human dignity demands not ‘sterile polemics, [but] a kind of “recapitulation” of the inviolable mystery of the person’ (cf. de Lubac, 1993, p. 171). Philosophical reflection on the human person is a consistent theme in Wojtyła’s writings, including his papal writings as Pope John Paul II.¹⁰ However, the magisterial writings are excluded from this analysis, since these have a theological and pastoral intent, and are themselves founded in Wojtyła’s pre-Papal thinking regarding the human person.

Wojtyła is an ‘existential personalist’ (Woznicki, 1980, p. 59) whose thought integrates phenomenology, existentialism and philosophical anthropology within a realistic personalism, and hence can shine light on the meaning of the human person who is, or can be, authentic. He was aware of Heidegger’s thought, opening a Lenten Retreat for Pope Paul VI with the observation that ‘human existence is — wrote Martin Heidegger — an anxiety in itself’ (Wojtyła, 1979a, p. 5). His distinctly personalist philosophy contains ‘echoes of ... Heidegger’s *Sein* and *Sendung*’ (Maliński, 1979, p. 230). As it happens, Wojtyła, like Heidegger, was also influenced by Scheler, and wrote his habilitation thesis on Scheler’s ethical perspective (Acosta & Reimers, 2016, p. 21). Lescoe argues that Heidegger’s notion of *Dasein* influenced Wojtyła’s thinking regarding human dynamism, that the person ‘is a dynamic subject, “who produces himself, if it can be so expressed, — he forms himself and in some way creates himself” (Il problema del costituirsi della cultura attraverso la ‘praxis’ umana, *Rivista di filosofia neo-scolastica*, 49(1977), 515)’ (Lescoe, 1986, p. 5). However, as

we shall see, Wojtyła has a decidedly different understanding of that dynamism and the person's acts of self-determination.

This study claims that Wojtyła's philosophical approach to persons—his metaphysics, anthropology and ethics—can complement, contrast and build on the insights found in the existentialists' search for authenticity and authentic selfhood. His approach also responds to the behavioural and social sciences and their largely traits and strengths-based research into authentic leadership. Since *all* leadership involves human persons, and personalism, at its most basic, ensures the dignity and respect of each human person is the primary consideration of every matter which involves them, Wojtyła's personalism could provide the more philosophically robust foundation that ALT seeks, and, for which this study argues, existentialism is not entirely suited.

The literature review in Chapter 2 found that questions regarding the meaning of authenticity, the being of the being who is called to be authentic and leading other potentially authentic beings remain unanswered within ALT. These are fundamentally philosophical questions. While many commentators within the authentic leadership literature refer to philosophy and philosophical thinkers, particularly the existentialists, the literature review revealed ALT's lack of a philosophical framework embedded in a philosophical tradition. Consequently, questions about the person, including significant concepts such as consciousness and subjectivity, tend to be addressed at the scientific level, which divides the person into specific elements for analysis, and so reduces the person to a mere object for enquiry. This has the effect of distracting one from the whole person. On the other hand, the insights of existentialism, phenomenology and a realist philosophical anthropology offer a deeper understanding of what it means to be a human person, and hence can enrich our understanding of what it means to be and become authentically human. This, in turn, can inform our understanding of authentic leadership.

These are the kinds of concerns addressed by Wojtyła, who sought a sound basis for anthropology and ethics within a philosophy grounded in the person and action. Buttiglione says Wojtyła's 'anthropology contains an exceptional methodological potential' (Buttiglione, 1996, p. 237) beyond that afforded by the humanities and social sciences by situating human behaviour and structures within an 'understanding of the nature of the human subject' (p. 237). Wojtyła's 'commitment to relational ontology and personalism ... [centred on] personal freedom and the correlative notion of authenticity' (Spinello, 2014, p. 17f) made 'a substantial contribution' (p. 17) to phenomenology. Wojtyła enriches phenomenology with 'a

metaphysically grounded anthropology’ (p. 18), which serves as a ‘foundation for engaging in ethical inquiry’ (p. 18) by insisting that a sound ethics is built on a sound anthropology (p. 18). Further, Wojtyła links ‘the moral subject’s authenticity with moral realism ... [taking] seriously the moral ideal of authenticity whereby the moral subject remains true to himself’ (p. 18), in the fullness of all that is true and good about the human person, as distinct from the psychological state of a self-centred individual (p. 18).

Hence, Wojtyła’s philosophical pedigree and personalist perspective, developed in a unique historical and cultural context, provides a possible solution to the metaphysical, anthropological and ethical concerns raised regarding authenticity and authentic leadership. Wojtyła’s key anthropological work, *The Acting Person*, reveals the status of persons ‘in the world, the meaning of freedom and of human fulfillment’ (Editorial Introduction, Wojtyła, 1979c, p. xxii). In other words, here we find a philosophical work on authenticity, since, as this study argues, fulfillment—understood as becoming who and what one is—can be considered equivalent to authenticity. In *The Acting Person*, Wojtyła demonstrates persons are fulfilled in and through morally good actions. If persons are constituted through moral judgement and action, then actions—including leadership acts—must themselves have a moral value. Hence, the way the person acts as a leader constitutes themselves. One becomes the kind of person one is being as a leader.¹¹

5.3 Philosophical foundations

Wojtyła’s perspective is informed by his philosophical foundations. This section explains the relevant aspects of that thought.

5.3.1 A phenomenological starting point

Wojtyła employs a phenomenological approach, starting with lived experience (Wojtyła, 1993h, p. 188f) to understand the human person and their experience of themselves. In contrast to Heidegger, who commences his enquiry with the Being of beings, Wojtyła argues the reality of the person and the person’s acting provides a starting point for understanding the being we call a person and, ultimately, Being itself. The question he addresses in his seminal work, *The Acting Person*, regards ‘what conscious acting or action really is, how the action reveals the person, and how it helps us to gain a full and comprehensive understanding of the person’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 16). Wojtyła explores how when one experiences actions of persons—whether one’s own or another’s actions—one not only grasps that oneself or the other self is performing an action, but readily appreciates a distinction between the action and the actor.

One is confronted with a person acting, and so one questions who and what is given in that experience, not whether someone *is* given. Upon reflection, one realises that the actions of persons disclose something of what it means to be a person (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 20). There is no question about whether the actor *is* a person, since this is ‘irreducibly given in the experience itself of man: person and action are somehow contained in every instance of man’s acting’ (p. 15). Wojtyła (1979c) argues, therefore, that it is reasonable to commence an investigation into persons with the reality of the action one experiences, and the person as a source of that action.

Hence, like Heidegger, Wojtyła’s main focus is on the ontological–existential, rather than the ontic–existentiell. His interest lies in the dynamic interplay between person and action in the human person, to understand the meaning of the person, rather than an empirical analysis of a human object that acts within his field of observation (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 16). Hence, Wojtyła argues, what is given in experience *is* the human in some manner, not merely a set of qualities or attributes: ‘it seems most improbable that man with his conscious acting or action is not given as the object of experience’ (p. 9). The other person who stands before one is not some abstract idea or impression in the mind which—by its nature as an idea—is unable to *contain* the essence of another person (Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 122).¹² Therefore, qualities or components, such as those which are purported to constitute authentic leadership—self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing and internalised moral perspective—provide data about what a person possesses. However, they reveal that a person’s acts do not in and of themselves reveal the person who is presumed to be authentic, nor their leadership. While helpful, they fall short of what is required to grasp the breadth and depth of what constitutes authentic leadership. Empirical knowledge about an individual is a supplement or complement to knowing who that individual is, and their degree of authenticity.

When one grasps ‘*I exist*’ and ‘*I act*’, as distinct from the existing and acting of other human beings, one can also grasp that the actions of the other reveals they also exist as a distinct being. Wojtyła states that, ‘Although I cannot experientially transfer what constitutes my own I beyond myself, this does not mean that I cannot understand that the other is constituted in a similar fashion—that the other is also an I’ (Wojtyła, 1993e). This means that, on the basis that ‘*I act*’, one can conclude ‘*you act*’ and hence ‘*you exist*’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 60). However, one experiences *oneself* experiencing—eating, talking, thinking and so on—in a profoundly different manner to one’s experience of an *other’s* experience—*your* eating, talking, thinking, etc. One does not experience the *other’s experience*, but the impact of an action which the other experiences as originator of that action: ‘everyone is the object of his

own unique experience and no external relation to any other human being can take the place of the experiential relation that the subject has to himself' (p. 6). In short, each human has a unique experience of the human who is themselves (p. 6), leaving little doubt that one is distinct from others and other things, and that the way one experiences oneself is quite distinct from the way one experiences others. This is so even when one is in a very close relationship with that other, although one's experience of others in a relationship can provide deeper insight and understanding of oneself (p. 6).

One's experience of other entities is always coincident with an experience of oneself. Hence, we can say that 'the object of experience' (p. 4) is the human being. However, the one having the experience is a subject of the experience, and so the human being is both 'subject and object' (p. 4) of experience. Hence, when one experiences another's action, one can grasp a distinction between oneself and the other, understanding I am not you and you are not me, with each of us having a distinct set of experiences. However, the same can be said of Caspian, my German Shepherd. He is this, and not another, German Shepherd and has a set of experiences that are distinctly his, whether chasing a rabbit or rolling on the floor. However, while Caspian may recognise another dog as a thing distinct from himself, it is unlikely that he *knows* it is not him—as demonstrated by the dog who chases his tail endlessly, failing to grasp it is him. It is not simply the fact that each person has their own experience, which is unique to humans, but the grasping of that distinction. Having understood what is *not* ourselves, we grasp something *about* ourselves.

This has implications for leadership: to lead others, the leader needs to appreciate that each person has a distinct experience of themselves and others, and interprets those experiences in a personal manner, and therefore needs to be treated as a distinct individual. A leader could not presume, for example, that the way they experience themselves leading—perhaps confident, in charge and inspiring—is the way followers experience them, and the way other leaders experience their own leading. Further, a leader experiences themselves as a self in acts of leadership, and those acts coalesce over time to create both an overall leadership experience and establish one's leader identity. Lastly, since leadership acts involve other persons, the experience is both of oneself and the other in an interpersonal manner. Hence, the leadership experience endures in a cognitive relationship between the leader and the leader's self, and the follower and the follower's self, which is not marked by geographic or temporal proximity but rather by relationship.

5.3.2 Metaphysical realism

Wojtyła's philosophical corpus is grounded in 'metaphysical realism' (Spinello, 2014, p. 25), which he considers 'the intellectual soil' (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 64) for all fields of knowledge. In contrast to subjectivism, which holds there is no reality independent of one's perception (i.e., consciousness is the only reality), metaphysical realism maintains the ontological reality of independent, knowable objects. Wojtyła states that 'It seems obvious, however, that the person, the action, and their dynamic union are more than merely an enactment of consciousness; indeed, they are a reality that exists also apart from consciousness' (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 153), as also are those independent objects. Metaphysical subjectivism ultimately leads to moral subjectivism—the view that there is no moral reality independent of one's perception, in which case the individual or the collective must become the arbiter of moral truth. This study argues that both existentialism and ALT suffer from this deficiency, and hence are unable to resist the sincerely held view of an individual.

This is more than an arcane philosophical concern, since one's epistemological assumptions issue in moral conclusions, which can be the source of considerable division in modern culture and organisations. This is the kind of challenge leaders face when standing for or against a position. A question such as 'Is climate change *real*?' contains a fundamental assumption about one's understanding of reality, which for many people today is predicated on what is observable and measurable, and adjudicated by one's emotions. The answer one gives to that question gives rise to moral behaviour. This becomes more problematic for leaders when the question at hand is morally contentious. Further, one's epistemological outlook also influence one's anthropology; one's understanding of what it means to be a human person is grounded in how one understands reality, or being.

Finding common epistemological ground is a key activity for leaders who wish to find common anthropological and moral ground with their followers. Contemporary leaders face a persistent epistemic challenge to know what is true, to overcome the often opposing, and usually poorly understood, epistemological frameworks that people bring to bear on the challenges and issues they face. While many leadership decisions are made in the absence of all the facts, being able to discern the reality of the situation is critical, particularly as it pertains to authenticity, since authenticity itself refers to reality.

Chapter 2 noted that the balanced processing component of authentic leadership reveals the need for an epistemology, and argued that this is lacking in ALT. In contrast, this study is grounded, like Wojtyła, in a metaphysical realism.

5.3.3 Human cognition and choice

Wojtyła builds his understanding of the human person on this realist foundation, and argues that the person has both material and spiritual dimensions. This is a fundamental tenet of metaphysical realism. If we are to understand the meaning of the person, then it is essential that we grasp the material and spiritual aspects, the relationship between them, and what this reveals about the nature, or essence, of persons.

While one's body is empirically present, the inner, spiritual aspect of a person, being less obvious, can be easily overlooked or misunderstood. However, it is this immaterial aspect of persons where we discover reason and the will, and hence the power of choice and self-determination. Understanding this is essential to leadership, since failure to recognise the person's powers of self-determination must, by default, cause one to reduce the other simply to a material object that has no independent will. Hence, the person can easily be considered as a means to an end. Similarly, a leader who only notionally agrees persons have an inner life can still deprive the other of freedom and choice, the means of personal growth, by employing a command and control style of leadership. This can be equally true of someone who claims to be an authentic leader, when their epistemological assumptions deny the person's spiritual dimension, and hold that consciousness, or interiority, is nothing more than a series of electronic impulses in the human brain.

Wojtyła argues that the process of reasoning, or cognition, involves a psychic 'leap' (Wojtyła, 2016, p. 83) from sensory perception to spiritual function, and that this attests to the spiritual nature of the human mind (p. 73). One is able to reason from a real object to knowledge, to abstract concepts and ultimately to Being itself, which is 'the broadest plane for thought and for philosophy' (p. 69), which is where Heidegger focuses his attention regarding Being (Heidegger, 1962, p. 1). While cognitive operations and processes of abstraction indicate a non-material process, it is the vast depth, breadth and unlimited scale of content humans can imagine and understand that reveals an inner spiritual dimension to persons, unbounded by materiality.

The human capability to reason soon reveals one must often choose between alternatives, which arise because of the need to select between perceived goods—including 'spiritual goods like virtue, knowledge, progress' (Wojtyła, 2016, p. 113). For example, one can face a choice between accepting a promotion, knowing the contribution one can make and wanting the career fulfillment one will enjoy, while on the other hand being cognisant of the impact on one's family and personal relationships, in which one places equal or greater value. Or a leader may

need to choose between promoting a woman over a better qualified man, to establish role models and advance gender equity. Another leader can face a choice between taking a cautious incremental product development strategy, or risk the business on an entirely new product line with exponential potential.

Close examination of the experience of choice reveals two aspects: desire, a longing for what one wants; and volition, the power of the will to choose (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 109). While one may experience a ‘want’, or desire, for something, one is able to choose whether to satisfy or deny that yearning (p. 100). One may feel, for example, like taking a break from work and, in response to one’s question ‘will I?’, choose, on this occasion, to complete the task at hand. The capacity of the will to choose is a distinct power, irreducible to cognition or emotion (Wojtyła, 2016, p. 99), which exists where ‘the deepest functions of personal life concentrate’ (p. 99) within persons. As noted, the inner life of persons, and their power to choose, and so shape themselves, is fundamental to what it means to be a person. It bears on one’s ability to act in an ethical manner, and so informs our understanding of the internalised moral perspective, and ethical wisdom, that ALT advocates.

An act of the will manifests in a choice between perceived goods, wherein one selects a particular object ‘as an end or as a means to an end’ (p. 105), according to the value one associates with that object. To choose for an object, according to the truth or goodness one attributes to that object, does not deny truth or goodness in another object, but reveals what the chooser considers of greater value at that time. Consider, for example, the CEO who chooses to refund advance payments made by customers due to changed circumstances, where customers had earlier acknowledged they had no right to a refund. In doing so, the CEO is not denying the benefit of the firm retaining the funds, particularly in the midst of an economic crisis, but their choice demonstrates that they believe the better path lies in caring for the firm’s customers. One’s choices ultimately refer to what one holds to be true and good. Hence, for leaders, the yardstick for choice is the degree to which the values for which they choose coincide with what is ultimately true and good, not simply with how one feels about those values.

The ability to exercise one’s will and choose between goods reveals the possibility of freedom of choice. Since the will has ‘*no prior determination within itself ... [other than the] need of striving for happiness, for absolute good*’ (p. 105 [emphasis added]), the will, by its very nature, is freely able to choose or reject value as presented by the intellect. For choice to have the character of freedom, one must be free of any coercion, constraint or restriction to a

particular option (Spinello, 2012, p. 31). Enforcing particular choices on others deprives them of their independence.

A free act of the will is therefore an act in which a person determines themselves regarding a particular good or value (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 127). One's freely chosen actions shape and give teleological direction (Wojtyła, 2016, p. 103) to the 'human I' (p. 99). In a genuine act of the will, the person actively directs themselves towards a good or value, without any action from the object itself compelling the person to embrace it. If persons were so obliged, they would therefore be determined by the object and their inner self absorbed by an outer object (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 127). Properly free choices, which acknowledge the primacy of truth rather than feeling, require a deep correspondence between both what is within and what is beyond the person, and integration of those values within oneself (p. 250). This means, that for a person so ordered, the good is not merely a transcendent value one affirms, but a value evidenced in one's actions and continual efforts to choose for the good and to be a good person.

This understanding of freedom as an ability to choose *for* good, for what is ultimately fulfilling of human persons, is distinct from the view we detect in ALT, where choice and freedom refer to a capacity to say 'yes' or 'no', to agree or disagree, on the basis of one's autonomy. The personalist perspective understands freedom operates within reasonable boundaries. Hence, for example, the writer who has mastered their use of the English language has far greater freedom to express their thoughts than the one who lacks a basic understanding of the rules and rubrics and believes that randomly simply stringing words together is an expression of their freedom. For the person who seeks sincere autonomy, norms of behaviour seem like a deprivation of freedom. For the person who seeks human excellence, norms of behaviour create guidelines within which they are free to become excellent.

Therefore, it seems reasonable to suggest that leaders have a responsibility to encourage freedom of choice and the promotion of truth as a guiding principle in their own actions and the actions of others. However, there is an inherent tension between the aims of an organisation and the choices one is asked to make in supporting those objectives. This tension is particularly relevant for a leader, for it is they who must navigate this tension in an authentic manner and help others in their own choices. A challenge arises when the person's will resists 'an object being imposed upon it as a good. It wants to choose, and to affirm its choice, for itself for choice is always the affirmation of the value of the object chosen' (Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 136). This explains why followers are inherently resistant to command and control models of leadership where the leader seeks to impose their will on followers. Where freedom is denied

or diminished, the follower experiences a *fait accompli*, a deprivation of choice, which in some manner denies or diminishes their subjectivity and sense of self. This could result in passive resignation to a leader's demands, with consequent low levels of engagement. In contrast, leaders who care for persons actively affirm followers as free and self-determining persons, respecting their choices even when these differ from one's preferred course of action. These constitute leadership moments, where one can help followers grasp the reasoning behind one's proposed action, allowing them to understand, and then freely choose for the direction, or action, which the leader proposes.

5.3.4 The human person: a psychosomatic unity of body and soul

Since every living being is a unity of material body and immaterial soul, what it means to be a person cannot be understood without understanding the spiritual dimension of persons. Wojtyła says a 'straight line' (Wojtyła, 2016, p. 75) runs from what is distinct about intellectual cognition to what is distinct about the origin of that cognition in the human spirit, rather than matter (p. 75). One can reasonably infer 'a power [a cause] which elicits that [intellectual] content and from the nature of the content we can conclude to the nature of the power itself' (p. 87), namely, the human soul. The human soul is 'the first source and principle' (p. 119) of all a person's acts and, as such, 'animates' the body and gives life to persons. Since the soul is oriented towards the beautiful, the true and the good, the will is attracted towards transcendent values. Hence, persons are drawn to realise themselves in the pursuit of timeless values (Wojtyła, 1993, p. 175). Since persons realise themselves in the pursuit of goodness, it is incumbent on leaders to both treat people in accordance with and to promote the conditions for such values.

The dynamic structure of the person is constituted by a bond between coexisting and cooperating material body and immaterial soul, the 'constitutive elements of ... human nature' (Wojtyła, 2016, p. 121), which together shape 'human experiences and acts' (p. 123). The human being is a 'complete substance' (p. 137) who possesses 'self-existence as a psycho-physical unity [of spiritual soul and physical body] and a whole' (p. 137); not simply a conglomeration of matter and spirit, but *one* substance, *one* human nature, formed in the union of body and soul (p. 139). Although the soul as a 'self-existing substantial being ... can exist independently of the body' (p. 137), the body or soul alone are incomplete substances. These two distinct but coexisting structures are so intimately joined and 'mutually influence each other that [it can be argued] the whole of man's actions depends on spirit and matter' (p. 143).

The soul provides a foundation for ‘the proper dynamics of ... organised matter’ (p. 139) and enlivens ‘the human body [which] lives through the spiritual soul’ (p. 141).

The existence of a spiritual soul with a material body makes one not just a human being but a human person—the soul is ‘the principle and source of the whole spirituality of the human being, and therefore, also that by virtue of which the human being may properly be ascribed the character of a person’ (Wojtyła, 1993l, p. 168). This unified psychosomatic structure of body and soul (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 202) indicates the ‘whole uniqueness’ (Wojtyła, 1993l, p. 168) and ultimate indestructibility (p. 175) of human persons.

Realistic personalism fully grasps and highlights ‘the embodiment of human persons ... [and] the place of the body in human action’ (Crosby, 2004, p. 117). The human person’s existence as an embodied being is independent of awareness of that existence:

there is an embodiment of ourselves as persons that is prior to all conscious body experience and that provides the basis for it ... [i.e.] the more fundamental thing of being embodied at all, is a work of nature, a given of human personhood, preceding and grounding all the conscious relations existing between ourself and our bodies. (p. 124)

Hence, realistic personalism recognises ‘an incarnated being’ (Woznicki, 1980, p. 6) who is ‘identifiable with [their] body ... present in the world ... in [a] particular space and time’ (p. 6).¹³

Therefore, leaders lead persons who are embodied spiritual beings. While one may observe another’s body, and confront their thoughts and feelings, one encounters a person. Hence, the constant challenge for leaders is to consider the whole person of the follower, not only their body or their feelings for example.

5.4 Anthropology: the dynamic structure of persons

Having established the philosophical framework, we are now in a position to consider the question of the human person. Wojtyła’s core insight regards subjectivity, or interiority, of persons, arguing this is what makes human beings to be human persons. Hence, the next stage of this investigation begins with the notion of consciousness, for it is consciousness that enables the discovery of subjectivity. On the basis that subjectivity is the distinctive characteristic of persons, we can find what it reveals about them qua persons.

5.4.1 Consciousness enables experience of self

This study argues that the metaphysical aspects of persons are largely ignored in the ALT literature. However, if one is to be an authentic person, and an authentic leader leading other persons, then it is crucial that one understands what consciousness is and how this is only an aspect of persons, not the complete person. This matters for leaders, because many people have unwittingly adopted a Cartesian mindset and hold that no reality exists beyond their thoughts and feelings, which in turn constitute them. Wojtyła intends to overcome the philosophical ‘cleavage’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 19) between body and soul that emerged from Descartes’s identification of ‘the person with consciousness’ (Wojtyła, 1993l, p. 169). He argues Descartes’s *cogito ergo sum* absolutised consciousness (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 226) and split (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 19) ‘the human being into an extended substance (the body) and a thinking substance (the soul)’ (Wojtyła, 1993l, p. 169). This virtually eliminates the ‘notion of a spiritual soul as the substantial form of that body and as the principle of the whole life and activity of the human being’ (Wojtyła, 1993l, p. 169), undermining the understanding of the will—a faculty of the soul—and, thus, freedom (cf. Wojtyła, 1993l, p. 170). It also diminishes the value of the body in ‘the structural whole of the person’s life’ (Wojtyła, 1993l, p. 169), which is the very means through which one engages with the world. In and through the body, one experiences oneself hearing, tasting, touching, seeing and smelling, enabling one to grasp that it is *I* who experiences, not some other *I* who then somehow transmits the experience to my consciousness to make it my own. In the absence of a sensing body, one would be unable to engage the world. Hence, pure consciousness is a metaphysical impossibility for human beings, and any attempt to identify the self with ‘pure consciousness’ (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 220) ultimately concludes in the annihilation of the subject of the person. In the search for authenticity, whether of oneself or one’s leadership, this is a crucial observation. For, if one identifies the person with consciousness, then one must accept a person is their idea of themselves, independently of how that self may be embodied. If one further accepts authenticity means ‘be true to oneself’ (i.e., one’s *idea* of oneself) with no need for correlation with objective reality, then a leader must remain constantly alert and sensitive to the changing perspective followers have on who they consider themselves to be.

Wojtyła contends consciousness ‘is the fruit of a rational nature’ (Wojtyła, 1993l, p. 170), not ‘a separate and self-contained reality’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 33), nor an ‘independent subject’ (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 226), and which ‘does not absorb ... or overshadow’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 46) the human being. He argues, ‘consciousness always reflects the existence (*esse*) and

activity (*operari*)’ (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 226) of an existing, acting, self. Consciousness, therefore, refers to *the subjective content* of the person’s being and acting (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 33), which enables one to experience oneself as a ‘distinct subject of existence and activity’ (Wojtyła, 1993l, p. 170): ‘the essential function of consciousness is to form man’s experience and thus to allow him to experience in a special way his own subjectiveness’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 42). Since consciousness ‘endows’ (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 227) persons as subjects, they should be treated ‘as a subject’ (Wojtyła, 1993b, p. 210) and not themselves objectified. Considering persons as resources or assets objectifies them and fails to respect their subjectivity.

Consciousness, as subjective content, is not a cognitive operation, such as knowing, which occurs in one’s consciousness (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 226). It enables both ‘an inner view of our actions ... [and the occasion] to *experience these actions as actions and as our own*’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 42). One becomes conscious of oneself as both the subject of one’s acts and the one who is responsible for bringing those actions into existence. *I*, not another, performed this action. Acting consciously is distinct from consciousness of acting, for the person both acts consciously and ‘has the consciousness that he is acting and even that he is acting consciously’ (p. 27). The distinction lies in the fact that ‘consciously’ acting refers to the manner in which one acts, whereas ‘consciousness’ of acting refers to the subjectivity of that act. Therefore, Wojtyła’s analysis reveals a fundamental distinction between *being* the subject, *knowing* oneself as the subject and ‘*experienc[ing]* oneself as the subject of one’s own acts and experiences’ (p. 44).

5.4.2 Conscious action reveals dynamic structure of person

When Wojtyła speaks of ‘action’, he specifically means ‘*acting consciously*’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 27 [emphasis added]), hence it is not just action but also *conscious acting* that reveals the person: ‘both *action* and *conscious acting* tell us of the dynamism proper to man as a person’ (p. 27). On this basis, Wojtyła makes a further distinction between actions persons cause to happen, by an act of will which determines how ‘I act’ (p. 127), and actions that happen to them. This distinction between action and happening ‘shows the person as a person’ (p. 127) and reveals both the efficacy and transcendence of the person. This dual reality—person’s act and something that happens in or to persons—provide the complete picture regarding ‘the subjectivity of the human being’ (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 224). Wojtyła’s observation that the human person has direct experience of themselves as both someone who acts and to whom something happens deepens our understanding of human persons by granting an insight about personal subjectivity and the *I* whose acts underpin human activity. He

profoundly observes that persons understand themselves—as distinct from another self—to be present in an action, that one has an experience of oneself acting or being acted upon. Persons are subjects, an ‘I’, who is revealed in the moment of action. Hence, while human beings possess human nature, action reveals human beings to be human persons, because action reveals subjectivity and the self as the cause—*I did this, and I know myself in the doing.*

Examination of the human person in light of action reveals a unified dynamic structure consisting of two ‘mutually opposite’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 62) aspects that encompass ‘man-acts’ and ‘something-happens-in-man’ (p. 61f). The person is revealed both as the self who is the cause of action (efficacy) and the self as subject to whom something happens (subjectivity) (p. 71). For example, one is both aware of oneself reading a book and aware of the impact on oneself of what is read—I read, and something happens to me when I read. One is also aware of the impact of one’s actions on others and vice versa—something happens to me when you act towards me. Hence, an analysis of the total dynamic structure of human experience and action (p. 60) reveals ‘human persons are *subjects* through their bodies and psyches’ (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 224 [emphasis added]), given in an objective manner in that experience (p. 221).

The distinction between ‘man-acts’ and ‘something-happens-in-man’ is discovered in ‘the moment of efficacy’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 66), when one experiences oneself as the agent, as the causal origin of one’s action (p. 66f). It is the moment, and power, of efficacy that makes ‘conscious acting the *action* of the person’ (p. 29), and is the means by which one determines oneself (cf. Wojtyła, 1993h). This moment to which Wojtyła refers is quite different to the existentialists’ moment of vision as existential insight, for Wojtyła is referring to a point in time—as distinct to the *Augenblick* which transcends time—in which one exercises one’s will. However, there is also a moment, perhaps bordering on the existential, where one grasps with considerable clarity that *I act*, and that one’s actions are a direct consequence of one’s willing. Hence, the person who reflects on their experiences readily identifies themselves as the source and cause of their acting, grasping their actions result from their efficacy, or willing (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 67). Therefore, ‘*he must accept his actions as his own property and also, primarily because of their moral nature, as the domain of his responsibility*’ (p. 67 [emphasis added]). Wojtyła points out that since one is the cause of one’s actions, those actions are one’s own property and do not belong to another. Further, actions have consequences, for good or bad, both for and beyond oneself, and so have a moral dimension. Hence, one must assume responsibility for those actions one brings into being and for the outcome of those actions. As the existentialists observe, the taking of responsibility for one’s actions is one of the first steps

towards authenticity, after one has divorced oneself from the crowd. Wojtyła, however, explains how such responsibility arises from an aspect of human nature, the power of efficacy.

