

Tobias Brügger

The Christian Body at Work

Spirituality, Embodiment,
and Christian Living

P V E R
V A L A
E R N G
L A G O



Nomos

Religion — Wirtschaft — Politik 21



The Christian Body at Work

P V E R
V A L A
E R N G
L A G O



Religion – Wirtschaft – Politik

Schriftenreihe des Zentrums für Religion, Wirtschaft und Politik

Herausgegeben von

Prof. Dr. Martin Baumann, LU / Prof. Dr. Paul Dembinski, FR /
Prof. Dr. Gerd Folkers, CH / Prof. Dr. Markus Huppenbauer †, UZH /
Prof. Dr. Jens Köhrsen, BS / Prof. Dr. Antonius Liedhegener, LU /
Prof. Dr. Jürgen Mohn, BS / Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Müller, LU / Prof.
Dr. Georg Pfeleiderer (Vorsitz), BS / Prof. Dr. Konrad Schmid, UZH /
Prof. Dr. Jörg Stolz, LAU

Band 21

Tobias Brügger

The Christian Body at Work

Spirituality, Embodiment,
and Christian Living

P V E R
V A L A
E R N G
L A G O



Nomos

The publication was supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF).



SCHWEIZERISCHER NATIONALFONDS
ZUR FÖRDERUNG DER WISSENSCHAFTLICHEN FORSCHUNG

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>
a.t.: Zürich, Univ., Diss., 2019

ISBN 978-3-290-22060-0: Pano Verlag (Print)
978-3-290-22061-7: Pano Verlag (ePDF)
978-3-8487-7853-9: Nomos Verlag (Print)
978-3-7489-2262-9: Nomos Verlag (ePDF)

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-3-290-22060-0: Pano Verlag (Print)
978-3-290-22061-7: Pano Verlag (ePDF)
978-3-8487-7853-9: Nomos Verlag (Print)
978-3-7489-2262-9: Nomos Verlag (ePDF)

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Brügger, Tobias
The Christian Body at Work
Spirituality, Embodiment, and Christian Living
Tobias Brügger

375 pp.

Includes bibliographic references.

ISBN 978-3-290-22060-0: Pano Verlag (Print)
978-3-290-22061-7: Pano Verlag (ePDF)
978-3-8487-7853-9: Nomos Verlag (Print)
978-3-7489-2262-9: Nomos Verlag (ePDF)

1st Edition 2021

© Tobias Brügger

Published by Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft mbH & Co. KG

Waldseestraße 3-5 | 76530 Baden-Baden

www.nomos.de

Production of the printed version:

Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft mbH & Co. KG

Waldseestraße 3-5 | 76530 Baden-Baden

ISBN 978-3-290-22060-0: Pano Verlag (Print)
978-3-290-22061-7: Pano Verlag (ePDF)
978-3-8487-7853-9: Nomos Verlag (Print)
978-3-7489-2262-9: Nomos Verlag (ePDF)

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5771/9783748922629>



Onlineversion
Nomos eLibrary



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution
– Non Commercial – No Derivations 4.0 International License.

*For God, who said “Let light shine out of darkness,”
is the one who shined in our hearts to give us
the light of the glorious knowledge of God in the face of Christ.*

*But we have this treasure in clay jars,
so that the extraordinary power belongs to*

God and does not come from us.

*We are experiencing trouble on every side,
but are not crushed; we are perplexed,*

but not driven to despair;

we are persecuted, but not abandoned;

we are knocked down, but not destroyed,

always carrying around in our body the death of Jesus,

so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our body.

For we who are alive are constantly being handed over to death for Jesus’ sake,

so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our mortal body.

As a result, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

Second Corinthians 4:6–12

Acknowledgments

This dissertation was supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF Project no. 169838), the UZH Forschungskredit Candoc, and the University Research Priority Programme in Ethics (URPPE) of the University of Zurich. I would like to thank the SNSF, the UZH Forschungskredit, and the URPPE for their support.

I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Markus Huppenbauer (†) for his support and supervision of this project and for his invaluable comments; Prof. Dr. Ralph Kunz for his support and co-supervision of the present study; Prof. Dr. Tamar El Or for her encouragement and for the right words at the right time; Prof. Dr. Margit Osterloh, Prof. Dr. Katja Rost, and Prof. Dr. Antonius Liedhegener for their feedback on the proposal for the present study; Prof. Dr. Rafael Walther for his feedback on the empirical study; Prof. Dr. Simon Peng-Keller for a helpful conversation on spirituality;

the participants in the empirical study for their openness and readiness to share their experiences as Christians at work; Daniel Schächli for helping with the data collection and transcription; the participants of a PhD seminar on political economy at the University of Zurich for their feedback and comments; the participants of two meetings of the Institute for Social Ethics at the University of Zurich for their comments and feedback on the present study; the participants of a meeting of the *praktisch-theologische Sozietät* at the University of Zurich for their comments and feedback; the participants at a conference on ‘Glaube und Management’ at the WU Vienna University of Economics and Business for their feedback and comments; the participants at the Faith@Work Summit in Chicago in 2018 for their feedback and comments; the participants at a session on Christian perspectives on management, spirituality, and religion at the Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management in Boston in 2019 for their feedback and comments; Sarah Louise Kirkby and Martyn Ford for their proofreading of the text; Beate Bernstein and Nina Katharina Doll from Nomos publishing house for their support; Rahel Brügger, Jürg Gugger and Martin Meier for their reading of parts of the manuscript; Wolfgang Küng for his encouragement;

all those who have been praying for me and my family during these years of studying and working. Thank you.

