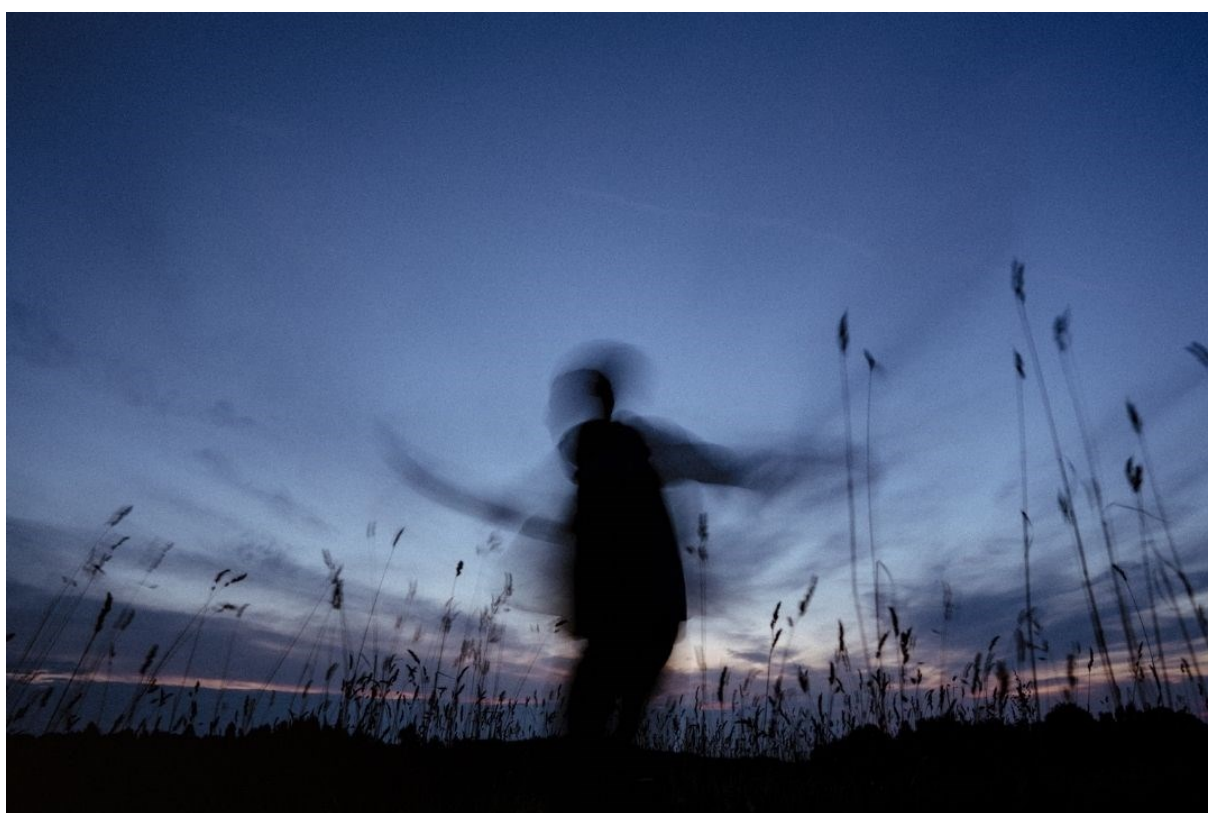


International Scientific Conference

MOVEMENT AND SPIRITUALITY

Ljubljana, May 28th, 2022



Organization

University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology

(Institute of Moral Theology and Spiritual Questions of Modern Culture)

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Program and abstracts

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Editors:

Ivan Platovnjak, Erika Prijatelj

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PROGRAM

Saturday, May 28th, 2022

On-line: <https://uni-lj-si.zoom.us/j/99325871608>; ID: 993 2587 1608

14:30-14:35 Welcome speeches

Dean of the Faculty of Theology Prof. Dr. Janez Vodičar

President of the Program Committee Assist. Prof. Dr. Ivan Platovnjak

President of the Organizing committee Assist. Prof. Dr. Erika Prijatelj

(Chairperson: Erika Prijatelj)

Lectures

14:35-14:50 Tone Svetelj (USA): *Importance of Sport in Ancient Greece and Today*

14:50-15:05 Patrick Kelly (USA): *Flowing in Sport and in Life*

15:05-15:20 Erika Zelko (Austria): *Mobility and Spirituality, New Movements in Medicine?*

