4 Fsw research and the study of Christians at work

Given the diversity of meanings that comes with different usages of the terms faith, spirituality, and religion at work, and taking into consideration the fact that the subjects under study in this dissertation are Christians, it is to the terms 'Christians' and 'Christian' and the respective modes of existence that my attention now turns. The focus of the present chapter is on discussing fsw research by exploring its contribution to the study of Christians in contemporary work contexts. In the previous two chapters, I presented an overview of fsw research as it emerged mainly in the context of management and organization studies. Implicit in the move toward fsw literature was the assumption that it is *in this research* that the existence of Christians in present-day workplaces is addressed. And, indeed, much material referring to Christianity is available. One finds different accounts of faith, spirituality, and religion at work which either explicitly address the faith, spirituality, or religion of Christians (for examples, see 4.1) or which use these terms in a way that is meant to be inclusive of Christianity.[1] The terms 'Christians' and 'Christian' seem to be mostly used in fsw texts in a traditional perspective, that is, as a category referring to Christianity as a spiritual, religious, or faith *tradition*,[2] or as a category used to group related traditions.[3] In section 4.1, I will discuss the role of tradition in fsw research and how it influences the portrayal of Christians at work in particular ways. In section 4.2, I will argue that this perspective needs to be broadened by considering the particular Christian location of individuals which shapes the interaction of Christians with tradition. In section 4.3, I shall discuss four accounts of Christian spirituality at work which offer a more comprehen-

1 A notable exception seems to be an understanding of the relationship between spirituality and religion at work as mutually exclusive, "suggesting that questions of spirituality have a unique expression at work, wholly separate from any religious connotation" (Phipps & Benefiel 2013:34; see also Mitroff & Denton 1999:88). For the authors, this seems to imply *Christian* connotations (for the broader 'spiritual but not religious' (SBNR) category, see e.g. Johnson et al. 2018). However, it is to be noted that a similar distancing from religion is performed by Christian practitioners who understand themselves as 'Christian, but not religious' (see McDowell 2018 and sections 6.1 and 7.3 of the present dissertation). For the broader phenomenon of the 'rise of the non-religious' with regard to management and organization studies, see Chand and Perry (2019).

2 See, for example, Pio and McGhee's (2019:88) chapter on "Spirituality and religion at work. Christian traditions in action".

3 For example, the Orthodox, Protestant, and Catholic traditions as 'subtraditions' of Christian tradition.

sive approach to Christians at work than those discussed in section 4.1. Finally, in section 4.4, I will draw a conclusion concerning the term 'Christian/s' in fsw research and its existential and nominal connotations.

4.1 Fsw and tradition

The understanding of Christianity as a tradition seems to rest on the idea that there are certain cognitive (beliefs) and behavioral (practices) contents and patterns of the Christian faith, spirituality, and/or religion that are transmitted over time and that can be (more or less) clearly marked as Christian. Christians, in this perspective, are people who partake in a particular tradition by sharing in its respective beliefs and practices. In fsw literature, the term 'tradition' is used in combination with terms from the trinity of faith, spirituality, and religion, and comes in phrases such as 'faith traditions' (e.g. Herman & Schaefer 2001), 'spiritual traditions' (e.g. Delbecq 2009), and 'religious traditions' (e.g. Dyck 2014, Agle & Van Buren 1999). The notion of tradition is usually not explicitly defined, although it is complex. Its complexity is linked to the fact that it can be construed as integrating other concepts central to fsw, such as the notions of behavior, practices, attitudes, values, belonging, and beliefs (see e.g. Brotheridge & Lee 2007:292). The notion of belonging or membership has a certain priority in the concept of tradition, because behavior, practices, and beliefs seem to be conceptualized *on the basis* of one's belonging to a certain tradition. In this way, the notion of tradition is used to portray Christian existence at work as a mode of existence determined or characterized by one's membership or participation in a particular tradition. Although I have not found it explicitly defined in fsw literature, the term 'tradition' seems to be used broadly as a socio-historical term referring to a group of people with common sets of beliefs and practices which are transmitted over time. In this section, I will introduce the tradition-oriented strand of fsw research and address the question of how this strand of literature contributes to the study of Christians in current workplaces. First, I will briefly discuss the main reasons that are offered for and against the relevance of tradition to the study of fsw, and some of the implications of this problem for the study of Christians in the workplace (4.1.1). Second, I will discuss how traditions are considered to possibly influence the fsw researcher, and his or her research activities and outcomes. (4.1.2). Third, I will describe how the study of traditions is approached in fsw research (4.1.3), and fourth, how

current studies explore Christian tradition(s) in their relationship to contemporary workplaces (4.1.4).

4.1.1 The contested role of tradition in fsw research

In this section, I am first going to introduce approaches that relativize the role of tradition in fsw. Second, I will sketch two arguments which are made to emphasize the importance of tradition in fsw. Third, I will focus on one crucial aspect of this discussion, the relationship between traditional beliefs and experience in present-day work settings.

First, it needs to be noted that many authors theorize fsw in a way which seems to *relativize* the role of tradition. For example, according to Miller and Ewest (2013b), everyone's faith–work integration can be described in terms of four types and specified according to the two orientations for each type (see 3.2). In other words, the specific tradition with which one is associated can be neglected when determining one's main mode of faith–work integration. Moreover, the main driving force for faith–work integration is, in this view, not a particular traditional influence, but an individual's desire to integrate faith and work.[4] For Smith (2008), because individual spiritual experiences are at the core of the emergence of spirituality in organizations, spirituality can occur at work with or without an individual's commitment to particular traditional beliefs (see 3.2), that is, regardless of one's conception of it.[5] In terms of practices, because spiritual experiences are facilitated by intense attention-focusing and ritualized, repetitive activity (2008:6.19 – 21), traditional spiritual practices, such as prayer and meditation, may potentially foster spiritual experiences at work, as far as they include intense attention-focusing and ritualized, repetitive activity. However, for the spiritual experience to occur, it is *irrelevant* whether this activity is located outside or inside the framework of traditional spiritual practices. Traditional influences are, in this perspective, therefore irrelevant or of secondary importance for the emergence of spirituality in the workplace. Radzins (2017:305f) argues that, for Simone Weil, spirituality does not imply a particular traditional affiliation. According to Radzins, Weil does not locate spirituality in a religious tradition, doctrine, or in personal piety, but in one's capacity to work. "Spirit

4 This is not to say that Miller and Ewest ignore tradition in their research, as for example their study on Protestant accents of faith at work indicates (see Miller & Ewest 2013c).

5 This position can, of course, always be countered by hinting at the fact that the idea that one's conception of spiritual experience is irrelevant for its occurrence is also a conception of spiritual experience.

arises in the activity of living, and more specifically in laboring—in one's engagement with materiality" (Radzins 2017:291). Gotsis and Kortezi (2008) distinguish between two main approaches to workplace spirituality: contextual and acontextual ones. Contextual approaches address workplace spirituality from the perspective of a particular theoretical or philosophical model, a cultural or religious tradition, or a scientific paradigm. Acontextual approaches are not founded on a particular theoretical tradition. In their view, both types have their strengths and weaknesses. However, the use of particular traditions and theories leads to a limited and restricted understanding of spirituality because spirituality is to be viewed, as Gotsis and Kortezi argue, as a universal phenomenon.[6] In addition, Fry & Cohen (2009:276), point to possible negative consequences of employing particular religious traditions at work, but at the same time they emphasize the importance of spiritual practices at work. This is reflective of an intention shared by many authors to emancipate the notion of spirituality from traditional religion.[7]

Second, others have emphasized the *importance* of tradition as it relates to fsw. McCann and Brownsberger (2007) draw on the work of Alasdair MacIntyre and Peter Drucker to argue that management is a morally relevant social practice and that MacIntyre has demolished "the claim of modern moral philosophy to deliver an approach to morality upon which all rational agents can agree" (2007:195). This is why, in this perspective, moral claims have to be embedded in communal traditions.[8] In McCann and Brownsberger's (2007:194) view, this opens up space for an "explicitly theocentric construal of reality" and "a theological model of business ethics", which they would organize around the notion of stewardship. They argue that this would have to be executed in the mode of public theology and that it would

6 Gotsis and Kortezi (2008:585) argue that Douglas Hicks's respectful pluralism is an acontextual approach because it is theoretically founded "on the moral ideas that are predominant in the modern democratic societies and not on a very specific, ultimately particularistic system of thought." One could, however, argue that this classification of Hicks's approach as acontextual ignores the fact that the emergence of modern democratic societies is undeniably linked to *particular* traditions of thought and practice.

7 On the contrary, discursive analysis of this type of spirituality research (see e.g. Bell & Taylor 2003, Long & Driscoll 2015, Oswick 2009) has indicated how such approaches to spirituality are clearly linked, implicitly or explicitly, to particular traditions of thought.

8 In theology, Alasdair MacIntyre's stress on traditions has been taken up by Stanley Hauerwas. According to Hauerwas (1983:46f, see also 1983:120.133f), "the Christian tradition holds us accountable, not to an abstract story, but to a body of people who have been formed by the life of Jesus".

enhance rather than inhibit critical conversations in organizations (2007:195). Black (2009) goes one step further, arguing that while the corporation is a concept with traditional roots, the demands of management implied in the concept are not restricted to those who understand themselves as members of the tradition from which the concept emerged, but are placed upon *all* participants in contemporary corporate life. The form of life which emerged from this traditional concept of the corporation is still marked by it, says Black. In other words, the corporation maintains its theological character "even in an apparently secular setting" (2011:5). In this view, the demands of the traditional concept of the corporation on managerial practice are not placed only on adherents to a certain tradition (because they happen to be both managers and adherents to a certain religious tradition), but are tied to the very functioning of a corporation and its management.

To sum up, there are thus three reasons provided in the literature regarding why tradition is of secondary importance to the study of fsw: it is irrelevant for theorizing different types of faith–work integration (Miller & Ewest 2013b), it is limiting and restricting in understanding spirituality as a universal phenomenon (Gotsis & Kortezi), or it is irrelevant or of secondary importance for the occurrence of spirituality (Smith 2008, Radzins 2017). On the other hand, and, interestingly with particular regard to managerial practice, tradition is viewed to be important because the morality related to managerial practice is understood as being dependent on communal traditions (McCann and Brownsberger 2007) in general, or, in particular, because the very functioning of corporate life is the product of (Christian) tradition (Black 2009:256).

How are these pros and cons related to each other and to the study of Christians in the workplace? If the embeddedness of moral claims in communal traditions proposed by McCann and Brownsberger (2007) is also at work with regard to claims about spirituality, the argument put forward by Gotsis and Kortezi (2008) that tradition restricts the understanding of spirituality and that an acontextual (non-traditional) understanding of spirituality is to be favored seems to ignore its own traditional embeddedness. Furthermore, one could argue that a seemingly acontextual approach to spirituality is simply an approach which ignores the fact that all utterances stem *from somewhere* and, therefore, from a particular context. If we relate this to the study of Christians at work and to broader fsw research, it seems safe to say that one's *understanding* of fsw is inextricably bound, in one way or another, to traditions of thought (and practice).

However, the question which emerges in the light of the accounts that argue for the occurrence of spirituality *irrespective* of traditional beliefs and practices (Smith, Radzins) is the following: Is the existence of Christians in the workplace adequately conceptualized as traditional by reference to particular practices and beliefs which are transmitted over time and which mark Christians as members of the Christian tradition? Or is the existence of Christians to be thought of as somehow transcending traditional beliefs and practices and, if yes, in what way? In other words, what is the role of traditionally mediated convictions and practices in the formation of Christian existence in the workplace? The problem of the role of beliefs, as the cognitive contents of one's faith, in Christian living at work can be elucidated by comparing the thinking of Smith (2008) and Tucker (2010).

Smith (2008) presents a position in which the possible cognitive content of one's spirituality is irrelevant or of secondary importance. An approach to fsw which argues for the importance of *particular cognitive conceptions* or beliefs for faith–work integration or separation is presented by Tucker (2010). I have already introduced Smith's (2008) account of organizational spirituality (see this section, and 3.2), and I will now briefly introduce Tucker's approach to faith at work. Subsequently, I will reflect on the perspectives of the two authors to argue that alongside traditional beliefs and practices, concrete *experience* is a third aspect which needs to be considered in the study of Christians at work.

Tucker (2010) draws upon the writings of Søren Kierkegaard to argue for the importance of adopting a *particular perspective* to overcome the separation of one's faith from one's work. Tucker's starting point is to address the disconnection of one's faith from one's work. He points out how, in terms of one's faith, such a disconnection (which he calls the "Sunday–Monday gap") is problematic. In order to be a person of faith, an individual must obtain and maintain a relationship with God, says Tucker. The spiritual connection with God through faith entails two aspects, a conceptual aspect (faith in the form of proper understandings) and a relational aspect (faith as trust). The second is dependent on the former, in that trust in God develops as an individual possesses the proper conceptions of God and of him-/herself. In particular, trust develops when an individual adopts the self-conception that s/he is "capable of nothing" (2010:26) without God, and that God is "absolute". Such an absolute conception of God in relation to oneself slowly transforms one's entire existence until one is convinced of this absolute conception at every moment of one's life, and until it enters

every aspect of one's life.[9] The recognition of one's complete dependence on God is accompanied by the development of trust in God, and this makes one's relationship with God something which is permanently maintained.

There are, however, difficulties for an individual to maintain this relationship at all times during the workweek, and Tucker, again drawing upon the writings of Kierkegaard, offers five reasons why a disconnection can occur. These are either cognitive or volitional (related to one's will) or a combination of the two, that is, the faith–work disconnection appears because individuals have 'a problem' in terms of their understanding and/or their desires. The first reason is a problem of will, where individuals do not want to maintain a relationship with God 'always', understood in a comprehensive way, meaning literally 'all the time'. The second is a cognitive problem and a matter of pride: individuals hold a misconception of themselves and of God. This can happen very easily when a person looks at her abilities and achievements. She is then tempted not to uphold the self-conception of herself as 'being capable of nothing without God' because our daily experience seems to tell us that we are at least capable of some things. The third reason can occur as a volitional or a cognitive problem. It is the belief that, by going to church on Sunday, people are relieved of the demands of faith during the workweek. The fourth reason is peer pressure, a desire for peer approval, and fear of peer rejection. In this case, individuals are reluctant to live according to their faith during the workweek because of a fear of being criticized, rejected, or ridiculed. The fifth reason is a belief that one's work or occupation is insignificant or irrelevant to God, and thus individuals are unable to see a connection between their work and their relationship with God.