Although the distinction between the efficacious person who acts and the subjective person to whom something happens may ‘seem to split the field of human experience into two mutually irreducible factors’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 71), there is no doubt ‘he who acts is simultaneously the one in whom something ... happens’ (p. 72). If, then, persons are one, not many, the ‘unity and identity’ (p. 72) of persons must lie in some ‘ultimate ontological foundation’ (p. 72) that accounts for the person as both a subject and an objective being (p. 72). Those ontological roots reside in the personal subject as a being who really exists and really acts, and in whom every action and happening issues or occurs (p. 72). Hence, Wojtyła distinguishes between the substance of what a person is, and the subjectivity of who that person is, while maintaining an ontological unity, rather than a conflict, between being and consciousness. He argues that understanding subjectivity is of fundamental importance when we are faced with a wide range of views about what it means to be a person, and particularly when consciousness continues to be confused with personhood (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 219). He further argues that subjectivity is what is irreducible in persons, and to that we now turn.

5.4.3 Subjectivity and the irreducible in persons

Wojtyła argues that a phenomenological approach, starting with one’s own lived experience as ‘someone who exists and acts’ (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 221), provides an intelligible path to understanding human subjectivity. This is because ‘in no other object of the experience of the human being are the constitutive elements of this subjectivity given ... in such an immediate and evident way as in my own self’ (p. 221). An enquiry grounded in experience enables one to build ‘an image of the person as subject’ (p. 221), without in any way eclipsing the intersubjective reality of the person’s action (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 60); that is, highlighting the person as subject does not deny or denigrate the embodied being of the person through which we encounter other persons.

Subjectivity is a fundamental dimension of each person, within the totality of who one is as a person (Wojtyła, 1993b, p. 216), and provides ‘the basis of understanding the human being as a *person*’ (p. 211). The term ‘subjectivity’, when used of a person, refers to ‘the whole experience of the human being which reveals the human being to us as someone who exists and acts, ... allow[ing] ... us to conceive the human being as the subject of that existence and activity’ (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 222). The fact of subjectivity guarantees ‘the identity of this human being in existence and activity’ (p. 223) and provides a ‘gateway into the mystery of the

person' (Crosby, 2016). It reveals the human person as a 'unique and unrepeatable' (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 221) self, as a someone rather than a mere individual.

Subjectivity is grounded in 'the essentially human *suppositum*' (p. 225), and so is an aspect of being a person, not simply an aspect of consciousness or empirical structure. The *suppositum humanum*, which unifies substance and subjectivity in an ultimate ontological foundation, must 'manifest itself as a human self: metaphysical subjectivity must manifest itself as personal subjectivity' (p. 225). Neither pure consciousness, with its emphasis on idealism, nor the empirical sciences which provide ever more data for understanding, can provide a complete understanding of human subjectivity, which can only be fully understood via a realist metaphysical perspective informed by phenomenology.

Human subjectivity unveils what is ultimately irreducible about the human person, the unique unrepeatable *I* 'by virtue of which ... [one] is not just *a particular human being* — an individual of a certain species — but *a personal subject*' (Wojtyła, 1993b, p. 214). The concept of subjectivity provides a rich answer to the perennial human question: 'who am I?', going beyond the genetic, demographic or geographic sense to the ontological, moral and teleological sense. In looking to one's internal, invisible, subjectivity, upon oneself as a subject, one 'is an "eyewitness" of his or her own self — of his or her own humanity and person' (p. 214).

In the encounter with oneself as a self-experiencing subject, one cannot but '*pause* at the irreducible' (p. 214 [emphasis added]), at the profundity of what has been discovered about the human person as a unique, unrepeatable human subject who possesses, governs and fulfils themselves. Pausing is no momentary hesitation, as one might pause before answering a question, but an 'inward movement of the heart' (Kierkegaard, 2008, p. 118) that appreciates and holds in awe that which is perceived.

An understanding of irreducibility becomes clearer when we consider the broad animal species to which human beings belong. The animal species is itself reducible to further categories, such as canines and felines, and also the human being, who was traditionally distinguished from other animals by rationality. While such a distinction may express a 'snug fit' (Crosby, 2016) of humans with the world of nature, the notion of rational animal is insufficient for highlighting what is ultimately irreducible about humans (Wojtyła, 1993b, p. 211) since it objectifies the human person as one among many existent beings. It fails to distinguish between human beings at an essential level, and simply 'marks out' the 'metaphysical terrain ... in which personal human subjectivity is realised' (p. 212). If all that is distinct about being human is rationality, it would not be possible to identify anything unique

about any specific human being, which clearly does not accord with experience. Hence, the defining characteristic of rationality may be further reduced to personal characteristics in a concrete particular person with their own distinct history. What ultimately sets persons apart, defining them as persons, is their subjectivity—persons as self-aware subjects who understand themselves understanding and who judge their own judgements. *This* subject who knows themselves as this subject. There is no smaller category; subjectivity is what is *irreducible* in the person. Every other aspect of being human is held in common with others, for example, rationality (other humans are rational), gender (other humans are male/female) and traits (other humans are compassionate/friendly/and so on). Hence, defining persons by common characteristics does not capture or explain what is unique about each specific person. However, no other person is *this* person, who knows themselves as a subject, both through their experience of themselves as a self, and the other as *not* themselves.

Understanding the irreducibility of subjectivity enables us to grasp persons are persons, not simply an individual human being (Wojtyła, 2016, p. 155). Although everyday language often uses the terms ‘individual’ or ‘person’ to refer to the same reality—a human being—to speak of *a* person, of this specific person, is to refer to a unique, incommensurable, incommunicable member of the human species, as distinct from a countable individual (Williams & Bengtsson, 2014, p. 34). While a census of the population may count how many individuals inhabit a city, each of those individuals is a distinct human person, possessing ‘consciousness, intentionality, will ... [and] the radical capacity to reason, laugh, love, and choose’ (p. 35) in a manner that is uniquely personal to each. Mounier captures the sense with some precision when he states that a person is not ‘*a* Bernard Chartier, he is Bernard Chartier’ (1950, p. ix).

Hence, what is ‘irreducible’ in human persons is the particular expression of the universal human being in each concrete individual, namely, subjectivity.

Hence, from a phenomenological starting point in the action of persons, we have established that those actions reveal persons as real, not notional, beings, who are composed of spirit and matter—body and soul—who know the world via reason and shape themselves via their free choices. Knowing and choosing, as interior operations, manifest in conscious action. Hence persons know themselves as a subject who acts, and this subjectivity is the ultimate foundation of personhood.

Our analysis of persons and action, and an understanding of ontological unity and subjectivity, enables us to discern a three key aspects of persons: they are unique, irreplaceable

and incommunicable; they are a someone, and not a something; and they possess ontological and moral dignity.

5.4.4 Persons are unique and irreplaceable

When we speak of particular persons, we refer not simply to a part of humanity that is incomplete without the other parts, but to a complete individual person whose specific subjectivity is not common to other persons (cf. Klubertanz, 2005, p. 251). While all persons are marked by subjectivity, *my* subjectivity is not shared with any other. Hence, subjectivity reveals each human person is unique and unrepeatable (Wojtyła, 1993b). This means the person is not merely some instance or specimen of humanity, but rather an irreplaceable being that exists for its own sake, living out of their own centre (Crosby, 2016), existing as themselves and not any other. Conversely, non-personal individuals are specimens or instances that can replace, and be replaced by, another of their kind. An insect, a rock or a chair, for example, is replaceable by another insect, rock or chair. However, only persons are irreplaceable: ‘another instance of person does not replace this instance of person’ (Crosby, 2016). Imagine arriving at work on Monday to find you have a new CEO who has a similar appearance, traits and attributes—to the extent they could almost be a twin—as the person for whom you worked for on Friday. The Chairman’s explanation that this new leader is the same as your previous leader may sound reasonable with regard to (say) strategic execution and leadership capability, but the Chairman would be delusional if he claimed the CEO was *identically* the same. No matter how closely one person approximates another, it is self-evident that the other is *not* the same as this one, and certainly no other is the same as oneself. One may be replaceable in terms of role and function, but is never replaceable in terms of personhood.

Since persons are unique and irreplaceable, they are also *incommunicable*—they cannot be ceded to, or supplanted by, another (Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 125). Each person belongs to themselves alone and ‘is a self-possessing and independent being, with an inner life that is not shared by others’ (Spinello, 2012, p. 39). Since persons are incommunicable, one’s will cannot be replaced by another’s act of their will (Wojtyła, 2013, p. 24).

5.4.5 Persons someone not something

Since efficacy and subjectivity are united in an ontological foundation within the human person, we readily refer to *someone* rather than ‘something’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 74) when we speak of persons, who differ from things in both ‘structure and degree of perfection’ (Wojtyła,

1993a, p. 121). A human person is always conscious of themselves as ‘a person, “some-one” as distinct from “some-thing”’ (p. 122)—the same conclusion reached by Heidegger, albeit via a different route (cf. Heidegger, 1977, p. 5). The someone–something distinction is captured with incisive clarity by Mounier:

Man is capable of living like a thing; but since he is not a thing, he feels that to live like one is a dereliction of duty: it is the ‘distraction’ of Pascal, the ‘aesthetic stage’ of Kierkegaard, the ‘inauthentic life’ of Heidegger, the ‘alienation’ of Marx, the ‘self-deception’ of Sartre. Man thus distracting himself is living as though exiled from himself ... Personal life begins with the ability to break contact with the environment, to recollect oneself, to reflect, in order to re-constitute and re-unite oneself on one’s own centre. (1950, p. 33)

Hence, persons have value as persons and cannot be treated as an objective but ‘as a subject in the dimension in which the specifically human subjectivity of the human being is determined by consciousness’ (Wojtyła, 1993b, p. 209).

We observe that persons respond to other persons not as they would to an object or a thing, but ‘to the knowledge that the human being concerned is a person’ (Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 123) who is of value because they are a person. Personal existence grounds personal value (p. 121). Importantly, personhood obtains despite the inevitable changes in the operations of persons due to (say) age or injury (Williams & Bengtsson, 2014, p. 34).

Acts that reduce persons to objects are depersonalising and, hence, manipulative and exploitative. While one may lack awareness of one’s actions that objectify others, a person knows instinctively when they are being objectified and treated as a thing for another’s satisfaction. This can happen very subtly in the workplace when persons are labelled (e.g., as ‘you girls’) in a manner that establishes the basis for an alienating ‘us and them’ culture, then further entrenched when ‘them’ become the subject of jokes and derogatory behaviour that remains unchallenged. In such a scenario, persons are rapidly depersonalised by the insidious ‘they’, and become treated as ‘things’, as objects for another’s use and abuse. This can be observed in the treatment of junior staff expected to work extraordinary hours, of foreigners who take ‘our’ jobs, and in bullying and harassment of anyone who does not appear to conform with accepted standards. Truly effective leaders, who see the other firstly as persons, implicitly know to resist this kind of behaviour, both in themselves and others.

5.4.6 Persons have both ontological and moral dignity

The subjectivity of the human person, and the unique, irreplaceable someone that a person is, is the grounds for human dignity:

the significance of every person is such that he is irreplaceable in the position he occupies in the world of persons. Such is the majestic status of the person, endowing it with the dignity of a universe; and yet also its humility, for in this dignity each person is equivalent to every other, and persons are more numerous than the stars. (Mounier, 1950, p. 41)

Persons possess both ontological and moral dignity. Ontological dignity refers to the dignity one is due because of personhood and is revealed in, for example, the frequent insistence on human rights for marginalised or dispossessed persons. While the proponents of those rights may not necessarily agree with what constitutes a human person, the very fact they argue *for* human rights suggests something unique about *being* human, that the person has a human nature and that dignity attaches to that nature. Moral dignity refers to the respect one is owed to choose and act freely—within the bounds imposed by ontological dignity—and is confirmed in each person’s right to exercise their will in their pursuit of truth and goodness, in relationship with others, to become the best person they can be. While ontological dignity establishes a right to reasonable work, for example, moral dignity respects each person’s right to choose their particular work. This is why collectivist societies which determine the work one does undermine human wellbeing, as they deprive people of the dignity conferred by freedom. A problem arises when the *mortal* being fails to be considered a *moral* person, such as when one’s employees are seen as mere workers who provide physical or intellectual labour, rather than persons with hopes and dreams and aspirations.

5.5 Ethics: persons and moral action

This study argues that, while ALT highlights the need for an internalised moral perspective and claims authentic leaders act in a more ethical manner, it fails to present an ethical foundation or framework. It further argues that such foundations are grounded in an understanding of the person, and so, having explained the meaning of the person, we proceed to consider the relationship between personhood and moral action. This provides the foundation for a discussion of ethical frameworks in Chapter 6.

Wojtyła grounds his approach to understanding persons in the ‘fundamental condition’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 13) of the person, the ‘real objective unity of the experience of moral value

and the experience of man' (p. 13), and argues 'the objective truth of action ... is the core of human morality' (Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 154). Rather than an abstract philosophising via anthropology and ethics, Wojtyła's phenomenological approach examines the dynamic and existential unity between anthropology and ethics in the real experience of the human person to reveal that person to the enquirer. The ontic and moral unity of persons indicates the 'link of ethics and metaphysics that is formed in the person; it emerges from the person's *efficacy and subjectivity*' (Wojtyła, 2013, p. 284 [emphasis added]), which lies at the very foundation of the human person—one who both wills acts and who is subject to, and shaped by, acts so willed. Therefore, the person is realised by virtuous acts—those which accord with the good of personhood—and ruined by vicious acts (p. 284). One's efficacy as an acting subject in relation to activity is intimately connected with one's responsibility for that action (Wojtyła, 1993h, p. 189), since if one is able to choose in the direction of a perceived good, one is also obliged to take responsibility for that choice and for the outcome that follows. Hence, taking personal responsibility for oneself, and one's self-determining acts, indicates a level of personal maturity and must be a prelude to leadership, for a person who cannot take responsibility for themselves should not have responsibility for others.

Hence, the moral dimension of an action cannot be neglected as it aids our grasp of the human being as a human person. Morality and human action are bound in such a manner that 'morality has no real existence apart from human acting' (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 70). While morals and actions are distinct and separate, they are existentially entwined (p. 70). Or, to put it another way, *human* action has no real existence apart from morality. When Wojtyła talks of 'action', he is specifically referring to actions of moral agents—persons—and so these have moral significance (p. 11). Therefore, anthropology and ethics are directly entwined since morality is manifest in action and actions are manifestations of the person. In other words, human action can always be understood as *moral* action, unless referring to actions of instinct. If humans either never acted, or could never act of their own volition, then morality and moral value would not exist, since acts would be simply instinctual—like those of an animal—and contain no moral goodness or badness. Therefore, since persons are moral agents, and hence morally good or bad, persons, *not* organisations, are responsible and should be held to account for morally good or bad acts. To say, for example, 'the company damaged the environment', or 'the company does not pay fair wages' fails to take into account that moral responsibility rests with the persons who acted in such a manner to produce those outcomes. Hence, the character of persons is the source of the culture of organisations.

Since actions cohere with personhood, morality is a fundamental aspect of being human (Wojtyła, 1993j, p. 141). Therefore, to say actions reveal persons (Wojtyła, 1979c, pp. 10, 16, 80) allows one to infer that actions reveal the moral dimension of persons, since actions of persons by nature have a moral dimension. Hence, one's *full* self includes one's *moral* self—one's moral values and moral actions—and so morality, and moral integration, must be an essential aspect of authenticity, of being who one is. The fact that good and evil are manifest in the actions of human persons cannot be avoided—the moral dimension of anthropology cannot be ignored or overlooked, as if one can act in a morally neutral manner.

Personalism therefore shines a light on what we might call the 'moral footprint' of our acts. Human actions have both transitive (beyond self) and intransitive (within self) effects—they impact persons in an enduring manner, leaving a 'moral imprint' *within* the person. This precedes, accompanies and succeeds the moral footprint *of* the person (i.e., *I* am shaped by my actions, for good or bad): '*Human actions once performed do not vanish without trace: they leave their moral value, which constitutes an objective reality intrinsically cohesive with the person, and thus a reality also profoundly subjective*' (p. 151 [emphasis added]). Moral values 'determine the inner quality of human actions ... [and leave] an *imprint* whereby man as a person, owing to his actions that may be good or may be evil, himself becomes either good or evil' (p. 13 [emphasis added]). This has profound implications for leadership: our actions *change* ourselves and others. We leave a moral imprint on those we touch—a theme to which we shall return to later.

Since the human person has an ontological integrity—the mind and body are inseparable in the one being—a person's inner intent and exterior act are inextricably bound, therefore, morality 'comprises the good and bad of inner responses and attitudes' (Crosby, 2004, p. 125), not only the impact or outcome of one's actions. Hence, the personalist perspective shifts 'the moral centre of gravity ... [to] the interiority of persons' (p. 115), bringing 'interior intentions and motives' (p. 115) to the fore, without diminishing bodily action. Persons experience in oneself 'the moral value of good and bad' (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 48) as a consequence of their actions. One is an agent in a 'remarkable drama of human innerness, the drama of good and evil enacted on the inner stage of the human person by and among his actions' (p. 49). This experience of moral goodness or badness reveals one to oneself 'as the one who is either good or evil' (p. 49), exposing morality as a 'subjective and personal reality' (p. 49).

A personalist perspective therefore offers a very distinctive approach to moral thinking. A traditional natural law approach emphasises universal truths and objective moral norms; holds

actions should accord with those truths; and considers human beings as rational, free, social and capable of growing in virtue (Smith, 2018). Conversely, personalism emphasises the concrete particular person, subjective consciousness of moral norms and recognises that persons are attracted to what is true and good. It understands persons as self-conscious, self-determining, self-giving and capable of growing in self-mastery over one's passions. Hence, persons 'must make a gift of self' (Smith, 2018) to live and become who they are. A personalist argument therefore holds that morality and living a moral life regards 'the activity of perfecting the conscious being' (Wojtyła, 1993c, p. 54) and personal responsibility for that life, rather than a focus on rules that delineate right from wrong. For example, while proponents of natural law argue fornication should be avoided because such acts contravene one's nature, personalists argue one should avoid fornication because doing so does not accord with the gift of oneself, or being master of one's passions (Smith, 2018).

5.6 Authenticity in the Wojtyła literature

Recall that Chapter 2 identified six issues regarding ALT, concerning anthropology of the human person, epistemology, ethical action, intersubjectivity, authenticity and authentic leadership. Our consideration of Wojtyła's thought has thus far provided a personalist perspective on the meaning of the human person and the ontological integrity of that person which grounds moral action in the person. We now divert slightly to consider authenticity and to show that the personalist notion of fulfillment conforms with authenticity. However, it offers considerably more depth and breadth to what persons seek in authenticity. We will then be in a position to explain how one can be fulfilled and how ultimate fulfillment occurs in community with others, hence addressing the questions of authenticity and intersubjectivity. In the penultimate chapter, analysing the contribution of both the existentialists and personalists, we address the final concern raised in the literature review regarding the problematic nature of authentic leadership.

Wojtyła's thought offers a significant response to the shortcomings identified in the ALT literature. That literature notes the essence of authenticity involves a distinction between what is genuine or what is merely an imitation, and hence it traditionally refers to being true, whether with regard to objective reality, or a moral way of life, where one's actions align with moral realities, which is nearer to the Wojtyła ideal. However, contemporary notions of authenticity tend to emphasise one's own truth that is discovered within (Guignon, 2008, p. 279), grounded in a psychological state, such as feeling authentic (Iszatt-White & Kempster, 2019, p. 356) and the association of authenticity with traits and identity (Novicevic et al.,

2006). Existentialists argue that authenticity is an individualistic pursuit that entails personal responsibility and the rejection of external authority (Golomb, 2005, p. 14). The ALT literature adopts the individualism of the existentialists and associates responsibility with ownership of one's experiences and actions that are true to oneself (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 242), particularly one's inner thoughts and feelings (Harter, 2002, p. 382). This is despite the inherent difficulties in truly knowing oneself (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 386). Hence, this study argues that the contemporary notion of authenticity may ultimately be understood as sincere autonomy. Further, ALT fails to afford responsibility the prominence shown by the existentialists and, as we shall see, Wojtyła, and, in particular, the moral obligations responsibility creates because of the personalistic nature of the relationship between persons.

5.6.1 Authenticity refers to truth, not a feeling

Wojtyła rejects any notion of authenticity grounded in emotion and holds that authenticity conveys the notion of *truth*, or truthfulness. He states:

authenticity is indicative of the fulfillment of freedom which depends on the certainty of truth, that is to say, on the reference to an authentic value and thus the validity of the judgment about the positive value of the object, concerning which a choice or a decision is being made. (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 233)

He then distinguishes between authenticity grounded in truth and that based on one's feelings, noting that these can often be opposed: an 'understanding of the notion of "authenticity" — *based on truthfulness* — may sometimes be contrary to its understanding based on sensitivity alone' (p. 233 [emphasis added]). Emotions are a poor guide, since they 'divert the "gaze of truth" ... from the object of the act and the act itself, and deflect it toward ... our feelings as we act' (Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 154).

Wojtyła uses *autentyczna/autentyczność* ('authentic/authenticity') in the sense of what is actually true, in contrast with those who hold what feels true 'must be acknowledged as "*authentic*" ... [and] good' (Wojtyła, 2013, p. 147 [emphasis added]). This erroneously equates a feeling of authenticity, when one experiences a 'saturation' of "true (sincere) affection" (p. 136), with the fact of authenticity. Wojtyła observes that one can be overwhelmed by feelings about the authenticity of what is experienced, because of a 'subjectivism of affections' (p. 147), which then attributes true judgement to the emotions. Subjectivism fosters egoism (p. 138) and empowers the ego as arbiter of truth, granting authenticity (i.e., truthfulness) to lived experience. This can result in disintegration of the person, since emotions overshadow

and detach themselves from the totality of the person, and, second, allow the act to be judged according to subjective emotion rather than objective principles (Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 154). Hence, an act is considered good because it feels authentic. However, one may feel good, and authentic, about actions that are themselves objectively wrong. The problem of the individual as arbiter of truth, although an age-old problem, is reinforced by the existentialist attitude that gives primacy to the individual's lived experience as criteria for truth. One's 'truth', therefore, becomes impregnable to argument when grounded in one's unquestionable experience.

Wojtyła's claim that the notion of authenticity is 'based on truthfulness' (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 233), and that *authenticity is more than a feeling and must be grounded in objective reality*, contrasts with any notion that insists 'feelings are the only source of man's cognitive relations to values and that apart from them there are no other authentic means of knowing values' (p. 233). However, rather than necessarily being a source of knowledge about values, the emotions and affections can 'avert "the gaze of truth" from what is objective in action, from the object of the act and from the act itself, and turn it toward what is subject in action, toward the lived-experience alone' (Wojtyła, 2013, p. 136). Affection absent truth 'possesses only a subjective veracity' (p. 136) and assumes what feels authentic must be true and good. While one may strongly feel they are 'authentic':

it is not the strength, the power of conviction, or the authenticity of belief with which the given subject passes a judgment that determines the veracity of the judgment, but its conformity with that to which or to whom the given judgment pertains. *The subject is the exclusive author of the judgment, but is not, however, the author of its truth.* (p. 136, footnote [emphasis added]).

Wojtyła has no dispute with the possibility and reality of person's feeling authentic. What he argues, however, is that what one feels authentic about does not derive its truthfulness from the strength of one's emotion. Such feelings must be tested against reality.

Therefore, authenticity must be grounded in truth and the truth about *the human person* (i.e., authenticity has an ontological foundation), rather than in subjective feelings of psychological wellbeing. Hence, authenticity is not as simple as 'being true to oneself', nor feeling responsible and autonomous. It involves being true *in the context of objective reality* to oneself *as an embodied incommunicable, unrepeatable, self-determining person*. One may feel self-aware, ethically competent, relationally transparent and unbiased—in accord with the

generally accepted four components of authenticity—while operating in ways that are completely inimical to personhood, human authenticity and authentic leadership.

5.6.2 Authentic actions are moral actions

There is another way that Wojtyła approaches authenticity. He emphasises that persons are both ‘the subject and the agent of an action’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 150), and actions are ‘*authentic* act[s] of a person’ (p. 150 [emphasis added]) when the act is consistent with personhood, and so contain personalist value (p. 270). Hence, there is a coherence between authentic persons and authentic acts of the person (p. 300).

This study has noted that, since actions, as acts of persons, accord or disagree with what is good and true, one’s actions must have moral standing. Hence, moral reality is ‘a sphere of the human being’s authentic transcendence’ (Wojtyła, 1993j, p. 154) and cannot be separated from the human person. This means a person is ‘an authentic author and producer’ (Wojtyła, 1993i, p. 118) of moral outcomes through one’s actions.¹⁴ If persons both will and choose for true good, and produce moral outcomes, the authenticity of an act must also be determined by the object of the act—the true and good intended by the act—rather than exclusively by the agent. Hence, one is able to know if one has acted inauthentically, when one has acted in a manner inconsistent with what is true and good. Therefore, actions, as ‘the locus of authentic ethical experience’ (Wojtyła, 1993k, p. 10), are authentic acts of persons when those acts accord with ‘the truth about the moral good’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 146). Since the person is ‘independent of the objects of his own acting’ (p. 138), it is accordance with truth, ‘contained in every authentic choice of decision making’ (p. 138), rather than with the agent, that makes an ‘action the authentic form of the “act of the person”’ (p. 146).

Understanding that authentic actions regard objective truth provides a means of addressing the common attribution of authenticity on the basis of emotion, of how one feels about an act or another person. On this view, acting in accord with one’s feelings is presumed to indicate one is ‘being true’ to oneself. According to this argument, the ‘authentic’ person must let others know how they really feel. However, this can become an excuse for appalling behaviour towards one’s colleagues, corporation and community, with little regard for the impact on others. One may presume an act of anger and abuse towards another is authentic because it accords with one’s feelings. However, such acts, directed at a person who, qua person, has value in their own right, lack moral goodness and so are inauthentic. It is not surprising that authentic leadership can be viewed in a negative light if this damaging and immature behaviour is construed as authentic leadership (cf. for example, Ford & Harding, 2011). However, if

authenticity corresponds with truth and goodness, one's authentic self is not the angry abusive leader, despite one's emotional disposition at any given moment. Living in accordance with personhood, with what is true and good, means developing self-mastery over one's emotions and desires. In other words, a person who behaves in a manner that contradicts their humanity, on the basis that they are 'being true to themselves', should be coached or counselled, not congratulated. Authenticity is grounded in truth, and the truth about personhood, not merely in one's true feelings. Personhood places demands on the way one treats both oneself and others, and anything that diminishes personhood diminishes oneself.

Leaders cannot avoid the question of moral norms. Merely claiming one is 'ethically competent' because one feels they are so is insufficient in the absence of a demonstrable framework against which that claimed competency is measured. Given the significant human impact of moral action, and the concerns raised in the ALT literature about ethical failure, it seems self-evident that leadership must be informed by moral reality. By way of illustration, no Board would appoint a CEO who argued he was strategically competent based entirely on his own view of what being strategic entails without testing that perspective against some reality of what strategy involves. Likewise, nor should they appoint someone who is an exclusive witness to their own ethical competence.

5.6.3 Authentic *communio personarum*

Wojtyła also speaks of authenticity regarding relationships with others in community, stating persons 'should strive to develop, maintain and expand *I-thou* and *we* relationships in their authentic forms' (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 253). While relationships include emotional content, the development of authentic relationships requires more than a positive feeling towards another: 'while in no way detracting from the importance of emotions and spontaneity in the development of authentic I-other relationships ... the actualisation of such relationships always depends to a basic degree on the will' (Wojtyła, 1993e, p. 203). Authentic human relationships require an act of the will, an intentional choice to engage with the other as a person, rather than as an object.

Wojtyła often uses the term 'authentic' with respect to 'communities of persons', for which he employs the Latin *communio personarum*. Fully personal relationships with others occur in the context of 'authentic human community', constituted of 'I-thou relationships as a mutual relationship of two subjects' (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 245). They together create 'an authentic *communio personarum*' (p. 252) in and through their shared human experiences, which 'authentically draws people together and unites them' (p. 257) in a community of persons.

Communio does not simply refer to a ‘being-with-others’, but to a ‘mode of being and acting ... [which] mutually confirm[s] and affirm[s] one another as persons’ (Wojtyła, 1993m, p. 321).

Wojtyła is arguing that the key to authentic community is authentic relationships, which are grounded in a mutuality that recognises and affirms the personhood of the other, rather than unequal relationships. Hence, authentic human community is grounded in personalism, and can never be realised by individualism or totalitarianism,¹⁵ since both lack authentic personalist relationships and cannot offer a ‘sufficient foundation for any authentic human community’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 276).

