The Spiritual Organization:

Critical Reflections on the Instrumentality of Workplace Spirituality

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Acknowledgements

Abstract

This article offers a theoretical contribution to the current debate on workplace spirituality by: (a) providing a selective critical review of scholarship, research and corporate practices which treat workplace spirituality in *performative* terms, that is, as a resource or means to be manipulated instrumentally and appropriated for economic ends; (b) extending Ezioni's analysis of complex organizations and proposing a new category, the 'spiritual organization', and; (c) positing three alternative positions with respect to workplace spirituality that follow from the preceding critique. The spiritual organization can be taken to represent the development of a trajectory of social technologies that have sought, incrementally, to control the bodies, minds, emotions and souls of employees. Alternatively, it might be employed to conceptualize the way in which employees use the workplace as a site for pursuing their own spiritualities (a reverse instrumentalism). Finally, we consider the possible incommensurability of 'work organization' and 'spirituality' discourses.

Keywords: workplace spirituality, peformativity, anti-positivism, Etzioni, spiritual organization.

Introduction: Interest in Workplace Spirituality

To suggest that there has been a growing interest in workplace spirituality in recent years would be to court understatement. In his bibliometric analysis of texts over two decades, for example, Oswick (2009) points to the relative proliferation in recent years of spirituality discourse within management studies and the social sciences more generally. The relatively early stirrings of attention given to the subject in the 1990s (for instance, Senge, 1990; *Management Education and Development*, 1992) has given way to a veritable flood of analysis, diagnosis and prescription on the part of organizational scholars, practitioners and popular management writers[1]. Several academic journals, such as *Journal of Adult Development* (2001, 2002), *Journal of Management Inquiry* (2005), *Journal of Organizational Change Management* (1999, 2003) and *The Leadership Quarterly* (2005), have dedicated special issues to the theme of spirituality. The launch of *The Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion* in 2004, specifically tailored to publishing scholarly work in what is rapidly emerging as a specialist subfield of organization and management studies, is also indicative of the growth in interest in workplace spirituality. Similarly, the number of conferences and websites dedicated to workplace spirituality is proliferating. 1999 saw the creation of an *Academy of Management* special interest group entitled, 'Management, Spirituality and Religion' which has grown considerably and now enjoys a membership in excess of 600[2]. 'Spirituality' has even entered the heretofore relatively atheistic (or at least agnostic) confines of the European-based Critical Management Studies (CMS) community in the guise of streams within the biannual international conference. Moreover, Lips-Wiersma

et al. (2009, p.289) are able to identify a distinct sub-theme of 'critical workplace spirituality' emerging in the academic literature.

Academic interest in the subject is following the corporate trend for workshops, seminars, culture change and corporate transformation programmes that, in many instances, are increasingly aimed at harnessing not only the mind and body of employees but also their spiritual essence or soul. Major companies, such as, Apple, Ford, GlaxoSmithKline, McDonalds, Nike, Shell Oil and the World Bank are embracing this recent drive to secure competitive advantage through what might be understood from a critical standpoint as the appropriation of employee spirituality for primarily economic ends (see Casey, 2002; Lips-Wiersma et al., 2009; Mitroff and Denton, 1999a, 1999b).

What are scholars and practitioners who are skeptical about the potential commodification of human spirituality - its being *used* for profit making ends as opposed to its being *valued* for its own sake within the workplace - to make of the current state of affairs? Moreover, what might we infer from these developments for the future of workplace relations and practices?

As two scholars with a personal and professional interest in 'spirituality' (acknowledging, from the outset, the semantic ambiguities of this term), we seek in this article to outline some critical thoughts on the commodificaton and *appropriation* of matters spiritual within predominantly capitalist forms of organization. This is not to say that we are in any way disparaging of expressions of workplace spirituality or scholarly

interest in the phenomenon. Our critique is specifically aimed at academic research and corporate practices that seek to extract economic ends from spiritual means since such instrumentality is, to our sensibilities, demeaning of the human spirit. We contest strongly any social technologies that treat the human as *mere resource* (bodily, emotional, mental or spiritual) to be deployed within a nexus of economic profit-making activity.

Despite what might be inferred from the burgeoning writing on spirituality, explorations of the relationship between the organization of work, religion and spiritual life is hardly new to social science. Indeed, analysis of this relationship is foundational to the social theorizing of Weber, Marx, Durkheim and Freud in considering the emergence of Methodist, Calvinist, and Quaker corporations during the Industrial Revolution. It is also present, either explicitly or implicitly, in theories of post-modern social organization, such as propounded by Bauman, Beck, Foucault and Giddens. However, much of what passes as original contributions to the debate on spirituality – with some notable exceptions - appears to be written in blind ignorance of this legacy, preferring, instead, to treat spirituality in ahistorical and apolitical terms as yet another neutral resource to be harnessed and husbanded by the erstwhile custodians of organizational performance. In short, much of the contemporary literature on spirituality is narrowly utilitarian and instrumental in its intent, often concerned directly to commodify spirituality. Bell and Taylor (2003), Casey (2002), Carrette and King (2005) and Roberts (2001) have all raised concerns about this tendency and attempted to account for the instrumental rediscovery of organizational spirituality through the invocation of relevant social theory.

We shall draw selectively on insights offered by these scholars in our critique of claims made within certain strands of workplace spirituality literature.

To this end, we present a brief review of the workplace spirituality literature, paying particular attention to theoretical and empirical contributions that adopt an instrumental and utilitarian attitude toward the subject. We raise concerns about the predication, definition and representation of 'spirituality' in such projects, drawing on extracts from contributions to support and illustrate our critique. Certain manifestations of workplace spirituality and spiritual leadership theory (SLT) can be understood as continuing a well-established trajectory within utilitarian approaches to organizational behaviour. It represents the latest turn of a wheel that positions organizational subjects within discourses of power and governmentality (Burchell et al., 1991; Foucault, 1991 [1978]), promoting a rhetoric which connects a highly attenuated version of 'spirituality' with organizational performativity (Lyotard, 1984). Our intention in generating this critique is not wholesale to discredit interest in workplace spirituality and leadership, but to suggest that much more nuanced theorisation of the field is needed along with interpretative approaches that reflect the subtlety of the terrain. To repeat an apocryphal methodological cliché: if one is armed only with a hammer, then every problem looks like a nail. This is the current state of affairs found in certain sections of the field, we suggest, and there is a desperate need for critical reflexivity if a great deal of ethical damage in the name of workplace spirituality is to be avoided.

Workplace Spirituality Research: A New Paradigm?

