The Wounded Healer: Spiritual Research on Feminist Spiritual Leadership

Nurtured by American Zen Buddhism

by
Tianyuan Yu

A thesis submitted to
Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Business Administration (Management)

March 2024, Halifax, Canada

© Tianyuan Yu, 2024

Approved: Albert J. Mills, Ph.D.
Supervisor

Approved: Hugh Willmott, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Approved: Jean Helms Mills, Ph.D.
Committee Member

Approved: Julia Storberg-Walker, Ph.D.
External Examiner

Date: March 27, 2024

Dedication

To my mother, my maternal grandfather, and the wounded healers.

The Wounded Healer: Spiritual Research on Feminist Spiritual Leadership
Nurtured by American Zen Buddhism

By Tianyuan Yu

ABSTRACT

My thesis tells a story of self-healing and self-empowerment, a story of how I obtain intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth through spiritual research on American Zen Buddhism. As a female Chinese immigrant in Canada, I have been wounded by people in power under various oppressive social systems. My deepest wound is my father's domestic violence that I suffer throughout my childhood and youth under Chinese patriarchy. I am able to heal this wound through an autoethnographic field study at some major American Zen centers that have been afflicted with sex scandals. This transformative experience enables me to better deal with challenges in both the personal and professional realms of my life. My story is worth telling because I want to inspire collective awakening. I know that countless people are suffering what I suffered, and I want to let them know there is a way out. My awakening experience enables me to be compassionate for all. Those who abuse others may have been abused. Those who are abused may abuse others. Who is to be healed and liberated? Everyone, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, or anything. The wisdom and power that one needs to fight inequity and injustice lie in a healed and fearless heart.

This Zen-informed spiritual research aims to address an overarching research question: How might American Zen Buddhist teaching and practice heal and empower the wounded people who manifest their healing and empowerment in their whole beings, including research approaches, leadership theorization, teaching practices, and dealing with challenges in personal and professional realms of life? Accordingly, my research makes four primary contributions. First, I develop a Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm that fundamentally transcends the dominant functionalist paradigm. Second, I propose a Zen-informed feminist (androgynous) spiritual leadership model that is not only gender-inclusive but also shedding light on the black box of spiritual transformation. Third, I examine the key features of American Zen teaching practice and explore a Zen-informed spiritual approach to management education that is healing and empowering to students. The fourth contribution of this research depends on its impacts on both you and me in dealing with life's challenges: Does the research enable you and me to be aware of our hidden wounds, of our collective sufferings, and to access our inner wisdom to show up in compassionate disruptions?

Only the wounded healer is able to heal. I am an aspiring wounded healer.

March 27, 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Figures

Table of Tables

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Who Is the Author?

I am a female Chinese immigrant living in Halifax, Canada. You are reading my thesis for my second doctoral degree in Management. You may find that the beginning of the thesis is somewhat non-conventional since a conventional research report would begin with introducing the background of the research rather than that of the researcher. However, an introduction of myself as the author is no other than an introduction to the research since it is autoethnographic research, and I live my research. Moreover, I write my thesis in a non-conventional way because I decide that I would *not* do a second Ph.D. just to write a thesis in the same way I did for my first Ph.D.

My first doctoral thesis is a typical mainstream, positivist research. I reckon that there is a deeper reason why I have to do a second Ph.D., a reason more than for surviving in a new country. The foremost intellectual growth I gain through my second doctoral study is being exposed to paradigms that are different from the dominant functionalist/positivist paradigm. This is owing to Burrell and Morgan's (1979) classic: *Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis*, a mandatory reading of the Sobey (i.e., Sobey School of Business) Ph.D. program under the direction of Dr. Albert J. Mills at Saint Mary's University. I am also inspired by the courageous writing of my Ph.D. cohort members (e.g., Williams, 2020; Jamjoom, 2020; Price, 2020), who demonstrate the power of "writing differently". I figure this is the real purpose for me to do a second Ph.D. – to explore an alternative research paradigm and to write in a different way. I will further discuss my way of "writing differently" in section 1.6. In this section, I aim to provide a concise overview of what story I want to tell and why the story is worth telling.

My thesis tells a story about self-healing and self-empowerment, a story about how I obtain intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth through an autoethnographic field study at major American Zen centers. I am wounded by various oppressive social systems such as patriarchy and totalitarianism in China, and Eurocentrism and systematic discrimination in the West. Perhaps the deepest wound of all is due to my father's domestic violence that I have suffered since childhood and throughout my youth. I am able to heal myself through this Zen research journey. This amazing experience enables me to better deal with all the challenges to come.

This story is worth telling because I want to inspire collective awakening. I know that countless people are suffering what I have suffered, and I want to let them know there is a way out. My own awakening experience enables me to be compassionate to everyone, especially those who are oppressed, silenced, traumatized, intimidated, humiliated, and angered.

In the Western DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) and social justice movement, I see black and Indigenous anger, white fragility, Chinese apathy and cynicism, and other complicated and destructive emotions. I assume that many of these heightened emotions are a result of unhealed wounds and hidden fears. Those who abuse others may have been abused. Those who are abused may abuse others. Who is to be healed and liberated? Everyone - regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, class, or anything. Where there is suffering, there is a need to heal. The wisdom and power that one needs to fight inequity and injustice lie in a healed and fearless heart.

"Only the wounded healer is able to heal" (Nakao, 1998, p.4). I am an aspiring wounded healer.

1.2 Why Spirituality and Religion?

This research focuses on feminist spiritual leadership because spirituality and religion are the inner sides of minority women's leadership. Being a minority woman myself and witnessing the testimonies of minority women leaders (e.g., Black Women in Leadership Forum, 2020), I understand that minority women cannot make it to leadership positions without a tenacious faith. Faith is the source of human conviction (Fry, 2003, p.713). An unshakable faith, be it spiritual or religious, is what it takes for minority women leaders to heal and empower themselves. This is simply because minority women are "doubly disadvantaged" and hence vulnerable to psychological distress such as self-doubt, feelings of powerlessness, hopelessness, and resentment. It is from divinity where minority women draw unsurpassable strength to maintain self-confidence. It is from prayer and vows that minority women obtain resolution to take on extraordinary tasks (Parameshwar, 2005, pp.699-700). Therefore, spirituality and religion are the "secret weapons" for minority women to deal with the greater challenges they continue to face.

Before proceeding further, I want to clarify what spirituality, religion, and workplace spirituality mean in my thesis, as is imperative for "quality MSR research" (Tackney et al., 2017b, p.247). The lack of a single widely accepted definition of spirituality (Houghton, et al., 2016) makes spirituality a difficult research topic (Karakas, 2010) and an intriguing phenomenon (Marques, et al., 2005). For me, spirituality is a broader construct than religion wherein religion is an institutionalized form of spirituality. Religion is typically associated with dogma, institutional organization and formalization whereas spirituality is usually seen as more personal and informal (Day, 2005; Tackney et al., 2017b; Stolz & Usunier, 2019). Hence, one can claim to be spiritual and religious, spiritual but not religious, or neither spiritual nor religious.

The commonality of spirituality and religion is that they are both symbol systems (Streib & Hood, 2013; Stolz & Usunier, 2019) that respond to problems of four broad themes: 1) inner identity, i.e., understanding who you are; 2) ultimacy, i.e., finding ultimate meaning or purpose; 3) transcendence, i.e., detecting a transcendent reality; and 4) interconnectedness, i.e., sense of being connected with community and divinity (e.g., Mitroff & Denton, 1999; Day, 2005; Phipps, 2009; Nelson, 2009; Houghton et al., 2016; Tackney, et al., 2017a). Accordingly, workplace spirituality can be defined as "the lived experiences and expressions of one's spirituality in the context of the work" (Sheep, 2006, p.358).

Parameshwar (2005) has pointed out that spirituality and religion are indeed the inner sides of all leadership "in the face of extreme adversity and oppression" (p.691). The concept of spiritual leadership itself emerges from people's search for spiritual solutions to societal and business turbulence and crisis (Parameshwar, 2005, p.690). Spiritual leaders often emerge in response to crises or scandals, and they tend to exhibit extraordinary ability to transform crisis situations into developmental opportunities (Beyer, 1999; Bass, 1990a; Bass, 1990b; Parameshwar, 2005). Spiritual leadership, therefore, is arguably essential for all members of equity-seeking groups to deal with everyday challenges posed by systemic discrimination.

However, spirituality and religion have been excluded from science and academia for ages. The Renaissance, Enlightenment, and Scientific Revolution encouraged "extreme skepticism" to guard against "gullible" acceptance of religious dogma (Abhoy, 2021). And the "Medieval trauma" seems to be lingering in the postmodern times. Education institutions and scholarly societies such as the Academy of Management (AoM) are dominated by the functionalist/positivist paradigm. Scientific realist assumptions and the accompanying methodological rigor criteria derived from

Newtonian naturalistic science are adopted as the primary benchmarks or "gatekeepers" of the scientific realm.

Therefore, the call for a restoration of legitimacy to spirituality and religion has "come into disrepute within a Western scientific worldview" (Parameshwar, 2005, p.716). Concerning this, Parameshwar (2005, p.699) suggests that spirituality and religion be deemed as "transcendental epistemologies" or "non-traditional epistemologies". Significant support for transcendental epistemologies is manifested in the growing call for establishing a "spiritual research paradigm" among Management Spirituality and Religion (MSR) scholars (e.g., Braud, 2009; Lin et al., 2016; Tackney et al., 2017b; Storberg-Walker, 2021).

MSR as a research field enters the scholarly discourse in the early 1990s. Workplace spirituality is of interest to scholars in Management and Organization Studies (MOS) because it is associated with such topics as meaning in work, sense of community, leadership, employee engagement and well-being, business ethics, intuitive decision-making, creativity, and productivity. From a utilitarian perspective, the legitimacy of MSR knowledge lies in the effectiveness of spiritual and religious practical wisdom. For example, it is observed that creativity may be generated by prayer and meditation: "When her biographer asks her how she gets such creative ideas, Mother Teresa replies that if he learned to pray, he too would get such ideas" (Parameshwar, 2005, p.716). From an MSR scholarly viewpoint, however, the value of MSR knowledge is certainly beyond managerial effectiveness.

Nonetheless, MSR has always been struggling to establish its status within the broader field of MOS for the reasons mentioned above. Apparently, the status of a research field is closely dependent on the legitimacy of methodologies utilized in pursuing such research. MSR scholars, unfortunately, have yet to establish a basic framework of "spiritual research paradigms" that they

have been calling for. There is not even a widely accepted definition of "spiritual research". To date, MSR research has been largely "scientific" research based on traditional functionalist/positivist paradigms (Fornaciari & Lund Dean, 2004; Yu et al., 2023).

To address this significant problem, I develop a Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm which is fully delineated in Chapter 4. This is my attempt to bring religion and spirituality back to the center of the academic realm. I believe that science and spirituality & religion should be equally important, and that the two domains must inform each other. It is also imperative to re-evaluate the role of spirituality and religion in post-secondary institutions' curriculum and pedagogy, especially in business schools and leadership training programs.

1.3 Why American Zen Buddhism?

Within the field of MSR, research rooted in Chan/Zen Buddhism is scant compared with that in Christianity and other Abrahamic religions (e.g., Judaism and Islam) or Western faith traditions. The growing body of research in Mindfulness along with the contemporary "corporate Mindfulness movement" has raised awareness of Buddhist wisdom in the West. Yet Chan/Zen Buddhism remains an untapped treasure for MOS.

I become interested in Chinese Chan Buddhism as a result of my first Ph.D. study in Management which I complete at Sun Yat-Sen University, China in 2012. My first doctoral thesis focuses on organizational culture and does not touch upon spirituality or religion. Upon completing my doctoral thesis, however, I reflect on my field studies with regard to rigor criteria such as "construct validity", "internal validity", "external validity", and "reliability" (Yin, 2018), and realize that "scientific" methods have their limits and that there are alternative realities which cannot be discovered or validated by those methods.

The catalyst for my conversion to Buddhism, however, is the abuse of power by my first Ph.D. supervisor (for simplicity, below I use "my supervisor" to refer to my first Ph.D. supervisor). My supervisor implies that my research must be published (with his name as the second author) in a CSSCI (Chinese Social Sciences Citation Index) top management journal (i.e., the *Management World* 管理世界) before I can graduate. This is because my supervisor has not published in that top journal by then, whereas he considers my research promising. I submit my research to the journal only to receive a desk rejection, which is not surprising given that opportunities for publishing in the top journal tend to be monopolized by a few "elites" in the Chinese academia. Nonetheless, I ask for my supervisor's permission for me to graduate since I already meet all requirements of the Ph.D. program. My supervisor finally agrees for me to do a "mock defence" in front of about twenty cohort members. At the "mock defence", however, my supervisor challenges the "generalizability" of my case study findings and concludes that I need to do "three more case studies" in addition to the three case studies I complete. As I attempt to argue back, citing Robert K. Yin's (2009) differentiation between "statistical generalization" and "analytic generalization" and the notion of "theoretical saturation", my supervisor abruptly interrupts me with a stern look:

"That's what *you* think. But what counts is what *I* think!"

Then my supervisor angrily bashes my thesis in front of the silenced audience. According to him, how shameless I am to ask for graduation with a thesis that is no other than rubbish! I do not know how long his yelling lasts, but it feels like ages. The audience remains silent, and I do not find the courage to yell back or run out of the room. I am completely frozen. The only thing I can help is sitting up straight and holding back my tears to preserve my last piece of dignity.

Suffering unbearable humiliation, indignity, and despair, I fall into depression after the scene. For several weeks I can hardly fall asleep. A month later, I try to distract myself from the pain by finding something to read. I somehow select a Buddhist reading, *The Diamond Sutra*, which unexpectedly cures my insomnia and depression in no time. The moment I read from the preface of the book that "bearing humiliation" is one of the "six pāramitā" (六波羅蜜, six pathways to Buddhahood), I feel tremendously relieved. Since the first day of my first Ph.D. study, I have been working on my thesis tirelessly for five years in order to graduate as soon as I can. At that moment I let go of my eagerness to graduate and hence find peace of mind, at least temporarily.

A few months later, I come across a mystical experience, involving an inexplicable dream that I have at a turning point in my struggle against my supervisor's power abuse. Below I offer a detailed account of this experience. I have omitted this account in earlier drafts of the chapter for fear that mysticism is considered problematic, unreliable, and even unacceptable by academics from functionalist paradigms. I finally decide to write down this mystical experience in detail because it is pivotal to my conversion to Buddhism and the inexplicable. It is precisely one of the transformative "epiphanies" – remembered moments that have significantly impacted the trajectory of a person's life (Bochner & Ellis, 1992; Ellis et al., 2011). Moreover, by writing down this story, I attempt to echo the call for "multiple ways of knowing" in search of spiritual research paradigms (Storberg-Walker, 2021; Gumbo & Gaotlhobogwe, 2021). Kriger and Seng (2005) in their research on the worldviews of five major religions emphasize the legitimacy of mysticism in spiritual research. They define mysticism as "the consciousness of the One Reality — be it called Wisdom, Light, Love or Nothing" (Schimmel, 1975, p. 4; as cited in Kriger & Seng, 2005, p.791). Gumbo and Gaotlhobogwe (2021) in their development of an Indigenous research paradigm contend that empirical data should include intuition, dreams, visions and receiving signs from the

natural world. Shawn Wilson (2008, p.75-76) in his famous work on "Research as Ceremony" write in detail a dream/vision that he has in order to depict Indigenous epistemology and ontology. In line with these arguments and writing practices, I suggest that dreams/visions/intuition, as powerful forms of the "transcendental epistemologies" (Parameshwar, 2005, p.699), may be deemed as a way of *deep knowing*.

My mystical experience takes place in November 2011 when I attend the Fifth Forum on Case-based and Qualitative Research in Business Administration in China. This annual conference is the largest, premium national conference in the field of case study and qualitative research in Management in China and is co-sponsored by Renmin Business School, China Renmin University and the journal of *Management World*. In the 2011 annual conference, 123 papers are submitted, and six papers are to be selected for the "Best Paper Award". The sponsors promise that the best papers will be given preference for publishing in the journal of *Management World*.

In September I submit to the conference the very same paper that is desk-rejected by that very same journal, as a long shot. Much to my surprise, I subsequently receive an email notice that the paper has been shortlisted as one of a dozen "finalists" running for the six "Best Paper Awards". According to the notice, there will be two rounds of anonymous voting by a panel of twenty expert reviewers taking place during the three-day conference; and the result will be announced on the last day of the conference.

Being shortlisted feels comforting enough to me – it demonstrates that my research is at least *not* "rubbish" as described in my supervisor's public humiliation of me. Nonetheless, I become anxious because of the uncertainty and high stake of the result of the anonymous voting. Can I win the award? Can I receive recognition for my five-year hard work, a work of my blood, sweat, and tears? Will I be able to publish in that top journal, obtain my Ph.D., and regain my

dignity in front of my supervisor and my cohort members? … A few days before I depart for Beijing, I visit a small Buddhist temple near my home. I pray to Guanyin (觀音 in Mandarin, Avalokiteśvara in Sanskrit; Kannon or Kanzeon in Japanese), Bodhisattva of Compassion, to alleviate my stress.

I then go to Beijing to attend the conference. On the early morning of the last day of the conference, I wake up from a dream while lying in my bed in the hotel room. I clearly recall that in the dream I see a piece of paper with a name list on it. In my dream, I somehow just know that it is the name list of the Best Paper awardees. And my name is evidently listed in the second row, numbered as No.2. I am so exuberant in that dream that I wake up immediately. Then I realize it is just a dream and feel the disappointment. I comfort myself again that it is already an honor to be shortlisted and that I should not expect anything more. I then get up, eat breakfast, and head to the conference venue.

Around noon, I find myself sitting with hundreds of people in the large auditorium, listening to the host announcing the names of the No.1 Best Paper Awardees. I am holding my breath and watching the huge PPTs being projected on the wall turning from the first page to the second page – there appear my name (and my supervisor's name as the second author, of course) and the title of my paper! My paper is in the second place! At that moment I can hardly tell whether I am in a dream or reality. I am bewildered by the fact that I see my name in the second place in a dream a few hours ago. My brain stops working and I look around – I see people clapping hands but I cannot hear the sound. The only other thing I can feel is tears pouring down my cheek - they are hot – so this is reality. I realize I am supposed to stand up and come up to the front stage to receive the award. As I stand up, I feel dizzy and disoriented. I can hardly find my way to the stage with my eyes and eyeglasses smeared by tons of tears. I spend great effort to walk to the stage to

receive the award. Under the spotlight in front of a large audience, I am embarrassed by my face messed with uncontrollable tears that keep pouring out. I try hard to smile, feeling elated and unbelievable (see Figure 1-1).

Figure 1-1: *The Moment of a Dream Coming True*

Note. The author (second from the left) receiving the Best Paper Award in the Fifth Forum on Case-based and Qualitative Research in Business Administration, Beijing, China, 13 November 2011. Retrieved on 12 November 2022 from https://casestudy.rmbs.ruc.edu.cn/forum_2011_summary.php

By intuition, I know the name list is revealed to me by Guanyin. You may question me why I know it. I cannot find an answer to that question, but I just know it. There can be no other explanations. Guanyin, bodhisattva of compassion, decides to show me the reality, in response to my sufferings and my prayers.

This mystical experience strengthens my Buddhist conviction.

My thesis, without any revision, quickly becomes an exemplary piece of work, along with a drastic turn in my supervisor's public discourse. My supervisor apologizes to me twice in private. I trust his sincerity. I obtain my Ph.D. degree in the following year when my conference paper is published in *Management World*. By then, however, I find myself no longer a wholehearted

student of my supervisor, or the positivist doctrines instilled by my first Ph.D. program. I am converted from "science" to Buddhism.

I come to Canada in 2013. In the first four years of my settling in Canada, I suffer the Eurocentric credentialism and systemic discrimination in Canadian universities against foreign credentials and work experiences. I am unable to secure even a single job interview opportunity despite my desperate, intense job-seeking effort for years. Apparently, my doctoral degree, my 10-year teaching experience, and my top-tier journal publications are all meaningless in the Canadian academic labor market. And that is simply because they are all earned in China. My knowledge of China is valueless in the Eurocentric curriculum of Canadian business schools which seem to have little impetus to decolonize their curriculum. I also suffer unconscious cultural discrimination against Chinese immigrants because of local Canadian's ignorance of the cultural challenges faced by Chinese immigrants (Yu & Loughlin, 2016). I feel powerless to change the status quo because I remain jobless and do not even "have a seat at the table", let alone "have my voice heard at the table".

During this difficult career transition period, I come across Japanese Zen Buddhism through reading D.T. Suzuki's[1] Zen essays. In 2015 when I start my second Ph.D. study at Saint Mary's University, the first and foremost reading is Burrell and Morgan's (1979) classic: *Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis*. I immediately capture the deep connection between Chan/Zen Buddhism and the "radical humanism" paradigm in Burrell and Morgan's framework of sociological paradigms. Furthermore, I find a Zen-informed way to reconfigure

---

[1] Daisetsu Teitaro Suzuki (1870-1966) is a Japanese Zen Buddhist scholar who is instrumental in introducing Zen and spreading interest in Eastern philosophy to the West.

Burrell and Morgan's framework to address the problem of paradigm incommensurability (Yu et al., 2020). I will elaborate on my Zen-informed philosophical stance in Chapter 4.

From a journal article (Low & Purser, 2012) I am surprised to learn that over 500 Zen centers have been established throughout North America, Europe, and Australia. Through an internet search I find that only about a dozen Zen centers are located in Canada and the majority of North American Zen centers are in the U.S. I also learn that these Zen centers are mostly founded by Japanese Zen teachers who come to the U.S. after WWII. As we all know, Japanese Zen originates from Chinese Chan which dates back to over 1500 years ago. Isn't that miraculous? How does Zen make it? How can this ancient Asian cultural heritage transcend the immense time and space to get rooted in modern American society, attracting and transforming modern business leaders and practitioners (Lesser, 2005)? I cannot imagine this amazing, innovative cultural translation and adaptation process, given my frustration and anxiety about getting my Chinese knowledge across in Canadian education institutions. I am curious about what Zen teaching practice is like in North America.

It is natural for me to focus on American Zen instead of Chinese Chan even though the latter is my cultural original. I have become a cultural hybrid as a result of my immigration experience. And American Zen is distinctly a hybrid of Chinese, Japanese and American cultures. More importantly, American Zen is better integrated into Western society compared with Chinese Chan. Notably, both Chinese Chan and Japanese Zen have been declining over the past centuries in their respective homeland, while American Zen has been continuously prospering since the mid-20th century in the U.S. Through my field study I discover several distinctive features of American society that may have contributed to the reinvigoration of this great Buddhist tradition, which I will touch upon in my thesis.

Another reason I decide to research American Zen is because of my mixed feelings of frustration and self-efficacy. Before I embark on this Zen research journey, my self-confidence in cross-cultural communication is severely damaged by my frustrating experience communicating with English-speaking Westerners. I do not understand many of the English slang, jokes, puns, idioms, and colloquialisms in daily conversations. Like most if not all first-generation Chinese immigrants in the earlier stages of their cultural learning process, I chronically feel awkward, slow, and stupid in social situations. Conversely, I am confident in my Chinese cultural knowledge, and I know my advantage in the topic of Chan/Zen Buddhism within Western academia. According to multi-ethnic feminism (Lober, 1997), my intersectional identity as a female, Chinese Canadian, Zen Buddhist, Management scholar, offers me an advantageous standpoint in doing this research. I know I would be sensitive to various elements of Chinese Chan Buddhism which have been miraculously inherited, revived, and transformed into new forms in North American Zen centers. Moreover, I am proficient in positivist case study research methods (Yin, 2018) through my first Ph.D. study while also having gained access to multi-paradigmatic traditions thanks to my second Ph.D. supervisor. I feel as if I am "the best candidate" to do a field study at American Zen centers in relation to MOS. In fact, I later realize that I am destined to do this research.

Finally, I choose to study American Zen to fulfill the requirement of a doctoral degree in Management because I firmly believe that Zen can inform the Western business society and the scientific realm with much-needed wisdom. Zen provides an alternative worldview which enables human beings to reach deeper areas of human life that have yet to be discovered by science. Zen enables human beings to live a holistic way of life wherein everything is intertwined. Workplace and household are intertwined. We do not go to the workplace leaving our personal lives behind. Personal emotional/spiritual growth and leadership development are intertwined. Teaching,

research, service, interpersonal relationships, everyday activities, etc., are all intertwined and inform each other. Hence, I decide to embark on a research project on American Zen Buddhism to explore how Zen informs MOS.

1.4 Research Questions

This research focuses on three questions: 1) How might Zen Buddhism inform spiritual research paradigms? 2) How might American Zen Buddhism inform feminist spiritual leadership theory and practice? 3) How might American Zen Buddhist teaching practice inform management teaching?

I must admit, however, that the initial research topic of my field study has nothing to do with spiritual research paradigms or feminist spiritual leadership but focuses on "wisdom-enhancing American Zen teaching practice". The theme of feminist spiritual leadership is not revealed until amid my field trips, and the topic of spiritual research paradigms only arises upon reflection on my awakening experiences and creative research practices.

Aside from the above three research questions, I have a "hidden agenda" - I want to bear witness to how Zen enables me to tackle my emotional conundrum with my father.

This is an unconscious intention when I start this research, because I reach the breaking point of my difficult relationship with my father at the time. I have been haunted by this emotional conundrum for 40 years since childhood. But this long-brewing issue happens to loom large and explode when I set out to do the field study for this research. I can no longer avoid the issue and I am forced to face it directly. I hence hope to obtain a "bonus point" from researching Zen teaching practice. If Zen heals the deepest wounds and enlightens the bewildered minds, I should be able to find the answer to my emotional conundrum through a sincere exploration of American Zen.

This is initially a "hidden agenda" because it is not a "legitimate" research question in the sense of conventional research. Management research is supposed to tackle workplace problems rather than personal problems. In the research design stage, I prepare a case study research protocol following Yin's (2018) case study methods, expecting a regular case study process. At that stage, I have no idea of the sex scandals endemic in American Zen communities and am not quite clear about the "hidden agenda" lying in my subconscious. Eventually, I find that my relationship with my father, however, is not only relevant to all my research questions but also energizes and enables my creative research practices that transform a typical positivist field study into an autoethnographic field study - or spiritual research. Qualitative research allows emergence, and my emotional conundrum emerges from backstage to the center of this qualitative research. There occurs to be some karmic convergence between my emotional conundrum, the Zen centers' collective traumas, and my research participants' life wounds. This convergence leads to the most important awakening moment of my field visit, which assures me that research can be healing and empowering.

I would argue that personal issues can be legitimate research questions in MOS, especially in MSR, because work and life are nondual. Deconstructive emotions such as fear and anger not only impede one's personal life but also get in the way of effective leadership and workplace behaviours. Fry (2003) emphasizes how "personal outcomes" of altruistic love and spiritual survival including joy, peace, and serenity are the sources of high organizational commitment and productivity as they free people from mental disturbance, strife, or agitation (p.713). Fernando and Nilakant's (2008) research, for another example, reveals that self-growth is of critical importance for spiritual leaders (as cited in Klaus & Fernando, 2016, p.72).

Furthermore, I observe that oftentimes the deepest emotional conundrum or strongest "spiritual survival" (Fry, 2003) comes from one's relationship with family members or loved ones, rather than from workplace interactions with colleagues. Arguably, one would be better equipped to deal with workplace relationships if they are able to solve personal emotional conundrums. Leadership wisdom comes from a healed and fearless heart.

Based on this reflection, I propose a post hoc, overarching research question for my research: How might American Zen Buddhist teaching and practice heal and empower the wounded people, who manifest their healing and empowerment in their whole beings including research approaches, leadership theorization, teaching practices, and dealing with challenges in personal and professional realms of life?

1.5 What is Spiritual Research?

MSR researchers have identified a number of emerging spiritual research approaches such as "research as ceremony" (Wilson, 2008), "first-person methods" (Roth, 2012), "clinical inquiry" (Lychnell & Martensson, 2017), and "global consciousness research" (Neal et al., 2023). My systematic review of research paradigms in the *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion* over 18 years (2004–2021) (see Chapter 3) has identified another two promising spiritual research paradigms: "Indigenous research paradigm" (Gumbo & Gaotlhobogwe, 2021) and "quantum research paradigm" (Storberg-Walker, 2021). However, spiritual research paradigms are still in their nascent stages of development, awaiting further enrichment to make more substantial impacts. Certain philosophical and methodological dimensions remain unexplored under spiritual research paradigms, and a clear definition of "spiritual research" is yet to exist.

I explore and develop a "Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm" in the process of doing this empirical research. Drawing on existent spiritual research paradigms as well as the Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm, I define "spiritual research" as marked by four basic philosophical and methodological characteristics:

1) An ontology informed by spiritual worldviews or post-Newtonian sciences that endorses the primacy of consciousness.

2) An epistemology that embraces multiple ways of knowing (e.g., intellect, sense, emotion, intuition, dream, vision, mystical experience, and enlightenment).

3) An axiological focus on deep, meaningful human experiences (e.g., suffering, relief of suffering, inner identity, ultimate meaning, transcendent reality, and interconnectedness), thus making possible spiritual transformation for the researcher and others impacted by the research.

4) Using autoethnographic methodology or first-person methods.

Spiritual research must be informed by spiritual & religious traditions or post-Newtonian sciences (e.g., quantum theory) which enable the researcher to take an ontological and epistemological stance that transcends the functionalist assumptions. This is not to exclude functionalism from spiritual research paradigms, but to acknowledge the fundamental inadequacy of functionalism and to legitimize and prioritize alternative paradigms in addressing spiritual phenomena. For example, Gumbo and Gaotlhobogwe (2021, p.468) outline an African Indigenous research paradigm incorporating "socially constructed multiple realities" wherein "knowledge arises out of and resides in mind, body, emotion and spirit" in connection with the cosmos and the spirit world. Storberg-Walker (2021, p.98, p.110) proposes a "quantum research paradigm" based

on a "quantum ontology" that bridges "the quantum field to the material world" and a postmodern epistemology that "involves multiple ways of knowing".

In terms of axiology, spiritual research must be inspiring and transformational. It must make possible emotional and psychological healing and societal change through spiritual interrogation. Research that does not break one's heart open is not spiritual research. Spiritual research may be healing, liberatory, and empowering to all involved in the research, including the researcher, participants, and readers. In this sense, spiritual research is similar to action research aiming for societal change while starting from inner change. This striking axiology of spiritual research necessitates its research topics to be "focused on deep, meaningful human experiences" (Storberg-Walker, 2021, p.98), most ideally individual life conundrums that reflect sociological problems. Using Storberg-Walker's characterization of quantum research, spiritual research is focused on "human experiences involving deep interconnectedness, transcendence, growth, transformation, mystery, or joy" (, 2021, p.96).

With respect to methodology, spiritual research must use qualitative methods (including texts, images, videos, music, and other arts-based methods) as the primary approach. Quantitative methods do not have the capacity to investigate the core of spiritual phenomena. Furthermore, spiritual research must be autoethnographic, or intensely introspective, wherein the researcher "plays a starring role" (Storberg-Walker, 2021, p.93). This is because spiritual experiences cannot be fully understood by the researcher through indirect learning (i.e., learning from the experience of others). Spiritual experiences are subjective and often intangible and incommunicable. Hence spiritual experiences have to be directly experienced by the researchers themselves. There has been a growing call among MSR scholars (e.g., Kriger & Seng, 2005; Roth, 2012; Coghlan, 2013) for first-person research. They emphasize the necessity of adopting first-person methods (e.g.,

participation, introspection, autoethnography) in addition to second-person methods (e.g., traditional one-way interview, non-participant observation, experiment) and third-person methods (e.g., survey, statistical analysis, bibliometric analysis, documentation, archive, "objective" writing). In an autoethnographic research, the researcher must be wholly engaged with her body, mind, heart, and soul, in search of understanding of oneself in relation to others. The researcher cannot adequately understand others unless she finds interconnectedness (Mitroff & Denton, 1999), or oneness (Ivanhoe, 2017), with others. From a Zen perspective, since the researcher and the researched are nondual, autoethnography (i.e., a story about oneself) is no other than ethnography about others.

Based on the conceptualization of spiritual research above, traditional MSR research is basically "scientific" research on tangible aspects of spirituality, rather than *spiritual research* on the core of spirituality. Notably, it has been suggested that "spiritual processes in the workplace can best be studied through the use of *spiritual processes themselves*" (Braud, 2009, p.60, emphasis in original). MSR research domain is in urgent need of establishing spiritual research paradigms that fundamentally transcend Newtonian functionalist paradigms.

In this research, I develop a spiritual research paradigm based on a Zen Buddhist worldview. I draw on autoethnography heavily since spiritual research must be autoethnographic. To ensure the quality of spiritual research, I establish a list of "rigor" criteria, or more accurately, quality evaluation criteria, which are drastically different from those of traditional positivist research. In exploring evaluation criteria, I also learn from Indigenous research methodology (e.g., Wilson, 2008) and action research (e.g., Hope & Waterman, 2003) since they share certain aspects with the spiritual research paradigm I develop.

The empirical data of my research come from my field study taking place between June and December 2019. I visit four major American Zen centers, located in either New York or Los Angeles. Each field visit lasts for about one week. I use a number of qualitative data collection techniques including participant observations as recorded by field notes (both in audio and written forms), audio-taped in-depth interviews (30 interviews, averaging 90 minutes each, see Appendix B for a list of interviewees), videotaped Zen classes, Zen ceremonies and other Zen practices (12 hours in total), photographed physical artifacts, and documentation. All interviews are conducted in English. The interviews are transcribed verbatim. I code the interview transcriptions using MAXQDA (2020), a qualitative data analysis software package.

Meanwhile, I also keep an autoethnographic journal starting in April 2019 when I begin practicing Zen meditation with a local Zen Buddhist community called Zen Nova Scotia (now Thousand Harbours Zen). This journal records my reflections on the weekly Dharma talks and dialogues taking place within this Zen group between April 2019 and February 2021.

In Chapter 4 I explicate in detail the features of a Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm, its evaluation criteria, and how I apply this paradigm in my research.

1.6 Why Writing Differently?

I adopt an embodied writing style (Helin, 2020) as opposed to conventional academic writing. This embodied writing feels natural to me as the thesis is to tell my story in a holistic way. There are three specific reasons for this choice.

First, embodied writing is necessitated by a spiritual research paradigm and its evaluation criteria which is fully discussed in Chapter 4. As spiritual research is autoethnographic, the author must be put at the forefront (Ellis, 1999). This forefront authorial voice reflects a feminist spiritual

epistemic assumption that personal experience is a legitimate knowledge base (Stanley, 1990; Calás & Smircich, 2006; Williams, 2020). In fact, for spiritual researchers, personal experience is the most important source of deep knowledge. I prioritize knowledge gained from my life experience instead of solely relying on citing literature to gain academic legitimacy. Moreover, the writing process is an important part of spiritual research, which is meditative, healing, and empowering.

Second, an embodied writing style echoes the feminist call for writing differently (Helin, 2020; Williams, 2020). It is interesting to note that I did not identify as a feminist until completing my field studies for this research in the fifth year of my second Ph.D. This transition is karmic in hindsight. Despite being supervised by a world-renowned feminist scholar for my second Ph.D. and surrounded by a large group of feminist cohort members, I resisted feminist ideologies. During a class discussion in the second year of my second Ph.D. study, I claimed that I was not a feminist since I had not seen gender inequity in my life hitherto. I was blind to gender inequity entrenched in Chinese society. I was not even aware of how deeply I had been wounded by my father at the time – notably this kind of unawareness and ignorance is a common symptom among people who have been too heavily wounded to recognize their wounds. My second Ph.D. supervisor appeared very tolerant of my nonconformity and never pushed me to follow his ideology. It was not until an awakening moment during my field study in 2019 that I realized I was meant to be a feminist researcher (see Section 5.8.1). Besides, it is worth noting that the individual and collective sufferings I narrate in my thesis are exclusively imposed under male-dominated social systems by men, be it my father, my first Ph.D. supervisor, or the controversial abbots of Zen centers.

Finally, I envision writing a thesis for the wide public, rather than for academics only. I want my research to be useful and moral for the society. I want my research to contribute to readers'

spiritual capacities to solve life conundrums. Such research needs to have aesthetic merit (e.g., Richardson, 2000; Ragan, 2000) to evoke readers (Ellis, 1999). Hence it must be written in an embodied way, as opposed to traditional academic writing style that is abstract, disembodied, and aloof.

My feminist embodied writing style has three features:

First, personal reflexive narratives permeate the writing. For instance, I use several sections in the first Chapter to position myself for the reader (Ellis, 1999), depicting in detail a mystical, transformative experience, revealing how my socio-historical location and my intellectuality, emotionality, and spirituality offer me a unique perspective on the phenomena examined. To achieve this goal, I need to be reflexive enough to understand my personal and emotional motives for the research and be brave enough to make my motives transparent. In the chapters to follow, I tell personal stories about my relationship with my father, my awakening moment in the field study, and my self-empowering workplace experiences in detail as they are all critical to my spiritual growth. The highlight of personal life in relation to research and workplace experiences reflects radical feminists' epistemological position in which "there is no distinction between 'political' and 'personal' realms: every area of life is the sphere of 'sexual politics' and worthy of political analysis" (Calás & Smircich, 2006, p.295).

Second, the writing is made with my full body, feeling, sensing, and intuiting. This is affirmed by radical feminists' claim that women have a "closer connection to nature" and "a different way of knowing the world: emotional, non-verbal, and spiritual" in contrast to "patriarchal ways of knowing" that rely on "reason and logic" (Calás & Smircich, 2006, p.296). Feminist embodied writing can be a meditative inquiry going with "the flow of inhaling and exhaling", "like the life-giving act that both breath and writing can be" (Yoo, 2019, p.1; as cited

in Helin, 2020, p.3). Similar to "vertical writing" as depicted by Helin (2020), embodied writing may be generated from vulnerability and activism. Such writing enables the writer to "go deep" in the sense of touching that which is most important as well as finding ways to "fly high" (Helin, 2020, p.1) using poetic writing. Such writing may not be revised as the text is "born out of the urge to say exactly these things and using exactly the language used" to capture raw feelings; some may even be born out of "the flash moment between being awake and at sleep" (Helin, 2020, p.7).

Third, my writing includes many Asian (Chinese and Japanese) cultural elements though primarily using the English language. This is because I am writing for English-speaking readers whereas I am deeply shaped by Chinese culture. I become a cultural hybrid of East and West just like my writing is. I cite both Chinese and English literature to demonstrate my resistance to the hegemony of the English language across academia which is in itself a neocolonial phenomenon (Guo & Beckett, 2007). For Chinese Chan Buddhist terminologies, I use simplified Chinese characters; for Japanese Zen Buddhist terminologies I use Romanised Japanese; all terminologies are accompanied by English translations in their first appearance in the text. In addition, I present images of physical artifacts that reflect Asian aesthetics such as Chinese/Japanese calligraphy, painting, architecture, instruments, sculptures, rituals, etc. I use personal reflexive narratives to delineate my attachment to Asian culture in the research journey, broadening my self-understanding in relation to others (Starr, 2010) to reach sociological understanding (Ellis et al., 2011).

1.7 Outline of Thesis

The chapters are arranged as follows: In this chapter, I begin with a brief introduction to myself and the key topics of the thesis, reflect on my research motives, and then propose my research questions. I also define "spiritual research" which is still a new, evolving concept in the

MSR research domain. In Chapter 2, I review the applicable leadership literature including feminist leadership theories and spiritual leadership theories. In Chapter 3, I review paradigms and methodologies utilized in MSR research and focus on features of evocative autoethnography as a spiritual methodology. In Chapter 4, I outline a Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm and the methods I create in this empirical research and propose a list of alternative evaluation criteria for spiritual research. In Chapter 5, I present my key findings from the field study and propose a Zen-informed feminist spiritual leadership model. In Chapter 6, I examine an important component of the Zen-informed feminist spiritual leadership model, that is, Zen-informed teaching practice. In Chapter 7, I conclude by identifying the contributions of this research and future research areas.

Chapter 2 A Review of Feminist Leadership and Spiritual Leadership Theories

2.1 Feminist Leadership Theories

2.1.1 A caveat: Gender difference or gender stereotype?

"Gender resistant" feminists (or radical feminists, e.g., Lorber, 1997; Oakley, 2000; Vasavada, 2012) focus on gender difference and women's advantage in leadership. They argue that a woman-centered perspective is needed to correct the gender-blind neutralism which in effect encourages women leaders to become just like men. They note that successful corporate leaders, regardless of their gender, almost always choose to conform to the traits associated with the male stereotype (Offermann & Beil, 1992). For instance, women leaders report to be diminished when they demonstrate "feminine traits" in their leadership styles. Tears have come to signal weakness (especially when expressed by men) and nurturing leadership styles have been viewed as lacking in substance (Chin, 2004) or "weak-willed" (Cohen, 2019). From an overreliance on masculine traits to the dismissal of feminine traits, the description of what a leader should look like has traditionally been constrained (Blake-Beard *et al*., 2020). Therefore, gender resistant feminists endeavour to showcase that women leadership is not only different from but also superior to masculine leadership.

On the other hand, there are cautions against the women-centered perspective, contending that the "gender difference" research may risk creating a new female stereotype and reinforcing gender essentialism. Specifically, postmodern feminists argue that gender resistant feminists' focus on the advantages of a feminine leadership style could work against women aspiring to

leadership positions if this new style is seen as a generic "woman's style" (Rosener, 1990; Helegesen, 1990; Oakley, 2000). Hence postmodern feminists oppose "a binary conception of leadership, matching a masculine/feminine dualism" (Berg *et al*., 2012, p.404) and instead push for a revolutionary approach that undermines the boundaries between what is defined as "women" and "men", or "female" and "male" (Lorber, 1997; Kark, 2004).

I acknowledge that gender is a fluid continuum as suggested by postmodern feminism and queer theory (e.g., Lorber, 1997, 2001; Oakley, 2000). Nevertheless, this viewpoint does not diminish the value of examining (stereotypic) feminist leadership models, given the persistent gender-blind neutralism. Indeed, the masculinization of effective leadership has held true for thousands of years across East and West (e.g., Yu, et al., 2018), and the "think manager – think male" paradigm (Schein et al., 1996) remains entrenched in contemporary societies, even after the second wave American women's movement led by liberal feminism (Calás &Smircich, 2006). For example, a meta-analysis done by Koenig and colleagues (2011) establishes a robust tendency for leadership to be viewed as masculine. They conclude that given this strong tendency, the pressures on women leaders are likely to continue for some time. Similarly, Lueptow and colleagues' (2001) thorough analysis of the literature from 1974 to 1997 conclude that gender stereotypes "are not decreasing, if anything they are intensifying" (2001, p.23).

Hence, I adopt the "gender resistant" view that creating awareness about women's advantage is the first important step forward towards a gender-inclusive notion of leadership (Vasavada, 2012). Acknowledging gender difference and women's advantage in leadership, albeit stereotypic, is a prerequisite for breaking the "think manager, think male" mentality. Furthermore, I also accept the postmodern feminist notion of gender fluidity that informs us to eventually break the gender binary and to build a more holistic, androgynous leadership model, in alignment with

the Zen spirit of nonduality and non-attachment. In this research, I argue for women's advantage in leadership in defiance of negative gender role stereotypes against women. Nonetheless, I propose a feminist (androgynous) leadership model that incorporates strengths of both (stereotypic) "feminine" and "masculine" values. I consider the model a feminist theory because the notion of androgyny is premised on an awareness of women's advantage, and that research on androgynous leadership is mostly, if not exclusively, found in feminist literature.

For convenience of discussion, in this research, I continue using stereotypic notions of "masculine/masculinity" and "feminine/femininity" while acknowledging that men can also embody "femininity", and vice versa.

2.1.2 Feminist leadership theories

Bem's (1974) Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) is the most commonly used measure of stereotypic gender perceptions. For example, Kark and her colleagues (2012) identify several "masculine" and "feminine" items from BSRI that have similar social desirability. The "masculine" items are: willing to take risks, self-confident, determined, powerful, competitive, aggressive, and independent. The "feminine" items include soft, sensitive to others' needs, showing compassion, showing affection, tender, willing to calm someone who is hurt, and soft-spoken.

Apart from the socially desirable feminine traits, women have been traditionally characterized by "the reverse of the masculine characteristics above" (Cook, 1985). For example, women have been labelled with negative qualities such as dependence, passivity, fragility, yieldingness, inability to take risks, and emotionality (Park, 1996). Female managers have been described by male managers as less self-confident, less emotionally stable, and possessing poorer leadership abilities than male managers (Oakley, 2000; Appelbaum & Shapiro, 1993). These

characteristics have been adopted in many management studies to explain differences in organizational outcomes (Atwater & Roush, 1994)

In contrast, gender resistant feminists emphasize women's advantage in leadership. For example, research shows that most women, and not men, are socialized to be emotionally expressive, which implies more stress on emotional dimensions and sensitivity to what others feel (Gartzia & van Engen, 2012; Jones, 2008). Nanus and Dobbs (1999) suggest that women tend to use more emotionally expressive language and are more likely to lead with a concern for the welfare of others. Researchers also relate women's advantage in appropriately expressing emotions to transformational and people-oriented leadership. They argue that relational skills and the ability to create significant emotional ties characterize the ideal transformational leader (Kark, 2004; Ely & Meyerson, 2000; Gartzia & van Engen, 2012).

Based on the female advantage literature, I propose that in mainstream literature women's "emotional expressiveness" may have been confounded with "emotional instability" or "neuroticism"; likewise, men's "emotional repression" is mistaken for "emotional stability". I suggest that an emotionally expressive woman may also possess a high level of emotional stability, and that an emotionally repressed man may well be highly neurotic. As unfolded in this research, women leaders tend to exhibit higher levels of emotional stability and resilience than men do.

In terms of leadership styles and interaction patterns, although some researchers claim that there are no differences in leadership style between men and women (e.g., Bass, 1990a; Bass, 1990b; Dobbins & Platz, 1986), comprehensive meta-analyses have found that female leaders tend to adopt a more democratic/participative style or a less autocratic/directive style than male leaders (e.g., Eagly & Johnson, 1990). For instance, women tend to use open communication and consensus-building to engage followers. Theorists have labeled these collaborative interaction

39

patterns "communal leadership", "distributed leadership", and "shared leadership" (Avolio et al., 2009; Chin, 2004; Fletcher, 2004; Helgesen, 1990; Rosener, 1990, 1995). The emphasis on maintaining cohesiveness also influences women's approaches to group structure. Gilligan (1982) and Neuse (1978) both find that women tend to prefer more egalitarian, flat organizational structures to formal hierarchy.

Another feature supported by empirical studies is that women tend to be rated as more transformational by their followers (Eagly et al., 2003; Eagly & Carli, 2003; Gartzia & van Engen, 2012; Kark, et al., 2012). Transformational leadership (Bass, 1990a; Bass, 1990b; Bass, 1998) is characterized by the ability to bring about significant changes in both followers and the organization. Transformational leaders are characterized by four dimensions: 1) charisma: creating vision and sense of meaning and purpose that gain followers' respect and trust; 2) inspiration: communicating high expectations on followers to go beyond their self-interests for the good of the group or organization; 3) intellectual stimulation: promoting innovation and creativity; 4) individual consideration: giving personal attention and individualized coaching.

Research on transformational leadership has been increasingly linked with gender. As Kark (2004) comments, while transactional leadership emphasizes stereotypic masculine activities such as goal setting and rational exchange, transformational leadership emphasizes the development of followers, their empowerment, and the creation of emotional bonds between leaders and followers. And these nurturing and empowering leadership roles are often played by women (Bartunek *et al*., 2000). For example, Vasavada (2012) reports her interviews with 29 women leaders who all consider nurturing followers' personal growth as their most important leadership function.

With respect to research gaps in transformational leadership studies, Kark's (2004) literature review shows that women's experiences as transformational leaders and as followers

remain unexplored. For example, the effects of transformational leadership have been attributed in part to the creation of emotional bonds between leaders and followers (Kark & Shamir, 2002). Yet research has not fully considered how transformational leaders elicit such relational and emotional bonds. Kark (2004) argues studies that "focus on women's viewpoints, using more qualitative research methods, are likely to provide critical descriptions and unique interpretations that can shed new light on the ways we understand transformational leadership" (p.168).

It might be helpful to clarify that transformational leadership should not be conflated with feminist spiritual leadership, or Zen-informed feminist spiritual leadership in particular. It is evident that empowerment is an inherent function of both transformational leadership and feminist spiritual leadership. Feminist spiritual leadership must be transformational in the sense of making possible spiritual transformation and psychological empowerment of followers leading to tangible changes in social arrangements. However, transformational leadership may not necessarily be spiritual. This is because transformational/charismatic leaders might still be egocentric. It has been noted that transformational/charismatic leadership has a "dark side" tendency "towards narcissism, authoritarianism, Machiavellianism, and a high need for personal power" and that "the vision and values of self-serving leaders may result in deception and exploitation of followers" (Fry & Kriger, 2009; p.1677). By contrast, spiritual leadership rests on a higher level of being for which ego transcendence is a prerequisite (Fry & Kriger, 2009; Fry & Vu, 2023). In particular, Buddhist spiritual leadership is grounded in the Buddhist doctrine of "non-self" and is known as "leading without a self" (Fry & Vu, 2023). Furthermore, Zen-informed feminist spiritual leadership is to transform "others/followers" by transforming the "self/leaders" first, in alignment with a nondual perspective which does not differentiate between leaders and followers. Besides, Zen-informed

feminist spiritual leadership stresses the leader's capacity for healing the wounds and sufferings, which is not emphasized by established transformational leadership theories.

2.1.3 Androgynous leadership theories

It has been suggested that influential leadership may not be characterized by either "feminine" or "masculine" traits, but rather "androgyny", a blending of "feminine" and "masculine" types of behaviors that renders female and male managers more flexibility and advantage as leaders (Berkery et al., 2013; Hall *et al*., 1998; Koenig et al., 2011, Kark, 2004; Kark et al., 2012; Park, 1996; Powell & Butterfield, 2015; Vasavada, 2012).

Numerous researchers have argued that organizational goals could not be exclusively achieved by either masculine or feminine leadership style and that integration rather than polarization is necessary (e.g., Blanchard & Sargent, 1984; Eagly & Karau, 1991; Gartzia, 2010; Gartzia & van Engen, 2012; Park, 1996). For example, Gartzia (2010) demonstrates that organizations whose workers and leaders are androgynous, rather than stereotypically masculine, make better use of communal resources. Gartzia and van Engen's (2012) empirical study indicates that individuals who can go beyond gender stereotypes and identify with both feminine and masculine traits are potentially the most effective leaders. Blake-Beard and her colleagues (2020) further argue that in times of crises, such as a financial collapse, a climate catastrophe, or COVID-19, an overreliance on masculine behaviours and a dismissal of feminine traits have proven insufficient in leading, and that the COVID-19 pandemic is a critical time for leaders to take up the androgynous style, drawing from the full portfolio of leadership behaviours available to them, whether masculine or feminine.

