Founder succession in international Christian networks and organizations: A narrative case-study approach

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## Abbreviations

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>GKI</td>
<td>Generative Knowledge Interviewing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLOBE</td>
<td>Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness</td>
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<tr>
<td>LMX</td>
<td>Leader-Member Exchange Theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSSC</td>
<td>Leadership Succession Strategic Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OEED</td>
<td>Oxford Encyclopaedic English Dictionary</td>
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Abstract

This thesis examines how international Christian organizations and movements undergo and enact leadership succession from their founders. It particularly focuses on the theories and theologies, whether overt or latent, which shape and inform such succession processes and enactments.

This multi-disciplinary study seeks to understand organizational successions by drawing on perspectives from psychology, organizational development, leadership theory and theology. As founder succession within Christian ministries has rarely been examined, a breadth of literature on succession from other fields of study is reviewed to show that, while studies in succession have been neglected in this specific field, much can be gleaned from other fields and applied to understanding Christian organizations. Furthermore, this thesis critically evaluates the methodological approaches adopted by the few attempts to study recent founder succession within Christian ministries and finds serious deficiencies in such approaches.

A multi-case study approach is pursued by examining the founder successions enacted within the Christian mission and development agency International Aid Services (originating in Sweden), the network of churches Newfrontiers (originating in the UK) and the network of churches and ministries Grace Network (originating in the USA). A narrative approach is adopted; data was gathered through tripartite, open-ended interviews with the organizations’ founders and successors, as well as documentary analysis. This approach provided data which allowed an analysis of succession as it relates to gender, apostolicity, movement deconstruction, successor origins, familial connections, leadership styles, symbolic enactments, environmental pressures and theology. Inconsistent theologies are brought forth through comparing elements of both espoused and operant theologies of succession within these organizations, showing that a lack of theological reflexivity impaired the succession processes in each of the three cases.
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Introduction

*Time means succession, and succession, change.*

Nabokov, *Pale Fire.*

For new organizations to endure beyond their founders, a way must be made for founders to relinquish, and for others to assume, organizational leadership. The quasi-aphoristic nature of such comments may obscure how complex and vicissitudinous successions can be. The crucial and potentially problematic nature of succession began to draw the attention of organizational scholars in the 1960s (Grusky, 1961; 1964). This has led to a growing field of literature on succession, which has become increasingly specialized as scholars examine facets of succession including successor origins (Cannella and Lubatkin, 1993), power (Block and Rosenberg, 2002), organizational performance (Caroll, 1984), strategic change (Hutzschenreuter, Kleindienst and Greger, 2012), leadership style change (Tashakori, 1980) and succession frequency (Kesner and Sebora, 1994). Chapter 1 is a review of some of the key research developments. Despite such a body of literature, there have been few attempts at empirical study of succession within Christian organizations or movements, thus pointing to a significant gap in the literature. From this, I posit a research question:

What are the processes which Christian movements construct and enact in transferring leadership from the founder to a successor? What are the theoretical and theological influences on the construction and enactment of such processes?

Chapter 2 provides a critical evaluation of the research methods of three studies of Christian founder succession. This evaluation focuses on research design (the extent to which methods supported the research aims) and researcher reflexivity. Due to inconsistent methods and insufficient reflexivity, the researchers’ findings are either severely limited or based on unreliable claims, even deliberately producing findings

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1 Nabokov (1997, p.54). Epigraphical citations will be referenced by footnotes rather than in-text.
constitutive of the official discourse of those being studied. Existing attempts at studying Christian founder succession are thus of limited value; at times they even obfuscate the topic with inappropriate methodology and insupportable findings. There is thus a vast lacuna in reliable empirical knowledge in this field. Given this, I propose a new method to gather data for analysis of Christian founder succession (Chapter 3). Concluding that the sample of participants are “experts” in their field (Welch et al., 2002, p.613), I draw from Meuser and Nagel’s epistemology of expert knowledge and adopt an unstructured interviewing approach (Meuser and Nagel, 2009, p.31). More specifically, I propose a form of interviewing for which I have coined the term ‘Generative/Dialectical’, a tripartite approach that generates largely unprompted data yet probes and debates those articulated narratives.

The thesis proceeds to a report (Chapter 4) on the pilot study conducted to test the above approach. The pilot study led to some minor amendments to interview protocols, but confirmed that the narrative analytical approach as well as that the ‘Generative/Dialectical’ interview was capable of leading to full and consequential narratives.

In Part II, I report on the methods of the main research phase (Chapter 5), providing a rationale for adopting a multiple case study approach with maximal variation. An analysis is provided of three case studies, namely International Aid Services (Chapter 6), Newfrontiers (Chapter 7) and Grace Network (Chapter 8). In these chapters, I provide a tripartite analysis of each succession.

Chapter 9 seeks to answer the research question by examining the espoused and operant succession theologies and theories in each case. Interstices between such theologies are presented, suggesting that a lack of theological reflexivity obscured such lacunae and impaired the founder successions.
Part I

As you set out for Ithaka
hope your road is a long one,
full of adventure, full of discovery.

Cavafy, Ithaka.²

² Cavafy (1975).
Chapter 1

Literature review

... and may you visit many Egyptian cities
to learn and go on learning from their scholars.

Cavafy, Ithaka

1. Introduction

A review specifically of the research literature on founder succession within Christian agencies would indeed be brief, given the lack of studies in this field. Three have been identified and will be reviewed. Given such paucity, attempts were made to examine succession in general within Christian organizations, even if not from the founder; yet this is a field that also has not attracted practical theologians. In stark contradistinction to this, other fields of study (organizational development; sociology) have long studied succession, including founder succession. This in itself indicates that an interdisciplinary approach to my study is necessary to learn of founder succession dynamics and to apply the findings of other fields to that of practical theology. Given that the preponderance of succession literature is in fields other than practical or empirical theology, this review will begin by examining those non-theological fields as they pertain to succession in general, and then founder succession.3 From this, I will move to consider matters related to succession within literature pertaining to Christian organizations, before looking at three examples of succession relating to founders of such organizations. Following this, review will be made in the area of international leadership to help inform this thesis’ emphasis on the international nature of new Christian movements and churches today. Finally, comment will be

3 I am aware that it is possible to view ‘practical’ and ‘empirical’ theology as coterminous or to distinguish on grounds of epistemology. For the purposes of this thesis, both terms refer to theology that reflects on lived experience, irrespective of epistemological provenance.
made on the literature which attempts a theological analysis of succession. Having concluded these sectional reviews, a summary of findings will be given; this shows considerable gaps in the literature related to my study. I aim to employ such lacunae to shape this thesis’ key research question and analysis.\textsuperscript{4}

2. Succession studies

\textit{From now on, (choosing my successor) is the most important decision I’ll make. It occupies a considerable amount of thought almost every day.}

Jack Welch, CEO of General Electric, nine years before his anticipated retirement.\textsuperscript{5}

Academic study of leadership succession began in the 1960s. From its beginnings, concentrating on the study of successor origins - that is whether successors were appointed from within the organization, or from outside, known as the ‘insider/outsider’ (or ‘internal/external’) question - and on succession frequency, it has grown as a discipline with studies examining multiple facets of succession. Such facets include processes, methodologies, socialization, consequences, reactions, performance, Leadership Succession Strategic Change (LSSC), and the relationship between the distributions of power within organizations. While some of the earliest studies stemmed from the world of sociology (Grusky, 1961, 1964; Gamson and Scotch, 1964), the majority of studies have been undertaken by academic researchers in the fields of business management and organizational development, for example, Kesner and Sebora (1994), Wiersema (1992), Ocasio (1999), Shen and Cannella (2000), Vancil (1987), Hutzschenreuter \textit{et al.} (2012).

Such researchers have not turned their attention to Christian organizations, and theologians have rarely studied succession. While there are large gaps in understanding whether and how these social scientific studies apply to Christian ministries, there is much, however, in the literature which might inform and assist ministries facing the challenges of leadership succession. Comment will be made on

\textsuperscript{4} Given the use of literature and related technical terminology from many academic fields, I provide a glossary of terms to assist the reader (Appendix A).

\textsuperscript{5} Slater (1993, p.268).
several themes in succession research which might apply and inform Christian ministries.

2.1. Origins

The internal/external question grew in importance as people sought guidance in how to find the most appropriate leader to enhance organizational success. The debate hinged upon the different characteristics of internal or external successors, how they are received and their styles and comparative performances. Interest in origins began with Grusky (1961; 1964) and developed during the 1970s (thirteen studies), and 1980s (eighteen articles) (Kesner and Sebora, 1994). Previously in the Western world, there had been a widely held assumption that one’s career was within one company; company loyalty led to promotion. If external appointments increased performance, this challenged the one career/one company philosophy. Also, at this time, leadership theory was still focused on the leader rather than other factors such as culture, contingences or leader-follower relationship (such as Leader-Member Exchange Theory [LMX]). Two schools of thought developed. Cannella and Lubatkin (1993) found that low performing firms have greater rates of outside succession, whereas Wiersema (1992) studied 146 companies in the USA, finding that an external successor brought greater strategic change. This research implies that external succession is helpful, certainly if an organization needed greater change. There was, however, growing evidence supporting the advantages of internal succession. Of significant influence in this field, with scores of printings in multiple languages, is Collins and Porras (2002). This is a study of eighteen ‘visionary’ (American, but often multinational) companies which have endured over generations, comparing each to another company in the same market, with the aim of identifying those characteristics leading to success. Collins and Porras found that succession is facilitated if the company has an ‘enduring purpose that goes beyond the original founding concept’ (Collins and Porras, 2002, p.xix) and that visionary companies appoint Chief Executive Officers (CEO’s) from within the company (their frequency of internal appointments was six times greater than the comparison companies [Collins and Porras, 2002, p.10]).
Ocasio (1999) found that as founders’ CEO’s tenure increased, it became more likely that outsider succession would occur, but offered no empirical reasons for this, suggesting that as others had experienced only the founder as leader, they were unable to see likely candidates within the organization. Shen and Cannella (2003) studied over 300 firms and showed that outsider succession was positively associated with negative performance post-succession. My concern with this (and with much of the research), however, is that it extrapolates findings from investor and stock market reactions rather than other longer-term performance measures, thus limiting the reliability. Allgood and Farrell (2003) found that insider appointments were better when the predecessor voluntarily departed, but that external appointments were a better match when the predecessor was forced to leave.

The limitation with many studies is that they examine one variable as it correlates to origins, rarely taking into account a number of variables (broader social and environmental factors) which impinge upon an organization.

Applying this debate to international Christian ministries leads to a number of questions, including whether such agencies make internal or external appointments and how successor’s origin affects performance. In Part II, it will be seen that there is unanimous preference for internal succession within this study’s population, but that the reasons for this are different to those found in the above studies.

2.2. Frequency of succession

Frequency became a subject of interest as it was seen that frequency and performance (both as antecedents and consequence) were related. Performance is a key driver for not only business but most organizations, including Christian ministries. In the 1970s, nine studies examined frequency; in the 1980s, nineteen (Kesner and Sebora, 1994). Higher frequency of succession was detrimental to firm performance (Eitzen and Yetman, 1972; McEachern, 1975) while numerous studies began to show that performance was an antecedent of succession, with lower performance correlating with higher succession rates (Morck, Shleifer and Vishny, 1988; Huson, Parrino and Starks, 2001 and others). Of course, correlation does not mean causation, and again, a number of studies would have been better served if
multiple environmental variables had been examined, as Cannella and Lubatkin (1993) sought to do as they studied correlations between performance and origins (above).

It would appear that there are no studies of frequency of leadership succession in Christian organizations, nor whether performance (however measured) is an antecedent to such succession. Mentzer (1993) does attempt such an application with regard to congregational performance post pastoral succession. He measures the level of donations and congregational attendance (see section 4.1.), which shows that application of such theories is possible to Christian groups.

2.3. Consequences

Grusky also found that performance was likely to be adversely affected by the disruption of succession (the ‘vicious cycle’ theory of succession). Guest (1962) questioned this, positing the ‘common sense’ theory that an organization will strive to choose a good candidate who will improve performance. Gamson and Scotch (1964) examined this further by studying the dismissal of sport teams’ managers. They found that the predecessor and successor had little influence over performance, thus developing a third theory, that firing a leader was ritual scapegoating (‘scapegoating’ theory). These theories heavily influenced subsequent understanding of leadership succession appointments.

Consequences of succession were examined when Kelly (1980) examined successors’ leadership actions during their first months of tenure, finding that the majority initiated organizational infrastructure realignments before seeking to change company strategy. McTeer, White and Persad (1995) conducted a major study of professional sports team across the main four sports in the USA. The findings were that, in most sports, performance in the next full season following leadership change had not significantly improved over the season in which the change occurred, or the full season prior. Not only did this seem to support scapegoating theory, but also it pointed again to the holy grail of leadership theory, ‘does leadership matter?’

The study of succession consequences might prove fruitful for Christian ministries. Which of the three theories (if any) applies? Do Christian organizations engage in
scapegoating when performance is declining? As will be shown (Part II), succession within the network Newfrontiers was highly disruptive, involving the cessation of employment for a number of long-term staff and indeed the cessation of Newfrontiers as a movement. This might suggest an interpretation of ‘vicious cycle’ theory; the subsequent stability of the new apostolic spheres and concomitant church growth after two years of transitions may, however, suggest that, although disruptive, the succession was not part of a repetitive cycle. All three of my cases certainly espoused a ‘common sense’ theory, and with Grace Network and International Aid Services, there was little disruption. As projection of blame onto others seems to be an attested human trait, something which Jesus spoke against (Matthew 7: 3-5; Luke 6: 41-42), it is likely that some Christian organizations might engage in scapegoating as a way of dealing with organizational difficulty (shown later in my review of Owens [2002]).

2.4. Processes

The first study of the actual processes of succession was undertaken when Vancil (1987) found organizations employed one of two methods for successor selection, namely ‘horse race’ (giving potential successors roles and tasks and observing which one displayed the most needed leadership capabilities) and ‘relay’ (agreeing a successor, who then spent a period of time working alongside the predecessor as training). These models were later refined by Friedman and Olk (1995) who developed the following typology for succession methods: crown heir (similar to ‘relay’), naming the successor (usually chosen by incumbent) and allowing the successor a period of role socialization before assuming responsibilities; horse race (incumbent firmly in control); coup d’état (usually out of concern, the board takes control of decisions in spite of the incumbent); comprehensive search, inquiring widely within and without the organization for suitable candidates (which usually involves many actors). The problem with this is a confusion between appointment methodology (who to appoint) and socialization. For example, an appointment might be made through ‘horse race’ method, but then socialization might still occur following the relay method. Vancil’s work, moreover, is less reliable due to his self-
selecting a group of CEOs who believed they had led successful transitions. This provides limitations to findings and transferability. However, while examples of research from the 1980s and 1990s, Vancil and Friedman and Olk, have both shaped ongoing understandings of processes as well as provided the terminology for their description.

Dyck et al. (2002) undertook a longitudinal study of a failed succession in a family-owned firm. The main research question was to find causes for unsuccessful succession (‘success’ was not clearly defined in this research, but the successor resigning within six months of appointment was deemed ‘failure’). Dyck et al. developed the ‘relay’ metaphor by examining the implied metaphor within ‘relay’, namely that of ‘passing the baton’. They examined four factors within baton passing: sequence, timing, baton-passing technique and communication. They saw, for example, when studying ‘technique’ that ‘title, power, control, and responsibility often do not transfer simultaneously’ (Dyck et al., 2002, p.149) and that this is problematic (my emphasis). The research reached a number of conclusions: the greater the similarity between the skill sets and managerial styles of incumbent and successor, the more likely it is that the succession will be successful, but less likely that superior organizational performance will result; and the greater the level of agreement between incumbent and successor on the mode of succession, the more likely it is that the succession will be successful. The researchers, however, fail to see the relevance of organizational life-cycle theory, for the next cycle might indeed require leadership skills different to the founder, which may explain the finding of similarity leading to lower performance. In Part II, I will show that Christian organizations also may not understand this; they prefer internal successors, tutored and mentored by, and thus often like, the founder.

Research into succession processes is crucial for Christian ministries. Both Wheeler (2008) and Peterson (2014) show how Christian ministries employ the relay succession method. There is room for an examination of why Christian groups choose this (pragmatism or theological rationale), its consequences and for comparison between ministries which adopt other methodologies. This alerts us to

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7 Both reviewed fully in section 4.
the potential importance of processes and methods as enactments of underlying theologies, something that occupies a good deal of Part II.

2.5. Socialization

Any new incumbent, even an internal appointment, needs socialization. Attention has been drawn to the transmission of tacit knowledge as part of that process of succession. Kikoski and Kikoski (2004) found that high functioning organizations are influenced by the tacit knowledge of their leaders; this raises questions of which knowledge is to be transmitted during leadership succession and how the transmission is to be effected. Peet (2012) conducted a study to test the efficacy of Generative Knowledge Interviewing (GKI) as a method of tacit knowledge transmission, by introducing ‘generative listening’ to discern the tacit ‘core capacities’ embedded in the patterns of the stories. This test was successful: staff grew in understanding their roles and core capabilities, as well as in taking less time to make decisions. The GKI process helped them understand why the outgoing leader’s results were achieved and assisted performance replication. Peet claims that the method thus produced organizational generativity, but there are few empirical findings to substantiate this. This matter, however, did shape my interview protocols to ascertain the extent of successor socialization.

2.6. Strategic change

Sakano and Lewin (1999) studied 81 Japanese firms which had experienced CEO succession (1988-89) and revisited these cases (1991-92) to assess the succession impact on change. They found CEO succession did not affect organizational restructuring. They attributed findings to Japanese firms’ taking a long-term view and thus a preference for evolutionary rather than revolutionary change. This begins to show a relationship between culture, leadership perceptions and performance (a topic to be addressed more fully in section 4).

The literature on leadership succession and strategic change (LSSC) exemplifies some of the growing specialization within succession studies. Hutzscheneurer, Kleindienst and Greger (2012) identify 68 articles on LSSC. A good deal of the literature examines whether the impetus for strategic change comes from within or is external to the
leader. Much of the literature draws on developments from cognitive psychology, studying the cognitive differences between predecessor and successor, and states that the impetus is internal. Other studies, however, maintain that strategic change comes through external drivers such as the mandate to implement change. I suggest that rather than isolating one driver for change, it would seem a reasonable hypothesis that there are many drivers. Indeed, Zúñiga-Vicente, de la Fuente-Sabaté and Suárez-González (2005) find the realignment of power relationships to be the external driver but they came to recognize that environmental factors such as business regulation could drive change as well as internal reactions of leaders to those environmental factors, thus offering a more nuanced understanding.

There have been few studies applying leader life cycle theory to LSSC due to an assumption that long-tenure leaders are less likely to initiate strategic change. Zúñiga-Vicente, de la Fuente-Sabaté and Suárez-González (2005) found, however, that long-tenure leaders could perform extremely well in the area of change. This is supported elsewhere:

> Long tenure may reflect leaders’ ability and willingness to continuously initiate appropriate strategic change. As a result, new leaders following long-tenured predecessors may find their firm better aligned to the environment than new leaders following short termed predecessors, reducing the need for post-succession strategic change’ (Hutzschenreuter, Kleindienst and Greger, 2012, p.741).

Concerning the international characteristic of my sample, however, it should be noted that, “there is virtually no research that addresses the influence that an incoming leader’s cultural identity may have on the LSSC-relationship” (Hutzschenreuter, Kleindienst and Greger, 2012, p.745). This shows the gaps in understanding correlations between cultural identity and strategic change. Successors in international ministries will need to be mindful of how change is perceived and handled by different nationalities.

### 2.7. Psychoanalytical reflection on succession

As the subject of succession studies has become more specialised, it has simultaneously become more diverse. Eisold (2008) attempts a psychoanalytical reflection of the dynamics of succession, noting that, since Freud, succession has been seen in the light of the Oedipus drama of father/son conflict and power
usurpation - successors are destined to live in guilt about overcoming their predecessors and not to go beyond their achievements. Eisold suggests that we have been interpreting succession with an inadequate metaphor (Oedipal) and ignored the more helpful one of Orestes, where there is a communal and political element to the succession development, as seen in the establishment of the first court of law and jury to judge the deeds of Orestes and discern who is to succeed. Thus, succession and justice are determined other than by the predecessor and successor but by a more dispassionate organ from the community. Eisold applies this to modern institutional succession, suggesting that we consider three matters: the creation of a mechanism to permit others to make impartial judgments on behalf of the community; the recognition of the emotions of those involved in succession, which necessitates the above mechanism so that irrational emotions do not dominate the succession process; and that we take into account the broader social and economic milieu in which the organization undergoing succession locates itself. Eisold suggests one practical application of the establishment of a search committee for an institution’s successor which represents the interests of different stakeholders.

While a thoughtful reflection from literary models, Eisold is not an empirical study of successor appointment mechanisms. It is helpful, but its conclusions require testing.

Applying this approach to the subject studied by Dyck et al. (2002), a father/son/father transition (see above), may have proven helpful to understand the powerful relational dynamics of the business succession and why it ultimately failed. As there are few studies applying psychoanalysis to succession, it might be fruitful to investigate the extent to which Christian ministries employ or require some kind of dispassionate organ to assist succession. The methodologies and participants in ministry succession could be examined to ascertain which transitions are the least disruptive and produce the best performance. In Chapter 6, I apply Eisold’s recommendations to an understanding of paternal-filial succession within a Christian organization and posit that his principles were of assistance in defence of charges of nepotism.
2.8. Deficits

Despite numerous succession studies, there are still considerable deficits in research. First, there is a complete lack of attention to the issue of gender and its relationship with the multifaceted issues of succession. The four academic reviews of the literature in the last decades make no mention of gender issues (Gordon and Rosen, 1981; Kesner and Sebora, 1994; Giambatista, Rowe and Riaz, 2005; Hutzschenreuter, Kleindienst and Greger, 2012). Second, succession studies have not thus far taken into account the perspectival differences of social generations as leadership is transferred. Weil (1987) shows perspectival differences among generations in Germany, while Cherrington (China) (1997) shows that social generational change is not merely a western phenomenon. How should international Christian organizations take into account generational transfer, especially when some cultures have rigid understandings of age deference (Hofstede, 2001)? Third, there has been scant research on succession within international organizations. Fourth, the myriad of studies are not conducted within the context of Christian ministries. A rigorous application of theory and methodology and examination of aspects such as internal/external succession, antecedents, consequences, post-succession performance, process and socialization might assist ministries in their preparation for succession.

3. Founder succession

*The great entrepreneur must, in fact, be compared in life with the male Apis Mellifera. He accomplishes his act of conception at the price of his own extinction.*

J.K. Galbraith

Despite the growth of succession studies, there have still been relatively few concerning founder succession. It became clear that founder transition was different from other forms of succession when Carroll (1984) found that organizational failure rates were higher after founder succession than after non-founder succession. This also raises questions for Christian ministries.

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8 Galbraith, 1979, pp.93-94.
3.1. Entrepreneurial leadership style to professional leadership style

Tashakori (1980) undertook a detailed study of cases where external leaders replaced owner-founders of businesses. Her key finding is that founder succession is usually from an entrepreneurial style of leadership to a professional style. Entrepreneurial management may serve well in the early stages of enterprises, but growth and complexity mean it can become an impediment in later stages. None of the founders in her study was able to make the transition to a professional role. She found that succession is made complex (even hindered) by founders’ reluctance to relinquish control, due to emotional/psychological factors such as perception of their importance, unknown future roles, their need to achieve, fear of their own mortality, or financial concerns for the future. Transition often occurs when the organization grows too complex for the founder to manage or when there is a need to turn to outside investors, who will then usually require board representation and concomitant power. Transitions were successful when successors had ‘substantial’ (Tashakori, 1980, p.82) realized power and that predecessors had little continuing power.

While there is much in Tashakori to inform my study, she portrays styles as exclusive categories. I argue that styles are not oppositional; drawing on situational leadership theory, I suggest they are fluid; Tashakori’s clear demarcation dissipates in one of my case studies (Chapter 5).

3.2. Succession and founder-embedded organizational culture

Schein (1983) shows the significance of the founder in the establishment of organizational culture and the subsequent problems this may pose for the successor. The founder will establish the culture by setting the tone for and ways of dealing with external adaption (primary task, core mission and strategies) and internal integration (conceptual categories, boundaries for inclusion/exclusion, allocation of power and allocation of rewards). The founder embeds cultural elements in many ways, but Schein found the three most potent media are deliberate role modelling, teaching and coaching by the founder; those matters which leaders measure and control; and leadership reaction to critical incidents and crises. Founder-owners and professional managers tend to differ in four key areas: motivational and emotional
orientation, analytical orientation, interpersonal orientation and structural/positional perspectives. Entrepreneurs subconsciously embed non-economic assumption into the culture, which a professional manager will want to rationalize. This can create conflict as such rationalization attempts challenge perceived organizational culture.

While not an exact parallel, Schein’s work points to the seminal writing of Weber and his theory of the routinization of charisma in which a pioneering leader with charismatic authority is succeeded by others who formalize and bureaucratize.\footnote{See glossary for ‘charisma’ and ‘routinization’.
} While sidestepping the many debates on Weber,\footnote{One search yielded over 46,000 pieces of literature (http://www.worldcat.org), (Accessed: 1 May 2015).} I suggest that it is not inevitable that the second-generation leadership routinize and diminish charismatic authority, or, put in Schein’s terms, that they rationalize leadership (although this may indeed be common). In my second case study, Newfrontiers, efforts were made to maintain charismatic authority. This conforms with Ukah (2008), who, in his study of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) in Nigeria, shows that not only is routinization not inevitable but that the successor can enhance the charismatic nature of leadership and church, providing a ‘double founding’ and ‘recharismatization’ (Ukah, 2008, p.83).

### 3.3. Contingency probability of founder succession

Rubenson and Gupta (1996) increased understanding of founder succession by offering a contingency model. They seek to predict when founder succession will help the organization by evaluating the founder’s continuing utility and power to allow or prevent change. They suggest that succession is unlikely in the following three scenarios: no great change in organizational needs; change in needs with an adaptable founder; change in needs with a lack of adaptability in the founder but where the founder is unable to impede succession. Where there is a change in needs, lack of adaptability, and where the founder is able to impede succession, it is impeded. While accepting these conclusions from Rubenson and Gupta’s sample, it seems to posit a Machiavellian view of humanity and not take into account matters
such as generativity. In some instances, it is possible to surmise that founders of Christian organizations, although having the ability to impede succession, might actually desire it for the good of their organizations and for purposes of generativity (as found in Part II).

Whether such contingency probabilities can be identified in Christian ministries is a topic needing research. The underlying matter, however, suggests the importance of power distribution in succession.

### 3.4. Founder’s succession and organizational zeal

Haveman and Khaire (2002) examined contingency factors, particularly the extent of the ideological zeal of a founder, the managerial role played by the founder and organizational affiliations, expecting these to moderate the relationship between founder succession and performance. For this research, they studied the magazine industry in the United States.

Their major contribution to the study of founder succession is the introduction of the concept of ‘organizational zeal’ among founders. Founders who were not intensely ideological created ‘instrumentally-rational’ organizations to achieve value-neutral ends, while those with high degrees of organizational zeal produced value-rational organizations which reflected firm principles rather than efficiency or profitability.

The authors found support for the following hypotheses: the succession of founders in line positions will have greater impact on organizational failure than the succession of founders in staff positions; the difference between the impact of line and staff founder succession will be greater for strong-ideology rather than weak-ideology organizations; the difference between the impact of the exit of a founder who plays multiple roles and the exit of a founder who plays a single role will be greater in strong-ideology organizations than in weak-ideology organizations. The major conclusion of this research is that “intense ideological orientation increased the detrimental impact of founder succession on organizations’ survival chances” (Haveman and Khaire, 2002, p.27). While helpful, I find the method of measuring zeal (content analysis examining frequency of certain words deemed to signify ‘zeal’) limited. It ignores the context and that words do not necessarily signify manifest
content in discourse. Such nuances are not taken into account in such content analysis.

There are no studies relating organizational zeal to Christian organizations. The above study would suggest that such organizations, presumably established with strong organizational zeal and a compelling mission, might find founder transition problematic. Yet, it might be found that Christian founders are motivated by generativity and are, therefore, especially diligent in ensuring succession conducive to organizational longevity.

### 3.5. Rates and antecedents

Wasserman (2003) conducted the first large-scale exploration of founder-CEO succession, by studying 202 internet companies. His study showed that: the rate of founder-CEO change increases after the company finished development of the initial product; the rate of founder-CEO change will increase after each round of outside financing; the more money raised by a company in its latest round of financing, the higher the rate of founder-CEO succession; in insider-controlled firms, the rate of founder-CEO succession will be lower than in outsider-controlled firms. In essence, Wasserman points to a paradox of success – the founder’s achieving critical milestones (product completion and rounds of financial investment due to growth) cause a significant rise in the probability of founder replacement.

This study, of course, may not be generalizable to other industries, as the internet industry changes rapidly, and may, in fact need greater amounts of shorter-term investment. Also, those companies studied were those which had raised new rounds of investments, biasing the study towards the more successful entrepreneurs. For the purposes of this thesis, however, it alerts me in analysis to consider founder succession antecedents.

### 3.6. Cultural/religious context of founder succession

From a study in Nigeria, Ukaegbu (2003) examined founder successions and enterprise durability.11 Ukaegbu’s work shows how local contextual realities

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11 See glossary for a technical definition.
moderate founder succession. In 1991, Ukaegbu studied twenty functioning businesses and five which ceased with the founder’s death, finding in these latter cases that issues of inheritance and family conflict were the primary causes of business cessation. In 2001 the five businesses remained non-functional, while a further four founders had died, three of whose businesses were now also defunct. The crucial moderator seemed to be familial conflict (which was more common in polygynous families). Not only do polygynous families have a greater number of members, increasing the probability of conflict, but also, the wealthier a man becomes the more likely (in modern Nigeria) he is to take more wives.

For the purposes of this review, Ukaegbu introduces the crucial nature of local religious and cultural context in mediating and moderating founder succession.

3.7. Power and power distribution

Block and Rosenberg (2002) attempted to discern whether founders of charities exercise greater levels of power than non-founder CEO’s. Their evidence showed in multiple ways that a greater percentage of founder leaders exercise greater influence and power than non-founders, including in matters such as reduced board meeting frequency and higher frequency of founders establishing board agendas and approving minutes before distribution. Founder succession, therefore, is likely to be from one who has higher levels of organizational power. A further area for research might be to link this to the findings of Haveman and Khaire (2002) and examine the relationships between zeal and power distribution.

Perry and Yao (2011) studied power distribution subsequent to external succession. Wasserman (2003) had already shown that external CEO succession was more common when replacing the founder; in selecting only external succession, Perry and Yao (2011) found that 73% of their study was founder succession. This study sought to understand the relationships between predecessors’ and successors’ four dimensions of power as identified by Finkelstein (1992): structural power, ownership power (connections to the owner and/or founders), expert power and prestige power. They found strong support that a predecessor founder’s status will be positively related to post-succession structural power. This is due to a number of factors, such as founders having stronger attachments (Wasserman, 2006), as well as
boards wanting to retain access to their knowledge (Clutterbuck, 1998). There were mixed findings concerning the predecessor’s structural power being negatively related to the successor’s expert power. Indeed, if the predecessor was expected to remain involved, it was found less likely to attract a successor with prior CEO experience. In short, the study found that predecessor founders remained more involved after succession, that the predecessor’s power negatively related to successor’s expert power, but less so to prestige power. With regard to subsequent performance, it was found that keeping a former CEO with some power showed higher return on assets, but it is less likely to attract an experienced or prestigious successor - thus providing a conundrum for those making leadership appointments.

There is greater generalizability of this study due to the examination of both a larger number and a wider diversity of organizations. There are, however, limitations. The research was based on announcements and plans, not actual distribution of power as it developed in the post-succession period. It also did not seek to compare cases where predecessors were not involved and how this related to power, growth, and other factors. The study, furthermore, did not examine any causal relationship between predecessor and successor power. Applying this methodology and studying power distribution within founder-led international Christian ministries could, however, be fruitful for a deeper understanding the succession dynamics.

3.8. Founder transition and organizational identity threat

After the departure of Friends of the Earth’s charismatic founder, new leadership challenged the decentralized nature of the charity and increased oversight and accountability between the regional offices. Many felt there was a loss of founding values and goals, resulting in internal conflict. In studying this, Balser and Carmin showed how founder succession may “bring to the surface latent differences in understandings of identity and be interpreted as internal identity threats if individuals believe modifications will devalue features they regard as central and distinctive to their organizations” (Balser and Carmin, 2009, p.198). While this is a study of one organization and may not be generalizable, it does highlight the potential difficulty in founder succession, particularly in a charity where people

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12 See glossary for full definitions of ‘identity’ and ‘identity threat’.
devote themselves to a founding vocation (organizational zeal) rather than profit motive. It fails, however, to examine correlations between identity threat and other succession characteristics, such as origins, that is whether external appointments caused greater identity threat than internal.

This study is helpful in alerting us to potential perceived identity threat in my case studies. I propose that issues of corporate identity correlate in particular with the successor origin theme in my cases (see Chapter 8).

3.9. Founder’s syndrome

Much of the literature points to the potentially problematic nature of founder’s transition, termed ‘founder’s syndrome’. Adams (2005) suggests a number of explanations for this dynamic within charities, including the likely ongoing influence of the founder even post-succession; that many founders have not been good managers, thus leaving structural problems for their successors; an overdeveloped sense of loyalty between the founder and staff/volunteers; and fundraising dependence on the founder’s relationships. McLaughlin (2008), despite the title, *Moving beyond founder’s syndrome to nonprofit success*, writes less about succession strategies and more of an attempt to understand founders, their passion and idiosyncratic management, which can lead to enmeshment of identity between the founder and the organization and compelling vision but little strategy, leading to loss of original focus.

The above literature emphasizes the person and style of the founder in the creation of founder syndrome, showing a latent and unacknowledged leadership theory of leadership as trait or style. I suggest, however that others participate in the syndrome’s creation by elevating the founder and his/her achievements, which thus produces insecurity among followers when succession occurs. Studies applying leadership theory to founder’s succession (such as leader-member exchange theory) might thus provide a more nuanced understanding of succession. Perhaps such psychodynamics partly explain a fascination for founders within the church, yet little interest to date on what happens post-founder, a matter taken up more fully in the following section examining literature on successions in Christian organizations.
4. Founder succession in Christian ministries

4.1. General literature on Christian leadership succession

There is surprisingly little on succession in the general literature on Christian leadership. Many influential classics of Christian leadership do not address it. This is the case with classic works such as Sanders’ *Spiritual Leadership*, with currently over 750,000 copies sold (Sanders, 1989, original edition 1967).\(^\text{13}\) Practitioner authors such as De Pree (1989, 1992, 1997) and Maxwell (1993, 1995, 1998) are both prolific and well read. More than 1,000,000 copies of both Maxwell (1993) and Maxwell (1998) have been sold.\(^\text{14}\) These works also do not address any specific issues with regard to succession. It is, furthermore, instructive that Banks and Ledbetter (2004) in their review of Christian leadership literature do not address the succession issue at all, despite referencing some 300 publications. Avoidance of the issue might be explained by the publications’ desire to impart skills or methods for those Christian leaders faced with the immediate quotidian practicalities of leadership rather than helping them plan for the future. There are, however, one or two works by practitioners which seek to give general guidance to a Christian in dealing with succession. They are not empirical but advise from experience. A recent example is McKenna (2006) who suggests succession as a cycle comprising of twelve components (Appendix B).

Notwithstanding the above, there have been many publications providing guidance for clergy and congregations undergoing pastoral succession. I have not reviewed them as they are often practical guidance and relate to one congregation rather than this thesis’ population.\(^\text{15}\) There is little empirical research on congregational leadership succession, exceptions being Mentzer (1993), Avery (2002), Lummis (2003), Anthony and Boersma (2007), Antal (2000) and Dollhopf & Scheitle (2013).


\(^\text{15}\) A list of such literature is available (Appendix C).
An attempt to apply the theories and findings of succession studies to the world of Christian ministry is a vast research opportunity. Hints that this might be possible may be seen in works such as Mentzer (1993) who examined whether leadership transition in a church affects performance, concluding that turnover is positively associated with organizational performance if it is operationalized in terms of attendance but not of funds raised. This study shows that the subject of studies in the business world (performance) and the methodologies (quantitative studies) may also be employed when studying Christian organizations. Dollhopf and Scheitle (2013), furthermore, analysed 1,321 congregations (in the USA) to examine whether leadership transitions in congregations are associated with membership decline or congregational conflict, as well as whether characteristics of the leader or congregations moderate any associations. These studies provide a hint that issues researched in other fields (internal/external appointments, performance, expectations, antecedents) are relevant to churches as well as businesses and that empirical research is possible and fruitful in Christian organizations.

4.2. Founder succession in Christian ministries

In turning to examine literature on founder succession within ministries, it should be noted that there have, of course, been numerous examples of founders within the Roman Catholic and Protestant traditions. Hanks (1995) provides sixty such evangelical examples. He writes that this work is to show the influence of Christians in creating a moral fabric for society. This work is short biographies of the founders and a brief history of the organizations initiated. It is a work of encyclopaedic entries which helps show the extent of evangelical initiatives. It does not, however, address the issue of leadership transference and succession from these pioneering figures. As with the Roman Catholic literature, it has undertones of hagiography.

Schattschneider (1975) might have been helpful as a study of Zinzendorf (1700-1760), in effect the founding leader of the renewed *Unitas Fratrum* (or Moravian Church)\(^\text{16}\) and his successor, Spangenberg (1704-1792); this study, however, is a

\(^{16}\) The *Unitas Fratrum* began in the fifteenth century. I am regarding Zinzendorf as the founder of the *renewed* church, as, under Zinzendorf’s leadership, it experienced a re-birth as a residential religious community and became a pioneering missionary movement within evangelicalism.
work of comparative missiology rather than a study of leadership succession processes.

What is surprising is the lack of attention paid to founder succession within Catholicism, where the term ‘founder’ is only used with regard to founders of religious orders. There was some interest in the subject of founders beginning during the Vatican II period, and lasting an approximate twenty-five year period (1964-1989) in which literature appeared in three forms: references in official Vatican statements (*Lumen Gentium*: 45, *Evangelica Testificatio*: 11, *Mutuae Relationes*: 11); articles from the 1975 conference ‘The Spirit of the Founders and our Religious Renewal’; and several scholarly books, of which two are the most comprehensive (Lozano, 1983 and Romano, 1994 - originally published in Italian, 1989). Such literature is not reviewed here as it is neither current, nor addresses succession. It seems that while inspired by founders, Catholicism has shown little interest in studying succession, perhaps due to its post-mortem nature: "For better or worse, the founders of religious institutes tend to stay in the role until death".

Notwithstanding the above comments, there are, however, four recent and relevant pieces of literature concerning founder succession within Protestant ministries. Two contribute little to understanding the subject; two are helpful. Each study will be reviewed before attempting composite conclusions. The methodology of the three empirical studies (Owens, 2002; Wheeler, 2008; Peterson, 2014) will, furthermore, be examined in depth in Chapter 2.

### 4.2.1. Founder succession in the Church of God in Christ (COGIC)

Owens (2002) studied succession from the founder of COGIC, Charles Mason (1866-1961), to the (soon disputed) leader, Ozro T. Jones (1891-1972). The title of his work, *Never Forget – The Dark Years of COGIC History*, points to the purpose of this study,

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17 There appears to be no literature before or since.
18 I used the 1977 English translation of the French conference papers published as “The spirit of the founders and our religious renewal”, *Vita Evangelica* Series - No.9, Ottawa: Canadian Religious Conference.
19 Correspondence from Rev. Dr. Thomas P. Gaunt, SJ, Ph.D., Director of Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, Georgetown University, 13 December 2017 (cited with permission).
20 Kondrath (2010) also includes one example of a Roman Catholic ministry.
that Christians would learn from a tragic example concerning how to navigate founder succession. Jones was elected by a presiding body of bishops and functioned as denominational leader for two years. Some claimed that he had not been appointed according to the denominational constitution. There were rival boards and rancorous meetings, at times to which the police were called to maintain peace. Finally, the courts imposed the need to determine a legal constitution, which, when enacted, elected a leader other than Jones.

This work is historical, citing numerous articles, minutes, sermons and conference proceedings. It is constructed, however, in a way which is confusing, neither adequately giving an account of events nor accounting for events. The methodology is not clear (see Chapter 2).21 There is a confusing attempt to evaluate the outcomes according to organizational theory with comments stating that routinization of charisma was taking place under Mason’s leadership yet others stating that it began later. In particular, Owens relies on organizational understandings drawn from Morgan (1977) and his notions of ‘bureaucratic authority’ (see glossary) and ‘traditional authority’ (Owens, 2002, p.81). Owens’ central explanation seems to be that the post-succession conflict was due to protagonists using the language of and appealing to bureaucratic authority (p.186), while some assumed the organization was led by traditional authority. It was, furthermore, made complex by Jones initially appearing to lead with bureaucratic authority but later employing charismatic, even autocratic, authority (p.190). Many of Owens’ statements are stem from inadequate methodology (see Chapter 2). What the study does indicate, however, is that a clear succession mechanism should be agreed before it is needed (p.188). It is also a salutary lesson that disastrous founder transition may occur, even in Christian organizations.

4.2.2. Founder succession at Liberty University, Virginia

Peterson (2014) examined founder succession at Liberty University, an evangelical institution in Virginia, USA. Succession occurred in 2007 following the death of the founder, Jerry Falwell (senior); the successor was his son, Jerry Falwell (junior). It was

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21 Indeed, much of this paragraph is expounded further, and with more detailed citations, in Chapter 2.
decided, largely by Falwell (senior), in 2003, that his son was the successor (‘crown heir’ succession [Friedman and Olk, 1995]).

There are problems within Peterson’s methodology, which purports to be an ‘exploratory’ case study (taken from Yin’s typologies of ‘descriptive’, ‘exploratory’ and ‘explanatory’ [Yin, 2009]). There are many pertinent questions which Peterson does not raise; he fails to explore the father/son dynamics raised by Eisold (2009); he is a senior staff member at the institution studied but seems unaware of the problematic nature of emic methodologies. He does not examine why there was such unanimous agreement concerning the successor, nor related questions of institutional loyalty or the management of dissent. The conclusion that the identification of a successor and subsequent mentoring can contribute to smooth transition, while true, is simplistic and naïve, as shown in failed founder succession in other ministries where successor identification and mentoring also took place, such as Crystal Cathedral (Lavietes, 2015).

4.2.3. Founder succession in American mega-churches

Wheeler (2008) is considerably more helpful in furthering an understanding of founder succession within Christian ministries. It is a study of succession in three mega-churches within the USA. It is not described as a study of founders but of mega-church pastoral succession; two of the transitions were from the founders who had long tenure; the third from the pastor of 41 years, who had followed a founder of three-year tenure. Succession following such a long tenure usually has the same dynamics as founder succession (Carlson and Donohue, 2010). All three cases were deemed successful because financial income and attendance remained stable, ministries continued well and there was no obvious division.

This qualitative study employed sound methodology, and using fifteen semi-structured life world interviews (Kvale, 1996) of the same (or functionally equivalent) actors in each of the three cases, all of which were examples of relay succession. Wheeler’s findings suggest: transitions are “complex multi-layered change processes” (Wheeler, 2008, p.311), often associated with structural, cultural and relational change; support for Zhang and Rajagopalan’s (2004) findings that there is a positive relationship between organizational performance and relay succession; the
crucial role of the predecessor (succession is facilitated if the founder initiates the discussion, thereby enabling others to participate in honest ways, has a plan for post-succession life, and in public ways supports the successor); preservation of core ideology is a stabilising factor during time of transition, supporting Collins and Porras (2002); succession affects multiple categories of people, not just the predecessor and successor.

The work has limitations. It identifies the processes of transition but is not processual in itself. Greater longitudinality would assist understanding of longer-term impacts. Of course, as with much detailed qualitative study, the results are suggestive rather than generalizable.

4.2.4. Founder transition and organizational change

Kondrath (2010) studied founder transition in three Christian ministries, one an outreach to the homeless, one a network of prayer groups, the third a small international networks of churches. This is not a study of the processes of transitions, nor matters such as antecedents, characteristics of the successors, performance, and socialization. As a pastoral theologian, Kondrath focuses on the relational dynamics of founder succession. His main argument is that leadership transition from the founder is not merely about a change of persons but also of both structure and leadership style. An organizational shift is needed. It is unhelpful to focus on the person of the leader; vision should not be transferred from the founder to another individual, but should become the responsibility of a designated group who ensure its continuation. There must be transfer of trust from a founder to trust in the community, its goals and structure.

For Kondrath, dissemination of information and communication is the key. Charismatic leaders who feel their mission is divinely inspired may fail to see the need for helping others to understand the reasons for the ministry. Beginning better communication can itself be a change of organizational culture. Communication at this stage must not be merely cognitive but affective. Followers will have many emotional responses to change, such as sadness, grief, fear or insecurity. Members also need to be in greater communication with each other as they become less centred on the leader. In particular, members may need to process their position
and relationship with regard to the founder, and what this meant to them, and what new relational possibilities there might be after the transition. Kondrath, furthermore, observed that differences might emerge. They may have existed before, but loyalty to the founder inhibited the discussion of divergent values. The disequilibrium and surfacing of differences may then be blamed on the new leader.

Kondrath’s central suggestion is that founder succession is not merely a person-to-person transference but will inevitably raise many other issues of relationship, structure, vision and values. This is a helpful contribution to understand the corporate dynamics of founder transition. The study, however, lacks comment on the international dynamics of the third (international) ministry succession.

4.2.5. Lessons from founder’s studies

From the above four studies a number of lessons may be drawn, including the importance of a clear plan of succession (Owens), the necessity of a clear understanding of the nature of the organization and its basis of authority (charismatic, tradition or bureaucratic) (Owens), that founder succession is not merely about the replacement of one person but requires an organizational paradigm shift (Kondrath), the importance of outside consultants and/or a board to help navigate succession (Kondrath, thus supporting Eisold, 2008), the need for socialization of successors (Wheeler) and the crucial role of the predecessor post-succession (Wheeler). These studies also point to areas of further potential research, including comparative studies of ministries which employ the methodology of relay succession and those adopting other methodologies, the kinds of successor socialization needed, the processes of succession within Christian agencies and comparative studies on those which employ consultants and those who do not (Kondrath). They show that attempts to study founder succession in Christian organizations have not always been undertaken with diligent research methods, and thus there is a vast field awaiting research with multiple succession aspects yet unstudied.

5. Succession in international contexts

A characteristic of my research population is ‘international’. This, therefore, raises the matter of whether there are any defining characteristics to succession at an
international organizational level, and are there ways in which it might differ from a local or mono-cultural organizational succession. Unfortunately, there are no empirical studies of founder succession in such international agencies, nor indeed within international organizations in any other field. There is some research into the competences needed to lead large international organizations, and considerable work studying the relationship between leadership and cultures, yet both these areas omit treatment of succession.

5.1. International leadership competences

Adler and Bartholomew (1992) pioneered the way in attempting to articulate the competences needed in a transnational organization, where traditional hierarchies tend not to exist and transnational leaders need a ‘career home’ rather than a geographic home (Adler & Bartholomew, 1992, p.61). While a study of 50 international organizations, they were all headquartered in the USA and Canada, thus, ironically, producing findings that still lack true international perspective.

Trompenaars and Wooliams (2009) turned to matters of intercultural competences in leadership, finding, “intercultural competence in reconciling dilemmas is the most discriminating feature that differentiates successful from less successful leaders and thereby the performance of their [international] organizations” (Trompenaars and Wooliams, 2009, p.164). Sheppard, Sarros and Santora (2013, p.272) moved the debate forward by positing the characteristics needed in transnational leadership.

As yet, there has been no application of the findings on transcultural competences to the field of international ministries. There is scope to explore the extent to which the required competences are the same as or different from the business world. In the field of Christian ministry, one would expect the need for competences to

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22 I use the terms ‘international’ and ‘transnational’ interchangeably, in common with much of the literature. Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, however, make a qualitative distinction in that the ‘transnational’ organization is one which draws from that which each nation does well (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998:12). See glossary.

23 Trompenaars (Dutch) is one of the most influential writers in the business world (https://thinkers50.com/biographies/fons-trompenaars/; http://www2.thtconsulting.com/about/people/fons-trompenaars/) (Accessed: 25 October 2019).
include fundraising and donor management in different cultures, as well as motivation of staff and volunteers who bring to their work cultural expectations of leadership.

5.2. Leadership and culture

With the numeric growth of transnational companies, the issue of the relationship between culture and leadership has become pressing. One influential study is Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998), who researched 30,000 participants in 30 companies in over 50 countries to identify the best leadership for transnational organizations. The authors’ main thesis is that every culture has to handle three dilemmas: relationships with people, such as individualism versus communitarianism or specific versus diffuse; attitudes to time; and attitudes toward the environment. This work concludes that there is no single best way of organizing or managing an international business because organizations must adapt ‘not simply to the environment but also to the views of participating employees’ (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1998, p.14). Thus, organizations actively select, interpret, choose and create their environments. Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, therefore, decry a universal absolute approach to leadership, contrary to the position of House et al. (2004) (below). Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner do not, however, treat issues of succession; how their notions of ‘specific’ versus ‘diffuse’ and temporal understandings impact succession are, therefore, matters open to research.

Hofstede (1980; 2001) examined culture and work by studying 100,000 respondents in over 50 countries. His main contribution has been to show five major dimensions where cultures differ: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity, and long-term-short-term orientation. He has been particularly influential in highlighting the notion of ‘power distance’. Cultures that are more egalitarian tend to be ‘low power distance’ cultures, where followers (employees, congregants) are more likely to initiate discussion, even criticize

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24 This work has sold several hundred thousand copies in multiple languages – see http://www.amazon.com/Riding-Waves-Culture-Understanding-Diversity/dp/0071773088/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1436535363&sr=1-1&keywords=trompenaars (Accessed: 10 July 2015).

25 See glossary (Appendix A) for fuller definition of ‘power distance’.
leadership. In ‘high power distance’ cultures, followers are more deferential, less likely to criticize leaders, wishing to know the leaders’ opinions and desires so these may be unquestionably followed.

Hofstede’s framework is helpful to leaders of international Christian ministries who need to understand, facilitate and motivate workers and volunteers from many cultural backgrounds. Indeed, power distance might intersect with theology in that some might infuse cultural understandings of high power distance with the notion of divine calling and be even less likely to initiate or criticize. His research, however, does not address issues of succession. It would surely be fruitful to address how power distance relates to selecting leaders and indeed, who is to participate in the process.

The GLOBE Project (House et al., 2004) presents a strong body of findings on culture and leadership, particularly the relationship between culture and leadership effectiveness, as it is based on a study of 17,000 managers from 950 organizations in 62 countries. Building on Hofstede’s five dimensions of culture, they offer a more nuanced model for the study of the relationship between culture and leadership by examining nine cultural dimensions and six global dimensions of leadership. The extent of their research has for the first time led to an attempt at a ‘universal’ understanding of leadership as they posit leadership attributes which are universally desirable, universally undesirable and which are culturally contingent (presented in Appendix D). The major contribution to understanding the relationship between culture and leadership was their finding that cultural values do not directly predict leadership behaviour but they do drive the cultural expectations that in turn drive leadership behaviour. This is a significant finding, one which may be difficult to challenge given the vastness of their study, making their conclusions more generalizable than many others do. While suggesting universal attributes, the study is actually of multiple contextual expectations of leadership. This still leaves the gap of how to lead when there is no one dominant set of contextual expectations, but in the case of an international ministry, multiple contextual expectations from a diverse group of followers. Despite their claims, the study fails, therefore, to offer a truly

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transnational or transcultural understanding of leadership helpful to those leading transnational organizations. Yet, their framework of attributes may be our best understanding of international leadership yet.

Northouse (2013) criticizes the GLOBE project for the conceptualization of leadership as how it is viewed rather than conceptualizations such as what leaders do, and that the universal positive attributes ignore context. Such comments suggest, however, that his critique comes from the perspective of leadership as action or behaviour.

The GLOBE project continued its extensive research by studying 1,000 CEOs and 5,000 managers in 24 countries to examine CEO leadership behaviour and effectiveness (House et al., 2014). They offer empirical evidence to support the congruency hypothesis of leadership and indicate those leadership styles which produce more effective results and greater follower participation. They indicate that there is a strong link between charismatic/transformational leadership and performance – in fact, it is universally effective.

With such findings, House et al. (2014) answer Northouse’s criticism and offer a general theory of strategic leadership which transcends national boundaries. They offer ‘mission critical leadership competences’ and ‘important leadership competencies’ (House et al., 2104, p. 360). This offering could be a crucial assistance to those seeking to lead international Christian operations. It also, however, raises the question of whether the competences suggested apply equally to ministries as to businesses. There is room here for significant comparative research. Again, these studies do not, however, address succession; there is no work on the relationship between culture and succession, culture and founder, nor succession within international organizations.

5.3. Christian literature

There is no literature on transnational competences within Christian organizations. There is some practitioner literature on cross-cultural partnerships within Christian organizations, mainly written by Americans (Lessegue, 2010; Yaccino and Yaccino,

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27 See glossary.
28 See Appendix E, ‘General theory of leadership’.
Such works provide general advice about cooperation. Lingenfelter (2008), also American, seeks to show how Christians can lead in intercultural settings and teams. He believes that for intercultural leadership to be successful, we must build a covenant community and suggests ways for that to materialize. For him, obeying Christ is the key. The Christian practitioner literature does not address international succession, founder’s syndrome or inter-cultural succession. Given the paucity of research into Christian ministries, there is considerable room for a number of avenues of research such as applying the findings of Trompenaars and Wooliams and Sheppard, Sarros and Santora on competences, the work of Hofstede on the effect of power distance, and applying the GLOBE research on expectations on leaders and senior leadership team functioning and performance.

5.4. Founder succession in international Christian ministries

Two articles have been located concerning founder transition in international ministries; neither examines the international or inter-cultural aspects or is empirical. Dyer (1989) (Australian) is a report by the founder of International Teams, setting out his planning processes in which he trained several young people to work alongside him before he appointed one as successor, thus a case of ‘horse race’ succession method. This article is from the perspective of the founder only. It fails to account for the emic nature of the report, and fails to examine matters such as antecedents, strategic change, performance or indeed the cultural or international dynamics of the succession. It, therefore, contributes little to an understanding of the subject.

