

UNITY & DIVERSITY c o n f e r e n c e

*Eighth International Congress on Philosophy and Culture,
January 27 –31, 2005 Seattle, Washington, USA*

Welcome to the site for the *International Conference on Unity and Diversity in Religion and Culture*. This conference is eighth in a series organized by the UNESCO Chair on Comparative Studies of Spiritual Traditions, Their Specific Cultures and Interrelations Dialogue: www.networkforpeace.org

**Russian State University for
the Humanities**



**Russian Institute for Cultural
Research,
St. Petersburg Branch**

**Russian Academy for Civil
Service
under President of RF**

**UNESCO Moscow
Office**

**UNESCO Chair on
Comparative Studies of
Spiritual Traditions, Cultures
and Interrelations Dialogue**

**Institute for Human Studies,
RAN**

Within the Seattle conference the Round table telecast session between Seattle and Moscow on the *Philosophical and Psychological Challenges of the Dynamics of Contemporary Culture* will be held under auspices of the UNESCO Moscow Office at the Russian State University for the Humanities and hosted by the Center for Computer Science and New Technologies in Education.

**Saturday – January 29, 2005
ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION**

***Philosophical and Psychological Challenges
of the Dynamics of Contemporary Culture*
Telecast, with live feed to/from Russia-USA**

Moscow 20.00 –21.30 // Seattle 9.00 a.m. –10.30 a.m.

The Round table discussion will address concerns the following issues

- 1) What are the main trends of the dynamics of contemporary culture (from a philosophical and/or psychological point of view)?**
- 2) What are the primary characteristics of these trends?**
- 3) Can human beings influence these trends of contemporary culture? If so, in what ways?**

Organizing committee: Astafieva O.N., Moreva L.M. Kuvshinov S.V.,
Yaroslavtseva E.I.

Coordinators: *Prof. Astafieva Olga Nickolaevna*, Deputy Director, Chair for Cultural Studies of the Russian Academy for Civil Service under President of RF.

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

January 29, 2005

Venue:

The Russian State University for Humanities Centre for Computer Science and New Technologies in Education 6 Miusskaya sg., Moscow

SCHEDULE

18.45 – 19.45 – Discussion in Russian

Preparation of Declaration

20.00 – 21.30 – Teleconference in English

List of participants (English-speaking section)

Co-moderators :

Mr. Philipp Queau Director, UNESCO Moscow Office	Mr. Kuvshinov Serguey Victorovich Professor, Vice-Rector, Department of Computer Education and New Technologies, The Russian State University for Humanities	Mrs. Astafieva Olga Nickolaevna Professor, Deputy Director, the Chair for Cultural Studies, The Russian Academy for Civil Service under President of RF
---	---	---

Delokarov Kadyrbech Hadjumarovich – Professor, Deputy Director, Chair of Philosophy, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; *Horuzhiy Serguey Sergeevich* – Professor, Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences; *Namiestnikova Irina Victorovna* – Professor, Chair of Philosophy, Moscow Social-Humanitarian Academy; *Nazaretian Akop Pogosovich* – Professor, Institute for Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences; *Nikanorova Ekaterina Vasilievna* – Professor, Deputy Director, Moscow State Library; *Siliaeva Elena Grigorievna* – Professor, Chair for practical psychology, Moscow Social-Humanitarian Academy; *Sayko Eddy Victorovna* – Professor, Chair of Acmeology and the Psychology of Professional Activities, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; *Serebrianiy Sergey Dmitrievich* – Professor, Russian State University for Humanities; *Zhidkov Vladimir Sergeevich* – Professor, Chief, Department of Human & Social Sciences, Russian Foundation for Basic Studies Head of Department, Institute for Arts Studies at the Ministry of Culture;

Pelipenko Andrey Anatolievich – Doctor of Philosophy, Russian Institute of Cultural Research; *Timashkov Aleksey* – Researcher and Interpreter, Russian Institute for Cultural Research, St. Petersburg; *Luniaev Euvgeniy* – Researcher, Russian Institute for Cultural Research, St. Petersburg; *Yaroslavtseva Elena Ivanovna* – Institute for Human Studies, the Russian Academy of Sciences.

