
Editorial

Laszlo Zsolnai

Business Ethics Center,
Corvinus University of Budapest,
1093 Budapest, Fovamter 8, Hungary
E-mail: laszlo_zsolnai@yahoo.com

Biographical notes: Laszlo Zsolnai is a Professor and the Director of the Business Ethics Center at the Corvinus University of Budapest. He is the Chairman of the Business Ethics Faculty Group of the CEMS (Community of European Management Schools – The Global Alliance in Management Education). He serves as the Editor of the *Frontier of Business Ethics* book series at Peter Lang Publishers in Oxford. With Luk Bouckaert, he founded the European SPES Forum in Leuven, Belgium.

This spirituality and suitability management special issue is a product of the Spirituality and Sustainability: A New Path for Entrepreneurship Conference held on 21–23 September 2012 in Visegrad, Hungary. The conference was organised by the Business Ethics Center of the Corvinus University of Budapest in cooperation with the European SPES Forum and the ERENET – Entrepreneurship Research and Education Network of Central European Universities. The conference addressed the following issues:

- How can spirituality and ecology contribute to the transformation of contemporary management theory and praxis?
- Which are the promising sustainability business models in Europe and other parts of the world?
- Which new leadership roles emerge for sustainability in business?
- How entrepreneurship can be inspired by nature and spirituality in a meaningful way?

In his paper ‘Spirituality as motivation and perspective for a socially responsible entrepreneurship’, philosopher and applied ethicist Imre Ungvári-Zrínyi of the Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj, Romania argues that openness to spirituality offers favourable terms for all forms of coexistence and collaboration, for example coexistence of different cultures, coexistence with nature, and furthermore provides a condition for all joint human enterprises including business enterprises.

In his paper ‘Doing business in Christian way’ by Antal Szabó, scientific director of ERENET Hungary emphasises that Catholic Social Thought calls special attention to truth and charity which could lead to a better and fairer economic and social life. The Love in Truth is a great challenge for the church in a world that is becoming pervasively globalised. The encyclical letter ‘Caritas in Veritate’ of Pope Benedict XVI tells us that it is possible to do business while pursuing socially useful goals and acting for pro-social reasons. Antal Szabo underlines that the ultimate goal of Christian entrepreneurs is not to

make money for itself, but to make a positive impact on the society. Enterprise as well as the family is a place of solidarity for Christian business people.

In his paper 'The serving organisation and leadership for sustainable human development', management scholar Roland Szilas of Corvinus University of Budapest and Sapientia Theology College, Hungary warns that in mainstream management models a reductionist anthropological conception is used which overemphasises the importance of monetary compensation in motivating workers, strives for efficiency through the separation of organisation and execution of work, and calls for the implementation of strong control mechanisms. Roland Szilas shows how a view of man emphasising purposeful existence and transcendental orientation can be connected to the servant leadership model and a new conception of the employer-employee relationship.

In their paper 'Understanding spirituality as experienced by catholic entrepreneurs', business scholars Jozef Richard Raco and Rafael H.M. Tanod of De La Salle Catholic University of Manado, Indonesia argues that spirituality should be considered as important element to understand entrepreneurship. People live as entrepreneurs because they are being inspired, motivated and pushed by inner force which might be called 'spirit'. This paper aims to understanding spirituality from the entrepreneurs' point of view. What is the essence of spiritual experiences according to the entrepreneur? How they manifest their spirituality in their activities as entrepreneurs? Does spirituality have impact to their business? How they perceive religion? How they define success? Authors study Catholic entrepreneurs running business in Indonesia, a Muslim majority society.

In their paper 'Ecologically-oriented enterprises in Hungary', business ethicists Zsuzsanna Györi of KÖVET, Budapest and András Ócsai of Corvinus University of Budapest Hungary presents theoretical arguments and empirical results suggesting that ecologically-oriented enterprises can survive and even prosper in competitive environments. Their hypothesis is that firms can be compensated for the higher costs of their social responsible behaviour by their ability to form commitments between owners, managers and employees and to establish trust relationships with customers and sub-contractors. They found two preconditions which makes the survival and prosperity of ecologically-oriented businesses possible. One is that ecologically-oriented businesses are intrinsically motivated to follow their social, environmental and business goals. The second is that ecologically-oriented businesses define success multidimensionally. Intrinsic motivation and defining success multidimensionally emerge as necessary conditions for the survival of ecologically-oriented enterprises in competitive environments.

In their paper 'Public-goods oriented agricultural business models with higher awareness', agricultural economists György Erneyi and László Podmaniczky of St. Stephan University Gödöllő, Hungary argues that in agricultural production both market related and non-market related factors play an important role. The harmonisation of these market and non-market factors is always a difficult and complex task. A new type of economic rationality is required, that creates harmony between factors reflected and not reflected in market prices. In this way, people's well-being will be served also by creating more public goods. Authors present the main characteristics of a multifunctional, public goods producing agricultural system model which is in line with the coming European agricultural and rural policy reform.

In his paper 'Self-reflection and personal evolution as keystone of sustainability', organisational scholar Vincent Gouwy of Osteopath DO, Belgium states that obtaining sustainability asks a truth-full relation to ones-self, the near environment and the

transcendent. This demands the sensitivity towards vulnerability, humbleness, creativity and the reinforcement of the individual integrity. The authenticity of this inner relation determines the sustainability and the inspirational strength towards others. By regaining the internal potential, one is capable in making a difference to the twist of the mental collective, the pressure to achieve and the patterns of identification. This gives an opportunity to live within oneself, to take place within the world, without being the property of this world.

In their paper ‘May spirituality lead to reduced ecological footprint? Conceptual framework and empirical analysis’, environmental economists Mária Csutora and Ágnes Zsóka of Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary show that spirituality does matter in pro-environmental behaviour, sustainable consumption, happiness and life satisfaction. Their statement is supported by a survey of 1,000 respondents, representing the Hungarian society in age, gender, education, income and settlement, carried out in 2010. The survey focused on lifestyle and consumption habits, the ecological footprint of people, spirituality and interpersonal relationships, as well as future attitudes of behaviour change towards a more sustainable living. Spirituality is definitely a significant factor in sustainable lifestyles, as people reporting themselves to be religious pursued significantly more pro-environmental activities than not religious people or those rejecting response. Strongly religious people are definitely happier and more satisfied than less religious or atheist individuals.

It is the hope of the editor that the papers of this special issue contribute to an extended understanding of the role that spirituality can play in transforming management and business into a more sustainable and more human activity.