Early (2001) attempts an account of the transition from the founder of an (anonymous) international mission organization. It is based on interviews with the founder and internal successor. This is also of limited value due to the lack of clear methodology – at times, the author is summarising the successor's inner mind, without stating it. It appears, but is not acknowledged, that this is again an emic account. What Early does provide, however, is insight into the thinking and feeling of the founder and successor during the succession process. This insight shows a lack of communication on transference of authority is problematic and the crucial nature of
the post-succession dyadic relationship between founder and successor. Sadly, however, this article is not based on consistent methodology; it, furthermore, lacks analysis of motives, actions, or study of antecedents.

6. Theology of succession?

This review has drawn much from the organizational field, as there is scant literature on succession within practical theology or missiology. In this section, however, I seek to review two attempts at theological reflection on succession, to assist my later framing of a theological, not merely organizational analysis. Fountain inquired into several Old Testament cases from which she hopes to produce “guidelines” for today (Fountain, 2004, p.189). Fountain concludes with “principles” (p.202) of succession as follows: God chooses leaders; existing leaders make God’s choice public; the successor must be given opportunities to prove himself/herself and thus gain credibility in the eyes of the people; mentoring by the predecessor is to be provided, particularly so that the successor might grow in servanthood. At the appropriate time, a public ceremony of power transference should take place.

Without so knowing, Fountain espouses ‘crown heir’ appointment followed by its implementation through ‘relay’ succession (Vancil, 1987; Friedman and Olk, 1995). A critical reflection on Fountain’s proposed theology, however, reveals its problematic nature. First, in terms of her methodology, it is not possible to generate the kind of nomological conclusions drawn by her; three (biblical) cases cannot provide substantive and multi-contextual guidelines, particularly when one of the cases (Elijah-Elisha) must surely be categorized as an “extreme” case. Second, her “principles” raise questions of hermeneutics. Do the Old Testament offices of prophet and king continue today, and if so, what aspects of them and their succession models is transferable to contemporary international Christian organizations? Is it possible, in the post-Pentecost era, to view the Old Testament description of several successions as normative for the church, as Fountain seems to suggest? The participants in my research (Part II) did not seek to draw normative guidelines from the Old Testament at all.

My third critique of Fountain is that theology alone is insufficient for providing a normative approach to succession. We have already seen in this review that there
are many factors in successions; these can often only be examined when taking into account matters such as human relationships, power, zeal and so forth. While such matters may be the subject of theological reflection, they may also be understood from different theoretical positions. While definitions of the concept of ‘leadership theory’ may be hard to find (although there are many definitions of specific theories), I posit that it is simply a way of “conceptualizing” leadership (Northouse, 2013, p.4), or that a theory is an “approach to leadership” (Northouse, 2013, p.2), a way of perceiving it, which emphasizes matters other than the numinous or authoritative religious scriptures (matters such as behaviours, traits, or situational factors).29 In her work, Fountain ignores theoretical understandings of leadership, which can nonetheless inform theology. An example of how theory might inform theology on this matter is seen with Fountain’s framing of the Elisha succession as a “continuation” of Elijah. This was appropriate in this specific case, but I argue that contingency theory helpfully shows that often a successor should not be a ‘continuation’. The second-generation leader might need a different style and traits to meet the different contingencies of his/her times; thus, contextuality impinges on normativity. Given the variety of ways that church leadership is understood around the world, there are many contextual factors which might shape succession today, something ignored by Fountain. This is not to say, however, that contextuality and normativity are necessarily in opposition to each other. A study of biblical leaders may reveal both normative principle and contingent variables in interplay in the shaping of leadership thought and action.

Fourth, Fountain’s work stems from a priori assumptions that God speaks and shows who the leader is. There is no problematizing of this assumption to examine how that might happen today, when (usually!) chariots of fire do not appear in organizational board meetings when succession appointments are deliberated.

Theologizing succession from scriptures was taken up by Pugh, seeking to find a “biblical basis for Pentecostal and charismatic leadership transition today” (Pugh, 2016, p.117). His investigation into the succession theologies of Britain’s new

29 See Northouse (2013) for descriptions of different approaches to, or conceptualizations of, leadership. See glossary for a standard definition of leadership from Burns (2010, p.18).
apostolic networks found divergent positions. Some held there should be no human involvement at all; it was entirely left to God to make the matters obvious, a position that still raises the question of how God intervenes and makes the appointment obvious. Several networks did not privilege any particular scripture as normative, thus suggesting they did not espouse a normative theology of succession. Pugh provides a nuanced interpretation of a number of Old Testament successions and thereby seems to posit a theology of succession largely resting on two constructs; leadership in the church is, or should be, charismatic and plural. All the new apostolic networks in the UK are categorized as having charismatic leadership, according to Weberian theory (Pugh, 2016, p.120). Thus, in succession, a crucial matter becomes “maintaining the charisma” (Pugh, 2016, p.120). For charisma to continue, Pugh stresses the need to avoid a transition to other types of authority (traditional or hereditary) which tend toward bureaucratization. This connects to the second pillar of succession theology, namely that it should lead to plural leadership, for such leadership itself mitigates bureaucratization. Pugh posits that Jesus disseminated charisma to a group, and believes that Kondrath’s recommendation for modern founder succession also adopts this approach with Kondrath’s stress that a board or group become the repositories of organizational vision, not an individual (Kondrath, 2010). For Pugh, Jesus did not appoint one successor; the Spirit was deposited primarily in a community (Pugh, 2016, p.128).

Pugh has gone further than most in examining succession from a theological position as he attempts to articulate a normative basis for leadership succession today. It is interesting that it is Newfrontiers, one of my case studies, that Pugh holds to be one of the better examples of his succession theology: “It is the kind of transition that can take place in a strong and growing organization possessed of a core community who are faithful custodians of the founding vision. Plurality is at its heart and the Spirit drives the process prophetically” (Pugh, 2016, p.128). His normative approach to the dissemination of charisma is underlined, for Newfrontiers succession is “the ideal type and the goal... should be to try to move in the direction of a plural rather than a singular investment where succession is concerned” (Pugh, 2016, p.129).

Pugh’s work brings together a biblical understanding as well as empirical comment from new church networks today. While helpful, a number of critical comments are
to be made. In Pugh’s theology, bureaucratization works contrary to maintenance of charisma, and thus Christian succession. I posit, however, that some amount of bureaucratization may be necessary as part of the succession process. In organizational literature, this is clear in both in Tashakori (1980) and Schein (1983), who show that charismatic founders may lead with idiosyncratic styles, producing irrational policies and decisions. This was seen in that after the highly charismatic leadership of Zinzendorf, the *Unitas Fratrum* needed Spangenberg to systematize theology and structures. Indeed, an understanding of organizational life cycle theory (Adizes, 1988) may help in this regard, as well realizing that in addition to charisma, a contingency approach may be necessary for organizational survival (Chapter 6). Indeed, the ‘dissemination’ of charisma attempted by Newfrontiers almost required a greater level of routinization on some issues as Newfrontiers Together formed (Chapter 8).

I argue, furthermore, that Newfrontiers was not the example of diffusion and dissemination lauded by Pugh. It was rather a reduplication or multiplication of leadership around individual apostles, rather than dissemination to a group. Each of the 15 apostles were to have exactly the kind of power and authority exercised by Virgo within their ‘sphere’. This was not a move to group leadership but a division of one organization into 15 separate ones, each having the same power structures as the former.

Pugh’s suggestion of “an ideal type” of succession, returns us to the matter of normativity. Given the diversity of leadership in international Christian organizations and the thorough research of the GLOBE project (House *et al.*, 2004) showing how cultures and leadership behaviours correlate, what may be needed, rather than normativity, are many contextual theologies of succession. Moreover, as with Fountain, we need to ask whether a purely theological imperative is adequate, but rather whether an interdisciplinary model of succession in which theory and theology are mutually in dialogue would be more helpful. There have been no substantive attempts at such a study.

To recapitulate, the question of succession theology has rarely been studied; it is highly problematic, raising matters of hermeneutics, methodology and the fundamental matter of whether there is normative theology of succession, or,
whether such theologies can at best only be contingent and contextual. It is the not
aim of this thesis to answer definitively whether there is a normative theology, nor
to seek to construct one, should one even be possible. Fountain and Pugh have
provided helpful initiation into the matter of succession theology; it would require a
different thesis to develop this matter. This thesis will examine, however, the
construction of three succession enactments and the theologies which shaped them.
In so doing, it contributes to presenting methodological approaches to the study of
succession.

7. Conclusions

From the organizational world, we see that organizational success and longevity are
positively correlated with internal succession (Collins and Porras, 2002; Ocasio, 1999;
Shen and Cannella, 2000). At times of forced departure, however, external
appointments may be needed (Allgood and Farrell, 2003). Organizations usually
employ one of four methodologies of succession (Friedman and Olk, 1995), with
‘relay’ succession being common in Christian ministries (Wheeler, 2008 and
Peterson, 2014). For relay succession to be successful, however, title, power, control
and responsibility must transfer simultaneously (Dyck et al., 2002). Due to the
personal dynamics of incumbent/successor relations, a dispassionate group must be
involved in the appointment and transitional processes (Eisold, 2008).

There are further complicating and potentially detrimental dynamics when
succession follows the organization’s founder (Carroll, 1984). Founders profoundly
influence the organization by the embedding culture (Schein, 1983); they have
greater levels of power than non-founding leaders (Block and Rosenberg, 2002).
Succession almost ineluctably leads to a change of style from entrepreneurial to
professional leadership (Tashakori, 1980), which may lead to perceptions of
organizational identity threat (Balser and Carmin, 2009).

There has been little attempt to apply the theories of organizational development to
Christian organizations, yet there are signs that such application can be fruitful
(Mentzer, 1993; Dollhopf and Scheitle, 2013). There have also been few attempts to
study Christian founder succession, but those studies do point to the importance of
all actors’ agreeing the nature of authority within the movement (Owens, 2002) and
indeed of the clear release of authority (Early, 2001). Intentional relay succession may provide smooth transitions (Peterson, 2014), but founder successions are complex as they bring structural, relational and cultural change (Wheeler, 2008; Kondrath, 2010). Both Wheeler and Collins and Porras (2002) point to the key role during transitions of core ideology preservation in supporting organizational stability.

This review of the literature shows that research into founder succession in international Christian organizations has barely begun; indeed, I explain in the following chapter that it has started on a wrong footing. There are vast gaps in the literature on Christian succession, international succession and little theological refection thereon. This thesis will seek to contribute to these matters both in terms of providing a salient methodological approach, by proffering fresh case studies to describe successions and by bringing organizational and theological considerations to bear on founder succession.
Chapter 2

Methodological considerations in the study of founder succession in Christian organizations: A critical analysis of recent research

May there be many summer mornings when,
with what pleasure, what joy,
you enter harbours you’re seeing for the first time.

Cavafy, Ithaka

1. University, denomination, megachurch - An introduction to three contributions

In the previous chapter, I proffered that there have been few attempts to study founder succession in Christian organizations, despite leadership succession becoming a burgeoning area of study in other institutional fields. There have been three significant attempts to enter this field, which will be examined here in terms of the methodological approaches employed. I will pay particular attention to research design and to researcher reflexivity to provide a fuller understanding of how research has been conducted. This will show the limitations and unreliability of much existing data and interpretations. Given this status, I will therefore, in Chapter 3, propose a research design which aims to bring reliable data to this field.

Peterson (2014) is a study of leadership succession from the founder of Liberty University in Virginia, USA. Liberty University is an evangelical university founded by Jerry Falwell (senior) in 1971 with the mission to “train Christ-centered men and women with the values, knowledge, and skills essential to impact their world”
Peterson reports that with 13 000 residential students and approximately 90 000 registered for online educational provision, it is “the largest private, non-profit, higher education institution in the United States” (Peterson, 2014, p.54). Upon the founder’s death in 2007, Falwell’s son, Jerry Falwell (junior) was appointed as chancellor and successor. Peterson’s aims are to investigate the succession processes and provide guidance to help “ensure successful and smooth transitions among colleges and universities” (Peterson 2014, p.17). He concluded that the founder engaged in the specific succession design of “relay succession” by using the “crown heir” strategy (p.117), that the transition was successful with universal agreement due to both the planning and skills of the successor (Peterson, 2014, p.117).

Owens (2002)31 is a study of succession from Charles Harrison Mason (1866-1961), the founder of The Church of God in Christ (COGIC), a largely black Pentecostal movement in the USA, to his immediate post-death successor, Ozro T. Jones (1891-1972) and of the disputes which arose challenging this succession. It seeks to chronicle and comment on the transition period 1961-1968, with a view to evaluating the leadership styles in operation. Conclusions include the following: that a succession mechanism must be decided before its enactment is required; if appeals are made to bureaucratic legitimacy, those who win the argument are those best at “maneuvering” [sic] (Owens, 2002, p.188) within bureaucracies; seeking to resolve matters through legal channels increases the likelihood that those better at handling bureaucratic procedures will have their view upheld; the leadership style enacted was a “bureaucratic, collective leadership style” which under Jones changed to an autocratic leadership style (Owens, 2002, p.190). Owens believes that this research supports the theory that charisma is routinized in succession from founders with charismatic authority (following Weber, 1964; Glassman and Swatos, 1986; Marger, 1987) and that his study is “conclusive” in confirming the “inherent instability of charismatic organizations in the area of leadership succession” (Owens, 2002, p.201).

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Wheeler (2008) researches leadership succession within Protestant megachurches in the USA, most being founder succession. The research aims to provide a “rich description of three megachurch succession processes” (Wheeler, 2008, p.5), to understand this succession in relation to theory as well as provide assistance to other megachurches which will face leadership succession (Wheeler, 2008, p.8). Wheeler identifies the consistent theme of ‘relay succession’ (Friedman and Olk, 1995) and posits a five-phase process of succession (Wheeler, 2008, pp.340-341). Wheeler seeks to draw a number of lessons including the following: transitions are “extraordinarily complex multi-layered change processes” (Wheeler, 2008, p.311); they are contrary to the linear process theory suggested by others (Gersick et al., 1999); there are four groups to be considered in the succession process (predecessor-successor, staff, board and congregation [p.313]), not simply the predecessor-successor of much of the succession literature; conflicts are inevitable and may often be explained by the different styles of two leaders or lack of clarity with regard to decision-making roles; change affects many facets within an organization including organizational culture and internal relationships; preservation of core identity (Collins and Porras, 2002) stabilizes an organization during transition. Comment on the methods of each of these studies now follows by examining reflexivity and research design in these studies.

2. The researcher – Issues of reflexivity

Reflexivity is a metaphor from grammar indicating a relationship of identity between subject and object, thus meaning the inclusion of the actor (scholar, author, and observer) in the account of the act and/or its outcomes. In this sense reflexivity shows that all knowledge [including that of scholars] is ‘subjective’ (Hufford, 1995, p.57).

Elsewhere, I have sought to provide a fuller treatment of reflexivity as it purports to the study of religion, showing its relevance and importance in practical theology (Bunton, 2019). In practice, reflexivity often means acknowledging and taking into account of one’s personal demographic characteristics, such as gender and race, world-view, methodological framework, one’s position with regard to the subjects of

32 Some of the content on reflexivity in this chapter has already been published in this article (Bunton, 2019).
study, and *a priori* assumptions. This chapter aims to comment on how these aspects of reflexivity affected data collection and analysis.

### 2.1. Reflexivity in studying Liberty University

Peterson’s research was conducted while an employee of and as a doctoral candidate at the university. Research committee advisors were drawn from the university’s faculty. These factors call for due reflexivity in several areas: these are inadequately addressed in this research, which leads to some significant weaknesses in both the data collection and interpretation.

Firstly, there is a general lack of personal reflexivity with regard to the researcher’s demographic characteristics and their potential role in the data collection and analysis. We do not know his race, but we do know his gender (male). We have no knowledge of the race of the research participants, nor how race might affect the perspectives and data. There is a lack of acknowledgement of how gender might influence the researcher’s knowledge production. This is of particular pertinence with regard to Peterson’s adoption of the interview and focus group methods. There appears to be no awareness in the construction of questions of neither the interviewers’ position of power and how this might affect responses, nor the potential for patriarchal assumptions of privilege in the guiding of an interview by an interviewer, nor that knowledge production may result from the type of relationship established between the interviewer and interviewee. The data analysis does not assess the responses on a gender basis, which would have provided a deeper understanding of perspective on the leadership succession at Liberty University.

This, of course, is part of a further issue, namely the lack of methodological reflexivity. At times Peterson appears to attempt a positivist methodology, yet, at other times, his framework appears constructivist. The former is seen with comments such as “the researcher detached himself from experiences in order to garner a better understanding of what actually transpired” (p.52). If detachment is the aim, there is, however, little indication of *epochē*. Yet at the same time (even on the same page), Peterson seems to adopt a non-objectivist position, placing himself firmly inside the research topic, thus presumably attempting a *verstehen* approach. Peterson decides that affinity with the interviewees (his colleagues) and
employment within the institution are strengths, gaining him access to “key players” who trusted him (p.52). This methodological confusion makes the data less reliable as we do not know the details of how it was obtained and on which assumptions it was analyzed.

Of greater concern is the lack of acknowledgement of the disadvantages of his being embedded in the research subject. He is aware of potential bias in three areas, citing Poggenpoel and Myburgh (2003): the researcher’s discomfort could pose a threat to the value of data obtained and analyzed; the potential lack of preparations for the field research; and bias might affect his conduct of the interviews (Peterson, 2014, p.51). Lack of due reflexivity, however, is evident in that he does not elaborate on any potential “discomfort”, does not elucidate potential lack of preparation and does not acknowledge potential bias in interviewing, nor any strategy to mitigate this. Indeed, Peterson takes these potential disadvantages out of context and misapplies them to his situation, as Poggenpoel and Myburgh’s comments are of highly sensitive interviews concerning termination of pregnancy among adolescents. While sensitivity to interviewees is needed in all cases, Peterson is misapplying the observations to his far less sensitive situation. Indeed, his references to Poggenpoel and Myburgh not only are irrelevant; they obscure the real problem, namely that the institution being studied is his employer (and the employer of his research advisors). The following pages reveal a strong institutional discourse that Liberty University is a thriving establishment blessed by God. Peterson’s lack of reflexivity as an employee severely undermines his research, which itself becomes not only reflective of that discourse, but also constitutive thereof.

The consequences of lack of reflexivity in the researcher’s complicated position may be seen in the areas of documentary analysis, appropriate coding and category identification, and omission of highly pertinent discourse analysis. Not only were crucial documents not analyzed (minutes of the board of trustees, correspondence between the founder and his successor) but also there was no accounting for the social production of those that were analyzed. This is particularly the case with regard to Peterson’s analysis of articles from the University’s own journal, Liberty Journal. Peterson fails to acknowledge that the purpose of Liberty Journal is the official dissemination of information about the institution and the promotion of the
institution to the wider public. While such aims are legitimate, these should be accounted for in any documentary analysis; indeed such documentary content is part of the official institutional discourse.

A second consequence of the lack of reflexivity was the omission of key coding and the overlooking of categories vital to understanding the succession processes; or, if such codes were part of the data categorization, analysis did not take place or was not reported, thereby omitting an opportunity for gaining a fuller understanding of the leadership succession. One such unreported category rich in analytical possibilities is that of “God” (or “theology”):

They pulled behind Jerry [Jr.] because God had done it just exactly right. He brought Jerry, Jr. on the scene just in time. He exposed him to all of us. He gave him enough power and authority to be able to, for us to accept him (Comment of an administrator, Peterson, 2014, p.109).

A further overlooked category was leader-follower theory, however defined, for example, LMX (Northouse, 2013). This omission may be seen in the following data:

He was more than a man, He (sic) was a movement (Member of Board of Trustees, Peterson, 2014, p.79).

The man was always bigger than life (A vice-president, Peterson, 2014, p.79).

You know, Doc (J.F. Sr.) was invincible. He was convinced he wasn’t going to die. He had told all of us he wasn’t going to die. So who were we to object to that… (Laughter) (An administrator, Peterson, 2014, p.80).

Coding for “leader/follower” might have led to further categories, such as the ascription of charisma. The omission of such categories means that the researcher was ill attuned to the hagiographical tone of the responses and thereby missed a significant opportunity to report on organizational myth-making and discourse constitution. The respondents’ answers are examined for ‘manifest content’ but not ‘latent content’, that is, “interpretations about the content in texts that imply

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something about the nature of the communicators or effects on communicators” (Nelson and Woods, 2014, p.120). There seems to be a lack of awareness that subjects might recreate and change the social world in their (re)telling of it; that there may be a prevailing institutional discourse which the respondents reflect and constitute; and that indeed there may be discursive limits at Liberty University.

It is noteworthy that Yin’s work on case study research (2009), a work from which Peterson draws heavily, provides a specific caveat about interviewing in a “closed” educational institution where respondents are likely to provide the same or similar responses:

Such consistent responses are likely to occur when interviewing members of a “closed” institution, such as the residents of a drug treatment program or the teachers in a closely knit school. The apparent conspiracy arises because those being interviewed are all aware of the “socially desirable” responses and appear to be providing corroboratory evidence when in fact they are merely repeating their institution’s mantra (Yin, 2009, p.125).

If such specific advice had been heeded, a fuller analysis of the responses might have produced interesting and “rich” data. This leads to my third point, that a discourse analysis method may have helped with data interpretation, but this approach would not be possible without due reflexivity. Rather worrying is the following comment:

As a researcher, who was close to the case being examined, potentially, the data collected might have appeared to contradict the mission of the organization or did not reflect well on the school. In this type of situation, counsel was sought of the committee chair and the other members of the committee to see if the alternative explanations for the data could be derived (Peterson, 2014, p.73).

It would seem that this research is not only reflective of the institutional discourse but is also, moreover, constitutive thereof, maybe even intentionally so. Lack of reflexivity has in fact undermined the research in its entirety.
2.2. Reflexivity in studying COGIC

This work is devoid of reflexive comment, except for the statement that the researcher is an elder in the Church of God in Christ (Owens, 2002, p.23). Owens believes this information is providing “full disclosure” (Owens, 2002, p.23). This lack of reflexivity is problematic in several ways. We do not know how his interview data were gathered and analyzed. By not providing details of his interview sample, we do not know the gender of the participants. From the names of participants, we assume that most were men. It is likely that the lack of reflexivity means that there is lack of taking into account any gender bias in the data gathering and analysis.

Issues of race are central to this research, but unacknowledged. COGIC is primarily a black church. The Pew Forum Religious Landscape Study 2014 states that 84% of members identify as ‘black’. While historical statistics on the racial demographics of COGIC have been difficult to find, the founder and successor were black; reports contemporaneous with the succession events being researched confirm the racial constituency of the church (Means, 1966, p.23, cited in Owens, 2002, p.139). There is, however, no comment on the race of the subjects, nor of the researcher. Investigation shows that Owens is white. There is no reflexivity concerning how a white American interviews and studies black Americans and how any assumptions concerning race affect his interviewing or analysis. This is a significant omission.

Thirdly, while Owens informs us of his leadership position within COGIC, he provides no reflection on how this might affect the research. If interviewees are less likely to reveal opinions to an elder in their denomination, this might affect collection. An elder might be predisposed to believe official church accounts, thus affecting analysis. He might not wish to present matters which reflect poorly on the Church or its leaders. The lack of acknowledgement of such things or suggested mitigation strategies means the reader might not have such full confidence in the data.

There is, furthermore, a lack of methodological reflexivity with regard to a possible unacknowledged positivism, to the historical method and to data collection methods (interviews). There are some hints that the study at least aims to be based on a positivist methodology by the desire to “prove” (not test) a hypothesis (p.15) and the conclusion that the study proves “conclusive” in confirming the “inherent instability of charismatic organizations in the area of leadership succession” (Owens, 2002, p.201).

This work is essentially historical research, the events in question having taken place some 35 years prior to research. The historiographical method is, therefore, of central importance, but there is no comment concerning historiographical approaches. There is lack of recognition that religious history is often “emic history” drawing on “emic narratives” (Rüpke, 2014, p.285) and how such emic narratives are constructed and should be interpreted by the historian. Perhaps the following is the closest to an overt, stated historiographical methodology:

Neither does the author of this work wish in any way to cast aspersions upon the characters, morals, or spirituality of any person mentioned within the context of either the case study or the evaluations contained here-in. No judgments are expressed or implied as to the motives, objectives, or reasons associated with any of the events discussed in this work (Owens, 2002, p.23).

This could mean that the author is at least in part attempting neutrality and objectivity, a kind of naturalist history or Rankean wie es eigentlich gewesen war (Moses and Knutsen, 2012, p.121). The desire for no judgment, however, speaks to the role of the historian. While not wishing to ascribe moral judgment, surely it is the role of the historian to evaluate, suggest responsibilities for actions, or to suggest interpretations for the decisions and speech reported. Indeed, Owens does make many interpretive judgments, certainly with regard to evaluations of leadership style, concluding that Jones was autocratic. An unclear historiographical method has led to a subconscious “nomological” approach, seeking to find “regularities” from which generalization may be made (Rüpke, 2014, p.287). This relates to some of the confusion with regard to a single-case leading to transferable conclusions.

The data gathered through a specific collection method such as the interview is also impaired by inadequate reflexivity. We do not know which approach to interviewing
was taken, nor the interviewer’s position and stance. There is no acknowledgement of issues which affect data reliability such as reactivity and social desirability. We do know that the interviewees were not asked the same questions (Owens, 2002, p.22), which we assume means the interviewer had an (unacknowledged) *a priori* understanding of what he wished to ask each specific participant, but this is not explained.

The effect of the lack of due reflexivity in Owens (2002) means that there is a lack of methodological clarity, that we question the reliability of the data collection, that we cannot judge any bias in the interpretations due to lack of knowledge, and that we do not know how his position as leader and his race affect the conclusions.

### 2.3. Reflexivity in studying American megachurches

Wheeler in his research shows a greater degree of reflexivity than Peterson or Owens, certainly with regard to potential effects of his professional position, his experience and methodology. His research, however, is limited in its effectiveness due to lack of reflexivity concerning both race and gender, which affect the reliability and transferability of his findings.

Wheeler states that he is a pastor of a large congregation and that this could prove problematic as he might seek to interpret according to his own experience in similar contexts to those being studied. Such reflexivity allows for an acknowledgment of potential problems, but also promotes mitigation strategies in his design; he is conscious of his need to root interpretations in the data rather than pre-judgments (Wheeler, 2008, p.79). He does not, however, write that this could have been helped by others scrutinizing his findings for possible prejudgments.

He acknowledges, furthermore, that he underwent a transition similar to those being studied; toward the end of his research, he transferred church leadership, in effect becoming a ‘predecessor’ leader of a large church. While he speaks of the “powerful feelings of loss” (Wheeler, 2008, p.84), there is no exploration of how such an experience might affect the research. What was his relationship with the church board during the transition? If negative, did this bias his interpretation of board members’ perspectives in the research? Does his personal transition mean that he is
more likely to empathize with the predecessors in the study and less likely to provide fair interpretation of the successors? Deeper reflexivity should have taken place at this point, and a counter-balancing strategy could have been developed (for example, asking the successor leaders to comment on whether his interpretation seems unduly biased toward the predecessor perspective).

Wheeler fails, furthermore, to reflect on his race and gender, which limits the usefulness of the data and interpretation that he provides. This lack of reflexivity particularly pertains to his two samples – the churches and the specific participants within those succession events. There is neither comment on his racial characteristic nor comment on the racial demographics of the three megachurches in which in-depth interviews were conducted. Not only are there different approaches to worship and spirituality in American black, Hispanic and Caucasian churches, but very different understandings of leadership (Paris, 1991). Given this, the dynamics of succession can be different for, “in the African American church, the identity of the congregation is heavily linked to that of the pastor” (Watkins, 2010, p.6). The leadership of the black community, whether against slavery or the modern civil rights movement, has always been the religious leaders and, therefore, remembrance of and comparison to a former leader is more acute in black congregations. Dollhopf and Scheitle (2013) show that Protestant churches of many types show a negative association between leadership transition and membership change, but Black Protestant churches in the USA show a positive association.

Wheeler cannot be criticised for not studying the relationship of race to succession. Due acknowledgement of this important issue and provision of demographic information would, however, help to locate this study and to see potential limitations to its conclusions. Lack of personal reflexivity on racial factors is, therefore, problematic.

Having identified the church sample, further sampling then took place with regard to the individuals who were interviewed. A serious omission is the lack of comment on

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the participants’ gender. A reading of the text reveals that they were all male. We are not told, however, that this work represents the male perspective on leadership succession. The single gender nature of this research limits how the data may be interpreted and the kinds of conclusions drawn. The research takes no account of any female actors in the transitions; this is not acknowledged. Richer data could have been collected had female staff members or predecessors’/successors’ spouses been interviewed. We do not know, furthermore, whether this omission was solely a lack of gender reflexivity on the part of the researcher, or whether only men occupied the leadership or board positions. If the latter, this should be acknowledged in the data and findings. If only men are in leadership positions, analysis could take place within the framework of “theology in four voices”, a quadripartite theological model of the following: normative theology (scriptures, creeds etc.); formal theology (theology of theologians and dialogue with other disciplines); espoused theology (a group’s articulation of its beliefs); and operant theology (the theology embedded within the actual practices of a group) (Cameron et al., 2010, pp.53-56). Assessing which of these voices shaped the single gender leadership appointments could provide a more nuanced understanding of the successions.37

Omission of gender reflexivity is even more significant given research which shows that congregations who have had leadership changes in previous two years are more likely than others to experience serious conflict, even more so if the leader is a woman (Dollhopf and Scheitle, 2013). Thus leadership gender may well be crucial to understanding succession consequences and thus to generating theory.38

In summary, in all three studies there was insufficient methodological reflexivity and awareness of the potential effects of the researcher’s gender, race and personal locus in the study. These matters limit the reliability of findings, and in the case of

37 These theological ‘voices’ are taken up in Chapter 9.
38 The relationship between succession, gender and conflict is complicated by other variables, as Dollhopf and Scheitle (2013) acknowledge. Given research (Simon and Nadell, 1995) showing little difference in approaches to ministry between male and female clergy, and bearing in mind that Dollhopf and Scheitle also found higher incidents of conflict in congregations in poorer neighborhoods, and that McDuff and Mueller (2002) show that women are more likely to be appointed to congregations in poorer areas, it is possible that location and social-economic milieu are more likely causal factors in post-succession conflict than leadership gender.
Peterson, transform the research to be constitutive of the official discourse of the organization being studied.

3. Research design in the study of founder succession in Christian ministries

The second aspect of methodology to be examined is that of research design, examining the research aim and methods, evaluating their appropriateness and use, and considering whether alternative methods might have been conducive to aim attainment.

3.1. Research design in studying Liberty University

3.1.1. Aims, methods and justification

Peterson aims to “explore” (p.3) leadership succession at Liberty University, to provide an understanding of this succession “process” (p.16), to provide information on the actions taken prior to and during the transition (p.15), and to produce insight and guidelines for other universities about to undergo founder or leader succession (p.17). Such aims are to be reached through the presentation of a “rich thick description” (p.49). To achieve his purposes Peterson adopts the case study design. Following Yin’s typologies of case design (single-case (holistic), single-case (embedded), multiple-case (holistic) and multiple-case (embedded)), Peterson is aware that he has chosen a ‘single-case’ design (Peterson, 2004, p.49). While not acknowledged, Peterson has in fact attempted a single-case (holistic) design. Three data collection methods are employed: individual interviews of the successor, managers and leaders within the institution and two members of the University’s board of trustees; focus group interviews among other staff and university alumni; and documentary analysis.

Peterson provides three (contradictory) justifications for adopting the case study approach to this subject. First, that all case studies provide insights for application in other settings (Peterson, 2014, p.18). Secondly, he writes that the qualitative case study approach is useful where there is “lack of theory or an existing theory fails to adequately explain a phenomenon” (Merriam, 2009, p.15, cited in Peterson, 2014, p.19). His third justification is that case study, particularly a single case study, is
appropriate when examining extreme or unique cases (Peterson, 2014, p.50). The researcher makes repeated references to the “unique” nature of the leadership succession studied: “A unique aspect to the leadership transition at Liberty University was the relationship between the founder and the second-generation leader. They are father and son” (Peterson, 2104, pp.92-93); “… There was a unique transition” (Peterson, 2014, p.101); “The case was s (sic) a bounded system with three unique aspects” (Peterson, 2014, p.101). This third justification (uniqueness) is, of course, in tension with the first (applicability), as will be discussed later.

Critique

Aims

A number of comments may be made with regard to Peterson’s aims. First, some are vague, such as providing “information” on the actions taken. Secondly, there is a lack of definition. For example, the aim of providing a “rich, thick description” is not defined. As this is a well-known phrase in qualitative research, however, and Peterson seems to rely heavily on Merriam (2009) for much of his conceptual understanding of research methods, I assume he means “a description of the setting and participants of the study, as well as a detailed description of the findings with adequate evidence presented in the form of quotes from participant interviews, field notes, and documents” (Merriam, 2009, p.227); or, in its more original, purist form it is “explicating explications” (Geertz, 1973, p.9), the “grasping and rendering” of the “multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another” (Geertz, 1973, p.10) and the presentation of “immediacies” (Geertz, 1973, p.25). It is difficult to discern whether the goal has been reached without knowing more precisely how that goal is defined. Thirdly, to provide transferable insight is valid; this may only be achieved, however, with appropriate design.

Case study

It is with regard to the use of case study that Peterson’s intended aims and his methods do not align. Four main points will be made concerning his adoption of the

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39 This is taken from Yin’s (2009) five justifications for single-case research: critical case (for testing well-formulated theory); extreme or unique case; representative or typical; revelatory (phenomenon not readily accessible); and longitudinal.
case study. Peterson misunderstands the nature of many case studies when he asserts that all case studies may be “applied to other like situations and settings” (Peterson, 2014, p.18). The literature is overwhelming that some cases are highly individual and may not be applied, such as a “deviant” case (Lijphart, 1971, p.691), or one interesting in its own right (Punch, 2014 p.122).

Not only is there misunderstanding and contradictions of case study theory, but also of the specific case he is studying. As was shown, this is regarded as a unique study. In one sense, of course, any case is unique; transition from the founder, furthermore, does only occur once in the life of an organization. There is much about the case, however, that is not unique: there are multiple studies of leadership successions (see Chapter 1); founder succession is, moreover, not unique (see Chapter 1); father-son founder succession has occurred elsewhere (Dyck et al., 2002), as has father-son founder succession within Christian ministries (Lavietes, 2015). Abramson provides a helpful framework for understanding appropriate reasons for unique studies, notably that they help elucidate the upper and lower boundaries of experience and they facilitate prediction by documenting “infrequent, non-obvious, or counterintuitive occurrences that may be missed by standard statistical (or empirical) approaches” (Abramson, 1992, p.190). While a unique case study may, therefore, be valid, this study is not, however, the unique case believed by the researcher. Indeed, given this, Yin’s third type of single-case study, “representative or typical”, may have been a more appropriate justification for this study. Indeed, the researcher himself refers to other institutions facing the same issue of leadership succession (pp.18, 19, 21, 22, 27, 28, 29 and elsewhere).

Peterson’s confusion raises two problems. First, that a research design aiming at transferability should not study a unique case, and secondly that, if this indeed not a unique case, then there is data which might be transferable precisely because it is not unique, in fact somewhat typical. The stated goal of transferability may have been achievable had the researcher understood the nature of the case he was studying.

The confusion concerning the case study approach is compounded, furthermore, by the inappropriate justification of choosing the single case because of lack of theory.
This is a mistake as there is indeed theory in both leadership succession studies in general and founder succession studies in particular which may have informed this case and assisted with the data analysis (see Chapter 1). There are theories to which the researcher could have referred in order to provide the understanding and rich description the author desires. An inadequate understanding of leadership succession theory means that this research is not properly set within the broader academic context, nor that the case study rationale was logically defined and applied.

**Methods**

**Sample**

While there is no mention of sample theory or plan, Peterson has in effect undertaken a stratified purposeful sample. Data collection, however, is undermined by the lack of a plan to seek data which might disconfirm or lead to alternative explanations and by a failure to provide a sample which might provide saturation, despite citing the need to do so (Peterson, 2014, p.57). Furthermore, Peterson does not take into account those who declined his invitation to participate: “The researcher did encounter resistance from some key individuals, who were asked to participate. As a result, their account of the succession was not documented for this study” (Peterson, 2014, p.56). Failure to pursue these respondents or to ascertain the nature and reason for their “resistance” may be a major oversight in the sampling and research design, for such potential respondents may have provided alternative or disconfirming information or perspectives which would have provided for a richer description. Indeed, their very “resistance” may have helped understand the prevailing institutional discourse and speak to the handling of compliance and dissent.

**Interviews**

Interviewing, while a valid method, is problematic in this study. There is no articulation of the philosophical approach to interviewing taken in this research, nor acknowledgment of the interview type. Following Roulston’s (2007) six conceptions of interviewing (neo-positive, romantic, constructivist, postmodern, transformative or de-colonizing) these interviews should be placed within the ‘neo-positivist’ type,
as there is little analysis of the discourse, transformative aim or challenging substance in the questions posed.

The interview conception, furthermore, affects the issue of reactivity. The researcher seems unaware that he may have influenced the data and does not account for potential social desirability influencing the responses. While the researcher did provide for confidentiality to respondents, many of the interviewees were being interviewed about their employers by the researcher who was also an employee of the institution. There is no acknowledgment or attempt to account for concern for employment or advancement if responses were not in accord with the institutional discourse.

Thirdly, the content of the structured questions shows that the questions do not adequately procure data to answer the overall research questions. The first research questions concern methods of planning and processes, but actual interview questions probe issues of succession criteria and candidates, rather than methods and processes. The interviews proceed to address reactions, responses and the changing roles of the interviewees. The questions are more appropriate for a study of succession consequences and reactions rather than method and processes.

Fourthly, the questions are, moreover, at times leading, based on *a priori* (and unacknowledged) assumptions. There is, for example, an assumption in the question that the succession was “successful” (Peterson, 2014, p.61). The assumptions in the questions reduce the possibility of an employee disagreeing that the succession was successful. Indeed, the questions’ assumptions may themselves be seen as part of the prevailing institutional discourse.

**Focus groups**

Similar weaknesses exist with regard to the use of focus group interviews. The content of the questions does not lead to data to answer the research questions. For example, with the groups of alumni, six questions related to the participants’ emotional reactions to the death of the founder, the “mood” of the campus and the extent to which respondents were “surprised” at who the successor was. It would seem that the data contributes little to answering the research questions of
processes and plans, or the nature of the relationship between founder and successor.

It is, furthermore, difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the focus group method. Focus groups are useful precisely because of the group interactive nature: “the hallmark of focus groups is the explicit use of the group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group” (Morgan, 1997, p.2). Nothing is reported on how interactions provided data and led to richer answers, nor does the researcher seem aware of his role and its effects on data collection (Morgan, 1997, 2002; Barbour, 2008).

3.1.3. Alternative approaches

Are there other methods or approaches which could have helped better to achieve the overall aims? In addition to better handling the case study rationale and data collection, I suggest that four further things could have helped this research achieve its goals; the employment of a single case (embedded) design; broader coding, based both on the literature and the actual data; a discourse analytical method; and greater reflexivity. The matter of coding from the data, discourse analysis and general comments on reflexivity were treated in section two of this chapter. Here, comment will be restricted to case design and coding based on the literature.

I suggest that a single case (embedded) design might have proven more fruitful for richer data collection. The existing research, without recognition, already embedded subunits in the study (for example, members of the board of trustees, alumni, faculty members); these were treated as subunits in the interviews and focus groups. The data from such subunits could have been exploited to provide a richer description by providing a comparative analysis of the responses of each subunit. Structuring the design accordingly would not have required further data collection and could have led to a more nuanced understanding of the succession.

The second matter which would have improved the quality of the data and made richer analysis possible is a different approach to coding. Had Peterson undertaken a broader survey of theoretical literature on leadership succession, even founder succession, a number of categories might have been available to him, such as ‘insider/outsider’ succession (Cannella and Lubatkin, 1993; Ocasio, 1999),
entrepreneurial/professional management styles (Tashakori, 1980), authority types (Weber, 1964), LSSC (Hutzschenreuter, Kleindienst and Greger, 2012), power distributions (Block and Rosenberg, 2002) and organizational zeal (Haveman and Khaire, 2002). Such an approach would have placed the study more firmly within the corpus of existing literature and have enabled greater nuance in the analysis and conclusions.

3.2. Research design in studying COGIC

3.2.1. Aims, methods and justification

“The purpose of this work is to describe, interpret, and evaluate the leadership styles and organizational types present in the Church of God in Christ with respect to the period of time this work terms “the Dark Years” (1961-1968)” (Owens, 2002, p.15). Owens aims to “provide guidance to organizations so that they may avoid the disruption, dislocation, and turmoil” which COGIC faced upon founder succession (Owens, 2002, p.15). Owens writes, furthermore, that he wished to “prove” (not test) a hypothesis that insight into theories of practices of organizational leadership will be gained. His specific questions were to find “lessons which can be learned from COGIC’s Dark Years”, to establish what prevented an orderly transfer of power, to determine which type of leadership style was operating in COGIC and how COGIC refined and institutionalized the succession process. To answer these questions, Owens utilizes the case study approach with the methods of interviewing and documentary analysis.

3.2.2. Critique

Aims

There are a number of problems with the stated aims of this research. First, the matter of “proving” a hypothesis is problematic in the following three ways. The hypothesis is poorly defined. Indeed, a general hope that insight into types of organizational leadership will be gained is not a hypothesis at all; it is not something specific that can be tested and found to be supported by empirical data. There is, furthermore, no mention of any literature or previous research which might lead to hypothesis formation. Furthermore, there appears to be confusion as to whether the ‘hypothesis’ is being tested through a quantitative study of some kind, or multiple
case study or single case. Despite Owen’s comment that this research is “built upon the multiple-case study model” (Owens, 2002, p.21), this approach is in fact a single case study.

The second problem with the research aims is that of providing guidance. This speaks to the matter of generalizability or transferability. A single case study is not adequate grounds for such goals; it can merely hint at some potential guidelines from one case, acknowledging that further research, would be necessary. It is a mistake to infer conclusions from this historical case study to other cases. According to Owens “the first and foremost lesson that can be learned” is the following: “if an organizational leader desires to see a seamless transfer of power after he passes from the scene he needs to have the mechanisms in place prior to that passing” (Owens, 2002, p.188). While this is true in this historical case, and indeed would seem common sense, from one study it cannot be concluded from empirical data that this is necessary for all Christian ministries. His second lesson, that those “most adept at bureaucratic maneuver [sic]” will triumph once appeals are made to “bureaucratic forms” (Owens, 2002, p.188) may also not always be the case. The literature on succession would need to be reviewed or other cases studied in order to make such a generalization.

Transferability is also suggested by Owens’ belief that his study is “conclusive” in confirming the “inherent instability of charismatic organizations in the area of leadership succession” (Owens, 2002, p.201). Given the references in this research to other works on charismatic authority and routinization, this statement has some credibility. However, this conclusion is weakened by a lack of due examination both of alternative explanations (that is interpretation according to other theories, such as LMX)⁴⁰ and of disconfirming research. Indeed, I suggest that routinization of charisma is not inevitable. Andelson (1991) shows that charismatic leadership may continue beyond the founder where there was a theology which allowed for multiple people to be charismatic; Melton (1991), shows that in the modern world, new religious movements often focus far less on founding charisma and power concentration; and Ukah (2008), suggests that not only is routinization not inevitable

⁴₀ See, for example, Northouse (2013) for other applicable leadership theories.
but that the successor can enhance the charismatic nature of leadership and church, providing a ‘double founding’ and ‘recharismatization’ (Ukah, 2008, p.83).

**Case study**

As previously noted, the matter of transferability is made complicated by the author’s confusion concerning case study typologies. Owens believes that his research is “built upon the multiple-case study model” (Owens, 2002, p.21) and that this model, therefore, allows for generalizations: “The author does contend that case studies (built upon the multiple-case study model) may contain specific information concerning events, characteristics, and experiences useful in moving from specific to general knowledge” (Owens, 2002, p.21). It seems that he confuses his use of multiple sources to mean this is a multiple-case study (Owens, 2002, p.21). There is, therefore, a belief that an approach has been taken which allows for generalization, even citing Yin that case studies may generalize from specific data to theoretical proposition (Owens, 2002, p.21). However, Yin makes the analogy to scientific experiments, that one does not generalize from one experiment, but from multiple experiments that have replicated findings. A single-case study may lead to theoretical propositions, but only tentative ones, as part of wider research (Yin 2009, p.15). A misunderstanding of case type by Owens has led to conclusions not supported by the data from a single-case.

If this is a single-case study (in fact a single-case [holistic] design), this means, furthermore, that an opportunity has been missed to appreciate the strengths of its type and to produce solid data and conclusions in keeping with the type. Of Yin’s five rationales for single-case designs (critical case, testing well-formulated theory, extreme or unique case, representative or typical, revelatory or longitudinal), and had Owens had different purposes and questions, this case could have been a critical case or an extreme case; if ‘critical’, the theory of routinization of charisma could have been tested more thoroughly, giving due credence to alternatives, or if ‘extreme’, it could have been celebrated for something interesting in its own right.
(Punch, 2014 p.122), still contributing to the “horizontal accumulation of knowledge” (Eisner, 1991, pp.210-211).\footnote{I suggest the category “extreme”. Whatever disagreement, misunderstanding or conflict an organization might undergo during transition, it is indeed rare, especially for a church, that matters are so acrimonious that police are called to church meetings.}

**Methods**

**Interview Sample**

Interviews constitute a “major part of the original, primary sources” (Owens, 2002, p.20). They are problematic with regard to sampling strategy, the lack of information on the demographic characteristics of the interviewees, and the lack of information on the interview questions.

Interviewees were chosen because they were “contemporaneous participants and/or observers” and “have relevant knowledge of the events” (Owens, 2002, p.20). Participants were chosen, moreover, with the assumption that they would represent a perspective or ‘outlook’; the categories were “central (or Memphis-oriented) leader’s outlook, a jurisdictional (or state) Bishop’s outlook, a district superintendent’s outlook, a pastor’s outlook and a member’s outlook” (Owens, 2002, p.20). This indeed seems to be a reasonable sample of appropriate people for the gathering of relevant data. No further comments are made concerning a sample plan; it would seem that this is a stratified purposeful sample. We do not know, however, how many were interviewed, their demographic characteristics, nor whether they were offered anonymity. The report, therefore, does not provide much of the information needed to be able to assess the trustworthiness of the data collected from the interviews and thus how it could be interpreted. It is, furthermore, unacknowledged that, as the interviews were taking place over 30 years after the events examined, it was only surviving participants who could be interviewed.

**Interview**

We do not know which approach to interviewing was taken, nor the interviewer’s position and stance. There is no acknowledgement of issues which affect reliability
such as social desirability. We do know, of course, that the interviewees were not asked the same questions (Owens, 2002, p.22), which we assume means the interviewer had an *a priori* understanding of what he wished to ask each specific participant. This is not acknowledged; we do not know why he decided to pose which questions to which informant.

The most concerning aspect of the interview method of data collection with this sample is that people were interviewed about events over 30 years prior, from which we assume that a number (most?) of those interviewed were very old indeed. Owens believes that this time has allowed “for the heated emotions and passionate spirits of the Dark Years to have cooled, and yet the memories and observations are still sharp” (Owens, 2002, p.12). No reason is given for asserting that memories are still sharp; we do not know that. Indeed, it is likely that memory is very unreliable and that the data collected will not be trustworthy. If it could be shown that the documentary evidence corroborates interview accounts, for example, this also would have provided greater trustworthiness in the data. There is, however, no systematic attempt to establish trustworthiness in this way. In this case, it is doubtful whether the interview method produced reliable data.

**Historical Documents**

Space does not allow an expatiation on the many documentary categories. What is of significance, however, is the lack of critical analysis of these documents. This may be seen in Owen’s view that the denominational accounts by the Recording Secretary should be considered objective. I posit that such accounts are laden with judgment: “The battle for authority was on. It had begun with the say as to whether or not there would be an offering taken during the fast. The Executive Board had won, and the offering was taken” (Cornelius, 1975, p.82, cited in Owens, 2002, p.122). To describe the suggestion of an offering as a battle for authority is clear imputation of motive on the part of the recorder. Believing that the official record was objective may have led to a misguided analysis of the institutional discourse.

**3.2.3. Alternative approaches**

Given the criticisms, which design, method and analysis might have helped Owens better achieve his aims? This is a complicated matter for, if the aims stand, that is
the aim of hypothesis testing and ‘guidance for others’ (that is generalizability), then a multiple case study rather than single case study, let alone an extreme case, is the appropriate method. Conversely, a single case study should indeed have aims other than testing and generalizing. Furthermore, the aim of evaluating leadership style would also have required a different approach. There would need to be a deeper understanding and description of leadership styles, probably with greater reference to leadership theory literature such as Northouse (2013), Adizes (1988) and Burns (2010, first published 1978). The characteristics of each style would need to be described. The actions and statements of the church leaders could then be evaluated against the characteristics of each style. This would require a close and systematic analysis of text.

A deeper understanding of the events in COGIC’s founder succession would have been enhanced, moreover, by a close analysis of thematic categories or codes. Content analysis, more specifically thematic occurrence frequency, for example, might have shown the themes most important to the interviewees and document writers. This would have helped place due emphasis on certain themes in the account. Coding might also have alerted the researcher to crucial content omitted in his analysis. For example, the code “theology” or “Bible” would have drawn attention to the theological underpinnings of the views on organizational leadership. In fact, it was a deliberate strategy of the researcher to eschew comment on such issues: “The author of this work in no way attempts to address the spiritual aspects of the Church of God in Christ. This is not an examination of the spirituality, biblical correctness, or appropriateness of any of the actions described” (Owens, 2002, p.200 – emphasis in original). More comprehensive coding for such matters would have given data rich in analytical possibilities which also would have provided alternative perspectives. For example, it may well have challenged the primary interpretive strategy of analysis through the framework of organizational leadership style rather than theology. There were clear appeals to scriptures to support leadership approaches; for example, the Official Manual, Church of God in Christ, 1957 refers to Titus 1:5 to support the position that it should be one bishop who

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leads, not a team (Owens, 2002, p.100). If such themes had been coded and analyzed, this would show that theological understandings of church government were also a way of understanding the debates, not simply through management theory. Thus, further coding could have produced alternative, or at least, additional, multi-layered interpretations.

Notwithstanding the above, appropriate coding, moreover, might have paradoxically even enhanced the conclusions that the disagreements could be explained by leadership theory. One of the main premises is that Mason led by charismatic authority. There is ample evidence in the data to show in greater depth how charisma functioned, particularly how it was ascribed. There is an hagiographical tone to writings concerning Mason, the founder. Elder Brown, for example, believed Mason’s “judgment is unquestionable” (Mason, 1987, p.85, cited in Owens, 2002, p.40); that he had “divine qualities” (Owens, 2002, p.41); that “he is anointed over and above his fellows” (Owens, 2002, p.41). Such references provide data which show the process of charisma ascription, yet these are not fully analyzed to gain a better understanding of charismatic authority within newer religious groups.

Owens (2002) is a study the aims of which require different methods. Research was conducted around a misunderstanding of case study design, with inappropriate interview sampling and insufficient analysis. It does not test a hypothesis; due to studying an ‘extreme’ case, it provides little transferability to others facing founder succession.

3.3. Research design for American megachurches

3.3.1. Aims, methods and justification

Statements of aims are to be found throughout Wheeler’s thesis (pp.1, 3, 5, 8, 24, 47 and 74). These include the provision of “rich description of three megachurch succession processes” and “comparative examination of the similarities and differences of the processes” (Wheeler, 2008, p.5). A further goal is to provide a “unique theoretical contribution to succession research” (Wheeler, 2008, p.8) and “to provide practical help and talking points to the hundreds of megachurches that will be facing succession issues in the next decade or two” (Wheeler, 2008, p.8).
Wheeler adopts a multiple case study design for three megachurch successions. His primary method of data collection was the interview; secondary methods were focus groups, documentary analysis and surveys. More specifically, Wheeler adopted a multiple-case design. He does not, however, explain a key benefit of multiple-cases, namely that they may lead to replication or, if contrasting, may still support theoretical replication (Yin, 2009, p.61). Secondly, Wheeler justifies the multiple case design as a means of “making sense of evidence and evidence is applied to sharpen and refine theory” as well as to develop theory: “casing is an essential part of the process of producing theoretically structured descriptions of social life and of using empirical evidence to articulate theories” (Ragin, 1992, p.225, cited in Wheeler, 2008, p.54). While a legitimate rationale, I suggest that theory exploration and generation is not undertaken adequately in this research and this goal is not attained.

3.3.2. Critique

Aims

Wheeler’s aims of providing data for a rich description, interpreting the data according to leadership theory and indeed to generate theory are appropriate aims, but ones difficult to attain with only one research design. While these aims might be served by the data collection methods Wheeler uses, they essentially require different interpretative methods of the data. Interviewing each participant in the sample once may well suffice for data collection leading to a rich description or even interpretation in the light of leadership theory; it would not do so for theory generation. This requires further interviewing as the researcher refines the codes and categories to provide higher-level theoretical categories. Wheeler does not use the data in this way, nor the mode of interviewing and analysis required. The researcher’s stated aims would require different approaches, such as grounded theory, which is difficult to accomplish in a study also dedicated to other ends.

According to Yin’s understanding of case study typology, there is some error in Wheeler’s use of the multiple case design. A typological assessment suggests that this is largely the multiple-case (holistic) design. Having interviewed the same five office holders in each case, he does, however, synthesize findings from each type of
office holder (for example, the predecessors); in this way he has treated the study as a multiple-case (embedded) design, but then sought to pool the data from the units across the cases. According to Yin, this is a methodological error as it causes slippage to a single-case study in which the units form part of a larger main unit of analysis (Yin, 2009, p.60). If Yin is correct, there is thus some confusion between the design and the analysis.

