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# Methodology and Applications of Christian Leadership Ethics

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## Introduction

A fundamental methodology for Christian leadership ethics will here be proposed, which has long been pending in the discourse on ethical leadership. It is necessary to first clarify what characterizes leadership ethics in general, and secondly, what Christian leadership ethics implies and how this methodology should be classified with regard to alternative paradigms. Our topic is the appropriate localization of a Christian Approach in the systematics of Leadership Ethics. Thirdly, the practical impact for selected areas of application will be identified. It will be demonstrated that leadership ethics, in general, is based on a transparent basis of values and applies to specific scopes. It defines the relationship between economic efficiency and human utility in a narrower sense as objective-dualism.

Christian leadership ethics is based on the biblical conception of man and therefore the arguments are metaphysical. The relevant answer to objective-dualism implies direct consequences for the design of human resource management, motivation, and communication. At least from a Christian point of view, it is undisputable that there are, and should be, Christian leaders in management. But can or should there be Christian leadership ethics? This has been questioned, in principle, by contemporary philosopher and theologian, Ferdinand Rohrhirsch – even though recently, several approaches have raised this claim as demonstrated by the model of Servant Leadership which emanates from the U.S. and is slowly gaining foothold in Europe. The perspective leadership ethics by Cornelius Keppeler and the Business Metaphysics by Michael Schramm, provide other examples. It seems necessary to us to clear the way for a Christian methodology that transcends virtue.[1]

## The Essence of Leadership Ethics in a Narrower Sense
### Fundamental Question

Due to confusion about its meaning and scope, the conceptual definition of *leadership ethics* is considered to be highly important. So we ask: How can we systematically clearly define what leadership ethics embraces? For it is not only a catalogue of virtues; it includes aspects of both individual and institutional ethics and is a systematic and normative reflection on leadership in business. Leadership is the effective influence on individuals, relationships, and rules within a company, premised on certain values.

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[1] Cf. Nass (2015).

Leadership ethics evaluate the practice from a normative perspective under a transparent set of values. For this purpose, it theoretically designs normative systematics with transparent values, while those values themselves are the basis of the normative evaluation of a leadership practice. We distinguish these universally-defined leadership ethics from leadership ethics in a narrower sense: for a normative evaluation of leadership culture based on a transparent set of values and involving a particular scope of application should define a relation of pareto-efficiency and human-centrality without instrumentalizing or substituting one of those objectives.[2] In other words, leadership ethics, in a narrower sense, must evaluate normatively how economic efficiency and humanistic orientation are understood as non-substitutable ends in themselves, and how they should be related to each other in the context of leadership. It is therefore given that neither of the two objectives can be sacrificed for the other because the determination of the relation between those relevant objectives would then be skipped completely. If one of the two viewpoints is lost sight of, in the long run, the execution of the culture of leadership will then lead to either an economic depersonalization or to a utopian state of lacking efficiency in business. Profitability and human-centrality, as well as efficiency and humanistic orientation, must both be recognized as non-substitutable objectives for leadership. The relation of those – based on certain values – is set in a concrete way. Different ethical leadership paradigms and approaches are distinguished by the objective to which more importance is attached.

- A normative individualistic school takes the heuristics of Homo Economicus (HE) as a basis for business ethics. Hence, an idea of the workforce as a human resource can be derived for business enterprises in terms of efficiency, which, however, does not want to relativize (just in terms of this heuristic) the objective of human-centrality. This is so since the economic calculation serves for the development of humans, who are not reduced to the HE outside of the economic context. Efficiency orientation, as an end in itself, initially opposes a heuristically-simplified concept, which remains open for a more complex humanistic orientation as an end in itself.

- Alternatively, a complex anthropologically-justified nature of man which tries to consider a human being as a person beyond the counterfactual HE-heuristics can be postulated. Apart from economic efficiency, the culture of leadership should serve the personal development of humans, since such ethical models do not work within their endogenizing economy. It is therefore imperative to consider the optimization of human development in relation to personal fixed and variable character traits. Then, in this complexity, the personal development in the sense of human-centrality is the end in itself which counters the objective of economic efficiency. At this point, a distinction between deontological approaches with Kantian characteristics and models with metaphysical (e.g. Christian) backgrounds must be made.

