I started to ponder the relationship between pentecostal worship practices and pentecostal theology long before my fieldwork stints in Nairobi, Kenya, in 2013 and 2014. Inspired by such theologians as Robert Schreiter, Steven Land, and Ulrik Josefsson, I had found it important to search for theology not only in academic texts but also in unconventional sources (for theologians), such as communal activities, songs, testimonies, and Christian journals. With the help of Daniel Albrecht and others, my eyes were opened to the ritual qualities of praise and worship and the central role it has in contemporary charismatic liturgy. I soon started to ask theological and theoretical questions when listening to worship songs or participating in church services in my home church and elsewhere. In heading for the field in Nairobi, my goal was to search for the theology that is expressed in worship, as well as the theology that underpins worship. Increasingly, however, I came to think of the songs as not merely expressing theology (as if theology were something already given and static), but as also crafting theology, constantly re-creating and moulding the very faith that they express. I am now convinced that this process takes place not just when the song is composed, but even more so as the song is sung in a liturgical context. To me, communal singing is thus a creative activity that both shapes and conveys theological knowledge. This study is an attempt to take seriously the relationship between pentecostal ‘theologizing’ and ‘musicking’, and to do so as part of a theologically informed empirical investigation.

Having briefly introduced this study and its place within current research in the last chapter, it is now time to give a deeper thought to its theoretical base. I do so in three steps, beginning by establishing the connection between

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2 Albrecht, Rites in the Spirit: A Ritual Approach to Pentecostal/Charismatic Spirituality.

3 See Yong, ‘Conclusion: Improvisation, Indigenization, and Inspiration: Theological Reflections on the Sound and Spirit of Global Renewal’. Yong discusses seven possible resonances between ‘theologizing’ and ‘musicking’ in renewalist/ pentecostal-charismatic tradition and challenges renewalist theologians to explore this relationship further.
spirituality and theology in the pentecostal tradition, and introducing the concepts that form the arc of my argument in this book: orthopraxis, orthopathos, orthopistis, and orthodoxa. The next step is to explain what it means to start with practice, and why I think worship can be seen as a mode of theology, a modus theologicus. Relating to that is a methodological discussion addressing the use of empirical tools in theological research. Third, ritual theory is introduced as a lens through which to examine pentecostal worship as embodied, liturgical practice. At each step of the argument I introduce and define related concepts. The theoretical framework can be summarized as: a spirituality approach to Pentecostalism, a practice approach to theology, and a ritual approach to worship.

1 A Spirituality Approach to Pentecostalism

1.1 The Pentecostal-Charismatic Tradition

Many scholars have tried to define Pentecostalism as a global phenomenon, sparking a sometimes heated debate as to what criteria should be used and what churches should be included in the category. Can we even speak of Pentecostalism in the singular anymore? The well-known expert on global Pentecostalism, Allan Anderson, has provided a brief yet comprehensive overview of this discussion and proposed a four-fold typology.\(^4\)

Anderson divides global Pentecostalism into four overlapping types: (1) Classical Pentecostals: movements, churches, and denominations with diachronous and synchronous links to the pentecostal revivals and missionary movements of the early 20th century in North America and Europe, (2) Older Independent and Spirit churches: movements originating in independent revivals in Sub-Saharan Africa, India, and China, usually without synchronous links to classical Pentecostals, (3) Older Church Charismatics: Charismatic renewal movements in the established churches (Catholic, Episcopal, Lutheran, etc.), practicing spiritual gifts and forming their own networks inside those churches, and (4) Neo-Pentecostal and Neo-Charismatic churches: a wide variety of independent charismatic churches and ministries, emerging since the 1970s and often marked by their charismatic preachers, a willingness to embrace contemporary culture (including music and media) and their appeal to a young, urban generation.\(^5\) In Africa, the second group frequently goes under the label

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\(^4\) Anderson, ‘Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions’.

AIC, which can be read variously as African Independent/Indigenous/Initiated Churches,⁶ and it has been argued that this group should be seen as akin to but not part of Pentecostalism.⁷

However, it is not always clear how to categorize a specific church or individual since categories overlap and churches and people change over time. For example, how are we to categorize Woodley, and other churches belonging to Christ is the Answer Ministries? Are they still classical Pentecostals because of their roots in the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC) and their theological and ritual affinity with classical Pentecostalism? What about Mavuno, is it to be called an evangelical, even Baptist, church due to its roots in Nairobi Baptist Church and Nairobi Chapel? Or should both Woodley and Mavuno be categorized as neo-charismatic because of their use of media, their church-planting strategies, and their urban, elite memberships? Are these churches developing within their own category, even changing the category itself, or are they becoming yet another type, as Mugambi has proposed?⁸ Many more churches and individuals do not fall into any self-evident category, even from an etic researcher’s perspective, while the situation is complicated further when including an emic perspective, taking into account the self-identification and self-definition of churches and individuals.⁹

Today, a shift in terminology is happening, with scholars seeking to replace ‘Pentecostalism’ as an overarching term, although there is still no consensus on the matter. For example, Mark Cartledge refers to the total phenomenon variously as simply ‘P/C’¹⁰ and ‘the charismatic tradition’,¹¹ while Monique Ingalls opts for ‘pentecostal-charismatic Christianity’,¹² Douglas Jacobsen speaks of ‘the Pentecostal/Charismatic tradition’ as the fourth major tradition within global, contemporary Christianity¹³ and James K.A. Smith employs “the convention of small-p ‘pentecostalism’ to refer to the broader ‘renewal’
or Pentecostal/charismatic traditions.” Nevertheless, the question of defining what the movement is, and who belongs to it, remains.

Anderson identifies four common approaches to the definitional task: the typological, the social scientific, the historical, and the theological. Each approach has its own priorities but all are dependent on each other. The typological approach is concerned with delineating different types of churches and movements within Pentecostalism, opting for an inclusive definition of the term itself. Here any movement that emphasizes “the experience of the working of the Holy Spirit and the practice of spiritual gifts”15 is considered pentecostal, regardless of historical origins or self-definition. The social scientific approach concentrates on social and cultural criteria—such as the use of mass media or a global orientation—while the historical approach defines the movement in terms of diachronous and synchronous links. For example, churches with roots in the early 19th-century pentecostal revival are considered pentecostal, regardless of their contemporary teaching or praxis. Lastly, the theological approach—which regards the doctrinal content as what defines the movement—often concentrates on a single doctrine, such as viewing glossolalia as the ‘initial evidence’ of Spirit baptism.16

Anderson himself endorses an inclusive understanding of Pentecostalism, saying “[t]he term itself is one with shortcomings but despite its inadequacy refers to churches with a family resemblance that emphasize the working of the Holy Spirit”.17 The problem as I see it with such a definition is that it is both too narrow and too wide. Or, rather, precisely because it is so narrow, it also becomes too wide and therefore fails to adequately describe what Pentecostalism is. By concentrating on a single aspect, namely the working of the Holy Spirit, many other important traits are left out and a highly diverse collection of groups are included under the same umbrella term. Indeed, the definition becomes so wide and inclusive that it may refer to almost any type of movement; the question is whether they have anything in common other than simply this focus on the Spirit. And if not, is the term really helpful, or does it disguise more than it reveals?

The inclusive use of the term also fails to take self-definitions into account, since a large proportion of people that scholars subsume under the umbrella of ‘Pentecostalism’ have not heard of the term and would never call themselves

14 Smith, Thinking in Tongues: Pentecostal Contributions to Christian Philosophy, xvii.
16 Anderson, ‘Varieties, Taxonomies, and Definitions’.
17 Anderson, 15.
‘pentecostal’. At the same time, people who do call themselves ‘pentecostal’ may be surprised to find themselves described as belonging to the same movement as groups that to them are questionable or even syncretistic. On the other hand, there are indeed similarities in emphasis between many of the churches that are commonly viewed as ‘pentecostal’ or ‘charismatic’, including those that do not call themselves such; furthermore, having an even narrower set of criteria where only self-definitions, historical links to Azusa Street, or a certain doctrine on Spirit baptism counts as ‘truly pentecostal’ is not a better option.

Instead, I propose using a wider set of criteria in order to form a tighter definition. The definition then does a better job at describing the movement and yet still allows for diversity in form and content. Therefore, the term pentecostal is used in this thesis to denote churches and movements that are: Bible-based in narration, Kingdom-oriented in direction, Spirit-filled in expression, and Jesus-centred in passion. Much could be said in connection to each part of the definition, but here is a brief explanation. Pentecostals are:

- **Bible-based in narration.** A common characteristic in pentecostal ritual praxis is orality, especially narration. Whether sharing one’s own testimony in a prayer meeting or preaching for the masses, narration is ever present. And so is the Bible. Biblical texts have a central role in pentecostal spirituality and are used as a reference point for both life and faith. Pentecostals tell their life stories to mirror those of biblical characters, they preach their sermons based on biblical stories, they make ethical choices that are deemed biblical, and seek to organize their church according to a biblical model, to name a few examples. Both in communal and individual practice, Pentecostals are encouraged to keep their Bibles ready to hand.