**Methods**

**Sample**

Previously, I stated an omission of sample characteristics (race, gender). The findings may also be limited in that there is no investigation of why the churches of the study were favourable to participation, nor why others were unfavourable. The data collected, therefore, may only be from megachurches generating a certain discourse, that is a self-belief in a narrative of success.

**Interviews**

“The in-depth interview was the key method in the case studies” (Wheeler, 2008, p.60). This, Wheeler believes, is significant because the majority of succession research had been archival field study (Giambatista et al., 2005, p.984, cited in Wheeler, 2008, p.61). Taking Kvale’s threelfold typology of interviews (structured, semi-structured and transformational) (Kvale, 1996, pp.5-6), he adopts the model of “semi-structured life world interviews” (Wheeler, 2008, p.61).

Wheeler shows considerable awareness of matters which might affect data collection through interviews, such as the potential for social desirability to affect answers; he attempts to mitigate this by providing confidentiality and assuring them that answers are neither correct, nor incorrect. He understands his interview methodology and methods. This increases confidence in the data collected and reported. He does not, however, articulate an interview philosophy. Certainly the interviews are constructivist and appear to be in line with Kvale and Brinkmann’s metaphor of the traveller collecting stories rather than the more positivist miner’s extraction metaphor (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, pp.48-49; Davidsson Bremborg, 2014, p.311).
The interview guide lists forty-two questions. These include nine specifically seeking data concerning process; four on the participants’ personal gifts and contributions; four on the profile of the successor; three on recruitment; one on successor socialization; two on congregation preparations; four on post succession roles; one on successor preparations; two reflecting on the concept of “success”; and seven reflecting on lessons learned (and thus related to transferability). They are appropriate questions to provide data for analysis in helping the researcher attend to his study aims of a rich description of processes and personal experiences and well as inter-case comparison (if the same questions were used in each case). It has already been suggested that the methods do not facilitate theory generation. There are no questions framed with some a priori assumption of theory, certainly after the first round of data collection. There is no account of grounded theory phases and no secondary (or tertiary) interviews took place which would be necessary in a grounded theory approach. The interviewing goals and question content of this research are not well suited to theory generation.

Documents

Wheeler employed documentary analysis of archival data (minutes and annual reports), but acquired limited other documents such as letters and successor profiles. His suggested explanation for this is “the concerns regarding confidentiality as well as the volume of request that these churches receive were obstacles to securing these items” (Wheeler, 2008, p.348). This may mean there is crucial data and perspectives not collected, or indeed disconfirming data wilfully hidden. Credibility might, therefore, be reduced by limited triangulation, as he was not able to provide the “useful comparison of past perspectives with the interviews” (Wheeler, 2008, p.57).

Analysis

It is difficult to assess whether the analysis was conducive to achieve the research aims. There is no stated approach to analysis. Wheeler reports that analysis was ongoing, part of the data collection (Wheeler, 2008, p.74). Secondly, Wheeler has a

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43 The following categories and quantification are mine, not Wheeler’s
general goal of analysis to “organize the interviews to present a narrative that explains what happens or provide a description of the norms and values that underlie cultural behavior” (Rubin and Rubin, 1995, p.229, cited in Wheeler, 2008, p.74). Thirdly, he is aware of analytical theory, citing Yin’s four modes of case study analysis (Wheeler, 2008, p.75), as well as Kvale’s (1996) five approaches to qualitative analysis: meaning condensation, meaning categorization, narrative structuring (focusing on the stories), meaning interpretation and generating meaning through ad hoc methods (an eclectic approach) (Wheeler, 2008, p.75). Although citing such analytical approaches, Wheeler does not state which of these (if any) he employs, which makes an evaluation of his analysis more difficult. This is an omission. We are simply told that analysis “paid attention to concepts, stories and themes” of the interview and archival data (Wheeler, 2008, p.75).

3.3.3. Alternative approaches

Did Wheeler achieve his research aims? Would other methods have served him better? This analysis focuses on three matters. First, Wheeler accomplished his research goal of providing a rich description of the processes of succession, with an intimate account of the inner life and emotions of those closely affected. This indeed fills a gap in the literature which had previously been based on archival research. Insight into succession processes is provided and a composite, five-phase processual model is suggested (Wheeler, 2008, p.340).

Notwithstanding the above, a richer description could have been written had Wheeler been attuned to further categories within his collected data. Important categories were not included in the analysis, despite these themes reported in the data. For example, despite multiple references in the interview data to ‘God’, ‘Christ’ and ‘gifts’, there is no analysis of the underlying theological understanding of leadership succession. Such coding would have given much richer understanding of the process and experiences. Not taking theology into account when seeking to understand and describe megachurch succession would seem a grave omission, as it

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is theology which affects so much of the thinking and ministry of those being interviewed (see Chapter 9).

Secondly, Wheeler does not achieve his aims with relation to theory. He notes the similar themes in all three cases, but this remains underdeveloped. Wheeler is aware of some leadership theory such as sigmoid curve theory in organizational development (Wheeler, 2008, p.330), relay succession models (Wheeler, 208, p.337 and elsewhere), insider/outsider succession and its relationship to socialization (Wheeler, 2008, p.319-322); there is, however, a lack of examination of how these theories relate to the cases and of a contribution toward theory development. For example, the reference to sigmoid curve is fleeting, without due citation or explanation. There is no attempt to apply this theory by examining the location of each case on the curve. Such an examination could have related, furthermore, to Adizes’ organizational life-cycle theory (Adizes, 1988). Furthermore, while reference is made to socialization theory, there is no in-depth analysis of how the socialization took place or whether theoretical models were employed (see, for example, Kikoski and Kikoski [2004] and Peet [2012]), the latter showing how socialization and tacit knowledge transference can increase organizational generativity. Further opportunities to examine theory are overlooked; LSSC theory, for example, could have produced a more nuanced interpretation of Wheeler’s point concerning the importance of the successor embarking on a fresh major initiative to establish trust and authority. There is thus little in this research which contributes to theory.

Thirdly, I suggest that this research could have moved further towards achieving its aims of a deeper understanding of processes and even theory exploration if additional methods of analysis had been employed. A semiotic analysis of the many symbolic references in the data would, for example, have greatly assisted a description of the succession processes. The language of the participants is often metaphorical, such as the metaphor of baton-passing (Wheeler, 2008, p.181); this, furthermore, can be related to theory (Dyck et al., 2002). Dyck et al. (2002) is based on Tsoukas’ (1992) work on the usefulness of metaphors for the development of conceptual models. The data move beyond metaphor, however, to the employment

45 I assume he refers to Handy (1994).
of physical symbols such as a baton used during a leadership transference ceremony (Wheeler, 2008, p.181), a sword used to “knight” and a golden sprinkler head presented (Wheeler, 2008, p.147). An understanding of how symbol could have related to theory may be seen with reference to Bolman and Deal (2003) and their influential work on theoretical frames of leadership, one being the symbolic. It would be fruitful to apply this theory to megachurch leadership given the frequent and significant use of symbolism. It could be that church leaders tend towards symbolic understandings of leadership rather than other “frames”. This could lead to hypothesis formulation.

A semiotic analysis would have “matched the form of the discourse to its social function” (Yelle, 2014, p.355). A deeper understanding of the succession process might have been gained by a semiotic “pragmatic” analysis of the signs and their function in the transference of leadership. Are the knighting and passing of batons indexical icons constructed through performance and enhancing communication through what has been called “sensory pageantry” (McCauley and Lawson, 2002, p.114, cited in Yelle, 2014, p.357)? Indeed, what are the semiotic ideologies of these megachurches? The data collected by Wheeler is rich semiotic data, an analysis of which might prove instructive in understanding the rituals and symbolism associated with succession and thereby the succession itself. In Part II of this thesis, I will show the importance of interpreting the symbolic enactments to understand founder succession and related theologies.

4. Conclusions

Analysis of methodologies and methods of these empirical studies leads to a number of conclusions. There is a lack of methodological rigour in this field, often with confusing aims, and methods poorly applied leading to unreliable data and conclusions. Secondly, the only design used is that of the case study, but there is confusion concerning which case study type is conducive to different research aims. Thirdly, reflexivity is poorly understood; its omission affects the reliability of the data and means that conclusion must be viewed with caution; in one case, it facilitated the study’s becoming part of the official discourse of the institution under study. Fourthly, despite conducting studies within Christian organizations and despite
multiple theological statements and references in the data, all three studies largely ignore any exploration of the religious beliefs of the subjects on the successions.

Empirical study of founder’s succession within Christian organizations has only just begun, but begun poorly. There is much room for further study with clear aims, facilitating research design and better use of the case study approach and interview, as well as room for studies employing other methods. There is, moreover, a need for empirical study which fully takes into account the religious and theological dimensions of such organizational succession. With this in mind, this thesis aims to study founder succession with consistent methods and, while interdisciplinary, to include theological analysis. The following chapter proposes a research design to achieve these objectives.
Chapter 3

Toward a Generative/Dialectical approach to narrative interviewing in the study of founder succession in Christian organizations

*Keep Ithaka always in your mind.*

*Arriving there is what you’re destined for.*

*Cavafy, Ithaka*

1. Introduction

As previously stated, the research question is:

What are the processes which Christian movements construct and enact in transferring leadership from the founder to a successor?
What are the theoretical and theological influences on the construction and enactment of such processes?

Given the little research into founder succession within Christian movements (Chapter 1), and my contention of the methodological insufficiency of earlier attempts at studies (Chapter 2), this chapter now turns to explore the type of data required to answer the question, the methods to procure such data and the methods of analysis most conducive to optimum interpretations and richest descriptions of founder succession. In positing this way forward, further gaps in understanding are also uncovered. It is hoped that this research will, therefore, go some way toward establishing an appropriate research method for studying founder succession.
2. Determination of types of data and how they are to be analyzed

2.1. Data type

The data required to answer the research questions of processes and theological and conceptual influences on founder succession will be of several types: factual data about decisions made - this will include data on the adoption of plans; descriptions by key stakeholders of such decisions, phases and plans; comment and reflection by key actors on such decisions, phases and plans, including evaluatory comments; personal feelings, experiences, and reactions to the decisions and processes, that is, POBA (perceptions, opinions, beliefs and attitudes) categories of data (Potter and Hepburn, 2012; Puchta and Potter, 2004; Puchta and Potter 2002); and descriptions and interpretations of the theological and theoretical frameworks, whether espoused or operant, in which these took place.

The data required to answer the research question fall, therefore, into a number of categories. Quantitative or highly structured methods are less likely to produce such data. An approach is needed which activates a deeper level than facts and occurrences in order to ascertain the perceptions, worldview and theology which shaped them and to explicate how such processes and ‘facts’ are interpreted by the key actors so that data is provided for a “thick” description (Geertz, 1973, taking the notion from Ryle [1971]). “Thick description” is nowhere succinctly defined, but Ryle seems to draw a distinction between “thin description” as a simple observation and a “thick description” as one of understanding the context, meaning and significance given to the action by the actor and audience. A thick description presents Geertz’s “piled-up structures of inference and implication” (Geertz, 1973, p.7); it is seeking to grasp and render a “multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another” (Geertz, 1973, p.10). The aim of this research, therefore, is not superficial or thin description; it aims for the “noema

46 Space does not permit a full treatment of the complexities around POBA questioning in interviewing, such as whether people have immediate access to their opinions. However, it is acknowledged that POBA questioning tends to elicit relevant data in ways that other questioning does not (Potter and Hepburn, 2012).
[“thought,” “content,” “gist”] of the speaking. It is the meaning of the speech event, not the event as event” (Ricoeur, 1991/2007, p.146). In this chapter, I will propose a specific method which will facilitate the production of such experiential accounts and theological understandings.

2.2. Data analysis

The second aspect to determining the methods is to know ab initio the type of analysis intended, that is the method to be used in interpreting such data. Large n surveys lend themselves to a quantitative content analysis, whereas unstructured and open-ended questioning are more conducive to in-depth discourse or narrative analysis. It is proposed that documents will lead to decisions and facts, and may furthermore, depending on type, provide an understanding of feelings, reactions and evaluations. A form of interview analysis is most likely to be the method which best makes manifest the perspectives, thoughts, feelings and interpretations behind the documents and factual processes. It is proposed, therefore, that the methods of documentary analysis and interviewing be adopted as data collection methods, with prime emphasis being placed on data elicited in interviews of founders and successors in the succession processes.

3. Introduction to documentary analysis as secondary method

A few brief comments will be made concerning the role of documentary analysis, before focusing on the interview as primary method. It is anticipated that there will be a sufficient quantity of documentary sources of differing genres to assist understanding succession processes and conceptualizations. Broadly, these documents fall into three categories: those constructed for the wider public; communications for key constituents in the transition (staff, boards of directors (or the equivalent), eldership teams, congregants/members, donors); and private documents among key participants. The first category includes press releases, press articles and website postings. The second is letters, written reports, newsletters, sermons and podcasts. The third consists of the minutes of decision-making bodies, and, for example, correspondence between the predecessor and successor.
Concerning my use of documentary analysis, a number of points may be made. First, documentary analysis will be a complimentary approach rather than “stand-alone” (Flick, 2014, p.353); the main research method will be the interview. Secondly, any classification will be in line with Scott’s standard documentary typology - ‘recurrent’, ‘regular’ and ‘special’ (Scott, 1990, pp.83-84). Thirdly, apart from the interview transcripts, other documents in this research will be ‘unobtrusive measures’ (not solicited by the researcher) (Webb et al. 1966); more specifically, following Webb et al.’s typology, they are “episodic and private” archives rather than “running” records or “erosion measures” (Webb et al. 1966, p.36). Fourthly, documents will be viewed not as receptacles of information but as ‘eigenständige methodische und situativ eingebettete Leistungen’ (Wolff, 2005, p.504). They will be considered in terms of “their content, context, production and function in society” (Davie and Wyatt, 2014, p.151.) Fifthly, due cognizance will be taken of their discursive formations, their “conditions of existence” (Foucault 1991: 61); they are situated products (Scott 1990, p.34) and social products which may have been received differently by different constituencies. They are not static but should be considered “in terms of fields, frames and networks of action. In fact, the status of things as “documents” depends precisely on the ways in which such objects are integrated into fields of action, and documents can only be defined in terms of such fields” (Prior, 2003, p.2).

4. Introduction to the interview as primary data collection method

“The qualitative research interview attempts to understand the world from the subjects’ points of view, to unfold the meaning of their experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations” (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015, p.3). It is most often used in qualitative research for “the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life world of the interviewee in order to interpret the meaning of the described phenomena” (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015, p.6). It may be used for many purposes, including to obtain empirical knowledge of subjects’ experiences; to seek knowledge of a social situation; to study life histories; to examine critically the personal assumptions and general ideologies expressed; to develop theoretical conceptions;

47 Or “methodologically created communicative turns” (Flick, 2014, p.357).
to test implications of a theory; and to develop knowledge for collective activities (action research) (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015).

There are many forms of interview, the selection of which is dependent on the research purposes. Roulston suggests six basic conceptualizations: neopositivist, romantic, constructionist, postmodern, transformative and decolonizing (Roulston, 2010, p.51). Each of these six types has a different purpose, structure, relational dynamics and produces different types of data. To add to the nuances of conceptualizations listed here, there are other relevant categories of interviewing such as according to type (phenomenological, ethnographic, dialogic and confrontational) and according to structure. Classically, there are three structures determined by the nature of the questions asked: structured, semi-structured and unstructured. Each structure lends itself to a certain type of data collection and analysis. The highly structured interview is often of the survey variety, which lends itself to quantitative study due to the vast amount of data that may quickly be collected and to the often binary nature of the data. Much qualitative work has used the semi-structured interview, but with the increasing use of narrative approaches to research, what has been called the “fifth moment” in qualitative research (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994), the unstructured interview is now widely employed.

5. Which type of interview is optimal for this research project? Determination by sample population characteristics and data analytical method

The goal of much of this chapter henceforward is to identify the type of interview most conducive to providing the desired data. The determination of the interview type will be made by considering the characteristics of the sample population and how this specific population might be interviewed to produce optimal data, and by providing evaluation of the analytical methods available to interpret such data.

5.1. Characteristics of the research sample

My sample population consists of founders and successors of international Christian movements. These are chosen, as they are the two main actors in the succession process, and probably have the most extensive knowledge of, as well as nuanced
perspectives on the matter. A broader ranging project could have sought the perspectives of others, but it is the perspective and self-understanding of those most affected by succession which is the goal of this research. Having fewer interviewees will also enable great in-depth analysis of their responses. What are the likely characteristics of such a sample and which form of interviewing might enjoin the optimal participation and data production from them? To answer these questions, I draw from five areas of study: theology of leadership, sociolinguistics, trait-based leadership theory, organizational psychology and qualitative studies on élites and experts.

5.1.1. Theology of leadership

As the interviewees will be leaders in Christian ministry, it is likely that they will have skills in spoken communication. In Clinton’s research on Christian leaders (Clinton, 1988, p.13), he maintains that of all the lessons a leader must learn and all the gifts he or she may have, the ability to use words, and discern the significance of words, is both paramount and ubiquitous (Clinton, 1988, p.143). Such gifts are often “vested gifts”, appearing “repeatedly in a person’s ministry and can be repeated at will by the person” (Clinton, 1988, p.233). Given this, it seems appropriate to allow them considerable latitude in how they choose to respond in the interview, as they are likely to provide clear and high quality data on leadership succession.

5.1.2. Sociolinguistics

In turning to sociolinguistics to understand better the capabilities of the sample, Christian leaders have high levels of “communicative competence” (Briggs, 1986, p.43), by which is meant not simply the original Chomskyan sense of the word as the ability to produce an infinite number of grammatical sentences from a finite set of syntactic rules, but also the “proficiency in use of its indexical properties”, that is, competence in knowing which expression may be used under which circumstances to convey which meanings (Briggs, 1986, p.43). Briggs is clear that understanding an interviewee’s communicative competence involves not just their ability to encode and decode referential meaning alone, but also the proficiency in indexical properties; both factors must be taken into account in any analysis of interview data. Founders of Christian agencies are likely to have higher levels of linguistic communicative competence, honed through textual exegesis training of biblical and
theological education (an assertion tested in the pilot study). This means that the interviewer should be aware that verbal fluency might provide established discourse or good impression management (Burris and Navara, 2002). However, such fluency means that this population sample will be capable of responding well in a very open-ended form of interview. Indeed, their communicative competence might be better activated by unstructured interviewing.

5.1.3. Trait-based leadership theory

Trait-based theories of leadership may also assist in understanding my interviewees. Kirkpatrick and Locke’s (1991) study articulates the six traits which distinguish leaders from others: drive, motivation, integrity, confidence, cognitive ability and task knowledge. Stevens (2003) details the entrepreneurial behaviour of nonprofit founders, finding fourteen entrepreneurial behaviour patterns. Many of those to be interviewed are, therefore, people of high cognitive ability and entrepreneurial orientation. They will also have high levels of ‘sunk costs’ (Kets de Vries, 1993) in the ministries they founded. This may mean that they desire to project a good image of the organization which they founded and will provide discourse with this aim in mind. This should be duly taken into account during data analysis; an open-ended, unstructured interview method will provide an opportunity to observe such traits and to ascertain how such leaders perceive succession.

5.1.4. Organizational psychology

Schein (1983), from the discipline of organizational psychology, has shown specifically how founders create an organizational culture. In determining how a new endeavour is shaped with regard to the external environment and internal integration, Schein shows how founders embed cultural elements in the new endeavour in ten ways (Schein, 1983; also see Chapter 1 for a fuller treatment of this matter). Thus, founders established the mission, structures, values and the eventual prevailing discourse of the organization which they found. A form of interview which

48 For trait approaches to leadership see Northouse (2013) and Jung and Sosik (2006).
49 This is a phrase from economics referring to costs already occurred in an endeavour which may not be recouped. Zeelenberg and Van Dijk (1997) show a positive relationship between successors’ high levels of sunk costs and risk-averse decisions in assuming leadership.
allows such people to speak freely of their founding of a ministry and of discourse establishment would be appropriate. A structured approach would provide responses based on the categories predetermined by the interviewer. Giving such entrepreneurial people latitude to recount processes and reflections in their own words may yield rich data relevant to the question of determining the conceptualization of succession. It will show what they judge to be narratable and thus important.

5.1.5. Qualitative studies on elites and experts

A fifth point of reflection is that this sample is constituted of “experts” in the field of Christian leadership. I use the term “expert” as this is commonly used in other fields of study to apply to those who have considerable experiences in their field, usually have broad networks of relationships and high status functional responsibility (Welch et al., 2002, p.613).50

Consideration of the expert characteristic of the interview sample is significant for this interview approach. First, as interviewer I will need to be well informed on the subject of their expertise, for experts tend to share more freely with those who possess knowledge of their field (Beckman and Hall, 2013; Meuser and Nagel, 2009, p.32). Secondly, and especially with regard to religious leaders, there may be an openness to participate in qualitative research, not so much out of kindness but due to clergy seeing their work and that of social researcher as similar in terms of social status; applying Coxon, Davies and Jones’ analysis of social stratification, both professionals are in the same quadrant - high formal education and high people content profession (Coxon, Davies and Jones, 1986). However, Aldridge’s experience in studying Anglican clergy in England is that this understanding of mutual social status is not a given but needs to be negotiated in order to gain full access (Aldridge, 1995). Issues of social standing, deference and power are, therefore, relevant. A third and related point is that clergy are used to leading discussion rather than

50 Extensive definitions of ‘expert’ from the research literature on interviewing experts is to be found in Meuser and Nagel (2009, p.19) and Bogner and Menz (2009, p.54).
following (Aldridge, 1995, p.121). A more highly structured interview might be perceived as counter to their usual role and professional status self-perception. A less structured interview, therefore, might elicit better responses and data, as this places clergy in a habituated position, one consistent with their role self-perception. This is supported by Meuser and Nagel’s epistemology of expert knowledge being “tacit or pre-theoretical experiential knowledge” which is better elicited by open interviewing (Meuser and Nagel, 2009, p.31). Fourthly, all professions have a corpus of sacred discourse (Aldridge, 1995) which is guarded by licensed practitioners. Key words typically signal the boundary between sacred discourse of the profession and the profane discourse accessible to laypeople. Aldridge, in his research with Anglican clergy, found that the word “theology” was a signal that the ensuing discourse would be of such a “sacred” nature; the word “theology” serves as a linguistic marker that the following responses would be an important argument and one to which they claimed expertise and authority. In analysis, I will need to be aware of such linguistic markers which change the relational position between the interviewee and interviewer; in the interview, I will need to elicit such utterances and the data which ensues, as this is indeed the data sought in this research.

5.1.6. Conclusion from sample characteristics

In summary, interviews are likely to be conducted with those who have word gifts, are accustomed to spoken communication and are experts. Given this, a form of unstructured interviewing is proposed in order to produce optimum data (accounts of succession and theological reflection thereon).

5.2. Analytical methods

The second matter to determine the interview type is the selection of analytical method. Any interview must produce data suited to the intended analysis. Three approaches may be useful to this research, namely discourse, content and narrative analysis. A rationale will be provided for eschewing the first two and for adopting narrative analysis as the optimal method of analysis. This will lead furthermore to a discussion of specific forms of interviewing.
5.2.1. Discourse analysis

It could be possible to employ a discourse analytical approach, which pays attention to the social phenomena around the text, the “social systems of relations” (Howarth, 2000, p.8). Language is not viewed as representing a given reality but is formative and constitutive of reality. It is thus about the significations of the language. Discourse concerns “practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak” (Foucault, 1972, p.49); it is “the structured totality resulting from the articulatory practice” (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985, p.105). Secondly, discourse often focuses on issues of power - what power is behind and in the discourse, who has the right to say and who does not (mechanisms of exclusion), and who is advantaged or disadvantaged by the discourse. Thirdly, discourse analysis is interested in the generation of social identities; it reduces consideration of people as agents.

Discourse analysis may be beneficial: it can make manifest power dynamics; it can show inclusion and exclusion, and why some are marginalized; it assists studying debates, as it highlights ‘antagonisms’, that is, the struggle for meaning creation on a linguistic level (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985; Bergström, Ekstrom and Boréus, 2017, p.216). This is related to a fourth benefit, namely that it makes more evident changes in social viewpoints on the discourse topic.

Discourse analysis would be helpful in my research were the primary goals the broader understanding of leadership within Christian communities, analysis of power relations, or a study of the debates within Christian leadership and management on succession by analyzing the articulatory practices of the non-crystallized “moments” in Christian leadership discourse (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985, p.134). A discourse analytical approach, however, will not be selected, as the research goal is not to study the broader sociological discourse of Christian leadership but the specific conceptualizations and enactments of certain leaders and agencies. These may reflect broader discourses, yet each organization to be studied is a new foundation seeking to develop its own discourse and, as shown above, the participants are likely to be highly articulate leaders who have in multiple ways established a new discourse. The aim of this research is to understand succession processes and the actors’ reflections thereon, not broader social discourses, nor the nature of
hegemony in leadership discourse. In my research project, I intend to be aware of both the institutional and broader evangelical discourses and draw upon reflection on them as appropriate, but will focus on other aspects (enactments and theological reflection thereon).

5.2.1. Content analysis

Content analysis is used to interpret textual data and may provide useful findings, depending on the research goal. Consideration has been given to this method which has led to the conclusion that, whether in quantitative or qualitative form, it would not be the optimal analytical method to enable the research question to be answered.

First, much content analysis is quantitative. Many of the standard and oft-cited reference works (Krippendorff, 1980; Neuendorf, 2002) are works on quantitative research, defining content analysis in purely quantitative terms: “Content analysis may be briefly defined as the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics” (Neuendorf, 2002, p.1). Quantification will not produce the rich description for processual and theological reflection needed to answer my research question; nuanced understanding of theology and relational processes is provided in a thick description, which requires a qualitative approach.

Secondly, content analysis, both quantitative and qualitative, is often employed when large quantities of text are to be studied. This relates, of course, to the first point, that larger quantities of material lend themselves to quantitative analysis; thus, many of the standard works (Krippendorff, 1980; Neuendorf, 2002) come from the field of mass media studies. Content analysis has been employed in empirical theology, but often even here using data from mass media (Van Driel and Richardson, 1988; Abelman and Pettey, 1988). My research project will not have such large amounts of data.

In thus eschewing a quantitative approach, further consideration is given to qualitative content analysis (QCA). I suggest, however, that this approach can be

51 For a fuller treatment of the role of hegemony in discourse, see Laclau and Mouffe (1985), especially pp.134-145.
52 For a fuller definition, see Neuendorf (2002, p.10).
highly problematic and, even if employed well, would not answer the research question in the way I intend to answer it. There is confusion as to the nature of QCA. “Qualitative content analysis is a method of systematically describing the meaning of qualitative material. It is done by classifying material as instances of the categories of a coding frame” (Schreier, 2012, p.1). This is a definition from a standard textbook, yet all we learn from it is that it is systematic and categorizes. Secondly, standard works on qualitative research have but a few pages (Flick, 2014; Mayring 2004/2005). More recent works (Flick, 2014; Boréus and Bergström, 2017b) are synopses of Schreier (2012), one of the few books dedicated to qualitative content analysis. Thirdly, attempts to describe qualitative content analysis, moreover, develop into descriptions of quantitative content analysis, thus showing either confused methodological thinking, or the ambiguity and fluidity of the method. Perhaps realizing such fluidity and ambiguity even in their own writing, Boréus and Bergström (2017b, p.24) state that the difference between quantitative and qualitative is not one of kind but degree. With its roots in quantitative studies and with a lack of clear differentiation, Hijmans (1996) questions whether QCA actually is a method.

Content analysis does, of course, lend itself well to certain types of study. Nelson and Woods (2014) see the benefits of content analysis for tracking specific data to identify and understand a direction of or change in specific phenomena over time; for identifying patterns or commonalities within a particular genre; identifying difference by drawing comparisons; assessing the image of a particular group in society; measuring a specific phenomenon against some standard in order to classify the phenomenon; and to relate certain message characteristics to the variable. Boréus and Bergström see it as advantageous for comparisons (Boréus and Bergström, 2017c, p.7) and for making evident changes in corpora over time.

Would qualitative content analysis help answer my research question? It is a method both linear and cyclical in that it builds a coding frame partly from the data; it

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53 Schreier (2014) is a short overview in a general work and is based on the more extensive book (Schreier, 2012). Mayring 2004 is a very brief English language entry, which is slightly expanded, in a German version (Mayring, 2005).

54 For more on this debate, see Schreier (2012, pp.14-15).
reduces data (unlike most qualitative methods which open up the data for more nuanced interpretations). It handles large amounts of text well. Reductions can be helpful in comparing categories across data. It is unable to analyse data which is “not there”. Moreover, even a qualitative approach must select categories; it cannot take such a holistic approach to the data and it cannot analyse connotative meanings or the symbolic (Schreier, 2012, p.52).

The goal of ascertaining the kind of theoretical and theological reflection in the processes cannot, however, be gleaned from quantitative data. Furthermore, there will be relatively few texts (small n interview transcripts) which will not be reduced to a few categories. I do not intend to make comparison, to study broader corpora of text, nor longitudinal changes, all of which may benefit from a content analytical approach. Indeed, a contextual understanding of the interview responses is crucial to understand the nuances around the personal data; theologies require a more qualitative approach in order to gain a “thick description” (Geertz, 1973). Such descriptions are less likely to come from the classic units of analysis used in content analysis: physical (e.g. number of pages), syntactical (number of words, phrases, sentences), referential (presence or absence of objects), propositional (statements/arguments) and thematic (repeating patterns of ideas or treatments) (Krippendorff, 1980). They also will not be achieved through the coding and reduction which is the core, even of QCA.

I will, therefore, eschew QCA as I will not analyze larger data sets (Schreier 2012; Mayring, 2005), nor seek to reduce and categorize as these might obscure the content and hinder in-depth analysis and underlying meanings (Flick, 2014, pp.435-436). It is such in-depth textual analysis which will bear fruit in answering the research question related to understanding succession processes and related theology and theory.

5.2.2. Narrative Analysis

*Innombrables sont les récits du monde.*

Barthes

The characteristics of the interviewee sample lead to an open, unstructured form of interview. This section considers the eventual analysis to be undertaken so that the
interview can be conducted appropriately to provide the best data for such analysis. In turning from both discourse analysis and content analysis, a narrative approach might yield the target rich description.

Barthes’ opening sentence (above) to his seminal work on narrative (Barthes, 1981, p.7) ushered in a new place for narrative in academic research. His use of anastrophe brings not just a declarative intent but a hortatory tone to which we should pay heed, something lost in the pedestrian English “the narratives of the world are numberless” (Barthes, 1977, p.79). The ubiquity and universality of narrative is established; it appears in multiple genres, substances, forms, and in all cultures. It is as if “toute matière était bonne à l’homme pour lui confier ses récits” (Barthes, 1981, p.7); “all material” (toute matière) must of course include conceptualizations of leadership succession.

In seeking to select definitively and with specificity the form of analysis intended and thereby the mode of interview to be adopted to facilitate that analysis, the subject of narrative will be addressed in further detail.

6. A deeper understanding of ‘narrative’ research

6.1. What is narrative?

For an understanding of narrative, I adopt the following definition:

Narratives are stories with a beginning, a development, and a state of affairs at the end about an event or process. Typically, they involve a complex structure that links facts and details to an overarching whole.... Using narratives for collecting verbal data should take the structure of the narrative into account instead of isolating single statements from it (Flick, 2014, p.199).

Narratives are produced by people usually in the following ways:

First the initial situation is outlined (“how everything started”), then the events relevant to the narrative are selected from the whole host of experiences and presented as coherent progression of events (“how things developed”), and finally the situation at the end of the development is presented (“what became”) (Hermanns 1995, p.183, cited in Flick, 2014 p.265).

55 I have not been able to find the original 1966 edition.
Narrative functions as a “fundamental interpretative frame, helping us to organize our experiences and make the world comprehensible” (Robertson, 2017, p.123). Narrative provides details of processes and events – what happened but also “insights into how individuals imbue those events and actions with meaning” (Robertson, 2017, p.124). This speaks to the dual aspect of narrative, namely histoire (the ‘what’, such as content, ‘existents’, characters) and discours (the ‘how’, the means by which the content is communicated) (Chatman, 1978). It provides a more detailed and nuanced understanding of the text, in part because narrative analysis allows for an analysis of both denotation and connotation; content analysis, for example, does not allow for connotation. Furthermore, a study of narrative provides the opportunity to note what is absent from or taken for granted in a text (Robertson, 2017, p.136), for omissions may be just as useful interpretative data as commissions (Feldman and Almquist, 2012). A narrative analysis stresses human agency rather broader sociological discourses (while not denying their influence). Indeed, narrative might provide insights into something larger or more general; “such generalization can only take place if specific micro-level narratives are related to accumulated or macro-level and recurrent narrative themes” (Robertson, 2017, p.143).

The above advantages of a narrative approach lend themselves well to answering the research question. Narratives can provide data to show the processes of succession (histoire) and the meaning imbued by key actors (discours). Narrative research will allow for a nuanced interpretation of the topic, making manifest both connotations and denotations. It may, furthermore, make manifest leadership identity creation during narration which will help show theological and theoretical understandings of leadership. A narrative approach to analysis will, therefore, be employed. The interviews must, therefore, produce appropriate narratives.

6.2. Narrative inquiry or narrative analysis?

Before addressing narrative interview with greater specificity, it should be noted that there are multiple methodologies and terminologies in the field of narrative research. One broad methodology is termed ‘narrative inquiry’. This approach does not merely study narrative, but narrative is the methodology. Such practitioners
tend to eschew functional definitions (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p.49), preferring to approach the method by asking what do narrative inquirers do. Perhaps the closest that we may come to a definition is:

Narrative inquiry is a way of understanding experience. It is collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus. An inquirer enters this matrix in the midst and progresses in the same spirit, concluding the inquiry still in the midst of living and telling, reliving and retelling, the stories of the experiences that make up people’s lives, both individual and social (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p.20).

This reveals a number of characteristics of narrative inquiry. There is a stress on the importance of experience; experience is “the stories people live” and “experiences grow out of other experiences, and experiences lead to further experiences” (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p.2). Secondly, it emphasizes the relational nature of the research, that narrative is co-produced from close empathy and rapport between researcher and participant. Thirdly, the data produced are not only context-conditional and constructionist, but tentative, for there will be future experiences which affect, indeed change the narrative. Fourthly, ‘temporality’ is the key concept to this approach, for things are better studied over time to understand the deeper experience upon experience of the narrators. What is produced are merely fragments, for “life… is filled with narrative fragments, enacted in storied moments of time and space, and reflected upon and understood in terms of narrative unities and discontinuities” (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p.17). This leads to the fifth observation, that the research itself is never the researcher’s arriving at conclusions; the narrative and the analysis never end (Czarniawska, 1997, pp.203-204). Furthermore, the beginning of the research is not really the beginning (of the field narrative); we arrive in the midst: “Entry of this sort into an entr’acte where all the really critical things seemed just to have happened yesterday and just about to happen tomorrow, induces an uncomfortable sense of having come too late and arrived too early” (Geertz, 1995, p.4).

Narrative inquiry does employ interviews to collect data; due to the relational dynamics, a structured or even semi-structured interview cannot be employed. The (unstructured) interview often develops into something other than an interview,
such as conversation between friends. The evolving nature of this method means that there is no adherence to an original research question, but continual reformulation of the inquiry.

For the purposes of my research, I will eschew narrative inquiry in this tradition. I will not conduct a longitudinal study but two interviews with each participant. This means, furthermore, that joint life narratives produced from close relationship will also not be possible. Thirdly, while aware that there are always antecedents, I will not be entering the field ‘in the midst’ but subsequent to the processes under inquiry. Those processes will, furthermore, have a beginning and end in a way that is not the case is broader ethnography. A fuller, diachronic and ‘ergonographic’ study of the ministry in question will not be undertaken.\(^5^6\) While the succession processes are over time, they are likely to be within a timeframe that is short in span (although the researcher must be cognizant that succession may long have been conceptualized in some form).\(^5^7\)

To distinguish from ‘narrative inquiry’, for the method of this thesis I will employ the term ‘narrative analysis’. This approach relies less on ethnography, is applicable in shorter term research, does not examine the interplay between the researcher’s own biographical narrative and that of the participants; it relies heavily on the interview as the main method of narrative elicitation. This latter point, however, requires greater specificity of interview genre, something to which we now turn.

7. Specificity of narrative interview type

In order to elucidate the precise method for this study, comment will be made on three approaches in narrative interviewing, namely the biographic interpretive method interview, the generative interview (my terminology) and the episodic interview, before advocating a fourth, a novel approach which I term ‘Generative/Dialectic’.

\(^{56}\) ‘Ergonography’ is ethnography of a work organization (Czarniawska, 1998, p.49).
\(^{57}\) See, for example, the long-pondered succession plan at General Electric (Slater 1993, p.268), cited on p.19.
7.1. Biographic Interpretive Method Interview

A considerable segment of the turn to narrative in much contemporary research has been the growth of biographical methods of narrative research (Chamberlayne, Bornat and Wengraf, 2000; Merrill and West, 2009; Riessman, 2008). Such research may focus on a number of aspects of narrative including the construction of narrative structure or incidents of “rupture” and “disturbance” in the normal course of events which provide reaction and become pivotal points of the narrative.

Due to the research question I will not focus on full life story but will focus on a transitional phase in the narrator’s, that is, founder’s and successor’s personal and professional life, which may be relatively short in comparison to a life’s biography. The method of interview in the biographical interpretive approach provides, nonetheless, some guidance in establishing an appropriate approach to interviewing in my research. Rosenthal (1993) suggests three phases for such interviews. The first is ‘main narration’, where interviewees are asked:

by means of an initial opening question, to give a full extempore narration (as opposed to an argument or a theoretical exposition) of events and experiences from their own lives. The ensuing story, or main narrative, is not interrupted by further questions but encouraged by means of nonverbal and paralinguistic expressions of interest and attention (Rosenthal, 1993, p.59).

The second phase is that of ‘narrative questioning’, where the interviewer seeks to procure further details or explanations using the language of the narrator and the sequence in which themes were introduced. The goal is to elicit further narrations, not argumentation or rationalizations. The third phase is that of ‘external questioning’, often, in fact, a second interview, when questions are asked from the first two phases as well as those about theory and interests of the research project.

The biographic interpretive narrative method has been criticized for assuming too much self-determined agency on the part of the narrator, that is, the narrator not being aware of the wider discourses of which they and the narration are a part. A second criticism is that some may be intimidated by one question with little further

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58 This section on biographic interpretive methods borrows from Hall (2016).
guidance (Thompson, 1988, p.199), which may suppress narrative (Merill and West, 2009, pp.119-120). In contrast, however, it should be noted that people use narrative every day in their lives; the advantages of allowing them to recount in their own linguistic modes and registers is beneficial as they give meaning to their worlds.

7.2. Generative Interview

A similar approach is presented by Flick and others (Flick relies heavily on Riemann and Schütze [1987]; Hermanns [1995]). As there is no terminology for this approach, I have coined the term “Generative Interview”, taken from the first question, namely the “generative narrative question”. This interview method, as with the biographic interpretive method above, is in three phases. The first is the “generative narrative question” (Riemann and Schütze, 1987, p.353, cited in Flick, 2014, p.266) which must be a broad question yet sufficiently specific for “the interesting experiential domain to be taken up as a central theme” (Flick, 2014, p.266). The question should be a narrative stimulus encouraging the narrator to start from the beginning, giving details of everything that is important to the narrator about the topic of interest.

Subsequent to the response narrative, the second phase is that of “narrative probing” of those fragments not exhaustively detailed in the first phase narration. This is followed by a third phase, the “balancing phase” “in which the interviewee may also be asked questions which aim at theoretical accounts of what happened and at balancing the story, reducing the ‘meaning’ of the whole to its common denominator” (Hermanns, 1995, p.184). In this phase the questions relate to why matters developed the way they did, about relations between events, or viewpoints about the relevant issues. This is a semi-structured interview phase. The aim here is not just narrative production but explanation or argumentations.

This approach would seem to offer a parallel structure to the biographic interpretive method, although the emphasis on the third phase of “reducing” would not be the aim of most other narrative methods. It is asserted that this method produces data which cannot be produced by other methods; this is because the narrative takes on some independence during recounting and people can tell a lot more of their lives than they have integrated in their theories of themselves and their lives – they “know” in another way.
Narrators of unprepared extempore narratives of their own experiences are driven to talk also about events and action orientations, which they prefer to keep silent about in normal conversations and conventional interviews owing to their awareness of guilt or shame or their entanglements of interests (Schütze 1976, p.225, cited in Flick, 2014, p.268).

Such narration develops because of the compelling entanglements of narrative, or Zugzwang. Narratives have three main constraints, namely closing Gestalt, condensing and detailing. ‘Closing Gestalt’ leads narrators to go forward to the end once they have started; ‘condensing’ requires the presenting of only that which is necessary to understand the process in the story; ‘detailing’ is background detail and relationships necessary to understand the story.

The strengths of this approach are that narrative is a Gestalt which produces a higher quantity of and different type of data than statements and reported facts, and it thus can go beyond, and in a deeper way, that which may be produced in semi-structured interviews. It is not, however, a completely open interview; the generative question should define and bring focus onto the research topic. It should be acknowledged, however, that this interview could be problematic: it may violate the role expectations of the interviewee; not everyone is capable of giving fluent narrative presentations of their lives and experiences; some, moreover, may be skilled at redirecting the interview (although such subversion itself provides interesting narrative data!).

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59 I have been unable to locate the original 1976 version and, therefore, cite Flick.
60 Zugzwang means ‘a compulsion to move’, taken from chess where a player is forced to make a disadvantageous move when he/she would rather pass. With regard to a narrative dynamic, Flick uses this in the adverbial form zugzwangs and means, “a certain implicit force may drive you to continue this narrative to its end or to provide enough details so that your listeners may understand the situation, process, and point in your story” (Flick, 2014, p.545). Both the literal and figurative meanings are supported in Wahrig Deutches Wörterbuch (1979, p.4269).
61 Flick’s definition of ‘closing Gestalt’ is as follow: “A specific format is completed. “Gestalt” refers to the fact that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. For example, to tell a story until its end, once the narrator started storytelling” (Flick, 2014, p.534).
7.3. Episodic interview

This is a third option available to my research. Rather than a generative question which leaves latitude for almost any narrative response, this adaptation brings greater structure to the interview and its questioning; indeed, it is my assertion that this form of interview lies somewhere on a spectrum between the generative narrative interview and semi-structured interviewing.

Underlying this approach is a view that a subject’s experiences of a certain domain are stored and remembered in forms of narrative-episodic and semantic knowledge (Flick, 2014, p.273). Episodic knowledge is organized closer to experiences and linked to concrete situations and circumstances. Semantic knowledge is based on concepts, assumptions and relations which are abstracted from episodic knowledge and generalized. The central units are the concepts and their relation to each other. Flick advocates that episodic interviewing both collects and analyses narrative-episodic knowledge using narrative and also accesses semantic knowledge by “concrete pointed questions” (Flick, 2014, p.274). The episodic interview yields context-related presentations in the form of narrative because they are closer to experiences and their generative context than other presentational forms. Constructing realities are more accessible in this approach than in other abstract concepts and answers. The method starts with episodic-situational forms of experiential knowledge, not a narratable whole. The researcher pays attention to episodes of which the interviewee has had experiences and which are relevant to the research question. The interviewee may choose the situations or be guided to them.

Flick suggests several advantages of adopting this method. It may help ensure that narratives produced are more closely related to the very research topic rather than divergent therefrom (although in a freer form of narrative interviewing even the divergence is of importance). It can ensure that episodes are told “in their specificity” (Flick, 2014, p.275), and allows a more concrete approach. It may be helpful when the interviewee appears to have a problem with free narration. It combines both narrative and argumentation which may be decontextualized in favour of conceptual and rule-oriented knowledge. It relies on narrative competence without relying on the Zugzwang of narrative constraints.
The central element is the repeated asking of the interviewee to present narratives of situations or chains of situations. The interviewer may also ask about the interviewee’s feelings with regard to the topic as well as abstractive relations.

7.4. Conclusions on narrative interview type: The ‘Generative/Dialectic’ interview as the way forward

This chapter has set out to clarify the research question, to consider the nature of the data required (facts about processes and plans, opinions about evaluations, and interpretations on the succession), and to provide a thick description of the theological and theoretical framework around the succession plans and processes. Giving due consideration to the characteristics of the participants (those who founded and were successors in leading Christian organizations), namely their high levels of linguistic competency, leadership and entrepreneurial gifts, it has been determined to adopt a narrative approach, which is seen as an opportunity for the stimulation of free-flowing data production, in a manner of telling that the participants choose. Thus, an unstructured, narrative analytical approach to interviewing is advocated. This approach is supported by the literature on interviewing experts, particularly as it is narrative which provides “insight into the tacit aspects of expert knowledge, which she or he is not fully aware of and which, on the contrary, become noticed only gradually in the course of the narration” (Meuser and Nagel, 2009, p.32). The following method is thus proposed: it is, in essence, the first two phases of the Generative Interview approach with the accretion of a dialectic third phase. I have termed this method, therefore, the ‘Generative/Dialectic’ approach to narrative analytical interviewing. The macro-structure will be three main parts, in two interviews. Parts I and II will comprise Interview I; Part III will comprise Interview II.

Part I will essentially be the first phase of the Generative Interview, consisting of the “generative narrative question” (Flick, 2014, p.266) to release “full extempore narration” (Rosenthal, 1993, p.59). At this phase there is little difference between

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62 Tacit knowledge transference is a crucial factor in leadership (Kikoski and Kikoski, 2004) and in successful succession and organizational generativity (Peet, 2012), as indicated in Chapter 1.
the Biographic Interpretive Method and the Generative Interview. Part II will be “narrative probing” seeking further narrations from the interviewee on matters pertinent to the research question which the interviewer believes could be developed with great specificity. Part III (Interview II) will not aim at reducing, as in the generative method, but will raise matters omitted in earlier narrations. For example, if theological reflection was not volunteered in Parts I and II, then theory and theology will be raised at this point. Furthermore, the researcher will posit alternative interpretations or explanations for evaluations volunteered in Parts I and II, adopting the subject position of *advocatus diaboli*, thus making Part III maieutic or dialectic, seeking to test the viewpoints previously proffered with the aim of eliciting ‘synthetic’ understandings (to adopt dialectic terminology). Part III is not the received semi-structured interview (where the same interview protocol is put to each participant); the questions will be predetermined by the researcher, but such protocols will differ in each second interview; they are contingent on the data procured in each first interview.

To recapitulate and restate my position, this interview type is adopted because it serves the purpose of eliciting the optimum research data to answer the question. These data need to elucidate the phases of succession, and need to describe fully and interpret the theoretical and theological perspectives underpinning the successions. The Generative/Dialectic interview will allow key actors to give their perceptions of the phases, plans, theories and theologies on their own terms and according to their own narrative structures; the data produced thus relies less on the *a priori* assumptions of the interviewer and will be original contributions to the field. Such free narrations allow participants to articulate the content which they feel is important and in a narratological manner which itself may reveal data about the perceived significance of the topics being narrated. Part II gives opportunity to probe those omitted matters which the researcher (from knowledge of the literature) considers pertinent. Part II, however, still elicits narrative, again allowing for fuller explanations and latitude in responses. Part III, in putting potential alternative perspectives to the participants, will procure data concerning their reactions to their perspectives being debated and will show whether interviewees maintain previously expressed perspectives or whether they consider fresh interpretations of the
narrations to be valid, thus providing a dialectic, synthetic interpretation. In all this, we are to be reminded that the goal is thick description – full explications of how the successions were enacted and the beliefs and theories which gave rise to such enactments. The Generative/Dialectic approach allows largely unprompted narrative data yet probes and debates those articulated narratives. It will provide the fullest descriptions to answer the research question. More highly structured interviews would elicit fewer rich perspectives; non-narrative analysis such as content analysis will limit the interpretations and ability to answer the question as originally conceived.

8. Chapter summary and conclusions

This chapter has presented a specific research question for the study of founder succession within Christian movements. It has outlined the data to be produced to answer the question, and suggested that unobtrusive documentary measures and the interview are the optimal data collection methods. It has focused, furthermore, on the types of interview method, and, with due consideration of the sample population and analytical methods, it suggests a narrative analytical approach using an interview conceptualization which I have termed ‘Generative/Dialectic’. A pilot study was conducted to test these approaches to data gathering and analysis, a report of which follows.
Chapter 4

Pilot study

1. Approval of research ethics

Before beginning a pilot study, approval of research ethics for both the pilot and main study was given from the University of Manchester (Appendix F).

2. Pilot study

As standard in research interviewing (Gillham, 2000, pp.53-57), a pilot study was conducted prior to the main research phase. The aims of this pilot study were: to evaluate my conceptualization of the ‘Generative/Dialectic’ interview method supported by documentary analysis; to reflect upon a priori assumptions about the sample’s characteristics; and to analyse the nature of the interviewer/interviewee relationship.

2.1. Sample

For the pilot study, I chose the founder and successor of Ephrata Community Church, a megachurch with considerable international focus in Ephrata, Pennsylvania. The church began in 1977 under the founding leader, Barry Wissler. In 2014, after 37 years of Wissler’s pastorate, leadership was transferred to Kevin Eshleman.

Interviews I and II of the Generative/Dialectic interview method were conducted with the founder and successor (November 2017). Prior to the interviews, written statements outlining the purpose of the research, and various ethical matters had been distributed. These were reviewed at the interviews. Written consent was obtained; the interviews were recorded and transcribed. From this pilot study, observations on a number of matters can be made which confirm the research

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design previously suggested. Several minor matters were also elucidated and amended.

2.2. Interviewee characteristics

The pilot study interviews confirmed that the sample had high logo-functionary capabilities and “vested” word gifts (Clinton, 1988, pp.143, 233). I did not find that one initial open-ended question produced problematic narrations, as cautioned by Merill and West (2009, pp.119-120), or that it confirmed Thompson’s concern that such questioning might suppress interviewee response (Thompson, 2000). Indeed, the four interviews confirmed that the Christian leaders of the sample displayed the characteristics of “experts” in their field (Welch et al., 2002), and responded freely. My own knowledge of the subject seemed to enhance their facility of narration, a further characteristic of experts (Beckman and Hall, 2013; Meuser and Nagel, 2009, p.32).

2.3. Narratives

The decision to elicit data through narrative interviewing was confirmed by the pilot study. I began Interview I with an open-ended question as a narrative stimulus; lengthy and coherent narratives immediately ensued. This was also the case with most of the subsequent questions in both Interviews I and II. At times, in Interview II, attempts were made by the researcher to activate maieutic dialogue, challenging earlier responses; this did not produce alternative explanations, but showed that the respondents had reflected on their initial responses and could articulate why their original interpretations were valid. I nonetheless decided to maintain the maieutic approach in Interview II, but am more keenly aware that this might produce confirmatory responses. Such responses are nonetheless data helpful in answering the research question.

2.4. Context

The respondents seemed habituated in the interview context. I was aware that a different context might produce different data; in socio-linguistic terms, the discourse of the interview was indexical (Briggs, 1986, p.42). However, I was also
aware of the dangers of reifying or ‘entifying’ the context as something pre-existent which ‘does’ something (Valsiner, 2007). In the pilot study, I decided to treat the context as a result of the work between the interviewee and the interviewer, thus following Dilly’s classic understanding (Dilley, 1999, p.39).

The pilot study showed, furthermore, that the interview context assisted the attainment of succession narratives and reflection thereon, and that this would best be accomplished by applying Bogner and Menz’s (2009) understanding of the kinds of knowledge activated when interviewing experts. A decision was made to focus less on ‘technical knowledge’ but more so on both ‘interpretive knowledge’ and ‘process knowledge’, that is knowledge of sequences of actions and “organizational constellations” (Bogner and Menz, 2009, p.52).

2.5. Interviewer-interviewee relationship

The pilot study led to four understandings of the interviewer-interviewee dyadic relationship.

2.5.1. Rapport

Rapport was established during pre-interview conversation about the interviewee’s life, family and ministry, as well as in conversation that demonstrated their interest in this research. The genuineness of the relationship helped my goal of avoiding any ‘commodification of rapport’, as warned by Duncombe and Jessop (2002, pp.109-112) and confirmed my eschewment of Ryan and Dundon’s (2008) five-stage view of rapport creation, which I found too linear; rather, I became aware of the fluidity of rapport as an ongoing relational matter (Darlington and Scott, 2002, p.54).

Furthermore, the professional manner of the encounter helped avoid the dangers of ‘over-rapport’ (Goudy and Potter, 1975, p.530).

2.5.2. Interviewer subject position

Within Brinkmann and Kvale’s three ideal types of interviewer positions (pollster, prober or participant) I adopted the position of ‘participant’ in Interview I and ‘prober’ in Interview II, finding both satisfactory (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015, p.109).

Being aware, however, that this threefold typology does not adequately take into account the relationally locative nature of the subject positions adopted, I drew from
Johnson and Rowlands’ understanding of relational location as either ‘complimentary reciprocity’ (what I know from observation and reading) or ‘strict reciprocity’ (what I know from having been in their position or one very similar) (Johnson & Rowlands, 2012). The pilot study caused me to extend this typology by introducing the concept of ‘hybrid reciprocity’, combining elements of ‘complimentary’ (as student of the succession literature) and ‘strict’ (as one who does have experience in leadership within a Christian ministry who has transferred leadership to a successor but at the same time acknowledging that I have not founded an organization). I found this self-positioning facilitated trust and candid responses.

2.5.3. Interviewee subject position

Drawing from Foley’s (2012) typologies of subject positions, I endeavoured to activate an interviewee subject position combining ‘teacher’ (having his/her voice heard) and ‘member’ (performing as experts). The combination of generative question to stimulate narrative and probing questions succeeded in achieving this activation.

2.5.4. Power

Being aware of power asymmetry favouring the interviewer, particularly in structured interviewing (Wang and Ying, 2012), I sought to attempt greater power symmetry through open-ended narrative interviewing. Furthermore, I stressed the non-prescriptive nature of responses, allowing for dissent or disruption (Latour, 2000, p.116). The narrative interview itself facilitated equalization of power distribution. One interviewee (Eshleman Interview II, p.18) commented that he appreciated the very open-ended nature of Interview I, as it allowed his narrative to come forth readily on his terms. This approach increased the interviewee’s trust in the interviewer.