It is not our purpose here to provide an exhaustive review of the literature on workplace spirituality, even were this possible. Several authors (Benefiel, 2003a, 2005a, 2005b); Lund Dean et al., 2003; Giacalone and Jukiewicz, 2004a; Reave, 2005) have undertaken the challenging task of trying to map the domain and we refer readers to these sources for comprehensive reference lists. Literature on workplace spirituality might be placed along a spectrum running from prescriptive texts that promote the transformative power of spirituality for a practitioner readership (for example, Barrett, 1998; Jones, 1996; Klein and Izzo, 1999; Lodahl and Powell, 1999; Owen, 2000; Wood, 2006) through more academically robust books (Conger, 1994; Fairholm, 1997; Howard and Welbourn, 2004; Mitroff and Denton, 1999a, 1999b) and scholarly study of the subject in peer-reviewed journals (see, inter alia, contributions to the special issues of *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 1999, 2003; *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 2005; *The Leadership Quarterly*, 2005). Of particular interest for the purpose of this article are contributions – hailing predominately from US academics – that seek to theorise and explore workplace spirituality empirically from a hypothetico-deductive standpoint. Generic examples of the empirical study of workplace spirituality would include, inter alia, Ashmos and Duchon (2000), Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2004a), Giacalone et al. (2005), Milliman et al. (2003). Within the sub-genre of spirituality and leadership, empirical studies would include: Duchon and Plowman (2005), Fairholm (1997, 1998, 2001), Fry (2003, 2004), Fry et al. (2005). Proponents of this approach (see, for example, Fry, 2003; Fry et al., 2005; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2004b) understand

their work to be contributing to an objectivist 'organization science' that holds out the possibility, in principle, of 'complete explanation' through the incremental accumulation of well-theorised empirical knowledge. Invoking licence from writers such as Kuhn (1970) and Burrell and Morgan (1979), advocates of this approach see themselves as pioneers of a new functionalist paradigm, which, although embryonic in form, promises to become a fully fledged 'normal science' in due course. As we shall see shortly, this new paradigm[3] also entails seeking ways of *measuring* spirituality in the workplace (or, at least, discovering proxies for such measurement) and incorporating it as an independent variable within hypothetico-deductive models of management, organization and leadership. Several studies, furthermore, seek to explore the relationship between corporate spirituality and organizational performance (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2004a; Krahnke et al., 2003) or spiritual leadership and organizational performance (Duchon and Plowman, 2005; Fry et al., 2005).

With respect to the espoused new paradigm and its 'science of workplace spirituality' (Giacalone and Jurkievicz, 2004b), there is a general lack of acknowledgement of the continuing epistemological dispute in organization and management studies concerning paradigm incommensurability. This is not the place to rehearse these arguments fully, but it is important to be aware of the historical legacy and context in which current contributions are being made. In brief, what has been described as a 'paradigm war'[4] has been waged within management and organization studies since the initial publication of Burrell and Morgan's typology (Burrell and Morgan, 1979). It should also be pointed out that this debate, far from abating, lingers on and has yet to

reach a conclusion which satisfies all parties (Westwood and Clegg, 2003). The debate between McKinley (2003) and Case (2003), for instance, is perhaps typical of the lines of division drawn between versions of positivist organization research and interpretative approaches which are founded on a fundamentally different set of epistemological assumptions. In short, to assume – as do the new spirituality paradigm researchers mentioned above - that there is, or could be, a consensus view about how to proceed with organization and management research is at the very least partial, if not downright naïve. Consider in this regard, for example, the high profile debate between Pfeffer (1993, 1995) and Van Maanen (1995a, 1995b) which, whatever one's intellectual allegiances, clearly leaves this epistemological question open. Benefiel (2005a) attempts some epistemological rapprochement with respect to alternative versions of workplace spirituality research that characterise the field, arguing that it is possible to create a centre ground in which both positivist and interpretative research traditions can cohabit in peace. This, however, is to gloss over fundamental ontological, epistemological and ethical differences within a plurality of different approaches that populate the two broad camps.

Leaving aside ontological and epistemological concerns momentarily, we suggest – contrary to Benefiel - that the *ethical* implications of adopting a positivist stance toward the study of organization, in general, and workplace spirituality, in particular, make it inappropriate to propose a neutral centre ground. Academics working in this field need to be aware of the pros and cons of alternative research attitudes and we feel obliged to raise some concerns about the positivism of the new workplace spirituality paradigm. Attempts

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to measure employees' spirituality, or corporate spirituality, involves the positioning and subjectification of persons within reductive, instrumental matrices. Individual and collective responses – indeed, individual and collective 'spirit' – are rendered as statistics suitable for techno-calculative manipulation. Such representations, moreover, serve to reinforce and perpetuate an unquestioned discourse of capitalist power and control. While the science of workplace spirituality may be couched within a rhetoric of value neutrality and apolitical 'contribution to knowledge', it serves, rather, as an instantiation of bio-political invasion and inscription (Foucault 1990).

When linked to the enhancement of corporate productivity and performance, moreover, the new paradigm research functions to reinforce and satisfy the appetites of extant capitalist discourse. Researchers in this paradigm need to appease their sponsors and the business community they serve. Even when pursuing the noble purpose of supplanting narrow materialist and selfish values with 'postmaterialist' (Giacalone and Jukiewicz, 2004b, pp.15-16) or 'transpersonal' (Giacalone, 2004) ones, the dominant discourse hails from a predominantly 'business-centred' worldview (Giacalone and Thompson, 2006). Attempts to establish a more human-centred worldview are thus compromised to the extent that their protagonists find themselves – in the context of the USA academy, at least - having, by necessity, to speak the language of business if they hope to have any influence in the status quo. If some degree of compromise is a feature of more enlightened advocates of the new paradigm literature, more blatantly performative research that links spirituality with the bottom line makes no attempt to disguise its motives. Such work is overtly *ideological* since it appropriates and emulsifies

what might be understood as the genuine grassroots spiritual aspirations of new counter-cultural social movements (Casey, 2002). In other words, we could theorise the openly performative elements of the new paradigm as representing yet another accommodation, typical of capitalism's historical development, which preserves and furthers hegemony (Gramsci, 1971). As such, the new paradigm research in question, we contend, is far from ethically neutral or harmless to the interests of employees who are either directly or indirectly (through the consumption and adoption of its research outcomes) implicated in its discourse and practices.

Problems of Definition

The field of workplace spirituality, perhaps unsurprisingly given the inherent ambiguity of the term 'spirituality'[5], is plagued by problems of definition (Benefiel, 2003a; Dent et al., 2005; Reave, 2005; Tourish and Tourish, 2010). What phenomenon is being referred to by this concept? Our intention here is not to try to resolve this problem for, we would argue, the power of what Burke (1970) refers to as 'God terms' within conceptual schema is precisely their lack of bounded-ness and the scope they offer for a plurality of meanings and interpretations. In pursuit of our argument, however, it will be necessary at least to indicate the range of meanings that have been identified in the workplace spirituality literature and to pay particular attention to definitions deployed within the 'new paradigm', this being the focus of our critique.