Tucker argues that, instead of giving way to a disconnection between faith and work, a person of faith needs to develop an appropriate awareness and frame of mind during everyday life. This living with awareness, which is at stake here, is a kind of living while being aware of being a single individual and aware of one's eternal responsibility before God (Tucker 2010:30). There is a particular method for doing so: to adopt a confessional attitude during every moment of life, that is, to think of oneself as being at a confession before God at all times. Tucker presents three characteristics of such a confessional mindset. First, God's presence is felt more vividly at the time of confession. With a person doing everything as 'before God', her

9 For an approach which establishes, in some respects, a contrarian direction of influence, see Cottingham (2005), who points out that one's praxis shapes what one believes.

or his awareness of God's presence changes everything. How? Before God, everyone *pays attention* to themselves and to what they are doing: "the speaker during his speech has the task of paying attention to what he is saying, and the listener during the speech has the task of paying attention to how he is hearing" (Kierkegaard quoted in Tucker 2010: 31). The second characteristic is that being in God's presence demands awareness of one's ethical responsibilities toward God. Third, this confessional attitude should be held at all times. Repentance, the reason for confession, should be a daily activity, because one sins on a daily basis. The relationship with God has to be permanent.

Tucker addresses the Christian characteristics of existence by describing how to become a Christian. In particular, one can move from a general religiousness to a Christian religiousness, which involves adopting the appropriate understanding of her/himself and of God and, in particular, accepting the self-conception that one is "capable of nothing" (2010:26) without God. This acceptance results in the development of trust in God, which is the essence of the relationship with God. In this way, living as a Christian includes being in a permanent relationship with God.

If one compares Tucker's (2010) approach to Smith's (2008), it seems that they identify different aspects as the decisive terrain where faith–work integration or the emergence of spirituality at work is decided upon. While for Smith the central element is the occurrence of a spiritual experience, which can be facilitated through particular patterns of behavior (attention-focusing and repetitive behavior), the nerve center of faith–work integration for Tucker is mainly located on the level of an individual's conception and attitude.[10] For Tucker, the individual has to adopt the right conceptions (of God and her-/himself) and this will then result in faith–work integration. The adoption of inappropriate conceptions will lead to the disconnection of one's faith and work. In contrast, for Smith, the level of individual conceptions and frameworks carries no decisive force. Spiritual conceptions and frameworks are but manifestations of something more central, namely the spiritual experience.

However, one could also see Smith's approach as contributing to balancing the Tucker/Kierkegaard conception, or as pointing to an inherent tension: If one takes seriously what Tucker says, that is, that the individual is 'capable of nothing without God', the path to living a faithful life cannot be "you simply have to get your conceptions of God and yourself right and

10 Note, however, the similar emphasis on *paying attention* to what one does within Tucker's and Smith's thought.

then maintain these conceptions in every moment of your life". If individuals are 'capable of nothing without God', this implies that individuals are not capable of getting their conceptions of God and themselves right and of maintaining them without God. Thus the 'cognitive' change which an individual is to undergo, according to Tucker, implies an experience of God or, in Smith's terms, a 'spiritual experience'. It is thus not purely conceptual, but has, at its heart, an experiential–relational quality.

Tucker's conception could also serve to balance that of Smith, in that it proposes quite specific answers to how the spiritual experience could manifest itself on Smith's level of inner manifestations as spiritual conceptions, frames, and beliefs in the form of particular conceptions of oneself and of God in relation to one's work.[11] Smith does not deny the existence of different spiritual traditions and perspectives. He argues, however, that a common spiritual experience can emerge *regardless* of the perspective from which one views this experience (Smith 2008:7). Challenging Smith's approach, one could, however, ask why beliefs should not be related to experience similarly to how practices are. In other words, why should certain practices facilitate spiritual experience, yet beliefs be irrelevant for its occurrence? Could there not also be certain beliefs that facilitate spiritual experience? On the other hand, Tucker's adoption of the appropriate conceptions (beliefs) also seems to imply a certain experience. A comparison of Tucker's and Smith's thinking makes it clear that, in an analysis of Christians in contemporary workplaces, experience seems to be an important aspect to be considered alongside traditional beliefs and practices.[12] In the formation of Christian existence at work, traditional elements, such as particular beliefs and practices, are interrelated with concrete individual experience at work. This seems to indicate that the formation of Christian lifestyles at

11 I leave it to the neurologists, however, to test whether they can identify a significant difference by comparing the neurological activity of people who hold the conceptions which Tucker associates with faith–work separation and that of people who adopt those which Tucker associates with faith–work integration.

12 For an fsw study which uses the distinction between beliefs, practices, and experiences, see Grant, O'Neil and Stephens (2004:280f). On different aspects or dimensions of religiosity, such as experience, rituals, and others, see for example Pollack and Rosta (2015:66–69), Schneuwly Purdie & Stolz (2014:93), or Woodhead (2011:139). Schneuwly Purdie & Stolz (2014:93) observe that the "Dimensionen sagen wahrscheinlich weniger über "Religion" bzw. "Religiosität" aus, als dass sie ganz grundlegende Dimensionen des Menschseins überhaupt unterscheiden (Handeln, Erfahren/Fühlen, Glauben, Wissen)". On the notions of practice and action in (practical) theology, see Smith (2012) and Mager (2012).

work cannot be totally subsumed under the category of tradition.[13] Having discussed the contested role of tradition in fsw, I will now turn to the question of the influence of traditions on fsw activities and outcomes.

4.1.2 How traditions influence fsw research

In chapter 2 (2.1.1), I outlined how overview articles on fsw point to critical issues in the formation of fsw research activities and outcomes, such as the importance of the person of the researcher (Delbecq 2009), her or his affiliations in terms of academic networks and religious traditions (Lynn & Burns 2014), and the discursive contexts which influence one's research (Bell & Taylor 2003, Long & Driscoll 2015, Oswick 2009). As regards the role of tradition, I will address three aspects in the following. A first crucial question is the influence of religious traditions on fsw research. A second important aspect is the influence of academic or research traditions on fsw research activities and output. A third crucial aspect concerns the *relationship* between religious traditions and academic traditions in fsw research.

First, a network analysis of academic associations in workplace spirituality conducted by Lynn and Burns (2014) indicates the influence of religious traditions on fsw research established in particular via academic networks. Lynn and Burns analyze the Christian Business Faculty Association (CBFA), the Colleges in Jesuit Business Education (CJBE), the International Symposium for Catholic Social Thought and Management Education (CSTME), and the Management, Spirituality and Religion Interest Group (MSR). There is a clear tendency with regard to the secular or religious identification of the members of each association, that is, the CBFA with 94 % Protestant members, the CJBE and CSTME with 95 % and 80 % Catholic members, respectively, and the MSR with 91 % secular members (2014:10). Scholars from the same network tend to cite similar academic literature, discuss similar topics, and produce similar genres of scholarship. The networks differ in their epistemological authorities, their focus on workplace emphases, and their view of business (2014:18). However, Lynn

13 I do not say that experience is a strictly extra-traditional category (traditions can e.g. be understood as stimulating certain experiences). However, I would say that experience has a certain quality that transcends tradition (in particular, if traditions are understood as characterized by certain beliefs and practices) and can mediate between the group level of tradition and the individual level (on the important role of experience in the transmission or non-transmission of religious orientations, see Mellor & Shilling 2010a:215; on the relationship of practices, beliefs, and experience, see also section 4.2).

and Burns indicate that cross-network communication may enrich research perspectives, and enhance research quality and innovation across networks.

If religious traditions influence research and higher education, the question of academic freedom arises. Epstein (2002, see also 3.3.2) addresses the issue of the extent of academic freedom with particular reference to the many religiously affiliated colleges and universities in the United States. He argues that, interestingly, academics do not perceive the religious affiliation of their institution as a constraint for academic freedom. One may even argue that there is more academic freedom in private institutions than in public institutions (2002:94). In Epstein's view, it is crucial to integrate lessons from faith traditions into management education. However, the main purpose is not indoctrination but intellectual illumination. In such an outlook, the influence of religious tradition is not a problem, and yet it demands critical reflection.[14]

Second, with reference to the influence of academic traditions on fsw research, Margaret Benefiel (2003, see also section 3.4.2) has pointed out that management scholars (automatically) approach the subject with the research methods and methodology they were trained in, and thus focus strongly on the measurement of spirituality and its impact on organizational performance. This is problematic in that the deeper question of the instrumentality of spirituality remains unaddressed: "If spirituality is ultimately about nonmaterialistic concerns, is it appropriate to focus on the material gains to be reaped by integrating spirituality into organizational life?" (2003:384). Spirituality discourses can thus become superficial, and due to a superficial understanding of spirituality, organizations abandon the spiritual path as soon as they hit "the inevitable bumps on the spiritual journey" (2003:384). Benefiel thus argues that the study of spirituality in the workplace needs to be "critical, analytical, theoretical, and not reductionist" (2003:385). Addressing the same problem of unthinkingly operating within one's own research tradition, Kent Miller (2015:284) argues that "natural and social scientists may often pursue their investigations without explicitly acknowledging or reflecting on the traditions in which they operate". Thus, the problem with regard to the inclusion of religious or academic tradition

14 For recent examples of critical integration of traditional religious perspectives into management scholarship, see Neubert (2019), Dyck and Purser (2019), and the other papers from the symposium 'faith in management scholarship and practice', published in Academy of Management Perspectives 33:3. See also Burrell and Rahim (2018) on the concept of 'religious literacy in the workplace'.

in fsw research is, in both cases, a lack of reflexivity, but not the inclusion of traditional elements per se.[15]

Third, how can religious and academic traditional sources be related in fsw research? Two instructive examples in this regard are provided by Travis Tucker's (see 4.1.1) and David Miller's (see 3.2.2) accounts of faith–work integration. Tucker operates with concepts that can be categorized as being rooted in religious tradition, while Miller employs concepts from the social scientific tradition of researching movements. A main difference between the conceptions of Miller and Tucker seems to be that, for Tucker, the overarching umbrella of faith–work integration is one's relationship with God, and that faith–work integration is understood in the context of this relationship, while Miller conceptualizes it more in terms of different modes or styles, and of individual preferences of faith–work integration, where the substance of one's faith is secondary (what matters is the intention to integrate one's faith and one's work).

While I do not think it is accurate to say that Tucker operates from a participant or insider perspective and Miller from an observer or outsider perspective, it is true that the conceptual lenses of the two authors stem from different traditions. And because of their different starting points, both approaches make particular contributions and have particular limitations. However, the fact that Tucker draws from ideas that many would allocate to a 'religious tradition', while Miller works with concepts from a social scientific research tradition, does not automatically make Miller's approach more critical and more academically sound. One can uncritically adopt social scientific paradigms and reflect very critically using concepts from a spiritual or religious tradition. I think that the academic study of fsw will gain more through the critical inclusion of such concepts from the traditions studied than through the rigid adoption of concepts from the social sciences and humanities *at the expense* of other concepts which are more closely related to the phenomena studied. Furthermore, the task of fleshing out and thinking through the implications of concepts from religious or spiritual traditions seems to be a legitimate academic task in itself. The academic task, then, is one of mapping and understanding concepts, a task which is explicitly embraced in hermeneutic approaches to ethics (e.g. Fischer 2002) or in some phenomenological approaches to organization studies[16]. As Cantrell

15 See also the study by Spoelstra, Butler, and Delaney (2020) on the role of beliefs from the 'positivist tradition' in leadership studies.

16 For an overview of phenomenological approaches to organization studies, see Gill (2014).

(2015:24) concludes in his analysis of the limitations of both methodological atheism and methodological agnosticism for the study of religion:

> This does not mean that "anything goes". But, as historian of religion George Marsden has suggested, it does mean that scholars are free, for example, to investigate issues in the form of the question, "*If so and so religious belief were true, how would it change the way we look at the subject at hand?* (1997:52)" (my emphasis)

This would separate the study of the implications of a spiritual or faith concept from the task of accounting for its legitimacy. However, it could be argued that in terms of academic research, a concept's legitimacy can be partly demonstrated by its usefulness for understanding the subject at hand. In this regard, Tucker's notion of an individual's relationship with God seems to be useful in understanding the faith–work integration of Christians.

Moreover, in the study of fsw, one is confronted with concepts, such as faith, spirituality, and religion, which are used by practitioners and academics alike. In such a case, practitioner perspectives should not be ignored, I think, but are to be considered alongside academic perspectives in clarifying the terminology used in academic research, and if practitioner usages of terms differ from academic usages of the same terms, this instance should not lead to the blind prioritization of customary (traditional) academic terminology which ignores practitioner usages of terms, but should attract academic reflexion.[17]

Many scholars have turned to the study of traditional sources and of lived traditions and their implications for working life. In the following, I will first outline how the influence of spiritual and religious traditions on work contexts is conceptualized (4.1.3) and subsequently introduce the respective research on Christian tradition(s) at work (4.1.4).

4.1.3 How traditions are studied in fsw

The strand of fsw literature which applies a traditional focus uses different categories to study traditions. Herman and Schaefer (2001) group their collection of essays on "Spiritual goods: Faith traditions and the practice of business" according to different 'faith traditions'[18], such as Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. "Christianity", however, does not refer to a

17 On the role of practitioner perspectives, see also 1.4 and 7.2. See also our empirical study of Christians at work (Brügger 2018; Brügger & Huppenbauer 2019; and chapter 6 in the present dissertation).

18 The phrases 'faith traditions' and 'religious traditions' seem to be used synonymously.

particular tradition in their approach, but is an overarching term referring to a group of different traditions, such as Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, the Mormon tradition, the African-American church, the Baptist tradition, evangelical Calvinism, the Lutheran tradition, and the Mennonite tradition. In light of such a categorical understanding of Christianity, an important question (to which I will return below) is: What marks these traditions and their respective beliefs and practices as *Christian* traditions? Similar to Herman and Schaefer (2001), Dyck (2014) also uses tradition as a socio-historical category to identify religions as religious traditions (such as Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, and Islam). In terms of the manifestation of the influence of a tradition, he adds two cross-traditional categories, namely scriptures and spiritual practices, mirroring two main aspects of tradition, namely beliefs and practices, and permitting an analysis across traditions.[19]

In addition to Herman and Schaefer's (2001) anthology and Dyck's study (2014), a number of other comparative works have been published which apply different foci. For example, Malloch (2014) offers case studies of companies shaped by particular traditions (Catholicism, Protestantism, Judaism, Confucianism, Islam, Buddhism, Shintoism, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, and humanism). Ray and colleagues (2014) compare insights from Judaism, Christianity, and Islam to advance normative stakeholder theory. They attempt to identify a 'normative core' of the three Abrahamic faith traditions. Fernando and Jackson (2006) conduct an inter-faith study with business leaders in Sri Lanka with Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, and Muslim backgrounds. Ali, Camp, and Gibbs (2005) compare the theological perspectives of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam on the concept of free agency and its implications for management and business organizations. Longenecker, McKinney, and Moore (2004) explore the relationship between religious commitment and business ethical judgment, comparing broad faith categories (Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, other religions, no religion) and religious intensity.[20] Ali, Camp, and Gibbs (2000) discuss and compare a Ten Commandments perspective drawn from Christianity, Judaism, and Islam on power and authority in corporations.