Contents

Acknowledgments	7
Figures	13
1 Researching Christianity at work	17
1.1 The study of Christians at work: Research question and objectives	18
1.2 Target discourses: management studies and theology	23
1.3 Empirical data and method	29
1.4 Research approach: Christian embodiment	35
1.5 Structure: Approaching the Christian body at work	42
2 Introducing contemporary research on faith, spirituality, and religion in work contexts	47
2.1 Fsw in theoretical contexts	48
2.1.1 Naming of the field and key issues raised	48
2.1.2 Fsw in academic disciplines and discourses	50
2.1.3 Fsw and influential thinkers	52
2.1.4 Methodological contexts of fsw	54
2.2 Definitions of fsw	56
2.2.1 Definitions in empirically oriented fsw research	57
2.2.2 Criticism of the definition project	60
2.2.3 The 'conceptual convergence' approach	62
2.2.4 Spirituality, religion, or faith at work?	66
2.2.5 Current state of fsw definitions and the study of Christians at work	70
3 Theoretical contours of contemporary fsw research	75
3.1 Theorizing spiritual practice in work contexts	75
3.1.1 Spiritual practices and workplace spirituality	76
3.1.2 Work as spiritual practice	78
3.2 Fsw levels of analysis	80
3.2.1 Organizational-level fsw	80
3.2.2 Individual fsw	82
3.2.3 Interrelationship between the individual, organizational, and extra-organizational levels	88
3.3 Fsw and selected work-related concepts	90

3.3.1	Fsw and leadership	91
3.3.2	Fsw and management/management education	93
3.3.3	Fsw and entrepreneurship	98
3.4	Assessing fsw	101
3.4.1	Outcomes of fsw	101
3.4.2	Justification, ethics, and critique of fsw	107
3.5	Conclusions and outlook	113
3.5.1	The terms faith, spirituality, and religion in fsw theory	115
3.5.2	Work-related concepts in fsw theory	116
3.5.3	Fsw theory and the study of Christians at work	119
4	Fsw research and the study of Christians at work	121
4.1	Fsw and tradition	122
4.1.1	The contested role of tradition in fsw research	123
4.1.2	How traditions influence fsw research	130
4.1.3	How traditions are studied in fsw	133
4.1.4	Christian tradition(s) at work	135
4.2	The relationship between Christians and tradition	143
4.2.1	The Christian location of individuals	143
4.2.2	Tradition in Christian perspective	148
4.3	Christian spirituality at work	159
4.3.1	Vivian Ligo's Christian spirituality of work	160
4.3.2	André Delbecq on the Christian manager's spiritual journey	164
4.3.3	Inese Radzins on the spiritual nature of work in the thinking of Simone Weil	169
4.3.4	Christopher Mabey on 'Jesus-centered ethical leadership'	171
4.3.5	Synthesis: Embodied Christian spirituality at work	172
4.4	Conclusion	173
5	Theology and the study of Christians at work	177
5.1	The question of a theological neglect of contemporary work contexts	179
5.2	Theological 'entry concepts' to the workplace	185
5.3	Theological ethical approaches to the workplace	190
5.3.1	Friedrich Wilhelm Graf on the role of Christianity in the process of globalization	191
5.3.2	Martin Honecker on being a Christian at work	193
5.3.3	Traugott Jähnichen on Protestant economic ethics	196

5.3.4	Nils Ole Oermann's Protestant approach to economic and business ethics	198
5.3.5	Arthur Rich's economic ethics from a theological perspective	203
5.3.6	Theological ethics and the study of Christians at work	205
5.4	Theologies of work, business, and the corporation	215
5.4.1	Jeremy Posadas on a critical Christian theology of work	215
5.4.2	Denise Daniels on the theology of business, management, and work	220
5.4.3	Michael Black on practical corporate theology and on the theology of the corporation	226
5.5	Theology and the study of Christians at work	232
6	The formation of the Christian body at work	241
6.1	Framing Christian existence at work	242
6.1.1	Mapping the framing practices of Christian managers in Switzerland	242
6.1.2	Pierre Bourdieu's habitus and the existential meaning of the label 'Christian'	255
6.2	Embodying Christian existence at work	268
6.2.1	Distancing, connecting, and investing	269
6.2.2	Viktor Frankl's meaning in life and the Christian body at work	285
7	Conclusion	293
7.1	Recapitulation	293
7.2	The basic category of 'Christians'	297
7.3	Terminological–conceptual orientations	305
7.3.1	Faith and spirituality	305
7.3.2	Religion	307
7.3.3	Ethics and morality	312
7.3.4	Tradition	314
	Works consulted	317
	Appendix: Themes in fsw overview articles	375

Figures

Figure 1	Recurring themes	64
Figure 2	Overview of topical clusters and overview articles	375

The present dissertation was accepted by the Faculty of Theology of the University of Zurich in the spring semester 2019 at the request of Prof. Dr. Markus Huppenbauer and Prof. Dr. Ralph Kunz. The text has been revised for publication.