In their review of the literature, Dent et al. (2005) identify a range of contemporary meanings relating to individual spirituality such as self-actualization, purpose and meaning in life, health and wellness, workplace spirituality and leadership spirituality. This diversity, by and large, is echoed in the workplace spirituality literature. In addition, there is also present an overarching idea of spirituality as connoting some sense of transcendence or inter-connectedness. Hence according to Kriger and Seng (2005), '"spirituality"… refer[s] to the quest for self-transcendence and the attendant feeling of interconnectedness with all things in the universe' (p.722) and, similarly, for Conger (1994) it is, 'to see our deeper connections to one another and to the world beyond ourselves' (p. 15). Clearly, many of these broad meanings intersect or converge with those found in the five main world religions – Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism – although there are important and quite fundamental distinctions to be drawn between the meaning of 'spirituality' within each of these religious contexts. Adding to the complexity of definition is the rise of what Wexler (1996) refers to as 'unchurched spiritualities', by which he means the plethora of practices and beliefs associated with the so called 'New Age'. These include: unorthodox forms of Eastern and Western mysticism, paganism, magic, astrology, divination, together with complementary medical practices, such as, homeopathy, acupuncture, reflexology and other mind/ body therapies. In short, at the limit, there may be as many conceptions of 'spirituality' as there are individuals that consider themselves, to a greater of lesser extent, to have a 'spiritual' dimension to their lives (Heelas, 2008; Heelas and Woodhead, 2005). Such plurality offers a significant problem to those students of workplace spirituality who are determined to specify, codify and measure its presence and influence

within organizations (Hicks, 2003). To perform such an operation and render it as a potentially manageable variable would require at least some consensus over not only the definition of 'spirituality' but also agreement about appropriate measures of the phenomenon.

Proponents of the new paradigm find themselves having to attenuate the variety of spiritual discourse considerably in order to make it amenable to measurement and control within the methodological frameworks that they employ. Hence, Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2004b) define workplace spirituality as '*a framework of organizational values evidenced in the culture that promotes employees' experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected in a way that provides feelings of compassion and joy*' (p. 13, original emphases). In this definition, 'values' become detached from individuals and, instead, manifest in reified form as part of the organizational 'culture'. Moreover, care is taken in this generic formulation to elide the possible relationship between religious affiliation, or belief and spirituality so as not to exclude any particular individual. But can a 'framework of organizational values' ever satisfy or represent the inevitable heterogeneity of spiritual commitment or expression found within a complex collective? We suspect not. Similarly, for Ashmos and Duchon (2000), spirituality at work consists in: '*the recognition that employees have an inner life that nourishes and is nourished by meaningful work that takes place in the context of community*' (p.137, original emphases). Questions arise concerning 'who' or 'what' is doing the 'recognition' that would satisfy this definition and make it empirically meaningful. Do Ashmos and Duchon have in mind anarcho-syndicalist groupings or

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commensurate which aspire to abandon formal hierarchical and power relations and thus permit a genuinely *mutual recognition* of 'inner life'? Probably not, for this definition has to be workable within a mainstream capitalist business context in order to serve its authors' purposes. What is meant by 'inner life' and how might it be 'nourished' in symbiotic relation to 'work'? Any one of the concepts employed in this and the previous definition of workplace spirituality is open to multiple readings and interpretations, which, on epistemological grounds, make their mobilization as would-be definitive and 'operationalizable' statements on the subject a fantastical endeavour. Our point is that workplace spirituality is, by nature, going to be an *ephemeral phenomenon* approachable from multiple perspectives and hence resistant to neat containment and normalization of the sort sought by many proponents of the new paradigm.

Added to the inherent difficulty of defining workplace spirituality, there is a widespread normative assumption, reflected in the definitional aspirations and present in the broader project of the new paradigm, concerning the mutual *desirability* of accommodating or meeting employees' 'spiritual needs' while at work. Hence, Duchon and Plowman (2005) assert that, '[A]n important dimension of spirituality at work is the notion that employees have spiritual needs (i.e., an inner life), just as they have physical, emotional, and cognitive needs, and these needs don't get left at home when they come to work' (p.811) and, for Mirvis (1997), 'Work itself is being re-discovered as a source of spiritual growth and connection to others' (p. 193). There are doubtless a series of socio-political and economic conditions – some of which we consider below - that one could introduce to theorise *why* spirituality is asserting itself as a concern for work organization

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both in terms of employees seeking spiritual expression and managers feeling the need to accommodate or harness these energies. The workplace spirituality new paradigm is notably lacking in its ability or willingness to locate its contributions in relation to broader social theory, tending to limit analysis to a concern for the pressures of global competition (Duchon and Plowman, 2005; Fry et al., 2005) and the emergence of post-materialist values (Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2004b). Both the problems facing corporations with respect to workplace spirituality and solutions to them are circumscribed by extant thinking in relation to organization science. What remains unquestioned, therefore, is the assumption that it is right and proper for organizations to seek to harness employee spirituality. This marks, we contend, a serious lack of reflexivity in the literature. At the very least, one might expect academic debate about the erosion of boundaries between the two domains – personal spirituality, on the one hand, and work commitment or contract, on the other – which have typically been segregated in modern organizations (Tourish and Tourish, 2010). Such boundary erosion brings us, conveniently, to a consideration of the new paradigm's interest in the relationship between spiritual life and performance in work organizations.

Workplace Spirituality, Performativity and Measurement

Improved Performance and Productivity

Much of the new paradigm literature assumes it appropriate to examine and, by implication, exploit a potential positive correlation between spirituality and workplace performance. The case is made starkly by Krahnke et al. (2003) when they assert that:

To have confidence that our suppositions are more than personal assumptions requires the dispassionate objectivism afforded by the scientific method… [O]rganizations need conclusive evidence *connecting workplace spirituality with bottom line performance*; anything less would bring into question their fiduciary responsibility to stockholders and their moral responsibility to stakeholders. For workplace spirituality to be a viable construct in improving organizations and the people in them, it requires a degree of confidence we can only attain through scientific measurement (pp.397–398, added emphases).