In addition to these comparative approaches, one finds studies which focus particularly on a single religious tradition. I will, in the remainder of this section, point to some examples of studies on Buddhist, Islamic, and Jewish traditions, and turn to Christian traditions in more detail in the fol-

19 On Dyck's approach, see also section 3.3 on fsw and management.

20 See also section 3.5 on outcomes of fsw.

lowing section. Vu and Gill (2018) discuss spiritual leadership from a Buddhist perspective. Marques (2010) explores the role of Buddhist practices in contemporary workplaces. Lurie (2013) proposes a Jewish perspective on faith and spirituality in the workplace, and Pava (1998) explores the 'substance' of Jewish business ethics. Murphy and Smolarski (2018) outline an Islamic perspective on corporate governance. Abdelzaher, Kotb, and Helfaya (2017) explore different aspects of Eco-Islam. Helfaya, Kotb, and Hanafi (2016) outline a Quranic ethical perspective on environmental responsibilities and its implications for business practice. Kirkbesoglu and Sargut (2016) consider the relationship between religious beliefs and social networks of managers in Turkey. Robinson (2015) explores the relationship between Islam and business. Tlaiss (2015) analyzes how Islamic business ethics influences women entrepreneurs in four Arab countries. Possumah, Ismail, and Shahimi (2013) discuss the role of work in Islamic ethics and the implications of an Islamic worldview on the concept of work. Al Arkoubi (2013) explores implications of Islam for business management. Graafland, Mazereeuw, and Yahia (2006) explore the relationship between Islam and responsible business conduct among Dutch entrepreneurs. Beekun and Badawi (2005) sketch an Islamic perspective on balancing ethical responsibility toward organizational stakeholders. Traditions are thus further categorized and analyzed with respect to historical, cultural, and geographical contexts.[21] In the following, I will turn to studies on Christian tradition(s) and their role in contemporary workplaces.

4.1.4 Christian tradition(s) at work

Within fsw research that addresses (Judeo-)Christian tradition, I find two main foci: textual sources and contemporary manifestations. On the one hand, there are studies which focus on *textual sources*, that is, a certain text or collection of texts, and explore its/their implications for key concepts and practices of organizational life (such as management, corporate governance, performance, or work). On the other hand, various studies focus more on a tradition's contemporary members, that is, the *people* (and their beliefs and behavior) who participate in a particular lived tradition. These categories are not mutually exclusive, but the distinction can be found in the starting

21 I can only offer a few examples here of what has been written in this area. For additional contributions to Judaism, Islam, and Christianity in business, see for example, Williams 2003, for other religious traditions, see the volumes by Herman and Schaefer (2001), Malloch (2014), and Neal (2013).

point or emphasis a study adopts. In the following, I will provide a brief overview of, first, studies on 'Judeo-Christian' textual sources and their implications for the workplace and, second, studies on particular contemporary 'lived traditions' and the traditions' implications concerning work contexts. Third, I will address the question of what it is that marks or characterizes a tradition as Christian.

First, the Abraham story is explored as a source with which to identify a leadership archetype (Abramson 2007) or a 'leadership by example' template (Fischer & Friedman 2017). Ali, Camp, and Gibbs (2000) analyze the Ten Commandments as a source of a perspective on power and authority in corporations. Rowe (2014) analyzes chapters 10–36 from Second Chronicles to identify antecedents and consequences of ethical leadership. Wessels (2014) relates insights into leadership drawn from the shepherd metaphor in the book of Jeremiah to the modern-day workplace. Escobar (2011) draws on the book of Amos to argue for the interdependency of spirituality and ethics.

Rodgers and Gago (2006) propose drawing on various biblical scriptures to establish a stronger link between decision-making in organizations and ethical decision-making frameworks and moral practices (2006:134). In particular, they use the scriptures of the New Testament as a source of ethical orientation for accounting practices. Dyck (2013) explores the implications of the gospel of Luke for management in the 1st and 21st centuries. Almond (2014) uses the biblical texts on the life and work of Paul of Tarsus to contribute to the scholarship on institutional work by developing a grounded theory of how new institutions are created. Whittington and colleagues (2005) draw on Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians to propose a causal model of spiritual leadership which they term 'legacy leadership'. In this model, leadership effectiveness is determined by the "changed lives of followers" (2005:749). Taylor (2017) explores the theology of work in First and Second Thessalonians. Gotsis and Dodd outline the economic ideas that they find to be contained in the Pauline Epistles (2002) and in the Epistle of James (2004).

Natoli (2008) outlines how Augustinian thinking may inspire business people to discover the presence of God in their own consciousness.[22] Tredget (2010) outlines the implications of key concepts from the Rule of Benedict (wisdom, practical wisdom, prudence, discretion, and discernment) for management education and leadership development. Mercier and Deslandes (2017) study the crucial role of practical wisdom in interpreting

22 For another recent study that draws on St. Augustine's thought, see Wray-Bliss (2019a).

the Rule of Benedict. Payer-Langthaler and Hiebl (2013) analyze the definition of performance in a religious organization by studying the case of a Benedictine abbey and by drawing predominantly on the Regula Benedicti. Weber-Berg (2010) draws on Martin Luther's thinking for a Protestant reformulation of faith and love as virtues of practical wisdom for modern management. In particular, he describes faith as a receptive attitude (2010:732). Cavanagh (2003) proposes an approach to spirituality based on the thinking of Ignatius of Loyola as a promising form of spirituality for business managers. Rothausen (2017) outlines an approach to leadership development which draws upon the writings on Ignatian spirituality. Tucker (2010) examines the writings of Søren Kierkegaard to address the problem of a "Sunday–Monday gap" (2010:24). Frey (1998) draws upon the thinking of puritan moralists (William Perkins, John Cotton, William Ames) to argue that the puritan ethic has been wrongly interpreted to encourage self-interest "inimical to the good of organizations and society" (Frey 1998:1573). In contrast, says Frey, they argue that the authentic puritan ethic believes the moral end of economic individualism to be the common good. Orwig (2002) outlines the influence of the writings of Norman Vincent Peale on the religious values of American business leaders. Melé (2016) proposes that current Anglo-Saxon capitalism can learn much from the macro-level business ethics of scholasticism, as developed between the thirteenth and the mid-seventeenth centuries. Armstrong (1993) offers a Protestant interpretation of the papal encyclical *Centesiums annus*. Naughton (1995) outlines how, in the papal social tradition, the notion of participation is crucial for structuring an organization and for the moral formation of the workers within an organization. Silva (2007) identifies three resources from Christian spirituality for business leadership: servant leadership, Catholic social teaching, and the spirituality of business leadership as a Christian vocation. Sandelands (2009) draws on the Catholic social tradition in order to correct current thinking on business. He argues that the business of business is not business, but the human person. Naughton and Alford (2012)[23] outline the implications of Catholic social teaching for business practice. Carrascoso (2014) relates Catholic social teaching to stakeholder theory. De Peyrelongue, Masclef, and Guillard (2017) draw upon Catholic social teaching to introduce the concept of gratuitousness for understanding consumer behavior. Heslam (2015) takes up the thinking of the Dutch Reformed philosopher and statesman Abraham Kuyper for an understanding of the workings of God's grace in business, the social function of

23 A church document written by Roman Catholic academics.

money, and the calling of business. Meynhardt (2010) tries to dissect the roots of the thinking of Peter Drucker, a leading management thinker of the twentieth century in the Christian tradition. Fourie and Höhne (2017) explore the implications of Protestant theology (in particular the writings of Jürgen Moltmann) for transformational leadership theory. Whipp (2008) draws upon contemporary approaches to Trinitarian theology to address the discursive interface between the church and secular work contexts.[24]

Second, while the studies introduced above focus on textual sources and their implications for present-day workplaces and workplace-related views and practices, I will now turn to studies that explore the contemporary formation of Christian traditions at work. Many researchers address a particular geographical context and compare the influence of different strands of tradition within each respective context.

In the United States, Neubert and Dougherty (2013) explore and compare Christian attitudes on faith at work across religious traditions (black Protestants, evangelical Protestants, and mainline Protestants and Catholics). In particular, they study the influence of Christian congregations "in making faith relevant to the workplace" (2013:47) in the US. They use two scales: the Congregational Entrepreneurial Orientation Scale (CEOS) and the Congregational Faith at Work Scale (CFWS). The CEOS measures "the extent to which the congregation behaves entrepreneurially" (2013:58) and the CFWS measures the extent to which specific beliefs about faith at work are emphasized within a congregation. Black Protestant congregations have the highest scores in both CEOS and CFWS, followed by evangelical Protestant congregations. "Hence, it is the most theological conservative strands of American Protestantism where worshippers are encountering entrepreneurial leaders and an emphasis on faith's relevance to work" (2013:58). Mainline Protestant congregations are slightly more entrepreneurial than Catholic congregations, but in terms of the CFWS, their score is nearly identical (2013:61). Among other results, Neubert and Dougherty (2013) found that a Protestant work ethic is most salient within evangelical congregations, followed by mainline Protestants and Catholics, who display a similarly salient Protestant work ethic, and by black Protestant congregations. Black Protestant Christians are thus the least likely, among the four Christian traditions, to embrace a Protestant work ethic. Brown (1984) compares Protestant, humanist and evangelical approaches to management in the US, and argues that while Protestant and humanist

24 The present dissertation also takes up different Christian traditional sources. For an overview, see 1.4.

approaches lead to authoritarian and manipulative management styles, respectively, the evangelical approach results in a participative management style. According to Miller and Ewest (2013c:77), American Protestants differ from Catholics in the sources they use for orientation. While Protestants still turn to "reformation hallmarks" (such as *sola scriptura, sola gratia, sola fide, solus Christus*), Catholics use church teachings and the papal encyclicals, such as *Laborem Exercens* (1981*), Centesimus Annus* (1991), and *Caritas in Veritate* (2009), for orientation.

With regard to Germany, Eugen Buss (2012) explores the social profile of German top managers. He finds that a crucial factor in their social profile is the confession of a manager's parents. In relation to the overall German population, Lutheran, Reformed, and independent Protestant (Free Church) parental influences are disproportionately high, and Catholic parental influences are disproportionately low among German top managers. As regards the managers themselves, 55 % of German top managers are Protestant (compared to 31 % in the overall population) and 22 % are Catholic (compared to 32 % in the overall population). Less than 10 % of German top managers express no relationship to religion at all and consider themselves atheistic. Nearly 65 % of German top managers grew up in a family with a Protestant atmosphere, and around 23 % in a Catholic milieu (Buss 2012:35). Religious influences during childhood are the *main* characteristic in the social profile of the majority of German top managers. For nearly 70 %, the religious atmosphere at home during their childhood is a decisive factor in their identity development. The majority of managers view the Christian education they received as a positive experience. Involvement in church played an important role in their education, in particular service attendance and involvement in youth groups. Every fourth German top manager was active in a church youth group (Buss 2012:36).

With reference to the Irish context, Cullen (2011) presents an auto/ethnographic study of workplace spirituality, reflecting on the difference between American Protestantism and Irish Roman Catholicism. He received spiritual training in an Irish company, which to him appeared to be suspiciously American and Protestant. For him, the American spirituality discourse has what he calls a particular "Pelagian" (2011:156) tone, with a more optimistic view of human nature compared to an Augustinian understanding of original sin, which is predominant in Irish Roman Catholicism. If the self is characterized by original sin, spirituality is not about expressing one's authentic self, but about getting in touch with God and seeking forgiveness. These studies with a geographical focus indicate that the presence of certain traditional influences in work settings varies not only across dif-

ferent strands of tradition, but also across different geographical–cultural contexts.

Various studies explore one particular strand of lived tradition as it relates to contemporary work contexts. For example, Trimiew and Greene (1997) discuss business ethics in the African-American church. Dana (2007) explores entrepreneurship among the Amish. Cao (2007) offers an ethnographic account of Chinese Christian entrepreneurs in Wenzhou, China. Lewis-Anthony (2014) analyzes the understanding of management in the Church of England. Other studies focus on Benedictine monasteries:[25] Inauen and colleagues (2010) draw on the monastic practice of governance as an inspiration for dealing with challenges in public management. Rost and colleagues (2010) explore the question of what business corporations can learn from Benedictine monasteries in terms of corporate governance. Roels (1997) discusses the business ethics of (Calvinist) evangelicals. Vaidyanathan (2018) explores Catholicism in Bangalore and Dubai. Gotsis and Kortezi (2009) develop a theoretical framework to describe the implications of Greek Orthodoxy on entrepreneurship. Miller and Ewest (2013c) outline current Protestant accents of faith at work in the United States. Nash (2007) reflects on the role of faith in a global marketplace from a Protestant perspective. Escobar (2011) offers critical reflexion on current practices in the Latino-Hispanic American Pentecostal church. Burton, Koning and Muers (2018) explore Quaker decision-making practices.

Others compare the use of concepts, such as governance, in religious and non-religious contexts with reference to a particular religious tradition. Pfang (2015) explores management as corporate governance practiced in the Catholic Church as it differs from corporate governance in a business company. Rost and Grätzer (2014) draw on the concept of governance practiced in monasteries of Catholic orders as an inspiration for the governance of multinational organizations.

I have only sketched these studies on Christian traditional influences in contemporary workplaces briefly, in order to offer a glimpse of the variety of research on Christian traditions and their relationship to workplaces. To offer a more concrete illustration of this research, I will now focus on the description of the American Protestant tradition and its formation in contemporary work settings provided by Miller and Ewest (2013c) as one particular example. They propose five "modern Protestant theological accents of faith at work" (2013c:69). Their proposal is based on a historical analysis of the development of Protestantism, of the emergence of a Protestant the-

25 See also above on the rule of Benedict as a textual source.

ology of work in North America, and of its contemporary revisions and contextualizations. In their proposal, they do not explore "official theologies of say, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Methodists, Congregationalists, and Baptists, or the so-called black church, and the variety of growing freestanding or Pentecostal-based Protestant churches", but

> how various theological accents commonly found in Protestantism writ large (and found across a range of Protestant denominations) impact contemporary attitudes toward and behavior at work, listening to foundational voices from the past as modified by context and experiences of the present (2013c:78).

The first accent is personal purpose or calling in daily life. The doctrine of vocation denotes that everyone has a calling to fulfill God's purposes which encompasses all spheres of life (Miller & Ewest 2013c:79). There is a second Protestant accent on stewardship: "This doctrine teaches that the people of God are cocreators with God and have a responsibility to use wisely and responsibly the gifts and opportunities they are given" (2013c:79). Third, there is an accent on economic justice, business ethics, and ethical character. Fourth, there is an accent on "lifestyle modesty within success coupled with a spirit of radical generosity (…) on modesty in material pleasures, prudence in consumption, and generosity for those who have less" (2013c:80). Fifth, there is an accent on the expression of one's faith at work (often referred to as evangelism), verbally and/or by example.