### *Systematics*

Every definition of leadership ethics, in a narrower sense, must give an answer to the determination of responsibility-dualism, based on a transparent normative basis of val-

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[2] Cf. concerning the difference of managers' human-and-success responsibilities, e.g. Kreuer (2017): 5-6, 18, as well as comparable concepts for objective-dualism, all of which are constitutive for leadership ethics, in Kuhn/ Weibler (2012): 46 or Ulrich (1999): 230, 237. Human resource development is defined by Becker (2003): 492 in an efficiency-mode: Human resource development aims at reaching the company's targets (economic efficiency) and at the fulfilment of individual employees' development goals (social efficiency). Cf. Ulrich (2010): 28; Kuhn/Weibler (2012a): 23, 94, 107; Fischer/Fischer (2007): 22.

ues on the one hand, and on the basis of specific application areas of leadership on the other. Thus, a fundamental systematic approach is given.

The *basis of values* first identifies the underlying conception of man. It also gives a general answer to the relation between individuals and teams and the company. Which development has priority? Which spirit should determine social life: more an anonymous coexistence or competition against each other, or coexistence as a sense of duty or even based on affection? Is human-centrality achieved when the individual subordinates him/herself to a collective in a team or a company? Or rather will a team or a company be understood as the sum of self-realized individuals? Are there any interactions? In order to be transparent and comprehensible in their justification, those and other basic concepts should be backed up by an ideological justification, which can be normative-individualistic, socialistic, gender-perspective, Kantian, metaphysical, or discourse-ethical, among others. At the same time, the design of the conception of responsibility shapes the profile of the value base for leadership ethics. In this context, the following questions must be asked with regard to an effective influence on rules, individuals, and relations: How are individual and social responsibilities justified, understood, weighted and in which culture should they be implemented?

The basis of values, therefore, also introduces a set of responsibilities, which points out clearly for whom and to what extent employees and managers are responsible. By this, it is not intended primarily to focus on aspects of hierarchy, delegation, or control. But rather it is about the question whether, how, and why respective leaders may or even should feel in relevant contexts of leadership with effective influence: responsible for themselves, for the company, for each other, for economic efficiency, or even for an objective idea of the good (deontologically or metaphysically reasoned).

Based on the respective determination of objective-dualism, the *scope of application* of this value base constitutes the practised culture of leadership for which the respective conception of leadership ethics strives. Guido Palazzo distinguishes between the following fields: respective structures for incentives, the cultures of control and trust, and the design of decision paths.[3] This methodology will now be used as an inspiration for a threefold division. Leadership in a company is centered within the culture of personnel planning – its deployment and development within communication (including hierarchy, power, and delegation) and motivation (including loyalty, identification, control, incentives). Those three relevant applications are highlighted here by way of example.[4] The avoidance of losses in the achievement of goals is always sought. Depending on the basis of values, however, the priorities within each scope of application are set and interpreted in a different way. They mark the respective fields of tension of the interpretations.

- Personnel planning, deployment, and development significantly determine the culture of leadership, through means of the selection of managers and other employees, by team composition, and by promotion and educational programs and interventions. Depending on the particular value set, there are generally different characters, individual qualities, and different team cultures – all of which are as-

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[3] Cf. Palazzo (2007): 120.

[4] Concerning the meaning of communication: generally, cf. Schulz von Thun (2007, 2014) or regarding staff meetings: Fonk (2010). In terms of the meaning of motivation cf. e.g. Bak (2014); 65-66.For a closer view into leadership-relevant motivation theories cf. Lewalter (2006) and Mudra (2010).

pirational in nature. This, in a consistent culture of leadership, has direct impacts on the decisions of training and promotion.

- Communication and its affiliated business structures – such as hierarchy, power, and delegation, in general – serve the culture of leadership either mainly for quick decision-making or mainly for the critical participation of as many employees as possible.

- A culture of leadership is characterized mainly by its understanding of performance motivation. How does this reflect Vladimir Lenin's imperative "Trust is good, control is better"? How is a culture of trust justified and implemented? How and why are certain types of control applied? And how can commitment and corporate identification be influenced effectively in a positive way – by means of extrinsic incentives or by a culture of intrinsic motivation? The objective of performance optimization can be pursued by different incentive-based and educational structures.