15:20-15:35 Snežana Brumec (Slovenija): *Walking Pilgrimage*

15:35-16:00 Discussion and Break

(Chairperson: Tone Svetelj)

Lectures

16:00-16:15 Đurica Pardon (Croatia): *Walking in the Ways of the Lord. Bodily Movements as a Means of Communication with God in the Bible*

16:15-16:30 Ivan Platovnjak (Slovenia): *»In Him We Live and Move and Have Our Being.« (Acts 17:28) Prayer in Movement*

16:30-16:45 Erika Prijatelj (USA, Slovenia): *Perichoresis and Dance Movement Therapy*

16:45-17:00 Berenika Seryczynska (Poland): *How Physical Activity Affects Spirituality. Developing Virtues on the Camino de Santiago*

17:00-17:30 Discussion and Break

(Chairperson: Ivan Platovnjak)

Lectures

17:30-17:45 Vassilios Bebis (USA, Greece): *Sacred Cyclical Movements in Eastern Christian Rituals*

17:45-18:00 Ahmet Türkan (Turkey): *Evaluations on Movement and Spirituality in Islam*

18:00-18:15 Anil Dalmeida (India): *Bodily Movements and Spirituality in Hinduism*

18:15 Discussion

18:35 Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

To move, to run, to walk is to live. The human body cannot develop properly if it does not move. Modern medicine increasingly emphasizes the importance of movement for a healthy life. Throughout human history, walking has played a huge role in the devotional life of people in all the world's religions.

In this international scientific conference we will reflect on movement, one of the basic human activities. Through our research, we hope to contribute to a deeper awareness of the importance of movement for every human being and its impact on human spiritual life. We put forward the thesis that a deeper awareness of the preciousness of movement and living in accordance with it can become a source of a deeper and more integral spiritual life as well as a means of acting in accordance with who we are as persons who move. We will approach the research from different perspectives: philosophy, anthropology, psychology/psychiatry, medicine, exegesis, theology, ethics, religious studies, etc.

ABSTRACTS

Prof. Dr. Tone Svetelj, Hellenic College; Boston College, USA, tsvetelj@hchc.edu

Importance of Sport in Ancient Greece and Today

Are physical and intellectual training two enemies in constant confrontation? Or is the exercise of physical strength imbued with moral excellence, required to obtain “eudaimonia” (a happy active life)? These two questions called from ancient Greek philosophy trigger new discussion in our time, a time permeated with both the culture of movement and the philosophy of sport. This modern resurgence of movement and sport is much more than an emotional response to a new lifestyle; perhaps it signals a new search for embodiment, power, and freedom.

Key Words: Aristotle, Eudaimonia, Philosophy of Sport, Embodiment, Freedom

Assoc. Prof. Patrick Kelly, University of Detroit Mercy, USA, kellypm@udmercy.edu

Flowing in Sport and in Life

In this presentation I will make use of psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi’s flow theory to show how joyful physical movement in play and sport is related to human well being and flourishing and also mirrors the dynamics of spiritual growth as described by spiritual writers of many religious traditions through the centuries.

Key Words: Joy, Flow, Play, Sport, Csikszentmihalyi, Spirituality

Prof. Dr. Erika Zelko, Institut für Allgemeinmedizin, Medical Faculty JKU Linz, Austria, Erika.zelko@jku.at

Mobility and Spirituality, New Movements in Medicine?

Mobility is a basic human need, but it is not just a reflection of physical ability. Even in the Bible, laziness is identified as one of the deadly sins. Health professionals recognize exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle and health protection. The neurological and chemical processes that are triggered in our bodies when we move and improve our well-being are now well-defined and understood. Many scientists are working on the importance of movement for health, but fewer are linking movement and spirituality and studying them together. Australian scientists pointed out that remaining physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually strong was perceived to work best to keep the patient mobile as long as possible. The importance of spirituality and religiosity also has different impacts on self-assessed health and well-being in different cultures. Eighty-one per cent of participants in a United Arab Emirates agreed that their perception of health status was influenced by their spiritual or religious beliefs. Bruce and co-authors pointed out that church attendance may protect men experiencing serious health conditions from mobility decline and disability. However, the line between the positive impact of exercise and spirituality on our health is a thin one that is sometimes blurred in our consumerist society. The importance of a healthy balance should therefore be particularly emphasized.