By extension, therefore, personalism, and authentic personalist relationships are the key to effective work environments. While ALT talks of relational transparency, or orientation, Wojtyła reveals the key to authentic relationships in a social environment is mutual respect for the personhood of the other, and the adoption of an *I-thou*, rather than an *I-object*, attitude.

5.6.4 Authentic human practices and authentic culture

Wojtyła claims ‘human praxis ... provides us with the most direct route to understanding *humanum* in its deepest plenitude, richness, and *authenticity* [emphasis added]’ (Wojtyła, 1993n, p. 264). He explains *humanum* refers to ‘the truth concerning the human person’ (p. 265), while the term ‘praxis’ ‘consider[s] both the subjective and objective aspects of the meaning of human experience ... [It] combines the Aristotelian understanding of “act of man” with a more modern use of praxis as “work of man”, works of a specifically external nature’ (Corrigan, 2017). Hence, praxis refers to those commonly accepted conducts and behaviours that influence the development of culture, whether at familial, communal, organisational or national levels, but with a particular emphasis on work as, for example, the praxis of teaching.

Therefore, truly human praxis refers to that conduct and those behaviours that respect the truth about the human person qua person, rather than those which consider her a mere acquirer and consumer of goods, and which therefore, constitute *authentic* culture (Wojtyła, 1993n, p. 268). Therefore, authentic culture—which truly enhances personhood—is constituted through authentic human action, through which ‘people become more human ... [rather than] acquire more means’ (p. 268). Wojtyła suggests ‘an overabundance of means, a superfluity of what people *have*, obscures who they *are* and who they ought to be’ (p. 269). Hence, environments that encourage an overabundance of possessions and objectify persons as consumers conceal and deny the truth about the human person, impair one’s ability to live as an authentic person and, hence, constitute an inauthentic culture. Culture befitting of human

persons prioritises human persons over human products (p. 265) or productivity: ‘Culture is basically oriented not so much toward the creation of human products as toward the creation of the human self, which then radiates out into the world of products’ (p. 265).

While authentic culture is fostered via human action, ‘human praxis *in its authentically human character* is also constituted through culture’ (p. 271 [emphasis added]). Hence, human work, the productive contribution of persons to society, is a means of becoming more human, of enhancing one’s human character, when performed in a personalist manner, rather than with the intentions of acquiring more goods or more means. Work, and hence leadership as an aspect of work, has, therefore, an authentically human dimension which can be reinforced via the environment (i.e., culture), while the culture itself is then strengthened by authentically human praxis (work). Cultural environments clearly shape human praxis. One learns, for example, about ‘the way we do things here’, or how ‘membership’ of a particular social groups requires the adoption of customary practices. Hence, culture shapes persons and persons shape culture, although it is authentically human actions which shape authentic culture. Therefore, authentic leaders have a profound responsibility to foster that environment in which persons can be creators, not producers, and in which their humanity can flourish (cf. Ciulla, 2004, p. 326), for that is the foundation of a human culture. Mea and Sims argue that:

Authentic leaders ... create ... organizational cultures of character (...).
A culture of character is ingrained into firms where ethical principles suffuse leader behavior. They humanize the firm, making it possible for stakeholders to prosper both materially and to contribute to society. When human dignity (respect, care, benevolence, etc.) permeates a firm’s culture, creative relations prosper (...). (2019, p. 62)

Since truly human praxis has an ‘authentically human character’, it is reasonable to infer that certain practices, even though they may be actions of persons, may lack an authentically human character and may foster inauthentic cultures. One thinks, for example, of those situations where systemic bullying is embedded in the culture, passed on from one generation of leaders to the next. While, in this case, bullying has become the ‘human praxis’, it is inimical to what it means to be authentically human, since such practices demean both the victim and the bully. They depersonalise the victim(s), treating them as mere objects for some disordered satisfaction of the bully, and stunts the growth and development of the bully in their failure to grasp what is truly human. Quite evidently, such practices have no place in any form of leadership, lacking as they do an authentically human character. On the other hand, recall

those people who, in standing against such practices, remind others of everyone's shared humanity. Regardless of what might be their role or title, such people demonstrate leadership in action, and authenticity in act.

Hence, we can conclude from Wojtyła's use of the term 'authentic' regarding human character and human praxis that authenticity accords with what is (truly) good for persons, who through their authentic actions create what is (truly) good for societies, which in turn fosters environments in which persons can freely act in an authentic manner. Human persons realise themselves in and through culture, and culture itself is formed by the actions of those persons who constitute the culture. Hence, cultures that promote human flourishing are to be encouraged, while those that undermine or diminish human growth and wellbeing are to be discouraged. Further, the actions of authentic leaders are integral to the formation of authentic human cultures, and so the leader himself must be grounded in authenticity—that is, be himself fully human, in all the dimensions of what it means to be human.

5.7 Authenticity as fulfillment: becoming who and what one is

Having considered the main ways in which Wojtyła uses and hence understands the term 'authenticity', one is left with a question as to how one becomes authentic. The answer can be found in Wojtyła's understanding of fulfillment, that end—*telos*—of persons which humans tend by nature to seek: 'I call the finality that is proper to the person *autoteleology*: self-fulfillment, like self-possession and self-governance, is proper to the person' (Wojtyła, 1993m, p. 321). This study argues that understanding how persons are fulfilled overcomes the limitations associated with authenticity, while satisfying that human urge for being and becoming who and what one is. Further, it grounds that fulfillment in personhood, rather than emotion, and thus offers a foundation to flourishing interpersonal relationships, and, as this study will show, provides an avenue for a fresh consideration of leadership.

Wojtyła considers the question of fulfillment 'the most profound and basic of all the problems that must be addressed in an analysis of the personal subjectivity of the human being' (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 232f), namely, 'to what degree is the fulfillment of an action also *the fulfillment of oneself*' (p. 232 [emphasis added]). Fulfillment is the consequence of self-determining actions that integrate *who* one is with *what* one is in accord with what *is*: 'When man acts, he at once fulfills himself in the action, for as a human being, as a person, he becomes either good or evil. His fulfillment is based on self-determination, that is to say, on freedom' (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 156). Hence, Wojtyła argues, fulfillment means 'becoming who and what one is' (p. 98). To understand this point, one must recall that persons are fulfilled in

and through action (p. 232). One can reasonably argue that authenticity refers to ‘who and what one is’—as distinct from who and what one is not—and hence argue that the notion of ‘becoming who and what one is’ corresponds with the notion of ‘becoming authentic’.

Therefore, the concept of ‘fulfillment’ corresponds to authenticity.

While the existentialists emphasise that authenticity involves taking responsibility for one’s choices, in response to an *Augenblick* which reveals the reality of one’s situation and the reality of living immersed in the crowd, Wojtyła states, ‘authenticity is indicative of the fulfillment of freedom’ (p. 233)—a very similar notion to the existentialists, yet with a different nuance.

Hence, understanding authenticity as fulfillment of persons can give substance and structure to the meaning of authenticity and how one becomes authentic. When Wojtyła speaks of freedom, he means freedom *for* responsible self-determination, not freedom *from* constraints, obligations, or the principles of ethical behaviour (cf. Wojtyła, 1979c, pp. 99, 115, 122). True freedom is freedom for self-mastery, or excellence, or human flourishing, rather than freedom from some bondage, and so freedom is directed towards an end or purpose and operates within established boundaries. For example, choosing how one shall build a house, with no regard to accepted norms of design, architecture and construction, is a recipe for disaster. Working within established norms—while being creative with regard to the end—is a recipe for functionality, beauty and longevity. Compare, for example, the great cathedrals with shoddy building work in unregulated regimes.

Running one’s fingers in complete freedom over a keyboard does not, for example, create music, while using chords, tonal structure and musical theory to one’s advantage can create a masterpiece:

the person who really possesses the art of playing the piano has acquired a new freedom. He can play whatever he chooses, and also compose new pieces. His musical freedom could be described as the gradually acquired ability to execute works of his choice with perfection. (Pinckaers, 1995, p. 355)

Hence, one is not free to choose to do as one pleases, but free to choose in accord with one’s personhood. Hence, the key to human flourishing—to fulfillment as a person—is to choose in accord with what it means to be a person.

5.7.1 Persons fulfilled through morally good actions

Wojtyła asserts that a person's action fulfills not only the act, but *the person* who acts (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 112): 'I fulfill myself not by the fact that I fulfill an action, but by the fact that I become good when that action is morally good' (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 235). Since actions fulfill persons, actions have a personalistic character (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 322). Recall Wojtyła's description of personalism as 'the understanding and solving of various human questions and matters in accordance with this premise: that man is a person, an unrepeatable value that does not pass away' (Wojtyła, 2016, p. 159). Hence, a personalist perspective refers not only to matters beyond oneself, but very specifically to *oneself*. Since *I* am an 'unrepeatable value that does not pass away', acting in a manner that affirms one's personhood enables one to be and become the person one is. Therefore, it is not simply *any* action that is fulfilling of persons, but only those actions that accord with the reality of what it means to be human: 'true fulfillment of the person is accomplished by the positive moral virtuality of the action, and not by the mere performance of the action itself' (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 153). Hence, it is specifically morally good actions that 'reaches the entire depths of the metaphysical structure of the human subject' (Wojtyła, 1979b, p. 286) through which persons are fulfilled.

Therefore, only good and efficacious acts consistent with personhood are fulfilling of the human person. Fulfillment arises not simply from the actions one performs in the pursuit of good, but specifically from the moral content within that action (cf. Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 235), and so the degree to which one's choices and actions accord with what is good contribute to self-fulfilment. The human person is only fulfilled *as a person in a good act*, since only those acts 'realise the person for what she is, a being oriented toward the truth' (Spinello, 2012, p. 33). Hence, morally evil acts damage one's personal structure (Wojtyła, 1979b, p. 286) and precipitate nonfulfillment (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 153). Persons do not become who and what they are in the pursuit of evil, which is by its nature is antithetical to being human; rather, they become a distortion of their true self. Hence, the choices we make do not render us simply human, they make us good or evil humans, fulfilled or unfulfilled, complete or incomplete, and so fulfillment does not simply refer to becoming a human person, but to becoming a *good* human person.

5.7.2 Conscience guides towards moral good

Since persons are fulfilled only by participation in the good and true (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 155) (i.e., the performance of morally good acts), fulfillment relies on being able to discern what is good and true from what is evil and false. This is a property of the conscience, an

‘authentic spiritual power which determines the guidelines of human acting’ (p. 250) and which, therefore, steers their choice and decision-making when persons are disposed to listen. The function of conscience is to distinguish ‘the element of moral good in the action and in releasing and forming a sense of duty with respect to this good’ (p. 156). The attraction of conscience towards what is true and good reveals persons are fulfilled ‘by going beyond ourselves toward values accepted in truth’ (Wojtyła, 1993b, p. 215), which manifests in a ‘righteous conscience, the ultimate judge of the authenticity of human attitudes’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 288). Hence, authentic human actions must be subordinate to the truth of things as they are, which gives rise to the first principle of conscience—‘Do good and avoid evil’ (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 234)—and provides a barometer for one’s judgement (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 288).

Further, the ability to go beyond oneself, ‘in the direction of truth and in the direction of a good willed and chosen in the light of truth’ (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 234), is a transcendent property unique to human persons. In the absence of such a characteristic, ‘I as a person, I as a personal subject, in a sense *am not myself*’ (p. 234 [emphasis added]).

We have here two quite profound observations. First, as persons we possess a spiritual capability that is naturally attracted to what is true and good beyond oneself, and second, by implication, going above and beyond oneself in the direction of truth and goodness is an important dimension to being oneself. Hence, a crucial aspect of self-awareness must be a familiarity with that voice of conscience which guides one towards those values. Both Kierkegaard and Heidegger argue that one is not oneself when absorbed in the crowd, since the crowd restricts one’s ability to discern those truths and goodness which lie, by virtue of their transcendent reality, beyond the crowd. In other words, such absorption stops persons from being able to choose and act in accord with conscience, until, as Heidegger observes, one experiences some existential insight that disposes one to hear one’s inner voice. One cannot be oneself if one is lost in the crowd, oblivious to reality. Conscience may guide one on the path towards authenticity, but the meaning and function of conscience has not been explored within ALT. One can reason that when a leader enables the people, the leader leads people to rise above themselves in the direction of truth and goodness, allowing and fostering people to be their authentic selves.

5.7.3 Self-determination enables one freely to choose

Since persons are fulfilled in the realisation of the good (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 174), one must be able to choose for the true and good which is indicated by the conscience. Therefore, self-

determination, by which one chooses for the true and the good and becomes who and what one is—a fully human person—is the key to fulfillment, to achieving the completion one seeks. As Wojtyła states, ‘To fulfill freedom in truthfulness — that is to say, according to the relation to truth — is equivalent to the fulfillment of the person’ (p. 174). Freedom alone does not render persons happy (p. 175), but the exercise of freedom in accord with truth. Hence, fulfillment of the person corresponds not simply with one’s freedom to determine oneself, but with the exercise of that freedom in accord with truth. The possibility of self-determination is fundamental to authenticity, or fulfillment, since it is a condition for taking responsibility for one’s actions.

Self-determination is made possible because a person ‘has possession of himself and is simultaneously his own sole and exclusive possession’ (p. 105). Self-possession is grounded in the dynamic structure of the human person, and is expressed in one’s willing:

Self-determination is possible only on the ground of self-possession. Every authentically human ‘I will’ is an act of self-determination; it is so not in abstraction and isolation from the dynamic personal structure but, on the contrary, as the deep-rooted content of this structural whole. Because ‘I will’ is an act of self-determination at a particular moment it presupposes structural self-possession. For only the things that are man’s actual possessions can be determined by him; they can be determined only by the one who actually possesses them. Being in the possession of himself man can determine himself. At the same time the will, every genuine ‘I will,’ reveals, confirms, and realizes the self-possession that is appropriate solely to the person — the fact that the person is his own judge. (p. 106)

Self-possession also confirms one is owned by oneself and no other, which enables one to grasp oneself as a person who is an end in themselves—free to choose, act and determine oneself—and hence that one is not a means to another’s end or an instrument in their hands (Crosby, 2004, p. 115).

Self-determination also reveals in the ‘most immediate way that I am a person’ (Wojtyła, 1993h, p. 193), and so understanding self-determination is crucial for understanding what it means to be a human person (p. 187). Self-determination, as ‘a property of the person’ (p. 190) which corresponds with personal freedom (p. 190), is not simply some methodological process. Persons are free to determine *themselves*, to will and to act. It is *the person* who is free, not

merely the thinking and acting of that person, and given that freedom, it becomes incumbent on persons to exercise that freedom in a responsible manner.

However, to be self-determining, one must both ‘possess and govern’ (Wojtyła, 1993b, p. 214; 1993h, p. 192) oneself, and so, both self-governance and self-possession are essential aspects of personhood. This underlies the experience one has of oneself as someone who simultaneously possesses and is possessed, governs and is governing, oneself (Wojtyła, 1993h, p. 193).

One cannot govern or possess oneself without some form of ‘response in the dynamic structure of the person’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 190) which allows the governing or possessing to occur. This ‘dynamic structure of self-determination’ (Wojtyła, 1993b, p. 214) points inward ‘toward the subject’ (Wojtyła, 1993h, p. 192), whose choice for a value determines not merely the action but the person themselves. Since human persons possess free will and are able to distinguish what is good from what is evil, they are therefore free to determine who they are and who they become, becoming morally good or morally bad according to the moral goodness or badness of their actions (p. 192). Hence, not only do actions *reveal* the person, they also *constitute* the person.

When going beyond oneself towards a chosen value, ‘I simultaneously determine myself’ (p. 191), being both the ‘cause of my acts ...[and] creator of myself’ (p. 191). When choosing, the will is actively directed towards a value that coincides with the self one has both chosen and seeks to be. One acts with generosity towards a person in need, for example, when one is drawn to the idea of becoming, and ultimately being, a generous person. That value chosen ‘is also an end’ (p. 191) in itself and represents an end for the person.

Therefore, it is evident that fulfillment arises from the choices one makes, and so fulfillment is possible because of the capacity for self-determination:

The performing of an action, through the fulfillment it brings, is coordinate with self-determination. It runs parallel to self-determination but as if it were directed in the opposite sense; for *being the performer of an action man also fulfills himself in it* [emphasis added]. To fulfill oneself means to actualize, and in a way to bring to the proper fullness, that structure in man which is characteristic for him because of his personality and also because of his being somebody and not merely something; it is the structure of *self-governance* and *self-possession*. (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 151)

Hence, fulfillment actualises self-government and self-possession—I own and govern myself—and hence one becomes authentic as one seeks fulfillment.

Self-determination is the key to becoming, and is the means by which one morally becomes who one is ontologically (Wojtyła, 1993h, p. 192). Hence, self-determination is the ground of fulfillment and fulfillment is therefore a consequence of the actualisation of the dynamic structure of self-possession and self-governance arising from self-determination (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 152). Further, fulfillment occurs in a moral context—one is fulfilled by doing what accords with personhood, and with what is true and good. Although Wojtyła does not necessarily state this explicitly, one can reasonably conclude from his writing that there is a deep interconnection between self-consciousness, self-actualisation, self-determination and self-fulfilment. One becomes aware of oneself as a personal subject, who has the freedom to will and choose one's actions, which determine who one becomes, which is fulfilling of the self when the person one becomes aligns with the truth of being human.

5.7.4 Self-determining exercise of freedom transcends structural boundaries

Wojtyła says that 'self-determination ... authentically inheres in the nature of ... [a person's] acting and the transcendence of the person is realized through his acting' (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 264). Hence, the self-determining actions of the person reveal the transcendence of the person. Transcendence refers to that spiritual capacity possessed by persons to go beyond one's inner or exterior thresholds or boundaries, which Wojtyła distinguishes, respectively, as either vertical or horizontal transcendence (p. 119). *Vertical transcendence*, which Buttiglione argues 'is the keystone of all Wojtyła's thought [since it] moves beyond subjectivity toward the interior, rather than toward the exterior' (1997, p. 154), refers to a movement in which the person goes beyond, or transcends, the self within. Vertical transcendence is 'the fruit of self-determination; the person transcends his structural boundaries through the capacity to exercise freedom; [and] of being free in the process of acting' (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 119). Authentic vertical transcendence occurs when a person 'apprehends the "truth about the good" and transcends his structural boundaries to choose that *bonum honestum* [the moral good] truly constitutive of human flourishing' (Spinello, 2012, p. 32), and does so in freedom, which is the ground of personal transcendence (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 101). *Horizontal transcendence* refers to transcending one's limits in the direction of an object (p. 119). This occurs when the person perceives or wills something, or someone, other than themselves and extends 'beyond' themselves (Spinello, 2012, p. 30) towards that other, transcending their immediate boundaries in so doing.

The capacity for transcendence means that one is not limited by what appear to be one's limitations, *but only by one's ability to make free self-determining choices*. Hence, the ultimate extent of a person's spiritual transcendence is determined by one's 'attitude toward truth, good, and beauty' (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 227), and the subsequent self-determining choices one makes in response to those values. Wojtyła says the 'quality and intensity' (p. 227) with which these values resonate in the human person 'determines the quality and intensity of the personal transcendence' (p. 227). Hence, the more one disposes oneself towards—and responds to—truth, goodness and beauty, the more one is able to transcend one's inner boundaries, and so the more one becomes all one can be. Or, in other words, a life lived in pursuit of truth, goodness and beauty will foster vertical and horizontal transcendence, accelerating progress towards fulfillment—becoming who and what one is, or one's authentic self. Hence, the capacity for horizontal and vertical transcendence means one can extend both inwards and outwards, having an almost unlimited scope for growth as a person. One can immediately observe the implications for ALT: vertical transcendence regards self-awareness, and horizontal transcendence regards other-awareness. In other words, the ALT components of self-awareness and relational orientation-transparency are able to be integrated within the leader because of the vertical and horizontal transcendence of the person, and so each, in some manner, complements and fosters the other.

5.7.5 Integration complements transcendence and allows self-determination

Since the dynamic structures of self-possession and self-governance, which reveal the person's capacity for transcendence, are *distinct from* the self who is possessed and governed, some manner of integration—of the self and self-possession/self-governance—must complement transcendence (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 190). Integration, in this context, refers to the 'realisation and manifestation of a whole and unity emerging on the basis of some complexity' (p. 191)—that is, the creation of an inner unity from a complex whole. Integration—of the self and self-possession/self-governance—ensures that the person's actions are shaped and determined by their own self, rather than by external forces, and so in this sense we can say a person is 'integrated in the process of an action' (p. 191). Hence, integration, along with self-determination and transcendence, is fundamental to fulfillment.

Wojtyła provides an insight into this understanding of integration when talking about the relationship between spouses. He says integration refers to 'the correct incorporation of all that proceeds from sensuality and affectivity into an ethically and fully-mature relation of one person to another' (Wojtyła, 2013, p. 135), noting that one's affections in a relationship

between persons respond to the will (p. 135), in contrast with those who hold the will is subject to emotion. Therefore, integration can be understood as both a capacity and an inner act of the will by which one masters one's intellect and appetites, or more precisely, to order one's values based on what is true and good, rather than what brings pleasure. Hence, the person who has integrated their personhood with their self-determining choices is more able to choose for values that reaffirm that personhood, which in turn promotes authenticity, or becoming who and what one is. One can observe in the workplace those leaders who lack mastery over their intellect and appetites and readily pursue the latest management fads or improper relationships with colleagues, to satisfy desire rather than their true self. In other words, the illusion that they can be satisfied by the latest pleasure—like Kierkegaard's 'aesthetic' Don Juan—indicates a lack of integration between their true person and their intellect and emotions, and so they lack the necessary power of will to choose for what is true and good.

The complementarity of integration and 'transcendence of the person in the action' (Wojtyła, 1979c, pp. 190, 197) expresses the 'dynamic "person-action whole"' (p. 190), and is the basis of the person's psychosomatic unity (pp. 190, 197). This prevents transcendence being 'suspended in a kind of structural void' (p. 190). One must take into account both transcendence and the integration of the whole person in the action to explain how one can be 'wholly engaged in my action' (p. 192). In other words, although one can transcend oneself horizontally and vertically, the capacity for integration enables oneself to be integrated in one's self-determining choices. Becoming who and what one is (i.e., becoming authentic or becoming fulfilled) is not possible for a person without this work of integration.

The distinction between integration and transcendence confirms, however, that '*active* possession of oneself ... [requires] a *passive* response in the dynamic structure of the person' (p. 190), a subordination of oneself to self-governance.¹⁶ Therefore, integration is the condition for, and complement to, transcendence (pp. 20, 190, 255), 'allows the realisation of the person's structure of self-governance and self-possession' (p. 198) and enables one to experience oneself 'from the inside and not only outwardly' (p. 19). Without integration, only subjectivity, and not efficacy, would be realised in the person's ontic structure (p. 199)—one would be aware of oneself as a subject but unable to integrate one's efficacy in a self-determining manner, since one would be unable to either possess or govern oneself.

While the integrated person employs the energy of their emotions and impulses 'to support the will in its pursuit of the good' (Spinello, 2012, p. 35), a person who lacks integrity—who is disintegrated—lacks control over their emotions and impulses, which compromises their self-

determination (p. 35). Disintegration ‘denotes a lack of cohesion’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 192), a failure to integrate the self and action, with a subsequent compromise of self-determination (Spinello, 2014, p. 35). In short, the possibility of becoming is eroded by disintegration and the associated lack of unity between subjectivity and efficacy. Disintegration commonly indicates some psychological aspect of the person has failed to reach what most people would agree is an ‘ordinary human standard’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 192). However, Wojtyła says disintegration fundamentally refers to a defect or failing in the person’s ‘structure of self-governance and self-possession’ (p. 193), with a consequent inability, or limitation, in one’s self-governance and self-possession, despite ontological unity. The strict connection between self-governance, self-possession and self-determination establishes ‘*the transcendent backbone of the human person*. ... disintegration may be considered as a collapse of this backbone’ (p. 194), even though such a collapse does not ‘contradict or destroy’ (p. 194) the person’s transcendence. Disintegrated persons are unable to govern or possess themselves to the extent required—and so are incapable of governing others—and, hence, ‘the defects and defaults of integration become ... the defects and defaults of transcendence’ (p. 194). This subsequently manifests in unwise choices, poor decision-making and defective self-determination (p. 194), and, where this occurs in the person of a leader, defective leadership. It would seem, therefore, that mature, integrated, self-governance, self-possession and self-determination are essential for authentic leadership—more so than the self-awareness advocated by Walumbwa et al. (2008).

Hence, the person and their acts are not ‘two separate and self-sufficient entities but a single deeply cohesive reality’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 149), which is revealed in human fulfillment: ‘*the existential and essential cohesion of the person and the action is best and most adequately expressed by the fulfillment resulting from performance of an action*’ (p. 149 [emphasis added]). Wojtyła expressly notes that persons are fulfilled in the performance of an action, but not just any action. He says fulfillment—which the present study argues in his thought equates to authenticity—is possible when the person and their actions cohere, or are integrated. As one becomes more integrated, self-knowledge and consciousness cohere in a manner that provides a basis for ‘the equilibrium in the inner life of a person’ (p. 37), which in turn provides a more solid foundation for continued transcendence and self-determination.

Further, integration is essential as that operation that enables not only the integration of vertical and horizontal transcendence, but integration of the person with the community of which they are a part. On the one hand, the person takes charge of their own inner life, being conscious of one’s choices and how one is shaping oneself. On the other hand, one reaches horizontally towards other persons, taking responsibility for both one’s actions towards them

and responses to them. While Kierkegaard and Heidegger established an almost either/or dynamic between the crowd and the individual, Wojtyła's deep insight into the human person enables us to identify operations—in this case, integration—that facilitate the proper functioning and relationship between the individual and the multitude, or, in personalist terms, the person and community. Although these are in tension, they are not opposed, and able to find constructive harmony in the mature self-integration of persons.

5.7.6 In transcending boundaries via self-determining moral choices one becomes fulfilled

Self-fulfillment '*corresponds to the becoming of a human being as a human being*' (Wojtyła, 1993h, p. 192 [emphasis added]), who manifests themselves (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 157), not another someone, in that becoming. This study argues that this becoming of oneself as a human being is what is sought in becoming authentic, and hence that authenticity coincides with fulfillment. On the one hand, a person *is*, in all their metaphysical reality, and on the other hand, a person becomes fulfilled as that person via self-determining actions. Therefore, a person is both *being* and *becoming*, becoming *someone* while already being *someone* (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 192). In this narrow opening, between being and becoming, persons encounter their freedom to choose, to determine who and what in fact they will become. Hence, fulfillment refers to becoming 'what and who ... [one] *actually is*' (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 98 [emphasis added]), consequent upon conscious action directed towards what is true and good. It is important to remember that fulfillment refers to a moral fulfillment of one's anthropological *self*, and not simply to an emotional state, such as the feeling of satisfaction one experiences when realising a dream, or fulfilling an aspiration.

Wojtyła states that 'through self-determination, the human being becomes increasingly more of a "someone" in the ethical sense, although in the ontological sense the human being is a "someone" from the very beginning' (1993h, p. 192). This is a crucial insight regarding the distinction between being and becoming, which is fundamental to a proper understanding of both fulfillment and authenticity. Wojtyła expressly states one *becomes* morally, via one's choices, but *is* ontologically, and that such becoming is the 'becoming of a human being as a human being', which means becoming *someone*, hence emphasising 'the uniquely personal character of the human being' (p. 192). Therefore, one *is* ontologically and *becomes* morally. This notion is distinct from the implied continuous becoming of authenticity which has, as it were, no end point or point of fulfillment. A proper understanding of self-determination resolves the conundrum of being or becoming authentic: both are true, as actual is to potential.

Becoming authentic is a work of moral integration with an ontological reality, not mere personal development or psychological growth of a mutable instrument, directed towards an unknown destination. Recall also the observation that Kierkegaard distinguishes between the immutable ontological and mutable moral self, resolving the being-becoming dilemma: ‘every moment that a self exists, it is in a process of becoming, for the self ... [in potentiality] does not actually exist, it is simply that which ought to come into existence’ (Kierkegaard, 1980, pp. 30, XI 142).

Hence, one is able to be fulfilled because of the personal capacity for self-determining choices, which enable one to transcend one’s current limitations. While the subjective person, one’s actual self, is unchanging, the manner in which that person expresses their personhood, lives out a vocation, seeks fulfillment and completion changes in an emerging process within the moral self. At the same time, an emphasis on understanding of ontological unity and integration mitigates the risk of falling into a Cartesian dualism.

However, while persons become who and what they are by repeated morally good acts, they never achieve a state of total fulfillment, since ‘no concrete action in the terrestrial experience of man can actualize such an absolute dimension’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 153, fn. 51). Hence, fulfillment, becoming all one can become, involves a noble pursuit of what is true and good, within one’s temporal, historical, cultural and personal limitations and boundaries. One of a leader’s great skills is accepting this reality of persons—and often reflecting that back to them—and helping each navigate that tangle in their own life.

