

# SYMBOLS, IMAGES AND STEREOTYPES OF CONTEMPORARY CULTURE

## VII International Symposium on Philosophy and Theory of Culture

arranged by The Philosophical and Cultural Research Center "Eidos"  
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&

The St. Petersburg Branch of The Russian Institute for Cultural Research  
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*Modernity in all its aspects always presents the biggest difficulties for its scholarly examination; but at the end of the XX century the state of society, man, and culture proves to be so “kaleidoscopic”, controversial and multi-faceted, that those who attempt to study it often end up with totally opposing opinions.*

*Today, human beings deal with serious shifts in the paradigmatic system of co-ordinates in respect to their values and orientation. With all the flexibility of this system, a certain caution is needed to preserve its vital power based upon the principal differentiation between the modes of ‘ascending’ and ‘descending’. Ignoring of, or insensibility to, this differentiation, all forms of ontological indifference, end up with orientation crisis, with total disappearance of sense in human life, with existential emptiness.*

*The on-going search for the new possibilities of productive syntheses of philosophic, scientific, artistic and religious experience in modern culture demands methodologically-accurate research practices that include very deep attention to the underlying space of traditions.*

*Comparative analysis of diverse cultural and historical forms of interaction among philosophy, science, art and religion gives a possibility to adequately evaluate the increasing longing for unity in modern culture, as well as to see a certain meaning in the dissipational processes in culture, together with the crises in values and orientation that they bring about.*

*As opposed to the past epochs, when culture was dominated by steady, long-established tendencies, modern culture is characterized by increasing dynamism, the appearance of totally new directions and streams, the non-trivial basic interaction of different spheres and fields, and the elimination of the borders between “low” and “high” genres. All this makes the structure of the modern cultural process very complex and heterogeneous, and requires research attention from the positions of comparative analysis, with the aim of revealing different layers of cultural idiosyncrasy and **creative potentialities of the intercultural dialogue.***

*External intensity of modern cultural processes leads to the issue of the inner constants of culture per se, about those ultimate **images, meanings and symbols** that determine the ontological and existential dimensions of man in the world, that crystallize the space of man’s existence.*

*The major aim of the Symposium is to promote a multi-faceted space of information and communication that would provide the dynamics of interdisciplinary studies, and their epistemological and heuristic value. The understanding of an inner unity of **culture** and **dialogue** assists in the assertion of ontological resistance of modern culture to all kinds of violence, revealing its creative, harmonizing potentials and perspectives of the **Culture of Peace.***

## TOPICS:

The Conference is characterised by an open, interdisciplinary atmosphere. It has traditionally brought together philosophers, philologists, psychologists, historians, experts on cultural studies, artists, writers, cultural managers, etc.

Contributors should send 1 page abstracts and full-length papers (not exceed 17 pages, double spaced) to the Conference Secretariat by e-mail: [centre@eidospb.spb.su](mailto:centre@eidospb.spb.su)

**Deadline for abstracts: June 17, 1999**

**Final papers due: August 17, 1999**

*The work of the Conference will include daily Plenary Sessions and Parallel Sessions for presentations and the ensuing discussions ( 40 minutes for Key Speakers and about 30 minutes for other presentations).*

### Plenary Sessions and Parallel Sessions:

***Symbols, Images and Stereotypes - Philosophical & Metaphysical Experience***

***Symbols, Images and Stereotypes - Social & Historical Experience***

***Symbols, Images and Stereotypes - Mythological & Ethnographic Experience***

***Symbols, Images and Stereotypes - Poetical & Artistic Experience***

***Symbols, Images and Stereotypes - Existential & Religious Experience***

### **Round Table TOWARD A PEACE CULTURE:**

#### **HOPE OF PEACE AND WAR SYMBOLS IN 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY CULTURE**

*Resumes of the contributions*

#### 1. FORMS OF BEING IN THE WORLD OF SYMBOLS.

by Prof. Tamara V. Kholostova

From the very beginning of his or her life a person lives not only in the world of reality but also in that of symbols, that is, in the space of previously determined meanings. In the contemporary civilization when we experience interpermeability of cultures in the atmosphere of the “open society” we witness creation of “the enlightened erudite person” who considers knowledge as a value in itself. Symbolically we can identify and study different types of people - those who do things and those who speak, those who tend to approve things and those who criticise, those who are actors and those who are viewers - we all are both separated and united by our consciousness.