List of participants (Russian-speaking Section)

Avanesova Galina Alekseevna – Professor, the Chair on Culture Studies, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Akilina Maria Ivanovna** – Head of Department, The Russian State Library; **Andriyanenko Svetlana Nizamievna** – Post-graduate Student, the Chair on Culture Studies, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Afanasieva N.V.**- Post-graduate Student, the Chair on Culture Studies, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Bogatyrlova Tatyana Georgievna** – Professor, Deputy Director, the Chair on Culture Studies, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Bulavina Dina Maratovna** - Post-graduate Student, the Chair on Culture Studies, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Vasilenko Liudmila Aleksandrovna** – professor, Deputy Director, the Chair on Social Systems and Antimonopoly Policies, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Volovik I.V.** - Post-graduate Student, the Chair on Culture Studies, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Godovanets Yury Anatolievich** – Deputy Director of the Ministry of Culture and Mass Media of RF; **Dashdamirov A.** – Professor, the Chair on Regional and Federative Policies, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Didenko F.** - Post-graduate Student, the Chair on Culture Studies, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Dyachenko Lidia Nikolaevna** – Deputy Director of Department of national policy the Ministry for Regional Development, RF; **Esayan Edgar Aramovich** – Post-graduate Student, the Chair on Culture Studies, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Zamay Vera Vasilievna** – Adviser, the State Committee on Statistics of RF; **Zacharova Oksana Aleksandrovna** - Post-graduate Student, the Chair on Culture Studies, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Ivasheikov D.; Kamishev E.** - Post-graduate Student, the Chair on Culture Studies, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Kolodovnikov Vladimir Ivanovich** – Director of International Center, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Maligina Irina Victorovna** – Head, the Chair of Aesthetics and the Theory of Culture, Moscow State University of Culture and Arts; **Mamiedov Nizami Mustafaevich** – Professor, Deputy Director, the Chair on Ecology, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Matveeva Zhanna Aleksandrovna** - Post-graduate Student, the Chair on Culture Studies, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Munkozhangalov Dashi** - Post-graduate Student, the Chair on Culture Studies, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Nickulichev Yury Vladimirovich** – Researcher, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Pavlovich Anna Aleksandrovna** - Post-graduate Student, the Chair on Culture Studies, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Raykova G.** - Head of Department, The Russian State Library; **Razmustova Tatyana Olegovna** – Researcher, the Russian Institute for Culture Studies; **Rybakova Irina**

Nikolaevna – Assistant Professor, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Sayko Elena Anatolievna** – Assistant Professor, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Samutina Irina** – Chief Editor, the Magazine “Herald of Eurasia”; **Surina Tamara Michailovna** – Professor, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Skudnova O.U.** – Assistant of Professor, The Russian Academy for Civil Service; **Stolayrov A.**; **Yaroslavtseva Diana Aleksandrovna** – Student, the Moscow State Pedagogical University **& another.**

Seattle, USA

Telecast session - Preliminary Program and list of participants

Anchor speakers, coordinators:

Liubava Moreva – National Officer for Culture, UNESCO Moscow Office

Stephen Erickson – Dean, Department of Philosophy, Pomona College, USA

Steven Shankman – Director, Oregon Humanities Institute, University of Oregon

Panel:

Sadrudin Boga – Core faculty, Antioch Center for Creative Change, Antioch University Seattle; **Erica Lilleht** – Professor of Psychology, Seattle University; **Seyyed Hassan Hosseini** – Professor of Philosophy of Science, University of Technology, Tehran, Iran; **Rev. John Boonstra** – Executive Minister, Washington Association of Churches; **Constance Eichanlaub** – Educational Programmer, Seattle Jungian Society; **Thao Nguyen** – Professor of Psychology and Asian Studies, Seattle University; **Peter Saeverin** – Lecturer, Private University Witten/Herdecke, Germany; **Louay Safi** – Executive Director, ISNA Leadership Development Center; **Skye Burn** – Associate member, UNESCO Chair on Comparative Studies of Spiritual Traditions, Their Specific Cultures and Interreligious Dialogue; Project Director, Network for Peace

Facilitators:

Larry Penning – Transformational Partnership

Daimon Sweeney – Open Question Institute

Newman Love – Open Question institute

Susan Partnow – Let’s Talk America and Global Citizen’s Journey

Participants:

Mustafa Akyol – Intercultural Dialogue Platform, branch of the Journalist & Writers Foundation, Turkey; **Roger Alan DeWitt** – Anthropology Chair, Aims Community College, Iowa; **David Marshak** – Professor in College of Education, Seattle University; **Stephen Rowe** – Professor of Philosophy, Grand Valley State University, Michigan; **Stanley Tweyman** – Professor of Philosophy and Humanities, York University, Toronto, Canada; **Jeff Shires** – Assistant Professor of Communication, Purdue University North Central; **Donald Mihaloew** – Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist, Western Institute of Family Practice; **Mehret Mehanzel** – Graduate