Even though the effectiveness of the "think manager – think androgynous" approach to leadership (Gartzia, 2010) has been empirically established in the literature (e.g., Gartzia, 2011;

Kark et al., 2011; Powell & Butterfield, 2015), qualitative studies on androgynous leadership remain scarce. For instance, extant research does not provide sufficient information about how to develop androgynous leadership in organizations (Parker, 1996, 1997). And there is a lack of theoretical framework for androgynous leadership drawing from empirical research findings. In this regard, my research also contributes to the literature by offering an androgynous leadership model based on an empirical, qualitative study.

2.2 Spiritual Leadership Theories

2.2.1 An overview of spiritual leadership research

The concept of spiritual leadership is introduced to the organizational context in the late 1990s (Fairholm, 1996), and operationalized by Louis Fry's ground-breaking research in 2003. Based on his causal model of spiritual leadership, Fry (2003, pp.694-695) conceptualizes spiritual leadership as "the values, attitudes, and behaviours necessary to intrinsically motivate self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership." This conceptualization is known as the most widely cited definition of spiritual leadership (Lean & Ganster, 2017; Oh & Wang, 2020), although its terminology (e.g., intrinsic motivation, altruistic love, calling, membership, etc.) has a Western, Christian mark that may not apply to Eastern, non-Christian traditions.

Based on a systematic literature review, Oh and Wang (2020, p.230) summarize three key characteristics of spiritual leaders: (a) having higher levels of ethical values (e.g., integrity, honesty, caring, and justice, etc.); (b) valuing interconnectedness with followers and peers by encouraging, engaging, and guiding one another; and (c) motivating people to pursue organizational vision and

mission, as well as meaningfulness at work. This summary roughly aligns with the four broad themes of the conceptualization of spirituality in the MSR literature, i.e., inner life, transcendence, interconnectedness, and ultimate meaning (e.g., Mitroff & Denton, 1999; Day, 2005; Phipps, 2009; Houghton et al., 2016; Tackney, et al., 2017a).

In addition, Lean and Ganster (2017) compile seven literature-identified components of spiritual leadership that differentiate a spiritual leader from a transformational, authentic, or servant leader. The seven components are: 1) displays of the leader's spirituality, 2) the leader's focus on service to others, 3) allowing opportunities for employees to explore their inner life, 4) encouraging a sense of fulfillment or significance through their work, 5) supporting a sense of community or connection among organizational members, 6) helping employees find enjoyment and creativity through their work, and 7) promoting opportunities for employees to experience personal growth through their work.

Spiritual leadership is becoming popular as more and more successful companies are committed to developing training programs that facilitate spiritual leadership in the workplace (Ajala, 2013; Oh & Wang, 2020). Research shows that the integration of spiritual leadership into training has led to positive outcomes, such as team empowerment, overcoming resentment and conflict, and consensus-based decision-making (Fry & Nisiewicz 2013; Fry & Altman 2013). Spiritual leadership has also become an increasingly hot topic in education, healthcare, psychology, and management as reflected in the growing number of scholarly publications devoted to the topic since the 2000s (Klaus & Fernando, 2016). It is considered a promising research field that can help leaders and organizations with ethical decision-making and creating a healthy balance on the "triple bottom line" (i.e., people, planet, and profits, see Fernando, 2011; Klaus & Fernando, 2016; Egel & Fry, 2017).

Below I first examine the dominant model in this research field and then discuss alternative spiritual leadership theories that are more relevant to my research.

2.2.2 The dominancy of Fry's causal model and its consequences

Although the field of spiritual leadership has been growing for over 20 years, it seems to remain "in its developmental stages", as "most theory offered in this literature is derived from the fields of Western religious theology and leadership ethics" (Lean & Ganster, 2017, p.295).

Overall, the spiritual leadership research domain has been dominated by Louis (Jody) Fry's causal framework (Fry, 2003; Fry, 2008; Fry et al., 2017; see Figure 2-1) which is based on quantitative studies under a positivist paradigm. The model demonstrates that hope/faith, vision, and altruistic love are precedents for successful spiritual leadership, which has a positive and

Figure 2-1: *Fry's Causal Model of Spiritual Leadership*
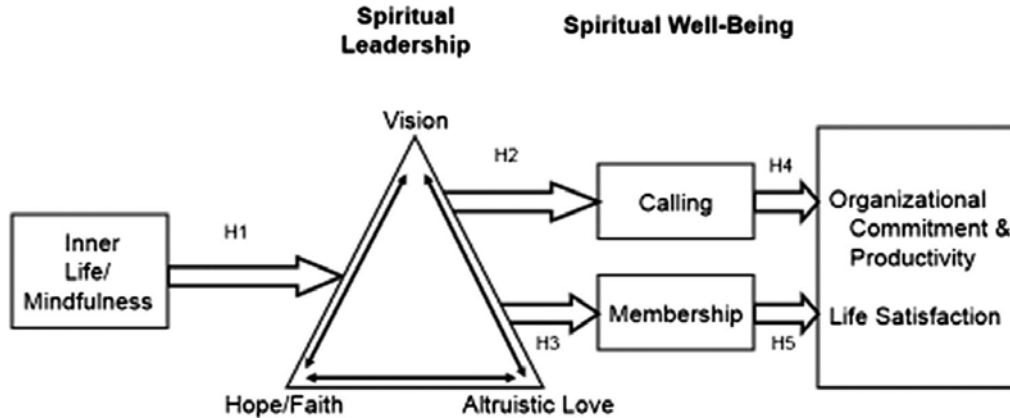
Note. Source: Fry et al. (2017, p.25)

significant relationship with several individual and organizational outcomes including organizational commitment, unit productivity, and life satisfaction, being mediated by followers' spiritual well-being comprised of a sense of calling and membership.

In addition, some key constructs in Fry's model, such as hope/faith, altruistic love, and calling, are informed by Christianity and the *Bible*. I would further argue that Fry's model is a typical Caucasian and masculine model. Other important constructs and dimensions of spiritual leadership, such as suffering (Parameshwar, 2005), healing, empowerment, creativity, gender, race, ethnicity, etc., are missing from Fry's model. Not surprisingly, such important constructs as psychological empowerment are rarely seen in the ensuing research on spiritual leadership (Oh & Wang, 2020).

Other spiritual leadership models in the literature tend to be considered as "variants" of Fry's model (Klaus & Fernando, 2016, p.72). For instance, Vandenberghe's (2011) model extends Fry's model by exploring the different levels of commitment that spiritual leadership may offer. Oh and Wang's (2020, p.237) holistic model offers a comprehensive list of antecedents, moderators/mediators, and outcomes derived from existing empirical studies, which remains to be a positivist, linear, causal framework based on Fry's model.

Meanwhile, the majority of existent empirical studies on spiritual leadership only seek to test and validate Fry's conceptualization for its applicability in different contexts and are almost exclusively focused on followers' well-being and organizational outcomes (Oh & Wang, 2020). Recent scholarly calls for future research are also restrained in a positivist paradigm, focusing on extending the nomological network between different constructs in Fry's causal model and validating its concepts and measures for generalizability. For instance, based on their systematic literature review, Oh and Wang (2020, p.240) call for more studies on identifying "different antecedents of spiritual leadership", and "other possible moderators and mediators", and more cross-national/cross-industry comparative analyses.

As a result of the dominancy of Fry's causal model and the positivist paradigm, research methods in spiritual leadership are predominantly quantitative (80%), with structural equation modelling (SEM) being the most frequently used analytical method (Oh & Wang, 2020). Considering that less than 50% of high-quality research in the MSR domain over the past 20 years is quantitative (see Chapter 3 for my systematic literature review), the predominance of quantitative methods in spiritual leadership is markedly peculiar and incommensurate with the special nature of the topic under investigation. Oh and Wang (2020) issue a call for studies using alternative methodologies, given the disproportionate amount of quantitative studies:

> Such a methodological choice is understandable, considering that the most popular framework of spiritual leadership is a causal model (Fry, 2003). However, this approach also reflects a lack of diverse research paradigms, and consequently, a lack of multi-dimensional insights into spiritual leadership. To advance spiritual leadership research, we need more studies using different methodologies and methods (Oh & Wang, 2020, p.241).

Another often-neglected negative impact of the dominancy of a positivist model and paradigm in spiritual leadership research is that non-positivist studies struggle to gain legitimacy. Not meeting positivist rigor criteria (e.g., validity, reliability, etc.), or not using positivist research techniques (e.g., expanding "sample size", "triangulation", minimizing "researcher bias", etc.), are considered deficiencies of such research. Apparently, non-positivist researchers have been forced to compromise with positivist critiques through acknowledgement of "research limitations" in order to get their work published. For instance, Parameshwar (2005, p.718) concedes "the inherent limitations in analysis based on a single individual's interpretations" in her phenomenological research on spiritual leadership and suggests that "the incorporation of third-party triangulation in examining the data, beyond the four readings by a single interpreter, may enhance the robustness of the conclusions" in future research. Citing Parameshwar, Klaus and Fernando (2016) also

acknowledge that the interpretation of data by a single researcher is a key "limitation" of their study and that "third party triangulation could further improve the quality of the findings" (pp.87-88).

Last but not least, Buddhism is virtually absent from Fry's causal model and all its ensuing research on spiritual leadership. There has been a call for spiritual leadership research "from different cultural and/or religious lenses to extend its scholarship and practice" (Oh & Wang, 2020, p. 240-241). To the best of my knowledge, however, spiritual leadership informed by Zen Buddhism has yet to be empirically investigated, let alone studied under a spiritual research paradigm informed by Zen Buddhism that is fundamentally different from Western functionalism. This is precisely a major contribution my research aims to make.

2.2.3 Parameshwar's ego-transcendence model

Parameshwar's (2005, p.695) ego-transcendence model (Figure 2-2) is the only spiritual leadership model that is empirically derived from a qualitative approach under a non-positivist paradigm, according to the information I have. Adopting a phenomenological approach, Parameshwar examines ten internationally renowned human rights leaders' autobiographies and creates an integrative framework to illustrate spiritual leaders' exceptional responses to challenging circumstances. The ego-transcendence model has been applied in other empirical studies (e.g., Klaus & Fernando, 2016). It noticeably draws from Eastern religions (primarily Hinduism) and utilizes Eastern concepts distinct from Fry's Christian conceptualization. Below I summarize five features of the ego-transcendence model in comparison with Fry's model.

Figure 2-2: *Parameshwar's Ego-Transcendence Spiritual Leadership Model*
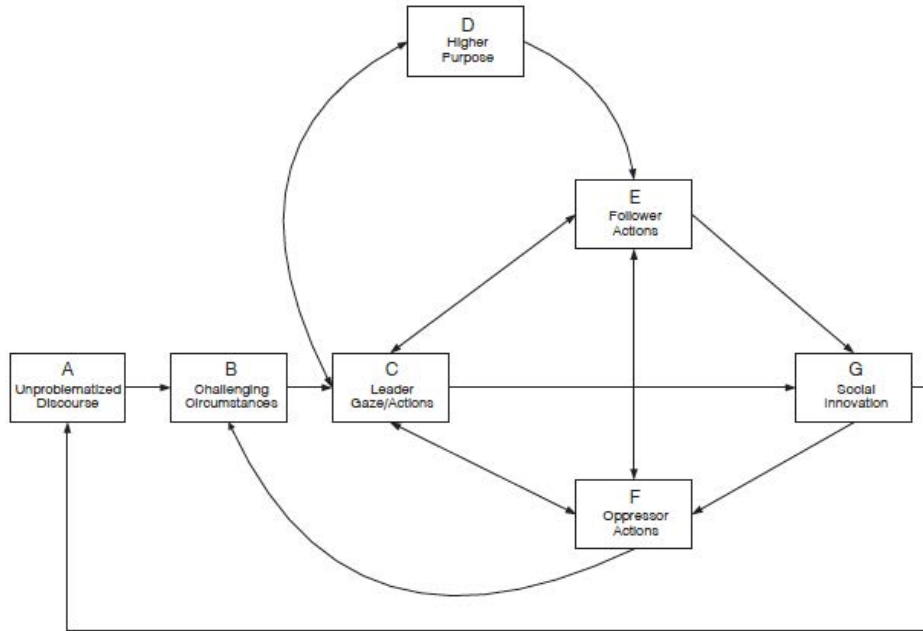
First, Parameshwar is one of the first researchers who employ autobiographical analysis to study spiritual leadership. Up to the time of Parameshwar's (2005) research, autobiographical analysis is "virtually absent in leadership research" (Parameshwar, 2005, p.718). Although more recently a few studies have made use of autobiographical works (e.g., Jacobs & Longbotham, 2011; Litz, 2013) and autoethnographic accounts (e.g., Blenkinsopp, 2007), autobiographical and autoethnographic narratives remain largely underutilized in spiritual leadership research. In Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, I would argue that autoethnographic analysis (Ellis et al., 2011), or first-person methods (Roth, 2012), should be a hallmark of spiritual research.

Second, the ego-transcendence model displays a cyclical relationship instead of a linear causal relationship between constructs. Parameshwar (2005, p.715) warns that "fitting the leaders squarely into a linear developmental continuum of consciousness is risky" and argues that

"development is essentially non-linear and messy and the waves of consciousness are not to be construed as being rigidly separate but shade into one another like colors of a rainbow".

Third, the ego-transcendence model reflects the Eastern wisdom of nonduality in many ways. First, Parameshwar cites the Hindu notion of "non-dual Brahman" to depict human experience of ego-transcendence (represented as the construct of "leader gaze/actions" in the model). She defines "ego-transcendence" as "an impartial extension of one's zone of caring over others" and "in its purest form would be akin to witnessing a non-dual spirit" (Parameshwar, 2005, p.714). Moreover, the model transcends the traditional dichotomy of leaders vs. followers, and victims vs. oppressors, and emphasizes the mutual influence between them (represented by the bidirectional arrows connecting these constructs in the model). Parameshwar (2005, p.713) comments that the ego-transcendental responses "are by no means limited to the leaders" and the ego-based responses are not limited to the oppressors. This insight exhibits a nondual view that human nature is complex and that the roles of leaders, followers and oppressors may be interchangeable.

Fourth, the complexities of suffering and its transformative power have been so far largely neglected by the Western-dominated spiritual leadership literature (Parameshwar, 2005). Parameshwar (2005) contends that "the centrality of pain and challenge to the phenomenon of spiritual leadership cannot be underestimated" (p.691). The ego-transcendence spiritual leadership model reclaims the centrality of suffering as represented by the construct of "challenging circumstances" in the model. The model is fundamentally based on the "life and death struggles" and "extreme conditions of human adversity and oppression" that globally renowned human rights leaders have faced as reported in their autobiographies. Therefore, Parameshwar's model clearly manifests the axiology of spiritual research that is "focused on deep, meaningful human

50

experiences" "involving deep interconnectedness, transcendence, growth, transformation" (Storberg-Walker, 2021, p.96, p.98).

Finally, according to Klaus and Fernando (2016, p.85), Parameshwar is "the only academic that attempts to explain the link between social innovation and spiritual leadership". Social innovation is defined as "the development, implementation and ideally, accomplishment of embracing new ideas with the intention of resolving existing social, cultural, economic and environmental issues" (Klaus & Fernando, 2016, p.86). Thus, creativity and creative problem-solving are highlighted as a key element inherent to spiritual leadership, represented by the construct of "social innovation" in the ego-transcendence model.

However, since Parameshwar relies on spiritual leaders' autobiographical reports rather than her first-hand experience or her autoethnographic accounts, the central construct in her ego-transcendence model, i.e., "leader gaze/actions", remains a black box. For example, Parameshwar (2005, p.715) admits that "[w]e do not know how these various differing initial conditions [i.e., time periods, religion, culture, geography, gender, nature of challenges, etc.] may have potentially enabled or constrained the leaders' ability to transcend ego." She only briefly suggests "four contemplative practices" for leaders who wish to develop the "ego-transcendence gaze", yet her suggestions are rather sketchy than detailed.

2.2.4 Kriger and Seng's integrative multi-religion model

Kriger and Seng (2005) create an integrative model of leadership (Figure 2-3) based on the worldviews of five major religious traditions: Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism. This model differs significantly from other leadership models in at least four aspects.

Figure 2-3: *Kriger and Seng's Integrative Multi-Religion Model of Spiritual Leadership*
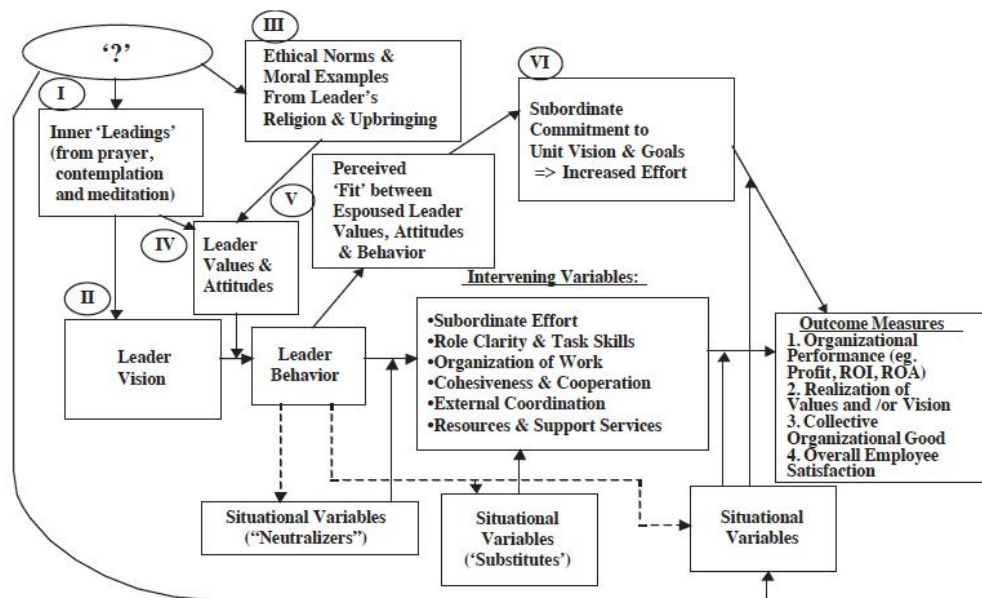
Note. Source: Kriger & Seng (2005, p.791)

First, the model has an extensive focus on the impact of religions on spiritual leadership. Religion does not occupy such a central place in other models of spiritual leadership (Klaus & Fernando, 2016). The central contribution of Kriger and Seng's (2005) work is delineating five levels of ontological being "at the heart of each of the religions of the world" (p.796), which has significant epistemological implications for spiritual leadership. I consider Kriger and Seng's (2005) study a courageous attempt to restore the fundamental influence of religion on spiritual leadership given the potential aversion to "religion", as opposed to the general acceptance of "spirituality", among academics.

Second, Kriger and Seng (2005) propose "the end of strict causality" (p.799). They include an important "latent variable", i.e., the "?" in the model that is "ontologically beyond names and, hence, uncreated" (pp.790-791). The "?" symbolizes the nondual, which is the source of the universe and all other variables in the model. It is at the same time the result of the interactions

between all variables. It is "the Uncaused Cause which is both the origin and the result of Itself" (p.799). This construct is obviously not controllable and is "highly problematic to any researcher from a structural-functionalist paradigm" (p.791). But it would make perfect sense for a postmodern researcher like me.

Third, Kriger and Seng (2005) call for multiple paradigms for the future development of leadership theory:

> We would argue that the emerging paradigm is likely to be a fusion of the currently ruling scientific paradigm of the renaissance and post-renaissance period with the convergence of a post-modern spiritual paradigm arising out of the interaction of the belief systems of the major religions of the world. (p.799)

Accordingly, they encourage methodological innovation featuring simultaneous use of first-person (e.g., participation, self-reports, introspection, autoethnography, etc.), second-person (observation, interview, etc.), and third-person research methods (e.g., documents, papers, surveys) (pp.799-800). Kriger and Seng's insight on spiritual research paradigms has far-reaching implications for the ongoing movement in the MSR research domain toward paradigmatic plurality.

Fourthly, Kriger and Seng (2005) highlight the notion of nonduality and propose "nondual leadership" as a Buddhist version of leadership (p.786). According to them, an implication of nondual leadership is "the radical idea that there are no essential inherent distinctions between leaders and followers" (p.785). They suggest that "followership and leadership are simply labels that overly constrain role sets to individuals who have the potential to enter roles as needed dynamically in the situation arising in the moment." (p.797). In the organizational leadership literature, the closest parallel is the concept of "distributed or multiple leadership" (Gronn, 2002, p.429).

I suggest that a potential issue with Kriger and Seng's (2005) model might be its lack of theoretical concision which arguably impairs its theoretical strength. Their model, in my view, contains too many constructs and variables along with too many relationships in various directions to offer a distinct, powerful representation of the leadership process. Therefore, this model may need further refinement and abstraction. Moreover, in Kriger and Seng's (2005) conceptual paper the crucial process of "inner leadings from prayer, contemplation and meditation" remains elusive. How the "inner leading" is generated from the leader's inner reality of "?" and how it directly impacts the leader's vision, values, and attitudes, are lacking narrative details. It is only sketchily described that the values and attitudes of a leader come from "moral role models and ethical examples from the sacred writings of one's religion plus ongoing dynamically created feelings and inner leadings that arise through contemplative prayer and meditation" (p.793).

2.2.5 The being-centered leadership model

Drawing from Kriger and Seng (2005), Fry and Kriger (2009) develop a being-centered leadership (BCL) model (Figure 2-4) that outlines five levels of being as context for effective leadership: Level I, the non-dual level; Level II, the level of the Spirit; Level III, the level of the soul; Level IV, the world of images and imagination; and Level V, the physical world. By proposing the BCL model Fry and Kriger (2009) accentuate "a question of whether leadership is based on 'having', 'doing', or 'being'" (p.1687). According to them, most organizational leadership theories are based either on having (i.e., the right skills, competencies, or personality traits) or doing (i.e., behaving or expressing activities for the situation), rather than being. They argue that "'having' and 'doing' are constructs that are central to the ego-based self" (i.e., Levels IV and V), whereas spiritual leadership is to shift from ego-centered to other-centered states of being, that is, "leadership based on Levels I, II, and III" (p.1687).

Figure 2-4: *Being-centered Leadership Model*

Non-self Leadership based on oneness and constant reconciliation of apparent opposites — Level I Nondual

Spiritual Leadership based on loving and serving others — Level II Spirit

Conscious Leadership based on self-awareness, self-transcendence, and interconnectedness — LEVEL III Spiritual Journey

Pseudo-spiritual Leadership based on social construction of reality — LEVEL IV Images & Imagination

Leadership based on leader traits & behavior appropriate to the context — LEVEL V The Sensible/Physical World

Epistemological 'Ascent' — Ontological 'Descent' (Unfolding)

Note. Source: Fry & Vu (2023, p.3)

Inheriting the dispositions of Kriger and Seng's (2005) work as analyzed in the previous section, the BCL model (Fry & Kriger, 2009) demonstrates a remarkable non-positivist orientation and a nondual logic. For example, Fry and Kriger (2009) critique the "overemphasis on 'observables'" (i.e., "having" and "doing") by "behavioral scientists", and their refusal of the ontological status of "being" through "the normal paradigmatic lens" (pp.1687-1689). They also recommend "the eventual removal of unnecessary dualities, including the often-emphasized duality between leadership and followership" (p.1691).

Fry and Kriger (2009) also offer other valuable insights about leadership research. For instance, they suggest that "[i]ndividual outcomes, such as an increase in the experience of joy, peace, and serenity, are hypothesized to increase as higher levels of being are actualized and should be the subject of research" (p.1690). This observation corresponds to the Zen-informed feminist spiritual leadership model (proposed in Chapter 5) which includes such key constructs as "confidence" and "equanimity" that denote emotional and spiritual states of being.

Accordingly, the BCL model is far more aligned with Buddhist perspectives of leadership than Fry's (2003) dominant causal framework. Most recently, Fry and Vu (2023) extend the BCL theory using "non-self" from the Buddhist philosophy to further illustrate how inner life functions as the source of spiritual leadership. Fry and Vu's (2023) research is the first attempt at applying Buddhist doctrines to investigating the dynamics of key elements within a major spiritual leadership model in the literature.

However, there are at least three problems with the BCL model (Fry & Kriger, 2009; Fry & Vu, 2023) that need to be further addressed.

First, pressing the ontologies of all major religions (Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism) into five equivalent levels of beings (Fry & Kriger, 2009) might be problematic and mechanistic because it risks losing essential knowledge of each religion. While acknowledging the commonalities among all world religions, I suggest that it is vital not to underestimate significant variations between different religious traditions, because it is these differences in worldviews that compose the uniqueness and essence of each great tradition, distinguishing it from all others and sustaining it across space and time. Fry and Vu's (2003) development of BCL is primarily based on Theravada Buddhism, focusing on the Pali Canon as the original teachings of the Shakyamuni Buddha. Other Buddhist traditions, such as Mahayana Buddhism and its sub-school of Zen Buddhism, might offer different ontological views regarding the delineation of the five levels of being, as well as different interpretations of such basic notions as "non-self" and "emptiness". For example, "manas" (self-awareness, or ego 末那識) in Mahayana Buddhism cannot be equated with "soul" (Level III of being) but lies somewhere in between "mind" (Level IV) and "soul" (Level III). Manas is highlighted as a distinct layer of consciousness in Vijñānavāda ("the doctrine of consciousness-only" 唯識宗) because of its vital role in creating the external

world (*The Lankavatara Sutra,* 2009; 大乘入楞伽經, 2017). Such inconsistencies between different religious ontologies may further lead to discrepancies in the understandings of leadership resting on each level of being. A Zen Buddhist view of leadership on Level III, for example, might be more about ego-centered leadership than about ego-transcendence leadership.

Second, the symbolization of the BCL model fails to reflect the holonic (i.e., inclusive) relationships between each of the five levels, but depicts them as if they are mutually exclusive. A holonic system is one in which each level as a whole is embedded in a higher level of the system, creating a nested system of wholes (Wilber, 2000). Fry and Kriger (2009) have also recognized the holonic nature of their five-level model "where each higher level is more encompassing than the ontological levels below" (p.1686). Therefore, I suggest that the BCL model illustration be altered into a series of concentric circles similar to the "Great Nest" model created by Ken Wilber (2000) in order to more accurately convey the inclusion of lower levels by each higher level of being.

Third, in the BCL model, descriptions of the key process of "epistemological ascent" (i.e., the upward left-side arrow, see Figure 2-4) remain abstract and theoretical, rather than concrete and empirical. It is described as "the progression through the levels", "a spiritual journey as a pilgrimage", "a shift in consciousness to greater awareness" (Fry & Vu, 2023, p.4), and a "developmental journey of leaders as they increase their awareness of more subtle levels of being" (Fry & Kriger, 2009, p.1686). While stressing the importance "for a being-centered leader to engage in continual quest for greater awareness", Fry and Kriger (2009) only briefly describe the process as below:

> At a minimum this involves several key spiritual practices, which usually include: 1) knowing oneself; 2) respecting and honoring the beliefs of others; 3)

being as trusting as one can be of others; and 4) maintaining a regular inner practice, such as meditation or constant prayer. (Fry & Kriger, 2009, p.1688)

Fry and Vu (2023) set out to reveal "how leadership practices can be activated at different levels of being by drawing on non-self in the Buddhist emptiness theory" (p.1). They compose their key points as the following:

> We propose that the practices of self-reflexivity, criticality, and context-sensitivity are essential for enhancing awareness of pseudo-spiritual leadership at Levels V and IV. […] Level III, which is the source of hope/faith, vision, and altruistic love in developing SL [i.e., the construct of "inner life" in Fry's (2003) causal model], is cultivated through various mindful practices (e.g., meditation, prayer, yoga, journaling, walking in nature). Mindfulness practices are therefore key for letting go of one's ego-centered, egoistic self, which is essential for moving beyond pseudo-spiritual leadership in Levels V and IV. (Fry & Vu, 2023, p.12)

Such propositions and arguments as quoted above are all abstract discourses that speak to human rationality only. They are not speaking to the heart, and hence lack strength and resonance. I argue that the subtle, embodied knowledge of deep human experiences such as "epistemological ascent" in the BCL model cannot be adequately conveyed in conventional academic discourses which tend to be dry and emotionally neutral. Newer insights and more profound understandings of spiritual transformation can only be gained through first-person empirical study and storytelling that offer rich details about the researcher's embodied experiences including sensations, feelings, intuition, dreams, and other ways of knowing.

In summary, a salient problem across major spiritual leadership theories in the literature is a lack of clarity and details of the inner process of spiritual transformation experienced by spiritual leaders. I suggest that autoethnographic spiritual research using first-person methods is what it takes to better understand the inner transformative process, be it called "inner life" (Fry, 2003),

"leader gaze" (Parameshwar, 2005), "inner leadings" (Kriger & Seng, 2005), or "epistemological ascent" (Fry & Kriger, 2009; Fry & Vu, 2023). This is what I plan to do in this research, enabled by the methodological approach I utilize.

In the next chapter (i.e., Chapter 3) I offer a systematic literature review of philosophies of science and methodologies utilized in high-quality MSR research along with a more focused review of autoethnography. Following that, in Chapter 4 I delineate the Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm that I develop in my autoethnographic field study. In Chapter 5 I discuss how the storytelling of my awakening experience and my Zen-informed spiritual leadership model shed light on the black box of the inner process of spiritual leadership. I gain insight into spiritual transformation by experiencing it firsthand through my autoethnographic field study.

Chapter 3 Searching for Spiritual Research Paradigms

3.1 A Systematic Review of Research Paradigms in JMSR

3.1.1 Introduction

As a relatively new field, Management, Spirituality, and Religion (MSR) is at a crossroads in its maturation journey concerning research paradigms. In their analysis of various research areas Keathley-Herring and her colleagues (2016) identify a mature research field as one that is, among others, robust across research paradigms and research methods/approaches. Moreover, failure to establish an appropriate research paradigm for a discipline may hamper its development or permanently marginalize it (e.g., Daft & Buenger, 1990; Fornaciari & Lund Dean, 2004).

While some organizational scholars favor a unified research paradigm (e.g., Pfeffer,1993), others have argued for more pluralism (e.g., Van Maanen, 1995). Knudsen (2005) cautions that unification can lead to a specialization trap that weakens a field's adaptability to new and unforeseen phenomena. Meanwhile, there has been a growing call for "a paradigmatic shift" and for establishing a "spiritual research paradigm" among MSR scholars (e.g., Tackney *et al*., 2017b, p.249; Storberg-Walker, 2021; Lin, *et al*., 2016). It is argued decades ago that MSR constructs resist positivist quantitative methods (Fornaciari & Lund Dean, 2001) and that "spiritual processes in the workplace can best be studied through the use of *spiritual processes themselves*" (Braud, 2009, p.60, emphasis in original). This is not to negate the merit of the positivist paradigm (or the "Newtonian scientific belief system"), but to acknowledge that positivist approaches are not adequate for investigating the spiritual core of MSR phenomena, which is internal, subjective, and supernatural, and that non-positivist approaches based on alternative philosophies of science are much needed in the MSR domain.

Aided by a co-researcher, Dr. Benito Teehankee, I carry out a systematic review of research methodologies and paradigms employed in the empirical research articles published in the Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion (JMSR) over 18 years (2004–2021). JMSR has been a highly esteemed scholarly outlet dedicated to MSR research since its founding in 2004. I aim to map the evolving research methodologies and paradigms employed in high-quality MSR research as represented by JMSR articles and to identify the most promising spiritual research paradigms within this landscape.

The examination of methodologies and paradigms is focused solely on empirical research articles, driven by the following rationales: A scientific "paradigm" (Kuhn, 1996) is defined as a set of universally recognized principles and patterns, including philosophical (i.e., ontological, epistemological, and axiological) assumptions, model problems, and methodological approaches. Therefore, paradigms contain not only the key concepts and principles but also – and this is what makes them paradigms – the applications of those concepts and principles in the solution of relevant problems along with empirical techniques (e.g., research design, data sampling, data collection, data analysis, theorizing, and report writing) and evaluation criteria. For this reason, it is generally difficult and often inapplicable to identify the "paradigms" of conceptual research articles since they typically do not involve methodological approaches or evaluation criteria. For the same reason, theory-only research is usually inadequate for establishing a research paradigm different from the dominant paradigm (i.e., functionalism/positivism) unless the research thoroughly discusses methodological choices based on philosophical assumptions. Some non-empirical articles, such as fictional writings (e.g., Boje, 2005), do exhibit paradigmatic distinctions. Nonetheless, the inclusion of non-empirical research articles would have increased the dataset multifold and hence made the project "unworkable", a same concern raised by Lund Dean and

Fornarciary (2007, p.8) to justify their decision to limit methodological analysis to empirical research only. Hence, my attention is directed toward JMSR articles grounded in empirical data. In addition, particular emphasis is laid on non-positivist empirical research articles to uncover promising spiritual research paradigms stemming from alternative philosophies of science.

3.1.2 Methodology

I wish to clarify that this systematic review is not a purely positivist study as a typical "systematic review" is supposed to be, but a multi-paradigm study (i.e., research based on an integration of positivist and non-positivist philosophies). This philosophical choice is based on my disposition towards paradigmatic plurality, wherein both positivist and non-positivist methods may be utilized depending on the research context. The legitimacy and merits of applying a multi-paradigm approach have been thoroughly discussed in the field of multi-paradigm studies (e.g. Gioia & Pitre, 1990; Hassard, 1991; Lewis & Kelemen, 2002; Romani et al., 2011; Schultz & Hatch, 1996). My multi-paradigm approach is further discussed in the following paragraphs.

All publications of JMSR from 2004 to 2021 are retrieved from the JMSR website. The database comprises 446 documents, including 331 research articles, 38 book reviews, and 77 other documents such as editorials and introductions. I analyze all 181 research articles published in odd-number years (i.e., 2005, 2007, 2009, …, 2021). My co-researcher examines the 150 even-number-year articles. For each research article, in addition to its basic information such as author(s)/year/volume/issue/title, the following information is identified: 1) research types: whether it is conceptual or empirical; 2) approaches: if empirical, whether it is quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods research; 3) methodology and methods; 4) philosophies of science: what research paradigm is adopted; 5) what evaluation criteria, if any, are measured against. It needs to be noted that "evaluation criteria" is the term used in this research instead of "rigor

criteria", as the latter is associated with logical positivism whereas the former has much wider connotations. Overall, the methodological analysis involves meticulously recording thousands of manual entries into a robust database comprising expansive Microsoft Excel spreadsheets.

The explicit information of the 331 research articles is retrieved through positivist content analysis, whereas the "hidden" information regarding JMSR authors' unconscious or implicit philosophical stances can only be identified through interpretivist discourse analysis (Phillips & Hardy, 2002), subject to the expertise of me and my co-researcher. Discourse analysis focuses on the processes whereby the social reality is constructed and maintained by discourses (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). In this case, the "social reality" we attempt to illuminate is the ontological and epistemological assumptions of JMSR authors as perceived by us.

Below are two major issues encountered and addressed in this methodological analysis process:

Issue 1: How to differentiate between empirical research and conceptual research?

For this research, three categories of research are defined as empirical. Category 1 covers research that uses primary data on the focal phenomena of MSR. Category 2 comprises research that uses secondary data on the content and discourse of MSR research, such as content analysis, narrative analysis, and discourse analysis. Category 3 includes research that uses bibliometric data and systematic reviews. Research that does not use any of the three categories of data is generally classified as conceptual. Some non-traditional research articles, such as fictional writings (e.g., Boje, 2005), dialogues (e.g., Boje & Tobey, 2007), interviews (e.g., Kaipa & Kriger, 2009), panel conversations (e.g., Barney *et al.*, 2015), and memoirs (e.g., Dent, 2017), do not fall into this categorization and are hence classified as "others" (i.e., neither empirical nor conceptual). As a result, a total of 152 articles (out of the 331 research articles) are categorized as empirical research.

Issue 2: How to identify the research paradigm or philosophy of science, especially if it is unstated in an article?

The following three principles are adopted to identify the research paradigm of an empirical research article:

1) Research that only uses quantitative methods is classified as positivist research.

2) Qualitative or mixed-methods research using only positivist rigor criteria is generally categorized as positivist research.

Positivist research assumes that there is one objective reality to be discovered by detached, neutral, value-free researchers whose ultimate goal is to find generalizable truth. Standard positivist criteria for qualitative research include, for example, seeking generalizability of research findings, attempting to minimize "researcher bias", strictly following case study protocol to ensure replicability, striving to reach inter-coder consensus to ensure reliability, using "triangulation" to ensure construct validity, and adopting "replication logic" to ensure external validity (Yin, 2018).

For example, Lund Dean and Fornaciary's (2007) mixed-methods research is categorized as positivist because of "the desire of the authors of this study to minimize the influence of their own preconceived biases and notions of the research" (p.11) and their effort "to eliminate potential coder subjectivity" (p.7). Similarly, Sirris' (2019) case study research is classified as positivist since the researcher uses "documentary evidence to triangulate the interview and observation data" (p.297), assuming the existence of one objective reality.

An unusual case is Tackney, Chappell, and Sato's (2017a) non-positivist narrative analysis integrated with positivist content analysis. Their research is assessed as multi-paradigmatic, given that the research adopts both positivist and non-positivist evaluation criteria. Tackney and his

colleagues name their methodological approach a "pre-critical history" in that they "aim at a valid and reliable document for the community of interest that is methodically artistic, ethical, explanatory, apologetic, and prophetic" (p.137). Such a statement reflects their assumption that research can simultaneously meet positivist criteria (e.g., reliability and validity) and non-positivist criteria (e.g., artistic, ethical, explanatory, apologetic, and prophetic).

Research that claims to be non-positivist while using only positivist criteria is categorized as "implicitly/unconsciously positivist". For example, Fisk and Hammond's (2021) qualitative research is classified as "unconsciously positivist" because the researchers, despite claiming to take "an interpretive stance to data collection and analysis" (p.181), strive to "reconcile [intercoder] differences and reach consensus" (p.182), emphasize "researchers role" to be "neutral" (pp.181-182), and suggest "future work to test the generalizability" of their findings (p.195).

There are only two exceptions to this principle. First, Jacobs and Longbotham's (2011) research is classified as interpretivist (phenomenology) as claimed, although the research only uses positivist criteria, including inter-coder "consistency/reliability" (p.75) and "epoche (or bracketing)" to "minimize researcher bias" (p.73; p.87). This is attributed to the comprehensive explanation provided by Jacobs and Longbotham (2011) regarding their ontological and epistemological assumptions, as well as their methodological strategies encompassing sampling, data collection, and data analysis, all of which are consistent with the principles of transcendental phenomenology (pp.70-75). Second, McGhee and Grant's (2017) mixed-methods research is recognized as critical realist as claimed, although the researchers only adopt positivist criteria such as "the validity of the analysis" (p.165). This evaluation recognizes that critical realism embraces an objective reality, aligning itself with the realist ontology of functionalism/positivism.

3) Qualitative research that neither makes explicit philosophical stances nor mentions any rigor/evaluation criteria requires the two researchers' judgement using Table 3-1 as a heuristic. Table 3-1 draws from the literature on research paradigms (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Aldawod & Day, 2017; Prasad, 2018; Saunders *et al*., 2019) and lists seven research paradigms relevant to MSR research: functionalism (including positivism and post-positivism), interpretivism (including constructivism and phenomenology), critical realism, poststructuralism, pragmatism, radical humanism, and postmodernism. It needs to be noted that the seven research paradigms often overlap with one another. Moreover, Table 3-1 is by no means an exhaustive list of research paradigms but rather a heuristic tool that helps identify the paradigmatic assumptions of empirical research articles.

For example, Moran's (2017) content analysis is defined as implicitly positivist even though the researcher's philosophical stance is never mentioned in the research, nor any evaluation criteria. Moran (2017) relies on "Nvivo 11 Pro software, a robust program for collecting and analyzing unlimited amounts of data" (p.347), to count the length, frequency, and weighted percentage of some "keywords and content" (p.348). Moran considers content analysis "a robust method for analyzing data and interpreting its meaning" (p.347), implying a typical positivist epistemological assumption that the nature of truth is objective, observable, and measurable. For another example, Fairholm and Gronau (2015) conduct a thematic content analysis of 31 interviews and a hundred essays. They call their research a "narrative analysis" (p.359), whereas it is essentially a content analysis focusing on "an aggregation of the numbers of times" that "key spiritual leadership elements" are mentioned and "their relative prevalence [i.e., percentages] in the essays" (p.359). Accordingly, this research is also categorized as implicitly positivist.

Table 3-1: *Comparison of Research Paradigms Relevant to MSR Research*

Ontology (nature of reality or being)	Epistemology (what constitutes acceptable knowledge)	Axiology (role of values and purpose of research)	Typical methods
Functionalism/Positivism			
real, external, independent; one true reality (universalism); granular (things); ordered	scientific method; observable and measurable facts; law-like generalizations; numbers; causal explanation and prediction as contribution	value-free research; researcher is detached, neutral and independent of what is researched; researcher maintains objective stance	typically deductive, highly structured, large samples, measurement; typically quantitative methods of analysis, but a range of data can be analyzed; triangulation required to reveal the reality
Interpretivism/Constructivism/Phenomenology			
complex, rich; socially constructed through culture and language; multiple meanings, interpretations, and realities; flux of processes, experiences, practices	theories and concepts too simplistic; focus on narratives, stories, perceptions and interpretations; new understandings and worldviews as contribution	value-bound research; researchers as part of what is researched; subjective researcher interpretations as key to contribution; researcher reflexive	typically inductive; small samples, in-depth investigations; qualitative methods of analysis; a range of data can be interpreted
Critical Realism			
stratified/layered (the empirical, the actual and the real); external, independent; permanent; objective structures; causal mechanisms	epistemological relativism; knowledge historically situated and transient; facts as social constructions; historical causal explanation as contribution	value-laden research; researcher acknowledging bias by world views, cultural experience, and upbringing; researcher trying to minimize bias and errors and to be as objective as possible	retroductive, in-depth historically situated analysis of pre-existing structures and emerging agency; range of methods and data types to fit subject matter; triangulation required to reveal the reality
Poststructuralism			
complex, rich; socially constructed through power relations; some meanings, interpretations, and realities are dominated and silenced by others; a flux of processes, experiences, practices	what counts as 'truth' and 'knowledge' is decided by dominant ideologies; focus on absences, silences, and oppressed/ repressed meanings, interpretations, and voices; exposure of power relations and challenge of dominant views as the contribution	value-constituted research; researcher and research embedded in power relations; some research narratives are repressed and silenced at the expense of others; researcher radically reflexive	typically deconstructive – reading texts and realities against themselves; in-depth investigations of anomalies, silences, and absences; range of data types, typically qualitative methods of analysis

Ontology (nature of reality or being)	Epistemology (what constitutes acceptable knowledge)	Axiology (role of values and purpose of research)	Typical methods
Pragmatism			
complex, rich, external; 'reality' is the practical consequences of ideas; a flux of processes, experiences, and practices	practical meaning of knowledge in specific contexts; 'true' theories and knowledge are those that enable successful action; focus on problems, practices, and relevance; problem-solving and informed future practice as the contribution	value-driven research; research initiated and sustained by researcher's doubts and beliefs; researcher reflexive	following the research problem and question; range of methods: mixed, multiple, qualitative, quantitative, and action research; emphasis on practical solutions and outcomes
Radical Humanism			
the ultimate reality is spiritual rather than material; the external world is the projection of individual consciousness; multiple meanings, interpretations, and realities;	viewing individuals as trapped within the mode of existence which they create; focus on the pathology of intentionality whereby in creating the external world, individuals separate themselves from their true "being"	value-driven research; researchers are at the center of what is researched; critiques of forms and sources of alienation which inhibit the possibilities of true human fulfillment; researcher radically reflexive	typically inductive and autoethnographic; small samples, in-depth investigations, qualitative methods of analysis, but a range of data can be interpreted
Postmodernism			
'participative reality': subjective-objective reality created by the mind and surrounding cosmos; 'language games': language as the source of reality; emphasizing plurality, diversity, and fragmentation	inter-subjectivist, co-created findings; multiple ways of knowing; collapsing disciplinary boundaries between artistic and intellectual genres;	value-constituted research; critiquing grand narratives/metanarrative; researcher radically reflexive	no single best method for obtaining knowledge; deconstruction; rejection of rationality & linear causality; fusion of multiple disciplines & genres; irony & playfulness to dilute the authority of scientific truth claims; range of data types, typically qualitative methods of analysis

Note. This table is based on Burrell and Morgan (1979), Aldawod and Day (2017), Prasad (2018), and Saunders et al. (2019).

By contrast, Sandelands and Carlsen's (2013) thematic narrative analysis is classified as implicitly phenomenological because their analytic focus is "not on parsing individual words or sentences [...] but instead upon the whole of their accounts" (p.368). In this way, they "[keep] to the precepts of thematic narrative analysis (Kohler Riessman, 2008) to preserve the context of each narrative [...] to capture manifestations of the phenomenon and to build theory" (p.368). For another instance, Fischer (2019) conducts a critical discourse analysis based on historical archives and visual ethnography. This research is assessed as implicitly poststructuralist, although the researcher does not state his philosophical stance or evaluation criteria. The assessment is based on the article's overall focus on how a religious logo "shapes, and is shaped by the local/national/global context, politics, and power" (P.148), a methodological orientation deeply rooted in poststructuralism (see Table 3-1).

Overall, this systematic review extensively examines 152 empirical research articles published in JMSR, adhering to the evaluation standards mentioned above. This analysis is by no means incontestable since philosophical assumptions are oftentimes implicit, evasive, and even self-contradictory as exhibited in the JMSR articles examined. Therefore, all the JMSR authors may not agree with other people's interpretation of their philosophical stances as appeared in their research, which is completely natural from an interpretivist perspective.

3.1.3 Findings and discussion

The first significant finding of the systematic review is a gradual "qualitative gain" over the past 20 years which reflects remarkable methodological pluralism given the complexity of MSR phenomena. Figure 3-1 shows that while the total number of quantitative research published in JMSR still exceeds that of qualitative research, qualitative and mixed-methods research together

have comprised more than half (i.e., 53%) of the JMSR articles to date, which is significant considering the overall dominance of quantitative research in the management fields.

Figure 3-1: *Approaches of JMSR Empirical Articles by Year of Publication*

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total	%
Mixed Methods	1	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	2	3	1	2	1	0	1	2	18	11.8%
Qualitative	2	1	1	5	2	5	2	2	2	4	0	5	2	6	4	7	3	9	62	40.8%
Quantitative	2	3	5	3	1	2	1	2	2	7	4	3	3	6	6	6	7	9	72	47.4%

■ Quantitative ■ Qualitative ■ Mixed Methods
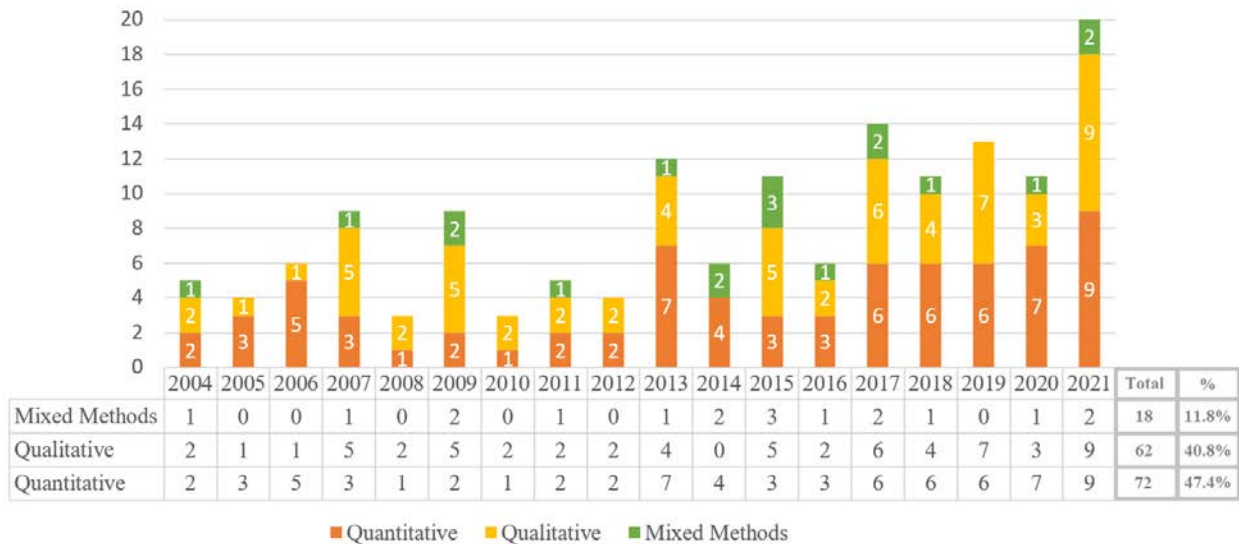
About 20 years ago, in their systematic review of empirical research during the founding years (i.e., 1996-2000) of MSR, Fornaciari and Lund Dean (2004) find that 65% employ quantitative measures, 31% employ qualitative measures, and 4% employs mixed methods. They consider the situation "troublesome" and call for researchers to include both quantitative and qualitative data to respect the MSR understanding that defies "nomothetic modeling" (Fornaciari & Lund Dean, 2004, p.22). Likewise, other leading MSR scholars (e.g., Neal *et al*., 1999; Lips-Wiersma, 200l; Lund Dean *et al*., 2002; McGee, 2001) call for more use of "ideographic approaches" and "non-nomothetic research techniques" in the early years of MSR. Figure 3-1 demonstrates a remarkable "qualitative gain" in terms of the overall portion of qualitative research (41%) and mixed-methods research (12%) versus quantitative research (47%) over the past 20 years. This evolution of research approaches indicates that the MSR community has formed an enhanced awareness of the particularized nature of MSR research and hence more welcoming of qualitative and mixed methods than most other management disciplines.

Despite this "qualitative gain" at the methodological level, positivist research still dominates publications in JMSR. Figure 3-2 reveals that 116 out of the 152 empirical research articles (i.e., 76.3%) are based on positivist paradigms. Only 36 articles (i.e., 23.7%) adopt non-positivist research philosophies.

