

Abstract

The main subject of the dissertation *Non-Religious Spirituality in the Postmodern Era*, subtitled *Spirituality and the New Paradigm*, is an analysis of non-religious spirituality within the context of the new possibilities revealed by the science of the new paradigm, which are changing the way we view reality and man's place within the universe. The study presents a possible system for classifying contemporary approaches to spirituality, and subsequently outlines a theoretical model for a new discipline enabling the comprehensive study of spirituality within broader interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary contexts. For this newly proposed scientific discipline, the paper suggests the name *spirituology*.

Spirituality, which was discarded by the Cartesian-Newtonian world view is experiencing a renaissance. Spirituality is a comprehensive and multifaceted phenomenon whose definition is still being shaped in contemporary discourse. Although the actual term comes from Christian theology, it is today understood as religiously neutral. It did not fully establish itself in society until the end of the 20th century in relation to the secularization and privatization of religion, when it replaced the previously used term "religiosity", which is strongly associated with the institution of religion. Within the context of the new paradigm, spirituality represents an important and innate dimension of life and is an integral part of human existence and the universal order of things. Seen as a process of cultivating the soul, a "process of humanization" in the sense of the evolution of higher stages of consciousness, it represents our innermost potential and is one component of cultural evolution.

The first chapter looks at the concept of non-religious spirituality and offers an overarching model for the basic orientational division of current approaches. The central criterion is the paradigm by which the various models are created, and the main starting point is the stance taken by the various disciplines or researchers towards the question of whether spirituality is an anthropological constant.

The second chapter engages in an interpretation of the metaphysical consequences in the science of the new paradigm to present a possible ontological foundation that legitimizes the search for meaning and places spirituality back at the center of being. An understanding of this transformation of the world, which was brought about by research in particular in physics and astrophysics and by the new approach to the life sciences as influenced by the new paradigm, is of central importance for the entire subject of non-religious spirituality.

The third chapter, which is a logical continuation of the first two, takes a closer look at the proposed overarching model for the current approaches to spirituality and outlines a theoretical model for the scientific discipline of spirituology, which in the coming decades may act as an inspiration for the interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary study of spirituality.

Besides offering support for the broad trend of newly emerging and evolving “popular” and alternative spiritual movements, the comprehensive study of spirituality can also have an impact on all of society. At a time marked by the dangerous atrophy of moral, ethical and spiritual values, it offers the gradual building of an official academic line that offers the possibility of balancing the material and spiritual aspects of our world. The spiritual dimension – which researchers have universally recognized as a foundation of the new paradigm and an entirely new way of looking at man and the universe as presented by contemporary research in the special sciences – would appear to be a fundamental catalyst for possible future changes.

Keywords: non-religious spirituality, new paradigm, spirituology