student, University of Washington School of Social Work; **Anthony Mansueto** – President, Seeking Wisdom; teaches philosophy, religious studies, and history at the University of New Mexico – Gallup; **Carol Hiltner** – Artist and writer; **Stephen Jacobsen** – Pastor and "reflective practitioner" in the area of spirituality, culture, and society; **Ryan Laine** – Student, Evergreen College; **Alicia Batten** – Community member; **Harley Arnold** – Community member; **Pauline Erickson** – Community member; **Patricia Bruce** – Graphic artist; **MaSanda LaRa** -- Founder and President, HeartVisions; **Nathaniel Burn** – Civil Engineer; **Rev. Joyce Manson** – Presbyterian Clergywoman, Interfaith Relations; **Mrinal Roy** – Asia Pacific Task Force, Church Council of Greater Seattle; **Adam LeMieux** – Student, Central Washington University; **David Laws** – Graduate student, Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington; **Irene Diamond** – Professor of Political Science, University of Oregon; **Erin Markel** – Student of Political Science, University of Oregon; **Randy Morris** – Core faculty, Antioch University/Seattle, in the history of ideas and depth psychology; **George Callan** – Depth psychologist, educator, mentor and writer; **Harold Bassford** – Community member.

Summary of the paper for the teleconference

1. One of the main tasks of today's thought is to clearly realize where we are in the ongoing process of evolution. Who we are? Where we are going to? The various definitions of our time as the era of the "new world order", "clear-cut frontier" or "the age of bifurcation" merely point to the very fact of change but do not show its essence. The civilization as a system of certain basic principles (as opposed to the principles of the primeval stage of human development), having a distinct vector of its development and the distinct stages of historical development such as antiquity, middle ages, modernity, etc., does crumble. This civilization began some 6 000 years ago and is coming to its end in our times. What are the main trends characteristic of the coming society?
2. There is no doubt for a philosopher that the first *philosophical challenge* of the contemporary cultural dynamics is this dynamics itself, which is not yet interpreted or understood philosophically. Traditional view conceives cultural dynamics as a projection of social and historical dynamics that means that in the present-day situation this view relates dominant cultural phenomena and mechanisms, in the first place, to the globalization processes. Such an approach is neither mistaken nor fruitless: it can explain quite well, for example, the growth and encouragement of multiculturalism; but, however, it is not all and mainly outer features of the cultural dynamics that are rooted in the globalization. As for the inner features, essence and nature of this dynamics, to my mind, they are connected more intimately not with the globalization, but rather anthropologization or «anthropological turn»: i.e. passing of the principal role in world dynamics to its anthropological level: to *what happens to Human Person*. The era of primacy of Big Systems – tribes, states, nations, or

macroeconomic monsters – is coming to its close. The challenge of the Third millennium is anthropological challenge.

3. Today we observe the fact that in the “engine of change”, with its dialectics of differentiation and integration, the processes of integration become much more active than those of differentiation.
4. In today’s world we clearly observe that the universal trends of integration and disintegration are represented by the paradigms of *globalization and postmodern*. They act together, in each specific case forming a unique cultural entity with its own values and ideas.
5. One of the fundamental challenges of the modern world is that of globalization which has radically transformed the basic “meanings” of the modern civilization. Under the influence of globalization, the very notion of scientific rationality as well as its place in culture are changing. The process also involves such basic “meanings” and structures as the idea of progress, of national state, etc. What is most alarming, however, is the marginalization of spiritual and moral values. Today they are quite often “just not anymore in demand” in the commercially oriented paradigm of globalization.
6. There is a universal sense of crisis permeating even the air that we breathe. It’s evident that the crisis is not even structural, - it is a systemic one. Its cause lies in the fact that the logo-centric paradigm of our culture which determined the formation and evolutions of the main religions of salvation seems to be almost totally exhausted.
7. It also should be remembered that this new phenomena embrace only a part of the modern world leaving outside a whole range of traditional societies. There’s no single and monolithic humankind as an actor in the worldwide scene. Postmodern and globalization embrace only in the European-Atlantic part of the world and, also, in some other parts which have gone through the processes of modernization.
8. The crises of the modern logo-centric civilizations manifests itself in the crisis of the traditional European humanistic anthropology (in its liberal and neoliberal versions). The erosion of the old values and traditions, the growing tempo of this process, which prevents the society from adapting to changes.
9. The present conditions of society are transitory and therefore chaotic and dynamic. The institutional structure is superseded by the subjective one. The subjective, personal factor becomes more and more active both at the individual and group levels. The indications of this are the transnational mechanisms of the human activities, for instance in economics.

10. The growing importance of the emotional factor and the collapse of stability in society with the growing number of its ethnic conflicts are predetermined by a confluence of subjective and objective factors, including psychological ones.

A) Due to the information explosion we today perceive the world around us in a quite new way, more actively as ever before adopting to the new spatial and temporal characteristics of society (it seems that quite often we do not give proper consideration to this important circumstance). We constantly “feel pressed” both at the conscious and unconscious levels. This “psychological destabilization” demands proper correction in our everyday lives, which we rarely give proper thought in our evaluations.