5.7.7 Persons become persons in gift of self to others

Although persons are fulfilled via self-determining moral actions, one is truly fulfilled in very particular acts, those that involve the gift of self to another. Wojtyła says persons are given to themselves and yet, as a ‘being turned toward others’ (Wojtyła, 1993h, p. 194), only fully find themselves in ‘a sincere gift of self’ (Wojtyła, 2013, p. 282) to another, becoming fully who they are in that giving. It is ‘precisely *when one becomes a gift for others that one most fully becomes oneself*’ (Wojtyła, 1993h, p. 194 [emphasis added]). Here we find the answer to self-fulfilment, to ‘fully becoming who and what one is’ in the paradox of giving oneself away. In doing so, one determines oneself regarding the good that is chosen, which, in this case, is the good of the human person. The notion of person and gift is ‘inscribed in the very being of the person’ (Wojtyła, 2013, p. 288) and ‘*explains the action of man in the most fundamental way*’ (p. 282). Therefore, the secret to ‘becoming’ authentic, to being fulfilled as who and what one is, is in the free gift of oneself to others.

One is able to give oneself because one is in possession of one's total self (i.e., one's ontic and moral self). Wojtyła stresses:

in order to explain the reality of the human person, both senses, the ontic and the moral ... must be unified. They must be properly correlated, that is coordinated. By accepting that the person becomes a gift in the moral sense ... we indicate the very being of the person, his essential properties, self-possession and self-governance, that he is 'sui iuris et alteri incommunicabilis' and ultimately we at last indicate his substantiality. (p. 283)

'Ultimately, we at last indicate his substantiality': a person's self-giving, made possible by their self-possession and self-governance, discloses their incommunicable being. The exercise of self-determination, self-possession and self-governance in a relational context means a person cannot be possessed by another but can freely choose to give themselves to another *and in so doing can fully discover their true self*. Here we have the very essence of what it means to be a person: *an incommunicable embodied self-determining subject, who becomes fully themselves in the free gift of themselves to others in the service of the common good*. While one may be fulfilled by choosing in accord with one's personhood, one becomes fully human in free, charitable, interpersonal service—not servitude—of other persons, and hence the essence of leadership lies in the self-giving of the leader to their followers.

Wojtyła cites the family as an example of those attitudes and virtues—particularly self-giving—which foster 'a fully authentic and harmonious community' (Wojtyła, 1993d, p. 338). The family '*become[s] an authentic community of persons through this diversified "disinterested gift of self" on the part of all its members*' (Wojtyła, 1993f, p. 350 [emphasis added]). Hence, the 'disinterested gift of self' to another—giving with no expectation of benefit—appears to be the means by which authentic human communities are created and maintained, and, therefore, must be the foundation to true leadership.

This means the person who chooses seemingly mundane work to pay the bills to care for their family, despite their 'authentic' self preferring a creative task that allows them to develop their passions and talents, is not failing in authenticity. Instead, they are being true to what being human means for them, giving themselves in the service of their family, for the good of their family. When performed as a gift of oneself, rather than reluctantly, while harbouring resentments regarding one's circumstances, those acts transcend oneself and promote human wellbeing both for the actor and for those whom one serves.

A truly authentic leader—in the full and total possession of their own personhood—would want to promote such a vision of persons, giving followers opportunities to realise themselves via virtuous, self-giving acts.

5.8 Fulfillment in participation with others

Having discussed the concept of fulfillment as becoming who and what one is, and argued that true fulfillment lies in the gift of oneself to another, we turn our attention to understanding the dynamic of human community, and how persons are fulfilled in the context of relationships with others—that situation in which we live most of our lives. While the existentialists argue the answer to becoming one's authentic self is largely an individualistic pursuit, Wojtyła argues that the solution lies in participation with others in authentic community. One discovers oneself with others, not in risking further alienation in an isolated pursuit of the self. Here, in an understanding of participation, do we find a philosophical grounding for the intersubjective relationship between leaders and followers. This perspective then reveals the responsibilities and obligations that exist between persons in relationship, and, hence, one of the hallmarks of effective leadership.

5.8.1 Persons exist and act with others in community

Wojtyła uses the term '*participation*' to refer to '*acting together* with other persons' (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 269) in a communal setting. He says existing and acting in a community of persons, whereby one participates 'in the very humanity of another human being' (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 243), fosters self-discovery of who and what one is 'in the mirror of another human person' (Buttiglione, 2016), and eventually, one's authentic fulfillment as a person (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 291). Fulfillment arises in a communal context when the values to which all are attracted coincide with the values to which the person is attracted. Hence, acting with others in a shared project, which affirms what is truly of value, is self-determining (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 270).

Participating with others, in their humanity, elevates the other to the status of a 'neighbour' (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 237). The possibility of sharing '*in the humanness itself of every man is the very core of all participation and the condition of the personalistic value of all acting and existing "together with others"'*' (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 295). Participating with others, such that they become a neighbour, provides an anchor and safeguard within which one's personal subjectivity can develop (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 255) and so enables each and every person in the community to be fulfilled by virtue of freely chosen mutual actions (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 295).

5.8.2 Persons fulfilled when existing and acting with others in a community

Wojtyła distinguishes between two types of relationships in a human community: the interpersonal *I-thou*, one to another; and the multiplicity of those relationships in the social dimension of human community, which he refers to as *we* (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 246). While *I-thou* refers to a particular relationship between two specific persons, *we* refers to the ‘collective’ of those relationships—a community constituted by *I-thou* relationships—rather than to the persons in those relationships (p. 246).

An *I-thou* relationship is that between two persons, two personal subjects, not merely a *he* and *she* (p. 247), and signifies a relationship that proceeds from oneself to another self and returns to oneself, involving both connection with, and separation from, a specific person (p. 241). Since one’s actions proceed from oneself to the other, who is themselves a personal subject, and return to oneself from the other, Wojtyła argues the ‘*I* is in a sense constituted by the *thou*’ (p. 241). Thus, one has a ‘fuller experience’ (p. 242) of oneself in that relationship, and is in some sense verified and validated by the other’s acceptance and respect. While this may seem at first glance to refer to the more intimate relationships, such as that between spouses, Wojtyła does highlight the impact of truly human relationships, which are grounded in mutual respect. From this we can conclude, as just one example, how the respect shown by a leader for their people, and the leader’s affirmation of those people as persons, not merely resources, allows followers a fuller experience of themselves as persons, through which they are further constituted as persons. In other words, when leaders affirm persons as persons, they grow as persons. However, if the leader treats someone as an instrument, they are diminished as persons.

Further, since the *thou* is an *I* to themselves, and the *I* is a *thou* to the other (p. 244), the person experiences their subjectivity in a new and distinct manner (p. 244). This self-realisation is quite different from one’s initial grasp of subjectivity, when one realises they are distinct from the other, that *I* am not *you*. While one may be aware of oneself as a subject, since one experiences the existence of other subjects, the subjective experience of oneself as a ‘specific other’ in a mutual relationship is a profoundly different experience of self. To know I am a self *because* you see me is a quite different experience to knowing I am a self because I am not you. In an *I-thou* relation, one grasps one is not simply a self distinct from other selves, but a self in a relationship with another self.

Hence, in a truly personalist *I-thou* relationship, marked by respect for the other's personhood, there 'ought to be a mutual self-revelation' (p. 245) of oneself as both seek self-fulfilment via self-determining choice and act (p. 245):

The *thou* stands before my self as a true and complete 'other self', which, like my own self, is characterised ... by self-determination ... self-possession and self-governance. In this subjective structure, the *thou* as 'another self' represents its own transcendence and its own tendency toward self-fulfillment. (p. 245)

Therefore, the vertical characteristics of transcendence—self-determination, self-possession and self-governance—are revealed in the reciprocal horizontal transcendence of an *I-thou* relationship. As the actions of the other reveal their self-determination, self-possession and self-governance, and hence capacity for self-fulfilment, the *I* experiences one's own self-determination, self-possession and self-governance. As a consequence, the transcendent interaction and mutual revelation between two personal human subjects, the *I* and *thou*, is self-fulfilling for each. This understanding of human relationships is profoundly distinct from that notion of relational transparency, or orientation, within ALT.

The interpersonal nature of the *I-thou* relationship means persons are therefore 'mutually responsible for one another' (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 246). The concept of mutual responsibility—and the import this has for fulfillment of persons—introduces a radical notion to the leader–follower relationship. While we speak of responsibility for oneself, one's role, one's organisation and the wider environment, we rarely hear reference to mutual responsibility between leaders and followers. Yet, we cannot deny that being in relationship carries a mutual obligation. While we may readily embrace the responsibility of leaders for followers, inviting followers to consider the responsibility they bear for their leader, and their success, could transform the practice of leadership—which this study has argued is itself an intersubjective relationship.

This mutual responsibility between persons, with other persons, is a characteristic of authentic human community (p. 246). In the:

I-thou relationship, an authentic interpersonal community develops ... if the *I* and the *thou* abide in mutual affirmation of the transcendent value of the person (a value that may also be called *dignity*) and confirms this by their acts. Only such a relationship seems to deserve the name *communio personarum*. (p. 246)

Hence, reciprocity plays a key role in a fully personalist relationship:

the *full* [emphasis added] experience of such a relationship occurs only when the *I-thou* relationship has a reciprocal character: when a *thou* that for me becomes a specific other, and thus ‘also another human being,’ simultaneously makes me its *thou*; when two people mutually become an *I* and a *thou* for each other and experience their relationship in this manner. (p. 243)

Wojtyła states that ‘the *thou* assists me in more fully discovering and even confirming my own *I*’ (p. 243), and so the other can serve as a model for one’s learning and self-fulfilment (p. 242). This observation is of some significance for our project, for while the notion of modelling oneself on others is commonly understood, Wojtyła elevates our understanding beyond merely copying the example of another, to the impact the other can have on becoming who and what we are. Other persons play a crucial role in helping one discover and validate oneself. Therefore, it seems evident that leaders need to consider the impact of the behaviour they model or demonstrate on others, in order that others may observe and learn their own path towards fulfilment, to becoming who and what they are. It is reasonable to conclude that a deeply personal relationship with another person facilitates authenticity in both persons.

Wojtyła’s analysis provides a means by which we can describe the particular *I-thou* relationships that exist in a community of workers, the reciprocity and mutuality of those relationships as a foundation to self-fulfilment of the participants, and, hence, the obligation to foster and enter into *relationships*, not *relational transactions*, to promote human flourishing. Hence, one can observe both an objective and subjective dimension to human relationships in the corporate environment. People have objective tasks and roles. They are, in one sense, objects to others. However, if an organisation is to be a truly personalist organisation, we must afford primacy to the person as subject. This occurs in, or is at least facilitated by, the actions of a leader who grasps that *I-thou* relationships precede functional relationships, and who understands the other is a person not a producer and so enables the conditions for their fulfilment.

However, the interpersonal *I-thou* relationships exist in a communal context, which is constituted by multiple *I*’s, and hence that community is specifically a *we* and not a *they* (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 247). When Wojtyła refers to ‘community’, he does not simply mean a multiplicity of persons, but specifically the ‘*unity* of this multiplicity’ (p. 238), distinguished by the ‘unique subjectivity’ (p. 247) of its members. Such a community is quite distinct from a

social group, which is constituted by the shared endeavour of its members. Authentic social community is fully realised when persons participate with others in a manner that conditions the community, while each person remains themselves (p. 254)—that is, no person is subsumed by, and each person flourishes in, the community. Wojtyła claims that the ‘mark of the communal ... is essentially *imprinted* on human existence itself’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 262 [emphasis added]), which means participation with others in community is fundamental to being and becoming fully human. This explains why, on the one hand, immersion in the crowd can feel satisfying to the inauthentic person, while on the other hand, one can never be fulfilled in the ‘they’, since it absolves one from true participation.

While Kierkegaard and Heidegger note that a group of multiple individuals constitutes a crowd, they both focus on the individual and self-responsibility as the key to authenticity. However, they fail to pay sufficient attention to the truly human communities in which one can participate in mutual, self-fulfilling relationships. Hence, while Kierkegaard and Heidegger note the metamorphosis from ‘they’ to ‘I’, Wojtyła reveals the transformation of ‘they’ to ‘we’, constituted by *I-thou* relationships, which occurs when persons take responsibility for themselves and their relationships, integrating both vertical and horizontal transcendence. This is a substantially different perspective on human community, and one that offers considerably more scope for leadership and the healthy relationships that must be obtained in that human community we find in the work environment. This study argues that it is only a truly personalist perspective that allows such a vision to emerge.

5.8.3 Persons fulfilled when acting with others for common good

This study has now described what it means to be a person, the intersubjectivity of persons and how persons are fulfilled in themselves and with others. We then considered how those particular person-to-person relationships exist in authentic ‘we’ communities that are radically distinct from inauthentic ‘they’ crowds. Since persons act, then persons in community act together in a manner that—in order to be personalist—must equally respect each person, while balancing this with the needs of both the immediate community and the wider society to which they belong. Such action, directed towards what is good for all, must be distinct from those actions one simply happens to share with others, such as cheering on a sporting team.

This question goes to the heart of organisational purpose, and hence to leadership of organisations, as it provides a resolution to the tension between individual persons and organisational outcomes, and the relationship between the organisation and society. The answer is found in a personalist understanding of the common good.

When a community of *I*'s—personal subjects—act together regarding a single value, as distinct from engaging in a shared activity, that value that they intend can be referred to as the '*common good*' (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 247). Hence, the common good is not simply the focus of shared engagement in a common task, or an amalgam of common private goods, but an objectively true and good value towards which that community intends. In a family, this could be the education of children as responsible members of society, while in a business, this could mean creating that environment in which human persons flourish—the common good of workers. It could also mean the common good of justice for all—fair wages, reasonable treatment of customers and suppliers, fulfillment of obligations to the community (e.g., payment of taxes and responsible citizenship) and a reasonable financial return to the business owners (whether public or private). This enables the community to flourish since each receives what is their due and no one is taken advantage of at the expense of another. The common good sits at the 'core of social community' (p. 247). Acting together for a common good enables persons to experience their own subjectivity with other persons, providing a basis for a new *I-thou* union, without in any way diminishing or distorting the *I* (p. 248). For example, a community of parents and children can take on the profile of a *we*, while the spouses continue in a mutually enriching *I-thou* relationship (p. 247). A similar dynamic occurs in the relationship between members of an executive team, which together constitutes a *we* when united in the pursuit of a common good, while remaining subjectively grounded in a number of interpersonal *I-thou* relationships.

Hence, the common good has both subjective and objective dimensions—the objective good of the community, and the fulfillment of persons who participate with one another in and for that community (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 283). Therefore, the subjective component of the common good can never be overlooked, since it is individual persons who act, and who freely choose their acts in self-determining ways, while making those choices in alignment with the choices made by others in the community (p. 281). The fully authentic person who is revealed in and through *I-thou* relationships 'must be permanently inscribed in the true meaning of the common good if that good is to conform to its definition and essence' (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 254). This is a crucial insight that overcomes any tendency to equate the common good *only* with what is in the best interests of the community, ensuring that the persons in that community are considered. Here also we find a suitable framework for situating Gardner's call for authentic leadership to include 'guidance toward worthy objectives' (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, et al., 2005, p. 345) in what is truly good and worthy, not mere financial good.

Hence, for example, shifting work to a low-cost jurisdiction and depriving the local community of work may be good for profits, but bad for people and so not truly contributing to the common good. Nevertheless, the challenge confronting business leaders is to navigate the tension between the common good of the community and the sustainability of the organisation. Leaders have a responsibility to generate sufficient profit to remain in business, but this can never be at the expense of persons.¹⁷

While the concept of ‘common good’ recognises that some outcomes are truly good for a community and require shared action directed towards that good for that good to be realised (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 280), it does not follow that shared endeavour indicates a common good. The common good is not simply some ‘goal of common acting’ (p. 281) that a group adopts, such as employees working together to achieve an annual target, although they are participating with one another for a common goal (p. 282). However, acting together for a common goal may be a means of discerning some greater good. For example, labourers digging a hole, or students labouring to learn, are united not only in shared endeavour, but in some greater—although unarticulated—good of (say) construction of social infrastructure or advancement of learning respectively (p. 282). This alerts us to the fact that a common purpose may well be awaiting discovery in shared action, and that doing so can transform the action from repetitious act to self-fulfilment of the persons acting together. Therefore, in the absence of an organisational purpose that is based on a common good, persons will only ever be colleagues united around shared endeavour, such as a team working to create and market products or services. This is quite different from that same team united as persons for the common good of enabling persons (who happen to be customers) to realise their dreams and ambitions via the effective use of those same products and services. The former serves the instrumental end of the company, while the latter serves the common good of persons. While the activities of the team in both instances may be the same, the value towards which they are attracted is of an entirely different order, and so fulfilling of them as persons. Although Kierkegaard focused on the authentic individual, this study suggests that his three spheres of development could inform leadership practice: the profit-driven aesthete, the morally upright ethical leader, and the ‘religious’ leader focused on a noble purpose beyond themselves. This last idea is what we find in Wojtyła’s notion of the common good.

Participating with others for the common good of all allows persons to both perform authentic acts and be fulfilled via those acts: the common good is ‘the principle of correct participation, which allows the person acting together with other persons to perform authentic actions and to fulfill himself through these actions’ (p. 282). This cannot be stated more

clearly: *authentic actions fulfill the person when acting with other persons for the common good*. One realises oneself in the performance of shared authentic acts, which are grounded in participation; that is, action directed towards the common good. Since authentic actions are those actions that fulfill persons, then such actions accord with what is true and good, and authentic leaders must assume responsibility for creating the conditions for such participation, balancing the common good with the good of persons.

The ‘common’ relation of many *I*’s to a common good in such a manner that constitutes a *we* is ‘an expression of the transcendence proper to the human being as a person’ (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 249), which is ‘realised in a relation to truth and to the good as “true”’ (p. 249). Therefore, the common good must be grounded in what is true and what is good (p. 249), which, in so doing, reveals the fullness of the common good of all—whether a couple in a relationship, or the members of a family, community, corporation, nation, or indeed humanity in total (p. 249). The persons who are members of these communities readily think of themselves as a *we* and (usually) demonstrate commitment to engage in actions that realise the *we* (p. 251). It is this kind of community, constituted by the ‘subjectivity of the many’ (p. 252) that Wojtyła considers ‘an authentic *communio personarum*’ (p. 251).

In a social group—a *we*—the common good represents a greater good than what is good for each individual in that social group (p. 250), since those goods are ‘more fully expressed and more fully actualised in the common good’ (p. 250). Serving the common good—whether the defence of one’s country, or the defence of what is true or good, for example—can often result in hardship and suffering for the defenders of the good. However, Wojtyła, drawing on his experience of totalitarianism in Poland, argues that the sacrifices people are prepared to make for such goods ‘testifies to the greatness and superiority of this good’ (p. 250).

Wojtyła argues that ‘*the person as subject is maximally actualised*’ (p. 251 [emphasis added]) in a true human community, which pursues the common good—being the objective good of the community and the fulfillment of its members. This is so because freely chosen authentic acts derive from the reason and will, and so actualise ‘the proper self-governance and self-possession of the person’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 147). This is quite distinct from those actions imposed by the will of another. We have here a key insight from Wojtyła: the pursuit of the common good—balancing the objective good of the whole with the subjective good of persons—maximises the actualisation of persons. A community constituted by interpersonal relationships ought to promote the conditions for those persons to be who and what they are—to maximise their actualisation—rather than dominate or use those persons. Hence, those

structures of a community or corporation that diminish or distort the human person almost certainly focus on placing demands on persons, limiting the possibility of persons being self-fulfilled, and so are morally deficient.

Since the human person as subject ‘is deeply inscribed in the true meaning of the common good’ (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 254), any leadership practice should enhance rather than hinder the common good, and so no authentic leader can avoid the question of what constitutes the common good. In essence, leaders can choose to pursue the common good—which includes implementing those structures that maximise the possibilities for actualisation of persons—or they can choose to treat persons, and groups of persons, as instrumental ends.

We have arrived, therefore, at a principle of leadership informed by a personalist perspective: a leader should promote the conditions in which persons can be maximally actualised. While this could be a difficult principle to enact in a vast organisation of many thousands of workers, such difficulty does not deny the principle. What it does highlight is that, since leadership is relational, such a principle is enacted in the particular leadership relationships that exist in the organisation, such as that between a frontline worker and their team leader, not directly between Group CEO and that frontline worker. The crucial questions that flow from such a principle regard whether practices inside the organisation help or hinder the fulfillment of persons, whether persons are being treated with dignity and respect, and whether persons are instrumentalised or actualised.

The *I* can be diminished where the common good is misconstrued as ‘the common good for many *I*’s’ (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 248), since this is not *the* common good, that intends those values that promote the good of the community and maximum flourishing and fulfillment of all persons impacted by shared actions. Consider, for example, the oft-heard view that the purpose of a company is the ‘common good’ of shareholders (i.e., the financial return). Combining this with agency theory, and the assumption that greater executive financial reward drives higher financial performance, instrumentalises people as a means to an end and undermines the possibility of participation by all.

The observation that persons are diminished where the common good is distorted suggests that where persons are damaged or diminished in organisations and restricted in their flourishing, identification of and orientation towards a common purpose that regards an end value could remedy the situation. While environmental factors such as organisational structure and working conditions should not be overlooked, this perspective suggests that the root cause of reduced fulfillment lies in a distorted orientation of the organisation and hence its people. In

the aforementioned example, working for the good of the community by constructing high-quality infrastructure—and even doing back-breaking manual labour for the good of one’s family—is perhaps more ennobling than digging a hole for wages, even though the same activity is undertaken.

Finally, no real common good can be possible where we lack a shared anthropological understanding of persons with whom one lives in common, or where we lack agreement about what constitutes good for those persons. Unless we share common ground on what it means to be a person, we are unlikely to find agreement on what constitutes good for persons, and may very well define as those ‘goods’ that are produced and consumed *by* persons, rather than what is good *for* persons (cf. Wojtyła, 1993l, p. 171). In the absence of an agreed ‘common good’ (or goods), human persons can only strive for personal satisfaction (i.e., what is good *for me*) and so will use other persons as a source of that satisfaction, or become the object of another’s satisfaction. One is reminded of the Kierkegaardian aesthete, or Heidegger’s *Das Man*, reduced to an instance of human being mortgaged to the majority.

5.8.4 Participation with others requires attitude of solidarity to be self-fulfilling

Although participation is the means by which one is fulfilled in community with other persons, the degree to which one may be fulfilled is influenced by the attitude one brings to the participative endeavour. One could participate unwillingly, half-heartedly, or with a wholehearted embrace of the relationship between oneself and others in the pursuit of a common purpose. Wojtyła calls this latter attitude *solidarity*, and argues that it is essential for that self-fulfilment induced by participation: the ‘attitude of solidarity ... [is a] manifestation of participation ... [which] allows man to find the fulfillment of himself in complementing others’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 285). An attitude of solidarity grasps and accepts ‘one’s share in the community because of one’s membership within that particular community’ (p. 285), which unites people in their common pursuit of a true good (Spinello, 2012, p. 37). Hence, one can see how the aforementioned labourers or students can approach their work unwillingly, begrudgingly, or with an attitude of solidarity, with a sense of *we*, united in a common cause. Solidarity is an outlook one brings to participation with others, that *I* in relation to *you* (Wojtyła, 1993g), united in action for the common good. It arises because persons live and act with other persons, and displays the realisation that one is a member of a community and so looks beyond themselves to the group, which is the means by which one realises oneself. This enables us to distinguish between oneself as a worker, participating with others, and the team(s) of which one is a member, in solidarity with one’s colleagues. Further, Wojtyła

highlights that persons are fulfilled in the exercise of their complementary capabilities, in solidarity with others. Hence, a leader needs to respect each person qua person, know and appreciate their particular gifts, and meld a team from those complementary gifts.

The notion of solidarity reveals one's duties and obligations towards the common good, and 'prevents trespass upon other people's obligations and duties, and seizing things belonging to others' (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 285). Here we find a penetrating insight that has relevance for effective delegation and, in particular, reveals the 'immorality' of micro-management. Wojtyła's comment allows the inference that *performing the duties of others* is in some manner seizing what belongs to them. When seen from the perspective of self-fulfilment via actions that accord with one's end, this is eminently reasonable. If a person does what is rightly another's to do, and that could contribute to that person's fulfillment, then doing so deprives the other of what is rightfully theirs: '*To take over a part of the duties and obligations that are not mine is intrinsically contrary to participation and to the essence of the community*' (p. 284f [emphasis added]). Hence, those managers and leaders who do the task of another deprive them of volition and the means of becoming. While ALT is positioned as an enablement theory, its main focus via the four components is on traits possessed by the leader that render them authentic, coupled with the view that such leaders foster authenticity in their followers. While such leaders may implicitly grasp the problem with micro-management, the absence of a robust philosophical framework makes it difficult to explain the underlying reasoning, beyond suggesting doing so would lack authenticity. Personalism's focus reveals the follower as a person, causing the leader to pause and consider their actions in the light of personhood rather than performance. One's duties regarding others occur at the intersection of persons and their shared action, 'in virtue of an interpersonal nexus of "participation" that manifests itself in the personal intertwinings of the coexistence and collaboration of people' (p. 163), which means duties are particular to each person one encounters, and to the content and circumstances of that encounter. The nature of the relationship determines the obligations and responsibilities obtained for the parties in that relationship. This has implications for the duties incumbent upon leaders, who encounter others at an 'interpersonal nexus' (p. 163), not simply as objects in a transactional moment. Since persons are fulfilled in participation with others, leaders have a moral responsibility to foster those conditions that allow each person 'to realise the personalistic value of his own action' (p. 271) and engage in self-fulfilling actions (p. 273).

5.8.5 Creates ethical obligation and the personalist norm

Since persons are fulfilled with other persons in human community, one can ask how persons should treat one another in such a context, and so, while we have considered the ethical question regarding the person and moral action, here we find an answer to the question regarding the intersubjective nature of moral action. As noted earlier, a person is both an actor and acted upon, both the cause of action and the one to whom something happens. In a social context, this means one's actions impact others, who are themselves the object of one's action, and so there is always a risk that persons could be objectified, instrumentalised and used as a means to an end, even unintentionally.

Wojtyła affirms Kant's categorical imperative—'act in such a way so that the person is never a mere means of your action, but always an end' (cited in Wojtyła, 2013, p. 11)—as an 'elementary principle of the moral order' (Wojtyła, 2013, p. 11), but proposes an alternative formulation that he refers to as the personalistic norm:

whenever the person is an object of your action in your conduct, remember that you may not treat him merely as a means to an end, as a tool, but [you must] take into account that *the person himself has or at least should have his end* (pp. 11, 25 [emphasis added]).

Kant advocates human beings are not subject to another's use because they are independent existing beings who, therefore, move themselves from within rather than being moved by another. Wojtyła, in contrast, argues persons ought not to be used by another since doing so denies them the end for which they exist. In doing so, he does not reject Kant, but shines a personalist light on his categorical imperative. This is a very important distinction. Wojtyła argues that in dealing with persons, one should consider the end of that person, rather than the end one seeks via the person, asking 'what is Mary for?', rather than 'what is Mary *useful* for?' The principle regarding the primacy of the end of the person grounds the notion of personal freedom, particularly freedom of conscience (Wojtyła, 2013, p. 11), which ensures action is grounded in truth (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 156). No person can deny another the freedom to choose and pursue their end.¹⁸ In fact, Wojtyła states 'a person is an entity of a sort to which the only proper and adequate way to relate is love' (Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 41). Therefore, love—not as an emotional attraction, but as that respect for another human person, which manifests in care and concern—must govern all human relationships, in order that the person does not become merely an object of enjoyment. One can begin to see the considerable responsibility such a principle imposes on leaders. Leaders should not care for followers simply because they

contribute to commercial outcomes and financial reward but because each person we encounter is worthy of our respect, care and concern.

We recall here Kierkegaard's admonition to discover one's task, or vocation. If one is subject to some manner of control by another, then one is restricted in one's ability to respond to that vocation, and hence to be fulfilled in oneself. That 'other' is not necessarily a person. It could be, and often is, the environment in which one exists, whether a totalitarian regime or even a commercial context, that restricts initiative, freedom and personal growth, treating people as units of economic production.

The personalistic norm, which requires us to never treat persons as mere objects of use and to respect their reasonable self-chosen ends and them as an end in themselves, stands in sharp contrast to utilitarianism, which 'is incapable of ensuring love in the relation between human beings, between persons' (Wojtyła, 2013, p. 24). Utilitarianism depends for its very operation in grasping the utility of the other, grounding action in one's own gratification (p. 24) and is the fundamental cause of that pulverisation of the human person that Wojtyła considered such a metaphysical evil (cf. De Lubac, 1993, p. 171).¹⁹ Any principle or practice that treats persons as a means to an end stands in opposition to the personalistic norm that promotes persons over pleasure. From this flows the obligation to justice—to treat people fairly and give them their due.