The three selected ethical leadership scopes of application have a direct impact on the answers to very practical questions in daily business: Which characters should assert themselves as managers?[5] Which candidates should be employed and which educational measures should be adopted? Should managers count more with respect to cooperative or to top-down decisions, more on control or on trust, more on competition or on teamwork? Within this context, are extrinsic financial incentives or intrinsic motivation through discernment and corporate identification more favourable? Leadership ethics does not leave the answers to chance. Instead, it should offer good justifications which are derived from the value basis, for their proposed program of a consistent culture of leadership.

## Overview

Now, a methodology can be identified and highlighted. It expresses the requirement of coherence for plausible leadership ethics after which the basis of values and the concrete scopes of application follow in a consistent normative logic. Because it should be sought, the consequent internalization of ethical points of view is present in all leadership systems (e.g., performance incentive, performance appraisal, rewards and control systems).[6]

With respect to the basis of values, it is mandatory to shape a transparent base which enables normative measurement of the gains of its application. However, leadership ethics is not closed systematics, since it is quite possible that competing styles or organization models match the same basis of values. Consequently, even within each paradigm, the design is open and flexible. It is also possible to adopt findings or perspectives of alternative ethical leadership models, as far as they do not contradict their own basis of values. Conversely, a syncretic dilutive basis of values would deprive the approach of its normative base.

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[5] E.g., Kuhn/Weibler (2012a) criticize that recently Machiavellians, narcissists, and psychopaths particularly are successful.

[6] Cf. Ulrich (1999): 244.

**On the basis of values:**

| Underlying idea of human beings (heuristical or anthropological), human dignity, and team | Addressee(s) and contents of individual responsibility: for oneself, for each other, for the company mission, and possibly also for an objective normative entity | Ideological access to the determination of legitimacy: normative individualistic, deontological, metaphysical | Basic unterstanding of economic efficiency within a company |
|---|---|---|---|

**...follows an answer to the question of the relation between non-substitutable objectives:**

| Human centrality | Economic efficiency |
|---|---|

**Following the evaluation of effective influence on:**

| Individuals: managers' and employees' attitudes or virtues | Relations: horizontal, vertical, and (streamlined or centrist?) | Corporate rules: from guidelines to an established code of conduct |
|---|---|---|

**...within the practised culture of leadership within the company:**

| Personnel planning, deployment, and development | Communication | Motivation |
|---|---|---|

# Systematics for Leadership Ethics

Christian leadership ethics is based on a Christian basis of values for normative reflection, i.e., the image of man founded in Jesus Christ, the ensuing responsibility ideal, and discernment of the relationship between economic efficiency and human endowment with application in business (human resource management, communication and motivation culture). Based on Christian ethics, it therefore systematically evaluates practised cultures of leadership with their moral concepts (e.g., within guidelines, missions, and visions). From an ethical viewpoint on the basis of values, the location of such a systematic in comparison to alternative paradigms can now be carried out step by step.

## *Personal Distinction from Normative Individualism*

There is a similarity between Christian leadership ethics and the Kantian paradigm, as it also requires an objective normative reference (within the moral law and the categorical imperatives). Like ethical leadership models from the deontological school (integrative approaches by Peter Ulrich, Kantian approach by Norman Bowie, and others), Christian leadership ethics must also presume a complex human anthropology with egoistic and non-egoistic rationality to define its basis of values. Legitimacy for an effective influence on norms, individuals, and relations is in both approaches oriented towards a nature-given human objectivity. Deontological and metaphysical approaches compete in their basis of values from an ethical perspective, explicitly with approaches from the normative individualistic school. However, unlike those, they share a post-Tayloristic rationality[7] concept to focus on a normatively substantial humanistic orientation with a moral standpoint in leadership ethics.