Here we see not only claims regarding the 'scientific' imperative to generate 'viable' knowledge of workplace spirituality through accurate 'measurement' of the phenomenon, but also a moral imperative to link that knowledge to corporate financial performance. This proposition is also interesting insofar as it seeks explicitly to erode the traditional fact-value distinction that has typified positivist social scientific research throughout its post-Enlightenment development (MacIntyre, 1985). To that extent it accords closely to the postmodern model of knowledge, characterized by the emergence of 'performativity', identified by Lyotard (1984). According to Lyotard, the episteme of modern science which found legitimacy in grand narratives of progress and emancipation – totalising stories that gave meaning to local narratives and practices - is being

systematically eroded within post-industrial societies by the advancement of information-driven technologies. These technologies, which, paradoxically, are a necessary product of the modern scientific need to 'observe' beyond the limitations of bare human sensibility, introduce knowledge criteria that undermine the denotative true/false criteria of scientific inquiry. The search for Truth is replaced by a search for the Efficient under what Lyotard (1984, p.111) terms the 'principle of optimal performance'. An economic episteme based on the utilitarian language game of more output for less input displaces the scientific episteme. Lyotard theorises this new basis of knowledge - the optimisation of input to output - as *performativity* (1984, p.112). One consequence of post-industrial technology's privileging of the ends of action over its means is that knowledge ceases to be a valid end in itself. Knowledge is assessed economically not by its truth-value, but by its *exchange-value*. Knowledge is produced to be sold. It becomes subsumed within a flow of capital exchange as part of the consolidation of consumerism within post-industrial societies.

Certain manifestations of new paradigm research into workplace spirituality are explicitly performative in their intent and remit. This agenda also extends beyond generic studies of spirituality in organizations to more specific concerns with the theorisation and study of leadership. Fry (2003, 2004, 2005, 2008) and Fry et al. (2005), for example, have developed a theory of spiritual leadership which seeks to model causally a set of individual and organizational variables which, when in proper relationship, are argued to lead to a number of positive individual and organizational outcomes. Spiritual leadership taps into, 'the fundamental needs for the SWB [spiritual well-being] of both leader and follower, through calling and membership, to create vision and value congruence across

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the individual, empowered team, and organization levels, and, ultimately, *to foster higher levels of organizational commitment and productivity*' (Fry, 2008, p.108, added emphases). By creating an overall corporate vision, spiritual leaders provide themselves and followers a context within which employees can find a meaningful vocation or 'calling' and feel that they are making a genuine difference through their work. This, in turn, enables the fostering of social and organizational cultures, 'based on the values of altruistic love' (p.109) in which leaders and followers derive an authentic sense of membership, feel understood and can thus express, 'care, concern, and appreciation for both self and others' (p.109). Fry and colleagues, moreover, claim to have established empirically that practitioners of spiritual leadership will experience greater psychological and physical well-being (Fry, 2003).

Spiritual Leadership Theory (SLT) also advocates embracing new business models which give emphasis to leadership ethics, sustainability and social responsibility, 'without sacrificing profitability, revenue growth, and other indicators of financial performance' (Fry, 2008, p.110). In other words, SLT is intended to assist managers in maximizing the triple bottom line of 'People, Planet, Profit' (see also Elkington, 1998). In his revised version of SLT, Fry (2008) offers a modified causal model in which, 'inner life, or spiritual practice' (p.111) is seen to positively influence, '(1) hope/faith in a transcendent vision of service to key stakeholders and (2) the values of altruistic love' (p.112). Fry summarizes the interaction between the variables as follows:

Leaders who practice spiritual leadership by drawing on inner life practice and communicate and model hope/faith, a transcendent vision, and organizational values based in altruistic love will encourage the manifestation of positive performance outcomes for both the individual and the organization. (2008, p.120).

The relationship between spiritual leadership and improved productivity is also evident in Fry's earlier work. For example, Fry (2003) observes:

A major change is taking place in the personal and professional lives of leaders as many of them more deeply integrate their spirituality and their work. Most would agree that this integration is leading to very positive changes in their relationships and their effectiveness. There is also evidence that workplace spirituality programs not only lead to beneficial personal outcomes such as increased joy, peace, serenity, job satisfaction and commitment but that *they also deliver improved productivity* and reduce absenteeism and turnover' (p.703, added emphases).

Furthermore:

The purpose of spiritual leadership is to create vision and value congruence across the strategic, empowered team, and individual levels and, ultimately, *to foster higher levels of organizational commitment and productivity* (*ibid.*, p.693, added emphases)[6].

This performative interest in harnessing workplace spirituality and leadership is echoed by Duchon and Plowman (2005) who,

… view workplace spirituality as a particular kind of psychological climate in which people view themselves as having an inner life that is nourished by meaningful work and takes place in the context of a community. Work units that can be characterized by a high degree of workplace spirituality are ones where workers are aligned with the climate. When this happens we contend the work unit will experience greater performance outcomes (p.816, original emphases).

In their study of a healthcare network of organizations in the Southern US, Duchon and Plowman attempt to introduce a utilitarian model of spiritual leadership, populated by a series of 'variables', which enables a statistical relationship to be established between 'work unit performance' and 'spirituality'. They conclude that, 'Ultimately, the model suggests that these variables lead to enhanced work unit performance... Our interest is in proposing an essential spirituality–performance link without which further model development would be irrelevant' (*ibid*., p.825).

Measurement

MacDonald et al. (1999) provide a detailed review of instruments designed to measure spirituality and associated constructs. These include, for example, the so called 'Expressions of Spirituality Inventory' (which purports to measure, inter alia, cognitive,

phenomenological, existential, paranormal and religious dimensions of spirituality) and 'Psychomatrix Spirituality Inventory' (aimed at capturing, inter alia, respondents' awareness of a higher power, their religious histories and current spiritual/religious practices). The kind of theoretical modelling pursued by proponents of the new workplace spirituality paradigm relies on methodologically similar measurement technologies. Fry et al. (2005), for instance, employ a Spiritual Leadership Theory (SLT) questionnaire that includes a 1–5 (from strongly disagree to strongly agree) Likert response set to measure such constructs as, 'Vision', 'Altruistic Love', 'Meaning/Calling', 'Organizational Commitment' and 'Productivity'. Their empirical study sought to, 'utilize a newly formed Longbow helicopter attack squadron at Ft. Hood, Texas to test and validate the hypothesized causal model hypothesizing positive relationships between the qualities of spiritual leadership, organizational productivity, and organizational commitment' (p.836). Similarly, Ashmos and Duchon (2000) developed a 34-question instrument with a 7-point Likert-type scale based on psychometric data from 689 respondents. This 'Meaning and Purpose at Work' questionnaire was designed to capture respondents' 'perceptions of their own inner life', the 'meaningfulness of their work', and their personal sense of 'community at work'. The instrument also attempted to address respondents' trans-personal sense of spiritual collectiveness at a 'work unit-level' by generating data on 'Work Unit Community' and 'Work Unit Meaning'. The Meaning and Purpose at Work questionnaire was also deployed in a subsequent study of healthcare organizations by Duchon and Plowman (2005), mentioned in the previous sub-section on 'performance'. More recently, Martin and Hafer (2009) sought to test empirically the relationship between emotional

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intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and performance using a modified version of the Ashmos and Duchon instrument and other measures.

