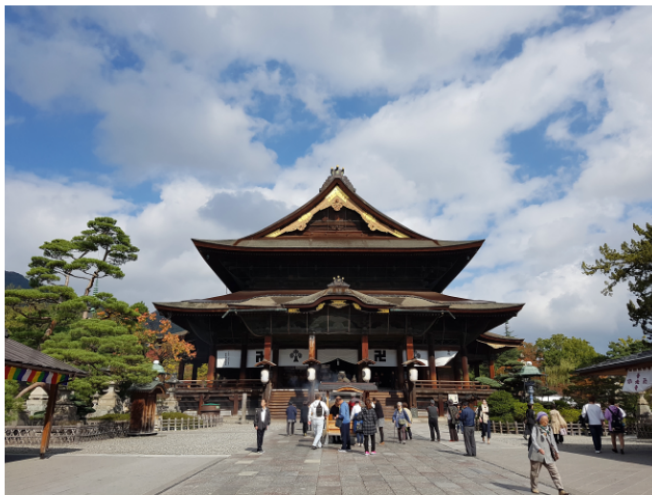


4th International Colloquium
in Contemporary Philosophy and Culture
May 31 (Fri) - June 02 (Sun), 2024
The University of Nagano



The University of Nagano (<https://www.u-nagano.ac.jp/en/>)



Zenko-ji Temple, Photo By RachelH_
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Society for
Philosophy as
Global
Conversation



尊厳学の確立

尊厳概念に基づく社会統合の
学際的パラダイムの構築に向けて



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NAGANO

Theme

Nature, Spirituality, and Culture

Organizer

Society for Philosophy as Global Conversation (<https://philogc.org>)

Hosted by

The University of Nagano, Nagano, Japan

Supported by

Society for Philosophy as Global Conversations

KAKENHI Grant: Reconstruction of the history of the concept of dignity in the Western world in light of new contemporary concepts of dignity such as the “dignity of the creature” (23H04850) (<https://kaken.nii.ac.jp/en/grant/KAKENHI-PLANNED-23H04850/>)

Language

English

Target Audience

Philosophers, faculty, and students from related disciplines (e.g. humanities, social sciences, literature, art, journalism), artists, writers, filmmakers, as well as representatives of any area of creative endeavor, with interests in cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary dialogue, work, and research.

On the Idea of the Colloquium

The link between nature, spirituality, and culture is as old as humanity. And yet, the culture of modernity largely turned its back on nature as a source of spirituality focusing on it instead as a source of utility. This tendency continues also today, but now accompanied by ever stronger trends towards a return to nature, which also comes along with a rediscovery of this basic link as a philosophical topos. Deep ecology is a prime example here, but others are voices from indigenous ethnic groups, such as that of the Brazilian thinker Ailton Krenak.

In the Eastern cultural traditions, the link between natural and spiritual has remained strong and experienced less interruptions than in the West. Perspectives on it can be found in Hinduism, Chinese thought, and Japanese Buddhism amongst others. The Hindu view of the natural and spiritual presence of Dharma, and the Taoist view of the relation of Tao and Te

have both left deep traces in their cultural traditions. Likewise, in Japan, the Medieval Buddhist schools have left a rich mark on the topic with the work of Kukai a prominent example, and later on, in the Edo period, Shoeki Ando appeared as a grassroots thinker promoting holistic understanding of the relation between humans and nature. In another region and still later, the Bengali poetic thinker Lalon Fakir conveys his moral-philosophical insights in a verse that abounds with natural and spiritual metaphors.