- **Kingdom-oriented in direction.** Pentecostals are known to be missional, entrepreneurial, and innovative. They are always heading somewhere, directing their lives to higher goals, ceaselessly moving forward. In doing so, Pentecostals orient themselves toward the Kingdom of God. Some concentrate on longing for the eschatological Kingdom, understanding salvation as a journey towards a different world, while others concentrate on manifesting the immanent Kingdom, perceiving salvation as a new way to live within this world. Most see the two as intertwined in a holistic manner and engage

– **Spirit-filled in expression.** The centrality of the working of the Spirit for pentecostal faith cannot be contested; it remains a core characteristic. This includes yearning for an infilling of the Spirit/Spirit Baptism; interceding for each other in the search for miracles and healing; receiving dreams, words and visions; singing and speaking in tongues; as well as many other forms of experiencing divine presence in an immediate way. Pentecostals are known for having an expressive faith, one where the experience of being born again and filled with the Spirit take vivid expression. Timidity, introspection, and reflection are not their strong points; theirs is a spirituality that is both seen and heard.\footnote{Anderson, An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity, 187–205.}

– **Jesus-centred in passion.** Lastly, Christology and soteriology are central in pentecostal doctrine, and conversion—being born again and receiving Jesus as one’s Lord and Saviour—is central to pentecostal experience. Indeed, the Gospel of Jesus Christ has been called the ‘hub’ of pentecostal theology.\footnote{Ted Peters (1992) cited in Archer, The Gospel Revisited: Towards a Pentecostal Theology of Worship and Witness, 14.} Moreover, Pentecostals are known to be passionate about Jesus: they speak of him, sing to him, pray in his name, and attribute their very existence and the miracles of their lives to his grace. Not only do they believe in Jesus, they love him, they admire him, they long for him, even desire him with their whole beings. Pentecostals are known for their love and passion for Jesus, but also for their passion for each other as a community and their passion for the weak, the poor, and the marginalized.\footnote{Yong, Spirit of Love: A Trinitarian Theology of Grace, 39–56, 59–91; Margaret M. Poloma and John C. Green, The Assemblies of God: Godly Love and the Revitalization of American Pentecostalism (New York, London: NYU Press, 2010).}

It is worth noting here that while I only mention the Spirit and the Son in my definition, most Pentecostals are indeed **Trinitarian in doctrine.** For while creeds are not often used in liturgy, and the exact interpretation and relative importance of different doctrines may vary between churches, the doctrinal content in general is not contested.\footnote{Keith Warrington, Pentecostal Theology: A Theology of Encounter (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2008), 29–38.; see also discussion in Martina Prosén, ‘En Treenig Gud. Kärlekens Verklighet Martina Björkander - 9789004682436 Downloaded from Brill.com 05/01/2024 07:19:01PM via Open Access. This is an open access title distributed under the terms of the CC BY-NC 4.0 license, which permits any non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author(s) and source are credited. http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0} This may seem like an obvious remark,
but it is important since it positions Pentecostalism as a major tradition within Christianity, rather than an exotic anomaly on its fringes. The exception is the group called Oneness Pentecostals, who baptize in Jesus’ name (only), and see God as “radically one in His transcendence, but threefold in His immanence.”

In the above definition I seek to balance common traits and characteristics that have been described in many cultural contexts and across time as essential to pentecostal spirituality and theology. Mine is a multidimensional approach that integrates thought, passion, and action, and allows the holistic character of Pentecostalism to come through even in the definition.

1.2 Pentecostal Spirituality as Theology

The holistic character of pentecostal faith has been pointed out by many scholars, often by referring to Pentecostalism “as primarily a spirituality.” One of the most influential among them is pentecostal theologian Steven Land, who defines spirituality as “the integration of beliefs and practices in the affections which are themselves evoked and expressed by those beliefs and practices.” Spirituality is thus an integrated and holistic way to look at faith;

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och Mysterium', in I Ljuset av Återkomsten: En Bok om Tro och Liv, ed. Jan-Åke Alvarsson and Martin Boström (Örebro: Libris Förlag, 2010).


Land, Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom, 1.
it is the combination of beliefs, practices, and affections that together make up Pentecostalism. No single aspect can account for what pentecostal faith is, but together they come close to the heart of the matter. In order to appreciate pentecostal tradition fully, one must look at all aspects of it in an integrated and holistic manner, an example of which can be found in Ulrik Josefsson's study of the Swedish Pentecostal movement. Josefsson defines spirituality as “lived religious life” and analyses what he calls “identity-bearing elements”\(^{30}\) (identitetsbärande element) of the Swedish Pentecostal movement: the doctrines, patterns of behaviour, and basic attitudes (läror, handlingsmönster, grundhållningar).\(^{31}\)

Steven Land uses three Greek concepts to explain the different aspects: “orthodoxy (right praise-confession), orthopathy (right affections), and orthopraxy (right praxis),”\(^{32}\) with orthopathy as the integrating centre for the other two. According to Land, the affective dimension is what connects confession to praxis, cognition to behaviour. This way of looking at spirituality is closely related to theology, in that it restores “theologia” to “its ancient meaning”\(^{33}\) of knowing God through prayer.\(^{34}\) At the heart of pentecostal spirituality is a "passion for the king,"\(^{35}\) a love and desire for God. Here, life becomes a constant prayer: a “moment-by-moment abiding in Christ through the Spirit and the Word.”\(^{36}\)

If Land regards affections as the central aspect, and Josefsson sees the three as equal in weight,\(^{37}\) philosopher James K.A. Smith rather starts with practice, formulating a pentecostal philosophy that seeks to make explicit the implicit worldview of Pentecostalism. “Pentecostalism,” he argues, “is not first and foremost a doctrinal or intellectual tradition; it is an affective constellation of practices and embodied ‘rituals’. In Wittgensteinian terms, we could say that pentecostal spirituality is ‘a form of life’”.\(^{38}\) This form of life carries in it


\(^{31}\) Josefsson, 26–39, 413.


\(^{34}\) Land, 24.

\(^{35}\) Land, 175.

\(^{36}\) Land, 175.


a certain understanding of the world, “a social imaginary,” which is latent in ritual and other forms of practice and provides Pentecostals with a story about life and reality, a worldview that guides the way they live in and relate to the world. These “implicit theological and philosophical intuitions” are “embedded within, and enacted by, pentecostal rituals and practices.”

Because of this lived and affective nature of Pentecostalism, Smith sets out to build a philosophy based on the ‘reading’ of pentecostal practices, rather than texts. While this reading in his case becomes a rather distanced activity (he does not offer any in-depth analyses of real-life cases, but discusses generic pentecostal spirituality), his ambition nevertheless resonates with my own. This is especially so in that the starting point for analysis is practice rather than text, and that practice is seen as integrative to belief and affection. I too believe that Pentecostalism is best understood as a spirituality, and that implicit in the worship of a pentecostal church is also its worldview or theology. Following Steven Land, we may even say that pentecostal spirituality is theology. Therefore theology can be read from practice.

1.3 Worship as Orthodoxa

Pentecostal theologian Kenneth Archer later revised Land’s ortho-terminology and proposed that we reserve the word ‘orthodoxa’ for right praise/worship, in accordance with its original Greek meaning, and instead use ‘orthopistis’ to denote right doctrine or belief. He says, “Orthodoxy has more to do with our primary way of doing theology, which is worship, than the secondary critical reflective activity—the production of official dogma or right believing (orthopistis). Worship is our primary way of doing theology.” In order to research this “affective-experiential theological tradition”, Archer calls for “an
Chapter 2

integrative methodology contextualized in an actual worshipping community".\textsuperscript{46} He underlines the importance of seeing theory and practice as integrated and mutually enforcing in this work, since "[a]ctions give rise to and shape beliefs, and beliefs shape and inform activities."\textsuperscript{47}

Although Archer himself does not revise Land's understanding of spirituality as such, I also find the impetus to revise the model itself in his correction of terms and his insistence on a methodology that starts in an actual worshipping community. To me, pentecostal spirituality is a holistic integration of practices (ritual and social action), affections (embodied experiences and emotion), and doctrines (theological ideas and convictions) that together create a larger whole: a ‘form of life’. For the adherents, this life is lived in the presence of God, in love and passion for the King, and so can be justifiably called ‘orthodoxa’, right worship.

The word ‘right’ must be qualified in this context. By using the prefix ortho- in connection with worship I do not mean to say that there is only one correct way to worship God at all times and places, nor that Pentecostals in Nairobi worship God in a better way than other communities. What I want to do is draw the reader’s attention to two aspects of the way worship functions in an actual faith community. On the one hand, worship is rule-bound: just like all other ritual practice it follows certain structures, builds on certain convictions, and lives within certain boundaries. In a local context, these rules and structures are constantly negotiated and yet at every given time there is still a ‘right’ way to do it from a local perspective.\textsuperscript{48} On the other hand, worship forms and shapes normative faith and practice. Through participating in worship, adherents are familiarized with theological narrative, learn theological concepts, and are shaped in theological thoughtforms. What the community believes to be ‘right’—their normative faith—is both conveyed and formed through the act of worship.\textsuperscript{49}

\textsuperscript{46} Archer, 11.
\textsuperscript{47} Archer, 11.
Figure 1 may serve to illustrate the way I think of spirituality and the relationship between orthopathos, orthopraxis, orthopistis, and orthodoxa.

Unlike Land, and in line with Smith, I put orthopraxis at the centre. It is in concrete practice that doctrines and affections find a way to correlate and merge. Both generally in social and religious practices, and specifically in ritual practices, pentecostal theological convictions of the head meet throbbing feelings of the heart. Without practice there is no way to express either conviction or emotion. In principle, orthopraxis could refer to any type of practice, including liberating praxis in line with the way liberation theology has utilized the word, although in the current study, it refers narrowly to ritualized action. My argument is that in pentecostal worship, ritualization forms a bridge between embodiment and theologizing in concrete communal-liturgical settings.

At the same time, it is not enough to say that the different aspects intersect and interact through concrete ritual practice. We must also say that in pentecostal understanding, worship is much more than congregational singing, it is a way of life. Life naturally includes all aspects—embodiment, ritualization, theologizing—and yet supersedes them all. The whole is larger than the sum. From a pentecostal perspective, life itself is a spiritual life. It is a life lived in community with Father, Son, and Spirit, and a life that cannot be separated

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into compartments. Life is holistic and integrated and expressed in essential ways as orthodoxy, ‘right’ or ‘true’ worshipping.

In this study, the task at hand is to investigate how the ritual practice of ‘worship’ (i.e. singing and making music as part of a community’s liturgy) in Mavuno and Woodley relates to the larger picture of ‘worship’, understood as orthodoxy. The basic idea is that the ritual practice of worship constitutes a microcosm of pentecostal spirituality in that it connects cognitive-doctrinal aspects of pentecostal faith with affective-experiential aspects into a larger whole. And so, worship—understood at both concrete and abstract levels—in a sense sums up pentecostal spirituality-as-theology.

I have used this model to structure my ideas throughout the book, discussing in turn ritualization/practice, embodiment/affection, and theologizing/doctrine as key aspects of musical worship practices. Ultimately, I return to a discussion of the integrated whole: the sum-total of pentecostal worship in its local, contextual, and communal configuration. In line with Smith, Land, and Archer, I maintain that understanding pentecostal spirituality-as-theology calls for a theological method that integrates “knowing, being and doing.”

In the next sections I discuss ways in which the holistic and integrative character of pentecostal spirituality presents both conceptual and methodological challenges in the theological field. If indeed “Pentecostalism represents a paradigm shift that unshackles theology from rationalistic/scientific ways of thinking ... and accords a new emphasis on the realm of human experience,” as missiologist Ogbu Kalu states, then theological research must follow suit and find ways to explore practice theologically.