It is possible to refer to a remote reality from the normative individualistic HE-model, which is also acknowledged by numerous economists and can be demonstrated in simple behavioural games. The Governance-theorist Robert Tricker offers the criticism: "agent theory argues that it has been erected on a single, questionable abstraction that governance involves a contract between two parties and is based on a dubious conjectural morality that people maximize their personal utility."[8]While economists Ulrich van Suntum, Alois Stutzer et al. postulate: not only by its methods, but also by its content, does a change of paradigms emerge. Also results from experimental economic research represent a major challenge for mainstream economics. They show altruistic and justice-led behaviours which do not seem readily compatible with HE's paradigm.[9]

The economic decision-making model which first derives human motivation from the price effect (rewards, penalties, wages) neglects psychological findings which show that human behaviour is mainly controlled by intrinsic motivations. According to the Crowding-out effect, intrinsic motivation – such as a high commitment due to corporate identification – is substituted by a morality-undermining external pressure. Empirical studies by Bruno Frey and Alois Stutzer lead to the conclusion that intrinsic motivation which must be distinguished from egoistic utility maximization and whose development has a cooperative and performance-enhancing effect, is an integral component of individual rationality.[10] Contrary to the crowding-out effect, a holistic personal development of this motivation would now lead to a higher personal satisfaction which comes along with higher commitment. Such indications support a personal-anthropological view of leadership

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[7]  Cf. Ulrich (1999): 241.
[8]  Tricker (2012): 223.
[9]  Cf. van Suntum/ Stutzer et. al. (2010).
[10] Cf. Frey/Stutzer (2001).

ethics as it is still equally represented nowadays within the deontological and the metaphysical paradigm.

Both schools take respective systematizations seriously. For this purpose, they introduce a complex anthropology which includes egoistic and non-egoistic human rationality. In this context, they can refer to Adam Smith who, within his "theory of moral sentiments," explicitly complements the egoistic rationality with an altruistic one: "No matter how selfish you think man is, it's obvious that there are some principles in his nature that give him an interest in the welfare of others, and make their happiness necessary to him, even if he gets nothing from it but the pleasure of seeing it."[11] Under this condition, a humanistic orientation of ethics cannot be restricted to the development and promotion of egoistic utility maximization (to whichever purpose).

This reduction would depersonalize humans as it ignores altruistic and individual deontological rationality.[12] If such anthropology is accepted, it is a duty for management committed to the human goal to take both rational natural traits seriously and to thus understand humans as dialogical beings. Whether it is deontological rational ethics rising up from the tradition of the Enlightenment (particularly Immanuel Kant) or a metaphysically justified, e.g., Aristotelian or Christian, theonomy – both schools categorically exclude the priority to a self-referential economic efficiency.[13]

Indeed, it is assumed that egoistic individual interests are not the only benchmark for ethical legitimacy within the design of leadership. Therefore, such personal paradigms for good leadership involve the broad cultivation of non-egoistic human rationality. An ethically good and effective influence of rules, individuals, and relations is oriented towards an objectivity, which can either be given by a moral or a natural law, or by the Bible or a different metaphysically given obligatory guideline.

This objectivity can and should be recognized by human reason. Its content is either derived transcendently from rationality's self-awareness and its necessities to think, or transcendently from the awareness of God or a divine being. Neither perspective is based on value-neutral assumptions at all, but rather on ideologically-justified normative postulates, which one may or may not share.[14] They imply the assumption of a discovered objectivity towards which morally good managers and cultures of leadership should be oriented, as well as an unconditional priority of the human goal.[15] They are convinced that such a priority is neither unrealistic nor contradicts economic efficiency. Christian Müller sets against the normative individualistic credo of moral freedom that, by means of game-theoretical reflection, an individual morality in a dilemma situation can be just as rational and economically successful without everyone aiming to be divine.[16] Both anthropological-personal paradigms commonly take a human being with a moral mission not only into consideration in an economic context, but rather support an integral per-

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[11] Smith (1790/2006): 1.

[12] Regarding deontological rationality cf. Sen (2003): 9. If this rationality is assumed, then humans are able to make rational decisions out of a pure sense of duty, which reduce their own utility.

[13] Cf. e.g.Ulrich (1999): 233, 235, 238f.

[14] Cf. e.g. Ulrich (1999): 237.There, such a modern neutrality, on contrary to supposedly pre-modern closed models, is claimed.