Hermeneutically, there is a "primacy of scripture when deciding orthodoxy and orthopraxy" (2013c:81). With the use of the term 'accent', Miller and Ewest take into account the fact that there is theological and practical diversity among North American Protestants, but that there are nevertheless common themes which can be found in contemporary North American Protestantism.

It is important to note that, in Miller and Ewest's account, the formation of tradition is conceptualized as a dynamic process. Contemporary revisions and contextualizations of Protestant theology influence attitudes toward and behavior at work. Traditional texts from the past interact with contemporary contexts and experiences. In particular, "foundational voices from the past" are "modified by *context* and *experiences* of the present" (2013c:78, my emphasis). Miller and Ewest's notion of 'accents' seems to include both beliefs and practices, and it is conceptualized as being related to particular contexts and experiences. With reference to the study of Christians at work, and if we take into account that traditions are continually modified, the question of *what it is that marks a tradition as Christian over time*

arises again. This brings me to the third and last question addressed in this section.

It is interesting that, while Christians seem to be ever present in fsw research, the question of what it is that makes a Christian a Christian is hardly ever addressed. A possible answer to the question of Christian characteristics is provided by Cavanagh and colleagues (2003:128), who propose four "core elements" of the Christian tradition of spirituality. According to them, it involves an account of God, of human beings, of discipleship to Jesus Christ, and of the church. In particular, in a Christian perspective, God is made known through events in history and is "most fully revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus whom Christians regard as Messiah or Christ" (2003:128). Through "God's Spirit, a community of believers in Jesus Christ arises and expands" (2003:128) heading to an "eventual culmination" (2004:128). While humans are made to live in a relationship with God, there is a human tendency "to place fundamental confidence and hope in a spiritual substitute for God" (2003:130), such as wealth and success. Jesus calls on human beings to repent, change their direction, and reorient their priorities toward God. Following Jesus involves a "fundamental change" (2003:130) which "is paradoxically both given by God and enacted by humans" (2003:130). God works in the world in particular through the formation of "a special social group, Israel and the church" (2003:131). In the church, the "Christian story takes on bodily existence" (2003:131). In section 4.3, I shall discuss additional approaches to Christian characteristics, but prior to that, I will address an aspect related to the account proposed by Cavanagh and colleagues (2003).

The proposal of core elements of Christian spirituality by Cavanagh and colleagues (2003) reflects the location of Christians in an overall framework of the 'Christian story'. This localization of Christians (and of human beings in general) is, as I will argue, insufficiently characterized as a mere traditional Christian belief, but characterizes the *relation* of Christians *to* particular beliefs, practices, and experiences in such a way that it appears reductionist to conceptualize Christian living in contemporary workplaces by (mere) adherence to particular traditional beliefs and practices. There is thus more to the study of Christians at work than the study of particular Christian traditions and groups, such as the Amish, the Greek Orthodox, Protestants, or Catholics (see the studies mentioned above in this section). Even though Christian living at work can be described, by applying a traditional lens, as being marked by the adoption of particular Christian traditional beliefs and behavior at work, its central features remain obscured if the broader reality to which Christians correspond (by being located in it

and by localizing themselves with regard to it) is ignored. To substantiate this claim, I will, in the following section, draw on a sociological perspective on the Christian location of individuals and, additionally, sketch a Christian perspective on tradition to elucidate the characteristics of the *interaction* of Christians with tradition.

4.2 The relationship between Christians and tradition

In this section, I will propose that the formation of Christian living is not traditional in a simple sense (e.g. a simple perpetuation of traditional beliefs and practices). Instead, it is the Christian location of individuals that functions as a mediating factor for the inclusion or exclusion of traditional elements in the formation of Christian lifestyles. I will take up the work of two fsw authors, as well as a current sociological approach (4.2.1). These, I argue, offer a perspective on the relationship between Christians and tradition which is congruent with a Christian perspective on the role of tradition in Christian living, which draws on traditional sources to encourage a dialectic, dynamic, and critical relationship between individuals and tradition (4.2.2).

4.2.1 The Christian location of individuals

With regard to the the question of the Christian localization[26] of individuals, some authors connect an emphasis on the bodily concreteness of Christian existence with a stress on the Christian location of individuals at the embodied intersection of this world and an other-worldly realm. Jean Bartunek (2006) reflects on the dualities and tensions between her academic and religious life (as a Catholic nun) and the tensions and dualities between theory and practice which have been influential in her intellectual development and her scholarly contributions.[27] She argues that these dualities and tensions were once reconciled in a Christmas gift, "whose ramifications have unfolded throughout my scholarly career" (2006:1875). She describes how she first experienced this Christmas gift as follows:

26 Similar notions discussed in German theology are that of "Lozieren" (Dalferth 1997:215) and the "lokalisierende Charakter des christlichen Glaubens" (Fischer 2002:15–32).

27 In the area of organizational change and transformation and in the insider/outsider joint research methodology.

> On Christmas morning of 1976 I was praying about the scripture readings from one of the masses of Christmas. Specifically, I was praying about the prologue of John's gospel in the Christian scriptures (John 1:1–18). The prologue starts with, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."
>
> "In the beginning" the Word (God) is very abstract and distant, always described in the third person. But later the prologue goes on to say, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." By this point the reading is using the first person and much more immediate language, and I suddenly had a eureka moment. The *Word* became *flesh*. There was a theory–practice link. The 'word' was no longer just abstract, distant words. They became flesh; they were enacted, became part of 'us'. There didn't have to be a separation between theory and practice even 'divinely'; they could be part of each other in some way, and my academic life could be integrated with my religious life (2006:1882).

In the remainder of her article, she describes how this Christmas moment has influenced her scholarly work. She notes that

> although I have never consciously made decisions about what work to undertake based on that Christmas morning insight, I have often discovered that what draws me has been some embodiment of it. (…) much of my intellectual life since then has felt as if it touches parts of 'the Word made flesh' in ways that help to keep that experience alive for me (2006:1883).

Bartunek mentions, in a footnote, a theological commentary on the prologue, which confirms her observation of the language used in the prologue, which made it clear to her that "the evangelist *positions himself and the readers of his gospel at this intersection of the timeless and the timebound.* Third person narrative slides[28] into first person plural narration" (2006:1892, my emphasis).[29]

Using different terminology, the notion of an intersection (she uses the term 'connection') is also prominent in Radzins' (2017) account of Simone Weil's understanding of work as spiritual.[30] For Weil, living labor comes from "the world beyond" (Radzins 2017:298), from what is unseen (thought, contemplation, or attention). "Spirit appears in the *connection* between the world beyond (what is unseen) and this world (the seen)," says

28 I am reminded here of similar shifts in the use of persons in the Psalms, in particular, the shift between speaking of God in the third person and speaking to God in the second person (see e.g. Psalm 23), which to me also seems to reflect a dynamic in terms of distance and closeness (on the shift of address in Psalms, see e.g. Suderman 2008).

29 One could, of course, argue that the very notions of 'embodiment' or 'incarnation' must imply the idea of a movement of something (or someone) from a non-incarnated or disembodied sphere into the dimensions of space and time.

30 For a more detailed discussion of Radzins' text, see 4.3.

Radzins (2017:298, my emphasis). For Weil, "the divine is materially present (…) the world is 'God's language to us,'" says Radzins (2017:303). In this way, one's experience of and concrete engagement with the world is interpreted as one's experience of the Word of God.[31] Thus for Weil, Christianity is particularly related to work contexts because spirituality is. The embodiment of Christianity at work is characterized by offering living examples of the spiritual character of work. The accent of Radzins/Weil is not on the timeless/timebound, but on the seen/unseen (or 'this world' and 'the world beyond'), where (the) Spirit appears in the *connection* of the two through one's engagement with materiality.

A similar notion of an intersection can be found in Mellor and Shilling's (2014:283) concept of a religious habitus[32]. Although Mellor and Shilling have no particular focus on workplaces, their approach brings together different aspects of the embodied character of the formation of Christian lifestyles in a way which I hold to be relevant for the study of Christians at work. In particular, they refer to an "embodied intersection of worldly and other worldly realities" and "the Christian location of the individual at the intersection of worldly and other worldly realities" (2014:283). They point out that the relationship between tradition, traditional sources, and the formation of individual lifestyles is complex and that the integration of traditional elements into one's own lifestyle is increasingly related to reflexive processes.

The dynamics of the manifestation of tradition and its Christian characteristics are particularly taken into account in Mellor & Shilling's (2014) notion of the *instauration* of a religious habitus. Mellor and Shilling (2010a) introduce the notion of the religious habitus by drawing on a number of sociological theories. They conceive of the habitus as "the embodied predispositions which promote particular forms of orientation to the world" (2010a:217). In particular, the notion of a religious habitus takes account of a number of aspects of embodiment specific to religious life, such as "the existential reassurances and anxieties reflective of human frailty, the stimulation and regulation of emotions relative to the sacred, and the development of rituals, techniques and pedagogics with the aim of stimulating particular

31 A similar thought can be found in Ligo (2011:459), who argues that the concreteness of one's workplace is an embodiment of grace (see also 4.3).

32 The attractiveness of the habitus concept for fsw research lies, generally speaking, in its capacity to bring together a number of cognitive, experiential, dispositional, and behavioral aspects as they concern the formation of different lifestyles. In this section, I concentrate on Mellor and Shilling's (2014, 2010a) notion of the religious habitus. For Bourdieu's notion of the habitus, see 5.5 and 6.1.

forms of consciousness and experience, including those related to transcendence and immanence" (2010a:217). Mellor and Shilling (2014) further develop the concept of the religious habitus by considering more explicitly the notions of instauration, reflexivity, and multi-realism[33], which are increasingly important given the "cultural discontinuities of the current era" (2014:290). Taking account of this, they re-conceptualize the religious habitus as "the reflexive crafting of a mode of being that locates human action, feeling and thought *at the embodied intersection of worldly and other-worldly realities*" (2014:277, my emphasis), "where traffic flows both ways" (2014:284). Thus, individuals do not unreflexively reproduce a traditional habitus, but increasingly encounter situations in which they have to choose "from where to receive religious guidance" (2014:279). Actors are routinely forced to take "an *'external', third-party view of their own practices*, assess them in relation to others, and plan according to changing contexts" (2014:281, my emphasis). Thus, individual actors do not simply reproduce stable traditional modes of being, but reflexively "negotiate their way through the heterogeneity of the present" (2014:281) by drawing on traditional repertoires to craft a mode of being. This is indicative of broader "hybridization of multiple-traditions and multiple modernities, wherein religious and other cultural resources are drawn upon and reinterpreted creatively" (2014:281).

In terms of the formation of a "Christian habitus" (2014:284), Mellor and Shilling identify three "central features of the Christian cultural 'repertoire'", upon which groups and individuals draw in the formation of, say, a Catholic, Protestant, or Pentecostal habitus: 1) "a focus of people being drawn out of their societies (by opening their bodies and minds to a transcendent other-worldly sphere)" (2014:283), 2) "the development of a relationally-defined but unique sense of personhood (arising from the experience of communion with God)" (2014:283), and 3) the acquisition of "the capacity to reflect upon, interrogate and deploy the individual conscience (in engaging morally with and identifying religious potential within, secular society)" (2014:283). In short, this characterizes "the Christian location of the individual at the intersection of worldly and other-worldly realities" (2014:283), which "has long required the faithful to consciously cultivate techniques and habits designed to 'open' their bodies to spiritual forces" (2014:283). Using Pentecostalism as an illustration, Mellor and Shilling out-

33 See also Fischer (1994:172), who speaks of "overlapping realities" in the Pauline writings, and the importance of the question of the "localization [Zugehörigkeit]" of humans in terms of these realities and his later (Fischer 2002:15) reference to the "localizing character [der lokalisierende Charakter] of Christian faith".

line how the practice of baptism in early Christianity "assumed new visibility with the modern Pentecostal focus on conversion" (2014:284) as an "active instauration of a Christian habitus" (2014:284). In the Pentecostal instauration of a Christian habitus, the "Pentecostal opening of the body as a conversional creation of a 'born-again subject'" (2014:284) centers "on the bodily dynamics of becoming and remaining a convert" (2014:284), which involves "techniques of prayer, pure living and a reflexive interrogation of the self across every aspect of life as believers prepare their bodies to be receptive to the Holy Spirit" (2014:284). Mellor and Shilling are thus able to account for a broader Christian cultural repertoire, upon which it is creatively drawn to instaur a Christian habitus, such as a Pentecostal habitus. This "reflexive reconstruction of tradition" (2014:287) is "certainly not 'traditional' in any simple sense" (2014:287), but "results in the emergence of something genuinely new" (2014:287). In a similar way, one could examine the crafting, for example, of an Amish (Dana 2007), Benedictine (Mercier and Deslandes 2017), or Greek Orthodox (Gotsis & Kortezi 2009) habitus as different ways of instauring a habitus in the crafting of Christian modes of being.

In terms of fsw and the study of Christians at work, this seems to imply that one's conduct at work is not totally determined by traditional influences, but that traditional influences on work conduct are *mediated by individual reflexive and experiential processes*. This may result in more fluid manifestations of traditions in contemporary workplaces. Thus, the influence of particular traditions is not linear, but dynamically shaped by individual biographies of workers and managers.[34] Therefore, while the study of Christians at work can build on studies of the influence of particular traditional sources on Christian practice at work or the study of particular strands of lived Christian (such as the Amish) traditions, as sketched in section 4.1, it should also take into account the dynamics of the manifestation of tradition(s) and the reality in which Christians localize themselves in their drawing upon traditional sources and by positioning themselves in relation to particular strands and aspects of lived tradition. In other words, the study of Christians at work must move beyond traditional particularities (of, say, Reformed spirituality at work) to address the cross-traditional factors that influence the inclusion or exclusion of particular traditional elements in the formation of Christian lifestyles.

34 This can be observed in our own data, for example with regard to the dynamic development of denominational orientations and affiliations in the biographies of the managers we studied (see 1.3).

Note that the term 'Christian' is used in Mellor and Shilling's approach as an umbrella term, of which 'Pentecostal' is one possible variation. It is the drawing upon what Mellor and Shilling term the Christian cultural repertoire that qualifies, say, a Pentecostal, Catholic, or Protestant habitus *as Christian*. With their identification of a Christian cultural repertoire, they offer a sociological answer to the question of the cross-traditional characteristics of Christian living. In the following section, I will address the question of a Christian evaluation of tradition and argue that it is roughly congruent with Mellor and Shilling's sketch.