Key words: Mobility, Spirituality, Healthy Lifestyle

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Walking Pilgrimage

Exceptional Human Experiences (EHEs) are understood as spontaneously emerging specific combinations of out-of-the-ordinary experiences and their transformative aftereffects (TAs). Besides exposure to scenes of natural beauty, the typical trigger of EHEs among pilgrims on the Camino de Santiago is intense involvement in walking. One of the identified types of empirically grounded typology of EHEs, based on qualitative and quantitative content analysis of 32 pilgrim travelogues, is denoted as the experience of deep calm and reconciliation. It is an experience of inner peace that usually manifests itself after a process of self-exploration and self-confrontation when walking in nature and silence. Experience of deep calm and reconciliation with the effect of increased interest and concern with spirituality, wisdom, and detachment represents a type of EHEs among the pilgrims on the Camino de Santiago.

Key Words: Pilgrimage, Walking, Spirituality, Transformative Aftereffects, Exceptional Human Experiences

Assist. Prof. Dr. Đurica Pardon, Catholic University of Croatia, Croatia,
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Walking in the Ways of the Lord. Bodily Movements as a Means of Communication with God in the Bible

Various bodily movements and physical efforts such as walking and running, dancing and playing, are used in the Bible to describe interactions with God in both the real and metaphorical senses. Numerous texts in Bible speak about walking with/alongside God as a justful way of living. Biblical history begins with Abraham's journey (on foot) from his birthplace to the Promised land. People of Israel walked from Egypt to Canaan. Prophets are called to get up, and set out on the way (willingly or unwillingly). Kings were playing and dancing front of God's face. Jesus is described as a teacher who traveled(walked) with his disciples. When Jesus healed the sick, they were reported to tremble and jomp to their feet. Women and apostles ran on Easter morning. The apostle Paul urged the first Christians to run and win a race of life. Human bodily movements are always a sign of response to God's word and a sign of communication between believers and God. Actions that humans perform to praise God are voluntary bodily movements. A human walks, works, stands, kneels, prostrates, springs up, dances and reposes by means of a body. In describing the effects of bodily movements of a person, biblical texts take a holistic view of the human person. With various body positions and movements, human beings enhance their motor and sensory skills, social behaviours and religious practices. Moving is not good for human body alone. It is also good for human person in its wholeness. In the art of communication the human person uses not only speech, but the entire body. People glorify and communicate with God with both spirit and body. Through body language, movement, dance and rhythm human persons execute and perform comunication practices on more profound levels. Exercising the body trough physical movement can lead to better communication with God. Learning and exercising a body language improves prayer and gives to a person the opportunity for more profound expression of thoughts, feelings and their interior spiritual heartland.

Key Words: Biblical Theology, Movement, Walking, Running, Body Language, Spirituality

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ivan Platovnjak, Faculty of Theology, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia,
Ivan.Platovnjak@teof.uni-lj.si

»In Him We Live and Move and Have Our Being.« (Acts 17:28) Prayer in Movement

In the literature on Christian prayer, we find descriptions of different postures in prayer, such as standing, sitting, kneeling, prostration, postures of the hands and head, and explanations of their importance for prayer. However, this is almost nothing about walking, running, or exercising in general as prayer. The author believes that many Christians who are looking for this but unfortunately do not find it in Christianity, go elsewhere. He believes that this is an area where the triune God is still waiting for us to discover Him and to allow Him to be with us, that all of this can become a place and time for our personal and deeply transforming encounter with Him and a spirituality lived integrally. In this lecture he wants to focus on the concept of movement in the Triune God, for "in Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28), illustrating how various forms of movement can become prayer in the sense of being with Him and remaining aware of how He is gently and actively present in us and we in Him.

Key Words: Triune God, Christianity, Movement, Prayer, Awareness, Spirituality

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Perichoresis and Dance Movement Therapy

The Triune God lives in a celebration of eternal joy. In the early Church, theologians such as John of Damascus, described the relationships between the three Persons of the Holy Trinity in terms of dance, using the word perichoresis, to highlight a dynamic, interactive, harmonious, loving and serving reality in which there is mutual giving and receiving. As human beings, we are all invited to participate in the divine dance and, consequently, we relate to one another in the dance of Life. Dance therapy (Zhong 2020) or dance movement therapy (Karkou 2019) is a discipline and has become an industry as well. Internationally, traditional dance therapy is applied to personal development, mental health counseling and mental disease prevention. More broadly, dance therapy uses dance or improvisation to treat social, emotional, spiritual, cognitive and physical challenges, enhance personal consciousness, joy and improve people's minds. Today, within secular culture and its unique search for healing and life fulfillment, we may also see a recognition of a calling for a deeper theological meaning of the importance of dance movement.