#### 2. THE IMAGE OF EXILE IN JOSEF BRODSKY'S *A PART OF SPEECH*

by Antonio Martinez Illan

In the poem *A part of Speech*, which happened to be the first work published by this famous Russian poet after his arrival to the West, we discover that the author symbolically lived in exile even before living his country (1972). We can understand this “internal exile” as the real presence in his mind of the other exiled poets - Ovidio, Pushkin, Mandelshtam - and of the cultural world of the past. Exile is reflected in the way Brodsky shows a reduction of the space and tries to reach a point of reference through the language and symbols.

#### 3. Symbolic character of the image in art (in fine arts).

by V.P. Bransky

In the past, in both philosophy and history the image was traditionally seen as opposing the symbol. The first presents a description of an object while the second presents a sign (a code) of it. The modern art of the XX-th century has shown that such contrasting is obsolete. Even in the past symbols used to appear in images either in a direct or in a hidden way. The truth is that any image does not merely copy but also codes real objects. Abstract art provides convincing examples supporting this point of view. In this paper we present some results of comparative analysis of the role played by symbols and images in art and science.

#### **4. SYMBOLS IN THE WORLD OF THE HIGHER REALITY.**

by A.A. Magomedova

Symbols are normally seen as being open to anybody but in our attempts to grasp the inner meaning of them we usually discover multiple levels of their interpretation. For the purpose of adequate perception of symbols it is necessary to go back to their source - to myths. Usually symbols have two aspects: outer objective form and inner meaning. Symbols are used in the presentation of a unified picture of the world through a particular event. They comprise a sort of mnemonic grid with nodes serving as a link between the lower and the higher worlds. Due to their nature and social status women tend to preserve old symbols better than men and to use symbols for interpretation of their everyday life.

#### **5. Images of “everlasting life” in the history of the world art.**

by M.K.Ivanov

Studying the art of all ages it is productive to isolate lines of dynamically related images revealing certain degree of unity. These lines can have various forms and shapes which correspond to certain meaningful tendencies in the historic development of art. We start with the most ancient signs of snakes, water, lightning, which we find on paleolithic ceramic objects, and examine ornaments symbolising eternal growth, certain anthropomorphic elements, as well as elements related to the forms of vegetables and animals. This approach opens the door for deeper interpretation of some images as elements of links connecting each of them with the preceding and the succeeding images, providing fruitful ties between different epochs in art.

#### **6. Everyday comedy: the hall, the scene, the coulisses.**

by V.V. Proserksy

While investigating various types of communicative human behavior we make use of a wide range of metaphors and stereotypes which were derived from the world of theatre and later became scientific terms: social drama, social scenario, actors, masks, etc. The communication space is efficiently described by sets of different objects comprising scenes which influence the daily life of human beings. Detailed analysis of theatrical settings is conducive for in-depth perception of life styles of all social groups of the past as well as for improvement of the possible scenarios for contemporary urban environment, including the so-called “dwelling quarters”.

#### **7. Permanent cultural symbols in urban environment.**

by L.E.Trushina

The existing division of modern cities into a number of relatively isolated zones - industrial, social, administrative, dwelling - usually does not coincide with the zones formed in the process of historic evolution of particular cities. Thus, nobody cares now about sacral zones which used to mark the very centres of old cities. But even in the age of “total atheism” there exist some kinds of sacral centres providing haloes and symbolic signs of charisma to the agencies which have power and authority. Attempts of urban planners to design consistent and pleasing city environment should account for the “historic tail” in order to be successful.