Our concern is that a performative attitude toward the social scientific investigation of workplace spirituality *necessitates through measurement* a highly attenuated and narrow conception of 'spirituality'; one that potentially denigrates and impoverishes the *meaning* that it has for organizational members. What is needed, we contend, is greater transparency and reflexivity with respect to the unconscious assumptions that are imported when a workplace 'science' approach to spirituality is adopted (see, for example, McKee et al., 2008). Such an approach would eschew the performative in favour of a more open ended enquiry into the complex set of socio-political and economic conditions that surround and inform the plurality of spiritual expression within organizations.

The Spiritual Organization: Exploiting or Valuing the Employee's Soul?

From the stirrings of the Industrial Revolution onward there has be a steady stream of theoretical and prescriptive practitioner literature on how to exact the most from employees by promoting identification with the corporation and thereby harnessing and directing their 'inner lives'. In the middle of the last century this was perhaps best epitomized in the work of the Human Relations and Quality of Working Life movements. And more or less from the outset, corporatist attempts to tie work to spirit and soul have

been subject to criticism. In his seminal critique of organizational commitment, for example, Whyte (1965 [1956]) voiced concern over the corporatist trajectory of employment relations in US organizations, pointing to the way in which the nature of the employment contract was shifting. Conventional wage labour was, for the 'organization man', to be supplanted by a work ethic that demanded a commitment of heart and soul. As Whyte put it, 'No one wants to see the old authoritarian return, but at least it could be said of him that what he wanted primarily of you was your sweat. The new man *wants your soul*' (Whyte, 1965, p.365, added emphases). Similarly, the rise of motivation theory, from Maslow (1970 [1954]) through to McClelland (1971) and Alderfer (1972), stressed the importance to corporations of harnessing employee needs for 'belonging'. In the case of Maslow, of course, popular management interpretations of his work also highlight the potential 'spiritual' dimension of life that an employee might pursue through 'self actualization'. There is, then, nothing new in the managerialist attempt to idealize and manufacture employees (Kunda, 1992; Jacques, 1995; Townley, 1994) in such a way that they become pliable and amenable to *totalizing* organizational control (Goffman, 1968). In that sense, the work of certain proponents of the positivist workplace spirituality movement (as evidenced in the preceding section) represents the latest in a very long line of ideologically infused fantasies about how more productivity can be exacted from employees by aligning their motivations, beliefs and values with those of the corporation.

It may be that, in certain instances, advocates of the 'science' of workplace spirituality are pursuing lines of scholarship and research in the name of humanizing the

workplace. In these cases (e.g., Giacalone, 2004; Giacalone and Jurkiewicz, 2004b; Giacalone and Thompson, 2006; Fry, 2005) the argument runs that the promotion of workplace spirituality will lead to 'good' or is of humanitarian value *in its own right*. The fact that it may lead to greater productivity and improvements to the bottom line are, viewed from a capitalist perspective, an incidental benefit. In other words, these authors might argue that their research and scholarship is not predicated on an interest directly in how workplace spirituality can improve financial performance. The relationship is *indirect*, and so references to the performative effects of spirituality are made for rhetorical purposes. Talk about performance and profit gives permission to talk also about spirituality; it affords a permissive space in which to suggest an association between spiritual and material profit. Arguably, this is necessary where performance and profit have become the only criteria of legitimacy, and perhaps even in the academy, without these two 'p-words' there would be no interest in discussing spirituality in the workplace, nor for studying it in organisational and managerial milieu.

However worthy the intentions and sentiments of these authors such arguments are, nonetheless, premised on the possibility of some form of enhancement of 'spirituality' – individual or collective - within the context of neo-liberal corporate life. As such, they are bounded by the power relations that obtain within capitalist socio-economic relations. It is managers or leaders who are still pulling the strings, seeking to mobilize consent and compliance from employees or followers so as to satisfy the interest of investors. If 'spirituality' is explicitly on the business agenda, it is difficult to imagine how it can resist being subsumed within or subordinated to dynamics that, for structural

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reasons, strive for the alignment of *personal* beliefs and values with those of business corporations. Nonetheless, we take seriously the suggestion that the emergence of organizational control characterised as 'spiritual' is something that might become visible if we approach organizations as instruments of human spirituality, and develop this further below, after an important caveat.

There are clear unitarist echoes in certain strands of the workplace spirituality literature of the Cultural Excellence, Total Quality Management and Business Process Re-engineering programmes of the 1980s and 90s which, at their worst, carry sinister Orwellian overtones of seeking to manipulate and control the hearts and minds of employees through ideological means (Willmott, 1993). In other words, as Lips-Wiersma et al. (2010) have pointed out, there is a darker side to the workplace spirituality movement that, far from liberating the spirit at work, entails acts of 'seduction', 'evangelization', 'manipulation', and 'subjugation' in pursuit of totalizing control. Tourish and Pinnington (2002) highlight a similar set of issues for Transformational Leadership (TL) theories and practices which, they claim, promote a fanatical attitude toward change that seeks to stifle and ultimately prohibit any expression of dissent or resistance. They suggest that patterns of leadership and power fostered by TL bear disturbing comparison to those found in religious cults, prompting Tourish and Pinnington to introduce the notion of 'corporate cultism' to complement that of 'corporate culturism' (Willmott, 1993). Dystopian analyses of corporate change initiatives also extend to the new agendas of workplace spirituality. For example, Case (2005) offers a quasi-science fiction parable against the potential excesses and dangers

inherent in the commodification of workplace spiritual education and practice (see also Forray and Stork, 2002). In this cautionary tale, New Age spirituality becomes part of the business education mainstream in a hi-tech mediated corporatist world of employee subjugation and ideological control.

Acknowledging the historical legacy of social technologies directed toward employee commitment and control, we would like to introduce a theoretical framework that we find helpful in understanding recent - and possibly future? – organizational developments. Our suggestion is that we might think in terms of a broad trajectory running from organizational technologies that seek primarily to control the body of the workforce, through those that try to elicit moral and ideological commitment and on to those that would have work organizations appropriate the spirits and souls of employees. One way of theorizing this trajectory would be to extend Etzioni's categorization of complex organizations (Etzioni, 1971 [1961]). Etzioni suggests that complex organizations can be classified according to the 'forms of relationship', 'member involvement' and 'types of power' that predominate in them. Thus, *coercive* organizations with a predominately 'alienated' membership ensure compliance through the use of actual or threatened violence. Such organizations would include, for example, concentration camps, most prisons and custodial mental hospitals (Etzioni, 1971, p.66). *Utilitarian* organizations elicit 'calculative' member involvement and use resource sanctions to encourage compliance (effectively purchasing employee commitment). At the time of writing, Etzioni included most blue-collar and white-collar industries in this category, along with trades unions and peacetime military organizations (*ibid.*, p.66).

Finally, *normative* organizations are characterized by the 'moral' commitment of their

members and seek to influence them through the manipulation of values, attitudes and

beliefs. Religious organizations, political organizations, healthcare organizations,

educational institutions and many professional organizations fall into this category (*ibid.*,

pp.66-7).