Key Words: Perichoresis, Dance, Therapy, Dynamic, Relationships

PhD Student Berenika Seryczynska, Nicolaus Copernicus University Torun, Poland,
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How Physical Activity Affects Spirituality. Developing Virtues on the Camino de Santiago

Pilgrimage will be analysed as a movement towards a natural place, which leads a person through the development of the virtues to put in order the powers wounded by original sin. Already Aristotle identified the natural with the ordered, and if everything were in its natural place, everything would be harmonious (or in the right proportion) because when things are ordered properly, they are as they should be by nature. Movement occurs from potentiality to actuality, and this means reaching the place, quantity and quality proper to its actual state. In contrast, the end of movement, the unification of the elements into unity, occurs when an element is in its natural place.

Aquinas also argued that every body strives for its own place, and that place has the power of attraction only in the sense that the goal has the power of attraction. The human authorities (i.e. intellect, will, sentience) by themselves remain incapable of acting fully and properly unless they are properly formed and prepared. Therefore, between the authorities and their actualization, there is the crucial intermediate element habitus, which determines the quality of both the subject and its action. While the pilgrim is approaching the goal of the path at the tomb of St James the Apostle in Santiago de Compostela, through the development of the virtues is also approaching the final purpose, which is salvation.

Key Words: Camino de Santiago, Movement, Pilgrimage, Spirituality, Virtues

Prof. Ddr. Vassilios Bebis, Graduate Theological Foundation; Hellenic College Holy Cross,
USA, bebis128@gmail.com

Sacred Cyclical Movements in Eastern Christian Rituals

Sacred cyclical movements are defined in this presentation as the ceremonial cyclical movements of Eastern Christian priests (Orthodox or Eastern Catholic) around a holy object (Altar table, ceremonial table, baptismal font, etc.) as an integral part of a service of Christian worship. The presentation aims to approach these sacred cyclical movements from a theological perspective, examining the words of the prayers or, more often, chants used along the way and revealing their distinguished symbolic function.

Key Words: Ceremonies, Movements, Symbols

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ahmet Türkan, Necmettin Erbakan University, Faculty of Theology, Turkey, ahmet.turkan@erbakan.edu.tr

Evaluations on Movement and Spirituality in Islam

Islam gave importance to physical and mental health and ordered the protection of both. Therefore, besides food, movement is of great importance for a healthy life. Looking at the Islamic sources, it is seen that there are many practices of the Prophet Muhammad related to movement. The Prophet Muhammad recommended that children be taught swimming and horseback riding. He himself raced with his wife Aisha at different times. Worship in Islam is divided into three parts. Zakat (alms) is financial, prayer and fasting are physical, pilgrimage is both physical and financial. It is seen that prayers and pilgrimages come to the forefront in terms of movement and spirituality. In this study, practices related to movement and spirituality will be discussed within the framework of Islamic sources, and also the spiritual movements that come to the fore in Islamic Sufism will be evaluated.

Key Words: Movement, Spirituality, Islam, Pray, Pilgrimage, Sufism

Dr. Anil Dalmeida, Vidyajyoti College of Theology, Delhi, India, anilksha@gmail.com

Bodily Movements and Spirituality in Hinduism

Spiritual quests are expressed in bodily movements. Within the Hindu tradition, the body is given a positive evaluation and seen as the vehicle of the journey to liberation (moksha) and enlightenment. The bodily movements within the Hindu tradition are for the maintenance of the social, cosmic, and divine orders (ṛta). The ritual traditions, ascetic movements, yoga, aesthetics (drama, dance), devotional (bhakti) movements, and Tantric traditions emphasize the bodily movements for spiritual progress. Among these movements pilgrimage (Tīrtha yātra), a journey to a holy place is a collective movement ritually carrying people closer to God through a physical movement, which explicitly symbolizes the devotees' progress towards unity with the divine. Even the performing arts of drama and dance with its aesthetic rasa theory not only has the primary goal of entertainment but transports the individual to a world of wonder and enables both the performer and the audience to reflect the spiritual questions and to have the experience of bliss (Ānanda).

Key Words: Liberation, Rta, Pilgrimage, Rasa, Aesthetics, Ānanda

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