2 A Practice Approach to Theology

How, then, are we to investigate concrete communal-liturgical worship practices as expressions of pentecostal spirituality-as-theology? In what way can this be researched as theology within the theological field? One of the key issues, as I see it, is to open up our conceptual understanding of what theology is and how it is done. In what follows, I argue that theology is a process as much as a product; it is theologizing as much as theology. Theology can take many forms, many modes, and academic theology is just one of them. An

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51 Land, Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom, 30.
investigation like my own is a second-order theological reflection on first-order lived theology.\(^{53}\)

### 2.1 Starting with Practice

Understanding religion in terms of ‘practice’ and ‘practices’ is widely established in the social sciences, not least through the so called “lived religion” paradigm.\(^{54}\) In the volume *Practice, Practice Theory and Theology*, edited by Kirstine Helboe Johansen and Ulla Schmidt,\(^{55}\) a range of authors explore what a practice perspective may bring to the table for the theological field. Referencing Nicolini, Ulla Schmidt explains:

> The novel contribution of practice theories, [Nicolini argues] is that they describe social realities and social phenomena as routinely made and remade through practices, by use of tools, bodies, discourses, actions and many more components. The social world is at the same time something which already exists and which we encounter and live in as a continuous, social reality of patterned practices, [and] something we do, make and produce anew.\(^{56}\)

Practice theories put practice at the centre of attention. Not only do they make ‘practice’ the basic unit of analysis, they also see the social world (including religion) as fundamentally made up of a web of interrelated practices. This points to an understanding of social realities and social life wherein materiality and embodiment take centre stage and the concrete and mundane are given sensitive thought. Practices are made up of diverse elements—bodies, tools, discourses, actions, and so on—and these are all necessary; they contribute to and produce the practice. At the same time, making practice the centre of attention also highlights the processual character of social reality,

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\(^{55}\) Kirstine Helboe Johansen and Ulla Schmidt, eds., *Practice, Practice Theory and Theology: Scandinavian and German Perspectives*, De Gruyter EBook Complete, Praktische Theologie Im Wissenschaftsdiskurs (Practical Theology in the Discourse of the Humanities), volume 28 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022).

accounting for both durability and fluidity, as well as its relational character, whereby human beings together encounter, share and produce their common world. For religion this means that beliefs and practices are fundamentally intertwined.

“There is no forming of beliefs, knowing of, speaking about or acting within reality that is not already embedded in preceding practical involvement with the world and other people, and thus constituted by pre-existing patterns and forms of being in the world.”

For practical theology this insight has resulted in a renewed interest in ‘practice’ as a theoretical concept, and concrete ‘practices’ as objects of research. The terminological distinction (and one that I utilize in this study) is that ‘practice’ (or ‘praxis’), as an uncountable noun, refers to human activity more generally—“human acting as opposed to thinking”—while ‘a practice/practices’ refer to “socially habituated patterns of activities,” subsuming all sorts of activities, from eating to gardening to praying and countless others. Even human ‘thinking’ is a practice embedded in a web of other practices and must be understood accordingly. The key here is that practice entails ‘doing’. Practice, Schmidt explains, “actually means practicing”, thus, practices exist only in so far as they are performed and enacted.

The insight has also led to a renewed interest in exploring the integration and interaction between beliefs, intentions and practices, as well as the material, social and embodied dimensions of faith. An ambition that concurs very much with my own. “Practices are therefore an object of practical theological research, not simply as an external expression of inner, preconceived beliefs and ideas, or as a means or ways to intended ends, but as constitutive of beliefs—indeed of religious faith and life.” This means that when we think about the relationship between practice/praxis and doctrine in order to map out what comes first in the life and faith of the church, historically and philosophically, then Christian practices take logical priority over more distanced forms of theology such as an academic investigation or other analytic and


59 Schmidt, 12.


doctrinal explorations. In real life, the two go hand in hand: practices affecting doctrine and doctrine affecting practices.

The ancient principle of *lex orandi, lex credendi* captures this priority of practice. In words borrowed from evangelical theologian William A. Dyrness, “This priority of practice means that a person's prayer may be a better indicator of her beliefs than her explicit statements of faith. Show me a person's practice of prayer, and I will show you her theological convictions.” Prayers reveal a lot about someone's theological convictions, often more than we realize. Through practice, including the words we use, our beliefs become apparent. The reverse is also true; through continuous praxis, theological convictions are formed in us. This is especially applicable at the group level, for a church’s common theology is formed over time via its corporate life, which includes a whole range of practices: liturgical, musical, missional, and diaconal, among others. At an individual level, we may well go to church and sing and say things we do not believe, or we may understand the words we use very differently; we may even believe different things on different days. However, at a group level, the best indicator of a community’s theological convictions, of local theology, is its practice.

Explaining the close link between songs and theology, ethnomusicologist Roberta King says that in the African church, “the maxim shifts more to *lex canendi, lex credendi*: how one sings is how one believes ... What is sung becomes a people's everyday working theology.” This, I believe, could also be said of Pentecostalism, where considerable theologizing takes place in oral and communal settings, not least through musicking. As Lester Ruth has said, “Songs will form faith one way or the other.” It follows that the prayers, including sung prayers, of a local church can be analysed to unpack their theologizing practice or ‘working theology’.

The relationship between prayer and doctrine is a complex one; the two intertwine and affect each other in multiple ways. Methodist theologian Don E. Saliers expresses the principle of *lex orandi* in the following way in his classic book *Worship as Theology*:

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What we believe, acknowledge, and become by praying are deep features of what we profess about God. The human activity of listening for and addressing God shows something of what may be said and known about God. In this way the language with which we address God gives more than a hint of the shape that theological doctrine about God must take. That is, praying to God and speaking about God in relation to the affairs of the world are intimately related ... but in complex ways.

If indeed the way we address God gives more than a hint of the shape of theological doctrine about God, it is paramount in an investigation like my own to unpack the doctrinal content of worship songs, as well as the theologizing processes that take place as part of a church’s liturgical and singing practice. One cannot be done without the other, for worship consists of both. Using the terminology of anthropologist Roy Rappaport, we can say that rituals transmit both canonical and indexical messages. Glenn Packiam explains the difference:

Indexical messages are those message transmitted by the performers’ body, emotions, cognitive state, and more. They fluctuate with each performance, but a message is being sent nonetheless. Canonical messages are fixed, pre-encoded messages that are highly invariant from performance to performance. In the context of congregational worship, liturgical texts and song lyrics are both examples of canonical messages. The tone of the priest’s voice or the attire, physical expressiveness, or extemporaneous exhortations of the worship leader and [sic] are examples of indexical messages.

In my study this complex interrelation is reflected in an analysis of concrete liturgical practices, including the songs that are sung, looking simultaneously at ritualization, embodiment, and theologizing, yet integrating them into a larger whole.


2.2  Researching the Lived and the Local

However, if practices are to take priority, yet exist only in so far as they are enacted and performed, then theology needs a method that can grasp them as such. Changing the unit of analysis from ideas, language, and text to practices requires what Geir Afdal calls a “social science mode of theology.”\(^69\) Hence, it is no coincidence that the ‘practice turn’ in theology corresponds with an ‘empirical turn’\(^70\).

Traditionally, theology has been seen as an intellectual reflection on the nature, purposes, and activity of (the Christian) God, and a systematic study of Christian doctrine. Later on, theology developed into an academic discipline analyzing religious belief systems more generally, Christian and others.\(^71\) In both cases, theology was a text-bound activity, done by and for a well-educated male elite: the clergy and academia. The foundational sources for theological reasoning (their relative importance was, however, debated) were Scripture, tradition, reason, and human existential experience.\(^72\) During the latter part of the 20th century, liberation theology paved the way for a major shift in how theology is understood, including as a legitimate source of theology the experiences of the poor in their socio-political context, and insisting on praxis as both the starting point and the goal of theological reflection.\(^73\) This gave rise to a whole field of discussion of contextual theology, black theology, and different forms of feminist/womanist theology, and highlighted the situatedness and particularity of all forms of theology. That also led to an opening, at least in theory, for more voices to be heard in the theological conversation, female voices as well as those of the poor and the oppressed.

I have elsewhere argued that the “charismatization”\(^74\) of Christianity has the potential to generate a new shift in theology whereby not only the socio-political context but also the communal-spiritual experience is allowed to


\(^71\) McGrath, Christian Theology: An Introduction, 141–42.

\(^72\) McGrath, 181–232.

\(^73\) McGrath, 116–18.

count as a valid source for theologizing.\textsuperscript{75} This widens the ‘data’ from which we create ‘theory’ in theology to include not only Scripture, tradition, reason, and socio-political contexts, but also the communal life of local churches and the spiritual experience of ordinary believers. Again, there is a potential for new voices to be heard in theology as the thoughts, experiences, faith—indeed, the theology—of lay Christians is taken into account.

In the pentecostal-charismatic tradition, theology and spirituality are intimately connected, as described above. Since its inception, pentecostal theology has been expressed in testimonies, rituals, sermons, songs, devotional literature, magazines, TV and radio programs, and in many other ways, but not until quite recently has it also been formulated in academic literature. The source material for an investigation of contemporary pentecostal theology will naturally, therefore, be different from the source material of, for example, medieval Catholicism, thus dictating a move beyond traditional exegetical, hermeneutical, and philosophical methods in academic theology. As a matter of fact, it requires theologians to start discussing issues of method, data, and theory in a whole new way, rather than just presuming that we know what we are doing and how to do it. Too much academic theological research is focused on the hands-on work of analysing and interpreting specific texts, while not many theologians ask themselves the basic methodological questions of how and why things are done in the way they are.