Figure 3-2: *Positivist vs. Non-positivist JMSR Articles by Year of Publication*

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total	%
■ Non-positivist	2	0	0	3	1	1	2	2	1	2	0	3	2	4	4	3	3	3	36	23.7%
■ Positivist	3	4	6	6	2	8	1	3	3	10	6	8	4	10	7	10	8	17	116	76.3%

■ Positivist   ■ Non-positivist
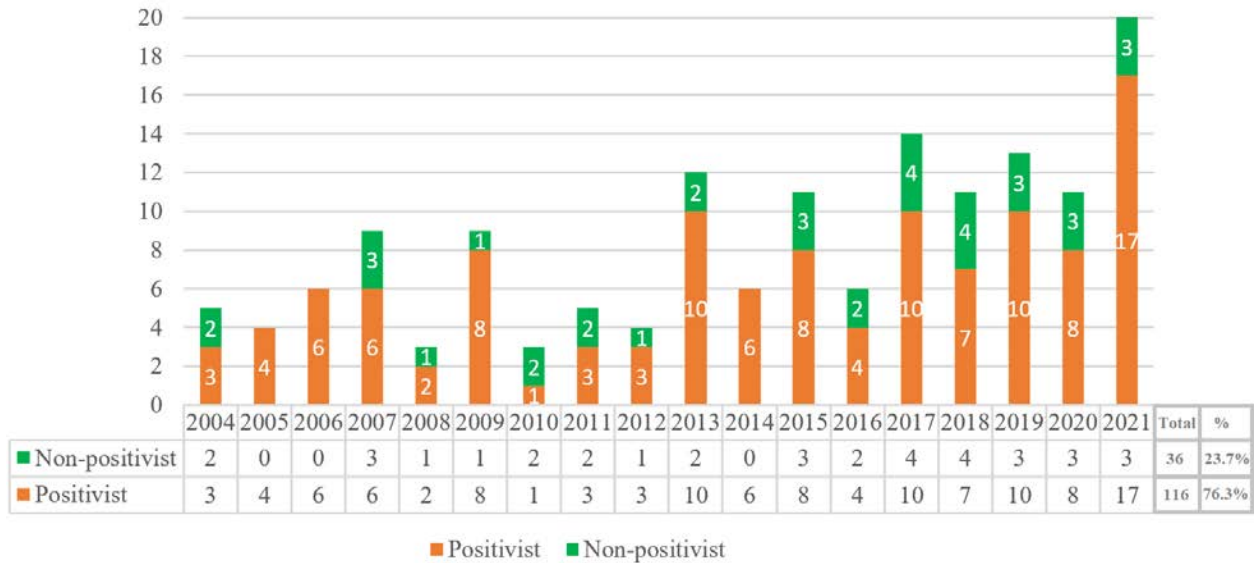
Moreover, there is a lack of variety of non-positivist paradigms. Table 3-2 shows that 28 out of the 36 non-positivist research articles cluster within the interpretivist paradigms. Only eight articles take critical, radical, or postmodern orientations such as postmodernism, critical realism, poststructuralism, and radical humanism. Other philosophical approaches or theoretical perspectives, such as pragmatism, postcolonialism, and feminism, are completely missing from JMSR articles.

Table 3-2: *JMSR Articles that Adopt Non-positivist Research Paradigms*

Paradigms/Philosophies	Articles (Author/s, year)	Total
Interpretivism/ Constructivism/ Phenomenology	Clark (2004), Cunha (2004), Bell (2007), Karakas (2008), Pavlovich and Doyle Coner (2009), Delbecq (2010), Groen (2010), Jacobs and Longbotham (2011), Cullen (2011), Litz (2013), Sandelands and Carlsen (2013), Chaston and Lips-Wiersma (2015), Almond (2015), Crossman (2015), Singh *et al.* (2016), Lychnell (2017), Jensen and Neck (2017), Yahanpath *et al.* (2018), Vu and Gill (2018), Nandram *et al.* (2018), Miller *et al.* (2018), Cova *et al.* (2019), Driscoll *et al.* (2019), Allen and Williams (2020), Small (2020), Betters-Reed *et al.* (2020), Mwaka and Ochola (2021)	28
Critical Realism/ Poststructuralism	Bergin (2007), Aadland and Skjørshammer (2012), McGhee and Grant (2017), Fischer (2019)	4
Radical Humanism/ Existential Phenomenology	Blenkinsopp (2007), Gumbo and Gaotlhobogwe (2021)	2
Multi-paradigm	Tackney *et al.* (2017a)	1
Postmodernism	Storberg-Walker (2021)	1

It is worth mentioning that only one multi-paradigmatic study is identified (i.e., Tackney *et al.*, 2017a). It has been argued that MSR research that "makes use of both positivist and non-positivist methods stands the best chance" of accurately recording spiritual experiences that defy easy definition and measurement (Lund Dean & Fornaciari, 2007, p.4; Lips-Wiersma, 2000; McGee, 2001, Mitroff & Denton, 1999; Tischler *et al.*, 2005). I hence suggest that the utilization of multi-paradigmatic approaches be more extensively employed within the MSR domain.

Table 3-3 summarizes specific qualitative methodologies and methods adopted by each of the 36 non-positivist research. Common methodologies are grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Gioia *et al.*, 2013; e.g., Jacobs & Longbotham, 2011; Crossman, 2015; Lychnell, 2017), case study research methodology (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 2018; e.g., Pavlovich & Doyle Coner, 2009; Chaston & Lips-Wiersma, 2015), (auto)ethnography (e.g., Groen, 2010; Cullen, 2011), and (participatory) action research (e.g., Aadland & Skjørshammer, 2012).

The most used sampling method is purposive sampling (e.g., Crossman, 2015; Chaston & Lips-Wiersma, 2015; Driscoll *et al*., 2019). Data collection methods include narrative/conversational interviews (e.g., Chaston & Lips-Wiersma, 2015; Miller et al., 2018), historical archives (e.g., Bell, 2007; Fischer, 2019), documentation (e.g., Pavlovich & Doyle Coner, 2009), autobiographical works (e.g., Litz, 2013; Jacobs & Longbotham, 2011), and autoethnographic accounts (e.g., Blenkinsopp, 2007). Typical data analysis methods are thematic analysis (e.g., Almond, 2015), discourse analysis (e.g., Fischer, 2019), narrative analysis (e.g., Sandelands & Carlsen, 2013), and historical analysis (e.g., Bell, 2007; Bergin, 2007).

Table 3-3: *Methodologies and Methods in Non-positivist JMSR Articles*

Author/s, Year	Methodology and methods
Clark (2004)	Case analysis; symbolic analysis
Cunha (2004)	Interviews; cluster analysis
Bell (2007)	Historical analysis based on secondary data, i.e., oral history interviews and archival research
Bergin (2007)	Historical analysis based on secondary data
Blenkinsopp (2007)	Case analysis of an autoethnographic account
Karakas (2008)	Case study; interviews
Pavlovich and Doyle Coner (2009)	Single-case study; interviews, informal conversations, documents
Delbecq (2010)	Case study; interviews and focus group discussions; nominal group technique
Groen (2010)	First-person internal dialogues; autoethnography
Jacobs and Longbotham (2011)	Grounded theory; transcendental phenomenology; life-narratives and (auto)biographies; purposive sampling
Cullen (2011)	Integration of two separate ethnographic accounts: one about others and one about oneself
Aadland and Skjørshammer (2012)	Participatory action research; surveys, interviews, observations, video cases
Litz (2013)	Single-case study; autobiographical works and corroborating data
Sandelands and Carlsen (2013)	Thematic narrative analysis
Crossman (2015)	Grounded theory; purposive sampling, Interviews

Author/s, Year	Methodology and methods
Chaston and Lips-Wiersma (2015)	Single-case study; purposive sampling; conversational interviews to allow for "views to be communicated more honestly and openly"
Almond (2015)	Grounded theory approach; thematic analysis of biblical texts
Jones (2016)	Case study
Singh *et al.* (2016)	In-depth interviews
McGhee and Grant (2017)	Survey; Semi-structured interviews
Tackney *et al.* (2017a)	Content analysis of scholarly papers and thematic analysis of interviews
Lychnell, (2017)	Grounded theory; longitudinal clinical inquiry with dual aim of aiding participants and developing knowledge; open coding process
Jensen and Neck (2017)	One single interview
Miller *et al.* (2018)	Semi-structured conversational interviews
Nandram *et al.* (2018)	Grounded theory; interviews; thematic analysis
Vu and Gill (2018)	In-depth interviews; thematic analysis
Yahanpath *et al.* (2018)	Case study; action research; semi-structured conversational interviews; participant observation
Cova et al. (2019)	Historical analysis
Fischer (2019)	Critical discourse analysis based on historical archives and visual ethnography
Driscoll *et al.* (2019)	Semi-structured, conversational interview; purposive sampling
Allen and Williams (2020)	Single case study
Betters-Reed *et al.* (2020)	Interviews
Small (2020)	Interviews; hermeneutic circle; a manual coding system
Gumbo and Gaotlhobogwe (2021)	Interviews (online and face-to-face); sharing circle
Mwaka and Ochola (2021)	Content analysis and discourse analysis
Storberg-Walker (2021)	Mixed deconstruction/imaginal research; postmodern deconstruction combined with quantum commentary

Notably, there is a dearth of research on evaluation criteria for non-positivist empirical research in MSR. Table 3-4 exhibits that only ten out of the 36 non-positivist articles explicitly state non-positivist evaluation criteria. 24 articles do not state any evaluation criteria. The remaining two (i.e., Jacobs & Longbotham, 2011; McGhee & Grant, 2017) only use positivist criteria. Given the urgent call for establishing spiritual research paradigms within the MSR realm,

it is crucial for MSR researchers to create comprehensive, widely accepted, non-positivist evaluation criteria to ensure the quality of future non-positivist spiritual research.

Table 3-4: *Non-Positivist Evaluation Criteria Used in JMSR Articles*

Author/s, Year	Paradigms	Evaluation criteria
Blenkinsopp (2007)	Radical humanism	Verisimilitude
Karakas (2008)	Interpretivism	Multiple interpretations and meanings
Aadland and Skjørshammer (2012)	Critical realism; postmodernism	Enhancement of a participatory process of internal self-reflection on values, practices, and change within the institution
Litz (2013)	Interpretivism	Objectivity, perspicacity, and veracity
Singh *et al.* (2016)	Interpretivism	The extent to which narratives produce "rich, thick data"
Tackney *et al.* (2017a)	Multi-paradigm	A valid and reliable document that is artistic, ethical, explanatory, apologetic, and prophetic; accuracy check by interviewees
Miller *et al.* (2018)	Interpretivism	Interpretations and meaning of "lived experience"
Nandram *et al.* (2018)	Interpretivism	Avoiding any preconceptions, conceptual forcing, or conceptual pollution; theoretical saturation
Cova *et al.* (2019)	Interpretivism	Containing all relevant facts; containing no facts that are not relevant; adequately explaining the research question
Small (2020)	Interpretivism	Increasingly deeper and layered reflection by the use of rich descriptive stories from the research participants

The most significant finding and theoretical contribution of this systematic review is identifying a basic framework of spiritual research paradigms generated from two promising spiritual research paradigms: the "Indigenous research paradigm" (Gumbo & Gaotlhobogwe, 2021) and the "Quantum research paradigm" [2](Storberg-Walker, 2021). Only two articles are selected

---

[2] Quantum ontology holds that human beings are deeply connected to one another, not only metaphorically, but in science-based terms of energy and information fields. Quantum physics reveals properties of entanglement and nonlocality, and a growing body of research suggests that consciousness may be a field property of the universe rather than a localized result of brain activity. Quantum management theory advocates for living a life of Oneness with "All That Is" (Laszlo, 2020, p.312). This theory is a postmodern counternarrative to the grand narrative of modernism (e.g., Newtonian physics, Cartesian dualism, and Darwinism).

because they are the only ones in the dataset that meet my selection criteria, i.e., explicitly stating philosophical assumptions and demonstrating methodological choices, as required by the concept of a "paradigm" (Kuhn, 1996). Table 3-5 displays the basic framework of spiritual research paradigms including philosophical assumptions and methodological features of the two promising spiritual research paradigms.

Table 3-5: *Promising Spiritual Research Paradigms Developed in JMSR Articles*

	Indigenous Research Paradigm	Quantum Research Paradigm
Articles	Gumbo and Gaotlhobogwe (2021)	Storberg-Walker (2021)
Ontology	Socially constructed multiple realities; knowledge shared between humans, the cosmos, and the spirit world	The quantum ontology that bridges the quantum field to the material world
Epistemology	Empirical data not restricted to the five senses but also including intuition, dreams, visions, and receiving signs from the natural world; knowledge arising out of and residing in mind, body, emotion, & spirit in connection with the natural world	Postmodern epistemology that involves multiple ways of knowing
Axiology	N/A	1. Research topic focused on deep, meaningful human experiences; 2. development of the researcher's inner capacities & sensibilities; 3. relationships & participation; 4. uncertainty & fuzziness;
Sampling methods	Purposive sampling; convenience sampling	Purposive sampling
Data collection methods	1. Preparation to build rapport between researchers and participants; 2. narrative interviews focused on participants' stories using their native language; 3. sharing circles anchored on the sacred meaning from indigenous cultures;	N/A
Data analysis techniques	Transcribing and translating from native language to English; reading transcripts repeatedly; thematic analysis	Mixed deconstruction/imaginal research incorporating deconstruction & quantum commentary that involves all facets of the researcher - scholarly knowledge, intuitive knowing, embodied sensing, beholding

	Indigenous Research Paradigm	Quantum Research Paradigm
Report writing	N/A	1. Bricolage of two-voice writing: analytical scholarly voice in normal font and intuitive voice in italics; research findings written in metaphor to destabilize the singularity; 2. affective and embodied storying; use of personal pronouns throughout; 3. invitation to readers to be open to new forms of scholarly writing; 4. longer than the typical journal article
Researcher's role	Communal embeddedness of the researchers to the researched other; participants and researchers viewed as equal, connecting spiritually & emotionally	Researcher playing a starring role; the researcher & the researcher's context/history matter
Evaluation criteria	N/A	N/A

Table 3-5 shows that both paradigms share four salient philosophical and methodological features:

1) Taking an ontological and epistemological stance informed by spiritual traditions or post-Newtonian science (e.g., quantum theory) that transcends positivism. For example, both paradigms assume a postmodern epistemology that involves multiple ways of knowing.

2) Using qualitative methods as the primary research approach.

3) Using purposive sampling (or in combination with other sampling methods such as convenience sampling) for data collection.

4) Emphasizing the researcher's agency. For example, Storberg-Walker (2021) claims that the researcher plays a "starring" role and that the researcher's context, history, and emotional/spiritual connection with the participants matter (p.93). She notes that quantum research values the development of the researcher's inner capacities and sensibilities connected to the psyche of the researcher.

In addition to these shared features, the two paradigms individually offer four insights into other dimensions of spiritual research paradigms:

77

5) Storberg-Walker (2021) prominently expands on the axiology of quantum research, arguing that quantum research should be "focused on deep, meaningful human experiences" (p.98) and on those "involving deep interconnectedness, transcendence, growth, transformation, mystery, or joy" (p.96).

6) Gumbo and Gaotlhobogwe (2021) report details of Indigenous data collection methods wherein narrative interviews focused on participants' stories are conducted in a most respectable, comforting, and healing manner called "sharing circles" (p.468). This methodological choice of narrative/conversational interviews coincides with that of other non-positivist research, as shown in Table 3-3, but also underscores the emotional and spiritual nature of the interview process.

7) Storberg-Walker (2021) indicates that the data analysis process requires the researcher's holistic engagement, involving "all facets of the researcher - scholarly knowledge, intuitive knowing, embodied sensing, and beholding" (p.103).

8) Storberg-Walker (2021) creatively showcases a postmodern way of writing called "bricolage of two-voice writing" (p.95), wherein analytical scholarly voice is displayed in standard font accompanied by intuitive/metaphorical voice in italics.

Notwithstanding the above-mentioned features, certain philosophical and methodological dimensions remain underexplored for both paradigms (see Table 3-5). For example, Gumbo and Gaotlhobogwe (2021) do not elaborate on axiology and ways of writing under the Indigenous research paradigm. Storberg-Walker's (2021) research does not detail data collection methods since it does not involve collecting primary data from the field. Besides, neither of the two articles touches upon evaluation criteria. Considering the publication of both articles in 2021, the two promising spiritual research paradigms are still in their nascent stages of development, awaiting further enrichment to make more substantial impacts.

3.1.4 Conclusion

This systematic review analyzes the research methodologies and paradigms utilized in JMSR articles for the last 18 years. The objective is to map the paradigms of the MSR field through bibliometric and methodological analyses and to stimulate the development of spiritual research paradigms. To my knowledge, this research is the first comprehensive analysis of paradigms in the MSR domain that investigates the philosophical assumptions of empirical MSR research and that generates a framework of spiritual research paradigms based on promising paradigms.

The major theoretical contribution of this systematic review is identifying a basic framework of spiritual research paradigms, incorporating eight key philosophical and methodological features manifested in two promising spiritual research paradigms, i.e., the Indigenous research paradigm and the Quantum research paradigm. The two paradigms share four features: 1) Taking an ontological and epistemological stance transcending positivism; 2) using qualitative methods; 3) using purposive sampling; 4) emphasizing the researcher's agency. Moreover, four additional features are signified in the two paradigms individually: 5) a focus on deep, meaningful human experience (e.g., interconnectedness, transcendence, growth, transformation, and mystery) as the axiology of quantum research; 6) conducting narrative/conversational interviews imbued with emotional and spiritual interconnectedness as an Indigenous data collection method; 7) involving all facets of the researcher in the data analysis process; and 8) engaging in creative, postmodern ways of writing.

The above eight philosophical and methodological features form a basic framework of spiritual research paradigms. This framework provides valuable heuristics for future researchers to further explore spiritual research paradigms in distinction from conventional positivist paradigms. In chapter 4 I elaborate on a Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm that not only

shares the above eight key features, but also enriches the framework in terms of ontology, epistemology, axiology, data sampling, data collection, data analysis, theorizing, writing, and evaluation criteria.

Another theoretical contribution of the research is conceptualizing a phenomenal trend in the MSR domain as represented by JMSR articles: the "qualitative gain" over the past 20 years. This trend reflects the maturation of the MSR domain and enhanced awareness of the particularized nature of MSR research.

The research findings make two practical contributions. First, an array of qualitative methodologies and methods commonly adopted by non-positivist JMSR authors is offered for future researchers to utilize in spiritual research. In specific, commonly used methodologies include grounded theory, case study research, (auto)ethnography, and (participatory) action research. The most used sampling method is purposive sampling. Popular data collection methods include narrative/conversational interviews, historical archives, documentation, and autobiographical/autoethnographic accounts. Typical data analysis methods are thematic analysis, discourse analysis, narrative analysis, and historical analysis.

Second, the systematic review reveals significant gaps in JMSR research regarding paradigmatic plurality. Specifically, JMSR and future researchers are encouraged to embrace diverse, non-positivist research philosophies in addition to interpretivism, especially those with a critical, radical, or postmodern orientation. For example, attention is needed to such philosophical perspectives as postcolonialism, feminism, radical humanism, poststructuralism, pragmatism, and multi-paradigmatic approaches. Establishing a comprehensive list of non-positivist evaluation criteria is also imperative to ensure the quality of spiritual research paradigms.

An obvious limitation of the research is that it only covers the JMSR articles and does not include any other journals or scholarly publications in the MSR domain. As a result, only two promising spiritual research paradigms are identified in this research. I acknowledge that there are other promising spiritual research approaches such as "research as ceremony" (Wilson, 2008), "first-person methods" (Roth, 2012), "clinical inquiry" (Lychnell & Martensson, 2017), and "global consciousness research" (Neal et al., 2023). These approaches have been published as books, chapters, and articles in non-MSR-focused journals. Looking ahead, I suggest that JMSR and the broader MSR community "push the envelope" to encourage more research that is non-conforming to positivist conventions.

In the next section, I offer a literature review of autoethnography with a special focus on evocative autoethnography which I contend to be a distinctively spiritual methodology and a hallmark of spiritual research paradigms.

3.2 Evocative Autoethnography: A Spiritual Methodology

3.2.1 Overview of autoethnography

Autoethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and analyze (*graphy*) personal experience (*auto*) for the purpose of extending sociological understanding (*ethno*) and consequently help people work towards reshaping themselves and their worlds – often in the interest of social justice (Chang, 2008; Ellis, 2004; Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011; Holman Jones, 2005; Holt, 2003; Le Roux, 2017; Spry, 2001; Wall, 2006).

Notably, self-understanding is a focus of autoethnographic research, and personal experience is foregrounded as a legitimate knowledge base. Functionalist researchers are accustomed to dehumanizing research that aims to minimize the researcher's influence, and hence

may critique autoethnography as being biased, self-absorbed, or narcissistic. However, a deepened self-understanding through autoethnographic research is not only a legitimate and worthy reward for researchers (Ellis, 1999, p.672) but also the way for researchers to extend their self-understanding to sociological understanding. Simply put, "they use the 'self' to learn about the other" (Ellis, 2004, p. 48). Starr (2010) explains that autoethnographers locate themselves within their own history and culture, thus allowing them to broaden their understanding of selves in relation to others. Denzin (2014, p.31) describes this process as "pushing always for connection between personal trouble and public issues".

I argue that autoethnography, especially evocative autoethnography to be discussed below, is a spiritual methodology. This is because autoethnographic research is distinctly introspective and potentially transformative. Ellis and colleagues (2011) note that "[r]eflexive ethnographies document ways a researcher changes as a result of doing fieldwork" (p.6), indicating the transformative impact of autoethnographic research on the researchers because of their deep reflexivity. Autoethnography typically revolves around some "epiphany" that is transformative for the researcher:

> Most often, autobiographers write about "epiphanies"—remembered moments perceived to have significantly impacted the trajectory of a person's life (Bochner & Ellis, 1992; Couser, 1997; Denzin, 1989), times of existential crises that forced a person to attend to and analyze lived experience (Zaner, 2004), and events after which life does not seem quite the same. (Ellis et al., 2011, p.2)

These "epiphanies" are self-claimed phenomena (meaning they can be transformative for one person but not necessarily for another) that create long-lasting effects and memories as a result of an experienced "intense situation" (Bochner, 1984; Bruner, 1993; Denzin, 1989; Freeman, 2004; Liu & Pechenkina 2016), leading to a type of research that is therapeutic and emancipatory both

for the researcher and the reader of the research (Le Roux, 2017; Ellis, *et al*., 2010; Starr, 2010). In this sense, autoethnographic research is spiritual by nature.

To continue discussing the features of autoethnography necessitates a delineation of major genres within autoethnography. It has been widely accepted (for example, see a special issue of the *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 2006, 35 (4)) that autoethnography incorporates a wide variety of modes of inquiry along a continuum (Le Roux, 2017, p.198) between two extremes, namely evocative autoethnography (Ellis, 2007; Ellis & Bochner, 2006; Denzin, 1989) and analytic autoethnography (Anderson, 2006; Atkinson, 2006; Butler, 2009). Analytic autoethnography focuses on developing theoretical explanations of broader social phenomena, whereas evocative autoethnography focuses on narrative presentations that open up conversations and evoke emotional responses (Ellingson & Ellis, 2008). This binary classification is useful for making visible the distinction between evocative autoethnography as a postmodern approach and analytic autoethnography within the functionalist paradigm. Nonetheless, I would argue that autoethnographic writing may break through this dichotomy to be simultaneously evocative and analytical, personal and scholarly, descriptive and theoretical (Burnier, 2006; Denshire, 2014). This is my ambition in this research although I identify my research as primarily rooted in evocative autoethnography.

Below I outline five key features of evocative autoethnography in contrast to those of analytic autoethnography representing traditional functionalist research. Then I discuss the feminist embodied ways of writing of evocative autoethnography as opposed to conventional masculine academic writing. Finally, I highlight major challenges faced by evocative autoethnographers as relevant to spiritual research.

3.2.2 Features of evocative autoethnography

As a critique and resistance to traditional analytic autoethnography, evocative autoethnography has five distinct features.

Firstly, evocative autoethnography adheres to nominalist ontology (e.g., constructionism) and postpositivist epistemology (e.g., interpretivism, postmodernism) in defiance of the realist ontology and positivist epistemology assumed by analytic autoethnography. Ellis and Bochner (2006) vigorously critique analytic autoethnography as "using it [i.e., autoethnography] against itself to reproduce the modernist project of realist ethnography" (p.434). The prioritization of theory over story is rooted in the positivist assumptions that there is one objective reality, and that the purpose of research is to search for certainty (Hope & Waterman 2003). Ellis and Bochner (2006) argue for an alternative paradigm embraced by evocative autoethnographers who want to "dwell in the flux of lived experience" rather than to "appropriate lived experience for the purpose of abstracting something they call knowledge or theory" (p.431). Ellis and Bochner (2006) mock the tradition of social science that sees "theory as somehow superior to story" (p.439). They put emphasis on storytelling that encourages "multiple perspectives, unsettled meanings, and plural voices" (p.438). Furthermore, they propose that storytelling is a type of theorizing which "reveals meaning without committing the error of defining it" (Arendt, 1973, p.107). They argue that storytelling is much more effective than abstract analysis in communicating ethical consciousness and in making social changes.

Secondly, evocative autoethnography takes a salient political stance as implicated in its deviance from the dominant paradigm. The political appeal of evocative autoethnographers is that mainstream realist researchers accept the legitimacy of autoethnography's evocative and ethical goals, literary forms, and alternative worldviews that stem from differences in gender, sexuality,

race, age, ability, class, education, and religion (Ellis et al., 2011). Liu and Pechenkina (2016) criticize "the persisting trend" in the academia "to push autoethnography to the periphery of the academic mainstream" and to position autoethnographic narratives as "delinquent" (p.190). Ellis and Bochner (2006) urge people "not to lose sight of the politics of autoethnography" wherein journal reviewers "could reject autoethnographies if they didn't have a Discussion section or make claims for generalizability" (p.436-443). Hence, evocative autoethnography becomes a form of resistance by postmodern, postcolonial, and feminist researchers (e.g., Jamjoom, 2020, 2021; Spry, 2001) who advocate for marginalized and silenced voices. For example, Haynes (2011) argues for the value of a subjective narrative where the voices of "ordinary" members, particularly women and minority groups, are being heard (p.143). Denshire (2014) and Richardson (1997) both stress the "moral responsibility" of authors to acknowledge and celebrate previously silenced voices.

Thirdly, evocative autoethnography emphasizes the researcher's "intimate involvement, engagement, and embodied participation" in the research process in contrast to the "distanced and detached" stance taken by analytic autoethnographers (Ellis & Bochner, 2006, p.436). Therefore, evocative autoethnography celebrates subjectivity and researcher influence instead of trying to diminish researcher "bias". As the research becomes an embodied experience of the researcher, it is emotionally charged rather than emotionally neutral (Ellis, 1999). As Pelias (2004) eloquently notes:

> I put on display a researcher, who instead of hiding behind the illusion of objectivity, brings himself [sic] forward in the belief that an emotionally vulnerable, linguistically evocative, and sensuously poetic voice can place us closer to the subjects we study […] a *Methodology of the Heart* […] located in the researcher's body – a body deployed not as a narcissistic display but on behalf of others, a body that invites identification and empathetic connection, a body that takes as its charge to be fully human (Pelias, 2004, p.1, emphasis in original).

Fourthly, reciprocity between the researcher and others involved in the research is a principle in evocative autoethnography as "a methodology of the heart". Reciprocity lies in the mutual trust and disclosure between researcher and research participants, as well as in the author's expectation on readers. Ellis and Bochner (2006, p.433) cite Victor Turner's (1986) terms of "coactivity" and "co-performance" to refer to a characteristically different connection between researcher and participants whereby the researcher not only empathizes with, but also cocreates knowledge with, participants. This "coactivity" results in a "reflexive, dyadic interview":

> Though the focus is on the participant and her or his story, the words, thoughts, and feelings of the researcher also are considered, e.g., personal motivation for doing a project, knowledge of the topics discussed, emotional responses to an interview, and ways in which the interviewer may have been changed by the process of interviewing. (Ellis et al., 2011, p.6)

Reciprocity also invites "vulnerable readers" who are expected "to care, to feel, to empathize, and to act" in exchange for the genuineness offered by "the vulnerable author" (Ellis & Bochner, 2006, p.434):

> If you let yourself be vulnerable, then your readers are more likely to respond vulnerably, and that's what you want, vulnerable readers. I agree with Ruth Behar, who wrote in *The Vulnerable Observer* (1996), that social science "that doesn't break your heart just isn't worth doing." My goal is the same as Dorothy Allison's (1994) — "to take the reader by the throat, break her heart, and heal it again." (Ellis, 1999, p.675)

Lastly, evocative autoethnography is in pursuit of ethical and liberatory solutions to social conundrums which are often difficult and emotive subjects, contrary to traditional value-neutral investigation that goes no further than intellectual understanding of social phenomena. As Haynes (2011) suggests, the combination of "crafted storytelling with rigorous social science", has enabled autoethnographers to explore a wide range of difficult subjects such as women's rights, illness and

bullying, motherhood and professional identity, abortion, pilgrimage, teaching practices, accounting, and career, etc. (p.136). Grounded in transformative, emancipatory experiences, autoethnographic research is inherently imbued with ethical purpose and is action-oriented, aiming to move readers to ethical action (Denshire, 2014; Denzin, 2014; Le Roux, 2017; Holman Jones, 2005). Ultimately, evocative autoethnographers view research and writing as "socially-just acts" whose goal is to produce accessible scholarly works that change the world we live in for the better (Holman Jones, 2005, p.764).

3.2.3 Writing of evocative autoethnography

The features of evocative autoethnography necessitate a feminist embodied way of writing in distinction to "conventional masculine academic discourse" (Mykhalovskiy, 1996) which is disembodied, aloof, and authoritative (Butler, 2011; Denshire, 2014). The feminist embodied writing demands the author's whole-being (intellectual, physical, emotional, and spiritual) engagement as manifested in three aspects of evocative autoethnographic accounts.

Firstly, personal experiences and personal narratives are foregrounded rather than diminished or marginalized. Holt (2003) and Denshire (2014, p.832) both suggest that "by writing themselves into their own work as major characters, autoethnographers have challenged accepted views about silent authorship". Autoethnographic writing is usually written in the first person (Ellis & Bochner, 2000) and typically starts with a short personal story to position the author for the reader, followed by a longer personal story. The author might also integrate parts of their experiences into each research participant's story (Ellis, 1999).

Secondly, autoethnographic writing emphasizes aesthetics instead of truth claims (Denshire, 2014; Ellis, 1999; Ellis & Bochner, 2006; Van Maanen, 2006) since the basic goal of evocative autoethnography is to evoke resonance rather than to reflect "truth" (Ellis, 1999; Haynes,

2011). By producing accessible texts, autoethnographers may also be able to reach wider and more diverse mass audiences that traditional research usually disregards, a move aligned with their pursuits of social justice (Bochner, 1997; Ellis & Bochner, 2006; Ellis et al., 2011). Accordingly, Denshire (2014) directly asserts that "autoethnography is a fictive tradition" wherein authors make use of literary conventions "such as dialogue and monologue to create character, calling up emotional states, sights, smells, noises" (p.836). Haynes (2011) further argues that the fictive elements, rather than negating the "validity" of autoethnography, retain "an intellectual and emotional engagement with personal experience", and that autoethnographic narrative must be "sufficiently detailed to enable the reader to engage with it" (p.136). She records a range of genres of autoethnographic accounts including novels (Ellis, 2004), dramatized episodes or conversations (Ellis & Bochner, 1992), vignettes (Humphreys, 2005), personal narrative or stories (Bochner, 1997), poems and performance (Spry, 2001), field notes (Jenks, 2002) and diaries (Vickers, 2002).

Thirdly, autoethnographic writing is a spiritual inquiry that makes possible psychological healing for authors, participants, and readers, in alignment with the inherent sacredness of femininity that emphasizes care, love, compassion, and wisdom. The ideas of "narrative inquiry" or "writing from the heart/soul" have been discussed widely (e.g., Ellis & Bochner, 2006, p.440; Denshire, 2014, p.837; Denzin, 2014, p.31; Jamjoom, 2021; Richardson, 2000). Ellis and colleagues (2011) describe this process as writing to "make sense of ourselves and our experiences, purge our burdens, question canonical stories" and "to improve and better understand our relationships". They argue that "writing personal stories can also be therapeutic for participants and readers", "give people a voice", and "motivate significant cultural change" (pp.7-8).

Overall, evocative autoethnographic writing carries with it its ethical and liberatory purpose. The feminist embodied writing conveys authenticity through the exposure of personal

experience, engages readers holistically through artistic expression, and makes possible psychological healing and societal change through spiritual interrogation. We want to cite the following to acknowledge courageous autoethnographic writing:

> I am grateful to the many women and men who dare to create theory from the location of pain and struggle, who courageously expose wounds to give us their experience to teach and guide, as a means to chart new theoretical journeys. Their work is liberatory. (Hooks, 1991, p.11)

3.2.4 Challenges faced by evocative autoethnographers

Evocative autoethnography emphasizes the researcher's personal experience and reflexivity as well as feminist embodied writing. Researchers may experience the transformative impact of their research because of deep reflexivity. This intense introspective process is clearly challenging at multiple (intellectual, physical, emotional, spiritual) levels for the researcher. Ellis (1999) warns that "[t]he self-questioning autoethnography demand is extremely difficult" and that "most social scientists are not sufficiently introspective about their feelings or motives or the contradictions they experience" (pp.671-672). In addition, evocative autoethnographic researchers have to endure marginalization in the process of academic publishing, since the focus on the researcher's personal life is often most controversial for traditional social scientists, especially if it is not accompanied by more traditional analysis or connections to scholarly literature (Ellis et al., 2011, p.7).

Furthermore, evocative autoethnographic researchers face two special challenges: "ethics of vulnerability" (Pullen, 2018), and the tension between literariness and rigor (Ellis et al., 2011).

First, evocative autoethnography creates unique ethical issues due to the revelation of vulnerabilities of both the researcher and the participants. Denshire (2014) points out that

traditional research ethics guidelines may not apply to autoethnographic research. The expectations of institutional ethics committees about participant anonymity, informed consent, and right to withdraw differ markedly from the values of autoethnographic researchers, since these expectations "do not constitute the whole story of undertaking the relational, and often reciprocal, social practice of autoethnography" (Denshire, 2014, p.842).

Instead of traditional research ethics, evocative autoethnographers adopt the term "relational ethics" to indicate "the interpersonal ties and responsibilities researchers have to those they study" (Ellis et al., 2011, pp.8; Adams & Ellis, 2012, p.189). Three layers of complexity have been identified:

1) The difficulty of balancing between anonymity and richness of account: It is often difficult to mask the identity of research participants who are, for example, the researcher's family members, neighbours, colleagues, or certain officials in an organization. Sometimes researchers may have to use some level of fiction or symbolic equivalents to protect the privacy of others while staying aware of how these protective devices can influence the integrity of their research. Such devices are not always suited to the task given the contexts and politics involved (Denshire, 2014; Ellis et al., 2011; Haynes, 2011).

2) The relational responsibilities of researchers for participants: Researchers cannot be emotionally neutral or distant from the participants, and participants cannot be regarded as impersonal "subjects" only to be mined for data. Researchers typically maintain and value interpersonal ties with participants. Researchers have to be able to continue to live in the world of relationships in which their research is embedded after the research is completed. On many occasions, this obligates researchers to show their work to others implicated in their texts, allowing others to respond to how they are represented in the texts (Ellis et al., 2011).

3) The risk of self-harm to researchers (Denshire, 2014): the writing of evocative autoethnography requires enormous genuineness and self-scrutiny of the writer, sometimes to the extent of bringing "a lot of fears and self-doubts, and emotional pain" to the writer, and uneasiness to the readers (Ellis, 1999, p.627; Denshire, 2014; Liu & Pechenkina, 2016). Self-exposure and the blurring between private and public, self and others, can be nerve-wracking and even humiliating, not only in the process of writing but also when presenting one's work to an academic audience (Haynes, 2011).

Therefore, evocative autoethnographers ought to be aware of the complexity of relational ethics embedded in their research and take care to do no harm, or to minimize potential harm, to research participants including themselves. Empathy, conscientiousness, and resilience are as essential requirements for autoethnographers as the ability to abstract and theorize.

The second special challenge is the tension between literariness and rigor (Ellis *et al.*, 2011; Haynes, 2011). Ellis and colleagues (2011, pp.10-11) observe that "autoethnography is criticized for either being too artful and not scientific, or too scientific and not sufficiently artful". On the one hand, in using personal experience, autoethnographers are thought to not only use "biased data", but also are "navel-gazers" or "self-absorbed narcissists" who don't fulfill their scholarly obligations of theorizing. On the other hand, they are viewed as "catering to the sociological, scientific" rigor criteria to achieve "legitimacy as scientists", and consequently losing the "literary, artistic imagination" as passionate artists (Ellis et al., 2011, pp.10-11). Haynes (2011) finds it difficult to negotiate "the tension between passion and theory". She warns that "[t]oo much passion risks the autoethnography being critiqued for self-indulgence", and that "[t]oo much theory obscures the richness of the personal experience" (p.139). This tension exists for all genres of

autoethnography but is particularly salient for evocative autoethnography due to its emphasis on artistic expression.

But the balance between rigor and aesthetics is not unachievable. Ellis and colleagues (2011) propose that autoethnography can be both rigorous and evocative:

> These criticisms erroneously position art and science at odds with each other, a condition that autoethnography seeks to correct. Autoethnography, as a method, attempts to disrupt the binary of science and art. Autoethnographers believe research can be rigorous, theoretical, and analytical, and emotional, therapeutic, and inclusive of personal and social phenomena. (Ellis et al., 2011, p.11)

It is obvious that traditional functionalist rigor criteria based on realist assumptions should not be applied to evocative autoethnography or spiritual research that is rooted in nominalist ontology and non-positivist epistemology. To address this issue, researchers have proposed a variety of alternative rigor criteria for evocative autoethnography. Some of the most mentioned criteria in the literature include: 1) "Authenticity" as opposed to "reliability"; 2) "Resonance" (or "verisimilitude") as opposed to "validity"; 3) "Researcher's agency" as opposed to "objectivity" or "minimization of biases"; 4) "Pragmatism" and "morality" as opposed to "value-neutral" (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Bochner, 2000; Le Roux, 2017; Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Ragan, 2000; Richardson, 2000; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005; Tracy, 2010; Weber-Pillwax, 2009; Wilson, 2008; Storberg-Walker, 2021).

I believe that developing alternative evaluation criteria has now become essential for autoethnographers and spiritual researchers to reclaim the connection between science, art and religion, and to embrace multiple ways of knowing in scholarly endeavours. In the next chapter, I outline a Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm including a list of alternative evaluation criteria to reunite art, science, and religion.

Chapter 4 A Zen-informed Spiritual Research Paradigm

4.1 A Brief Introduction to Zen Buddhism

Zen Buddhism (Chinese Chan School of Buddhism 中國禪宗) derives from Indian Buddhism, which is introduced to China no later than the Han dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE). According to 五燈會元(*Song Dynasty History of Zen Buddhism in China*), the origin of Zen can be traced back to a koan (公案, recorded dialogical and nonverbal encounters between Zen masters and disciples in Tang and Song dynasties) known as the Flower Sermon (拈花微笑) of Shakyamuni Buddha (i.e., Siddhartha Gautama, c.563-c.483 BCE):

> The world-honoured [i.e., the Buddha] at the Lingshan meeting picked up a flower and showed it to the audience. All was silent, except the venerable Mahākāśyapa, who broke into a smile. The world-honoured announced, "I possess the true dharma eye treasury, the marvelous heart-mind of Nirvana, the true form of the formless, the subtle dharma that does not rest on words but is a special transmission outside of the scriptures. This I entrust to Mahākāśyapa." (普濟, 1252/2021. Vol. 1)

Yet Zen Buddhism does not take form until early Tang dynasty when Hui Neng (638-713 CE), known as the sixth Chinese patriarch of Zen, opens a new field in Buddhism. Zen is strongly influenced by Chinese Taoism and Confucianism and flourishes as a distinguished Chinese style of Buddhism throughout the Tang and Song dynasties (618-1279 CE). According to D.T. Suzuki (1953), Zen as a "great revolutionary development of human consciousness in the world history of thought" "could not arise anywhere else" than China because "it is in Zen that the Chinese mind completely asserts itself" (p.39-40).

Zen Buddhism spreads from China to Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Singapore and other Asian countries, while remaining unknown to the West for 1500 years until the early 20th century when D.T. Suzuki (1870-1966) introduces Zen to the English world. After WWII, a growing number of Japanese Zen priests come to the U.S. to found Zen centers. American Zen Buddhism begin to flourish along with the "counterculture movement" in the 1960s-1970s.

Speaking of philosophical roots, Zen Buddhism follows the Mahāyāna ("the great vehicle") tradition. Hence, the terms "Zen" and "Mahāyāna" are used interchangeably when referring to ontological and epistemological assumptions in this chapter. Mahāyāna is one of the three major branches of Buddhism, the other two being Theravāda (prevalent in Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, and other Southeast Asian countries) and Vajrayāna (influential in Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, and Mongolia).

Theravāda Buddhism emphasizes self-salvation through adherence to the Buddha's original teachings in the Pāli Canon and has become increasingly impactful in contemporary Western societies thanks to the Mindfulness movement. Mahāyāna differs from Theravāda in that it proclaims the possibility of realizing Buddhahood through the bodhisattva's path, wherein the bodhisattvas vow to defer their own salvation in order to liberate all creatures in the universe from suffering. The most well-known bodhisattvas include, for example, Avalokiteśvara (bodhisattva of compassion 觀音), Manjushri (bodhisattva of wisdom 文殊), and Maitreya (the future Buddha 彌勒).

What is the essence of Zen? This is a question that can be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to answer. As recorded in traditional Chinese koans, Zen masters answer this question by improvising any word (e.g., "Big fine lantern", "the cypress cones in the courtyard", 普濟,

1252/2021, vol. 4) or any nonverbal expression (e.g., a blow and a shout, holding up a finger, knocking down a bottle) depending on the immediate context. Suzuki explains that one can hardly find a way to answer questions such as "What is life" or "What is everything", and Zen is just life and everything:

> In fact, Zen, being life itself, contains everything that goes into the make-up of life: Zen is poetry, Zen is philosophy, Zen is morality. Wherever there is life activity, there is Zen. As long as we cannot imagine life to be limited in any way, Zen is present in every one of our experiences. (Suzuki, 1951, p.3)

Some Western Zen teachers define Zen more explicitly as the cultivation of the mind through meditation and mindful living. For instance, Toni Packer understands Zen as "descriptive of a mind that understands itself clearly and wholly from instant to instant" and that it "suggests a way of seeing and responding freely, without the limitations of the self" (as cited in McMahan, 2008, p.228).

For Western academics, Burrell and Morgan's (1979) classical framework of sociological paradigms (see Figure 4-1) may be a useful anchor to locate Zen. In this framework, Zen Buddhism finds the closest affinity with radical humanism, which is positioned in stark contrast to functionalism, the mainstream of modern Western intellectuality. But Zen Buddhism occupies the uppermost and far-left margins of the quadrant of radical humanism because of its extremely subjectivist ontology and utmost focus on radical change. Zen Buddhism holds that the whole universe is but an illusion created by consciousness. In line with the radical humanistic concern over "alienation", Zen Buddhism is concerned with the liberation of human consciousness from various illusions, which is manifested in such core concepts as Dukkha (suffering) and Nirvāna (relief of suffering).

Figure 4-1: *Zen Buddhism in Burrell & Morgan's (1979) Framework*
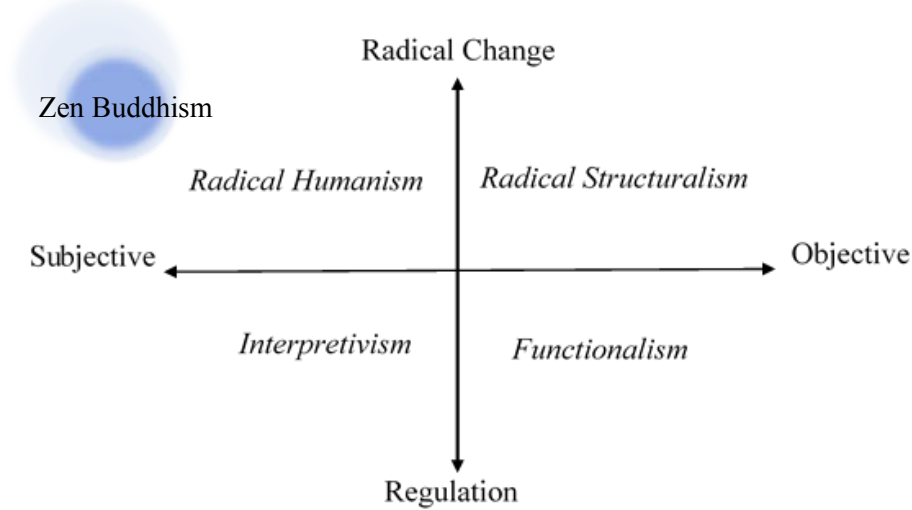
In line with Burrell and Morgan's delineation, Zen is ontologically nominalist, epistemologically anti-positivist, and methodologically ideographic. In the following sections, I elaborate on the features of a Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm in terms of ontology, epistemology, axiology, methodology, and evaluation criteria. For simplicity, I use "Zen paradigm" to refer to the "Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm".

4.2 Ontology of Zen Paradigm

Ontological assumptions of science concern the very essence of the phenomena under investigation – whether the "reality" to be investigated is external to the individual or the product of individual consciousness (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.1). Table 4-1 summarizes the ontological assumptions of Zen paradigm compared to those of the functionalist paradigm.

Table 4-1: *Zen vs. Functionalism: Ontology*

Zen paradigm	Functionalist paradigm
1. nominalism	1. realism
2. stratified reality created by multiple levels of consciousness;	2. single objective reality independent of consciousness

Contrary to the realist assertion that there is one objective reality external to individual consciousness, Mahāyāna Buddhism is utterly nominalist. Mahāyāna scriptures emphasize nominalist doctrines throughout. Some statements, such as "the externality is created by one's heart-mind" (境由心造), and "recognizing that the externality, like an illusion, is the manifestation of heart-mind itself" (了境如幻, 自心所现) (*The Lankavatara Sutra, 2009;* 大乘入楞伽經, 2017; Ch.2) have become idiomatic in China.

Furthermore, Vijñānavāda ("the doctrine of consciousness-only" 唯識宗), a major school of Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism that Zen draws from, explores human consciousness in great depth. According to Vijñānavāda (*The Lankavatara Sutra,* 2009; 大乘入楞伽經, 2017; Ch.6), there are nine types of consciousnesses that can be categorized into five levels of being depending on their functions. The first level includes the five senses (五蘊), namely eye consciousness, ear consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, and body consciousness. The second level is mental consciousness (mano-vijñāna 意識). The third level is self-awareness, or ego (manas 末那識). The fourth level is storehouse consciousness (ālaya-vijñāna 阿賴耶識), which stores and accumulates the "seeds" of all thoughts and deeds. The fifth level is nondual consciousness (Tathāgatagarbha 如來藏). Nondual consciousness is also known as Buddha-nature (佛性), Suchness (真如), and "clear deep heart-mind" (清淨心). Mahāyāna Buddhism asserts that

ordinary human beings are unable to sense the higher levels of consciousness (i.e., storehouse consciousness and nondual consciousness). Only enlightened beings (i.e., bodhisattvas and Buddhas) can "see" them.

Notably, the first seven consciousnesses are all different forms of the storehouse consciousness, which is born from the all-encompassing, nondual consciousness. In the Lankavatara Sutra, this relationship is vividly described by the metaphors of "wave" and "ocean":

> [The Buddha sees] evolving vijñānas [i.e., the first seven consciousness] like waves rising in the ocean of the storehouse consciousness stirred by the wind of externality. 藏識大海。境界風動。轉識浪起。 (*The Lankavatara Sutra,* 2009; *大乘入楞伽經,* 2017; Ch.2)

It must be noted that the "externality" in the above quote is by no means an objective reality outside of consciousness, but a product of consciousness itself. The Lankavatara Sutra describes how consciousness creates delusions of "externality" through a cyclical process. In this process, the delusions of "externality" are constantly produced by, but also reinforcing, the "seeds" in storehouse consciousness due to the manas' tenacious attachment to duality (i.e., separation between the perceiver and the perceived). Manas has been choked with dualistic ways of thinking since beginningless time and thus has created immense "habit-energy" (vasana 習氣), or karma (業力). The multitude of seeds reposited in the storehouse consciousness grows out of the habit-energy, thereby being "soiled". These "soiled seeds" (雜染種子) give a constant supply to the uninterrupted flow of the vijñāna waves, which continue to produce the delusions of "externality".

Therefore, Mahāyāna ontology can be illustrated by a series of concentric circles. It is similar to, but different from, the "Great Nest" model (Figure 4-2) created by Ken Wilber (2000). Wilber (2000) uses the "Great Nest" to summarize "the common core of the world's great spiritual

traditions" that reality is composed of various levels of being "ranging from body to mind to soul to spirit" (p.5). These basic levels of being are holons wherein each senior level transcends but includes its juniors so that the universe exists in "nested hierarchies – or holarchies" (p.7). Wilber acknowledges that the number of divisions of the levels may vary considerably among different traditions, but the general levels of the "Great Nest" have been in nearly unanimous agreement across cultures. Interestingly, Wilber uses the metaphor of "waves in the great River of Life" to convey that these levels are not rigidly separate but "infinitely shade and grade into each other" (p.7).

Figure 4-2: *The Great Nest of Being*
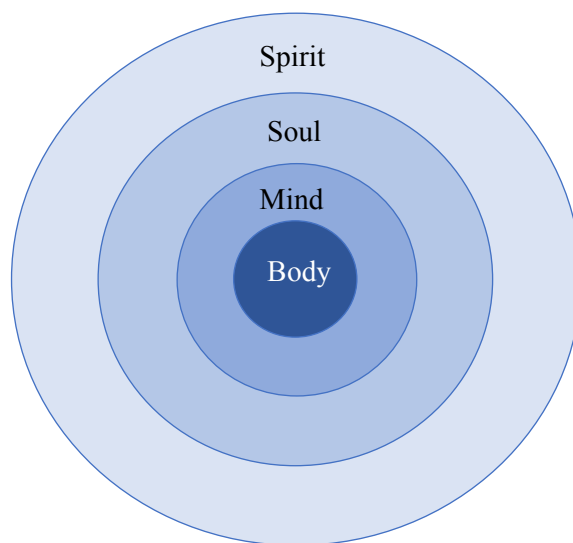
Note. Adapted from Wilber (2000)

The Mahāyāna Buddhist ontology model (Figure 4-3) is similarly a "nest" (or "holarchy") comprising five levels: the five senses (five vijñānas), mental consciousness (mano-vijñāna), self-awareness/ego (manas), storehouse consciousness (ālaya-vijñāna), and nondual consciousness (Tathāgatagarbha).

