

World's Religions after September 11
At the Palais des congrès de Montréal from September 11 to 15

Montréal, le 11 September 2006 – Where were you five years ago? The majority of people remember where they were and what they were doing when they learned the news of the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. For many among us, the concept of religion itself changed that day. Instead of representing peace and harmony, religion now evokes aggression and terror. Five years later, the world's religions must respond in a clear way to these challenges.

Opening Ceremony (September 11, 19h00 to 21h30)
Speakers not to miss: Shirin Ebadi, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, Revered Didiji, Karen Armstrong

Religion and human rights (September 12, 9h to 12h30)
The secular and the religious are two possibilities of a way of life. The Second World War was preceded by the growth of secular extremism under diverse forms: fascism, communism and others. The adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations aimed to preserve the world from these forms of excess. Is it not justified for the World's Religions to adopt a new Universal Declaration of Human Rights (and Responsibilities) against the ideology religious extremism?
Speaker not to miss: Shirin Ebadi

Religion and Women (September 12, 13h30 to 16h30)
For too long, women have remained invisible within organized religion. Today's struggle for equality between the sexes in the world's religions leads us to ask the question: Do religions have the inner resources to transform the relationship between the sexes? Or will they have to change themselves to deal with this issue?
Speakers not to miss: Rosemary Ruether (Harvey Cox and Rev. Don Posterski during the evening)

Religion : din, dao and dharma (September 13, 9h to 12h30)
We currently employ the word religion to describe a sphere of human activity that also uses other terms. But not only are religions different from one another, they also distinguish themselves by the significance they give to this word. To get a sense of this reality and the consequences for world peace, it is useful to analyze how our perspective changes if we use a different word to describe the same phenomenon. Can we also use the words din, dhama or dao as a common point of departure for this exercise?
Speaker not to miss: Seyyed Hossein Nasr

Proselytization and religious freedom (September 13, 13h30 to 16h30)
Proselytization is still a major source of conflict among religions. Mahatma Gandhi despaired to see a day of peace in a world as long as proselytization persisted. Is not it time to pause so that religions can find new ways to transmit their message without appearing to impose themselves on other faiths?
Speakers not to miss: Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Rabbi David Rosen, (Huston Smith during the evening)

Religion and Spirituality**(September 14, 9h to 12h30)**

If in our worldly life we search for success and excellence, we hope for harmony and peace in our inner life. Can this common desire, which appears in the practice of yoga, for example, serve as a point of convergence for the religions of the world? Although they have different doctrines, can the religions achieve symbiosis with their spiritual practices? And is it possible that a positive response to the events of September 11 will emphasize our commonalities rather than our differences?

Speaker not to miss: Deepak Chopra

Religion and Science**(September 14, 13h30 to 16h30)**

Who possesses the absolute truth regarding the human condition: religion or science? Religion once claimed complete authority in this area until science tried to discount all matters of faith. While often still at odds, both approaches are struggling to accommodate each other without subverting their principles. Is it time to ask if the two can walk hand in hand, even if they do not always see eye to eye?

Speakers not to miss: Patrice Brodeur, Jean-François Roussel, Padmanabh S. Jaini (Gregory Baum, Karen Armstrong, Seyyed Hossein Nasr during the evening)

Religion and Healing**(September 15, 9h to 12h30)**

As religion itself is not merely a matter of faith, healing is not only a medical affair. Our well-being depends not only on the health of one's body, but of one's spirit. It is not necessarily a question of spirit dominating matter or of the body housing the soul, but the simultaneity between the two. Medicine may act in such a simultaneous fashion, but is it healing that incorporates both?

Speaker not to miss: Abdolkarim Soroush

Religion and the Media**(September 15, 13h30 to 16h)**

The role of religion in the public sphere has grown around the world since the 1979 Iranian revolution. The media is the prime method of learning about the increasing role of religion in society today. But does the media objectively reflect the doctrines and practices of a faith or distort them? When the media deals with different religions, do they report the news well or unfairly? How can we assure that religion is presented with justice in the media?

Speaker not to miss: Satguru Bodhinata Veylanswami

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Un point de presse aura lieu chaque jour, de 12h00 à 12h30, à la salle de presse 523A, avec les conférenciers de la journée.

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