## 8. Destiny of the Military Myth in the XX-th Century: politics, ethics, art.

by A.N.Isakov

A military myth considers war as a fundamental and primary reality which cannot be justified and which does not need any justification. In the sphere of politics war was traditionally seen as a positive factor shaping society and consolidating nations. But estimating the overall results of the wars waged in our century we see immense losses accompanied by transformation of society into a part of the military machine. In the sphere of ethics the military myth emphasises high moral spirit of acting armies, although the very idea of war contradicts the moral imperative and drives ethics entirely outside the field of war. In the sphere of art the military myth is extremely conservative. Examining the most famous contemporary movies dedicated to wars we have identified an amazing similarity between the battle scenes shown in these movies and those depicted in the pieces of art of the previous century. This means that in the conditions of war we are trying to somehow revive certain aspects of the old vision of the world which are alien to our new vision.

## 9. War: Chthonism and the present time.

by V.Yu.Sukhachev

War reveals itself as Force, Chaos, Might meaning a transcendental transition of man into an image which is, on the one hand, inhuman (chthonic) and devilish and, on the other hand, - divine. The main imperative of war is to kill a human being. It means that a person has to break the mirror which reflects himself, to reject the very idea of unity: "the Another and Myself - we are both people" and to lose his human identity. Symbolically, war brings about the inversion of high and infernal notions and also initiates competition between them. When power of war governs the world of man, it is impossible to give ear to voices of individuals; thus, humans are used as raw materials for realization of inhuman drives. It means that a war changes the usual symbols in a very cruel way and it can act as a catalyst for many unpredictable chains of events.

## 10. Symbolic and rhetoric aspects of the notion of demonstration (demonstrativeness)

by B.Shifrin

The turning point between any two centuries is always a period of shocks and expectations. Examining the end of the XIX-th century we can identify the three major types of presentation of various events and artefacts: in everyday life - total exposition and advertisements, in science - visualisation of invisible objects (X-rays), in the art - "uncovering of constructions" symbolised by the Eiffel Tower as a model of structural simplification. Other conventional symbols were airplane and cinematograph. Our modern postpositivist era has activated the ability of people to intuitively perceive the world in its integrity and it has vivified certain mythological views. When looking at the modern art we can see a twofold attitude to the very idea of construction: on one hand, an artist or an analyst can uncover things, "scratch the skin off" revealing the skeleton, or, on the other hand, - to create a construction starting with a scheme and moving to a complete, almost living, object. The two mentioned poles are clearly observable in puppet shows which are based on specific images and symbols. Our point is that a modern act of total demonstration shapes both the object itself and the viewer's consciousness. In this respect nature of public shows has not experienced considerable changes since ancient times.

## 11. The Saint-Petersburg archetype in the fine art.

by V. Koziyev

Saint-Petersburg has an important mission in the fine art. Russian secular art has, in fact, started in this city and Saint-Petersburg dominated during the first period of art's development. The myth of Saint-Petersburg has established the uniqueness and specificity of the city but its character was

understood in many different ways by different artists and writers. For the first time, the Saint-Petersburg type was shaped in the end of the XIX-th century by a group of artists named "World of the art". They initiated the so called "pure art" which embraced and, to certain extent, integrated various fields of culture including literature, poetry, music, theatre, history. Care for traditions and symbols characterized the activity of this group. Contemporary art in Saint-Petersburg, including the well-known Leningrad underground, is trying to follow the "pure art" line in its search for true cultural and spiritual values. Its orientation on traditionalism and conservatism means that it opposes radicalism and brutalism, on one hand, and populism and pursuit of sensations, on the other. The world of art in Saint-Petersburg still cherishes its reserved and aristocratic features.

