



FACULTY OF
RELIGION
AND THEOLOGY



Spirituality & Business in the Anthropocene Era

The 20th Anniversary Conference of the European SPES Institute
Corvinus University of Budapest
June 20-22, 2024

The Business Ethics Center of Corvinus University of Budapest (<https://www.businessethicscenter.com/>) organizes the The 20th Anniversary Conference of the European SPES Institute entitled "Spirituality & Business in the Anthropocene Era" in Budapest in June 20-22, 2024.

Co-organizing partners of the conference are the Free University of Amsterdam – Faculty of Religion and Theology; Neyenrode Business University; the UNESCO Chair towards a Culture of Economic Peace, Grenoble School of Management; ABBS School of Management, Bangalore; S.P. Jain Institute of Management and Research, Mumbai; and the Macau Ricci Institute, University of St. Joseph, Macau.

The Theme of the Conference

In 2024 the European SPES Institute (<http://europes.org/>) celebrates its 20th anniversary. It is a good time to reflect on the prospects of spirituality in business and society as the new reality of Anthropocene emerged in the form of multiple crises.

As consumption and human numbers have risen, humankind has ushered in a new era called the “Anthropocene” in which we are altering the biogeochemistry of the planet itself, destabilizing climate and influencing co-evolution at the planetary level. The Anthropocene is a regrettable exit from the placid past ten thousand years – the Holocene – a period of climate stability in which human civilization arose.

The dramatic symptoms of the Anthropocene – climate change, biodiversity loss, the collapse of the ecosystems, wellbeing deficiencies, raising global inequality, and migration – indicate that humanity may approach a point of no-return where the survival of our civilization is at stake.

While the Anthropocene is reshaping human consciousness and human-nature bonds, there is another big force that is racing to alter the human spirit and consciousness: Artificial Intelligence. For example, Google filed patent for “System & method for conscious machine” comprised of an artificial neural network configured to identify correlated temporal patterns and attribute causality and agency, which can recognize itself and other agents in a dynamic environment, in a way similar to biological consciousness in humans and animals.

What is the role of spirituality in such an unprecedented situation and what business and other social institutions can do to avoid further catastrophes? What should responsible professionals do? What is meaningful action today? How should we change our way of life? These and similar questions constitute the grand themes of the conference.

Issues to be Addressed

Redefining spirituality in the context of the Anthropocene

The spiritual aspects of the present ecological, economic, social and ethical crises

Examining the concept of interconnectedness and interdependence for mitigating the consequences of the Anthropocene

Investigating Earth spirituality for business and society

Understanding ecological consciousness in organizations and societies

Analyzing materialist worldviews in the Anthropocene and their relation to crises

Reinterpreting personalism for embracing ecological values

Envisioning the future of religion in the Anthropocene

Identifying research methodologies for catalyzing positive changes in the Human-Earth nexus

Exploring indigenous ways of knowing of and coexisting with nature

Evaluating the psychological costs of materialistic value orientation.

Examining the values of aesthetics and grace in our relationship with nature

Investigating the link between ecology and social justice

Analyzing human rights and the rights of nature in the Anthropocene

Discussing the balance between materialist and spiritual values at individual and organizational level

Assessing frugal consumption and production patterns

Seeking for practical wisdom from diverse spiritual perspectives to understand and act upon the current polycrisis

Exploring the role of the arts in promoting sane and healthy living

Developing working models of spiritually-based sustainability practices in business

Identifying immediate actions required “now” to address the challenges for future generations

Incorporating spirituality into daily individual and business practices for a sustainable future

Promoting collaboration among businesses, NGOs, governments, and spiritual communities

Integrating spirituality into education to foster a greater understanding of our interconnectedness with the planet and with each other

Displaying case studies of successful integration of spirituality into strategies and leadership of businesses and social institutions

Understanding spirituality’s contribution to building resilience and adaptation strategies for businesses and society in the emerging crises of the Anthropocene era

Examining transhumanism from a spiritual perspective

Exploring the problems of conscious machines and AI in relation to society, and nature

Place and Date

The “Spirituality & Business in the Anthropocene – The 20th Anniversary European SPES Conference ” will be held at the venue of the Corvinus University of Budapest in Budapest, Hungary. The conference will start on June 20, 2024 and will end on June 22, 2024 (from Thursday morning to Saturday noon).



Scientific Committee

Luk Bouckaert, Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium

Madhumita Chatterji, ABBS School of Management, Bangalore, India

Sharda Nandram, Free University of Amsterdam & Nyenrode Business University, The Netherlands

Mike Thompson, Anthesis Group, London, UK

Peter Rona, Blackfriars Hall, University of Oxford, UK

Stephan Rothlin, S.J., Macau Ricci Institute, University of St. Joseph, Macau, China

Paul Shrivastava, Pennsylvania State University & The Club of Rome, USA

Dominique Steiler, Grenoble Ecole de Management & The Club of Rome, France

Surya Tahora, S.P. Jain Institute of Management and Research, Mumbai, India

Laszlo Zsolnai, Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary

Participation Fee of the European SPES Annual Conference

150 Euros for European SPES members

180 Euros for non- European SPES members

100 Euros for students and accompanying persons

Submissions

Interested participants should send a *detailed abstract* of their planned presentation (about 500 words) accompanied by a *short biographical note* (100 words) electronically by *January 31, 2024* to:

Laszlo Zsolnai,
President
European SPES Institute
Leuven
Email: laszlo_zsolnai@yahoo.com

Conference organizers are interested in receiving proposals for *academic papers* as well as *practice oriented* submissions.

Publication

Selected papers presented in the conference are considered for a volume edited for the *Palgrave Studies in Sustainable Business*.