While we grant that Etzioni's conceptualization of power appears somewhat dated

in the light of subsequent theorization (see, inter alia, Lukes, 1974; Foucault, 1980), his

basic typology of organization remains remarkably innovative and thought provoking.

The analysis also contains a level of subtlety that is difficult to convey in the cursory

summary of the typology offered here. For instance, Etzioni fully recognizes that his

categories – coercive, utilitarian, normative - can co-exist in any single complex

organization and he writes extensively on the nature of 'dual-structure' examples. Our

purpose in introducing the basic scheme is to suggest two ways in which it might be

augmented. In the first place, it would seem that the archetypal *modern* organization

typified by Etzioni as 'utilitarian' is increasingly having to respond to social forces that

entail the encroachment of the 'normative' into its domain. As we have already pointed

out, this process was certainly underway in the 1950s but gained considerable momentum

with the appearance of corporate culturist innovations in the 1980s and 90s (the Cultural

Excellence movement, TQM, BPR, and so forth). Etzioni's framework would thus

benefit from a retrospective evaluation of the effects of changes over the past four-and-a-

half decades on the classification boundaries. Secondly, there may be a case for either

extending the 'normative' category or introducing a new category to accommodate workplace spirituality programmes that seek explicitly to manage employees' souls.

Whereas Whyte (1965) and Kunda (1992) speak of the corporate aspiration of capturing the 'souls' of the workforce, their meaning seems more metaphorical than literal. What they refer to is the manner in which certain organizations strive for enhanced control of the cognitive and emotional commitment of workforces.

The *literal* reference to the management of spirituality in contemporary positivist literature casts such metaphorical usage in a different light. Might we be justified, therefore, in suggesting that the explicit and organised management of employees' souls extends beyond the domain of 'normative' control, which seeks to shape the morality and aesthetic preferences of employees? The 'new paradigm' studies imply a more ambitious intention to lay claim to the employee's subjectivity; to position employee identity as the most salient selfhood. The workplace would no longer be merely the site for the discovery and expression of socially sanctioned values and norms; rather, it becomes both the material and metaphysical conditions for selfhood, the over-soul or collective soul of which individual souls are holographic offprints. In this new organizational cosmology, employees are destined to find their home and fulfilment through willing conformity to the whole. This, we contend anticipates the emergence of a new post-Etzionian category: the *spiritual* organization, whose member involvement would entail hope for *revelation* or enlightenment, and where power is exercised pastorally through

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conscience, willing obedience, self-surveillance of innermost thoughts and disciplining of the spirit (Mitchell, 2009; Bell and Taylor, 2003; Foucault, 1982).

Clearly, there are extant organizations, such as, monasteries, cults and other spiritual communities which would fall into this fourth general category. However, to substantiate a claim that these 'spiritual organizations' and their moral communities are more than an intensification of normative control requires a significant re-faming of organizational and individual agency. Etzioni argues that workers must be persuaded into their relationship with organizations by force, utilitarian exchange or a belief in the moral rectitude of the work (or any combination of these). While the worker who is coerced into employment may retain a personal antipathy to the organization and its aims, the morally committed organizational member does not afford such independence. The normative organization –whether or not it overlaps with the coercive or utilitarian – has successfully bought the conscience of its members, becoming central in their account of who they are. The positivist literature that we have reviewed thus far might be dismissed as aiding and abetting such normative control.

However, before we dismiss these discourses of workplace spirituality as mere accoutrements to the intensification of labour, we should allow the possibility that scholars are attempting to address substantial and vital aspects of organizational life (member spirituality), but are simply handicapped by the inadequacies of positivist social science methods. In the following section we attempt an alternative approach,

hypothetically differentiating the spiritual from normative organization in a tentative

modification of Etzioni's model (Table 1).

Form of Relationship	Member involvement	Type of Power
COERCIVE	ALIENATIVE	Use of actual or threatened violence or discipline to ensure compliance
UTILITARIAN	CALCULATIVE	Use of resource sanctions to encourage compliance – the 'purchase' of commitment
NORMATIVE	MORAL	Influence through the manipulation of values, attitudes and beliefs – the management of meaning, desire and identity
SPIRITUAL	REVELATORY	Willing obedience to rules and practices. Collaborative management of resources and opportunities in order to enhance spiritual insight

Table 1. Extending Etzioni's typology of complex organizations

At issue is whether we can anticipate a pattern of expectations associated with what we are designating the 'spiritual organization' beginning to permeate erstwhile secular organizations and institutions in the same fashion that the 'normative' has been encroaching inexorably upon the 'utilitarian', in Etzioni's terms. As with Etzioni's original consideration of dual structures, we would also have to acknowledge that under certain circumstances, and in differing contexts, workers could potentially be respected as spirit-enlivened beings within utilitarian and normative modes of organizing. The potential obtains in most complex organizations for their systems and structures to be relatively liberating and life affirming or, by contrast, oppressive and stultifying to the human spirit. In effect, this fourth category implies the instrumental use of organisational norms (and rhetoric) in the service of personal or collective spiritualities – a possibility we return to in the concluding section of this article.

Our critique thus far of the would-be instrumental exploitation of workplace spirituality and our conjecture concerning the *spiritual organization* as a new ideal type raise a number of crucial social theoretical questions that deserve attention. It is to these questions that we now turn.

Enchantment Meets Disenchantment in Workplace Spirituality

Not summer's bloom lies ahead of us, but rather a polar night of icy darkness and

hardness, no matter which group may triumph externally now… (Weber, 1970,

p.158).

In an attempt to resolve the ambivalent relationship between self and organization

in the West, it appears managers are turning to the instrumental use of

technologies that appropriate spirituality in order to establish what they are

encouraged to perceive as total obedience among a workforce (Bell and Taylor,

2003, p.342).

Several contributors to the debate have raised concerns about the attempted

parcelling out of the human soul that seems to characterize the positivist workplace

spirituality project. To begin with, as Fornaciari and Lund Dean (2001, p.335) observe, it

seems rather ambitious if not absurd to try to 'factor analyze God'. The endeavour to

reduce spirituality to a set of hypotheses, measures and statistical relationships risks

trivializing the subject and, indeed, offending the sensibilities of those whose beliefs and

values are being scrutinized. Several critics have also pointed to the apparent incongruity

of directly associating a materialist concern for improving corporate productivity and

profitability with personal or collective spirituality (Bell and Taylor, 2003; Benefiel,

2005a; Casey, 2002; Lund Dean et al., 2003). That certain academics and practitioners

have manifestly been eager to link spirituality with productive output within a

performative matrix is of intrinsic social scientific interest and warrants closer inspection.

There seems to be a fundamental paradox at the heart of positivist attempts to contain and

manage spirituality in the interests of improved performance; one that has distinct *ideological* overtones.