Things are changing, however. One example is the volume on practice theory mentioned above, another one is the anthology, \textit{Perspectives on Ecclesiology and Ethnography}, in which a range of authors discuss and exemplify how ethnographic methods can be used when studying the Christian church (universal and specific), and how data generated by such research can form the foundations of theological reasoning and reflection. Based on the idea of the church as simultaneously theological and social/cultural they argue that ecclesiology must make use of ethnographic methods in order to speak credibly and justly about it. To do so is a way to take seriously the situatedness of the church as the Body of Christ on earth.\textsuperscript{76} In his introduction, Pete Ward says, “The turn toward the ethnographic represents a strategic intervention in Christian theology. Methods of research are never neutral ... Whatever the disciplinary field and whatever the particular point at issue, the ethnographic ‘voice’ focuses attention on the lived and the local.”\textsuperscript{77}

\textsuperscript{75} Prosén, ‘Pentecostal Praise and Worship as a Mode of Theology’.
\textsuperscript{77} Ward, 9.
Taking the life of the church seriously is, however, not something new in theology. Neither is the use of songs or rituals as a basis for theological reflection. Some of the most important Christological texts in the New Testament—for example, Philippians 2, Hebrews 1 and Revelation 5—are doxologies that were most probably sung in the early church. No theologian would dream of dismissing them as a basis for theological reflection just because they are songs. The early church was aware of the close connection between worship and theology, as captured in the principle of *lex orandi, lex credendi*, described above. This shows us that the life of the church and its rituals, including songs, have always been intimately connected to theology. The new element is that we now turn to contemporary songs and contemporary practices instead of the historical or biblical, and that, too, urges us to search for new methods in theology, as well as providing material for continuous reflection on the nature of theology itself.

Practical theologian Mark J. Cartledge highlights the need for theologians to take into account contemporary worship practices, noting, “practical theology should be interested in the nature, function and significance of worship among congregations, especially the relationship between narratives, symbols such as the sacraments, and praxis.” I do not discuss narratives and symbols as much as praxis, but I do agree that the nature, function, and significance of worship in concrete congregations is essential for understanding pentecostal-charismatic Christianity.

Here ethnography and, indeed, other empirical methods help us focus our attention on ‘the lived and the local’ and to do so in an academically credible way. The question is whether theologians will be prepared to take up the task and enter into dialogue with the anthropologists and social scientists who so far dominate the field of pentecostal studies in Africa. I think this is a crucial issue for the future of theology itself, due to the rapid shift of focus within Christianity from the North to the South and from mainline churches to pentecostal-charismatic churches. If theology is to be relevant and plausible within the contemporary church (not only as an academic discipline), and if there is to be any connection between the way we think of the church doctrinally and how life in the local church is actually lived, then theologians need to take the challenge of the ‘ethnographic turn’ seriously, as Pete Ward and his colleagues argue.


2.3 Worship as a Modus Theologicus

In this section thus far, I have argued that practices are suitable—indeed necessary—objects of research for theology, especially when researching Pentecostalism and pentecostal spirituality, and that the shift in focus from ideas to practice also requires a shift in methodology. In a final step I argue that the shift in method also has consequences for how we conceptualize theology itself.

According to Edward Farley, the term theology is “fundamentally ambiguous” as it refers to things of entirely different genres. This ambiguity, he argues, is due to pre-modern understandings of theology as both a salvation-oriented knowledge of God (theology as wisdom) and a discipline, a scholarly enterprise (theology as science). When the two ways of understanding theology drifted apart, and yet the same concept continued to be used for both, the present ambiguity of the term arose.

Another perspective is offered by Catholic theologian Robert Schreiter in what he calls “a sociology of theology” which divides theology into four different types or styles. These are: (1) theology as variations on sacred text (commentaries, narratives, sermons, etc.), (2) theology as wisdom (the mystical search for knowledge of self and God), (3) theology as sure knowledge (a systematic, philosophical, and critical discipline), and (4) theology as praxis (a dialectical process of reflection and action aimed at social transformation). The strength of Schreiter’s model is that it discusses the cultural and social conditions under which different types of theology thrive and does not judge any of them as being more or less sophisticated or ‘real’ theology.

Helen Cameron and her colleagues in the ARCS (Action Research Church and Society) project also propose a four-part model—the four voices of theology—implying that theology may take different forms (speak with different voices) within the same cultural and historical context. The four voices they identify are: (1) normative theology (Scriptures, creeds, liturgies, official church teaching), (2) formal theology (academic theology, theology of theologians), (3) espoused theology (theology embedded in a group’s articulation of its beliefs), and (4) operant theology (theology embedded within the practices of a group). This model has much to offer theologians who work with

81 Farley, 1–3.
82 Schreiter, Constructing Local Theologies, 80.
83 Schreiter, 80–93.
84 Helen Cameron et al., Talking about God in Practice: Theological Action Research and Practical Theology (London: SCM Press, 2010), 53–56.
empirical research methods as it presents theology as “properly complex,” neither discounting any of the four voices, nor seeing them as unrelated and independent of each other. This allows us simultaneously to read theology in the everyday activities of any faith community, as well as their official teachings, their sermons, and their narratives, while at the same time acknowledging the academic discipline of theology as something distinct and yet related. Theology thus has at least two levels, the constructive and the analytical, and may take at least four different formats. But how do the different levels and forms relate, and how does constructive theologizing happen in the first place?

For me it is fruitful to look at constructive theologizing as an ongoing process of interaction between text and context and between relating and reflecting. This process of interaction generates a whole range of different forms or modes of theology, all with their specific emphases, and takes place wherever Christian faith is lived, expressed, and reflected upon. The model seeks to acknowledge the communal-spiritual experiences of believers as sources of theology and to delineate theology itself as a multi-modal and interactive process.

To explain the model in Figure 2, I briefly switch to the voice of an insider-pentecostal theologian. The model has two axes and starts with the vertical one, with the self-revealing God, who is in himself relational and seeks to relate to his creation. He reveals himself to humanity through nature, history, human personality, and Scripture, but most of all through his Son, Jesus Christ. Responding to God’s self-revelation, humans seek God and start to live in a personal relationship with him. Through the Holy Spirit they are born again,
filled with his love and power, and by baptism taken into his Church, the Body of Christ. Living now in this new state, they start to reflect on who God is and what implications that has for them as human beings and as an ecclesial community. This deepens their faith and understanding as well as their relationship with God and with each other. And thus, it goes on, in a continuous move back and forth between relating and reflecting, and this, I would say, is the embryo of all Christian theology.

More explicit forms of theology arise when the first axis is combined with a second, namely, that of text and context. For as God revealed himself to humanity, he did so through the Word, Christ, and the written word that bears witness of him. Therefore words—that is, texts—are central to Christian theologizing, both as sources and as expressions of theology; however, no text can be read and understood apart from its context and no text can be made relevant for new readers unless it also relates to their context. Therefore, it is part of theology’s task to reflect on the various contexts of biblical texts, as well as on the many texts and contexts of the church, both historical and contemporary. Then a new cycle begins, in which the text is understood from its own context, as well as from the context of the contemporary church. At the same time, the text is allowed to speak in and to our current context, to correct and challenge our way of life.

In my understanding, this ongoing interaction between relating to God and fellow humans, and reflecting on those relationships in the light of both text and context, generates a whole range of different expressions that may all be seen as valid modes of theology. Examples include philosophical or devotional texts, oral testimonies, songs, sermons, ecumenical manifests, church statutes, ethical guidelines, creeds, catechisms, political activism, humanitarian work, liturgies, and many other forms of expression. While belonging to different genres, they may still be regarded as outcomes of a communal, creative, and constructive theology-making process. Even the biblical texts are in some sense the result of such theologizing processes. Paraphrasing the well-established term loci theologici (theological topics or content categories), I propose that the above examples and many other theological expressions may be viewed as different modi theologici (theological modes) in their own right, enabling us to build a theoretical frame for investigating them as theology (and not, for example, as folk belief or religious practices). Thus, first-order theologizing can become an object of study for second-order academic theological investigation. Figure 3 illustrates what this looks like when combined with Cameron’s model of the four voices of theology, referred to above.
This ties into the discussion that started off this section. Viewing theology as theologizing (as practice) has methodological consequences, for if theology is processual and interactive and creatively expressed in many different modes, then theology as a discipline (theological research) must work accordingly, finding the most suitable method to examine the theological mode under study.

I conclude that pentecostal worship, as communal-spiritual practice, is a modus theologicus comparable to other forms, and therefore suitable for critical theological examination using appropriate methods for data collection and analysis. The spirituality approach to Pentecostalism very naturally leads to a practice approach to theology, forming a theoretical basis for utilizing empirical methods in research.

3 A Ritual Approach to Worship

Before moving into a concrete description of method and research design in the next chapter, an exploration of one more step of theory is required, namely, the ritual approach to worship. For, in this study, it is not pentecostal practice in general, but ritual practice that is the focal point, and even more specifically, the ritual practice of worship as manifested in ‘the rite of worship and praise’. In this section I argue that a ritual approach to the study of pentecostal spirituality is both fruitful and valid as it sensitizes us to aspects of ritualization and embodiment that are central to the tradition. Taking a close look at performance and practice levels of worship, as well sensory and affective dimensions, in conjunction with theological and doctrinal aspects, takes us closer to answering the research questions that guides this study.
3.1 The Lacuna in Pentecostal Studies

Ritual—in the sense of ‘fixed’ liturgy, symbolic actions, and sacred language—might not be the first thing that comes to mind when thinking about pentecostal-charismatic Christianity. Rather, Pentecostals are well known for their spontaneous prayers, vibrant music and the absence of traditional Christian symbols and ritual paraphernalia in their churches. On the surface, it might look as if Pentecostals do not have a liturgy and do not engage in rituals. At least, this has frequently been part of the self-perception of Pentecostals. For Pentecostals, the words ‘ritual’ or ‘liturgy’ have had a negative ring to them.\textsuperscript{87}

On digging deeper, however, it becomes apparent that ritual is actually at the centre of pentecostal spirituality; it is one of the movement’s “obvious aspects”,\textsuperscript{88} as anthropologist Joel Robbins has convincingly argued. Pentecostal believers engage in ritual whenever and wherever they meet. They pray (together and alone, short and long, night and day), sing worship songs, listen to worship music, participate in a choir, meet in cell groups, and put Bible verses on their walls.\textsuperscript{89} All of these practices can be seen as ritual acts, although having more of a performative, non-formalized nature than a fixed, written and liturgical one.\textsuperscript{90}

Connecting ritual to the global spread of Pentecostalism and its institution-building capacity, Robbins says, “It is … Pentecostalism’s promotion of ritual to the centre of social life that has allowed it to travel so well and to build institutions so effectively, even in socially harsh environments.”\textsuperscript{91} Drawing on Randall Collins’s theory of interaction ritual chains,\textsuperscript{92} Robbins argues that it is the pentecostal mastery of ritual production, not pentecostal doctrine, that makes church institutions work and Pentecostalism spread. Through chains of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{88} Robbins, 'The Obvious Aspects of Pentecostalism: Ritual and Pentecostal Globalization'.
\item \textsuperscript{89} For a close description of pentecostal everyday ritual life, see Jessica Moberg, Piety, Intimacy and Mobility: A Case Study of Charismatic Christianity in Present-Day Stockholm, Södertörn Doctoral Dissertations (Huddinge: Södertörns Högskola, 2013), 75–124.
\item \textsuperscript{91} Robbins, 'The Obvious Aspects of Pentecostalism: Ritual and Pentecostal Globalization'.
\end{itemize}
successful interaction rituals, a high quantity of positive emotional energy is produced in pentecostal churches and the desire and the search for more keep people involved long before they are convinced, or even aware, of the content of pentecostal faith.