2.6. Interview questions

In general, the pilot study confirmed the interview question content, particularly for Interview II, where a more defined protocol was required. It raised three broad issues with regard to specific content. First, during Interview II, I decided not to adhere to the order of the questions if the interviewee initiated reference in one
question to a matter structured later in the interview. For the sake of fluency and to encourage narration on the matter the interviewees had now initiated, I changed the question sequence. As this facilitated narrative response, this approach was continued in the main corpus of the field research. Secondly, during Interview I, it became clearer that the nature of the post-transition dyadic relationship between predecessor and successor was significant in understanding the succession. I decided, therefore, to ask questions to elicit data on this matter (see Appendix G). Thirdly, the gendered nature of succession became evident. As a male researcher, I was interviewing men, and from my initial unsuccessful attempts to find cases with female subjects, I was becoming aware that all my cases solely contain interviews of men. Being aware of “gynopia” (Reinharz, 1985) – the inability to see women, something which is relevant to engendered interviewing (Reinharz and Chase, 2003; Schwalbe and Wolkomir, 2003) – led to an inclusion in Interview II protocols of at least one question which activated gender considerations (Eshleman Interview II Protocol, question 11 [Appendix G]; Wissler Interview II, Protocol, question 11 [Appendix H]).

2.7. Transcription

The pilot study led to a theorization of interview transcription. Aware of the fruitful data that can be provided by conservation analysis (Lerner, 2004; ten Have, 2007) and its application in empirical theology (Capps and Ochs 2002; Lehtinen 2009), I nonetheless discerned that the aim of this research (narrative and theological reflection thereon) would not require a more technical conversation/talk analysis; I thus did not adopt the standard Jeffersonian transcription conventions (Jefferson, 2004). Nonetheless, I became aware of the potential interpretive nature of transcription (Lapadat and Lindsay, 1999) and included, therefore, as many data as possible for interpretation. In practice, this led to a decision to include paralinguistic utterances.64

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64 See Gorden (1975, pp.370-393) for more on non-verbal communication.
I produced a short set of transcription guidelines (Appendix I), drawn from theoretical literature, particularly Roberts Powers (2005) and Poland (2003), and from experience in transcribing the pilot study interviews.

2.8. Documentary analysis

A small sample of documents was analyzed to test whether documents would provide a rich textual field for analysis. I procured the document “Transition plan for ECC”, written and adopted in 2012, along with the published history of the church (Ulrich, 2017). These two documents confirmed that documentary analysis would be a rich secondary source of data; they furthermore enabled the following six observations on documentary analysis. First, the documents provide a means of data corroboration. Secondly, however, it became clear that rather than a simplistic positivist data triangulation, they could, moreover, facilitate data crystallization (Merriam 2009, p.216; Richardson and St. Pierre, 2005, p.963), allowing nuanced perspectives on the succession both within the printed documents themselves and when compared to the interview transcripts.\(^65\) This relates to a third matter, namely that both printed documents and the interview transcripts were intended for different audiences, and thus had different social relations (Katriel, 2012; Howarth, 2000, p.8). They were Wolff’s ‘eigenständige methodische und situativ eingebettete Leistungen’ (Wolff, 2005, p.504). A consideration of such relations would produce richer interpretations. Fourthly, they suggested possibilities for multi-modal analysis as advocated by Björkvall (2017); Ulrich (2017) contained photographs (for example, of the transition service in 2014).\(^66\) Fifthly, they accentuated different aspects of the succession. The written transition plan was richer in theological data than any of the four interview transcripts, as it contained both comments on Scripture and exempla of leadership sites around the world as a framing for the succession plan. This

\(^{65}\) The metaphorical basis of this approach is of course that of crystals, which are seen as allowing for “an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multidimensionalities, and angles of approach. Crystals are prisms that reflect externalities and refract within themselves, creating different colors, patterns, and arrays casting off in different directions” (Richardson and St. Pierre, 2005, p.963).

\(^{66}\) For an understanding of the place for visual data in research, see Flick, 2014, pp.334-351; Banks, 2014; and Rose, 2012. Harvey writes on the analysis of visual artefacts in empirical theology (Harvey, 2014).
impinges on the sixth point, that an analysis of the intertextuality of the written documents as ‘unobtrusive measures’ (Webb et al., 1966) and interview transcripts (obtrusive measures) would provide further data for a fuller understanding of the succession. In summary, therefore, the intended research design of using documentary analysis as a supporting method to the narrative interview was confirmed by the pilot study.

3. Conclusions from the pilot study

The pilot study confirmed the proposed research design. The sample would consist of ‘experts’ with high communicative competence and vested word gifts (Clinton, 1988, pp.143 and 233). Given these sample characteristics, a narrative approach is justified; the Generative/Dialectic interviews and subsequent protocols for Interview II produced coherent narratives and rich data for analysis. The pilot study facilitated, furthermore, the refinement of the interview protocol, and made aware the need for the activation of gender and the post-succession founder/successor dyadic relationship. The study was also confirmatory of the earlier understandings of the interviewer-interviewee relationship, as well as my suggested approach to context, power and rapport. It confirmed that the narrative approach to studying founder succession within Christian movements could indeed provide narratives rich in data.
Bridging statement

In Part I, I examined literature from various fields pertaining to succession, finding little research into founder succession within Christian organizations. The few existent studies reveal poor research design, making their findings unreliable. I have suggested that one avenue to procure pertinent data for analysis is to employ narrative interviewing of both founders and successors.

In Part II, I report on the application of this approach and provide an analysis of three themes in each case study which emerged from the narratives, thus providing reflection on nine aspects of Christian founder succession. Part II concludes with a chapter juxtaposing the three successions with research literature and shows the problematic nature of each succession due in particular to a lack of theoretical and theological reflexivity by the institutions and their leaders.
Part II

... may you stop at Phoenician trading stations
to buy fine things,
mother of pearl and coral, amber and ebony...

Cavafy, Ithaka
Chapter 5

Methodological reporting from main research corpus

1. Research goals and case studies

Consistent with Punch’s approach (Punch, 2014, p.33), a goal of producing ideographic findings was established, from which I could both describe the phenomenon of founder succession, but also allow initial exploration and interpretation of the concomitant themes. Furthermore, I pursued “horizontalization imaginative variation” (Meriam, 2009, p.199; Moustakas, 1994, pp.97-98) in an attempt to see and interpret the phenomenon from different perspectives, using an interdisciplinary analysis which draws on understandings of succession not just from theology but also from social sciences.67 To obtain such ideographic knowledge, a case study approach was pursued, more specifically ‘exploratory’ case studies (according to Yin’s typology of cases [2009]), which describes and attempts tentative explanation and interpretations.

2. Sample size, method and processes

Given the anticipation of longer narrative interviews, and with a desire for deeper analysis and presentation of the cases with imaginative variation, a decision was made to include only three cases. A small n sample is still capable of producing rich data for multiple interpretations (Patton, 2002, p.245).

Maximum variation of cases within that small population was pursued in an attempt to explore diversities of approach to succession. In particular, identifying cases in different nations was a high priority in this maximum variation. Purposive sampling was thus pursued, particularly maximum variation sampling (Punch, 2014, p.162). In general, the sampling followed Miles and Huberman’s recommendations that

67 Further comment on the multi-disciplinary nature of this study is provided later.
sampling be relevant, the interested phenomena appear, produce believable
descriptions, and be feasible (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p.34). Recent studies
supported my goal, showing that maximum variation is feasible and productive
(Vohra, 2014).

Delimitation, particularly temporal, was established. A succession that had taken
place too recently might find participants still in the throes of transition, either
unduly overwhelmed or still with an idealized view of succession. Transitions
enacted too far in the past could turn the cases into historical research rather than
current practice. Attempts were made to locate cases of succession within the range
one to fifteen years prior to the research.

The three identified cases allowed for maximum variation on many aspects including
impetus for succession, power and decision-making, planning, theologies of
leadership, exogenous environment and country of origin (Sweden, USA and United
Kingdom). Variation was not achieved in two noteworthy areas, namely successor
origins (all were internally appointed successors) and gender (all three founders and
all three successors were male). This was despite multiple efforts to locate external
appointments and female founders or successors; finding no examples of either is
interesting in itself. This study may be narrower for only finding cases of internal
succession. There could be correlation between internal succession and flourishing
rather than struggling organizations (Canella and Lubatkin 1993; Allgood and Farrell,
2003), and this may limit the applicability of any findings. However, as seen in
Chapter 8, Christian ministries tend to insist on internal succession; my case studies
are thus in this regard representative of a broader population of Christian ministries.

A provisional list of potential cases was constructed through personal knowledge of
organizations and through seeking input from those who might be aware of such
potential cases. This led also to snowball sampling (Punch, 2014, p.162), producing
twenty-eight ministries to be considered more fully, three of which conformed to the
sample criteria and had founders and successors willing to participate. A statistical
categorization of reasons for rejecting the other twenty-five cases is appended
(Appendix J).
3. Data analysis

Interviews were transcribed according to the principles already outlined. Upon initial reading of the transcripts and due to there being only four transcripts per case, manual coding was developed rather than entering the transcripts into a computer program; this generated nine motifs for analysis. A ‘within-case’ analysis was employed, identifying themes in the narratives and how they were presented in the telling. At times, I drew upon other analytical methods such as metaphor analysis for a deeper comprehension of the narratives.

While this study is within the field of missiology and thus theological reflection is desired, I was also aware that there existed few studies of founder succession from theologians, yet there have been many studies in the social scientific realm. In order to initiate theological reflection, it seemed vital, therefore, to draw on the work of other fields. Thus, an interdisciplinary analysis was employed to provide multiple perspectives of succession. Theological analysis alone would be inadequate, even misleading: “The secrets of both the sacred and the secular are often revealed more in their adumbrations and interpenetrations than in their separation” (Demerath, et al., 1998, p.vi). Studying religion is not a question of materialism or theology, for “institutions are symbolic systems which have nonobservable, absolute, transrational referents and observable social relations which concretize them” (Friedland and Alford, 1991, p.249).

4. Reflexivity

This study may be viewed as both emic and etic. It is emic in that I am an evangelical Christian engaged in full-time Christian ministry, a position held in common with all the interviewees. This position proved advantageous as participants were inclined to trust the researcher. I was aware, however, that I could be sympathetic to their position and needed to develop critical ‘epochē’. On the other hand, I simultaneously was in an etic position for I was not part of the organizations studied. This allowed a greater measure of ‘epochē’ and a more critical perspective (seen in Chapter 2).

I am male, studying men in Christian leadership (despite efforts at gender inclusivity). I thus sought to activate gender considerations in the interviews by posing relevant questions concerning the role of women. As findings are from an
exclusively male sample, I am aware of limitations in application to other populations.

In seeking to record lengthy narratives by hearing from the participants in their mode, this research was largely a constructivist exercise to ascertain the self-understandings of the participants concerning succession. The following three chapters report my interpretations of the themes emerging from the narratives in an attempt to move towards an understanding of founder succession and to answer the research question concerning plans, enactments, theories and theologies of each succession.
Chapter 6

International Aid Services

1. Introduction

International Aid Services (IAS) is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) founded by Leif Zetterlund (born 1952, Swedish, male) and team of workers in 1989 with the purpose of assisting conflict affected populations in South Sudan. Zetterlund and his family had worked for several years in government-controlled Juba and had seen the plight of the people. Sudan’s Peoples Liberation Army was fighting for independence, while the Lord’s Resistance Army was active towards the Ugandan border kidnapping children and forcing them to become soldiers. Local people lacked necessities such as water and food, but many aid agencies left Juba. In these circumstances, Zetterlund launched IAS on New Year’s Eve 1989 (the original acronym stood for International Aid Sweden, which was later changed to International Aid Services as it grew from being a solely Sweden-based organization). Leif Zetterlund (LZ) led the ministry for 25 years from its inception until 2014. 68

IAS’s vision is a ‘godly transformed society’. Its mission is articulated as “to save lives, promote self-reliance and dignity through human transformation, going beyond relief and development” (2015 Annual Report, p.4). This is a Christian ministry “abiding by Christian values”. 69 The core values are expressed as missions, integrity, relational leadership and teamwork, empathy (compassion) and equality. 70

By 2015, the ministry was working in ten countries, primarily in the Horn of Africa/Eastern Africa, supported by four offices in Europe and the USA. The Alliance head office is located in Stockholm. The organization had some 350

68 Much of this information is from http://www.ias-intl.org/?page_id=1177 (Accessed: 24 January, 2018)
70 See Appendix K for full statement of values.
employees, of which 95% in the programme countries were indigenous, not ex-patriot. By that time over 6 million people had been assisted by IAS, with, for example, over 5 000 wells having been drilled. IAS’s annual budget is approximately $9.5 million (USD). Income is largely through donations and grants from individuals, churches, businesses, governmental agencies (Sida\textsuperscript{71} and USAID) as well as international agencies (UNICEF, UNHCR).\textsuperscript{72}

1.1. Plans and processes

As a general preparation for new leadership, all original members of the international board relinquished their board positions. The founder saw this as “phase one” of the succession (LZ Interview I, p.1). Subsequently, some two years prior to the succession, there was a general sense among the leadership of the ministry that new leadership structures and vision might be needed given the changing political and donor environment in which the ministry functioned. In 2012, Douglas Mann, chair of the IAS international executive board, raised the matter of succession with the founder (LZ Interview I, p.3). There was no specific activating event but “I think it was more seeing the fact, the old man is getting old and one day he will not be around. Why wait until it is getting late. Let’s do something before it is too late” (LZ Interview I, p.17). The founder asked Mann to lead the succession planning. Candidates were considered and interviewed. Daniel Zetterlund (son of Leif – born 1981, Swedish, male) (DZ) had grown up within IAS, often as a child volunteering to assist the mission. Between 2007 and 2012 he was the director of IAS Sudan. While in Khartoum, in May 2013, at this point working at the Swedish embassy, Daniel received a call from the president of the IAS international board stating that the board was considering a successor, that they would prefer to find an internal candidate. Consultations ensued, resulting in February 2014 with the Executive Board unanimously offering the position of CEO to Daniel Zetterlund. Wider consultation took place with field workers (LZ Interview I, p.22). The Executive Board’s recommendation was approved by the General Assembly in May 2014.

\textsuperscript{71} Sida is an acronym for ‘Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency’ (Styrelsen för Internationellt Utvecklingssamarbete), the overseas aid department of the Swedish government.

Daniel served the following six months as deputy CEO (Press Release, June 23, 2014 – Appendix L). There was no specific training or successor socialization. Daniel Zetterlund became CEO on 1 January 2015, and a celebrative ceremony of installation was held in March 2015 in Yei, South Sudan.

The successor instituted what he calls a “rebirth process” (DZ Interview I, p.19) with restructuring to increase capacity to reach objectives; it was a framework which allowed for geographic expansion. A new partnership alliance was crafted to build capacity; legal changes were made. The previous board was dissolved; a new legal board was put in place. The Swedish office became the international office. Audits took place to clarify the financial status of the organization. Having led IAS to change its global governance structures, DZ developed a 5-year strategic plan entitled “Fit for Purpose”.73 As a successor to an entrepreneurial founder, DZ’s hope is that, “I’m harnessing the positive energy that is there and elevating that in a more structured way...That’s what I would like,” adding, “It’s a different time now” (DZ Interview II, p.24).

The founder, Leif Zetterlund, and successor, Daniel Zetterlund, were each interviewed twice in Stockholm, Sweden in March 2018.

1.2. Documents

Documents examined (all accessed: 28 May, 2018) included: the IAS website, especially the report (written, photographic and video) of the transition ceremony in South Sudan;74 the 23 June, 2014 press release announcing the appointment of Daniel Zetterlund as CEO (Appendix L); and the 2015 Annual Report.75

To understand succession within IAS, three themes will be analyzed: change of leadership style, paternal-filial transition and the succession ceremony in South Sudan as theological text. The conclusion will be reached that all three cohere to

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74 http://www.ias-intl.org/?page_id=1177
provide an organizational succession Gestalt, through which holistic interpretations may be posited.

2. Succession as transition from entrepreneurial to professional leadership style

A dominant understanding of the succession from founders of new religious movements and organizations is Weber’s (1964) thesis that founding charisma is routinized with transition from charismatic authority to a more bureaucratic-based authority. This conceptualization continues to guide understandings of founder succession in Christian movements (Owens 2002; Habib 2014). It is, however, moderated by Andelson (1991), who shows that charismatic leadership may continue beyond the founder where there was a theology which allowed for multiple charisma, and by Melton (1991), who shows that in the modern world, founders often establish vast international organizations and bureaucracies which perpetuate their mission, regardless of any one individual. While initially a new movement is an extension of the founder’s ideas and dreams, once the vision has been enunciated and teachings imparted, it exists independently of the founder and develops a life of its own. Indeed, as many modern organizations will need legal registration (often in many countries) with concomitant boards and structures, there is today far less focus on founding charisma and power concentration.

Rather than becoming mired in the debate over routinization of charisma itself, it might be more helpful in this case study to view the succession from the dynamic of change of leadership style and thereby to adopt other terminology, now broadly accepted within organizational studies, namely that of ‘entrepreneurial’ and ‘professional’ styles of leadership. This approach draws on the work of Tashakori (1980) and Schein (1983) from business studies and Kondrath (2010) from empirical theology. Schein (1983) explores the ways and means by which founders embed organizational culture. Schein shows that founder-owners and professional managers tend to differ in four key areas: motivational and emotional orientation, analytical orientation, interpersonal orientation and structural/positional perspectives. Entrepreneurs subconsciously embed non-economic assumptions into

76 Explained in Chapter 1.
the culture, which a professional manager will want to rationalize. This can create conflict as such rationalization may challenge perceived organizational culture (Balser and Carmin, 2009). Tashakori (1980) specifically employs the terminology of ‘entrepreneurial’ and ‘professional’ leadership style to posit that succession is not merely a change of person but invariably a change of leadership style. Entrepreneurial style displays characteristics such as the leader’s regular involvement in detail, little planning, reactive financial planning, little input from others, informal reward systems, few formal control systems (and if there are plans, they are not followed or often changed). Tashakori believes that the core characteristic is the involvement in detail which is the founder’s “delegation contract” (Tashakori, 1980, p.15). Conversely, successors employed a professional leadership style,77 with characteristics such as written plans, fewer changes to plans, delegation to others, formal evaluations, a change from oral to written reporting, decisions based on empirical data rather than intuition, and formal structures: “The core characteristic of professional management is the professional manager’s involvement in operations decisions by exception (that is to say, when there is a deviation from plan) rather than on a routine basis” (Tashakori, 1980, p.23). That founder succession is about change of style and not just person was confirmed by Kondrath (2010) in his study of founder succession in three Christian ministries.

The appointment of DZ as successor to the founder of IAS may be viewed in a similar light to the analyses of Schein, Tashakori and Kondrath, namely that of succession as transition from entrepreneurial to professional leadership. This assertion stems from seven factors.

First, DZ applies an understanding of organizational life cycles to discern the stage of development and thus which actions were needed to allow not merely for continuation but “rebirth”.78

So this organizational rebirth, after 20, 25 years, very typical as well I think in organizational development basis. You have that defining moment. Whenever you want to speed up into the next gear, if you don’t address these issues that you’ve identified, you will probably start to decline. But if you do address them properly, you, maybe, will

77 See glossary.
78 For further understanding of organization life cycle, see Adizes (1988).
probably have rebirth and you can shoot off again in a new shape and form (DZ Interview I, p.17).

Second, and in response to discerning the life cycle stage, DZ embarked upon organizational audits, to assess IAS’s strengths and weaknesses. This showed strengths such as *esprit de corps* and strong relational connections between workers (DZ Interview I, p.15), but also significant deficiencies in “infrastructure and hardware.… But this exercise helped us to see why. Because we simply didn’t like it! It was not part of our DNA as an organization necessarily” (DZ Interview I, p.16). Seeing such organizational resistance, external consultants were introduced, itself a move towards greater management professionalization. Such steps show professionalization as posited in Schein’s change in analytical and motivational orientations and Tashakori’s emphasis on empirical data in decision-making. There is, furthermore, a turning from an implicit agency theory, often prevalent in founder-led businesses. Agency theory states that there is a natural alignment of founder and agents (managers, staff) which decreases the need for formal supervision and governance mechanisms, thus reducing agency costs (Poza, 2004, p.14). DZ’s stance, however, follows the contrary understandings of Gomez-Mejía, Nuñez-Nickel, and Gutierrez (2001) who revealed the lack of supervision in such alignments actually increases agency costs. DZ’s change is a sign of professionalization through a different interpersonal orientation (Schein, 1983).

This relates closely to a third professionalization marker, the emphasis of financial clarity and restructuration. The successor felt that due attention to such matters had been lacking, resulting in the impossibility of gaining a comprehensive understanding of the financial status of the global organization. This facilitated the realization that existent audits would henceforward be inadequate for the procurement of grants from Sida and the European Union. A decision was made to conduct a “fully consolidated audit” (DZ Interview I, p.25) and to pay a considerable fee for this to be completed. The founder balked at such expenditure, thus showing a value difference between founder and successor, and a shift in analytical orientation and structural perspectives (Schein). Rather than a mere pragmatic professional rationale, however, for the successor this was part of his service to God: “I want IAS to prosper; not for IAS’s sake. But I think the Gospel, you know, deserves it. I think the Lord
deserves better” (DZ Interview I, p.28). For DZ, greater professionalization honours God, thus providing a theological rationale, not merely a managerial one.

A fourth marker was organizational cultural shift. This may be seen in a number of matters: greater globally centralized leadership (DZ Interview I, p.18); increased reliance on and consolidation of procedures and documents (DZ Interview I, p.17-18); formalization of a truly international office rather than only national offices. This reflects Schein’s structural/positional perspectives and Tashakori’s comments on both greater formality and the transition from oral to written reporting.

Professionalization led, moreover, to change in corporate governance structures. IAS branches in the USA, Denmark, Norway, Germany and Sweden were each legally responsible for various matters, yet the implementation and decision-making in actuality resided with the Swedish office. This status was changed to provide the Swedish branch full legal ownership of IAS (international) (DZ Interview I, pp.20-21). The successor clarified that his status was as an employee of the organization, accountable to the board (DZ Interview I, p.18). This change reflects Kondrath’s recommendation that in order for Christian ministries to weather succession successfully, others must be involved in the change process, with a greater dissemination of ownership of the ministry. I suggest, furthermore, that DZ’s enhancement of board power is also a noted feature of founder succession power distribution change. Block and Rosenberg (2002) discerned that founders of charities led in different ways to non-founders; a larger percentage of founder leaders exercise greater influence and power than non-founders, including in matters such as reduced board meeting frequency and higher frequency of founders establishing board agendas and approving minutes before distribution. DZ’s views on board authority are in accord with the professionalization of founder succession found by Block and Rosenberg (2002).

A sixth marker of professionalization is the refined and focused strategy, evidenced in the *Fit for Purpose* document. The strategy sought to emphasize core values, which facilitated strategic decision-making:

So, that strategy is framing the vision. It’s not saying we will go to Libya tomorrow, but we’re putting the framework of a geographical expansion, we’re putting the priorities here and those kinds of things. It means also we need to say ‘no’ to things. If people want us to start programming in Zambia, we will say ‘thank you, but no thank you’. Because our heart and passion and drive is for this region because in terms of spiritual needs, humanitarian needs, human rights needs, development needs, this is the area that we should focus on (DZ Interview I, pp.19-20).

A seventh and final factor in professionalization was the implementation of a corporate communications strategy in order to ensure that the global vision was clear and decisions were made in accordance with the strategy. The successor believed the prior lack of communication was a classic trait of new, entrepreneurial organizations:

IAS, as an organization, has grown very organically. It is driven by a strong vision, but the vision is not necessarily communicated... It’s been up to everyone to run their own thing, essentially. All these little countries popping up like mushrooms and little kingdoms, running their own bookkeeping systems, all their procedural stuff. And then, along the way, and this I think is very classical for organizations coming from a very strong family spirit into something, okay, you need to do something in order to enhance further growth (DZ Interview I, p.16-17).

The development of enhanced communications was seen by Kondrath as a crucial need in second-generation leadership (Kondrath, 2010).

While it is the position of this thesis that IAS succession was an enactment of greater professionalization, there are, however, a number of ways in which this study contradicts or extends current understandings of the change from entrepreneurial to professional leadership style. The literature (Tashakori, 1980; Schein, 1983) might imply that the two styles are mutually dichotomous. This seems particularly the case with Tashakori’s findings that entrepreneurial founders are unstructured, lacking in clear plans and policies to achieve their goals, and especially likely to generate problems through over-involvement (Tashakori, 1980, p.30). In the case of IAS, the
founder had, however, created a functioning organization, with written goals, which had achieved much. Tashakori also found that founders were reluctant to relinquish leadership (Tashakori, 1980, especially pp.35-40). In the case of IAS, LZ was aware of the need to do so, acknowledging that the cultural and political environments of 2014 were different from those of 1989:

So, and I think if you talk a structural – I think this is where you have a difference between a well-organized organization that doesn’t have this kind of background as ours. Uh, everything is in writing. Everything is very structured, well worked on, well, well, well documented. I – I think that is part of our weaknesses under my leadership, that everything was not documented, and he has picked up on that and put it in proper systems (LZ Interview I, p.16).

Indeed, for his founding creation to expand and be more effective, LZ knew a different leadership approach was necessary:

So I could see that bringing in somebody from that point of view, now when bureaucracy is becoming a number one thing for donors and partners and systems must be in place, it might be a very healthy thing for the organization in order to grow forward, grow both in depth and what also be able to – to – to actually spread out to other countries as well (LZ Interview I, p.9).

In two further areas, moreover, IAS succession did not reflect the findings of other succession literature, namely that the post-succession relationship between founder and successor was absent of the many problems in other post-succession relationships (Tashakori, 1980, pp.64-70), and that an internal appointment resulted nonetheless in change of style. This is contrary to findings that “longtime executives have a propensity to adopt the owner/founder’s style of management” (Tashakori, 1980, p.107).

A closer examination of the successor shows, furthermore, that professionalization need not imply an undue reliance on bureaucracy and administration. DZ was appointed precisely because he also possessed visionary insight (LZ Interview I, p.5, 19; DZ Interview II, p.18). DZ’s faith, including belief in God’s speaking to Christians today through thoughts, ideas and even specific intervening prophecies, is a constitutive factor in DZ’s vision. This matter is treated by Edwards (2018) with his thesis that bureaucracy is violence and that the Christian message of peace runs
contrary to bureaucratic totalizing (Edwards, 2018, p.211), and subverts the controlling norms of bureaucracy. While there is much in Edwards which shows the negative impact of bureaucracy, Edwards, however, overly reifies bureaucratic structures as inherently evil, for there is “an unquestioned expectation that formal procedures are the best imaginable means of solving particular issues. In all such processes, there is an invalid application of the principle which veers towards pervasive formal control” (Edwards 2018, p.199). In the case of IAS, I argue that increased professionalization enhanced their ministry.

The successor’s clear belief in God’s speaking to His people motivates his enthusiasm for his work as well as provides ideas for specific strategies:

I’m looking at Lebanon, Syria, Libya, Sudan. And I live in Morocco now. That’s a different story. But there are so many visions and dreams and prophecies on how the whole region will just be swept across from the far west, which is Morocco, to the Far East, probably somewhere down in Indonesia, right? So very exciting times (DZ Interview I, p.11).

The spiritual and visionary nature of DZ’s leadership may also be seen in his receiving a prophetic utterance from an intercessor concerning how IAS should “dig deeper” in its ministry. The prophetic *ipsissima verba* were used to frame and entitle a funding campaign for borehole drilling in Africa called “We Dig Deeper”.\(^{80}\) The successor’s vision is not merely to continue the work of IAS but to become a significant organization within the international development and evangelical missionary sector, bridging both organizational fields (see appendix M for DZ’s statement on operating in these two sectors).

While this thesis is that IAS founder succession enacted entrepreneurial to professional leadership style change, this should not be perceived in terms of binary opposites but that both founder and successor find their place on a continuum, where both display aspects of entrepreneurial as well as professional leadership style.

The change of leadership style has, moreover, served IAS well. Applying Greiner’s widely supported theory of evolutionary and revolutionary stages in an

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organization’s development (Greiner, 1991), DZ’s markers of professionalization comport with Greiner’s “coordination” stage (for example, more centralized governance and coordination of decision-making) (Greiner, 1991, pp.350-351). An organization in such a phase tends to require the kinds of changes DZ introduced in management style. That such professionalization was necessary may be seen in the changing nature of Sida funding, no longer to individual organizations but to “framework organizations” who, in turn, redistribute funds. The Swedish government now grants funds to the Swedish Missionary Council, of which IAS is a member. Indeed, IAS now receives more money from the Swedish Missionary Council than any other group (DZ Interview I, p.32). The greater professionalization of IAS has meant that the ministry may take advantage of such funding opportunities.

3. Oedipus or Orestes? Succession as paternal-filial transition

As the literature shows, successions are complex and multi-faceted. In the case of IAS, the succession was from father to son, the relational dynamics of which raise a number of specific questions. This section will seek a tripartite examination of the paternal-filial nature of the succession: first, by suggesting an interpretative framework drawing on business studies, ethics, theology and psychology; second, by providing an exogenous and endogenous problematizing of IAS father-son succession; and third by seeking to understand and evaluate that succession in light of the framework proposed above.

3.1. Interpretative framework

3.1.1. Family business

IAS was an organization in which several family members were involved, including occupying paid positions within the charity. Of course, family members working together is common in most societies in the form of family businesses. Research into family business succession may help inform the familial nature of IAS succession. While larger companies may well look outside the organization for succession, as fewer people have the skills needed for larger corporate leadership,81 father-son

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81 Chapter 7 discusses internal/external succession more fully.
succession within family enterprises is common (Ward, 1987; Cabrera-Suarez, De Saa-Perez and Garcia-Almeida, 2001; Poza, 2004), as increasingly is father-daughter succession (Halkias et al., 2011). Indeed, father-son succession is often expected by the family and employees (Poza, 2004, pp.122-124). Within a family business, succession may, nonetheless, be problematic. Contributing factors may include: incongruent hierarchies between business and family (Poza 2004, p.58; Barnes and Kaftan 1991, pp.119-126 and 134-147); poor intrafamilial communication (Poza, Johnson and Alfred, 1998; Habbershon and Astrachan, 1997); founders remaining in post too long (Barnes and Kaftan, 1991, p.153; Daily and Dollinger, 1992); disharmonious relationship between father and son (Dyck et al., 2002), of which the life stage of the protagonists may be influential (Davis and Tagiuri, 1989); and lack of acknowledgement that title, power, control and responsibility should transfer simultaneously (Dyck et al., 2002, p.149).

Notwithstanding the above, paternal-filial succession within business may be successfully navigated when certain factors are present: the business enacts resource-based strategies, where there is realistic understanding of and exploitation of strengths (Cabrera-Suarez, De Saa-Perez and Garcia-Almeida, 2001); appropriate professional governance structures (Poza, 2004, p.25); the fortuitous age of the founder (for example, founders in their 40s tend not to see company problems they have created, but they do when they are older [Poza, Hanlon and Kishida, 2004]); the age-affected dyadic relationship between father and son (Davis and Tagiuri [1989] show that the relationship tends to be most harmonious when the father is in his 50s and the son between 23 and 33, but more problematic when the father is in his 60s and the son 34-40); mutual agreement concerning timing of transference (Dyck et al., 2002, p.149); and role of founder. Sonnenfeld and Spence (1989) provided researchers with a fourfold typology of founder role in succession (monarch, general, ambassador and governor), to which Poza has added ‘inventor’ and ‘transition czar’ (Poza, 2004, pp.27-33). Literature concurs that the monarch and general role do not provide for good succession (that is, not releasing responsibility or even regaining power subsequent to succession) (Daily and Dollinger 1992; Poza, 2004). I will later suggest that LZ’s conduct was of the ambassador type.
3.1.2. Public ethics

A second matter which may contribute to a framework in which to analyze IAS’s father-son succession is that of public ethics. In modern liberal democracies, there may be a suspicion of father-son succession, commonly viewed as nepotism.\(^{82}\) A meritocratic society values appointments according to talent rather than familial connections. Prevailing suspicion of familial appointments by public officials has, furthermore, led to such appointments being unlawful in many countries.\(^{83}\)

3.1.3. Empirical and systematic theology

Despite concerns about nepotism in government, father-son founder succession in large and in international Christian ministries is common (certainly in the USA). Appendix N shows many well-known international ministries or megachurches where a son succeeded his father in leadership. Many fathers as well as the successor sons claim that their succession was successful (Mullins, 2015; Shibley;\(^{84}\) Osteen\(^{85}\)). Mullins asserts that the son being known to key stakeholders is helpful in that his strengths may be released, but the organization will know his limitations and how to mitigate them; the son is likely to be committed to the mission and culture of the organization.

Paternal-filial transitions in Christian ministries are not, however, immune from difficulty, even painful failure. Those enacting father-son successions within Christian ministries may benefit from awareness of the following factors. There should be a similar vision and way of operating, a factor seen in the aborted succession of Charles Stanley, senior pastor of First Baptist Church, Atlanta, to Andy Stanley. The father had announced that he would be succeeded by his son; during the transition preparations, the son noted that he had both a different directional vision to and way of operation from his father; he thus aborted the succession (Mullins, 2015,

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\(^{82}\) See glossary.

\(^{83}\) In the USA, for example, it is forbidden under US code 5 USC 3110 (b). Available at: https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/USCODE-2010-title5/html/USCODE-2010-title5-partIII-subpartB-chap31-subchapI-sec3110.htm (Accessed: 14 July 2018).

\(^{84}\) Correspondence with founder, 27 August 2018. (Cited with permission)

pp.73-74), causing pain to many.\textsuperscript{86} Full authority, furthermore, must be transferred from father to son. The lack of authority transference has notably been problematic when Robert H. Schuller in 2006 transferred leadership of the Crystal Cathedral and associated Hour of Power broadcasting to his son, Robert A. Schuller. In 2008 the father reasserted his own leadership of the ministry, stating: “For this lack of shared vision and the jeopardy in which this is placing this entire ministry, it has become necessary for Robert and me to part ways”.\textsuperscript{87} The son’s explanations were that his father did not release power, there was no formal agreement and that sibling rivalries complicated the matter (Mullins, 2015, pp.8-9). These explanations seem little different from the findings of Barnes both on fathers resuming power and sibling rivalry complicating succession in family businesses (Barnes, 1991, p.212).

Robert Schuller’s comments point, furthermore, to the need for a clear plan accepted by all key stakeholders. Moreover, theological assumptions are better articulated and agreed. Due to the prevalence of many well-known Christian leaders transferring leadership to children, Schenck, a well-known leader in American evangelicalism, believes father-son transition may be viewed as a sign of God’s special blessing. This may, however, cause painful reactions within a son who does not wish to follow his father. Such an expectation, Schenck admits, caused “rupture” in his own family (Schenck, 2018, pp.46-47).

Even if the son wishes and is qualified to succeed his father, it does not entail that the succession is free of problems. Sons may feel that need to be like their father, and indeed others may expect that of them. This may hamper effective leadership unless the son is able to enact healthy differentiation and individuation. This is illustrated by Joel Osteen, successor to his father at the megachurch Lakewood Church in Texas:

When I first started preaching, I thought I had to have a long opening text with forty support scriptures, like my dad. And during the week I thought I had to walk the halls and talk to everyone like he did. These

things didn’t suit my personality, though, and I struggled to find a balance between who I really was and who everyone expected me to be (Interview, 19 February 2013, reported in Mullins, 2015, p.109).

Eventually Osteen needed to individuate in order to lead: “Some people didn’t stand with me, but I had a strength from God to say ‘You will not pigeon-hole me into being who you want me to be: I will be who God wants me to be’” (Interview, 19 February 2013, reported in Mullins, 2015, p.109). Jerry Falwell, Jr. at Liberty University speaks in similar terms: “I had to break everyone of the notion that everything would be done just the way Dad did it. You have to be yourself .... don’t try to copy other people” (Interview, 18 February 2013, reported in Mullins, 2015, p.110). Similarly, in family business research, Barnes found that successor children, in order to flourish in their new roles, needed to develop both a new self-identity as well as a new identity in the eyes of others around them (Barnes, 1991, p.215).

Despite the number of Christian organizations enacting father-son transition, there seems to be relatively little theological, rather than organizational, reflection on this matter. Tushima (2016) is one such reflection, studying contemporary leadership succession patterns in Pentecostal and charismatic churches and movements. Tushima believes that succession to a son, or indeed other family members including spouse, is common in such movements, focusing his work on the African context, which he believes took American Pentecostal succession as its model. Indeed, American Pentecostalism is replete with father-son transitions (Robins, 2010, p.131) such as Kenneth E. Hagin to his son, Kenneth Hagin, Jr. (Tushima, 2016, p.6). African examples cited are the succession in the Church of God Mission International in Nigeria from Benson Idahosa to both his wife and son (1998) as well as succession within New Anointing Ministry from Godwin Ikyernum, first to his wife, and then to his son, Joshua (Tushima, 2016, p.7). Tushima posits that much of Pentecostalism has a social inferiority complex. He sees the emphasis of the prosperity gospel and the amassing of wealth as an attempt by Pentecostals for social advancement; when this is successful and ministries acquire significant assets, financial concerns induce leaders to place confidants around them. This environment leads towards only trusting family members and hence family preferment. This is supported by Ngomane (2013) who shows the extent to which African charismatic movements concentrate on fundraising rather than the development of leaders.
Tushima’s conclusions are that Jesus established collegial leadership based on the gifts of his followers; others in the New Testament were appointed to lead on the basis of doctrine, character and the traditions handed down by the apostles (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9) and not “familial affiliation” (Tushima, 2016, p.6). He sees no evidence that either Christ or the early apostles and sub-apostolic leaders made familial appointments (Tushima, 2016, p.6). He believes that a change from collegial leadership to “sole proprietary managerial leadership patterns” (Tushima, 2016, p.7) correlates with family succession. In summary: “Following in the example of Jesus, familial affiliation should not be the criterion for advancing in the leadership hierarchy, leading to succession in a Christian ministry setting” (Tushima, 2016, p.7).

What Tushima does not explore, however, is whether appropriate character or gift and family connection are mutually exclusive categories; this leaves ambiguity in his position. While not explicitly stating their exclusivity, his reiteration of comments on finding no family connections in biblical and apostolic successions and by juxtaposing this with stating that family connection was not the criterion for appointment, leaves a putative interpretation that family membership is an exclusionary characteristic * per se*. It could be on the other hand that he does leave open the possibility that a family member may be a successor as long as the relationship is not the *ratio decidendi* for the succession. While Tushima is unclear in this regard, I argue that it is indeed possible for a son also to display the qualities for Christian leadership which Tushima advocates as the criteria for succession; thus, relationship and character are not mutually exclusive categories.

### 3.1.4. Psychoanalytical perspectives

In seeking to draw from theoretical understandings of father-son succession to be able better to analyze IAS’s succession, attention is also turned to the field of psychoanalysis, particularly the work of Eisold (2008). He suggests the replacement of the Oedipal myth as a means to understand succession with that of Orestes, as this “offers a more complex and promising view of the intergenerational transfer of leadership and authority” (Eisold, 2008, p.619) with the introduction by Athena of

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88 Described in some detail in Chapter 1.
89 *Oedipus the King* (Sophocles, 1960)
90 *The Eumenides* (Aeschylus, 1974)
the first court of law to decide intrafamilial matters. Eisold’s main recommendation is that of a dispassionate organ (such as a search committee) to appoint a successor in all cases, including potential instances of intrafamilial succession.

3.2. Exogenous and endogenous problematizing of the enactment of IAS father-son succession

Having framed this topic with reference to business, ethics, theology and psychology, an attempt will be made at both an exogenous and endogenous problematizing of the paternal-filial succession enacted within IAS, before seeking evaluation according to the aforementioned framework.

3.2.1. Exogenous problems

The most significant exogenous problem the ministry faced was that of judgment from others concerning nepotism. The leadership of IAS took this potential, imputed nepotism into account through a number of strategies.

There was full recognition of potential accusations. Referring to father-son succession, LZ remarks: “And uh, in America, it’s not very unusual, but in Sweden, it is almost a crime…. So it’s extremely sensitive and we wanted to avoid any kind of nepotism here, as much as it was ever possible” (LZ Interview I, p.7). This sensitivity continues post-succession:

We have always tried to kill the kind of rumour of family organization because it is not, but it could be seen as that. We, of course, have been a hundred percent aware of this. So, a... we are very careful in how to handle that... So it should not be seen as a family issue still (LZ Interview I, pp.9-10).

Such concerns were not foundationless, as evidenced when a representative of the Swedish government raised the matter subsequently (see below). It is indubitably with imputed nepotism in mind that the press release announcing Daniel’s

91 While not a classicist, Eisold’s interpretation of the establishment of impartial mechanisms for justice and decision-making is consistent with renowned classicists such as Thomson (1968, p.259) and with understandings of the Athenian nomophulakia (Cawkwell, 1988). To this, I would add that the drama is not proposing a one-time expediency but establishing a good governance principle: “The people of Athens shall have this council forever” (The Eumenides - Aeschylus, 1974, line 683).
appointment stressed how the board had evaluated “numerous qualified candidates”.

A second strategy was LZ’s recusal from the appointment, as well as communication of this recusal: “And today I’m glad it was on that level because it was not a father/son kind of issue. It was on a completely different level. And I was not actually involved in the decision-making process at all here” (Leif Zetterlund Interview I, pp.3-4).

Further strategies include that a body of people (the international board), not the founder/father, led the process and made the decision. Furthermore, there was agreement from staff in many nations, which mitigated suspicion of this being a family matter.

Further to the above strategies, attention is drawn to the post-succession strategy that good governance practices were confirmed and communicated, so that the management of the ministry was not seen as intrafamilial but according to recognized good practice. That this was a strategy and was boldly communicated may be seen when the matter of imputed nepotism was raised by a representative of the Swedish government. This related both to LZ and DZ but also to DZ’s brother, Andreas, who also works for IAS:

The head of internal audits for Sida, the Swedish government... They were sitting in a high-level meeting with us, evaluating our programs and stuff. And he started pinpointing at family issues. And he didn’t get to the point. He spoke very indirectly. And I was sitting next to my brother. He said, “You’re handling government money. You need to be careful”. I said, “What are you talking about? Are you talking about me and my brother?” And I just laid my hand around my brother and said, “Yeah, he’s my brother. You can’t take that away from us. We’re in the same organization”.

But then I tried to say, “We have these policies in place. This is how we structure our work in order to safeguard that we’re not making decisions that, you know, our family ties tie into”.

And he said, “Okay, good” (DZ Interview I, p.45).

92 Appendix L.
Despite the above strategies and statements, a critical evaluation of IAS in this regard still reveals inadequacies. The appointment was made by the boards and not the founding father, but nevertheless the board may have still been influenced through the founder’s power. Board members had worked with the founder over years and may not have been fully independent from the founder; Block and Rosenberg (2002) show how great a founder’s power over a board of a charity may be. Furthermore, IAS may have left itself open to charges of nepotism by not enacting a fully transparent and public application process where other candidates also had the opportunity officially to apply for the post, rather than simply being considered by the board. A greater degree of corporate reflexivity may have led to such actions which would increase transparency and thus further counter suspicions of nepotism.

### 3.2.2. Endogenous difficulties

Further to the exogenous problem of imputed nepotism, father-son succession raised matters endogenous to IAS, including an assumption of successor knowledge (and thereby lack of successor socialization), the complexities of a multi-layered dyadic relationship between founder and successor, where work decisions and family relationships might be mutually affected, and the difficulty for a son to lead a father.

DZ believes successor socialization was inadequate. There were no documents or a written brief concerning issues that he was to address as he began his tenure. In short, there was no customary socialization for an incoming CEO; the father-son dynamic was partly responsible for that (DZ Interview, I, p.37-38). The second endogenous problem might have been the successor needing to challenge, criticize or confront the decisions of the founder. Daniel’s assessment is that “it adds some complexity because we’re father and son...But I think we’ve been handling that quite well” (DZ Interview I, p.39). The successor feels that he has asked his father not to be involved in some matters and is making the changes he feels the organization needs. In this, he appreciates the support of his chief financial officer, a neutral colleague who enforces certain policies and does not allow any interference from the founder.
3.3. Interpretations

3.3.1. Applying the framework

Given how paternal-filial succession was enacted, especially in light of imputed nepotism and potential endogenous intra-family problems, how might this succession be interpreted in light of the frameworks provided by business, ethics, theology and psychology? A number of interpretations are suggested.

Regarding the broader ethical concerns of potential nepotism, the actual strategies implemented by IAS have already been enumerated. Following Eisold’s model, I suggest these strategies form part of an adoption of the Oresteian approach, namely the establishment of an independent body to guide the process (board of directors). Not only is this helpful in terms of external communications to a suspicious society, it does address the three matters recognized by Eisold in succession: the need for an impartial body; the removal of inter-personal subjective emotions from the process; and the representation of broader society. I suggest Eisold’s three factors were duly addressed when the board made the decision, and in so doing reduced intrafamilial pressures, and, furthermore, duly recognized the interests of stakeholders (donors, intercessors, worldwide staff and especially grant-making institutions and public bodies). At a personal psychoanalytic level, it furthermore assisted the founder and successor to have confidence in the appointment and not feel guilt over family advancement.

The enactment of succession, furthermore, avoided some of the pitfalls of intra-family succession in business. IAS deployed the appropriate professional governance structures necessary in family enterprises (Poza, 2004, p.25). The initiation of the board on this matter, furthermore, ensured that the potential problem of the founder’s remaining in post too long (Daily and Dollinger 1992) was avoided, and that the findings of Dyck et al. – that title, power, control and responsibility need to transfer simultaneously – were enacted in the transition (Dyck et al., 2002, p.149). Even protagonist age shows us that the founder leaving office in their 60s tends to allow for smoother transitions than when younger (Poza, Hanlon and Kishida, 2004).

While in some ways the succession corroborated previous findings, IAS succession did not, however, support previous research in two areas. According to Barnes
(1991) and Poza (2004, p.58) “incongruent hierarchies” between business and family are very problematic. I suggest that in the case of IAS such incongruent hierarchies existed; for example, the successor was not the oldest son. Yet, contrary to Barnes and to Poza, such incongruences were not causative of problems. This was due to such hierarchies being reified as separate entities, and the determinative factor in appointment being the giftedness of the successor candidate. IAS’s succession furthermore did not support Davis and Tagiuri’s findings that the dynamics of a father in his 60s and son in mid-30s are not conducive to a convivial relationship when working together. This was not problematic due to a number of relevant factors including the founder’s perception that it was the appropriate time to resign. Applying Sonnenfeld and Spence’s (1989) and Poza (2004) typologies, LZ acted according to the “ambassador” role of departing founder. This type steps aside for others, transfers full authority and does not seek self-reassertion, but is available for “diplomatic or representational duties on behalf of the corporation” (Poza, 2004, pp.29-30). LZ, with DZ’s agreement, remains active in a representational capacity and is available for advice if asked (LZ Interview II, p.6).

In turning to the framework of theology, particularly the five observations of paternal-filial succession within other Christian movements (above), a number of evaluations may be made. Both founder and successor were motivated by similar vision and led from a similar values system. There was full transfer of title, power and authority (as recommended by Dyck et al., 2002, p.149). This is seen very clearly at the succession ceremony in South Sudan.93 The transition was agreed by all key stakeholders, including staff around the world (unlike succession of the Crystal Cathedral). There appear to be no unarticulated theological differences (see following section). Finally, as recommended by other son-successors in Christian ministry, the son was able to differentiate his leadership from that of his father, as seen, for example, in the greater professionalization of leadership (Mullins, 2015, pp.109-110). While Tushima might not approve of the father-son succession, I suggest that DZ does display the qualities which Tushima posits as qualifications for

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93 This ceremony is subject to fuller analysis in the following section.
inheriting Christian leadership. The IAS succession is one of biblical and character qualities for leadership coalescing with familial relationships (contra Tushima, 2016).

3.3.2. The positive possibilities of paternal-filial succession

While the chapter has sought to problematize paternal-filial succession, there may of course be advantages, including appointing one who already understands the organization (“I grew up, in many ways, with the organization” [DZ Interview I, p.2]). The son, moreover, honoured and admired the founder; his father was a “great source of inspiration” (DZ Interview II, p.21). With such honour, the successor was not going to embark on a significant change in direction or challenge organizational values. The son, furthermore, was already well known and respected within the ministry. The consultation and agreement of international workers meant that the whole organization could move forward in unity.

3.3.3. Did father-son succession benefit IAS?

In turning to the pragmatic question, ‘did it work?’, three main comments will be made. The founder views the succession as positive: the successor has a “zeal in his heart ...[and a] commitment...to serve” (LZ Interview I, p.9), as well as commitment to the “unreached” (LZ Interview I, p.20). The founder believes the policy changes being implemented are necessary in this phase of the organization’s life. There was, moreover, no attrition – the appointment was universally accepted. The organizational systems of the ministry have been changed by Daniel to meet the challenges of new governmental engagement; the organization is now receiving funds in new ways (DZ Interview I, p.32). In this case, paternal-filial succession was largely successful due to the engagement of an impartial decision-making body (Eisold, 2004), the correct timing in the organizational life cycle (Adizes, 1988), the role and character of the founder (Poza, 2004, pp.27-33), the successor’s adherence to organizational vision and values, to good relationships stemming from honour and respect, clear decision-making processes and to collaborative international consultation. Indeed, DZ believes that the familial nature of the leadership is now viewed as an organizational strength:
I think both my brother and me and Leif have realized this is actually something to be proud of... I sit in networks like ECHO,⁹⁴... And they know I’m the son of the founder. I think they know I’m different, of course, but they know we’re family... but I think their respect actually grows over time (DZ Interview I, pp.46-47).

4. Succession as symbolically enacted theological text

A third dimension of succession within IAS is the symbolic enactment of theology. Here I seek to analyze and interpret IAS’s succession in a symbolic reading of the theological data observable during the succession ceremony held in South Sudan (March 2015). Eade advocates a similar approach to understand the “contrasting visions of the Roman Catholic Church” which are “acted out through the nuances of public ritual” at the pilgrimage shrine in Lourdes (Eade, 2000, p.xxiii). Such an approach provides rich theological data. This approach is supported by the growing field of ritual studies (Grimes, 2013; Bell, 2009). More specifically I draw upon the approach of Kaufman and Ideström and their call for a “sociomaterial understanding of the embodiment of the normative voices of tradition in ecclesial practices” such as liturgy (2018, p.84). The IAS ceremony was not a normative ritual from magisterial tradition, of course; rather it is a new sui generis ritual. Nonetheless, the analysis of artefacts is still helpful, as shown by Lathrop (1998). Kaufman and Ideström propose the study of “the relationality and interconnectedness of human and non-human actors in any social setting or situation and how this in a fundamental way shapes how knowledge and meaning is mediated and created” (Kaufman and Ideström, 2018, p.98). Thus, following Kaufman and Ideström (p.100), I look at the use of place/space and artefacts such as a book and a key; such actors (human and non-human) work as “mediators of tradition rather than as vessels of transporting doctrinal information or theology that is left unchanged by the mediation process” (Kaufman and Ideström, 2018, p.100). In this case, they are used for this first time not normatively, but nonetheless mediate theology afresh.

In examining the symbols, particular attention will be paid to an analysis of its celebratory style, latreutic dimension, contextualization, facilitation of liminality

both to produce *communitas* and as symbolic didactic *per se* pertaining to missional goals and communication of *sacra*, and finally to the porrection of the physical symbols of a key and book. While evangelical, the faith of IAS was not aniconic.

### 4.1. Symbols

“A symbol is something that stands for or suggests something else; it conveys socially constructed means beyond its intrinsic or obvious functional use” (Zott and Huy, 2007, p.72). Symbols are used to convey meaning in the plastic arts (Battistini, 2005), literature, and in the field of religion (Dillistone, 1955; 1986). Not only are symbols powerful didactic tools, they are a means of persuasive communication for leaders (Bolman and Deal 2008, p.253).

#### 4.1.1. Symbolic enactments

**Celebration**

The transition ceremony began with a celebratory communal walk or march around town.95 This celebration included a marching band, singing and ululation. It celebrated both the 25th anniversary of the founding of IAS, as well as the leadership succession. It was symbolic of IAS’s belief in divine guidance in their work, including the succession. A celebration may also be a didactic tool for leadership as celebrations provide opportunity for “arousal, heightened activity and emotional responsiveness” (Turner, 1982, p.21). Symbolically, succession, through celebration, is framed as a positive, God-ordained event.

**Intercultural yet contextualized worship as outward movement yet inner latria**

The IAS acts of worship enacted during the transition march include the physical, the bodily processes of walking. This is a move towards God, and one another. It involves the body, yet is also God-focused praise. It is both physical and yet latreutic. A non-dichotomous view of body and spirit permits many cultures to use the body in significant ways in the worship of God, as movement and dance may “capture the nonverbal movements of the Holy Spirit” (Kane, 2007, p.165). The worship is, furthermore, universal in that the participants in the praise march are of all ages,

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men and women, as well as different races and nationalities. These inter-racial and inter-cultural dimensions point to the eschatological worship all of tribes and tongues foreseen in Revelation 7:9; the worship is at the same time, however, contextualized. The embodied yet inner spiritual dimension shows IAS theology to be non-dualistic; succession thus is enacted in both a natural and spiritual framework.

**Contextualization**

The praise march displays a belief in contextual missiology, literally following the classic evangelical understanding of contextualization from the Lausanne movement’s *The Willowbank Report on Gospel and Culture* (1978), namely that the church must be able to “celebrate, sing and dance” the Gospel in its own cultural medium (Stott, 1996, p.102). The worship is not an imposition of European modes and forms, but something arising within the African context where celebratory marching bands, singing and ululation are common within African churches of many types and nations (see Robert and Daneel, 2007; Gampiot, 2017). Indeed, the paternal-filial nature of the succession might also be viewed as contextual (Ngomane, 2013; Tushima, 2016). Contextualization is furthermore evident in the emphasis on *epideixis*. Elders, government representatives and the founders were thanked. In a culture of high “power distance” (Hofstede, 1980 and 1991) such honour is required. Indeed, the

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96 The full text of *Willowbank* may found in Stott (1996, pp.73-113).