Figure 4-3: *Mahāyāna Buddhist Ontology*

Nondual consciousness (Tathāgatagarbha)

Storehouse consciousness (ālaya-vijñāna)

Self-awareness (manas)

Mental consciousness (mano-vijñāna)

Five senses (five vijñānas)
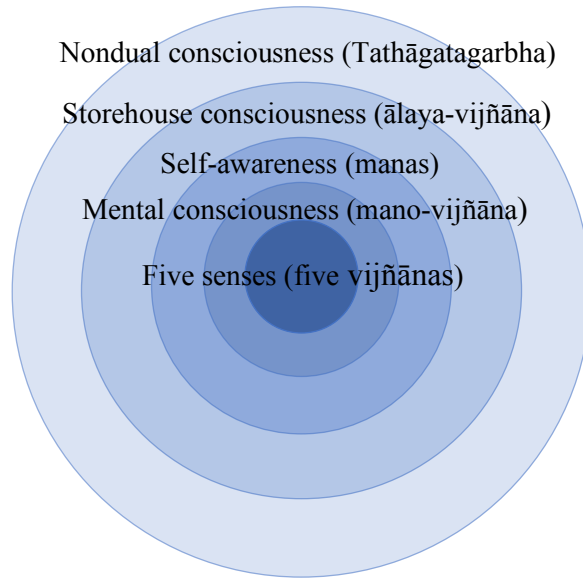
It is difficult to find precise correspondence between the five levels of consciousness in the Mahāyāna ontology model and the four levels of being in Wilber's "Great Nest", for the Mahāyāna levels would be put in liminal spaces in between the levels in the "Great Nest". For example, the mental consciousness closely connects "body" and "mind", the self-awareness overlaps "mind" and "soul", and the storehouse consciousness functions as both "soul" and "spirit". Nonetheless, aligned with Wilber's prototype of "holarchy", all levels of beings/consciousness are essentially born from the same "spirit": nondual consciousness. Nondual consciousness is often referred to as "global consciousness" in the MSR domain (Neal et al., 2023) and is also known as "oneness" in other spiritual traditions.

4.3 Epistemology of Zen Paradigm

Epistemological assumptions of science focus on the nature of knowledge – what forms of knowledge can be obtained, how one might receive and communicate the knowledge, and how one can sort out what is "true" from what is "false" (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.2). The latter

matter is concerned with the evaluation criteria of research, which is further discussed in section 4.6. Table 4-2 provides a summary of the epistemological assumptions of the Zen paradigm in comparison to those of the functionalist paradigm.

Table 4-2: *Zen vs. Functionalism: Epistemology*

	Zen paradigm	Functionalist paradigm
What constitutes knowledge	1. the pathway to enlightenment (i.e., seeing Buddha-nature); 2. intangible, incommunicable & unmeasurable phenomena; 3. fuzzy notions	1. generalizable laws (i.e., causal explanation) of the external reality; 2. observable, communicable, & measurable facts; 3. clearly-defined concepts
How to obtain knowledge	1. research is embodied practice utilizing multiple ways of knowing; 2. research is sacred; spiritual conviction as the prerequisite for and the result of knowing; 3. dualistic knowledge is imperfect, impermanent & empty; perfect knowledge gained through nonduality 4. autoethnographic, first-person methods;	1. research is an intellectualizing process 2. researcher remains value-neutral; 3. empirical knowledge gained through dualistic thinking as concrete truth and generalizable principles 4. second-person & third-person methods;

Positivist epistemology assumes that there are generalizable rules corresponding to a single objective reality independent of human consciousness. Knowledge is observable, measurable, and can be transmitted in tangible forms. Therefore, one can acquire knowledge indirectly through second-person (e.g., one-way interview, non-participant observation, and experiment) or third-person methods (e.g., survey, statistical analysis, documentation, archive, and "objective" writing). High-quality research is marked by delineating clearly defined, measurable concepts and their causal relationships, which are reliable, valid, and generalizable. The discovery of knowledge relies solely on the intellectualizing process of the researcher, who strives to remain objective, value-neutral, and emotionally distant.

Zen Buddhism has a layered epistemology in accordance with its multi-level ontology, incorporating multiple ways of knowing, such as sensing, intellectualizing, feeling, intuiting, mystical experience, and enlightenment. Intellectualizing as the positivist way of knowing is useful for abstracting and verbalizing the perceived reality created by the lower levels of consciousness (i.e., five senses, mental consciousness, and manas). However, all knowledge gained at the lower levels of consciousness is "imperfect knowledge" (有漏法), which inevitably leads to endless suffering. This is because all the "conditioned dharmas" (有為法) created by the five senses and mental consciousness due to the manas' attachment to duality are interdependent, impermanent, and empty in essence. A famous four-line verse (gāthā 偈) that concludes *The Diamond Sutra* reads:

> All conditioned dharmas
>
> 一切有為法。
>
> are like dreams, illusions, bubbles, shadows,
>
> 如夢幻泡影。
>
> like dew drops and lightning flashes.
>
> 如露亦如電。
>
> Thus we shall perceive them.
>
> 應作如是觀。
>
> (*The Diamond Sutra*, 2000; 金剛般若波羅蜜經, 2002; Ch.32)

Only the nondual consciousness is "unconditioned dharma" (無為法) that is independent and permanent. The "perfect knowledge" (無漏法) about unconditioned dharmas can only be attained through enlightenment. According to the Lankavatara Sutra, one can "cut loose from the triple continuation [i.e., reincarnation], enter the Tathāgatagarbha and reach the stage of

Buddhahood" (斷三相續見, 入如來藏), "being relieved from sufferings by realizing that reincarnation is but a dream" (輪迴如夢, 醒即解脫) (*The Lankavatara Sutra*, 2009; 大乘入楞伽經, 2017; Ch.1).

Ordinary human beings can be transformed into enlightened beings by practicing the "bodhisattva path" (菩薩道) to "cleanse the storehouse consciousness of the soiled seeds" (轉染成淨). According to Chinese Chan tradition, one can practice the bodhisattva path through "six pāramitā", literally meaning the "six pathways to Buddhahood" (六度). The six pathways include: giving (佈施), keeping precepts (持戒), bearing humiliation (忍辱), diligence (精進), meditation (禪定), and wisdom (般若). These are also known as the "six pathways and ten thousands of practices" (六度萬行) since they can be practiced in limitless ways in everyday life.

Once bodhisattvas remove all the "soiled seeds" from the storehouse consciousness through practice, they turn the storehouse consciousness into pure nondual consciousness. This is a purifying process through which one attains "enlightenment" (開悟), or "seeing Buddha-nature" (見性). It is the "spiritual transformation" as a critical feature of spiritual research, or the "quantum shift" as a focal phenomenon of global consciousness (Neal et al., 2023).

Therefore, for Zen-informed spiritual researchers, research is an embodied practice. It is imperative that researchers holistically participate in their research and engage in multiple ways of knowing, paying attention to their body, mind, heart and soul. Moreover, research is sacred. Researcher's spiritual conviction is both the prerequisite for, and the result of, true knowing. Spiritual transformation is impossible to occur without conviction and authenticity. Researchers must have convictions in their spiritual traditions and remain authentic in their interactions with

all involved in the research. Researchers strive to follow their "clear deep heart-mind" in what they do throughout the research. Finally, from a transcendental perspective, research is ultimately a dream. All knowledge created through a dualistic mind is imperfect knowledge. Digging deeper into their research and consciousness, researchers may observe impermanence, emptiness, and no-self. It is through non-attachment and nonduality that researchers obtain the perfect knowledge.

The perfect knowledge is incommunicable. Transcendental knowledge is not communicated through the medium of language, for language itself is discriminatory and differentiated (Suzuki, 1953). As long as our mind is concerned with words and ideas, we can never reach the essence of Zen. This "nonverbal" spirit is highlighted by a Zen verse widely known in China:

> [Zen is] A special transmission outside the scriptures, 教外別傳。
>
> independent of words or languages, 不立文字。
>
> pointing directly to one's heart-mind, 直指人心。
>
> seeing one's Buddha-nature and attaining Buddhahood. 見性成佛。

Notwithstanding its incommunicable nature, knowledge of higher levels of consciousness has to be communicated somehow. Otherwise, there would have been no such thing as spiritual research. Consequently, perfect knowledge is at best expressed discursively through fuzzy notions which cannot be measured. Kriger and Seng (2005) suggest that "from a nondual perspective precise measurement of the presence of nondual awareness is believed to be inherently not possible" since nondual awareness is "by definition at a level of being where the discursive mind as knower has merged with the very object of knowing" (p.797). Words are inadequate for conveying rich, nonverbal experiences, let alone abstract numbers or generalizing statistics. Quantitative

approaches simply do not have the capacity to explore and describe the first-person embodied experiences of nondual consciousness.

This is also why Zen-informed spiritual research must be autoethnographic. Knowledge of higher consciousness has to be directly experienced by the researchers themselves through embodied knowing rather than indirectly acquired or verbally transmitted through second-person or third-person methods. An autoethnographic researcher must infuse their holistic self into the entire process of empirical research (e.g., field study, interview, archival research, historiographic analysis, and discourse analysis), essentially transforming second-person and third-person methods into first-person methods such as participant observation, interactive/narrative interview, aesthetic archival analysis (Durepos, 2023), storytelling and writing with authorial voice. Instead of minimizing researchers' influence, an autoethnographic researcher takes advantage of their personal history and identity to exert agency on their research because the researcher's intellectual, emotional, and spiritual maturity is essential to the success of spiritual research.

This principle applies to other spiritual research paradigms as well. For example, Storberg-Walker (2021) emphasizes that in quantum research, the researcher "plays a starring role" and that "both the *researcher* and the *researcher's context* (or history) matter" (p.93, emphasis in original). Using Burrell and Morgan's (1979) words, the world "[for the anti-positivist] can only be understood from the point of view of the individuals who are directly involved in the activities", whereby knowledge is "based on experience and insight of a unique and essentially personal nature" (p. 5).

4.4 Axiology of Zen Paradigm

The axiology of social science refers to the values and ethics that guide the search for knowledge and judge which information is worthy of searching for (Wilson, 2008; Aldawod & Day, 2017; Saunders et al., 2019). For example, should research be value-free or value-driven? What is the purpose of research? What constitutes meaningful data? Why is one research topic more important than other topics? How does the researcher deal with their relationship with research participants? Table 4-3 summarizes the axiological assumptions of the Zen paradigm in comparison with those of the functionalist paradigm.

Table 4-3: *Zen vs. Functionalism: Axiology*

	Zen paradigm	Functionalist paradigm
Research topic	1. personal emotional conundrums in relation to workplace/societal problems; 2. personal is professional & political	1. workplace phenomena; 2. personal life irrelevant
Research purpose	1. understanding and resolving researcher's life conundrum; 2. healing, transformative, and empowering for all impacted by the research; 3. action-oriented; promoting societal changes for social justice.	1. generalizing, theorizing, and predicting about research subjects; 2. improving organizational outcomes for managers; 3. other values (e.g., healing, transformative, empowering, pragmatic, ethical, etc.) irrelevant.
Researcher's role in the research	1. researcher-centered; 2. researcher's personal history & motives matter; 3. researcher's subjectivity & agency as advantages to be embraced;	1. researcher as an aloof observer; 2. researcher's personal history & motives irrelevant; 3. researcher's subjectivity as biases to be minimized
Researcher's relationship with participants	1. equal & reciprocal; 2. participants as co-investigators; 3. authenticity, vulnerability & empathy as key abilities of the researcher	1. unequal; 2. participants as resources to be mined; 3. researcher emotionally detached

The purpose of functionalist social science is to discover facts and regularities about the research "subjects" (e.g., individuals, events, or organizations), offer explanations of structures and dynamics in societies, and predict future events. In particular, management research focuses on workplace phenomena for the sole purpose of improving organizational outcomes. Personal life struggles and personal outcomes are considered illegitimate topics in management research. Accordingly, the researcher's role in functionalist research is that of an aloof observer. Research is thought to be solely intellectual work wherein the researcher keeps emotionally detached and value neutral. Researcher's subjectivity is usually considered as "bias" to be minimized. Researcher's personal history and motives are to be hidden from the report's readers. Research participants are treated as the resources to be mined and the sole provider of data. Researcher's inputs to interviews are minimized and not recognized as "data".

By contrast, spiritual research topics should be "focused on deep, meaningful human experiences" "involving deep interconnectedness, transcendence, growth, transformation, mystery, or joy" (Storberg-Walker, 2021, pp. 96-98). This research orientation necessitates an inward looking into the researcher's life.

Ideally, Zen-informed spiritual research involves an emotional conundrum, a life dilemma, or suffering of the researcher – like a Zen koan (an enigmatic question or dilemma which cannot be solved by rationality) that the researcher has to work on. This is because awakenings are driven by sufferings accompanied by intense emotions. All delusions of reality are potential "dharma gates" that lead to one's enlightenment. It is through the delusions that one can access the unconditioned dharmas and gain the perfect knowledge. As a famous Buddhist saying goes, "煩惱即菩提" ("your angst is your liberation") (六祖大師法寶壇經 *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch,* 2002, Ch.2). One's angst or intense emotions, such as greed, hate, anger and fear, are

the keys to penetrating manas and reaching higher levels of consciousness. For it is the manas' relentless clinging to the ego that produces emotions and sufferings, and thereby karma and reincarnation. As the Verse of Atonement 懺悔偈 (*大方廣佛華嚴經 The Buddhāvataṃsaka Sutra*, 2021, Ch. 40) declares:

> All my past and harmful karma,
>
> 往昔所造諸惡業。
>
> born from beginningless greed, hate, and delusion,
>
> 皆由無始貪嗔痴。
>
> through body, speech, and mind,
>
> 從身語意之所生。
>
> I now fully avow.
>
> 一切我今皆懺悔。

Notably, positivist methods are not even adequate for comprehending the empirical levels of consciousness, let alone higher spiritual levels. Positivist methods tend to focus on the abstract, discursive representations of the five senses conceived by the mental consciousness rather than on the five senses themselves. With the positivist emphasis on rationality and emotional neutrality, the rich, nonverbal experiences of the five senses, and any intense or subtle emotions accompanying these experiences, are filtered, neglected, and oppressed. Therefore, positivist methods do not offer the researcher the opportunity to fully experience the reality, deconstruct the ego, and explore higher levels of consciousness. Eber Hampton (1995), an Indigenous researcher, eloquently critiques the positivist oppression of emotions:

> One thing I want to say about research is that there is a motive. I believe the reason is emotional because we feel. We feel because we are hungry, cold, afraid,

brave, loving, or hateful. We do what we do for reasons, emotional reasons. That is the engine that drives us. That is the gift of the Creator of Life. Life feels. [....] Feeling is connected to our intellect and we ignore, hide from, disguise, and suppress that feeling at our peril and at the peril of those around us. Emotionless, passionless, abstract, intellectual research is a goddam lie, it does not exist. It is a lie to ourselves and a lie to other people. Humans - feeling, living, breathing, thinking humans - do research. When we try to cut ourselves off at the neck and pretend an objectivity that does not exist in the human world, we become dangerous, to ourselves first, and then to the people around us. (Hampton, 1995, p. 52)

In contrast to the dehumanizing tendency of functionalism, the notions of Dukkha (suffering) and Nirvāna (relief of suffering) are central to Buddhist doctrines. The historical Buddha is reputed to have said: "I have taught one thing, and one thing only, Dukkha and the relief from Dukkha". Thus, the axiological focus of Zen-informed spiritual research is suffering and relief of suffering. Instead of avoiding emotions, Zen-informed research encourages researchers to dive into their emotional conundrums and address them head-on.

Furthermore, Zen-informed research enables the researcher to understand and resolve their life conundrum in relation to workplace or societal problems. Zen-informed research must transcend the personal-professional dichotomy. The personal is professional. "The personal is political" (Calás & Smircich, 2006, p.313). Personal life conundrums both reflect and impact workplace/societal dynamics. This is in line with the radical feminist stance that "there is no distinction between 'political' and 'personal' realms: every area of life is the sphere of 'sexual politics' and worthy of political analysis" (Calás & Smircich, 2006, p.295). Autoethnographers have also been advocating for research that "crosses personal and professional life spaces" in critique of "the depersonalizing tendencies" of social scientific research (Brodkey, 1996; Denshire, 2014, p.833). I would further argue that it is unrealistic to expect a researcher to offer insights on

organizational or societal problems without experiencing the problems by themselves. "Only the wounded healer is able to heal" (Nakao, 1998). If the researcher does not even understand their own life sufferings, how would they be able to understand or help with other people's sufferings?

Therefore, the purpose of Zen-informed research is to understand and resolve the researcher's life conundrum/dilemma and make possible psychological healing for all through spiritual interrogation. Successful Zen-informed research should be healing, transformative, and empowering for the researcher, but also for others impacted by the research (e.g., research participants, readers, and their communities). Buddhist teaching and practice aim to relieve sufferings for all through collective enlightenment. For example, Hui Neng (惠能 the sixth Chinese patriarch) teaches *The Bodhisattva's Vows* (四弘誓願) as follows:

> In my mind, beings are countless. I vow to free them all.
>
> 自心眾生無邊誓願度。
>
> In my mind, delusions are inexhaustible. I vow to put an end to them.
>
> 自心煩惱無邊誓願斷。
>
> In my Buddha-nature, dharma gates are infinite. I vow to enter them.
>
> 自性法門無量誓願學。
>
> In my Buddha-nature, the awakened way is unsurpassable. I vow to embody
> it.
>
> 自性佛道無上誓願成。

Hui Neng goes on to say:

> Yet it is not Hui Neng who frees all beings. 且不是惠能度。 […] [All
> delusions of all beings] must be put to an end by everyone themselves with their

own Buddha-nature. 各須自性自度。 (*六祖大師法寶壇經 The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch,* 2002, Ch.6)

Accordingly, Zen-informed research is action-oriented. The awakened way is to be embodied by the researcher. Spiritual transformation is to be manifested in behavioral changes. With its "problem-solving" focus, Zen-informed research is full of the spirit of pragmatism. In this sense, spiritual research is akin to action research, aiming for societal changes while starting from inner changes. Consequently, Zen-informed research is imbued with ethical values such as relief of suffering, liberation and empowerment of marginalized groups, improvement of future practice, and societal changes for social justice.

As mentioned previously, Zen-informed research is researcher-centered, autoethnographic, or intensely introspective. The researcher is holistically engaged in and lives their research. Researcher's personal history, context and motives are to be reflected upon and revealed in the research report. The researcher takes advantage of their personal history and identity to exert subjectivity and agency throughout their research. Researcher's reflections and judgements are not biases to be acknowledged, but insights to be celebrated.

In Zen-informed research, researcher's relationship with participants is equal and reciprocal. Instead of "resources to be mined", participants are treated as co-investigators. In a conversational interview, interviewer and interviewee can exchange roles. Researcher's input to the research, such as their autoethnographic narratives and exchanges with the interviewees, are treated as valid data as those from research participants. Authenticity, vulnerability, and empathy are essential values and skills of the researcher, who seeks to find emotional and spiritual interconnectedness with the participants.

4.5 Methodology of Zen Paradigm

The ontological, epistemological, and axiological assumptions of the Zen paradigm outlined above have direct implications for methodological approaches – the way in which one attempts to investigate and obtain knowledge about the world. Realist researchers utilize nomothetic approaches to analyze the relationships and regularities between the various elements of an external, objective reality, basing research upon systematic protocol in accordance with the canons of scientific rigor. Alternatively, nominalist researchers adopt ideographic approaches to understand the way in which individuals create and interpret the world, stressing the subjective experience of individuals in the creation of the world (Burrell & Morgan, 1979).

Zen paradigm, because of its multi-layered ontology and epistemology, adopts a hybrid methodology that encompasses a multitude of research approaches that correspond to multiple ways of knowing. Below, I use my 2019 field study at four American Zen centers to showcase the application of Zen methodologies in empirical research with respect to research design, data sampling, data collection, data analysis, theorizing, and report writing. Throughout the research process, I create and apply a number of Zen-informed methods as opposed to Yin's positivist methods, as shown in Table 4-4. It needs to be noted that the specific features of Zen methodologies delineated here are just *heuristics* or signposts rather than fixed formulas. Zen paradigm emphasizes pragmatic adaptation and improvisation of methods as necessitated by research context rather than adhering to any systematic research protocol. Like quantum research, the Zen paradigm is "fluid and tentative" (Storberg-Walker, 2021, p.98).

Table 4-4: *Zen vs. Functionalism: Methodology*

	Zen Paradigm	Functionalism
Research design	1. research purpose cannot be predetermined but to emerge from the research process; 2. research protocol as a starting point; researcher constantly improvising	1. research purpose predetermined; 2. detailed research protocol that needs to be strictly followed
Data sampling	karmic sampling in combination with purposive & snowball sampling	purposive, convenience, theoretical sampling, etc.
Data collection methods	1. first-person methods accompanied by second-person & third-person methods; 2. researcher's embodied practice; 3. emotionally charged; 4. vulnerable fieldwork; mutual disclosure; interchangeable roles	1. second-person & third-person methods, 2. researcher's intellectual work 3. emotion-free; 4. one-way disclosure by interviewees;
Data analysis techniques	1. involving all facets of the researcher; 2. can be done by the researcher only 3. writing field notes and reflexive personal journals as data analysis	1. intellectual work only; 2. can be done by research assistants; 3. thematic coding as data analysis
Theorizing	1. insights into the internal, intangible, unmeasurable spiritual process; 2. varieties of modeling through artistic expressions, e.g., storytelling, metaphors, poetry, images, symbols; 3. non-linear, bi-directional, cyclical relationships between fuzzy notions; 4. heuristic, everchanging	1. describing how spirituality impacts external, tangible, measurable workplace phenomena; 2. linear conceptual models 3. depicting causal relationships between clearly defined, dualistic concepts 4. definite, static
Report writing	1. personal narratives with rich details; emotionally charged; 2. artistic representations with cultural aesthetic appeals; 3. religious texts as reliable references 4. multi-lingual	1. concise writing in an objective tone; 2. scientific representations; 3. scientific literature as the only legitimate reference; 4. English only

Research design

The *actual* purpose of Zen-informed research cannot be predetermined but will emerge

through the research process. The research purpose is unforeseeable because spiritual research, by

definition, should be transformative to the researcher whereas transformative experiences cannot

be planned but naturally occur. Spiritual transformations, like "epiphanies" in autoethnographic research (Ellis et al., 2011), will eventually reveal the actual research focus, which may differ from the planned purpose. For instance, I consider my 2019 field study "karmic" research, meaning that I am destined for this work due to unknowable karmic reasons. I will further explain it in the next section.

Consequently, the research design may only serve as a starting point, and the researcher has to improvise constantly. The researcher relies on their intuitive knowing, embodied sensing as well as scholarly knowledge to guide their exploration. For instance, in the early stage of the field study I prepare a case study research protocol (research design and interview script) following Yin's (2018) case study methods. This protocol ends up being continuously modified as necessitated by the evolving circumstances of my field adventure. Eventually, the research topics are changed because of my awakening experiences in the field, and the interviews become free-flow conversations following broadly defined topics (Appendix A).

Data sampling methods

I use "purposive sampling" and "snowball sampling" at different stages of the field study. However, I realize in hindsight that there is something inexplicable in the sampling process. I name it "karmic sampling". Spiritual researchers need to rely on intuition and trust karma when facing tremendous uncertainty or making consequential decisions. This applies to not only data sampling but also all aspects of doing spiritual research.

The Buddhist notion of karma advises that there is no "coincidence" and that everything is meant to happen as a result of one's body, speech and mind accumulated in this and previous lives. The Zen notion of karmic sampling finds affinity with Quantum research and Jungian psychology in that "the unconscious" or "psyche" influences the research process and findings. Storberg-

Walker (2021, p.97) in her advice on "being the quantum researcher" cites Carl Jung's notion of synchronicity (meaningful coincidences without apparent causal connection) to pinpoint the epistemological problem related to "the indissoluble bond that exists between the object to be investigated and the human investigator". Quantum research concurs with Jung's assertion that the form of the material world (e.g., meaningful coincidences) depends on the unconscious state of the observer. Below I offer an autoethnographic narrative reflecting on how my unconscious state and emotional motives might have influenced the topic, purpose, sampling, and findings of the field study.

The initial research topic of my field study has nothing to do with feminist leadership or Zen-informed research paradigm. These are not revealed until in the midst of the third field trip, i.e., my visit to Zen Center of Los Angeles, where I have an awakening conversation with a Zen Buddhist practitioner, Annemarie Mal, who happens to take residence at ZCLA at the time. My initial research topic is about "wisdom-enhancing American Zen teaching practice". I use purposive sampling in the planning stage of the research, selecting major Zen centers representing either Soto Zen or Rinzai Zen, two American Zen lineages known for different pedagogy. At that stage, I have no idea of the sex scandals endemic in American Zen communities and am not clear about the "hidden agenda" lying in my sub-consciousness. Just three days before I depart for the field visit, however, I discover from online news reports and archives the sex scandals of the deceased founding abbot of New York Zendo and Dai Bosatsu Zendo. I am disturbed and regret that I have chosen the wrong places for my field research. Nonetheless, I decide to set off, and soon enough realize that I have chosen precisely the right place at the right time.

My "hidden agenda" turns out to be about my relationship with my father, an emotional conundrum that I never expect to be resolved before. I have been haunted by this emotional

conundrum for 40 years since childhood. But this long-brewing issue happens to loom large and explode while I embark on the field study. I am hence subconsciously hoping to obtain a "bonus point" from doing this research - If Zen, as I believe, helps heal the deepest wounds and resolve life conundrums, I should be able to find the answer to my own emotional conundrum through a sincere exploration of Zen. This is a hidden agenda because it is not a legitimate research purpose as per academic convention. Eventually, I find that my personal conundrum is not only relevant to but also at the center of the research. New York Zendo and Dai Bosatsu Zendo have been plagued for many years by their founding abbot's sex abuse, to which I can relate easily since I have long been distressed by my childhood and youth experiences of my father's domestic violence. When I visit Dai Bosatsu Zendo in June 2019, the late Jun Po Dennis Kelly Roshi is also visiting DBZ to lead a 7-day Sesshin (intensive meditation). Through an interview with Jun Po Roshi, I get to know that he has a similar childhood experience. That interview directly leads to the most critical awakening moment of my field visit, which assures me that research can be healing and empowering.

I cannot explain why I am so fortunate to have chosen the places to visit. Such miracles cannot be fully explained by "science". Numerous conditions, known and unknown, lead to the unexpected awakening moments in my field study. As a Zen researcher, all I can do is go with the flow and make ad-hoc decisions whenever prompted, just like receiving "signals from the universe" (Parameshwar, 2005, p.699). I call this intuitive sampling process "karmic sampling". And I believe that karmic sampling, like miracles, is not replicable. The sampling process depends on the history (this life and previous lives), subconsciousness, and motives of the researcher at the time of doing the research, as well as a myriad of invisible connections that she has with research participants (and their karmas).

Data collection techniques

At the lower levels of consciousness/being, Zen methodology acknowledges the value of positivist data collection methods, for these methods help capture the discursive, mental consciousness that abstracts and verbalizes the perceived reality. The researcher may draw from various second-person and third-person methods that are typically utilized in positivist research. For my 2019 field study, I draw on Yin's (2018) positivist case study methods because they are the "tool kit" that I learn to utilize during my first doctorate research. I implement several qualitative data collection techniques as planned, such as observation, audio-taped in-depth interviews (30 interviews, averaging 90 minutes each; see Appendix B for a list of interviewees), videotaped Zen classes and ceremonies (12 hours), hundreds of photographed physical artifacts, documentation, and archival records.

However, as the field process unfolds, these traditional methods have to be altered to incorporate the researcher's holistic experiences. The researcher may imbue the entire research process with her holistic self, essentially transforming some or all of the methods into first-person methods, such as participant observation (recorded by reflexive field notes), interactive/narrative interview, embodied data analysis, and writing with authorial voice.

My 2019 field study is an embodied, immersive experience. The awakening moments would not have happened if I did not wholeheartedly participate in Zen practices such as Zazen (sitting meditation 坐禪), kinhin (walking meditation 經行), chanting, formal dining, samu (volunteer labor service 作務), Zen classes, and various ceremonies.

For example, on the first day I arrive at Dai Bosatsu Zendo, I am given a traditional Japanese robe to wear, and then a 90-minute tutoring on jihatsu (formal dining etiquettes 持鉢). I

am overwhelmed because there is just too much to learn within 90 minutes! But thanks to that training and my dining practice over the following days in Dai Bosatsu Zendo, I am able to perform with ease when invited to a formal lunch upon arrival at Zenshuji months later. At Dai Bosatsu Zendo I always wear a robe, which feels comfortable and elegant on my Chinese body, to conduct research activities. Most interviews are carried out wherein my interviewees and I are both sitting on the floor mat, wearing robes. Oftentimes, we engage in a short sitting meditation before we start a dialogue.

For another example, at the Zen centers (NYZ, DBZ and ZCLA), I get up at 4:30 AM and attend the morning Zazen (sitting meditation 坐禪), kinhin (walking meditation 經行), chanting, and service between 5:00-7:00 AM every day, despite the exhaustion from long-distance travel and the intense workload of the field study. At Zenshuji, I attend the Rohatsu Sesshin (the last day of a week-long sesshin to celebrate the Buddha's enlightenment), sitting from 6:00 AM until 1:00 AM the following day. Participation in such intense Zen practices can be physically challenging for the researcher, and some of the practices I do may be deemed unnecessary from an academic point of view. For instance, At New York Zendo, I volunteer to clean the floor and all zabutons (cushions), and request to be struck by the kyōsaku (awakening stick 香板) just to feel it first-hand. Such practices are an integral part of the research process as they prepare the researcher's meditative mind to channel what wants to emerge through the research process. Zen practice is holistic and has to be experienced with body, mind, heart and soul.

The data collection process is emotionally charged rather than emotion-free. Awakening moments come with powerful emotions. Instead of remaining distant from interviewees, I establish emotional and spiritual interconnection with my interviewees. Because of shared beliefs in Zen Buddhism and, in some cases, similar experiences of emotional conundrums, my interviewees and

I are engaged in genuine and self-disclosing exchanges even though we have never met before. My tears pour down at various points of my research journey, during interviews, chanting, ordination ceremonies, Zazen, prostrating, praying, taking field notes, resting on the Greyhound bus, etc. Overall, my field study is an emotional, powerful, and self-purifying experience.

The roles of interviewer and interviewee are equal and interchangeable. In contrast to the one-way communication mode of traditional interviews where the interviewer only asks questions and the interviewee only answers questions, my interviews are two-way dialogues, or "interactional, narrative interviews" (Ellis, 1999). The interview scripts only provide a rough reference, and the interviewer follows her intuition to keep the natural flow of conversation. Some of my interviewees are as interested in me as I am interested in them. They would sometimes ask me questions, and I would share my thoughts and experiences with them. For an extreme example, in a 100-minute interview, the interviewee, founder and CEO of a non-profit organization dedicated to freeing women from sexual and domestic violence, shows a keen interest in me. Hence our conversation centers on my life story for about 60 minutes, which becomes a therapeutic process for me. For another example, a 60-minute interview becomes a test of my Buddhist wisdom as the interviewee, a beloved Zen priest offering Buddhist chaplaincy at prisons and hospices while teaching at a top American university, spends 40 minutes genuinely seeking consultancy from me about an emotional conundrum in her teaching practice. I am impressed by her vulnerability, and I appreciate being trusted and valued. Because the research is about myself as well as about others, my inputs are as important data as those provided by research participants.

Data analysis

The data analysis technique that I use for my 2019 field study is thematic analysis following the three-step open-coding process (i.e., coding data into first-order themes followed by further

aggregation into second-order & third-order themes) that is typical for qualitative studies in the MSR domain (Yu et al., 2023). The coding process is aided by MAXQDA (2020), a qualitative data analysis software package.

However, the coding process can only be done by me, instead of by any research assistant as is commonly seen in positivist research projects. This is because the data collected by me, through my intellect, body, emotion, and spirituality, can only be adequately analyzed by me with an equal level of engagement. For example, the recorded interviews, classes, ceremonies, and photos involve a large amount of Buddhist terminologies, symbols, and tacit knowledge originating in Japanese Zen or Chinese Chan traditions. The data also contain an abundance of contextual, emotional, and spiritual cues that only the person who collects them can possibly recall. As Storberg-Walker (2021) indicates, the data analysis process of spiritual research requires the researcher's holistic engagement, involving "all facets of the researcher - scholarly knowledge, intuitive knowing, embodied sensing, and beholding" (p.103). Such an embodied process of data analysis is time-consuming. It takes me three years following the 2019 field study to complete the verbatim transcribing and open-coding of the interview data. The open coding process results in 1518 coded segments that are aggregated into 12 third-order themes.

Ironically, as I begin to write Chapters 5 and 6 on research findings, it turns out that the majority of the coding work is useless for my writing, especially for my writing of Chapter 5. This is because Chapter 5 adopts a different way of writing, that is, autoethnographic storytelling, instead of conventional academic writing. I find my actual writing process drawing heavily on the raw field notes that I take at the Zen centers, as well as some reflexive personal journals that I write after the field visits. These personal narratives tell a much more coherent and engaging story than the thousands of coded segments or the 12 themes do. Therefore, I suggest that for

autoethnographic spiritual writing, field notes and reflexive personal journals may be more helpful than thematic coding, because the writing of field notes and personal journals in itself is already a synthetic process of data analysis and storytelling.

Theorizing

Positivist theorization in the MSR domain tends to outline how constructs of spirituality (e.g., "inner life", "mindfulness", "inner leadings", "leader gaze", "vision", "hope/faith", and "altruistic love") lead to tangible and measurable workplace phenomena. Such knowledge, however, is usually confined to the "peripherals" of spirituality, leaving the core of spirituality a "black box" unexplored. This is because positivist methods, by excluding other ways of knowing, can only tackle mental consciousness that functions to abstract, generalize, and verbalize the perceived reality. Positivist methods are inadequate for comprehending other layers of the "empirical" reality (i.e., the five senses and self-awareness), let alone higher spiritual levels of consciousness (i.e., the storehouse consciousness and nondual consciousness). Moreover, positivist researchers relying on second-person or third-person methods are unable to gain direct experience of the incommunicable process of spiritual transformation.

By contrast, Zen-informed theorization sheds light on the internal process of spirituality by revealing the functions of higher levels of consciousness. This is because Zen research focuses on deep human experiences, emotional conundrums, life dilemmas and sufferings, which are the driving forces for spiritual transformation. Zen-informed researchers taking a first-person perspective are able to comprehend the internal process of spiritual transformation by directly experiencing it through embodied practice and intense introspection.

Furthermore, positivist theorization typically takes the form of linear models depicting causal relationships between clearly defined, dualistic concepts (e.g., leader vs. follower,

antecedents vs. dependent variables, etc.) that are definite and static. In contrast, postmodern theorization can take a variety of forms, such as metaphors (Storberg-Walker, 2021), storytelling (Arendt, 1973), images (Corrigan, 2015), symbols (Kriger & Seng, 2005), poetry, and other artistic representations. Zen-informed conceptualization can be broad and fuzzy. In a Zen-informed theoretical framework, the relationship between concepts can be non-linear, bi-directional, cyclical, and heuristic.

Report writing

The writing stage of spiritual research is also an embodied process. Because of its autoethnographic nature, Zen-informed research report is permeated by personal narratives and reflections. I make space in writing to include details of my sensed reality, such as facial expressions, tones, laughs, cries, gestures, sound, smell, touch, and emotions, because they are the key elements that shape my memory. For example, in Chapter 1, I use 900 words to describe in detail a mystical experience revolving around a dream, to recognize its pivotal role in my spiritual transformation. As Ellis (1999) suggests, good autoethnographic narratives are emotionally charged and incorporate rich details.

Furthermore, to bring aesthetics and spirituality back to science, I incorporate artistic expressions such as metaphor, image, and poetry in my writing. For example, because of my aesthetic sense primarily shaped by traditional Chinese culture, I include in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 dozens of photos of cultural artifacts (e.g., calligraphy, painting, architecture, instruments, sculptures, costumes, etc.) that reflect Asian aesthetics. I cite religious texts as key references for my research in both English and Chinese languages. For Zen Buddhist terminologies I include both English translations and Sanskrit, or traditional Chinese, or Romanized Japanese, depending on the context.

Keeping the anonymity of participants is a common practice and generally required by the Research Ethics Clearance provided by the researcher's affiliated institutions. It is also an important ethical principle in autoethnographic research to protect the privacy of participants (Ellis et al., 2011). However, one of my interviewees, Shinge Roshi Sherry Chayat, abbot of New York Zendo and Dai Bosatsu Zendo, requests that I use her real name and the Zen centers' real names in my report because she wants to keep the story human and intimate, rather than abstract and distant. I then realize the researcher's responsibility to offer participants more options for ways of addressing them in the research report. Hence, I would always ask my interviewee's preference at the end of an interview. And most of them prefer to be addressed by dharma names or legal names rather than anonymized.

In North American Zen Buddhist communities, people generally go by their dharma names. Zen practitioners are given dharma names by their Zen teachers when they receive Jukai (taking precepts 受戒) from the teachers. The dharma names usually express the individual's personal qualities and aspirations. They are written in Romanized Japanese which correspond to Chinese characters. During my field study I have always been keen on finding out the Chinese characters that correspond to people's Japanese dharma names because of my Chinese cultural appetite. I enjoy this cultural translation process and have almost become obsessed with it, because these Chinese names are always beautiful and poetic, carrying profound meanings and telling me something about the individuals. I feel getting closer to my interviewees once I know the Chinese characters of their dharma names, such as Mukei – 霧溪 ("foggy stream"), Kimpu – 金風 ("golden wind"), Gangyo – 願行("vow practice"), Jun Po – 淳法 ("profound dharma"), Shinge – 心華 ("heart-mind flowering"), Senshin – 純心 ("pure heart-mind"), and Muso – 無束 ("no limit"), just to name a few.

4.6 Evaluation Criteria of Zen-informed Spiritual Research

There have been ongoing debates over the issue of rigor criteria in qualitative inquiry, which has led to three distinct positions (Hope & Waterman, 2003). One position is to accept positivist concepts or to propose analogues of positivist criteria such as reliability and construct validity in case study research (e.g., Yin, 2018). Another view holds that establishing standards for qualitative research is a fruitless endeavor and hence dismisses the notion of rigor criteria in its entirety (e.g., Newman, 1999). A third stance recognizes the necessity for evaluation criteria to ensure the quality of research yet argues for different criteria based on alternative assumptions (e.g., Le Roux, 2017).

I take the third stance, that is, to establish separate criteria that are distinct from the positivist concepts. Positivist rigor criteria are based on the realist assumption that there exists an objective reality independent of human consciousness. They conceal the value-laden nature of research, separate science from arts and religion, and reject alternative ways of knowing. Schwandt (1996) critiques that logical positivism leads to "a search for certainty that has its origin in Cartesian dualism, wherein knowledge is seen as separate from belief". Carlos Cordero (1995), an Indigenous researcher, comments that within the Western knowledge system there is:

> …a separation of those areas called science from those called art and religion. The [Indigenous] knowledge base, on the other hand, integrates those areas of knowledge so that science is both religious and aesthetic. […] For Indigenous people, knowledge is also approached through the senses and the intuition. (Cordero, 1995, p.30)

Non-positivist qualitative researchers, especially those in the areas of autoethnography, Indigenous research, and action research, have proposed a number of alternative evaluation criteria (e.g., Bochner, 2000; Le Roux, 2017; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Ragan, 2000; Richardson, 2000;

Tracy, 2010; Wilson, 2008). Based on their contributions as well as on my research experiences, I propose six evaluation criteria for spiritual research. Furthermore, I provide applicable methodological strategies for each criterion. A summary of the evaluation criteria and methodological strategies of the Zen paradigm is presented in Table 4-5.

Table 4-5: *Zen paradigm: Evaluation criteria and methodological strategies*

Functionalist criteria	Zen criteria	Zen methodological strategies
Realist ontology & positivist epistemology	Spiritual ontology & epistemology	1. citing spiritual/religious scriptures & texts as knowledge base; 2. spiritual practices essential to researcher preparation
Reliability / replicability	Authenticity	1. self-reflection on research motives; 2. vulnerable fieldwork; 3. emotional recall;
Validity & generalizability	Verisimilitude / resonance	1. writing as storytelling; 2.embodied writing; poetic writing; artistic expression; 3. vertical writing
Researcher's objectivity	Researcher's agency	1. positioning the author for the reader; 2. demonstrating researcher's agency; 3. field notes & researcher's inputs as important data
Improving organizational outcomes	Pragmatism and morality	1. personal motives explicit and ethical; 2. reciprocity as a principle in interaction with participants; 3. healing and empowering; enabling researcher to tackle life conundrums
Contribution to dualistic knowledge	Contribution to nondual knowledge	1. symbolizing spiritual/religious wisdom 2. nondual, non-linear, bi-directional frameworks

Specifically, the six evaluation criteria for spiritual research include:

1) spiritual ontological and epistemological assumptions that transcend Newtonian science;

2) authenticity as opposed to reliability or replicability;

125

3) verisimilitude or resonance as opposed to validity and generalizability;

4) researcher's agency;

5) pragmatism and morality: healing, empowering, and promoting social justice;

6) contribution to nondual knowledge: scientific knowledge being extended or challenged by spiritual wisdom.

Spiritual ontology & epistemology

The first evaluation criterion for spiritual research is whether the researcher makes explicit ontological and epistemological assumptions drawn from spiritual traditions or post-Newtonian sciences that transcend scientific realism. Spiritual researchers value spiritual knowledge the same as, if not more than, they value scientific knowledge. A practical implication of this criterion is that spiritual/religious scriptures and texts are cited as important knowledge base. This also necessitates the researcher's deep learning of, as well as a firm conviction in, their spiritual/religious tradition. Hence, spiritual learning and practice are part of the "professional development" of a researcher.

Authenticity

The second evaluation criterion for spiritual research is authenticity (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Bochner, 2000; Richardson, 2000; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005; Tracy, 2010; Le Roux, 2017), as opposed to the positivist notion of reliability. Based on the realist "truth" assumption and the logic of "evidence-based" methodology, experimental methodology is placed at the top of the hierarchy of knowledge because of its espoused replicability. Researchers rooted in nominalist traditions (e.g., interpretivism, radical humanism, postmodernism, etc.), however, acknowledge multiple subjective realities rather than committing to a single objective truth. They assert that any

reality is an interpretive one (Hope & Waterman, 2003), and that researchers' role is to select, represent and interpret individual experiences to inform meanings and shared understandings (Haynes, 2011). Since there exist "infinite possibilities" (Cunliffe, 2002, p.130) instead of a definite reality, the realist notions of reliability, replicability, validity, and generalizability are all meaningless to nominalist researchers. Ellis (1999, p.674) asserts that "there is no such thing as orthodox reliability in autoethnographic research", because the ontological past is unattainable, memory is fallible, and different people who have experienced the same event have different perceptions and tell different stories about what happened (Ellis *et al.*, 2011).

I want to add that there is no such thing as replicability in spiritual research. This is because transformative experiences like "epiphanies" (in autoethnographic terms) or "awakening moments" (in spiritual terms) are, by definition, non-replicable. Awakenings are like miracles - and miracles are not replicable.

Therefore, for spiritual research, the question of reliability refers to the researcher/narrator's authenticity, that is, whether the narrator believes that their narrative actually describes what happened to them (Ellis *et al.*, 2011). The research process and reporting should be permeated by authenticity. In fact, authenticity is essential to spiritual research. Ellis (2007) suggests that good autoethnographers conduct research in the way they conduct themselves in their personal lives, with the key being honesty towards self and the audience of their research. I further argue that there would be no spiritual research without authenticity. Without authenticity towards self and other participants, the researcher cannot build a heartfelt connection with the participants, and spiritual transformation cannot happen. Moreover, without authenticity towards the audience, the research would not be impactful.

To ensure authenticity, a researcher can do at least three things at different stages of the research process:

1) Self-reflection on research motives: Is there any "hidden agenda" for the research that is unreported or that you are unconscious of? As Indigenous researchers point out, personal emotional motives of research are valid and legitimate (e.g., Hampton, 1995; Wilson, 2008). Feminist researchers also recognize that research may be "triggered by a personal need" (e.g., Helin, 2020, p.3). I further argue that spiritual researchers should be reflexive enough to understand their personal emotional motives, and also brave enough to make their motives transparent in their research. This is also required by the ethical obligation of spiritual research regarding research purpose and research impact.

2) Vulnerable fieldwork: The researcher opens their heart to the fieldwork (i.e., the data collection process) and fully engages in the field activities (e.g., participating and volunteering in spiritual practices, ceremonies, meetings, and classes). Practice self-disclosure if the researcher expects the same thing from the research participants.

3) Emotional recall: When writing the report, imagine being back in the scene emotionally and physically. If one can revisit the scene emotionally, they remember the details.

Verisimilitude (Resonance)

The third evaluation criterion for spiritual research is verisimilitude or resonance (Ellis, 1999; Richardson, 2000; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005; Tracy, 2010; Le Roux, 2017), as opposed to the positivist criteria of validity and generalizability. The positivist notion of validity is a measure of the degree to which an account corresponds to the objective reality it claims to represent (Hammersley, 1992). By contrast, evocative autoethnographers argue that "[w]hat matters is the

way in which the story enables the reader to enter the subjective world of the storyteller" instead of whether this "world" matches "reality" (Plummer, 2001, p.401). In terms of a story's generalizability, Ellis and her colleagues (2011) argue that it is constantly being tested by readers as they determine whether a story speaks to them about their experience and informs them about unfamiliar people and lives.

Ellis and her colleagues (2011) define "verisimilitude" as the ability of a text to "evoke in readers a feeling that the experience described is lifelike, believable, and possible, a feeling that what has been represented could be true" (p.10). Le Roux (2017) describes "resonance" as the audience being "able to enter into, engage with, experience or connect with the writer's story on an intellectual and emotional level", "a sense of commonality between the researcher and the audience", and "an intertwining of lives" (p.204).

Obviously, the first criterion, authenticity, is a prerequisite to verisimilitude /resonance, just like reliability being necessary to validity/generalizability in positivist logic. Hence, a researcher may follow the three "authenticity guidelines" mentioned above to achieve verisimilitude/resonance. In addition, the researcher may pay attention to the "aesthetic merit" (Richardson, 2000; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005; Ragan, 2000; Bochner, 2000) of their writing to appeal to the readers. This may take various forms, including but not limited to the following:

1) Structure the report in a way that takes the readers on the research journey with the author (Ellis, 1999). Writing is storytelling, inviting readers to enter the storyteller's subjective world and memory.

2) Embodied, poetic writing: Explore and incorporate artistic expressions and representations (e.g., metaphor, image, poetry, etc.) that invoke multiple ways of knowing (sensing, feeling, intuiting, dreaming, vision, etc.). For example, Yoo (2019) describes embodied writing as

"[s]tarting from within the flow of inhaling and exhaling, like the life-giving act that both breath and writing can be'" (p.1). Helin (2020) recommends capturing "the flash moment between being awake and at sleep" to "harvest what your night dreams have offered you" (p.7). Storberg-Walker (2021, p.98) suggests "metaphorical writing" by writing research findings or claims in metaphors to avoid freezing or reifying what is really always a fluid dynamic.

3) "Vertical writing" (Helin, 2020, p.1): Writing detailed stories built around a non-linear temporality, or vertical temporality, which brings depth to every instant imposing itself all in one blow, with no past or future. Vertical writing feels like being "written in one breath" (Helin, 2020, p.7) as it tells the stories all in one fragile moment. Oftentimes, such writing comes from a sense of urgency to write down the raw feelings, and the text is born out of the urge to say exactly these things and using exactly the language used. Such writing is generated from vulnerability and activism. That is why Helin (2020, p.14) asserts that "unlike horizontal writing that can be planned by scheduling, vertical writing cannot be forced into existence".

Researcher's agency

The fourth evaluation criterion for spiritual research is researcher's agency (Richardson, 2000; Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005; Le Roux, 2017; Storberg-Walker, 2021). Instead of trying to recognize or minimize researcher's "bias" premised on the positivist understanding of "reflexivity", a spiritual researcher needs to reflect on how their socio-historical location and their emotional and spiritual maturity enable them to gain insights that others may not be able to. Indeed, researcher's emotional and spiritual maturity is critical to the success of spiritual research. Méndez (2013, p.280) suggests evaluating autoethnographic research by seeking evidence of researchers who "live" their research and are fully present in the research process. The same rule applies to spiritual research.

There are at least three techniques to enhance researcher's agency:

1) Position the author for the reader (Ellis, 1999). This may take the form of personal narratives or stories revealing the author's socio-cultural context, highlighting how their personal history offers them a unique perspective. Reflecting on and disclosing researcher's personal/emotional motives for the research also help accentuate the researcher's influence.

2) Explicate how the researcher's subjectivity influences the research process and research results. Include in writing the researcher's reflexive narratives and holistic experiences throughout the research process.

3) The researcher's field notes, personal journals, and inputs to the interviews are deemed as important data of the research.

Pragmatism & morality

The fifth evaluation criterion for spiritual research is pragmatism and morality (Bochner, 2000; Le Roux, 2017; Ragan, 2000; Tracy, 2010; Weber-Pillwax, 2009; Wilson, 2008). This theme relates to the idea that research may be seen as valid from an axiological perspective and that judgement of quality is essentially a moral and practical issue (e.g., Smith & Deemer, 2000; Le Roux, 2017). For example, Wilson (2008) critiques that positivist rigor criteria conceal the value-laden nature of research methodology, assuming a privileged (often white, male) standpoint of axiology. He argues that Indigenous researchers have a "vested interest in the integrity of the methodology (respectful) and the usefulness of the results if they are to be of any use in the Indigenous community (reciprocity)" (p.77). Hope and Waterman (2003, p.126) suggest that action research may be seen to be valid due to its "inherent worth of setting out to improve the situation or lives of people". Autoethnographers also view research as socially just acts and suggest

that appraisal of autoethnographic research needs to take into account the goal of the research, which is to produce accessible texts that change the world for the better (Ellis, 1999).

I suggest that the legitimacy of spiritual research should be based on the pragmatic and moral appeal of its research purpose. This is particularly endorsed by Zen Buddhism, which is in itself a philosophy of pragmatism and morality. Zen research must offer a way to improve the lives of the researcher and others, producing knowledge that contributes to people's capacities to solve problems.

Based on my research experience, I would further argue that successful Zen-informed spiritual research is both healing and empowering, hence promoting social justice. Like autoethnographic research, which may have "therapeutic value" (Ellis, 1999, p.677), Zen research may heal trauma. In fact, each component of the process of doing Zen research – participating, self-reflecting, interacting with research participants, writing research report, and presenting the report – can be healing and empowering. Zen research solves emotional conundrums, and thus liberates and empowers the researcher. For marginalized groups, it is also empowering to have their silenced voices heard by the act of writing and presenting the research report.