Moreover, the comparatively simple frames—sometimes referred to as “portable practices”\(^\text{93}\)—used in pentecostal rituals are easy to learn across cultures and create a sense of global belonging through shared bodily styles. The argument suggests “not only that we should study ritual, but that we should explore making it central to our approach to Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity.”\(^\text{94}\) This has not been done sufficiently in the past, Robbins says. In fact, despite the abundance of studies on pentecostal-charismatic Christianity, the scarcity of detailed studies of pentecostal ritual is the “greatest lacuna in the work done so far.”\(^\text{95}\) There are notable exceptions, though, as the following discussion demonstrates.

The most referenced study in pentecostal studies that applies ritual theory to pentecostal spirituality is *Rites in the Spirit: A Ritual Approach to Pentecostal/Charismatic Spirituality* by pentecostal theologian Daniel Albrecht. His now classic study draws on data collected through ethnographic fieldwork in three pentecostal (classic and neo-charismatic type) congregations in Northern California over the course of more than two years.\(^\text{96}\) In explaining his choice of ritual theory as a lens, Albrecht notes that “authentic ritual expressions are not peripheral actions for Pentecostals but represent fundamental elements of an authentic Pentecostal spirituality. Thus, to study Pentecostal rites with the best approach possible promises access to experience that is primary to Pent/Char spirituality.”\(^\text{97}\) Given that ritual action is integral to pentecostal spirituality and constitutes an “efficacious dynamic”\(^\text{98}\) within it, he concludes that a ritual approach may serve as an important lens and make pentecostal spirituality more understandable and accessible.

Other theologians have worked in a similar vein. Mark Cartledge analyses a classical pentecostal church in England using ritual theory as one of his theoretical lenses,\(^\text{99}\) and Samuel W. Muindi discusses ritual and spirituality in an


\(^{96}\) Albrecht, *Rites in the Spirit: A Ritual Approach to Pentecostal/Charismatic Spirituality*, 13–16.

\(^{97}\) Albrecht, 14.

\(^{98}\) Albrecht, 14.

African-independent denomination in Kenya. Both underline the importance of a ritual perspective to understanding pentecostal spirituality, but before presenting further studies on the theme of ritual and pentecostal spirituality, ritual theory must be introduced.

3.2 Perspectives in Ritual Theory

Within ritual theory there are several different approaches, all with their specific perspectives onto the subject; structuralist, functionalist, symbolist, and linguistic, to mention a few. Those that come closest to what I do in this study are practice and performance perspectives in ritual theory. Both take seriously the fact that ritual action is action (and not primarily, for example, language or symbol) and that acting individuals are “bodies and not just minds”. Both perspectives are concerned with what ritual does—as opposed to trying to decipher what it means—although on different levels. While a practice perspective is interested in cultural activity in general and studies ritual as a creative strategy for shaping and reshaping social and cultural environments, a performance perspective focuses on specific types of ritual acts and attempts to describe them in detail, often concentrating on their physical, sensual, processual, and dramatic aspects. The latter perspective is often associated with Ronald Grimes, who is also the theorist to whom I am most indebted in my analysis. His way of asking basic questions of ritual—who, when, what, how—as well as his reflexive and imaginative way of writing have inspired me in countless ways.

To Grimes, performance is “inevitable” for “whenever ritualists (‘people who engage in ritual’) enact (‘put into force’), they also perform (‘show what they are doing’”). In this way, rituals are similar to theatre and other performing arts, a comparison Grimes frequently makes. He continues, “Although practitioners may not label what they do as either art or performance, they attend to the how, the art or technique of their activities.” The word ‘perform’ is etymologically derived from the Latin words per ‘through’ and forma ‘form’.

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100 Muindi, ‘Ritual and Spirituality in Kenyan Pentecostalism’.
101 See for example Catherine M. Bell, Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), where the different theories are presented and discussed. See also Anne-Christine Hornborg, Ritualer: Teorier och Tillämpning (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2005).
102 Bell, Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions, 76.
103 Bell, 73–76.
105 Grimes, ‘Performance’, 38i.
106 Grimes, 38a. Emphasis added.
107 Grimes, 38i.
The form of a specific ritual may be implicitly or explicitly stipulated, regulated loosely or strictly, but all rituals have a form that can be observed by the senses. They are ‘performances’. It is this formal, surface level of worship that is the focus of Chapter 5, while Chapter 6 deals with embodiment and affection (see below).

However, the word ‘performance’ might be misunderstood when used in the context of worship. I do not mean to say that worship is ‘just a performance’, as if questioning its authenticity and value by calling it ‘mere entertainment’. Worship is not an artistic performance, but in many ways it resembles one; it is produced and designed in a well-thought-out way, it is sometimes highly entertaining, it gives people something to look at, it requires space and time, it involves some people performing in front of others, and it includes music and singing, to mention a few similarities. There are differences as well, perhaps the most important one being the difference between an audience and a congregation. The congregation participates in a ritual, while an audience is primarily there to watch and listen. As Rappaport says, “[The audience] is present for the performance, but is not part of it.” At the same time he notes that at modern day performances, notably rock concerts, there seems to be a transformation of audiences into, or in the direction of, congregations, with the active participation of those gathered becoming part of the performance itself. In charismatic worship, a reverse move often takes place as music is professionalized and services streamlined into productions. To mark this ambiguity, I sometimes speak of the gathered congregation as ‘audience’. In charismatic Christianity in general, lines are often blurred between artistic and ritual performances and one affects the other. There are some clues to framing an event as either/or, but there are also important and interesting overlaps.

Taking a performance perspective on ritual is a way of focusing my investigation on the fine details and allowing the specific, empirical, ecclesial reality to play centre stage. Grimes calls this an “elemental analysis”, one would.

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110 Rappaport, 137.
that disassembles the “designed assemblage”\textsuperscript{112} that ritual constitutes. This is important as it helps the scholar resist oversimplification in order to account for the complexity of ritual action.\textsuperscript{113} 

What then do we mean with the word ‘ritual’? What exactly are we talking about here? There are numerous debates within ritual theory about the definition of ritual, and I do not intend to iterate them all. A good overview is given by Grimes in \textit{The Craft of Ritual Studies}.\textsuperscript{114} He says that it is first of all important to understand that the concept of ‘ritual’ is context-bound, and that a student of ritual must learn to know the language game of both the field and the academy. A ritual might not be called ‘ritual’ by the people involved, but it can nevertheless be understood and analysed as such by a scholar, as long as he or she knows the difference.\textsuperscript{115}

The first definition of \textit{ritual} to which I want to draw attention is that of Roy Rappaport. Although it has been criticized for being too stiff and not allowing for ritual change and development,\textsuperscript{116} it nevertheless captures something important about what ritual is. He defines it as “the performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not entirely encoded by the performers”.\textsuperscript{117} We may note from this definition that ritual has to do with both actions and words, which come in a specific order and follow a certain pattern. Sequencing and repetition is thus important, together with a combination of people, language, and action, and the analytic chapters present numerous examples of all these features. We may also note that it is part and parcel of ritual that it is performed and yet not completely verbalized or coded by practitioners. Thinking of the pentecostal aversion to calling their worship ‘ritual’, one could assume that this has to do, at least in part, with a sense in which the mystery of worship disappears or diminishes when the ritual is encoded in words and its acts and utterances are put on display as if they were mere human endeavours. While refusing to reduce worship to its elements, I nevertheless think there is a point in trying to encode it for the purpose of academic research. This does not take away the possibility of God’s acting within the ritual, or of ritual having more layers than an observer or

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{112} Grimes, \textit{The Craft of Ritual Studies}, 232–34.
\bibitem{113} Grimes, 234.
\bibitem{116} Grimes, 189.
\end{thebibliography}
participant can grasp, meaning that, theologically speaking, it maintains its mystery.

However, trying to capture what ‘ritual’ means using a tight definition might actually be less fruitful than taking a broader stance. Ritual theorist Catherine Bell suggests a practice-oriented approach, wherein finding a universal definition of ritual is less important than seeing how actions are ritualized in any given context. She says, “Clearly, ritual is not the same thing everywhere; it can vary in every feature. As practice, the most we can say is that it involves ritualization, that is, a way of acting that distinguishes itself from other ways of acting in the very way it does what it does; moreover, it makes this distinction for specific purposes.” This means that analysing pentecostal praise and worship from a ritual perspective involves paying attention to the way things are done, how actions are ritualized in this specific context and why. And this, in turn, involves paying attention to bodies and how bodies move in space according to learned schemes and strategies. Bell adds, “The most subtle and central quality of those actions we tend to call ritual is the primacy of the body moving about within a specially constructed space, simultaneously defining (imposing) and experiencing (receiving) the values ordering the environment.” Charismatic worship has its own set of embodied practices, and analysing them in detail helps us see how congregants simultaneously shape and are shaped by pentecostal values. As this book progresses, it will become evident how much ritualization and embodiment is involved in praise and worship.

Caroline Humphrey and James Laidlaw also point out the importance of ritualization for understanding ritual action, which, to them, is characterized by being non-intentional, stipulated, and archetypal. By this they mean that the intentions of an individual performing a ritual are not the key to understanding the identity of her action, which is, rather, fixed by prior stipulation, follows certain rules, and appears to come from outside of herself. At the same time, this does not exclude a person’s own intentions, in the sense that she is still conscious and aware of what she is doing and can reflect on it. Hence, “it is important not to describe ritual as if the person performing it becomes an automaton or unaware”, rather, they “remain human agents.”

This dual approach is important to remember in relation to praise and worship;

118 Bell, Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions, 81.
119 Bell, 82.
121 Laidlaw and Humphrey, 279.
congregants’ actions can only be understood with reference to the ecclesial, cultural, and theological framework in which they take place. Nonetheless, congregants are human beings, and their own individual reflections and intentions should not be overlooked.