#### 12. The role of symbolism in creation and establishment of the "Myself" phenomenon.

by V.Yu.Sukhachev

What is now called "the Russian reality" presents, in fact, a highly fragmented surface. The split has produced cracks not only in the social structures but also in constellations of symbols, practices of discourse, ways of presentation, various worlds of life. Instead of a consolidated society we see an archipelago of isolated "islands" of "worlds of life" having their own specific myths, symbols and rituals. This situation is aggravated by intense desymbolisation, desacralisation and dissatisfaction. Desintegration and confusion is present on all levels. Chaos has seized the throne, generating monstrous events, creatures and phenomena. This amazing process is accompanied by dramatic distractions in ethics and aesthetics, leading to apathy and, at the same time, euphoria. We witness appearance of the following scenarios of creation of "Myself" in the absence of the "Other": the first scenario - a person encapsulates himself through identification with the "Lost world" of communism; the second - a person cannot stand isolation and is destined to selfdestruction and such symbolic destruction can be worse than physical death; the third - a person is trying to find some substitution; the fourth - accepting the death of the "Other" a person mobilizes himself in order to capture the place of this "Other".

#### 13. Consolation through stereotypes.

by K.S. Pigrov

Our intention is to bind together Weber's conception of traditional behavior, ideas of the modern conception of everyday life and technogenic character of the new European civilization (technology treated as hardened stereotype). This approach made it possible to reveal a powerful, albeit hidden, traditionalistic trend in the technogenic civilization.

#### 14. Apophatics in postmodernism.

by M. Mikhailova

In the religious and philosophic society postmodernism is often interpreted as destruction of fundamental elements, rejection of guidelines and loss of the true path. While accepting certain truth of the mentioned opinion I would like to suggest an alternative view of postmodernism: I see it being a certain trend in the European culture that still preserves its Christian roots. It is of interest to identify relations between modernism and postmodernism, between classical and neo-classical models of culture using kathaphatic (positive) and apophatic (negative) methods which have been developed in theology. The first approach tries to highlight the multiple superb qualities of Creator and to reveal manifold signs of His presence in the world. On the contrary, the second approach tries to reach God directly through meditation and knowledge of His manifestations; it finds support in the experience of communion with God. The first approach can be traced in most classical cultures aiming to present beauty in artefacts, while the second one is readily seen in the works of the main figures of postmodernism. The latter turned to the heritage left by theologians of the past and tried

to find such understanding of loftiness which was free of romanticism. They looked for new paths leading to the Truth which were not corrupted by dogmatism, ecstasism and idle talks.

15. Symbols of power and their role in modern culture.

by R. Dymers

We present a typological scheme of those symbols, which can be used as symbols of power, together with analysis of their role in our society. We distinguish between straightforward power-violence and more sophisticated forms of power, such as domineering, authority, control, predominance. All these forms of power are reflected in corresponding symbols some of which are discussed in this paper. Special attention is paid to investigation of elements and symbols of power in creative activity which is directly linked with culture. The presented philosophical analysis of the mentioned set of symbols facilitates solution of the problems related to translation of languages of different cultures.

16. On the motives of Celtic mythology in modern culture.

by Ye. Kolesnik

In modern literature we witness a marked tendency to create new myths in order to construct a world picture, although schematic but, to a certain extent, integral. The most potent in this respect is literature, especially fiction and science fiction. The well developed Celtic mythology with its old motives, symbols and names is extensively used for this purpose. In the paper we present some results of our thorough investigation of the traces of Celtic Myths in the works created by a number of well-known Russian and foreign authors. We present interpretation of certain symbols and images such as fairy country, royal sacrifice, sword, centre of the world, the number "nine" as the image of supreme perfection.

17. Stereotype, Internment, and the Bomb.

by Chung-min Tu and Kam-ming Wong

Ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and the NATO bombing clearly demonstrate that despite of all progress humanity has not evolved much beyond WWI and WWII. Recent incidents of "racial profiling" chillingly remind us of the incarceration of Japanese Americans and Canadians by their governments in internment camps purely on the grounds of ethnic origin which violates the very democratic and religious principles the two nations and their people hold dear. We examine the novel "Obasan" as a case history of a victim of racial stereotyping and psychological repression. By deconstructing the stone as a symbol of, at once, silence and speech, we construct an alternative program for looking at diversity and difference in the light of Confucian and Deleuzian Middle Way.