97 While taking place in South Sudan, the ceremony was attended by workers from many African nations. The works cited above refer to several African countries. For the purposes of this chapter, I thus speak of a generalized ‘African’ rather than specifically South Sudanese context.

98 I have adopted the term from classical rhetoric. Aristotle describes the qualities of epideictic speeches as: “the present is the most important; for all speakers praise or blame in regard to existing qualities, but they often make use of other things, both reminding [the audience] of the past and projecting the course of the future” (Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, 1358). *Epideixis* is used to refer to the kinds of subject which draw attention to the speech, such as praise (Rüpke, 2006); it was both a specific genre but also a more general term for speeches of praise present in other genres (Haskins, 2008). My adoption of the term refers both to the specific act of laudatory speech and, by use of metonymy and more specifically synecdoche, to the broader celebratory and laudatory event.
place of those who have gone before, especially ancestors, is a central issue in African worldview, a matter with which the Christian church with its imported theology from Europe has had to engage in order for there to be a genuine African Christian theology (Bediako, 2004, pp.22-33; Pobee, 1979, p.94). The ceremony of March 2015 honours leaders, elders and those who have gone before.

The *epideixis* not only honours in word but also with enactments. Despite the imposition of western forms of government, in African tribal societies, community elders are often still the leaders in communal matters (Donovan, 2003; South Sudan Customary Authorities Project, 2017). DZ, in the speech below, is both ritually empowering elders and revealing that he understands the culture of his African colleagues, and revealing that he is willing to work within their leadership. DZ was able to articulate his contextual goal:

> And I didn’t point to any Swedes. I pointed to the four African leaders sitting at the forefront. I said, “Elders, I come to you for counsel and advice”. I didn’t even look at my father. I looked at them. And I said, “Advise me when I’ve gone wrong. Counsel me when I need counsel”. And I said something else. “Mentor me”. And I said, “This key, I hold very dear. I think it will be a key not for opening most doors, but it will be a key where I will close doors”.

> I think this is what I’m doing. I’m referring to those things. First, I think it’s biblical. It’s principled. But I think it’s also contextually correct and how you address that to Africans (DZ Interview I, pp.50-51).

Such contextual submission to African conceptualizations of leadership went beyond intention. DZ believes it was subsequently enacted in management processes within the movement (see DZ interview I, pp.51-52 for a narrative on the successor subsequently submitting to African elders in organizational problem-solving). The successor comments:

> So from an organizational, hierarchical point of view, yeah, I have so much more authority, or hierarchically, than a director from a local implementation organization in [name of country]. But I subdued myself spiritually and said, “You are my counsellor. You’re my mentor” (DZ Interview I, pp.51-52).

The succession theology is not one simply of power and authority transference but of submission and service.
Liminality and *communitas*

A fourth symbolic enactment rich in data is that of liminality creation. The praise march is a vibrant symbol that the workers of IAS are to be a liminal people doing liminal things. Here I draw on classic understandings of liminality from van Gennep (1909) and Victor Turner,99 “the most important cultural anthropologist of our time” (Moore, 2001, p.38).100 Enactments such as ceremonies, celebrations and rituals progress with a tripartite flow involving separation, margin (or liminality) and reintegration (or aggregation). The liminal phase is outside normal structures and hierarchies, often inverting them. The liminal state is a place of “optation” (Turner 1974, p.202).

Five factors contributed to the liminality that was created through the praise walk. First, the framing of the event as celebration, as celebrations are liminal events that take place extraneous to the structuration of quotidian activities (Turner, 1982). Second, the physical setting of the march (spacial liminality). Many epiphanies and theophanies happen in places outside routine space (Eliade 1989; Giesen, 2006) or in places on the margins (Horvath and Szakolczai, 2018 pp.115, 128, 130). Third, the activity of walking, which may be emotionally and spiritually transformative (Gros, 2014; Ingold and Vergunst, 2008) as classically seen in pilgrimage (Frey, 2004). While the Yei march was not a pilgrimage in the classic sense,101 it is nonetheless a walk with a religious purpose of installing a leader. Fourth, Christian worship itself is often liminal activity (Alexander, 1991). Finally, rituals of status elevation in African societies are liminal events, where normal social norms are suspended (Turner 1995, p.167). The succession ceremony to install a new leader is one of status elevation.

Having shown the multiple ways in which the succession event induced and enacted liminality, I now turn to how these reveal the theological nature of succession within IAS. Liminality leads to *communitas* (Turner, 1995), a relatively undifferentiated society of equals where everyday social structures and relational hierarchies are suspended. Such movements from structurated society to *communitas* of equals

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100 See also Salamone and Snipes (2018).
101 Leaving home, direction to a goal, and returning home on the same road (Dupront 1987; Horvath and Szakolczai, 2018, p.152).
may themselves be productive of new ways of being and seeing. In Turner’s words, *communitas* has “an aspect of potentiality; it is often in the subjunctive mood” (Turner, 1995 p.127). To explain this further, Turner draws upon Martin Buber: in *communitas*, individuals “are not segmentalized into roles and statuses but confront one another rather in the manner of Martin Buber’s ‘I and Thou’” (Turner, 1995, p.132). It is from Christians’ walking together for spiritual purposes that *communitas* flows (Sallnow, 1981; Eade and Sallnow, 2000).

The creation of *communitas*, moreover, creates the spiritual community from which the ministry of IAS must operate. It is a Christian community with spiritual goals. IAS’s vision is a “godly transformed society” and its mission is articulated as “to save lives, promote self-reliance and dignity through human transformation, going beyond relief and development” (2015 Annual Report, p.4): “Our biblical understanding of missions motivates everything we do. The unreached and under-privileged people’s groups (sic) is our major focus in spreading the good news.”

*Communitas* is, furthermore, a symbolic enactment of the values and theology of the organization, one of which states: “Equality: We believe in treating all people as we would like to be treated. We believe that people will feel valued and appreciated when we regard them with dignity and respect.” It is, moreover, a symbolic enactment of the very mission of the agency, for IAS is clear that is called to serve those in liminality, that is those marginalized by normal social structuration, such as those displaced through war or living with HIV/AIDS.

The enactment of liminality and *communitas* symbolically communicates that workers of IAS are to be a liminal people serving the marginalized peoples. It is an enactment of the mission.

This is further developed by conceptualizing the ceremony and worship as redressive rather than sublimational. To understand this requires a return to the classic structuralist understanding of liminality, *communitas* and social states. Everyday social hierarchies and relationships are seen as “structure”; an individual or group

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102 See Buber, 1996.
who enters a transitional phase or ceremony is removed from the everyday flow of activities and enters a threshold or liminal state of “anti-structure” (Abrahams, 1995). Much of ritual and ceremony may be anti-structure but it enables people to pass through towards a new structure. Such an understanding has been applied to Pentecostal worship, for example. What has been called “ritual possession” (Alexander, 1991) (that is, worship including glossolalia, prophetic utterances and altar calls) is seen as inducing communitas, where anyone, regardless of status, may be used by God. Some see this in classic structuralist terms of sublimation, a kind of ‘safety valve’, which allows worshippers to express frustrations and their oppressed states, but then facilitates their leaving the worship and returning, with acceptance, to the unjust structures of society. According to Hollenweger in his classic work on Pentecostalism, many Brazilian Pentecostals felt they had “no solutions to offer for the social and political problems of Latin America” (Hollenweger, 1972, p.105); others found it helpful to express their disadvantages “liturgically” and found courage in meeting with those with similar disadvantages (Hollenweger, 1972, p.459). Alexander, however, in his study of ritual possession among black American Pentecostals states that liminal communitas may also be redressive in that it “introduces into everyday life the alternative, communitarian relations” (Alexander, 1991, p.84). He found that the Pentecostals of his study did not accept social conformity but were actively engaged in social and political actions to agitate for racial justice. Similarly, I suggest that the worship and praise of the IAS staff was redressive, for they had gathered not to accept the world as it is, but to move forward, under a new leader, to move toward IAS’s vision of a “godly transformed society” (2015 Annual Report, p.4). The appointment of a new leader was not a flow from anti-structure to structure, that is to a maintenance of a new hierarchical status quo, but it should be seen rather as a move from ‘spontaneous’ communitas to normative and ideological communitas (Eade, 2000, pp x-xi). While often there is a return to structure, there may instead be a continuation of communitas, either normative, where the spontaneous features are somewhat constrained (such as rules governing practice at pilgrimage sites), or ideological, where attributes of the communitas experience are formulated into a plan for societal reform.106

In summary, through the above analysis we see that the enactments of celebration, contextualization and liminality creation symbolically reveal organizational theology; they are, moreover, enactments of the organizational mission of movement toward the margins with redressive motivation. Succession is part of the liminality creation and stirring of redressive vision – it is not to be seen as an institutional, hierarchical appointment.

4.1.2. Physical Symbols

In turning from symbolic enactments, attention will now be given to two physical symbols employed during the transition ceremony, namely the donation from founder to successor of a book and key.

The field of religion is replete with transition ceremonies, rituals, and commissions, often including symbolic artefacts (see, for example, 1 Kings 1:39). In ecclesiastical practice today, churches hold services of installation, often ritually prescribed.107 Such ceremonies and rites of leadership succession are symbolically rich. In the appointment of a new leader with the ordination of presbyter in the Anglican Communion, the Ordinal requires the bishop to donate a copy of the Bible to each ordinand (Buchanan, 2006). This is in the long tradition of porrectio instrumentorum in the ceremonies of appointment to office in the early western and medieval church (Bradshaw, 1971, p.2).

Should one be tempted to believe that it is largely the historical churches which enact symbolism (as traditions handed down from former pre-literate, pre-modernistic and iconophilic eras), it is noteworthy that new evangelical churches and movements are not aniconic but adopt symbolism in their transition rituals, even if they do less so in daily worship patterns than some older traditions. Ulrich (2017, p.142) contains a photograph of a 2014 founder succession event at Ephrata Community Church in Pennsylvania, USA (image 1). In the centre of the photograph stand the founder (right) and successor (left), either side of a “shepherd’s staff”; the

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staff is the visual centre. The symbol of the founder giving to the successor and the specific donation of a symbol representing care of the “flock” reveal the central message of the symbol, that is one of transference of power and authority.

Image 1


Wheeler similarly relates donations of physical symbols within founder succession of megachurches; in one case the departing leader gave the successor a “golden sprinkler head”; “It represented that he [the successor] needed to be keeping his eye on everything going on campus even down to the sprinklers” (Wheeler, 2008, p.150).

In the case of IAS, the use of physical symbols enhances the African contextualization: “And this is what appeals to African leaders as well, global leaders, the visual stuff, giving a key” (Daniel Zetterlund Interview I, p.50). It also places the succession ceremony within the broader church tradition of the porrection of gifts to symbolize the appointment to office (Bradshaw, 1971, p.2).

Book

During the epideictic event in South Sudan, the founder gave the successor a book:

   We dreamt... about transformed communities and we would like you to continue dreaming. We want to give you a book, Dare to
An analysis of this gift-symbol suggests that it is an enactment of blessing from a founder-patriarch; one which reveals to those gathered that he is supportive of the transition. It is also an act of counsel or guidance. A reading of the book shows that its theme is that of not accepting the status quo in life, but envisioning a brighter and better future. This specific symbol is to encourage the new leader and those in attendance, to foster a forward-looking purpose and to develop a resilience to achieve goals. It might also be a warning to maintain spiritual vision, a warning given to a successor who was (by consent of both founder and successor) more structured and bureaucratic in his style of leadership. The symbol could, therefore, be interpreted as not just encouraging guidance but a parting invocation to keep the organization progressing in the same direction.

In summary, the symbol of a book treating dream and vision reveals IAS’s leadership theology, and stresses that from succession should flow the envisioning of distal states as motivation to mission, which is to procure societal transformation. Succession is thus to further such vision.

Key

The second donation from founder to successor was a key:

And today I would like to give this key to my successor, Daniel. A key... I am going to give you this key as a symbol from this event that this key will remind you about two things - not to be lost and not to be forgotten... but to open doors and also, maybe close doors. There are always situations in life where we have to be able to say “No”. “No” to temptations. “No” to corruption. “No” to greed. Those doors will not be opened. They would be sealed. Closed. But the doors that will be open will continue leading people into prosperity, people into proper education, doors that will be opening the minds of people. Doors that will give people an opportunity to help themselves. So I want you to receive this key as a symbol of what is ahead. I have not opened all the doors with it. There’s still plenty of those in this wonderful

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108 Maxwell (2006)
country we are in now but also throughout the nations of the world that you will see being ready to receive you where you go (LZ, speech at transition ceremony).

The donation of a key places this installation ceremony within the broader field of installation rituals in the Church. An analysis of this symbolic gift reveals the following matters. First, the act of giving is a symbol of passing on, literally and metaphorically giving to someone else. It is thus a sign of voluntary relinquishment of power, of blessing and endorsement for those gathered to witness. Second, the use of a key (“to unlock”) speaks of the role of a leader to release the potential within the organization and its workers – that leadership should not concern itself with a wrong form of control which uses people for its own ends, but instead for their betterment, which will in turn accomplish the organization’s goals. This symbol thus speaks to a foundational issue of transformational rather than transactional leadership (Northouse, 2013, pp.185-217; Burns, 1978/2010.) During the interviews, LZ explicated this aspect further:

I think it should open relationships to donors, to new potential supporters and unlock the potential that people have within the organization. Unlock capacity that is built over a period of time. I mean many years. Those people who are still feeling that their capacity, their resources, their... it’s like they are in a cage. If someone would help them to get out of the cage so that they could actually fly like a bird, but use them for the sake of the organization and their own future growth.

To lock, when you are in top leadership, you need to be able to say ‘yes’ and ‘no’. If you are not willing to take that kind of role, I don’t think you can stay as a leader. I wanted to remind him about the key could also close. And you have a mandate to close a door when it is necessary (LZ Interview I, p.28).

The metaphor of unlocking speaks to both a third and fourth aspect of the symbol. The “locking/closing” speaks to the values and morality of the ministry, that matters

111 At the porrection of keys to a new incumbent in the Church of England, the churchwardens speak “receive these keys in token of the responsibility which we share” (Service of Institution or Collation and Induction/licensing/and installation, 2013) available at https://www.oxford.anglican.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Service-of-institution-or-collation-and-induction.doc (Accessed: 21 February 2019).
such as “corruption” and “greed” will impede the organizational thrust and should thus be avoided. Symbolically, the founder is reinforcing the second organizational value, that of integrity. This, of course, needs to be a powerful guiding force in African contexts of rampant corruption.\footnote{Transparency International’s 2017 annual corruption perceptions index places South Sudan, the country of the ceremony, at number 179 out of 180 nations (https://www.transparency.org/news/feature/corruption_perceptions_index_2017) (Accessed: 31 December 2018).}

The fourth aspect concerns the strategic choices that come with leadership. To the above I wish to comment on a fifth nuance of the symbol, namely that a key is a powerful biblical symbol of authority, seen, for example, with the appointment of Eliakim to rule Jerusalem and the concomitant donation of the key to the house of David (“What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open” \footnote{The giving of a key, therefore, is a symbol of the transference of authority, particularly God-appointed spiritual authority to lead others within the kingdom of God.} and with the words of Christ to Peter upon his confession that “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God”. In Matthew 16:19, Christ responds: “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven”. The giving of a key, therefore, is a symbol of the transference of authority, particularly God-appointed spiritual authority to lead others within the kingdom of God.

In theological terms, symbolic enactments of donation and reception of a key reveal that ultimately and fundamentally the transference is one of spiritual authority. It symbolically and didactically frames, moreover, IAS’s succession as a Christo-Petrine event.\footnote{A framing of succession which Newfrontiers sought to avoid (next chapter).}  

**4.2. Summary and achievement of transition ceremony**

This intercultural act of worship fostered liminality (place, walking and worship) which generated normative *communitas*. The theology was one of celebration, prophetic intercultural witness, and symbolically enacting of God’s concern for those excluded from normal social structuration. Through such enactments a theological text was created, enhanced by the physical symbols of book and key. The theology of IAS as symbolically mediated is not one of sublimational withdrawal from the world, but one that is redressive. Revealed through symbolism, succession was constructed
as a Christo-Petrine event where the successor was to lead a people of *communitas* to redressive acts. Through placing of the succession within an act of celebration, it conveyed that the transition should not be feared but was to be embraced; it communicated continuity of values and reassurance as the new leader had a confidant sense of the future: “We know where we are heading as an organization” (DZ speech at transition ceremony). The ceremony, moreover, re-laid a foundation of the theocentric nature of the ministry – that the future would be prosperous if IAS followed Christ, as articulated in the successor’s closing remarks:

> May the Lord bless you and keep you. Don’t ever leave His side. Abide in Him, as we will as an organization, and you will see that your life will be prosperous. And you will go places you never thought was possible (DZ speech at transition ceremony).

**5. Chapter summary**

This analysis of succession within International Aid Services has concentrated on three aspects, namely the professionalization of leadership style, the dynamics of a father-son transition and on the succession ceremony as symbolically enacted text. These three motifs are not independent but interdependent:

i) The dynamic of professionalization is mediated and mitigated by the father-son relationship and by the *communitas* of the transition ceremony. This may be viewed in that despite the markers of professionalization (financial restructuration, governance reformation, and written, not oral strategy), the relationships of the key actors are humanized by the familial bonds: “And I just laid my hand around my brother and said, ‘Yeah, he’s my brother. You can’t take that away from us. We’re in the same organization’” (DZ Interview I, p.45); “[My father is] a great source of inspiration” (DZ Interview II, p.21); “I love him” (DZ Interview I, p.30). The second point may be seen with the father and son worshipping God and praying together and the Christo-Petrine framing of organizational succession: “And today I would like to give this key to my successor, Daniel” (LZ, speech at transition ceremony). Such enactments were not ones of professional bureaucratic management.
ii) The paternal-filial succession navigates putative nepotism through professionalization and is universalized by the multi-cultural transition event. This may be seen in the new emphasis on written policies, the adoption of standards to meet governmental grant-making criteria but particularly in the board of directors appointing the successor: “And today I’m glad it was on that level because it was not a father/son kind of issue. It was on a completely different level. And I was not actually involved in the decision-making process at all here” (LZ Interview I, p.4).

The second part is seen by the various nationalities and races joining in worship, local African workers giving speeches and the successor publicly submitting himself to African eldership (DZ Interview I, p.50).

iii) The celebration, *communitas* creation, symbolic enactments and theologizing of the transition ceremony are mediated by the professionalization (written plans, formal evaluations, change from oral to written reporting and decisions based on empirical data rather than intuition [see Tashakori, 1980]), and by good bureaucratic governance through the involvement of the board of directors in the father-son successor appointment (DZ Interview I, p.10).

All three motifs are thus nuanced by the other two. Such matters could create tension as they relate to different exigencies and goals (such as complying with both Swedish good governance and African eldership; maintaining Christian fraternity and devotion to God while complying with exacting auditing and accounting demands of European governments). If tension exists, it seems a productive one, where all three motifs cohere into a tripartite succession *Gestalt*, which made navigable the changing bureaucratic environment of donors yet maintained relationships of Christian fraternity, provided reassuring internal succession yet in an impartial manner, and enhanced a vibrant Christian spirituality which reemphasized the missional goals of the ministry and the theological nature of the succession itself.

In taking further my conclusion that such a *Gestalt* arises from an interdependency among the three motifs, I employ Thompson’s (2008) conceptualization of interdependencies to suggest that there is a specific type of interdependency present in this *Gestalt* production. Rather than “sequential” interdependency, where
the enactment of each motif is contingent on a temporal enactment and completion by the others (Thompson, 2008, p.54), or “reciprocal” interdependency, where the outputs of each become inputs for the other parts (Thompson, 2008, p.55), the interdependency of the IAS Gestalt is rather one of “pooled” interdependency, where the temporal nature (sequence and contemporaneity) is less important but each part ‘performs’ adequately rendering “a discrete contribution to the whole and each is supported by the whole” (Thompson, 2008, p.54).
Chapter 7

Newfrontiers

1. Introduction

Newfrontiers is a network of churches begun in the United Kingdom, developing into a large international network. The founding leader, or apostle, is Terry Virgo (born 1940, British, male).\textsuperscript{114} Beginning evangelistic ministry in the late 1960s, he started churches in southern England, which became a base for broader and eventually extensive international ministry. When it became clear that nomenclature was important, the name ‘Coastlands’ was adopted, becoming officially registered as a charity in 1982. The growing movement was renamed ‘New Frontiers International’ to express the practice and desire to be doing new things in new places.\textsuperscript{115} In 2002, the network was re-branded as ‘Newfrontiers’, which ameliorates the negative connotations of the word ‘frontier’ in some languages.\textsuperscript{116}

The numeric growth of both churches and attendees was sustained. At their first Downs Bible week in 1979, some 2 700 attended, growing to around 10 000 in ten years. This annual summer gathering later relocated to the showground at Stoneleigh, Warwickshire. By 2001, 30 000 people came for the summer camp of Bible teaching and workshops. Such growth began to receive the attention of scholars; Smith’s (2003) title, “An account of the sustained rise of New Frontiers International within the United Kingdom” was telling of what was being observed. By the time of founder succession (2011), Newfrontiers numbered some 850 churches in 60 nations (\textit{Forward Together}, 2011, p.4).

\textsuperscript{114} A fuller account of both Virgo’s life and the development of Newfrontiers is available in Virgo’s autobiography (Virgo, 2008b). A briefer account of the network appears in Kay (2007).

\textsuperscript{115} New Frontiers International was officially registered with the Charity Commission in December 1991, but had in effect been in existence before that time (see Kay, 2007, p.71).

\textsuperscript{116} See Aune, 2004, p.31.
To understand better the founder succession of this movement and frame the analysis, three descriptive points regarding its theology and ecclesiology are made at this point, namely that the network was evangelical, Calvinistic (yet charismatic) and restorationist. Newfrontiers possessed the classic four “special marks” of evangelicalism, known as the “Evangelical quadrilateral”: conversionism, activism, biblicism, and crucicentrism (Bebbington, 2005, p.16). Within evangelicalism the network is more specifically Reformed or Calvinistic in theology. Walker, however, believes that Virgo’s Calvinism is not that of the mainline Reformed tradition: “Terry’s Calvinism is in the spirit of the great Puritan leader John Owen, mediated through the separatist tendencies of Martyn Lloyd-Jones and the earlier evangelicalism of C.H. Spurgeon” (Walker, 1998, p.332). The theology of Newfrontiers is, furthermore, unusual in that it combines Calvinism with a belief in the ongoing existence and use of the charismatic gifts of I Corinthians 12. Thirdly, Newfrontiers is restorationist. “Restorationism” has been elucidated by Walker in his now classic work (1985/1998), and subsequently studied by Kay (2007). According to Walker, “restorationism” describes those movements of churches desiring to:

- restore or return to the New Testament pattern (as they see it) of the Early Church. The restoring of the Church as it was in its pristine form is to restore a charismatically-ordained church, and one in which Christians are seen as living in a kingdom run according to God’s order and rules (Walker, 1998, p.39-40).

Walker continues that restorationism “refers to a recognizable cluster of doctrines and practices adhered to by a considerable number of churches which nevertheless

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117 Bebbington’s 1989 original has become a classic study of British evangelicalism. I have used the 2005 digital version (Bebbington, 2005). There has been much scholarly discussion on this quadrilateral, but, as Bebbington writes, none has yet “challenged the fourfold description” (Bebbington, 2015, p.87).
118 According to the entry “Reformed Theology” in The Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms, “key aspects include God’s initiative in salvation, and election, and union with Christ” (McKim, 1996, p.234). Letham (1988, p.570) cites the five characteristics (from the Canons of Dort) generally accepted as descriptive of reformed theology: total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace and perseverance.
119 Newfrontiers is “exceptional, if not unique, in combining Calvinism with charismatic theology” (Kay, 2007, p.334).
120 I used the fourth edition (1998).
prefer to see themselves as non-denominational” (Walker, 1998, p.41). Walker believes that there are two types of restorationism in Britain, namely R1 and R2 (designations which are widely used, even by Virgo himself – see Virgo, 2008b, p.82). For Walker, R1 types are the more conservative and most like the ideal type; R2 groups are more liberal and fluid (Walker 1998, p.39). Newfrontiers is R1. A particular feature of restorationism, and one which is pertinent to this study on succession, is that of the role of modern-day apostles.

Restorationism in essence argues that the power and pattern of the early church can be restored to the contemporary church. Along with a belief in charismatic gifts is the belief in 21st century apostles. The two are intimately linked because apostles may be recognised, among other things, by their exercise of charismatic gifts (Kay, 2007, p.318).

Virgo states that the key themes of the restorationist church are “body ministry, a committed community, grace, spiritual authority and a prophetic hope” (Virgo, 2008b, p.80), while Devenish, the leading missiologist within Newfrontiers, sees two components, namely the restoration to New Testament truth and to New Testament practices (Devenish, 2005, p.9). As these two are restored, “we put our hope in the prophetic promises of an end-time glorious church affecting every people group” (Devenish, 2005, p.10, italics in original).

In 2011, with 850 churches, Newfrontiers underwent founder succession – not by replacing Virgo with another international director or lead apostle, but by dividing the international movement into fifteen autonomous “apostolic spheres”, each with its own name and leadership. Newfrontiers ceased to exist as one church-planting movement. This unusual, bold and controversial act is the subject of this study. I conducted interviews with Virgo in March 2018; transcripts, online articles, sermons as well as some of his multiple books were also used to gain a deeper understanding of the succession (see bibliography for a list of Virgo’s publications). Due to the multiplication of successors, there was no single successor to be interviewed. To interview all fifteen – in Australia, India, South Africa and elsewhere – was prohibitive. The decision was made to interview one, namely David Devenish (born 121

Multiple church leaders, including a representative from the Evangelical Alliance, the body representing two million U.K. evangelicals, either wrote to Virgo or met with him to urge Newfrontiers not to enact succession in this way.
1948, British, male). He was one of the fifteen successors and subsequently became the coordinator for any collaboration between those spheres. His apostolic sphere is “Catalyst”. He was interviewed in March 2018. He also has authored several books that are used in this analysis (Devenish 2000, 2006, 2011).

1.1. Plans and processes

Newfrontiers had no written plan for succession. At the annual international leadership conference (2008), a visiting preacher, Mark Driscoll, publicly stated that Virgo needed to find a successor from the next generation in the next four years (Devenish Interview I, p.2): “Are you going to honour your future or your founder?” This was followed by reference to a photograph Driscoll had seen of the wedding of Virgo’s daughter. Driscoll posited that a young man had to be found to marry Terry’s daughter – that is a younger man to become the leader of Newfrontiers. Virgo announced, “This is from God” (Virgo Interview I, p.10) to ensure that the congregation knew that he accepted Driscoll’s forthrightness.

The international leadership team of Newfrontiers subsequently deliberated this message. The team approved the four-year period and began thinking of who that successor might be, assuming it would be a man in his 40s. During these years of deliberation, Virgo became aware, however, of friends in other networks for whom succession had been problematic. One network had transferred leadership from its founder to a much younger man; other church leaders within that network spoke to Virgo that it had not progressed well, largely because they could not relate to the successor as a spiritual father, although admiring this younger leader’s gift and integrity. A second leader in this movement wrote Virgo a long document explaining this. The effect was to cause the Newfrontiers leaders to “stop in our tracks” (Virgo Interview I, p.25). Virgo’s chief concern was that in appointing a new younger man others might not look to him as spiritual father (Virgo, Interview I, pp.25-6). Virgo

stated that final clarity came through a reading of Psalm 45 concerning sons becoming fathers.125

This caused a paradigm shift in Newfrontiers’ conceptualization of succession; the ‘international team’ adopted a model of multiplication of apostolic leaders and spheres. This was processed with a wider group, the ‘apostolic forum’, where apostolic leaders were already meeting for training and deliberation (Devenish Interview I, p.7). The international team appointed a transition team (chaired by Devenish) to discuss and advise on the precise way forward; the international team made the decisions concerning who to appoint as sphere leaders, but with considerable deference to Virgo (Devenish Interview I, p.8). Virgo asked fifteen people to consider such an appointment. The transition plan was announced in June 2011; Terry Virgo retired from executive responsibility on December 31 (Devenish Interview II, p.11). At that year’s annual leadership conference (with some 5 000 present), the fifteen men stood and groups gathered around them to pray for them. These fifteen, although now autonomous, stated a desire for some (limited) ongoing collaboration across the spheres; Devenish was appointed to lead a team to investigate how such a desire might be implemented.

Between announcement of the succession plan and its execution, Virgo had been shocked at reaction from those in other British churches who expressed concern that the voice of Newfrontiers, so influential within British evangelicalism, would be dissipated, to the detriment of British evangelicalism. Indeed, others saw Newfrontiers as having pioneered new ways of church which helped those in other networks (Virgo Interview II, pp.23-25). Newfrontiers stayed its course. Indeed, Virgo believes that the values of Newfrontiers have been amplified within the British church.

Not all matters proceed smoothly, however. Virgo narrated three principle difficulties with the succession: it took two years for churches and leaders to know fully where to locate themselves in the post-succession structures; one leader was pained, feeling overlooked in the new leadership appointments (who subsequently

125 Although he does not provide a specific verse reference or quote verbatim, Virgo is referencing Psalm 45:16: “Your sons will take the place of your father; you will make them princes throughout the land”.

has acknowledged that decisions made were correct); and one of the fifteen sphere leaders has struggled with there no longer being one movement with one name. This leader has withdrawn from joint meetings with the other fourteen. Devenish adds that the fifteen leaders were not well prepared for administrative and legal matters. This, as well as the placing of each church in the new spheres, was an issue of greater difficulty in the United Kingdom than other countries.

Subsequent to succession, Devenish led the sphere leaders to clarity on ongoing matters of “togetherness”, particularly in matters of accountability, training, participation and concomitant financing. These processes led to formalization and documentation including, for the first time, a written doctrinal statement. By 2016, Devenish believed that such discussions were concluded; any collaboration needed to move beyond knowing a common past and set of values to a common future vision and direction. He stresses that this was “a vision for our togetherness, not a vision for each individual sphere. That’s their own autonomy. But if you want to be involved all together, this is what we’re about” (Devenish, Interview I, p.17).

In retrospect, the transition, after two or three years, resulted in increased church-planting around the world.126 There is now clarity concerning autonomy of spheres, as well as mutual (and documented) agreement on matters in which the spheres still desire co-operation.127

1.2. Documents

Documentation concerning the succession is located in four categories: Virgo’s and Devenish’s books; the Newfrontiers Together website; Virgo’s online articles and sermons; the magazine (2011) which communicates the succession to adherents around the world. A list of such documentary sources is provided (Appendix O).

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126 According to Devenish, there are some 2 000 churches in the combined spheres (Devenish Interview I, p.33).
127 “Newfrontiers is a group of apostolic leaders partnering together on global mission, joined by common values and beliefs, shared mission and genuine relationships” (https://newfrontierstogether.org/) (Accessed: 4 May 2018). The full documentation details the nature of the mutual collaboration and accountability, as well as doctrine. This is not a published document, but I have been given access to it and permission to cite small sections.
Furthermore, the online public statement explaining succession is provided (Appendix P).

Some of Virgo’s final written comments prior to the succession event were a call to the future and to change:

The time has come to redefine Newfrontiers. Through 2011, Newfrontiers will begin to take on a new identity. It will be the name given to multiplied apostolic spheres who plan to work together interdependently, owning the same values, retaining the same Newfrontiers title and aspiring to fulfil the prophetic promises given to us.

Virgo concludes this message:

Some decades ago, God told us that there are no well-worn paths ahead. More recently, He has promised us multiplication and exponential growth. We are not following traditional patterns, but we know that he who calls himself ‘the Way’ will continue to provide us with his guidance and grace.¹²⁸

The aim of this thesis is to provide rich descriptions of founder successions within international Christian networks. This succession enacted by Newfrontiers was unique. I suggest it may be understood more fully in the following conceptualizations,¹²⁹ namely as an act of apostolic succession by recognition, not replacement; as perpetuation of male hegemony (due either to biblical faithfulness or postfeminist backlash); and as an act of anti-routinization and ‘kinesisoclasm’. Comment will be made on each of these ways of perceiving this succession.

2. Apostolic succession: Not replacement but recognition

For those restorationist networks which began in the 1970s and 1980s, founder succession is a recent phenomenon. Kay, in his 2007 work on apostolic networks in Britain, writes, “The next major challenge facing almost all the networks is to find the right person to fill the shoes of their founding apostle” (Kay, 2007, p.350). As if following Kay’s cue, Newfrontiers planned and enacted founder succession in the following years. It is restorationist theology which shaped and defined Newfrontiers’


¹²⁹ Terminology will be elucidated later in this chapter.
understanding of leadership and therefore of succession; it is more specifically the
theology of apostleship which is crucial for an analysis of that succession.

2.1. Apostleship today

Within the broader church, apostleship is a disputed doctrine. Many churches have
no official doctrinal position on whether the office of apostle continues today.\textsuperscript{130} In
contrast, those in the reformed tradition are adamant that this gift was extinguished
after the first apostles of Scripture: “The officers which Christ hath appointed for the
edification of his church, and the perfecting of the saints, are, some extraordinary, as
apostles, evangelists, and prophets, which are ceased”.\textsuperscript{131} Catholicism, however,
since Vatican II, addresses the matter in stark contradistinction to both reformed
theology and restorationism, for in Catholicism all lay people are part of the
apostolate (\textit{Lumen Gentium}, 33), and the laity have the “right and duty to be
apostles” (\textit{Apostolicam Actuositatem}, 3).

In the last few decades, however, the new networks of churches have reintroduced
the doctrine of the ongoing apostolic gift, but with a more restricted understanding
than Catholicism; indeed, it is almost the primary doctrine around which much else
in restorationism coalesces: “Sociologically and theologically what is distinctive
about the networks is their concentration upon the ministry of the apostle” (Kay,
2007, p.292). This coincides and is indeed part of a broader global phenomenon of
newer networks propagating the ongoing office of apostle. Wagner (1998) presents
cases of eighteen new networks (thirteen in the USA, five in other nations) under the
title, \textit{The new apostolic churches: Rediscovering the New Testament model of
leadership and why it is God’s desire for the church today}. Indeed, so crucial is the
theology of apostleship that of the nine factors which Wagner believes to be
characteristic of the new apostolic churches, it is the concept of apostleship which is
the primary defining characteristic: “In my judgment, views of leadership and
leadership authority constitute the most radical of the nine changes from traditional
Christianity. Here is the main difference: \textit{The amount of spiritual authority delegated

\textsuperscript{130} See McNair Scott (2014) for an analysis of the conceptualizations of the
apostolate throughout history.

\textsuperscript{131} This example is from the Free Church (Continuing),
by the Holy Spirit to individuals” (Wagner, 1998, pp.19-20, italics in original). He states: “We are seeing a transition from bureaucratic authority to personal authority, from legal structure to relational structure, from control to coordination and from rational leadership to charismatic leadership” (Wagner, 1998, p.19).

This cardinal point of restorationist doctrine has not merely influenced other denominations but also, to varying degrees, it has been adopted by them. It is advocated in influential works on contemporary church planting and mission from multiple church and theological traditions.132 McNair Scott, in his study of the charismatic apostolate, concludes:

In summary, the charismatic apostolate is becoming a feature of the church scene in Britain; this will not be a short-lived fad, but rather something that will remain commonplace in the independent churches and become more so in the older mainstream ones. The desire for mission, for a new shape of leader, for more organic expressions of church life will make it inconceivable that the charismatic apostolate in its various guises will disappear from the scene (McNair Scott, 2014, p.219).

2.2. Apostleship within Newfrontiers

What is apostleship within Newfrontiers, and how can succession occur from the founding apostle? These questions frame this analysis of Newfrontiers’ succession. It should be noted, that even within restorationism, Newfrontiers has the most monolithic belief in contemporary apostolic ministry. Based on Kay’s quantitative research on British networks, Newfrontiers adherents were “significantly more likely to accept the importance of apostle” than other restorationist networks; in particular, moreover, they “were significantly more likely to accept the importance of apostolic networks” (Kay, 2007, p.319).

For Virgo, this theology developed through praxis. In describing his work in the early years, he writes that he was involved in the “planting and overseeing of scattered local churches, laying foundations of truth, and providing ongoing love and care. I was increasingly gathering a team of men who also served those churches. In the New Testament this was what apostles did” (Virgo, 2008b, p.98). Virgo dedicates a

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132 McNair Scott cites the following examples: Gibbs (2005); Frost and Hirsh (2004); Murray-Williams (2004); Cray (2004).
chapter in his work on church restoration to apostleship (Virgo, 1985). My analysis of this writing is that there are six key characteristics. First, Virgo sees three classes of apostle: Jesus, the twelve and others belonging in the class referred to in Ephesians 4:8-11 (“He gave some as apostles”). Secondly, with regard to drawing upon Scripture, Virgo refers to his being a “master builder and foundation layer”, citing 1 Corinthians 3:10 (Virgo, 1985, p.128). This leads to a third observation, namely that a primary purpose is to hold churches to correct doctrine: “One of God’s great provisions to safeguard his church from going astray is a continuing apostolic ministry” (p.129). Fourthly, Virgo states that such a gift can only operate if there is relationship with those being overseen; there can be no imposed authority. Fifthly, apostolic ministry transcends boundaries, including national boundaries; and sixthly apostles emerge as “they are brought out by the sovereign choice and anointing of God” (Virgo, 1985, p.132).

Concerning specific roles of apostles, Virgo posits the following: helping church leaders apply truths and providing wisdom in decision-making; recognizing and installing leaders in a church, which is enacted by recognizing others’ gifts and the respect in which these men are held in their congregation (Virgo, 1985, p.131); going to new places to pioneer new works (Virgo, 1985, p.131-2); and bringing others onto ‘apostolic teams’. Such teams can facilitate others utilizing their spiritual gifts and providing experience for other “embryonic apostles” (Virgo, 1985, p.135).

Devenish defines the roles of the apostle in the New Testament in similar terms: planting and laying foundations in churches; appointing elders in churches; moving to unreached areas and involving the church in mission; bringing wisdom in difficult situations. To this, however, he introduces the conceptualization that apostles must ensure that the poor are served (Devenish, 2005, pp.65-66). Devenish writes of the fathering heart of the apostle. As with Virgo, he cites 1 Corinthians 3:10; the conceptualization therefrom of apostles as builders is a main theme: “By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is

133 Virgo cites on more than one occasion, and seems particularly influenced by, J.B. Lightfoot (1981 – original 1865) in his understanding of the continuance of the apostolic gift (see for example, Virgo, 1985, pp.126-127).
building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds” (Devenish, 2011, p.87).\textsuperscript{134}

\section*{2.3. Apostolic succession}

The complexity of the succession with Newfrontiers is made more evident in considering a number of matters concerning apostleship. First, Newfrontiers theology does not allow for the “creation” of apostles by humans; it is a “sovereign choice and anointing of God” (Virgo, 1985, p.132). Secondly, and following from this first point, thus “there is no apostolic succession” (Virgo, 1985, p.133).\textsuperscript{135} This leads to a belief that in a sense there is no second generation; the future of Newfrontiers must always be God’s raising new apostles who will always be their first generation of God’s fresh work. As Devenish states:

\begin{quote}
My contention is the ‘apostolic succession’ in the traditional sense is not the way forward, but rather that each generation should be like a first-generation church in its life and organization, while maintaining the foundation built on the truth laid down by the original apostles and prophets or what Jude, as we have already seen, described as ‘the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints’ (Devenish, 2011, p.335).
\end{quote}

A third crucial perspective is that there is no scriptural framework for succession: “The original apostles, it seems, envisaged the body of New Testament doctrine being passed on to subsequent generations, but they give no specific instructions as to how any succession to their apostolic office should take place” (Devenish, 2011, p.335). Thus, Newfrontiers could approach the decision and structuration of succession with freedom, not looking to follow biblical models. While not viewing their succession as normative for others (Devenish Interview II, p.26), but contingent on contextual factors, particularly that of organizational size (Virgo Interview II, p.20), others proffered Newfrontiers’ approach as an ideal type (Pugh 2016, p.129).

\textsuperscript{134} Fuller treatment of the apostle as builder appears later.

\textsuperscript{135} It is difficult to know if at this point Virgo states this position against the backdrop of the Roman Catholic understanding of succession as a negative example. He certainly states this explicitly in Interview I, p.28.
Fourthly, it is in succession in particular that the role of apostle as “father” is activated:

In practice, leaders today need not only a written record of the example of fathering leadership in the first century, but actual spiritual fathers. And each church needs to express Christian family relationships and to be joined with those who can serve them both by caring for them and by involving them in world mission. This needs to take place dynamically and relationally in each generation, through those anointed by the Holy Spirit for this task. The apostolic and prophetic foundations need to be laid dynamically in each generation, always consistent with the truth set out in the pages of the New Testament, but contextualized in each generation and location... (Devenish 2011, pp.335-336).

Succession in Newfrontiers is thus familial, pioneering, and not wedded to the founding generation’s contextualized structures.

Fifthly, while succession does not seek a man or men to replace the founder, it must, however include recognition of new apostles: “We need to recognize those with an apostolic call who will need to function in the next generation, because churches will continue to want to be related to and served by such ministries” (Devenish, 2011, p.336). It was this recognition of ‘new’ apostles which led to the appointment of fifteen men, each with his own autonomous sphere:

We aim to imitate the New Testament practice of travelling ministries of apostles and prophets, with apostles having their own spheres of responsibility as a result of having planted and laid the foundations in the churches they oversee. Such ministries continue the connection with local churches as a result of fatherly relationship and not denominational election or appointment (Devenish, 2011, p.33, italics mine).

2.4. Summary

Founder succession within Newfrontiers took place from founding apostle to other apostles, but not as direct apostolic succession as understood through church history. Succession was the recognition of men who were planting and overseeing churches, teaching biblical doctrine and ‘building’ the church across boundaries. While they may be trained, they were not ‘made’ by Virgo et al.; all the founder and team could do was to recognize and announce those already engaged in apostolic
ministry. Thus, succession in Newfrontiers was a form of apostolic succession but one reconceptualized through contemporary restorationist understanding of the apostolic gift and ministry.

2.5. Discussion

There is much around the Newfrontiers conceptualization of apostleship, which is problematic. Several aspects on this will be discussed more fully in Chapter 9, including the power in the installation of apostles that Virgo and others yielded to congregants, without so knowing. Here I wish to draw attention to the lack of clarity concerning the characteristics which identify a man as apostle. Newfrontiers theology suggests we are to look for a ‘father’ and a ‘master builder’ but there is no definition of what these terms mean and how a master builder is to be recognized, except perhaps later when there is an obvious edifice. There is, furthermore, a lack of clarity on the difference between an apostle and the more general term ‘leader’. Are all leaders apostles? We presume not, but what exactly is the difference, for any leader sets goals, communicates direction and seeks to take people with him/her in a venture. There is a lack of definition concerning the differences between apostle and leader, all the more in reflection on the term ‘father’, for it is possible to be a spiritual father, to love and nurture people, and not be an apostle. Perhaps the emphasis on ‘foundation’ might be one aspect that provides a crucial distinctive characteristic. Indeed the lack of differential definition between ‘apostle’ and ‘leader’ is in line with one of the main criticisms of charismatic theory; Sashkin asks the question whether charismatic leadership is a different Gestalt from other “ordinary” leadership, as this is theoretically unclear (Sashkin, 1976, p.217).136

A second problematic characteristic of apostolic multiplication by recognition is the overlooking of the role of the founder. For an emerging apostle to have the opportunity for recognition by the people, he may need to receive training and be allowed a place to exercise his gifts (following Conger and Kanungo, 1998, p.32). It is possible that there were gifted apostles but not known and for whom an environment was not created for their gifts to be recognized. This speaks to the crucial role of the founder in the model of apostolic multiplication by recognition.

136 Further comment on charismatic leadership theory is given in Chapter 9.
This critical nature of the founder’s role in ensuring transference of charismatic authority was clearly seen in the ground-breaking study of Trice and Beyer (1986), who showed the necessity for the founder to diffuse charisma among the members through rites, to produce written and oral traditions that sustain the leadership’s message over time, to establish norms and reference points for use in testimonies and the rearticulation of the vision.

Thirdly, the concept of apostle does not take into account environmental and contextual factors. Is it as possible for the people to recognize the apostolic gift in a society where the church is latent and perhaps does not even meet publically compared to a nation where there is freedom of religion and large conferences at which those with apostolic gifts are seen by many? Furthermore, charismatic leadership theory suggests that such leadership is more likely to be enacted and recognized in times of distress (Weber, 1947; House, 1976, pp.203-204). The founding of Newfrontiers by Virgo came at a time of retrenchment in much of the British church, with declining attendance and where the context facilitated the articulation of a compelling and competing vision differentiated from broader social trends. During less turbulent times, the recognition of an apostolic/charismatic leader may be more difficult.

3. Succession as perpetuation of male hegemony: Biblical faithfulness or postfeminist backlash?

Succession from Virgo was from a man to fifteen men; gender disqualified women from the role of apostle. A deeper understanding of the succession entails, therefore, an understanding of the gendered nature of the succession. In this section, I seek to explain why founder succession in Newfrontiers had to be the appointment of men only, before moving to, not a critique of Newfrontiers’ complementarianism, but to an argument that the network was lacking in reflexivity on this matter, unaware of other matters which may have been impinging upon decisions and affecting their appointing only men as successors to Virgo.
3.1. Gender and leadership in the church: An introduction to the debate

Christians disagree on the issue of women in church leadership, whether it be congregational leadership or whether a woman may hold the office of apostle. This is a topic of considerable popular and academic debate, a full analysis of which lies beyond the scope of this thesis. A number of introductory comments, however, will be made.

In the last 50 years there has been a development of Christian feminist theology; Aune suggests a threefold typology of such theologies, namely reformist, revisionist and revolutionary (Aune, 2004, p.117).137 Some feminist theology is not evangelical (Bendroth, 1993, pp.36-37), but many within evangelicalism have constructed theologies of gender and leadership. British writer Elaine Storkey has been influential (Storkey, 1985); similarly, a well-known figure such as Loren Cunningham, founder and, for many years, president of the global mission agency Youth With A Mission has been an advocate for women in governmental leadership (Cunningham and Hamilton, 2000).

Broadly speaking, evangelicalism divides itself into two theological camps on this matter, namely egalitarianism (those believing that women can exercise governance and apostleship) and complementarianism (those believing that each gender is assigned different roles by God, and thus that women are not to be in governmental roles).138 Egalitarians, particularly evangelical feminists, hold some of the following tenets: that the curse of Genesis 3:16, that a husband “will rule over” a wife, has been negated by Christ; that men and women are equal (Galatians 3:28, which has been called the ‘Magna Carta’ of Christian feminism [Aune, 2004, p.118]); passages such as 1 Timothy 2:11-15 are seen as temporary culture-dependent guidance; egalitarians state that the meaning of ‘head’ (1 Corinthians 11:3) is not ‘authority’ but refers to ‘source’ or ‘origin’ as in the Genesis creation account. For complementarians, however, men’s and women’s roles are ordained in Genesis 1

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137 For other typologies, see King (1989) and Clifford (2002).
138 See Aune (2004) for a fuller account of the differences. The brief summary above draws from this work.
and 2; Christ only appointed men as apostles, thus the office is closed to women. Furthermore, ‘male headship’ is the teaching of 1 Corinthians 11:3.

3.2. Newfrontiers’ complementarianism

As this thesis is not primarily a study of church and gender, I will limit my analysis to the data procured during the research interviews and to the following three texts which most clearly address the issue: Virgo (2008b, pp.235-237); Devenish (2011); and the article of 27 January 2012, The presumption of complementarianism. For a more thorough treatment of Newfrontiers and gender, the reader is referred to Aune (2004), from whom I have drawn for the broader framing of this issue.

In his autobiography, Virgo only briefly comments on the issue of women in church government, stating that Jesus, who subverted the traditions and norms of the day, only appointed men as apostles. Women may engage in a variety of ministry and leadership (including breaking bread in communion), but they are not to exercise church government and the “authoritative teaching and leading of men” for “we would regard these as territory forbidden to women by Scripture” (Virgo, 2008b, p.236). Virgo believes that the New Testament “looks back to creation rather than forward to our ultimate heavenly state (see 1 Corinthians 11:8; Ephesian 5:31; 1 Timothy 2:13)” (Virgo, 2008b, p.237). Women are “to emulate the challenging and multi-faceted example set out in Proverbs 31 with maturity and security” (Virgo, 2008b, p.236). We are told, furthermore:

Our desire has never been to belittle or underestimate over 50 per cent of God’s created humanity and we don’t aim to perpetuate a historic Victorian stance, dictating that women should be ‘seen and not heard’. We simply and honestly believe that the Bible shows us that there are roles in the church that are gender-specific and that if these principles are correctly observed we shall see women blossom and flourish into the beautiful potential God has for them (Virgo, 2008b, p.237).

140 Aune (2004) is a PhD thesis specifically on gender in Newfrontiers, with data gathered largely through the ethnographic and participant-observer method.
Subsequently, in his 2012 article, *The presumption of complementarianism*, Virgo advocates for “women in ministry, prophesying, deaconing (sic), worship leading, preaching, teaching, leadership, missionary work, church planting”; only men, however, should be elders for several reasons. First, he locates his position within the hermeneutic of obedience to Scripture, unless it is clear that any commands or injunctions applied only to specific individuals or for a limited period. Thus 1 Timothy 2:12, “I do not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man”, still applies as an injunction disbarring women from church government. Secondly, he places the burden of proof on those who advocate for women in governmental roles, as church history has been overwhelmingly complementarian. Thirdly, Virgo stresses that greater weight should be accorded to New Testament passages which address an issue with specificity rather than generality (and he cites 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 as so doing). His fourth argument is that of the hermeneutic of compatibility; if theological positions were compatible to the apostle Paul, they should also be compatible to us. Thus, Paul writes of gender equality, yet, for example, that wives should submit to husbands.

Devenish specifically addresses the question “Are women able to serve as apostles?” (Devenish, 2011, p.329), stating, “I would argue that women do not hold the office of apostle in the New Testament, though it is clear that many women numbered among Paul’s fellow workers and in that sense were part of apostolic teams” (Devenish, 2011, p.330). Devenish makes his case on the basis of ‘asymmetry’ in the doctrine of the Trinity, namely that the three persons of the Trinity have equal yet asymmetrical relations and roles; therefore, such equality yet asymmetry in human relationships and roles is based on humans’ being created in God’s image (Devenish, 2011, p.330).

### 3.3. Newfrontiers succession

Such theology framed apostolic succession for Newfrontiers as a male-to-male transition. Women are precluded from such office on the basis on Scripture. Succession, therefore, ensures male hegemony within the networks which followed.

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141 Brauch is representative of many proffering a differing interpretation (Brauch, 1990, pp.252-257).
While not entering the scriptural debate over complementarianism _per se_, I suggest that a closer analysis, however, may reveal other influences on gendered founder succession, and that there is little evidence of reflexivity on such possible influences. First, there appears to be a gender-blindness or “gynopia” (Reinharz, 1985) when reading the very scriptures used both to support apostolic ministry and the model of multiple successors. Devenish titles his 2001 book _Fathering Leaders, Motivating Mission_, with chapter four titled “The need for fathers in ministry and mission”. There is no mention that leaders might also need ‘mothering’ or ministry from the feminine within the church. The work speaks of “fatherly leadership”, “Paul’s fatherly lifestyle” and “fathers for mission”. It is ironic that one of the key texts cited to show the fatherly nature of apostleship is 1 Thessalonians 2:6-7: “As apostles of Christ we could have been burden to you, but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children”. These words of a male apostle use the simile of motherhood to express apostolic ministry. Devenish mentions this in passing but does not provide any further exegesis on this point. The key text, therefore, cited to support ‘fathering’ is one which explains apostleship with a feminine simile.

When speaking of succession, Virgo and Devenish cited Psalm 45:16: “Your sons will take the place of your father; you will make them princes throughout the land”, a scripture which for them provided clear direction on succession decisions. There is however, no comment on the place of women in Virgo’s or Devenish’s citing of this psalm, despite the previous verses speaking of “daughter”, and the princess being led to enter the palace of the king (verse 15). Yet the application of this psalm focused on the appointing of (multiple) males. There was no mention of how the women could be ‘led to the king’ in Newfrontiers’ application of this seminal scripture shaping their succession. It would have been possible to maintain a complementarian theology but also to refer in the narratives to the role of women.

Women, furthermore, are not mentioned in Virgo’s texts; the language is often exclusively male, as seen in the following three citations. Virgo states that he gathered “men” to help him (Virgo, 2008b, p.98), yet women were part of his church-planting and ministry efforts. Secondly, in his article _Newfrontiers marches_
Virgo’s account of a leadership conference in Turkey, where many women were present, includes the summation that “to meet with men from Bolivia to Mongolia, from Seattle to Sydney was a joy and delight”. There appears to be no recognition of the women at the conference. Thirdly, we read in Virgo’s 2011 article *On the future of Newfrontiers, transition, but not retiring just yet*: “I’ve seen guys I remember when they were starting and now I see ‘Boy, look what he’s built. Look at these men who look to him’.” There is no acknowledgement of any role of women in this “building”, despite Newfrontiers’ theology allowing for women on apostolic teams (Devenish, 2011, p.330).