A fourth perspective on ritual and ritualization is offered by Ronald Grimes, who lists a number of characteristics that ritual acts share with each other, which he suggests we use in order to quantify the extent to which an event is ritualized—the degree of ritualization—rather than debating the binary options of whether something is ritual or not.\(^\text{122}\) Listing characteristics of ritual is “a way of circumventing formal definitions by appealing to a ‘family resemblance’ or ‘fuzzy set’ theory.”\(^\text{123}\) No specific case of ritual manifests all characteristics, but all events that we identify as ritual have at least several of them to some degree. According to Grimes, actions can become ritualized by:

- traditionalizing them, for instance, by claiming that they originated a long time ago;
- elevating them by associating them with sacrally held values;
- repeating them—over and over, in the same way;
- singularizing them, that is, offering them as rare or even one-time events;
- prescribing their details, so they are performed in the proper way;
- stylizing them, so they are carried out with flare;
- entering into them with non-ordinary attitude, or in a special state of mind;
- invoking powers to whom respect or reverence is due;
- attributing them special power or influence;
- situating them in special places and/or times;
- being performed by specially qualified persons.\(^\text{124}\)

Thinking of charismatic worship as it is practiced in my two case churches, I find it attractive to be able to embrace a broad spectrum of criteria to describe the degree of ritualization and the unique mix of characteristics that charismatic ritual displays in these particular settings. Rather than debating whether it is indeed (theologically or analytically) correct to call worship a ritual, we

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\(^{122}\) Grimes, The Craft of Ritual Studies, 193–94. Compare Ronald Grimes L., Ritual Criticism: Case Studies in Its Practice, Essays on Its Theory (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1993). His original list included sixteen items, and was more or less a summary of what other people defined as ritual. He has since recast the list so it mirrors his own views better, and it now includes eleven items.


\(^{124}\) Grimes, The Craft of Ritual Studies, 194. This list includes all eleven items, but explanation is slightly abbreviated.
may investigate in what way and to what extent it is ritualized. I return to this list in Chapter 5’s conclusion in order to summarize the ways in which worship is ritualized in the contexts under discussion.

A note on terminology is in order. Following Grimes I use ‘ritual’ as a mid-level unit from which one can shift attention “to either small-scale micro units (elements) or large-scale macro units (traditions or systems).”125 And although Grimes uses ‘element’ to denote both time units (phases) and other categories, such as actors, actions and languages, I prefer to use the word ‘rite’ for phases/sequences, following Albrecht (see below), and retain ‘element’ for other aspects—or constituent parts—of the ritual.126 Following both Grimes and Albrecht I occasionally use the term ‘ritualists’ to denote participants in ritual, especially in cases where I want to refer to both congregants and leaders together.

In the Interlude the reader will be presented with two detailed narratives: descriptions of specific Sunday services in Woodley and Mavuno, respectively, focusing on the role of music and singing within the liturgy. Both are attempts to paint a careful picture of the audio-visual-emotional landscape—“the ritual field”127—that charismatic worship constitutes, and to invite the reader to come alongside me in observing it. The analysis in this book builds on the whole of my collected data, although I often exemplify by referring to these two ethnographic vignettes. I regard these descriptions as important documentation of actual church settings, and have done my best in both gathering and presenting the data in a fair and detailed way. At the same time, the descriptions are evidently my own narrations: based on my observations, written from my perspective, and with my research interests in mind. I have underlined this fact by including notes of a reflexive character in the descriptions—again, inspired by Grimes, who says “theorizing, like ritualizing, is a personal, bodily action.”128

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125 Grimes, 232.
126 However, unlike Grimes, I will not try to uphold a division of labour between, on the one hand, ‘rite’/‘a ritual’ for the specific, concrete enactments, and, on the other, ‘ritual’ as the general or abstract idea of which a rite is a specific instance, as I find this almost impossible to do in practice. Grimes, 192–93.
3.3 Embodiment and the Study of Pentecostal Ritual

Since the inception of ritual studies in the 1970s scholars have continued to draw attention to the physicality and bodiliness of ritual. According to Ronald Grimes, bodies are methodologically primary to ritual studies, for it is only as embodied human activity that ritual can be studied. If there is no human body acting, or deliberately refraining from acting, there is no ritual. The researcher therefore does well to start by observing ritual action, using his or her own body and senses as an instrument.129 In his definition of ritual Grimes says:

Ritual is embodied. An obvious feature of ritual is that it is a human activity. People do it, and they do it in overt, bodily ways. Because it is in and of bodies, ritual is also cultural, since bodies are enculturated. Ritual is not only in the mind, or the imagination, even though it can be both mindful and imaginative. If an action is purely mental, it is not ritual even though mental processes clearly underlie ritual action.130

To Grimes, ritual is by definition embodied. While mental processes underlie ritual action, they do not constitute it, neither do ritual scripts nor sacred texts. Ritual, inasmuch as it can become the object of study, is embodied human action and, as such, it is also connected to culture and enculturation. Note that Grimes prefers the plural ‘bodies’ to the singular ‘the body’, since the latter is an abstraction that too easily serves individualism and mind-body-dualism, while the former reminds us of the social and concrete reality. “Whereas bodies, mine and yours, are tangible and distinct … ‘the’ body belongs to no one.”131 As a core analytic theme, embodiment thus reminds us to pay attention to concrete individual bodies acting in time and space, as well as linking them to the collective social body: group, society or culture.

Practice perspectives in ritual theory (briefly introduced above), have emphasized this latter aspect. Here ritual is regarded as one of the primary ways in which cultural meanings come to be taken for granted in a group. Pierre Bourdieu’s theory on habitus explains how societies reproduce their values in individuals, to the point where these values and beliefs come to seem natural and obvious. This process of ‘habituation’ or socialization takes place from birth and continues throughout life, not just in ritual. Nevertheless, because of the way ritual repeatedly places bodies in prescribed positions, thereby evoking associated feelings and states of mind, it is especially powerful in creating

130 Grimes, 195. Emphasis in original.
the mental structures and dispositions known as *habitus*. To Bourdieu, bodily space is seamlessly integrated into social and cosmic space through ritual.\(^{132}\) Grimes, however, is critical of the way Bourdieu seems to imply that people ritualize without thinking, as if ritualization and habituation were one and the same thing. In an attempt to separate the two processes analytically he says, “Habituation is a sociobiological process that begins at, or even before, birth and is carried out automatically, much as one breathes. Habituation happens. Ritual, on the other hand, happens deliberately, at least partly by design. Someone or, more typically, some group constructs it, even if they later forget or obscure this fact.”\(^{133}\)

There is an element of design, construction, re-construction and creativity in ritual that is not there in habituation. People who engage in ritual can think both critically and analytically about what they are doing. They can ‘practice’ their ritual as one would practice a musical performance or sport, and evaluate the result. At the same time, ritual can be ‘practice’ also in the theoretical sense of “actions repeated for the sake of deepening a ritual’s permeation of body and psyche,”\(^{134}\) actions that sometimes become so habitual that their constructed nature and constitutive force are rendered invisible.\(^{135}\)

Closely related to the embodiment perspective is a focus on the senses: how does the ritual mobilize the senses? In what way is the ritualist attuned to or disattuned from his or her senses? What sensory information is deemed important/unimportant? Since all human experience is mediated by the senses, there is no way to speak of what people experience in ritual without also discussing the role of sensory information and how to go about researching them.

The embodied and multisensory character of ritual has methodological consequences in ritual studies, leading to a prevalence of fieldwork methods.

Ritual studies is rooted in the senses. For both good and ill, it tends to start with the visible and audible appearance of bodies in motion enacting meanings in social contexts. The discipline of ritual studies is enhanced by field methods because a ritual can be more fully understood by asking

\(^{132}\) Grimes, 244–45. ‘Habituation’ is Grimes’s expression, not Bourdieu’s, although Grimes reads Bourdieu as having a processual understanding of *habitus*. Compare Jessica Moberg, who attributes this expression to Saba Mahmood, reiterating her critique of Bourdieu’s much-too-static understanding of *habitus*. See discussion in Moberg, *Piety, Intimacy and Mobility: A Case Study of Charismatic Christianity in Present-Day Stockholm*, 36.


\(^{134}\) Grimes, 245.

\(^{135}\) Grimes, 245–46, 342.
participants questions, listening to their responses, participating alongside them, observing their interactions, audio-visually documenting their rituals, and receiving what they offer as gifts or critique.\textsuperscript{136}

Fieldwork, combining participant observation, interviews, and audio-visual documentation, is a much better way for a researcher to grasp the deep layers of ritual and what it means for participants than examining a liturgical text or interview alone.

Although Christianity has periodically railed against the senses, it has also ritually utilized them, especially audition—hearing—which has been valued almost unequivocally in Christian liturgy across the spectrum; the use of sight, taste, smell, and touch is more debated and has met with suspicion in some traditions.\textsuperscript{137} However, the role of the body and senses is sometimes overlooked in general theological elaborations on Christian liturgy. For example, in the classic \textit{Introduction to Christian Worship} by liturgical historian James F. White, which explores and thematizes different aspects of Christian worship and liturgy across the denominational board, only a few scattered paragraphs take an embodiment or sensory approach to worship, and none of them under a subheading of its own.\textsuperscript{138}

Yet, as Chapter 6 demonstrates, charismatic worship is replete with sensory stimuli, engaging participants’ senses in several ways at the same time. It is also thoroughly embodied, involving the whole body in singing, dancing, praying, interacting, and responding. This has led scholars interested in pentecostal ritual and spirituality, both social scientists and theologians, to place particular focus on its embodied, sensory, and affective character.