Among the masterpieces of the Western philosophy and culture exploring the topic, we can immediately point to Immanuel Kant's Critique of Judgment, as well as to the works of the Romantic poets, writers, and artists. Similarly, the works of Baruch Spinoza and German Spinozism remain philosophical resources of deep ecology which today calls for renewed interpretation of the link in question from an ever-wider perspective. For their part, the non-traditional 19th century thinkers Søren Kierkegaard and Friedrich Nietzsche apperceived human existence, life, and nature within terms that in one way or another point to the same link as well. In 20th century, the philosophy of Henri Bergson (especially his work Matter and Memory) opened a new debate on this matter, but so did also thinkers as different as Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Sigmund Freud, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Simone de Beauvoir, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Jacques Lacan, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Hélène Cixous, Willard V. O. Quine, and Richard Rorty, among still others. A contemporary relevance of the link of nature, spirituality, and culture can be also sought, and in various ways, in art, literature, critical theory, social-political theory, psychoanalytic theory, feminist theory, critical race theory, queer theory, and not least in the research and debates that today surround the AI venture as a whole.

Meanwhile, it is also true that peculiar takes on the link between natural and spiritual have been used to prop up various nationalist ideologies as well. This has been so to such an extent that it has been seen as integral to the matrix of nationalism, as for instance manifest in Emmanuel Levinas' critique of the later Heidegger. Nevertheless, the cultural consequences of the link between natural and spiritual are much wider than what its nationalist appropriation could suggest. In particular, the link between nature and spirituality can be associated with the relation between local and global as a cultural encounter, which can be seen also as a form of a continuous conversation. Thus, the conjecture is that it is a high time to re-examine the relation between nature, spirituality, and culture.

Nagano, the site of the colloquium, is itself rich in nature and spiritual places, which are integral to its culture. Temples and shrines can be found nearby in the areas of Togakushi

mountain and Lake Suwa. Additionally, an integrated cultural program will offer to the participants the opportunity to complement the intellectual stimulation of the academic conference with a first-hand local and global cultural experience.

Specific topics of interest to the colloquium can be related but not limited to,

- Environmental philosophy and ethics
- Traditional religions' views on nature and human
- Philosophy of nature and mind
- Philosophical, literary, and artistic perspectives on animals and vegetables
- Capitalism's separation of human from nature
- Exploitation of nature and humans
- Philosophy of landscape
- Well-being and mindfulness
- Multispecies anthropology
- Animism in ethnic traditions and religions

Other topics of interest to the colloquium can be related but not limited to,

- Phenomenology, existential philosophy, post-structuralism
- Metaphilosophy, pragmatism, and communicative action
- Language, thinking, and technology
- Critical theory, literature, and art
- Ethics, religion, and spirituality
- Power, politics, and economics
- Race, gender, sexuality, identity
- Refugees, strangers, and outcasts
- Community building, inclusion, and integration
- Human person, health, and self-creation
- Globalization, multi-culturalism, and the meaning of nationality
- Trans- and cross-cultural horizons
- Environment, common concerns, and common solutions
- Radicalization, Populism, and Extremism
- Poverty, Gentrification, and Biopolitics

Dates

May 31 - June 02, 2024

Venue

The University of Nagano, Miwa Campus (Nagano City)

Registration Fee

Free of charge

Visa application, transportation, accommodation and meals

Self-financed and should be arranged by the panelists themselves. Optional cultural program and conference dinner will be organized.

Abstract Submissions (Deadline March 15, 2024)

We invite **academic and art-projects abstract-proposals within 300 words at global.conversations.ph@gmail.com by March 15, 2024** (with early submission encouraged).

Visual artists who would like to participate in an art show could present **one to three pieces** of work. **Performing artists** are asked to limit their act to **45 min; filmmakers to 2 hours** (discussion time will be allotted as an addition).

Online Registration

Selected participants are asked to register at <https://forms.gle/huDXikLXbqAbu8if6>

Publication

Conference organizers will consider the completed academic articles of the conference presentations for publication (after a review process) in the next issue of *Global Conversations: An International Journal in Contemporary Philosophy and Culture* (<https://philogc.org/journal/>), an online open-access academic journal inaugurated after the first conference of the Society for Philosophy as Global Conversation in March, 2018.

Website

<http://philogc.org/colloquia/>