I suggest the following guidelines for Zen-informed spiritual researchers:

1) Ensure that researcher's personal or emotional motives of doing research are ethical in the sense of solving life dilemmas, emotional conundrums, or relational problems.

2) Reciprocity is a principle in spiritual research, just as it is for autoethnographic research, action research, and Indigenous research (Ellis, 1999; Hope & Waterman, 2003; Wilson, 2008). Reciprocity lies in the mutual trust and disclosure between researcher and research participants, as

well as in the author's expectation on the audience. A spiritual researcher ought to be a "vulnerable observer" who not only empathizes with, but also co-creates knowledge with, research participants.

3) Successful spiritual research is healing and empowering for the researcher and potentially for others impacted by the research. The researcher should be able to take actions to better deal with life conundrums as a result of the research.

Contribution to nondual knowledge

The sixth evaluation criterion for spiritual research is contribution to nondual knowledge. The theoretical value of spiritual research depends on the extent to which scientific dualistic knowledge is extended or challenged by spiritual nondual knowledge. I suggest that conceptual frameworks established by spiritual research should be based on spiritual notions and principles such as nondual logic instead of scientific dualism. Spiritual theoretical frameworks may symbolize non-linear, bi-directional, cyclical relationships of spiritual concepts. Theoretical contributions of spiritual research are characterized by novel ways of symbolizing spiritual knowledge.

Chapter 5 The Wounded Healer

5.1 Before Departure: The Perplexing Moment

The original purpose of the research is to examine the "wisdom-enhancing teaching practice at American Zen centers". Using purposive sampling, I select major Zen centers representing either Soto Zen or Rinzai Zen, the two major American Zen lineages, for my field studies. The first two Zen centers I visit are the New York Zendo (NYZ) and the Dai Bosatsu Zendo (DBZ), both belonging to the Zen Studies Society (ZSS), one of the oldest and largest American Rinzai Zen communities. While NYZ is located in Manhattan as the "city temple" of ZSS, DBZ is built in the Catskill Mountains Preserve as its "mountain monastery". Both NYZ and DBZ are founded by a Japanese Zen priest, Eido Shimano Roshi (嶋野榮道禪師,1932-2018).

On May 18, 2019, two weeks before my departure for New York, I make a phone call to my father in China because I am notified that he is in hospital. Below is the phone conversation as recorded in my personal journal.

> Father: "Why did you not contact me for two years?!"
>
> Tianyuan: "We need to talk, but I do not know how to start. I do not know how to tell you my true feelings. [stop for a few seconds] And, I am so guilty for not being able to look after my mom in her late years."
>
> Father: "Why would you feel guilty? It is my responsibility to look after her."
>
> I can't believe my ears to hear such a hypocritical, shameless response. I try my best to control myself: "Then did you look after her at all?" I ask in a cold voice.
>
> Father: "How can I look after her since we are divorced?"

I lose control upon hearing that. I burst into a shout at my father, for the first time in my life, with all my strength: "I HATE YOU!"

I begin yelling, for about 20 minutes. My voice is so loud that my son tells me afterwards that it is "almost knocking the roof off". I have to exert all my strength to speak to my father because that is the only way to overcome my fear of him and tell him my true feelings. I tell him: "I FEAR YOU! I FEAR YOU since CHILDHOOD!"

"Why do you fear me?" My father asks in a sarcastic tone.

"Because you BEAT me, you BEAT me almost to DEATH!" At this point, I am so choked up that I can't speak. I hang up the phone and begin to cry. (personal journal, May 18, 2019)

Six months later, I write down my memories about my father at the invitation by Egyoku Roshi (惠玉禪師), former Abbot of the Zen Centre of Los Angeles. Egyoku Roshi has been collecting "raw stories" of life dilemmas experienced by real people for her "householder koan" teaching cases. She listens to my story during our interview and considers it a typical householder koan:

I think your story is so significant because you have this really important breakthrough from a really traumatic situation, and then it's continuing to unfold. Now, it'd be interesting to see how it continues to unfold in you. Um, not everybody can go to those kinds of places with that kind of pain. So, it's something that's very interesting to me in terms of our householder koans (Interview with Egyoku Roshi, November 8, 2019).

When I send her my "raw story" as below, I add a note: "I'm afraid it is a bit too long, but I just write down whatever I feel important. Everything in the story is to the best of my memory." (T. Yu, personal communication, November 20, 2019).

I am born in northeastern China in 1977. I fear my father since I have a memory. I remember how I, a horrified four-year-old girl, is scrambling for all the

135

scissors and knives in my home and hiding them from my parents, who are fighting each other with fists, for fear that they would reach those weapons.

My childhood is nurtured almost entirely by my loving mother. I never get to feel any intimacy with my father. My father would easily lose his temper and beat me badly for my "wrongdoings", such as inviting a little girl from my neighbour to play with me at home or trying to sneak out of home to play with other kids. I always fear my father because I know he would often get mad and beat me for no reason.

On the other hand, my father is good at Chinese literature, calligraphy, and painting. At the age of five, I get trained by my father in these areas and later become proficient as well.

When I am ten, my mother is heavily injured in a traffic accident and sent to a rehabilitation center in another province, where my maternal grandfather takes care of her. During those two years, I live with my father who physically abuses me even more frequently and severely, as my mother can no longer protect me. I remember my father throwing many books, one by one, at my face, because I fail to keep them neat and tidy. Being struck by those heavy books on my head, I do not even dare to run away but keep crying and begging. On another occasion, my father makes me stay up all night to finish a piece of Chinese painting. At midnight, he becomes agitated and fetches a knife from the kitchen, threatening to kill me unless I can finish the painting by dawn. Today, I can still remember the feeling of utter exhaustion, horror, and hopelessness in me, a sleep-deprived 10-year-old girl.

Two years later, my grandpa brings my mother back home, as her worker's compensation insurance has run out. She gets hemiparalysis and recurring epilepsy as a result of the injury. My father is disappointed to find that she is no longer capable of doing housework but is permanently handicapped. Then my father refuses to provide any caring or financial support to my mother and just leaves all these responsibilities to my grandpa. My grandpa begins to look after both my mother and me, physically and financially.

In the following three years, my life is filled with escalating domestic violence. My father threatens to kill me with knives multiple times because I become increasingly non-obedient to him. Each time, I end up being saved by my neighbours, who would break in upon hearing my father's roars and my screams. I also remember how I cry for an hour on my way from home to school because my father refuses to pay for my tuition and says to me: "Why do you want money? Don't you know that you can wear rags to go to school and still be a top student!"

At the age of 15, I write a letter to the local court on behalf of my mother to apply for a divorce. In the letter, I report my father's abuse of my mother and me. My parents finally get divorced in 1993. But my mother, my grandpa and I still have to live in the same apartment with my father due to restricted housing arrangements at the time in China.

What I write in the letter to the court apparently infuriates my father. One day in winter 1994 he finds an excuse to vent on me. He slaps me hard on my face, then beats my head hard with a fluorescent tube. I use my left hand to block the fluorescent tube slamming on me, and the tube breaks into numerous tiny pieces and cuts off the vessels and nerves deep under the skin of my left hand. Blood splashes out onto myself, onto the wall, onto the floor, everywhere. My father then picks up a mop and continues beating my head, almost to my death. My consciousness and vision get very blurred, except seeing my blood all over the place. My life is only saved by my neighbours, who finally break in. My left hand is eventually saved after multiple surgeries and months of recovery.

If it were in modern Western society my father would probably have been put in jail. But due to the patriarchal culture in China, there is not even any public blame for what he does to me. The only thing I can do at the time is to avoid my father as much as possible. Fortunately, in 1995, my mother, my grandpa and I can finally move away from him. In 1996, I leave my home city for my undergraduate study, followed by my graduate study.

I am married in 2000 and begin to teach at a university in South China in 2003. In my 30s, I start to enjoy a smoother life. I think I may forgive my father. After all, he is my father and has fostered my strength in Chinese literature and arts.

I begin to contact and visit my father regularly. I return to my old role as an obedient daughter and he, a domineering father, as always. I am still in dreadful fear of him, feeling deeply insecure when I have to stay alone with him.

My mother is looked after by my grandpa until 2007 when they both move to live with my cousin in another city. My cousin's family takes care of them until my grandpa passes away in 2016 and my mother in 2018. Meanwhile, in 2013, I leave China and immigrate to Canada with my family.

In July 2017, during a long conversation with a friend, I come to realize how deeply I have been hurt by my father in a way that I have never realized. I become aware that when I am raging against my son, the rage is inherited from my father. I become aware that any problems in my intimate relationship can be traced to my deeply entrenched insecurity as a result of my father's abuse. My friend happens to have a very caring, supportive father. She is astonished to hear about my father and leaves me with the comment: "I do not understand how a father can become the biggest threat to his daughter instead of being her strongest protector."

I am suddenly overwhelmed by a profound anger towards my father. This anger only gets deepened after my mother's death in 2018. She passes away in great pain and never forgives my father. I feel deeply guilty for my mother as I am not able to look after her even though I have tried my best to. I attribute these pains and guilt to my father. My hatred gets so intense that I would be jealous when hearing people express how they appreciate their loving, dedicated fathers.

I stop contacting my father in July 2017. I try hard to forget him because almost everything I recall about him is abusive and traumatic. For a period of time, I almost feel like being fatherless. However, there are moments, especially when I am teaching my son the Chinese language, that my childhood memory of my father teaching me Chinese literature would come across my mind. Those are the perplexing moments. I realize I wouldn't have been born into this world if it were not for my father. Even my poetic Chinese name is given by him. He *is* in me. How can I *forget* him? And how can I *forgive* him? My father becomes my koan, a life dilemma, and an emotional conundrum. I have been trying to avoid my father and hide my true feelings from him since 1994. Can I avoid and hide forever? I know

he is a time bomb buried in the hustle and bustle of my life that would sooner or later explode. (T. Yu, personal communication, November 20, 2019)

May 18, 2019 is the time. I explode on the phone call.

After the phone call, I continue to prepare for my upcoming field study. On May 30th, just three days before I depart for NYZ and DBZ, I come across an article published in *The New York Times* (Oppenheimer, 2010) reporting the sex scandals of Eido Shimano Roshi. I also discover *The Shimano Archive* (https://shimanoarchive.com/), an online archive of Eido Roshi's sexual misconduct over 40 years. Eido Roshi is forced to resign from his abbotship in 2010 after revelations of a series of sexual relationships with and alleged sexual harassment of female students. He sends a letter of apology to the ZSS community in 2010 and passes away in 2018. Shinge Roko Sherry Chayat Roshi (心華禪師), a student of Eido Roshi, is installed as the second Abbot of ZSS in 2011.

I am shocked and somewhat disillusioned with my fantasy of "Zen masters". How can an "enlightened" being engage in such egregious behaviours? If Eido Roshi is not an "enlightened" human being, how can I trust that his dharma heir, Shinge Roshi, is "enlightened"? I probably have chosen the wrong place for my field study! The only thing that is somewhat reassuring to me is that Shinge Roshi is a female – Is that a sign of some changes occurring in this Zen community? In any case, it is too late to change the destination of my field study after a six-month negotiation to gain access to "the field", not to mention all the flights and lodgings that have already been booked. My intuition tells me that I have no choice but to start the journey, which is destined to unfold in an unexpected way.

While I keep reading the Shimano Archive before my departure, I find the term "antisocial personality disorder" (aka. sociopathy) in an open letter by Joan Halifax Roshi, the founding Abbot

of Upaya Zen Center. It strikes me that my father may be a person with sociopathy like Eido Shimano Roshi because he falls in most of the typical symptoms of sociopathy. Below is an excerpt from the open letter:

> Perhaps it is too difficult for Eido Shimano's students and the Board of his organization to look with clear eyes at the depth of his delusion. Forgive my presumption but let me share a little psychology with you. Accordingly, the Antisocial personality disorder is defined by the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual as "…a pervasive pattern of disregard for, and violation of, the rights of others that begins in childhood or early adolescence and continues into adulthood. Characteristics of people with antisocial personality disorder may include: persistent lying or stealing; apparent lack of remorse or empathy for others; poor behavioral controls - expressions of irritability, annoyance, impatience, threats, aggression, and verbal abuse; inadequate control of anger and temper; tendency to violate the boundaries and rights of others; aggressive, often violent behavior; prone to getting involved in fights; poor or abusive relationships […] I think this description must be somewhat familiar to many of you…" (Halifax, 2011, January 2)

I begin to realize the similarities between my father and Shimano, along with my unconscious motives for the field study.

On June 3, 2019, I depart for New York. The next day at 8 AM, I find myself standing in front of New York Zendo Shobo-ji 金剛寺, located in Manhattan's Upper East Side.

5.2 The First Days: Storytelling of the Shimano Scandal

I ring the doorbell and hear the steps of someone dashing down the stairs. Very soon, a Caucasian monk opens the door and greets me graciously – it is Giun (宜雲), the head monastic of NYZ. I later notice that Giun would always run as fast as he can when answering the door – showing humbleness and courtesy to people. Giun gives me a tour of the three-level structure of

NYZ. I see Eido Roshi's framed photo being placed in the Founders' Hall with other important figures in ZSS history (Figure 5-1). This is certainly not helpful in relieving my suspicion about the organization's attitudes toward the Shimano scandal. Yet, I do not dare to touch upon this sensitive topic at this moment yet. On that morning, I sit down with Giun in the Dharma Hall and have a pleasant interview centered on the topic of Zen pedagogy as planned.

Figure 5-1: *The Founders' Hall of New York Zendo*

Note. Eido Shimano's photo (first from the right) placed on the table. Photo taken at New York Zendo on June 5, 2019.

On the afternoon of the day, I am browsing the Zendo's books, magazines, and pamphlets placed on a tea table for visitors. A beautifully printed book entitled *Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-Ji 40th Anniversary* catches my eye (Figure 5-2).

Figure 5-2: *Pamphlets and Books for Visitors of New York Zendo*

Note. The Dai Bosatsu Zendo 40th Anniversary Book (front row, first from the left) placed on a tea table in the Dharma Hall. Photo taken at New York Zendo on June 5, 2019.

This anniversary book records all historic moments of DBZ through narratives and illustrations, including multiple images of Eido Roshi, which is not surprising. What surprises me, however, is the following narrative under the title "Heartache and Transformation":

> On June 21, 2010, an endemic culture of secrecy surrounding decades of sexual misconduct is broken when a student discloses an affair with Eido Roshi. Many practitioners leave both temples. An article about this appears in The New York Times. Meanwhile, an Internet archive has been posted documenting Eido Roshi's abuses of power and the many unsuccessful ZSS Board attempts to call a halt to such behavior. The current Board asks Eido Shimano and Aiho Yasuko Shimano [i.e., Eido Shimano's wife] to step down from their positions on the Board and engages the Faith Trust Institute to help guide the Society through this traumatic time of broken trust.

> In her book *Turning The Wheel: American Women Creating The New Buddhism*, Sandy Boucher notes, "In most situations in which the teacher is having sexual relations with students, it is not the actions themselves that prove destructive, but the secrecy in which they are pursued. Students believe in their teacher and model themselves after him. A deep trust is established. When that is broken, much psychological harm is done. Also, the senior students usually know about the affairs,

keep the secret, and thus the hypocrisy spreads. Certainly the teacher's participation in secret affairs affects his ability to give guidance to his students, especially in the area of relationships."

"Often the sexual liaisons are only part of a larger picture in which a hierarchical structure results in some students feeling taken advantage of, as their unpaid labor built the Zen center and their loyalty allowed their Zen master to enlarge his domain of influence and function in a dictatorial manner."

On January 1, 2011, Shinge Roshi is installed as the second Abbot of the Zen Studies Society. She and members of the Board are faced with splintering factions in the Sangha [i.e., Buddhist community] and a darkly tarnished reputation. They work at revitalizing an organization in disarray and attempt to cultivate a positive atmosphere based upon the Buddhist precepts and democratic principles while upholding strong Rinzai Zen practice.

A limited access policy for Eido Roshi is put into effect, based on ethical, legal, and insurance requirements. It precludes his teaching on ZSS premises. An unfunded retirement policy that had been drawn up years earlier becomes a major issue, and the Zen Studies Society is sued by the Shimanos for nonpayment. With the help of non-binding arbitration, eventually the lawsuit is dropped and a mutually agreed-upon financial settlement is put into place.

During the next few years, consultants from the professional organization An Olive Branch conduct workshops on board "best practices" and mission, values, and vision, as well as a facilitated Sangha weekend retreat during which more than 50 people speak honestly about their deep pain, anger, and disillusionment, and make recommendations for the future. New by-laws are adopted. Atonement ceremonies are held at the conclusion of each Anniversary Sesshin, along with Council gatherings to foster openness in the process of healing. Shinge Roshi and her students vow to let the air in, to "take off the wrappers," as Nyogen Senzaki put it.

[…]

In her first "From the Abbot" article, published in the Spring 2011 newsletter, she [i.e., Shinge Roshi] writes, "There are changes that I envision. I want to cultivate an atmosphere that is harmonious, warm, open, and respectful of everyone. Since my way as a teacher is more relational than hierarchical, I look forward to sharing creative ideas with residents and visitors alike. I welcome past and current students with deep concern for continuing our heritage and love of the Dharma to take part in shaping the future of Dai Bosatsu Zendo." (Zen Studies Society, 2016, pp.32-34)

I later find that the DBZ anniversary book is not only available in print to all visitors but also downloadable from the ZSS official website (https://zenstudies.org/about/history). I am impressed by this unique organizational storytelling, which exhibits an alternative way of dealing with controversial figures and traumatic experiences in the organization's history. Instead of either glorifying or demonizing their founding Abbot, ZSS members both honor Eido Roshi's contribution and denounce his perpetration.

On the one hand, ZSS makes sure that Eido Roshi's name and images are kept everywhere in their physical and cyber space. For instance, Eido Roshi's name appears in the ZSS *Daily Sutras*[3] on the "Rinzai Dharma Lineage"[4] name list. The ZSS members chant this name list in their daily service, hence chanting Eido Roshi's name every day. On the other hand, ZSS members do not try to hide or forget the sex scandal in order to uphold Eido Roshi's reputation. On the contrary, they disclose the scandal to the public, reflect on it in all seriousness, and write it down in history. Moreover, the scandal seems to be driving ongoing cultural changes - a departure from the hierarchical culture of the Shimano era toward building an open and horizontal culture. The

---

[3] A sutra book is a handbook being used in everyday chanting service in a Zen center, containing sutra, dharani (mystical verses) and other text frequently chanted in Zen ceremonies.

[4] The Rinzai Dharma Lineage is a line of transmission of the Rinzai Zen teaching that lists all the venerable Zen masters/patriarchs and is traced back to the Shakyamuni Buddha himself.

organizational transparency and authenticity as manifested in their official statement give me enough confidence to confront my interviewees with the scandal. I decide to invite Giun for an ad hoc interview.

The following morning Giun and I sit down again in the Dharma Hall. I get straight to the point and share my concerns – Am I choosing the wrong place for my field study? What happened in the scandalous event? And what are ZSS's attitudes? Giun does not appear to be the slightest surprised or embarrassed by my questions. He sits upright in his chair, brushing his cat "Diane" in a gentle caress, gazing into the distance, and begins to recollect the past. Considering the sensitivity of the topics, I do not record this 60-minute interview. Instead, I record a 30-minute voice note of myself, reflecting on this interview right after. The narrative below is based on my voice note.

It turns out that Giun is one of the few residents of DBZ who personally witness the sex scandal being revealed by a female student of Eido Roshi on a summer evening nine years ago. Three days later, Giun leaves DBZ out of despair and disillusion. Soon enough, ZSS members are leaving the Sangha in flocks, deeply wounded and disillusioned. Among them is the incumbent head monastic of NYZ, for whom Giun has always had the utmost respect. Today Giun still feels it most heartbreaking that the former head monastic of NYZ never ever gets in touch with the Sangha again. Giun, like most of those who leave, would not accept any excuse for Eido Roshi's misbehaviour. The entire Sangha almost completely collapses at the time.

Meanwhile, Shinge Roshi is facing tremendous pressure due to a drastic schism where there are at least three different attitudes towards Eido Roshi within the community. The first group is made up of die-hard followers of Eido Roshi who remain loyal to him no matter what. The second group thinks that Eido Roshi is a sociopath and criminal and should be erased from ZSS history completely. Yet another group of people condemns Eido Roshi's misbehavior and cuts off his engagement with ZSS, while insisting on acknowledging his contributions to the

founding of DBZ and NYZ. Therefore, however she deals with the issue, Shinge Roshi would have displeased at least one of the groups. It is the darkest period of time in ZSS history. At the lowest point there are only three or four people hanging in with Shinge Roshi at DBZ. But the Sangha does not disappear. Shinge Roshi is able to survive the impossible situation, and the Sangha has been reviving spectacularly in recent years. When Shinge Roshi calls Giun to return, Giun feels a sense of belongingness, like a karmic link, to the ZSS community and hence comes back to be the head monastic of NYZ.

I know it would be enlightening to ask Shinge Roshi herself about her experience navigating this organizational crisis. But, I am still hesitant about using my precious time with Shinge Roshi to raise this intrusive question. Giun advises that Shinge Roshi has been dealing with daily critiques in the first few years following the scandal and would likely remain open to discussing the issue.

I feel I can somehow completely understand the clashing attitudes among ZSS community members toward Eido Roshi, just like my conflicted feelings toward my father. The DBZ and NYZ are like Eido Roshi's sons and daughters, who have been fatally wounded by their founding father. I feel very much like being part of the Sangha experiencing their collective trauma. How to deal with the emotional conundrum? I still do not know. But I feel much relieved of my anxiety over one pressing question - I now know for sure I have come to the right place for my research. I trust the honesty and integrity of Giun, who, as head monastic of NYZ, may be considered a representative of the organization. People leave the organization nine years ago precisely because of their sincere faith in Buddhist morality. In that sense, the darkest period of the ZSS encompasses the very potential of its rebirth. As I feel much relieved, I realize that my field study is ultimately a pursuit of self-salvation. (Yu, T. voice note on an unrecorded interview with Giun, June 5, 2019)

My next interviewee is Gangyo (願行). I notice that, when answering my questions about Zen pedagogy and enlightenment, Gangyo would naturally and peacefully mention Eido Roshi's name and quote his teaching. I find that I cannot mention my father as naturally and peacefully. I

would be stuck in a "perplexing moment". I suddenly understand what I am searching for is how to heal the perpetual wound so that I can mention my father as naturally and peacefully. Gangyo encourages me to explore the so-called "emotional koan" created by Jun Po Denis Kelly Roshi (淳法禪師, 1942-2021). The emotional koan, according to Gangyo, is "something that recurs in your life that you want to do better". I immediately know that my father is my emotional koan. It happens that Jun Po Roshi will be leading a seven-day Sesshin (攝心 intensive meditation) with his Hollow Bones Sangha (a Zen Buddhist group founded by Jun Po Roshi) at DBZ which I will be visiting as well. Gangyo promises to introduce me to Jun Po Roshi.

5.3 Experiencing the Teaching: The Emotional Koan

Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji (金剛寺) sits above the highest lake in the Catskills Mountains, surrounded by 1,400 acres of forest and meadows. The traditional Japanese-style buildings of DBZ are elegantly furnished and meticulously maintained (Figure 5-3). Coincidentally, Jun Po Roshi arrives at DBZ almost at the same time as me on June 7, 2019. I soon gain his permission to have an interview scheduled for the following day.

Figure 5-3: *A Peek at the Japanese-style Architectures of Dai Bosatsu Zendo*

Note. Photo taken at Dai Bosatsu Zendo on June 8, 2019.

In hindsight, my interview with Jun Po Roshi on June 8, 2019 is a great adventure. We differ drastically in gender, age, race, geographic location, first language, culture, history of drug abuse, criminal record, health condition, and so much more. And I am not even aware of these immense gaps before diving into the great adventure. However, Jun Po Roshi and I just hit it off through the following conversation:

Tianyuan: "Is it extremely hard to break one's ego?"

Jun Po: "Well, you don't want to break it. You want to train it. This gets into the emotional koan process. So it's like, 'Has anyone ever made you angry?' "

Tianyuan: "Yes. One person, forever. My father."

Jun Po: "No one has ever made you angry."

Tianyuan: "Myself."

Jun Po [smiling]: "Stop it."

Tianyuan: "Couldn't."

Jun Po: "Couldn't?"

Tianyuan: "I couldn't."

Jun Po: "You won't!"

Tianyuan: "Yes. I won't."

Jun Po [roaring]: "I won't!"

Tianyuan: "Yeah. [choking and inhaling] I've tried, [bitterly smiling] many times..."

I instantly admit that it is myself that makes me angry. This is a truth that I have already known. I know my anger and hatred towards my father, my guilt for my mother and jealousy for my friends are all due to my ego. I also understand that I would remain a victim of my father as long as I am angry. But I just do not believe I am strong enough to forgive him.

Jun Po: "Can you feel his ignorance and his pain?"

Tianyuan: "Yes. I do. But what if my father never regrets what he did? He never admits that he did horrible things to me and my mom."

Jun Po: "He can't. Not yet. And maybe he never will be able to admit."

Tianyuan: "Yeah. That's what I think. He'll never regret. So how can I forgive him?"

Jun Po: "Compassion."

Tianyuan: "I vowed to save all beings, but I just don't know how I can save one who remains ignorant forever."

Jun Po: "He can't change until karmic evolutionary circumstances unfold for him. Something may happen in his life where he sees it and breaks. You may be able to have a conversation like this, 'So dad, can I talk to you, dad? You know, I love you. I care deeply about you. You're my father. Were you not understanding love? Is there some way I can share with you what love is?' What would he say? "

Tianyuan [sobbing]: "I've tried to speak with him. Um, but I couldn't stop my anger. So, I ended up ranting at him because I've never been able to speak with him equally. He's always domineering."

149

Jun Po: "Cause he was born educated in a hierarchical, domineering structure."

Tianyuan: "Yeah. So the first time I've ever been able to speak with him honestly about my feelings was about three weeks ago, um, when I lost my temper. …I still believe he will not regret. He was sarcastic last time when I lost it.

Jun Po: "Anger is sacred. Anger is sacred. 'Dad I'm so angry. I care so deeply about this.' "

Tianyuan: "Yes."

Jun Po: " 'Dad I'm afraid you'll never get it, never wake up. You'll never be able to be here with me.' "

Tianyuan: "This is my emotional koan. I thought of that again and again and again, for many years [sobbing]."

Jun Po: "Okay. So, how can you show up? How can you show up? He's made you extremely angry. He's hurt your feelings deeply. There is a good side to what he's done. He encouraged you to…you are a professor. You know, he's part of your drive and everything you had to impress. … So how do you open your heart and take your father into your heart? Open your heart! Go deeper into who you are."

Tianyuan: "Do you think a victim can ever forgive the abuser?"

Jun Po: "Absolutely."

Tianyuan: "Did anybody make you angry?"

Jun Po [in tears]: "Yes. My father. My father beat me, for twelve years. [in trembling voice] I almost killed him. I took a gun to kill him."

Tianyuan: "You did?"

Jun Po: "I took a gun to go shoot him. And he was not there where he was supposed to be. Never happened that he was not there. It's just a miracle that I didn't kill him. And that was the beginning of our conversation. So yes, I understand hatred. And that helped break me open."

Jun Po Roshi's words and tears cut through my heart immediately. I finally find a person who understands the depth of my pain. I know Jun Po Roshi shares my anger because he is angry to the extent of intending to kill. I feel my anger and hatred being fully acknowledged rather than being dismissed. Over the years, I have confided to several friends about my father's abuse, seeking to find some comfort or affirmation. A few of them, out of goodwill, would try to persuade me to forgive my father. They do not really understand my feelings because they do not share my experience.

Tianyuan: "So, did you forgive him?"

Jun Po: "Absolutely. There's nothing to forgive. But it took me years to get there, to feel his pain and his ignorance. He cannot be any other than the way he is based on his conditioning and genetics. It's just cultural conditioning."

Tianyuan: "When did you forgive your father?"

Jun Po: "When I realized there was nothing to forgive, that he was not evil, he was damaged from one point of view."

Tianyuan: "But you were in tears when you mentioned your father."

Jun Po: "Yeah. If I go back to the memory space… I would never wish my experience on anyone else. But I would never trade it for anything. The good aspects of my character were also developed in reaction to that so-called negative circumstance. It got me here. So, I'm also accepting the gift that my father brought me. …You need to understand what's really going on. You're afraid. And you're attacking as a defensive mechanism. Go deeper into your heart. This heart can never be broken. Why aren't you meditating to go deeper and deeper and deeper into the witnessing intelligence within you?"

Tianyuan: "So I shouldn't try to forget him."

Jun Po: "No. Just love him and let him go."

Tianyuan: "Let go…Doesn't 'let go' mean 'forget'?"

Jun Po: "No."

Tianyuan: "Actually, I can never forget."

Jun Po: "No. It's not necessary to forget."

Tianyuan: "I'll…I'll try. I'll try to forgive him. I'll try to talk to him calmly."

Jun Po: "Don't say try. Try is an escape. You *will* talk to him calmly. You are more powerful than you think. You are an enlightened person. No one can disturb you."

After the interview I have an informal lunch with Jun Po Roshi and Shinge Roshi. Jun Po Roshi says: "When I asked you if anyone has made you angry, and you said 'my father', it cut through my heart right away."

What a miraculous moment it is. Two hearts are blown open. I still do not know how to forgive my father, let alone how to save him. However, I am now able to face my deepest wound directly. People try to forget their deepest wounds because they do not believe they can be healed. But the fact is that the deepest wounds can never be forgotten. If you pretend to have forgotten, the wounds will never be healed.

5.4 Practicing: The Enlightenment

The next morning, I get up at 4:30 AM when the temple bell rings to wake everyone up. At 4:55 AM, I enter the Zendo where Jun Po Roshi and the Hollow Bones Sangha members have all been seated quietly. A Zendo (Meditation Hall) is the space for doing Zazen (sitting meditation) and kinhin (walking meditation) in a Zen Center. The Zendo of DBZ is the most spacious and beautiful one I have ever seen (Figure 5-4). Sitting down on my designated zafu (cushion), I hear nothing but the soft sounds of mountain breeze constantly brushing the leaves on the trees

surrounding the building, punctuated by the chirps of the birds in the garden. Sitting still for long enough, I feel the chill to the bone although it is already summer.

Figure 5-4: *The Meditation Hall of Dai Bosatsu Zendo*

Note. Photo taken at Dai Bosatsu Zendo on June 8, 2019.

I am immersed in the stillness and the chill, as well as in my emotional koan. I understand my father's conditioned reactions. I know he loses his father at the age of five. Then, his mother remarries, leaving him to his uncle, a military officer. My father is brought up by his uncle, who beats him frequently and brutally. I can feel my father's pain. I feel compassionate both for my father and for myself because I am no other than my father.

At 6 AM the sangha members stand up, move to the Dharma Hall, and begin chanting the *Hollow Bones Sangha Sutra Book*. The Hollow Bones Sangha chant in a very animated style with varied tones, tempos, stresses, facial expressions, and body movements, depending on the content of the text. While remaining seated, people would frequently shake their bodies, wave their hands, turn to each other to make eye contact, smile, sing, and exclaim, all in sync. The atmosphere is tremendously infectious and joyful. I am completely engaged, chanting and dancing with the group wholeheartedly. Suddenly, a line in the *Awakened One's Vow* strikes me while we are chanting it:

> If by chance they should turn against us, abuse and persecute us,
>
> we will remember our fearless heart,
>
> our path of wisdom, compassion, nonviolence, and skillful means.
>
> Before we react,
>
> we will consider deeply our personal and collective karma
>
> that brought these conditions and circumstances upon ourselves.
>
> (Hollow Bones Order, 2018b, pp.9-10)

A mighty emotion arises, and tears pour down my cheeks. I cannot even tell what kind of emotion it is, except that it is incredibly powerful and overwhelmingly joyful. I am flooded by this strong emotion. The only other thing I can sense at the moment is my unstoppable tears. I try hard to get hold of myself and keep up with the group chanting, knowing that something inside of me has melted. That is the awakening moment when I decide to forgive my father. I feel immensely relieved because I am no longer angry.

Three days later, I am about to leave DBZ. I write down my father's name on a small piece of paper and put it in the bowl on the altar in front of Guanyin (觀音, Kanzeon, the Bodhisattva of Compassion) so that the Sangha would read my father's name and pray for his recovery during service. I then prostrate to Guanyin and pray for my father's health, with tears pouring out again. At that moment I officially forgive my father, in front of Guanyin and the Buddha. Then I go to see Jun Po Roshi to say goodbye.

> Tianyuan [sobbing]: "I just want to let you know I will forgive my father."
>
> Jun Po [smiling]: "You have *already* forgiven him! You are freed now!"

Yes, I am freed. I throw off my shackles. I am no longer haunted by my memories. I no longer need to forget anything about my father. I feel immensely grateful to Jun Po Roshi. I hug him, my tears pouring again (Figure 5-5).

Jun Po [gazing at me]: "You are beautiful. Cherish it. Enjoy your future."

Figure 5-5: *Jun Po Roshi and the Author*

Note. Photo taken at Dai Bosatsu Zendo on June 11, 2019.

Sitting on the long-distance coach from Catskill Mountain back to New York, I write field notes while reflecting on my journey. I cannot help but keep weeping. It surprises me that a field study can be soaked with so many tears. Yet I find the tears healing and purifying. This whole research journey is healing and purifying. I figure this is the kind of research I am meant to do. I feel that only healing and purifying research that relieves life's suffering is worth doing.

Upon returning home, I make a phone call to my father. Below is my personal journal on that day:

Made a phone call to my father at 11 AM. The phone was one hour long. Told him all my painful memories and my anger and hatred towards him. Also told him that I had already forgiven him and wanted to help him. I spoke calmly and kept my composure. There were tears in my eyes when I said there is still deep love

between him and me, as father and daughter, and I wish him to get better in both spirit and body. He didn't say anything, except urging me to tell everything I had to say. The phone call ended because my phone ran out of power. I told him I would call him again in late July when I get back from a conference in Europe. I hope to hear what he thinks. I hope to listen to his reflection and confession. But I knew I shouldn't expect much. In any case, I feel I've done what I could. And I'm glad I was able to keep my emotions in control and spoke to him confidently as an equal, independent person. This is something brought by my visit to DBZ and NYZ. This is a huge change. I AM EMPOWERED! (personal journal, June 18, 2019)

It is an incredibly self-empowering phone call, permanently changing the long-entrenched, oppressive power dynamics between my father and me. I email Jun Po Roshi to let him know about the phone call:

…This was something I did not believe I could ever do in my life, before I went to New York and DBZ. (T. Yu, personal communication, June 27, 2019)

Jun Po Roshi's reply affirms my enlightenment:

Lovely to meet you and share a dish of Mondo dharma. And yes, you got the transmission and are sharing with your father. Gratitude Tianyuan. (D. Kelly, personal communication, June 28, 2019)

On July 24, I phone my father again. This time, he goes on a rant, completely denying all my "allegations":

…To my disappointment, he does not confess at all. He says he is deeply wounded. And that is all he can remember. He does not accept my story of what happened. He keeps accusing and cursing my grandpa and others. He does not admit to having hurt anyone. Instead, he says it is he who is hurt. "I cannot hurt anyone, because I was devastated!" He does not remember things. […] He seems to have a heavily deluded view and memory. He does not feel guilty at all. Instead, he is furious and hateful. I try to tell him what really happened, but he refuses to listen. I realize his delusion is so heavy that he may not be able to put an end to it

in this life. I should accept it: my father would never confess. I will continue praying

for his health before Guanyin and the Buddha. I will accept whatever happens in

the end. (personal journal, July 24, 2019)

Several months later, my father miraculously recovers from his physical illness. I know it

is because of my prayers before Guanyin and the Buddha. But I no longer expect my father's

repentance. And it no longer bothers me. As time goes by, I find that when I stop trying to forget,

I actually begin to forget – or more accurately, I begin to let go. When traumatic memories no

longer haunt, they naturally fade away. Occasionally my father would come across my mind, and

I would mention him peacefully and lightly. I am able to accept and acknowledge everything he

has impressed upon me, be it good or bad. My father is of course in me. Life is nondual. I can now

better deal with my father whenever needed, and better respond to any challenges posed by people

who have power over me.

5.5 Equanimity

On the evening of June 9, 2019, a few hours after my awakening moment, I gain the

opportunity to interview Shinge Roshi at DBZ. Before my departure for New York, I have watched

a recorded Teisho (Dharma talk) given by Shinge Roshi during a "March-on" Sesshin in 2013. It

was her early days taking over the wreckage from the Shimano Scandal. She talks about "failure"

and "equanimity":

> I feel I've been very deeply steeping myself in failure since becoming the
> Abbot here. There is really nothing I can do to 'solve' the difficult situation that I
> inherited on January 1st, 2011. I've tried everything – it doesn't work. [I'm talking
> about]the difficult framework of taking the reins of an organization under dark
> cloud, hostility, and anguish. So now it's 2013. And I have to say, I failed at what I
> hoped to achieve, which was some kind of rapprochement, healing of Sangha,
> bringing together in a harmonious way the wishes of all on all sides. But I've come

to see it can't be done. I can't do it. What can we do about that? – March on. Bravely march on. Sitting after sitting. Opening our hearts. Realizing that whatever we thought it should be, the Dharma has other ideas. We don't see it in the full picture. So, some kind of deep acceptance is necessary. I have thought many times of running away. But then I think about you, all of you, and this beautiful place. And somehow, I know the clouds will part, maybe not in my lifetime. But all I can do is do my best. […] The most important thing for our practice as Bodhisattvas is equanimity. […]Equanimity is a deep and radical acceptance of things as they are. (Zen Studies Society, 2013, June 19)

Looking at this testimony back in 2013, I feel Shinge Roshi has said it all. There seems to be no magical "crisis management" in her leadership, but sheer perseverance nurtured by profound equanimity in the face of hardship. This feeling is corroborated in my interview with Shinge Roshi, who is "seeing the light at the end of the tunnel" after nine years of "marching-on".

Shinge Roshi: "It was a very terrible period of time. We had hardly any people studying here. It was a very bleak and depressing time. And that was the early part of my abbot days."

Tianyuan: "I would say it is a miracle that this whole organization did not disappear."

Shinge Roshi: "I know. It was almost disappearing. […] I really wanted to leave. Because people blamed me from all sides. […] I just felt like a horse with blinders. Just got to keep this Rinzai Zen going. We had no money. A lot of supporters disappeared."

Tianyuan: "Would you still say you failed today?"

Shinge Roshi: "No. No, I don't fail now. I see everything is vibrant. Everything is strong. We have money. We are doing what we need to do."

Tianyuan: "Congratulations. And how did you make it?"

Shinge Roshi: "Just by being like that horse with blinders, marching on, one foot after the other." (Interview with Shinge Roshi, June 9, 2019)

I understand that Shinge Roshi's determination and equanimity come from a nondual view of Eido Roshi, acknowledging both his "brilliance" and his "impediment". Shinge Roshi has the following comment on Eido Roshi in our interview:

> There are people who fall on both sides of the issue. Some continue to revere Eido Roshi as their teacher no matter what, and don't want to hear about the harm he caused. And others refuse to acknowledge him as an enlightened being because how, if he was enlightened, could have done what he did? - It's a very common question. It comes because we have an illusion of what an enlightened person is. And in our illusion, there is no room for humans. Human beings are … struggling. He never called himself anything but a human being. And he had…what I would call I think several people actually have seen it as a…a very deep, karmic wound. […] And I remember how loving he was to all of us, male and female. […] We all loved him. He was really a very good person. This is so hard. Humans are so complicated. It's not black or white. And he had brilliance in his teaching, truly, in the way he would do Dokusan, in the way he would give talks. […] So people felt 'he saved my life' - many times I've heard this from people. […] Then other people, you know, 'I thought he was a great man but he turned out to be just somebody who exploited me. I will not have anything to do with him'. So this is our reactivity. The truth is, it's impossible to put it in such a dualistic way. The truth of his existence is impossible to put in rational terms, logical terms – 'This is so therefore that cannot be so; if this is not so then that can be so' – No, that's logic. It doesn't work that way with complicated human lives. So, I would say he had a deep psychological impediment, karmic impediment that caused him to have…like an addiction maybe you could say even…so he couldn't stop. (Interview with Shinge Roshi, June 9, 2019)

Upon reviewing an early version of the research report, Shinge Roshi sends me a note about her appreciation of Eido Roshi's legacy:

> And a key reason that we survive after the upheaval is not only his financial legacy but more importantly his Dharma legacy - he inspired us to delve deeply into

our practice and reach a level of insight that could allow us to hold both aspects of this complex human being, and feel deep gratitude for all of it in a nondual way. (S. Chayat, personal communication, June 1, 2020)

I understand that a nondual view of their controversial founding Abbot is the only way for ZSS community members to heal their collective trauma. They achieve spiritual growth through bravely confronting and reflecting on the infamous part of their organization's history. When there is nothing to avoid, hide or forget, there is nothing to fear. And only when there is nothing to fear, are people completely healed and empowered. I am able to understand these complexities because I have gained a nondual view of my father, which brings me profound equanimity.

I share my awakening experience with Shinge Roshi in our interview:

> Tianyuan: "It's a miracle. I didn't expect that. That's why I think I came to the right place, contrary to what I thought before my departure. "

> Shinge Roshi: "Yes, you did. And again, this rational mind has nothing to do with it."

> Tianyuan: "I could forgive my father even if he never regrets."

> Shinge Roshi: "You know Eido Roshi did regret. At the end of 2017, he actually gave a public apology. Many of us gathered. And he said, 'I'm sorry'. So I know that there was regret. And then your father too, I'm sure." (Interview with Shinge Roshi, June 9, 2019)

Shinge Roshi is in her late seventies, yet her eyes are still crystal clear. She seems to be able to see just everything. At the end of the interview as I stand up, Shinge Roshi whispers with a smile: "You see the birds too? The woodpeckers?"

Ah! Are those faraway rattles from the woods the sounds of woodpeckers? I have never really paid attention to those sounds before, even though I do hear them. The truth is always there. I just do not see it.

Returning from New York, I decide to delve deeper into the organizational changes led by female leaders of Zen Buddhist communities in the aftermath of sex scandals. My next destination is the Zen Center of Los Angeles.

5.6 Witnessing Creativity: Organizational Reform

Zen Center of Los Angeles (ZCLA) is a major American Zen center founded by Japanese Zen master Taizan Maezumi Roshi in 1967. In 1983 he publicly admits he has been having sexual relationships with female students and is an alcoholic. Many students leave as a result. Maezumi Roshi is forthcoming in admitting his mistakes and never tries to justify his behaviours. He remains in his position as Abbot of ZCLA until his death in 1995, during which period he keeps apologizing for his deeds and shows deep remorse. Wendy Egyoku Nakao Roshi (惠玉禪師) assumes her abbotship in 1999, initiating systemic change programs which leads to the turnaround of ZCLA as one of the most influential Soto Zen centers in North America. In May of 2019 Egyoku Roshi steps down as Abbot of ZCLA. She is succeeded by Sensei Deborah Faith-Mind Kyobai Thoresen (空梅), also a female leader.

Figure 5-6: *Teachers' Photos at the Dharma Hall of ZCLA*

Note. Maezumi Roshi's framed photo hanging in the upper row, second from the left. Photo taken at Zen Center of Los Angeles on November 7, 2019.

Unsurprisingly, Maezumi Roshi's framed photos hangs in the Dharma Hall of ZCLA along with the photos of other prominent figures in ZCLA's history (Figure 5-6). To my surprise, I happen to witness how the Maezumi scandal is being used as an educational tool in class at ZCLA. Rev. Dharma-Joy Thomas Reichert, a Zen priest at ZCLA, regularly gives a series of "Jukai (i.e., precepts) classes" as an introductory course for students interested in taking precepts. I have the opportunity to videotape one of his classes on November 9, 2019. Rev. Dharma-Joy begins by briefly introducing the history of ZCLA, then proactively raises the issue of the Maezumi scandal:

> … Many religious institutions have gone through some sort of scandals, then they tried to hush it up. And here we've gone in the opposite direction. You know, like, from the very beginning of my time here, the whole Maezumi Roshi's sort of transgressions were well-known everywhere. […] It's formed a lot of how we practice here. […] I see this is somewhat controversial, but in a way for me as a practitioner twenty years later, I'm grateful for the fact the Zen center went through

that experience. Because you have that kind of idea, you know, this mystic from the East, who was put up on the pedestal, and so people just gave all their power to him. […] And then in 1983 it was like "BOOM!" This was like the Big Bang in a certain sense. Half of the people here left because they were so disillusioned. They couldn't deal with what had happened. It was just too much. It was terrible because many people lost their faith in the dharma, lost their faith in the practice. And then some people stayed, and then just dug in. (Reichert, T., recorded class, November 9, 2019)

A student in the audience makes the following comment in reaction to Dharma-Joy's recount:

It really struck me when I first moved in, right around the time of the fiftieth anniversary, and one of the things that were distributed was the Zen center's brief history. And this [i.e., the Maezumi scandal] was all laid out just in black and white. And it really struck me. It kind of almost moved me. I was like, this is kind of great, not that these things happened, but the fact that this is completely laid out transparently. You know, it's very reassuring to be moving into a place that has the confidence in itself to do that. (recorded class, November 9, 2019)

I clearly see a nondual view of the controversial founding Abbot held by ZCLA, similar to what I find in ZSS. Yet, a more eye-opening finding at ZCLA is that the Maezumi scandal becomes the starting point of the community's decades-long social innovations of structural and cultural changes. These social innovations are distinctly feminist in that they emphasize healing and caring, participative management, shared stewardship/leadership, horizontal structure, ethical culture, and equal homage paid to the divinity of female buddhas as well as to male buddhas.

To address their collective trauma in the wake of the Maezumi scandal, Egyoku Roshi and her Sangha members "borrow knowledge from Western psychology, Western management theories, aboriginal cultures, and Zen Buddhist traditions" (interview with Egyoku Roshi, November 8, 2019) and create various healing programs such as "healing circle", "HEAR (Hearing,

163

Ethics, and Reconciliation) circle", "many hands and eyes circle", "mala workshop", "bones lab container", and the "atonement ceremony", to name but a few. The healing is not limited to the Maezumi trauma but also all kinds of wounds in individuals' lives in modern society. As an interesting counterpart of Jun Po Roshi's "emotional koan", Egyoku Roshi has invented another creative approach to koan pedagogy called "householder koan" (Marko & Nakao, 2020). In her co-authored book on "householder koan" she suggests that ancient Chinese and Japanese koans are known to be difficult for Westerners to construe due to cultural gaps. In contrast, householder koans are created by 21st-century Zen practitioners living a lay life in the West who deal with the challenges of relationships, raising children, work, money, love, loss, old age, and death. Egyoku Roshi has been collecting "raw stories" of life dilemmas experienced by real people. I observe how Egyoku Roshi, in her "householder koan" class, encourages the participants to create koans on their own, based on these raw stories. In our interview, Egyoku Roshi shows interest in my "emotional koan" and invites me to write down my own "raw story", which has become part of the chapter.

It becomes a shared understanding at ZCLA that sexual abuse is a form of power abuse, and that a root of the sex scandals is the autocratic culture and hierarchical structure implanted by early Japanese Zen teachers within American Zen communities, including ZCLA. Since 2000, Egyoku Roshi and her Sangha members have initiated a systemic organizational reform aiming to build a horizontal organizational structure, and a democratic, transparent, and ethical culture. For example, they create "shared stewardship" to "honor one another as worthy stewards of the Sangha in whatever way our unique talents and abilities manifest". They call it "an ongoing exploration of how we all co-create Zen training, governance, and Sangha dynamics". On the ZCLA website, they introduce "shared stewardship" as follows:

In 2000, Roshi Egyoku Nakao led the Sangha in an exploration to reorganize the Center to expand it from a teacher-focused vertical structure to an all-inclusive model that embraces a sangha-oriented horizontal structure. We took a daring leap off the 100-foot pole into an invigorating exploration of what we now call Shared Stewardship. (ZCLA, 2023)

As a notable characteristic of "shared stewardship", they use "council practice" (formal consensus-building procedures) to "experience the inherent diversity and complexity of ourselves and our life together", and to "trust in the wisdom of the group". Egyoku Roshi emphasizes how council practice changes the hierarchical culture into a horizontal relationship :

… So, we do a lot of council. It has a very particular format where we all sit in a circle. Everyone faces each other. You know, you can see everyone equally. Everyone's an equal part of this circle. It's a different energy that's developed there from the hierarchy. We're really developing what we call the Sangha treasure. It's all about our relationship to each other. And the teacher is just another person in the circle. So, your position is not important (Interview with Egyoku Roshi, November 8th, 2019).

They also create "circles" (a participative management structure), each circle having its own statement of purpose and a "steward" that assists in its functioning. In her introduction article to "circles" in the ZCLA Sangha Letter, Egyoku Roshi writes the following epigraph:

For the past six months, the Sangha has engaged in Practice Circles. Circle practice was introduced to counterbalance the strong vertical structure of the practice as we have come to know it and to strengthen the horizontal relationships within the Sangha. (Nakao, 2000)

Meanwhile, they have developed a series of organizational documents such as "The Sangha Sutra", "Statement of Right Conduct", "The Conflict Resolution and Grievance Procedures", "Statement of Ethics for ZCLA Teachers", and "The Lineage of Women" (ZCLA, 2019). In an article introducing "the lineage of women", Egyoku Roshi writes:

[…] I have come to recognize this stirring as the energy of the feminine, dormant for so long, reclaiming itself and flowing fiercely forth. So when I reflect upon the practice of women, I begin by affirming the obvious. The obvious is that for immeasurable, hundreds, thousands, ten thousands, millions, trillions of kalpas, women have practiced, manifested, realized, and accomplished the Buddha Way. Who are all these women whose names have been forgotten or left unsaid?

In growing up in the Japanese Soto Zen tradition, I have chanted daily the lineage of Patriarchs. During my Dharma transmission retreat, I bowed to the Patriarchs at least three times each day, all 81 of them. By the second day, when my teacher Roshi Glassman came to hold dokusan for me, I asked, "Where are the women?" The next day, I asked with more urgency, "Where are the women?!" And by the fourth day, it was "WHERE ARE THE WOMEN!"