4.2.2 Tradition in Christian perspective

In this section, I will draw on contemporary and biblical accounts of tradition to sketch a map of understanding for the role of tradition in a mode of existence pertinent to Christians. Let me start by highlighting and synthesizing some of the key aspects of the above discussion of fsw research with regard to the notion of tradition. Broadly speaking, in the respective fsw literature Christian existence seems to be mainly conceptualized through a traditional lens, that is, Christianity is studied as a (faith, spiritual, or religious) tradition, resulting in an understanding of Christian existence as consisting primarily of a particular set of (traditional) *beliefs* and *practices*. For the formation of particular modes of existence in work contexts, concrete *experience* is a third element which is considered in addition to beliefs and practices. The relation of experience to tradition is interpreted in different ways. According to one interpretation (see e.g. Miller and Ewest 2013c), experience interacts with traditional (transmitted, that is, 'handed-over') beliefs and practices in a way which leads to particular modifications of traditional modes of existence in the formation of concrete ways of living. According to another interpretation (see e.g. Smith 2008, who is concerned with spirituality in general, and not with a specifically Christian mode of existence), the role of experience as *spiritual* experience is juxtaposed with and prioritized over traditional beliefs and practices in the formation of spirituality at work. This results in an emphasis on spiritual experience at work *at the cost* of traditional beliefs and practices, and in the claim that traditional beliefs and practices are of secondary relevance or even irrelevant in the formation of spirituality at work.[35] In the study of Christian existence

35 In a similar vein, some (see e.g. Fry & Cohen 2009:276) have argued for the priority of spirituality over (traditional) religion in contemporary workplaces. On the definitions of these terms, see below (2.2).

at work, both lines of thinking can be taken up by highlighting the importance of experience and by accentuating the specific relatedness of beliefs and practices to the particular kind of experience pertinent to a Christian mode of existence.

Shannon Nicole Smythe (2018) draws upon the thinking of Karl Barth[36] to propose that the divine handing-over (παραδίδομι) of Jesus in the incarnation and crucifixion has its human correlate in the apostolic handing-over (παράδοσις) of tradition by the disciples. She argues that through Jesus's handing-over of the Spirit to his followers, they are given the power to correspond existentially to "the divine prototype of handing-over" through "the Spirit's non-identical repetition of Christ's death in us", and "in the apostolic way of handing-over Jesus" (2018:77), or, in other words, "in witnessing to Jesus" (2018:77). In this outlook, the human handing-over of tradition is located in the context of a wider framework. But even though the handing-over of tradition is important in this approach, the value of the handing-over of tradition lies in its correspondence to a reality, on which its significance is based. To explore this in more detail, I will, in this subsection, connect the general question of the formation of modes of existence via the possible interaction of *beliefs*, *practices,* and *experience* to a reading of biblical accounts and assessments of tradition.[37] The aim is to sketch a basic scheme or map of understanding of the particular relationship between beliefs, practices, and experience in a Christian mode of existence informed by the New Testament texts on tradition.

In the New Testament writings, different texts offer differing accounts and evaluations of the notion of tradition. Without ignoring the different nuances, meanings, and contexts that the different passages imply, it seems to me that the New Testament writings *do* speak with a rather clear voice with regard to the question of the role of tradition in the lives of followers of Christ. The Greek term παράδοσις appears 13 times in the New Testament (Mt 15.2.3.6, Mk 7:3.5.8.9.13, Gal 1:14, Col 2:8, 1 Cor 11:2, 2 Thess 2:15, 2 Thess 3:6).[38] There is no similar term used in the Hebrew Bible or

36 In particular, Barth's exegetical work on some of the New Testament occurences of παραδίδομι (see Smythe 2018:78).

37 I will address the problem of the anachronism of such a move in my discussion of Acts 11 below in the present section. On the hermeneutical approach taken toward the biblical texts, see also 1.4.

38 In addition, the verb παραδίδομι is used five times to refer to the impartation or passing on of instructions for believers (Lk 1:2, 1 Cor 11:2.23, 1 Pet 1:18, 2 Pet 2:21, see Williams 2017; on additional occurences of παραδίδομι, see Smythe 2018).

the Septuagint.[39] Broadly speaking, in the New Testament tradition refers to teachings on matters of belief and conduct (see e.g. Williams 2017).[40] In most of the 13 occurrences, the notion of tradition is used with a *negative* connotation.

In the synoptic references to tradition (Mt 15:2ff, Mk 7:3ff), a (dis)qualification of the tradition in question is introduced which targets its origins and the lifestyle to which it leads: "Mt 15:1 Then Pharisees and experts in the law came from Jerusalem to Jesus and said, 15:2 'Why do your disciples *disobey the tradition of the elders*? For they don't wash their hands when they eat'"[41] (my emphasis). Tradition here refers to something passed on from generation to generation and coming from the "elders".[42] Jesus modifies the qualification of tradition presented by the "Pharisees and experts in the law" as the tradition *of the elders*. His reaction focuses on the "Pharisees and experts in the law" themselves (instead of the elders) as those who claim the tradition in question as their own: "15:3 He answered them, 'And why do you disobey the commandment of God because of *your* tradition'" (my emphasis)? In addition, Jesus contrasts the commandment of God to their own tradition. In this sense, tradition stands against what God says. Jesus illustrates this by giving an example in verses 4 to 6, concluding that

> You have nullified the word of God *on account of your tradition*. 15:7 Hypocrites! Isaiah prophesied correctly about you when he said, 15:8 "This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me, 15:9 and they worship me in vain, teaching as doctrines the commandments *of men*" (my emphasis).

Using the notion of "teaching as doctrines the commandments of men" (from Isaiah 29:13), Jesus contrasts what comes from humans to what comes from God. As Mark has it: "Mk 7:8 Having no regard for the command of God, you hold fast to *human* tradition (τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων)" (my emphasis). The emphasis is not so much on the particular form of the concrete tradition which is of concern here, but on qualifying it

39 Except for some passages where the term is used with a different meaning, see Williams (2017). In spite of this terminological report concerning παράδοσις in the Septuagint, the idea of handing over instructions can, of course, be found in the Hebrew Bible (see e.g. Deuteronomy 6:6), and it is against the background of a culture in which tradition in this sense *is* important that the disputations of Jesus with the 'Pharisees and experts in the law' acquire their particular profile.

40 There is no entry on παράδοσις in THWNT, but there is one in TDNT (referenced on www.net.bible.org, accessed on 29 November 2017, and on https://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/nas/paradosis.html#Legend, accessed on 22 May 2018).

41 Scripture quotes are taken from the NET Bible (2017) if not otherwise indicated.

42 A description of what the respective tradition entails can be found in Mk 7,3f.

as human. Interestingly, for those observing it, the human origin and character of the tradition leads to a discrepancy between what one says and one's existential attitude, which is referred to as paying lip-service to God while "their heart is far from me" (Mt 15:8). In continuing, Jesus refers back to the washing of hands (the topic which the Pharisees and experts in the law used to initiate the conversation), and it becomes clearer why he assesses the human character of tradition as problematic. It is because of an inner source of impurity which characterizes human beings:

> Mk 7 20 He said, 'What comes out of a person defiles him. 7:21 For from within, out of the human heart, come evil ideas, sexual immorality, theft, murder, 7:22 adultery, greed, evil, deceit, debauchery, envy, slander, pride, and folly. 7:23 All these evils come *from within* and defile a person.' (my emphasis, see also Mt 15:11)

The thoroughly negative account of tradition in the synoptic gospels is thus connected to a radically critical view of the source and quality of what humans produce.

Similar to the synoptic accounts, the epistle to the Galatians also advocates a juxtaposition of human tradition and Godly intervention:

> 1:13 For you have heard of my former way of life in Judaism, how I was savagely persecuting the church of God and trying to destroy it. 1:14 I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my nation, and was extremely zealous for the *traditions of my ancestors*. 1:15 But when the one who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace was pleased 1:16 to reveal his Son in me so that I could preach him among the Gentiles*, I did not go to ask advice from any human being,* 1:17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before me, but right away I departed to Arabia, and then returned to Damascus (my emphasis).

Paul describes himself as working against "the church of God" and at the same time advancing in the "traditions of my ancestors". This "former way of life" was interrupted when God "was pleased to reveal his Son in me so that I could preach him among the Gentiles". Paul seems to be emphasizing here, and in the rest of the chapter, that the interruption of his "former way of life" and the subsequent changes in his behavior are attributed to the influence of God's intervention and not to that of other human beings. While one could get the impression that Paul somehow turns from one tradition to another, and thus becomes a proponent of another tradition,[43] it is interesting to note that God's intervention had the purpose of leading Paul to "preach the Son" among the Gentiles. After having focused above on beliefs and practices as crucial elements of tradi-

43 For a recent study of Paul's positioning work, see Eyl (2017).

tion and the question of their relationship to experience, I must stress that the event which is accentuated here, although it can be described as involving beliefs and practices, is closer to what the authors discussed above termed experience. Paul refers to the particular experience that God "was pleased to reveal his Son in me". Thus, what Paul now starts to pass on to others is probably not best depicted as a set of beliefs or practices (and it is, in this sense, not primarily a tradition), but as his report of an experience of the Son. Therefore, the movement of passing on or transmission becomes important in the very formation of followers of Christ, but it is inextricably linked to a specific kind of experience. Paul does not primarily communicate certain viewpoints as beliefs, and gives recommendations in terms of practices, but he preaches "the Son" as a result of his experience of Him.

In the epistle to the Colossians, one finds the description of a related contrast between living according to human traditions on the one hand, and according to the reality of Jesus Christ on the other:

> 2:6 Therefore, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, 2:7 rooted and built up in him and firm in your faith just as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. 2:8 Be careful not to allow anyone to captivate you through an empty, deceitful philosophy that is *according to human traditions* (κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων) and the elemental spirits of the world, and not *according to Christ* (κατὰ Χριστόν) (my emphasis).

The broader theme here is how to live one's life as a follower of Christ. Those who have "received Christ Jesus as Lord" are to live in him and be "rooted and built up in him". This 'living in Christ' stands in stark contrast to a mode of existence marked by being limited by a philosophy which is 'according to human traditions' and 'not according to Christ'. The contrast is clear: One can live one's life *either* according to human traditions *or* according to Christ.

Positively connoted references to tradition are entailed in the first epistle to the Corinthians and in the second epistle to the Thessalonians (1 Cor 11:2; 2 Thess 2:15; 3:6). In these passages, tradition seems to refer to the composite of Paul's (who is traditionally believed to be the author of 1 Cor and 2 Thess[44]) personal example and the oral and written teachings that he gave and passed on to the recipients of his message.

44 For a recent discussion of the authorship of the Pauline writings, see Schnelle (2017).

> 2 Thess 2:15 Therefore, brothers and sisters, stand firm and *hold on to the traditions that we taught you*, whether by speech or by letter. 2:16 Now may *our Lord Jesus Christ himself* and God our Father, who loved us and by grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope, 2:17 encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good thing you do or say (my emphasis).

Here one finds a juxtaposition between Paul's tradition and the Lord Jesus Christ. The context and situation sketched in 2 Thess 2:13–17 indicate that Paul's activities of transmission are *embedded* in Jesus Christ's and God the Father's acting to save and sanctify the Thessalonians by the Spirit.

Given the negatively connoted accounts of tradition in the synoptic gospels and the parallel existence of critical and positively connoted accounts of tradition in Pauline literature, it can be noted that it seems to be clear that the message of Jesus Christ is passed on from person to person, from individuals to groups, and from groups to individuals. Therefore, in the sense that there is a message (which can be conceptualized as implying beliefs and practices) which is handed over, tradition plays an undeniable role in the formation of the mode of existence in which followers of Christ partake. In the words of Smythe (2018:81), "apostolic paradosis" is "necessary". Nevertheless, the reader of the synoptic gospels and Pauline literature is also cautioned about human tradition. With reference to Paul, he presents himself as a human being who passes on 'tradition' and at the same time cautions his hearers about 'human tradition'.

Interestingly, a passage which sheds light on this tension is presented in Acts 11, where the term Christians (Χριστιανοὶ) is first introduced and where one of only three occurrences of the term in the New Testament writings is to be found.[45] Persecuted followers of Christ came to Antioch and spoke "the word" (τὸν λόγον) to the Judaioi (Acts 11:19). In addition, "men from Cyprus and Cyrene" came to Antioch and announced "the good news of the Lord Jesus" (εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν) to the Hellenists/Greeks (Acts 11:20). Thus, what is transmitted is referred to as "the word" and "the good news of the Lord Jesus". This is the 'traditional content', the substance of what has been passed on, so to speak. However, the text makes it clear that this human activity of passing on or handing over the word of Jesus was accompanied by God's intervening support, as "the hand of the Lord was with them" (Acts 11:21), and it ascribes the *success* of these human activities of transmission to the accompanying divine intervention, as "a great number who believed turned to the Lord"

45 On the label Χριστιανός in the New Testament and its role in the formation of Christian identity, see David Horrell (2007) and also sections 5.3.6 and 6.1.2.

(Acts 11:21). The recipients heard the message of Jesus, believed (the message), and *turned to Him*. They did not primarily turn to the apostles, or to certain teachings or beliefs, but they turned to the living Christ, as the reality to which the preaching of the apostles pointed them. According to Acts (11:26), "it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians". The status which the recipients of the message of Jesus obtained is aptly described with the term "Christians" since the term "Christians", in the context of its historical emergence, refers to the followers of Christ as those who *belong to* or are *allegiant to* Christ (see Horrell 2007:362, Grundmann et al. 1973:529, and also Bile & Gain 2012, Blass 1895, and Spicq 1961).

In contemporary fsw research, the term 'Christian/s' is used with reference to a (group of) tradition(s) and its members. To evaluate this usage of the term in the light of the socio-historical context in which the term emerges,[46] I will now explore the possible relationship of the terms of beliefs, practices, and experience found in contemporary fsw discourses to Acts 11.In this endeavor, an anachronistic reading of the contemporary notions of beliefs, practices, and experience into the text is to be avoided.[47] Instead, I will try to show that if such a comparison is performed carefully, the text of Acts 11, if taken seriously, resists a simplistic anachronistic reading. It is this particular resistance the text displays which may contribute to a modification of the understanding of what it means to be a Christian in the context of contemporary fsw research, informed by Acts 11. Now, if one relates the terminology of beliefs, practices, and experience found in contemporary fsw discourses to the events described in Acts 11, it seems misleading to say that the people in Antioch simply embraced certain beliefs they were told. If the term belief is employed to describe the events

46 On the origins of the term, see Horrell (2007:362–367). On the one hand, Daniel Boyarin (2009:11–16) argues for the later emergence of the idea of a religious identity constituted by a set of beliefs and practices "abstractable from cultural systems as a whole". On the other hand, David Horrell (2002) posits the New Testament period as crucial for the constitution of Christian identity. If both are correct, this could indicate that we should at least be hesitant to understand Christian identity as a religious identity.

