

Spirituality And... Culture
2nd Global Conference

Saturday 13th April to Sunday 14th April 2019
Bruges, Belgium

Spirituality and culture are closely linked. How we treat other people, what and when we eat and drink, how we interact with – and transcend – the everyday world are all affected by our spiritual orientation. Our spiritual commitments may prompt us to seek social change, travel to sacred places, and follow certain rituals to put us in touch with something beyond humdrum living. We might signal our identification with a particular spiritual group by our outward appearance, and hope that our conduct will improve the culture around us in some small way. In turn, the wider culture affects our spiritual life, so that it's sometimes hard to know which aspects of our daily living are based on local customs and which are spiritual in origin.

Spirituality recognises that there is more to reality than just the material world. The intuition that our lives have meaning and are part of something bigger is a powerful motivator for us to cultivate our spiritual side. The mystical experiences and beliefs that arise from this engagement can stimulate our creative urges. Feelings of transcendence and awe have inspired artists, writers and composers throughout the ages, and continue to influence cultures around the world. Spirituality has not gone away in a hyper-connected age, but finds new modes of expression and practice.

Spirituality And ... Culture is part of an exciting series of inclusive interdisciplinary projects that focus on the significance of spirituality to human living, thinking and feeling in today's world. This event will explore the interactions between spirituality, culture and social phenomena with a view to forming a publication to engender further collaboration and discussion.

Themes we would like to develop include (but are not limited to):

Spirituality and Creativity

e.g., painting and sculpture inspired by spirituality; popular culture; literature; mass media; music; dance; theatre; opera; architecture; cyberspace

Spirituality and Travel

e.g., pilgrimages as spiritual living; spiritual tourism; retreats; sacred spaces; migration in a globalized economy; borderless spirituality; how well do religions 'travel'?; nomadic and worldwide religions vs localised beliefs; religious appropriation; porous communities

Spirituality and Social Change

e.g., social justice; pacifism; enlightenment; patriarchy; polygamy; fundamentalism; feminism; euthanasia; abortion; environmental awareness; poverty; racism; penal reform; toleration of difference

Spirituality and Politics

e.g., church and state; theocracies; Hindutva; religion in the private sphere and public square; clash of

secular and spiritual ideologies (such as 'gay cake' incidents in Northern Ireland and the USA, cow vigilantes in India); shariah compliant banking; anti-consumerism; fundamentalist atheism; claims of indigenous peoples to sacred geographies

Spirituality, Liberation and Oppression

e.g., transcendence as escape from misery; human rights; religious tolerance; secular intolerance of religion; discrimination; extremism; misogyny; homophobia

Spiritual Practices

e.g., belief-centred vs. practice-centred religion; changing liturgies; newer forms of worship; New Age 'supermarket' of spiritual practices – crystals, angels, candles, incense, chanting, music, drumming, psychoactive drugs, dancing, sleep deprivation; exorcism; revivals, retrievals and appropriations of older styles of religion – druidism, Kabbalah, Wahhabi, fundamentalist Christianity

Spirituality and Food

e.g., fasting; Lent; Ramadan; feasting; dietary laws; kosher, halal, prohibitions; alcohol; transubstantiation; cannibalism; puja; monastic asceticism; vegetarianism; mindful eating; soul food

Spirituality and Education

e.g., secular schools and spirituality; meditation in the classroom; mindfulness; attention and distraction; Steiner, Krishnamurti etc; schools with religious ethos; madrassa; religious education versus religious training

Spirituality and Interfaith Relations

e.g., meditation as common ground between world religions; development of a global ethic; Dalai Lama/Kung conversations; conversion and apostasy; immigration; cultural clashes involving spiritual orientation; jihad; crusades

Spirituality and Identity

e.g., religious symbols – hijab, turban, cross, kippah; communities of faith, 'Spiritual but not religious'; census categories; non-religious forms of spirituality; yoga; mindfulness; non-religious Buddhism; 'anonymous' Christianity

What to Send

The aim of this interdisciplinary conference and collaborative networking event is to bring people together and encourage creative conversations in the context of a variety of formats; papers, seminars, workshops, storytelling, performances, poster presentations, panels, q and a's, roundtables etc.

300 word proposals, presentations, abstracts and other forms of contribution and participation should be submitted by Friday 9th November 2018. Other forms of participation should be discussed in advance with the Organising Chair.

All submissions will be minimally double reviewed, under anonymous (blind) conditions, by a global panel drawn from members of the Project Development Team and the Advisory Board. In practice our procedures usually entail that by the time a proposal is accepted, it will have been triple and quadruple reviewed.

You will be notified of the panel's decision by Friday 23rd November 2018.

If your submission is accepted for the conference, a full draft of your contribution should be submitted by Friday 1st March 2019.

Abstracts and proposals may be in Word, PDF, RTF or Notepad formats with the following information and in this order:

a) author(s), b) affiliation as you would like it to appear in the programme, c) email address, d) title of proposal, e) body of proposal, f) up to 10 keywords.

E-mails should be entitled: Spirituality 2 Submission

Where to Send

Abstracts should be submitted simultaneously to the Organising Chair and the Project Administrator:

sean@progressiveconnexions.net Seán Moran:
brugesspirituality@progressiveconnexions.net Project Administrator:

What's so Special About Progressive Connexions Events?

A fresh, friendly, dynamic format – at Progressive Connexions we are dedicated to breaking away from the stuffy, old-fashion conference formats, where endless presentations are read aloud off PowerPoints.

We work to bring you an interactive format, where exchange of experience and information is alternated with captivating workshops, engaging debates and round tables, time set aside for getting to know each other and for discussing common future projects and initiatives, all in a warm, relaxed, egalitarian atmosphere.

A chance to network with international professionals – the beauty of our interdisciplinary events is that they bring together professionals from all over the world and from various fields of activity, all joined together by a shared passion. Not only will the exchange of experience, knowledge and stories be extremely valuable in itself, but we seek to create lasting, ever-growing communities around our projects, which will become a valuable resource for those belonging to them.

A chance to be part of constructing change – There is only one thing we love as much as promoting knowledge: promoting real, lasting social change by encouraging our participants to take collective action, under whichever form is most suited to their needs and expertise (policy proposals, measuring instruments, research projects, educational materials, etc.) We will support all such actions in the aftermath of the event as well, providing a platform for further discussions, advice from the experts on our Project Advisory Team and various other tools and intellectual resources, as needed.

An opportunity to discuss things that matter to you – Our events are not only about discussing how things work in the respective field, but also about how people work in that field – what are the struggles, problems and solutions professionals have found in their line of work, what are the areas where better communication among specialists is needed and how the interdisciplinary approach can help bridge those gaps and help provide answers to questions from specific areas of activity.

An unforgettable experience – When participating in a Progressive Connexions event, there is a good

chance you will make some long-time friends. Our group sizes are intimate, our venues are comfortable and relaxing and our event locations are suited to the history and culture of the event.

Ethos

Progressive Connexions believes it is a mark of personal courtesy and professional respect to your colleagues that all delegates should attend for the full duration of the meeting. If you are unable to make this commitment, please do not submit an abstract or proposal for presentation.

Please note: Progressive Connexions is a not-for-profit network and we are not in a position to be able to assist with conference travel or subsistence, nor can we offer discounts off published rates and fees.

brugesspirituality@progressiveconnexions.net Please send all enquiries to:

http://www.progressiveconnexions.net/interdisciplinary_projects/spirituality_and/spirituality_and_culture/conferences/ For further details and information, please visit the conference web page:

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