18. The Right Reason of Crazyiness.

by Dr. Montserrat Herrero

The paper analyses the reflections on Quixote made by a group of thinkers, called Spanish "Generation of '98", and compares their reflections with Turgenev's in "Hamlet or Don Quixote". After losing its colonies, Spain no longer sees her reflection in the mirror of glorious empire. Spain is Don Quixote broken, preparing for a noble death. But Spain is also a Sancho Panza who realises what was lost without ever knowing what had been won. The mentioned thinkers understood that an apparent victory or failure says nothing about the triumph of the inner spirit. Turgenev presents the figure of Quixote with his counter-figure, Hamlet: the first is the ideal of realism while the second - of modernity.

19. Some remarks on relations between microcosmic and macrocosmic instantiations of the mythological world-axis.

by Karin Verelst (Brussels, Belgium)

The aim of the paper is to show that, even if one accepts the “common sense” conception of reality as a set-up in three-dimensional space, the basic assumptions shoring it up, when scrutinized thoroughly, inevitably lead back to the centre of a proper Sphere of Being. The individual Spheres coincide eventually with a cosmic Sphere of Being, instantiated around the Axis Mundi or the World Tree, attested in various ways in different cultural traditions. This approach opens a perspective on a generalized ontological condition, without the need to invoke “universal principles” and reconing with the mythological heritage transmitted to us from very different cultural periods and realms.

21. Transaction of symbols.

by V.A. Ruschakov

Poetry is always an intimate thing and a poet always tries to create its own unique language including symbols and images. This language is a tool for communication with the “Other” and it should make it possible to isolate this “Other” for the purpose of meaningful communication. Metaphor expresses a desire to reveal a sort of equivalence, to rename something, but it does not expose the nature of that desire. This is done by allusion that makes a person to fulfil the necessary substitution with the goal to compensate for the lack of integrity and for fragmentarity. The point is that postmodern culture shows no intention for the search of integrity and stays fairly happy dealing with fragments, thus, placing the moral problems into the economic channel. The universal market becomes a usual place where people get compensation for the deficit and for deficiency.

22. Will in the two dimensions of unconsciousness: Rousseau, Nietzsche.

by A.N. Isakov

The considered problem is connected with the following two modes of the free will: establishing and egocentric. On the one hand, the free will always establishes a certain intersubjective community and, on the other hand, - it presumes relations of the supreme/subordinate type. The identified problem was fairly common in the European political life in the past and it can be found in the treaties of the XXVIII-th century. British authors usually preferred the establishing will, while French authors - the tradition of the egocentric and, at the same time, universal will. We compare the “universal will” of Rousseau with the “will for power” of Nietzsche in the general context of the duality Will-Desire.

23. On the interpretation of images and symbols in religious literature.

by V.N. Nomokonov

Implementation of various images and symbols is an unavoidable phenomenon in religious texts because they deal with spiritual issues which normally cannot be precisely defined and used as terms. Manifold meanings of symbols is another typical feature of such texts. The problem of their interpretation was approached on the basis of the following presumptions: all existing world religions present interlinked stages of development of the same belief in God; Founders of different religions used to reiterate certain core principles and to give signs describing the appearance of the next Prophet. Some remarks on relations between microcosmic and macrocosmic instantiations of the mythological world-axis Comparative study of texts of several religious traditions, including the most recent one, made it possible to suggest some new, mostly spiritual, interpretations of the most common religious images and symbols.

## 24. GUATEMALAN POET GUSTAVO GONZALEZ AND HIS CONSTRUCTIVE TRIPOD

Victor VALEMBOIS

Universidad de Costa Rica

In his "Praise in Ancient<sup>1</sup> Guatemala", Gustavo Gonzales Villanueva, a priest, a Guatemalan citizen and a poet (three complementary identities within him), makes a poetic evocation of his land and his people. We would like to try to unravel the structuring axes of this poem, which are also three. The first one is about several romances with a particular philosophy of history. As a second one, that artistic resource that seems so masterly renewed with a series of references to the present. Finally, we verify an intertextual streak of this artistic production with numerous references to the literary world of both sides of the Ocean.