[15] Within their Stakeholder-Management-centred Integrative Social Contracts Theory, Donaldson/Dunfee (1994): 265 refer to so-called hyper-norms, which can estimate contractualistic norms' legitimacy, as they are fundamental for human existence. Thereby, a normative objectivity is provided, which eludes all kinds of constructivistic or other types of relativization. Cf. Bruton (2011): 185-190.

[16] Cf. Müller (2017): 277.

sonal view. For objective-dualism, this means that human centrality is realized in the assumption of personal responsibility by leadership towards the correspondingly identified addressees of this responsibility. From a virtue-ethical point of view, leadership ethics indeed firstly takes managers' or employees' qualities within the company into account. Moreover, there is also the ethical claim that this morality should be emphasized effectively in other contexts of life, too: "... successful business leader[s] should have integrity in both his [/her] business and his [/her] personal life."[17]

### *Metaphysical Differentiation from the Deontological Model*

Christian leadership ethics argue with metaphysics.[18] Deontological models do not necessarily exclude transcendence in their ideology (in the end Immanuel Kant at least considered God as an idea that must be thought about). But, contrary to metaphysical models, they are not based on the concept that managers can or even should derive norms for leadership from it. This point makes the essential difference between the otherwise related paradigms: deontological approaches want, like normative individualistic models, to stay free from metaphysics.

On the contrary, within a metaphysical (religious or esoteric) basis of values, normativity is derived from the understanding of transcendence, and not transcendently from rationality's necessities to think.[19] The transcendently good should be the orientation for a good life in general, and therefore also for leadership within companies. This requires that managers, especially, recognize, share, and habitually represent this measure of the good in order to apply it effectively.[20] Human dignity is now, as an ethical basis of values, explicitly derived transcendently. Metaphysical approaches assume a transcendently reasoned human centrality, which can be understood and operationalized in its content by virtuous rationality.

Managers, especially with respect to their effective influence, are primarily responsible as the recognized authority championing the idea of the good and thus, the universal ethical principles (e.g., the commandments of God, the cosmos, or the metaphorically identified truth within Plato's allegory of the cave, among others). By being able to use their virtuous rationality to identify the good, good leaders carry a main responsibility towards the objective instance to follow its commandments. This results in a responsibility for oneself and for fellow human beings so that here, a triple responsibility is essentially given towards which good leadership must first be oriented. Unsurprisingly, metaphysical approaches also have a missionary claim to liberate humans to God or to any other transcendently determined idea of the good. However, this is just a gradual difference from deontological approaches, which, in no less a missionary way, strive for holistic autonomy.

Even metaphysical approaches do not have to involve any kind of religious conversion. They potentially include more the employees' empowerment, made possible through effective influence, to find a responsible freedom which then makes room for transcendence. Ferdinand Rohrhirsch understands Christian leadership in this way: as collabora-

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[17] Bowie (2005): 144.
[18] Cf. Melé/Cantón (2014).
[19] For esoteric leadership ethics, cf. Dietz (2008) and Werner (2006) for a respective application in the drugstore-chain *dm*.
[20] Popular example for this is a non-egoistic attitude of a "Caritas in Vertitate," as it was unfolded by Benedict XVI (2009) in the encyclical of his same name.

tion to the preparation of the future.[21] Human centrality consists of paving the way for means to fulfil the prescribed good, but not of enforcing it. It is fulfilled within the triple transcendently justified responsibility. A market and hence economic efficiency are considered desirable with their service to the now metaphysically justified freedom of every human being. In turn, economic efficiency gains its legitimacy not only from itself, but from the morally superordinate human centrality. Human centrality is now understood as a human liberation to religiously pledged salvation or rather to a different type of transcendently prescribed good, salvation, or meaning. The togetherness of economic efficiency and human centrality thereby follows neither an economic nor an ethical substitution of the other objective. Both have their own entitlement with their own underlying logic.