Viewed from a Weberian standpoint we are witnessing in the new paradigm research documented above what is, in effect, a collision of opposing social forces. The performative interest in harnessing spirituality through instrumental technologies necessitates the thrusting together of a series of incommensurate poles: disenchantment and enchantment, demystification and mystification, technical and substantive rationality. Weber (1970) characterises rationalisation as a process that has as its ultimate end the disenchantment of the world (a concept he borrowed from Schiller), that is, the complete elimination of all wonder and mystery and its replacement by instrumental knowledge. Disenchantment is the outcome of rationalisation and 'intellectualisation which we have been undergoing for thousands of years…' (*ibid.*: 138). In pursuit of instrumental knowledge, moreover, modern organizations court the perfection of 'technical correctness', or *Zweckrationalität* (formal rationality), in Weber's terms, at the expense of thoughtful and normative *reflection* on subjective means and intentions (what Weber referred to as *Wertrationalität*, that is, substantive rationality). The manner in which ends replace means under modern conditions, of course, is what led Weber to speculate on the inherently *irrational* foundation and trajectory of formal rationality and the self-defeating dilemmas produced by bureaucratic technologies of social control.

While positivist studies of workplace spirituality embody, par excellence, the drive toward disenchantment, the irony is that their object of enquiry is, arguably, a

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striving toward a *re-enchantment* and revitalized sense of meaning on the part of

employees who have become *disaffected* by the soulless rationalities and materialism of

the modern world (Casey, 2002). The resulting paradox is characterized admirably by

Bell and Taylor (2003) in their critical analysis of workplace spirituality discourse:

> This positivistic logic reflects dominant methodologies within management
> research that attempt to constitute workplace spirituality as an object of study.
> Ironically, however, interest in workplace spirituality is driven by the limitations
> of positivistic thought and by the need to develop alternative visions that
> challenge the 'dehumanized representations'… Paradoxically, the subsequent
> representation of workplace spirituality as something to be managed, measured
> and modelled contributes towards the subsequent demystification of spirituality
> and the self (p.336).

Whereas conventional religious sensibilities were occluded from industrial

organizations in which the instrumental rationality of production was privileged,

disaffection with the excesses of that prevailing order has given rise to a proliferation of

attempts to re-enchant workplace practices. As Casey (2002) observes of contemporary

Western organizations, 'a monological instrumental rationality and economic ideology of

one-sided modernity now meets a counter-force it unintendedly [*sic*] helped generate.

Informational capitalism, simultaneity of exchange and boundary collapse expose

organizational rationalities — which were always fragile — to forces and demands in the

wider cultural sphere' (p.165). In other words, organizations (and, no less, students of

organization) in the post-industrial world are necessarily having to accommodate or respond to social forces, including a revitalization and reinvention of plural spiritualities, that are beyond their immediate control. Hence we witness the willingness of major corporations to take seriously the spiritual aspirations of employees – whether of a traditional religious or 'unchurched' New Age complexion – and reconfigure work practices to address and even promote these interests in the name of improved performance and control.

Conclusion: Is There a Place for Spirituality in Work Organisations?

While being critical of the current fashion for the instrumental appropriation of spiritual energy within organizations, we nonetheless desire to address the question of what place a considered and nuanced understanding of spirituality might have within contemporary organizations. In other words, can such notions as spiritual practice, spiritual discipline and wisdom – intrinsic features of our 'spiritual organization' ideal type - be meaningfully integrated within predominantly secular work regimes (Case and Gosling, 2007)? Is there an 'art of living' available to the contemporary employee (Nehamas, 1998)? Is there a philosophical way of life to be led (Hadot, 1995)?

To commence, we note the instrumentality inherent in our own effort to research, write and present this article. We have delineated and appropriated both a body of literature and personal thoughts and experiences, manipulating them to our purposes –

and these purposes themselves are conditioned by the ideological and normalising forces (discursive and disciplinary) of contemporary academic life. On the whole, we consider ourselves to be free agents in undertaking and executing this work, while adopting a functional instrumentalism in pursuit of the performative values of our employers (universities). Curiously, however, we find ourselves alert to the Weberian paradox noted above: our attempt to mount a rational critique of positivist studies of workplace spirituality is motivated in part by a frustration with the rationalising and normalising forces of the academic discipline we deploy. While in pursuit of the emancipation of workers from the normalising rationality of the corporation, no less than that of the positivist scientist, we are ourselves bound by this rationality. So it appears that while we set out to write an article on 'the theorisation of spirituality in organisation studies' we have been exploring forms of instrumentality. Furthermore, we have positioned this as anything but 'neutral'; rather, have mounted a critique of the ways in which organizations might manipulate the spiritual feelings of their employees, and a parallel critique of scientific collusion in this process. However ours is not, we argue, the same degree of performative instrumentalism as implied in the positivist studies cited above. In those studies the 'spirituality' of employees has been constructed as a thing liable to be measured and manipulated as a factor in the productive process. As readers of those studies we have not been *impelled* by them to think as we have, or to work on this material at all. Rather, we have been *afforded the opportunity* to work with the material (Gibson, 1966, 1977, 1979; Greeno, 1994; Thanem, 2008). We conclude by elaborating three possible ways of re-conceptualising the relationship between spirituality and the workplace that follow from our critique and theoretical reasoning.

1. The 'spirituality' of employees is subject to the organized manipulation of beliefs and disciplinary practices, such that behaviors systematically enhance corporate goal-seeking and attainment. Some adherents to spiritual or religious beliefs may find a happy coherence in, for example, their dedication to 'service' and the 'customer service' aims of the organization, or the reliance of the state on voluntary labor to provide welfare for the mass unemployed. Religious belief may well be, as Marx and Engels (1967 [1848]) so eloquently put it, 'the opiate of the people' both for its analgesic qualities as well as the ideological alignment provided by its doctrines and practices. This is a position we share with the positivist authors we criticize: an assumption that spirituality is some form of constructed consciousness; all that separates us is that we are skeptical of their manipulations.

However this is to ignore some other possibilities: that, to pursue the metaphor of the opium-eater, psychedelic experiences may be wonderful. A characteristic of post-modern societies is that the totalizing ideological effects of capitalist production are contested from many directions. No longer is contestation exclusively the province of direct assault by the proletariat. Instead, parallel discourses (de)construct capitalism in a multitude of ways. Which consideration requires that we acknowledge another direction of instrumentality.