Those axes are assembled one in another, forming a tripod. Someone pointed that the things to come should be called things to do. Gonzales puts this into practice by using his pen as a tool and also by the art of saying that he cannot leave indifferent the construction of a nationality. We conclude that even if the religious monopoly is displaced, the religious dimension continues being valid, especially in the beautiful epic apparel of this great poet.

## 25. THE TRANSLUCENT, AN IMAGE OF AMBIGUITY IN CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE

MARIA ANTONIA FRIAS, ANA BELEN DE ISLA

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In the last years, in Central Europe, and especially within the trend known as minimalism, there has been a proliferation of works that employ translucent glass as their main material. From the start, this implies an attitude of genuine agreement between the opaque and the transparent, between the heavy and the light (or the weightless), between that which is immobile and that which is not. Thus, we find ourselves before a reconciliation between the traditional qualities of classic architecture and those of modernity.

On the other hand, ambiguity seems to be one of the most attractive characteristics in our contemporary culture. We would like (or wish) for this quality to come to signify (or imply), in our time, not the irresoluteness of a renunciation to compromise, but rather an agreement: that is, the longing for and the attempt to recover the balance lost.

## 26. WHAT VALUES REMAIN?

William L. McBride (USA)

Among the premises of this paper are the following points: that social and political philosophy must respond to actual events; that the recent bombing campaign by NATO against Serbia is an event of world-historical importance; and that what has happened raises profound issues concerning cultural values, which is one of the principal announced topics of this conference. After briefly making these points, the paper will first turn to a discussion of the role of intellectuals, making reference to specific examples such as Vaclav Havel and Jurgen Habermas. It will then explore the concept, recently restored to popularity by a number of writers from very different points of view, of the "clash" and alleged "incommensurability" of different world civilizations. Finally, it will turn to an analysis of "values", first raising the question of what if any meaning this term itself retains today,

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and then exploring the extent, if any, to which such supposedly central social values as human rights and democracy retain conceptual legitimacy in light of the degradation to which they have been subjected by events.

#### 27. Culture as deprivation.

by A.L.Kazin

In the world of Creation all being is related to its other life. Culture, as an anthropocentric sphere, is interfacing with other spheres: superhuman (Divine energies), inhuman (inertia of things) and anti-human (demoniac exaltation). The Divine aspect in culture is religion; the projection of things onto culture is design; the demoniac aspect in culture is witchcraft, magic. Culture has common borders with the three transcendent spheres; because of that the master of culture (anthropos) abides concurrently inside and outside of the human realm. The main paradox of culture lies in its polyvalency and its feminine character. Culture is a diagonal of meanings which, by definition, does not coincide neither with the vertical line of spirit nor the horizontal line of created things. Because of all that, the Russian Orthodox culture finds itself in a state of perpetual struggle with itself, and it takes part in the world's progress (from paradise to hell) only in the superficial layers of civilization. To be a cultured person in Russia is mostly not a social problem but a metaphysical one.

#### 28. Phenomenology of image and metaphysics of identity.

by G.L. Tulchinsky

The XX-th century is approaching its end under the sign of the image and with the stylistics of imagemaking. The image constitutes a problem of specific postmodern character. The modern business, management and even political life is unthinkable without images. We understand the image as a symbolic presentation of that which is special and, probably, unique in a certain person, institution or activity. The image is a part of our reality and it is to be studied, formed and developed properly. In the paper we give our answers to the questions: Why do people need images? Can we influence their content and form? How can people use them? It is shown here that postmodernism is powerless in dealing with the problem of the image. The way out of this deadlock can be found only in the shift of the whole paradigm, opening another dimension and "diving into depth". For this purpose we have to once again raise questions about the identity of a human being, his purpose and place. His responsibility should become deeper: everybody is responsible for all and for everything. It can be also said that all roads lead to culture.