## *Christian Differentiation from the Esoteric Model*

The personal Triune God, as a transcendent reference of the good who incarnated himself in Jesus Christ, distinguishes the Christian model from esoteric and other religious ones. The Christianly understood principle of personality as a basis of values is premised on a biblically-justified conception of man and the thereto relating God-given assignment of welfare for humans. This aspect must be understood in a holistic way. Work time is lifetime, which therefore must be filled with meaning. This meaning is oriented towards God's assignment to also open a way to salvation for human beings at their workplace. The personal God expects an answer from every human being to his affectionate call for salvation. In the Christian view, as it can be read in the biblical book of Genesis, every person, as a creature and an image of God, has an unconditional dignity which is owed to the creator. This is affirmed by God's Incarnation in Jesus Christ. This explains every human being's unconditional right to develop creativity and community by personal Individualitas and Socialitas. A human as a free and social being is furthermore a moral existence who transfers individual utility and social orientation to decisions, by means of the self-honestly reviewed conscience. According to the biblical witness, God takes the first step and then expects humans to give corresponding answers:

| God's Demands for the Covenant with Humans | Answers Relevant for the Salvation of Humans | Biblical Sources |
|---|---|---|
| Freedom, friendship, and judgement | Moral responsibility for our lives/overcoming of constraints | "No longer do I call you servants. […] but I have called you friends." John 15:15 "So then each of us will account himself to God." Romans 14:12 |
| Love for mankind | Self-love, charity, and love of God | "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, […] and your neighbour as yourself." Luke 10:26-27 |
| Human talents | Creative development of our talents | "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." 1 Peter 4:10 |
| Rare goods on earth | Sustainable use and appreciation of the creation | "The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it." Genesis 2:15 |

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[21]  Cf. Rohrhirsch (2013): 95.

### *Normative Aspects in the Biblical Perception of Man*

God grants every human being dignity and freedom. He founded a community with the people in His covenant and entrusts the creation to humans. Moreover, He gives them grace and forgiveness on the cross and not lastly the certainty of a new life at Easter.

As in the esoteric-anthroposophical approach, the individual development is, with its moral determination, the first objective in business; therefore, it is also within companies and their culture. Only the conception of persons and thereby the basis of values, from a Christian point of view, is defined differently. The human unfolding is not understood as a purifying process of self-redemption which prepares people for a reincarnation on earth. Rather, the development of one's personal natural characteristics is considered as the human answer to God's gift of personhood. Human liberation is not a Pelagianistic act, but finally is God-given for humans. This way human existence, broken in its weakness (the fragmentary), maintains the same appreciation as the (co-)entrepreneurial spirit, which is free within its development. From a Christian point of view, humans have an assignment towards God and also towards themselves to unfold their individual and social personality and to appreciate every human life, especially the weak ones. Therefore, charity's assignment is to take responsibility for fellow humanity. In business, this is realized through an effective spirit of togetherness (e.g., within a team).

As a moral existence, in accordance with the triple biblical commandment of love, humans also carry a triple responsibility:

- *Towards God*: It is expressed by understanding life in the light of the Creator God, by being thankful for His gift and by developing freedom as a moral being in this light.
- *Towards oneself*: It is expressed by the self-awareness to be a creation in the image of God with an unconditional dignity, and at the same time by recognizing the undivided dignity of the weak.
- *Towards fellow humans*: It is expressed by acts of absolute charity on the one hand and by the service for community life out of an affective spirit of social love on the other.

The empowerment of people to be able to unfold this triple responsibility is an objectively understood end in itself for Christian leadership ethics. It is realized through virtues and norms. Within this responsibility, Christian leadership ethics cannot be satisfied with institutional ethics, which, within the context of economically determined norms, warn against individual morality. This would be equal to a de-personalization, since the development of individual virtue in all areas of life especially is a fundamental function of personal development. The design of norms and strategies both within and outside of business in are systematic places for morality and virtue.[22] Christian leadership ethics is therefore always the ethics of virtue and institutions.

Human centrality consists of paving the way for means to fulfil the God-given good. It is fulfilled both virtue- and institution-ethically in a triple, biblically given responsibility. The objective of economic efficiency can be derived from the Bible as a careful dealing with rare resources on the one hand (prevention of wastage) and as an unfolding of individual human talents on the other. However, responsibility-dualism holds the priority of a not economically endogenized personal unfolding, while the economic calculus must be set

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[22]  Cf. Schockenhoff (2007): 113.

in its service. Human centrality and economic efficiency are, in relation to God, the primary objective.[23]

Human unfolding, also of the Socialitas, sets social-creative performance as well as critical-creative decision potentials within the workforce free, since humans cannot completely unfold themselves in isolation. A Christianly-acceptable synthesis of economic success and human centrality rewards performance as an unfolding of the Individualitas and promotes the social unfolding within teams as well: not primarily to increase profit, but for the purpose of the development of one's natural personal destiny. Finally, it is the Christian sense perspective of human existence, as it is internalized both as individual as well as corporate culture, which makes economic success a service value for the personal unfolding. In this way, it systematically determines the relation of efficiency and human centrality for business practice. In this manner, economic efficiency is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for the implementation of Christian-personal human-centrality in business.