B) Every fact of destabilization feeds *resistance* and the trend towards conservation of status quo in the same way as migration strengthens the need to preserve former ties with the core of the system. This breeds the ground for “provoked” ethnic and group self-determination – an additional factor of aggressive self-determination at the political and economic levels.

11. The crumbling of old paradigms and values provokes the “reflex of self-protection”. On the other hand, people more actively as ever before search for their own “Me”, for a new identity. Quite often this leads to the strengthening of religiosity, which is not only a form of self-protection but also self-determination. This is also a special form of a personal identification with the most stable traditions in society. However, the efforts of the Pope to find some common ground for the solutions of global problems have not as yet been a success. It seems that religions in culturally divided societies could not be radically changed by way of mutual concessions. But still the global religions are nevertheless able to overcome their differences – at the level of extrareligious system realizing certain spiritual values, but also including Faith in the framework of a new worldview.

This new worldview should include both objective natural components and subjective psychological dimensions specially constructed by society. Faith, intuition, rational and irrational, conscious and subconscious elements of human experience should find their proper place in this new worldview. It should be constructed in a way which does not exclude different ways of accumulating human knowledge and experience. What should be a key element of this endeavor. Evidently, it should be a product of intellectual elites of the global society – their solutions for environmental, space, economic and information problems of the world.

12. One of the most important mechanisms in a new self – determination of humankind is identification and identity creation. This process can be and should be influenced by specially created international organizations. We also

have many examples of such gradual creation of identities. These are the American experience in the development of a special “American identity” and the European efforts to find a new “European identity” for the peoples of the continent.

13. The philosophic comprehension of the situation in the Russian and world cultures does not allow us to evaluate it either as crisis or progress. In it we clearly see both negative and positive trends. These trends reflect contradictions between global and local, “we” and “they”, traditions and innovations. The most evident among those trends are the following the dominance of mass media in all spheres of culture, which underlines the role of “gatekeepers”, those who “distribute” culture among people.
14. The changing role of the ways culture is consumed – the individualization of cultural consumption (the transition to “individual worlds”), which also is connected with the progress of mass media. The radical changes in the basic structures of culture, the growing role of interactivity, technologies of “virtual reality” replacing the “real reality”.
15. How to overcome this crisis? One of the ways is to stimulate intracultural dialogue between “high” and “low” cultures, which will give additional momentum to the development of culture as a whole. It’s quite possible that now we find ourselves at such a juncture of history when the whole world is moving towards a completely new culture, which is going away from local cultures and approaching some integral quality that reflects new means of human communication.
16. It is obvious that the rhizome status of modern culture has some features. It per se is not a matrix, i. e. not a hierarchically constructed reality, but a set of personal senses assuming their total equivalency.
This, in turn, causes, firstly, the model nature of modern knowledge, since none of the cultural concept has "true" advantages over the others; secondly, the clipped nature of the culture, mainly restricted by the scope of self-sufficient individual; and thirdly, excessive and redundant nature of cultural variety, which does not allow even in principle to separate the essentials from the secondary items.
17. *Creation of common cultural space* will facilitate social, economic as well as social and political development of mankind as polyethnic and multinational or to be more precise multicultural entity. We understand cultural space as intellectual one, i.e. space basing on studying and knowing history of different countries, their cultural peculiarities, psychology of people and ethnoses inhabiting these countries. Under such space we also imply multilingual and

multicultural space that unifies compatriots of all people living in different countries.

Such an approach requires wide collaborative educational and research activities in which libraries play an important role since it is libraries being cultural institutions, safeguarders of cultural heritage that are able most effectively using information technology to integrate this heritage into educational and research activities, to unify education and science with richness of culture, with values and meaning without which further development of human civilization is impossible.

18. *The problem of dialogue at the plural world.* A dialogue can spring up at any point – as a form of correlation of interests of subjects, if we consider them as a developing in autopoietic fractal reality, as a systemic process. The main problem lies not in producing a rich and diverse dialogue but in *seeing* and *realizing* the already existing diversity of dialogues and communications. To see it and recognize this fact. To learn not to stand in its way. A human person is not always able to be open for diversity and keep his/her identity at the same very time! In the problem of diversity the human person encounters his/her (and also of their own group) life limits, quite often fearing to lose his/her identity. From this point of view, it should be said that humans should learn to perceive the diverse world and open themselves to it, that is letting the world to enter their inner world. And at the same very time to preserve the balance of their identity.

It's important to understand if we are able to free communication of conflicts. The identity of humans is preserved not when they are isolated or exist in a limited life space but when all their components are able to function in a balance.

19. *The problem of virtualization of culture.* The contemporary stage of development of the IT's enables modelling a special type of spaces: the interactive informational – communicational environments. They make for transformation of a human's value system resulting in changes in his "socio-psychological, ethic and aesthetic nature". Thus the special patterns of interpersonal relations are set up, "sign and sense entity of the contemporary culture being altered".