

Call for Submissions

Special Issue of the *Journal of Management Spirituality and Religion*

(Re)Claiming the Sacred Feminine in Management and Organizations

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Background and Rationale for the Proposed Special Issue

In conventional EuroWestern approaches, spiritual qualities have often been dichotomized by gender (masculine/feminine, culture/nature, mind/body) and differentially valued and privileged, such that the divine masculine has been deemed superior to, or more advanced than, the sacred feminine (Fedele, 2019). The divine masculine is commonly framed in terms of “the sublime...an inclination toward detachment and transcendence, intellectual clarity and religious rigor, purification and perfection” (Starr, 2019, p. 226). In contrast, the sacred feminine is commonly understood in terms of attributes associated with connection and immanence, such as “mercy, loving-kindness, wildness, inclusiveness, radical truth telling and *tendencies* such as nurturing, subversive, relational, community building, heart centered, honoring of embodied experience, comfortable with ambiguity” (Starr, 2019, p. 225). Masculinist bias has also been associated with racial, heterocentric, colonial and classist economic biases (Dillard & Walker, 2022; Hope, 2010). Feminine spiritualities, particularly when they have considered the voices of those who have suffered oppressions, including at the intersection of multiple marginalized identities

(Dillard & Walker, 2022), have been associated with individual and collective agency through the use of power-with, rather than power-over, others (Hope, 2010).

Both within and among individuals, these dualities have been theorized as contributing to disunion, disharmony and fragmentation, believed to be implicated in both social and ecological denigration and desecration (Rimanoczy & Llamazares, 2021; Rozuel, 2014). Hence, one spiritual path for redressing these predicaments is the anti-oppressive use and valuation of “images of divinity...(that) reflect the world’s diversity: female and male, both and neither, personal and impersonal, human and other than human” (Christ & Plaskow, 2017, p. 100). For example, just as images and stories of the sacred masculine might involve qualities such as tenderness and compassion, those of the sacred feminine might involve power and intrepidity (Austen, 2018; Kinsley, 1986; Starr, 2019; Woodman, 1989). Moreover, when the lens is expanded beyond the conventional EuroWestern, spiritualities often move beyond dichotomized and even gendered forms (Fedele, 2019).

Yet, despite the potential for the anti-oppressive integration of feminine and masculine aspects of work-related spirituality, deep-seated, systemic challenges have been identified (Watts et al., 2025). Examples include the creation of post-feminist, feminine ideals that intertwine with, or reflect and maintain neoliberal trends (Jain, 2020; Sullivan & Delaney, 2017), as well as the “feminization” of capitalist logics through the potentially predatory leveraging of feminine spiritualities for personal gain (Kieffer, 2020, p. 83). Similarly, the pervasive and persistent institutionalization of practices associated with dominant leadership archetypes of “agentic solo heroes ...characterized as...competitive, independent, and dominating with power over others” has obscured “positive, healthy, feminine, relational, cooperative leadership” oriented toward the just and good (Rothausen, 2023, pp. 627, 630). Even with

growing organizational and management interests in, or needs for, values or skills that have been associated with the feminine, these might still be seen as inconsistent with dominant, masculinist approaches to management (Billing, 2011; Zaidman, 2020) and might well be discriminated against (Tejeda, 2015; Yu et al. 2023).

Although the value of integrated approaches to spirituality is recognized here, given persistent inattention to and omission of the sacred feminine, the current call focuses on (re)claiming or re(integrating) the sacred feminine. We welcome conceptual papers, case studies, and other empirical research that advance theory and scholarship, while offering practical implications for management and organizations, in (but not limited to) the following areas:

- Critical perspectives on postfeminist, holistic, alternative or self spiritualities as feminine spiritualities in management and organization; potential shadow sides for organizations and leaders of integrating the sacred feminine
- Jungian perspectives on integration of masculine and feminine dimensions of spirituality for leadership, management or organization
- Consideration of the sacred feminine within specific religious or spiritual traditions that have implications for leadership, management or organization
- Development or perspectives on postsecular feminist spiritual identities in work organizations; or spiritual and social empowerment in organizations through feminine spiritual practices (e.g., Poutiainen, 2024).
- Decolonial and Indigenous perspectives on the sacred feminine in work and organizations
- Alternative ontologies, epistemologies and methodologies that help to conceptualize and study the sacred feminine differently in organizations and management research.

A one-page abstract of a potential manuscript may be submitted via the ScholarOne system at <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/rmsr> between March 15 and May 15, 2026. **Full manuscripts** must be submitted via the ScholarOne system at <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/rmsr> by **January 15, 2027**.

For questions, please email: sacredfeminineeditors@gmail.com.

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