[…] I offer a draft [of "The Lineage of Women"] for your consideration, and I look forward to this exploration with the women of the Sangha. (Nakao, 1998b)

Then in the working draft of "The Lineage of Women", Egyoku Roshi enumerates dozens of the names of ancient and modern female Buddhists and laywomen, including the nun Mahaprajapati (大愛道比丘尼, the foster-mother of the Buddha), the nun Yashodhara (耶輸陀羅 the wife of Prince Siddhartha), the eight-year-old daughter of the dragon king Sagara, the old women who helps clarify the mind of Te-shan (德山宣鑑 782-865 CE), to name just a few. She continues to write:

From ancient times, living female Buddhas have accomplished the Way. The spiritual attainment and practice of females have flowed in a continuous yet hidden stream to the present time. All Buddhas pass through Prajnapramita, the Mother of the Buddhas. From the blackness of her womb, Buddhas appear and disappear, sometimes as male, sometimes as female. The proclamation of the World-Honored One, Shakyamuni, confirms women as Buddhas. […] All the great masters know that paying homage to female adepts and females acquiring the

166

essence is the living spirit of the ancient Buddhas. The lineage of the Matriarchs is to be revered. Now this lineage lives as you. Please cherish this forever. (Nakao, 1998c)

Notably, a statue of Mahaprajapati is placed at the entrance of the Dharma Hall of ZCLA and is being worshiped by all who pass the entrance (Figure 5-7). This is somewhat unusual as that prominent place would usually be reserved for the Shakyamuni Buddha. Mahaprajapati is the foster mother of the Buddha. She is known as the first woman to receive ordination directly from the Buddha and becomes the first bhikkhuni (比丘尼, Buddhist nun).

Figure 5-7: *A Statue of Mahaprajapati at the Dharma Hall of ZCLA*

Note. Photo taken at Zen Center of Los Angeles on November 7, 2019.

Moreover, there are multiple statues of Guanyin (觀音, Kanzeon, the Bodhisattva of Compassion) located in different places around the ZCLA garden, all in female forms (e.g., Figure 5-8).

Figure 5-8: *A Statue of Guanyin in the Garden of ZCLA*

Note. Photo taken at Zen Center of Los Angeles on November 7, 2019.

5.7 No Fear in Action

On the morning of November 12th, the very last day of my stay at ZCLA, I finish the morning Zazen and chanting with the Sangha, walk back to my bedroom, and open my computer. One of the emails popping up is from a Senior Administrator at Saint Mary's University (SMU), the university where I do my second doctoral study. The Senior Administrator requests that two cohort members and I meet with him. My cohort members and I are accused of making "serious allegations of misconduct occurring within SMU's Ph.D. Management program" (e.g., racism, exclusion, and bullying) in our public presentation at a conference symposium in September. The Senior Administrator denies the existence "of any racism/exclusion/bullying" in the Ph.D. program and demands us, as "current students" in the program, to "supply and discuss evidence of such misconduct" (personal communication, November 12, 2019).

My inbox is soon flooded with communications between my two cohort members and several close colleagues who are copied. They agree that the Senior Administrator's message is "defensive", "threatening", and "aggressive", and that they feel "disturbed and disappointed" (personal communication, Nov 12, 2019). One of my colleagues, an alumna of the Ph.D. program and established scholar, offers to attend the meeting as a "lifeguard", as she is a co-convenor of the symposium while being excluded from the Senior Administrator's email presumably due to her relatively "safer" position in the power structure. Two senior colleagues suggest we "say little", and "ask for a union/student union representative" or a "grievance committee member" "to be in attendance" at the meeting. (personal communication, November 12, 2019)

I would probably have felt equally, if not more, disturbed, had the incident happened a few days before. Besides being in a similarly disadvantaged power position with my two cohort members as "current students" in the Ph.D. program, I am at the same time subject to an additional layer of disadvantage as a person dealing with neglected language barriers, which would likely be intensified in such political situations as the proposed meeting due to the complexity of the issue involved and the psychological intimidation imposed. Moreover, at the time of receiving the email, I am sojourning alone in a foreign country, striving to make every minute count in my remaining precious time of the field visit at ZCLA, and about to navigate my way back to Canada within 24 hours. I have tons of tasks to complete before leaving the country, including searching for some archival records at the ZCLA library, responding to some participants' emails, having a farewell conversation with Egyoku Roshi, helping out a new friend (a temporary resident at ZCLA) who is standing at the crossroads of her life, among all other things. All in all, it is a critical, demanding moment in life.

However, I feel deeply grounded and confident after immersing myself in a one-week intense meditation practice and field research at ZCLA. I do not feel even the slightest disturbance but maintain my focus and clarity. My journal on the morning of November 12 reads:

> …I might have become concerned and disturbed, if I had received the email before I came to ZCLA. But now I feel it would be a good opportunity to practice Zen, manage conflict, control anger, practice deep listening, speak up, and embody feminist leadership. I'll observe how I navigate through this opportunity and challenge. For now, I don't feel any disturbance at all. I remain calm and positive. This is Zen practice in action. (personal journal, November 12, 2019)

Subsequently, I am able to focus on my tasks at hand, tie up all loose ends in the field study, help out my new friend, and then fly back to Canada. During my layover time at Los Angeles Airport and at Toronto Airport, I write emails in response to my cohort members and colleagues. In my emails, I clarify that we do not need any "lifeguard" or "protector" in attendance at the meeting because we need to "create an environment for [the Senior Administrator] to practice deep listening" instead of defensive communication. I consider the meeting "a great opportunity for us to directly communicate with, and hopefully to educate, these people in power" (Yu, T., personal correspondence, November 13, 2019). I manage to find in my computer key documents, including detailed minutes of the conference symposium to prove that the "allegations of misconduct" are raised by the audience in the room instead of being made by us as presenters. I also identify and retrieve solid evidence of "racism, exclusion, and bullying" existing in the SMU Ph.D. program, that is, a report of the results of the SMU Ph.D. student survey in April 2018.

On November 14th, the next day after my landing in Halifax, my two cohort members and I meet with the Senior Administrator. Throughout the meeting I remain calm and vocal. Together with my cohort members, I make our case with all the documents we retrieve in preparation for

the meeting. I also raise another relevant issue concerning the Ph.D. program's unfulfilled promise to maintain its previous "unique, multi-paradigmatic approach" to research that incorporates "selected (postpositivist) systems of thought (e.g., feminism and critical management studies)" (Saint Mary's University, 2023, July 25). The Senior Administrator acknowledges all our points and promises to look into the issues we raise. This leads to "a happy ending" of the drama wherein the two parties "left the meeting with mutual respect and courtesy" (personal communication, November 15, 2019).

I consider this critical incident a hard-won battle and a turning point of my ongoing struggles in my professional life in Western academia. I know I will no longer be the same person from then on.

> I witnessed how Zen taught me of equanimity, how equanimity freed me from suffering, and enabled me to win the battle. I was not upset at all since receiving that email, keeping focused on every minute left at ZCLA, did lots of work tying up the loose ends, including helping a friend with her life choice, and found my way to the airport. At the airport, I was able to respond to my co-convenor's emails, giving suggestions on what to do next. I slept well the day before the meeting despite the jet lag and the uncertainty I was facing. All these contributed to the successful meeting with [the Senior Administrator].
>
> This is equanimity. Equanimity is brought by no fear. No fear results from being healed and freed from all sufferings. Equanimity brings wisdom. Wisdom is power. So, feminist leadership offers compassion and wisdom, which lead to healing and empowerment. (personal journal, November 14, 2019)

Two days before the meeting, on the morning of November 12, I am busy browsing the archival records at the library of ZCLA shortly after receiving the Senior Administrator's email. I am drawn to the rich content of *Sangha Letter*, a ZCLA newsletter, which has been published bi-monthly for decades. Suddenly, a quote in an article by Egyoku Roshi catches my eye:

"…Only the wounded healer is able to heal. As long as we think that spiritual leaders need to be perfect, we live in poverty. I have a perfect teacher inside; there is no perfect teacher outside."

-- Excerpt from Sensei Jishu's Journal, Jan 29, 1998 (Nakao, 1998c, p.4).

I am struck by the quote, as I finally find a name for Zen-informed feminist leaders, for myself, and for the whole research – "the wounded healer"! It is yet another serendipitous discovery that makes every minute of my field study count.

Before long, Egyoku Roshi appears in the room. She takes time out of her busy schedule to bid farewell. She happily accepts my invitation to take a photo together, and suggests we go to the "garden Kanzeon" to take the photo. The "garden Kanzeon" is the largest and most prominent one of all statues in the Zen center (Figure 5-9). Its image appears in various official communications of ZCLA (e.g., printed bookmarks) as an icon of the Zen center. On the back of a printed bookmark with the image, it says:

The image is of ZCLA's garden Kanzeon ("The One Who Hears the Cries of the World"), the Bodhisattva of Compassion. The right hand is in the position of "No Fear"; the left hand holds a vase filled with the water of compassion.

When she and I stand side by side under the statue of Kanzeon, Egyoku Roshi suggests we make the same gesture as the statue: a "no fear" mudra. I love the idea and follow suit (Figure 5-9).

What a memorable moment. I feel like taking a vow, vowing to embody the bodhisattva who hears the cries of the world, vowing to offer compassion to all who suffer, vowing to tell them and myself: "No fear!"

Figure 5-9: *The No Fear Mudra*

Note. Egyoku Roshi and the author posing the no fear mudra alongside ZCLA's garden Kanzeon. Photo taken at Zen Center of Los Angeles on November 12, 2019.

5.8 Theorizing: Zen-informed feminist spiritual leadership

5.8.1 My awakening to the theme

On the morning of November 8th, I am in the kitchen of ZCLA chatting with Annemarie Mal, a ZCLA resident, who generously shares her food with me and is busy cooking her breakfast. The bright morning sunshine fills the kitchen, as well as our bodies and heart-mind. This lighthearted conversation leads to another awakening moment of my field study when the focal point of my research begins to surface, drawing together all the different pieces. Below is my journal on that day:

> Had an inspiring conversation with Annemarie, a guest resident at ZCLA. She shared many insights on the rise of feminist leadership within American Zen communities after the revelation of widespread sex scandals of male perpetrators. She also mentioned We Zetian, who she considered as another example of feminist

leadership nurtured by Buddhism. I think I finally find the best angle to connect everything - from my Wu Zetian papers to the sex scandals, to "shared stewardship" and "circles", the healing programs, the "lineage of women", the statues of Mahaprajapati and Guanyin, etc. - all pointing to feminist leadership! (personal journal, November 8, 2019)

I have been resistant to being called a feminist scholar despite being supervised by a world-renowned feminist scholar and surrounded by feminist cohort members. This is because I am blind to gender inequity in my life. I am too much impaired by patriarchy to be awakened to it. Although the first two journal articles I publish since immigrating to Canada are both on proto-feminist activities of Wu Zetian (武則天, 624-705 CE, the first and only female Emperor of China) (Peng et al., 2015; Yu et al., 2018), I do not truly identify myself as feminist. On that sunny morning in the kitchen of ZCLA, I am reminded by Annemarie that Wu Zetian is also a Buddhist, and a strong proponent of Buddhism in her rule during the Tang dynasty in China. I also realize that Wu Zetian is known to have written the famous Sutra-opening Verse (開經偈), which is printed in every copy of Chinese Buddhist sutras from ancient times to the present and transmitted to the modern West. Nowadays, the Sutra-opening Verse is being chanted daily by Zen Buddhist practitioners across the East and the West:

> The unsurpassed, profound, and wondrous dharma
> 無上甚深微妙法
> is rarely met with, even in a hundred thousand million kalpas.
> 百千萬劫難遭遇
> Now we can see and hear it, accept and maintain it;
> 我今見聞得受持
> May we unfold the meaning of the Tathagatha's truth.
> 願解如來真實義

All of a sudden, it all makes sense that I restart my academic career in the West with two papers on a historical female leader, and with a Ph.D. study under the supervision of a feminist scholar – I am meant to be converted into a feminist scholar. And this research is meant to be focused on feminist leadership.

5.8.2 The emerging feminist leadership in American Zen communities

Since the 1980s, American Zen communities have been rocked by scandals of sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, and other related improprieties (A rich collection of public reflections can be found in the Winter 2014 issue of *Buddhadharma: The Practitioner's Quarterly*). These scandals generally involve Japanese or American male teachers (in most cases, Zen center founding abbots) and their sexual relationships with female students, which have triggered ongoing public reflections and institutional reshaping across North American Zen communities (Gleig, 2019). A predominant consequence of these sex scandals, along with the spillover effects of the women's movement (Meyer & Whittier, 1994), is the increased presence of women in leadership positions within American Zen communities (*Buddhadharma*, 2019).

The rise of women leaders has significant implications on historical, socio-cultural and political dimensions beyond my research scope. But my research reveals a striking feminist/androgynous leadership pattern and trend, wherein the Zen teachers/leaders exhibit both (stereotypic) feminine traits (e.g., compassionate, caring, healing, nurturing, etc.) and (stereotypic) masculine traits (e.g., equanimous, perseverant, confident, creative, etc.), and foster a feminist democratic cultural change in defiance of the patriarchal power relations, hierarchical structure, and autocratic leadership style deeply entrenched in Asian Buddhist traditions. As an exemplary case, ZCLA under the leadership of Wendy Egyoku Nakao Roshi has been at the forefront leading systemic organizational changes. Their change programs are distinctly feminist as they espouse

women's empowerment (e.g., women leaders), horizontal organizational structures (e.g., shared stewardship, circles), collaborative group processes (e.g., council practice), and female deities and role models (e.g., Guanyin, Mahaprajapati, the lineage of women). These practices are what is called "feminist values in action" by academics (Calás & Smircich, 2006, p.296). A good example is the Zen centers' healing circles and atonement ceremonies that manifest feminist values (compassion, healing, nurturing) "by blurring the distinction between the personal and the organizational and focusing on situations that are emotionally charged" (Calás & Smircich, 2006, p.297).

As mentioned in Chapter 2, postmodern feminists oppose "a binary conception of leadership, matching a masculine/feminine dualism" (Berg et al., 2012, p.404) and push for a revolutionary approach that undermines the boundaries between what is defined as "female" and "male" (Lorber, 1997; Kark, 2004). This stance is aligned with the Zen spirit of nonduality and non-attachment. For the convenience of discussion, I continue using stereotypic notions of "masculine/masculinity" and "feminine/femininity" yet adopting the postmodern feminist concept of gender as a fluid continuum, acknowledging that men can also embody "feminine traits", and vice versa. Jun Po Roshi, for instance, shows great compassion for my "emotional koan" with tears flowing from his eyes during our interview. Shumyo Kojima Sensei, another male Zen teacher who participates in my research, displays the caring side of his role as head priest of Zenshuji (the headquarters of American Soto Zen centers) by cooking daily for community members.

Meanwhile, female Zen leaders demonstrate strong "masculine" qualities (emotional stableness, confidence, creativity). Research shows that female managers have been described by male managers as less self-confident and less emotionally stable than male managers (Oakley, 2000; Appelbaum & Shapiro, 1993). My finding is that American Zen is nurturing profound

equanimity in both women and men leaders: a deep, clear heart-mind that is unmovable and fearless under difficulties and hardships. Equanimity seems to be the very personality nurtured by Zen practice, salient among many of my interviewees, especially Zen teachers. In my field study I am particularly impressed by the resilience and determinacy shown by Shinge Roshi during organizational crisis. Such profound equanimity fosters greater creativity, manifested in American Zen leaders' ongoing social innovations. In Chapter 6, I further discuss some of the innovative cultural adaptations of Zen Buddhism that I observe in my field study.

It needs to be clarified that equanimity, or "emotional stability", should not be confounded with "emotional repression", which is the opposite of emotional expressiveness. A person with a high level of emotional stability can also be emotionally expressive. In fact, emotional expressiveness may be an advantage rather than characterizing weak leadership. Nanus and Dobbs (1999) propose that women tend to use more emotionally expressive language and are more likely to lead with a concern for the welfare of others. Moreover, the female advantage literature suggests that relational skills and the ability to create significant emotional ties characterize the ideal leader (Kark, 2004; Ely & Meyerson, 2000).

In the next section, I propose a Zen-informed feminist (androgynous) spiritual leadership model (Figure 5-10) that incorporates strengths of both "feminine" and "masculine" values and supports an androgynous leadership style. The Zen-informed androgynous spiritual leadership model is a feminist theory because it challenges the gender-blind and male-dominant leadership theories and "is a critique of the status quo and therefore *political*" (Calás & Smircich, 2006, p.287, emphasis in original). First, the notion of "androgyny" is premised on an awareness of women's advantage, and research on androgynous leadership is almost exclusively found in feminist literature. The androgynous model I propose upholds the inherent sacredness of femininity that

underscores care, love, compassion, and healing. The implication is a radical feminist viewpoint that women tend to have an advantage in accessing human capacity for compassion, and hence nondual wisdom in Buddha-nature. Second, the model highlights women leaders' profound equanimity and confidence in the face of crisis and adversity, countering the male-dominant discourse about women being emotionally unstable and less confident than men. Third, by emphasizing empowerment and creativity, the model honors feminist social innovations and organizational changes, which shares the "feminist theoretical tendencies" towards "a desire for changes from gendered dominance in social arrangements" (Calás & Smircich, 2006, p.287).

5.8.3 A Zen-informed feminist (androgynous) spiritual leadership model

Based on my findings, I propose a Zen-informed feminist (androgynous) spiritual leadership model (Figure 5-10). A Zen-informed leader leads by teaching and practicing compassion and wisdom. Compassion and wisdom are the flip sides of Zen-informed leadership. They reinforce each other and need to be practiced incessantly.

By receiving and practicing Zen teachings (e.g., working on emotional koans), ordinary human beings may transcend their ego (manas) and reach higher levels of consciousness (storehouse consciousness and nondual consciousness), and hence become enlightened beings (bodhisattvas). The innate compassion and wisdom in one's Buddha-nature naturally arise from enlightening. Compassion is healing. Wisdom is empowering. Compassion and wisdom generate profound confidence, equanimity, and creativity, enabling one to embody the awakened way of no fear and non-attachment. Essentially, a Zen-informed leader guides their followers to self-heal and self-empower through Zen teaching and practice, and eventually to become Zen-informed leaders themselves.

Figure 5-10: *A Zen-informed Feminist (Androgynous) Spiritual Leadership Model*
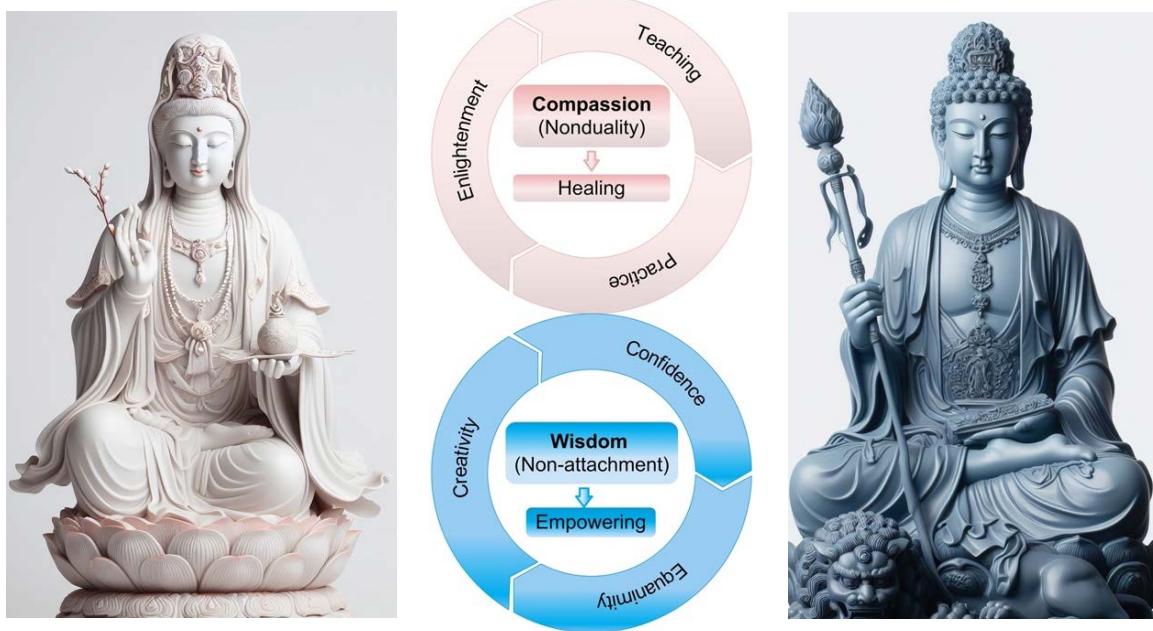
Note. The two bodhisattvas' images are generated by Microsoft Bing using specific prompts on October 31, 2023.

The Zen-informed feminist (androgynous) spiritual leadership model aligns perfectly with Buddhist symbolization. Whereas Manjushiri (文殊菩薩 the bodhisattva of wisdom) is a male figure in Buddhism, Guanyin (觀音菩薩 Kanzeon, the bodhisattva of compassion) is traditionally depicted as a goddess in Mahayana Buddhism. The female Guanyin and the male Manjushiri, symbolizing "feminine" compassion and "masculine" wisdom, are the two facets of the Buddha and are united with shared Buddhahood (Figure 5-10).

In my brief encounter with Jun Po Roshi, I directly experience how my deepest wound is healed through receiving Zen teaching (emotional koan), practice (meditation, chanting, prostrating, and praying), and enlightenment (experiencing nonduality, compassion, and wisdom). This enlightenment fundamentally transforms me, and empowers me to take actions to change the long-entrenched, oppressive power dynamics between my father and me. It also manifests in my

subsequent interactions with other people in power (e.g., the Senior Administrator). It is worth noting that Zen enlightenment is not something like a "graduation" from the process, but the beginning of the next round of learning and practice involving every aspect of one's life.

Feminist scholars have been looking for a description of the empowerment mechanism of transformational leadership. I would suggest that the key to empowering marginalized people is to enable them to regain self-confidence through self-healing or self-liberation. As a stereotypic masculine characteristic, self-confidence is essential in leader emergence (Kark et al., 2012; Vasavada, 2012; Walker & Aritz, 2015). Notably, maintaining self-confidence is not only crucial but also challenging for members of minority groups because of their vulnerability to multiple forms of discrimination and marginalization. Being a racialized woman in the West, I understand how often minority women may feel frustrated, alienated, and hopeless, and how easily it can be to lose confidence in oneself. Therefore, an unshakable faith in the divinity lying in one's deep clear heart-mind is what sustains a minority woman's inner life on her way to leadership.

For example, while Jun Po Roshi embodies transformational leadership in my healing process, he only helps me affirm the truth that is already in me. He only encourages me to trust my intuition and my capacity. In Zen terms, he points directly to my heart-mind, enabling me to see my Buddha-nature. "I have a perfect teacher inside; there is no perfect teacher outside" (Nakao, 1998c, p.4). In the teaching manual of "emotional koan", Jun Po Roshi emphasizes:

> Please know and remember that throughout this Mondo Zen Dialog, you are led in Mondo to have your own insight experience, and you claim these insights and experiences as your new understanding – No one can do this for you! (Hollow Bones Order, 2018b, p.7).

One needs to be cautioned not to confound self-confidence with narcissism. Narcissism is just another duality caused by the manas' attachment. Awakening experience enables one to shed

180

these dualities and become non-attached to them. A healed, liberated soul is fearless precisely because it is no longer attached to the ego.

Chapter 6 American Zen Teaching Practice

6.1 Introduction

The feminist leadership described in Chapter 5 is nurtured by American Zen Buddhist teaching and practice. Zen leaders lead by teaching and practice. Zen teaching and practice are intertwined and mutually reinforcing. This chapter is not to discuss the cognitive aspect of Zen teachings, such as the notions of emptiness, non-self, impermanence, nonduality, non-attachment, or the four Noble Truths, all of which can be learned cognitively by reading Buddhist sutras and listening to Zen teachers' dharma talks. Learning about Zen Buddhist doctrines is undoubtedly essential and fundamental to Zen Buddhist practice. However, this chapter is focused on how these doctrines are being taught at American Zen centers through Zen practice that demands students' holistic engagement and embodied ways of knowing. I also share how I explore Zen-informed approaches to management education during the COVID-19 pandemic, gaining insights into spiritual teaching practice that can be healing and empowering in a time characterized by unprecedented uncertainty and stress.

One can hardly do justice to the topic of Zen teaching practice in just one chapter, or even one book, given the richness and depth of this great tradition and the vast varieties of its adapted forms in the West. This chapter only offers a peek of American Zen teaching practice based on my 2019 field study at four American Zen centers in relation to how it nurtures feminist leadership. This study also draws from my autoethnographic journal between April 2019 and February 2021 that records my reflections on the weekly dharma talks by Zen teacher Koun Franz at Zen Nova Scotia (now Thousand Harbours Zen).

Zen teaching practice stresses not only intellectual but also physical, emotional, and spiritual engagement. Accordingly, Zen teaching practice uses both verbal and nonverbal methods that demand whole-being engagement and embodied knowing. Another feature of Zen teaching practice that particularly appeals to me as a Chinese is the Eastern aesthetics of the cultural artifacts, rituals, and ambience at American Zen centers. Furthermore, a prominent social phenomenon I observe is how Zen Buddhism is experiencing an innovative, dynamic process of adapting to modern American society. Below, I summarize four features of American Zen teaching practice: 1) koan study, 2) meditative practices, 3) Eastern aesthetics, and 4) innovative cultural adaptation.

6.2 Koan Study

Among all kinds of Zen teaching practices, koan study and dharma talk figure prominently as the more discursive interactions between teachers and students (Heine & Wright, 2000). In this section, I focus on koan study and only briefly mention dharma talk at the end of this section.

Koan is the Japanese translation of Chinese "gong-an" (公案), literally meaning "public case". Traditional koans are recorded sayings, teachings and dialogical encounters between Zen masters and disciples in China during the Tang dynasty (618-907 CE) and the Song dynasty (960-1279 CE). These koans are compiled and published in the Song Dynasty as Chinese classical koan collections (e.g., 景德傳燈錄 *Records of the Transmission of the Lamp,* 五燈會元 *Song Dynasty History of Zen Buddhism in China*). Popular Chinese koan collections being used in modern American Zen centers include *Blue Cliff Record* 碧巖錄 and *The Gateless Gate* 無門關. It feels incredible for me to observe that ancient Chinese koans are still being studied by modern American Zen practitioners after a millennium, despite the obvious historical and cultural barriers for the koans to cross.

Koans are often enigmatic or shocking expressions designed to induce enlightenment by putting the Zen practitioner in a dilemma unsolvable by the rational, intellectualizing mind. For example, below is a famous Chinese classical koan:

> A monk asked, "For what purpose did the Patriarch[5] come from the West[6]?" The master [i.e., Zhaozhou Congshen 趙州從谂 (778-897 CE)] replied, "The cypress cones in the courtyard." (普濟 Puji, 1252/2021, vol. 4)

Koans, as my interviewees (e.g., interview with Muso 無束, November 10, 2019) say, are meant to be confusing. Koans are conceived as both the pedagogical tool by which enlightenment is brought about and an expression of the enlightened mind itself (Heine & Wright, 2000). "Driven into an ever more desperate corner by his [sic] repeated futile attempts to solve what cannot be rationally solved, the practitioner finally breaks through" (Horn, 2000, p.280). Koun Franz says that there are usually two kinds of situations when people get enlightened: either hearing their teacher saying the right thing at the right moment, or after hopelessly working on a koan and then hearing or seeing anything that is just like their teacher saying the right thing in the right moment (personal journal, June 25, 2019).

Typically, a Zen practitioner is given by the teacher a koan to work with for a period of time. If they "pass" the koan through dokusan (a private meeting with the teacher), they would be given a new one. If a person keeps working on a koan for years and it seems "not doing any good", the teacher may give them a different koan to try to "shake things up" (interview with Giun 宜雲, June 4, 2019). Some people may go through hundreds of koans and pass all of them within a few

---

[5] "The Patriarch" refers to Bodhidharma (菩提达摩, ?-535 CE), the first patriarch of Zen who brought Buddhism from India to China during the 5th or 6th century.

[6] "The West" refers to ancient India.

years (interview with Senshin 純心, November 7, 2019), and some may stick to one koan for years

or even decades (interview with Giun, June 4, 2019).

In addition to Chinese classical koans, American Zen teachers also use koans from Japan, Korea, and create modern Western koans drawn from everyday lives. For example, Zen teacher Jun Po Roshi (淳法禪師) creates the famous "emotional koan" practice that directly links koan study to one's emotional conundrum. It is "a dialogue practice that uses enigmatic questions to awaken one to Clear Deep Heart-Mind, our deepest self, which includes unconditional compassion" (Hollow Bones Order, 2018a, p.7). Emotional koan dialogues usually begin with existential questions or statements such as "Has anyone or anything ever made you angry, shamed you, or made you disconnect", or "Select a recurring negative habitual reaction from your daily life and transform it into a conscious, compassionate response", or "Show me silently, through your eyes and body, the awareness and clarity that are always present before an emotional reaction begins". Jun Po Roshi believes that through the emotional koan practice, one can transform negative emotional reactions into wise, compassionate responses and alleviate suffering. He emphasizes that "dharma gates are infinite", and "our angst becomes our liberation" (Hollow Bones Order, 2018a, p.1).

Egyoku Roshi (惠玉禪師) and Myonen Roshi take a different approach and create "householder koans" (Marko & Nakao, 2020). In their co-authored book, they suggest that ancient Chinese and Japanese koans are known to be difficult for Westerners to construe due to cultural gaps, whereas "householder koans" are created by 21st-century Zen practitioners living a lay life in the West who deal with the challenges of relationships, raising children, work, money, love, loss, old age, and death. For example, a householder koan entitled "My mother's diaper" reads:

Two years into being my mother's primary caregiver, she began to need adult diapers. She adapted to them without comment. For me, the ritual of sitting on the edge of the tub first thing in the morning, facing mom as she's seated on the toilet, sliding her pants and diaper first over her knees, and then off each foot, has become a meditation.

How heavy is my mother's diaper? (Nakao, 2019)

During our interview, Egyoku Roshi makes the following statement:

Our lineage is very koan-oriented. But the [classical] koans are mostly male koans coming from the monastery. There are a few women koans which are very powerful, but they all led monastic type of lives. So this movement to the householder koans is coming out of our own soil in a way. And Bernie Glassman would often say the real koans are people's lives in this country. That's the real koans. And it really forces us to look at, well, what is a koan? [laugh] What is it about my life that I could really penetrate? […] I think what makes a koan is if there's something that grabs a person and the rational mind cannot grasp it. Then you have the potential of a koan because you have to leave the rational mind behind. For the rational mind, it's a dilemma or paradox, but for a Buddha mind, it's not. So that's the ship. It puts you beyond the duality of things. It has to be a living question. And you have to be willing to sit with it so that it can keep open. But as long as you engage it mentally, you haven't entered it yet. You have to learn how to do it. (Interview with Egyoku Roshi, November 8, 2019)

Moreover, American Zen practitioners are trained to create koans by themselves spontaneously. For example, I observe how Egyoku Roshi, in her Zen class at Zen Center of Los Angeles, encourages the participants to develop koans on their own, after reading the householder koans provided in the class handouts. For another example, Jun Po Roshi and I have the following dialogue during our interview:

Tianyuan: "Can you describe what enlightenment is?"

Jun Po: "No." [giggling]

Tianyuan: "Why?"

Jun Po: "What is the question?"

Tianyuan: "What is enlightenment?"

Jun Po: "Okay. So, what is the question?"

Tianyuan: "Hmm."[falling silent]

Jun Po: "What is enlightenment?"

Tianyuan [in a low voice]: "Yeah, this is my question."

Jun Po: "Go into the question. What is enlightenment? What is enlightenment? So, koan is a question. What is enlightenment? Where is the Buddha? What is enlightenment? What was your original face before your mother was born? What is enlightenment? What is the sound of one-hand clapping? What is enlightenment? It's the same question. You have to answer the question." (Interview with Jun Po Roshi, June 8, 2019)

Jun Po Roshi responds to my question by repeating it, immediately making my question a koan for me to work on. It is noteworthy that repetition is a typical verbal method identified by D.T. Suzuki (1958), who classifies ancient Zen masters' teaching methods as recorded in Chinese classical koans under two general categories: verbal methods and direct (nonverbal) methods. Suzuki categorizes five types of verbal methods: paradox, going beyond opposites, contradiction, affirmation, and repetition.

According to Suzuki, nonverbal methods are usually a display of physical force such as exclamation, gesture, facial expression, striking, stamping feet, or any improvising actions depending on the immediate context (e.g., picking up a flower, blowing out a candle, knocking down a bottle, etc.). Exclamation, for example, originates from Master Linji Yixuan (臨濟義玄, ?-

866 CE), founder of the Chinese Linji school (now Japanese Rinzai Zen). Linji is reputed for leading students to enlightenment by shouting (*鎮州臨濟慧照禪師語錄. Quotations from Chan Master Linji Huizhao from Zhenzhou*. 2002), known as the "Linji shout" (臨濟喝). Whether a shout, a blow, or other shocking expressions, nonverbal methods are meant to lead the student to awakening, that is, letting go of one's dualistic thinking. Nonverbal methods demonstrate the famous Zen teaching philosophy: "pointing directly at the heart-mind, seeing one's true nature and attaining Buddhahood (直指人心，見性成佛)".

It is captivating to observe both verbal and nonverbal methods being actively utilized by American Zen teachers in their interaction with students, especially when giving dharma talks (Yu & Mills, 2022). For example, during my field study, I witness for multiple times Zen teachers using the "Linji shout" method while speaking. Jun Po Roshi, for instance, in his dharma talk for the orientation of a seven-day Sesshin at Dai Bosatsu Zendo, shouts forcefully: "What do you want to gain from the Sesshin? Hah! Hah! Hah!" (field notes, June 2019).

6.3 Meditative Practice

Zen teaching practice stresses students' physical, emotional, and spiritual engagement beyond intellectualizing. The intellectualizing mind tends to be trapped in dualistic thinking, the dominant way of knowing in modern Western science. Zen koan is a dilemma that is unsolvable by the intellectualizing mind. Zen practitioners need to maintain a meditative mind to activate embodied knowing. In Zen centers, this state of mind is usually cultivated by engaging in koan study combined with meditative practices. Zen teacher Junryo Roshi says: "Working on koans without doing Zazen (sitting meditation) will make koan study merely intellectual work. It is not sufficient. You have to *experience* it." (field notes, June 2019, emphasis added).

The most used meditative practices in American Zen centers are Zazen (坐禪 sitting meditation), kinhin (經行 walking meditation), and chanting. Zen centers are known for their emphasis on daily Zazen practice. Zen centers also regularly hold intensive meditation periods such as Sesshin (攝心, usually seven days) or Ango (安居, prolonged meditation lasting for three months). In addition, Zen classes and ceremonies typically start with Zazen for a short period of time (ranging from 5 minutes to 30 minutes, depending on the situation).

When doing Zazen, a Zen practitioner can be counting breaths, reflecting on a koan, or "just sitting" (Shikantaza 祇管打坐). Differing from popular Mindfulness meditation practice,

which is often guided by a facilitator who would describe some sort of imagined visions, a Zazen practitioner has no facilitator nor imagined visions to rely on when doing Zazen. There are basic instructions on different sitting postures depending on different Zen lineages or traditions. But a practitioner has to rely on themselves to concentrate the mind once Zazen begins. Moreover, Zazen is not a relaxing practice like Mindfulness meditation. A common instruction of Zazen postures is to keep one's back straight up throughout the meditation so that one's mind remains alert. Zazen practitioners are advised to keep their eyes open rather than closed in order to be fully aware of what is happening in their surroundings.

Furthermore, unlike Mindfulness meditation known for bringing various benefits to the practitioner, it is often emphasized that Zazen is useless and goalless. Zen practitioners do not do Zazen for anything except itself. It may sound ridiculous that anyone leading a busy, secular life would sit for nothing for half an hour or more every day. But this is the paradox of Zen as a pointless point or purposeless purpose. As Warner (2012) points out, "[t]he weird thing is that the

only way one really gets any of the most important benefits of meditation practice is by giving up

on the notion that there are any benefits to meditation practice."

One can imagine how difficult, boring, uncomfortable, and even painful Zazen can be. Arguably, that is what makes Zazen a powerful practice. Below is a story shared by Jitsujo (實定), a Zen priest at the Zen Center of Los Angeles, about her first time doing Zazen.

> Jitsujo: "2003 was the first time I sat down in Zazen. It was in New York city at the Village Zendo […] I don't think I knew this at the time, but upon reflection of many years of Zen practice, when I sat down in Zazen, that moment, I really think was an awakening experience for me. It was the hardest 30 minutes of my entire life."

> Tianyuan: "The first time you sat."

> Jitsujo: "I had done some meditation in a chair, like 10 minutes with groups or some guided things, but in Zazen... I went to a 15-minute class, and then we sat 30 minutes in the meditation hall. And it was just like, ahhhhhh, like my ego just went crazy. It was so crazy. And I just sat with this crazy mind, but it was the first time that it was like, there was no one to blame. I looked around and everyone, like, I remember opening my eyes, and everyone looks fine, but why am I so crazy? It was like the first time I saw my own mind and there was no one to blame. And I saw my anger and I saw that it was me."

> Tianyuan: "Yes. How powerful."

> Jitsujo: "It was so powerful. But at the time I just, I left there. And I was like, I'm never going to do that again." [giggling]

> Tianyuan: "Is it also because of the pain in your legs?"

> Jitsujo: "I had pain too. It was the whole thing. It was a complete body experience."

> Tianyuan: "Uncomfortableness. "

> Jitsujo: "It was. It was so raw. It was so raw."

Tianyuan: "Did the teacher notice your struggle, or did you tell anybody?"

Jitsujo: "No, I just left, and I was like, I'll never gonna do that."

Tianyuan: "But you did have an awakening moment." [giggling]

*Jitsujo: "*I couldn't forget it. So I eventually went back, and it just took me about six months, but I eventually went back. And there was something…my ego would have said, don't do that, but I couldn't shake that experience. And I had to go back and see what it was." (Interview with Jitsujo, November 8, 2019)

Chanting is another Zen meditation practice that takes place regularly during group gatherings, ceremonies, and services at Zen centers. Each Zen center I visit provides practitioners with a Sutra Book that includes their most chanted sutras and dharani, mostly in English and some in Japanese. My interviewees enjoy and appreciate the act of chanting because it helps the mind pay attention to the present. For example, Dharma-Joy, a Zen priest at the Zen Center of Los Angeles, explains why he appreciates chanting in Japanese as a person who does not speak Japanese.

Tianyuan: "Do you find chanting the dharani and sutras in Japanese confusing, especially for new people?"

Dharma-Joy: "I want it to be confusing for them. [laughing] I'll tell you why. This is my perspective. And I am one of the ceremonial stewards of the Zen Center. We can learn the English really easily. And then when you have learned the English, you can just start chanting it, and you can put your brain on autopilot and start thinking about other things. Right?"

Tianyuan: "Oh, I see what you mean."

Dharma-Joy: "If you're chanting in Japanese or Sino-Japanese, unless you've been here a long time, you have to follow along every single syllable. Or else you're going to get lost. So, this practice is about getting us to pay attention, to be here. So that's why I say I like it to be confusing because it forces people to pay attention."

Tianyuan: "But what if you have recited those Japanese dharani so many times that…"

Dharma-Joy: "That's the big challenge. Sometimes you may drift off. But you're gonna drift off in English a lot faster. And so the chanting is helpful because it can shift you from a certain kind of lazy mind, distracted mind, to an attentive mind." (Interview with Dharma-Joy, November 10, 2019)

Mukei (霧溪), a long-time practitioner at Zen Center Los Angeles, shares why he enjoys chanting after having memorized everything:

Mukei: "I enjoy service and chanting and reciting the sutras. Because I've been doing it long enough now that I have things memorized. […] And so having it memorized, I don't have to work to read what's on the page. I can let the words come out of my mouth and I get to just pay attention to what they actually are without having to worry about trying to remember or read or whatever. And that's where I can really sort of pay attention to what the sutra is saying, you know."

Tianyuan: "You enjoy the chanting and service because you can really pay attention to the meaning of those words."

Mukei: "Yes." (Interview with Mukei, November 6, 2019)

The accumulated practice of chanting makes the content of the sutras and dharani part of one's body that naturally flows out when prompted. For instance, in my interview with Daniel, a Zen priest of the Hollow Bones Sangha, he answers one of my questions by reciting the chant "*Atta Dipa*":

Daniel: "[…] I saw all these different places pointed to one fundamental thing that I needed to work on. When we can identify what that thing is, we cut that route. Then all the other things kind of fade away."

Tianyuan: "How do you cut that route?"

Daniel: "By realizing who you really are. You are this light, pure selfless awareness. Rely upon selfless awareness. Do not rely upon concepts of self and

other that appear. Do not depend upon beliefs, sensations, and emotions, which rise and fall away. Meditative awareness, clear intention, acting wisely, compassionately and skillfully, are this practice. Rely upon this only. Rely upon this ceaselessly."

Tianyuan: "Well, you are speaking as if you are reciting some verse."

Daniel: "That's the *Atta Dipa*, which is part of our morning service. Um, it is in our sutra book and it opens our morning service. […] The concept is that within each of us, we have this Buddha nature. And we have only to realize who we are, our true self, our true nature, which has no self. Once we realize that and bring that forward, we're manifesting this light in the world. What else do you need?" (Interview with Daniel, June 8, 2019)

In American Zen centers, meditation is not only practiced through formal Zazen, kinhin, prostrating, and chanting, but also through various ceremonies and other daily routines such as cooking, eating, cleaning, and literally each and every moment of life. All the nonverbal interactions and embodied practices taking place at Zen centers may cultivate one's meditative mind and embodied knowing.

For example, Mukei mentions how Zen ceremonies, like many group activities *at Zen centers*, are essentially meditative practices that demand participants' full attention to make highly coordinated moves:

…So the ceremonies are probably as enjoyable [as chanting] because I just like the form and paying attention to what I'm doing. […] And, although I know the ceremonies well enough that that I could do it alone if there weren't anyone else there, but when you're doing it with other people, it becomes really sort of how you work together. Right? Because the person doing *this* position is giving signals and cues to *this* position. And the person doing *this* position is doing things that *this* person has to pay attention to. And it becomes like a flow and like a dance. (Interview with Mukei, November 6, 2019, emphasis added)

For another example, a 40-minute dharma talk given by Jun Po Roshi at Dai Bosatsu Zendo on June 10th, 2019 includes a 20-minute period of silence. This prolonged silence stands out to me because it takes place at a time when the teacher is supposed to talk. At the time, the audience of the dharma talk has just completed a Zazen practice and is attentively listening to Jun Po Roshi. I, as a participant observer, am videotaping the dharma talk and directing my camera at Jun Po Roshi. But Jun Po Roshi keeps silent, sitting still on the podium. No one in the audience seems uneasy about this silence since sitting silently has become part of life at Zen centers. Everyone is sitting still as well and listening to the silence. I hear through the window the very soft sounds of the breeze brushing through the trees around the Zendo. After a while, the silence in the room is punctuated by an echoing sound made by Jun Po Roshi, who is striking the rim of a small bowl-shaped gong with a stick. And the audience keeps listening to the sound of the silence. Eventually my camera records a total of 20 minutes of silence before Jun Po Roshi starts to talk.

6.4 Eastern Aesthetics

A salient feature of Zen teaching practice that appeals to me as a Chinese is the Eastern aesthetics of the cultural artifacts, rituals, and ambience at American Zen centers. It feels incredible for a Chinese to witness ancient Chinese and Japanese traditions being lively maintained in modern American Zen centers, despite the immense temporal and spatial distance. This cultural inheritance offers an embodied experience of Eastern aesthetics that fosters a meditative mind. Below, I provide some examples of various aspects of cultural inheritance, illustrated by photos I take during my 2019 field study at American Zen centers.

Whenever you walk into an American Zen center, a most prominent artifact would be the Buddha's statue placed on a Buddhist altar (Figure 6-1, Figure 6-2). You may also encounter statues of different buddhas and bodhisattvas located in various places around the Zen center

(Figure 6-3), all of which are of distinct Asian art styles. Meanwhile you may find yourself immersed in the lingering, subtle aroma of Chinese or Japanese incense offered to the Buddha. You would likely see floral offerings beside the Buddha statue, manifesting the Japanese art of flower arrangement.

Figure 6-1: *An Altar at the Meditation Hall*

Note. Photo taken at New York Zendo on June 5, 2019.

Figure 6-2: *An Altar at the Dharma Hall*

Note. Photo taken at New York Zendo on June 6, 2019.

Figure 6-3: *A Statue of Guanyin in the Garden*

Note. Photo taken at Zen Center of Los Angeles on November 7, 2019.

A most captivating phenomenon for me when visiting the four American Zen centers is the prevalent influence of the traditional Chinese language and arts. For example, American Zen centers tend to have their temple names in Chinese inscribed on a plaque or a stone placed at the main entrance of the building, following the Chinese tradition (Figure 6-4, Figure 6-5). Chinese calligraphy artworks are displayed all around the buildings (Figure 6-6, Figure 6-7), along with paintings of traditional Chinese style (Figure 6-8). Many of the artworks reflect Chinese Zen Buddhist figures, stories, and idioms (Figure 6-9). And they are usually handwritten by contemporary Japanese Zen practitioners, who continue learning traditional Chinese language, calligraphy, and painting.

Figure 6-4: *The Gate of Dai Bosatsu Zendo*

Note. A plaque inscribed with "鳳雲山" (Phoenix Cloud Mountain) hanging on the gate. Photo taken at Dai Bosatsu Zendo on June 7th, 2019.

Figure 6-5: *A Stone Plaque of Chinese Characters*

Note. The plaque is inscribed with "大菩薩禪堂" (the Chinese translation of "Dai Bosatsu Zendo"). Photo taken at Dai Bosatsu Zendo on June 7th, 2019.

Figure 6-6: *A Chinese Calligraphy Artwork - I*

Note. Photo taken at New York Zendo on June 5th, 2019.

Figure 6-7: *A Chinese Calligraphy Artwork - II*

Note. Photo taken at Dai Bosatsu Zendo on June 8th, 2019.

Figure 6-8*: A Painting of Traditional Chinese Style*

Note. Photo taken at Zen Center of Los Angeles on November 11th, 2019.

Figure 6-9: *A Painting Mimicking the Chinese "Ten Ox Herding Pictures"*

Note. Using metaphors, the pictures depict the stages of a Zen practitioner's progress toward enlightenment. Photo taken at Zen Center of Los Angeles on November 11th, 2019.

Somehow it feels healing and empowering for me to observe English speakers making efforts to learn and use the Chinese language. As a first-generation Chinese immigrant in the West who is forever disadvantaged by the English language hegemony and the Eurocentric

discrimination against Chinese knowledge, I find it therapeutic and exciting to see my cultural

heritage being respected and appreciated at American Zen centers. For example, in the libraries of

major American Zen centers one may find Chinese language learning tools such as stacks of cards

of Chinese characters (Figure 6-10) and language learning books (Figure 6-11). At the library of

Dai Bosatsu Zendo, I even come across a copy of a Chinese book called Yijin Jing 易筋經, a

classic Chinese manual of martial arts (Figure 6-12). It is thrilling for me to see the book because

it is a rare, legendary book written by Bodhidharma (菩提達摩, the first patriarch of Chinese Chan

Buddhism) according to Chinese Wuxia (武俠 martial arts chivalry) novels.

Figure 6-10: *Chinese Language-learning Cards*

Note. Photo taken at the Library of Dai Bosatsu Zendo on June 10th, 2019.

Figure 6-11: *A Book on Chinese Characters and Calligraphy*

Note. Photo taken at the Library of Zen Center of Los Angeles on November 7th, 2019.

Figure 6-12*: A Copy of Yijin Jing 易筋經*

Note. Photo taken at the Library of Dai Bosatsu Zendo on June 8th, 2019.

Compared to Chinese cultural influences, Japanese cultural traditions are even more prevalent in American Zen centers for obvious reasons. For example, the entire architecture of Dai Bosatsu Zendo is built by community members of the Zen Studies Society in the 1970s led by Eido Shimano Roshi following traditional Japanese models (Figure 6-13, Figure 6-14, Figure 6-15). If a Zen center uses existing American buildings, such as the case of New York Zendo, the interior layout may be reshaped following Japanese traditions (Figure 6-16). At Zen Center of Los

Angeles, Japanese artifacts are also found everywhere around the buildings (Figure 6-17, Figure 6-18).

Figure 6-13: *The Japanese-Style Architecture of Dai Bosatsu Zendo*

Note. Photo taken at Dai Bosatsu Zendo on June 8th, 2019.

Figure 6-14: *A Japanese-Style Dry Garden*

Note. Photo taken at Dai Bosatsu Zendo on June 9th, 2019.

Figure 6-15: *A Meditation Hall of Japanese Style*

Note. Photo taken at Dai Bosatsu Zendo on June 8th, 2019.

Figure 6-16: *A Garden of Japanese Style*

Note. Photo taken at New York Zendo on June 5th, 2019.

Figure 6-17: *A Japanese Statue of Jizo (Bodhisattva of Earth Womb 地藏菩薩)*

Note. Photo taken at Zen Center of Los Angeles on November 7th, 2019.

Figure 6-18: *A Japanese Drum*

Note. Photo taken at Zen Center of Los Angeles on November 11th, 2019.

Some Zen centers, especially those following the Rinzai Zen lineage, may provide traditional Japanese Buddhist robes for visitors and resident practitioners (Figure 6-19). The act of wearing Buddhist robes offers an embodied experience of Zen traditions. I feel differently when dressed in a robe. I feel more attuned to the surroundings since everyone is in robes at the Zen center (Figure 6-20). I feel as if my body and presence are more elegant since traditional Asian costumes are physically comfortable and aesthetically appealing to me. I also feel more connected to the living tradition of Zen.

Figure 6-19: *A Change Room for Visitors*
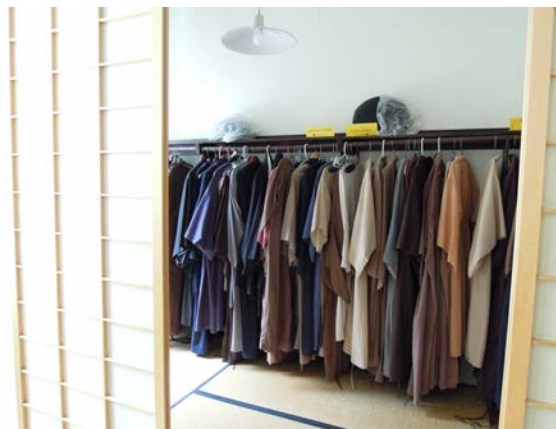
Note. Photo taken at New York Zendo on June 5th, 2019.

Figure 6-20: *Kinhin (Walking Meditation) Practice*

Note. Photo taken at Dai Bosatsu Zendo on June 9th, 2019.

