



Editorial

It is self-transcendence that stands at the core of every authentic spirituality. No matter what form of practice one's spirituality takes, self-transcendence is always involved in it as a movement going "through" or "beyond" our "ordinary" human experience as the Latin etymology of *transcendence* suggests: "moving upward" (Lat. *scandere*) "through" or "beyond" (Lat. *trans*). In its original sense, self-transcendence denotes a process of reaching "beyond" our self-image, i.e., our identification with a particular psychosomatic structure.

In the European tradition going back to the ancient Greek philosophy, Aristotle expressed the idea of "becoming" by the term *energeia* (Gr. *ἐνέργεια*; Lat. *āctūālītās*) and gave two examples of what he meant by it – pleasure and happiness. Both are of experiential nature, and both are manifestations of *energeia*. In the Indian tradition dating back to the Vedic times, notably in its Tantric branch, a similar idea is expressed particularly by the notion of Kundalinī. The same is true of the Buddhist Mahāyāna Tantra traditions, and the "esoteric" Chinese traditions of Taoism, although obviously individual theories and interpretations may differ one from another.

There is another framing notion Aristotle relates to *energeia* – *dunamis* (Gr. *δύναμις*; Lat. *potentia*) as the inherent "capacity" or *potentiality* "to be" (Gr. *εἰμί*, "I am"). This *ousia* (Gr. *οὐσία*; Lat. *essentia* or *substantia*) is hidden "beyond" sensual and conceptual dimension of our reality and needs to be *uncovered* (Gr. *ἀλήθεια*). When this happens, wisdom arises.

As the symbol of wisdom on the cover of the current edition of *Spirituality Studies* is depicted Confucius (551–479 BCE) – the quintessence of Chinese sages: philosopher, politician, leading figure among those, who established the foundations of the Chinese civilization.

All those, who contributed to the 2021 Fall edition of *Spirituality Studies*, are shedding light on the process of self-transcendence in the areas of their interests, whether it is a personal experience with Kundalinī rising and subtle energies, gerotranscendence, medieval allegory, or the processes of adaptation to cancer and posttraumatic growth in cancer patients. Let me invite you, dear readers, to learn more from their inspiring takes on the pages of the *Spirituality Studies* journal.

Cordially
Martin Dojčár