5.8.6 Participation restricted when persons treated as objects

When individuals are deprived of the opportunity for participation, they experience alienation, which is the antithesis of participation (Wojtyła, 1979b, p. 279; 1993g, p. 255). Alienation arises whenever a person is unable either to discover or to develop their subjectivity, and so their self-fulfilment is curtailed. Wojtyła's main concern with alienation is not simply that it depersonalises or dehumanises persons, but that it 'threatens the person as a subject' (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 257), in contrast with participation which upholds the subjectivity of the person. Alienation deprives people of the possibility of fulfilling themselves with other persons in community (p. 256). It 'constricts or even annihilates the human *we*' (p. 256) and subverts 'the truth of the essential worth of the person' (p. 256), severing the *I* from the *thou*, rendering the other no longer 'neighbour' but now 'stranger' or even 'enemy' (p. 257). Any actions that foster such alienation should be firmly rejected since these diminish shared lived experience, which is required to draw people into the social community, where they may ultimately be fulfilled in mutual striving towards the common good. Clearly, any action that objectifies persons alienates them. While bullying is an obvious example, in the manner it

separates persons from others, there are doubtless many ways leaders can alienate followers. Consider, for example, workers in a call centre given extremely limited time for bathroom breaks, sweatshop labour conditions that reduce persons to their productivity, and all those places where employees are treated without respect.

As a result of depriving individuals of the opportunity for self-fulfilment, the *we* itself is unable to become an authentic social community, even when that social group is an entire nation. In other words, alienation can occur in personal relationships and very large and complex social communities, where *the people*—the *we*—are alienated. Hence, in an organisational context, where persons are treated as resources, assets, or units of economic production, the organisation itself is unable to become the kind of social community fitting to a corporation—one at a minimum marked by care and respect, and in which human persons can flourish and become who they are. When leaders treat persons as things—the someone as something—and so alienate them, the organisation simply becomes a structural entity for achieving instrumental ends. Conversely, when leaders treat persons as ends in themselves, the organisation becomes an authentic community of persons, in which persons can be fulfilled and in which all can participate in service of the common good. Hence, the starting point for creating such a community is not cultural transformation but personal transformation in the mind and heart of the leaders. An organisational culture grounded in a sound anthropological model is more conducive to human flourishing, and hence the organisation and its members are more able to pursue the common good since each person is themselves free to pursue moral goodness and personal fulfillment.

5.9 Summarising Wojtyła: a fulfilled life is a life of moral goodness with others

Starting with an analysis of action, and the understanding that action follows being (*operari sequitur esse*), Wojtyła concludes that the actions of persons reveal the meaning of persons. His analysis of the experience of the human person reveals an anthropological and moral dimension to persons, and a distinction between the person and the person's experience of action, with an accompanying moral experience of good and evil (Wojtyła, 1993h, p. 189). Human actions have moral relevance because they refer to the person, and to the person's authentic fulfillment. Actions have a moral dimension—'leave a moral footprint' (cf. Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 151)—for the very reason that those acts involve persons, the relationship between persons and who those persons become as a consequence of those actions. Hence, the value of an act can be judged not exclusively by virtue of its human dimension, but more specifically by

how that act contributes to the authentic fulfillment of the person. We then turn our attention to one of Wojtyła's central claims, the possibility of the fulfillment of persons because persons are able to transcend their horizontal and vertical limits and boundaries as they determine themselves by choosing in accord with moral norms.

Both transcendence and self-determination are grounded in integration of oneself and one's actions (both internal and external) with one's external world, which fosters an inner equilibrium. As one becomes more integrated, one is able to overcome one's limitations and boundaries, choose for ever-higher values, become more of who one is, and so experience fulfillment. In summary, Wojtyła shows that one *is* able to fulfil oneself—become who and what one is—because one is able to transcend oneself, choose for what is true and good and become someone (Wojtyła, 1993h, p. 192). Since fulfillment means becoming who and what one is, it is reasonable to consider fulfillment conforms with authenticity.

While several elements together constitute fulfillment, the key aspects are transcendence, self-determination and integration—self-conscious persons, who are able to transcend themselves both vertically (within) and horizontally (without), at some moment take responsibility for shaping their life and becoming a fully human person. Such transcendence and self-determination is enabled by the person's ability to integrate vertical and horizontal transcendence, emotion and reason, to possess and 'take charge' of oneself, while also integrating one's subjective self with objective reality in a moral manner (i.e., governing oneself and taking charge of one's actions to act in a manner that accords with being a person) and treating others in a similar manner. Interior and exterior integration performed, or undertaken, in a responsible manner enables the person to become who and what they are, in other words fulfilled, or authentic.

Therefore, it is evident that self-determination, transcendence and fulfillment are inseparable. In going beyond oneself to complete an action, one fulfils oneself *if* the action accords with a well-formed, good and true conscience (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 235), which itself conforms with what is true and good. As we have seen, 'self-fulfilment is a distinct structure of the personal subject' (p. 235), and moral habits—whether virtuous or vicious—are crucial aspects of one's self-fulfilment or destruction (p. 235). Therefore, it is vital that human persons 'strive for self-fulfilment' (p. 236) in a manner that chooses good over evil, in accordance with the first principle of conscience (p. 234), as the actual means by which one can experience 'peace and happiness' (p. 236). In other words, the key to a fulfilled life, a life of human flourishing, is a life of moral goodness. Hence, the moral question for oneself does not merely

regard means or ends, although these matter, but, crucially, how the acts under consideration shape the persons involved. Specifically, ‘who will I become as a result of this action?’ Further, it is crucial that leaders foster the conditions for such moral development.

These four aspects of persons—self-fulfilment, transcendence, self-determination and integration—are not mutually exclusive, nor necessarily distinct. They support, complement and enable one another: ‘self-fulfillment and transcendence are inseparably connected’ (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 233); vertical transcendence is ‘the fruit of self-determination’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 119); moral choice ‘is a basic expression of the transcendence of the person’ (Crosby, 2016); self-possession, the foundation to self-determination, makes ‘self-transcendence possible’ (Spinello, 2012, p. 38); ‘the moment of efficacy [i.e., willing] ... is simultaneously the moment of the transcendence of the person with regard to his acting’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 69); and the person is able to become ‘someone or someone else’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 110) because of transcendence. Hence, any theory of (authentic) leadership must take account both of what it means to be a person and, specifically, how persons are fulfilled, as well as fostering personhood, while allowing followers to become fulfilled by exercising freedom of choice in accord with moral good. Lastly, Wojtyła’s analysis reveals persons are fulfilled in an interpersonal context with other authentic persons in a community of persons, constituted by authentic *I-thou* and *we* relationships, which are grounded in a mutuality that recognises and affirms the personhood of the other.

This discussion of Wojtyła has revealed that a fulfilled life, grounded in moral action in the pursuit of the true and the good, is ultimately the panacea to the angst and dread that is of such concern to the existentialists. Wojtyła claims ‘the proper object of the will is happiness’ (Wojtyła, 2016, p. 105) and, at one point, proposes ‘felicity’ as a synonym for fulfillment (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 174). Felicity, however, is the ‘extreme opposite’ (Acosta & Reimers, 2016, p. 182) of despair, that existential angst that occupied the minds of the existentialists. Recall from our study of Kierkegaard (in Chapter 3) the despair experienced by the aesthete, confronted by the meaninglessness of life when fulfillment is not realised in extrinsic reward, or of the ethical individual confronted by their own limitations and shortcomings. Recall also Dasein’s oppressive anxiety in the revelation of ultimate non-existence (in Chapter 4). Kierkegaard and Heidegger indicate that existential angst is overcome in some form of metamorphosis or moment of vision—the *Augenblick* or *øieblikket*—that reveals the truth of one’s situation, to which one responds by taking responsibility for one’s life. However, Wojtyła indicates the real solution lies in the pursuit of what is true and good to become who and what one is, a fully human person. He reminds us that the path to fulfillment lies in

authentic acts, which accord with who one is, as a unique, incommunicable, personal subject, in participation with others in an authentic human community. This grounding of act in the human person, and the dynamic personal structure that enables such acts to be authentic and fulfilling, is lacking in the ALT literature, which focuses on analysis of the act rather than the actor. When viewed in this manner, it allows questions such as ‘is the act conscious?’, ‘is the act consistent with personhood?’ and ‘does the act accord with objective truth and moral reality?’ to provide a lens for discerning authenticity, beyond the felt authenticity of the agent.

We conclude this chapter with a quotation from Wojtyła: ‘to fulfill oneself is the same thing as to realize the good whereby man as the person becomes and is good himself’ (1979c, p. 174). With that understanding of the profound relationship between the person, moral action and human fulfillment in the realisation of the good with others, the next chapter proceeds by drawing out the insights we can glean from our study of Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Wojtyła regarding authenticity and leadership. Then, in the subsequent and final chapter, we will return, and offer answers to, the questions raised by this study.

6 An existential–personalist perspective on authenticity and leadership

This study consistently stresses that leadership is about persons. The purpose of this chapter is to consider the contributions of Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Wojtyła to an understanding of persons and leadership. We have argued that the four components advanced by Walumbwa et al. (2008) are ultimately insufficient for a model of leadership and that what we seek in leadership can be inferred from those deficiencies. Hence, we begin by considering the four components through an existentialist–personalist lens, then combine this with what may be considered bookends for authenticity (an existential moment of vision and a personalist concept of fulfillment). This analysis establishes what is required for persons to become fully who they are. This in turn forms the foundation one requires to be an effective leader, and so the second section of this chapter considers persons as leaders and the key dimensions an existential–personalist perspective reveals about leadership. What emerges is that it is ultimately personalism, rather than existentialism, that informs leadership as that interpersonal relationship, and hence the final section of this chapter considers a personalist contribution and proposes *personalist leadership*, a model of leadership grounded in personalist attitudes.

6.1 An existential–personalist perspective on the four components of authentic leadership

Walumbwa et al.'s (2008) commonly accepted components of authentic leadership—self-awareness, internalised moral perspective, relational transparency and balanced processing—merely provide data about attributes a person possesses, rather than insight about the meaning of the person who is presumed to be authentic or the degree to which they may be authentic. Further, these say nothing about that person's leadership capability or behaviour, and so are insufficient to grasp the breadth and depth of what constitutes authentic leadership. Significantly, they say little about the profound, transformative work one must undertake to become self-aware, relationally transparent, morally competent and a balanced processor. Despite the difficulties of identifying whether, and to what degree, such states exist, even when one becomes so it remains unproven that one is therefore one's authentic self, or an authentic leader. ALT has not explained what it is to be a self, what it means to be authentic and how that translates to leadership. An existentialist–personalist perspective on these four components, which is summarised below, reveals the extent of this problem.

A fundamental problem with ALT is the conflation of authentic persons with authentic leadership, as if being the former ensures the latter. This view arises from a common assumption that the actions of a leader constitute leadership *per se*. ALT argues that authentic leadership occurs when *leaders* are self-aware, ethically competent, relationally transparent and balanced processors (Walumbwa et al., 2008). Although it is readily apparent that these components refer specifically to attributes or traits possessed by the person who is a leader, ALT claims a correlation between these and authentic leadership.

Contrary to this claim, it can be argued that these components, while helpful to leaders, do not constitute authenticity, are not useful measures of authenticity and do not constitute authentic leadership. Further, the claim that people who score well on these components therefore demonstrate authentic leadership does not prove the underlying model, and seems tenuous at best. The inherent problem is the lack of a sound understanding of personal authenticity, which can then underpin a *further* definition of authentic leadership, for they are not the same thing. The value of these characteristics in any individual, whether a leader or a follower would seem self-evidently to be beneficial for themselves and others. However, one may well ask whether these actually constitute authenticity. While an individual may score well in a test for these components, they may not necessarily be an authentic leader. ALT, as it stands, does not appear to measure leadership itself, that act in which authentic persons engage. Being an authentic person does not mean one is or will be an authentic leader, although it is self-evident that personal authenticity is antecedent to authentic leadership as understood. The point being made is not to dispute the correlation but to observe that ALT says little about leadership itself, concerning itself more directly with the person of the leader in the leadership role.

6.1.1 Self-awareness

While self-awareness in ALT refers to making sense of oneself (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 103), and coming to understand one's values, talents, emotional framework, strengths and weaknesses (Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, et al., 2005; Ilies et al., 2005), there remains considerable debate in the ALT literature about whether the self exists (Medlock, 2012, p. 51) and, if so, what it means to be a self (p. 42). Further, some argue that since any self that does exist undergoes change in its own growth, development, role and relationships, it cannot be constant and, hence, cannot be authentic (Caza & Jackson, 2011, p. 359).

Kierkegaard's emphasis on one's inner life, and his observation that the majority of people have 'forgotten what it is to *exist* [humanly] and what *inwardness* means' (Kierkegaard, 2009a,

p. 209) indicates this same yearning to know and understand oneself. However, since people have forgotten what it is to exist as persons, they can lose themselves without realising who and what has been lost (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 32). While Socrates says ‘know yourself’, Kierkegaard highlights the centrality of ‘choosing oneself’ (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 517), for in choosing, one accepts and becomes oneself (p. 491). Hence, self-awareness is not simply knowing oneself—understanding one’s habits and tendencies, strengths and weaknesses, virtues and values, and generally knowing how one thinks and behaves—but also choosing oneself, and understanding the conditions, those moments of insight, that shaped those choices and have made one who one is. However, the deeper question regarding the *self*, the I of human consciousness, who lies beneath our behaviour has not yet been answered. Self-awareness is grounded in the human capacity for knowing and choosing, which Wojtyła has explained in some detail. It could be argued that ‘facing into’ that need for self-awareness, and having the maturity to address what emerges, is an indicator of authenticity.

Heidegger argues there must be an enquirer—the self—who can discover and know their own self (Heidegger, 2010, p. 167), and that the possibility of that self, and its potential for authenticity (Heidegger, 1962, p. 167), is grasped in the *Augenblick* (cf. Heidegger, 1962, p. 376, Translator’s fn. 2). He indicates the most fundamental self-awareness is that of one’s mortality, consequent to the *Augenblick*, coupled with the realisation that one is not subject to the whims of the crowd, but able to take responsibility for oneself. The acceptance of one’s finitude and mortality promotes greater self-awareness and care for others and one’s world. Genuine care and concern—in accepting the other—allows the other to be who they truly are, who they truly can be, namely, their fully human, authentic self. Further, since Dasein is Care, one is able to grasp oneself as someone, as distinct from something (Heidegger, 1982, p. 160). One can then consider oneself a someone who becomes authentic in care and concern for other beings and entities (Heidegger, 1962, p. 308). This discloses who one is and who one can become (p. 243), in some manner of historical constancy with oneself (p. 463). Hence, one’s self-awareness increases as one expresses who one is—as care and concern—towards others. However, Heidegger’s prioritisation of existence over essence (pp. 67, 153)—that one *is* what one makes oneself—allows the possibility of the self as a revocable idea, and, ultimately, the contemporary view that self-declared identity annuls objective reality.

When Wojtyła speaks of self-awareness, he means grasping *oneself* present in action, where that self is a unique, irreplaceable person, worthy of dignity and respect. Self-awareness enables one to recognise *I* am present in an action, and to simultaneously grasp the distinction between the action one is performing and the actor—it is *me* who is acting (Wojtyła, 1979c,

p. 31)—which transforms being present in an action to being present to oneself in the action. Further, he grounds creativity—which proves a *person* exists (Wojtyła, 1993, p. 171)—in self-awareness: ‘the better we know ourselves — our possibilities, capabilities, and talents — the more we are able to derive from ourselves and the more we are able to create, making use of the raw materials we find in ourselves’ (p. 171). Wojtyła also highlights the subjectivity of the person, and hence that, although one’s actions are objectively available for others, one’s thoughts, feelings, self-knowledge and consciousness are not accessible or immediately available to others unless one so chooses. One is present to oneself in a way and manner that is substantially different from knowing that others are present to themselves. Knowing one is present to oneself reveals *I* am a subject, not merely an object, and a subject constituted by personhood, from which one derives certain rights and responsibilities. Hence, a leader can know *about* their people, but is limited in what they can *know* about their people. A leader may well know the strengths and capabilities of their team, for example, almost certainly having some form of competency matrix mapped against organisational needs to place people in roles to maximise performance. But knowing competencies is not the same as knowing persons, and knowing persons is grounded one’s own interiority and knowing of themselves, and the disclosure of that person in action.

This would suggest an obligation on the part of leaders to respect a person’s interiority and to encourage opportunities for persons to become more self-aware by learning about, and cultivating, their interior life. It seems evident that such practices could also reveal one’s prejudices and biases, and so foster balanced processing and better ethical reasoning. Conversely, a leader who fails to appreciate their own or another’s interiority can only view the other through an empirical lens, as an individual object with particular competencies and capabilities that are suitable for the task at hand.

Hence, the main contribution of philosophy to the concept of self-awareness, in the context of ALT, is that such awareness refers to the self of the human person, not simply a collection of components, and that one becomes fully oneself self in knowing and choosing in a way that aligns one’s ontological and moral self.

6.1.2 Internalised moral perspective

ALT arose in response to, and as a possible panacea for, ethical failures among leaders, and so an internalised moral perspective is considered a key aspect of authentic leadership. This is premised on the belief that leadership is an inherently ethical pursuit (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 94) and that authentic leaders anchor their decisions and actions in ‘internal moral standards

and values' (p. 96). It is claimed authentic leaders are leaders of moral character, since they possess greater self-awareness and so greater sensitivity to inner moral guidance (Gardner, Avolio & Walumbwa, p. 395), who act in accord with those values (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 95) while transcending self-interest (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 247). While this sentiment may be correct, there continues to be no shortage of examples of ethical failure (Crawford et al., 2020, p. 2). Whether the effective practice of authentic leadership, as understood according to the theory, actually reduces incidents of ethical failure is an interesting and vital question, although beyond the scope of this study.²⁰

ALT has also failed to recognise the need for an ethical theory or framework (Crawford et al., 2020, p. 7) or fully explain the relationship between ethics and authenticity (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1130; Avolio & Walumbwa, 2014, p. 344). Nor has it developed a coherent ontological and epistemological foundation for truth and goodness (Case et al., 2011, p. 248), which is necessary to ground any moral theory. One of the reasons this matters is that ethical failure is not a failure of leadership per se, but a failure in the character of the leader. *Leaders* do not make ethical mistakes—*persons* in leadership positions make mistakes—hence, the failure is in the intentions and choices of the person (Price, 2003, p. 69). As Wojtyła observes, actions are actions of persons and, hence, are moral actions by virtue of the agent.

Since one's actions have a moral value, leadership actions must have moral value. This means the actions of a leader *always* have moral content, being morally good or morally bad. Notwithstanding this fact, leaders face many dilemmas and decisions that appear morally ambiguous, and so ethical choice is rarely binary. However, morally good actions contribute to self-fulfilment, and so a leader who engages in morally good behaviour enhances their own self and becomes fulfilled. Hence, there is a foundation *in the person* of the leader between the self and the ethical component of authentic leadership.

It therefore follows that leadership has a moral dimension: leadership is an essentially moral undertaking with and between human persons in mutual action, containing within it the moral obligation to act responsibly towards oneself and others (Bombała, 2002, p. 339). Actions shape the self who acts and—when performed by a leader—shape others via the environment created by those actions. Hence, is it reasonable to suggest that just as persons are *moral* persons, leaders are *moral* leaders. This does not infer leaders are necessarily morally *good*, but reasons that since personhood has a moral dimension, so too must leadership be moral leadership, since it is the act of a moral person that impacts other persons.

Wojtyła's observation that our acts leave a 'moral footprint' on both ourselves and others has considerable import for this notion. Since human actions 'do not vanish without a trace' (Wojtyła, 1979c, pp. 13, 151), leaving an imprint in the person, by which persons become good or bad persons (p. 13), it is self-evident that the actions of a leader similarly do not vanish without a trace. They leave an imprint both in the leader and on the follower, shaping the leader and influencing the shape of the follower and the culture of the organisation that is created by their actions (Bombała, 2002, p. 335). Such footprints often continue far beyond the original leadership relationship.

Since actions reveal the person, one can argue that the actions of a person in a leadership role reveals the person of the leader *and* their understanding of the human person. In other words, the way a leader treats persons reveals whether they consider persons to be a radical individual, or as just one among many in a collectivist whole, or a means to an end, or as a distinctly personal subject. When leaders and followers desire the other for their own ends—that is, when one or both wants the other for what the other can do for them—the relationship is one of utility, and so utilitarian. An unexamined anthropology risks centralising and elevating either the individual or the organisation, to the detriment of the human person. Individualism can be observed in remuneration structures that play to selfish greed, grounded in the view that people are driven by financial reward, or a more radical individualism which holds each person is the centre and arbiter of reality. On the other hand, 'capitalist' totalitarianism—where the organisation rather than the state becomes a collective—treats people as an object or instrument for use by the organisation, while the more radical social totalitarianism holds the state is the source of all that is good and true. The oft-heard statement 'people are our greatest asset' infers people 'belong' in some way to the firm, and can inadvertently deprive people of freedom by asserting, and insisting on, such maxims as 'the way we do things here' is the only way, even when such behaviours are immoral or illegal. When people are an asset, they are easily eliminated when no longer required for the financial wellbeing of the organisation. Contrary to this, a leader with a sound philosophical anthropology as a foundation to their ethical framework, who sees and relates to human persons rather than human assets, would instinctively resist such tendencies. The philosophy of personalism in particular can help one navigate and overcome these two extremes, resolving the inherent flaws in both individualism and totalitarianism, each of which can be observed in contemporary business environments.

ALT's ambivalence regarding a philosophical anthropology of the self-determining person, who has themselves as an end (Wojtyła, 2013, p. 11), its failure to distinguish between

ontological and moral reality, and its failure to fully consider the persuasive influence of the crowd erodes its emphasis on an internalised moral perspective. Although ALT advocates for moral capability, it does not situate that within a theory of the human person that explains what it is to be moral, nor within a social context that explains the difficulties one encounters in being moral.

While ALT advocates authenticity, it does not come to grips with the difficulties of operating independently of the environment one inhabits. Both Kierkegaard and Heidegger emphasise the perfidious nature and influence of one's social environment, an observation the ALT literature does not address. This becomes particularly relevant when we consider how the environment influences thinking and behaviour, and which therefore may be a causal factor in the ethical failures that authentic leadership purports to mitigate. Kierkegaard argued most people live empty lives, immersed in the crowd, which takes on a life of its own and becomes the arbiter of moral truth (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 117f). However, a moment of vision reveals the truth of one's situation, which launches a metamorphosis from the aesthetic to an ethical individual (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 544) as one chooses oneself (p. 543), rather than abandoning one's freedom to events or the environment (p. 489). Hence, the ethical individual takes responsibility for their own life and actions (p. 542), and so chooses, creates, determines and fulfills themselves (p. 543). Kierkegaard shows that assuming control of one's life gives one ethical agency, and the possibility of creating one's own life (p. 544). However, an internalised moral perspective as advocated in ALT is the fruit of much work on oneself—it does not come naturally, as if in the *øieblik* one suddenly gains moral insight and capability.

Therefore, while development of authentic leaders may foster authenticity among leaders, it will not in and of itself provide more effective tools for navigating the ethical dilemmas of leadership in complex environments. While behavioural and social sciences can provide significant insight and understanding about the way leaders act, these actions are manifestations of persons, and hence any proper leadership theory must incorporate a theory of the human person, and what is good for that person and the society that person inhabits, as a foundation to an ethical theory. An understanding of the persons involved in the act of leadership is fundamental. Absent a theory, leaders will ground ethical behaviour in their own sense of right and wrong, informed to some degree by culture and legal norms.

Leadership is one of the most 'determining' acts we encounter—either as a leader or a follower—since it is probably the most common relationship persons encounter. We are constantly leading or being led, and our actions and response within that relationship shape

who we are. Many people can recount stories of the impact leaders had on them, both good and bad. To be a leader is, therefore, a serious responsibility. A philosophical perspective highlights not only the moral perspective, but also the moral footprint of a leader, the foundations in character that must be built to counter one's environment and the requirement to treat persons as persons.

6.1.3 Relational transparency

ALT describes relational transparency as self-disclosure of the leaders 'authentic self' (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 95) and claims this is a foundation for trusting relationships with followers. It is argued that relationship based on trust encourage followers to assume responsibility for their actions, which is a foundation to self-determination (Avolio & Walumbwa, 2014, p. 342). However, this is predicated on the leader being of sufficient maturity and character that the self that is disclosed inspires followers to positive self-determining action—that is, that the leader is themselves a good role model.

The relational dimension of the person is not a central concern for Kierkegaard and Heidegger, although Wojtyła emphasises the intersubjective nature of the person. Wojtyła argues that the mutuality of personal relationships establishes a foundation for fulfillment of the persons in those relationships, and that persons are fulfilled in what he terms *I-thou* relationships. Hence, the quality of the *relationship* matters for authenticity; that is, the relationship itself is of prime concern, rather than the transparency of the leader in that relationship. The human person experiences both themselves and others as existing and acting persons, although this experience is unique to each person (i.e., I experience myself acting in a different manner to that in which I experience you acting). Hence, there is never merely an I, but always an *I-thou* and *we*. Therefore, a focus on *I-thou relationships*, rather than on relational transparency, is crucial to effective leadership, since leadership is always an *I-thou* action in the context of a wider set of relationships. Hence, leadership is grounded in the relationship between leader and follower, not the actions of the leader. Since leadership is a relationship, the quality of that relationship matters, and whether it helps or hinders, promotes or diminishes another.

While ALT talks of relational transparency, Wojtyła reveals the key to authentic relationships is mutual respect for the personhood of the other, and hence a focus on an *I-thou*, rather than an *I-object*, relationship. While people have objective tasks and roles, and are themselves an object—although not to be objectified—to another, they are a subject to themselves, and hence worthy of dignity and respect. While this may seem like a subtle

nuance, it has significant import. The question for a leader becomes not ‘am I being open and transparent?’, since what is disclosed is most often one’s traits and attributes, strengths, weaknesses and feelings, but ‘am I building an effective relationship with this person?’, or ‘am I creating the conditions for effective personal relationships?’ Therefore, leaders who grasp the other as persons, not producers, and treats them accordingly, enables the conditions for their fulfillment, or authenticity. However, as commented earlier, the degree to which this fosters authenticity in the follower may well depend on the maturity and character of the leader themselves.

Wojtyła observes that ‘love is impossible for beings who are mutually impenetrable’ (Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 131). To say another is impenetrable is to note that although the physical self may be observed, the inner self remains a mystery. This means the other, who they are in themselves, cannot then be discovered, and so any understanding of the other with whom one is in a relationship is filtered through one’s perspective of the other, rather than the reality of their true self. The relevance is this insight regards one’s capacity for knowing others and being known by others. For example, when a leader fails to explain their actions, their thoughts remain resistant to understanding and so must be assumed by the follower. It is apparent that mutual impenetrability—where both people remained closed to the other—would restrict any truly human relationship.

Wojtyła reminds us of the impact of good and proper relationships: just as one’s actions determine oneself, so too do one’s relationships.²¹ Hence, social environments provide the context in which persons can develop into their authentic selves or, in the terminology adapted here, become fulfilled. Therefore, the development of the authentic person occurs vertically within the person, horizontally in interpersonal relationships, and environmentally within communities of persons. Leaders have the ability to make an impact on that for good or bad, either enhancing or diminishing the person both by their own actions and by the environment—the culture—they foster. The leader–follower relationship, which constitutes authentic leadership, must enable each person to integrate, transcend and be fulfilled in themselves. Authentic vertical transcendence allows one to transcend one’s structural boundaries and become who one can become. Authentic horizontal transcendence, on the other hand, involves one’s true self extending towards the other. Hence, leaders who foster the conditions for effective relationships between persons enable horizontal transcendence, which, therefore, is an essential aspect of authentic leadership since in such an act one truly goes beyond oneself to the goodness and truth of the other, and joins together in the pursuit of the common good.

6.1.4 Balanced processing

ALT refers to balanced processing as an attitude and approach that considers all the relevant data (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 95), including, and in particular, that which conflicts with one's own opinions and beliefs (Caza & Jackson, 2011, p. 354), and so authentic leadership must involve a disposition towards truth. Therefore, balanced processing requires an understanding of what constitutes truth, which is a question for epistemology; an understanding of the cognitional process by which one can know truth; and a process which one can follow to overcome bias. Further, the possibility of balanced processing must be predicated on the possibility of objective reality—that there are truths that can be known, against which one's biases can be tested and measured.

Despite their differing philosophical perspectives, our philosophers all express a concern for truth and for persons making decisions regarding the truth. In so asking, they are not simply asking how one defines truth, but asking how one responds to truth—what is truth *for me?*, the question first raised by Kierkegaard (Gilleleje, 1 Aug 1835, Kierkegaard, 2007, p. 5:5100). Each argues in their own way that becoming who and what one is—whether we term this authenticity or fulfillment—is contingent on some revelation of truth. Hence, how one understands, and responds to, truth is fundamental to becoming who and what one is.

The notion of turning towards is central to the thinking of Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Wojtyła, each of whom, in their own way, refers to a coming to truth. However, while Heidegger argues truth emerges in one's choosing as an act of the will, Wojtyła argues truth is grounded in objective reality and discoverable via reason. For Wojtyła, 'the essence of freedom is truth' (Spinello, 2012, p. 39), while for Heidegger, 'truth is in essence freedom' (Heidegger, 1961): '“Truth” is not a feature of correct propositions which are asserted of an “object” by a human “subject” and then are valid somewhere, in what sphere we know not. Rather, truth is disclosure of beings through which an openness essentially unfolds' (Heidegger, 1961).