47 On the problem of anachronistic interpretations of historical texts, see Skinner (2002). Regarding the role of modern analytical categories in the interpretation of ancient cultures, I like Daniel Boyarin's (2009:10) remark: "This is not to say that modern analytic categories, such as gender or identity, should not be used in the analysis of ancient cultures but these analytic categories should be tools for exhibiting what is actually happening in the culture (and what not) whether by that name or another and not ahistorical categories that are simply assumed to be there for every culture."

to which Acts 11 refers, it seems more appropriate to say that people from Antioch were told certain beliefs about Jesus and, subsequently, they turned to Jesus. If one refers to "the message of Jesus" as a belief or a set of beliefs, it is crucial to note that these beliefs are not portrayed as closed cognitive constructs, but that they are open in their reflecting of and pointing to Jesus Christ as present and alive. If one takes into account contemporary fsw discourses, this difference is crucial. The people from Antioch did not primarily relate to certain beliefs in a new way, nor did they primarily become members of a tradition. They did, however, relate in a new way to the person the respective beliefs point to. In this light, conceptualizing Christians as characterized by the mere adoption of traditional beliefs and practices (irrespective of the reality they are relating to), as contemporary fsw research seems to be inclined to do, ignores the localizing activity of Christians in relation to Jesus Christ as the context of the formation of their mode of existence and as the context in which their beliefs, practices, and experiences become intelligible.

Following this line of thought, I would say that the definition of a Christian proposed by Clive Staples Lewis on the basis of Acts 11 is not wrong, but potentially misleading in the light of contemporary fsw usages of the label 'Christian' as referring to a (religious, spiritual, or faith) tradition of beliefs and practices.Lewis (1980:XII) defines a Christian as someone "who accepts the common doctrines of Christianity".[48] He arrives at his definition by arguing that in Antioch, what marked the Christians as Christians is that they accepted the teachings of the apostles. Now it is true, according to Acts 11, that those who were called Christians accepted the teachings of the apostles, but if that had been the decisive indicator, then the followers of Christ would have had to be called 'disciples of the apostles' or something similar. But the context of their accepting the apostles' teaching was that "the hand of the Lord was with them" (Acts 11:21) while they delivered the message and that the teachings did not primarily consist of information to be accepted cognitively, but it was "the good news of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 11:20) which resulted in an existential turning point for those who heard the message. Although it seems in line with the account of Acts 11 to say

48 Note that my point is only that, in the light of contemporary fsw discourses (of which it is not part), Lewis' definition can be misleading but not that it is wrong. Given the particular understanding of what Lewis means by "common doctrines of Christianity" and "accepting", which he develops in "Mere Christianity" (1980), I agree with Lewis' definition, and I trust there is some hope that he would have agreed with my reading of Acts 11.

that they accepted the teachings of the apostles, it is not the *teachings* to which they turned, but that their acceptance of the teachings led them to turn *to the Lord*. In this regard it was, of course, crucial for the formation of Christians that the people of Antioch accepted the teachings of the apostles, but the importance of the teachings of the apostles for the formation of Christians is inextricably linked to the particular context of the corresponding reality in which human transmission (the handing over of tradition) is located, and to the particular function of the handing-over of the teachings of the apostles to locate the people from Antioch in this context and initiate an existential turning point.

The differentiation between traditional content which is transmitted and the reality to which it corresponds also appears elsewhere in the New Testament. For example, in the first epistle of John, one finds the juxtaposition of 'the word of life' with 'the life' itself:

> 1:1 This is *what we proclaim to you*: what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and our hands have touched (concerning *the word of life*—1:2 and *the life was revealed*, and we have seen and testify and *announce to you the eternal life* that was with the Father and was revealed to us). 1:3 What we have seen and heard *we announce to you* too, so that you may have fellowship with us (and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ). (my emphasis).

The process of transmission is described here in a lively manner as including hearing, seeing, and touching (1:1). This process is distinguished from the content of what is transmitted, that is, "what we proclaim to you", and "the word of life", and this is in turn contrasted with the experience of the reality toward which the 'traditional content' is pointing to, the revelation of life itself (1:2). It is the experience of this reality which, in a cycle of transmission, leads to a movement of sharing ("what we have seen and heard we announce to you too") in order to include the recipients of the message (the traditional content, so to speak) in the same reality which the author has experienced, "so that you may have fellowship with us (and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ)". Thus, the acts of handing over tradition are framed in a particular way. In this light, in the formation of followers of Christ, the practice of handing over tradition is closely linked to the experience of the reality to which the transmitted beliefs point and is intended to include the recipients in the same reality. Generally speaking, with reference to fsw research, tradition, in the context of Christian existence, is inextricably linked to a corresponding reality which is experienced. In terms of the study of Christians, traditional beliefs and practices are to be considered in their connection to and struc-

turing toward the living reality in which they locate individuals and in which individuals locate themselves.

With this in mind, the problem of the label 'Christian' and the talk of Christianity as a faith tradition or a religious/spiritual tradition becomes clearer. In 4.2.1, I drew upon a sociological perspective to argue that the description of Christians as members of a tradition marked by adherence to certain beliefs and practices is reductionist if it draws a veil over the particular Christian location of individuals in which Christian beliefs and practices become intelligible. In this subsection, I have drawn upon the New Testament writings to show that such a sociological perspective is congruent with a Christian account of the role of tradition in the life of followers of Christ which is informed by the New Testament writings. In this respect, the use of the label Christian as referring to a tradition marked by certain beliefs and practices, irrespective of the corresponding reality toward which individuals are located, ignores the context in which Christian beliefs and practices become intelligible. In a synthesizing view, a reading of the New Testament accounts of tradition seems to offer a frame with which to evaluate traditional (that is, handed over) beliefs and practices for their Christianness. The crucial criterion for evaluating traditional beliefs and practices seems to be their being 'according to Christ'. Such an evaluative scheme or frame refers to two basically different qualities, according to which traditional contents and patterns can be qualified as being either 'according to human tradition' (κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων), or 'according to Christ' (κατὰ Χριστόν).

First, traditional beliefs and practices can be part of a merely human tradition which ignores the reality of God in Christ. Importantly, in light of the New Testament writings, observing such tradition results in superficial and inauthentic ways of living. Human tradition, in this sense, is dead because it leaves no room for the living God, even if some might call it 'Christian' and apply this label to their beliefs and practices or trace their roots in history back to important Christian women and men.[49]

49 The difference between living in a way that is oriented toward God as a living reality, on the one hand, and toward dead human products, which leaves no room for God, on the other, can also be illustrated by reference to Isaiah's notion of the *Elohim chai* (אלהים חי), the living God, in the story of the liberation of Judah from an invasion by King Sennacherib of Assyria, as described in Isaiah 36f. "In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah's reign" (Isa 36:1), after Sennacherib's armies have marched up against the fortified cities of Judah and captured them, he sends a large army to Jerusalem, and Sennacherib's messenger challenges the inhabitants of Jerusalem: "Has any of the gods of the nations rescued his land from the power of the king of Assyria? 36:19 Where are the

Second, and in contrast to the first quality to which the evaluative frame refers, traditional beliefs and practices can be 'according to Christ' and thus point to the reality of God in Christ. In terms of the formation of individual lifestyles, this is reflected in Paul's formula "for me, to live is Christ" (Phil 1:21). In terms of concrete behavior and particular practices, the criterion seems to refer to the structuring of a practice toward the practitioners' existential participation in Christ's life, death, and resurrection.[50] On the level of thought and beliefs, the distinction between human standards and the reality of Christ is particularly emphasized in 2 Corinthians 10:3–5:

> 10:3 For though we live as human beings (ἐν σαρκὶ), we do not wage war according to human standards (κατὰ σάρκα), 10:4 for the weapons of our warfare are not human weapons, but are made powerful by God for tearing down strongholds. We tear down arguments 10:5 and every arrogant obstacle that is raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to make it obey Christ.

gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Indeed, did any gods rescue Samaria from my power? 36:20 Who among all the gods of these lands have rescued their lands from my power? So how can the Lord rescue Jerusalem from my power?" (Isa 36:18–20). As a reaction, Hezekiah prays to God. He does not downplay the power of the Assyrians, but he outlines, in his prayer, an essential contrast between the so-called gods as human products and the Elohim chai (אלהים חי), the living God: "37:17 Pay attention, Lord, and hear! Open your eyes, Lord, and observe! Listen to this entire message Sennacherib sent and how he taunts *the living God*! 37:18 It is true, Lord, that the kings of Assyria have destroyed all the nations and their lands. 37:19 They have burned the gods of the nations, *for they are not really gods, but only the product of human hands manufactured from wood and stone. That is why the Assyrians could destroy them.* 37:20 Now, O Lord our God, rescue us from his power, so all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you alone are the Lord" (Isaiah 37:17–20, my emphasis). While these two chapters contain rich descriptions of the various conversations between the parties involved, there is only one short verse which describes God's intervention: "37:36 The Lord's messenger went out and killed 185,000 troops in the Assyrian camp." This resulted in the liberation of Jerusalem from the Assyrians: "37:36 (…) When they got up early the next morning, there were all the corpses! 37:37 So King Sennacherib of Assyria broke camp and went on his way." The living God liberates his people, while human products made to protect and liberate those who made them are ineffective. Transferring this contrast portrayed in Isaiah 36f to the question of the relationship between beliefs, practices, and experience, we can note that, in this light, merely 'human tradition' is dead because it is 'only the product of human hands' (and minds), whereas the value of traditional beliefs and practices is to be judged according to the degree they support someone's orientation toward the living God.

50 In this respect, Smythe (2018) discusses centering prayer as an example of an embodied practice of spiritual kenosis.

In this regard, the mental area of thoughts and beliefs is characterized by a war, as the military vocabulary[51] used in this passage suggests. In terms of Christian existence, "taking every thought captive to make it obey Christ" therefore seems to be a crucial characteristic of the mental aspects of the existence of Christians. Thus, the Christian location of individuals at the embodied intersection of 'this and other-worldly realities' (see 4.2.1) is a location of individuals in relation to Christ. In other words, the Christianness of beliefs is to be judged in terms of their being structured in accordance with Christ.[52] This particular localization, which characterizes Christians' relationship to tradition, beliefs, practices, and experience, needs to be taken into account in the study of Christians in work contexts. Interestingly, in fsw research, this is considered by approaches to Christian *spirituality* at work. In the following section, I will thus introduce approaches to Christian spirituality at work which, in different ways, reflect the 'Christian criterion' of being 'according to Christ' and discuss their contribution to the study of Christians at work.

4.3 Christian spirituality at work

The accounts which I will discuss in this section approach Christian living at work via the notion of spirituality. My review focuses on four instructive cases which entail an understanding of Christian living at work.[53] Vivian Ligo (4.3.1) and Inese Radzins (4.3.3) configure Christian spirituality as one form of (general) spirituality of work. André Delbecq (4.3.2) addresses the spiritual journey of a Christian manager, focusing particularly on the question of how it can (and cannot) be recognized as a *Christian* journey. Christopher Mabey and colleagues (4.3.4) position a Christian approach to leadership in the context of current discourses of spirituality at work. In my discussion, I will focus in particular on the sketch of Christian living at work which these accounts entail.

51 On the significance of the warfare imagery used in 2 Corinthians, see Bowens (2018).

52 In this sense, I think that, in line with the Pauline writings, Christian theology is to be "non-foundational" (Miller 2014:4), in the sense that "Jesus Christ *is* the apocalypse for Paul" (Harink 2003:74, quoted in Miller 2014:3f) and that "God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ cannot be secondary or subordinate to any prior systems of meaning, idea, ethics, beliefs, or principles. Christ *himself* is the reality, and everything must be seen in his dominating epistemic light" (Miller 2014:1).

53 For further recent approaches to Christian spirituality at work, see also Buszka and Ewest (2020), McGhee (2019), Pio and McGhee (2019), and Wiebe and Driscoll (2018).

4.3.1 Vivian Ligo's Christian spirituality of work

Vivan Ligo (2011) articulates a Christian form of spirituality of work by reference to a general notion of work. She identifies five interrelated variables of work: product, process, end user, the worker, and the workplace (2011:441). As each of these five variables entails a spiritual dimension, work is to be understood as inherently spiritual. Christian spirituality of work is characterized by a particular religious perspective on the spirituality of work, says Ligo (2011:441f), which can only be described from within its context. In other words, while the (general) spirituality[54] of work is given with the existence of the phenomenon of work in a general sense, its particular "explication" (2011:443) may be Christian (or e.g. Islamic, or Jewish, or even atheistic, or agnostic, see 2011:446). In short, "spirituality becomes Christian when lived through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit and is mediated by participation in the life of the church," says Ligo (2011:442).

The first variable of work, 'product', refers to "the work at hand" (2011:443), understood in broad terms as including "one's craft, professional practice, or even one's daily chore" (2011:443). The second variable, 'process', refers to the method by which one proceeds. There are are four precepts inherent in the concept of method, which Ligo takes from Bernard Lonergan's understanding of method: "be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, and be responsible" (Ligo 2011:443). With respect to the work process, these precepts are the basis for evaluating one's work in terms of productivity and effectiveness. The third variable, 'customer', together with the following variables, points to work's interpersonal character and to work as a relational event. The fourth variable, 'the worker', emphasises that working involves "giving of oneself" (2011:444), the participation of the "whole person, body and spirit" (2011:444). The fifth variable, 'the workplace', "encompasses not only the physical, institutional, structural, and cultural, but also and more importantly, the interpersonal settings, in which work is done" (2011:445).

Based on the inherent spiritual dimension of these five variables of work, Ligo (2011:448) proposes five criteria for "deliberately and consciously developing a spirituality". The deepening of spirituality according to these criteria can (but does not have to) be pursued "within Christianity" (2011:448):

54 Note, however, the Christian origin of the term spirituality, see Ligo (2011:446).

1) Does the spirituality tend toward the fullness of reality? (product)
2) Does it heed Lonergan's precepts? (process)
3) Does it have a positive impact on relationships at work? (customer)
4) Does it call for self-investment? (worker)
5) Is it open to a sense of being graced? (workplace)

In meeting the first of the above criteria, human work "becomes a participation in God's work of creation, providence, and grace", says Ligo (2011:455), in that it could display redemptive, creative, providential, compassionate, and revelatory qualities. The participative character of work is based on an "experience of a personal presence of God" (2011:454).

The second criterion is expressed, says Ligo, in Lonergan's precepts (be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, and be responsible; or: do things attentively, rightly, well, and for the sake of others). From a Christian perspective, heeding these precepts creates "a purity of heart that enables one to see God right there in the daily grind of work" (2011:456). Thus, work is lived as a form of "conscious participation in the creative act of the Holy Spirit" (2011:457).

In terms of the third criterion, work as a relational event (2011:447) exhibits the polarities identified by Erik Erikson, says Ligo (2011:447): "trust versus mistrust, autonomy versus shame and doubt, initiative versus guilt, industry versus inferiority, identity versus role confusion, intimacy versus isolation, generativity versus stagnation, and integrity versus despair". In a Christian spirituality of work, the relationships at work tend toward the former (trust, autonomy, et cetera) and away from the latter qualities (mistrust, shame, et cetera).

The fourth criterion of a Christian spirituality of work encompasses self-investment in creativity instead of self-preoccupation. In work, one becomes a participant "in God's own self-giving to creation, as well as God's self-giving within the Trinitarian reality of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit", says Ligo (2011:459). "Through the Incarnate Son, redeemed humanity finds its irrevocable place within the self-giving of the Trinity. Redeemed humanity finds itself encircled by the Trinity of Lover, Beloved, and Love" (2011:459).