Further to this lack of acknowledgement of the role, at times even presence, of women, there are still other ways of reflecting on the correlation of gender and succession, upon which greater reflexivity may have been helpful as the network made a transition to a new phase. One such matter is that of the development of the ‘separate spheres’ social practice of assigning men and women different societal roles stemming from industrialized capitalism (Davidoff and Hall, 1987; Aune, 2004), which separated work and home. With men being to a greater extent away from home on business, an ideology was needed to reconceptualize home life and its importance. Evangelicals may think they have shaped culture, but Rosman (1992) shows that social context is a key driver in the shaping of evangelical attitudes to culture in England. This, and the economic nature of evangelical ‘theology’ on the matter may be seen in the writings of evangelical Congregationalist Ann Martin Taylor, publishing novels, letters and pamphlets, writing that preserving domestic happiness is “an effectual, as well as simple means of increasing national prosperity” (Martin Taylor, 1818 p.176, cited in Davidoff and Hall, 1987, p.173). ‘Separate spheres’ in broader society drove ‘separate spheres’ in church life, where women served in the home, or in the nurturing areas of church, such as teaching children and visiting the sick (see Aune, 2004, pp.113-115). If this is valid, then apostolic

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144 See Davidoff and Hall (1987, pp.107-118) for a fuller treatment on the development of ‘separate spheres’ and evangelical teaching in the late 18th century and early 19th century.
succession within the Newfrontiers movement may be an enactment of and is constructive of industrialized socialization. At best, “Evangelicals may claim their gender ideals derive directly from the Bible, but these ‘biblical’ ideals are mediated through their cultural understandings” (Aune, 2004, p.110). Indeed, Aune would go beyond this understanding and assert that Newfrontiers is “substantially formed and informed by postfeminist discourse” (Aune, 2004, p 2).\textsuperscript{145} and that, furthermore, a “backlash” against the feminism of the 1970s and 1980s may also be discerned within Newfrontiers. Thus, “NFI’s public, congregational discourses and practices of gender are postfeminist, yet with a far stronger emphasis on separate spheres conservatism and its backlash reassertion” (Aune, 2004, p.143).\textsuperscript{146} While further work on this is necessary, it is my point, however, not to critique Newfrontiers’ complementarianism, but to suggest they lacked reflexivity on such matters.

In seeking to relate the implications of gender theology to succession, I also draw from Bendroth’s attempt to trace the history of gender within evangelicalism and fundamentalism. She draws attention to Calvinism as a theology more likely to produce complementarianism, for Calvinists believe in the ‘natural order’ of genders related in the Genesis 1 and 2 accounts. Newfrontiers is Calvinistic. Certainly, other non-Calvinistic British restorationist networks seem more inclined to place women in governmental leadership (Kay, 2007, pp.330-331).

Bendroth notes, furthermore, that during periods of growth, churches use and rely more on the gifts and energy of women, but that conversely, during times of retrenchment they become more concerned with male status (Bendroth, 1993 pp.116-117). Newfrontiers has recorded sustainable growth since its inception.

\textsuperscript{145} Postfeminism is a fluid and multi-valent term (see Aune, 2004, pp 82-88). For Aune, postfeminism refers to “attitudes and practices of gender that amalgamate feminist and traditionalist ideologies within a postindustrial context. It is a sometimes-contradictory adherence to both gender traditionalism (manifested in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth-century notion of separate spheres and the post-1970s backlash against feminism) and feminist discourse, enacted within a late-modern context”. (Aune, 2004, p.92).

\textsuperscript{146} As with any church or network, the official doctrine may not be believed in the same way by the multiple adherents: “In at least one local setting... NFI is less conservative and more feminist than the wider and national settings suggest. Conservative gender ideologies, therefore, despite their rhetoric are sometimes weakened in social practice”. (Aune, 2004, p.2).
which might seem to disprove Bendroth’s thesis. However, Newfrontiers is within the context of British Christianity where there had indeed been greater retrenchment.

As gender was not activated unprompted by the interviewees, I sought to activate it in order to ascertain, even within complementarian leadership, what role women might have played in the succession. There was in fact no involvement by women in the leadership discussions and decisions (Virgo, Interview II, p.2). I would suggest this points to a ‘hard’ complementarianism (my terminology).147 When asked a similar question, Devenish, like Virgo, acknowledged that women did not participate, but added: “I’m not saying that was right. I’m just saying that’s what happened. Whereas now, it’s not quite how it works” (Devenish, Interview II, p.16). He gives examples of wives of leaders being at significant leadership events, as well as women being members of “apostolic teams” (Devenish, Interview II, p.15). While stressing the continued belief in complementarity, such comments may be a recognition of past inadequacies; while complementarianism remains a *theologia ex mente*, these could be signs that it is weakening as a *theologia ex corde*. Alternatively, in metaphorical terms, this theology might be seen as palimpsestic with complementarianism overwritten with attempts at greater gender inclusivity.

To conclude, founder succession within the theological framework of complementarianism preserved male hegemony in church affairs. For the leaders within the fifteen spheres, this was faithfulness to scriptural teaching; egalitarians would probably view such succession either as stemming from poor exegesis resulting in denying women their opportunity to be leaders, or as female exclusion through backlash postfeminism. Greater reflexivity may have helped Newfrontiers acknowledge the role of women, even within a complementarian framework. In Chapter 9, I return to the matter of insufficient reflexivity on such matters not to discuss that the successors had to be male, but, in fact, they could only be a certain type of male which fit the network’s construction of masculinity.

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147 A ‘softer’ complementarianism is seen in Grace Network (Chapter 8), where apostolic leaders are men, but their wives participate in leadership meetings.
4. Succession as act of anti-routinization and kinesisoclasm

4.1. Routinization

Succession from the founder of Newfrontiers was an enactment to obviate routinization, contra Weber’s theory of the routinization of charisma in the transition of authority in new movements and organizations. Having so begun this section, immediately a number of explanations and qualifications must be made. Weber’s theory is complex and classic. Given the vast nature of the scholarship, it remains beyond the scope of this thesis to treat this matter adequately. Weber’s notion has sustained considerable criticism, with some viewing it as inadequate to understand founder succession (Sasson, 1991; Andelson, 1991; Shields, 1991; and others). As Weber’s notion, has, however, been the predominant notion of understanding founder succession in charismatic-led movements for many decades, it has relevance, therefore, to ongoing conceptualizing of the dynamics involved. Many of the critics do not so much expunge the theory, but add to it by showing the greater complexity of succession in the modern world. The leaders of Newfrontiers, furthermore, seemed aware of the dynamics which Weber was seeking to describe, while being unfamiliar with the terminology of ‘routinization’; indeed, it was those dynamics which occupied their deliberations on succession (see Devenish Interview I, pp.45-46). A brief statement will be made concerning Weber before seeking to analyze Newfrontiers on this matter.

Weber posited that there are essentially three types of legitimate authority: legal, traditional and charismatic. It is the latter that Weber applies to new religious movements or organizations:

The term ‘charisma’ will be applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men [sic]

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148 This is my terminology, taken from the Greek words for ‘movement’, both in literal and figurative sense, and for ‘breaking’ (supported by Liddell and Scott, 1901, p.806 and Pring, 1965, p.98).
149 This theory is taken from Part I of Weber’s Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, published in German in 1919, better known in the English-speaking world through its 1947 translation The Theory of Social and Economic Organization.
and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are such as are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader (Weber 1947:358-9).

The crucial factor is the perception of such a person by followers or disciples. It is others’ recognition of the one in authority which validates charisma. Often there is no constitutional authority or regulation of powers. There tend to be few administrative structures, and others are appointed because they too have charismatic authority. This authority operates outside of routine, rational and bureaucratic or traditional authority; it rests on charisma.

For a movement to endure, however, it must pass from the reliance on personal gifts to some form of routinization (according to Weber). Importance becomes attached to the ideal and the material interests of the followers as they seek to continue the movement. It is the disappearance of the founder which brings such matters to the fore, if they have not been already addressed.

Weber emphasizes that charisma’s anti-economic character must be altered in order for it to be routinized. Laity and clergy might be differentiated, with the latter receiving a stipend, or there is distinction between the taxpayers and recipients. A strong influence on routinization is the desire for security, both economic and in the sense that the movement will continue its mission. The issue is not only succession from the founder but more fundamentally making the transition from a charismatic administrative staff to one which is adapted to everyday conditions.

Newfrontiers leaders were aware that routinization was a possibility, although they employed the term “institutionalization”. There was, for example, a negative view of hierarchal structures. Referring to new apostolic networks, Devenish states: “The last thing that the founding fathers of these movements would want is to see their living, relational leadership structures being institutionalized into something more rigid and hierarchical by a second generation of leaders” (Devenish, 2011, p.12). The prevention of such institutionalization would be by means of maintaining “the biblical emphasis on family relationship, particularly the continuing need for fathers”

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151 This understanding was first articulated by Durkheim (1965).
(Devenish, 2011, pp.12-13). Routinization (at least in this context) is viewed as negative and antithetical to the values of Newfrontiers. When questioned, Devenish responded:

We did talk about that. I don’t remember us saying this sociological...but we did, that observation is something we debated a lot. We looked at organizations, Christian organizations, which in the first generation had no constitution. In the second generation have a very complex constitution.

We felt that, firstly, each new sphere needs to be a first generation sphere, if you see what I mean. It’s only our togetherness in the second generation. And therefore, it’s only our togetherness which that could apply to. But because our togetherness is probably 10-20% of who we are, you see, all the churches, they’re not Newfrontiers churches, they’re all in their sphere. Do you see what I mean? So, we, that’s ... we like to... in one sense, though we didn’t do it precisely for this reason, we may be kidding ourselves, I don’t know, but we’re thinking this is one way of trying to avoid that. ... So we debated that (Devenish Interview I, pp.45-46).

This nuanced response shows that devolution to fifteen autonomous spheres was a way of avoiding routinization and in fact perpetuating a continual first generation, a range of fresh new networks rather than a continuing of the old. Devenish allows that the continued collaboration of the “togetherness” might involve routinization. Indeed, I maintain that it has done so. The paper Definition of Newfrontiers for the current phase documents the common values of the fifteen spheres, defines mutual accountability as well as codifies doctrine for the first time.

While admitting greater formality with regard to ‘togetherness’, the main thrust of the apostolic spheres, however, should be the continual renewing of the church to be first generation, and thus perpetually charismatic rather than routinized: “Each generation should be like a first-generation church in its life and organization” (Devenish, 2011, p.335).

Virgo similarly wished to avoid such bureaucratization. He believes the succession occurred without producing it:

Yes, I think, I think even sometimes the difficulty I have in answering is because it is based on gifting, personality, relationship, rather than on documents and details. We have never gone that way.... When people wanted to say ‘can we join you?’, at
one point we said ‘shall we print our fifteen values?’ And we felt uneasy about that because it’s like, well, if you want, this is the list. And we didn’t want people to meet a list. We wanted people to meet a person and feel ‘are we getting engaged relationally?’

So, in fact, one of the ways we have tried to overcome that was, on my website, I did a question-and-answer. My son asked me, on every one of the fifteen points, he probed in a video format. ‘What do you mean by this? What do you mean by that?’ And then he would ask questions around, ‘What does that mean then?’ So, at least, it was a conversational thing, rather than, well, there it is on paper, do it... So, relationship came first (Virgo Interview II, pp.16-17).

This narrative shows an attempt to convey important values but, through the medium of video, to attempt to do so in a less formal or bureaucratic way than a written document.

Subsequently, as the ‘togetherness’ leaders have documented certain doctrines and procedures, Virgo sees the benefit of this for the second generation working together in their current and future contexts. Nonetheless, Virgo believes they have been successful in avoiding the pitfalls of routinization. The interview transcripts as well as documentary sources indicate, while not using such terminology, that Newfrontiers believes in ongoing recharismaticization. I suggest this resonates with Ukah’s notion of recharismaticization (Ukah, 2008, p.83).

4.2. Movement

Succession from the founder of Newfrontiers was, moreover, not solely an act of anti-routinization; it was an act of resistance to and destruction of ‘movement’. To introduce the notion of ‘movement’ into the analysis is fraught with complexity as in the literature of sociology, including the sociology of religion, its meaning is contested (see for example Della Porta and Diani, 2009, pp.25-28). While absent in Newfrontiers literature, Virgo introduced the notion multiple times (unprompted) (Virgo Interview I, pp.28, 29, 30, 32, 39 and Virgo Interview II, pp.12, 13, 14, 34); he does not, however, include any concomitant meaning. Yet, to understand Virgo’s conceptualization of ‘movement’ is crucial to analyse the succession.
A dictionary definition of ‘movement’ is of “a body of persons with a common object”. The field of sociology often speaks of “social movements” as “networks of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in political or cultural conflicts, on the basis of a shared collective identity” (Diani, 1992, p.1). Della Porta and Diani (2009, p.25) state, however, that such a term does not apply to a religious (or any other) formalized organization. Others, however, would indeed see a religious sect or cult as a social movement (Robbins, 1988). Hadden, moreover, states that social movements are “organized efforts to cause or prevent change” and that ‘religious movements’ are a “subcategory of ‘social movements’” (Hadden, 2001, no page number). Hadden adopts a three-part typology of religious movements, namely, endogenous (desiring change internal to the religion), exogenous (attempting to alter the environment in which the religion resides) and generative (seeking to introduce new religion into an environment). Endogenous movements seek to change one or more of the beliefs, symbols, practices and organization of the religion; they frequently result in schism. If the religious hierarchy adopts the objectives, reform rather than schism may result. If the environment is conducive to the survival, economic viability, status and ideology of the religion then there is often harmony between the religion and surrounding culture; such groups in harmony are usually defined as ‘church’ or ‘denomination’ (Hadden, 1980, p.103). If there is disequilibrium between the religion and society, exogenous movements may result.

Without pausing unduly over the debates on terminology, I suggest that Newfrontiers was, and each of the fifteen apostolic spheres is, a “movement”. They organize people around certain values and goals; they desire change – indeed the restoration of New Testament Christianity and the working towards the presence of the Kingdom of God. They are a religious movement, partly of the endogenous type, seeking to change certain beliefs and practices of Christianity, yet also of the generative type, seeking to introduce the Christian faith to societies including those with little

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church presence. It could be that Virgo would not even dispute this assertion, if spoken solely in terms of sociology: “But we do have a name. You've got to in the modern world... bank accounts, etcetera” (Virgo Interview II, p.12). Nonetheless, Virgo is ‘anti-movement’ in terms of church. What does he mean by ‘movement’ and why is this anathema?

I suggest five ways to understand Virgo’s conceptualization of, and opposition to, movement. First, ‘movement’ is to be resisted: “In a sense, I always resisted the concept that we are a movement” (Virgo Interview II, p.13).

Secondly, the motive for such resistance is its lack of biblical warrant, noting Virgo’s antithetical juxtaposition of ‘movement’ and ‘biblical’: “I knew other people who started movements, and I think ‘what’s a movement?’ I’m trying to be a biblical Christian. I don’t know what a movement is. So, I challenged it. ‘What is a movement?’” (Virgo Interview I, p.30). Thirdly, this lack of biblical warrant is based partly on the reification of the relationship between Christians working together, turning the matter to a human institution which one joins; in contradistinction, church networks are to be based on mutual agreement to receive the ministry of those with Ephesians 4 gifts:

...for instance, I strongly resisted... And over the years, people, you know churches, can I join Newfrontiers? I would say, “that's really not a very good question. It is not a biblical question. Are you asking for Ephesians 4 ministries to help you? Do you want, uh, apostolic help? Do you want prophetic help?” Because we’re to model it on biblical principles, we have to have a name, but the way that’s, I think...can I join this club, or whatever, is a – is just an unhelpful way in. Because it is asking the wrong question and therefore you can have the wrong concept (Virgo Interview II, p.13).

Fourthly, for Virgo, ‘movement’ is similar to, and in danger of fully becoming, ‘denomination’: “So denominations, I have always resisted that concept, of a denomination” (Virgo Interview II, p.14):

Well, Paul, as a biblical example, had churches that he worked with. They weren’t denominations in the modern sense. But they were what the theologians call the Pauline churches, the ones he fathered or cared for. So I thought, well, this is a biblical principle. Paul could say ‘all are yours’. You know, Peter’s in and out of Corinth, but he does talk about our sphere. We’re not overextending our sphere. We are not building on another person’s foundation. So we’ve tried to
observe those principles. And I just hope... I have always felt that is very important. And I’m not quite sure whether everyone has grasped how important I felt that to be. Because I think you then hear of all sorts of movements. So you hear of Acts 29 or this or that, who are not... They are happy to call themselves movements, but I have been a bit resistant of wanting that title. But trying to argue it biblically (Virgo Interview II, p.14).

For Virgo, what conjoins is fathering relationships; those are organic not structural. Fifthly, it is antithetical to the model provided by the New Testament networks (plural). The New Testament does not show the church as one movement under one leader:

I remember one of the things that Chris put in his paper, when he talked about Peter on the day of Pentecost. He said it became Peter’s moment, not Peter’s movement, which I felt...is a phrase that I still remember, obviously.

It’s not like Peter, then in stark contrast to the Roman Catholics... it’s not like he became the leader of.... It was his moment, the day of Pentecost, not his movement. And that was a helpful little phrase (Virgo Interview I, p.28-29).

To be a movement with a leader puts one in the same theological and organizational position as Roman Catholicism. Virgo’s objection to being a movement is, therefore, a resistance based not on sociology, but on theology from which organizational developmental decisions must flow. Thus the succession is not merely ‘anti-movement’; the succession to fifteen sphere leaders is ‘kinesisoclastic’, an intentional destruction of movement:

So, if Terry is an apostle, who makes fifteen apostles...well, we realized we can’t go there because no man can make an apostle. That’s what we felt. So that...we talked the whole thing through. We’re trying to stay biblical and not just become a movement (Virgo Interview I, p.32).

Yet, at the same time, Virgo desired that which he founded to continue into the future in some form, in a sense to ‘move’ from what it was through a decentralizing and multiplying process.
5. Chapter summary

Succession in Newfrontiers has been interpreted as a perpetuation of male hegemony, as an enactment of apostolic multiplication and as an act of anti-routinizational kinesisoclasm. The dissolution of one network to create fifteen has proven a unique navigation of founder succession. This analysis also began to raise the matter of theological reflexivity in founder succession, a topic to be examined in greater depth in the final chapter.
Chapter 8

Grace Network

_Amerika, du hast es besser_  
_Als unser Kontinent, der alte,_  
_Hast keine verfallenen Schlösser_  
_Und keine Basalte._  
Goethe

1. Introduction

1.1. Founding and purpose

Grace Network was founded in the USA in 1980. The three founders, Jimmy Hollingsworth (Roanoke, Virginia), John Manzano (Charlottesville, Virginia) and Dick Blackwell (Harrisonburg, Virginia) each provided guidance and oversight to churches in the USA and overseas. In 1980, they agreed to formalize meeting together and to invite churches to be part of a network. By 1988, the founders registered their network as a charity under the name ‘Grace Presbytery and Ministry International’, later becoming ‘Grace Network International’ (but usually referred to as ‘Grace Network’). The purposes of the network were to provide assistance, accountability, biblical teaching and to start new churches and ministries in the USA and overseas (Constitution, article II). Churches were self-governing; the leadership team of the network provided advice, support and training to those churches and leaders desiring it and wishing to be part of a broader network of fellowship and voluntary collaboration than is possible in a single congregation.

1.2. Doctrine

The by-laws of the ministry articulate belief in twelve statements, broadly in line with the Lausanne Covenant\(^\text{153}\) and similar to many evangelical churches (By-laws, 2008). Section III-B [Values and Practices] more narrowly defined the network’s

spirituality with the acronym “CARE,” (Charismatic, Apostolic, Reformed, Evangelical). Over time, the leadership employed the acronym ‘I CARE’, having added the ‘I’ for ‘inclusion’. The leadership and member churches (in the USA) were largely white; the accretion of ‘inclusion’ expressed their desire to collaborate with the black and Hispanic American churches. Indeed, three Spanish-speaking congregations in the USA were admitted to membership. The founding leadership governed as a triumvirate, with co-equal authority. When one founder retired, Jack Groblewski was appointed as director and then later as executive director (successor to founders) in 2005.

1.3. Multi-faceted international network

Grace Network International had member churches and para-church ministries in a number of nations. Their work in Uruguay, for example, developed when a Christian leader from Uruguay visited Grace Covenant Church in Harrisonburg. The American church then supported the church and large orphanage led by this Uruguayan leader. This work grew to 17 new churches in Uruguay. Blackwell’s role was to provide spiritual oversight to the Uruguayan leader who in turn would oversee the churches in his nation. The ‘mother’ church in Uruguay was part of Grace Network, even adopting (in Spanish) the nomenclature of Blackwell’s Harrisonburg church (Pacto de gracia). Similarly, the network helped establish and support churches in Haiti. While an independent, self-governing network, Grace Network International also sought to establish good working relationships with other similar networks around the world, in one case, forming a loose affiliation with Ground Level (United Kingdom) and The Christian Network (TCN) in South Africa. Through this affiliation, Grace Network began to collaborate with the other two on matters of training and international ministry, using the name ‘Partners For Influence’ (PFI) for such collaborative efforts.

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154 See Appendix Q for further explanation of these four foundational doctrines. This network, like Newfrontiers, is both charismatic and reformed, something previously mentioned as rare.
The overseas churches in Grace Network were considered full members. Representatives would attend network conferences in the USA; there was much cooperation and considerable financial support to works in Haiti, Uruguay and later in Africa. Furthermore, other types of ministry could be members of Grace Network. Betel is both an international network of ministries to those suffering addiction and a church-planting ministry. Representatives of Betel attended Grace Network conferences in the USA. Some Betel missionaries were ordained through churches within the Grace Network in the USA.

1.4. Formation of ‘One Focus’

In 2017, Grace Network merged with others to form ‘One Focus’; Grace Network as a separate movement now no longer exists. Given this, there are few documents currently available (the former website is no longer extant). The website of One Focus provides the sole online statement on Grace Network’s ministry, history, founding leadership and succession.157

1.5. Narratives

Dick Blackwell (born 1941, American, white, male) was chosen as the founder for the purposes of the research interviews. One of the other founders is now deceased; the other was unable to be interviewed on grounds of health. The successor, indeed the first person actually given the title ‘Executive Director’, was Jack Groblewski (born 1948, American, white, male). The two interviews with Blackwell were conducted in Virginia, USA in May 2018. Research interviews with Groblewski were conducted in June 2018 in Pennsylvania.158

Grace Network was led by a “three-headed leadership team” (Blackwell Interview I, p.2), which Blackwell believes operated well due to mutual respect and lack of any “grasping for leadership” (Blackwell Interview I, p.2). There was no succession plan for Grace Network (Groblewski Interview I, p.7). In 2005, Van Niekerk, the South African leader of TCN, articulated difficulty in relating to a triumvirate; he challenged

157 https://onefocus.global/about/ (Accessed: 26 May 2018), also attached as Appendix R.
158 In the interviews, Groblewski is referred to by his nickname ‘Grubby’.
Grace Network to appoint a “representative” (Blackwell Interview I, p.3) who could speak on behalf of Grace Network in PFI matters. Blackwell and Manzano proposed that Jack Groblewski be appointed as a new executive director. Network members were consulted. At a regular network meeting, less than six months after the PFI leaders articulated the need for an executive director, Groblewski absented himself so that discussion and voting could take place. A unanimous vote followed; Groblewski, at the same conference, was installed into office through prayer, *cheirotonia*\(^\text{159}\) and anointing with oil. The Scripture read was Numbers 27:18-20, which describes God saying to Moses to take Joshua on whom God had put his spirit and to lay your hands upon him, and some of the power on Moses would transfer to him. There was little discussion as to role, expectations and no specific training provided. In Groblewski’s words, it was similar to Joshua saying to the people “Get up. You have not been this way before” (Groblewski Interview I, p.11).\(^\text{160}\)

Groblewski narrates that succession was problematic in two significant ways. Firstly, it raised unrealizable expectations among the churches with regard to his role. His precise role was not clearly articulated or communicated. Secondly, his role with the other two leaders was not clarified; that is, the leadership decision-making process and the amount of authority he had was unclear. For him, the model was unsustainable over time (Groblewski Interview I, p.5).

Groblewski believes that he instigated changes in leadership methodology and conceptualizations, seeking to be a more directive leader. When significant pressure came upon the movement years later, the leadership, however, reverted to their prior understanding of co-equality. That external pressure was the grave failings within the leadership of TCN, which led to addressing many painful pastoral issues. The role of PFI waned, and the Grace Network leadership reverted to a former *modus operandi* (although Groblewski was still executive director). These exogenous factors brought the co-equal Presbyterian leadership model into unavoidable view and catalyzed criticism from within the network from those desiring a more decisive leadership. Faced with such comment, with which Groblewski agreed, the three

\(^{159}\) ‘laying on of hands’. I have found no reference to such action, or indeed to anointing with oil, in the interviews or documents of my other two case studies.

\(^{160}\) A reference to Joshua 3:4.
directors saw that there was no one else wanting to take leadership in this manner. A decision was made (2016-17) to disband the network and offer the churches the possibility of joining a freshly merged network (One Focus). Despite such difficulties, Groblewski nonetheless viewed his tenure as a “very fond time of my life” (Groblewski Interview II, p.20).

To understand founder succession within Grace Network, interpretations will be provided by examining succession as coercive isomorphism, as organizational cultural preservation and as collision of competing theologies of leadership.

2. Succession as coercive isomorphism

Founder succession in Grace Network may be understood and interpreted as a case of coercive isomorphism. Following an explication of terms, Grace Network’s succession will be set within the typologies of isomorphism and the theory of new institutionalism. I will show how, both at the theoretical and case level, new institutionalism may be applied to practical theological analysis. Founder succession in this instance, however, will also be shown to be more complex than a simple reading of coercive isomorphic theory, as the succession showed both acquiescence and resistance to isomorphic pressures.

2.1. Explication of terms

Borrowing from natural science, ‘isomorphism’ is a term adopted by the social sciences since the seminal work of DiMaggio and Powell (1983), who posit that organizations tend toward homogeneity within their organizational field; a field being “organizations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life” (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983, p.148). Fields have a structuration of parts including interaction among organizations within the field. Defined interorganizational structures of domination and patterns of coalition merge; mutual awareness develops among participants that they are involved in a common enterprise (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983, p.148). Within such a field, there is pressure toward homogenization; this is isomorphism, defined as “a constraining process that

161 Bolman and Deal found this article to be the most cited of the previous few decades in the area of organization studies and sociology, and the tenth most cited work of all academic fields (Bolman and Deal, 2008, pp.439-441).
forces one unit in a population to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions” (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983, p.149). DiMaggio and Powell identify three types of isomorphic pressure: coercive, mimetic and normative.

Coercive isomorphism “results from both formal and informal pressures exerted on organizations by other organizations upon which they are dependent and by cultural expectations in the society within which organizations function” (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983, p.150). Many studies support this concept, including Sadlak (1981) on how charities often change their structures and methods to appeal to donors, and Swidler (1979) on how organizations appoint leaders contrary to their own values of non-hierarchical decision-making so as better to relate to the exogenous environment inhabited by other bureaucracies.

A second form of isomorphism identified by DiMaggio and Powell is ‘mimetic isomorphism’, which is modelling after others due to uncertainty, becoming like others who are viewed as successful (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983, p.152). The third type of isomorphism, namely ‘normative’, occurs when professions enforce certain norms and standards on the organization. DiMaggio and Powell extend their work to identify predictors of isomorphic changes, which include dependence on other organizations, exchange relationships, the extent to which an organization views its goals as ambiguous and others as successful, as well as the extent to which internal conflict is repressed in the interests of harmony. In this latter case, it is easier to mimic others than confront the hidden disagreements (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983, p.155).

Conceptualizations of institutional isomorphism are set within the broader theoretical frame of ‘new institutionalism’, a perspective which stresses that it is the exogenous factors of an organizational environment which shape an entity’s decision-making, structures and procedures (Powell and DiMaggio, 1991). New institutionalism “is a theory of diffusion that provides ways to think about how an organizational structure or behavior [sic] goes from an artificial creation lacking legitimacy to being unconsciously accepted by all” (Scheitle and Dougherty, 2008, p.989).

An increasing number of scholars have applied concepts of new institutionalism and isomorphic change to religious studies (Cormode, 1998; Swartz, 1998; Kondra and
Hurst, 2009; Packard, 2011; Zainiddinov, 2018). Lindsay (2006) studied isomorphic pressures on evangelical elites, while Chaves (1996 and 1997) shows the extent of isomorphic pressures on denominations’ stances on women’s ordination. I am unaware of any research seeking to interpret founder succession in the frame of isomorphism, but suggest that, given the above citations, this is a logical extension of previous research in the practical theological field. Indeed, Dollhopf and Scheitle specifically study the isomorphic pressures in founding religious “noncongregational nonprofit organizations” during a period (in the USA) of “explosive growth” of such ministries since the mid-1990s (Dollhopf and Scheitle, 2016, p.261). This growth in the last two decades, unless these organizations ceased, must mean there have been, or soon will be, many founder successions, which begs the question (unable to be answered without further research) whether the large number of isomorphic religious networks leads to isomorphic successions.

2.2. Impetus for succession in Grace Network

Groblewski had replaced Hollandsworth as the third director. They continued a co-equal leadership model, which led to Van Niekerk’s urging the appointment of one director who should be empowered to deal with international partnership matters. Groblewski, who was not a founder, was appointed to this new role; this was judged to have been a leadership transition with minimal change in vision or modus operandi (Blackwell Interview I, p.4). Groblewski is clear that it was international pressure which caused the triumvirate to acknowledge that their leadership model was not understood or helpful to their partners:

I’m mentioning that because that was the trigger that moved me from being, uh, part of a triumvirate, three – three leaders, to being an executive leader. And the reason was the other two networks had executive leaders. And since we had decided to partner, the other two leaders were kind of insisting that Grace needed an executive leader, someone with whom they would be able to, uh, negotiate and have relationship and have a face to Grace Network and so forth. So consequent to, uh, their urging ... I became the executive director (Groblewski Interview I, p.2).
2.3. Interpretation – acquiescence to isomorphic pressure

This succession may be interpreted according to new institutionalism theory, that it was the external environment that most shaped the decision and process of succession within Grace Network. Grounded on a fivefold rationale, I suggest more specifically that founder succession was a case of coercive isomorphism. First, the initiative for the succession was external and the appointment was to acquiesce to exogenous “urging”: “So my accession was, I think, of international necessity or partnership necessity” (Groblewski Interview I, p.3). Second, the pressure was to follow the leadership pattern and structure of the PFI constituent movements: “And those networks both had hierarchial [sic] leadership with a measure of collaboration. While Groblewski used the word “imitate”, normally associated with the term ‘mimetic’, the epithet ‘mimetic’ in new institutional theory is more usually reserved for voluntary or self-initiated isomorphism because the organization desires to become like the other (often due to uncertainty). While coercive isomorphism does lead to imitation, in this case I argue that it was not a self-initiated and thus not mimetic isomorphism in the sense used by DiMaggio and Powell.

A third reason for describing this succession as coercive isomorphism is that in the broader field of new apostolic movements, a single defined apostolic leader had become the accepted norm (Wagner, 1998, pp.19-20). Grace Network’s decision accords with the findings of Chaves (1997, p.33) and Lindsay (2006) that church leaders institute policies or structures when those become commonly understood as bringing further legitimation. A fourth and more specific reason is that research shows that primary sources of coercive pressure on churches are their collaborative relationships with other networks or denominations (Chaves, 1997, p.10; Kondra and Hurst, 2009).

A fifth and final reason for citing this as a case of coercive isomorphism is, moreover, not simply the collaborative relationships but more specifically the dependency of Grace Network on its international partnership. In their original definition of coercive isomorphism, DiMaggio and Powell state that it is coercive when there are “pressures exerted on organizations by other organizations upon which they are
dependent” (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983, p.150). While not being financially dependent, each of the three networks in PFI had a pooled interdependency (Thompson, 2008) and reliance on each other. As the other two organizations were already agreed on leadership structures, Grace Network adapted to suit the majority in the partnership.

While describing Grace Network’s succession as one of coercive isomorphism, it is a case more complex than an assignation of such an epithet would suggest. Such complexity is revealed in the succession’s differing effects on different levels of leadership within the network, in resistance to organizational change and in a generalized ambivalence to the appointment.

The differing effects are seen in that the change to an executive or apostolic leadership mode only applied to the area of international partnership matters. Within their ministry in the USA, the triumvirate ignored the change; they continued as before. There was no change in theological beliefs about leadership appointments and structures. To appease external partners, there was an overt change of leadership structure, a legal appointment of an executive director, but in reality, on most matters the team of three continued as before.

There was, furthermore, latent resistance to such isomorphic pressures. Groblewski’s appointment, for example, was actually intended not to produce change:

It was natural and it was easy for us to do because we didn’t feel like Grubby was going to take it – take it places we weren’t comfortable with... So, it was probably the smoothest transition you can have. It just seemed natural, the thing to do [laughs] (Blackwell Interview I, p.4).

Although a succession appointment and concomitant installation ceremony did occur, many within the movement did not view this as succession. An official ceremony took place, after which Groblewski’s position was now changed (in juridical terms according to the constitution), as well as in terms of spiritual authority. This installation caused Groblewski to experience internal shift: “I felt the weight of more responsibility” (Groblewski Interview I, p.39). The network was, however, creating a problem at this very point, because many did not view this
enactment in the same way that Groblewski did. Indeed, there existed a dissonance between theological beliefs and enactment due to external pressure. During the prior fifteen years of its ministry, Grace Network had not seen any need for an executive director. This failure to appoint manifests a deeper issue of leadership theology. Put simply, had they believed in a model of ‘primus inter pares’ or an ‘apostolic’ model of leadership, someone would have taken that role within the first fifteen years of ministry. Confusion over the appointment was compounded by there being no consideration of expectations on the appointee, the precise hours he was to give in service in this role, or of any financial remuneration. Over time, Groblewski felt this put him in a difficult position, especially with the church of which he was pastor, and who in effect were paying him for work outside of the church. Full commitment to the role of executive director could have been evidenced by clearer expectations and remuneration.

This matter was compounded yet further by the lack of change of leadership mode; the triumvirate (Blackwell, Manzano and Groblewski) largely continued their previous modus operandi (Groblewski Interview I, p.3), except with reference to external partnership negotiations. The organizational ambivalence toward the nature of the appointment is evidenced in the nomenclature and equivocal response to my questioning. Blackwell’s report of Van Niekerk’s urging the appointment of one leader is narrated thus: “It’s difficult relating…uh, relating…uh… There are times you all three can’t come to meetings or whatever. Why don’t you just have a representative?” (Blackwell Interview I, p.3). In narrating the discussion concerning whom to appoint, we hear: “But we said… we talked and we said, ‘Grubby, how about you taking the primary leadership, especially with outside groups? And even when we meet with just our home…with our churches, um, you know, you be the point person’” (Blackwell Interview I, pp.3-4). It is hard to know whether Blackwell was appointing Groblewski to a different role concerning international matters than American matters (“primary leadership” in contrast with “point person”), and also the precise denotations and connotations of “point person” and “representative”. Certainly, terms such as ‘executive’ or ‘apostolic’ were not employed. When questioned further, Blackwell responded, “We called him ‘executive director’ [laughs]” (Blackwell Interview I, p.12). The vocabulary of the responses and indeed
the laughter (showing discomfort with the term) indicate ambivalence to the nature of the appointment.

That the appointment did not come from a theologia ex corde is seen, moreover, with the installation ceremony being functional rather than highlighted as a significant development in the life cycle of the organization. Churches in the movement treated ordination ceremonies as epideictic, with spouses also being prayed for and with symbolic enactments (Groblewski Interview I, pp.35-36); yet the time of prayer at a conference for Groblewski’s appointment was not replete with epideixis, nor was his wife even present at the occasion. In Groblewski’s words, “it wasn’t a big deal” (Groblewski Interview I, p.36).

Thus, an appointment was made and enacted, resulting in positional and legal change for Groblewski, yet ambivalence and awkwardness are revealed in the interviews. While the leadership agreed an appointment of executive director was necessary to develop their work with others, it seems that this signified little to the other leadership of the movement or domestically within the USA. In retrospect, for Groblewski this “was a succession of sorts” (Groblewski Interview I, p.4). Indeed, although the founders were installing a new leader for the network, with the two founders continuing much as before, this succession was not even experienced as such by most of those concerned. Thus, espoused and operant leadership theology were not coterminous. To put this more sharply, the founders’ appointing of a non-founder as the primary leader in name and with authority in some defined areas was not experienced as succession by many in the network. Exogenous acquiescence to isomorphic pressure led to the processes, decisions and ceremonies of succession, but for many this was experienced as ‘non-succession’. This matter would prove problematic years in the future: “… it was the succession thing that was the fly in the ointment” (Groblewski Interview I, p.5).

In developing this analysis further, however, I suggest that even the resistance to the homogenization of leadership structures may itself be interpreted as a further marker of coercive isomorphism. When an entity succumbs to isomorphic pressures it may still seek to maintain an organizational cultural uniqueness (Pedersen and Dobbin, 2006). Meyer and Rowan identify a phenomenon called “decoupling” which “enables organizations to maintain standardized, legitimating, formal structures
while their activities vary in response to practical considerations” (Meyer and Rowan, 1991, p.58). This may result in “loose coupling” which suggests “the dependence of organizations on the patterning built up in wider environments – rather than on a purely internal technical and functional logic” (Scott and Meyer, 1994, p.2). Chaves states that such loose coupling is a signal to the environment rather than a regulation governing internal operations (Chaves, 1997, p.5). Chaves shows how churches and Christian groups enact such loose coupling. Prichard provides details of such a difference between an official denominational stance and actual practice (Prichard, 1996, p.49). Such inner subversion or resistance is, therefore, a sign of existent isomorphic dynamics. It is also a sign of conflict repression, itself a predictor of isomorphic changes (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983, p.155). Such conflict suppression and its theological roots will be examined later in this chapter to gain a fuller analysis of founder succession in the case study.

2.4. Summary

In summary, succession within Grace Network was due to isomorphic pressures which led to the outward adoption of new leader, but in practice made little difference. The transition was not fully discussed; a change of role and expectations for the executive director were not articulated. An exogenous request was met, but Groblewski’s appointment was not viewed as a moment for change, including ways to empower its first executive director. This will be shown to be problematic for the network’s sustainability.

3. Succession as organizational cultural preservation: The internal/external debate

Despite the complexities of isomorphic succession in some ways being perceived as non-succession, in empirical terms a succession within Grace Network nonetheless took place, including consultation concerning the appointment and a ceremony of installation of the new executive director. Attention will be drawn to the rationale for appointing an internal candidate, thus raising the matter of successor origins, one of the great debates in the research literature on succession. The transition at Grace Network will be placed within this broader theoretical framework but also within
that of other evangelical networks, examining why internal founder succession is prevalent in modern Christian agencies.

3.1. Successor origins in Grace Network

Grace Network would not have made an external appointment to the position of executive director: “No, we wouldn’t. We believe, any way possible, to do it from within. I mean we had – we didn’t even need to think about external” (Blackwell Interview II, p.4). This reluctance to search external to the organization may be seen in the more general organizational characteristic of needing to know potential leaders for a good while. This is typified in the constitutional provision that one had to be a member of the movement for at least five years before one could be admitted to the board of directors (By-laws I-A, 3).

What lies behind the organizational culture of caution and reluctance to make external appointments? According to Groblewski, there were a number of factors, including the following: organizational cultural preservation - “So I think that provision [five-year membership] was put in so that no one would come in and really eviscerate the culture of Grace Network” (Groblewski Interview I, p.13); the desire for doctrinal fidelity - “But, as time went on, we became, I believe, more parochial, more focused on maintenance, more focused on, uh, doctrinal tidiness, uh, which is always a pitfall of Reformed groups” (Groblewski Interview I, p.13); and concern for maintenance of Christian ethics and morality:

Well, to maintain, I think, to maintain order, doctrinal tidiness, uh – uh – uh, the – the charismatic movement... These are charismatic Reformed churches. And so, you’ve got a tension right there. The charismatic movement has just seen so much, uh, ineptitude as far as its moral – its moral and ethical posture has gone, you know, the televangelist controversies, all those kinds of things... And I, uh, think it was just caution and, uh, not wanting our churches to suffer... (Groblewski Interview I, p.14).

This citation also manifests a fourth point, that of protection of the churches.

The successor’s understanding of the reasons for an internal appointment is confirmed in the founder’s narratives. These show a motivation of conservatism: “It was – it was natural and it was easy for us to do because we didn’t feel like Grubby
was going to take it – take it places we weren’t comfortable with” (Blackwell Interview I, p.4). This is related to a desire to preserve the organization’s culture and values:

Unless you wanted it to have radical change, turn it over to somebody with similar DNA who has similar values and mode of operation. I think, if the organization is good the way it is... has good values to begin with that you want to continue, then you have to have someone come along who has similar vision, values (Blackwell Interview II, p.14).

The founders of Grace Network conceptualize organizations as having a DNA: “You make radical changes to that and you mutate into something” (Blackwell Interview II, p.15). Any such mutation was to be avoided.¹⁶²

A number of points in critique of the above conservative, preservative and biological perception of Christian leadership will be made below. Before doing so, this example of succession will be set within the broader framework of evangelical founder succession to show that this approach is common. This succession will be placed furthermore within theory and literature on successor origins.

3.2. Successor origins in other founder-led international Christian organizations

Internal founder succession is common in many of the new international Christian networks, as the following selection shows (name and country of origin supplied; all websites accessed: 14 March 2019): New Covenant Ministries International (NCMI) (South Africa),¹⁶³ Salt and Light (United Kingdom),¹⁶⁴ Cure International (USA),¹⁶⁵ Operation Mobilization (United Kingdom),¹⁶⁶ Youth With A Mission (USA),¹⁶⁷ Global Advance (USA),¹⁶⁸ Edify (USA),¹⁶⁹ Life Impact Ministries (USA),¹⁷⁰ International Aid

¹⁶² The implications of this biological metaphor are treated more fully later.
¹⁶³ https://www.ncmi.net/
¹⁶⁴ https://www.saltlight.org/
¹⁶⁵ https://cure.org/
¹⁶⁶ https://www.om.org/uk/en
¹⁶⁷ https://www.ywam.org/
¹⁶⁸ https://www.globaladvance.org/
¹⁶⁹ https://www.edify.org/
¹⁷⁰ https://lifeimpact.care/
Services (Sweden).\textsuperscript{171} This raises the question of why Christian agencies prefer or even limit their understanding of succession to the internal. Conclusive findings should, of course, be reserved for a further and more far-reaching study. It is possible, however, to attempt a few tentative explanations. In writing about founder succession in Edify, Christopher Crane, founder, when speaking of his successor, highlights the successor’s history of high performance and his demonstrated long-term commitment to organizational mission.\textsuperscript{172} The appointment was thus due to high levels of trust for future performance, something that would have been more difficult to assess with an external candidate. For Shibley at Global Advance, the decision of who to appoint as successor was made over a five-year period of reflection, of which he writes concerning the (internal) successor that it “became obvious to everyone he was God’s choice”.\textsuperscript{173} This speaks to the preference for a long period of reflection and observation before appointing, something almost impossible with an external candidate. For Life Impact Ministries, the successor, David Knauss, writes that the founders desired an internal successor because of a “strong desire that the core values of the mission be carried on. Those values are often not seen in mission agencies and one of the reasons Life Impact Ministries exists in the first place”.\textsuperscript{174} In this example, strong emphasis is being placed on maintenance of organizational values, for which an external candidate would not be qualified.

In placing such comments from three organizations together, it would seem that these international evangelical organizations proceeded slowly and cautiously over the appointment of a successor, preferring to see demonstrated high performance and commitment to the ministry and its values as crucial qualifications. Such emphases favour internal appointments.

I suggest, furthermore, that this preference for internal succession as a means to perpetuate values and organizational spirituality is due to concern that in the future, the organization will depart from its founding Christian values and become a

\textsuperscript{171} http://www.ias-intl.org/
\textsuperscript{172} Correspondence from Crane, 20 February 2018 (cited with permission).
\textsuperscript{173} Correspondence from Shibley, 17 August 2018 (cited with permission).
\textsuperscript{174} Correspondence from Knauss, 29 October 2018 (cited with permission).
humanistic, philanthropic organization. Greer and Horst posit (with examples) that ‘mission drift’ is due to the persuasive pressure of secularization: “Functional atheism is the path of least resistance” for a Christian ministry; taking such a path is to be resisted (Greer and Horst, 2014, pp.42-43). This seems to be a widely held belief among Christian leaders, evidenced in a survey of hundreds of Christian leaders at the Q conference in Los Angeles (April 2013) at which 95% said mission drift was a challenging issue to faith-based nonprofit organizations (Greer and Horst, 2014, p.20). Such a view was also echoed by Crane, who recently led the organization he founded through (internal) succession: “It’s the exception that an organization stays true to its mission. The natural course – the unfortunate natural evolution of many originally Christ-centered missions – is to drift” (Interview with Greer, February 2013, in Greer and Horst, 2014. p 19). Internal succession is one means, it is believed, to maintain the Christian nature of an organization’s calling and purpose.

3.3. Successor origins in research literature

Grace Network did not consult theory or social scientific literature with regard to leadership succession. Had they done so, they would have become aware that the matter of succession origins has been widely studied. Indeed, it was interest in successor origins which largely catalyzed the creation of succession studies. Literature has already been reviewed (Chapter 1, section 1.1.1.); it will merely be reiterated at this point that much literature on origins exists, a good deal of which points to the benefits of internal succession, exemplified by the work of Collins and Porras (2002, p.10).

3.4. Evaluation and critique of Grace Network’s understanding and enactment of successor origins

It has already been suggested that Grace Network’s belief in internal succession was framed within cultural, doctrinal and ethical preservation. The use of emotive vocabulary (“mutate” [Blackwell Interview II, p.15] and “eviscerate” [Groblewski

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175 Q is a ministry which “educates church and cultural leaders on their role and opportunity to embody the Gospel in public life” (http://qideas.org/) (Accessed: 14 March 2019).
Interview I, p.13]) underlines the conservative and preservative nature of the succession.

There are three main points of analysis which lead towards a critical evaluation of the focus and emphasis on internal succession in Grace Network. First, conservatism obscured focus on future goal orientation, environmental challenges or a broader contextual evaluation for leader-situation congruence. Second, there was a strong yet unacknowledged espousal of leadership theory. A focus on the person of the leader rather than other factors (as seen in contingency theory or leader-member exchange theory) indicates that Grace Network espoused a trait-based leadership theory, not even other person-orientated theories of leadership such as leadership as skills. Thus a strong, yet unacknowledged, theoretical understanding of leadership emerges, that of trait and character based leadership (Bass, 1990; Kirkpatrick and Locke, 1991; and others), a matter which I will demonstrate more fully in the following section. This may lead to an overlooking of other crucial aspects to be considered in transition, such as skills and environmental match: “The natural tendency is to think about succession in terms of specific people rather than skills and talents. But even strong internal candidates will have strengths and limitations, and when ‘working backward’ from the person to the job, the limitations often get overlooked” (Garman and Tyler, 2007, p.3). Focusing on the successor’s origins and traits, furthermore, may displace attention from the need for a change in communication strategy, something that Kondrath identifies as important in founder succession in religious ministries (Kondrath, 2010). Emphasis tends to be placed on the replacement of the founder and his/her provenance and not on the broader interpersonal dynamics with other leaders in the process and the general depth and breadth of intraorganizational communication.

A third potential problem is that internal succession may be seen as panacean; internal founder successions in Christian organizations may, however, fail (Owens, 2002; Lavietes, 2015; Lobdell and Landsberg, 2015). This speaks to the possibility that emphasis on successor origins may obscure other vital matters in the successor process, such as skill and style similarity, the transmission of tacit knowledge and the extent to which the predecessor had already led the organization through strategic change. Dyck et al. (2002) reached a number of conclusions concerning founder
succession: the greater the similarity between the skill sets and managerial styles of incumbent and successor, the more likely it is that the succession will be successful; and the greater the level of agreement between incumbent and successor on the mode of succession, the more likely it is that the succession will be successful.

Kikoski and Kikoski (2004) found that high functioning organizations are influenced by the tacit knowledge of their leaders, while Linde (2001) suggests, “new leaders adapt to the roles by learning the stories of their organization”. Knowledge sharing is therefore a critical component of leadership succession (Peet, 2012). Furthermore, Zúñiga-Vicente, de la Fuente-Sabaté and Suárez-González (2005) found that long-tenure leaders could perform extremely well in the area of change. Indeed, “long tenure may reflect leaders’ ability and willingness to continuously initiate appropriate strategic change. As a result, new leaders following long-tenured predecessors may find their firm better aligned to the environment than new leaders following short termed predecessors, reducing the need for post-succession strategic change” (Hutzschenreuter, Kleindienst and Greger, 2012, p. 741). An emphasis on successor origins may obscure the matter of whether the predecessor has produced the optimal environment for succession. Such considerations reduce the significance of the person of the successor and increase that of the preparatory role of the founder.

In conclusion, Grace Network’s succession was sub-optimal due to conservatism, an overemphasis on trait-based leadership theory (strongly advocated yet unacknowledged) and an over-attention to successor origins. All three are, of course, interdependent and produce a conceptualization of leadership succession which will be shown to produce problems in later organizational life.

A further reflection on successor origins raises the question of why such emphasis has historically been placed on the importance of successor origins in succession literature. Successor origin research developed during the 1970s and 1980s when leadership studies and theory in general was placing great emphasis on the leader as person (Jago, 1982; Lord, DeVader and Alliger, 1986; Bennis and Nanus, 1985). More recently other conceptualizations of leadership have focused on matters such as environment, for example, contingency theory, suggesting leadership effectiveness depends on leader/context fit (Northouse, 2013, pp. 123-136; Fiedler and Chemers, 2012).
1984) or the dyadic relationship between leader and follower (such as leader-member exchange theory [Northouse, 2013, pp. 161-184]), which draws attention away from origins as being significant.

To complete this analysis of successor origin perceptions in Grace Network, a final matter to be considered is that of metaphorical corporate self-conceptualization. Analysis of a rhetor’s metaphors reveals much about conceptualizations and actions. Metaphorical analysis may help provide an interpretation of a subject’s theology (Graves 1993; Adams, 1990); this is because the characteristics associated with the vehicle of the metaphor are used to organize conceptions of the tenor of the metaphor (Foss, 2004, p. 299). Tenor and vehicles index how the rhetor sees the world. The structure of a metaphor contains assumptions; it prescribes how to act. It does not merely support an argument; the structure of the metaphor itself argues (Foss, 2004, p. 301). Metaphors structure how we think and what we do (Lakoff and Johnson 2003, p. 4). Metaphors also thus suppress and obscure. In foregrounding the vehicle of “DNA” and the need for new leadership to have that DNA (Blackwell Interview II, p. 14) to the tenor of Grace Network as an organization, the ministry is seen as something that once conceived, cannot (naturally) be changed, for metaphors lead us to see their entailments as true (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003, pp. 159-184). Other conceptualizations of the organization (hierarchy, bureaucracy) are suppressed, even concealed (Boréus and Bergström, 2017a, p. 149); the organic, biological nature is privileged. Such a metaphorical understanding must lead to internal succession, for an appointee must have the DNA of the founders and others within the organic structure. To believe and apply the metaphor consistently thus leads inexorably to internal leadership appointments and excludes external appointments; internal succession is privileged by the network’s metaphorical corporate self-identity.

Given the desire for little change, the trust of internal leadership, the desire to preserve organizational culture and doctrinal purity, together with the metaphoric self-identity, Grace Network could only appoint from within the movement. This is common in new Christian movements. The advantages of such appointments are

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176 For a deeper understanding of metaphor and its analysis see Boroditsky (2000); Johnson (1999); Lakoff and Johnson (2003); and Boréus and Bergström (2017a).
supported by much empirical literature from other fields of study. Emphasis on successor origins, however, may obscure other factors to be taken into consideration in founder succession.

4. “The fly in the ointment”: Succession as catalyst for collision of leadership theologies

Despite twelve years of ministry subsequent to the succession, this leadership transference was inadequately enacted, leaving unacknowledged problems which eventually led to the recognition of the unsustainability of the network’s leadership model, thus leading to Grace Network’s eventual cessation. In this analysis, I suggest three features of the succession which produced unsustainability; this is followed by an exploration of theologies of leadership which produced these three problematic features. The first feature is that there were different perspectives on the nature of the succession itself. For Blackwell, it changed little. Indeed, Groblewski was appointed so that there was little change. For Groblewski, however, he was assuming that his leadership had greater executive and individual authority post-succession. He felt the “weight” of leadership (Groblewski Interview I, p.39). This began to lead to executive action: “But with the rise of the apostolic network churches, one of the first things I did when I acceded to the executive position [Executive Director] was insisted that the name change from Grace Presbytery to Grace Network” (Groblewski Interview I, p.1).

A second problematic feature was the minimization of the succession’s significance, indeed a lack of acknowledgment that any change was taking place. This may, for example, be evidenced in the omission of any discussion of “terms” for Groblewski, such as expected hours of work and remuneration. Not to discuss these matters is to minimize the appointment and concomitant leadership changes; or, put differently, to discuss such terms would have per se acknowledged a positional change for Groblewski with a different measure of authority. It would have been an external practical and symbolic acknowledgement of leadership change.

This matter is related to, but is also distinguished from, the third point, namely that there was little discussion of authority in decision-making. This had already been the case prior to succession: “Uh – uh we never talked about co-equality. The words
were never used and so forth, but essentially, I think we viewed ourselves, uh…” (Groblewski Interview I, p.1). The awkwardness of acknowledging the lack of clarity is confirmed by the repetitive paralinguistic utterances. This avoidance, however, became acuter post-succession:

But I think it might have set up some expectations that weren’t realized, uh, in the sense that, uh, we never really, from my memory, we never really talked through extensively what a change to an executive director would mean (Groblewski Interview I, p.4).

The succession was inadequate and confusing due to its being understood differently; its significance was minimized, and the avoidance of consideration of crucial succession features suggests that it was confusion over theology of leadership which contributed to the aforementioned insufficient enactments of succession. This may be seen both in examining the polity of the network and its member churches, and in analyzing the different leadership theologies of the founders and the successor.

The first point may be seen in that the leadership modus operandi of member churches could be different from that of the network leadership: church leaders and pastors had clear executive authority; and there was a clearly and duly appointed “senior pastor”, or “the whole first among equals thing… [yet] that model really never existed at the presbytery [Network] level,” (Groblewski Interview I, p.16). Thus, confusion of polity and the theology from which it stemmed was not consistent at different levels within the movement.