However, knowing truth is not, in this context, an epistemological question regarding the *meaning* of truth—although that matters as a foundation—but a *cognitional* question regarding the *means*, or method, by which one can know the truth, and so overcome one's biases. If the will refers to truth, then not only must one strive to overcome biases (i.e., discover truth) but one must also be open to the promptings of truth that arise from the will, which is attracted to truth. Those promptings perhaps best indicate the presence or possibility of bias. Overcoming biases requires a continual process of self-examination, testing of one's assumptions, and frequently asking 'Is such and such true?', or 'is such and such the case?', accompanied by a

humility that recognises that, despite one's firmly held views, one can in fact be wrong. Hence, disposition to truth could be evidenced by readiness to change one's mind, to accept new insights that dispel previously held positions. Unexamined bias ultimately limits one's access to truth, which therefore restricts one's ability to choose wisely and well, and so undermines the possibility of who one can become.

The existentialists shine a light on the insidious power of the crowd to represent itself as truth, which is experienced when, for example, it is stated that 'everyone is in agreement', although it remains unclear who 'everyone' is and on what basis they are all in agreement. The challenge for an authentic leader is to remain alert to such influences, both in their own life and the lives of their people, bearing in mind that the crowd can be one's Board or executive colleagues. The crowd does not necessarily consist of a large number, but emerges when any number fail to think independently and insist on the correctness of their shared view. While balanced processing may be an admirable trait, an attitude disposed towards truth and overcoming bias requires continual cultivation.

Leaders occupy a position that limits their ability to discover truth and risk being told either what others think they want to hear or what the followers want the leader to hear. Hence, bias is an ever-present threat for leaders, not just in one's own thinking, but in that of others, and so leaders must constantly ask if they have asked all the relevant questions, such as: have I excluded particular people or information from my thinking? Have I invited, and am I open to, honest feedback? Do I in fact have feedback mechanisms in place? Do I review my decisions after a period of time, to compare outcomes with expectations? Are the conclusions and recommendations in this report based on solid data, or merely preference or opinion? What is the question you do not want me to ask?

In summary, while the notion of balanced processing recognises the need to consider all the relevant data, particularly that which differs from one's firmly held view, it relies on a disposition to truth. Thus, to grasp truth, one must have a cognitional process that transforms data into understanding, and insight into judgement and sound decision-making, which is grounded in both a solid questioning process, and an acceptance of objective reality.

Hence, while our analysis reveals what is lacking in these four components, it also reveals the essential foundations for persons in leadership: knowing one's moral and ontological self, and making choices in accord with that self; a grasp of truth, as distinct from feeling; and an appreciation of the other as person, not as object. It also indicates what is essential in a theory

of leadership: responsibility grounded in realism regarding the person and ethical behaviour, and an appreciation for the intersubjective dimension of persons.

In the following section, we consider two ‘bookends’ for a truly authentic life: the existential moment of vision, and fulfillment as becoming who and what one is.

6.2 Authenticity: fulfillment, predicated on a moment of vision

6.2.1 Authenticity is fulfillment

We noted Wojtyła’s view that fulfillment means ‘becoming who and what one is’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 98), which corresponds with authenticity as being who and what one is. The existentialists emphasise the role of personal responsibility in becoming authentic, while Wojtyła says fulfillment is based on self-determination (p. 156), and hence personal responsibility. Hence, responsibility is also fundamental to becoming authentic, or fulfillment.

The correspondence of fulfillment with authenticity can be detected in Kierkegaard. His posing of the questions regarding what it means to be human and what it means *for me* to be human goes to the heart of authenticity, recognising—at least implicitly—that authenticity refers to a correspondence between an ontological and moral reality. Recall the earlier observation that while an object is or is not authentic according to its correspondence with the reality of its being—it is or is not a diamond, for example—a human person has a choice regarding their conformance with their being. One can choose to act in ways that are compatible, or not, with what it means to be human. Kierkegaard discovers that one is fulfilled in the conformance of that moral and ontological reality. He contrasts the illusory, unfulfilling life of the aesthete (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 493), with the ethical individual who is fulfilled in taking personal responsibility for their actions (p. 542f) and claims that ultimate fulfillment is experienced by the person of faith (Stages on Life’s Way, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 182). Hence, we can glimpse in Kierkegaard a correlation between authenticity and fulfillment, as one discovers who one is, and makes self-determining choices to become who one is, in the ethical and religious stages that Kierkegaard identifies. However, Kierkegaard does not acknowledge this relationship.

The metaphysical foundations of fulfillment—becoming who and what one is—are explained in far greater detail by Wojtyła. He explains one *is* (a person), and is fulfilled by becoming who and what one is (fully a person), where such becoming is a lifelong work, facilitated by living out one’s vocation. Hence, while all persons are persons—ontologically authentic—one must become morally authentic, becoming who and what one is, for which

Wojtyła uses the term ‘fulfillment’. While there is a tendency in ALT to identify authenticity with emotion—one ‘feels’ authentic—Wojtyła confirms what we glimpse in Kierkegaard: authenticity is grounded in truth (Wojtyła, 1993b, p. 215), and an authentic person is not only someone who accords with being a person but one whose actions accord with personhood. Hence, an existential–personalist perspective on authenticity refers to being true in the context of objective reality to one’s ontological self as an embodied incommunicable, unrepeatable, self-determining person, in pursuit of one’s vocation. However, both Kierkegaard and Heidegger hold that one is inauthentically not a self when absorbed in the crowd, becomes authentic in a defining moment and endeavours to remain authentic while avoiding falling back into inauthenticity. Wojtyła enables us to grasp that authenticity refers to being a fully human person, both as who one is and who one becomes. While there are an unlimited number of authentic human persons, there is only one way *this* person can be authentic, by being who and what they truly are, distinct from every other person who is, was and will be.²² This creates opportunities for leaders to help followers discover and follow their ‘way’ of being authentic, by discovering how they may be fulfilled—which includes what we may call a vocation. Where that aligns with organisational purpose, in service of the common good, one may discover fulfillment in and through one’s work.

Wojtyła’s analysis of the acting person, his distinction between the ontological and moral self, and his concept of fulfillment of persons—to which Kierkegaard alludes—enables us to grasp the potential offered by fulfillment as a substitute for authenticity. This perspective on fulfillment extends the notion of authenticity as being ‘true to oneself’, to the idea of becoming ‘what and who ... [one] *actually* is’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 98 [emphasis added]), which is consequent upon conscious action directed towards what is true and good (p. 156). Hence, Wojtyła indicates that becoming is an inner transition from potential to fulfillment, an actualisation in the metaphysical sense, ‘becoming fulfilled in who one is’ a moral becoming of an ontic self (cf. Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 96). This is quite distinct from the common notion of ‘fulfilling one’s potential’, which usually refers to prowess, such as achieving one’s career, athletic or intellectual potential, rather than to fulfilling one’s total human potential. The person is an authentic ontological self, with whom they can align their authentic moral self, via self-determining choices that accord with personhood, and so become fulfilled.

In other words, the ontological–moral distinction underpins a distinction between *being* and *becoming* authentic, since one *is* an authentic human person, and *becomes* who and what that person is. Hence, a person’s moral authenticity develops as one makes ever wiser choices that accord with what is true and good, enabling them to become more fully human. Fulfillment

refers, therefore, to a moral and anthropological fulfillment of one's *self*, becoming who and what one is (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 153; 1979b, p. 286). It is not simply an emotional state, such as the feeling of satisfaction one experiences when realising a dream, or fulfilling an aspiration. Hence, fulfillment is commensurate with authenticity, since each refers to becoming who and what one is, both in the quotidian and the totality of one's life. However, while it may be unclear whether or not one is authentic, and how one may become authentic, self-fulfilment is a direct consequence of self-determining choices that align with one's personhood and true and good values that transcend oneself.

Wojtyła shows one is able to determine oneself, and so is able to fulfil oneself—become who and what one is—because one is able to transcend oneself, choose for what is true and good and become one's full self (Wojtyła, 1993h, p. 192). Both transcendence and self-determination are grounded in integration of one's ontic and moral self, which fosters an inner equilibrium. As one becomes more integrated, one is able to overcome one's limitations and boundaries and choose for ever-higher values and so become more of who one is, and so fulfilled. Wojtyła's personalist approach overcomes the limited cosmological model of the individual as simply a 'rational animal', and the flawed ethical models that consider human beings as part of a collectivist whole or the radical individualist, none of which provide a sound foundation for authenticity regarding persons. His perspective on subjectivity, the irreducible in persons, efficacy and the power of the will are *crucial* to our understanding of authenticity, and so fulfillment. Unless we grasp efficacy and subjectivity—what makes Mary uniquely Mary—authenticity is reduced to being a rational animal, and one's felt expression of that via particular traits and attributes. However, as stated earlier, Mary *is* authentically Mary as a unique person, and her life's task is to *become* who and what she is. A focus on the behavioural or social aspects of authentic leadership, in overlooking the subjective, efficacious person who acts, therefore overlooks the responsibility of leaders to help followers make wise and free choices, rather than have decisions imposed on them, as an enabler of ownership and a foundation for fulfillment.

Heidegger, on the other hand, identifies authenticity with ownership, specifically in the sense of taking responsibly for one's actions. He argues that the challenge to live an authentic existence emerges in response to the realisation of one's mortality or finitude, which compels one to take 'ownership' for one's life, rather than leaving life up to the vagaries of chance or the desires of the crowd (Heidegger, 1962, p. 308ff). However, considering authenticity as taking ownership of one's actions fails to capture the fulfillment as a person that one experiences as a consequence of taking ownership. Wojtyła links acts, and ownership of those

acts, in the dynamic structure of the person (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 42)—one’s acts belong to oneself, and no other has a claim to responsibility for one’s actions (p. 67). An authentic act is one that is fully owned by oneself, for which one takes complete responsibility, and consequently is self-determining. Hence, while Heidegger alerts us to the relationship between authenticity and ownership, Wojtyła draws our attention to the need for self-possession, in order to take ownership, and the possibility of fulfillment that ensues. Wojtyła points out self-possession enables self-giving, through which one is fulfilled: ‘it is precisely when one becomes a gift for others that one becomes most fully oneself’ (Wojtyła, 1993h, p. 194).

Hence, authenticity is not simply ownership, but ownership grounded in full possession of oneself, which then manifests in the gift of oneself to others. Therefore, ownership, as taking responsibility for one’s acts, is a condition for authenticity. Since persons are fulfilled—become who and what they are—in self-giving, then failure to give oneself limits the degree to which one may become oneself, and so failure to give oneself, keeping one’s talents to oneself, represents a failure in authenticity. Therefore authentic leadership must encourage and instil personal responsibility, and, in particular, not deny persons that opportunity by doing those tasks that are rightfully theirs. In that case, helping people out is singularly unhelpful, as it deprives them of an opportunity for fulfillment.

6.2.2 The moment of vision

In one of existentialism’s greatest contributions (Westra, 1988, p. 250), both Kierkegaard, with his *øieblik* (Either/Or, II 125, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 70), and Heidegger, with his *Augenblick* (cf. Heidegger, 1962, p. 376, Translator’s fn. 2), attest to a moment of vision as a condition for authenticity. In this moment, where time touches eternity (The Concept of Anxiety, IV 357, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 151), one grasps one’s inauthentic existence and the possibility of authenticity, and so takes responsibility for one’s actions, rather than abrogate them to the crowd.

Hence, one may ask whether Wojtyła acknowledges a similar life ‘reorienting’ moment in his philosophical work.²³ A solution to this question appears when we consider the existentialists’ view that the *Augenblick* heralds the moment where one assumes personal responsibility for who one is and who one is to become. The existentialists argue that, prior to the *Augenblick*, one’s actions are determined by some external force, such as the crowd, or the ‘they’. Although the question regarding *how* persons *become* the cause of their own actions is crucial, neither Kierkegaard nor Heidegger asks this question, since they focus on the lived experience of persons—such as existential anxiety, or the calling of some potential self from

the future—to cause the action. This indicates that they consider the inauthentic person, immersed in the crowd, as someone to whom something happens, rather than someone who acts. However, this raises a further question regarding what happens in the person to cause one to take responsibility, in that moment between the revelation and responsibility, for there must be some manner of response in the person.

Wojtyła's analysis of the acting person distinguishes between something that happens to one—in this case, the *Augenblick*—and something that one causes to happen, in a 'moment of efficacy' (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 66)—an act of the will in which one takes responsibility for one's actions, revealing oneself as a person. It is this supervening moment of efficacy that sits between the stimulus of the *Augenblick* and the response in a self-determining act, that enables revelation to cause responsibility. For without the moment of efficacy, an action of the will, one would not be able to take responsibility for one's actions. Therefore, a personal response to the *Augenblick* is not possible without an accompanying moment of efficacy—an act of one's will in answer to the existential revelation, without which the moment of vision would remain suspended in a mystical void, and fail to achieve completion.

Wojtyła's analysis provides an understanding of what happens in one (the existential *Augenblick*), the response in the person via an act of the will, and the responsibility one must take for one's actions (they are mine and no other's). Hence, the *moment* of the *Augenblick* is a prelude to a *moment* of efficacy, as a result of which, one takes ownership and personal responsibility for one's life and actions. In that decisive moment, one both grasps and experiences oneself as the origin of action: *I act. I take responsibility. I am no longer one to whom something happens, caused by the crowd, but one who takes ownership and responsibility for my life.* Hence, Wojtyła provides a metaphysical foundation to the phenomenological *Augenblick*.

Taking personal responsibility for one's actions is a crucial point of agreement between Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Wojtyła. However, while the existentialists consider the *Augenblick* as a moment of transition from inauthenticity to authenticity, after which one assumes responsibility, Wojtyła understands persons are authentic persons—as an ontological reality—who are able to be fulfilled via self-determining choices, and hence have always borne responsibility for their acts. The existentialists claim the inauthentic individual immersed in the crowd is not a self (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 35; Heidegger, 1962, p. 166f). However, this individual can, in a moment of vision, grasp their freedom and possibility of being a self. Wojtyła argues one is constantly a self—there is no before and after—who experiences

themselves in an ever deeper manner, becoming ever more fulfilled. Wojtyła understands the person as someone who is revealed via action, while the existentialists consider the *Augenblick* as a defining moment of becoming a self, who is then revealed to oneself.

Hence, one may ask whether authentic leaders should actively promote opportunities for an *Augenblick* among their employees, such as organising retreats and similar reflective experiences. Doing so risks assuming responsibility on employees' behalf and overlooks the fact that each person will have their own experience at their own appointed time, when they are ready for the revelation. Since each person's journey is their own, no program will suffice, and many may never experience this existential awakening. Since each person's journey is their own, one cannot *cause* a moment of vision in another, although a leader can foster the conditions that allow an existential insight to intrude by encouraging certain practices. Kierkegaard advocates for times of silence and stillness, devoid of distraction, to allow the possibility of an *øieblikket* (Lily in the Field, Bird of the Air, XI 18, Kierkegaard, 2000, p. 336), while Heidegger proposes habits of what today may be called mindfulness, and/or reflecting on beauty, such as that found in art (Heidegger, 1962, p. 387). Executive retreats, and specific exercises such as writing one's eulogy—focusing as it does on one's finitude and mortality—have been found helpful in this regard, by this researcher and colleagues. Also, leaders could make this a subject of enquiry of their followers. Encouraging people to identify and articulate such moments of vision would, in turn, foster authenticity and a greater taking of personal responsibility. As noted earlier, in the absence of an existential *øieblik*, and an orientation towards truth and reality, there is every likelihood that an individual, despite an appearance of authenticity, remains immersed in the crowd. Another approach is not only to encourage others to take responsibility for their actions, but to also invite reflections on those occasions where one took responsibility, particularly regarding one's interior experience. As persons recognise they are the cause of action, and how those actions shape and determine themselves, they are able to grasp themselves as human persons who can make free decisions independent of the crowd or the 'they'. This can create the conditions for a moment of vision.

However, given our analysis, perhaps the single biggest influence on facilitating a moment of vision could be an emphasis on radical personal responsibility, insisting both oneself and one's followers take total responsibility for their actions and the consequences of those actions.

6.3 An existential–personalist perspective on leadership

Wojtyła, and the existentialists, also have much to offer regarding a philosophically grounded theory of leadership. Their thought helps to overcome the philosophical limitations

of ALT. In particular, Wojtyła's anthropology underpins an understanding of how human persons are fulfilled in relationship with others and who serve together, in a leader–follower dyad, for mutual development and flourishing, and the common good of the corporations and communities of which they are a part.

6.3.1 Leadership is a relational intersubjective act

The analysis of the dynamic structure of human action, which shows persons act and are acted upon (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 61f), reveals human *interaction*, for sometimes that happens to one is the result of an act of another person. Therefore, one's actions form the basis of connection between persons, and—since actions are determining—shape both oneself and others (Bombała, 2002, p. 337). The relationship between leaders and followers reveals this in all its clarity: a leader acts and something happens in and/or to the follower, to which they respond. Therefore, leadership exists in that mutual act of leader and response by a follower. Hence, *leadership* is grounded in a relationship between persons—*not in a person*—and requires an act–response sequence between these persons. Leadership is an intersubjective action, a dynamic structure existing between two (or more) persons that constitutes a leadership act. Leadership requires action by *both* leader *and* follower, otherwise, *nothing* happens. This understanding is distinctly different to understanding leadership as a 'process in which the activity of leading is what makes up leadership' (Betta, 2018, p. 246), since leadership must involve action by the follower. Contrary to this position, leadership is a relationship in which the activity of leading and following makes up leadership. In the absence of an initiating act by a leader and a responding act from a follower, no leadership ensues. Leadership requires two mutual complementary and self-reinforcing acts, which must be fully free to be considered truly human acts. The follower's act—their response—requires freedom and volition, with no coercion, to be a truly human act. Hence, leaders must not restrict the will of the other, in order for them to choose well and allow the active involvement of the person in the act, since one cannot impose their will on another and deprive them of their freedom to choose.

Leadership is not an object one can see, but a reality whose effects one can observe in those mutual actions that flow from the relationship between leaders and followers: one observes a leader and their follower(s). In the dynamic relationship between these persons, one can observe the consequence of a leader leading and the follower following. Leadership is brought into existence by the mutual and dynamic actions of two persons, in an interdependent gift and response, which both shapes the leader and follower(s) and, subsequently, creates value in a

product or service, in the good so performed. The shared participation in values that are true and good ultimately create true and good organisational cultures—places in which people wish to work.

6.3.2 Persons are the object and subject of leadership

Unlike many human relationships that are freely embraced—marriage being the preeminent example—people often find themselves following leaders, or leading followers, whom they have not chosen, and in some cases would not choose. It is not uncommon to be a member of a team, tasked with a project, alongside people with whom one has little natural affinity, or desire to establish, or build, a personal relationship. Regardless of the cause of the relationship—choice or duty—when the leader *treats* people as persons who have made a choice, rather than merely assume they are fulfilling an obligation, they are treating the person, not their function, as decisive for the relationship. Wojtyła (1993a) argues that *the person* ‘must be the real object of choice, *not* values associated with that person, irrelevant to his or her intrinsic value’ (p. 133, [emphasis added]) and that treating the value of the person ‘as the most important and decisive one’ (p. 133) ensures a choice is person-centred. This can be a guiding principle for leadership: the person must be the real object of choice. When a leader regards people as volunteers, as someone who freely chooses where they commit their time and energy, and hence could make alternative decisions, the leader demonstrates respect for the human person rather than their utility.

Hence, when considering a course of action, leaders must recognise which persons are impacted by one’s decision—and not just those who immediately come to mind, for responsibility extends to the whole human community, including those who precede and succeed us. A leader then needs to gauge the impact of their decisions on those persons. In the same manner that organisations are required to conduct Environmental Impact Assessments to identify the environmental significance of a project to eliminate or mitigate any risks to a natural ecosystem, so too should they conduct ‘Person Impact Assessments’ prior to embarking on any project to identify all persons impacted by a project and understand those impacts. They will then be in a position to mitigate any detrimental impacts and maximise positive impacts on persons. Just as some projects are rejected because the environmental cost is too great, despite the potential profit, so too should projects be rejected when the human cost is too great—and that cost is too great whenever persons are deprived of their personhood, dignity and freedom.

6.3.3 Persons are not resources for a leader

As pointed out, Wojtyła notes the creative capacity of human person to use ‘resources for ends which he sets himself’ (Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 25), while being careful not to squander those resources (p. 25). This invites a question regarding how one is to act when those ‘resources’ are not in fact objects but other human persons, since people are frequently referred to as ‘human resources’. It is possible to observe situations where persons in the employer–employee, and hence leader–follower, relationship are used as a means to an end. There appears to be only one text where Wojtyła specifically comments on this relationship,²⁴ indirectly providing the answer we seek regarding the kind of behaviour a leader demonstrates when applying personalist principles. Anticipating the question of follower freedom and self-determination when under a leader’s direction and supervision, Wojtyła asks:

does not an employer use a worker, i.e. a human person, for ends which he himself has chosen? Does not an officer use the soldiers under his command to attain certain military ends, planned by himself and sometimes known only to himself? ... Yet both the worker and soldier are adults and fully developed people. (p. 26)

The distinction between management and leadership becomes clear when viewed from a personalist perspective. Commentators often struggle to make a distinction between management and leadership. On the basis of this analysis, it is apparent that genuine leaders serve the good of persons and the common good; leaders lead persons for the common good of something greater, while ensuring the dignity and value of the persons whom they lead. On the other hand, managers—who manage resources to generate a result—view persons as a resource at their disposal. Although it is sometimes said ‘leaders lead people and managers manage things’, the crucial distinction is that leaders are only able to lead people when they grasp who and what a person is. When leaders view persons as a means to an end, they are not acting as a leader, but merely a manager who considers persons as another resource to be managed. Bombała distinguishes between leadership of people and management of objects (Bombała, 2002, p. 338), observing that the leader, as themselves the ‘subject’ of work, directly impacts the ‘object’ of work who is themselves another human person. It follows that ‘each participant in an organization should be treated as the subject of work, and not as an object of work’ (p. 336). Hence, it is too simplistic to distinguish between people and things without emphasising persons are not things. Here we have the essence of the personalist principle applied to work—persons are subjects, not objects, participating with other persons for a

common good. Therefore, leaders have a grave obligation to show dignity and respect worthy of persons to those persons for whom they are responsible.

Wojtyła affirms persons are free, self-determining subjects, to whom leaders do violence whenever they take advantage of their own power, or the weakness of vulnerability of the follower (Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 26f), since doing so treats the follower ‘as a blind tool, as a means to an end’ (p. 30). The use of bullying, coercion, emotional persuasion or manipulation to obtain a desired result can never be justified, even though followers may sometimes acquiesce to such demands because of their own fears, anxieties or insecurities.²⁵

Wojtyła argues the solution to the risk of using workers as a means to an end lies in love and care, since love longs not simply for persons but for their good (p. 93):

obviously I may want another person to desire the same good which I myself desire. Obviously the other must know this end of mine, recognise it as a good, and adopt it. If this happens a special bond is established between me and this other person: the bond of a *common good* and of a common aim (p. 28).

When one person uses another as a means to one’s own ends, they consequently regard themselves ‘in the same light’ (p. 39). When a leader considers persons as mere tools or resources for the delivery of outcomes, then such leaders must likewise hold that *they* themselves are a tool or resource in the hand of someone else. This observation alone should give leaders pause to consider their outlook and practices: ‘if I consider my staff to be a resource, a means to an end, who is using me in a like manner?’ becomes the uncomfortable question. It immediately becomes apparent that for the leader to achieve the end for which they aim, they must serve those who are termed followers, for without them the leader will fail.

6.3.4 Leadership responsibility for persons

Hence, responsibility for persons is at the very heart of human relationships (cf. Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 130), and so, by extension, one can argue that *responsibility for persons is at the heart of leadership*. A commentary on the responsibility of spouses for one another (Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 130) reveals lessons for leaders in a relationship with followers. Reading this text from the perspective of leadership enables one to grasp the importance of sufficient maturity in the leader to justify the trust given by followers. It emphasises that a true relationship is grounded in mutual self-giving, and that the gravity attached to, and impact of, leadership, requires leaders who are not egoists, who truly grasp the value of other human persons and

who have an abiding concern for every dimension of a follower's wellbeing (cf. Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 130). In addition, a well-formed conscience and deep grasp of personhood is essential to prevent leaders from treating people as vassals. Hence, leadership is grounded in love, care and concern for human persons, which affirms the person *as* a person, who has a right to be treated 'as an object of love' (Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 42), rather than an object of gratification, satisfaction or production.

Therefore, the responsibility of being a leader fundamentally concerns responsibility for other persons—prior to responsibility for tasks or outcomes. Such a responsibility can only be understood by someone who truly grasps the value of the other as a person (p. 123), who is themselves their own end, rather than a means for the leader to produce an end. That which is guided only by the usefulness of another cannot be called leadership, no matter how noble the utility, since this demonstrates a desire and intent to use the other, which is fundamentally incompatible with the personalist norm. Holding that a follower is merely a means to serve or deliver one's own ends is no sound foundation to leadership.

The love and care that one must show to another indicates the need for a virtuous, rather than emotional, response to one's followers. Such a response involves 'an authentic commitment of the free will of one person (the subject) resulting from the truth about another person (the object)' (Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 123). Hence, a more authentic leadership involves an 'authentic commitment of the free will' of both leader and follower—one freely chooses to lead and the other freely chooses to follow. That choice is ultimately grounded in the truth about the other—particularly on the part of the follower knowing the leader—and, hence, leaders who disclose their real selves lay a foundation for the self-giving of the follower. This occurs where the leader has disclosed themselves in such a manner that the follower wants to follow because of who the leader *is*, not merely because of the leader's title.

Leadership responsibility is not primarily for tasks but for persons who, usually by their choice and hence gift of themselves—via their time and service, albeit for some financial exchange, in accordance with agreed conditions—have given themselves to work together in a common pursuit with the leader. This means leaders do not have followers unless the follower chooses to give themselves, notwithstanding the fact some people may have limited options. The old adage, 'people join organisations and leave leaders', captures this notion; most people can ultimately choose where they invest their time and energy, which therefore constitutes a gift of themselves. However, as a consequence of that self-giving, followers become, in some manner, 'the property of whoever benefits from this gift of self' (Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 130),

which enables the leader to direct and deal with, almost as they please, those people who work for them.

This does not mean followers are, therefore, possessions of the leader, to be used and disposed of at will, but that the leader has been temporarily assigned as a steward, with a responsibility of care. Therefore, leaders have ‘an immense responsibility’ (Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 130) for their leadership, and so should ensure it is ‘mature and complete enough to justify the enormous trust of another person’ (p. 130) who has given themselves to the leader, for a task or tasks. Followers are entitled to trust that their gift of self will not entail a loss of self—that their leader will not take advantage of the gift—and will enhance, or at a minimum not restrict, their growth and development. As a result of trusting the leader, and placing one’s life in their hands, the follower is able to become who they can be, in and through their service of the leader, who in turn serves the follower(s), while both together serve the common good. Therefore, a leader themselves needs to be properly prepared for the responsibilities of leading other persons, in order that the trust placed in them by followers is well founded and not abused, and that such trust results not in diminishment but growth and flourishing.

The immensity of responsibility arises not from the size of the task, or superiority of the title, but from the responsibility to care for other human persons. Hence, grasping what it means to be a human person is a fundamental leadership responsibility and, therefore, capability. Leaders who do not see and understand the person of the follower can only see resources, assets and talent for the achievement of some end. Failure to grasp the value of the person diminishes oneself and potentially damages others. Leadership divorced from responsibility is egoism, which ultimately pits self-interest against the interest of others. This narrows the existence of leaders and followers from the *I-thou* of interpersonal relationships to the *I* as an instrument of interpersonal egoism, treating the other as something, not someone, as a mere means to an end (cf. Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 157), shrinking one’s world into oneself and seeing others as competitors or challengers for one’s resources and what one values. In contrast, leaders who see and serve the other as a person demonstrate an unlimited, expansive leadership through which one’s life, influence and impact broadens and deepens. In that broadening, one becomes attractive to followers, who perceive they themselves will be treated as persons and flourish under this kind of leadership. This is a more authentic kind of leadership, grounded in responsibility for persons, arising from self-awareness, demonstrated in relational orientation, living and leading in accord with moral value and virtue, and committed to the reality of what is, rather than defending or unwittingly submitting to one’s biases.

Responsibility for others manifests in concern for the good of the other and extends to concern for the community and environment. The absolute centrality of human persons, and the responsibility leaders have for their fulfillment, is largely missing from ALT. While many individuals and organisations claim they ‘put people first’, this commonly refers to persons as objects, rather than subjects. For example, the view within ALT that authentic leaders create authentic followers is a consideration from the perspective of outcomes—measures of authenticity are achieved across a cohort of individuals—rather than the responsibility that obtains for each person, as a person, whom the leader leads. Few organisations have grounded leadership in a deep understanding of the meaning of what it means to be a human person and the responsibility that obtains in a leadership relationship with human persons. Further, the common good is often confused with the collective good of many individuals—a maximised private good. ALT and practice can benefit from Wojtyła’s understanding about the person’s subjectivity, dynamic unity, and the dignity and respect due to persons that flows from that ontological foundation. Unfortunately, many leaders lack a metaphysical perspective and remain largely unaware of personal subjectivity. Thus, for want of philosophy, leaders can unintentionally instrumentalise human persons. The personalist norm—‘whenever the person is an object of your action in your conduct, remember that you may not treat him merely as a means to an end, as a tool, but take into account that the person himself has or at least should have his end’ (Wojtyła, 2013, p. 11)—can be readily applied to leadership theory and help overcome this philosophical void.