The fifth criterion refers to a particular perception of the workplace: "the very concreteness of the workplace is but the embodiment of the spiritual dimension of reality, which Christianity proclaims as grace", says Ligo (2011:459). Work in the totality of its aspects can be assumed as "a participation in Christ's total act of self-giving" in his passion, death, and resurrection. Christ is present in all that is, and the workplace is "installed in the

grace-filled presence of God" (2011:460). At the same time, the workplace can be "a microcosm of sinful social structures" (2011:463), of domination and exploitation. This leads to the question of if one can "pursue a Christian spirituality of work when one is entangled in the capitalist system that is condemned as structurally sinful" (2011:464)? However, "blanket judgments on the inherent sinfulness of the structure, within which workplaces concretely exist, distance the clergy and/or theologian from where workers experience a craving for spirituality" (2011:264).[55] In contrast, it needs to be emphasized that workplaces need to stay "open to being graced" (2011:465). The workplace as a human construct remains a space for the *Creator Spiritus*, says Ligo. Therefore, in spite of the potentially negative aspects of work and the workplace, it "cannot be emphasized enough that the workplace is also installed in the grace-filled presence of God" (2011:465).

In conclusion, work is "sacramental" (2011:465) in that it entails, in its five variables, a spiritual dimension, which can be actualized. Work thus serves as the context for "the recognition of God who calls us to participate in the Trinitarian life of self-giving", says Ligo (2011:465). Her approach entails both a perspective on work and an account of Christian existence at work.[56] Ligo's account is conceptually based on a general analysis of work as inherently spiritual and not on a particular Christian view of work and the workplace.[57] To be sure, a Christian understanding of work and the workplace are offered, but less on a theoretical level and more as part of a description of perspectives which are part of lived Christian experience. While Ligo offers a general account of work as spiritual, she configures Christian spirituality as one particular way of actualizing work's spiritual dimension. Although Christian spirituality is "stamped with Christian perspectives" (2011:442), Christian spirituality is not primarily an intellectual or mental undertaking, but the locus of spirituality is the "actual, existential or lived level" (2011:448). For Ligo, a Christian perspective on the spirituality of work is inextricably bound to the existential character of

55 A similar point is made by Schneider (2007:280f).

56 In fact, in Ligo's account, the two aspects seem to be naturally interwoven in such a way that it would be artificial to separate them. However, I mention the presence of these two aspects here because in the following chapter on theological approaches to work contexts, I will discuss approaches which address a perspective of work without considering Christian existence as the existential context in which a (Christian) perspective on work is embedded.

57 As is the case, for example, in Daniels's approach, see 5.4.

Christian spirituality in such a way that a Christian perspective can only be described from within its context (2011:441f).[58]

What marks a Christian spirituality as Christian, according to Ligo? My first interpretation was that the five criteria which Ligo proposes are intended to evaluate the Christianness of someone's spirituality. However, after I had taken a closer look at the text, the status of these five criteria in relation to Christian spirituality was not fully clear. They are proposed as a way of evaluating one's spirituality based on the five variables of work (which, according to Ligo, do not reflect a particular Christian view of work), and are first introduced without the use of specific Christian or theological terms (except for the fifth criterion). However, in the respective section heading, they are introduced as "criteria for developing a Christian spirituality of work" (2011:445) and they are used as the framework with which to explicate a Christian spirituality of work. Even though the status of these five criteria is not fully clear, there are a number of phrasings scattered throughout the text which clearly indicate Ligo's understanding of the 'Christian characteristics' of Christian existence at work (which can be linked to, but not identified with the five criteria): It is "lived through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit" (2011:442), and "meditated by participation in the life of the church" (2011:442). A particularly Christian form of spirituality is linked to faith "in God as revealed by Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit" (Kenneth Collins quoted in Ligo 2011:449). The fundamental meaning of being Christian is "to be in Christ" (2011:449). This is an "existential condition" which is marked by "the mystery of the passion, death, and resurrection of Christ" (2011:449), and which is "at once intelligible, interpersonal, ecclesial, embodied, historical, eschatological, ethical, and open to prayer, worship, and ministry" (2011:449). Work can potentially become a response to a vocation and an occasion for interpersonal communion, and the workplace can become a place to apprehend the presence of grace, says Ligo. However, as work can often be toilsome and alienating, "work itself needs to be redeemed and transformed through the passion, death, and resurrection of Christ" (2011:451). Part of the redemption of work is the overcoming of the separation of work from its inherent spiritual dimension. When work is experienced with toil, the "inherent relationship between work and spirituality" (2011:451) is obscured. The experience of work can be redeemed from a sense of drudgery and toil by overcoming the "discon-

58 Note that, according to Ligo (2011:441f), the fact that they can only be described from within their (existential) context applies to religious perspectives in general (and not only to a Christian perspective).

nection between the material and the spiritual" (2011:454). Thus, a Christian approach to work includes and redeems work's toilsome aspects through participation in God's creative act in the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus, says Ligo (2011:456). Our work can be "assumed as a participation in Christ's total act of self-giving" (2011:460). In this way, Christian existence is particularly linked to "an experience of a personal presence of God" (2011:454) and one's spirituality is completed and redeemed in Jesus Christ (2011:465). In short, Ligo accentuates some of the characteristic aspects of being a Christian at work: it is an existential condition of being in Christ, including whole people, is lived through the Holy Spirit, and is characterized by participation in Christ's passion, death, and resurrection. While Ligo discusses Christian spirituality in relation to work (and workers) in general, I will now turn to Delbecq's approach which focuses particularly on managers.

4.3.2 André Delbecq on the Christian manager's spiritual journey

André Delbecq (2004) proposes an account of the spiritual journey of a Christian manager in which he draws upon his experience of teaching executives and working with Christian executives to explore the "nature of the spiritual journey as described by the Christian business leaders" (2004:253). He follows Gerald Cavanagh in understanding spirituality as entailing a "worldview" and a "path" (Delbecq 2004:245, see Cavanagh et al. 2003:119). Thus, an executive informed by the Christian tradition should adopt a particular intellectual *perspective* and practice a set of *disciplines* for "forming the inner self", says Delbecq (2004:245).

In terms of the respective *worldview* or 'intellectual perspective', he identifies four propositions often held by Christian executives. First, they see the primary role of business in providing necessary products and services, and their leadership role as a form of loving service (2004:245). Second, they see their organization as a place of community (2004:246). Third, they have a concern for organizational justice (2004:247) and, fourth, for stewardship (2004:248). Delbecq argues that the actions of these "committed" (2004:245) Christians are "congruent with the actions of many people of good will across other spiritual traditions" (2004:248). Their assumption of a Christian worldview only becomes evident by focusing on the inner life and the inner "path" (2004:249) of Christian business executives.

To describe this *path*, Delbecq (2004:249–252) creates a "composite executive", named Sally, "composed of the stories" (2004:249) the Christian executives he worked with shared. Sally's spiritual path deepens after she joins a "Christian Business Professional Club that meets monthly" (2004:249), where listening to the scriptures of her tradition and prayer focused on the calling as a business leader is practiced. In the early stages of her journey, she adopts two spiritual disciplines: evening reading of scripture (followed by reflection and prayer) and a daily examen (an exercise aimed at continuously integrating lessons learned from scripture reading into daily activities through daily evaluation of one's conduct and prayer). These practices increase her self-awareness. After a while, she starts to practice "mindfulness", that is, attending to God in the "now" of each daily activity and including short pauses between activities to remind herself to be "present" in what she is doing, says Delbecq (2004:250). This increases her ability to be present with each task or person. Later on, she includes the "contemplative practice" (2004:250) of "Christian centering prayer"[59], "where she detaches from thought and affect for twenty minutes twice-daily" (Delbecq 2004:250). Thus, she learns to "detach from fears, anxieties, and self-concerns" (2004:250). Sally also begins to explore the traditional Christian practice of discernment, which helps her to listen to all points of view, to solve problems participatorily, to return to prayer, and to hold a problem in her heart, while paying attention to the movements of desolation and consolation (2004:251). Thus, she learns to include affective and spiritual insights alongside rational problem-solving. In addition, she "becomes increasingly accepting of the mystery of suffering" (2004:251) and develops an increasing understanding of Christian tradition's emphasis on the suffering of Christ. In this way, she develops the capacity to endure difficult moments in her organization and to provide support to others in difficult situations (2004:251). Finally, "worship" (2004:252) becomes important to her, with an increased awareness of "the presence of the mystery of the Spirit at work and in the lives of colleagues" and "deepened participation in the worship of her tradition" (2004:252).

Summarizing Sally's path with regard to spiritual disciplines and her inner journey, Delbecq (2004:252) argues that

> by accepting the disciplines of reading, reflecting, and meditation with scripture, the examen (opening herself to greater inner awareness), mindfulness (being present to the Spirit in the eternal "now"), discernment, openness to suffering, and worship, Sally has tread (sic) the classical Christian path.

59 As proposed by Thomas Keating. See also Smythe (2018).

Delbecq (2004:252) proposes understanding the spiritual journey as involving "cycles of conversion" and "increased illumination and unification" which is "never over this side of death", and that any progress on this journey is "a gift of grace".

Delbecq emphasizes that the spiritual journey is an inner journey hidden from the observer, and that it results in leadership action that can be fully described in secular terms. Growth in the spiritual journey can be perceived by outside observers as "strength of character" and "business savvy" (2004:253). Only through insight into the personal journey of Christian executives is it possible to recognize that the "special qualities" of a leader "build on an inner foundation" (2004:253):

> In one sense little separates the agenda regarding many organizational goals of a Christian and a secular humanist. Both embrace a desire to transform business in order that it evolves a human way of operating to efficiently and effectively provide for the needs of the world (Lakeland, 2003). The Christian is expected to join all efforts seeking to address such matters as environmental sustainability, social justice, and the mitigation of destructive features of globalization. At the same time Christianity asks questions provoked by its own wisdom tradition, and has a long established set of social teachings regarding the role of work, economic justice, and human solidarity (Alford and Naughton, 2001). This implies that a Christian executive informed by the tradition should bring a particular intellectual perspective to the business endeavor, and engage a set of disciplines for forming the "inner self" as a business leader (Delbecq 2004:244f).

Let me comment briefly on Delbecq's positioning of a Christian mode of existence with regard to the mode of existence of a 'secular humanist'. Delbecq identifies the Christian proprium of a manager's spirituality with a particular perspective on business and the practice of a set of disciplines.

In terms of the *perspective* of Christians, Delbecq says that "in one sense little separates the agenda regarding many organizational goals of a Christian and a secular humanist" (2004:44) and argues that the spiritual journey is an *inner journey hidden from the observer, and that it results in leadership action that can be fully described in secular terms*. This manner of framing seems to be very close to the proposal of some theologians[60] who argue that there are no particularly Christian ethical/moral norms, but that Christianity provides particular substantiation/justification of such norms and a motivation for compliance. To me, it seems that the main drivers for adopting such a position are to create some common ground for Christians and non-Christians, and not to offend anybody who does not share a Christian commitment.

60 e.g. Rich and Oermann, see 5.3.

However, it is precisely Delbecq's concrete description of a manager's spiritual formation which substantiates the criticism of such a position. For, in Sally's case, moral and spiritual formation are so closely intertwined that it seems artificial to separate them (see in particular 2004:250f). In practice, these are inextricably linked in a way which is not captured by conceptualizing spiritual formation as merely providing the substantiation of and motivation for compliance with moral norms or values or as the 'inner' foundation of 'outer' leadership action. Rather, the case of Sally seems to suggest that the spiritual experience and the corresponding moral behavior are not two separate 'things', one merely motivating (psychologically) or justifying (intellectually) the other. If the moral behavior in question can be fully described in secular terms, such a description remains deficient. Not only does it not capture the particular psychological motivation or conceptual substantiation, *but it cannot account for its practical substantiation*, the nitty-gritty of how it comes about. If one takes a close look at the concrete existential formation of the spiritual life of a Christian, as described by Delbecq, and how it includes the development of a perspective and a lifestyle, it becomes, to me, highly questionable whether Christian life is just an option to become a nice and decent business person, just a somewhat arbitrary means to an end which could also be achieved differently.

In terms of the *practice* of Christians, Delbecq (2004) stresses that spiritual formation is facilitated by practicing spiritual disciplines. What is crucial is an attentiveness to the Spirit and, later on in the spiritual development, an awareness of the "mystery of suffering" (2004:251) and an understanding of the suffering of Christ. Delbecq (2004:252) also takes up the notion that the spiritual journey is both enacted by humans and a gift of grace at the same time.

What Delbecq does not mention explicitly, in contrast to Ligo, is the aspect of participating in Christ. However, he stresses the role of a group of Christians that supports Sally on her spiritual journey. Such a group can be interpreted, from a Christian perspective, as a form of the body of Christ. In addition, it should be noted in particular that, in the Christian tradition, the contemplative practice of centering prayer, with its focus on detaching from thought and affect, and on letting go of "fears, anxieties, and self-concerns" (2004:250) is a practice structured toward embodied spiritual kenosis and participation in Christ's death and resurrection (see Smythe 2018:77). The practice of detaching from thought and affect reflects the Pauline putting to death of one's desires and passions, the 'killing of the practices of

the body'[61], and the corresponding "pneumatic vivification" (Miller 2014:130), which means participation in Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection. Thus, even though Delbecq only explicates the practical importance of an understanding of the suffering Christ and the awareness of the mystery of suffering insofar as it helps Sally to endure diffulties at work and to provide support to others in difficulties, the consideration of a Pauline perspective points to additional possible interconnections between different aspects of the spiritual journey, as described by Delbecq, with Christians' participation in Christ, as described, for example, by Ligo (see 4.3.1)

This brings me to the crucial point where I find Delbecq's approach to be inconsistent: I suggest that what he (2004:244) refers to as the similar "agenda" of a Christian and a humanist *is also part of the Pauline 'passions and desires'* or, in Delbecq's terminology, of thought and affect, of "fears, anxieties, and self-concerns" (2004:250), from which one needs to 'detach' or, in a Pauline perspective, which are to be 'put to death'. This is why, in this light, there is a difference in quality between a secular humanist way of life and a Christian mode of existence. The secular humanist with the most noble agenda one can imagine differs from the Christian, not because the agenda of the Christian is more or less noble than the secular humanist's agenda, but because the Christian has crucified her very agenda. There are two different modes of existence at work here. The Christian relation to any humanist motive is simply that they 'detach' themselves from them or 'put them to death'. In a Pauline perspective, it is such actual participation in the death and life of Christ through the Spirit which characterizes Christians. Christian existence displays both moral and spiritual quality, not because of the moral agenda of Christians, but by their very participation in the life of Christ through the Spirit, where Christ becomes the wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1 Cor 1:30) of those who belong to and participate in Him. Thus, the lives of followers of Christ are not moral in themselves, but insofar as they display the shape of Christ. Becoming moral, in this sense, transcends any agenda to live a good or just life as a human being because it involves and participates in death and new life.[62]

61 Romans (8:13) speaks of the the practices of the body (τὰς πράξεις τοῦ σώματος), which are to be put to death (θανατοῦτε) through the Spirit.