This matter was compounded by the second matter, namely a confusion of theology within the network’s senior leadership. More precisely stated, each of the network leaders espoused clear leadership theology but it was not the same theology; this, moreover, was not fully acknowledged. Blackwell, as a founder, for example, held a strong theology of leadership based on distaste for legalism and control of people; this stemmed from a particular conceptualization of leadership as trait and character. The reaction to legalism is heard in his unprompted narrative which spoke in critical terms of other networks, which, he felt, were based on rules rather than Christian liberty (Blackwell Interview I, pp.24-25, 28). That leadership is character (not skills) is heard in the following: “But we taught often on what we thought godly
leaders should be like: not lording over, serving, being examples, leading like they were stewards of the... the... You know, biblically, stewards were managers of another’s... someone else’s” (Blackwell Interview II, pp.5-6); “Grubby was clearly the type of leader that didn’t lord over. He wasn’t doing it for money. I mean like from First Peter, I mean he just...he didn’t aspire to be the leader of our network. He was willing to do it” (Blackwell Interview I, p.23). It is not simply that character is the qualification but one character attribute in particular. The first character quality narrated by Blackwell (and on more than one occasion) is that of “not lording over”, a reference to 1 Peter 5:3 (κατακυριεύοντες), where Peter is reemphasizing the teaching of Christ (Matthew 20:25 and Mark 10:42). Because we conceptualize linguistic form in spatial terms (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003, p.126), and because the metaphor ‘closeness’ indicates strength of effect (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003, p.128-130), Blackwell’s placement of “not lording over” nearest to “godly leaders” allows an interpretation that this is the most significant character quality in leadership. Thus, for Blackwell’s understanding of leadership, we see, as with the citation of negative exempla of other legalistic networks, an aversion to leadership wielding power. Indeed, the Markan account’s use of the same term as 1 Peter but succeeded by οὐχ οὕτως δὲ ἐστιν ἐν ὑμῖν (Mark 10:43), a grammatical construct of strong contrast, supports Blackwell’s understanding. For Blackwell, therefore, an understanding of leadership is framed in terms of emphasizing the juxtaposition of “lording over” and the strong imperative to eschew such leadership methodology. For him, to restrain such tendencies toward wrong exercise of power, leadership must be seen in collegial terms: “Autonomous, uh, type leadership is not really Christian in my opinion” (Blackwell Interview I, p.6). When asked to explain further this understanding of church polity he explained:

Blackwell: Well, I think plurality of elders. One person making all the decisions without anyone having input as well is dangerous. No one is fallible, or infallible rather. We’re all fallible, I guess. And it’s just meant, you know, a wise...I think church leadership is to be... have a number of elders with each... And I don’t even think the senior leader should be able to veto them. It should be running on consensus. Now we...

177 Novum Testamentum Graece: Nestle-Aland (Na28).
don’t think you can run – can operate a church on, what’s the word? [long pause]

Interviewer: Unanimity?

Blackwell: …unanimity. Because that way, you could have six elders and one elder who controlled everything by saying ‘no’. So it’s like…that gives the power to one person. Consensus, unanimity when you can have it. I mean, I think you should pray. And I think the network maybe can be the same way (Blackwell Interview II, pp.4-5).

Blackwell’s principal understanding of leadership is to restrain the wrong exercise of power; this means (for him) that an episcopal approach would not be countenanced, but rather a Presbyterian model is necessitated.

In turning to Groblewski’s theology of leadership, we have already noted an internal phenomenological shift with appointment. He desired greater levels of empowerment to make decisions on behalf of the movement: “But I think I felt like my role was going to evolve into something more hierarchal [sic] as we began, and it didn’t” (Groblewski Interview II, p.13). When this did not develop, Groblewski became frustrated (Groblewski Interview II, p.12). His perspective with regard to leadership may best be explained by restating an earlier citation of Wagner, that new forms and authority of leadership in new apostolic churches is the “most radical of the nine changes from traditional Christianity” (Wagner, 1998, p.19). Wagner clarifies the difference as a greater amount of spiritual authority delegated by the Holy Spirit to individuals, designated by Wagner to be “charismatic leadership” (Wagner, 1998, p.20). Such reformulation of leadership different to historic denominations is expressed in the following terms by Lawrence Khong, senior pastor of Faith Community Baptist Church in Singapore: “I will be a strong leader, one who believes what the Lord wants me to do and who pursues it with all my heart” (Khong, 1998, p.222). While agreeing with accountability, Khong believes that the church’s focus on counterchecks to the leader have “often become major roadblocks for God’s appointed leaders to lead His people into victorious ministry” (Khong, 1998, p.222).

In light of the above, what may be seen within the Grace Network leadership team is two different conceptualizations of Christian leadership. One, particularly concerned
with the harmful use of power, leads to the placement of checks and balances around the executive director enacted in the form of collegial leadership modes; the other aims to acknowledge that individuals may have a gift of leadership and seeks to empower such people to lead by articulating directional vision and strategy. In Groblewski’s words, “There was a rift over the issue of leadership model, between collaborative team and directional…” (Groblewski Interview I, p.5). Yet even this description given by the successor, however, fails to provide a fuller understanding of the different leadership modes. To understand better the theological difference here, I turn to others in the ‘new apostolic churches’, such as Kreider et al. (2019). Kreider is the founder of DOVE International, one of the eighteen cases of ‘new apostolic churches’ described by Wagner (1998). Kreider et al. see in the Christian scriptures three types of leadership or church government, whether at the congregational or broader network/denominational level, namely a ‘primary leader – episcopal government’, ‘God calls a team to work together – presbyterian government’, and ‘God speaks through His people in the local church – congregational government’ (Kreider et al., 2019, pp.78-88). The authors argue for a leadership model where all three principles are to be incorporated in order to make balanced decisions (p.89-90), referring to this model as a “head, shoulders and body” model (taken from the simile for unity found in Psalm 133) (Kreider et al., 2019, p.89). At times, a whole congregation might need to be involved in decision-making. Mostly, however, a leadership team will seek to process matters and find unity. At other times the primary leader should be empowered to lead in a direction that he or she believes is from God (with input from others and with a process for appeal in place). I suggest that Groblewski’s model may have more in common with Kreider et al.’s episcopal model, which is suggested by his emphasis on the term ‘hierarchical’. Groblewski’s (less than clearly articulated) theology of leadership was not the same as that of Blackwell.

Having suggested that different polity between churches and the network leadership level as well as divergent theologies within the network leadership were both problematic, there was a further contributory factor to the confusion of theology, namely the lack of acknowledgement of the differences: “There was this kind of a

sense that everybody had the same understanding of...” (Blackwell Interview I, p.10). If a problem were suspected, it appears not to have been adequately resolved:

I think Grubby, at times, felt like it made it harder for him to know how to relate to the other two guys and the other two networks. Like, he didn’t know if he had full authority to just say absolutely [on behalf of Grace Network] in making a decision with those guys without coming back and talking to us. So I think it probably was more difficult for him... we gave him a lot of freedom, but I think he felt tethered to us (Blackwell Interview I, pp.4-5).

Having stated an inadequate conceptualization of the nature of the appointment stemming from divergent theologies, the leadership team nonetheless functioned well in many ways with years of collaborative ministry. Both founder and successor believe this was due to mutual graciousness, love and friendship. Such friendship can, however, obscure matters and enable avoidance of key “crucial conversations”. Avoidance of potential problems may be possible in good times, but such matters may become overt during times of severe stress. When such times arose (the serious moral failure of an international partner), which model of decision-making dominated? As Groblewski grappled with issues pertaining to the very integrity of the movement, he admits, “I think I was struggling with my own leadership” (Groblewski Interview I, p.8). This according to Groblewski drove the return to an even greater collegial style of leadership (Groblewski Interview I, p.8): “We kind of swung back to a three – three-headed deal” (Groblewski Interview I, p.7), which reduced his acting in accord with apostolic leadership principles. The network, having continued for years with unspoken leadership theology and two different operative models of polity, now exhibited corporate leadership stress, causing others in the movement to urge action because they viewed the existing

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A phrase widely used in the business literature, popularized by Patterson et al. (2002), with over three million sales (https://www.vitalsmarts.com/crucial-conversations-training/) (Accessed: 16 September 2018). The term refers to “a discussion between two or more people where (1) stakes are high, (2) opinions vary, and (3) emotions run strong” (Patterson et al., 2002, p.3). Literature indicates that much of management performance may not be driven by formal performance-management processes but the extent to which companies have a clear ethos in which employees and managers engage in meaningful dialogue and crucial conversations to ensure achievement of standards (Patterson et al., 2002, p.11 and Simon, 1996, p.195).
Presbyterian leadership model as unsustainable. Under stress, the leadership model had indeed fully reverted to one that the executive director had hoped it would not be. This might be understood by reference to Girard’s seminal work, *Violence and the Sacred*:

> The goal of religious thinking is the same as that of technological research -- namely, practical action. Whenever man is truly concerned with obtaining concrete results, whenever he is hard pressed by reality, he abandons abstract speculation and reverts to a mode of response that becomes increasingly cautious and conservative as the forces he hopes to subdue, or at least to outrun, draw ever nearer (Girard 1972/1979, p.32).

From the successor’s narrative, we read that lack of clarity on leadership theology, polity and leadership style eventually led to the leadership determining that their model was unsustainable; the network ceased to exist. This stemmed from an inadequate leadership succession years before: “In fact over the years there was a rift over the issue of leadership model, between collaborative team, and directional, between a ‘conservative reformed group’ and a ‘little more charismatic group’... But it was the succession thing that was the fly in the ointment” (Groblewski Interview I, p.5). Indeed, Groblewski admits: “Our leadership model, the collaborative nature of the leadership model, was unsustainable. That was a key... In other words, it was a problem in succession that gave birth to a new network” (Groblewski Interview I, p.5). Succession, ill defined, differently understood, minimized in significance, all arising from confusion or collision of theologies of leadership, eventually led to the termination of Grace Network as an independent network.

### 5. Chapter summary

In this chapter, founder succession with Grace Network has been examined according to new institutionalism as a case of coercive isomorphism. It is, furthermore, one of internal succession, an approach found in many other similar agencies. Focus on successor origins stems from a desire to protect the movement and preserve organizational culture and beliefs; indeed, Grace Network’s metaphoric self-conceptualization leads to internal succession. This chapter has shown, moreover, the importance of theologies of leadership in a Christian network. Such theologies may be espoused and articulated, or largely unacknowledged but
operant. In the case of Grace Network, different theologies led not only to frustration on the part of the successor, but an eventual cessation of the network itself. Contrary to Goethe’s romanticism (cited to open this chapter), it seems that the new world was still inhabited by the old world’s ruined castles and basalt deposits.

Such differences in theologies are a main theme in the final chapter of this thesis, as I examine more closely the theological frameworks of the three successions.
Chapter 9

Toward consistent, consequential succession: The need for lacunal reflexivity

But don’t hurry the journey at all.
Better if it lasts for years,
so you’re old by the time you reach the island,
wealthy with all you’ve gained on the way...

Cavafy, Ithaka

Having gathered data through narrative interviewing and documents and produced a tripartite analysis for each of the three cases, in this chapter I present findings, and, by focusing on a matter for which I have coined the term ‘lacunal reflexivity’, I will reflect on the theories and theologies of successions in a way that answers the research question and shows the main contribution to knowledge of this thesis.180

1. Institutional and theological reflexivity and the voices of theology

In Chapter 2, I sought to explain reflexivity as it relates to empirical study of Christian founder succession. I wrote that a reflexive approach can be crucial to gaining a fuller description, and that in earlier studies of founder succession, a lack of reflexivity was detrimental to credible findings. While much of that chapter concerned epistemological and methodological reflexivity, elsewhere I have also made the case for reflexivity as a theological category (Bunton, 2019, pp.83-84). In this chapter, I wish to examine not the researcher’s theological reflexivity, but that of the organizations studied; that is, the extent to which there was appropriate and sufficient reflection on organizational theology (and theory) in the succession processes. More specifically, I wish to do this by seeking to identify the congruencies

180 The matter of plans and phases has been shown in the analysis chapters.
and incongruences within those theologies of succession; in other words, I seek to identify the interstices or lacunae in the theologies and reflections thereon, hence the term ‘lacunal reflexivity’. Such an approach will point to the theories and theologies which informed succession and provide a tool for their critical evaluation.

I adopt this approach in light of the established benefits of institutional reflexivity in many fields. Reflexivity as an organizational level construct is defined as “the extent to which group members overtly reflect upon, and communicate about the group’s objectives, strategies (e.g., decision-making) and processes” (West, 2000, p.296). Organizational reflexivity has been shown to be beneficial in a number of ways, including: increasing the agency of the institution’s members (Swift and West, 1998); facilitating greater team effectiveness (De Dreu, 2002); enhancing institutional innovation (Farnese and Livi, 2016); building character among members and thus promoting better ethical responses (Antonacopoulou, 2018). To my knowledge, there have been no studies to date on institutional reflexivity (as a modern sociological concept) within Christian organizations, a surprising observation given the ubiquitous concern of mission drift (Chapter 8). While many of the above studies focus on performance, others position institutional reflexivity as a means of enabling reflection at the deeper level of values and worldview shaping decisions and performances (Antonacopoulou et al., 2019). It is at this level that I examine the lacunal reflexivity of organizational theology. In classic organizational learning, a distinction is made between ‘single-loop learning’, where lessons are learned from actions framed within existing shared mental models and existing norms, and ‘double-loop learning’, where the shared mental models and norms are themselves questioned (Argyris and Schon, 1978). I posit that an organizational theology can only be reflected upon with ‘double-loop learning’, and it is this that requires theological reflexivity, to make known the prevailing theological (and theoretical) constructs which drive succession actions.

181 Further studies showing the organizational efficacy of institutional reflexivity include Mäkitalo and Säljö (2002); Widmer, Schippers and West (2009).
182 Of course, one could argue that much of ecclesiology is a reflection by the church on itself.
To develop this further, I propose a specific method of examining institutional reflexivity on succession theology. I do this partly following Baggett’s approach in his ethnographic study of Habitat for Humanity (Baggett, 2001). While this is a fuller, multi-faceted study of one organization than I could undertake in three cases, some of Baggett’s ethnography describes and explains the ministry’s theology, both at the official level (printed literature, mission statements) and the informal level (volunteers, clients and staff). One of Baggett’s contributions is to give voice to many of the unheard participants’ beliefs within Habitat for Humanity by bringing their theological understandings to bear on an understanding of corporate beliefs. Baggett shows incongruences between the official organizational theology and the theologies of the volunteers and staff. Such findings need not be a surprise if understood within the model of a “theology in four voices” (Cameron et al., 2010) (previously described in Chapter 2). Applying this model, I argue that there can be degrees of congruity and incongruity between the voices which affect organizational belief and thus practice. It is such lacunae that I wish to explore as part of answering the research question.

In reflecting further on methodology, I am aware that theology in four voices was conceptualized within the context of theological action research (TAR) (Cameron et al., 2010), a method which emphasizes “conversation, attentive to otherness” between the voices (Watkins 2015, p.36). This raises questions as to whether or how the theology in four voices might be employed in methods other than TAR. Many have found the voices a useful analytic tool for other ethnographic approaches in ecclesiology (Kaufman and Ideström, 2018, p.91), something also acknowledged by Watkins, one of the developers of theology in four voices along with Cameron (Watkins, 2015, p.24). Theology in four voices has, for example, been used well by Loy in her PhD thesis, where she employs an ethnographic rather than TAR approach. There seems thus to be growing confidence in the voices being a helpful tool for a variety of approaches. My approach draws to some extent (but with differences) on the approach of Loy (2015) in her study of the theology of the development agency, Christian Aid. Loy draws from the four voices approach to examine the agency’s beliefs but also combines this with a different model, that of explicit theology (official organizational theological statements), implicit theology
(expressed through informal discourse) and null theologies (unspoken or only referred to obliquely) (Loy, 2015, pp.25-29). My critique of Loy is that she ends up with a confused conflation of the systems, wrongly equating Christian Aid’s ‘explicit’ with Cameron’s ‘formal’ theology; Loy’s ‘explicit’ is not the same as ‘formal’ academic theology according to Cameron’s definition (Cameron et al., p.54). Loy concludes her study with “points of confluence and contradiction between the explicit, implicit and null theological voices” within Christian Aid (Loy, 2015, p.94). Congruence was found on matters such as the belief widely held on the equality of all people and thus being non-discriminatory in who were chosen for assistance (p.98), yet the official and explicit theology of the agency was an overt adoption of Barth’s relational theology, something of which the staff were either unaware or understood differently (p.97).⁷¹⁸³ The implicit theologies of the staff were largely contextual theologies, whereas the explicit organizational theology was “from above”. Many workers felt the organization was not acting according to its explicit theology (p.127).

While there are matters in which Loy is to be critiqued, such as privileging the voices of the staff interviewees over others and at times methodological inconsistency by asserting quantitative claims despite not having a representative sample (p.184), there is much in this work to inform my approach to the theologies of the three cases with regard to succession. Yet, my research stands in contradistinction to both Baggett and Loy in a number of ways: it is not an in-depth study of one organization, but a focus on one aspect (succession) of three organizations. This leads to the most significant distinction, namely that both Baggett and Loy were able to show the lacunae between organizational espoused theologies and the operant theologies of the staff and volunteers. In my study, I have purposefully sought not to follow this approach but to obtain extensive interviews only with the founders and successors, in effect the organization’s leadership who wield the most power, including in the construction of espoused theologies.⁷¹⁸⁴ Yet, I believe a significant finding of this study is that the kinds of incongruities found by Baggett and Loy are still to be found even within the succession theologies of leadership. There are interstices between

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⁷¹⁸³ In Cameron’s terms, a gap between normative and espoused theologies.
⁷¹⁸⁴ This approach is explained more fully in Chapter 3, section 6.1.
espoused theologies and operant theologies of the leaders and insufficient reflexivity thereon. Further theological reflexivity, indeed the lacunal reflexivity for which I call, would have assisted the successions in terms of clarity, congruity and organizational focus.

To show the rationale for this assertion I will examine three aspects of the successions, namely successor identification methods, the use of power, and succession ceremonies. I will introduce relevant literature and examine espoused and operant theologies of succession through organizational text, interviews, symbols and action. This will show the interstices in these voices of theologies and thus congruencies and incongruences between them, allowing reflection on the extent to which the cases confirm or differ from other research findings and on how reflexivity may have assisted succession.

2. Three aspects of succession – method, power and ceremony

2.1. Method and successor identification

The two formative works in this field are that of Vancil (1987) and Friedman and Olk (1995), both reviewed in Chapter 1, section 1.1.4, where their well-used terminology of succession methods was explained (‘relay succession’, ‘heir apparent’ or ‘crown heir’, ‘horse race’, ‘coup d’état’ and ‘comprehensive search’) and critical comments provided. To the comments in Chapter 1, it is added that Friedman and Olk (1995) suggest that “outcome preference certainty” (p.147) shortens the process of finding a successor and minimizes disruption. If the criteria for selecting a successor are given, then it is more likely that ‘crown heir’ succession will ensue. Uncertainty may lead to ‘horse race’ or ‘comprehensive search’. Legitimacy is ascribed to the succession by those affected if the successor is viewed as competent and the selection process fair. They suggest that ‘horse race’ selection provides the greatest legitimacy. Their findings are also that perception of legitimacy is greater when incumbents lead the process. The issue of legitimacy is consequential as other leaders might depart the corporation should the processes be viewed as illegitimate (Freidman and Saul, 1991).
2.1.1. International Aid Services

The succession method with IAS was at the initiation of the international board/executive team with a concomitant search being enacted to find a successor, leading to the international board’s making the decision. This approach was a ‘comprehensive search’ (Freidman and Olk, 1995) as “numerous qualified candidates for the position of CEO were evaluated”. The employment of the ‘comprehensive search’ method alerts us to a possible lacuna; a ‘comprehensive search’ usually takes place when there is little outcome preference certainty. I argue that, in contradistinction, there was indeed outcome preference certainty in the succession process, seen in the need for the successor to have an unwavering commitment to the missiological aims of IAS (LZ Interview I, p.19) as well as to possess the requisite skills for addressing the challenges of a changing donor environment. If such outcome certainty was indeed the case, then a ‘comprehensive search’ (according to Friedman and Olk) becomes unnecessary, as the organization knows exactly the kind of successor they desire, and may already have strong inclinations even to the successor’s identity. Indeed, such certainty usually leads to the ‘heir apparent’ succession method. Given this, it is possible to find a lacuna between the espoused method of comprehensive search (which would normally accompany outcome uncertainty) and an operant method of crown heir, knowing exactly the kind of person needed; despite a wider search, the board had already discussed a preference for an internal candidate (DZ Interview I, p 9).

I suggest, furthermore, that this relates also to insufficient reflexivity on matters of leadership theory. IAS undertook no reflection on formal theory, but placed emphasis on the changing donor environment (DZ Interview I, pp.31-32). This makes manifest operant theory, namely that of contingency leadership (Fiedler, 1967; Fiedler and Chemers, 1974 and 1984), a ‘leader-match’ theory: “Effective leadership is contingent on matching a leader’s style to the right setting” (Northouse, 2013, p.123 – italics in original). In focusing on styles and situations, this theory distances itself from person-based leadership theory.

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This view of the importance of leader/situation match was confirmed by the founder:

[Speaking of successor] He’s not practical the way that I am, but he’s much more academic and more structured than I am. So, I could see that bringing in somebody from that point of view, now when bureaucracy is becoming a number one thing for donors and partners and systems must be in place, it might be a very healthy thing for the organization in order to grow forward, grow both in depth and also be able to actually spread out to other countries as well (LZ Interview I, pp.8-9).

This interpretation of IAS’s actions as an application of contingency theory may, furthermore, be supported by evidence suggesting that IAS aimed for favourableness on the three scales of contingency theory (position power, task structure, and leader-member relations [Fiedler and Chemers, 1984, p.46]): the successor position power was made clearer through the changes to international governance and the CEO’s role with regard to the board; task structure was improved with, for example, greater definition of vision and strategy (Fit for Purpose, 2016); and leader-member relations were enhanced by the consultation process with staff (LZ Interview I, p.9).\(^\text{186}\)

A conscious reflection on theory may have facilitated other self-understandings of the organization and led to further helpful steps forward for the organization. For example, after being severely disappointed with the Swedish government funding changes, organizational inspiration may have been needed; reflection on charismatic understandings of leadership may have made this more visible, which may, in turn, have led to different or additional leadership actions to bring inspiration after such disappointment. Of course, IAS may well have been wise to adopt a contingency approach given the exigencies of public funding; but this approach’s privileging over other understandings may have obscured alternative or additional leadership strategies which could have benefitted the organization at that time.

2.1.2. Newfrontiers

The espoused theology of succession for Newfrontiers has earlier been described (Chapter 7). Significant aspects of such espoused theology are that Newfrontiers’

\(^{186}\) For criticism of contingency theory, see Northouse, 2013, pp.128-130.
succession was to be kinesisoclastic and an enactment of apostolic multiplication. The former manifests in Virgo’s understanding of New Testament succession from the day of Pentecost’s being “Peter’s moment, not Peter’s movement”. I give particular significance to this theological position due to its repetition in the interviews (Virgo Interview I, pp.28 and 29, for example, and elsewhere), as well as to its emphasis achieved by Virgo’s use of alliteration and homeoteleuton.

Commitment to apostleship is indeed a strong defining characteristic of Newfrontiers’ adherents (Kay, 2007, p.319). It is an espoused theology that apostles are ‘master builders’ (1 Corinthians 3:10) (Devenish, 2011, p.87). The succession method chosen was a form of ‘horse race’, observing which leaders oversaw growing congregations, thus a sign that others were following them. This resulted in fifteen becoming ‘heirs apparent’ at a later stage.

Despite such espoused theologies, I believe there was, moreover, operant theology manifest through the succession, seen in metaphoric privileging and gendered conceptualizations of leadership type. The first matter is the privileging of the conceptualization of apostles as architects. While apostleship as architect is espoused, it is its privileging over other conceptualizations which is not espoused but operant. A multi-modal analysis of the special edition of Newfrontiers magazine (2011) (image 2) as the official explanation of succession reveals the privileging of architectural images from around the world on both front and back covers, where virtually every picture is of a building. Greater reflexivity may have been helpful at this point, because the operant theology contained therein may be interpreted as showing the crucial understanding of succession is that of organizational, structural change rather than an emphasis on people and ethnic diversity. A privileging of the architecture (in a metaphorical sense) of church government and structural change means that without due reflection the organization may look for structural leaders rather than leaders with greater pastoral gifts. There is, thus, a theological lacuna between espoused theology of apostles as architects, and operant theology concerning the privileging of apostles as architects over other understandings of

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187 I am aware that in the New Testament, building images are at times used to refer to people (for example, 1 Peter 2:5), but many of the images in the Newfrontiers magazine are not of a ‘spiritual house’ but of parliaments, bridges and palaces.
The second lacuna concerns theologies and typologies of leadership gender. By that, I do not mean that the movement was complementarian, for that is an espoused, indeed a normative theology, which explicitly precludes women from apostolic succession (Chapter 7). What I suggest, however, is that there is an operant theology concerning the types of masculinity to which apostleship can be ascribed, or the
ways in which masculinity is constructed – and that there is little reflexivity on this in the succession process. I am aware that such comments touch upon issues of gender construction and theology, a vast and complex field encompassing many disciplines. Despite the debates within this field, the correlation between gender construction and religion/theology has been increasingly made obvious (Satlow, 1996; Castelli, 1998; Thatcher, 2014). Studies have explicated the religious construction of gender among modern-day Wesleyans (Weaver Swartz, 2018) and among evangelicals (Sheldon, 2017), while others even describe the construction of fatherhood within Newfrontiers (Aune, 2010) and masculinity in general within this network (Wignall, 2016).

Through a reading of Newfrontiers texts and ethnographic observations of Newfrontiers churches (Aune, 2004; Wignall, 2016), a picture emerges not just of leadership as male, but as a certain type of male. Studying sermons of Newfrontiers leaders, Aune shows how masculinity is constructed against the perceived background of men being absent from family life and not taking leadership both in the family and church (Aune, 2004, pp.195, 203). While this is espoused, at the operant level, masculinity is constructed through the movement in a number of ways. Wignall shows, for example, the importance of physicality in Newfrontiers discourse, suggesting that the movement draws on the “Muscular Christianity” movement (Putney, 2009, pp.14-16) which correlates physicality, strength and morality (Coleman, 2007). Wignall shows how men in Newfrontiers, including leaders, make people aware of their physical fitness (Wignall, 2016, pp.399, 400), while Aune notes that discussions on masculinity encompass sport (Aune, 2004, p.196). The discourse on manhood, moreover, lauds aggression and risk-taking, as seen when a leader of the student and youth work at a large church states that manhood is “not about being nice and being a peacemaker. It’s about being aggressive and taking risks” (cited in Wignall, 2016, p.397). Furthermore, the catalyst for Newfrontiers’ succession came from Mark Driscoll, a man at the time highly regarded as a significant leader, yet who in 2014 was removed from leadership of his

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church due to bullying leadership style (Glenza, 2014). Wignall comments that those masculinities are shaped in dialogue with an “imaginary outside world that is perceived as having lost its ability to shape young men appropriately” (Wignall, 2016, p.397). While leadership and apostleship are male at the normative and espoused level, at the operant level leadership is understood within a certain construction of manhood. Thus, when leaders were seeking to recognize those men who had apostolic gifts, were they also seeking a certain perception of man and potentially excluding those who did not fit their operant understanding of masculinity? It is possible that such non-conforming men might nonetheless be strategic ‘architects’. This points to insufficient reflexivity on this lacuna between espoused and operant theologies of leadership gender type. This matter can be problematic, furthermore, due to the attributional notion of espoused theology, that the people are to recognize the gifts of apostles and follow them. As Wignall states, adherents “consume and self-create identities within the permissible cosmologies set down by leadership teams” (Wignall, 2016, p.408). Lack of full reflexivity on such matters may in this case mean that organizational leaders perceived to have constructed a certain masculinity were chosen, while others excluded. Recognition by the people may be an enactment of operant conceptualizations of manhood where people ascribe apostleship to those who fit the operant model. Leadership selection and follower attribution thus manifest a theological circularity which could not be seen within the network without greater lacunal reflexivity (although perhaps more readily observable by others outside the network).

2.1.3. Grace Network

The espoused method of successor selection for Grace Network was for the board of directors to appoint an executive director. This is consistent with a theology of Presbyterian leadership. The operant theology, however, was also congregational, manifest by members voting to appoint Groblewski at the network conference. The very method of appointment, therefore, showed incongruity and exposes ambiguity concerning the locus of power; is it with the board, the voting church leaders, or indeed, with international partners who insisted on such an appointment?189 Such

189 Of course, such ambiguities may exist in other denominations. Power within the Church of England may lay with a bishop, clergy or a lay synod, for example.
ambiguity was compounded by this succession being a response to coercive isomorphism. Such a response to exogenous pressure mitigated against due reflexivity on polity and led to ‘decoupling’ which “enables organizations to maintain standardized, legitimating, formal structures while their activities vary in response to practical considerations” (Meyer and Rowan, 1991, p.58), something which churches and Christian ministries have been shown to do (Chaves, 1997; Prichard, 1996). The lack of lacunal reflexivity on such ‘decoupling’ was further reinforced by “outcome preference certainty” (Friedman and Olk, 1995, p.147). From the outset, the directors had a certainty of purpose in any appointment, namely organizational cultural preservation and a desire for as little change as possible (Blackwell, Interview I, p.4), both of which favoured an internal candidate. These matters point to a further aspect of inadequate reflection, namely of the dominant metaphor of Grace Network as an organism with DNA. This was an espoused conceptualization within the network, an understanding leading to a fear of “mutation” (Blackwell Interview II, p.15). I suggest that lack of due reflexivity on such matters was problematic in that the dominant metaphor obscured other understandings of the situation (Boréus and Bergström, 2017a, p.149) by insisting on the truth of the metaphoric entailment (Lakoff and Johnson, 2003, pp.159-184). I suggest that greater reflexivity might have made available further theoretical and helpful ways of considering succession, such as the need also to take into account contextual and contingent matters.

To explain further this last point requires some attempt to differentiate between theology and theory, as explained in Chapter 1 (section 6). Blackwell, for example, in talking of the servant nature of a leader, and citing the Bible in so doing, is, of course, engaged in a theological reflection on the nature of leadership and its qualifying character, as many others do (Agosto, 2005; Kelley, 2001; Roach, 2016; Whitehead, 2019; and others). There is, however, a widely held leadership theory of servant leadership; it is my contention that reflection on theory and not solely theology may also have helped Grace Network for the following reasons. The leadership theory of servant leadership was articulated in Greenleaf’s foundational works (1970/2008, 1972 and 1977) and was primarily inspired not by Christian scriptures but Herman Hesse’s novel Die Morgenlandfahrt, itself inspired by eastern
philosophy (see Banks and Ledbetter, 2004, p.108). This was first translated into English in 1956 (Hesse, 1956) and soon read by Greenleaf (Greenleaf 2008, pp.9-10). This is not to say that servant leadership theory does not, in places, concur with Christian perspectives; indeed, Blanchard (2002) openly synthesizes Greenleaf’s concepts with the scriptural teachings of Christ (Blanchard, 2002, p.xi).

For Greenleaf, servant leadership concerns:

... the care taken by the servant – first to make sure that other people’s highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? (Greenleaf, 2008, p.15 – italics in original).

Servant leadership theory thus focuses on placing the needs of others above oneself, on moral behaviour to others, including followers and organizations. It implies shifting one’s organizational power to those being led.\(^{190}\)

In Blackwell’s narratives, it is possible to discern that his concept of leadership is similar to this theory of servant leadership (see Blackwell Interview II, pp.5-6). Indeed, Blackwell’s view accords with Northouse’s summation of servant leadership: “Rather than using their power to dominate others, leaders should make every attempt to share their power and enable others to grow and become autonomous. Leadership framed from this perspective downplays competition in the organization and promotes egalitarianism” (Northouse, 2013, p.233).

It is maintained that due reflexivity on this matter of leadership theory could have helped Grace Network see some of the weaknesses in their position. For example, servant leadership theory has been criticized for being utopian and minimizing the importance of leadership behaviours such as directing and goal-setting (Gergen, 2006, p.54). It may, furthermore, be a moralistic philosophy rather than a pragmatic theory (Northouse, 2013). Such criticisms are noteworthy in light of the criticism

\(^{190}\) Spears enumerates the characteristics of a servant leader (Spears, 2002, pp.4-8). Liden et al., (2008) and Liden et al., (2014) offer a more sophisticated model of servant leadership combining antecedent conditions, servant leader behaviours and outcomes.
Grace Network received from within its network, that their leadership model was unable to handle crises and produce directive leadership on agreed collaborative matters (Groblewski Interview I, p.5), a criticism with which the executive director agreed. Thus, Grace Network’s perceived leadership weakness may also be reflected in the weakness of this theory, giving further credence to the assertion that servant leadership theory was operant for this network.

If the leaders of Grace Network had shown reflexivity on such theoretical matters, they may have been aware of the balancing benefits of theories other than servant leadership. Contingency theory (Fiedler and Chemers, 1984), for example, suggests that they look not just at the character of the successor, but whether there was contingent match, that is whether the successor had the appropriate skill to lead given the contextual challenges the organization faced. Furthermore, understandings of transformational leadership theory (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985; Antonakis, 2012) may have helped the network address how its participants could, through synergism, accomplish greater effectiveness and might have offered a different way forward in their difficulties. The unreflective adherence to the paradigm of ‘organization as organism with DNA’ and the outcome certainty of ‘no change’ obscured the need for lacunal reflexivity concerning leadership theory and succession methods and selection which may have helped bring clarity to the type of leadership actions needed.

2.1.4. Summary

While it may be possible to discern elements of the ‘heir apparent’ selection method in Grace Network, the method, however, fits none of the categories in the succession literature, as Grace Network’s succession was a reaction to isomorphic pressures, which led to an unreflexive decision of little meaning to many in the organization. This appears to identify a gap in the research literature, as there have been no studies on correlation between succession and isomorphism. IAS’s succession differs from the expected succession patterns as outlined both by Vancil (1987) and Friedman and Olk (1995), in that outcome certainty and comprehensive search are rarely associated, indicating incongruities between espoused method (search) and operant method (heir apparent). Newfrontiers does not conform to existing research models, particularly in that the succession ratio of 1:15 seems sui
generis and thus benefits understanding of succession as an ‘extreme’ or unique case. Nonetheless, lacunal reflexivity on method does show incongruity between espoused and operant theology of apostleship and gender type. This was not accounted for in the succession. The three cases furthermore seem to confirm, in varying degrees, the literature which is conclusive on the significance of the predecessor leader in many succession matters, including timing, selection and successor socialization (Vancil, 1987, p.257; Friedman and Olk, 1995). In the case of IAS, this was true in that the founder’s involvement provided practical assistance to the process and his blessing provided legitimacy. With Newfrontiers, the founder’s involvement was crucial; Virgo had the final authority to approve the fifteen; he wrote about the process; he introduced and commended the successors at the 2011 conference.

2.2. Power

‘Power’ is the second aspect of succession to be examined for congruities and incongruities between espoused and operant theology and theory of succession, for leadership transition is about the “passage of power” (McDonald, 1987, p.xii). Tashakori in her study of founder succession gives considerable place to the examination of power. Few took up that matter until Block and Rosenberg conducted comparative empirical research on founder and non-founder director power (Block and Rosenberg, 2002) (see Chapter 1). Tashakori found that in successful transitions, the successor had “substantial” power. There is the potential power of the successor and realized power (actual power gained while in office). The successor can derive power from four sources: coalition with the board; coalition with the founder; coalition with investors; and through his or her personal characteristics such as skill, competence and personality. Even if potential power is high, the successor must still convert it into realized power.

Power realization most crucially depends on the founder/successor relationship (also Vancil, 1987). The founder may assist the successor by providing legitimacy and ensuring opportunities to lead. This is determined, however, by the extent to which the founder is dependent on the successor, as well as by the founder’s own

191 See Abramson (1992) on unique cases.
attributes and management style. Founders are more likely to build a coalition with the successor if the founder perceives that the successor has abilities lacking in the founder but needed at that time. Furthermore, founders need the personal attributes that enable them to relinquish control. The entrepreneurial style, with its involvement in so many aspects of the enterprise, means that founders can find it difficult to allow a successor to lead with a different style (Tashakori, 1980, p.87). For successors to flourish, Tashakori stresses the importance of ‘competence’, which can be dependent on knowledge of the ‘industry’ and administrative ability, and of the ability to build positive interpersonal relationships.

The problem with this conceptualization is that much still depends on the successor, whereas others (founder or board) exercise power and may be unwilling to release enough power to the successor. The matter is thus more dynamic and relationally contingent than Tashakori allows.

Block and Rosenberg studied power in founder succession, finding that founders tend to exercise greater power than successors. Their findings should, however, be treated with caution as they do not take into account organizational size or longevity. In new and small organizations, the founder will hold great power as fewer matters are delegated. Both Tashakori and Block and Rosenberg, furthermore, pay insufficient attention to other environmental factors which may influence power relations (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978).

2.2.1. International Aid Services

Power in the succession process lay with the international executive board. It was the board chairperson who initiated discussion on succession; the board considered candidates and the board appointed the successor.

For IAS, power and decision-making seemed less a matter for theological reflection, but one of pragmatism and good governance. As suggested earlier, succession decisions were made less within a theological framework but more within the framework of contingency leadership theory, although the organization would not have been aware of such theory. There was little reflection on theology or theory, but a concern for the successor to suit the exigencies of the exogenous environment. This itself points to potential areas requiring greater reflexivity, namely the evidence
pointing to contingency theory shaping decisions, as previously stated, and indeed the lack of theological reflexivity, apart from requiring the successor to be an evangelical Christian. For example, reflection on biblical models of leadership may have helped guide the process further by emphasizing qualifying characteristics other than leader-situation fit.

A further lack of reflexivity concerning power of decision concerns the role of the founder. The details of any communications between him and the board were not explored empirically in this study; while all are clear that he played no role, however, it is, of course, likely that the international board wished to honour him, taking seriously his views gleaned from any informal conversation or passing comments. The official narrative of the founder not being part of the decision-making process needed to be constructed to counter potential charges of nepotism, but it is difficult to imagine that the board did not listen to the founder at all, after his 25 years of service and leadership. This is, of course, suggestive and would need to be investigated further.

2.2.2. Newfrontiers

Power in the succession processes of Newfrontiers officially lay with the International Apostolic Team. This team determined the succession method, timing and selection of apostolic sphere leaders. Successor decisions were not taken to congregations or to the international conference for approval (voting).

At the operant level, however, there was deference to Virgo on appointments (Devenish Interview I, p.78). This gave him power of veto. A greater lacuna, however, concerns the espoused theology of decision-making (founder and team) and the power that was given to Newfrontiers congregations around the world, not in terms of voting power but in terms of ‘attributional theory’. At this point, comment will be made on Newfrontiers theology of succession as well as charismatic leadership theory.

The Newfrontiers espoused theology of leadership at the level of the international network of churches is that of apostolic. In theological terms, a person is an apostle by virtue of a God-given gift (Virgo Interview I, pp.30-31). Newfrontiers succession theology was that Virgo and others could not create apostles but could commend
men they believed were exercising apostolic ministry. The appointee could only function as apostle if followed by people, that is by recognition of his gift (Virgo interview I, p.33). This theology, in fact, places considerable power with the people to attribute apostleship.

There are similarities between the Newfrontiers theology of apostolic recognition and attribution of charisma within charismatic leadership theory (although the qualities sought in Christian apostolic leadership may vary from those sought in business organizational settings). House’s (1976) well-known work on charismatic leadership posits that charismatic leaders demonstrate a number of behaviours: being a role model for the beliefs and values they desire followers to adopt (pp.194-196); appearing competent to followers (p.197); articulating “transcendent” goals (p.197) which become the basis of a cause; communicating high expectations for, and confidence in, followers’ abilities to meet those expectations (pp.198-200); arousal of motives relevant to the accomplishment of the mission (pp.201-203). Shamir, House and Arthur (1993) also include the ability to link followers’ self-concepts to organizational identity and to work for intrinsic rewards.

In deliberating the succession, the Newfrontiers leaders did not consider theory (Devenish Interview I, p.43). Perhaps the emphasis on ‘hearing God’ and the weight given to prophecy obscured the need for consideration of theory (see, for example, Virgo Interview II, pp.24, 30). Nonetheless, it is possible to discern adherence to beliefs in accord with theory, in this case the theory of charismatic leadership deriving from Weber’s account of authority (Weber, 1947, p.358-359, previously reported [Chapter 7, section 4]). In theoretical terms, such a conceptualization is ‘charismatic’ leadership, for, like Weber’s definition, there is, or is seen to be, a divine presence with that person. Certainly, according to Virgo, apostles cannot be produced by other people: “No man can make an apostle” (Virgo Interview I, p.32). Furthermore, similar to Weberian and Durkheimian theory, a theology of charismatic leadership emphasizes the need for recognition of that gift by others. Speaking of Paul’s visit to Jerusalem, Virgo explains:

> Well, actually, Paul says I went down to Jerusalem. I submitted my gospel. And those who were before him, as he put it, gave us the right hand of fellowship. In other words, we interpreted that, they acknowledged their authentic apostolic gift. They didn’t make Paul an
apostle, God did, but they observed it, recognized it. Now that was
the philosophy we brought to bear. So we are saying, ‘where do we
see?’ We’re not making somebody, uh, an apostle. We’re saying,
‘look, there’s -- the proof. There’s the evidence. That’s what we
recognize. That’s what other people already are drawing from them’
(Virgo Interview I, p.33).

Newfrontiers, in its founder and successors, saw apostles as having a divine gift,
which could not be produced or multiplied by people, and that this gift was
confirmed when others recognized it by following. While Virgo was thinking in
theological terms, it is possible also to interpret this in terms of charismatic
leadership theory.

I take lengths to explain the charismatic theory of leadership because I posit that due
reflexivity thereon could have helped bring clarity to the succession processes.
Despite espoused theology of apostolic team leadership and the role of the people
as “recognizers”, there was little theological reflexivity on this dual aspect of
multiplication. Newfrontiers’ dependence on the people to recognize the apostolic
gift is an “attributional theory of charisma” (House, 1995, p.414). This
conceptualization of apostleship, however, fails to take into account adequately
exactly how and why people respond, or acknowledge that people respond to a
leader from their own normative models of leadership. The GLOBE Project (House et
al., 2014), for example, studied leadership conceptualization in many nations, finding
that high levels of ‘humane-oriented’ leadership produces effective results in almost
every nation, with the exception of Russia, where the people actually perform better
under authoritarian leadership. Thus, people’s understanding of normative
leadership is culturally and contextually dependent.

In the case of Newfrontiers, attribution and endorsement from the people may
further be complicated by the likely distribution of personality types among its
leaders (Francis, Gubb and Robbins, 2009) and committed adherents (Francis,
Robbins, and Ryland, 2012). Using the Francis Psychological Type Scales, these
studies suggest that Newfrontiers church leaders are likely to adopt a structured and
organized approach: “There is a toughness about this style of leadership that is
unlikely to be distracted by opposition” (Francis, Gubb and Robbins, 2009, p.67).
Concerning the wider core membership of Newfrontiers, the 2012 study found an
“overall preference for STJ”\textsuperscript{192} which may indicate congregations are less “suited for shaping new visions and for inspiring new congregations in complex and changing environments” (Francis, Robbins, and Ryland, 2012, p.227). Given this, the wider Newfrontiers membership might find it difficult to recognize those gifts and preferences, such as intuition, which might be needed to develop new forms of church and apostolic ministry, for they are not the broader preferences of the majority of Newfrontiers adherents.

In matters of power in succession, therefore, the espoused theology places the locus on the founder and the international apostolic team, whereas operant beliefs empower the people to a greater extent than reflected upon by the leadership. Insufficient reflexivity is seen in that Virgo and team did not consult with wider membership as did Grace Network and IAS, something which may have helped them avoid the situation in the first two years post-succession in which there was considerable uncertainty where churches fit, with some congregations joining an apostolic sphere only quickly to change their minds. Furthermore, there was little reflexivity on any contextual factors which affect how people recognize leadership. Roberts and Bradley (1988) state that in times of crisis people are more likely to ascribe charisma to leaders. Thus, environmental stability/instability affects enactments of succession. The period of such uncertainty might have been avoided if greater reflexivity on this matter had been undertaken pre-succession. The lacuna between espoused power (founder and team) and operant power is thus partly responsible for a period of uncertainty post-succession.

\textbf{2.2.3. Grace Network}

According to the constitution (Article V), the decision with regard to appointment of the executive director lay with the Board of Directors. The decision was taken, however, to the broader membership of the network at a conference, not just for consultation, but also for approval (voting). Thus, the normative and espoused position with regard to decision-making power was mediated through an operant theology of members’ power. Furthermore, the effectual power given to the

\begin{footnote}{Sensing, Thinking, Judging types according to the Francis Psychological Type Scales}
\end{footnote}
network’s overseas partners who urged the appointment was also operant. The matter of power is further complicated by the dissonance between the espoused theology of Blackwell (Chapter 8) which conceived of the successor’s operating within the constraints of Presbyterian co-equality and the preferred theology of the successor who desired greater apostolic authority and executive capacity. Power and authority were contested matters within the movement. It was unclear whether they resided in the executive team, executive director, overseas partners or network members, or indeed some unstated combination of these categories. Sufficient reflexivity may have assisted the team and may have avoided the eventual inability of the leaders to function in times of stress. Indeed, it was the results of a lack of such reflexivity which eventually caused the cessation of the network (Groblewski Interview I, p.5).

2.2.4. Summary

In turning again to the scarce literature on power in transitions, in many ways my cases confirm Tashakori’s findings on power; for example, the finding of the significance of the post-succession dyadic relationship between founder and successor is applicable. Tashakori found that succession was far more likely to proceed well, with the successor turning potential power into realized power, if there was a coalition between founder and successor. This aspect had different nuances in each of the three case studies. With Newfrontiers, Virgo divested himself of all formal authority at succession. He remained available for advice, personal counsel and for preaching. In this case, the post-succession dyadic relation was not a hindrance to realized power among the fifteen apostles; indeed, if invited, he preached to congregations in support of the new leadership. In this sense, the successors did have a ‘coalition’ with the founder which increased their authority. With IAS, both protagonists speak of an open and clear post-succession relationship. The founder took many steps to communicate that he was no longer the leader (for example, his speech and the symbolic gifts at the transition ceremony). He acknowledged that the successor had the requisite skills to lead this ministry in this season (LZ Interview I, p.9) and communicated his availability to advise and support (LZ Interview II, pp.5-6). Thus, this also confirms Tashakori’s findings.
Similarly, her findings are supported by examining the post-succession relationship between the executive director of Grace Network and the founders, but in a different way from the first two cases. There was a lacuna between the theology of leadership of Blackwell and that of Groblewski, which the successor experienced as a restraint upon his leadership. In Tashakorian terms, his potential power was not fully realized due to theological differences. Though negative, this, however, also supports Tashakori’s findings on the importance of founder/successor relations as one of the critical factors in organizational success.

2.3. Transition ceremonies

While there is often reference to transition ceremonies within organizational development literature, I have found no empirical studies. This is surprising in light of the considerable study of transition ceremonies in the field of anthropology (Chapter 6). Bolman and Deal (2008), in their classic work on organizational leadership, reference the importance of ceremonies in organizational transitions, believing them to “create order, clarity, and predictability” (Bolman and Deal, 2008, p.265), or having a quadripartite functionality: stabilization, socialization, reassurance and communication to external constituencies (p.266). Transition may consist of meetings, interviews, training and contracts, yet humans also need drama and symbol to comprehend and adjust to change: “Without ritual and ceremony, transition remains incomplete, a clutter of comings and goings” (Bolman and Deal, 2008, p.408). In their work on organizational cultures, Deal and Kennedy introduce the concept of “strong culture”, where strong culture organizations consistently perform better than others (Deal and Kenney 1982, p.7) because a strong culture has a system of informal rules which indicate how to behave and what is expected, thus leading to greater efficiency (p.15). Work-place ceremonies are one mechanism of building and communicating such strong cultures: ceremonies place the culture on display and provide experiences that are remembered by employees.

While the literature is helpful, the above comments are practitioner observations and not derived from empirical study. The observations may nonetheless be of assistance when applied to practical theology. As ceremonies in the organizational world are planned by leadership, and given the comments on the provision of strong
culture, socialization and reduction of ambiguity, it seems likely that such ceremonies manifest the espoused doctrine and values of the organization. This perception is helpful when it comes to the ceremonies of the three case studies, which also were planned by the senior leadership and have the function of expressing the espoused view of the transitions. This is supported by Hammarberg (2008) and Baggett (2001). Hammarberg describes the ceremonial processes of transition after the death of the president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The church employs ceremony and symbolism to reinforce its theology that the church is a “house of order” under the Melchizedek priesthood, and the president is “prophet, seer, and revelator” (Hammarberg, 2008, p.42). The body of the departed president is placed for viewing in the Hall of the Prophets, thus symbolically communicating that presidents are prophets. Various groups make decisions concerning who should succeed him, and then this is brought to a vote at the General Conference at which members raised hands in “a collective gesture of affirmation” (p.42). Such a symbolic display of unity reinforces the espoused theology that they are a “house of order” with good governance.

A further example that succession ceremonies are enactments of espoused theologies may be seen in Baggett (2001). After a lengthy description of the operant theologies of the staff and volunteers, much of which differs from the espoused theology of Fuller, Habitat for Humanity’s founder, Baggett describes a housing dedication ceremony in the USA (when a home for those on low incomes is completed and the homeowner is ceremonially invested of the construction). A standard format for the ceremony includes the reading of scriptures, a testimony from an existing homeowner about how their life has changed because of Habitat’s ministry, a short sermon on the importance of faith, but faith which results in practical actions, all of which culminates in the donation to the owner of the house keys and a Bible: “Our hope is that this house will keep your family safe and warm and this Bible will nourish your spirits throughout your lives” (Baggett, 2001, p.188). The ceremony communicates the goals of the organization, its founding evangelical Christian spirituality, its values and focus on meeting people’s needs. It sacralizes housebuilding and weaves the individual volunteers participating into “webs of significance” (Geertz, 1973, p.5, cited by Baggett, 2001, p.189). In other ways,
however, the ceremony exposes the incongruences of the ministry’s espoused theologies with those theologies operant in many of the committees, offices and lives of its workers and volunteers. The ceremony emphasized the role of the Bible and is shaped by the founder’s evangelicalism (for example, for Fuller, volunteers building a house are “part of the movement of the Spirit” [Baggett, 2001, p.199]). Baggett shows throughout his study that the beliefs and spiritual practices of the staff and volunteers are often incongruent with the espoused theology, exemplified by the following staff member: “For me, what motivates my work is just a general commitment to humanity. It has nothing to do with God or religion” (Matthew Carletti, staff member, cited in Baggett, 2001, p.201).

What can be learned about the espoused and operant theologies of Newfrontiers, IAS and Grace Network from their succession ceremonies?

2.3.1. International Aid Services

I have already written (Chapter 6) that the ceremony may be read as a theological text – and, in light of the comments above on the nature of ceremonies, as a text particularly of espoused theology. I will not repeat the details of my earlier analysis, but, in focusing only on succession theology, I propose that the espoused theology of succession within IAS is that succession should be contextualized, that succession is best enacted as a form of patriarchal blessing, as seen with the blessing and *porrectio instrumentorum* initiated by the founder, and that a crucial aspect of succession is authority transference, symbolized by the key.\(^{193}\) The theology of succession is fundamentally a Christo-Petrine transference of authority. Having been appointed as CEO of IAS, Daniel Zetterlund culminates his remarks with a blessing, which frames his role in priestly terms: “May the Lord bless you and keep you”,\(^{194}\) a truncated version of the priestly blessing found in Numbers 6:24-26.

While much is planned and orchestrated by the leaders, thus suggesting espoused theology guiding the enactments, actions may, of course, spontaneously occur or be symbolically enacted of a less conscious theology. I suggest two things which

\(^{193}\) See Kaufman and Ideström (2018) on artefacts in theology.
\(^{194}\) Transcription of speech given at transition ceremony held in Yei, South Sudan, March 2015.
manifest IAS’s organizational operant theology. First, due to the multiple references to ‘key’ in the speeches of the founder and successor, I interpret the dominant symbol in the ceremony is the donation of the key (as previously explained in Chapter 6). This suggests at the operant level that the dominant understanding of succession theology is that of transference of authority together with the centrality of decision-making; at an operant level, this aspect is privileged over others.

Secondly, and relatedly, I posit that the identity transformation of the successor is not espoused but is nonetheless to be understood at the operant level; it is a transcendental transformation. Indeed, this reflection is supported by Kapferer in his work on the transformative nature of ritual: “Rites of transition often seem to end on a transcendental note and this enables them, I consider, to carry the transformation effected in the process of the rites to externally located contexts of meaning and action” (Kapferer, 1979, p.14).

From the transition ceremony, therefore, I discern espoused theology, yet also operant theologies, which stress the importance of the authority of the leader, and point to the Petrine nature of his position; IAS did not reflect on these theological aspects. In this case, the insufficient reflexivity did not produce significant incongruity; it may nonetheless lead to potential problems with regard to understanding the precise nature of successor decision-making authority and the extent to which leadership is to be collegial or individual. This matter could have been addressed through lacunal reflexivity for this interpretation is only made manifest by examining the lacunae between espoused and operant theologies. A reason for insufficient theological reflexivity concerning succession was the emphasis being placed on the changing environment in which IAS as a grant-recipient organization operated, and the concomitant realization that the successor must be able to adjust the organization to focus on the new environment (LZ Interview I, p.9; DZ Interview I, pp.33-35). Succession for IAS was a pragmatic response to a problem.

2.3.2. Newfrontiers

Through Virgo’s many books, conferences, online sermons and articles, Newfrontiers sought to establish not just an espoused theology but also a normative theology. Specifically with regard to succession, an espoused theology was also developed. In the case of Newfrontiers, however, the transition ceremony seems to provide less
manifestation of it. The ceremony took place during a conference with some 5,000 attendees. There had been multiple communications throughout the preceding period of how Newfrontiers would navigate succession. Indeed, a special issue magazine was produced. Thus, before the occasion of the ceremony, the theology and mode of succession had been extensively communicated. At the conference Virgo introduced the fifteen men who were to be appointed, commended them and then had people gather around them to pray for them.