Another immersive experience with the living tradition of Zen is dining at American Zen centers, which nourishes my mind and soul as well as my body. The Japanese tea ceremony, which takes place regularly during the break of Zazen sessions, is a beautiful ritual performed by all practitioners through coordinated moves without a word, almost like a dance. Likewise, the formal dining that follows traditional Japanese monastic etiquette is, in essence, a meditative ceremony conveying spiritual meanings through group chanting and highly coordinated practice by all. I would be remiss not to mention the delicious Japanese cuisine which comforts my Chinese appetite way better than Western food. When I use chopsticks instead of forks to eat, I feel at home.

American Zen centers regularly hold formal ceremonies such as Jukai (受戒 taking precepts), Ordination (得度), and Jodo-E ceremonies (成道日 commemorating the Awakening of Shakyamuni Buddha). Zen teachers and students take ceremonies and rituals so seriously that they may even do rehearsals in advance to ensure the rituals are performed in the way they are supposed to be (Figure 6-21). Ceremonies and rituals are an indispensable part of the religious life of Zen practitioners, but also offer an immersive experience of the great tradition steeped in Eastern

aesthetics. It is through the whole-being engagement with the sacred rituals that participants get to refresh their spiritual beliefs and deepen their embodied knowing. I remember bursting into tears watching a Zen practitioner taking vows at a Jukai ceremony at Zen Center of Los Angeles. I cannot forget the purifying moment of witnessing her wholeheartedness flowing out of her look, her voice, her body in a white robe bathed in soft lighting.

Figure 6-21: *Jun Po Roshi and Students Rehearsing for an Ordination Ceremony*

Note. Photo taken at Dai Bosatsu Zendo on June 10th, 2019.

Throughout the ceremonies and daily practices at Zen centers, traditional percussion instruments are highly functional because of the emphasis of Zen practices on embodied knowing. Zen centers use a variety of traditional percussion instruments, such as bells, drums, gongs, clappers, and sounding boards, to give nonverbal cues and orders. For example, a day at a Zen monastery typically starts at dawn with the profound sound of the ogane (大鐘, the largest temple bell). Different instruments, such as inkin (引磬, hand bell, Figure 6-22), keisu (磬, large bowl-bell, Figure 6-23), and densho (殿鐘, main hall bell, Figure 6-24) may be used to signal the beginning and ending of Zazen, kinhin, group meals, and group gatherings. A mokugyo (木魚, wooden carved instrument, Figure 6-23) serves to keep the rhythm during group chanting. A set

of wooden clappers (拍子木, Figure 6-22) functions to prompt changes in moves amid meditative practices. And there are "a hundred ways" to play each instrument concerning the timing, frequency, sequence, duration, and intensity (interview with Shumyo Kojima, December 8, 2019). Zen practitioners are trained to adjust their behaviours in accordance with these nonverbal cues.

Figure 6-22: *A Set of Wooden Clappers and an Inkin (Hand Bell)*

Note. Photo taken at the Meditation Hall of New York Zendo on June 5th, 2019.

Figure 6-23: *A Mokugyo (wooden carved instrument) and a Keisu (large bowl-bell)*

Note. Photo taken at the Meditation Hall of New York Zendo on June 5th, 2019.

Figure 6-24: *A Densho Hanging under the Eave*

Note. Photo taken at Dai Bosatsu Zendo on June 8th, 2019

Some instruments may also serve to convey Buddhist teachings. For example, a han (板) is a heavy, solid wooden sounding board hung at the front door of a Zendo. It is usually struck by a monastic with all their strength and in a cascading rhythm, communicating the spirit of the words inscribed on the han with an ink brush (Figure 6-25):

生死事大

The matter of birth-and-death is of utmost importance;

無常迅速

Life is impermanent and swift.

時不待人

Time waits for no one.

慎莫放逸

Do not indulge in idleness!

Figure 6-25: *A Han (Wooden Sounding Board)*

Note. Photo taken at Dai Bosatsu Zendo on June 9th, 2019.

6.5 Innovative Cultural Adaptation

As a cross-cultural transplanting process, the integration of Zen Buddhism into contemporary Western society has been undergoing tremendous cultural challenges. A major issue is how to adapt Zen teaching practices to the needs of modern Americans without diluting the essence of this great Eastern tradition. To address this problem, American Zen communities have been engaged in numerous cultural innovations. In a sense, this process is a reinvention of Zen Buddhism that is filled with controversy and tension. For instance, according to Rev. Shumyo Kojima, head minister of Zenshuji, traditional Japanese Zen rituals are "already cut down to 5%" in their current forms retained at American Zen centers (interview with Kojima Sensei, December 8th, 2019). Rev. Gyokei Yokoyama, a Japanese Zen priest and secretary of the Soto Zen Buddhism North America Office, shares his perspective on this issue:

> There's a certain aversion in the Western hemisphere against rituals. …They [i.e., Westerners] generally want to keep it casual, which is like the American spirit, right? They want to keep it a little more casual, friendly, personable, which is great. I always appreciate how people want to feel relatable about this

tradition and find actual ways to live with it. …But the wisdom from Asian countries is beyond intellectual understanding, right? It's sort of embodied knowledge, and the rituals definitely play an important role in the embodiment. It is only by throwing yourself into the practice can the wisdom manifest…. If you only grasp verbal expressions, you are blinding yourself. (Interview with Gyokei, December 4, 2019)

Gyokei's remark reflects the ongoing tension involved in the cultural adaptation of Zen Buddhism in the U.S. Nonetheless, from my point of view, the reinvention of Zen Buddhism in North America is not only inevitable but also promising. And it is this reinvention that shapes American Zen Buddhism which is distinct from Chinese Chan, Japanese Zen, or any other forms of Buddhism. Moreover, it is American Zen Buddhism that nurtures the type of feminist leadership that I find from this research.

The reinvention of Zen is in line with the Zen spirit of non-attachment and spontaneity. The Buddha says that "dharma teachings are like a raft" which should be cast aside once one reaches the other bank of the river (*The Diamond Sutra*, n.d., Ch. 6). It is a Mahayana Buddhist doctrine that infinite teaching methods can be used as "skillful means" or "dharma gates" that lead to the awakened way.

In my field study, I observe how American Zen teachers continuously make innovative cultural adaptations to traditional Zen teaching practices. For example, as mentioned previously, American Zen teachers create their own koans in addition to using classical Chinese and Japanese koans. Jun Po Roshi creates the famous "emotional koan" practice that directly links koan study to one's emotional conundrum. Egyoku Roshi and Myonen Roshi create "householder koans" (Marko & Nakao, 2020) and encourage students to create koans based on lay life.

Gleig (2019) suggests that emotional koan exemplifies an ongoing trend of a powerful synthesis of Eastern Zen wisdom and Western psychological insight that unites spiritual awareness and emotional maturity. In fact, the scope of knowledge synthesis taking place at Zen centers is not confined to Western psychology. For example, physical activities such as Yoga and Taichi have been integrated into intensive Zen meditation programs at Dai Bosatsu Zendo and New York Zendo, which are well received by Zen practitioners. The trend of knowledge synthesis is also noticeable at Zen Center of Los Angeles (ZCLA), whose library collects not only Buddhist books but also books on other religions (Taoism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism) and on a variety of disciplines (e.g., psychology, women studies, Indigenous traditions, poetry, mysticism, death and dying, ecology, science, arts, and philosophy). Egyoku Roshi mentions how the ZCLA sangha members "borrow knowledge from Western psychology, Western management theories, aboriginal cultures, and Zen Buddhist traditions" to address their collective trauma in the wake of the Maezumi scandal (interview with Egyoku Roshi, November 8, 2019). Through the knowledge synthesis process, they create various healing programs such as "healing circle", "HEAR (Hearing, Ethics, and Reconciliation) circle", "many hands and eyes circle", "mala workshop", "bones lab container", and the "atonement ceremony", to name but a few.

More importantly, a significant "modification" to the Asian Zen Buddhist tradition is a shift from an autocratic, hierarchical, and male-dominated culture to an egalitarian, horizontal, and gender-inclusive culture more aligned with the American values of equality and democracy. This fundamental cultural change is most evident from the systematic organizational reforms led by Egyoku Roshi at ZCLA as described in Chapter 5, which transforms the organization "from a teacher-focused vertical structure to an all-inclusive model that embraces a sangha-oriented horizontal structure" (ZCLA, 2023). As mentioned in Chapter 5, ZCLA adopts many innovative

management practices such as "shared stewardship", "council practice", and "circles" to strengthen the horizontal relationships within the sangha (Nakao, 2000). They also develop a series of organizational documents to set forth ethical guidelines for teachers and students (ZCLA, 2019), and to reclaim the rights and status of women within the sangha (Nakao, 1998b).

This feminist, democratic cultural movement also manifests in many other aspects of Zen teaching practices taking place at American Zen centers. For example, I find similar modifications to Zazen practice at ZCLA, New York Zendo, and Dai Bosatsu Zendo, wherein Zazen practitioners no longer face the wall as per the tradition but face each other. Sangha members share with me why this small change is significant. Before this change, sangha members rarely communicate with each other except with the teacher, as people do not even know each other's faces despite sitting together for a long time. After the change, communication is no longer teacher-focused; it becomes horizontal and sangha-oriented. For another example, Muken (無間), a long-time sangha member at Dai Bosatsu Zendo, shares with me that he finds Jun Po Roshi's teaching style drastically differs from Eido Shimano Roshi in how they interact with students. Jun Po Roshi would often tell jokes with students to diminish the sense of hierarchy or distance. His dharma talks are full of lightheartedness and humor. In contrast, Eido Roshi tends to preserve a grave and dignified bearing. Muken recalls how Eido Roshi would scream and yell at some students for as long as ten minutes in his class (interview with Muken, June 11, 2019).

In addition to "democratizing" the Eastern Zen tradition, American Zen teachers are also endeavoring to "secularize" Zen Buddhism so that Zen practice is more accessible to lay people in modern Western society. This social innovation is significant considering the Chinese and Japanese traditions of rigid segregation between monastics and lay persons. Growing up in mainland China as a lay person, I know that Buddhist temples are conventionally closed to lay

people. A lay person can visit Buddhist temples to pay tribute to the Buddhas and bodhisattvas, or just drop by as a tourist. However, only monks and nuns are allowed to participate in Buddhist practices at the temples. Therefore, Buddhist monastic lives and practices are almost completely inaccessible to lay people in China. By contrast, American Zen centers are open to all. American Zen teaching and learning programs are typically designed with flexible schedules to accommodate lay people's work-life balance. Zen centers may offer lay practitioners multiple options, such as weekly introductory classes, evening classes, half-day/one-day retreats, weekend temple visits, seven-day intensive meditation programs, and monastic residence programs that last for months or years. Zen teachers may also adopt multiple delivery modes of teaching. For example, The Hollow Bones Sangha founded by Jun Po Roshi has been offering online courses (e.g., the emotional koan practice) since before COVID-19.

Another example of the "secularization" of Zen practices is the variation of chanting practice. As mentioned previously, chanting is an integral part of Zen practices that requires the practitioner's whole-being engagement. Chanting may even trigger a powerful awakening experience, as described in Chapter 5. Traditional Japanese chanting follows a flat, even tone with coordinated tempos and beats. By contrast, American Zen teachers create various ways of chanting to enhance its transformational effect, although some may choose to stick with the Japanese even-tone style. I am particularly impressed and almost enchanted by the Hollow Bones Sangha's way of chanting created by Jun Po Roshi. As mentioned in Chapter 5, instead of using an even tone, the Hollow Bones Sangha chant in the normal, varied tones just like reading, making this religious practice rather approachable. But they would "read" with their whole body, mind, heart, and soul. They would "read" in a very animated style with varied tempos, stresses, facial expressions, and body movements depending on the content of the text. While remaining seated, sangha members

would frequently shake their bodies, wave their hands, turn to each other to make eye contact, smile, sing, or exclaim. The atmosphere is tremendously infectious and joyful. It encourages expressions of emotions and fosters interconnections between sangha members rather than the opposite as traditional Buddhist practices may look like.

6.6 Exploring a Zen-informed Approach to Management Education

I teach management undergraduate courses at a small liberal arts university in Atlantic Canada. Starting in the fall term of 2020, when all courses are moved to an online teaching mode due to COVID-19, I begin to experiment with four recurring, Zen-informed activities in "Managing diversity: Gender and other issues", a seminar course that examines issues faced by women and minority groups in the workplace. Course topics include discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, and other grounds. This is a course particularly suitable for applying Zen pedagogy, as it is designed to be a) a highly participative seminar course, b) of a small class size under 25 students, and c) focusing on authentic dialogues over difficult topics.

I aim to build a learning community where members develop and share compassion and wisdom with each other. Emotions are encouraged to be expressed, and personal experience is valued as a legitimate knowledge base. These are conveyed in the "welcome letter" posted on the Moodle course site:

> My name is Tianyuan Yu 于天遠, your teacher and fellow traveler on this diversity-learning journey. As I type these words, I recognize that the current situation in our country and in the world is causing many of us to feel a host of emotions—anxiety, confusion, fear, frustration, hurt, grief, anger, guilt, etc. In light of this recognition, I designed an assessment framework that focuses less on grading and more on learning, healing and empowering. Please know that you are

very much valued, and your participation matters. I invite you to bring your own experience to enrich one another. Let us begin this journey of learning together.

The four recurring Zen-informed activities are sitting meditation, reflexive learner activity, bewildering question, and council practice. Students are actively engaged in these activities despite the challenges posed by a virtual teaching and learning environment.

6.6.1 Sitting meditation

Directly borrowing from Zazen as a spiritual practice and nonverbal method, I do a three- or five-minute sitting meditation at the beginning of each 75-minute session (for longer sessions, I would recommend ten-minute meditation at the minimum). Sitting meditation, even for a very short time, would enhance one's capacity for deep listening and authentic dialogue. The practice of "sitting for 5 minutes" is so handy that it is frequently utilized in my 2019 field study interviews, leading to some exceptionally candid conversations. The interviewees appear to be deeply reflexive and honest, willing to show their vulnerability to me, who was a stranger to them.

In my class, I ask the students to "just sit", keeping their backs straight and breathing slowly. Students could do breath-counting if it helps concentrate the mind. Alternatively, they could try thinking of nothing and observing the mind. So far students' feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, indicating that sitting meditation helps them clear their minds, be in the moment and engage in non-judgmental dialogues. For example, a comment in the Student Rating of Instruction Questionnaire (i.e., a senate-approved, anonymous student evaluation of teaching) reads: "…She [i.e., me, the instructor] also does this 'three-minute meditation' to clear our minds because some course material is very heavy." Moreover, I find that this practice is particularly appreciated by those who need accessibility accommodations. Some express explicitly in class that they tend to

be constantly distracted and that they are grateful for this simple meditation practice which helps them regain focus.

6.6.2 Reflexive learner activity

Self-reflexivity and self-understanding are essential for Zen practitioners and are aligned with the meditative mental state. Instead of merely "gaining" knowledge from the outside world, Zen practitioners look into the world inside, and drop their dualistic thinking to reveal their true nature. These are conceptualized by the Zen Buddhist saying as "seeing one's Buddha-nature and attaining Buddhahood" (見性成佛), which is the path to enlightenment. In the field of education studies, self-reflexivity within the educational process is the core of autobiographical theory (Pinar, 2012).

In my class, I include four to six reflexive "learner activities" (LAs), all of which are designed to stimulate self-reflection about the issues to be discussed in the course. These LAs are similar to homework assignments, requiring students to write up autobiographic responses to various questions about diversity experiences.

For example, one LA asks students to think about some groups (e.g., schools, summer camps, churches, community work groups, companies, etc.) where they Ire minority members in terms of gender, race, age, disability, or any other dimensions (if the students have never been minority members, they can talk to someone who is a member of a minority group). Students are asked to explain the situation and reflect on their emotional experiences, interactions with group members, work performance, etc., in relation to the concepts and theories in course materials. Another LA asks students to interview someone (preferably one who is very different from the interviewer in terms of diversity dimensions) and identify differences and similarities between the

interviewer and the interviewee. At the end of the semester, I ask the students to write down their reflexive thoughts on several questions regarding their learning process in this course.

I find that these LAs not only prompt thoughtful conversations initiated by students in class but also foster a closer connection between class members. Through sharing personal diversity experiences, students and I gain a deeper understanding of each other on a human level in addition to a conceptual understanding of the discussion topics.

6.6.3 Bewildering question

Low and Purser (2012) argue that Zen koan study offers a unique opportunity for training the mind to tolerate the ambiguities, tensions and contradictions embedded in modern organization management. Inspired by the Zen koan tradition and the "householder koan" practice innovated by Egyoku Roshi, I assign one or two students each session to raise a "bewildering question" for class discussion. The "bewildering question" is the wording I choose as a substitute for the seemingly exotic term "koan". I explain that the question can be related to the designated readings for the session, or, more generally, to diversity management. But it must be a baffling question. Students are encouraged to share their personal experiences or observations as the basis for raising the question.

Sometimes, students need a little more prompting from the instructor to raise a good question. For example, one student initially frames the question as, "Do you think discrimination exists in every country?" After a few email exchanges with me, she eventually changes her question to "What drives discrimination?", a de facto koan that later leads to an amazing class-wide dialogue.

6.6.4 Council practice

"Council practice" (aka "listening circle" or "talking circle") weaves ancient practices and wisdom traditions throughout many different cultures and has been practiced by Western Zen centers as well as by indigenous communities. It involves bringing individuals together in a circle to talk one at a time, listen deeply, and share stories about love, loss, fear, triumph, challenge, hope and other experiences. With minor modification, it can be done in a virtual environment.

I see council practice as a powerful tool that facilitates deep listening. In Zen terms, it offers a space where individuals practice "not-knowing" and "bearing witness" (Zen Center of Los Angeles, 2020). Moreover, when practiced regularly, council practice can diffuse tension, increase resilience, and create a deeper sense of community and connection. In the course syllabus, I emphasize the following:

> I envision our class as a learning community that not only learns about but also practices equity, diversity, and inclusion. This is the place in which every voice is heard, no one is invisible, and everyone is valued. […] There is an immense need, now more than ever, to slow down and listen, to recognize and bear witness to our shared humanity, and to seek cooperative solutions to our collective challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Students comment that council practice creates the most engaging class they have had in an online teaching environment, as it "allows everyone a chance to be vulnerable" and "removes the fear of judgement (student reflection, winter 2022). It also creates a collective learning platform wherein class members, including the instructor, learn from each other:

> I liked the council practice. It was a great way to foster an interactive environment and I enjoyed when the professor would contribute. […] I love being a part of the MSVU community because there are so many different students from

all walks of life in class with me and it was wonderful being able to learn from them. (student reflection, winter 2021)

More importantly, for students who used to be marginalized in class discussions due to various reasons (e.g., language barriers, fear of expressing disagreement, introverted personality, discussion being dominated by a few, etc.), council practice offers a formal communication mechanism through which they have their voice heard. For example, below is a quote from another student's reflection:

> Through the council practice, I have had the opportunity to engage and listen to others and their own experiences. The council practices taught me more than just aspects of diversity and inclusion but also helped me feel comfortable speaking in class regularly. Talking in class discussions has not always been easy because I'm rather timid and keep to myself. However, … how respectful my classmates Ire helped me share and enjoy speaking to the class. (student reflection, fall 2021)

Overall, I find these Zen-informed activities lead to a spiritual teaching and learning experience that can be healing and empowering in unprecedented times. It is healing because authentic dialogues over difficult topics with a meditative mind stimulate deep reflexivity and reveal our Buddha-nature, which heals our hidden trauma and ongoing suffering. It is empowering because we gain strength and faith from self-healing and become fearless to show our true selves. This healing and empowering teaching and learning process is reinforced by a supportive learning community that shares compassion and wisdom, working towards collective awakening. I believe that such a healing and empowering teaching and learning experience is the type of education we need during unprecedented times as well as in the post-COVID era.

It is noteworthy that due to the nature of Zen-informed pedagogy as a highly spiritual and improvisational approach, the instructor needs to invest in the teaching process their whole-being

engagement, drawing on their life experiences and overall capacity for compassion and wisdom. It not only requires an intellectual mastery of course materials, but also demands emotional and spiritual maturity on the instructor's part.

Chapter 7 Conclusions

7.1 Contributions

As predicated in Chapter 1, my research aims to address an overarching research question: How might American Zen Buddhist teaching and practice heal and empower the wounded people, who manifest their healing and empowerment in their whole beings, including research approaches, leadership behaviours, teaching practices, and dealing with challenges in personal and professional realms of life? Accordingly, my research makes four primary contributions. Below, I highlight these contributions in terms of a spiritual research paradigm, a feminist spiritual leadership theory, a spiritual approach to teaching practice, and self-empowerment in personal and professional realms, all informed by Zen Buddhism.

Before proceeding further, I wish to acknowledge that my research is shaped by my embodied position as a female Chinese immigrant scholar in the West who is marginalized on multiple grounds, including gender, race, ethnicity, religious belief, and research paradigm. In this sense, my research is inherently *political*. This important implication is further explicated in the sections to follow.

7.1.1 A Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm

The first primary contribution of my research is developing a "Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm" (Chapter 4) in response to the urgent call for establishing spiritual research paradigms (e.g., Lin et al., 2016; Storberg-Walker, 2021) and for "a paradigmatic shift" (Tackney et al., 2017b, p.249) in the field of MSR. My systematic review (Section 3.1) reveals that high-quality MSR publications as represented by JMSR articles are still dominated by a functionalist paradigm (76.3%) and that spiritual research paradigms are still in their nascent stages of

development. Moreover, a clear definition of "spiritual research" is yet to exist. Therefore, my research makes two prominent contributions in this regard: 1. Defining spiritual research. 2. Delineating a Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm that tremendously enriches the basic framework of spiritual research paradigms. Each of the two prominent contributions has multiple implications as elucidated below.

1. Drawing on existent spiritual research paradigms as well as the Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm, I define "spiritual research" as marked by four basic characteristics:

1) *An ontology informed by spiritual worldviews or post-Newtonian sciences that endorses the primacy of consciousness*. This proposition is foundational and crucial because it points to researchers' awareness of their own beliefs as a prerequisite to approaching MSR research. It is discovered through my systematic review (Section 3.1) that the philosophical assumptions of MSR researchers, as exhibited in JMSR articles, are oftentimes implicit, evasive, and even self-contradictory. A clear awareness of one's ontological assumptions is the first step towards conscious ways of employing methodologies instead of taking for granted the dominant functionalist paradigm and positivist methodologies. Furthermore, this proposition affirms the primacy of consciousness in spiritual worldviews as opposed to the exclusive focus on materiality and tangible phenomena in Newtonian "scientific" realism. This is my attempt to bring spirituality and religion back to the center of the academic realm, and to restore the Eastern and Indigenous view that "science is both religious and aesthetic" (Cordero, 1995, p.30).

2) *An epistemology that embraces multiple ways of knowing (e.g., intellect, sense, emotion, intuition, dream, vision, mystical experience, and enlightenment)*. This proposition encourages researchers to engage in multiple ways of knowing as opposed to positivists' sole reliance on rationality. In spiritual research, mystical experiences and dreams, for example, are not dismissed

as superstitious, but ratified as potential channels of deep knowledge. Emotions, for another example, are not to be avoided but highlighted in the research process as potential gateways to accessing higher levels of consciousness.

3) *An axiological focus on deep, meaningful human experiences (e.g., suffering, relief of suffering, inner identity, ultimate meaning, transcendent reality, and interconnectedness), thus making possible spiritual transformation for the researcher and others impacted by the research.* This proposition reclaims the role of axiology in spiritual research paradigms as an essential evaluation criterion, as opposed to the circumvention of an explicit discussion on axiology in functionalist research. Managerialist research has been focusing on workplace phenomena for the sole purpose of improving organizational outcomes, whereas personal life struggles are considered illegitimate topics. For example, in the area of spiritual leadership, Oh and Wang's (2020) systematic review finds that the majority of existent empirical studies only seeks to test and validate Fry's (2003) causal model and is almost exclusively focused on organizational outcomes and "followers' wellbeing" rather than leader's inner life. This is MSR research led astray from what matters most in the spiritual realms of life. In this regard, my proposition accentuates the vital role of spiritual transformation in spiritual research, which has never been stressed in the literature of spiritual research paradigms.

4) *Using autoethnographic methodology or first-person methods.* Although "first-person methods" (e.g., participation, introspection, autoethnography) have been suggested as an important approach to spiritual research, the idea that spiritual research must use autoethnographic or first-person methods has never been proposed in the literature. Drawing on Zen Buddhist epistemology, I discuss why spiritual research must be autoethnographic (Section 4.3). I also conduct an in-depth literature review of evocative autoethnography that illuminates the features and challenges of this

spiritual methodology in comparison with conventional analytic autoethnography (Section 3.2). My proposition that spiritual research must be autoethnographic has significant implications for changing the landscape of MSR research that has so far been predominated by second-person (e.g., non-participant observation, one-way interview) and third-person methods (e.g., survey, experiment, statistical analysis, bibliometric analysis, documentation, archive, "objective" writing).

2. I develop a Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm in the process of doing this empirical research. This contribution is significant in terms of the following three aspects:

1) This is the first elaborated spiritual research paradigm informed by Buddhism in general and Zen Buddhism in particular. Within the field of MSR, research rooted in Zen Buddhism is virtually absent compared to that in Abrahamic religions (Christianity, Judaism, and Islam). And a Buddhist approach to research has yet to exist despite the growing body of Mindfulness research in the West. My research contributes to the decolonization of MSR research paradigms by drawing heavily on non-Western religious traditions and restoring Eastern spiritual knowledge that shares wisdom with Indigenous epistemologies to a great extent.

2) My systematic review (Section 3.1) reveals a lack of diversity of non-positivist paradigms other than interpretivism within the MSR research domain. Specifically, there is a salient absence of research stemming from postcolonialism, feminism, poststructuralism, and pragmatism in JMSR articles. Research with a critical, radical humanist, postmodern, or multi-paradigmatic orientation is also scarce. By contrast, the Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm is in considerable alignment with postcolonial, feminist, radical humanist, pragmatist (axiological emphasis on problem-solving), and multi-paradigmatic approaches and hence is much needed in fostering paradigmatic plurality in MSR research.

3) My systematic review (Section 3.1) identifies a basic framework of spiritual research paradigms, incorporating eight key philosophical and methodological features manifested in two promising spiritual research paradigms, i.e., the "Indigenous research paradigm" (Gumbo & Gaotlhobogwe, 2021) and the "Quantum research paradigm" (Storberg-Walker, 2021). Meanwhile, I find that specific philosophical and methodological dimensions remain unexplored within both paradigms, and that neither of the two studies touches upon evaluation criteria. My elaboration of a Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm not only shares the eight key features of the basic framework of spiritual research paradigms, but also enriches the framework in terms of ontology, epistemology, axiology, data sampling, data collection, data analysis, theorizing, writing, and evaluation criteria. On this subject, my research is tremendously original and innovative by being the first to propose the following ten ideas:

a. Zen (Vijñānas) Buddhist ontology is illustrated by a five-level holonic/concentric model (Wilber, 2000) and is connected to radical humanism in Burrell & Morgan's (1979) framework.

b. In accordance with its multi-level ontology, Zen Buddhism has a layered epistemology that includes multiple ways of knowing. Spiritual research is embodied practice and sacred ceremony. Spiritual conviction is both the prerequisite for, and the result of, true knowing.

c. Research can be healing and empowering for the researcher. Healing as a research purpose is not only legitimate, but also attainable. Miracles do happen.

d. The personal is professional. Spiritual research should be focused on emotional conundrums and life dilemmas as the dharma gates that lead to awakenings.

e. The *actual* research purpose cannot be predetermined but can only emerge from the research process. Researchers need to constantly improvise in the research process using research protocol as a starting point.

f. Spiritual research is *karmic* research and hence is not replicable. The researcher uses "karmic sampling" in combination with other sampling methods. It is a sampling process that depends on the history (this life and previous lives), subconsciousness, and motives of the researcher at the time of doing the research, as well as a myriad of invisible connections that she has with research participants (and their karmas).

g. Researcher uses first-person methods accompanied by second-person and third-person methods. The researcher may imbue the entire research process with her holistic self, essentially transforming some or all of the methods into first-person methods, such as participant observation, reflexive field notes, interactive/narrative interviews, embodied data analysis, and writing with authorial voice.

h. Authenticity, vulnerability, and intuitive knowing are as essential research skills as intellectuality.

i. Writing field notes and personal journals is not only a data collection process but also an important data analysis process. For autoethnographic spiritual writing, field notes and reflexive personal journals may be more helpful than thematic coding since these personal narratives usually tell a much more coherent and engaging story than the segmented, coded data.

j. Spiritual research theories shed light on the internal spiritual process, using varieties of modeling through artistic expressions (e.g., storytelling, metaphors, poetry, images, symbols), and denoting non-linear or cyclical relationships between fuzzy notions.

In addition, my research is the first to propose a comprehensive list of non-positivist evaluation criteria for spiritual research, which is much needed to support the quality of spiritual research paradigms. These criteria include spiritual ontological and epistemological assumptions, authenticity (as opposed to reliability or replicability), verisimilitude or resonance (as opposed to validity and generalizability), researcher's agency, pragmatism and morality, and contribution to nondual knowledge.

Overall, my research is the first to define spiritual research and build a Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm. As acknowledged at the beginning of this chapter, my research is inherently *political*. It is a courageous endeavour in its absolute refusal to conform to the dominant functionalist paradigm. In Chapter 2, I have alluded to the political consequences of the dominancy of the functionalist paradigm in MSR research wherein non-positivist researchers struggle to gain legitimacy and are forced to acknowledge "research limitations" in order to get their work published (e.g., Parameshwar, 2005). Hence, my research may be considered as critical and even subversive to current power structures in academia. Furthermore, I would argue that my research is potentially ground-breaking, opening up opportunities for reshaping the landscape of MSR research (and the broader management research) by doing research differently.

7.1.2 A Zen-informed feminist (androgynous) spiritual leadership model

The second primary contribution of my research is proposing a Zen-informed feminist (androgynous) spiritual leadership model wherein a leader leads by teaching and practicing compassion and wisdom. By receiving and practicing Zen teachings, ordinary human beings may transcend their ego and hence become enlightened beings (bodhisattvas). The innate compassion and wisdom in one's Buddha-nature naturally arise from enlightening. Compassion is healing. Wisdom is empowering. Compassion and wisdom generate profound confidence, equanimity, and

creativity, enabling one to embody the awakened way of nonduality and non-attachment. In essence, a Zen-informed leader guides their followers to self-heal and self-empower through Zen teaching and practice, and eventually becoming Zen-informed leaders themselves. This model makes original contributions in five aspects:

1. The model contributes to the decolonization of spiritual leadership research by being the first empirically derived spiritual leadership model focusing on Zen Buddhist wisdom and also the first generated through Zen-informed spiritual research. It stems from a focus on the healing of personal and collective psychological trauma since the notions of Dukkha (suffering) and Nirvāna (relief of suffering) are of centrality in Buddhist teachings. According to my literature review (Section 2.2), spiritual leadership informed by Zen Buddhism has never been empirically investigated, let alone studied under a spiritual research paradigm informed by Zen Buddhism. Moreover, MSR scholars have noted that the complexities of human suffering and its transformative power have been neglected by the Western spiritual leadership literature (Parameshwar, 2005; Klaus & Fernando, 2016). Other critical dimensions of spiritual leadership, such as healing, empowerment, and gender, are also missing in spiritual leadership research (Oh & Wang, 2020). A focus on suffering, healing and empowerment is particularly significant for traditionally marginalized groups who are in need of psychological healing and empowerment to fight inequity and injustice.

2. The model is the first spiritual leadership theory built on autoethnographic research, and the first theorization of the intangible, unmeasurable process of spiritual transformation based on first-person direct experience. As noted in my literature review (Section 2.2), none of the existent spiritual leadership theories is based on autoethnographic research (Parameshwar, 2005). Hence, they all fail to theorize the core phenomenon of spiritual leadership, that is, the inner process of

spiritual transformation experienced by spiritual leaders. This core phenomenon is called "awakening" or "enlightenment" in Zen Buddhist terms and is labelled as "inner life" (Fry, 2003), "leader gaze" (Parameshwar, 2005), "inner leadings" (Kriger & Seng, 2005), or "epistemological ascent" (Fry & Kriger, 2009; Fry & Vu, 2023) in different spiritual leadership theories.

3. The model is the first feminist and gender-inclusive spiritual leadership theory that counters the gender-blind or male-dominant tendency in spiritual leadership research and the broader MSR research (Lund Dean & Fomaciari, 2007; Yu et al., 2023). The model is premised on a radical feminist awareness of women's advantage, the inherent sacredness of femininity that underscores care, love, compassion, healing, and nondual wisdom in Buddha-nature. The model also upholds a postmodern feminist, gender-fluid view that highlights women's capacity for profound equanimity and confidence in the face of crisis and adversity, countering the male-dominant discourse about women being emotionally unstable and less confident than men. Furthermore, emphasizing empowerment and creativity, the model honors feminist social innovations and organizational changes.

4. The model demonstrates a postmodern, Buddhist way of theorization, that is, theorizing by storytelling and artistic expressions with cultural aesthetic appeals. The model is accompanied by rich personal narratives and photos of my autoethnographic research experiences. My storytelling narratives and the accompanying photos in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 are an indispensable part of the Zen-informed feminist spiritual leadership theory. In fact, storytelling and metaphors are primary teaching tools the Buddha uses, as recorded in Buddhist scriptures (e.g., *The Lankavatara Sutra, 2009. The Diamond Sutra, 2000*). It is presumed that knowledge of higher levels of consciousness, such as insights about spiritual transformation, cannot be conveyed

through a dry statement of Buddhist doctrines or an abstraction and over-simplification of lived experiences.

5. The model represents a Buddhist nondual logic, symbolizing non-linear, cyclical relationships between fuzzy notions as opposed to the positivist dualistic, linear, causal frameworks that dominate spiritual leadership research. The model demonstrates a nondual view, in that compassion and wisdom are the flip sides of leadership and that leaders and followers are not differentiated. The model is cyclical, indicating a dynamic, ever-changing leadership process that needs to be practiced incessantly. The model also utilizes artistic, metaphorical symbolization of key notions (i.e., compassion and wisdom) by creating images of bodhisattvas (i.e., Guanyin and Manjushiri) manifesting religious wisdom. As noted in my literature review (Section 2.2), there is a disproportionate amount of quantitative studies (80%) in the area of spiritual leadership research as a result of the dominancy of Fry's causal model (Oh & Wang, 2020), which is markedly incommensurate with the special nature of the topic under investigation. Such a research landscape is unlikely to generate multi-dimensional insights into spiritual leadership or to advance the field (Oh & Wang, 2020). The Zen-informed feminist spiritual leadership model, by contrast, opens up possibilities for more qualitative, in-depth investigations of spiritual leadership under diverse research paradigms using different methodologies and methods.

7.1.3 A Zen-informed spiritual approach to teaching practice

The third primary contribution of my research is an examination of the key features of American Zen teaching practice in comparison with modern management education, followed by an explorative application of a Zen-informed spiritual approach to management education (Chapter 6). My research is original in providing an autoethnographic account of how Zen Buddhism, as

practice, is transmitted, transformative, and nurturing feminist leadership. Such an insider's account is rarely seen in academic literature on leadership and management education.

My research discovers that traditional Zen teaching practice is being maintained in American Zen communities. I summarize four features of American Zen teaching practice: 1) koan study, 2) meditative practices, 3) Eastern aesthetics, and 4) innovative cultural adaptation. Notably, Zen teaching practice stresses not only intellectual but also physical, emotional, and spiritual engagement. Accordingly, Zen teaching practice uses both verbal and nonverbal methods that demand whole-being engagement and embodied knowing. American Zen teaching practice is infused with Eastern aesthetic appeals as manifested in its cultural artifacts, rituals, and ambience. Most prominently, this Asian tradition is experiencing an innovative social process adapting to modern American society and evolving into a new form of Zen, namely, American Zen. It is American Zen that nurtures the type of feminist leadership that I witness in this research.

I argue that it is imperative to re-evaluate the role of spirituality and religion in post-secondary institutions' curriculum and pedagogy, especially in business schools and leadership training programs that have been overly reliant on verbal, logical, and analytical ways of teaching and learning. Zen teaching practice has great potential for application in management education in terms of its focus on life dilemmas and emotional conundrums, meditative practices, embodied ways of knowing, aesthetic and spiritual appeals, and improvisation and creativity.

Moreover, through an autoethnographic account of my exploration of a Zen-informed spiritual approach to management teaching since the fall term of 2020, I demonstrate that Zen pedagogy offers a teaching and learning experience that is healing and empowering in unprecedented times. The four recurring Zen-informed activities I experiment with include sitting meditation, reflexive learner activity, bewildering question, and council practice. I find that

authentic dialogues over difficult topics with a meditative mind stimulate deep reflexivity, reinforced by a supportive learning community that shares compassion and wisdom. I believe that such a healing and empowering teaching and learning experience is the type of education we need in the post-COVID era as well as during the pandemic. There is an immense need for collective compassion and wisdom to tackle the grand challenges and crises facing humanity.

7.1.4 Impacts on the researcher and the research audience

The fourth primary contribution of my research depends on its impacts on both you (the research audience) and me (the researcher). This proposition is required by the axiological emphasis and evaluation criterion of autoethnographic spiritual research on pragmatism and morality (e.g., Bochner, 2000; Le Roux, 2017; Wilson, 2008). It is also required by the principle of reciprocity, including the author's expectation on the audience to be "vulnerable readers" (Ellis, 1999; Hope & Waterman, 2003; Wilson, 2008). In Chapter 4, I propose that Zen-informed spiritual research must offer a way to improve the lives of the researcher and others, producing knowledge that contributes to people's capacities to solve problems. Successful Zen-informed spiritual research must be healing and empowering, hence promoting social justice (Section 4.4 and Section 4.6).

Since completing my field visits to American Zen centers in 2019, I have been going through many "critical incidents" in both personal and professional realms of my life, wherein I find myself confronting people who have power over me. In chapter 5, I narrate how I take actions to permanently change the long-entrenched oppressive power dynamics between my father and me (Section 5.4) and how I counter the charges by a Senior Administrator at SMU (Section 5.7). The courage it takes to confront influential people would have been inconceivable for me before my 2019 field study, not to mention the clarity of mind it takes to clearly express complicated,

emotionally charged messages using a foreign language. I am permanently transformed by this research and consider my life a ceaseless Zen practice to engage in "compassionate disruptions". Below, I provide a brief account of one of these incidents in my professional life.

It is during the first online session of a series of research webinars held by the Management Spirituality & Religion (MSR) Interest Group of the Academy of Management (AoM) on spiritual research methodologies, taking place on December 22nd, 2021. The host invites Dr. Louis (Jody) Fry and Dr. Ian Mitroff to share their personal and scholarly journey of spiritual leadership and research. Both guest speakers are among the most renowned founders and trailblazers in the MSR research domain. In particular, Fry's (2003, 2008) functionalist model of spiritual leadership is foundational for the area of spiritual leadership and has since dominated the area, as discussed in Chapter 2. Approaching the end of the session, I call up all my courage to raise my "Zoom" hand and then make the following comment:

> Okay. I'm not sure if I can do this, because I'm going to say something that is potentially offensive, and I have the tendency to become overly emotional when I'm speaking. But I really want to say this. After listening to today's two speakers, I'm filled with anger and frustration. I'm angry because I have had issues with Dr. Jody Fry's research on spiritual leadership. Because, for me, spiritual leadership should be at the forefront of exploring spiritual research methodologies. But Dr. Fry's research is mainly positivist and quantitative. The problem is, the whole Academy is dominated by quantitative research and positivism. Although we agree that quantitative research and qualitative research can inform each other, the current state is that qualitative research and alternative paradigms are very much marginalized. In the area of spiritual leadership, Dr Fry's research is the foundational research and dominating the whole area. And the majority of the research on spiritual leadership is just following Dr. Fry's framework, trying to replicate, prove, or support that framework. That is the negative consequence, although it may not be the intentional consequence of Dr. Fry's research. But it

actually further marginalizes qualitative research methods and alternative paradigms. And today, Dr. Fry says he considers qualitative research as "putting flesh onto the bones". I disagree with that, because qualitative research is not only "flesh", but also the "bones". And it can be the mind and soul of spiritual research. And Dr. Fry says he's done with empirical research since 2018. I suspect that is because quantitative methods cannot explore deeper into the spiritual phenomena. Actually, we should use more empirical qualitative methods to explore deeper. We need more qualitative empirical research.

The reason I feel frustrated is because Dr. Ian Mitroff suggests, I think it is out of good intention, that junior scholars like me better conform to the academic tradition before we get tenured, which I think means we need to do quantitative research in a positivist paradigm. I really feel it's frustrating. Even though I haven't got tenured, I really want to do qualitative research based on alternative paradigms. That is my passion. I don't want to conform to the academic tradition anymore. I know I'm getting too emotional now. Yeah. [palms together] Thank you for listening. And sorry if I offended anybody. (Zoom meeting recording, December 22nd, 2021)

The host smiles: "Your passion is coming through loud and clear, Tian. You know, you don't have to follow the suggestions here. You can make your own path." The host then has to quickly wrap up the session due to time limitations, but he allows people to stay in the Zoom meeting room should they wish. Then the host leaves the room and there is an ensuing invigorated discussion for about 30 minutes in response to my comment. Jody and Ian and many of the audience stay in the room to share feedback. And the feedback is overwhelmingly supportive. I am surprised by the enthusiasm, affirmation, and appreciation I receive, including those from the two speakers. The impact of this incident seems to last longer than I thought. In August 2023, during the first post-COVID in-person annual meeting of AoM held in Boston, an Asian professor approaches me and says:

> Hi, I know you. I remember you years ago in an MSR webinar. You made a powerful comment in front of Jody Fry. I want to thank you for your courage to speak up. I often use you as an example in my class about hierarchy. You know, what you did is simply impossible to happen in my country. (personal communication, August 5, 2023)

What I do would not have happened in the West either, if the wounded were not healed.

Healing and empowering are an ongoing, endless process. This research has been healing and empowering for me. But its lasting effect depends on my continued Zen practice in all realms of my life. Next, I would like to prompt you, the reader, to ponder the following questions: Do you resonate with my storytelling? Are you aware of your hidden wounds? Are you able to fathom your anger, shame, disconnection, fear, and sadness? Can you engage in self-healing, meditative practices? Are you able to access your inner wisdom and show up in compassionate disruptions?

Awakening will come in the readiness of time.

7.2 Limitations and Future Directions

The notion of "limitations", as framed by functionalism/objectivism, does not apply to this research. The attempt to identify "limitations" is based on the functionalist assumptions that research is to accurately reflect a single objective reality and that research must be replicable. As elaborated in Chapter 4, the realist rigor criteria of reliability, replicability, validity, and generalizability are all meaningless to nominalist researchers. In particular, spiritual research is not replicable because spiritual research must be transformative, and transformative experiences are non-replicable. Moreover, Zen-informed spiritual research may be considered as "karmic" research, meaning that the researcher is destined for doing the research in the way it is done, due to unknowable karmic reasons. The Buddhist notion of karma advises that there is no "coincidence"

and that everything is meant to be as a result of one's body, speech and mind accumulated in this and previous lives. Therefore, the current research cannot be done in any other way.

That being said, this research does have limitations from a non-positivist, Zen-informed perspective. The limitations are those resulting from the effects of karma that restrain my capacity to gain a deeper understanding of the research topics and to engage in more critical self-reflection. The Zen-informed theories and practices discussed in this research are all transient and impermanent in nature. The research only reflects the wisdom I gain at a particular moment in my life. In Buddhist terms, it is another "conditioned dharma". With potential intellectual and spiritual growth in the future, I might be able to realize other limitations of this research than the ones I list below.

Presently, I find the following aspects of my research as potential areas for improvement and future research.

First, the specific features of Zen-informed spiritual research methodologies delineated in my thesis may be altered depending on the research context, and be enriched as I continue my exploration of Chan/Zen Buddhism. American Zen Buddhism has been and is still adapting to the ever-changing American socio-cultural landscape. Therefore, any fixed methods or models may be outgrown by the ever-evolving American Zen. After all, the Zen spirit is improvising every moment instead of being attached to rigid principles.

> There are no prescribed methods; there is no methodology already set down in formulas. (Suzuki, 1953, p. 36)

Therefore, any suggested philosophical and methodological features, such as those summarized in Chapter 4, are fluid and tentative. Future research may further explore the boundless embodied ways of knowing, theorizing, and writing, to enrich the Zen-informed

spiritual research paradigm and methodologies. For example, spiritual research, as a spiritual journey, may be carried out through a meditative pilgrimage. Artistic ways of expressions (e.g., filming, visual/audio performance) and advanced technologies (e.g., generative AI) may be utilized to communicate research findings with enhanced aesthetic appeal.

Second, the conceptualization of "spiritual research" (Section 1.5) and the "basic framework of spiritual research paradigms" (Section 3.1) proposed in this research primarily draw on the Zen-informed spiritual research paradigm in combination with a few other spiritual research paradigms and methodologies, especially "Indigenous research paradigm", "quantum research paradigm", and autoethnography. Future research may refine the definition of spiritual research and enhance the basic framework of spiritual research paradigms by comparing and integrating more spiritual research paradigms as well as relevant methodologies such as (participatory) action research, grounded theory, transpersonal research methods (Braud & Anderson, 1998), and Jungian psychology (Romanyshyn, 2020). More in-depth comparisons between Zen-informed paradigm and Indigenous research paradigm and quantum research paradigm would also bear fruit.

Third, the Zen-informed feminist spiritual leadership model (Chapter 5) may be reshaped to better reflect its connection with the five-level Buddhist ontological model. In particular, it is worth exploring ways of integrating the being-centered leadership model (Fry & Kriger, 2009) with the Zen-informed feminist leadership model in light of their potential compatibility as discussed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.2.5).

Fourth, the literature review on feminist leadership could be strengthened by including more contemporary feminist literature, such as standpoint theory (e.g., Harding, 2004; Sweet, 2020) and women and leadership theories (e.g., Madsen, 2024; de Santibañes et al., 2023).

Finally, my summary of the key features of American Zen teaching practice and exploration of Zen-informed spiritual approach to management education (Chapter 6) could be tied more closely to management scholarship by comparing it to existing conceptions of management learning. For example, future research can tease out the connections between Zen koan pedagogy and the notion of "disorienting dilemma" (Mezirow, 1991; Reynolds, 2014) in the literature of adult education and transformative learning. Currently, I am still in the early stage of developing and applying Zen-informed pedagogy in management teaching. The great potential of Zen-informed pedagogy for transformative teaching/learning and management education awaits further exploration and theorization.

7.3 Epilogue

It is on the peaceful sunny afternoon of December 8, 2019, when I have just completed a 20-hour Rohatsu Sesshin (intensive sitting meditation to celebrate the Buddha's enlightenment) followed by a three-hour interview with Shumyo Kojima Sensei, Abbot of Zenshuji. The interview marks the end of my 2019 field visits to American Zen centers. Walking out of Zenshuji, I am ruminating on my conversation with Kojima Sensei. He talks about the Japanese internment camps in the U.S. during World War II, the notion of abuse, and gender and sexuality:

> "…So they built that museum [i.e., the Japanese American National Museum] to keep this memory. But if you look at the pictures [displayed in the museum], all the pictures, [people in the internment camp are] all smiling. They enjoy the camp. […]People tell jokes about the camp. […]Politically, they need justice. They need government apologies. Individually, they do not. […] So abuse is kind of a socially constructed idea that comes from the West. Now, the idea has become normal and standard. But in other times, abuse is a natural thing that happens all over. […] There is no sexuality for me. People [i.e., Buddhist monastics] are all uniformed, shaving their hair. There is no woman or man. That's not a topic

or a matter for me to work with. It doesn't matter whether the person is a woman

or a man." (interview with Kojima, December 8th, 2019)

What Kojima Sensei says is *his* truth. His words remind me that all visible phenomena are conditioned dharmas that are interdependent, impermanent, and empty in essence. All notions are fabrications. All knowledge created through a dualistic mind is imperfect. Research is ultimately a dream.

All conditioned dharmas

一切有為法

are like dreams, illusions, bubbles, shadows,

如夢幻泡影

like dew drops and lightning flashes.

如露亦如電

Thus we shall perceive them.

應作如是觀

(*The Diamond Sutra, 2000; 金剛般若波羅蜜經, 2002*; Ch.32)

This is not to negate any effort we make for our life endeavours, be it completing a doctorate dissertation that takes nine years or cooking a meal for the family that takes one hour. Every effort counts. We have no choice but to do what we think is the right thing to do. It is our ceaseless practice. However, try not to be attached to anything, or any emotions associated with it. Thus, we can better maintain our profound equanimity, the deep clear heart-mind that relieves all sufferings.

I would like to close the dissertation by sharing a lovely framed maxim I see at the office of Zen Center of Los Angeles: "Keep calm and practice!" (Figure 7-1)

Figure 7-1: *A Framed Maxim at the Office of ZCLA*

Note. Photo taken at Zen Center of Los Angeles on November 12, 2019.

References

Aadland, E., & Skjrshammer, M. (2012). From God to good? Faith-based institutions in the secular society. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *9*(1), 83–101. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2012.641099

Adams, T. E. (2006). Seeking father: Relationally reframing a troubled love story. *Qualitative Inquiry, 12*(4), 704-723. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800406288607

Adams, T. E. & Ellis, C. (2012). Trekking through autoethnography. In S. D. Lapan, M. T. Quartaroli, & F. J. Riemer (Eds.), *Qualitative Research: An Introduction to Methods and Designs* (pp.189-212). John Wiley & Sons.

Ajala, E. M. (2013). The impact of workplace spirituality and employees' wellbeing at the industrial sector: The Nigerian experience. *The African Symposium: An Online Journal of the African Educational Research Network 13*(2), 3–13.

Aldawod, A. & Day, J. (2017). *A Critical Reflection upon the Postmodernist Philosophical Positions and Issues Relevant to Entrepreneurship Research*. [Paper presentation] British Academy of Management 2017 Conference, Coventry, U.K.

Allen, S., & Williams, P. (2020). Teaching management, spirituality, and religion: André Delbecq as a pioneer. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *17*(1), 37–44. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2019.1639073

Almond, B. A. (2015). The "acts" of Paul: Micro-processes and new institution creation. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *12*(3), 186–226. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2014.965784

Anderson, L. (2006). Analytic autoethnography. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 35*(4), 373-395. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241605280449

Appelbaum, S. H., & Shapiro, B. T. (1993). Why can't men lead like women? *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 14*(7), 28–34. https://doi.org/10.1108/01437739310047010

Arendt, H. (1973). *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Harcourt.

Atkinson, P. (2006). Rescuing autoethnography. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 35*(4), 400–404. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241606286980

Atkinson, R. (2007). The life story interview as a bridge in narrative inquiry. In D. J. Clandinin (Ed.), Handbook of Narrative Inquiry (pp.224-245). Sage.