#### 29. Social imagination in the dynamics of the contemporary historic process.

by A. Koneva

The faculty of imagination plays a special role in perception of the world by man, in creation of projective images of the world and of himself in his mind. In this way a person acquires the world and makes it his own imaginary world. On the other hand, imagination means activity. People construct a model of "required or desirable future" and they develop culture enhancing their real experience by imaginary experience in the mythological reality and in the reality of art. In the periods of drastic changes in social and cultural conditions images of specific cultures, both profane and sacral, are related to the image of the developing world, to the image of history. The latter can be analysed in the context of specific culture and interpreted as a special text.

#### 30. The idea of universal human values as a stereotype of European culture.

by S.Ye. Zolkina

The idea of universal human values is a common one in the Western culture of the XX-th century and is an object of on-going polemics. The purpose of this paper is to examine the very idea of such values and the possibility of its practical implementation. It is presumed that there exist certain basic

spiritual and ethical norms which are acceptable to all ethnic and cultural communities. Supposedly, the interaction of cultures would bring about their synthesis and creation of a new type of culture, more universal in its character. But here we come to a contradiction between the two different mentalities - Western and non-Western. Resolution of this contradiction requires a mechanism of creation and realization of certain core universal criteria in practical activity on the world-wide scale. We have to speak of symbiosis of cultures that requires substantial changes in all of them. Obviously, the technogenic Western culture has to master a new vision of the world with a different attitude towards nature. It will need to develop an ability to cope with the natural economic restrictions. Psychological culture and social rituals of peoples which do not belong to the Western civilization offer instruments making it possible to control and moderate emotional stresses that bring about destructive behavior of individuals and social groups.

### 31. On the principle of autonomy of morality in relation to knowledge.

by M. Savelieva

Speaking about the mystery of the starry sky and the inner moral law Kant wondered about the connection between the two mentioned objects. The question is whether there can be any moral law if Heaven is out of reach and God is out of comprehension? Can we identify, with confidence, the connection between precisely defined moral categories and the sincerity (true morality) of deeds? There is a danger, in Hegel's words, of "death of life in notions" because every notion can cause death of essence. Notions in morality stand outside morality; and they can constitute moral legislation for those who operate with them. The main problem here stems from duality of knowledge and "non-knowledge" as unconditional understanding. If morality is considered as an apriory form of sensuality than it is unconditional and we can accept it freely as the only ground for true human behavior.

### 32. Anthropologic unity of the European science and ideology.

by P.I. Bublik

Distinction between theory and practice lies in the basis of European culture and, in particular, culture of thinking. Mental vision, as immediate access to the Absolute, is regarded as an apotheosis of theory. Practice has been re-interpreted in terms of evolution from mystical creativity to a game and further to practice-verification which justifies absolute things in front of the needs of human life. Practice is seen as ordered accumulation of technical communication between nature and science - as systemic fixation of collective practice. Then, ideology appears to be the only form of re-union of theory and practice which is accessible for Western culture. Ideology is perceived as a complex of notions and symbols: "meaning-value-might-power".

### 33. Silen of Alkiviad and metamorphoses of a forgotten symbol.

by L. Starodubtseva

The so-called "contemporary world", which has forgotten fear and trembling, contemplates with irony on mysticism, self-knowledge and invisible cities, which are arbitrarily taken from different cultures and traditions. And still... Sometimes you can hear prayers said in wisper, some people feel like reading spiritual poetry or just gazing at the sky at night. In manifold ancient tales and legends as well as in sacred texts we come across such symbols as fairy "walking-stick", "rod", "sceptre" presented as instruments for finding and obtaining wisdom. There is an amazing number of variations of these symbols, for example the famous "stick of Moses", "golden stick" in Apocalypse and "scepter of chosen ones".