62 With regard to the juxtaposition of a Christian and a secular humanist, it is interesting to note the Pauline distinction between spiritual (πνευματικός) and human (κατὰ ἄντροπον) (see 1 Cor 3,1–5).

In summary, in Delbecq's account the spiritual journey seems to be primarily facilitated through the adoption of perspectives (provided by tradition) and through (traditionally inspired) disciplines which are first practiced outside one's work contexts, and which then exert an influence on one's behavior at work. In Delbecq's conception, traditional perspectives and practices are thus two pillars *from outside one's work context* which provide a foundation for the spiritual journey at work. Christian spirituality at work is thus conceptualized as the inclusion of traditional perspectives and practices at work. In Radzins's approach, to which I will turn presently, spirituality is conceived of as being an internal part of work itself.

4.3.3 Inese Radzins on the spiritual nature of work in the thinking of Simone Weil

Inese Radzins (2017:291) outlines how Simone Weil repositions work as a "site for spirituality" by drawing on Marx's notion of labor as life activity. Weil does not locate spirituality in a religious tradition, doctrine, or in personal piety, says Radzins, but in one's capacity to work. "Spirit arises in the activity of living, and more specifically in laboring—in one's engagement with materiality" (Radzins 2017:291). Materiality is crucial in this regard because "living labor requires thoughtful engagement with the world" (2017:304).

Drawing on Marx's distinction between living and dead labor, Weil criticizes capital as a force which "disrupts the individual's relation to her own work by reducing it to the mere activity of calculable 'production'", says Radzins (2017:291). The influence of capital leads to the separation of life from work. Capital has an abstracting and deadening influence on labor, disconnecting human subjectivity from "living praxis" (2017:291). In this way, "life itself is exchanged for a simulacrum of life" (2017:291). As a corrective to this influence, Weil positions living labor as spiritual. Dead labor alienates the worker from her life activity. Weil points to the possibility of individuals "feel[ing] more 'at home' while working" (Radzins 2017:293). She draws upon Marx's notion of alienation (from the product of labor, from the act of working, from oneself, and from one another) which characterizes dead labor. In contrast, living labor is a free ("as little constraint over the means of production as possible", Radzins 2017:294) and conscious activity.

This implies being thoughtful about one's work (be it "painting, plowing, writing, building, or cooking", 2017:295) and it involves the "faculty of attention" (2017:295). In dead labor, work becomes only a means to an end.

Living labor comes from what Weil calls "the world beyond", says Radzins (2017:298), from what is unseen (thought, contemplation, or attention): "Spirit appears in the connection between the world beyond (what is unseen) and this world (the seen)" (Radzins 2017:298). For Weil, "the divine is materially present (…) the world is 'God's language to us'" (Radzins 2017:303[63]) and the beauty of the world is "Christ's tender smile" (Radzins 2017:305) to us. Weil's thinking suggests "an opening to the ways laboring is always and already spiritual", says Radzins (2017:303).

With regard to the larger society one lives in, "the destructive tendencies of modern capital manifested in deadening working conditions" (Radzins 2017:304) are to be minimized. Therefore, in political life, "the spiritual concerns of workers" (Radzins 2017:304) are to be prioritized, and free and conscious laboring is to be increased, and dead labor, which objectifies the worker and neutralizes one's life activity, is to be minimized.

What understanding of Christian existence at work is presented in this approach from Radzins/Weil? For Weil, consistent with her location of spirituality in the capacity to work and not in a religious tradition, doctrine, or personal piety, spirituality does not imply a particular religious affiliation, says Radzins (2017:303). For Weil, what is considered secular is also related to the unseen and thus implies a spiritual connection, and for her, working is spiritual and workplaces are sacred. Weil's own "emphasis is on Christianity" (Radzins 2017:306) and she emphasizes the importance of showing "the public the possibility of a truly incarnated Christianity" (Weil quoted in Radzins 2017:306). Christianity becomes incarnated in the world by "advocating for a spirituality of work and by offering examples of what this kind of labor looks like" (Radzins 2017:306). Thus, an incarnated Christian existence is political in that it advocates a certain attitude toward work. It is interesting that Weil has a strongly Christological view of the world, and that she, at the same time, insists that work as one's engaging with materiality is the place where spiritual formation occurs. Given this, it seems that she does not differentiate between relating to God in Christ, on the one hand, and working, on the other hand. Engaging with materiality can be somehow identified with relating to God in Christ, because the world "is God's language to us" (Radzins 2017:303), which seems to mean seeing in this world something from the world beyond. One's working activities are the place where we can relate to God because what we engage with is 'God's language to us'. In this sense, Weil's thought, as described by

63 She also provides the original French wording: "Le monde est la langage de Dieu à nous. L'univers est la Parole de Dieu. Le Verbe" (in Radzins 2017:303).

Radzins (2017), provides an important reference, at this place in the present study, to the fact that the emphasis on Christ in describing Christian existence at work is not to be mistaken for an emphasis on a particular religious tradition or a particular religious doctrine or practice[64] from outside one's work context, which has to be first integrated with one's work. Rather, Christian existence can 'happen', for example when one is doing 'ordinary work', or whenever "the one who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace" (Col 1:15) is "pleased to reveal his Son in me" (Col 1:15f, see also 4.2).

4.3.4 Christopher Mabey on 'Jesus-centered ethical leadership'

Mabey and colleagues (2017) discuss current discourses of spirituality at work and propose an account of 'Jesus-centered ethical leadership'. They argue that, in the literature on spirituality at work and on spiritual leadership, which is concerned with a Christian standpoint, the teachings of Jesus are misconstrued. Mabey and colleagues (2017:758) argue that Christian wisdom[65] is relevant for current leadership debates because it allows two main points of criticism against (Christian) spirituality at work to be countered.[66]

First, spirituality at work has been criticized as yet another means to establish monocultural workplaces. However, Jesus, as reported in the gospel of Mark, challenges the ideological hegemony, power, and privilege of the religious and political elite of his days, leading to "his eventual lynching for dissidence" (2017:759). Jesus broke the cultural taboos of his time, rather than imposing a monocultural mindset, according to Mabey and colleagues (2017:759).

Second, spirituality at work is also criticized as being a manipulative approach to the workplace. In contrast, from a Christian perspective, a "meaningful life can only be achieved by following Jesus rather than worldly organizational leaders" (2017:759).

64 Framed in beliefs–practices–experience terminology (see 4.2), Radzins/Weil prioritize concrete (work) experience over traditional practices and beliefs.

65 As contained in the New Testament scriptures and embodied in the teachings and lifestyle of Jesus (see Mabey et al. 2017:758).

66 Both points of criticism are variations of the criticism of instrumentality in approaches to spirituality at work, see also section 3.4.

In addition, a Christian account emphasizes that "it is not possible to develop personal integrity, honesty, kindness, fairness, and moral judgment by trusting in personal strength—something more than willpower and good intentions is needed" (Mabey et al. 2017:762). In particular, Jesus calls on human beings to repent and to allow an inner transformation to happen through the work of the Holy Spirit within a person (2017:762).

In conclusion, the approach of Mabey and colleagues (2017) focuses on some of the teachings of Jesus and relates them to current discourses on spirituality at work. Drawing on Jesus's teachings, they stress the importance of repentance and of an inner transformation. In light of the approach to Christian living at work that I will outline in more detail in the following chapters, the repenting and transformed individual that Mabey and colleagues describe can be located as participating in Christ and, in particular, in his death and resurrection in a comprehensive and existential way.

4.3.5 Synthesis: Embodied Christian spirituality at work

In section 4.3, I have discussed four approaches to Christian spirituality in work contexts, all offering a unique and important picture of Christian existence at work. I suggest that they find their common ground, first, and on a very general level, in addressing the question of Christian existence at work via the notion of spirituality and, second, in taking into account, albeit in different ways and to different degrees, the reality of Christ in which Christians are localized and localize themselves. In so doing, these approaches to Christian spirituality are able to move beyond an analysis of particular strands or aspects of particular (Christian) traditions, which characterizes much of the 'traditional strand' of fsw research on Christians at work (see 4.1.4), to the question of the characteristics of Christian existence in contemporary work settings. In this way, they tend to appreciate that Christians are not, in a simple sense, perpetuating particular traditions, but, in living as Christians, they locate themselves at the embodied intersection of worldly and other-worldly realities and position themselves with regard to Jesus Christ (see 4.2). It is this particular localization which shapes Christians' dynamic relationship to different aspects and elements of tradition.[67] In this light, the notion of spirituality seems to be a promising notion for the study of Christians at work, offering space for appreciating Christian lifestyles as

67 Nevertheless, Ligo (2011), Delbecq (2004), and Mabey and colleagues (2017) seem to conceive of the Christian mode of existence as a (primarily) traditionally shaped and informed mode of existence.

both traditionally embedded and traditionally informed, but also as transcending tradition. Having said that, the bodily qualification of Christian spirituality is also touched upon, in that Ligo indicates the comprehensive and existential character (which includes the body) of Christian spirituality, and Radzins suggests that spirituality arises in one's engagement with materiality. With this in mind, I suggest that a more elaborate analysis of the bodily character of a Christian mode of existence can fruitfully draw upon an analysis of Christians' positioning in relation to Jesus Christ, in that the latter helps to accentuate the concreteness of the former. In this regard, I suggest that the available accounts of Christian spirituality at work can benefit from a Pauline perspective (see e.g. Miller 2014), which is helpful in accentuating the actual, bodily, spiritual, and performative/practical character of Christians' participation in Jesus Christ (see chapters 5 and 6).

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter on the relationship between fsw research and the study of Christians at work, I have, first, discussed the role of the notion of tradition in fsw research and, in particular, its influence on research relevant to the study of Christians at work. Drawing on the particular Christian location of individuals at the embodied intersection of worldly and other-worldly realites, I have, second, argued that Christian individuals are not to be simplistically construed as members of a tradition in which membership is determined by adopting certain (particularly Christian, whatever that may be) beliefs and practices. I have taken up the stress on experience advocated by some proponents of contemporay fsw research and have argued that, in a Christian mode of existence, the Christian location of individuals can be specified, in the sense that beliefs and practices are to be understood in their relationship to a particular kind of experience or event, that of participating in Jesus Christ. Third, I have discussed how the location of individuals in relation to the reality of Jesus Christ is taken up in existing approaches to Christian spirituality at work.

Two main implications of the analysis conducted in this chapter are particularly noteworthy. First, research on Christians at work needs to take account of the *dialectic* relationship between Christians and traditions. Second, this relationship can be specified by reference to the existential aspects of the category 'Christian'.

I introduced the existential aspects of the term 'Christians' when addressing Acts 11 in section 4.2.2 and its description of the experience of an 'existential turning point' (an existential localization of themselves with regard to Jesus Christ) by people in Antioch that led to their being called 'Christians'. The existential character of being a Christian will also be crucial in the next chapter on theology and the study of Christians at work. But what are the implications of the existential aspects of the term 'Christian/s' with regard to fsw research as discussed in this chapter? If the existential connotations of the term 'Christian/s' are taken seriously, it primarily characterizes (should characterize) *people* as Christians, that is, as being located in relation to Jesus Christ in a particular way. It marks individuals as the bearers of the name of the Jewish Messiah[68], as belonging to or participating in Jesus Christ.[69] Its primary reference points are, therefore, individuals and their mode of existence, not concepts. The application of the term 'Christian' to concepts is secondary and its appropriateness depends on its primary use. As long as it is clear what the term 'Christian' signifies, existentially speaking, one can imagine situations where it is meaningful to speak, as a secondary and extended use of the term, of Christian faith, Christian religion, Christian tradition, Christian ethics, and Christian spirituality, Christian beliefs, or even Christian music, or whatever. These phrases then refer to the faith, religion, spirituality, ethics, tradition, or whatever, *as displayed by those who are located and locate themselves in relation to the reality of Jesus Christ in a particular way*. However, if the existential connotations of the term 'Christian' are lost or become obscured, the usage of the term arguably becomes pornographic (displaying an outer form of something without its essence), obscuring the very characteristics of Christian living, or, to put it differently, the understanding of the term becomes merely nominal, while its existential substance is lost.[70] In a merely nominal usage, the term is used as a mere label that comes without clarification of what the label actu-

68 The fact that 'Christ' is a Jewish concept (or, more accurately, χριστός is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew concept משיח; see e.g. Grundmann et al. 1973 and Shahar 2018) can be easily overlooked by those who argue that Christianity is a religion that is separate from Judaism.

69 In other words, the label 'Christian', existentially understood, carries a certain normativity in terms of one's localization in social space, in a similar way a term like, for example, 'FC Zurich player' does, and using it arbitrarily (in the sense of everyone can define for themselves what being a Christian means for them) is, in this respect, a project which violates the socio-existential normativity the label 'Christian' carries.

70 In sections 5.3.6, 6.1, and 7.3.2, I will discuss the nominal/existential distinction in more detail.

ally stands for. While there are some approaches which address the existential aspects of the term 'Christian' with regard to current work contexts (see 4.3), many studies seem to tend toward a nominal understanding of the term 'Christian', in which it is used to categorize something as Christian[71] without specifying what this categorization of something as Christian should mean. In summary, while this existential awareness has not become common currency in fsw research, some fsw accounts contribute to the study of Christians in contemporary workplaces by indicating the existential aspects of the term Christians as referring to modes of existence orientated toward the reality of Christ.

Even though questions of Christian existence have long been addressed by Christian theology, much of the work on fsw in general (see chapters 2 and 3) and on how Christianity relates to contemporary workplaces has been undertaken by management scholars and not by theologians.[72] Moreover, in fsw literature, as it emerged mainly in the context of management and organization studies, theology has been largely ignored, while theologians have proposed their own approaches to contemporary workplaces which seem to be only loosely (if at all) related to fsw research as developed in the context of management and organization studies. In the next chapter, I will address the question of the role of *theology* in the study of Christians in contemporary workplaces.

71 For examples, see the literature addressed in 4.1.4. A 'nominal use' of the term 'Christian/s' may not be the best way to characterize this practice. However, if one looks at studies on contemporary Christians at work, terms like 'Christians' and 'Christianity' seem to be used in a wide sociological or cultural sense, and *without an account of why these people or groups are referred to as Christians*. Irrespective of the question of whether they should give such an account or not, this is an interesting phenomenon. It seems to indicate that, in these cases, it is simply taken for granted that the people or groups referred to as Christians are Christians (see e.g. in Cao 2007 or Neubert & Dougherty 2013).

72 See 4.1 – 4.3. For exceptions, see 1.2.