### *Applied Christian Leadership Ethics*

A good culture of leadership must, in terms of Christianly-understood anthropology, create room for the unfolding of the triple responsibility (towards God, oneself, and one another), in both individual- and institution-ethical terms. In general, it applies the assumption that Christian managers are Christians. They do not only have to develop the triple responsibility for themselves but should also facilitate respective room for their employees' development. To follow one's own destiny of salvation and to simultaneously enable employees to comply with their own destiny is the Christian vision of good leadership.

Norms within the company must serve this purpose, too. Accordingly, a culture of leadership is good if it includes virtues, norms, and relations which facilitate the unfolding of the God-given destiny of salvation for everyone, including those within the workplace. Regarding the use of this given tenet, individuals are – in accordance with their abilities – responsible for themselves. On the one hand, the Christian's freedom to make decisions is taken seriously. On the other hand, there is, of course, a broad scope for people with different worldviews and religions. It is a central part of Christian personality to consider the foreign and the different as images of God in all their dignity, too.

However, it does not go as far as to want to cultivate Christian leadership completely without Christians. For then the fundamental metaphysical dimension of responsibility which constitutes the Christian would be missing in practice. Arbitrariness of managers' confessions would impede the Christian idea of profile, freedom, and tolerance just as paternalism by force or a discourse polarized on an indispensable consensus would do.[24]Uniformity and anonymity are not Christianly acceptable. In contrast to the esoteric variation of the international drugstore chain DM, the Christian understanding of personal appreciation in business does not define an employee's temporary imbalance or a missing positive charisma as a lack of refinement. Rather, it is a human expression of our creative ground, which, biblically spoken by Kohelet (preacher), may also have its time.

Within the fields of motivation and communication, the God-given individual and social nature of humans have to be taken into account along with a high extent of self-

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[23] For example, Rohrhirsch (2013): 29.

[24] Concerning the meaning of diversity based on a Christian fundament of values, cf. Rohrhirsch (2013): 84 with reference to Volk (2012).

responsibility and communality. All this requires a concept of help for self-help with a high degree of solidarity and individual commitment. The norms must first be designed in the service of mutual trust. Where possible, there should not be a place in which whistle-blowing could be desired for breaking conspiracy within a culture of leadership because distrust and fear basically contradict the Christian ideal of togetherness.

A responsible transparency of corporate objectives and strategies is indispensable. Yet the limits of a deliberative culture must be kept in mind. Scrupulous moral rumination which blocks performance is as questionable as the inefficiency of overly-long decision-making. A corporate sense of unity in which loyalty is based on the sense-understanding and which ideally arises from an affective togetherness is – where possible – to be encouraged.[25] For this purpose, Christian confessors as leaders establish room for freedom based on their conception of man and also where are ideological differences exist. From the source of Christian belief, this culture therefore facilitates heterogeneity and diversity from the Christian faith, but it must not poison this source which makes freedom possible.[26] This is the Christian idea of social love, which ultimately concretizes social peace in the spirit of community. Undoubtedly, its realization remains a visionary concept, which at least sets a desired objective.

Within a homogenous workforce (e.g., under a commonly shared Christian vision) a strict hierarchy may be possible. This, however, necessarily presupposes a self-determined voluntariness of all affected parties, who, in case of doubt, can, or rather must, abolish this hierarchy. Since also in homogeneity, the co-responsibility, which is owed to the Christianly understood personality, must not be relativized. In terms of employee motivation, economic and ethical aspects should not be played off against each other on a basis of the personal Christian conception of man. Since as soon as the egoistic aspiration for one's own benefit is suppressed, or if – inversely – it is assumed as the only guiding principle, the holistically understood responsibility of a free human before God is not taken seriously.