Pentecostal theologian Steven J. Land’s study, \textit{Pentecostal Spirituality}, has already been mentioned as a major theoretical influence in this current work. Land builds his understanding of the affections on the work of Methodist theologian Theodore Runyon, who sees ‘orthopathy’ as providing the necessary link between ‘orthodoxy’ and ‘orthopraxy’ in John Wesley’s theology.\textsuperscript{139} To Runyon, ‘orthopathy’ is “religious experience as an event of knowing between

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{136} Grimes, 78.
\item \textsuperscript{137} Grimes, 247.
\item \textsuperscript{138} White, \textit{Introduction to Christian Worship}, 32, 78, 89–90, 115–16.
\item \textsuperscript{139} Land, \textit{Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom}, 32–33. A similar discussion can be found in Gregory S. Clapper, ‘Orthokardia: John Wesley’s Grammar of the Holy Spirit’, in \textit{The Spirit, the Affections, and the Christian Tradition}, ed. Dale M. Coulter and Amos Yong (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2016), 259–78. Clapper states that Runyon in fact has based this understanding of John Wesley and ‘orthopathy’ on his own concept ‘orthokardia’, developed in his 1985 PhD thesis, later published as \textit{John Wesley on}
the Divine Source and human participant." Land develops the concept further, showing how pentecostal spirituality is heavily indebted to the Wesleyan Holiness tradition and yet has its own flavor and energy. According to him, ‘orthopathy’ is the “personal integrating center of orthodoxy and orthopraxy” and refers to “the affections which motivate the heart and characterize the believer.” These affections are not fugitive feelings or moods, but are stable in a person over time and, although personal, they are shaped and determined by the biblical story in a communal, historical setting. He states,

Love in particular and Christian affections in general are not passing feelings or sensate episodes. Affections are abiding dispositions which dispose the person toward God and the neighbor in ways appropriate to their source and goal in God. Feelings are important but they come and go, are mixed, and of varying degrees of intensity. Moods too are variable, but affections characterize a person.

According to Land, affections are shaped and expressed through fellowship, especially prayer. Corporate and individual prayers, including songs, in conjunction with the preaching of the Word and other communal activities, form an individual in fundamental ways, even to the point where she can be said to be characterized by certain affections. This is a process that includes fellowship within the church family, but most of all fellowship with the Spirit of God. In Land’s case, studying the early pentecostal movement in the U.S., he identifies gratitude, compassion, and courage as important affections shaped by the Spirit-human community. But most important is love or passion: “The heart of Pentecostal spirituality is love. A passion for the kingdom is a passion for the king.”

The centrality of love for pentecostal theology has been developed further by Amos Yong who underlines that the encounter with the Spirit can be understood as an experience whereby “God is perceived to break through into the very depths of the human domain and awaken people’s affections.”

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Religious Affections: His Views on Experience and Emotion and Their Role in the Christian Life and Theology; see page 274, fn 1.

140 Theodore Runyon quoted in Land, Pentecostal Spirituality: A Passion for the Kingdom, 32.
141 Land, 33–34.
142 Land, 132.
143 Land, 163–80.
144 Land, 175.
145 Yong, Spirit of Love: A Trinitarian Theology of Grace, 55.
is a deep and holistic experience, involving the whole person. He continues, “Thus Pentecostals meet God not merely as rational creatures but as embodied, feeling and desiring ones.”\textsuperscript{146} Pentecostal spirituality is one of love and desire. Prayer, and especially glossolalic prayer, is described as expressing the individual’s existential longing for God, while praise and worship expresses the corporate desire of the church. Yong says,

> If prayer manifests the affections of the human heart in longing for their Creator, then praise and worship unfolds the congregational or corporate affections of the church, understood according to the New Testament metaphor as ‘the bride of Christ,’ for their groom. ... praise and worship articulates a desiring heart in response to the reception of divine love.\textsuperscript{147}

These affective dimensions of worship are thus in line with the Wesleyan Holiness heritage of pentecostal spirituality, as presented by Land, where God’s love and love for God plays a central role.\textsuperscript{148} Music and singing expresses and manifests a corporate longing and desire for God, and at the same time mediates divine love through the Holy Spirit to the congregation.\textsuperscript{149} From a theological perspective, understood as an ideal type, pentecostal worship is affective and affectionate. It mediates an intimate and emotional relationship of love that is at the same time communal and personal. In practice, of course, people can experience worship in a range of ways, and it is part of the task of the current study to investigate this in concrete contexts.

Daniel Albrecht has worked in a similar vein when analysing contemporary pentecostal-charismatic ritual. If Land is interested in the affections characterizing an individual, Albrecht is more concerned with the community and what embodied attitudes are at play in the liturgy. Instead of speaking of ‘the affections’ as Land does, Albrecht prefers the term ‘modes of ritual sensibility’ (borrowed from Ronald Grimes), although he sees the two as overlapping.\textsuperscript{150} Modes of ritual sensibilities are the embodied attitudes with which the participants “perform and experience the ritual”\textsuperscript{151} and, as such, they “help orient and
animate” each of the rites, actions and acts included in the liturgy. Albrecht argues that it is impossible to yield a proper understanding of pentecostal ritual without probing into the embodied attitudes with which rites are performed. Even though pentecostal rites do maintain a structure, a structural analysis alone will not suffice, since it is the sensibilities that give pentecostal ritual its vitality and authenticity. As he writes, “By ‘sensibility’ I mean an embodied attitude that is the result of abilities to feel or perceive, as in a receptiveness to impression or an affective responsiveness toward something. Ritual sensibilities both orient and animate a spirituality’s beliefs and practices.”

Thus sensibility has to do with both perception and feelings—with both sensory receptivity and affective responsiveness—and these abilities are understood as connected to the body in fundamental ways, so as to form ‘an embodied attitude’. In line with Hollenweger’s views of pentecostal spirituality as one bridging the mind/body divide (see Introduction), Albrecht looks at ritual sensibilities as the combination of body (‘embodied’) and mind (‘attitude’). There is also considerable overlap with the way anthropologists and religious studies scholars describe charismatic ritual in terms of ‘somatic modes of attention’ and ‘metakinesis’, a discussion to which we now turn.

In the Introduction I referred to the anthropologist Thomas Csordas as a nestor in the study of pentecostal-charismatic ritual, and many other scholars have taken up his formulations, especially his term ‘somatic modes of attention’. He coined it as a way to speak of the interrelation between collective practice (as per Bourdieu) and perceptual consciousness (as per Merleau-Ponty), between the social, enculturated body and the individual, perceiving one. Csordas defines the concept thus:

Somatic modes of attention are culturally elaborated ways of attending to and with one’s body in surroundings that include the embodied presence of others. ... To attend to a bodily sensation is not to attend to the body as an isolated object, but to attend to the body’s situation in the world. ... Attention to a bodily sensation can thus become a mode of attending to the intersubjective milieu that give rise to that sensation. Thus, one is paying attention with one’s body.
The point is that there are ways in which human beings experience their social world through bodily sensation, and these ways are culturally constituted. Some of the examples he gives of this embodied subjective/intersubjective process are taken from the charismatic milieu. He describes how a person, upon praying for someone else, may experience ‘anointing’ as a feeling of heaviness, lightness, or heat (among other things). Or the intercessor may receive ‘a word of knowledge’, through, for example, sensing a similar pain as the person being prayed for.

In his study of the Toronto Blessing, Dagfinn Ulland borrows the term from Csordas and uses it to describe what happens in worship, what he calls ‘the warming-up sequence’ of charismatic ritual.

During the warming-up sequence in the meetings, the ritual actions, the singing and music, the bodily movements and the repetitive verbal elements prepare the people and surround them with a receiving atmosphere. Here the body is engaged in a somatic mode of attention. These experiences are learned and stored and can be activated in a later ritual context. The intense bodily engagement in worship and surrender can also be interpreted as sacramental actions of love to God.\(^{156}\)

Several things are important here: first, the basic observation that in pentecostal-charismatic corporate worship there is a simultaneous combination of ritual action, singing and music, bodily movements and repetitive verbal elements that together create a ‘receiving atmosphere’. This observation is so obvious that it may seem almost superfluous to anyone familiar with this type of Christianity. Second, these experiences are learned, or at least the interpretation of them is culturally specific. Third, the bodily engagement in worship is a form of sacramental action.

The first observation corresponds to Joel Robbins’ argument that mutual ritual performance is the reason behind Pentecostalism’s globalizing and institution-building capacity, referred to above. To argue his point Robbins builds on Randall Collins’ theory of interaction ritual chains according to which human beings “are creatures who go through life trying to participate in as many successful interaction rituals as they can, using the energy generated in each such interaction ritual to fund the next one.”\(^{157}\) Hence, a long chain of interactions is created. For Collins, any interaction between people can

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\(^{156}\) Ulland, *Guds Karneval: En Religionspsykologisk Studie av Toronto-Vekkelsens Ekstatiske Spiritualitet*, 221.

become a successful interaction ritual, as long as it involves two components: a “mutual focus of attention” (a shared definition of what participants are doing together) and “a high degree of emotional entrainment”\textsuperscript{158} (a sense built up through rhythmic synchronization of bodies). Any institution or organization that is able to provide people with such successful ritual experience will likely draw more people into its orbit.

For Robbins, pentecostal communities do just that. Mutual focus is ensured by a set of basic ritual frames (such as prayer, worship, healing, testimony, etc.) that orient pentecostal social interaction, while a range of shared bodily practices (practices that are not dependent on a shared culture, language, or social status) facilitates rhythmic synchronization. He says, “Drawing on their trained ability to fall into states of mutual attention and push such states forward through bodily synchronization, Pentecostals go through life producing an unusually high percentage of social occasions that qualify as successful interaction rituals.”\textsuperscript{159} And since the emotional energy produced is “its own reward”,\textsuperscript{160} people will keep coming back for more. One could probably add that in churches where worship has stagnated and the service no longer creates an abundance of emotional energy, people will leave to find themselves a new “ritual hotspot.”\textsuperscript{161}

The second part of Ulland’s argument, the notion that embodied experiences in worship are learned, corresponds to Tanya Luhrmann’s observations among contemporary (charismatic) Evangelicals in the U.S. She describes a process in which new converts come to see God as an intimate and personal friend: “a buddy, a confidante, the ideal boyfriend”.\textsuperscript{162} This process takes place on several levels and involves learning of different kinds: cognitive/linguistic, metakinetic, and relational. It is the metakinesis aspect that interests me at this point. Luhrmann borrows the term from dance criticism, where it is used “to depict the way emotional experience is carried within the body so that the dancer conveys the emotion to the observer and, yet, does it by making the expressive gesture uniquely his or her own.”\textsuperscript{163} Transferred to the evangelical charismatic context, it describes a process whereby new believers “learn to identify bodily and emotional states as signs of God’s presence in their life.”\textsuperscript{164}

\textsuperscript{158} Collins (2004) quoted in Robbins, 57.
\textsuperscript{159} Robbins, 58.
\textsuperscript{160} Robbins, 59.
\textsuperscript{161} Robbins, 61.
\textsuperscript{163} Luhrmann, 519.
\textsuperscript{164} Luhrmann, 519.
According to Luhrmann, this can be described in psychological terms as “trance”, “absorption”, “hallucinations”, and “altered states”, and is a process that takes place inside the person. To the congregants themselves, it is a matter of “falling in love with Jesus” and “getting to know Jesus”, thus referring to a spiritual, metaphysical reality outside of them.