True leadership arises in a mutual act between persons, which is directed towards both persons and the common good. Anything less than that is directed either towards an outcome, and the human being as a means of achieving that, or towards an activity, and the human being as an agent of that. While both have their place—leaders inevitably require outcomes and activity—both fall short of the ideal proposed by the personalist norm, and neither consider the relational dimension of leadership. Taking the personalist norm—the person is not a means to an end but has value in their own right—as a starting point may result in the same outcomes, or require the same activities. However, there is a fundamental difference in both the manner in which that occurs and the centrality of the human person as person and the dignity and respect accorded to the person.

6.3.5 Leadership is for the common good

Personalism alerts us to the reality of persons as the fundamental unit of human community, and so persons are the norm against which we measure the common good, and

whom one serves in pursuit of that good. Hence, personalism resolves the tension between the extremes of individualism and totalitarianism, reframing the debate as one not between these two depersonalising ideologies, but as a creative harmonising of the dignity and good of each person and the common good of all. The common good is not a collection of private goods, but what is true and good for all rather than some, and hence something towards which persons are naturally attracted—and which persons are often prepared to die to defend.

True human leadership is grounded in human love, which desires the good of the other and a shared desire for a common good which, as noted, enables the performance of authentic actions and fulfillment of persons through those acts (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 282). This shared pursuit of a common purpose ensures equality between persons:

when two different people consciously choose a common aim this puts them on a footing of equality, and precludes the possibility that one ... might be subordinate to the other. Both ... are as it were in the same measure and to the same extent subordinated to that good which constitutes their common end. (Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 28f)

Wojtyła recognises the elemental tension between the institutional nature and ends of business, with its inherent risk of objectification of the person, and the nature and ends of persons who work in and for that business (p. 29). To mitigate, and possibly eliminate, that risk, he advocates ‘*the employer and the employee so arrange their association that the common good which both serve becomes clearly visible*’ (p. 27, [emphasis added]), enabling both leader and followers to work in unity towards a mutual end, while recognising and accepting the different roles each perform in the achievement of that end. Hence, leaders and followers *are in service of the purpose*, rather than the follower being in service of the leader. While the organisational structure may indicate John works for Mary, which in and of itself generates particular responsibilities, in a truly personalist organisation, both John and Mary are equal as persons, working together for some common good. This is not a mere utopian fancy, but a practical reality for which many leaders strive, and which could be established as an operating principle.

Wojtyła observes the fact of participation in a community, and the values in and of that community, creates a fundamental tension between the teleology of the community and the autoteleology of the persons in that community (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 240). In community, ‘the autoteleology of the human being and the whole problematic of human self-fulfillment naturally comes to the fore’ (p. 248). A community is directed towards its own end via the

actions of its members, while persons are self-directed and drawn towards their own fulfillment—and the two are not always aligned. This tension is further exacerbated when the social group is constituted on the basis of shared endeavour, rather than shared personal subjectivity.

Reconciling and resolving this tension in a manner that protects both persons and the community of persons is one of the fundamental challenges confronting leaders. On the one hand, leaders are responsible for impersonal organisational objectives, while on the other hand, they are responsible for both the community of persons that constitute the organisation and particular persons in their care for whom they must foster the conditions for flourishing, and not do or allow anything that undermines or diminishes persons. The answer is found in the shared pursuit of a common good that exists beyond the leader or the follower, while recognising that neither the leader or follower are instruments for the other, but both exist and act for the common good.

Individualism and totalitarianism—‘anti-individualism’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 273)—hold diametrically opposed visions of the human person, and hence of what constitutes moral norms. Individualism places the good of individuals ‘above the common good of the collectivity, attempting to subordinate the collectivity to themselves and use it for their individual good’ (Wojtyła, 1993l, p. 174), while totalitarianism ‘subordinate[s] persons to itself in such a way that the true good of persons is excluded and they themselves fall prey to the collectivity’ (p. 174), although purporting to represent the overall good. On the one hand, individualism subordinates the society to oneself, using others as a means towards one’s own ends, while collectivism subordinates the individual to society, hence using persons as a means towards collective ends. While the former can foster unfettered selfishness, the latter allows unchecked totalitarianism, both of which are antithetical to what it means to be a human person because of the manner in which they treat human persons.

Wojtyła resolves this tension with a personalist vision of the person being and becoming fulfilled with others for each other’s mutual wellbeing, realising the personalistic value of action in authentic acting with others in community. Both individualism and collectivism oppose personhood (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 275), deprive persons of the opportunity for free participation (p. 276), and so deny persons the possibility of being fulfilled in their actions (p. 273). Hence, finding the mean between individualism and collectivism, and so sponsoring true participation, which respects human dignity, is not an easy path to navigate. However, constantly asking the personalist question, respecting the personalistic value of the act and the

dignity of human persons, in the context of the common good, restrains the collective tendency towards authoritarianism and the individual from greed and egoism.

Wojtyła argues that individualism and collectivism are flawed anthropological models, constructed on the defective metaphysical notion of subjectivism which denies objective metaphysical reality, in which case either the individual or the state becomes the arbiter of the truths of anthropology and ethics (and indeed all philosophy), and therefore either ‘I’ or ‘We’ decide what is true and good. If one starts from such a faulty premise, it is but a small step to a radical individualism or an oppressive totalitarianism, both of which reduce the human person to less than they are, stripping them of dignity and value. Only a sound ‘philosophy of the person’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 21) that respects, balances and integrates both the dignity of the human *being* and of *being* human, balancing the opposing and irreconcilable demands of the selfish ego and the selfish state with a relentless focus on service of the common good, can adequately reconcile these forces.

6.4 A personalist approach to leadership

Questions about the meaning, nature and significance of the human person surface during times of ‘great crisis and confrontation’ (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 220), which, as a consequence of the challenge, require great leadership. At such moments, it is paramount that leaders maintain an abiding concern for the human person, to ensure persons are not overlooked in the rush for solutions, and so depersonalised (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 21). While the challenges at hand may require political, economic, or technological responses, those responses must be informed by sound epistemological, anthropological and ethical perspectives. Hence, during times of change, it is critical that leaders defend the human person rather than, for the sake of expediency, accede to solutions that may have longer-term negative impacts for persons. Wojtyła worries that, although advances in science and technology have ‘conquered so many secrets of nature *the conqueror himself must have his own mysteries ceaselessly unravelled anew*’ (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 21, [emphasis added]). Heidegger shares this unease: ‘everything depends on our manipulating technology in the proper manner as a means. ...The will to mastery becomes all the more urgent the more technology threatens to slip from human control’ (Heidegger, 1977, p. 5). Heidegger and Wojtyła both emphasise the primacy of the person over products or outcomes. Wojtyła asserts there is an underlying tendency among people and societies to reduce the person to one of two extremes—either a radically self-centred individual or a means to an end in a collectivist whole. Just as Kierkegaard argues each person in each generation needs to learn what it means to be human, Wojtyła also asserts an

answer to the question is essential to preserve rather than diminish the person. Hence, each moment of history requires philosophical analysis of the human person, to disclose a deeper, more mature articulation of the meaning of the human person. The current and emerging challenges regarding the global economy and health systems; the interface between technology and persons; the tendency to use persons as a means to an end; and the risks posed by artificial intelligence, digital surveillance and data mining make this argument quite prescient, and an area of grave concern for leaders.

Any thinking about how societies or organisations could or should be structured, and therefore led, includes assumptions about the meaning of human persons and their place in that community of persons, which must be surfaced and addressed. It is highly likely that a failure to grasp the meaning of the human person could contribute to poor management and leadership practices. Mele and Canton have argued that uncritical acceptance of underlying anthropological models, with their beliefs about what it means to be a person, are ‘embedded’ (2014, p. 2) in management theory and practice. Ghoshal (2005) likewise asserts that such assumptions, based in either a social science model, which excludes human intentionality, ethics and values (Alford, 2010), or in a distrust of people, which arises from the influence of agency theory, are at the root of poor contemporary management practices (Ghoshal, 2005, p. 75). Assumptions about the human person permeate the business environment—regardless of whether one is a student of the theories—and influence how leaders behave towards followers (Ghoshal, 2005). Since leadership is a human act wherein men and women lead other men and women, some concept of what it means to be a human person *must be assumed* as the foundation to that leadership, whether such concept is formulated or articulated. Every leader must ask and answer, ‘What does it mean to be a human person?’—the antecedent question for the underlying question of this thesis, *what does it mean to be an authentic human person leading other authentic human persons?*

Personalism, which takes *persons* and their inherent value as the starting point for solving questions and addressing issues that involve persons, with its emphasis on the transcendence and integration of persons who become fulfilled by choosing freely in accord with moral good, and so determining themselves, has immediate relevance for leadership and leadership theory. It augments the existentialist and behavioural/social sciences perspectives about persons—which fail to address the meaning of the human person in her totality—with its insistence on the person and their dignity in any resolution of human affairs. This minimises the risk of treating persons as a means to an end. Arguing one ‘puts people first’, while treating those persons as a resource to deliver profit for shareholders, exposes the contradictions one often

observes in business. Wojtyła observes persons are so close to themselves that they can lose sight of the mystery and meaning of that self (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 22) and, in taking ourselves for granted, can take others for granted. If a leader assumes they know themselves, and therefore ‘knows’ what it means to be a human person, they can easily conclude that they deeply understand their colleagues and customers, since they are persons. However, in the absence of philosophical analysis and reflection, the person, for example, can too easily be considered and treated as a means to an end. Considering employees as resources or assets, rather than persons, is a constant temptation for leaders under pressure to perform and deliver, particularly in low-cost operating environments. Hence, anyone with the privilege of leading human persons must keep the good of those persons, rather than (say) the outcomes one seeks, front and centre in all decision-making and action. Therefore, personalism is of significant importance, since the majority of decisions a leader faces involve and impact persons, and so a personalist perspective is fundamental to leadership.

6.4.1 Personalist leadership—a more satisfactory model

Hence, this study ultimately argues that ALT is inadequate for the task at hand, standing as it does on shaky philosophical ground. In response, it proposes a theory of leadership, grounded in the human person, that takes account of the end of persons, the relationship between persons and the community of which they are a part, the responsibility one has for oneself and others, and personal fulfillment. This kind of leadership could be termed ‘*personalist leadership*’, since it allows the fullness of what it means to be a person, serving with other persons in pursuit of the common good. While personalism is grounded in the person, personalist leadership is grounded in both the person *and* interpersonal and communal relationships, to ensure persons *and* the common good remain at the centre of all corporate, community, political and economic activity. Hence, personalist leadership includes, as a foundation, the fulfillment of those persons who are leaders and followers, responsibility for and solidarity with one another, and mutual service of the common good. We define personalist leadership as *a relationship of mutual responsibility and service for the common good, in solidarity with one another, grounded in personal fulfillment.*

As noted previously, personal fulfillment is constituted by a moment of existential vision, personal responsibility, participation with others, self-giving and a sense of purpose. Hence, the elements of personal fulfillment provide a foundation to personalist leadership: personal responsibility grounds leadership responsibility, participation grounds solidarity, self-giving grounds mutual service, and personal purpose grounds the common good. One aspect, and

perhaps the most important aspect, of the leader's role, is, therefore, fostering an environment in which followers can become fulfilled. While they do not have responsibility for the inner response of the follower, they have responsibility for ensuring conditions that allow the free response of the follower, and the growth and development of the follower.

Hence, personalist leadership contains both personal and interpersonal dimensions, and may be represented as follows:

First, the personal fulfillment aspect, with its five dimensions:

<i>Augenblick</i>	Self-responsibility	Participation	Self-giving	Purpose
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Second, the five dimensions of personalist leadership:

Personal Fulfillment	Total Responsibility	Solidarity	Mutual Service	Common Good
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Taken together, the proposed model of personalist leadership builds on personal fulfillment for leadership of others in society:

<i>Augenblick</i>	Self-responsibility	Participation	Self-giving	Purpose
Personal Fulfillment	Total Responsibility	Solidarity	Mutual Service	Common Good

To summarise, the components of personal fulfillment include a moment of vision (*Augenblick*), wherein one truly grasps oneself as a self; the taking of responsibility for oneself and one's actions; participation, which emphasises fulfillment is not a solitary pursuit, but the discovery of oneself in relationship with others; self-giving, on that basis that one is ultimately fulfilled in the gift of oneself to another; and purpose, on the understanding that persons have an end beyond instrumentality. Fulfillment is enabled by transcendence, integration and self-determination, guided by a conscience grounded in truth and goodness. As such, fulfillment is contingent on objective reality, and the truth of who one is. It is grounded in an understanding of persons as a self-determining, incommunicable, unrepeatable embodied subject who is an end in themselves. No theory of leadership is complete without explaining its epistemology, anthropology and ethical frameworks, which this study argues one can find in personalism, with an existentialist influence.

While personal fulfillment is something available to all persons, only some persons become leaders. This study argues that the foundations of personal fulfillment underpin the four core components of personalist leadership: total responsibility, for oneself, one's colleagues and the

community; solidarity, which emphasises the obligation one has for others, while respecting their obligations, and not denying what may belong to them; mutual service, of leader and follower, as distinct from models where followers serve leaders; and the common good, which is beyond oneself and the organisation. Hence, personal fulfillment is a condition for personalist leadership, and hence this could be considered a fifth component. This study argues that one cannot be an effective leader in the absence of those aspects of personal fulfillment. Note, however, that this does not mean that one must be *totally* fulfilled, although we argue that the greater the role and the responsibility, the greater fulfillment required, since the inner life of the leader has a direct impact on the life of the organisation they lead.

Personalist leadership is leadership premised on the good of the human person, service of the followers by the leader and pursuit of a common good, in an environment where both the leader and follower(s) can be fulfilled. The role of a leader is to ensure those conditions, ensure they are serving followers, ensure clarity regarding the good and ensure no person is diminished or damaged in the achievement of that good. The recognition of mutual service for a common good is pivotal to an understanding of personalist leadership and forms the foundation to any leadership that seeks not to take advantage of persons, but to love and care for them in shared pursuit of a common good. Such leadership is not merely directed towards the mind or body of the leader or follower, for their intellectual or physical contribution, nor simply towards a human being—a resource—but specifically *towards a person* (cf. Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 123), and emerges in the mutual service of leader and follower towards each other for a common good. This common good is not something created by the organisations, since it lies in a value beyond the organisation, and so is discerned by its leaders as they encourage the free participation of followers in that good. True leadership must be leadership that fully engages both the leader and follower in the freely chosen pursuit of a common good. A common good is, by its nature, something both leader and followers can embrace, else it is not common even to them. In such a pursuit, leaders and followers are equal as servants of the good, while performing different roles or functions in that service. Neither is superior and both are subordinate to the good.

The term ‘personalist leadership’ occurs in only one other English reference, with reference to a ‘strong man’ who wields exceptional power because of the force of his personality (Kostadinova & Levitt, 2014). This use, with its connotations of dictatorial abusive leadership concept, is diametrically opposed to the concept of personalist leadership proposed in the current study. However, Bombała uses a very similar term—‘*personalistic* leadership’—in a single Polish document (Bombała, 2011), *Fenomenologia przywództwa: być kimś – czynić*

coś, “Prakseologia”, nr 151. p 16; Szandurski, 2016, p. 116), with an almost identical meaning to that which we propose for personalist leadership. Further, personalist leadership is characterised by leadership that adheres to moral norms and respects the dignity of persons, and so contributes to the formation of a personalist culture (cf. Bombała, 2002, p. 339). Hence, the starting point for personalist leadership is not simply in the actions of a leader, but the morality of those actions, since one’s actions have moral standing and one becomes good or evil as a consequence of those actions (Wojtyła, 1979c, p. 11).

Adopting and being guided by a personalist perspective as a leader means assuming specific stances as a leader. Prime among these is regarding others *not* as mere individuals to be controlled, exploited, or instrumentalised, but as self-determining persons with hopes and dreams and aspirations, with thoughts and feelings, who act and are acted upon—whose work can contribute to their fulfillment. Hence, a leader taking a personalist approach constantly asks the question of each of their followers, ‘what is this person’s end, and how may I serve them in achieving that end?’ The personalist leader asks why the follower(s) work, why they do this work, what they aspire to, and helps them discover their purpose and end, and helps them create a path towards personal fulfillment in the realisation of that end.

Second, personalist leadership means challenging oneself and one’s followers to take total responsibility and ownership for one’s choices and actions, how these shape them as persons, and how those actions impact others, in the context of shared responsibility for mutual objectives. Knowing that one’s actions shape oneself, the personalist leader asks, ‘who do I become if I engage in this act?’ and so also asks, ‘who might my followers become if I ask them to engage in this act?’

Third, personalist leadership means ensuring the purpose and objectives for which one works are in service not firstly of profit, but of a common good. Hence, the personalist leader also asks, ‘who do *we* (the society of which we are a part) become if I lead others in this manner?’ A personalist leader does not avoid the confronting moral question regarding the impact of their actions on themselves and others.

In one sense, this is an extraordinarily simple formula for leading others that provides instinctual boundaries for moral decision-making—care for people and engage them by serving the common good together, while asking, for example, whether the decision one is about to take enhances or damages persons. However, at the same time, it is extraordinarily difficult to observe. It requires subjugating one’s own ego and putting others first. It requires clarity about good and the common good, and choices that foster those goods. It may at times mean that

projects take longer, or cost more, because one gives primacy to persons over profits or performance, the very mention of which can cause visceral reaction in some leaders.

What is quite distinct about this model is that these components of personalist leadership *apply equally* to leaders and followers. This study has argued that leadership is a mutual relationship, realised in a leader–follower, act–response dyad that does not exist in the absence of a follower response. Hence, personalist leadership is obtained when leaders *and* followers are personally fulfilled, take responsibility for their respective roles and functions, work in solidarity with and mutual service of one another, and work towards the common good. At the risk of labouring the point, leadership is not some inner combination of self-awareness, ethics, balanced processing and relational transparency, but a mutual self-giving grounded in personal fulfillment of leader and followers, joined together in pursuit of the common good.

Finally, this study notes that leadership in specific scenarios does require, for example, strategic agility, global insight and/or commercial acumen. However, this study attempts to establish the existential, rather than existentiell, components of leadership, and, as such, argues that the components of personalist leadership provide a foundation to leadership, equipping people with the personal, interpersonal and societal capabilities they require to face whatever challenges they may confront in a particular context.

We further argue that these five elements provide the ethical framework sought in leadership theory. One can ask, for example, whether the act—proposed or completed—fulfills persons, fosters the good of persons, fosters the common good, gives and takes responsibility in freedom (i.e., with no coercion or compulsion), fosters personal relationships and accords with what is proper. Asking questions such as these, and acting in accordance with the answers, would, arguably, have prevented the ethical failures that ALT presumes to prevent, and so personalist leadership offers the ethical framework sought. If this approach to leadership is successful, one could expect outcomes that include a flourishing environment and advancement of the common good. Hence, we could enquire whether persons are becoming fulfilled as who and what they are, and not merely better performers. We could examine how the good has been advanced in the corporation and community, and map this against sustainability of the organisation, such as the extent to which a firm has identified and pursued a good purpose while caring for people and delivering a reasonable profit, and while managing the tension between purpose people and profit.

Hence, this thesis argues that this philosophical analysis has revealed the structural weakness in ALT, proposed a theory of leadership based in the human person that overcomes

those weaknesses and offered a solution to the ethical challenges for which ALT was originally proposed, but is unable to answer. In the subsequent, and final, chapter, we return to the concerns and questions that initiated the study and summarise our answers to those questions.

7 Conclusion: authentic leadership is a failed construct

7.1 Reviewing the concerns with authentic leadership theory

This study opened with the observation that leaders are persons who lead other persons, which invited the question about what it means to be an authentic person and an authentic leader. To answer this, we turned our attention to ALT and found it lacking. We found that ALT, in its commonly accepted definition, it is poorly defined and refers to the strengths and attributes of leaders, rather than to leadership per se. It fails to clearly define authentic *leadership*, having almost entirely overlooked the philosophical questions regarding the meaning of authenticity, the meaning of the person who is a leader, or a follower, and the meaning of leadership. Since leaders are persons leading persons, it can be argued that leadership is grounded in human persons, and hence an understanding of the human person, of what it means for persons to be authentic and how that may translate to authentic leadership itself, is necessary for a theory of authentic leadership. Further, since authenticity refers to a state of being, in regard to individual persons or objects, and leadership refers to actions of persons in leader–follower relationships, there is an inherent disconnect between these terms.

We noted that ALT emerged in the early 2000s, as a proposed remedy for ethical failures among leaders, and has been the subject of considerable research and practice. However, ALT lacks a philosophical foundation (cf. Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012; Alvesson & Einola, 2019; Cooper et al., 2005; Hayek et al., 2014; Iszatt-White & Kempster, 2019; Lawler & Ashman, 2012), rests on an unstable intellectual base and may not be salvageable, since, as a traits-based theory grounded in the social sciences, it fails to grasp that persons are more than their traits (Alvesson & Einola, 2019) (cf. also, Iszatt-White & Kempster, 2019, p. 360). Understanding the philosophical foundations of authenticity regarding human beings is crucial *before* the concept is applied to leaders and leadership. However, a philosophical understanding of authenticity, and what it is to be authentically human, have not been investigated in a systematic manner within the ALT literature (Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012, p. 119).

Hence, the purpose of this study was to describe ALT, and its philosophical limitations regarding the meaning of authenticity and what is to be authentically human, and to evaluate the contribution of three thinkers—the existentialists Søren Kierkegaard and Martin Heidegger, and the personalist Karol Wojtyła—towards overcoming those limitations. This study is unique in its application of an existentialist–personalist perspective to ALT, and although it contributes to an understanding of authentic leadership, it ultimately raises questions about the

viability of ALT. It suggests the usual formulation of the theory, proposed by Walumbwa et al. (2008), is problematic because it fails to consider the philosophical meaning of authenticity and authentic persons, and the associated need for an anthropology, ethics, epistemology and understanding of intersubjectivity.

Although Kierkegaard and Heidegger are often cited within the authentic leadership literature, this is usually to acknowledge their influence, rather than provide a detailed evaluation of their insights and perspective. This study finds that their understanding of authenticity, particularly regarding the critical role played by a moment of vision and the consequent responsibility one takes for one's life, is more extensive than what is recognised in the authentic leadership literature. However, neither Kierkegaard nor Heidegger are sufficiently far-reaching with regard to what it means to be an authentic person. Their focus, on the individual who is distinct from the multitude, is only able to provide limited insight regarding persons and the interpersonal dimensions of human existence, such as those that involve leadership.

Therefore, this study introduced an explicitly personalist thinker—Karol Wojtyła—who focuses on the meaning of the person and the person in relationship with other persons. It is ultimately Wojtyła's phenomenology, which is informed by metaphysics and results in a realist personalism, that can provide the philosophical depth and breadth required for a fuller understanding of authenticity regarding persons and action, and so provide the answers we seek for a fuller, interpersonal understanding of leadership. At the same time, the philosophical triumvirate of Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Wojtyła find common ground in a shared concern for discovering what it means to be human in the face of depersonalising social and philosophical forces. Whether talking of the crowd (Kierkegaard), the 'they' (Heidegger), or the 'pulverisation' of persons (Wojtyła), each philosopher, in his own way, calls on persons to be who and what they can be, to be fully human, authentically oneself, and to oppose anything that reduces persons to a means to an end, to a something rather than someone.

Therefore, this study straddles the fields of management and philosophy, bringing together management concepts regarding authentic leadership with the philosophical traditions of existentialism and personalism to interrogate authenticity and authentic leadership. This approach reveals that ALT contains structural deficiencies that are unable to be overcome. Hence, the theory, as it is currently formulated, is unsustainable as a theory of leadership.

The study set out to answer five questions:

1. What is ALT?

2. What does ‘authenticity’ and ‘authentically human’ mean in ALT, and from where and whom does the theory derive these concepts?
3. What are the philosophical limitations of ALT regarding authenticity, and what is it to be authentically human?
4. Do the philosophical contribution of Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Wojtyła overcome these limitations?
5. Does an evaluation of the philosophical perspective of these three thinkers indicate an alternative leadership theory?

The study found, in answer to question one, that authentic leadership refers to a pattern of behaviour that fosters self-awareness, an internalised moral perspective, balanced processing and relational transparency among leaders, which fosters self-development, an ethical environment and positive psychological development of followers (Walumbwa et al., 2008, p. 94). However, since the fields of positive psychology and the social sciences primarily focus on quantitative research, an interest in the development of authentic leaders has influenced the research agenda and trajectory (Avolio & Walumbwa, 2014, p. 347), while philosophical attempts to understand the meaning of authenticity and being an authentic individual were resisted (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1129; Avolio & Walumbwa, 2014, p. 353). The most compelling argument advanced in favour of authentic leadership is the claim that authentic leaders have a deeper understanding of their self and their values, and hence act in an ethical manner, which limits ethical failures and contributes to sustainable performance (Gardner et al., 2011, p. 1142; Luthans & Avolio, 2003).

In answer to question two—what does ‘authenticity’ and ‘authentically human’ mean in ALT, and from where and whom does the theory derive these concepts—the study found the notion of authenticity is often abbreviated to knowing and being true to oneself, following the Socratic ‘know thyself’ (Harter, 2002, p. 382) and the Shakespearean ‘be true to oneself’ (cf. Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 242), which, together, are often cited as capturing the authentic ideal. However, it is Søren Kierkegaard, the father of existentialism, who introduces the fundamental, thought-provoking questions that sit at the heart of authenticity: ‘what does it mean to exist?’ and, more specifically, ‘what does it mean *for me* to exist?’ Kierkegaard’s writings reveal he is more interested in the latter, vocational question: what does it mean for this person—Søren—to be an individual, and live out my life in a way that is authentically mine? One hundred years later, Martin Heidegger turns his attention to the question of the meaning of existence, the question of being, to understand what it means to authentically exist. These two philosophers have had a significant influence on the contemporary understanding of

authenticity, with their insistence on the primacy of the individual over the multitude and the discovery of meaning within oneself.

ALT's origins in the social sciences and positive psychology (Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Avolio et al., 2005) means authenticity tends to be associated with traits and identity (Novicevic et al., 2006) and a psychological state of feeling authentic (Iszatt-White & Kempster, 2019, p. 356), which derives from acting sincerely (Alvesson & Einola, 2019, p. 385; Medlock, 2012, p. 47) in accordance with one's own internally discovered truth (Guignon, 2008, p. 279) and values (Golomb, 2005, p. 11). Authenticity is attributed to oneself (Erickson, 1995, p. 122) as one takes ownership of (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 242) and responsibility (Kernis & Goldman, 2006, p. 288) for one's experience and actions, in a process of self-integration (Kernis, 2003, p. 17). This leads to the view that authentic individuals, having made a decision to live in accordance with certain truths that they have discerned for themselves, feel authentic when doing so, and inauthentic when acting contrary to those values. Consequently, the claim that one is being authentic is used to justify one's actions, particularly when one's thinking or acting puts one at odds with the majority.

Hence, the combined influence of the social sciences, and emphasis on emotional wellbeing, and the existentialist notion that one has no inherent essence, or nature, and that one creates one's existence—oneself—via one's choices and responsibility taking, ultimately ushers in a contemporary notion of authenticity understood as 'sincere autonomy'. Sincere autonomy is a combination of a deep feeling of satisfaction that one is acting in accordance with one's sincerely discovered and held beliefs and values, and the feeling that these have been formed entirely of one's own reason and volition, and not subject to external influence. This becomes problematic when it ultimately appears in persons confusing emotions with reality; for example, the person who *feels* unsafe, and so determines that they *are* unsafe, and so call out any opinions that cause such a feeling. Or a person who *feels* that they are leader and so believes they *are* a leader, and hence cannot understand when they are passed over. In efforts to be authentic, leaders have to find a way to navigate the complexity of another's sense of sincere autonomy.

Two key observations emerge from a review of the ALT literature regarding what it means to be authentically human. First, the literature conflates authenticity with being an authentic human. In other words, when the literature speaks of authenticity, it does so in reference to being an authentic individual. This highlights that the individual human is taken as a given in the literature, without enquiring deeply about the individual who can be authentic. What it

means to be a self, whether there is a self, and whether that self is constant in the manner required to be authentically oneself is an ongoing question within the ALT literature (Harter, 2002; Alvesson & Einola, 2019). Therefore, the notion of the individual, as a self, remains unresolved.

Second, theorists (understandably) focus on scientific causes and consequences, with little philosophical focus on meaning, when both are important. ALT concentrates on what Heidegger refers to as the *ontic–existentiell* (Heidegger, 1962, p. 32f), rather than the *ontological–existential*, discoverable facts about the human, rather than the meaning of that human—understanding self-awareness, for example, rather than the meaning of the self of which one is aware. It does not investigate the meaning of the human person, other than as an object of scientific study. Since leaders are persons who lead other persons, and authenticity is presumed to be an ideal state in which to live one's life, it is essential that ALT engages with philosophical perspectives to form a more complete picture regarding authenticity and being an authentic person. However, that is not yet the case, and so what it is to be an authentic person, leading other authentic persons, remains unclear.