2. People – employees – use work, organizational life, and employment itself as instruments in their spiritual lives. In other words, an argument that the material world,

with all its tribulations as well as its wonders, serves a purpose in the spiritual life of the soul (or however one may approach the matter of one's own identity). This is not to say that all doctrines, and all spiritualities, are alike in this regard. Some forms of established religion would consider harmonious and prosperous citizenship as a sign or a fruit of their spiritual righteousness (Weber, 1992 [1958]), while others find expressions of their spirituality in a determined, even violent resistance to consumerism and corporate hegemony (McIntosh, 2001). Our point here is *not* an endorsement of a transcendent ontology; rather, we wish to point out that various academic discourses– ours as well as those we criticize – have eschewed the fundamental distinguishing feature of spiritual perspectives on work and leadership; that their reality and authority derive from transcendental sources. To put this more prosaically, the instrumentalism that we criticize in this article treats spirituality as a cipher in the material relations of production. It therefore fails to take its own avowed subject-matter seriously, to speak of spirituality from the ground of the spirit, as it were. If they were to do so, in familiar instrumentalist and positivist terms, they might consider the extent to which work organizations help or hinder the progress of spirituality.

3. Finally, it may be more appropriate to consider 'work organizations' and 'spirituality' as entirely different in type, with incommensurate ends, neither bearing any essential relation to the other. This is a stance taken by Tourish and Tourish (2010) in their strident post-structural critique of the spirituality at work literature. In their view, 'the workplace is not a useful medium for people to find the deepest meaning in their lives', and, furthermore, '[l]eaders of business organizations are not spiritual engineers or

secular priests, charged with responsibility for the human soul, and business

organizations are not a suitable forum for exploring such issues' (p.219). From our

viewpoint, there may be *incidental connections* between spirituality and the workplace:

spirituality might be strengthened by association and friendship, and perhaps the

disciplines of spiritual exercises are functional in improving performance at work; but the

discipline of these exercises, and of philosophy itself, might be considered to be *good in*

themselves (Hadot, 1995). This would constitute a somewhat more radical critique of

instrumentalism in this context rendering it, to all intents and purposes, irrelevant.

We have sought in this article to make a theoretical contribution to the current

debate on workplace spirituality by: (a) taking issue with scholarship and corporate

practices which treat workplace spirituality in purely *performative* terms, that is, as a

resource or means to be manipulated instrumentally for organizational ends; (b)

tentatively suggesting that Ezioni's analysis of complex organizations might be

developed to include a new category which we have designated *the spiritual*

organization; (c) positing three alternative positions with respect to workplace spirituality

that follow from our critique and theoretical reflections. The spiritual organization, as

ideal type, is ultimately an ambiguous category. From one perspective it can be

interpreted as representing a sinister attempt on the part of capitalist organizations to

harness, manipulate and control the soul of employees. As such, the spiritual organization

forms part of an historical trajectory of social technologies which has incrementally

sought to colonize and control, firstly, the bodies, secondly, the minds and emotions

(through ideological manipulation) and, lastly, the spirits or souls of employees (position

1 of our conclusion). From another perspective, the spiritual organization can be taken as a potentially liberating notion which acknowledges the resurgence and plurality of grassroots spiritualities that currently find expression in the workplace (position 2). Taken in this sense, it celebrates and values spiritual capacities and would seek to assist employees in finding meaning in their lives *through work*. In effect this amounts to a reversal of the organizational instrumentalism of position 1 in preference of an instrumentalism on the part of the employee. However, we also want to hold out a third possibility, namely, the incommensurability of work and spirituality. Here we see value in spirituality and related disciplines *for their own sake* and not as *means* to be utilized, either by academics using the discourse strategically for what they see to be a 'greater good', corporations or individuals within a work organization context. From this third position, whatever interaction there might be between the subjectivities of individual or collective spiritual pursuits and the workplace would be incidental. The workplace has no special relevance to spirituality; it is simply another site, amongst the multitude of transient phenomena within which subjective spiritual journeys may or may not be pursued. We suspect that position 3 will not be a popular conclusion for most readers of this journal for it would, of course, imply the end of workplace spirituality as a discrete subject of study.

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Endnotes

[1] By way of illustration, popular publications include: Barrett (1998) *Liberating the Corporate* Soul, Conger (1994) *The Spirit at Work*, Howard and Welbourn (2004) *The Spirit at Work Phenomenon*, Jones (1996) *Jesus CEO*, Klein and Izzo (1999) *Awakening Corporate Soul*, Lodahl and Powell (1999) *Embodied Holiness: A Corporate Theology of Spiritual Growth*, Mitroff and Denton (1999) *A Spiritual Audit of Corporate America*, Owen (2000) *The Power of the Spirit: How Organisations Transform*, Wood (2006) *Business the Bible Way*. The are also sites dedicated to selling spiritual tools of personal and corporate success. For example, Vincent Roazzi's website offers a book and series of CD audio products entitled, 'Spirituality of Success: How to Get Rich with Integrity', available from http://www.spiritualityofsuccess.com/Home.aspx?tabId=50 (accessed 14th June 2007).

[2] The actual membership of this interest group at the time of writing is 640; a statistic which compares favourably, for example, with the 774 members of the 'Critical Management Studies' *AOM* interest group and is more than one tenth the size of the long-established generic 'Organizational Behaviour' grouping of 5816 members. Data obtained from http://www.aomonline.org/aom.asp?id=18# (accessed 27th January 2010).

[3] We shall treat this scholarly community's claims to be contributing to a 'new paradigm' on face value purely on the grounds that it has emic anthropological meaning. In other words, insofar as proponents of this discourse are engaged in a set of *practices* that they themselves understand to be paradigmatic, then it is appropriate for interested observers, such as ourselves, to accept that nomenclature (regardless of social scientific objections that might be raised regarding this claim).

[4] See Case (2004) for further details of (and references to) 'paradigm wars' with organization studies.

⁵ 'Spirituality' according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* first appears in the English language around the middle of the 15th century and refers originally to, 'The body of spiritual or ecclesiastical persons' (*OED* online). Among the meanings that it accrued during the intervening centuries is, '[A]ttachment to or regard for things of the spirit as opposed to material or worldly interests' (*OED* online). The word 'spiritual' has a slightly older legacy, dating from the 14th century and, in addition to reflecting a structural differentiation between the numinous and material, means 'Of or pertaining to… the spirit or higher moral qualities, esp. as regarded in a religious aspect' (*OED* online). Early meanings of the term also related to 'breathing' and 'respiration', semantic associations which resonate with the concept of 'inspiration' in Medeival Scholasticism. During the 18th and 19th centuries, 'spirituality' became associated with more worldly qualities, such as, refinement of the senses and intellect. (Source: http://dictionary.oed.com/entrance.dtl accessed 27th January 2010).

⁶ In the interests of balance, we should note that elsewhere Fry (2005) advances a normative argument which privileges the pursuit of 'well-being' over principles of acquisition and consumerism that, he contends, results from a perversion of the Protestant work ethic in the USA. Nonetheless, it seems that the move from selfish individualism to collective well-being is to be achieved *within* reformed and more socially responsible forms of capitalist corporation. Spiritual leadership still plays a central role in harnessing collective corporate energies for the purposes of enhancing overall well-being and, indirectly, improving productivity.