Following methodological individualism, different individual action motives are assumed. Non-explicitly Christian arguments also enhance the explicitly Christian idea of personal motivation. Jonathan Wolff sees the anthropological reason for the social aspect in a "human social nature" which nevertheless facilitates the development of a social responsibility as a "sense of community" by also considering individual egoistic self-interest-centred thinking.[27] Amartya Sen carries forward this idea – even beyond Christian reasons –when he recognizes that a human, by his very nature, basically follows his own interest. But, at the same time, by his social endowment, he strives for collaborative actions.[28]

Both motivations are each based on their own efficiency potentials which are to be activated by an appropriate deployment to an optimized allocation, i.e., to an efficient use of human resources via incentives. The Christian culture of a synergetic motivation also seeks to challenge the advantages of competition and team motives alike with a possible reference to such assumptions, now rooted in Christian personality. Efficient synergy ef-

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[25]  Regarding the sense-understanding, which is characteristic for Christian leadership and which is also emphasized within the anthroposophical approach, cf. Rohrhirsch (2013): 83-84.

[26]  This line of thought corresponds to the so-called Böckenförde-dictum, after which also a democratic society has to protect the normative sources, which only allow this democratic freedom and which precede every democracy. Cf. Böckenförde (1967): 75.

[27]  Cf. Wolff (1991): 29f., 89.

[28]  Cf. Sen (2002).

fects result from the fact that the individuals thus mobilized are fully addressed in their willingness to compete and in their ability to develop a team idea with all their rationality. The idea is that, by a culture of "commitment," this facilitates a higher identification with the company, a reduction of free-rider mentality, and the realization of Christian personality.[29]

The compulsion to cultivate a dogmatic ideal of freedom contradicts the idea that the Lord Jesus Christ expects a self-determined free response of humans to His offer of love. As Individualitas and Socialitas constitute a person, competitive and group-rational team motivations must both be equally in view. The reductions due to economic endogenization as well as the killing or re-education of competitive thinking, from this liberal-personal point of view, lead to a flawed understanding of motivation. This understanding violates the Christianly understood, self-determined freedom of humans and at the same time wastes efficiency potentials.

Christian-ethical and managerial perspectives converge here since the reductions of the conception of man – from a Christian point of view – lead to inefficient allocations in economic decisions because they are not oriented towards the basic structure of human rationality (with both competitive and team motivation). Therefore, they neglect the holistic human perspective because the Christian-personal motivation should make full use of the efficiency potentials of self-interests (competition) and of collective integration (team spirit) together, from the point of view of humanity and profitability alike. By this approach, employees, on the one hand, are easier to motivate. Alternatively, this human orientation of the performance incentives should optimally challenge the potential for efficiency which is grounded in human rationality. The holistic essence of human rationality is here the standard of personal ethical leadership legitimacy.

## Conclusion

We have demonstrated that leadership ethics, in a narrower sense, is based on a transparent basis of values and applies to a concrete scope of management. It determines the relation of economic efficiency and human centrality without instrumentalizing one of the objectives or substituting them. Within the present article, the localization of Christian leadership ethics in contrast to alternative paradigms has been made clear. First, it was determined that Christian leadership ethics in their basis of values – unlike the normative individualism – presumes a complex human anthropology with egoistic and non-egoistic rationality. Furthermore, Christian leadership ethics is based on a metaphysical basis of values, whereby the normativity is derived from the understanding of transcendence. Good leadership should therefore – in contrast to deontological models – be oriented towards the transcendently good.

Compared to other religious and esoteric models, Christian leadership ethics refer to the Triune God as the transcendent reference of the good. Biblically explained, a human as God's creature and image has an unconditional dignity, which justifies every human's right to unfold creativity and communality. For the responsibility-dualism, the priority is set for the non-economically endogenized personal unfolding, into which service the economic calculus must be set. Good leadership, therefore, implies following one's own destiny of salvation and empowering employees to comply with their own destiny. As a result, a good culture of leadership includes virtues, norms, and relations, which enable every

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[29] Cf. van Diek (2004).

human being, also within the work context, to unfold his or her God-given destiny of salvation.

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