The third question asked by this study enquires into the philosophical limitations of ALT regarding authenticity and what is it to be authentically human. The study identified six major concerns, four of which arose from the components of authentic leadership: the epistemological regarding knowing, the anthropological regarding personhood, the ethical regarding actions and the intersubjective question regarding relationships. In addition, ALT fails to adequately define authenticity beyond the subjective emotional. Finally, as a consequence of these failures, there is an inherent conflict between authenticity, as sincere autonomy, and leadership, as a leader–follower relationship directed towards objective goods. Hence, authentic leadership is unattainable.

This study claims that the notion of authenticity within ALT suffers from a fundamental flaw in that it allows too great an emphasis on one's subjective feelings, and lacks a foundation in truth and so may itself be problematic. The understanding of authenticity offered within ALT as feeling that one is being true to oneself, and acting in accordance with the truths and values one has discerned for oneself, with the accompanying existentialist scepticism, and often rejection, of any authority that appears to impose its own will, is a fundamentally subjective, individualistic notion. Since ALT lacks a philosophical anthropology, it is unable to ultimately agree on what constitutes authenticity for a person and how to distinguish between inauthenticity and authenticity, and being and becoming authentic, other than to rely on the

sincere feelings of the individual, which are themselves transient. The affective notion of authenticity as sincere autonomy falls short of a truth-based notion that accords with what is good for the person who seeks authenticity.

The existentialist emphasis on becoming who one chooses to be, in the absence of any subsisting essence, situates one's identity and knowing in one's prevailing emotional disposition and most recent choice, with no reference to ontological and moral reality and a sound philosophical anthropology. Believing such profound insight exists in oneself, particularly at the beginning of one's metaphysical journey, is problematic. Having rejected the crowd, one has no foundation other than oneself on which to judge the correctness or otherwise of one's thoughts and acts. One may merely be living out unresolved teenage angst that rejects authority as a matter of course, under the illusion that one is an authentic individual because of this apparent self-choosing. There can be occasions when the multitude is correct, and hence choosing for oneself over against the crowd, on the basis of one's sincerely held beliefs and values, can be inimical to human wellbeing. Unfortunately, people can be sincerely wrong. Hence, authenticity, as understood, requires one to become both judge and jury regarding truth and moral reality and embrace a Cartesian idealism, the very position the existentialists, and Heidegger in particular, set out to reject.

This poses serious challenges in a business environment, where teams can be rendered ineffective by individuals who claim they are not resisting change, management direction and performance requests, but, on the contrary, are being their authentic selves, being true to themselves and their values. It is extraordinarily difficult to lead when individuals default to the authority of their own authenticity, their autonomous, sincerely held views. The lack of an objective standard, or agreement on what constitutes normative behaviour, lays the foundation for dysfunction in teams, organisations and wider society. Even the most fervent anarchist can ground their action in authenticity. While the theorists may argue that this is not their intent, and point to the original distinction between authentic and pseudo transformation leaders to resolve the problem of poor leadership among those who are being true to themselves, the emphasis on being authentic, and the manner in which it has evolved to mean sincere autonomy, means many people claim authenticity on the basis of their emotions. Hence, the leader who justifies their outbursts of anger or crudity on the basis of that being their authentic self. Authenticity, as sincere autonomy, establishes a tension and adversity at the heart of business teams, when it is collaboration and mutual support that is required. Hence, encouraging authenticity may actually be inimical to proper organisational functioning and fundamentally resistant to leadership.

Third, the four components of authentic leadership—self-awareness, balanced processing, relational transparency and an internalised moral perspective—paradoxically reveal the four flaws that lie at the heart of ALT. To develop these components, one must answer four fundamental questions that remain unanswered in the theory.

Self-awareness requires an answer to the question of anthropology, what is the meaning of the person? ALT lacks a philosophical anthropology, a foundational theory of the human person, which is crucial for self-awareness if one is to truly understand the self of which one is to be aware. The self is not simply an amalgam of biological processes with strengths and attributes, and self-awareness is not simply knowing those facts about oneself. Kierkegaard's troubling questions, which form a foundation to authenticity—'what does it mean to exist?' and, more specifically, 'what does it mean *for me* to exist?'—cannot be answered with a theory of strengths and attributes. While ALT encourages one to 'be true to oneself' as an authentic individual, it fails to articulate what it means to be a human person.

Balanced processing requires an answer to the question of epistemology, how does one know what is so? ALT is an entirely relativist theory, grounded in subjective emotion and offers no epistemological theory that can aid one's balanced processing, and so overcome one's biases and blind spots and know what is true. A truly authentic person must be concerned for knowing what is true, and making decisions in accordance with truth. Becoming who and what one is requires that one be able to discern what is so, whether that arrives in a moment of existential insight, or as the result of considerable mental labour. In the absence of such insight, one remains an intellectual prisoner, shackled by one's biases and prejudices. While balanced processing recognises the need to consider all the relevant data, particularly that which differs from one's firmly held view, to do so requires a disposition towards, and a means of discovering, truth. Hence, this study claims ALT needs, but fails to elucidate, an epistemology or cognitional theory.

An internalised moral perspective requires an answer to the question of ethics, which itself is grounded in one's understanding of the person and reality, how ought one to act? Theorising that authentic leaders possess an internalised moral perspective does not in and of itself provide a framework for that perspective. In the absence of a moral framework, the internalised moral perspective proposed by ALT remains grounded in moral subjectivism—in the thinking and feeling of the agent—and cannot articulate an argument for the goodness of moral actions of persons that accord with the good of persons. Hence, ALT, as it is currently formulated, is

unable, by itself, to limit ethical failure by leaders, which has been argued as the rationale for authentic leadership.

Further, the influence of the crowd is not considered in ALT. The crowd of which one is a part can lull one into a false sense of authenticity, with the concomitant belief that one is acting in an ethical manner, since ‘everyone’ seems to be in agreement. This is exacerbated in the absence of an ethical framework and an objective sense of reality against which one can judge one’s thought and action. If ALT is to offer a remedy to the ethical failures of leaders, its ethical theory will need to consider the pervasive influence of the crowd and an understanding of those actions that foster human fulfillment.

Finally, relational transparency requires an answer to the question, how ought one to act towards other persons? While ALT talks of relational transparency, and recognises persons exist in relationships with others, it inadvertently embraces the existentialist individualism that lies at the heart of authenticity and its focus on choosing for oneself against the suffocating crowd. ALT lacks an understanding of intersubjectivity, the notion of *I-thou* relationships, the social existence of persons in community and the notion of the common good, all of which are crucial to the relational component of ALT.

This last point highlights the sixth concern identified by the study, the paradoxical tension between authenticity and leadership. On the one hand, authenticity has devolved to sincere autonomy, establishing power in the individual, while on the other hand, leadership is a fundamentally interpersonal *I-thou* action, in mutual service—this study argues—of a common good. The attitude of solidarity required for mutuality and service of leader and follower, in the context of objective good of a community, is fundamentally distinct from the subjective, feeling-based concept of authenticity, centred in the individual. Hence, tension is established in the leader–follower relationship when authenticity is idealised.

Hence, ALT contains a foundational weakness due to the lack of deep, philosophical reflection about the meaning of the terms, and the four components presumed to follow from, and contribute to, authentic leadership are inadequate to confirm the presence of authenticity or authentic leadership. While they may be helpful attributes for persons in leadership roles, and can be enhanced with a philosophical perspective, they are not in and of themselves proof of authenticity or guides to authentic leadership.

The answer to question four, regarding the philosophical contribution of Søren Kierkegaard, Martin Heidegger and Karol Wojtyła, offers a number of insights to overcome the identified limitations in ALT. This study shows how the thinking of this trio, in undertaking an

ontological—existential—as distinct from the scientific ontic—existentiell—investigation, informs our understanding of the meaning of the person, who is self-aware, ethically competent, relationally transparent and a balanced processor. Regarding an understanding of authenticity, this study notes the existentialists emphasis on, as it were, standing back from the multitude and seriously considering one's stance towards life, taking responsibility rather than taking orders from an all-enveloping crowd, consequent upon a moment of vision—an insight that is not fully appreciated or recognised within ALT. The standard four components model of authentic leadership fails to appreciate that authenticity is not simply being self-aware, relationally transparent, ethically competent and a balanced thinker, but that it is consequent upon a conscious rejection of the crowd, subsequent to a moment of vision that arises from the call of conscience, and which issues in one taking personal responsibility for one's life. The moment—which Heidegger refers to as an *Augenblick*, and Kierkegaard as *øieblikket*—is, for them, a fundamental antecedent of personal authenticity. Hence, unless one can refer to such an experience, of a moment of vision, with a subsequent self-determining decision, it is arguable whether a person has grasped who they are, and hence who they are to become, or that a conscious decision has been made to take personal responsibility for one's life. As a focal moment of existential insight, it constitutes a landmark event in a person's life and should be encouraged.

Further, taking responsibility for one's life—of one's self-determining choices and their consequences—demonstrates one's attempt to live in accordance with what is true and good. A person may claim that they take responsibility, are free from the pervasive influence of the crowd, and know who they are and are living in accordance with that self. However, such a claim would be mere words unless the person could describe those occasions where they realised they are *not* the crowd, and not subject to the whims and fancies of popular opinion, but in fact have chosen freely and without coercion. Such an explanation would not be a merely emotional expression, but a reasoned response setting out when, and why, they decided contrary to the crowd and for themselves.

However, neither Kierkegaard nor Heidegger have explained the operation by which one takes up that responsibility, an explanation we find in Wojtyła's understanding of efficacy. Hence, the existential moment of vision, amalgamated with the metaphysical moment of efficacy, explains the foundation to authenticity, and, ultimately, personal fulfillment. Also, while Kierkegaard and Heidegger argue divorcing oneself from the suffocating nature of any authority—whether an institution or an amorphous crowd—is fundamental to being an authentic individual, they have not fully answered the question of what it means to be a person,

which is crucial if we are to understand what it means to be an authentic person, and so apply authenticity to the person and, specifically, persons in leadership roles. Hence, this study looks to Karol Wojtyła, whose entire philosophical corpus is grounded in a realist metaphysics, an understanding of the acting person and a personalist argument that persons must be central to any matter that concerns them.

In Wojtyła, we discover the notion of fulfillment—how a person becomes who and what they are in their actions and interactions with others—which ultimately resolves the limitations regarding authenticity, and, further, a more complete answer to the questions of epistemology, anthropology, ethics and intersubjectivity. However, those same answers expose the ultimate limitations in, and unsuitability of, ALT.

This study asserts, following Wojtyła, that a person is an embodied (Wojtyła, 1993l, p. 167), incommunicable, unrepeatable (Wojtyła, 1993a, p. 125) subject (Wojtyła, 2016, p. 155), able to know, feel and will, and so determine who and what they become (Wojtyła, 2016, p. 105). The study further claims, relying on Wojtyła's personalistic norm (Wojtyła, 2013, pp. 11, 25), that persons possess both ontological and moral dignity, due to having a teleology, and so a person can never be a means to an end. The deficiencies noted regarding authenticity—as sincere autonomy—render it unsatisfactory as a teleological state for human persons. Further, authenticity as sincere autonomy gives primacy to freedom as being, and doing, who and what one pleases. The concept of fulfillment, on the other hand, reveals that personal freedom is freedom *for*—for becoming all that one can be, to fulfil one's potential as a human person, to determine oneself in accordance with what it means to be a human person, in relationship with other human persons. Hence, if one seeks authenticity—a subjective, individualistic concept—one will never be fulfilled. However, if one seeks fulfillment—to live in accordance with who and what one is—one will discover one's authentic self.

This study finds that finds authenticity more properly refers to the truth about the human person—which is more aligned to the historical understanding, and contrary to the way it is understood within ALT—and that the question of how one becomes authentic is more easily addressed via the concept of fulfillment. Kierkegaard notes that one is fulfilled via free, self-determining choices (Kierkegaard, 1992, p. 543). However, it is only when we turn to Wojtyła that we have a fully worked out analysis of fulfillment (Wojtyła, 1979c, pp. 98, 156, 232). Wojtyła shows one is able to fulfil oneself—become who and what one is (p. 98)—because one is able to transcend oneself, choose for what is true and good (p. 155) and become someone (Wojtyła, 1993h, p. 192). Hence, fulfillment, which refers not simply to 'fulfilling

one's potential' but rather to a metaphysical actualisation whereby one becomes one's ontological self via one's morally sound choices, is the consequence of self-determining actions that integrate *who* one is with *what* one is in accordance with *what is*. To seek fulfillment is to seek knowledge about oneself and how one should act towards oneself as a person, and to seek relationships with others and how one should act towards them as persons. One is fulfilled as a person in morally good actions that accord with both personhood and moral reality, guided by one's conscience, and so persons determine themselves as they transcend internal and external boundaries. Hence, the notion of living a fulfilled life overcomes the inherent tension between being and becoming authentic, and so one is able to live in a coherent manner as one integrates one's choices with one's being, which is possible because of efficacy, self-determination and transcendence.

While the existentialists posit becoming one's authentic self as an individualistic pursuit, Wojtyła firmly situates personal fulfillment in participation with others in human community (Wojtyła, 1993g, p. 291), in mutual service of the common good. Contrary to the individualistic nature of authenticity, Wojtyła highlights the intersubjective nature of persons, and reveals the key to authentic relationships is self-giving and mutual respect for the personhood of the other, and a focus on *I-thou*, rather than an *I-object*, relationship.

To summarise, to be fulfilled—as distinct from authentic—one must be able to grasp the truth of who and what a person is; one must appreciate, and be able to choose, those actions that foster becoming the person one is, as distinct from actions that deny or undermine one's personhood; and, lastly, since personhood includes intersubjectivity, and full possession of oneself enables the free gift of oneself to another, one realises that fulfillment is not a solitary, but rather participative activity in solidarity with other persons for a common good.

Hence, leaders—who lead persons, and so have a moral responsibility towards both themselves and others as persons—have a responsibility to create environments that enable people to be fulfilled and to do so in service of other persons and the common good. The opposite, to create environments that damage or diminish people, is clearly incompatible with leadership. Hence, the personalistic understanding of the person, and the fulfillment of persons, overcomes the limitations within ALT's understanding of authenticity and what it means to be authentically human. Since personalism informs our understanding of the personhood and actions of persons, it can be applied to persons in leader and follower roles, which is the domain of authentic leadership.

The study found, in answer to question five, as to whether the philosophical perspective of these three thinkers indicated an alternative leadership theory, that Wojtyła's personalism in particular offers a new approach to leadership that could satisfy what followers seek when they call for authenticity among leaders, and also provide the ethical framework that ALT seeks. Since all leadership involves human persons, and personalism at its most basic means ensuring the dignity and respect of each human person is the primary consideration of every matter that involves them, Wojtyła's realistic personalism can provide a more philosophically robust foundation for leadership. It negates any tendency to instrumentalise persons and resolves the tension between individualism and collectivism, which Kierkegaard and Heidegger were unable to do, and ALT does not address. Wojtyła shares the existentialist concern for persons taking responsibility for their own lives, rather than being absorbed by the collective or ensnared by radical individualism, and emphasises the necessity of grasping what it means not simply to be a human person, but to be *this* human person in community with other persons.

The study asserts that leadership is relational, responsible and in service of the common good. Leadership is grounded in the relationship between leader and follower,²⁶ not in the person or the actions of the leader. It is the mutual leader–follower act–response that constitutes leadership and in which leadership emerges. In the absence of a response from the follower(s), leadership does not obtain, hence, a focus on intersubjective *I-thou* relationships—in a *we* community, rather than ‘they’ crowd—is crucial to effective leadership, since leadership is always an action that involves two or more persons—a leader and their follower(s)—in the context of a wider set of relationships.

Leadership is responsible. Personhood grounds responsibility towards oneself and others with whom one exists in society, and since responsibility for persons is at the very heart of human relationships, one can argue, by extension, that responsibility for persons is at the heart of leadership. Since leadership is an intersubjective act, responsibility for the persons one leads obtains in the same manner one has a responsibility towards oneself.

Lastly, leadership is mutual, for the common good. That responsibility, and the service it fosters, is mutual between leaders and followers, in order that both can serve the common good, which grounds leadership in both the relationship and what is true and good, and balances the tension between the person and the collective.

Therefore, this study proposes a theory of leadership grounded in the human person, that encompasses the notion of fulfillment and is predicated on a moment of vision; mutual service of, and solidarity between, leader and follower(s) and the common good of the organisation

and society which they serve; and total responsibility for one's actions, grounded in a realist metaphysics and anthropology. This model of leadership integrates self-fulfilment with mutual service between leader and follower(s) for the common good, based on radical personal responsibility for oneself and one's actions, which can satisfy the desire for authentic and ethical leaders, providing a framework for ethical decision-making grounded in the good of persons and the good of society. The study terms this model *personalist leadership*.

7.2 Contributions and further research

These findings make a number of contributions. They challenge the four components model of ALT as currently formulated by Walumbwa et al. (2008) and explain, contrary to Avolio and Walumbwa (2014), why a philosophy of authenticity and authentic leadership is as equally important as the development of authentic leaders. They confirm the concerns raised by scholars such as Algera and Lips-Wiersma (2012), Crawford (2020), Iszatt-White and Kempster (2019) and Alvesson and Einola (2019) regarding the superficiality of the theory, and propose solutions to those concerns. They identify the individualistic, relativistic problems inherent within authenticity, the problems this poses for leadership and working as a team, and offer solution via the notions of fulfillment and participation.

The study also contributes to the body of research that has applied the personalism of Karol Wojtyła to economics and management (e.g., Acevedo, 2012; Alford, 2010; Finn, 2003; Fontrodona & Sison, 2006; Gronbacher, 1998; Jeffko, 1999; Mele, 2009; O'Boyle, 2001; Whetstone, 2002; Zúñiga, 2001) by applying personalism specifically to leadership, and hence offers a new model of leadership based in personalist thought, which we have termed personalist leadership. This model offers an ethical framework for decision-making, which can go some way towards ameliorating the kinds of ethical failures that authentic leadership set out to overcome, but is unable to resolve.

However, the model would benefit from further research. The model identifies *five* components of personalist leadership—personal fulfillment, total responsibility, solidarity, mutual service and the common good—and *four* components of personal fulfillment—an existential moment of vision, self-responsibility, participation, self-giving and purpose—that are grounded in personhood, self-determination, moral choice in accordance with who and what one is and what is true and good, and integration of one's horizontal and vertically transcendent self. Note, however, that these constitute horizons for which persons and leaders aim, rather than hurdles to exceed or criteria to satisfy to prove one's leadership capability. Second, further study could be conducted on the development of the specific ethical framework

that issues from this model, but which was outside the scope of this project. Third, research could be undertaken on the application of Kierkegaard's three stages to leadership. As a starting point, this study proposes that aesthetical leadership focuses on maximising *profit* and measures success against externalities such as share price appreciation or shareholder return; ethical leadership focuses on what is *proper* and doing the right thing, measuring success against moral codes and doing what is right and best; and, lastly, 'religious' leadership, marked by transcendent values, focuses on *purpose* and the common good, measuring success against positive impact on colleagues, customers and the communities in which the business participates. Hence, Kierkegaard's individual stages could distinguish between leadership that focuses on profit, what is proper, or what is purposeful. While leadership is enacted horizontally, it is initiated vertically, as the leader transcends their inner boundaries, discovers themselves and becomes fulfilled as they take responsibility for themselves via self-determining actions. This issues horizontally, as the true self extends towards others in intersubjective acts between responsible self-determining leaders and followers who differ in role, but not personhood. As the leader becomes more fulfilled, they transition from that unfulfilling, profit-centred leader to the ethical leader who does what is proper but yearns for something greater, which they ultimately discover in a noble purpose in service of the common good.

The study has also argued that the notion of authenticity, as sincere autonomy, establishes a tension with the organisational, or social, objectives of leadership, potentially reversing outdated command and control models of leadership and replacing these with follower command and control. Such a claim could be the subject of a research study.

On a final note, this research has been enormously fulfilling at both a personal and professional level, and had a direct impact on my own leadership practice, working with individual leaders and their teams. For example, I originally conducted authentic leadership workshops, with a focus on building self-awareness, ethical competence, relational transparency and balanced processing. However, this instigated a growing unease with the theory as it was difficult to discern change in leadership capability, or the elements of authenticity.

Anecdotally, this author conducted a 12-month Authentic Leadership program for a cohort of nine senior executives, conducting a one-day workshop on each of the stated components of authentic leadership, plus individual coaching to both tailor and embed the learnings for each participant. A self-rated ALQ carried out prior to the program indicated a group of executives

who considered themselves self-aware, ethically competent, relationally transparent and aware of biases. The ratings they gave themselves at commencement showed very little movement at the conclusion of the program. However, it was evident to this author and other participants that some individuals had made significant progress on (say) self-awareness, while others had remained stubbornly low. While the relational transparency among the cohort had noticeably improved, as shown by the ease and readiness of self-disclosure, at least one person remained steadfastly resistant to self-disclosure, while rating himself highly on relational transparency. The point being made is that participants rated themselves highly, based on their self-perception. While helpful, the ALQ did not appear to actually measure authentic leadership, but simply confirm that, at least in this group, people generally consider themselves to be self-aware, morally competent, unbiased and relationally transparent. Further, these were very subjective, even when the views of others were considered. For example, a follower's understanding of moral perspective appears to influence their view about the moral capability of their leader. However, shifting the emphasis to, first, helping people understand what it means to be a person and how persons are fulfilled, and then fostering the conditions for a moment of vision, focusing on taking total responsibility for one's personal and professional actions and understanding leadership as a relationship between two or more persons, grounded in the gift of one to another, and a focus on the common good which they mutually serve, is a substantially different conversation.

Hence, one hopes that this work will contribute not simply to leadership theory, but also to leadership practice, and result in leaders leading persons as persons, treating them with the dignity and respect that is their due.

8 Endnotes

¹ While many papers cite Sartre in their introductions, only Lawler and Ashman (2012) have produced an extensive discussion regarding a Sartrean perspective on authenticity and leadership.

² The significant body of work on authentic leadership in the healthcare environment is a consequence of authentic leadership being identified as one of six factors that contribute to a healthy work environment (Nurses, 2005).

³ This is not to suggest that no one prior had asked questions about the person, just as we do not hold that no philosopher prior to Kierkegaard enquired about existence. However, the perspective that Kierkegaard brings to these questions, and the manner in which he asks them regarding specific individuals, is a unique contribution.

⁴ Camus is quite apt here: ‘The truth is that everyone is bored, and devotes himself to cultivating habits. Our citizens work hard, but solely with the object of getting rich. Their chief interest is commerce, and their chief aim in life is, as they call it, “doing business”. ... Certainly nothing is commoner nowadays than to see people working from morn till night and then proceeding to fritter away at card tables, in cafes and in small-talk what time is left for living’ (Part 1 Camus, 1948).

⁵ At the same time, the crowd is threatened by those who find themselves: ‘the self is the last thing the world cares about and the most dangerous thing of all for a person to show signs of having’ (Kierkegaard, 1980, p. 32).

⁶ While ‘*øieblikket*’ refers to ‘the moment’, ‘*øieblik*’ refers to ‘moment’ (Herskowitz, 2016, p. 87), and each is used according to the context.

⁷ The Loeb translation makes the question clear: ‘Then since we are in perplexity, do you tell us plainly what you wish to designate when you say “being.” For it is clear that you have known this all along, whereas we formerly thought we knew, but are now perplexed’ (Plato, 1921, p. 244a).

⁸ Heidegger anticipates the question of euthanasia or suicide, those acts that presume to take charge of the when of one’s death. He argues that to actualise the possibility of death would be to cause one’s death, which dispossess Dasein of the grounds of its Being as a Being-toward-death (Heidegger, 1962, p. 305). Such an actualisation is paradoxical since in the actualisation Dasein ceases to be (Heidegger, 1962, p. 306).

⁹ This is his earliest known description, from the notes of a 1949 lecture series.

¹⁰ Cf., for example, *Laborem Exercens* (1981), *Redemptoris Hominis* (1979), *Veritatis Splendor* (1993) and his series of arguments on the theology of the body (Taylor, 2010, p. 97)

¹¹ In its investigation of Wojtyła’s thinking about persons, this thesis relies significantly on his major English work *The Acting Person* (1979), while recognising the questions regarding the reliability of this translation. Acosta and Reimers (2016, p. 9) argue that *The Acting Person* is not a faithful rendition of *Osoba i czyn*—the 1969 Polish ‘Person and Act’—and is unsuitable for graduate-level study.

Schmitz (1993) notes the English revision:

supplanted an older technical language for another more contemporary one ... [which] obscures the continuity of the author’s thought with older traditions of thought ... misleads the English reader regarding the relationship the author maintains between traditional metaphysics and contemporary phenomenology ... [and] obscures the vitality which the author still finds in the intellectual traditions of medieval scholasticism. (p. 60)

However, not everyone agrees. *The Acting Person* was not published in English as a commercial venture designed to profit on the strange chance that a distinguished philosopher had become Pope. Rather, the English translation had been in preparation for several years. It was being given the most sensitive care in translation because the translator and editor realised it was a major philosophical work (Lawler, 1982, p. 35).

Taylor agrees that *The Acting Person* is ‘unfaithful to the original’ (Taylor, 2010, p. 84), but notes Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, who collaborated extensively with Wojtyła in the production of the English translation, held *The Acting Person* ‘is an essentially different work’ (p. 84) from the Polish original, incorporating Wojtyła’s reflections since the original publication and written for an international phenomenological readership.

Tymieniecka (1979) argues that Wojtyła’s philosophical scholarship: culminate[s] in his treatise in philosophical anthropology, which in its *mature, definitive version* [emphasis added] was published in 1979 as *The Acting Person*, vol. X of *The Analecta Husserliana* (its *first, unfinished version* [emphasis added] having been published as *Osoba i Czyn*, Krakow: Polskie Towarzystwo Teologiczne, 1969). (p. 17)

Here, Tymieniecka, who was perhaps Wojtyła’s closest intellectual confidante, and who played a key role in promulgating his thinking in the English-speaking world, argues *Osoba i Czyn* represented earlier thinking that matured into the definitive text of *The Acting Person*. Hence, *The Acting Person* is not an attempt to render the Polish original in English, but the work of an author revising his initial draft (Taylor, 2010, p. 85).

To further complicate the question of reliability, two subsequent and revised versions of the Polish text were released, which also show evidence of maturing thought (Taylor, 2010, p. 85). Taylor (2010) suggests reading both the later Polish versions and *The Acting Person* is more helpful to understanding Wojtyła's thought, since each represents a maturing of his thought over earlier editions, rather than debating which is definitive or lacking.

¹² This argument appears to demolish quite simply any denial of essence, for one readily comprehends something of oneself—*me, myself, I*—is unable to be *contained* in the thoughts of another and vice versa.

¹³ Crosby (2004) refers to this as 'incarnational personalism' (p. 119).

¹⁴ 'To say that this experience consists in the personal practice of morality and the personal experience of moral good or evil is also to say that every normal human being is here an authentic author and producer. It is impossible to divorce moral reality from this authorship and productivity' (Wojtyła, 1993i, p. 118).

¹⁵ An apt term, since 'the world of persons ... can never be added up to a total' (Mounier, 1950, p. 30).

¹⁶ Does such subordination of oneself to self-governance contribute to more effective leadership, since the leader themselves recognises their own need for subordination, and hence could be less likely to insist on subordination of other persons, and instead treat them as persons?

¹⁷ Cf. *The Acting Person* (ch. 7) and Wojtyła (1993g, p. 261, fn. 23) for detail.

¹⁸ While recalling that such an end, because it regards the human person, must be good in itself. An evil end is not a human end.

¹⁹ 'I devote my very rare free moments to a work that is close to my heart and devoted to the metaphysical sense and mystery of the person. It seems to me that the debate today is being played out on that level. The evil of our times consists in the first place in a kind of degradation, indeed in a pulverization, of the fundamental uniqueness of each human person. This evil is even more of the metaphysical order than of the moral order. To this disintegration planned at times by atheistic ideologies we must oppose, rather than sterile polemics, a kind of 'recapitulation' of the inviolable mystery of the person' (cf. De Lubac, 1993, p. 171).

²⁰ One would have to first develop a more robust measurement tool for identifying the degree to which a leader is authentic, agree on what constitutes ethical behaviour and find a means of identifying both positive and negative ethical outcomes. This author hypothesises that ethical failure is not a consequence of being more or less authentic, but a consequence of character failure.

²¹ One is reminded of that old adage to choose one's friends wisely.

²² For the avoidance of doubt, this does not mean each person has only one specific way of living out their authentic self, as if to suggest (say) that John could be his authentic self if a banker but not a lawyer, if married but not single, for such an argument would deprive John of freedom and responsibility.

²³ As distinct from his theological writings, which acknowledge religious conversion and include the concepts of Sacraments and Grace, where one encounters the Eternal touching one's present. While this is an interesting question worthy of an answer, it is beyond the scope of this current work.

²⁴ However, this was a regular theme in his Papal writings (cf., for example, *Laborem Exercens*).

²⁵ 'We have before us here a great drama that can leave nobody indifferent. The person who, on the one hand, is trying to draw the maximum profit and, on the other hand, is paying the price in damage and injury is always man' (*Redemptoris Hominis*, 16).

²⁶ This notion is central to my relational understanding of leadership. However, I discovered upon completion of this thesis that Lapierre and Carsten (2014, p. 28) had made the same statement. Although I have not attributed it to them, since I was unaware of their work, I acknowledge their insight.

9 Bibliography

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