Atwater, L., & Roush, P. (1994). An investigation of gender effects on followers' ratings of leaders, leaders' self-ratings and reactions to feedback. *Journal of Leadership Studies, 1*(4), 37–52. https://doi.org/10.1177/107179199400100405

Avolio, B. J., Walumbwa, F. O. & Weber, T. J. (2009). Leadership: Current theories, research, and future directions. *Annual Review of Psychology. 60*, 421-449. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163621

Bartunek, J. M., Walsh, K., & Lacey, C. A. (2000). Dynamics and dilemmas of women leading women. *Organization Science, 11*(6), 589–610. https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.11.6.589.12531

Bass, B. M. (1990a). *Bass and Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research and Managerial Applications* (3rd ed.). The Free Press.

Bass, B. M. (1990b). From transactional to transformational leadership: Learning to share the vision. *Organizational Dynamics, 18*(3), 19–31. https://doi.org/10.1016/0090-2616(90)90061-S

Bass, B. M. (1998). *Transformational Leadership: Industrial, Military and Educational Impact*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bell, E. (2007). Disruptive religion: The case of the catholic worker-priests (1943-1954). *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *4*(4), 432–442. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766080709518677

Bem, S. L. (1974). The measurement of psychological androgyny. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *42*(2) 155–162. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0036215

Berg, E., Barry, J. & Chandler, J. (2012). Changing leadership and gender in public sector organizations. *British Journal of Management, 23*(3), 402-414. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8551.2011.00751.x

Bergin, J. (2007). Dysfunctional organization? Institutional abuse of children in care in Ireland. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *4*(4), 461–485. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766080709518679

Berkery, E., Morley, M. & Tiernan, S. (2013). Beyond gender role stereotypes and requisite managerial characteristics: From communal to androgynous, the changing views of women. *Gender in Management, 28*(5), 278-298. https://doi.org/10.1108/GM-12-2012-0098

Betters-Reed, B., Harvey, S., & Neal, J. (2020). Nurturing the soul of the company at EILEEN FISHER, Inc. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *17*(3), 211–222. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2020.1752994

Beyer, J. M. (1999). Taming and promoting charisma to change organizations. *The Leadership Quarterly, 10*(2), 307–330. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843(99)00019-3

Black Women in Leadership Forum. (2020). *Black Women in Leadership Forum Report: Sharing and shaping our journey*. Halifax, Canada: Black Women in Leadership Organizing Committee.

Blake-Beard, S., Shapiro, M. & Ingols, C. (2020). Feminine? Masculine? Androgynous leadership as a necessity in COVID-19. *Gender in Management, 35*(7/8), 607-617. https://doi.org/10.1108/GM-07-2020-0222

Blanchard, K. H., & Sargent, A. G. (1984). The one minute manager is an androgynous manager. *Training & Development Journal, 38*(5), 83–85.

Blenkinsopp, J. (2007). Organisational loss of faith: Treating affective commitment as a spiritual matter. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *4*(2), 212–233. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766080709518658

Bochner, A. P. (1984). The functions of human communication in interpersonal bonding. In C. C. Arnold & J. W. Bowers (Eds.), *Handbook of Rhetorical and Communication Theory* (pp.544-621). Allyn and Bacon.

Bochner, A. P. (2000). *Criteria against ourselves. Qualitative Inquiry, 6*(2), 266–272. https://doi.org/10.1177/107780040000600209

Bochner, A. P., & Ellis, C. (2016). *Evocative Autoethnography: Writing Lives and Telling Stories*. Routledge.

Bochner, A.P. (1997). It's about time: Narrative and the divided self. *Qualitative Inquiry, 3*(4), 418-438. https://doi.org/10.1177/107780049700300404

Bøje, D. M. (2005). Wilda. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion,* 2(3), 342-364. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766080509518592

Boylorn, R. M. (2006). E pluribus unum (Out of many, one). *Qualitative Inquiry, 12*(4), 651-680. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800405282798

Braud, W. (2009). Dragons, spheres, and flashlights: Appropriate research approaches for studying workplace spirituality. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion, 6*(1), 59-75. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766080802648557

Braud, W., & Anderson, R. (1998). *Transpersonal Research Methods for the Social Sciences: Honoring Human Experience*. Sage.

Brodkey, L. (1996). I Site. -An essay from a personal narrative that the author has written about herself as a writer and reader. *Open Letter: Australian Journal for Adult Literacy Research and Practice*, *6*(2), 17-30. https://search.informit.org/doi/epdf/10.3316/ielapa.970909191

Bruner, J. (1993). The autobiographical process. In R. Folkenflik (Ed.), *The Culture of Autobiography: Constructions of Self-representation* (pp.38-56). Stanford University Press.

Burnier, D. (2006). Encounters with the self in social science research: A political scientist looks at autoethnography. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 35*(4), 410–418. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241606286982

Burrell, G., & Morgan, G. (1979). *Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis*. Heinemann.

Butler, J. (2011). *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge.

Butler, S. (2009). Considering objective possibilities in autoethnography: A critique of Heeson Chang's Autoethnography as Method. *The Qualitative Report*, *15*(1), 295–299. https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2009.2864

Calás, M. B., & Smircich, L. (2006). From the 'woman's point of view' ten years later: Towards a feminist organization studies. In S. R. Clegg, C. Hardy, T. B. Lawrence, & W. R. Nord (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Organization Studies* (2 ed., pp. 284-346). SAGE Publications Ltd. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781848608030

Chang, H. (2008). *Autoethnography as Method.* Left Coast Press.

Chaston, J., & Lips-Wiersma, M. (2015). When spirituality meets hierarchy: Leader spirituality as a double-edged sword. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *12*(2), 111–128. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2014.938244

Chin, J. L. (2004). 2003 Division 35 Presidential Address: Feminist leadership: Feminist visions and diverse voices. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 28*(1), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-6402.2004.00116.x

Clark, D. (2004). Managing Jewish museums in a multi-faith society: Notes from Italy. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *1*(1), 94–112. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766080409518544

Coghlan, D. (2013). What will I do? Toward an existential ethics for first person action research practice. *International Journal of Action Research*, *9*(3), 333-352.

Cohen, J. (2019). Behind the times: Protectors. *History Today, 69*(1), 90-93. https://www.historytoday.com/archive/behind-times/protectors

Cook E. P. (1985). *Psychological Androgyny*. Pergamon Press.

Cordero, C. (1995). A working and evolving definition of culture. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, *21*(Supplement), 7-13.

Corrigan, L. T. (2015). Budget theatre: A postdramaturgical account of municipal budget making. [Doctoral thesis] Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Couser, G. T. (1997). *Recovering bodies: Illness, disability, and life writing*. University of Wisconsin Press.

Cova, V., Bousquet, J., Claveau, C., & Qazi Shabir, A. (2019). The changing dichotomy between the sacred and the profane: a historical analysis of the Santiago de Compostela pilgrimage. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *16*(1), 109–130. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2018.1501415

Crossman, J. (2015). Eclecticism and commonality in employee constructions of spirituality. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *12*(1), 59–77. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2014.933709

Cullen, J. G. (2011). Researching workplace spiritualization through auto/ethnography. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion, 8(2),* 143-164. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2011.581813

Cunha, M. P. E. (2004). In search of organizational cockaigne: Organization identifying the pillars of the ideal. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *1*(1), 77–92. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766080409518543

Cunliffe, A. L. (2002). Social poetics as management inquiry: A dialogical approach. *Journal of Management Learning, 11*(2), 126–146. https://doi.org/10.1177/10592602011002006

Daft, R., & Buenger, V. (1990). Hitching a ride on a fast train to nowhere: The past and future of strategic management research. In J. W. Fredrickson (Ed.), *Perspectives on Strategic Management* (pp. 81–103). Harper & Row.

Dauphinee, E. (2010). The ethics of autoethnography. Review of International Studies, 36(3), 799-818. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210510000690

Day, N. E. (2005). Religion in the workplace: Correlates and consequences of individual behavior. *Journal of Management Spirituality and Religion*, *2*(1), 104-135. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766080509518568

de Santibañes, M., Ospina, S. M., Lee, S., Santamaria, A., Evans, M. M., Muelas, D., & Guerrero, N. (2023). The dialectics of leadership identity construction: Case studies from Indigenous women leaders. *Leadership, 19*(4), 366-390. https://doi.org/10.1177/17427150231169554

Delbecq, A. L. (2010). Organizational compassion: A litmus test for a spiritually centered university culture. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *7*(3), 241–249. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2010.499998

Denshire, S. (2014). On auto-ethnography. *Current Sociology*, *62*(6), 831–850. https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392114533339

Denzin, N. K. (1989). *Interpretive Biography*. Sage.

Denzin, N. K. (2003). Performing (auto)ethnography politically. *Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, 25(3), 257-278. https://doi.org/10.1080/10714410390225894

Denzin, N. K. (2014). *Interpretive Autoethnography.* (2nd ed.), Sage.

Dobbins, G. H., & Platz, S. J. (1986). Sex differences in leadership: How real are they? *Academy of Management Review, 11*(1), 118–127. https://doi.org/10.2307/258335

Driscoll, C., McIsaac, E. M., & Wiebe, E. (2019). The material nature of spirituality in the small business workplace: from transcendent ethical values to immanent ethical actions. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *16*(2), 155–177. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2019.1570474

Eagly, A. H. & Carli, L. L. (2003). The female leadership advantage: An evaluation of the evidence. *The Leadership Quarterly. 14*(6), 807-834. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2003.09.004

Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (1991). Gender and the emergence of leaders: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 60*(5), 685–710. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.60.5.685

Eagly, A. H., Johannesen-Schmidt, M. C., Van Engen, M. L. (2003). Transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles: A meta-analysis comparing women and men. *Psychological Bulletin, 129*(4), 569-591. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.129.4.569

Eagly, A. H.., & Johnson, B. T. (1990). Gender and leadership style: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin, 108*(2), 233–256. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.108.2.233

Egel, E. & Fry, L.W. (2017). Spiritual leadership as a model for Islamic leadership. *Public Integrity, 19*(1). 77–95. https://doi.org/10.1080/10999922.2016.1200411

Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989). Building Theories from Case Study Research. *Academy of Management Review*, *14*(4), 532–550. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1989.4308385

Ellingson, L. L., & Ellis, C. (2008). Autoethnography as constructionist project. In J. A. Holstein, & J. F. Gubrium (Eds.), *Handbook of Constructionist Research* (pp. 445-465). Guilford.

Ellis, C. (1999). Heartful autoethnography: Keynote addresses from the first annual advances in Qualitative Methods Conference. *Qualitative Health Research*, *9*(5), 669-683. https://doi.org/10.1177/104973299129122153

Ellis, C. (2002a). Shattered lives: Making sense of September 11th and its aftermath. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 31*(4), 375-410. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241602031004001

Ellis, C. (2002b). Being real: Moving inward toward social change. *Qualitative Studies in Education, 15*(4), 399-406. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518390210145453

Ellis, C. (2004). *The Ethnographic I: A Methodological Novel about Autoethnography*. AltaMira Press.

Ellis, C. (2007). Telling secrets, revealing lives: Relational ethics in research with intimate others. *Qualitative Inquiry, 13*(1), 3-29. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800406294947

Ellis, C. (2009). Telling tales on neighbors: Ethics in two voices. *International Review of Qualitative Research, 2*(1), 3-28. https://doi.org/10.1525/irqr.2009.2.1.3

Ellis, C. & Bochner, A. P. (2000). Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity: Researcher as subject. in N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed.) (pp.733-768). Sage Publications.

Ellis, C. & Bochner, A. P. (2006). Analyzing analytic autoethnography. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *35*(4), 429-449. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241606286979

Ellis, C., Adams, T. E., & Bochner, A. P. (2011). Autoethnography: An overview. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung [Forum: Qualitative Social Research] 12*(1), 1-18. https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-12.1.1589

Ely, R.J., & Meyerson, D.E. (2000). Theories of Gender in Organizations: A New Approach to Organizational Analysis and Change. *Research in Organizational Behavior, 22*, 103-151. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-3085(00)22004-2

Fairholm, G. W. (1996). Spiritual leadership: Fulfilling whole-self needs at work. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal, 17*(5), 11–17. https://doi.org/10.1108/01437739610127469

Fairholm, M. R., & Gronau, T. W. (2015). Spiritual leadership in the work of public administrators. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion*, 12(4), 354-373. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2015.1060516

Fernando, M. (2011). Spirituality and leadership. In A. Bryman, D. Collinson, B. Jackson, K. Grint, & M. Uhl-Bien (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Leadership* (pp. 483-494). Sage.

Fernando, M. & Nilakant, V. (2008). The place of self-actualisation in workplace spirituality: Evidence from Sri Lanka. *Culture and Religion*, *9*(3), 233-249. https://doi.org/10.1080/14755610802535538

Fischer, J. (2019). Looking for religious logos in Singapore. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *16*(1), 132–153. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2018.1470026

Fisk, G. M., & Hammond, M. M. (2021). Revitalization and Resurrection? Confronting Decline and Change in Religious Organizations. Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 18(3), 177-200. https://doi.org/10.51327/IXEV3410

Fletcher, J. K. (2004). The paradox of postheroic leadership: An essay on gender, power, and transformational change. *The Leadership Quarterly, 15*(5), 647-661. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2004.07.004

Fornaciari, C. J., & Lund Dean, K. (2001). Making the quantum leap. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, *14*(4), 335–351. https://doi.org/10.1108/EUM0000000005547

Fornaciari, C. J., & Lund Dean, K. (2004). Diapers to car keys: The state of spirituality, religion and work research. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *1*(1), 7–33. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766080409518540

Freeman, M. (2004). Data are everywhere: Narrative criticism in the literature of experience. In C. Daiute & C. Lightfoot (Eds.), *Narrative Analysis: Studying the Development of Individuals in Society* (pp.63-81). Sage.

Friedan, B. (1964). *The Feminine Mystique*. Dell.

Fry, L. W. (2003). Toward a theory of spiritual leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *14*(6), 693-727. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2003.09.001

Fry, L. W. (2008). Spiritual leadership: State-of-the-art and future directions for theory, research, and practice. In J. Biberman & L. Tischler (Eds.), *Spirituality in Business* (pp.106-124). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230611887_7

Fry, L. W., & Altman, Y. (2013). *Spiritual Leadership in Action: The CEL Story Achieving Extraordinary Results through Ordinary People*. Information Age Publishing.

Fry, L. W., & Kriger, M. (2009). Towards a theory of being-centered leadership: Multiple levels of being as context for effective leadership. *Human Relations, 62*(11), 1667–1696. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726709346380

Fry, L. W., Latham, J. R., Clinebell, S. K. & Krahnke, K. (2017). Spiritual leadership as a model for performance excellence: A study of Baldrige award recipients. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion 14*(1). 22–47. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2016.1202130

Fry, L. W., & Nisiewicz, M. S. (2013). *Maximizing the Triple Bottom Line through Spiritual Leadership.* Stanford University Press.

Fry, L. W., & Vu, M. C. (2023). Leading without a self: Implications of Buddhist practices for pseudo-spiritual leadership. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1-17. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-023-05416-x

Gartzia, L. (2010). *From "think male" to "think androgynous".* [Doctoral dissertation, University of the Basque Country]. UPV/EHU Editorial Service.

Gartzia, L. (2011). The Gendered nature of (male) leadership: Expressive identity salience and cooperation. *Academy of Management Proceedings, 2011*(1), 1-6. https://doi.org/10.5465/ambpp.2011.65870473

Gartzia, L. & van Engen, M. (2012). Are (male) leaders "feminine" enough? Gendered traits of identity as mediators of sex differences in leadership styles, *Gender in Management, 27*(5), 296-314. https://doi.org/10.1108/17542411211252624

Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Harvard University Press.

Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G., & Hamilton, A. L. (2013). Seeking Qualitative Rigor in Inductive Research. *Organizational Research Methods*, *16*(1), 15–31. https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428112452151

Gioia, D.A., & Pitre, E. (1990). Multiparadigm perspectives on theory building. *The Academy of Management Review, 15*(4), 584–602. https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.2307/258683

Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Sociology Press.

Gleig, A. (2019). *American Dharma: Buddhism beyond Modernity*. Yale University Press.

Goodall, B. H. L. (2006). *A Need to Know: The Clandestine History of a CIA Family*. Left Coast Press.

Groen, J. (2010). An insiders view: Reflections on teaching a graduate education course on Spirituality in the Workplace. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *7*(4), 335–349. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2010.524729

Gronn, P. (2002). Distributed leadership as a unit of analysis. *The Leadership Quarterly, 13*(4), 423–452. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843(02)00120-0

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1989). *Fourth Generation Evaluation*. Sage.

Gumbo, M. T., & Gaotlhobogwe, M. (2021). African Indigenous Knowledge and Practices to Combat COVID-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *18*(5), 462–481. https://doi.org/10.51327/EDTA1013

Guo, Y., & Beckett, G. H. (2007). The hegemony of English as a global language: Reclaiming local knowledge and culture in China. *Convergence*, *40*(1/2), 117-131. https://globalization.anthro-seminars.net/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/guo-2007.pdf

Halifax, J. (2011, January 2). *Open letter from Roshi regarding Eido Shimano*. Upaya Zen Center. https://www.upaya.org/2011/01/open-letter-from-roshi-regarding-eido-shimano/

Hall, R. J., Workman, J. W., & Marchioro, C. A. (1998). Sex, task, and behavioral flexibility effects on leadership perceptions. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 74*(1), 1–32. https://doi.org/10.1006/obhd.1998.2754

Hammersley M. (1992). *What's Wrong with Ethnography?* Routledge.

Hampton, E. (1995). Memory comes before knowledge: Research may improve if researchers remember their motives. *The Canadian Journal of Native Education. 21*(Supplement), 46-54. https://doi.org/10.14288/cjne.v21i.195782

Harding, S. (Ed.) (2004). *The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader: Intellectual and Political Controversies.* Routledge.

Hassard, J. (1991). Multiple paradigms and organizational analysis: A case study. *Organization Studies, 12*(2), 275–299. https://doi.org/10.1177/017084069101200206

Haynes, K. (2011). Tensions in (re)presenting the self in reflexive autoethnographical research, *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management*, *6*(2), 134-149. https://doi.org/10.1108/17465641111159125

Heine, S., & Wright, D. S. (Eds.). (2000). *The Kōan: Texts and Contexts in Zen Buddhism*. Oxford University Press.

Helgesen, S. (1990). *The Female Advantage: Women's Ways of Leadership*. Doubleday.

Helin, J. (2020). Temporality lost: A feminist invitation to vertical writing that shakes the ground. *Organization*. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508420956322

Hollow Bones Order. (2018a). *Mondo Zen: Ego Deconstruction Koans*. Unpublished teaching manual.

Hollow Bones Order. (2018b). *Hollow Bones Sutra Book*.

Holman-Jones, S. (2005). Auto ethnography: Making the personal political. In Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S., (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 763-791). Sage.

Holt, N. L. (2003). Representation, legitimation, and autoethnography: An autoethnographic writing story. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 2*(1), 18-28. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690300200102

Hooks, B. (1991). Theory as a liberated practice. *Yale Journal of Law and Feminism 4*(1), 1–12. http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.13051/7151

Hope, K. & Waterman, H. (2003). Praiseworthy pragmatism? Validity and action research. *Journal of advanced nursing. 44*(2), 120-127. https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2648.2003.02777.x.

Horn, V. S. (2000). Koan and Kensho in the Rinzai Zen Curriculum. In S. Heine & D. S. Wright (Eds.), *The Koan: Texts and contexts in Zen Buddhism* (pp. 280–315). Oxford University Press.

Houghton, J. D., Neck, C. P., & Krishnakumar, S. (2016). The what, why, and how of spirituality in the workplace revisited: a 14-year update and extension. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *13*(3), 177–205. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2016.1185292

Humphreys, M. (2005), Getting personal: Reflexivity and autoethnographic vignettes. *Qualitative Inquiry, 11*(6), 840-860. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800404269425

Ivanhoe, P. J. (2017). *Oneness: East Asian Conceptions of Virtue, Happiness, and How We Are All Connected.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press

Jacobs, G. A., & Longbotham, G. J. (2011). The impact of spirituality on the formation of a leaders purpose. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *8*(1), 69–91. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2011.552259

Jago, B. J. (2002). Chronicling an academic depression. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 31*(6), 729-757. https://doi.org/10.1177/089124102237823

Jamjoom, L. A. (2020). *The narratives of Saudi women leaders in the workplace: A postcolonial feminist study.* [Doctoral thesis] Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Jamjoom, L. A. (2021). A spectacle of otherness: An autoethnography of a conference presentation. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal*, *16*(1), 261-277. https://doi.org/10.1108/QROM-12-2018-1708

Jenks, E.B. (2002), Searching for autoethnographic credibility: Reflections from a mom with a notepad. In A. P. Bochner & C. Ellis (Eds.), *Ethnographically Speaking: Autoethnography, Literature, and Aesthetics* (pp. 170-86). AltaMira Press.

Jensen, J. R., & Neck, C. P. (2017). The relation of religion and spirituality to time management: examining the lives and careers of FranklinCovey co-founders–Hyrum W. Smith & Stephen R. Covey. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *14*(4), 281–294. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2017.1370257

Jones, D. (2008). Gendering emotion in organizations. *Gender in Management: An International Journal, 23*(1), 81-84. https://doi.org/10.1108/17542410810849141

Karakas, F. (2008). A holistic view of spirituality and values: The case of global gulen networks. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *5*(1), 56–83. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766080809518689

Karakas, F. (2010). Spirituality and performance in organizations: A literature review. *Journal of Business Ethics 94* (1), 89–106. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-009-0251-5

Kark, R. (2004). The transformational leader: who is (s)he? A feminist perspective. *Journal of Organizational Change Management, 17*(2), 160-176. https://doi.org/10.1108/09534810410530593

Kark, R., & Shamir, B. (2002). The dual effect of transformational leadership: Priming relational and collective selves and further effects on followers. In B. J. Avolio & F. J. Yammarino (Eds.), *Transformational and Charismatic Leadership: The Road Ahead.* JAI: An Imprint of Elsevier Science.

Kark, R., Van Dijk, D. & Esformes, E. (2011). Birds of a feather flock together: The relationship between leader-follower self-regulation congruency, LMX, and organizational commitment. [Paper presentation]. 4th Annual EuroMed Conference of the EuroMed Academy of Business, Crete, Greece. https://emrbi.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/euromed-4-2011.pdf

Kark, R., Waismel-Manor, R., & Shamir, B. (2012). Does valuing androgyny and femininity lead to a female advantage? The relationship between gender-role, transformational leadership and identification. *Leadership Quarterly, 23*(3), 620–640. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.12.012

Kiesinger, C. E. (2002). My father's shoes: The therapeutic value of narrative reframing. In A. P. Bochner & C. Ellis (Eds.), *Ethnographically Speaking: Autoethnography, Literature, and Aesthetics* (pp.95-114). AltaMira Press.

Klaus, L. & Fernando, M. (2016). Enacting spiritual leadership in business through ego-transcendence. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal, 37*(1), 71–92. https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-04-2014-0078

Koenig A. M., Eagly A. H., Mitchell A. A. & Ristikari, T. (2011). Are leader stereotypes masculine? A meta-analysis of three research paradigms. *Psychological Bulletin, 137*(4), 616-642. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0023557.

Kriger, M., & Seng, Y. (2005). Leadership with inner meaning: A contingency theory of leadership based on the worldviews of five religions. *The Leadership Quarterly, 16*(5), 771-806. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2005.07.007

Kuhn, T. (1996). *The structure of scientific revolutions* (3rd ed.). University of Chicago Press.

Laszlo, C. (2020) Quantum management: The practices and science of flourishing enterprise. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion*, 17(4), 301-315. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2020.1734063

Le Roux, C. S. (2017) Exploring rigour in autoethnographic research. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 20*(2), 195-207. https://doi.org/10.1080/13645579.2016.1140965

Lean, E. R. & Ganster, D. C. (2017). Is there a common understanding of spiritual leader behaviors? *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion, 14*(4), 295–317. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2017.1315316

Lesser, M. (2005). *Z.B.A. – Zen Business Administration: How Zen practice can transform your work and your life.* Novato, CA: New World Library.

Lewis, M.W. & Kelemen, M.L. (2002). Multiparadigm inquiry: Exploring organizational pluralism and paradox. *Human Relations, 55*(2), 251–275. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726702055002185

Lin, J., Oxford, R. L., & Culham, T. (2016). *Toward a Spiritual Research Paradigm: Exploring New Ways of Knowing, Researching, and Being.* Information Age Publishing.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Sage.

Lips-Wiersma, M. (2000). The study and application of spirituality at work: Some critical questions. [Paper presentation]. *Academy of Management 2000 Annual Meeting*, Toronto, Canada.

Litz, R.A. (2013). Leaving the godfather to follow God the father: Successor generation conversion in a mob family. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, 10(2), 183-211. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2012.758053

Liu, H. & Pechenkina, E. (2016). Staying quiet or rocking the boat? An autoethnography of organisational visual white supremacy. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, 35*(3), 186-204. https://doi.org/10.1108/EDI-08-2015-0067

Lorber, J. (1997). The variety of feminism and their contributions to gender equality. *Gender Inequality: Feminist Theories and Politics* (pp.7–43). Oldenburg, Germany: Bibliotheks-Information system der Universität Oldenburg. http://oops.uni-oldenburg.de/1269/1/ur97.pdf

Lorber, J. (2001). *Gender Inequality*. Roxbury Publishing.

Low, A., & Purser, R. (2012). Zen and the creative management of dilemmas. *Journal of Management , Spirituality & Religion*, 9(4), 335–355. http://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2012.744543

Lueptow, L. B., Garovich-Szabo, L., & Lueptow, M. B. (2001). Social change and the persistence of sex typing: 1974-1997. *Social Forces, 80*(1), 1–36. https://doi.org/10.1353/sof.2001.0077

Lund Dean, K., & Fornaciari, C. J. (2007). Empirical research in management, spirituality and religion

during its founding years. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *4*(1), 3–34. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766080709518644

Lychnell, L. (2017). When work becomes meditation: How managers use work as a tool for personal growth. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion, 14*(3), 255-275. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2017.1307782

Lychnell, L. & Martensson, P. (2017). Straight from the heart: A clinical group intervention to research management spirituality. *Management Research Review*, *40*(8), 870-889. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/MRR-05-2016-0128

Madsen, S. (Ed.). (2024). *Handbook of Research on Gender and Leadership* (2nd ed.). Edward Elgar Publishing.

Manning, J. & Adams, T. E. (2015). Popular culture studies and autoethnography: An essay on method. The Popular Culture Studies Journal, 3 (1&2), 187-221. http://mpcaaca.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/PCSJ-Volume-3-Issues-12.pdf

Marko, E. M., & Nakao, W. E. (2020). *The Book of Householder Koans: Waking up in the Land of Attachments*. Monkfish Book Publishing.

Marques, J., Dhiman, S., & King, R. (2005). Spirituality in the workplace: Developing an integral model and a comprehensive definition. *Journal of American Academy of Business, Cambridge 7* (1), 81–91.

McGee, J. (2001). Research methods for spirituality and management. [PDW session]. *Academy of Management 2001 Annual Meeting*, Washington, D.C.

McGhee, P., & Grant, P. (2017). The transcendent influence of spirituality on ethical action in organizations. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *14*(2), 160–178. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2016.1268539

McMahan, D. L. (2008). *The Making of Buddhist Modernism*. Oxford University Press.

Méndez, M. (2013). Autoethnography as a research method: Advantages, limitations and criticisms. *Colombian Applied Linguistic Journal*, *15*, 279–287. http://www.scielo.org.co/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0123-46412013000200010

Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning*. Jossey-Bass.

Miller, D. W., Ngunjiri, F. W., & Lorusso, J. D. (2018). "The suits care about us": employee perceptions of workplace chaplains. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *15*(5), 377–397. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2018.1501414

Mitroff, I. I., & Denton, E. A. (1999). A study of spirituality in the workplace. *Sloan Management Review*, *40* (4), 83–92.

Moran, R. (2017). Workplace spirituality in law enforcement: A content analysis of the literature. Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion, 14(4), 343-364. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2017.1376287

Mwaka, J. O., & Ochola, E. (2021). Harmony and Tension in Integrating Indigenous Responses to COVID-19 in Uganda. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *18*(5), 425–443. https://doi.org/10.51327/IHHQ8367

Mykhalovskiy, E. (1996). Reconsidering table talk: Critical thoughts on the relationship between sociology, autobiography and self-indulgence. *Qualitative Sociology 19*(1), 131–151. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02393251

Nakao, W. E. (1998). Saying goodbye to a dharma sister: Sensei Sandra Jishu Angyo Holmes (1941-1998), In Zen Center of Los Angeles (Eds.), *Sangha Letter*, *May/June 1998*, 1-4.

Nakao, W. E. (1998a, May/June). Saying goodbye to a dharma sister: Sensei Sandra Jishu Angyo Holmes (1941-1998). *Sangha Letter*. Zen Center of Los Angeles.

Nakao, W. E. (1998b, July/August). Women acquiring the essence. *Sangha Letter*. Zen Center of Los Angeles.

Nakao, W. E. (1998c, July/August). The lineage of women. *Sangha Letter*. Zen Center of Los Angeles.

Nakao, W. E. (2000, May/June). Practice circles. *Sangha Letter.* Zen Center of Los Angeles.

Nakao, W. E. (2019, November 7). *Shunryo: My Mother's Diaper.* [Class handout]. Zen Center of Los Angeles, Householder Koan Class 2.

Nandram, S. S., Mourmont, G., Norlyk Smith, E., Heaton, D. P., & Bindlish, P. K. (2018). Understanding entrepreneurial decision-making by objectivizing subtle cues. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *15*(5), 398–423. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2018.1503088

Nanus, B. & Dobbs, S. M. (1999). *Leaders Who Make a Difference: Essential Strategies for Meeting the Nonprofit Challenge*. Jossey-Bass.

Neal, J., Storberg-Walker, J., Gjikondi, I., & Laszlo, C. (2023, September 30). *Global consciousness: Frameworks for a Flourishing World.* Global Consciousness Institute. Retrieved September 30, 2023, from https://edgewalkers.org/gci/key-elements-of-global-consciousness/

Neuse, S. (1978). Professionalism and authority: Women in public service. *Public Administration Review, 38*(5), 436–441. https://doi.org/10.2307/975502

Newman, J. M. (1999). Validity and action research: An online conversation. In I. Hughes (Ed.). *Action Research Electronic Reader*. http://www.aral.com.au/arow/newman.html

Oakley, J. G. (2000). Gender-based barriers to senior management positions: Understanding the scarcity of female CEOs. *Journal of Business Ethics, 27*(4), 321–334. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1006226129868

Offermann, L. R., & Beil, C. (1992). Achievement styles of women leaders and their peers: Toward an understanding of women and leadership. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 16*(1), 37–56. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-6402.1992.tb00238.x

Oh, J. & Wang, J. (2020). Spiritual leadership: Current status and agenda for future research and practice. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *17*(3), 223-248. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2020.1728568

Oppenheimer, M. (2010, August 20). Sex scandal has U.S. Buddhists looking within. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/21/us/21beliefs.html

Parameshwar, S. (2005). Spiritual leadership through ego-transcendence: Exceptional responses to challenging circumstances. *The Leadership Quarterly, 16*(5), 689-722. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2005.07.004

Park, D. (1996). Sex-role identity and leadership style: Looking for an androgynous leadership style. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies, 3*(3), 49–59. https://doi.org/10.1177/107179199700300306

Park, D. (1997). Androgynous leadership style: An integration rather than a polarization. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 18* (3), 166-171. https://doi.org/10.1108/01437739710168643

Pavlovich, K., & Corner, P. D. (2009). Spiritual organizations and connectedness: The living nature experience. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *6*(3), 209–229. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766080903069323

Pelias, R. J. (2000). The critical life. *Communication Education, 49*(3), 220-228. https://doi.org/10.1080/03634520009379210

Pelias, R. J. (2004). *A Methodology of the Heart: Evoking Academic and Daily Life*. AltaMira Press.

Pelias, R. J. (2007). Jarheads, girly men, and the pleasures of violence. *Qualitative Inquiry, 13*(7), 945-959. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800407304413

Peng, N., Yu, T., & Mills, A. (2015). Feminist thinking in late seventh-century China: A critical hermeneutics analysis of the case of Wu Zetian. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 34(1), 67-83. https://doi.org/10.1108/EDI-12-2012-0112

Phillips, N. & Hardy, C. (2002). *Discourse Analysis: Investigating Processes of Social Construction*. Sage Publications.

Phipps, K. (2009). Spirituality and strategic leadership: The influence of spiritual beliefs in decision making. [Paper presentation] Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, Chicago.

Pinar, W. (2012). *What Is Curriculum Theory?* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Plummer, K. (2001). The call of life stories in ethnographic research. In P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland, & L. Lofland (Eds.), *Handbook of Ethnography* (pp.395-406). Sage.

Poulos, C. N. (2008). *Accidental Ethnography: An Inquiry into Family Secrecy.* Left Coast Press.

Powell, G. N., & Butterfield, D. A. (2015). The role of androgyny in leader prototypes over four decades. *Gender in Management, 30*(1), 69–86. https://doi.org/10.1108/GM-07-2013-0082

Price, S. (2020). *Storytelling leadership: Connecting heart, mind, body and spirit to stories of the old days and old ways of Labrador.* [Doctoral thesis] Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Pullen, A. (2018). Writing as Labiaplasty. *Organization, 25*(1), 123–130. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508417735537

Ragan, S. L. (2000). The critical life: An exercise in applying inapplicable critical standards. *Communication Education*, 49, 229–232. https://doi.org/10.1080/03634520009379211

Reynolds, M. (2014). *The Discomfort Zone: How Leaders Turn Difficult Conversations into Breakthroughs.* Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Richardson, L. (1997). *Fields of Play: Constructing an Academic Life*. Rutgers University Press.

Richardson, L. (2000). Evaluating ethnography. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 6, 253–255. https://doi.org/10.1177/107780040000600207

Richardson, L. (2000). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp.923-948). Sage.

Richardson, L., & St. Pierre, E. A. (2005). Writing: A Method of Inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 959–978). Sage.

Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*. Sage.

Romani, L., Primecz, H., & Topcu, K. (2011). Paradigm interplay for theory development: A methodological example with the Kulturstandard method. *Organizational Research Methods, 14*(3), 432–455. https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428109358270

Romanyshyn, R. D. (2020). *The Wounded Researcher: Research with Soul in Mind.* Routledge.

Rosener, J. B. (1990). Ways women lead. *Harvard Business Review 68*(6), 119–125. https://store.hbr.org/product/ways-women-lead/90608

Rosener, J. B. (1995). *America's Competitive Secret: Women Managers.* Oxford University Press.

Roth, W. (2012). *First-Person Methods: Toward an Empirical Phenomenology of Experience*. Sense Publishers.

Saint Mary's University. (2023, July 25). *Ph.D. in Business Administration Program Overview*. Retrieved July 25, 2023, from https://www.smu.ca/academics/sobey/Ph.D.-management-program-overview.html

Sandelands, L. E., & Carlsen, A. (2013). The romance of wonder in organization studies. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *10*(4), 358–379. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2013.801024

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research Methods for Business Students* (8th ed.). Pearson Education Limited.

Schein, V., Mueller, R., Lituchy, T. & Liu, J. (1996). Think manager – think male: A global phenomenon? *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 17*(1), 33-41. https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1099-1379(199601)17:1<33::AID-JOB778>3.0.CO;2-F

Schultz, M., & Hatch, M.J. (1996). Living with multiple paradigms: The case of paradigm interplay in organizational culture studies. *Academy of Management Review, 21*(2), 529–557. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1996.9605060221

Schwandt, T. (1996). Farewell to criteriology. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *2*(1), 58–72. https://doi.org/10.1177/107780049600200109

Schwandt, T. A. (2007). *The Sage Dictionary of Qualitative Inquiry* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Sheep, M. L. (2006). Nurturing the whole person: The ethics of workplace spirituality in a society of organizations. *Journal of Business Ethics 66* (4), 357–375. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-006-0014-5

Singh, S., Corner, P. D., & Pavlovich, K. (2016). Spirituality and entrepreneurial failure. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *13*(1), 24–49. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2015.1029961

Sirris, S. (2019). "The pastors' dilemma" revisited. Religious leaders connecting the spiritual and organizational realms through conceptual work. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion*, 16(3), 290-313. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2019.1574599

Small, E. (2020). How successful African-American male leaders in predominately White Organizations integrate spirituality with leadership practice. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *17*(2), 184–208. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2019.1697727

Smith J. K. & Deemer D. K. (2000). The problem of criteria in the age of relativism. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed., pp. 877–895), Sage.

Spry, T. (2001). Performing autoethnography: An embodied methodological praxis. *Qualitative Inquiry, 7*(6), 706–732. https://doi.org/10.1177/107780040100700605

Starr, L. J. (2010). The use of autoethnography in educational research: Locating who we are in what we do. *Canadian Journal for New Scholars in Education, 3*(1), 1–9. https://journalhosting.ucalgary.ca/index.php/cjnse/article/view/30477

Stolz, J., & Usunier, J. C. (2019). Religions as brands? Religion and spirituality in consumer society. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *16*(1), 6–31. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2018.1445008

Storberg-Walker, J. (2021). A Window of Our Own: Towards a Quantum Research Ontology. *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion*, *18*(6), 92–129. https://doi.org/10.51327/BQLC1209

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. M. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. SAGE Publications Inc.

Streib, H., & Hood, R. W. (2013). Modeling the religious field: Religion, spirituality, mysticism, and related world views. *Implicit Religion*, *16*(2), 137–155. https://doi.org/10.1558/imre.v16i2.137

Suzuki, D.T. (1951). The philosophy of Zen. *Philosophy East and West, 1*(2), 3–15.

Suzuki, D. T. (1953). A reply to Hu Shih. *Philosophy East and West*, *3*(1), 25-46.

Suzuki, D. T. (1958). Essays in Zen Buddhism (First Series). In C. Humphreys (Ed.), *The Complete Works of D. T. Suzuki*. Rider & Company.

Sweet, P. L. (2020). Who knows? Reflexivity in feminist standpoint theory and Bourdieu. *Gender & Society, 34*(6), 922-950. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243220966600

Tackney, C. T., Chappell, S. F., & Sato, T. (2017a). MSR founders narrative and content analysis of scholarly papers: 2000–2015. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *14*(2), 135–159. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2017.1295879

Tackney, C. T., Chappell, S., Harris, D., Pavlovich, K., Egel, E., Major, R., Finney, M., & Stoner, J. (2017b). Management, Spirituality, and Religion (MSR) ways and means: A paper to encourage quality research. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *14*(3), 245–254. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2017.1316764

The Diamond Sutra (The Buddhist Text Translation Society, Trans.). (2000). Sino-American Buddhist Association. https://www.buddhanet.net/pdf_file/prajparagen2.pdf

The Lankavatara Sutra: A Mahayana Text. (D. T. Suzuki, Trans.) (2009). Motilal Banarsidass.

Tischler, L., Biberman, G. & Altman, Y. (2005). A model for research in the field of spirituality in organizations. [Paper presentation]. *Academy Management 2005 Annual Meeting*, Atlanta, GA.

Tracy, S. J. (2010). Qualitative quality: Eight big-tent criteria for excellent qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 16*(10), 837–851. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800410383121

Turner, V. (1986). *The Anthropology of Performance*. PAJ Publications.

Van Maanen, J. (2006). Ethnography then and now. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management, 1*(1), 13-21. https://doi.org/10.1108/17465640610666615

Vandenberghe, C. (2011). Workplace spirituality and organizational commitment: An integrative model. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion, 8*(3), 211-232. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2011.599146

Vasavada, T. (2012). A cultural feminist perspective on leadership in nonprofit organizations: A case of women leaders in India. *Public Administration Quarterly*, *36*(4), 462–503. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41804557

Vickers, M.H. (2002). Researchers as storytellers: Writing on the edge – and without a safety net. *Qualitative Inquiry, 8*(5), 608-621. https://doi.org/10.1177/107780002237007

Vu, M. C., & Gill, R. (2018). Is there corporate mindfulness? An exploratory study of Buddhist-enacted spiritual leaders' perspectives and practices. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *15*(2), 155–177. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2017.1410491

Walker, R. C., & Aritz, J. (2015). Women doing leadership: Leadership styles and organizational culture. *International Journal of Business Communication*, *52*(4), 452–478. https://doi.org/10.1177/2329488415598429

Wall, S. (2006). An autoethnography on learning about autoethnography. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 5*(2), 146–160. https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690600500205

Warner, B. (2012). Goalless practice. *Tricycle: The Buddhist Review*. (Winter). https://tricycle.org/magazine/goalless-practice/

Weber-Pillwax, C. (2009). When research becomes a revolution: Participatory action research with Indigenous peoples. In: D. Kapoor, & S. Jordan (Eds.), *Education, Participatory Action Research, and Social Change* (pp.45-58). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230100640_4

Wilber, K. (2000). *Integral Psychology: Consciousness, Spirit, Psychology, Therapy*. Shambhala Publications.

Williams, K. S. (2020). *Conversing in time with overlooked, historical female proto-management theorists: A ficto-feminist polemic*. [Doctoral thesis] Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*. Fernwood Publishing.

Wyatt, J. (2008). No longer loss: Autoethnographic stammering. *Qualitative Inquiry, 14*(6), 955-967. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800408318324

Yahanpath, N., Pacheco, P., & Burns, E. A. (2018). Discussing a balanced scorecard for one local independent New Zealand church. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, *15*(1), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1080/14766086.2017.1338612

Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case Study Research and Applications: Design and Methods* (6th ed.). Sage Publications Inc.

Yoo, J. (2019) Learning to write through an awareness of breath. *Qualitative Inquiry, 26(*3/4), 400–406. https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800419846533

Yu, T. & Loughlin, C. (2016). An exploratory study of challenges to Chinese students' cross-cultural adaptation in the Canadian workplace: More about sitcoms and less about values? *Proceedings of Administrative Sciences Association of Canada 2016 Conference*, Edmonton, Canada.

Yu, T. & Mills, A. J. (2022). 'Zen koan pedagogy: A spiritual approach to management education'. In M.C. Vu, N. Singh, N. Burton, I. Chu (Eds.), *Faith Traditions and Practices in the Workplace. Volume II. Palgrave Studies in Workplace Spirituality and Fulfillment* (pp.137-156). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-09540-5_7

Yu, T., Mills, A. J. & Helms Mills, J. (2020). Towards a Zen-informed Approach to Management and Organizational History. In K. Bruce (Ed.), *Elgar Handbook on Management and Organizational History* (pp.146-168). Edward Elgar Publishing. https://doi.org/10.4337/9781788118491.00015

Yu, T., Mills, A.J. & Peng, N. (2018). A reflexive critique of a critical hermeneutics analysis of Wu Zetian. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management, 13*(3), 250-260. https://doi.org/10.1108/QROM-10-2016-1454

Yu, T., Teehankee, B. & Rocha, R.G. (2023, August 4-8). *A Systematic Review of Research Paradigms in the Journal of Management Spirituality and Religion.* [Paper presentation]. The 83rd Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, Boston, MA., United States.

Zaner, R. M. (2004). *Conversations on the edge: Narratives of ethics and illness.* Georgetown University Press.

Zen Center of Los Angeles. (2019). *The Sangha Sutra: ZCLA Ethics Practices*. https://zcla.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/The-Sangha-Sutra-%E2%80%93-ZCLA-Ethics-Practices.pdf

Zen Center of Los Angeles. (2020, October 8). *Core values*. Retrieved October 8, 2020, from https://zcla.org/about/governance/core-values/

Zen Center of Los Angeles. (2023, July 25). *Governance.* Retrieved July 25, 2023, from https://zcla.org/about/governance/

Zen Studies Society. (2013, June 19). *The Pointless Point of Zen Training*. [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PVMZ1EVkgtQ

Zen Studies Society. (2016). *Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-Ji: 40th Anniversary*. https://zenstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/DBZ-Anniversary2016.pdf

六祖大師法寶壇經 (*The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch*). (2002). 中華電子佛典協會. CBETA (Chinese Buddhist Electronic Texts Association) Chinese Electronic Tripitaka Collection eBook. http://buddhism.lib.ntu.edu.tw/BDLM/sutra/chi_pdf/sutra19/T48n2008.pdf

大乘入楞伽經 (*The Lankavatara Sutra*). (于曉非, 編校; 梵漢對照本). (2017). 淨名精舍. https://www.vimalakirti.cn/web/images/8/8f/%E6%A5%9E%E4%BC%BD%E7%BB%8F%28%E7%94%B5%E5%AD%90%E7%89%88%29.pdf

大方廣佛華嚴經 (*The Buddhāvataṃsaka Sutra*). (2021). 中華電子佛典協會. CBETA (Chinese Buddhist Electronic Texts Association) Chinese Electronic Tripitaka Collection eBook. T10n0279. http://buddhism.lib.ntu.edu.tw/FULLTEXT/sutra/chi_pdf/sutra5/T10n0279.pdf

普濟 (Puji). (Ed.). (1252/2021). *五燈會元 (Song Dynasty History of Zen Buddhism in China)*. 中華電子佛典協會. CBETA (Chinese Buddhist Electronic Texts Association) Chinese Electronic Tripitaka Collection eBook. X80n1565. http://buddhism.lib.ntu.edu.tw/FULLTEXT/sutra/10thousand/X80n1565.pdf

景德傳燈錄 (*Records of the Transmission of the Lamp*). (n.d.). 中華電子佛典協會. CBETA (Chinese Buddhist Electronic Texts Association) Chinese Electronic Tripitaka Collection eBook. T51n2076. https://buddhism.lib.ntu.edu.tw/FULLTEXT/sutra/chi_pdf/sutra20/T51n2076.pdf

金剛般若波羅蜜經 (*The Diamond Sutra*). (2002). 中華電子佛典協會. CBETA (Chinese Buddhist Electronic Texts Association) Chinese Electronic Tripitaka Collection eBook. http://buddhism.lib.ntu.edu.tw/BDLM/sutra/chi_pdf/sutra3/T08n0235.pdf

鎮州臨濟慧照禪師語錄 (*Quotations from Chan Master Linji Huizhao from Zhenzhou*). (2002). 中華電子佛典協會. CBETA (Chinese Buddhist Electronic Texts Association) Chinese Electronic

Appendix A

Interview Questions

1. How long have you been practicing Zen?

2. Are there any Zen teaching practices that you think are particularly inspiring or confusing?

3. Do you see any changes/adaptations of Zen teaching practice in the U.S. since it was introduced from Japan in the 20th century? (If so, what have been the changes?)

4. Do you anticipate changes/adaptations of Zen teaching practice in the near future? (If so, what would the changes likely be)?

5. Have you had any experience of "awakening moments" through Zen practice? (If so, would you like to describe it?)

6. How do you think Zen practice has affected your own workplace behaviour? Is there any workplace experience that you think is relevant to your Zen practice?

7. How do you think the Zen teaching practice can inform management education (e.g., wisdom, intuition and creativity enhancement, leadership training, etc.)?

Appendix B

List of Interviewees

#	Interview Date, 2019	Interview Venue	Length of Interview (Minutes)	Legal/Dharma / /Chinese name or Pseudonym of Interviewee	Sex	Length of Zen Practice (Years)	Position/Occupation
1	Jun 4 & June 5	NYZ	90 + 60	Giun Stefan Streit 宜云	M	14	Head Monastic of NYZ
2	Jun 5	NYZ	75	Gangyo 愿行	M	43	Director of IT Dept. of a large corporation
3	Jun 8	DBZ	90	Jun Po Roshi Denis Kelly 淳法禪師	M	N/A	Founding abbot of Hollow Bones Order
4	Jun 8	DBZ	60	Daniel Rotnem	M	27	Founder & CEO of a Zen & Yoga training centre
5	Jun 9	DBZ	80	Kimpu 金風	M	13	Head Monastic of DBZ
6	Jun 9	DBZ	90	Shinge Roshi Sherry Chayat 心華禪師	F	N/A	Abbot of ZSS
7	Jun 10	DBZ	60	Togan	M	15	Administrative Assistant of Abbot
8	Jun 11	DBZ	60	Muken 無間	M	7	Resident monk; former university lecturer
9	Jun 12	NYZ	165	Zuiken	M	21	Freelancer
10	Jun 12	NYZ	75	Kokan	M	33	Professor; Director of emergency management of a Medical Center
11	Jun 13	NYZ	60	Eto	F	1	Intern teacher at a pre-K public school
12	Jun 14	NYZ	90	Amanda	F	5	Nurse; student of Biomedical Science
13	Nov 6	ZCLA	110	Mukei 霧溪	M	35	Head trainer of ZCLA; retired computer programmer
14	Nov 7	ZCLA	98	Senshin 純心	F	33	Program Steward of ZCLA; comic; writer; actress; instructor
15	Nov 7	ZCLA	70	Kyobai 空梅	F	20	Abbot of ZCLA; retired flight attendant

#	Interview Date, 2019	Interview Venue	Length of Interview (Minutes)	Legal/Dharma / /Chinese name or Pseudonym of Interviewee	Sex	Length of Zen Practice (Years)	Position/Occupation
16	Nov 8	ZCLA	90	Darla Myoho Fjeld 妙凤	F	23	Temple Director of ZCLA; former CEO of an NPO; former political activist in New York
17	Nov 8	ZCLA	105	Roshi Wendy Egyoku Nakao 惠玉禪師	F	N/A	Abbot Emerita & Head Teacher of ZCLA
18	Nov 8	ZCLA	60	Jitsujo 實定	F	16	Zen priest; Professor;
19	Nov 10	ZCLA	85	Thomas Dharma-Joy Reichert	M	20	Zen priest; lawyer
20	Nov 10	ZCLA	107	Muso 无束	F	20	President, Board of Directors of ZCLA; CEO of an NPO
21	Nov 11	ZCLA	108	Gessho Kumpf 月亮	F	30	Retired professor
22	Dec 4	Zenshuji	140	Yukinori Gyokei Yokoyama 横山行敬	M	20	Zen priest; Secretary of Soto Zen Buddhism North America Office
23	Dec 4	Zenshuji	100	John	M	40	N/A
24	Dec 5	Zenshuji	90	Franklin Neft	M	19	N/A
25	Dec 5	Zenshuji	100	Doshin 道心	F	8	Zen priest in training; chaplaincy; former government employee;
26	Dec 6	Zenshuji	90	Jion 慈音	M	22	Composer
27	Dec 6	Zenshuji	110	Etsugen 悦玄	M	12	Founder & CEO of a high-tech company
28	Dec 7	Zenshuji	30	Roger 慈明	M	20	Founder & CEO of a film company; movie producer & director
29	Dec 8	Zenshuji	175	Shumyo Hideaki Kojima 佛鑑	M	41	Head Minister of Zenshuji