The third part of Ulland’s observation, that the intense bodily engagement can be interpreted as a sacramental action, corresponds to that of theologian Mark Cartledge who speaks of an “implicit sacramentality” in pentecostal-charismatic worship rituals, whereby the presence of God is mediated through the intermediaries of people. In his view, there is both “a ritual pole” and “an emotional or affective pole” in pentecostal worship, and the two are dependent on each other; thus, mediation takes place via both external and internal means, via both divine intervention and created elements.

In her study of charismatic revival and mysticism, sociologist Margaret Poloma has underlined that the “extended time of music” in charismatic liturgy, in particular, “is catalytic for a sense of close communion with the divine.”

Engaging the whole person, including emotions and the physical body, revitalized P/C worship requires more than a cognitive assent. It is during the worship time that many appear to enter into the ‘collective effervescence’ that Emile Durkheim recognised to be the heart of ritual. Praise and worship of God is believed to be the medium through which the presence of God is made manifest, as reflected in the oft-cited scripture verse, ‘God inhabits the praises of His people.’

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165 Luhrmann, 523.
167 Cartledge, Mediation of the Spirit: Interventions in Practical Theology, 69.
169 Cartledge, Mediation of the Spirit: Interventions in Practical Theology, 68.
170 Poloma, Main Street Mystics: The Toronto Blessing and Reviving Pentecostalism, 38.
171 Poloma, 41.
With philosopher James K. Smith we may say that pentecostal musicking has a "mystical function": it serves as a vehicle, a facilitator of recurrent divine encounters. This is further discussed in Chapter 8; it suffices to say at this point that the embodied and communal character of pentecostal worship has a sacramental side to it.

Although expressed in theological terms, and with an openness to divine and transcendental realities, the perspectives of pentecostal theologians are nevertheless similar to the anthropological views quoted above. Where anthropologists see a strictly psychological or socio-biological process of habituation or ritualization, theologians see a metaphysical and ecclesial process of spiritual formation. Where anthropologists tend to interpret religious experience in terms of 'altered states' and 'sensory hallucination', theologians are happy to see it as 'an event of knowing between the Divine source and the human participant'. But both are equally keen to point to the formative role of corporate rituals. While anthropologists tend to focus on somatic-emotional dimensions and pentecostal theologians more on the affective-spiritual, both acknowledge that there are communal-formative processes going on in pentecostal practice.

Thus, there is a joint and strong emphasis in academia on the role of bodies, emotions and senses in pentecostal worship. It has been theoretically explained in several manners, using several different conceptual frames, but the overarching theme is certainly that of a holistic integration of affective and somatic—of body and mind, of communal and individual, of sensory and cultural, of psychological and kinesthetic: a perspective that to me is subsumed by the term *embodiment* and further discussed in Chapter 6. To pinpoint just exactly how somatic and affective aspects of charismatic ritual are related is a difficult task, although the literature certainly leads us in the direction of trying. Yet in this study I do not have the ambition to create new theory on this relationship but, rather, to show how these aspects are played out through dance, dress, and music in specific ritual settings. I loosely adopt 'somatic' for things related to physical bodies, 'sensory' for those related to the human senses, 'kinesthetic/kinetic' for those related to bodily movement, and 'affective' for those related to emotional states and lasting dispositions. But my interest is less in defining them separately, and more in showing how intimately related they are in actual ritual practice. There is simply no way one can understand worship without looking at the connections between

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spiritual, sensory, kinetic, somatic, and affective. Hence the description above of both anthropological and theological perspectives that endorse a holistic embodiment perspective.

3.4 Worship as ‘The Rite of Worship and Praise’

In this section so far, I have presented a ritual approach to pentecostal spirituality that entails paying specific attention to ritualization and embodiment and I have provided ample reason for doing so. In principle, such an approach could be used to study any aspect of pentecostal spirituality or liturgy, not just worship. Therefore I want to end by saying a few words specifically about worship in its most narrow sense, namely as ‘the rite of worship and praise’.

In his analysis, Daniel Albrecht identified a basic ritual structure of five sequences: three primary rites surrounded by gathering/dispersing practices and joined together by a block of transitional rites. Within each of the five sequences, which he calls foundational/processual rites, he identified a number of micro-rites, smaller building blocks that could be used by congregants and leaders in a creative fashion. Some micro-rites occurred more often within one or other of the processual rites, but they could all be adopted by all of them. He thinks that the services’ being a result of both creative improvisation and a set order explains the tension between spontaneity and structure within pentecostal liturgy. It gives a much-valued freedom to each ritualist and at the same time guarantees predictability and continuity in both form and content. Indeed, charismatic liturgy has been compared to a jazz performance in that it creatively combines a set formula with freedom to improvise.

The three primary rites that Albrecht identifies are: (1) the rite of worship and praise, (2) the rite of pastoral message, and (3) the rite of altar/response. The first primary rite consists of music, singing and prayer; the second is the

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sermon and the third is a time for responding to the message and includes healing and prayer rites (at the ‘altar’, a designated space at the front).\textsuperscript{175}

Before the first rite the congregations gather to greet each other casually, both inside and outside the auditorium. Between the first and the second primary rite there is a time for congregational announcements, collection, testimonies, and prayers. In the churches studied by Albrecht this period seems to make up a smaller part of the service (although he never gives a clear time indication), functioning as a transition between the first and second primary rites. Albrecht considers it a ‘pause’ in the liturgy, a time where the ritualists may relax a bit between the highly engaging rites of worship and pastoral message.\textsuperscript{176}

Albrecht notes the resemblance to the revivalist American Frontier and Wesleyan Holiness traditions with their triadic structure of services: preliminaries, preaching, and harvest. The initial phase, also called the ‘song service’, included gospel songs and hymns that would orient the congregation towards the evangelistic preaching. He says, however, that, unlike these traditions, the singing in the pentecostal liturgy is not considered ‘preliminary’; it is not a mere warm-up before the sermon but a primary rite in itself.\textsuperscript{177}

In addition to the basic sequences of the liturgy, Albrecht identifies a large number of micro-rites, smaller units that together make up the ritual. In an appendix he lists about a hundred or so micro-rites, including everything from brief actions such as lifting hands and kneeling, to larger units like communion and water baptism.\textsuperscript{178} Summarizing his findings on the ritual structure, Albrecht says,

\begin{quote}
I have shown how the three primary rites together with the transitional rites (and the gathering and dispersing practices) make up what I have described as the foundational/ processual rites. These rites give the ritual its fundamental structure. This fundamental structure serves as a framework within which the microrites emerge spontaneously or intentionally. In either case, a variety of microrites configure to give the ritual its
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{176} Albrecht, 153–60.


internal shape. Consequently, the multitude of potential component practices, gestures, acts and actions (i.e. the microrites), fitted within the fundamental structure (i.e., the foundational/processual rites), help to account for the perception of the ritual as flexible, and for the sensation of freedom. (Two characteristics valued in Pentecostal spirituality.) The microrites are not mere ‘seasoning’ that stimulate the pentecostal tastes and senses, instead, the microrites together in their various assortments and configurations provide the basic ingredients that make up Pentecostalism, even as they constitute the elements of the liturgy.\(^{179}\)

It is the combination of a fundamental structure with a multitude of potential component practices that forms such a powerful whole: accounting for freedom and flexibility and yet connecting the church to its historical roots and its contemporary kin. In Chapter 5, I show how this combination of foundational rites and micro-rites is played out in concrete worship practices, and I modify the liturgical structure by adding a fourth primary rite—‘community-building rites’—to the whole.

From Albrecht I have borrowed the idea that the first section of a pentecostal church service—the part that variously goes under the name of ‘worship’ and ‘praise and worship’ and consists of music, singing, and prayer—may indeed be seen as a primary rite within the liturgy, along with the sermon and the altar call. In line with his usage, I occasionally call this section ‘the rite of worship and praise’, especially when highlighting ritual sequencing, although in general I refer to it simply as ‘worship’. When I speak of ‘worship practices’ it refers to the embodied actions that together make up the rite of worship and praise in a congregational setting. Related concepts such as ‘worship songs’, ‘worship music’, ‘worship team’, and ‘worship set’ follow the general usage in pentecostal-charismatic idiom, as described by Ingalls.\(^{180}\) However, as noted in the Introduction, ‘worship’ is a rich concept in pentecostal idiom, and it is part of the task of this study to wrestle with its different connotations and levels of meaning, something I do continually throughout the book.

4 A Combination of Approaches

The current study takes as its starting point the ritual practice of worship, specifically the rite of worship and praise, in two specific congregational settings,

\(^{179}\) Albrecht, 175–76.

in order to discuss and develop a pentecostal theology of worship. The analysis draws on a range of disciplinary sources, yet my primary dialogue partners are in pentecostal theology and ritual theory.

In this chapter I have detailed the theoretical basis for the current study. That basis can be summarized as a combination of three distinct yet related approaches; first, a spirituality approach to Pentecostalism, where the holistic and multidimensional character of pentecostal faith is acknowledged and where theology and spirituality are seen as thoroughly integrated; second, a practice approach to theology, grappling with notions of theology and theologizing and highlighting the importance of empirical research methods for studying the pentecostal-charismatic tradition; and lastly, a ritual approach to worship, presenting ritualization and embodiment as important tools for understanding pentecostal praise and worship. Throughout the discussion, basic concepts have been introduced and defined. Most notably, worship is described as *orthodoxa*, as a *modus theologicus* and as ‘the rite of worship and praise’. Each of these are central to the way this study is organized and theorized.

The above theoretical framing answers three questions: (1) Why is this study important? Because of the connection between spirituality and theology in the pentecostal-charismatic tradition and the centrality of worship to this spirituality. (2) How do I proceed? By way of a close-up field study that adopts empirical methods as tools in theological research. (3) What have I studied, more precisely? The rite of worship and praise in two local congregations in Nairobi, Kenya, with the ultimate goal of theologizing worship from a pentecostal perspective. In the next chapter I describe my research design and method in more concrete terms.