A reading of these enactments shows three aspects of espoused succession theology. First, succession is to take place with the blessing and agreement of the founder. The provision of his blessing affirms the new leaders and communicates to the people that they are expected to follow the new leadership. Secondly, the ceremony enacts the belief that apostles are not created and that Virgo himself has no special power to create the apostles. This is a ceremonial enactment of the theology diffused in the special edition magazine: “We have no permission from God to create apostles” (Virgo, *Newfrontiers Magazine*, 2011, p.5). Virgo is not appointing but commending, believing this to be the biblical model: “Paul did not nominate Timothy as an apostle but was happy to commend him and encourage the saints to receive him as they would Paul himself” (Virgo, *Newfrontiers Magazine*, 2011, p.5). This leads to the third point, namely, that in the commendation for those to be received as apostles, a theology of apostleship by recognition is made manifest, which is an “attributitional theory of charisma” (House, 1995, p.414). Yet, this aspect is not enacted in the ceremony in the sense of all the people voicing agreement. This voicing of agreement, as in the Latter-day Saints’ “collective gesture of affirmation” (Hammarberg, 2008, p.42), did not take place. For Newfrontiers the voicing of agreement, or the contrary, was to come in the acts of the people by following the new leadership and by placing their churches under their apostolic authority.

In the case of Newfrontiers, there was little additional operant theology to be deduced from the succession ceremony itself. Operant theology with regard to succession does exist, but it concerns gender and conceptualization of apostleship (addressed earlier).
2.3.3. Grace Network

Grace Network had no written theology of succession. The ceremony to install Groblewski as executive director took place during a regular network conference during which a unanimous vote supported his appointment. He was installed at the same conference. The installation ceremony included prayer for Groblewski, *cheirotonia* and anointing with oil, all framed by the reading of God’s words to Moses to appoint Joshua and commission him for leadership through the laying on of hands (Numbers 27:18-23).

This brief ceremony indicates the espoused theology of succession was that their modern network succession enactment was in the biblical tradition of leadership appointments, with the Old Testament text, especially that of succession from Moses to Joshua as the privileged model. However, I conclude that there were high levels of ambivalence regarding the succession, seen in not just a lacuna between espoused and operant theologies but that the operant belief actually contradicted the espoused. Operant beliefs indicate that the event was not a significant occasion in the ministry’s development. This was due to the event being a response to isomorphic pressures. The successor’s wife was not present, despite a spouse usually being present at the installation of church elders. The ceremony occurred within the context of no agreement of job description, or terms of employment; the triumvirate’s leading of the movement continued much as before the installation. Such enactments speak of the operant theology which in this case undermined the espoused theology of Moses-Joshua succession. A strong operant theology was framing the succession, despite the overt ceremonial acts. This operant theology is manifest in a number of ways, including: “loose coupling” (Scott and Meyer, 1994, p.2); the minimizing of the succession by the successor – “it wasn’t a big deal” (Groblewski Interview I, p.36); and the awkwardness for Blackwell, one of the founders, fully to acknowledge the appointment, “We called him ‘executive director’ [laughs]” (Blackwell Interview I, p.12). Thus, there existed a large interstice between espoused and operant theology of ceremony. Furthermore, I suggest that even seeking to ground the ceremony within the biblical text of Numbers 27 was problematic, manifesting further an operant understanding of succession theology. Although Joshua is commissioned in this text, Moses continues in leadership,
including decisions concerning going to war (chapter 31), the division of spoils and the allocation of land. Thus the Numbers 27 text, while a commissioning text, is not a text of leadership authority transference. Its use in the ceremony, probably unintentionally and without reflection, does ironically encapsulate the operant theology well! In the case of Grace Network, insufficient attention to the considerable incongruences between its espoused and operant theologies was severely problematic, causing later confusion in decision-making and an inability for the network leadership to lead through turbulent events. Lack of theological reflexivity was detrimental to the longevity of the ministry.

In returning to the literature, in line with Hammarberg (2008), enactments have symbolic meaning. Ceremonies are texts which reveal espoused theology yet may well have operant characteristics. For IAS that operant theology pertained to leadership authority; for Grace Network it undermined the significance of the Moses-Joshua portrayal of succession.

3. Findings and conclusions

In summary, this thesis has reviewed succession literature, suggested a fresh approach to examining Christian founder successions, provided nuanced descriptions of such successions and has shown some of the theological and theoretical conceptualizations which shaped succession. From these actions, a number of conclusions may be drawn.

First, there is a wealth of literature on leadership succession in organizations other than Christian networks, but there has been little attempt to apply findings to Christian institutions from such literature in the field of organizational development, leadership theory, sociology and psychology (Chapter 1). A few have attempted to do so, but such studies produced less than reliable findings due to inadequate research methodology (Chapter 2). This suggests that to study Christian founder succession is a relatively new field for social science, for practical theology, and for a multidisciplinary approach combining both social science and theology.

Pursuant to this, my study shows that it is possible to examine Christian founder succession through empirical study. I have shown that a multidisciplinary approach is an appropriate way forward as I have drawn from organizational studies, sociology
and leadership theory, yet with the accretion of theological reflection. This is a multidisciplinary study, yet, at the same time, a practical theological study. There is both much in the data suitable for theological reflection, yet much is gleaned from perspectives other than theology. This study has shown the complexities and nuances of Christian organizational succession, where issues such as life cycle stage, encultured perceptions of leadership (Hofstede 1990; 2001) and external contingencies become relevant matters affecting succession decisions and enactments. A practical theological reflection drawing from fields other than theology enabled such complexities to be made manifest.

Thirdly, I posit that this study has more specifically shown that a valid way to gain greater understanding of this phenomenon is through the data gathering method of unstructured interviewing and the subsequent analysis of the founders’ and successors’ narratives. This is not the sole method to further understanding, but one which has been fruitful for the production of richer descriptions.

Furthermore, this study shows that the application of ‘theology in four voices’ may facilitate richer understandings of succession, but also shows that this approach may be used differently from other studies. I have not sought to draw the contours of broader organizational theologies (Loy; Baggett) but have rather focused on one aspect of theology, namely founder succession. I have not sought to expose theological lacunae between leadership and followers, but have sought to make manifest lacunae within the theologies of the leaders themselves. Thus, this approach does not adopt the model of Cameron et al. in focusing on the followers’ unheard voices, which was also the specific aim of Loy, leading her to recommend a normative theology (in the sense of prescriptive guidelines). Neither Baggett nor Loy call for a theological reflexivity of the nature I propose after finding incongruences in the succession enactments; greater theological and theoretical reflexivity could have remediated some of the inconsistencies. I posit, therefore, that my approach, focusing on reflexivity, is distinctive from other studies, as it puts forward a theological discipline which could assist Christian organizations undergoing organizational succession.

This multidisciplinary yet theological study has further brought into view that succession processes and succession beliefs of Christian organizations are diverse;
even in just three cases there was diversity of impetuses, selection methods, processes, power dynamics and theologies. Thus, successions, even within only three cases, vary greatly; they are not monolithic in theology or process. Yet, within such diversity and complexity, matters such as a commitment to internal succession from founders seem prevalent, not solely in these three cases but also in other Christian founder successions (Chapter 8).

This thesis has answered the research question by illuminating a variety of theologies which shaped founder successions. For IAS, there was actually little theological reflection, apart from strong organizational commitment that the successor support the evangelical missiological goals of the organization. Within this succession, emphasis in the successor appointment seems to have been placed on a contingent leader-situation match. Yet at the same time, there was a good deal of theology discernible in the succession ceremony, especially that the crucial matter of succession was authority transference. An analysis of the ceremony, together with the motifs of professionalization and paternal-filial succession, shows a complex succession Gestalt in operation in this organization. For Newfrontiers succession was kinesisoclastic, enacted within a theology of apostleship and complementarianism. For Grace Network there appeared a theology of leaders as servants which shaped the succession; however, there were different theologies of leadership and government held by key protagonists. Their succession was due to isomorphic pressures, yet, in common with other organizations cited, still showed a commitment to internal rather than external succession. There are rich and complex perceptions of succession with these Christian organizations, arising from the above diverse theologies. Some such theologies were espoused and acknowledged; others appear to be operant but discernible though actions and symbols.

Reflection on the theologies presented in the interview narratives and documents, as well as the succession enactments, led to my stressing the importance of institutional reflexivity on succession for the healthy functioning and effectiveness of each organization; such reflection in the case of these organizations focuses on the matter of theological reflexivity. Through applying the model of ‘theology in four voices’ and particularly focusing on the two voices of ‘espoused’ and ‘operant’ theologies, I have examined, in order better to understand the theologies of
succession, three aspects of succession in each of the three cases, namely methods and selection, the use of power and the ceremonial enactments. This method has enabled an identification of incongruities between the two voices of theology, thus exposing lacunae in the theologies of succession of each organization. This finding is noteworthy as such a lack of reflexivity was problematic for founder succession as follows.

For IAS, lack of reflexivity meant that a priori assumptions of contingency were not acknowledged as privileged in the successor selection, thus obscuring any benefits of the application of other theoretical or theological models. With this, IAS could be paving the way for future problems in that the ceremony provided a transcendental understanding of the successor installation, compounded by its being framed as a Christo-Petrine event. This, coupled with the correctio instrumentorum of the dominant symbol of ‘key’ representing authority, suggests that the transition was endowing the successor with considerable authority and that this was the crucial focus of the succession. This, however, leaves the matter of the extent of that authority unclear, which could become problematic in future organizational decision-making. Further reflexivity could have mitigated such an enactment and helped provide a greater holistic understanding of leadership.

For Newfrontiers, an inability to identify the interstices of theology led to a privileging of the conceptualization of apostles as architects, which, in the succession event led to an emphasis on selecting structural leaders, thus possibly excluding other potential and qualified candidates. Furthermore, lack of reflexivity on the nature of operant masculinities excluded non-conforming men from consideration. Insufficient lacunal reflexivity meant that Newfrontiers leaders gave greater power than they conceived to the people for them to accept or reject the leaders’ selections, something which contributed to a two-year period of instability within the new fifteen spheres as people and churches exercised that power, but in haphazard ways.

For Grace Network, there was little theological reflexivity with regard to the reasons for initiating succession; succession was a response to external promptings. This omission of reflexivity was problematic in that the question of the locus of power and authority was not examined, nor the nature of the authority and role of the
successor, the ambiguities of which eventually led to the cessation of the network. This ambiguity was compounded by an unreflexive construction of the ceremony at which an espoused theology of Moses-Joshua succession competed with the operant view of succession as “no big deal”. This was compounded yet further by the unreflexive framing of succession with this ambiguous biblical text, one of appointment but not one of power transference.

With the above in mind, I find that insufficient reflexivity is problematic for Christian organizations as they enact founder succession. Moreover, I find that such insufficient theological reflexivity may be found, not in the expected interstices between the espoused theology of leaders and the operant theology of followers (Baggett, 2001; Loy, 2015), but that such interstices both exist and can be made evident within the theologies of the founders and successors themselves; this is submitted here as a new research finding. These three cases show that where there has been reflection of a theological nature, there has been little reflection from the perspective of leadership theory, and that theoretical reflection can be useful in understanding the multifaceted nature of succession and the conceptualizations which produced the succession enactments.

It is to be concluded that this thesis places the study of Christian founder succession within the field of practical theology, but shows the benefits of bringing other disciplines to bear on succession in order to understand the multifaceted nature of the processes. This study has uncovered the diversities of such successions and shown that theologies and theories, even if unacknowledged, shape the succession conceptualizations and enactments. It has examined the espoused theologies of those enacting succession as presented in books, magazines, sermons and in the narrative interviews; this study has also contrasted them with the symbolic enactments of succession which often show incongruities between what is espoused and that which is operant. I have thus found these lacunae rich for interpretation. It is a key finding that the three organizations did not adequately reflect on theology and theory, and that such insufficient reflexivity is problematic in succession; I point to inadequacies in the successions created by such a lack of reflexivity. This study highlights theological reflexivity as crucial for Christian organizations preparing for impending founder succession.
And if you find her poor, Ithaka won’t have fooled you.
Wise as you will have become, so full of experience,
you’ll have understood by then what these Ithakas mean.

Cavafy, Ithaka
Blank
Appendices
Appendix A

Glossary

Bureaucratic authority

“This type of legitimate authority exists when the foundation of power is the correct application of formal procedures and rules.” (Morgan, 1977, p.172)

Case

“A phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context.” (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p.25)

Charisma

“The term ‘charisma’ will be applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are such as are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader.” (Weber, 1947, p.358-9)

Congruency hypothesis of leadership

A hypothesis that leader effectiveness is predicated upon the extent to which leaders enact the type of leadership actually expected to be outstanding within that society. (Adapted from House et al, 2014)
Cross-cultural leadership

“Leading cross-culturally is inspiring people who come from two or more cultural traditions to participate with you (the leader or leadership team) in building a community of trust and then to follow you and be empowered by you to achieve a compelling vision of faith.” (Lingenfelter, 2008, p.21)

Crown heir succession

Successor is identified a considerable time before tenure begins.

Enterprise durability

“The prospects for a firm to exist for long after the death of its founder without a significant decline in human and material input as well as organizational output.” (Ukaegbu, 2003, p.28)

Entrepreneurial leadership style

A leadership style which is reactive, with short-range planning, lack of plan enforcement, fewer policies concerning evaluation and reward, and with the leader involved with the details of daily operations. (Adapted from Tashakori, 1980, p.15)

Founder’s syndrome

“The imbalance of power in a non-profit organization in favor of the founding executive that occurs because of the unique advantages of assembling the board and staff of the organization.” (McLaughlin, 2008, p.x)
Horse race succession

Succession where several candidates are pitted against each other in a kind of competition to observe behaviour, skills, aptitude and the like. (Adapted from Vancil, 1987)

Implicit Leadership Theory

“Leadership is an attribution process that occurs when there is substantial overlap between a particular person’s schema of leadership and that of the person they are assessing.” (House et al, 2014, p.329)

Intercultural competence

“The ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in a variety of cultural contexts.” (Schaetti, Ramsey and Watanabe, 2009, p.127-128)

Leadership

“Leadership over human beings is exercised when persons with certain motives and purposes mobilize, in competition or conflict with others, institutional, political, psychological, and other resources so as to arouse, engage, and satisfy the motives of followers.” (Burns, 2010, p.18)\(^{195}\)

“A process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.” (Northouse, 2013, p.5)\(^{196}\)

\(^{195}\) First edition 1978

\(^{196}\) First edition 2001, sixth edition 2013
Leadership succession/ primary leader succession/ CEO succession

“A pivotal act or process in a company’s history by which a new actor, an incoming CEO, takes the place of another actor, an outgoing CEO, and inherits all the rights and responsibilities of the position.”
(Hutzschenreuter, et al, 2012, p.731)

Nepotism

“Favouritism shown to relatives in conferring offices or privileges” (OEED, 1991, p.975).

Organizational culture

“The pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered, or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration – a pattern of assumptions that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.” (Schein, 1983, p.14)

Organizational identity

“Organizational identity is the set of features that members understand to be central, distinctive, and enduring within their organization.” (Balser and Carmin, 2009, p.186)

Organizational identity threat

When organizational members interpret events or situations as challenges to or violations of or danger to that which they believe are central and distinctive features. Such threats can be external, for example a reduced donorship, or internal, such as prioritising one
value over another. (Adapted from Balser and Carmin, 2009, p.187)

Organizational zeal

“Enthusiastic – at the extreme, fanatical – commitment to a coherent set of principles, creed, dogma, or belief system, which channels social behavior toward some end and away from others.” (Haveman and Khaire, 2002, p.4)

Power Distance

“The power distance between a boss B and a subordinate S in a hierarchy is the difference between the extent to which B can determine the behavior of S and the extent to which S can determine the behavior of B.” (Hofstede, 2001, p.83)

“The extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally.” (Hofstede and Hofstede, 2005, p.402)

Professional leadership style

A leadership style which relies on the enforcement of long-range plans, clear delegation with subordinates empowered to make decisions according the plan, and formal evaluation and reward policies. (Adapted from Tashakori, 1980, p.15)

Relay succession

A method of succession where the successor is groomed and prepared for a potential role, perhaps even working alongside the incumbent for a period. (Adapted from Vancil, 1987)
Routinization of charisma
The establishment of rules, constitution, eligibility tests and economic structures of a new (religious) group or community.

Social generation
“An aggregate of similarly aged people.” (Cherrington, 1997, p.304)

Socialization
“The process by which an individual acquires the skills, knowledge, values, perspectives and expected behaviors needed to occupy an organizational position.” (Fondas & Wiersema, 1997, p.566)

Strategic change
“A difference in form, quality, or state in an organizational entity over time that alters the company’s alignment with its environment.” (Hutzschenreuter et al, 2012, p.730)

Tacit knowledge
The unconscious, subjective knowledge, insight, intuition about technical matters and the frames of reference for employing it and making decisions. (Adapted from Peet, 2012)
Traditional authority

“This type of legitimate authority exists when power is vested in people who embody and symbolize the traditional values of customs and practices of the past.” (Morgan 1977, p.172)

Transactional leadership

Leadership “which focuses on the exchanges that occur between leaders and their followers.” (Northouse, 2013, p.186)

Transformational leadership

“The process whereby a person engages others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower.” (Northouse, 2013, p.186)

Transnational organization

“The genuinely international organization… in which each national culture contributes its own particular insights and strengths to the solution of worldwide issues and the company is able to draw on whatever it is that nations do best.” (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998, p.12)
Appendix B

McKenna’s twelve components cycle of Christian leadership succession

Remembering our story

Reading our culture

Understanding our life cycle

Accepting our role

Timing our leave

Completing our task

Announcing our decision

Celebrating our successor

Making our exit

Managing our emotions

Letting history be our judge

Leaving our legacy
Appendix C

Practitioner literature concerning aspects of pastoral succession

Phases of departure and detachment for clergy in transition

Philips (1994)

Succession timing


Emotional and psychological issues for the departing pastor


Transition phases and sequence

Mead (1986 and 2005)

Role of search committees in finding a successor

Kethcum (2005), Vonhof (2010)

Congregational development during transition

Mead (2005) and Nicholson (1998b)

Interim ministry

Svingen (1998), Smith (2009), Miller (2009), Gribben (2003), Smith (2009)

Congregational size/culture and relationship to succession

Weese and Crabtree (2004)
## Appendix D

### Universally desirable, undesirable and culturally contingent leadership attributes


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Universally Positive</th>
<th>Universally Negative</th>
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<tr>
<td>Trustworthy</td>
<td>Nonexplicit</td>
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<td>Dynamic</td>
<td>Dictatorial</td>
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<td>Decisive</td>
<td>Loner</td>
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<td>Intelligent</td>
<td>Ruthless</td>
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<td>Dependable</td>
<td>Asocial</td>
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<td>Plans Ahead</td>
<td>Egocentric</td>
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<td>Excellence oriented</td>
<td>Irritable</td>
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<td>Team builder</td>
<td>Noncooperative</td>
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<td>Encouraging</td>
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<td>Confidence builder</td>
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<td>Informed</td>
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<td>Honest</td>
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<td>Effective bargainer</td>
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<td>Motive arouser</td>
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<td>Win-win problem solver</td>
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<td>Positive</td>
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<td>Foresight</td>
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<td>Just</td>
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<td>Communicative</td>
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<td>Motivational</td>
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<td>Coordinator</td>
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<td>Administrative Skilled</td>
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<td>Culturally Contingent</td>
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<td>Ambitious</td>
<td>Evasive</td>
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<td>Logical</td>
<td>Domineering</td>
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<td>Sincere</td>
<td>Habitual</td>
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<td>Enthusiastic</td>
<td>Individualistic</td>
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<td>Intuitive</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
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<td>Orderly</td>
<td>Subdued</td>
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<td>Wilful</td>
<td>Micromanager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worldly</td>
<td>Elitist</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-sacrificial</td>
<td>Ruler</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sensitive</td>
<td>Cunning</td>
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<td>Intragroup competitor</td>
<td>Provocateur</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compassionate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Procedural</td>
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<td>Unique</td>
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<td>Status conscious</td>
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<td>Formal</td>
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<td>Risk taker</td>
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<td>Class conscious</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intragroup conflict avoider</td>
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<td>Independent</td>
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<td>Self-effacing</td>
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<td>Autonomous</td>
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<td>Cautious</td>
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Appendix E

General theory of leadership

From House et al., (2014, p.360)

**Mission critical leadership competences**

(Activities leaders must perform to high levels to produce extraordinary results)

Visionary

Performance oriented

Decisive

Inspirational

Administratively competent

Integrity

Diplomatic

**Important leadership competencies**

(Activities which do not need to be performed at such a high level as the first set)

Self-sacrificial

Collaborative

Participative

Team integrator

Bureaucratic\(^{197}\)

\(^{197}\) Meaning, leading according to guidelines, norms and fairly administering rewards.
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Appendix F
Ethics approval

UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER
COMMITTEE ON THE ETHICS OF RESEARCH ON HUMAN BEINGS
Application form for approval of a research project

This form should be completed by the Chief Investigator(s), after reading the guidance notes.

1. Title of the research
Full title: Founder succession in international Christian networks and organizations: A narrative case-study approach

2. a. Chief Investigator

Title: Mr.
Forename/Initials: Peter
Surname: Bunton
Post: Postgraduate student
Qualifications: BA, MA
School/Unit: School of Arts, Languages and Cultures
E-mail: peter.bunton@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk
Telephone: 001 717 917 5823

2. b. Co-Investigator

Title: Dr.
Forename/Initials: Justin
Surname: Thacker
Post: Academic Director, Cliff College
Qualifications: MRCP, DTM&H, PhD, PGCHE, FHEA
School/Unit: Cliff College
E-mail: academicdean@cliffcollege.ac.uk
Telephone: 01246 584220

3. Details of Project

3.1. Proposed study dates and duration
Start date: September, 2017
End date: August, 2020
3.2. Is this a student project?

Yes /No
If so, what degree is it for?

Professional Doctorate in Missiology – 6 year part-time

3.3. What is the principal research question/objective? *(Must be in language comprehensible to a lay person.)*

What are the processes which Christian movements construct and enact in transferring leadership from the founder to a successor? What are the theoretical and theological influences on the construction and enactment of such processes?

This question will include inquiry into the following areas:

**Phases:** What were the phases of the succession? Were these articulated at the beginning of the processes or only identifiable at a later point in time? Such phases might include data on activating/initiating antecedents and training/preparation (of predecessor, successor, staff and key affected actors).

**Plans:** What plans were established? Which steps were anticipated? What was the anticipated time scale? Was there adherence to the plans?

**Prior and contemporaneous reflection:** What, if any, reflection took place prior to and during the succession processes? Were any theoretical (organization developmental, sociological, biblical, theological or cultural) models considered? Were any prior examples reviewed as paradigmatic? Was any literature considered and deemed to be influential? Which theology of leadership and succession was articulated and discussed, if any? Were any theological works which influenced the process? Were any passages of scripture read and deemed influential as part of the reflection and processes? Which transition rituals or liturgies were employed? Which espoused and operant theologies may be discerned in the preceding aspects?

3.4. What is the scientific justification for the research? What is the background? Why is this an area of importance / has any similar research been done? *(Must be in language comprehensible to a lay person.)*

The main aim of the research is to understand leadership succession within international Christian organizations. While there is much work on leadership succession in literature on management and organizational development, there is less on the matter of founders’ succession, and virtually no empirical research on founder’s succession within Christian ministries. Those research projects which have been undertaken (all in the USA) have serious flaws, largely due to poor and inconsistent methodologies which have produced inadequate data and interpretations. As many such organizations, begun in the 1980’s, approach the retirement of the founders, this topic is of consequence to many non-profit organizations around the world. This is an opportunity to conduct a research project with sound methodology and methods, in this case based primarily on narrative interviews, supported by documentary analysis.

3.5. How has the scientific quality of the research been assessed? *(Tick as appropriate)*

- Independent external review
- Review within a company
- Review within a multi-centre research group
- **Internal review** *(e.g. involving colleagues, academic supervisor)*
- None external to the investigator
- Other, e.g. methodological guidelines *(give details below)*

*If relevant, describe the review process and outcome. If the review has been undertaken but not seen by the researcher, give details of the body which has undertaken the review:*

University of Manchester Review Panel for PhD/Professional Doctorate students.

3.6. Give a full summary of the purpose, design and methodology of the planned research, including a brief explanation of the theoretical framework that informs it. It should be clear exactly what will happen to the research participant, how many times and in what order. Describe any involvement of research participants, patient groups or communities in the design of the research. *(This section must be completed in language comprehensible to the lay person.)*
To answer the research question (3.3), three case studies are proposed. Such cases are international Christian organizations which have undergone succession within the last 2-5 years (10 years being the absolute limit if cases within the 2-5 year time frame are impossible to find).

The previous CEO/international director and his/her successor will be interviewed. The further possibility of a third interviewee, such as chairman of the board, is left open at this time. If deemed useful, this third interview will be conducted in all cases.

Each participant will be interviewed for approximately 90 mins. The goal is to elicit narratives on leadership succession. The interview will, therefore, be largely unstructured, leaving participants to speak of aspects, phases and plans which they deem important, in a manner which they feel appropriate. The interviewer will provide guidance if necessary (e.g. "Can you please tell me more about...").

There will be a second interview some weeks later. This will be based on a question protocol which can only be prepared subsequent to the first interview. The questions will be for clarification, positing suggested explanations to which the participants will respond, and probing areas of interest which were not raised in the first interview (such areas are based on the research literature).

Participants will be asked to provide relevant documents to the succession processes, such as succession plans, minutes of planning meetings, order of service of any liturgies or rituals enacted in the succession.

3.6.1. Has the protocol submitted with this application been the subject of review by a statistician independent of the research team? (Select one of the following)

- Yes – copy of review enclosed
- Yes details of review available from the following individual or organization (give contact details below)
- × No – justify below

This is a small n qualitative study aimed at thick descriptions of the cases. Generalization claims will not be made.

3.6.2. If relevant, specify the specific statistical experimental design, and why it was chosen?

N/A

3.6.3. How many participants will be recruited?

If there is more than one group, state how many participants will be recruited in each group. For international studies, say how many participants will be recruited in the UK and in total.

The research design is to interview two people in a pilot study in order to test the data collection methods. These two participants are in the USA. Following this pilot study, three cases are to be studied. Each case will require the interviewing of two, possibly three people. The total number of participants is therefore 8-11. At least two are in the USA. When other cases are identified, it may be that some others are in the USA or a country other than the UK.

3.6.4. How was the number of participants decided upon?

If a formal sample size calculation was used, indicate how this was done, giving sufficient information to justify and reproduce the calculation.

An in-depth study of cases is desired in order to find and analyse not just the succession phases, plans and events, but the theologies and theories which shaped them. To achieve these ends, longer narratives are to be elicited and analysed. With such close, in-depth analysis of data, the sample is, therefore, small in number. The findings may suggest, for example, that larger n studies might be useful to test any potential hypotheses drawn from the findings.

3.6.5. Describe the methods of analysis (statistical or other appropriate methods, e.g. for qualitative research) by which the data will be evaluated to meet the study objectives.

The main method is the narrative interview; the main analysis will be a narrative analysis of interview data. This will allow analysis of leadership theory and leadership theologies which have shaped events, showing both espoused and operant beliefs and theologies. Documents will also be analysed, paying attention to manifest and latent content.
3.7. Where will the research take place?

Interviews will be conducted in an office or lounge within an office suite or a church building. These are public places. Some will be conducted outside the UK. Indeed I reside and work in the USA and will interview some in this nation. Interviews will be conducted in public places, as already stated. The sample is likely to comprise of executives in Christian mission agencies and even ordained clergy. This population group is considered low risk in terms of interviewer safety. However, others will be informed of the location of the interview; the interviewer will carry a mobile phone.

3.8. Names of other staff involved.

No other staff or students involved, except I might employ a professional transcription service to assist with transcribing interview data.

3.9. What do you consider to be the main ethical issues which may arise with the proposed study and what steps will be taken to address these?

There are few ethical issues raised with this study and participant population. Participants are likely to be well-educated executives and leaders used to public speaking. The subject of the data is unlikely to be sensitive.

3.9.1. Will any intervention or procedure, which would normally be considered a part of routine care, be withheld from the research participants?

☐ Yes ○ Yes ○ No

If yes, give details and justification

4. Details of Subjects.

4.1. Total Number: 8 or 11

4.2. Sex and Age Range: Legal adults of either gender

4.3. Type: Executives within faith-based organizations

4.4. What are the principal inclusion criteria? (Please justify)

Predecessor and successor executives in an international faith-based organization who have experienced leadership transition within the time frame stated in 3.6.

4.5. What are the principal exclusion criteria? (Please justify)

Anyone not within the category stated in 4.4.

4.6. Will the participants be from any of the following groups? (Tick as appropriate)

☐ Children under 16
☐ Adults with learning difficulties
☐ Adults who are unconscious or very severely ill
☐ Adults who have a terminal illness
☐ Adults in emergency situations
☐ Adults with mental illness (particularly if detained under mental health legislation)
☐ Adults with dementia
☐ Prisoners
☐ Young offenders
☐ Adults in Scotland who are unable to consent for themselves
☐ Healthy volunteers
☐ Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the investigator, e.g. those in care homes, medical students.
☐ Other vulnerable groups

Justify their inclusion

None N/A
4.7. Will any research participants be recruited who are involved in existing research or have recently been involved in any research prior to recruitment?

☐ Yes  ☐ No  ☑ Not known

If Yes, give details and justify their inclusion. If Not Known, what steps will you take to find out?

It is unlikely that participants will be part of existing research. The researcher will ask this question at the first meeting or in the prior communication to establish the meeting.

4.8. How will potential participants in the study be (i) identified, (ii) approached and (iii) recruited?

Where research participants will be recruited via advertisement, please append a copy to this application.

The two participants I wish to interview for the pilot study are from an organization known to me. I intend to find other cases by researching information (such as reading website publicity, speaking with personal contacts) on a number of relevant organizations, such as those members of Global Connections, a network of international Christian agencies based in the UK. A brief email will be sent to make a contact and if the organization and appropriate individuals appear favourable, these potential participants will be approached by email to which the participants' information sheet (Appendix A) will be attached. They will be given at least two weeks to consider the request. The participants’ information sheet will explain the project and the potential participant’s freedom to decline participation. It is anticipated that I will find three appropriate organizations through such personal contacts, emails to agencies and then submission of detailed information as above.

4.9. Will individual research participants receive reimbursement of expenses or any other incentives or benefits for taking part in this research?

☐ Yes  ☑ No

If yes, indicate how much and on what basis this has been decided.

5. Details of risks

5.1. Drugs and other substances to be administered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DRUG</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>DOSAGE/FREQUENCY/ROUTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indicate status, eg full product licence, CTC, CTX. Attach: evidence of status of any unlicensed product; and Martindale’s Pharmacopeia details for licensed products

5.2. Procedures to be undertaken

Details of any invasive procedures, and any samples or measurements to be taken. Include any questionnaires, psychological tests etc. What is the experience of those administering the procedures?

The first interview will be unstructured. The aim is to elicit narratives about an organization’s leadership succession. The questions are likely to be: “In your own words, tell me about the leadership succession in your organization?” “Could you tell me more about that aspect?” “You mentioned …X…, could you tell me more about how you understand that?”

The second interview will be more structured questions on matters that arise during, or were omitted in the first interview. Examples might be: “Which models or literature, if any, did you find helpful, in preparing your succession plan?”; “How did you conceive of God in these processes?”

My experience is that I have reviewed and read widely on both theologies of leadership, theologies of succession and management succession in organizational development. I have been an executive in a Christian organization for almost 30 years. I have advised and consulted many such organizations in a number of countries. I regularly interview charity workers about their experiences as part of their evaluation and debriefing.
5.3. **Activities to be undertaken**

Please list the activities to be undertaken by participants and the likely duration of each.

Interview one: 90 mins.
Interview two: 60 mins.

There will be no structured or semi-structured protocol for the first interview. A protocol for the second interview is likely to be more semi-structured, but based on the data elicited in the first.

Questions will relate to: Leadership understandings, leadership theologies, management theory, succession plans and phases, and theological and theoretical reflection on such plans and phases.

Further to the interviews, participants will be asked to forward electronically a number of relevant documents. This may be approximately 30 minutes work.

5.4. **What are the potential adverse effects, risks or hazards for research participants, including potential for pain, discomfort, distress, inconvenience or changes to lifestyle for research participants?**

The interview sample consists of educated executives. This is not a vulnerable population.

The topic of study is largely not a personal, sensitive or emotive topic. It relates to management theory and theology.

The research literature in this field does not refer to adverse effects in such studies.

This will not result in lifestyle changes.

It is possible that upon reflection on organizational events, a participant might become aware of personal feelings to those events. This is unlikely, however, to produce difficulty.

5.5. **Will individual or group interviews/questionnaires discuss any topics or issues that might be sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting, or is it possible that criminal or other disclosures requiring action could take place during the study (e.g. during interviews/group discussions, or use of screening tests for drugs)?**

- [ ] Yes
- [x] No

*If yes, give details of procedures in place to deal with these issues:*

5.6. **What is the expected total duration of participation in the study for each participant?**

2 hours, 30 minutes.

5.7. **What is the potential benefit to research participants?**

No direct benefit.

5.8. **What is the potential for adverse effects, risks or hazards, pain, discomfort, distress, or inconvenience to the researchers themselves?** *(If any)*

No identifiable risks, hazards etc.

6. **Safeguards**

6.1. **What precautions have been taken to minimise or mitigate the risks identified above?**

There are no identifiable risks given the interview sample. However, participants will be reminded that they may choose not to answer a question or to stop at any point. In the unlikely event that a sensitive matter is raised, a reminder will be given that we may stop, or the researcher may choose to move on from that topic.

6.2. **Will informed consent be obtained from the research participants?**

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

*If Yes, give details of who will take consent and how it will be done. Give details of the experience in taking consent and of any particular steps to provide information (in addition to a written information sheet) e.g. videos, interactive material.*

*If participants are to be recruited from any of the potentially vulnerable groups listed in Question 4.6, give details of extra steps taken to assure their protection. Describe any arrangements to be made for obtaining consent from a legal representative.*
If consent is not to be obtained, please explain why not.

Where relevant the committee must have a copy of the information sheet and consent form.

A participant information sheet and consent form will be sent to participants at least 2 weeks prior to the interview to allow for adequate reflection from the participants. Participants will be told that they may return the signed form to the researcher or give it to the research on the day of the interview. When meeting in person just prior to the interview, consent will be explained again, also explaining the options for the participant not to answer questions or to withdraw without the need to give reasons.

I, the researcher, do not have experience in taking consent in a research setting, but have on many occasions sought consent to interview people and requested permission to quote them etc.

6.3. Will a signed record of consent be obtained?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If not, please explain why not.

A copy of the consent form is attached as Appendix B.

6.4. How long will the participant have to decide whether to take part in the research?

At least two weeks.

6.5. What arrangements have been made for participants who might not adequately understand verbal explanations or written information given in English, or who have special communication needs? (e.g. translation, use of interpreters etc.)

It is anticipated that all participants will have high fluency in English. Should this be found not to be the case once all the case organizations have been identified, translation will be considered. This is, however, unlikely to be needed.

6.6. What arrangements are in place to ensure participants receive any information that becomes available during the course of the research that may be relevant to their continued participation?

N/A. There will not be continued participation. However, participants are to be informed that they may withdraw at any time without stating reasons.

6.7. Will the research participants’ General Practitioner be informed that they are taking part in the study?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If No, explain why not

N/A

6.8. Will permission be sought from the research participants to inform their GP before this is done?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If No, explain why not

N/A

6.9. What arrangements have been made to provide indemnity and/or compensation in the event of a claim by, or on behalf of, participants for (a) negligent harm and (b) non-negligent harm?

I am seeking cover under the terms of the Cliff College’s insurance arrangements for students conducting research. I do specify that some of the research will take place in the USA. Should any further research be needed in another country other than the UK or USA I will seek permission from Cliff College before beginning any such research.
7. Data Protection and Confidentiality

7.1. Will the research involve any of the following activities at any stage (including identification of potential research participants)? (Tick as appropriate)

- [ ] Examination of medical records by those outside the NHS, or within the NHS by those who would not normally have access
- [ ] Electronic transfer by magnetic or optical media, e-mail or computer networks
- [ ] Sharing of data with other organizations
- [ ] Export of data outside the European Union
- [ ] Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, e-mails or telephone numbers
- [ ] Publication of direct quotations from respondents
- [ ] Use of audio/visual recording devices
- [ ] Storage of personal data on any of the following:
  - Manual files including X-rays
  - NHS computers
  - Home or other personal computers
  - University computers
  - Private company computers
  - Laptop computers

Further details:

7.2. What measures have been put in place to ensure confidentiality of personal data? Give details of whether any encryption or other anonymization procedures have been used and at what stage?

Data will be kept on a password protected computer. Any hard copy forms or data will be kept in locked document safe in a locked building. In this research, however, participants will be informed that their responses will not be anonymous; participants are experts who have published books, spoken at large conferences and are likely to have sermons and lectures available to the public from their organization’s websites. Analysis of such published literature may take place in conjunction with the research data in an attempt to analyse their theories and theologies.

7.3. Where will the analysis of the data from the study take place and by whom will it be undertaken?

Analysis will only be undertaken by the student researcher in a private study room in a private home.

7.4. Who will have control of and act as the custodian for the data generated by the study?

The student researcher will have control of and act as custodian for the data.

7.5. Who will have access to the data generated by the study?

The student researcher and supervisors.

7.6. For how long will data from the study be stored?

2 Years 0 Months after the degree result.

Give details of where they will be stored, who will have access and the custodial arrangements for the data:

Information will be stored on a password protected computer. Hard copy data will be kept in a locked safe in a study room in my private home. Any data will only be accessible to the student researcher. If someone is paid to transcribe, as part of the agreement the transcribers will be asked to surrender all files related to the transcription upon completion.

8. Reporting Arrangements

8.1. Please confirm that any adverse event will be reported to the Committee

I confirm that any adverse event will be reported to my supervisor.
8.2. How is it intended the results of the study will be reported and disseminated?  
(Tick as appropriate)

☐ ☑ Peer reviewed scientific journals
☐ ☐ Internal report
☐ ☐ Conference presentation
☐ ☑ Thesis/dissertation
☐ ☐ Written feedback to research participants
☐ ☐ Presentation to participants or relevant community groups
☐ ☑ Other/none e.g. Cochrane Review, University Library

8.3. How will the results of research be made available to research participants and communities from which they are drawn?

Participants will be informed upon completion of the study and given details concerning how they might access the thesis.

8.4. Has this or a similar application been previously considered by a Research Ethics Committee in the UK, the European Union or the European Economic Area?

☐ Yes  ☑ No

If Yes give details of each application considered, including:

- Name of Research Ethics Committee or regulatory authority:
- Decision and date taken:
- Research ethics committee reference number:

8.5. What arrangements are in place for monitoring and auditing the conduct of the research?

The supervisor will monitor the research.

8.6. Will a data monitoring committee be convened?

☐ Yes  ☑ No

8.7. What are the criteria for electively stopping the trial or other research prematurely?

Any unforeseen harm that cannot be resolved.

9. Funding and Sponsorship

9.1 Has external funding for the research been secured?

☐ Yes  ☑ No

If Yes, give details of funding organization(s) and amount secured and duration:

- Organization:
- UK contact:
- Amount (£):
- Duration:   Months

9.2. Has the external funder of the research agreed to act as sponsor as set out in the Research Governance Framework?

☐ Yes  ☑ No  ☑ Not Applicable

9.3. Has the employer of the Chief Investigator agreed to act as sponsor of the research?

☐ Yes  ☑ No
9.4. **Sponsor** *(must be completed in all cases where the sponsor is not the University)*

Name of organization which will act as sponsor for the research:

University of Manchester

10. **Conflict of interest**

There is no conflict of interest at the time of application.

10.1. Will individual *researchers* receive any personal payment over and above normal salary and reimbursement of expenses for undertaking this research?

- [ ] Yes
- [X] No

*If Yes, indicate how much and on what basis this has been decided:*

10.2. Will the host organization or the researcher’s department(s) or institution(s) receive any payment of benefits in excess of the costs of undertaking the research?

- [ ] Yes
- [X] No

*If Yes, give details:*

10.3. Does the Chief Investigator or any other investigator/collaborator have any direct personal involvement (e.g. financial, share-holding, personal relationship etc.) in the organization sponsoring or funding the research that may give rise to a possible conflict of interest?

- [ ] Yes
- [X] No

*If Yes, give details:*

11. **Signatures of applicant(s)**

.................................................................................. ............................... 24 July, 2017...

Signed

Date

12. **Signature by or on behalf of the Head of School**

The Committee expects each School to have a pre-screening process for all applications for an ethical opinion on research projects. The purpose of this pre-screening is to ensure that projects are scientifically sound, have been assessed to see if they need ethics approval and, if so, go to the relevant ethics committee. It is *not* to undertake ethical review itself, which must be undertaken by a formal research ethics committee.

The form must therefore be counter-signed by or on behalf of the Head of School to signify that this pre-screening process has been undertaken

I approve the submission of this application

.................................................................................. ............................... 26th July 2017...

Signed by or on behalf of the Head of School

Date
Appendix G

Eshleman interview II – Protocol

1. During the time since our first interview, is there anything that you have subsequently thought of that you omitted to say or feel that would have been helpful to say as part of this research?

2. Prior to a succession plan being drawn up, was there any pre-existing document which spoke about how succession from the founder would be enacted, something such as a constitution, or written by-laws?

3. At the transition ceremony, you were given a staff. Tell me more about the staff? (Or, what does it represent to you, Barry, the congregation?)

4. Were there other gifts given? Were there other symbols or symbolic actions enacted?

5. Since the transition Barry has been an elder, an overseer and the founder. Can you describe any occasions since the transition when Barry has spoken or acted as the founder (rather than elder or overseer)?

6. You mentioned that you would have the freedom to say to Barry, “You are going too far” in anything he said or did now. Can you explain any circumstances where you have actually had to say that since the transition?

7. As the successor, in what ways do you see yourself as similar to, and different from Barry?

8. Please characterize the nature of the relationship that you and the predecessor have now.

9. The chosen method of succession could be categorized as “relay” succession - one leads, then both work alongside each other, then the successor has full authority to lead. Please explain, if you can, why the succession was enacted this way. Was this based on pragmatics, or a defined theological understanding of leaders and succession?

10. Some say that a movement is usually started by a person with a charismatic gift, and thereafter authority tends to be routinized, as the successor puts into place more structures and procedures. Do you feel this is an accurate
description of the succession in Ephrata Community Church, and which reasons would you give for your answer?

11. Please describe any role your wife played in the succession.

12. Because of your experience, what advice would you give to others planning for or experiencing founder transition? What would you say to the founder/ to the successor?

13. Please help me evaluate our two interviews together. Is there anything I/we could have done differently? Would you have any input concerning how I might best interview other founders and successors to produce the optimum data for my study?
Appendix H

Wissler interview II – Protocol

1. During the time since our first interview, is there anything that you have subsequently thought of that you omitted to say or feel that would have been helpful to say as part of this research?

2. In interview 1, you mentioned your advisors, Alan Vincent and Marc Dupont. Can you tell me a little more about their role in the succession plans, processes? Were there any examples they cited, or scriptures they proposed as foundational?

3. What was the role of other outside advisors? Was there a formal transition consultant?

4. The first step was you approaching (informally) Kevin. Would it have been better to have raised the matter first with the elders? Would that have shown a greater commitment to the governing team?

5. On two occasions you mentioned that you gave Kevin a staff. Tell me more about the staff. (Or, what does it represent to you, Kevin, the congregation?) Were there other gifts given? Were there other symbols or symbolic actions enacted?

6. Since the transition you are an elder/ overseer. But how have you enacted your role as founder? What have you done as the predecessor/founder (rather than elder or overseer)? What did you regard as important for you to do/say (as founder)?

7. Kevin is about 8 years younger than you. Did you contemplate a more significant generational shift and appointing someone considerably younger? Why did you not appoint a younger person?

8. Did you look for someone with a similar gift/skill set to you, or someone more obviously different (or was this not considered)?

9. Your chosen method of succession could be categorized as “relay” succession. Was this based on pragmatics, or a defined theological understanding of leaders and succession?
10. There is a theory, based on the sociologist, Weber, that pioneer leaders tend to show ‘charismatic’ leadership, but that this is (inevitably) “routinized” with the successor. Were you aware of this theory, and if so, what was your position on it? Is routinization inevitable?

11. Please describe any role your wife played in the succession.

12. Were the succession taking place in an international ministry, are there other factors to take account of, and if so, which?

13. Because of your experience, what advice would you give to others planning for or experiencing founder transition? What would you say to the founder/ to the successor?

14. Please help me evaluate our two interviews together. Is there anything I/we could have done differently? Would you have any input concerning how I might best interview other founders and successors to produce the optimum data for my study?
Appendix I

Transcription guidelines

- the use of conventional symbols as much as possible
- the ascription of only one function to a symbol
- consistency
- the use of only page numbers rather than line numbers
- em rules for repetition
- the inclusion of paralinguistic utterances (including sound of assent and dissent)
- inclusion of repetition, false starts, “fillers” (Roberts Powers 2005, p.49) and incomplete sentences
- ellipsis points to indicate faltering speech
- punctuation “to reflect on something of the phrasing and spacing of oral speech” (Roberts Powers 2005, p.45)
Appendix J

Investigation of potential cases

- Determined that founder had not yet relinquished leadership: 4
- Founder had died: 2
- Founder unable to participate on health grounds: 1
- No response to my communications: 3
- Unable to find adequate information: 1
- Refused participation with stated reason “Lack of time”: 4
- Determined that recent succession was not founder succession but a subsequent succession: 4
- Succession was too long ago: 1
- Succession in process at time of study: 1
- Case was geographically inaccessible: 2
- Determined that ministry did not have sufficient international scope: 1
- Rejected by researcher due to similarity with other case (father/son succession): 1
- Met the sampling criteria and agreed to participate: 3
Appendix K

International Aid Services statement of values

*Missions*: Our biblical understanding of missions motivates everything we do. The unreached and under-privileged people’s groups (sic) is our major focus in spreading the good news.

*Integrity*: We believe that integrity is the foundation of our Christian character. Character is not inherited but is built daily by the way one thinks and acts, thought by thought, action by action.

*Relational Leadership and Team Work*: We believe in a team-based approach to leadership. We invest in leaders and train them to realize their full potential as well as giving them tools and opportunities to be effective leaders. We believe healthy leaders produce healthy communities.

*Empathy (Compassion)*: We show compassion to a hurting and broken world – feeling the feelings and emotions of others and being motivated to act.

*Equality*: We believe in treating all people as we would like to be treated. We believe that people will feel valued and appreciated when we regard them with dignity and respect.

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Appendix L

International Aid Services

Press release of June 23, 2014

In 2012, the Executive Board of International Aid Services (IAS) began the undertaking of a leadership search and transition plan for the position of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) within the organizational structure of IAS. In February of 2014, after having evaluated numerous qualified candidates for the position of CEO, the Executive Board of IAS unanimously agreed that Daniel Zetterlund was to be offered the role of CEO for International Aid Services beginning January 1, 2015. The recommendation by the Executive Board was approved by the IAS General Assembly held in May of 2014.

As of May 24, 2014, Daniel Zetterlund has assumed the transitional duties of IAS Deputy CEO until the end of the year when he will accept the position of CEO for IAS beginning January 1, 2015. Daniel’s international management credentials and proven leadership skills have made him the perfect candidate for this position, and IAS is fortunate that Daniel has agreed to take on this new challenge of moving IAS forward in its organizational mission and vision.

The current CEO of IAS, Leif Zetterlund, after January 1, 2015, will transition into other leadership roles within IAS. IAS is excited to announce these new changes, and the organization wishes to extend our utmost appreciation and gratitude for the stewardship and leadership exercised by Leif Zetterlund during the twenty-five years of the organization’s existence. A solid foundation has been laid, and we look forward to continuing to build on that groundwork and expand our organizational capacity under the new leadership of Daniel Zetterlund.

Sincerely,

Douglas Mann
Chairman, IAS Executive Board
President, IAS America

199 For this appendix of have maintained the type and size of font of the original.
Appendix M

Daniel Zetterlund statement on IAS’s desire to combine roles of mission agency and development agency

And, the way you portray yourself as an organization defines, that’s really the direction you will take as an organization. I have told the board if you want to see yourself as a small mission organization, be my guest. But I’m not going to be the CEO. There’s nothing wrong with small mission organizations. But the sector we are working in as a non-profit, as an NGO, we need to compete and out-maneouvre the Save the Childrens, the Plan Internationals, the CAREs, the World Visions. That’s the organizations. We’re sitting in the same networks. We’re sitting in the same arena. And those are the types of organizations that we need to have even better systems than if we’re going to get a grant with Sida, if we’re going to continue to have our framework agreement with ECHO.

This is a very foundational issue. Either you go that route and it can become a very solid mission organization still, or you continue going this route but you have the mission drive the organization. You’re still having those key elements and you’re making it more efficient and you’re a bridge to the mission world.... We have so many partnerships and networks on reaching unreached people groups spiritually, but we don’t see other NGOs in those networks. At the same time, I’m sitting on different boards and networks with the key secular organizations but also Christian organizations on the NGO side. We talk poverty reduction strategies. We talk humanitarian interventions. (DZ Interview I, p.33-35).
Appendix N
Father-son successions in international ministries and megachurches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Father</th>
<th>Son</th>
<th>Year of Succession</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liberty University</td>
<td>Jerry Falwell Sr.</td>
<td>Jerry Falwell, Jr.</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Peterson (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethany World Prayer Center, Louisiana</td>
<td>Roy Stockstill</td>
<td>Larry Stockstill, who in turn transferred leadership to his son, Jonathan Stockstill</td>
<td>latest transition 2011</td>
<td>Hunter (2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christ Fellowship Church, Florida</td>
<td>Tom Mullins</td>
<td>Todd Mullins</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Mullins (2015)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix O

Sources for documentary analysis of Newfrontiers

Website for Newfrontiers Together (https://newfrontierstogether.org/)

Virgo’s articles and sermons

ii. The end of the beginning
iii. Honouring the future
iv. Newfrontiers Redefined

Magazine – Succession edition


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200 (Accessed: 4 May 2018)
Appendix P

Text of Newfrontiers Together website account of succession

As a result of another message at one of our leaders’ conferences, the international team began to consider whether Terry Virgo should now hand over executive responsibility for the Newfrontiers family to a younger generation. We resisted the idea of appointing a next generation successor to Terry and instead felt God leading us to multiplication of apostolic ministry. We treasured the fact that we were a family of churches and families grow into the next generation, not by appointing a new leader but by ‘sons’ becoming ‘fathers’. We therefore recognised a number of brothers who had already become like fathers to other churches and who also had a clear apostolic calling, and it was agreed that Newfrontiers would multiply into autonomous but interdependent apostolic spheres. Those who were leading these spheres did not want to move apart from each other even though they appreciated the freedom given to develop their own apostolic call and their own apostolic family. They therefore invited David Devenish to lead what Newfrontiers continued to be together in its interdependence. So from January 2012 David took on that role with a team that became known as the Newfrontiers Together Team. We therefore continue to have international conferences in some form or other bringing the leaders of the spheres together once a year.

Appendix Q

Grace Network by-laws, section III-B

Charismatic

By “Charismatic”, we mean that we are committed to the present day demonstration of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as outlined in the first epistle to the Corinthians and in the Book of Acts. Our posture is to encourage the exercise of such expressions in our public gatherings as the Spirit inspires and directs their use.

Apostolic

By “Apostolic”, we understand that we are committed to following the Apostles’ doctrine and practice as described in the New Testament. The objective of the apostles was to see churches planted. This “apostolic” gift is functional today. In expression of this, we will promote high quality ministry to provide support and resources to equip the leadership of member churches. We will also extend the gospel with power, compassion and relevance through church planting and mission projects which engage in church planting or pastoral training.

Reformed

By “Reformed”, we understand that we share a common commitment to the truths that were reclaimed by the Reformation. While we do not wish to perpetuate animosities aroused by the disputes of the Reformation, we are convinced of the primacy of the “Doctrines of Grace”. These include: the need for God’s grace to draw us and convince us of the truth of the Gospel, that justification is received by faith and that good works will follow our reception of the Gospel, and that because of the sufficiency of God’s grace we will be kept and enabled to endure to the end. Moreover, we hold to the sole, absolute authority of the Bible. These concepts will also be expressed by
earnest, loyal and accountable relationships with each other in the context of grace, spiritual authority and spiritual unity. Spiritual authority is given by God, but is solely dependant [sic] on the recognition and voluntary submission of those governed. The local autonomy of each congregation is fully recognized and heartily supported.

We embrace each local church as self-governing and led by Elders. These men have the responsibility and final say in matters regarding the spiritual and governmental oversight of each church.

We value the opportunity to relate to the leadership of one another’s churches. We value earnest, loyal, and accountable relationships and the unity that the Holy Spirit brings.

We recognize the spiritual leadership of the Directors of the Network to give oversight and direction to the Presbytery and to counsel churches and their leaders. Their spiritual authority is given by God, but is solely dependant [sic] on voluntary submission.

Evangelical

By “Evangelical”, we understand that we are committed to the historic truths of the faith, including the inspiration and infallibility of Scripture, the deity of Christ, His virgin birth and miracles, His penal death for our sins and His physical resurrection and personal return. We also include the proclamation of the Gospel as the means that God has chosen to use to win those who are separated from Himself. This term also describes the attitudes we have as churches in terms of taking assertive steps to ensure that we are actually winning souls, i.e. leading others to the Savior.
Appendix R

Statement on history and succession in Grace Network

In the late 1970s, the move of the Holy Spirit which came to be known as “The Charismatic Renewal” swept much of the Christian world. Many new expressions of the Body of Christ emerged in the form of new churches and ministries, embracing a new found emphasis on the gifts and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Three pastors, John Manzano, Dick Blackwell, and Jimmy Hollandsworth, who were impacted by the renewal recognized the need for authentic relationship and mutual accountability beyond their local churches and began to meet together for fellowship. In the 1980s, as their churches grew, planted other churches and added more leaders, they formed an apostolic network of churches called Grace Presbytery International.

As the network grew, the constituent churches began to share ministry and to cross pollinate. Churches were planted collaboratively in the U.S.A., as well as, in Haiti, Uruguay and Cameroon. When Jimmy Hollandsworth retired, Jack Groblewski was appointed a network director and later became the senior director.

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